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President's Corner

*Ellen Bush, LPC, LMFT, NCC, MCC
LCDA President*

Greetings!

What an honor to lead such a dynamic association, and how humbling to follow the long line of outstanding LCDA officers! My hat's off to each of you for your superb leadership and ongoing support of LCDA, as well as to our membership who faithfully work to promote the association and the profession. With the help of all of you I know we will have a rewarding, productive 2008!

As I thought about goals for the year I recalled Dr. June William's inspiring keynote address at the spring 2007 LCDA conference. In her address she challenged the audience to find ways to better educate others about the scope and practice of career counseling. As I continued to reflect on June's address a theme began to emerge for this year, "Take a Fresh Look at Career Counseling", along with the following goals:

- Promote greater communication and exchange about the scope and practice of career counseling and the relevance to all counselors regardless of work setting.
- Establish a means to recognize LCDA members who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in the field of career development.
- Expand professional development and networking opportunities at the Louisiana Career Development Association's 2008 spring conference.
- Actively solicit presentation proposals dealing with career counseling issues for the annual LCA conference, particularly those that support all counselors in better understanding how to integrate career theory and practice into their treatment protocols.
- Increase membership through the Each One Reach One campaign.
- Assume coordination of Louisiana Career Development Month.
- Maintain the strong relationships established with the Louisiana School Counselors Association and the Louisiana College Counselors Association.

As you can see we're in for a busy year as we "Take a Fresh Look at Career Counseling".

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LCDA Membership



Our current membership includes counselors in K-12, university/college, private and corporate settings. We welcome all counselors! Regardless of the setting or the clients served, career-related issues are often infused into the counseling experience. Networking with other counselors to learn ways to more effectively integrate career development theory and practice into treatment protocols can offer professional counselors an extra lens with which to view clients' struggles.

New Website

A huge "thanks" to Michele Faith who worked diligently with Sarah Kovich of Provisions Consulting to update our new website. Check it out at: <http://lacareerdevelopment.org>

New Listserv



At the October breakfast meeting the LCDA membership voted to move forward with a one year trial listserv. The listserv is now up and running! Current LCDA members as of December 31st 2007 have are subscribed as users. We hope that members will find this a beneficial service for sharing information related to the career counseling profession.

Websites

NCDA

National Career Development Association

www.ncda.org

LCA

Louisiana Counseling Association

www.lacounseling.org

NECA

National Employment Counseling Association

www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/6491/neca.html

SIS: Seminar Information Service

www.seminarinformation.com/

SIS lists over 300,000 seminars, classes, workshops, corporate training events, and conferences offered annually. The Quick Search option can be used to find upcoming programs by title or topic, to browse the category lists to see what is offered in any given locations, or to target upcoming programs by location. Users can also enroll online.

Member Activities & Achievements

Congratulations to Sharon Walker who recently received the designation of Master Career Counselor (MCC) from the National Career Development Association. Way to go Sharon!

Congratulations to Sharon Walker, Mary Feduccia, and Karen Goodridge whose presentation, "Capitalizing on the Digital Environment for Career Planning" won "Best of Show" at the 2006 LCA Conference! Keep up the good work!

We would like to hear about other members' activities and achievements so please email Ellen Bush at eb08@cox.net so that we can recognize your accomplishments and congratulate you in the next newsletter!

Speaking of member achievements... At the October breakfast meeting the LCDA Board announced that a Career Counselor of the Year Award is being established to recognize a Louisiana career professional who has made significant contributions to the field. The Board is in the process of developing the criteria and timelines.

"Each One Reach One" New Member Campaign



The "Each One Reach One" campaign is marching on! How about a challenge? Let's see how many of us can bring in at least one new member this year. Just think, we would double our membership! You might even consider gifting an honorary membership to a colleague or graduate counseling student as a way to promote the association and career counseling. Joining LCDA is easy and inexpensive, and members are provided with quality career development resources and publications to enhance their professional knowledge and skills.

Membership in LCA is required for joining. Please visit LCDA's website at: <http://lacareerdevelopment.org/membership.html>.

Professional/regular dues are \$5.00 and student dues are \$2.00.



Events

2008 Spring Conference

We are pleased to announce the 2008 spring conference with the theme, "***Differing Gifts—United in Purpose***". The conference will be held at Our Lady of the Lake College's Health Career Institute on Essen Lane in Baton Rouge from **9:00-4:00 on Saturday, April 12th**. (Registration opens at 8:30 a.m.) You won't want to miss this wonderful professional development opportunity! **Cost: \$40** (includes lunch)

The 2008 conference format is an expansion of last spring's conference. We hope to offer two concurrent sessions during four 75 minute time periods. Additionally there will be a keynote luncheon speaker, making it possible to earn a total of **6 CEUs**.

