

Evergreen Coaching and
Counseling Services, Inc.
and Vermilion Association
for Special Education
(VASE)

Welcome to Evergreen Coaching & Counseling and VASE!



History & Background

Evergreen Coaching and Counseling Services, Inc., is a dynamic private practice that serves a variety of clients in Champaign-Urbana, but also surrounding counties. The clinical opportunities available through Evergreen are broad and diverse. A large portion of the clinical work done by staff at Evergreen are State-contracted evaluations. Evergreen performs consultative examinations for several state departments and regional agencies, including the Disability Determination Service and the Division of Rehabilitation Services for the State of Illinois, as well as the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission and Prairieland Service Coordination. These evaluations consist of helping the State of Illinois adjudicate who is eligible for Social Security Disability benefits, helping adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities secure Medicaid funding for residential services, and helping adults with disabilities gain access to employment services.

History & Background

Evergreen also fields referrals from the University of Illinois, local school districts, hospital systems, and community members for the evaluation and treatment of children and adults with suspected Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders, Learning Disorders, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and psychiatric and behavioral disorders. In addition to evaluation services, staff at Evergreen carry caseloads of clients seeking mental health counseling and academic coaching. Dr. Thomas-Stagg, President and psychologist with Evergreen is a certified school psychologist and licensed clinical psychologist. He is also a certified Mental Health First Aid instructor and provides MHFA trainings in the community.

History & Background



Vermilion Association for Special Education (VASE) is a Special Education Cooperative serving 10 rural community districts in Vermilion County surrounding the city of Danville, IL. Danville is approximately thirty (30) miles east of Champaign, IL. VASE exists to provide comprehensive, evidence-based prevention and intervention services to enable students with diverse needs to achieve their maximum learning potential through collaboration with, and support to the families, district personnel, and community agencies. The districts who are members of the coop include: Armstrong-Ellis Consolidated District, Armstrong Township High School, Bismarck-Henning, Georgetown-Ridge Farm, Hoopston Area, Salt Fork, Oakwood, Potomac, Rossville-Alvin, and Westville.

History & Background

VASE provides a unique opportunity for interns to learn and specialize in activities related to Rural School Psychology with students with diverse needs and social-economic statuses. Internship activities involve opportunities to engage in psycho-educational assessment, functional behavior assessments, problem solving team participation, academic/behavioral consultation, and direct service of group/individual academic and social-emotional interventions at all grade levels with students with a variety of different needs and disabilities. Interns interact with a multidisciplinary team including school social workers, speech-language pathologists, and other service providers to conduct evaluations. They complete written reports of evaluations. Interns experience how rural schools with limited resources are able to meet the needs of students with special need and how a therapeutic day school wraps-around students and families to provide comprehensive learning experiences that focus improving social-emotional functioning.

History & Background

The member districts at VASE include over 7000 students. Member district enrollments range from as low as 73 students to almost 1,500. Across the cooperative, 17% of students are identified as having disabilities (IEPs), which equates to approximately 1200 students. Across member districts, approximately 91% of students are white, 3% of students are Hispanic, and other students primarily identify as biracial or multiracial. There is a very low number of students who identify as ESL/ELL. Approximately 50% of the population of member districts are low-income, though in some districts that number is as high as 66%. Across member districts, there is approximately at 12% mobility rate, which is consistent with the state average.



Intern Experiences

Interns working with Evergreen will develop an internship plan for the specific clinical activities they want to provide. Interns will be expected to assist with State-ordered evaluations. Such evaluations include the assessment and diagnosis of a wide range of DSM-5 disorders in children and adults from ages 0 to 80. Such assessments typically include the administration, scoring, and reporting of intellectual and developmental batteries (e.g., Wechsler tests, Bayley) as well as administration and interpretation of adaptive behavior questionnaires. Evergreen has a strong belief in serving community members of limited means and each staff member carries a caseload of clients that pay for service on a sliding scale, or are seen pro bono. Interns will be expected to develop treatment offerings to community members in need.

Intern Experiences

Interns with VASE will be placed part-time at the cooperative's therapeutic day school program, Middlefork, designed to serve students who are struggling with a variety of special education disabilities, such as, but not limited to, severe emotional concerns, anxiety, depression, physical symptoms or fears associated with school problems, behavior issues, inattention, hyperactivity, autism, and overall low functioning in cognition, whose needs cannot be adequately met in their home school districts.

Intern's Typical Week of Training

An intern spend 2 days a week at Evergreen and 3 days a week in a school setting during the school year. During the summer the intern typically works 32 hours at Evergreen with 8 hours available for dissertation work and training. The full stipend is \$20,000. Interns maintain their own malpractice coverage.

Intern's Typical Week of Training

Evergreen

A typical work-week at Evergreen may include:

- 2 hours of formal supervision and professional development with a licensed clinical psychologist
- 6 hours of psychological assessment
- 4 hours of individual or group therapy
- 4 hours of indirect hours including charting, scheduling, and report-writing

A typical workday at Evergreen is from 8:00am to 5:00pm, though work hours are flexible depending on the intern's specific internship plan. The internship may involve some mileage-reimbursed travel.

VASE

A typical work-week at VASE may include:

- 2 hours of formal supervision and professional development with a licensed school psychologist
- 4 hours of psychological assessment
- 5 hours of student observation and completion of functional behavior assessments & behavior intervention plans
- 4 hours IEP meetings and providing consultation to staff
- 4 hours of charting, scheduling, and report-writing

A typical workday is 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours. Travel is required, but mileage is paid.

Supervision

Evergreen

Jonathan Thomas-Stagg, Ph.D., is a certified school psychologist and licensed clinical psychologist working at Evergreen Coaching and Counseling Services, Inc. Dr. Thomas-Stagg has special interests in post-secondary services for students with disabilities, neuropsychological assessment, Autism/Asperger's Syndrome, Response to Intervention, data collection and management (e.g., universal screening and progress monitoring), school and parent consultation, and executive skills interventions. He earned his Ph.D. in school psychology from Illinois State University in 2008 and has previously worked at the Ogle County Educational Cooperative before coming to the University of Illinois.

Dr. Thomas-Stagg will work with the intern to help them learn about features of private practice including developing a business model, working with insurance companies, and marketing and advertising their services. Dr. Thomas-Stagg provides clinical supervision. Colleagues at Evergreen includes other licensed clinical psychologists, a licensed professional counselor, practicum students, and coaches and mentors affiliated with the practice.

Supervision

VASE

Julie Puzey is a certified school psychologist working for the Vermilion Association for Special Education. Mrs. Puzey earned her Specialist Degree in School Psychology from Eastern Illinois University in 2002. She has a particular interest in systems level change through the Response to Intervention process. Julie is a certified PREPaRE Trainer with NASP and provides crisis response training throughout the county.

Sarah Wilson is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist working for the Vermilion Association for Special Education. Mrs. Wilson earned her Specialist Degree in School Psychology from Loyola University. She has an interest in reading and math intervention. Sarah is certified in Level 1 Wilson Reading Systems.

Supplies & Materials

Interns have access to testing supplies, resources and intervention materials. They are provided a laptop as needed. They participate in professional development activities offered by VASE. If travel is required between sites, VASE & Evergreen will reimburse the intern for mileage.



School Sites



JUDITH GIACOMA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Home of the Panthers

Evergreen



Evergreen



Evergreen (Intern Office)

