

# CWTAP Quarterly

*Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program  
Eastern Washington University*

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## Director's Letter

Dear CWTAP Community,

As we move into the new academic year with fall quarter's start, we are successfully transitioning to in-person classes and continuing with in-person field learning. We are grateful for the progress we are making during this unprecedented time and grateful for the continued cooperation and support of our DCYF partners.

In June our Vancouver program held its last graduation, at least for the foreseeable future. While the Vancouver program has been paused, we are adding a second cohort to our Everett hybrid part-time MSW program and we have already launched a second cohort for our Spokane weekend part-time MSW program. Our hybrid programs are designed such that students from other geographic regions can access the programs that work best for them and their schedules.

If you know anyone interested in pursuing their MSW on the west side of the state, now is the time to apply for the next Everett MSW Cohort, more information can be found here <https://www.ewu.edu/everett>. Questions about the program can be directed to Kara Rozeboom, or Nancy Fagan (contact information can be found on last page of newsletter).

Thank you for your continued support of Eastern's CWTAP.

Sincerely,  
Diana LeBlanc

## CWTAP Welcomes Mason Hayes



“My name is Mason Hayes and I am the new Fiscal Specialist II for the CWTAP here at Eastern Washington University. I originally grew up in Melbourne, Australia and now permanently reside in Spokane, WA, USA. I graduated with a Bachelor of Business and a Bachelor of Communications from Swinburne University of Technology, located in Melbourne, Australia. My professional background is in banking and finance, most recently working at Umpqua Bank. I am really excited to be in this new role and a part of the CWTAP team. Go Eags!”

- Mason Hayes

## Alumni Spotlight

*Gracie Volyn , MSW – Legally-Free unit, Spokane  
By Angie Keith*



Gracie Volyn is a CWTAP graduate from EWU's full-time MSW program in 2017. Prior to that, Gracie obtained her BSW from EWU in 2013. Gracie was initially hired in Spokane by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) in June of 2017 in the Indian Child Welfare (ICW) unit as a Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) worker. She changed positions in March of 2019 to the Legally-Free unit, working with children whose parents' rights have been terminated. Gracie has found legally-free teenagers are a small population that typically gets overlooked. She explains the amount of support needed for these clients is phenomenal, and helping a teen transition successfully into adulthood is especially rewarding.

Prior to her employment with DCYF, Gracie worked for Sally's House, an emergency receiving facility for children 2 to 12 years of age that are removed from their home due to abuse, neglect, abandonment or criminal activity. Gracie explained that during this time she witnessed "the depth of need for children removed from their parents care" and found her true calling to get her MSW and pursue public child welfare. She applied for the CWTAP program and was placed in the ICW unit in Spokane. While in the MSW program, Gracie lived at Mukogawa U.S. Campus in Spokane and worked there with Japanese exchange students learning English. During the same time, she had part-time jobs as a visitation supervisor at Empowering Inc., and then at PNW Helping Hands, a Behavioral Rehabilitation Services group home. Working at Helping Hands helped her realize her passion and natural abilities to connect with the adolescent population.

Gracie recalls, "CWTAP did an excellent job preparing me for the structure of DCYF case work. I was introduced to each element individually and able to learn the job in pieces before I had to put them all together. As a CFWS caseworker, you have to juggle a monumental number of moving tasks. CWTAP experience helped me learn each task, and then learn the skills to prioritize them. I had opportunities to shadow strong workers who modeled client interactions and field work that would have been very challenging to learn on my own." The advice Gracie would offer to students in the MSW CWTAP program is volunteer for new experiences whenever possible; make connections with case workers with diverse roles and volunteer to assist with case work and field experiences; being brave and asking for more opportunities will benefit you by opening up doors that you might otherwise have missed.

