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WINTER 2022

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

LISA R. JENKINS

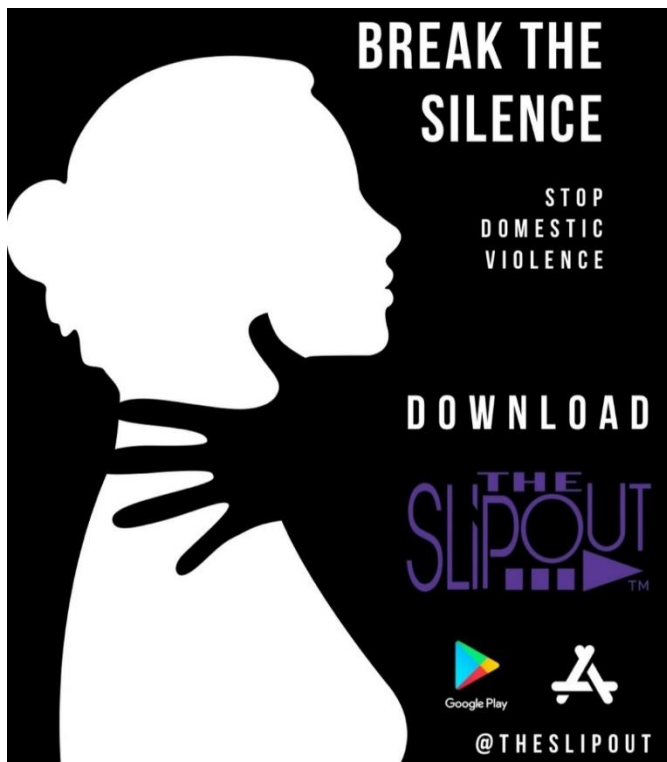
UPDATE ON THE SLIPOUT APP

BY KIM CHO

The words courageous, ambitious, and compassionate do not begin to describe current NLU student Lisa R. Jenkins. Last year, the NLU counseling newsletter ran a feature piece that highlighted Lisa and her creation of a successful app for domestic violence victims called The Slipout. As the app has gone live and been in use for the past year, we thought it would be a great idea to check in with Lisa for an update on the app.

According to Lisa, The Slipout App went live on September 25, 2020. The idea for the app came to her in March of 2020. As a survivor of domestic violence herself, Lisa started doing research and began creating the app while working and attending graduate school courses full-time. Being motivated by her own domestic violence experiences and with the biggest focus being on the safety of her victims, Lisa chose to do an app because it provided a secure place for those who needed help to find resources in private. As it can be challenging for those in abusive relationships to find and utilize domestic violence resources, Lisa's app is an essential means to the domestic violence population. Noting that the "escape" of a domestic violence survivor is the most dangerous part of removing yourself from a domestic violence situation, the app can be a helpful resource to those trying to leave a dangerous situation. The app includes a letter from Lisa that includes her personal story of getting out of her own domestic violence situation. Currently, 5,700 people have downloaded Lisa's app in 45 countries, a fact that is currently still overwhelming to her in a positive way.

On the topic regarding how Lisa created the app and her background in phone apps/app creation, Lisa said she is not tech-savvy; however, she was able to create the app and manages the app on her own. Lisa noted that finding out that not all apps require coding was a "Godsend." Lisa included a funny story regarding the app creation and advised she was told by an app creator that it would cost \$8,000 to create the app. Crushed and heartbroken by this, Lisa determined she didn't have the funding. However, two days later, Lisa came across a webinar on Facebook she





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DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE!**

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The Slipout Domestic Violence (DV) Advocacy Deck of 27 cards was created to discreetly educate the public about the signs of DV, the types of abusers, steps to escaping, and starting the healing process. In your professional capacity, you may encounter victims who are silenced by fear. Together we can change the narrative surrounding domestic violence.

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KRA COMMUNICATIONS



could attend to learn how to create an app. Lisa shared she believed that this was God intervening, as there was no other explanation for coming upon this gift. As transparent and honest as anyone I have interviewed, Lisa said that it was difficult and scary to create the app, as she was not only creating an app for the first time but had to also relive her own domestic violence experience through the process. She noted there were many times she wanted to give up, however Lisa said her purpose was bigger than her pain.