All counselors, regardless of setting or the clients served, are encouraged to join us in sharing knowledge about effective ways to integrate career development theory and techniques into a variety of settings.

Proposal Submission Information

- Proposals should be no more than 300 words and support the conference theme and topics. The session length is 75 minutes.
- The deadline for submitting proposals has been extended to March 1st.
- Additional information on where to submit proposals will follow soon. In the meantime for more information contact Ellen Bush at eb08@cox.net.

Topic areas may include:

- Effective techniques used to address career-related concerns in a variety of counseling settings.
- Innovative career development programs, research projects, or activities that have been successfully implemented.
- Successful partnerships and collaborative efforts designed to deliver career services.
- Creative and effective uses of technology in career counseling.

LCA Town Hall Meetings

Coming soon to a location near you in the months of January through March. Please don't miss this wonderful opportunity to network with other counselors.

November Career Development Month

Career development month in Louisiana has moved to November! At the October 2006 breakfast meeting LCDA voted to assume full sponsorship of Career Development Month from LSU-Baton Rouge. One of our members, Krystal Hardison, graciously agreed to serve as the 2007 Coordinator. Krystal was instrumental in getting a Governor's proclamation to recognize November as Career Development Month in Louisiana. Additionally, she spearheaded efforts to offer a poetry and poster contest. The state winners will be announced soon with the winning entries forwarded to NCDA to compete in the national contest.

Featured "Tools of the Trade"



Books

The following excellent resource books are available on NCDA's website: <http://ncda.org/>

- *Experiential Activities For Teaching Career Counseling Classes & Facilitating Career Groups, Vol I;* Mark Pope & Carole W. Minor
 - *Experiential Activities For Teaching Career Counseling Classes & Facilitating Career Groups, Vol II;* Carole Minor & Mark Pope
- Note: Up to 12 continuing education units are available for completing the following activities in this volume, and writing a brief summary: #15 Best Jobs Worst Jobs, #64 Virtual Careers Scavenger Hunt, and #38 Expanding Your Horizons.

Techniques

Ideal Resume - An ideal resume is a great tool for helping college or high school students strategically plan their education and work experiences related to a particular career choice. In creating an ideal resume students must first research an occupation of interest to determine the skills, qualifications, training and education required for entering it. Once that information is determined, the next step is to help students plan their educational and work experiences, as well as extracurricular activities that would contribute to successful achievement of their career goals. Students then use traditional resume headings to record the information on their ideal resumes. Relevant skills to acquire in order to work in the targeted occupation are listed under the "Summary of Qualifications" category. Specific work experiences (volunteer, part-time, seasonal, and/or fulltime) to pursue in preparation for a chosen career, along with projected dates are entered under the "Work Experience" category. The education or training (appropriate major, degree or training program) required for entering the chosen field of work is listed under the "Education" category, along with anticipated dates for completing the education or training. Lastly, students identify specific extracurricular activities related to the chosen career and list them under the "Activities" category. The finished ideal resume serves as a strategic career plan to guide students as they move through school into their chosen careers.

S.W.O.T. Analysis - The SWOT analysis is a technique borrowed from the business world that readily lends itself to career counseling. The tool allows counselors to assist clients with conducting an internal analysis of their **S**trengths and **W**eaknesses, and an external analysis of **O**pportunities and **T**hreats in relationship to their career endeavors. A clear understanding of their *strengths and weaknesses* helps clients to be more focused in setting career goals. Thinking carefully about the *opportunities* that exist can help them recognize and take advantage of breaks when they become available. Recognizing potential *threats* and thinking through the possible effects allows clients to identify the resources such as time, effort, energy, money, etc. required to diminish or eliminate the threats to their career goals.

For an excellent article on how to use the S.W.O.T. analysis in career planning go to:
http://www.quintcareers.com/printable/SWOT_Analysis.html

Assessments

Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI)-- The CTI instrument is a self-administered, objectively scored, measure of dysfunctional career thoughts. It is designed to assist high school and college students, as well as adults with identifying then challenging negative or self-defeating beliefs that are negatively impacting their ability to make a career decision or move forward in their career development.

Using the CTI test booklet clients respond to 48 items on a 4-point rating scale (*Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*). The CTI yields a CTI Total score (a single global indicator of negative thinking in career problem solving and decision making) as well as scores on 3 construct scales:

- Decision Making Confusion (14 items). This scale reflects an inability to initiate or sustain the decision-making process as a result of disabling emotions and/or a lack of understanding about the decision-making process itself.
- Commitment Anxiety (10 items). This scale reflects an inability to make a commitment to a specific career choice, accompanied by generalized anxiety about the outcome of the decision-making process that perpetuates the indecision.
- External Conflict (5 items). This scale reflects an inability to balance the importance of one's own self-perceptions with the importance of input from significant others, resulting in a reluctance to assume responsibility for decision making.

