“Map Maven Meets Mindfulness Professor”

RULE Alumni Spotlight

by Dr. Joseph Croskey, RULE XVI

Clarion University’s Advising Center Director and Assistant Professor, Dr. Joseph Croskey has amassed a number of honors, including: 2013 Clarion University Outstanding Faculty, completing his PhD in 2019 and a number of presentations statewide on equity, inclusion and mindfulness. Clarion’s Provost, Dr. Pam Gent truly captured Joseph’s capacity building and RULE’s role in helping him be successful.

“Joseph has always been an advocate for our Clarion students and their success and this has increased since completing the RULE program. Last year, he wrote and was funded for an Act 101 grant which provides additional supports for students who are low income, first generation, or of minority status. His leadership of this grant makes a difference for our students, and we are grateful for that. We are also grateful for the mindfulness work he does with students, faculty, and staff. In this time of increased stress due to COVID-19, we all need to learn how to deal with stress in a healthy way. And Joseph has been there to lead the way.” ~Dr. Pam Gent, Clarion University Provost

I’ve loved maps for as long as I can remember. This love for maps is partly because I lived in three different states and three different countries by age 9. When we settled in the states, my family would drive from Illinois to Florida in the summer to visit my parents’ family homestead. As an only child, my parents would probably give me a map for entertainment on that long ride to avoid the inevitable question, “Are we there yet?”

I enjoy beholding maps and exploring new places. Recently I’ve been re-inspired by the phrase on old maps, “Hic Sunt Dracones!” (Here be dragons!) The phrase can be considered as a warning that there is something unknown about that area and therefore dangerous. Sometimes while exploring new places, or even familiar ones, we encounter problems we didn’t expect. Often, those problems make for a fantastic story about the exploration- worthy of retelling to friends.

As we travel on this journey of life, we are bound to come up against unforeseen obstacles & challenges.

Certainly, today we are facing unknowns that are challenging the most prepared of us.

During a RULE Study Institute “Change More Challenge,” Joseph creatively repositioned his magnetic name tag and bandana.

Joseph Croskey created a RULE succession legacy when he nominated his wife, Kathy Ellwood, for a subsequent RULE class. They often present for RULE as a team.
When I began my RULE journey, I did not know what to expect. Fortunately, I’ve been able to incorporate some of our RULE practices into the things that I do at work. The small group is something that I think is very valuable and I am working to make that idea a regular practice for my team at the office.

If we are not facing dragons, real challenges, perhaps we are not wholly engaged in a journey that is inspiring to us, nor to others. “How do I realize transformation for myself and for others?” This is a thought bouncing around the monkeys in my mind. “What can I contribute?” Is there a need for a “Contemplative Alchemist Academy?” These are fun questions that come up while I walk our dog, Carson, in the morning.

I look forward to finding, facing and befriending dragons with you as we forge a new academy dedicated to bringing out gifts that we are meant to share for the benefit of the world.

RULE and its predecessor sibling PALP program have yielded over 700 alumni. Whether a recent alum, or one that attended RULE decades ago, RULE experiences stay relevant and resonant.