

Past NCDA President Norm Gysbers Retires Leaving Comprehensive Guidance Better Through 52 Years of Leadership and Scholarship

Every so often in one's career, we have the unique privilege of working with a true "master" of our profession. While our organization has attracted numerous professionals who have impacted career development, few have impacted school counseling and career counseling/development as much like Dr. Norm Gysbers. This summer, Dr. Gysbers will retire from the University of Missouri following 52 years of scholarship and leadership in our profession.

Dr. Norm Gysbers earned his bachelor's degree from Hope College (1954), and his master's degree (1959) and Ph.D. from University of Michigan (1963). He joined the University of Missouri faculty in 1963. Norm served as director of guidance for the University Lab School (1963-71). He was honored as a Distinguished Curators Professor in 2008. Prior to his distinguished career in guidance and career development, Norm taught fourth grade and middle school science. He also served his country as a Specialist Second Class with the U.S. Army Artillery during the Cold War in Germany.

Dr. Gysbers is recognized both nationally and internationally as the one of the foremost scholars of our time in school counseling and career counseling/development. He has published numerous articles on both practice and research throughout his career, and has authored many books and publications. He has delivered addresses to colleagues and dignitaries in Europe, Asia, and across North America. Many of these same colleagues selected Norm as the president of both the National Career Development Association (NCDA) in 1972-73, as well as the American Counseling Association (ACA) in 1977-78. His list of awards and accolades are extensive from both professional societies and academic institutions. These include the Mary Gehrke Lifetime Achievement Award from ACA; President's Award for a Lifetime Commitment to Career Development as well as the Eminent Career Award both from NCDA; Distinguished Faculty Award from the University of Missouri; and the William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence.

Of the countless contributions Norm has made to our profession, the one that perhaps stands out most is how his work influenced the development of the National Model for School Counseling Programs. Dr. Gysbers states, "Based on my education background and my work as a school counselor, I decided to focus on seeking ways to improve the work of school counselors and the organizational framework in which they worked. Through a number of federal and state grants in the 1960's through the 1980's, and numerous workshops I conducted across the U.S., a framework emerged that changed the traditional position approach of school counselors to a comprehensive program approach."

Dr. Gysbers comprehensive guidance approach was later adopted by the State of Missouri, and subsequently spread to other states and countries, becoming the foundation of the national Model. Former University of Missouri colleague and University of Massachusetts-Amherst professor, Dr. Rich Lapan said it best when he calibrated the impact Norm's work in comprehensive guidance has had on school counselors everywhere: "This language now cradles conversations about the central issues of our day and provides a framework to meet new and unexpected challenges in our future... school counselors are doing their best to help their young people create lives with meaning and satisfaction. The ideas that Norm helped shape and the common, even ordinary, words he used to teach us these thoughts don't belong to him anymore. They live in the hearts and minds of countless educators."

Norm served as the editor of the Career Development Quarterly, the Journal of Career Development, and along with Drs. Mary Heppner and Joe Johnston, wrote what has become the most authoritative textbook on career counseling, *Career Counseling: Processes, Issues and Techniques*. The book is currently in its 4th edition and has been translated into numerous foreign languages.

In recent conversations with Dr. JoAnn Harris-Bowlsbey, she reflected on Norm's outstanding professional accomplishments stating: "From my perspective, Norm's biggest contribution has been the "systematizing" of guidance services. He has moved them from "random acts of guidance" to a planned program of services that meet the needs of students and whose effects can be measured. This fact makes it possible for guidance services to be accountable."

Longtime friend and colleague, Dr. Bragg Stanley, said of Norm: "I have had the privilege of knowing Norm since 1973 when I began work on my certification as a school counselor at the University of Missouri. In the ensuing years our relationship has moved from student to mentor to colleague and friend. Through these various relationships over the years, I not only became a better school counselor, administrator, and counselor educator, but I believe I have become a better person. No one could have been a better role model than Norm Gysbers and I will always be grateful for the opportunities I have been given as a result of knowing and working with him."

Dr. Harris-Bowlsbey stated that she has always "found Norm to be a wonderful collaborator on any projects which we have shared. He is a humble, extremely competent professional who has served the profession in many ways over this lifespan."

At a recent retirement banquet honoring his career, Dr. Gysbers commented that he had "...the wonderful opportunity to work with outstanding professional colleagues here and across the world. Equally important, I have had the opportunity to work with outstanding master's and doctoral degree students for 52 years. Thanks to the University of Missouri for the support, encouragement, and opportunities to follow my professional passions. It has been 52 wonderful years."

In reflecting on Norm's retirement, ACTE Executive LeAnn Wilson shared, "In his more than 40 years as a member of the ACTE community, Norm Gysbers' work has helped bring his profession and our association to new heights by striving to ensure that every student has the necessary support for personal and professional success. We at ACTE are so grateful for his contributions to the field of career and guidance counseling, and we wish him the absolute best in his next steps!"

Following ACTE in Charlotte in 2008, Dr. Ray Davis created a four-part interview with Dr. Gysbers and colleague Dr. JoAnn Harris-Bowlsbey as they reflected on our profession past, present and future. This series entitled, "The Legacy Series: Inspired by the Past - Reaching toward the Future."

Legacy Series: Inspired by the Past - Reaching Toward the Future

Part 1 – Populations Served (15:45)

http://scetvradio.vo.llnwd.net/o33/EdDiv/SL/CarolinaCareers/LegacySeries/1_Intro.mp4

Part 2- Theoretical Basis (17:00)

http://scetvradio.vo.llnwd.net/o33/EdDiv/SL/CarolinaCareers/LegacySeries/2_TheoreticalBasis.mp4

Part 3 – Methods of Practice (17:00)

http://scetvradio.vo.llnwd.net/o33/EdDiv/SL/CarolinaCareers/LegacySeries/3_MethodsOfPractice.mp4

Part 4 – Counselor Training (27:30)

http://scetvradio.vo.llnwd.net/o33/EdDiv/SL/CarolinaCareers/LegacySeries/4_CounselorTrng.mp4

C-Authored by:

Ray Davis, Ph.D. is NCDA Trustee to the NCDA board of Directors for School Counselors and Career Specialists

Bragg Stanley is retired from his leadership position as State Guidance Director, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.