



Eastern Region, ACPE Newsletter

October 2009

Greetings from the CORDS

We are looking forward to seeing everyone in the next week at SOS and the Bi-Regional ExNE Annual Meeting. We are aware that the attendance is down a bit given the economic realities of our institutions. Like you, we hope the economy is on the road to recovery. It may have been fortuitous that the hotel we had anticipated being in for this meeting in Saratoga Springs, NY was unable to accommodate us due to their hold-up with construction. The region is taking a hard look at watching our expenses and somehow Stony Point Retreat and Conference Center makes a bit more economic sense! We like to think that wherever we gather the spirit of the Eastern Region will be strong and lively.



Speaking of the "spirit of the Eastern Region" we encourage you to read carefully the thoughtful article by Greg Stoddard and Jay Cooke with regard to the "state of the region". This article was inspired by conversation at the Administrative Board retreat in July and we hope that their reflection will generate conversation at the regional meeting. *We also encourage any of you who will not be attending the regional meeting to respond to us by email (eastern.region@sbcglobal.net) if you want to contribute a response in the next newsletter.*

We are excited about the bi-regional meeting and think the topic about Alcoholism/Addiction/Pastoral Care and Education is very timely and worthwhile to all our members. If you haven't registered there is still room; go to the regional website www.eneacpe.org to download information and registration. We will also have 2 guests at our Regional meeting: Rev. Teresa Snorton, Executive Director of ACPE and Rev. Deborah Whisnand, Executive Director of FCPE. See you at Stony Point!

*Jo Clare Wilson and Nancy Anderson
Co-regional directors*

The picture below does not mean that the supervisors at Sisters of

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Upcoming Events:

Oct 11-12
SOS at Stony Point
Oct 12 - 14
ExNE Bi-Regional Conference
Stony Point, NY

Nov 4-8
ACPE Leadership
Atlanta, GA

Feb 2-6, 2010
REM (Racial Ethnic Multicultural)
Invitational
Omni Hotel
San Antonio, TX

April 10-14, 2010
Association of Professional Chaplains (APC)
Renaissance Hotel

Charity in Buffalo are changing careers! However, they were enjoying themselves while showing the co-regional directors and the chair of accreditation around their facility.

Bob Spillman, Janet Bielman, Jo Clare Wilson and Tyler Dudley

Reflections: The Eastern Region

Greg Stoddard and Jay Cooke

The following was generated after the Administrative Board Meeting in July at Stony Point. There was lively discussion about the current "state of the region" and discussion of our Clinical Membership. We are appreciative of the thoughtful reflections that Greg and Jay have done regarding the conversation, and which, we hope, will stimulate conversation at the upcoming Bi-Regional Meeting October 12 -114.

In the introductory chapter of his 1998 book Open Minded: working out the logic of the soul, The Harvard Cambridge Press, Jonathan Lear shares a brief reflection on what he calls a self deception in the way that the eastern college establishment sees itself. He says,

"In America, the great East Coast universities think of themselves as modeled on Oxford and Cambridge – but this is really a false-self presentation. In fact they are modeled on Heidelberg . In the German model, the older professor reigns and the younger academics work under him, often in servile submission, hoping that one day they too will be the senior. Tenure is the American-democratic form of a rite of passage which favors seniority. Oxford and Cambridge, by contrast, formed themselves around a phantasy of an ancient Greek ideal of homosexual love. In that world, what is best is to be the beautiful, brilliant young man. The older men, past their bloom, look with nostalgia, delight, administration, and a touch of envy at their brilliant youngers. (pg. 6-7)

At our recent Eastern Region Administrative Board retreat, a discussion began toward the end of the meeting regarding the observation of one of our colleagues at the general lack of energy in the region. Everyone agreed that regional meetings in years past had seemed more energetic. We recalled talent shows, string bands, and song and energy.