When asking Lisa about the type of feedback she has received on the app, Lisa advised that the overwhelming response has been that it is a brilliant idea, and that users are finding the information on the app to be very practical and useful. I also asked Lisa what she has learned from this experience, and she said she lives by the motto, “with pain comes strength, with strength comes peace.” With this statement, Lisa has found that there is healing through sharing.

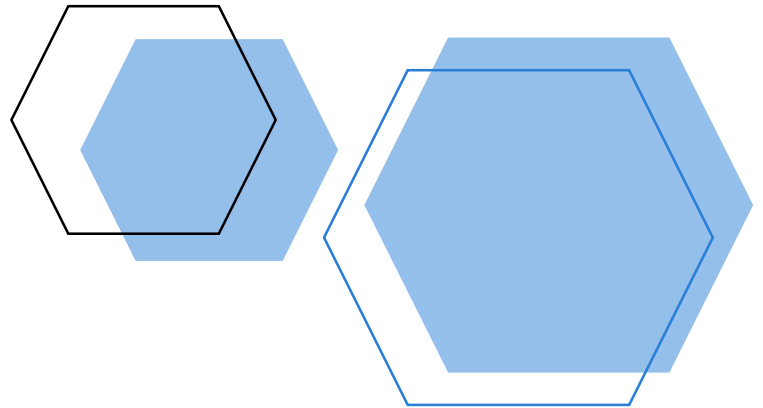
I asked Lisa what her overall goal is for the app and where she hopes it will go to one day. Lisa hopes to continue to share The Slipout app on media platforms and news outlets across the world. Lisa’s goal is to ensure that the app can always get into the hands of a person who finds themselves in an abusive relationship. Lisa’s dream is that the app will help people find the strength to escape abusive situations, and that sharing her own journey will instill in others that it is possible for them to build a new life after trauma.

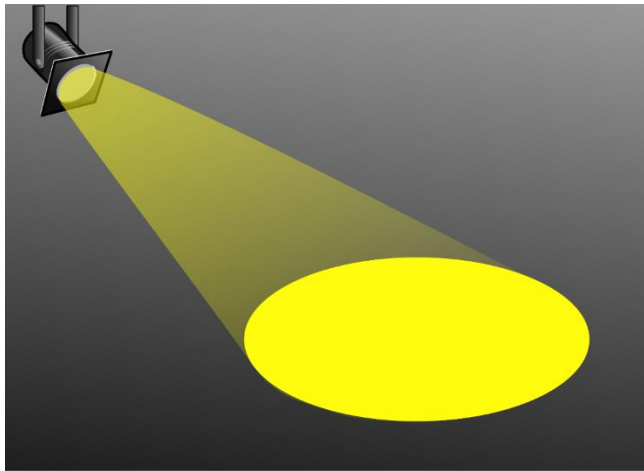
An important update to note is that Lisa created The Slipout Domestic Violence Advocacy Deck in April, which is a deck of 27 cards created to provide information discreetly to victims; the deck resembles playing cards and allows those in business who may suspect that someone is in an abusive situation to pass a card to the potential victim without verbalizing their concern or getting heavily involved. The cards contain information that can help those wanting to leave an abusive situation. Lisa’s idea behind this is to have public businesses carry the cards such as a beauty-salons, nail salons, EMT’s, police, fire, dentists, medical offices, and other places that victims may frequent. Her goal is to ensure that the above public places have a deck of these cards on hand to provide to clients or people they may suspect that are in an abusive situation. It is not uncommon for victims of domestic violence or abuse to hide their abuse, and those that suspect abuse with others often are fearful of intervening. The cards provide a way for the victim to reach out for resources without

verbally discussing the issue with the person who gives them the card. If you or someone you know may be interested in ordering a deck, you can visit bit.ly/KRADeck to purchase a deck.

If you haven't already, please download The Slipout app for FREE on the Google Play and Apple app stores today. For more information, we have also included a link to media coverage that was done on The Slipout app. Lisa wants to remind readers that together, we can change the narrative surrounding domestic violence. Lisa will be graduating in May/June of 2022 and we certainly wish her all the success in the world!

