



# **PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC EXTERNSHIP/PRACTICUM PROGRAM**

**Revised: August, 2019**

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Connection's Academy East (CAE) is a private therapeutic day school, founded in 2015. We serve children and adolescents, ages 6-21, primarily from Lake and Cook Counties who, because of significant special education needs (ED, BD, LD, OHI, TBI, AUT & ID), require an alternative school program that is both educational and therapeutic. By utilizing therapeutic, educational, family and community connections, CAE is able to promote academic achievement, social/emotional well-being and personal growth. The Staff Members at CAE employ a variety of methods to help students make academic progress, and develop and/or improve their coping problem-solving and social skills. By utilizing a combination of respect, humor, empathy, and kindness balanced with firmness (i.e., maintaining high expectations and ensuring that students adhere to rules, boundaries and limitations), Staff Members are able to establish and maintain supportive, nurturing relationships with our students. In turn, these relationships can help the students be more open to learning the life skills required for long-term success.

The students engage in an academically challenging curriculum emphasizing group instruction and hands-on activities. The Clinical/Therapeutic Staff at CAE utilize a cognitive-behavioral/problem-solving approach as well as psychodynamic, family-systems and narrative principles. In addition, the Lakota-Sioux Circle of Courage – which teaches the value of belonging, independence, generosity and mastery – is explored to help students develop these essential life skills. This multi-faceted approach works to assist the students in: overcoming issues at hand; practicing more successful behavioral alternatives; and exploring ways to re-write their negative life stories. The goal is to work with students to build on their strengths and gifts, and be allies with them in their “fight” against the challenges and obstacles that get in the way of their success. The therapeutic milieu is based on a positive, nurturing model, where natural, logical consequences for behaviors are frequently utilized. CAE avoids using restrictive and/or punitive methods of behavioral management and does not have a time-out room. Therapeutic holding (restraint) is only employed as a last resort, when a student is presenting as a danger to him/herself or others.

Ms. Betty Lindquist, Dr. Sol Rappaport, and Ms. Elaina Shannon, the founders of our program, chose to base the mission of CAE on philosophical principles similar to those held at Counseling

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Connections – their multi-disciplinary group practice which specializes in the therapeutic needs of children, adolescents and families. The professionals at Counseling Connections have worked closely with the schools, courts and social service agencies of Lake and Northern Cook Counties since 1983.

Connection’s Academy East offers a comprehensive array of support services, including:

- Small Group and Individualized Academic Instruction
- Individual, Group & Family Therapy and Crisis Intervention
- Psychiatric Consultation and Evaluation
- Individual and Group Art Therapy
- Substance Abuse Evaluation and Individual & Group Therapy
- Occupational Therapy and Speech & Language Evaluations and Services
- Social/Emotional, Problem-Solving & Coping Skill Building
- A Comprehensive Behavioral Management Program
- Daily School Nurse Services
- Transition & Post-Graduation Preparation

## **II. TRAINING PROGRAM, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Clinical Training Program at Connection’s Academy East is quite extensive - offering Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Doctoral Internship and Psychotherapeutic Externship/Practicum positions.

The Psychotherapeutic Externship program has been designed to help Externs acquire and refine their clinical skills in key areas of practice, all while functioning as a valued member of a Multidisciplinary Team. There is an emphasis on training in fundamental clinical skills with a primary focus on Individual, Group and Family Therapy, and Crisis Intervention. The training program is organized in such a way that it provides Externs with a planned, programmed sequence of training experiences, one that assures breadth and quality of training.

Externs are provided with opportunities to work with high-risk children, adolescents and their families – individuals struggling with mild to severe: mood, anxiety, behavior, substance-related, psychotic, developmental, and personality disorders. Externs also get an opportunity to work with people of all ages, and diverse cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. All of this is done under the supervision of the Senior Psychologists, and other members of the Clinical Training Staff.

Ultimately, the main training goal/objective is to promote the Extern’s professional growth in such a way that, by the end of the training year, s/he feels confident in his/her ability to competently function as a Clinician, with the ability to practice in accordance with the highest standards of care.