I shared the previous passage from Open Minded during that discussion along with my observation that the lack of energy all confessed to feeling might be something of what Lear would term a kind of "deadness" that comes upon a profession that reaches a point where inquiry regarding the nature of the professional practice has largely ceased. Lear says that, this arises from the presumption that the profession has arrived at a point where it believes it knows what constitutes quality practice and thus moves to enshrine it in standards so quality can be preserved. On its face, the concern for quality is an

Schaumburg, IL

April 17-21, 2010
ACPE Leadership
Marriott
Downtown
Kansas City, MO

April 21-24, 2010
ACPE Annual
Conference
Marriott
Downtown
Kansas City, MO

important matter, but according to Lear, the concern to propagate quality through standards has a paradoxical effect on practice. If we as a clinical pastoral educators are arriving at settled set of standards of professional practice, then Lear warns that the assumption that we now know what good practice is about engenders a deadness in our profession stemming from our lack of curiosity and inquiry into the how and why of clinical pastoral education. If the standards tell us what quality is then all we have to do is meet them. Advancing our knowledge and understanding is then dead.

So if standardization deadens inquiry, the assumptions out of which we relate to our students can set an expectation for who they are as budding pastoral educator. This is where the opening passage from Lear most helped focus our discussion. We asked, are we in this Region, through our attitude toward ourselves and our students, more akin to the Oxford - Cambridge or Heidelberg philosophy. The consensus was we're more like Heidelberg .

We reflected that, at least in this region, we give ourselves high status as Supervisors. We learned, with the help of Claudia Landau , that we are largely blind to the Clinical Members around us. Our supervisory education and certification process generates a ethos wherein our student's come to envy certified supervisors for their knowledge and status and struggle to find a way to gain what we know and attain to our level. And as supervisors we re-enforce this in that we tend to focus attention on our student's weaknesses and lacks and question our objectivity if we are too enamored with their creativity and potential. This is very much the Heidelberg ethos.

Taken together, the ethos of Heidelberg and our growing focus on standardized education its quite possibly at the root of the low energy level we see around regional life and work. We all agreed that the future of CPE in this region would be well served if we could manage a cultural shift from Heidelberg to something more along the lines of Cambridge .

But we also identified a third thread in our malaise that we thought important to acknowledge, as a way of preparing for this shift. That is, to acknowledge that we are to some degree corporately grieved as a region. We took stock in our discussion of the loss of too many valued colleagues to death in recent years. This is by no means a complete list.

- 2009 Dan deArment
- 2008 Arabella Young
- 2008 Joan Hemenway
- 2007 Bob Cholke
- 2007 Don Young

I know there have been others as well going back to Bill Wycoff.

When you begin to take account of the people you see that within the framework of Heidelberg we've lost people who were important elders in our group and have lost them continuously while giving ourselves little space to grieve their passing. If we are to shift as a region, perhaps we need to some new way to collectively mourn these colleagues and friends and mentors who are with us no more.

If we can do this we may be able to make space for our new generation of colleagues whose brightness and potentially is truly to be admired.

*Greg Stoddard - Reading Hospital
Board of Representatives*

As I sat in on my first Eastern Region administrative board retreat as chair of the Nominating committee, I was filled with eagerness and nervousness about what might occur in terms of decision-making and discussion among the members. It was an exciting and challenging two days for me. I saw and learned about aspects of the region that I had taken for granted and came away with an appreciation for the financial, administrative, pastoral, and visionary aspects of our work as a Region of various members and as a Board. I was invigorated by the presentation by Claudia Landau, Clinical Member representative, who encouraged us to utilize the expertise and wisdom of Clinical Members in our clinical sites and leadership of the Board. Quite frankly, feeling freshly minted as a CPE supervisor in January, I enjoyed myself and came away with a sense of carrying on the work and vision of ACPE in our part of the world.

Also, I was excited to be among those for which I have high regard. I have a sense of the weight of responsibility of being on the Board coupled with a somewhat naïve but nonetheless youthful enthusiasm. When Greg Stoddard spoke and read a passage from Open Minded: working out the logic of the soul, I appreciated his engagement about what I understood as a search for an academy of CPE and a generational shift in the age of CPE supervisors in Region.

As I have reflected on Greg's words and the passage from Lear, I found myself less concerned with the location of our academy of CPE in the tradition of Heidelberg or Oxford and Cambridge. I agree that in the world of CPE there can be a tendency to view older supervisors as those who reign on high and for younger supervisors and supervisory education students to learn at their feet. Also, I believe there is the view that these older supervisors are past their bloom and younger supervisors and supervisory education students are somehow brilliant and hold great promise. What I am more concerned with is how to acknowledge and honor the road that has been trod by previous supervisors and members of CPE and to forge a new path for the future of CPE in this Region. This has less to do with where our academy resides or what tradition we perceive ourselves to be in or hope to be.