<https://www.fox32chicago.com/news/chicago-woman-creates-app-to-help-victims-survivors-of-domestic-abuse>





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH INTERN: CANDACE SANDERS AURELLO

BY KIM CHO

For counseling students just starting on their graduate school journey, securing a practicum/internship site will happen later during the program. While new program students are getting reacquainted with attending classes, doing homework, reading, and writing papers, some of us in our last year of graduate school here at NLU have completed our practicum hours and will be starting internship hours in January 2022. To provide some insight and understanding on what it's like to be a clinical mental health counseling intern, I was grateful to spend some time talking with Lisle student Candace Sanders Arguello.

Candace completed her practicum hours in the Fall of 2021 and will be starting her internship hours at WINGS, a domestic violence program for victims of abuse and domestic violence situations. WINGS mission is to provide housing, integrated services, education, and advocacy to end domestic violence. With the pandemic still very much a presence in our lives, Candace has been conducting individual counseling to clients from WINGS virtually weekly for the last three months. In 2022, Candy will start going into the office in the main WINGS office in Rolling Springs a few times a week to conduct in-person counseling sessions and she is looking forward to that. Some of Candace's responsibilities as a clinical mental health intern include conducting individual counseling sessions with WINGS clients, case management and client paperwork, utilizing counseling ethics, helping clients implement interventions and techniques into their lives and having supervision and consultation sessions with her supervisor and other WINGS employees.

One of Candace's favorite things about working for WINGS is their mission. She described the mission as more than just empowering survivors of DV, but also intentionally embracing all domestic violence survivors. WINGS has

measures in place to support all types of families and they do not discriminate based on gender identity. The main criteria for qualifying for WINGS services is that there must be some form of domestic violence occurring with the client. WINGS offers safe houses, where most clients go initially after exiting a dangerous DV situation and then they eventually transition to transitional housing, where they are required to attend individual therapy sessions and participate in WINGS programs. Candace said one of the most amazing things about WINGS is that she has personally witnessed previous WINGS clients to come back to the organization as volunteers to help others that are experiencing the same trauma that they once were experiencing.

Candace wants to remind students that it can be challenging to take on an internship and still concede with the other responsibilities of life. In her early thirties, Candace went through a divorce and as a newly single mom, found herself fearing the unknown of her future. Candace homeschools her children Monday through Friday, and along with taking classes of her own through NLU, Candace started her fall practicum hours working 16 hours a week. When the winter term begins, Candace will be changing her hours to 22 hours a week and will be spending some time in the office as previously noted, rather than only doing telehealth from home.

When asking Candace what type of feedback she would offer to students who are beginning to search for internship placement, Candace transparently shared the importance of thinking about what drives you, what populations you want to serve and what kind of work you want to do. In her early thirties, Candace found herself as a single mom fearing the unknown of her future. In December 2020 (after one year in the counseling program), Candace began looking at internship sites. After a productive meeting with an internship coordinator, Candace determined her passion was dedicated to helping women. With experience in running a single parenting group in the past, Candace was reminded of how motivated and positive she felt around other women. Candace encourages students searching for internships to apply your experience and do what you love. She also feels it is important to view this internship experience as an opportunity to learn and grow,

so take your time with finding a site that will address your passion and give you the experience you need to be a successful clinician one day. Candace also wants to remind students to consider networking and look at your social circle to see if you have anyone that works in the mental health field. Professionals who work in the field already can be great resources for future careers and providing their wisdom and feedback to what it's like to work with certain populations and organizations.

Interviewing Candace was truly an honor to me. I have had the privilege of being in a cohort with her through this journey and her passion truly shines through for the work she is doing at WINGS; she's doing amazing things with her internship experience. Candace wants to remind students to be gentle with yourself through this journey and to soak up as much information and experience that you can. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, but also remember to act ethically and professionally and communicate your needs to your supervisors. This experience has been truly rewarding to Candy and she is excited to continue her internship journey with WINGS during the winter. Candace will be graduating from NLU Lise in June of 2022.





