

**Highlights of the IHS FASD Training Sept. 5-7, 2012  
conducted by the Fetal Alcohol and Drug Unit, University of Washington**

Training Faculty:

Albert Allick, M.D., Psychiatrist and clinician at Turtle Mountain Healthcare, Belcourt, North Dakota.

Natalie Novick Brown, Ph.D., Psychologist specializing in clinical evaluation and treatment of those with FASD. She is also a member of FASDExperts, the forensic FASD diagnostic team.

Paul Connor, Ph.D., Neuropsychologist specializing in FASD and a member of FASDExperts.

Julian Davies, M.D., Pediatrician, FASD diagnostician at the UW FASD diagnostic clinic and Co-Director of the Center for Adoption medicine.

Therese Grant, Ph.D., Epidemiologist, Director of FADU and of the Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP), an FASD prevention program.

Kay Kelly, Project Director of the FASD Legal Issues Resource Center, a project of FADU.

Suzie Kuerschner, M.Ed., FASD Consultant and Child Development Specialist working with Tribal Communities nationally and internationally, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board.

Carolyn Hartness, B.A., FASD Educator and Consultant, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board Affiliate.

Richard Ries, M.D., Psychiatrist, certified in Addiction Medicine, Co-Chair of the UW Addiction Psychiatry Residency Program, Director of Outpatient Psychiatry, Dual Disorder and Chemical Dependency Project at Harborview Medical Center.

Charlene Takeuchi, M.A., Clinical Director of Kitsap PCAP.

Anthony Wartnik, Judge (ret.), served 34 years as a trial judge, 24 years of which were with King County Superior Court.

Randy Steckel, Judge, Suquamish Tribal Court, Suquamish, WA

Dennis Donovan, Ph.D., Director, UW Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, Principal Investigator on the National Institute on Minority Health Disparities-funded project: Healing of the Canoe. This project is in collaboration with the Suquamish and Port Gamble S' Klallam Tribes.

Nancy Whitney, M.S., Clinical Director of Seattle PCAP.

Amy Gilbrough, J.D., Partner at Douglas Drachner McKee and Gilbrough. She practices Social Security Law.

Mary Rodriguez, J.D., Attorney with the UW Tribal Court Defense Clinic substituting for Molly Cohan, J.D. the Supervising Attorney with the Clinic.

The Visiting Scholars from Washington State were from the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Lummi Nation and Quinault Indian Nation. Of the eighteen participants, two were Tribal court judges, one was a Tribal police detective, one was a registered nurse, one was a Tribal court lay advocate, two were Tribal court public defenders, one was a Tribal court prosecutor, three were chemical dependency specialists, and seven were mental health counselors.

Observers included FADU staff members, Janet Huggins and Nina Triffleman, Doctoral candidate, Joanne Sparrow, Lois Billig, and documentary filmmaker, Sue Stewart.

Days 1 and 2 were in a conference room in the Maxwell Hotel, Seattle.

- Day 1 began with Morgan Fawcett's flute (via his CD), to celebrate his many gifts and his philosophy that his diagnosis of FASD is only a part of the person he is. This was followed by a prayer and welcome from Suzie Kuerschner and Carolyn Hartness.
- Therese Grant gave an overview of FASD, and she and Paul Connor spoke on the effects of FASD, physically and behaviorally, as well as how to prevent adverse life outcomes. The Visiting Scholars were asked to advise us (via an anonymous form) on the relevance of each presentation to their work. One noted "Policy makers need to know this. Administration, also. Judges need to know this." Another said "Going over the basic elements helped me understand."
- Paul Connor talked about the value of an FASD diagnosis and how the neuropsychological assessment can illuminate the individual's areas of strength and areas of deficits. One scholar noted "Learning about some of the science behind FASD gives one a different view of how and why this affects people."

Although a film was planned, lively questions and conversation within the group seemed a better use of the Visiting Scholar's time.

- Nancy Whitney spoke on screening for FASD among the adults in the community. She discussed a pilot FASD screening assessment tool that is being developed. One scholar commented "Plan to incorporate these questions into our intake process, either our forms or as a separate check sheet. It's a great organizer for our awareness of what's significant".

- Ms. Whitney then spoke on strategies for working with adults with FASD. One scholar said “Very hands-on application for myself as a mental health professional. Very real world.”
- Kay Kelly moderated a conversation on FASD and the Law with Judges Steckel and Wartnik and Mary Rodriguez, an attorney with the UW Tribal Court Public Defense Clinic (working in the Tulalip Tribal Court). The judges were asked to talk about how they handled FASD in their courtrooms and how sentencing could be modified for those with FASD. Ms. Rodriguez was asked about representing those with FASD. It was a very spirited and wide-ranging conversation. One of the scholars commented “Good ideas about how to approach Tribal Council about services they need to support with casino dollars.”

In the evening the Visiting Scholars, some of the training faculty, Judge Cindy Smith from the Suquamish Tribal Court and FADU staff came together at Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center for a hosted dinner of salmon prepared in a traditional style by Daybreak Star staff and associates. Daybreak Star Executive Director, Kelvin Frank, welcomed the group with a talk on the Daybreak Star mission. Dr. Allick praised the cultural relevance of the venue and the traditionally prepared meal.