The CTI helps clients to understand the nature of their negative thoughts as well as how much help they are likely to need in order to make effective use of career services. It is easily and quickly administered and interpreted.

Websites

Quintessential Careers: <http://quintcareers.com/>

The website contains a wide array of career-related information including tutorials and articles for students, job seekers and career changers, as well as career professionals.

My Majors: www.mymajors.com

My Majors provides useful advice on college majors relevant to a high school senior or first year college student's interests and skills.

Next Steps: www.nextsteps.org

The website is full featured employment, career development, and job finding resource for youth.

Food for Thought

Do career assessments really work? The answer depends on who you ask. If you ask clients, some will report finding them beneficial while others will say they were not particularly helpful. One of the main reasons some clients find assessments unhelpful is because they have unrealistic expectations for the results, leading to frustration and disconnect from the process. For example, a client who seeks career counseling with the notion of taking an assessment that will pinpoint the "perfect" career fit will likely be disappointed.

In general, most career counselors contend that assessments are helpful if they encourage self-exploration and consideration of related career options. To alleviate potential disillusionment associated with career assessment results, career counselors must do a good job of educating clients about the usefulness of these assessments. We need to help them understand that assessments are only the beginning of the process, not the end—that they can offer data about interests, skills and traits, and related career options; however, they cannot forecast a "perfect" career for a lifetime of happiness and success. Clarifying client expectations about assessment results at the beginning of the process, encouraging them to assume responsibility for carefully evaluating the information obtained, and helping them thoroughly investigate career options and ultimately make their own decision is a key to a more satisfactory outcome of the career counseling process.

Please share your favorite "tools" with us for the next newsletter. Send them to Ellen Bush at eb08@cox.net

NCD A Special Membership Categories

Have you considered applying for one of the special membership categories offered by NCD A? The following are some of the categories and criteria as listed on NCD A's website at <http://ncda.org/>

Master Career Counselor (MCC)

NCD A members who hold a master's degree in counseling or related field may apply for the MCC category. NCD A members may apply for MCC throughout the year. (Note: Members who hold the NCCC are automatically qualified for the MCC category. Supporting documents are not required; only a completed application, application fee, and copy of the NCCC Certificate are required.) Minimum requirements include:

- Two year membership in NCD A (either professional or regular membership).
- Master's degree or higher in counseling or closely related field from a college or university that was accredited when the degree was awarded by one of the regional accrediting bodies recognized by the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation.
- Three years of post-master's experience in career counseling.
- Possess and maintain the NCC, state LPCC, RPCC, or licensed psychologist credential.
- Successfully completed at least three credits of coursework in each of the six NCD A competency areas (Career Development Theory, Individual/Group Counseling Skills, Individual/Group Assessment, Information/Resources, Diverse Populations, Ethical/Legal Issues).
- Successfully completed supervised career counseling practicum or two years of supervised career counseling work experience under a certified supervisor or licensed counseling professional.
- Document that at least half of the current full-time work activities are directly career counseling related.

Master Career Development Professional (MCDP)

NCDA members who are involved in the career development service field may apply for the MCDP category. NCDA members may apply for MCC throughout the year. Minimum requirements include:

- Two year membership in NCDA (either professional or regular membership).
 - Master's degree or higher in counseling or closely related field.
 - Three years of post-master's career development experience in training, teaching, program development, or materials development.
 - Document that at least half of the current full-time work activities are directly career development related.
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Supporting Documents

Each application for a special membership category must include supporting documents as follows:

Master Career Counselor (MCC) and Master Career Development Professional (MCDP)

- Application
- Resume/Vita
- Documents supporting how MCC or MCDP criteria have been met
- Application fee of \$50 for EACH category
 - MCC Certificate & Web Posting
 - MCDP Certificate & Web Posting
 - Special Membership Renewal Form*
 - Special Membership CE Reporting Form (CEUs must be NBCC approved)

Once the MCC or MCDP category is awarded, recipients **must maintain regular or professional membership in NCDA** and complete 20 hours of continuing education through an NBCC or state licensure board approved provider during the period of five years. After five years, a renewal notice will be sent and a renewal fee will be accessed. The NCDA Board of Directors will set the fee annually. If membership lapses during the five years, a reapplication process will be required.

Ellen Bush
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www.lacareerdevelopment.org