

CCWT Team Showcases Groundbreaking Career Wellness Research at International Conference in Switzerland



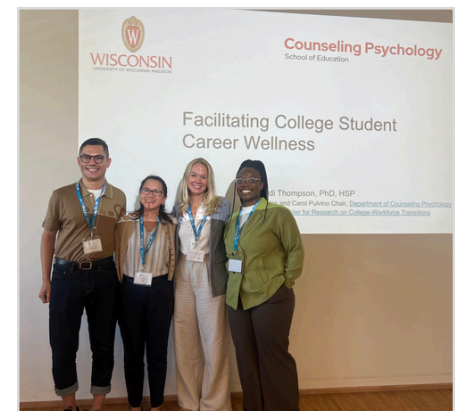
A team of UW-Madison students and faculty led by Prof Mindi Thompson from the Department of Counseling Psychology and [Center for Research on College to Workforce Transitions](#) (CCWT) recently attended and presented at the Society for Vocational Psychology (SVP) International Conference in Lausanne Switzerland.

Collectively, the team presented work funded by the National Science Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on topics including facilitating

student career wellness through interventions, campus partnerships, and theory development; program development and evaluation research supporting adults who are unemployed; post-graduation outcomes associated with college student internship participation; and employer reflections on college intern recruitment and selection.

Thompson, who is the Charles and Carol Pulvino Chair of Counseling Psychology and Director of the [Center for Research on College to Workforce Transitions](#), reflected:

I was so fortunate to attend the 2005 SVP international conference in Vancouver BC and to help host the 2007 conference in Akron OH as a doctoral student. These experiences were formative in my own development as a vocational psychologist. As a doctoral student, it was such an incredible experience to be in the room as some of the preeminent vocational psychologists debated the merits and future of our field. I was blessed to meet and develop relationships with several of these individuals who later became mentors and to connect with peers who have become colleagues. This year, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to introduce some of our UW-Madison students and colleagues to this generative conference and to be challenged by colleagues whose local context differs from ours as we work together to support individuals navigating the world-of-work!





Dr. Pa Her, Clinical Associate Professor of Counseling Psychology and Director of the Counseling Psychology Training Clinic, summed up her experience in this way:

Attending my first SVP conference was an incredibly rewarding experience. The intimate setting fostered meaningful conversations, opportunities for collaboration, and genuine connections with colleagues from around the world. As a scientist-practitioner whose primary role is in clinical training, I was especially encouraged by how deeply the conference community valued the integration of research and practice. My clinical perspective was not only welcomed—it was actively sought out and appreciated. One of the most fulfilling aspects of the conference was attending alongside my colleague and our students. Together, we had the opportunity to present research and practices that are shaping the future of vocational work in our field. Sharing this experience with emerging professionals and contributing to the dialogue around evidence-based practice made the event all the more impactful.”



Marquel Norton, Counseling Psychology doctoral student, said,

“This trip was a whirlwind. If you know, you know. I was in shock at how inviting everyone was, given that my

expertise was not in vocational psychology. The levels of warmth and rigor were exceedingly high. It was great to meet a community of scholars whose work you cite and get their encouragement to challenge and extend their work. I’m still blown away by the validation from people at various points in their career and opportunities for communal support.”

Of particular note: this year’s conference co-chairs, Drs. Nimrod Levin and Jonas Masdonati, along with their colleagues Caroline Éliane Brazier and Dr. Anouk Albien from the University of Lausanne’s Center for Research in Counseling and Guidance Psychology, developed and led the first-ever Doctoral Track. Their proposal was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and provided invaluable experiences for our students to access mentoring, support, and individualized feedback on their research projects.

Michael Sanchez, a 5th year Counseling Psychology doctoral student shared,



“Attending the SVP conference was both energizing and inspiring for me. Connecting with fellow researchers and engaging in thoughtful discussions around vocational development truly reignited my passion for scholarly work. Coming out of the conference, I feel a renewed sense of motivation to dive deeper into writing and continue contributing to research in meaningful ways. I am tremendously grateful for the funding support provided as part of the doctoral track; without the support, I might not have been able to participate in this invaluable professional development opportunity.”

Nasitta Keita, a Counseling Psychology doctoral student similarly remarked,



“Attending the SVP conference will be remembered as a pivotal moment in my career. It was truly amazing to be in a cross-cultural space, sharing discussions on our role as vocational and counseling psychologists in contributing to the betterment of society through our research, practice, and service. I was also thankful to be a part of the doctoral track and gain critical feedback on my research agenda.”

Current and former UW-Madison Counseling Psychology and CCWT scholars were well-represented at the conference. In total, 13 distinct presentations from 10 current and former UW-Madison undergraduate and graduate students from Counseling Psychology, Psychology, and Education Policy Studies was presented at the conference.