## **III. CLINICAL WORK, SUPERVISION AND TRAINING**

- Individual, Group, & Family Therapy, and Crisis Intervention with children, adolescents and their parents/guardians. Co-leading “Specialty Groups” with experienced staff group leaders (art therapy, music therapy, drug & alcohol education and personal management).
- Assisting with the facilitation of Monthly Parents’ Support Group meetings.

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- Attending Multidisciplinary Staffings for students; and writing and presenting Treatment Summaries, and occasionally Social Developmental Histories, for these Staffings.
- 1 hour of Individual, and at least 2 hours of Group Supervision/Didactic/In-service Training per week with a Licensed Clinical Psychologists, and opportunities to consult, as needed, with other members of the Clinical Training Staff. The primary focus of this supervision is to explore and develop the psychological services rendered directly by the Extern, as well supporting their professional development.
- Monthly consultation meetings with the Medical Director/Consulting Psychiatrist for CAE.
- Daily Staff Meetings to discuss the day's events, problem-solve and develop plans for the future.
- Institute Days – in-school staff training which cover school-related, community, therapeutic and behavioral topics and interventions; and include mandatory Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training (for which you will receive formal certification).
- An opportunity to engage in Animal Assisted Therapy by working with our Staff Therapy Dogs (all certified through *Therapy Dogs International*), within the milieu and in individual & group therapy.

**TRAINING NOTE:** Although the Psychotherapeutic Externs at CAE do not conduct any psychological testing, when one of the students on their caseload requires testing, they provide consultation for the Psychodiagnostic Externs from Counseling Connection who provide this service for CAE. These Diagnostic Externs (and their Supervisors) are the only individuals who provide formal psychological testing for Connection's Academy East students.

#### **IV. EXTERNSHIP FORMAT**

- 11 consecutive months ~ mid-August – late-July.
- 3 days per week (24 hours) for the School Year; and 2 days per week (16 hours) for Summer Term – the final 7 weeks of training.
  - **Please note:**
    - Some modifications can be made to this format depending upon the Extern's course schedule (e.g., an Extern can be on site for 2 full-days and 2 half-days).
    - Some evening work may be required in an effort to be as available and accommodating as possible for Family Therapy sessions.
- Thursday is the one day that ALL Externs are required to be on-site.
- Externs are required to participate in a minimum of 600 hours of Supervised Clinical Experience throughout the year; this time is spent in: Direct Service; Indirect Service; Training; and Supervision.

#### **V. EVALUATION**

Evaluation is an active, ongoing process throughout the Externship period. All evaluations that an Extern's academic program requires will be completed by her/his Primary Supervisor. In addition, the Supervisor and Extern will have an active discussion of the evaluation itself, and the Extern's areas of strength and weakness (this type of discussion will occur at least 2 times throughout the course of the training year). Any serious concerns will be discussed with the Extern, the other members of the Clinical Training Staff, and the Director of Training at the Extern's academic

program. All Externs will receive a copy of the document: *Due Process Procedures*, for a full explanation of these policies, at the beginning of their training/orientation.

## **VI. EXTERNSHIP BENEFITS**

- Vacation Time ~ Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring and Summer Breaks, all National Holidays and a modified Summer Schedule (2 days per week, for the last 7 weeks of the Externship).
- 10 Sick Days and 1 Personal Day for the year.
- No pager or on-call duties
- Free lunch available daily for Organic Life
- Free Parking
- Laptop Computer
- Monthly Allowance for Program/Clinical Supplies

## **VII. CLINICAL STAFF**

*As a Connection's Academy East Extern, you will be a member of a dynamic Clinical Team:*

Ruth Tompkins, Psy.D.  
Illinois School of Professional Psychology  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Senior Psychologist

CJ Garcia, Psy.D.  
Adler School of Professional Psychology  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Assistant Senior Psychologist

Charlotte Edwards, Psy.D.  
Illinois School of Professional Psychology  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Auxiliary Supervisor

Sol Rappaport, Ph.D.  
DePaul University  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Founder / Administrator / Auxiliary Supervisor

