ECU Psychology Students Support Academic Enhancements at Farmville Middle School

GREENVILLE, N.C. (Nov. 11, 2015) — East Carolina University students are assisting Farmville Middle School students through tutoring and team building projects.

Approximately 10 school psychology and pediatric school psychology students in the ECU Chapter of the Student Affiliates in School Psychology (SASP) have been working with the middle school children to help them perform well academically and continue on to college.

ECU health psychology doctoral student Maribeth Wicoff said tutors provide assistance with subject matter as well as study skills, such as effective note-taking. Team building includes group discussions where students learn techniques for getting “their point across in a professional tone and expressing disagreement non-judgmentally,” she added.

While the partnership benefits students at Farmville Middle School, the ECU students are learning from the experience as well. Dr. Christy Walcott, director of ECU’s school psychology and pediatric school psychology programs, said graduate students who engage in community service enhance their areas of study and receive the added benefits of training before graduation.

Walcott noted three reasons for encouraging community service. “First, psychology is a helping profession that is strongly rooted in principals of social justice,” she said. “Second, we specifically train our students to be leaders in addressing needs and advocating for underserved populations.”

Finally, Walcott added, “We believe that graduate training is a privilege…thus participating in the community is a small way of symbolically and fundamentally giving back.”

The ECU chapter of SASP is formed under the auspices of the American Psychological Association’s Division 16. SASP is designed to keep graduate students apprised of issues pertaining to school psychology while offering activities that support their professional development and advocate for the field. For additional information about SASP, visit http://www.apadivisions.org/division-16/students/.

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Photo Note: Pictured left to right are Farmville Middle School Instructional Coach Etosha Kiah; ECU SASP members Christine Rivera, Caroline Mulhare, Lauren Gaither, Katie Gitto, Erin Jackson, Hannah Wilson and Vicki Steinmetz. Kneeling in front is Farmville Middle School Principal Paul Briney. Photo provided by Christine Rivera.