A Special Thank You from the STEPP Team!

As the world continues its efforts to stay healthy during unprecedented times, we would like to take a moment to thank parents, mentors, tutors, program supporters and students for their continued resilience and flexibility. We still maintain that we have the best students in the world, and as the university transitioned to alternative instructional methods, we were able to provide uninterrupted support. This only happens when everyone works together. Thank you!

STEPP Program Highlights

STAFF UPDATE

Our Senior Associate Director for Program Services, Dr. Morgan James, has accepted a new position as Director of Learning Services at a K-12 school in New Bern, N.C. Dr. James has worked with the STEPP Program since 2012 and has been an invaluable member of our team. Before transitioning to her new role, she remarked, “It has been an honor to serve the STEPP Program for the past eight years. Please accept my deepest gratitude for allowing me to be part of your lives and this program for so long. Each student holds a special place in my heart and will never be forgotten.”

While with STEPP, Dr. James worked as an Instructional Specialist, the program’s Academic Advisor, and the Senior Associate Director for Program Services. She will always be an important part of the STEPP family, and we are incredibly grateful for her contributions to our program. While we will miss having her in the Cove, we are excited for her and wish her well. Congratulations to you, Dr. James!

During this time of transition, Alysha Gray will be assuming advising support for students in the program.

FUNDING NEWS

Beginning in September 2020, a generous four-year grant from the Oak Foundation will not only benefit our students, but will also help us to refine recruitment and research activities. As stated on the foundation’s website, “The Oak Foundation commits its resources to address issues of global, social and environmental concern, particularly those that have a major impact on the lives of the disadvantaged.” Additionally, The American Endowment Foundation has provided a generous opportunity for us to support students through employment opportunities, and individual members of the STEPP family contributed over $35,000 to support the work of the program. We are so grateful to our supporters who recognize the students we serve and the importance of the providing educational opportunities for students with different learning profiles. STEPP would not exist without this type of generous support.

CONGRATULATIONS SPRING 2020 GRADUATES!

Graduation season for the class of 2020 has arrived! We are so very proud of our hardworking students who are graduating this spring! These are but a few of our promising spring graduates:

DANIELLE HAYES: (2015 cohort)
Hometown: Kill Devil Hills/New Bern/Greenville, N.C.
Major: Hospitality Management
Next STEPPs: Attend graduate school at ECU and work toward a Project Management Certificate.

“I’ve loved my time at ECU and will always be a Pirate! Starting freshman year, I formed a wonderful group of friends that helped me experience new activities and create amazing memories. After my freshman and sophomore years, I was able to find the perfect major for myself and I developed strong relationships with my professors who have had a huge impact on what I want to do in the future.”

HARRY FRITTS: (2015 cohort)
Hometown: Winston-Salem, N.C.
Major: Business Administration with a concentration in Finance
Next STEPPs: Land a job in corporate finance.

“ECU taught me a lot about life in many different ways. Whether it was through the friends I made or the professors I had throughout the years.”

Due to the unexpected transition to remote instruction associated with Covid-19, face-to-face events this semester have been cancelled. We are finding creative ways to stay in touch this spring and summer through community-building conversations and challenges. We also cannot wait to get back to campus and come together with our students and their families this coming fall. Be sure to follow STEPP on our social media platforms to stay up to date on all our events and announcements.
CONGRATULATIONS SPRING 2020 GRADUATES!

MADISON SCHOLAR: (2015 cohort)
Hometown: Beulaville, N.C.
Major: Birth - Kindergarten Teacher Education
Next STEPPs: Obtain a position as a Pre-K or Kindergarten teacher and start my teaching career in the fall.

“Going to college, especially East Carolina University, was the best decision I have ever made. During these past five years I have taken chances and have had opportunities which have had a huge and positive impact on my life. Along the way, I have met some incredible people who will be my friends for life. Lastly, The STEPP Program helped me see that I am not alone in my academic struggles and made me feel encouraged and supported no matter what. It has not been easy for me, but I couldn’t have succeeded without this program. Go Pirates!”

JACOB WICKER: (2016 cohort)
Hometown: Charlotte, N.C.
Major: Business Administration with a concentration in Finance
Next STEPPs: Attend Wake Forest University where I will be getting an MSBA in Business Analytics.

“East Carolina might not be for everyone, but it was for me, and I certainly could not have done it without the STEPP Program. I was probably like any other kid going to college, nervous, but with STEPP, I knew they had my back the whole way. Whenever I needed help, someone to talk too, or a great place to do work, I knew I could count on them. Class taught by Dr. James is still one of my favorite classes I have ever taken. The one thing I will miss about STEPP the most (other than the people) is Soup Day, it was like a holiday for me. STEPP has helped me get to where I am today, and I could not have done it without them. To Dr. Williams, Mrs. Johnson, Dr. James, Mrs. Tritt, Ms. Gray, and everyone involved in STEPP, I will forever be grateful for you accepting me to this life changing program, because it changed my life and I will forever be grateful for it. From sitting in the cove on interview day, to my last day in STEPP, I have loved every minute of it.”

We wish all of our graduates the very best as they celebrate this exciting time and embark on new journeys.

Student Major Spotlight: Communication

MEGAN HOGAN (2019 cohort) intends to major in Communication during her time at ECU. She first became interested in the university during visits with her sister, who also attends ECU. During the spring semester, Megan will be completing her first year as an ECU student and is looking forward to taking more communication courses in the future. Megan loves “interacting with other people and wants to develop a “deeper understanding of the world.” After graduation, she hopes to become a Public Relations Specialist and plans to research and learn more about this position and others through STEPP’s Freshman seminar course.

CAROLINE ROCHELLE (2017 cohort) is working toward her BS in Communication with a concentration in Interpersonal/Organizational Communication. Caroline decided to major in communications because it “opened up a world of possibilities and was a great mix of business and psychology.” After enjoying classes within the major, she has been accepted into ECU’s Accelerated Master’s program. She is looking forward earning a Master’s in Communication, which will put her closer to her ultimate goal of becoming a college professor. Until then, she is excited to continue to learn more about communication processes and their impact on our world.

MAXIMILLIAN “MAX” REICHWALD (2017 cohort) is the STEPP program’s first international student and is working toward a degree in Communication with a concentration in Public Relations. While completing courses toward his degree, he is also minoring in Anthropology. Max enjoys learning about history as well as the importance of communication in everyday life. He considers himself a people person and is interested in “the levels of communication; how you read someone just by their body language, their posture, and how they hold themselves.” After graduation next summer, he is hoping to live in the UK and travel the world for a year; then he is excited about the “wide range of possibilities” that this degree will offer.

If you would like more information regarding endowments for scholarships, contributions to original endowment, and other contributions you can make to the STEPP Program, please contact ECU’s Associate Vice Chancellor for Development, Kendra Alexander at alexanderk@ecu.edu.

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