Shazia Tayyab, M.D.  
King Edward Medical College  
Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist / Medical Consultant

Danielle Boggeman, Psy.D.  
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Danika Prister, ATR  
Adler University  
Art Therapist

Leah Hanhart, MT-BC  
University of Minnesota  
Music Therapist

Jacki Brunk, LCSW  
California State University – Long Beach  
Program Therapist

Christine Pope, LCPD; CADC  
Chicago School of Professional Psychology  
Substance Abuse Therapist

Adrienne Weiss, LCPC; ATR; MA  
Lesley University  
Program Therapist

Crystal Hall, B.S., OTR/L  
Concordia University  
Occupational Therapist

Kacy Nelson, OTD, MS, OTR/L  
Rocky Mountain University  
Occupational Therapist

June Klein-Koonin, M.A., CCC/SLP  
Northwestern University  
Speech & Language Pathologist

Sima Kamenetzky, MS-CCC/SLP  
Nova Southeastern University  
Speech & Language Pathologist

Lindsey Cooley, (Psy.D. Candidate)  
Adler University  
Post-Doctoral Fellow

Suzanne Snyder (Psy.D. Candidate)  
Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Washing  
Post-Doctoral Fellow

Jennifer Tatum (Psy.D. Candidate)  
Adler University  
Post-Doctoral Fellow

Jessica Brodzeller (Psy.D. Candidate)  
Wisconsin School of Professional Psychology  
Doctoral Intern

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Grace Domzalski (Psy.D. Candidate)  
Illinois School of Professional Psychology  
Doctoral Intern

Sarah Goldberg (Psy.D. Candidate)  
Roosevelt University  
Advanced Therapy Extern

Keely Dee (Psy.D. Candidate)  
ISPP – Argosy University  
Therapy Extern

Madeleine Foley  
Chicago School of Professional Psychology  
Therapy Extern

Estelle Oyer  
Chicago School of Professional Psychology  
Therapy Extern

## **VIII. APPLICATION PROCESS**

Doctoral and Master's level students, from Clinical and Counseling Psychology training programs, who have met all the requirements of their program for application for Externship/Practicum, must submit the materials listed below **within one week of the ACCEPT-identified date that students may begin submitting applications** (e.g., if students can begin submitting applications on the second Tuesday in February, they are due to CAE by the third Tuesday in February) prior to their Externship year. **No applications will be accepted after this date.**

- Cover Letter outlining professional goals and interests, and how this Externship site meets those criteria
- Curriculum Vitae
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- Writing Sample (*Note: a Case Formulation, Treatment Summary, etc. is preferred. However, if you do not have a sample that would fit in this category, please send a Psychodiagnostic Report.*)
- All Graduate School Transcripts

This information must be forwarded via E-Mail to:

**Ruth Tomkins, Psy.D.**  
**Clinical Director & Director of Clinical Training**

E-Mail: [rtompkins@connectionsacademyeast.net](mailto:rtompkins@connectionsacademyeast.net)

**APPLICATION NOTES:**

- **Ideally, we would like to receive all application documents in one attachment.** Given this, please SCAN all documents together, in the order identified below, to create ONE attachment and e-mail this to Dr. Tompkins.
- If you are unable to do this, please attach your individual documents, in the order identified below, and e-mail this to Dr. Tompkins.
- **Applications must be organized in the following manner:**
  1. Cover Letter
  2. Vitae
  3. 3 Letters of Recommendation
  4. Writing Sample
  5. *If required by your program:* Letter of Eligibility/Readiness from your DOT
  6. *If required by your program:* ACEPT Pledge
  7. Transcript(s)

If you have any further questions, please contact Dr. Tompkins at:

E-Mail: [rtompkins@connectionsacademyeast.net](mailto:rtompkins@connectionsacademyeast.net)

Phone: (224) 544-5920 ~ Ext. 101

***Connection's Academy East abides by the ACEPT policies that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept or use any ranking-related information from any Externship applicant; and that no offers will be made to applicants prior to 9:00am on the ACEPT-identified Notification Day.***

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