- Day 2 began with Julian Davies presenting on the topic of diagnosing FASD and follow-up referrals. One Visiting Scholar commented “Love his energy and passion. Helps me retain (the information).” Another said “Fantastic presentation of Dx (diagnosis).”
- Richard Ries spoke on FASD, addictions and treatment. Dr. Ries works with many Tribal communities and is very engaged in advising these communities on chemical dependency treatment options. One scholar noted “Very eye-opening, direct and straight to the point.” Another said “The up to date information was great.”
- Dennis Donovan discussed addiction prevention in adolescents through the “Canoe Journey-Life Journey” project which is being implemented in collaboration with the Suquamish and Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribes. Dr. Donovan is the Principal Investigator and Dr. Lisa Rey Thomas is the Co-Investigator. One scholar commented “Powerful. I hope to use this in my work with middle school Lummi youth. I couldn’t agree more on the approach.” Another said “(I’m) excited about the idea of utilizing a culturally-based model of increasing self-identity, self confidence and cultural identity.” Every scholar who responded in detail spoke of the value of learning about this program.
- Suzie Kuerschner spoke about building community readiness for the recognition of FASD and the development of plans to address the problems. Her thoughtful approach to bringing a community to the decision to develop their own FASD diagnostic team or clinic is likely to be helpful to those from Indian Country and the scholars’ comments reflected this. One said “I appreciate all the knowledge shared; I appreciate to see the pictures of my grandmothers from Warm Springs. It makes me feel proud of the line of strong woman blood line that I follow. The ladies are my grandmother’s cousins.”

Another said of Ms. Kuerschner, “Lummi could use your help and guidance in Building Community Readiness. Bannock’s example sounds effective.”

- Carolyn Hartness’ topic was FASD and family abuse. One scholar commented “Great lived experience/knowledge of how to deal with situations that we see in our current practice.” Another said “Good reminders about what affects FAS response and what they need for help.”
- Natalie Novick Brown, likely the world’s expert on FASD and sexual behavior and misbehavior, spoke on understanding the link between FASD and sexual offending. The Visiting Scholars were surprised to learn much of the information, especially the low rate of re-offending. One said ““Good info. Some of the info hard to believe, re-offending stated to be low. I don’t believe that.” Another said “This is a frustrating but much needed topic.”
- Albert Allick and Therese Grant discussed the link between FASD and suicide based on the research FADU did for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and a follow-up pilot study. Both showed those with FASD were five times more likely to attempt/commit suicide than the general U.S. population. One scholar called this information “...crushing.”
- Ms. Kelly described the highly successful suicide prevention program developed by the San Carlos Apache Tribe in Arizona. Although not specifically developed for those with FASD, the program offered the most extensive interventions to those who had the highest needs, many of whom were known to have been prenatally exposed to alcohol. The scholars praised the San Carlos Apache program and one asked “I’m curious now are the children of our tribe safe, especially the FAS, especially the ones that have speech and learning delays.”
- Amy Gilbrough, an attorney specializing in Social Security eligibility appeals, spoke on strategies for obtaining Social Security benefits for those individuals with FASD. The majority of the scholars felt this was very useful information and wanted more detail on the SSI eligibility process for those with FASD.

Day 3 was held at the UW Center on Human Development and Disability.

- Observation of the process of FASD diagnosis at the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Diagnostic and Prevention Network (FASDPN) began with an overview by Clinic Director Susan Astley for all the Visiting Scholars. They were then divided into two groups with the morning group observing, through one way mirrors, interviews with the patient and with the parents/caregivers and then observing the meeting of the diagnostic team to review the material and discuss the diagnosis.
- The other half of the morning group attended a presentation by Therese Grant and Charlene Takeuchi on FASD prevention through the Parent Child Assistance Program (PCAP) intervention model. Discussions on next steps for the Scholars followed.

- At mid-day the groups reversed and the afternoon group observed the clinic and the morning group heard the presentation on PCAP and discussed the development of an FASD diagnostic team/clinic.
- At the closing the entire group met together and talked about next steps.

Concluding comments from Visiting Scholars as to observing the operation of the UW FASD Diagnostic Clinic (FASDPN): “Beyond expectations; knowing the process can be a huge tool for implementing importance and awareness at our clinic.” “Got a lot from observing the psyche testing—what she was looking for, tests used, how she managed disruptions; good to see team process, coming up with report and recommendations.” “Great experience. Now I know how they do it.”

Concluding comments on the PCAP presentation: “Very informational training. Would like to continue to be involved with PCAP.” “Amazing approach to assisting woman’s children to develop, help them establish wellness, healing and stability.”

As to the entire program, several scholars suggested extending the number of training days to afford more time to absorb the information and for discussion. All who commented felt the experience had been valuable. As one scholar said “I cannot begin to explain how much I appreciate this privilege to learn and interact in this training. I’m beyond impressed by the balanced collaboration of professionals (both presenters and visitors).”