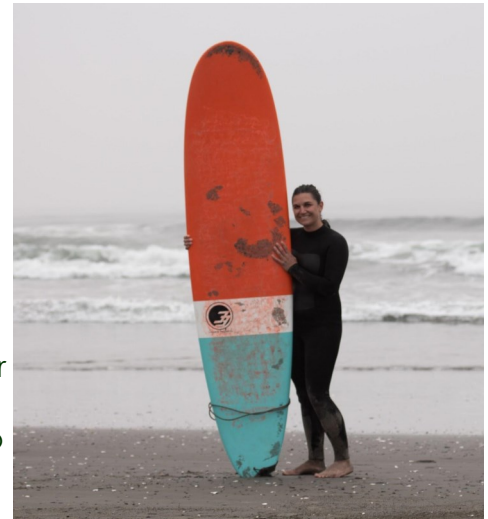
In Gracie's off-time, she studies Japanese and stays in touch with her friends from Mukogawa U.S. Campus. She traveled to Japan a few years ago and hopes to go back soon.

## Student Spotlight

*Alicia Barranco – Cheney full - time  
By Gerry Charvat*

Alicia Barranco is an EWU CWTAP student in her second year of the Cheney full-time MSW program. Alicia obtained her bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies with a focus on addiction studies, disability studies, and applied developmental psychology in 2020 from Eastern Washington University. She was contemplating pursuing a law degree or a graduate degree in psychology but after meeting with Diane Somerday in the EWU School of Social Work, she found her calling. Alicia recalls Diane being very intentional while explaining the education and career path of an MSW. She felt that Diane was interested in her as a whole person, helped her make her own connections and really modeled what a social worker does in practice. Alicia realized she could do so much more with an MSW and chose that path.

Alicia chose CWTAP for many reasons beyond the financial benefit. She knew that she was interested in working in the legal system but also wanted to work more closely with families. CWTAP would provide her the opportunity to engage families within the legal system and help them beyond what she could do as an attorney. This desire has served her well as she discovered how involved with the dependency court system DCYF child welfare is. Alicia is the first to admit that COVID has impacted her practicum but believes Washington state has been a leader in its response to COVID. She is proud to be a Washington citizen and is eager to work for and represent Washington state in the service of families and the community. Alicia's advice for those considering CWTAP is to really research the actual work to make sure it will be fulfilling to you. It is not worth accepting the tuition if you are not passionate about public child welfare. It is also very important to have stability in your own life and have supports in place for self-care before entering the program. When Alicia is not in practicum she enjoys surfing, kayaking and travel. She loves to write and even had a few short stories published in a literary magazine.



## Teaching During a Pandemic

*By Gerry Charvat & Diana LeBlanc*

Eastern's CWTAP continues to work closely with DCYF to provide a safe practicum experience not only for students but for DCYF staff and clients. In accordance with Governor Inslee's mandate, all CWTAP students are required by EWU and DCYF to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved exemption to continue in the program(s). EWU CWTAP students have begun returning to DCYF field offices and field work while following specific COVID-19 safety protocols. Our students are currently concentrated in Regions 1, 2, and 3; we have a few students each in Regions 4 and 5. DCYF has issued tablets for non-employee CWTAP students to access FAMLINK, DCYF email, and DCYF intranet remotely which has helped students stay more closely connected to their field learning. Eastern's students have also returned to in-person class and seminar (some classes are offered on-line, as they were prior to the pandemic). Eastern's CWTAP continues to put the safety of our students, and DCYF partners and clients at the forefront as we continue to navigate the changing landscape of COVID-19.

## Contact Information

	Everett	Cheney/Spokane
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	<p>Please submit suggestions to: <a href="mailto:dpatterson@ewu.edu">dpatterson@ewu.edu</a></p> <p>Contributors to this issue: Gerry Charvat, Angie Keith, Mason Hayes, Diana Patterson LeBlanc, and Nancy Fagan.</p>	

## Helpful Links

### [Children's Bureau COVID-19 Resource Page](#)

Includes information for frontline workers, children involved in child welfare, foster care providers, and other general workforce resources

### [National Indian Child Welfare Association COVID-19 Resource Page](#)

Includes information for frontline workers, children, caregivers, and other general workforce resources

Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence: [www.allianceforchildwelfare.org](http://www.allianceforchildwelfare.org)

Child Welfare League of America: [www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)

Children's Defense Fund: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)

Child Welfare Information Gateway: [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

Casey Family Programs: [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families: [www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov)