

CWTAP Quarterly

*Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program
Eastern Washington University*

Alumni Spotlight	Page 2
MSW Site Updates	Page 2
Student Spotlight	Page 3
Contact Information	Page 4
Helpful Links	Page 4

Director's Letter

Dear CWTAP community,

We are excited to greet autumn and a new academic year. At our fall College of Professional Programs (CPP) retreat we were delighted to present Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) Child Welfare Field Operations with our Alumni Excellence award. Ms. Green is a graduate of our Everett MSW program and CWTAP. Congratulations, Natalie!

This summer Eastern welcomed our 27th president, Shari McMahan, PhD. Dr. McMahan was most recently provost and vice president for academic affairs at California State University, San Bernardino where she was the first woman provost in the university's history. Welcome, Dr. McMahan!

Please see below for an exciting addition to our CWTAP instructor team, and inside for more about our students, alumni, and programs. Thank you for your support of CWTAP.

Sincerely,
Diana LeBlanc

Welcome Danelle Stone

Danelle Stone is the newest member of Eastern Washington University's Child Welfare Training & Advancement Program. In her new role as a Faculty Field Instructor, Danelle facilitates integration and application of advanced generalist social work skills into professional child welfare practice for MSW students. She joins us from DCYF where she has worked for the last seven years as a Social Service Specialist and regional Social and Health Program Consultant.

Danelle is a native of the Hawaiian Islands, born and raised for part of her life on the island of Oahu before moving to the Pacific Northwest at 10-years old with her mother and younger brother. After receiving her undergraduate degree from Eastern Washington University, she returned to Oahu and received her Master's Degree in Social Work with specializations in gerontology and working with children and families from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2015. Her graduate school studies and internship experiences quickly shaped

her passion and strong sense of advocacy for advancing social work practice and creating equity across systems. Danelle is deeply committed to strengthening communities and believes the core of that work starts with the dignified and equitable treatment of all children and families.

Danelle is happiest in her roles as mom and bonus mom to her four children. She enjoys quality time with her family, autumn in the Pacific Northwest, quiet walks and personal time to read. Although three of her four children are living their adult lives outside of the family home, Danelle remains busy raising her 4-year old son and keeping up with their three rescue dogs in Spokane, Washington. She insists her four-year old son's youthful enthusiasm, wild imagination, shameless dance moves and infectious giggle keep her young.



Alumni Spotlight

*Anna Nielsen, MSW – Regional Staff Performance and Training Support Manager
By Kara Rozeboom*



Anna Nielsen is a CWTAP alumni who graduated from Eastern Washington University's Everett part-time MSW program in 2020. Anna obtained an associate's degree from Skagit Valley College and then a bachelor's degree in human services from Western Washington University in 2009. Anna initially thought she would work as a marriage and family therapist. She always wanted a Masters degree. When she started working for the Department she learned about the Everett MSW program and CWTAP. She learned that CWTAP would help her gain an education and a better understanding about the families DCYF serves. This started shifting her thinking and her goals regarding her career in social work.

Anna started with Children's Administration (now DCYF) in 2013 as a child protective services (CPS) Investigator in the Smokey Point office. She has worked with legally free youth in the Adoptions Unit, as a CPS Investigator in Lynnwood, and as a CPS Supervisor in Smokey Point. Currently, Anna is the Regional Staff Performance and Training Support Manager. In this role she works to support staff retention, gives additional support to the field, leads the group hiring process for Region 3, creates onboarding strategies for the different social service specialist (SSS) positions and leads Supervisor Support meetings. Anna enjoys her work in child welfare because she engages with families and partners with them. She states that the majority of the cases aren't as extreme as everyone thinks. She enjoys showing parents strengths, helping parents network, and being a part of the change in family's lives.

Her advice for people interested in CWTAP is that it's a great opportunity for people who already have an interest and intention of working at DCYF. She learned a lot while obtaining her MSW in CWTAP and this in turn helped support families in a better way.

Anna has been married fifteen years and has three children. In her off time, Anna enjoys attending concerts, running, hiking with her family, being outdoors and exploring.

MSW Site Updates

As most are aware, we no longer have a part-time MSW program in Vancouver, WA. However, our Cheney full-time, and Everett and Spokane hybrid, part-time programs are running strong. We have moved to admitting new cohorts for both part-time programs every two years (instead of just one program every three years). Our current programs consist of:

Cheney full-time, first year and second year/advanced standing

Everett hybrid part-time (evening), 2020-2023

Spokane hybrid part-time (weekend), 2021-2024

Everett hybrid part-time (evening), 2022-2025

We are currently recruiting students for our Spokane part-time weekend 2023-2026 program, and advanced standing students for our Everett 2022-2025 program.

Student Spotlight

*Elsy Cruz – Spokane Part-time
By Gerry Charvat*

Elsy Cruz is a current CWTAP student in their second year of the Spokane 3-year part-time MSW program. She is a supervisor in the Omak office overseeing all child welfare programs for that area.

While in middle school, Elsy began volunteering at her local nursing home reading to veterans. This experience had a tremendous impact on her and she decided she wanted to be a social worker. While in high school, Elsy shifted her focus towards social work with children and began volunteering at her local Head Start program. Elsy's high school was selected as a grant recipient of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Washington State Achievers Program. Elsy completed the competitive process of applying to the program and received a full scholarship to attend Central Washington University. As one of 6 children in her family she knew her parents could not afford to send them to college. So, Elsy took full advantage of the scholarship program and obtained a bachelor's degree in sociology and criminal justice with a minor in ethnic studies.




While attending school, Elsy continued to serve children and families, working at Head Start in Ellensburg and promoting to a Family Service Coordinator following her graduation. Elsy continued to work at Head Start from 2008 to 2012. In 2012, her husband's work moved the family to Spokane and for the next 2 years Elsy spent time at home strengthening her young family. She still knew she wanted to be a social worker and, when the time was right, Elsy applied for a position at DCYF, where the hiring manager was so impressed with her application, she was encouraged to apply for another position closer to her preferred area. Elsy was successful in applying to a child and family welfare services (CFWS) position, where she stayed for 1 year before moving to adoptions for 3 years in Spokane. In 2019, Elsy had to return home to Omak to support her family and took a job as an Adult Protective Services worker. She realized very quickly that she missed working with children and families at DCYF and applied for a supervisor position in the Omak office and has been supervising there since.

Elsy was the first person in her family to get a college education and she always knew she would go back and get her MSW when the time was right. She was encouraged by her Area Administrator to apply and her husband supported her in making a temporary sacrifice for the family in order to model the importance of education to their children.

CWTAP was a natural fit for Elsy as she plans on remaining at DCYF as a long-term career in one capacity or another. She reports the MSW program has given her a fresh look at her practice and has reignited her passion for social work and public child welfare. CWTAP has also helped her connect and network with colleagues in ways she would not have otherwise experienced.

When Elsy is not working or going to school she loves spending time with her family on the water and in nature. The advice she would give to DCYF workers considering getting their MSW in CWTAP is to reach out to those who have successfully done it before them. Elsy reports upper administration has been very supportive of her pursuing an MSW and participating in CWTAP.

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	<p>Please submit suggestions to: dpatterson@ewu.edu</p>	<p>Contributors to this issue: Gerry Charvat, Kara Rozeboom, Danelle Stone, 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

Child Welfare League of America: www.cwla.org

Children's Defense Fund: www.childrensdefense.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway: www.childwelfare.gov

Casey Family Programs: www.casey.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families: www.acf.hhs.gov