There is power in the transmission of knowledge of spiritual care, clinical pastoral education, and supervision provided by those who have been working at the craft of each of these endeavors. There is also power in the creativity and newness of those who are emerging on to the scene.

As to the lack of energy that exists in Region and that was discussed at the Board retreat, I imagine this may well be connected to the loss of pivotal figures in the work of CPE and spiritual care. This is why I think it is so vital for us to honor those who have gone before and those who are handing on the tradition of CPE to what I might call the younger generation. The younger generation is by no means characterized by age but by our newness as members of CPE.

I am choosing my language carefully and specifically – if there is going to be a shift in the Region, we need to think about all members of CPE and not just those connected to the learning and craft of supervision. The vision of any community can become limited by the unintentional exclusion of some of its members. This is why Claudia Landau’s presentation about the presence and potential of clinical members is so important.

So needless to say, I am excited about the future of CPE and spiritual care in the Region. I am relatively new at this, so perhaps that is the reason for my excitement. I am excited though to be walking a path forged by those who have dedicated their lives to practice and teaching of spiritual care.

A favorite time of mine at regional meetings and other CPE meetings such as the Seminar on Supervision is the later evening when there are gatherings of handfuls of people and the telling of stories. There is much transferred during those times – stories and memories are passed on and the whole range of feelings are expressed including sadness, joy, anger, and grumpiness. It’s one of the reasons I have stuck around and one of the reasons I hope to make a place for myself in CPE.

*Jay Cooke - Bridgeport Hospital
Nominations Committee Chair*

NEWS FROM CERTIFICATION

Just a few notes of importance from certification. I want to thank the members of the Certification Committee and all of the co-opted members for their time and commitment to the SES’s in the Eastern Region. Without each of you the Spring 2009 and the Fall 2009 Certification Meetings would not have gone as smoothly as they did. Thank you.

I also want to take the opportunity to commend all the SES's in the region who met with the Certification Committee during 2009 and congratulate our new Supervisory Candidates. Congratulations to Katy Wilcox, Debra Slade, Osvaldo Tanon, Alice Walsh, Greta Wagner, Silvia Misinova, Susan Liguori, Samuel Mathew, Inge Lessner-Wittke, and Jongmi Bae.

There are a few points of interest regarding the *new* 2010 Standards. Readiness Consults should be done at the Regional level. If they are set up outside of the Regional Certification Meeting at least two members of the Certification committee must be on the Consult. Candidates requesting Candidacy will have to submit their Theology Paper for Consultation. Supervisors of SES will need to submit a one page paper to the committee four weeks in advance addressing the supervisor's plans for supervisory education, an assessment of the student's learning issues, a theoretical basis for working with the student, strengths and weaknesses of the theory, and any identified areas required consultation. I hope this has enticed everyone to read the new Certification Manual from cover to cover.

Thank you,
Maureen E. Mitchell, RSM, D.Min.
Eastern Region Certification Chair



Maureen Mitchell, Chair, Eastern Region Certification, hard at work during the September 25-27 meeting! You can see she has many good helpers.....

Students from Puerto Rico
Carlos

Five supervisory education students from Puerto Rico will be arriving in New York City in mid-October for a three-day intensive training seminar under the supervision of Carlos Alejandro, from the Eastern Region. The SES's will present clinical material from their CPE groups in Puerto Rico, theory papers for review, and participate in didactics on Personality and Educational theory, and Theology of supervision. Special attention will be given to group theory within the context of Puerto Rico . The indigenous CPE supervisory education program is going on its third year. CPE programs are being run in three separate hospitals throughout Eastern coast of Puerto Rico . One of the programs is a collaborative effort with the Inter-American University in Ponce, Puerto Rico . Leadership in one of the more conservative Pentecostal denominations in Puerto Rico has given official approval for the development of a fourth program, which will be a parish-based CPE program for pastors and lay leaders. Carlos Alejandro is director of Pastoral Care and Education at North General Hospital in Harlem and has been running CPE programs in Puerto Rico for the last five years.

Reminders

Please keep us posted about any news and notes we need to know. If you want to contribute something to the newsletter, please let your regional co-directors know.