NLUCA UPDATES

[BECOME AN NLUCA MEMBER TODAY!](#)

As a reminder, NLUCA meets the first Saturday of every month at 10:00 AM via ZOOM, except for the month of January when the group met on 1/8/22. Please keep an eye out for an email from Jason if you are interested in attending a meeting and becoming an NLUCA member! The email will provide a reminder of the date and time and the ZOOM link for the meeting.

NLUCA and ICA is having its 8th Annual Care Fair Saturday, 2/5/22! This is a virtual event and is an internship/career expo and keynote for graduate students and professionals. The schedule for the day is as follows:

- 10:00 AM: NLUCA Meeting
- 11:00AM: Keynote Address
- 12:10PM: Internship Fair

Please see the link for more information:
<https://www.ilcounseling.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1588658&group=>



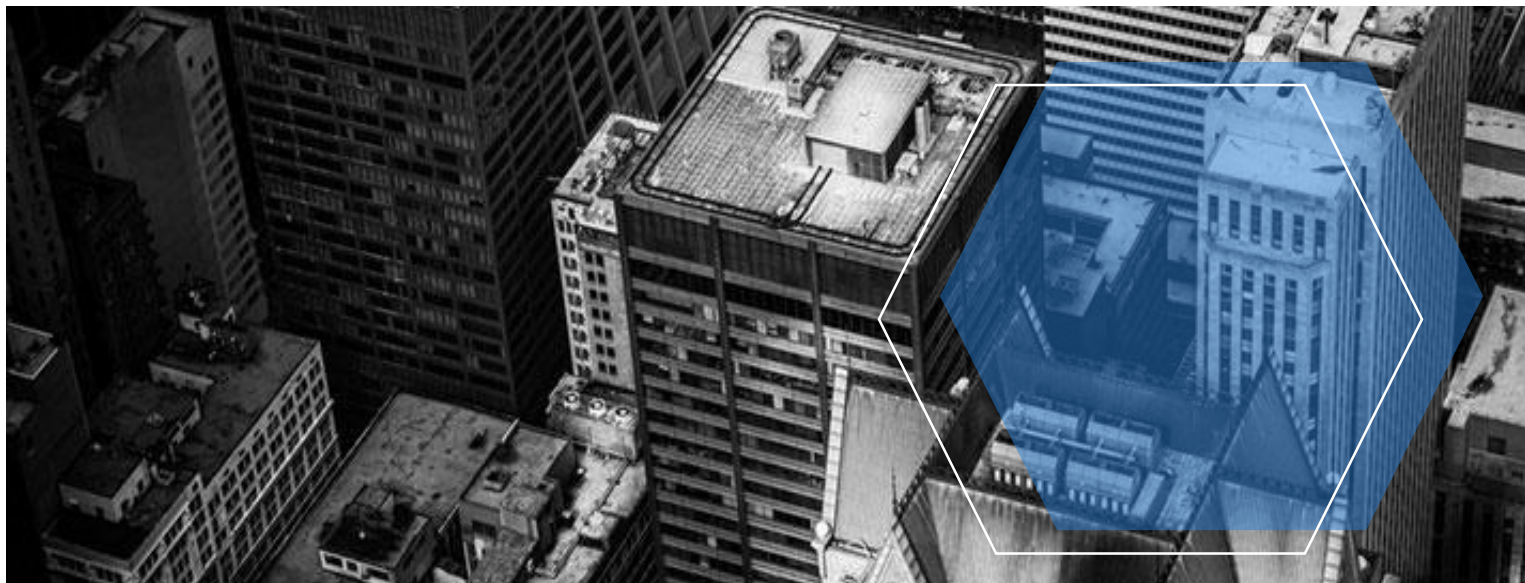
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NCE TEST PREP DATES: 2/18 & 2/19

[YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER IF YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE NCE TEST IN THE SPRING](#)

In November, Jason Landrum sent an email to all Practicum students to inform of the NCE Test Prep Dates, which are Friday, February 18 and Saturday, February 19. Please utilize the link below for registration:

<https://www.imhca.org/event-4518240>.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SCHOOL COUNSELING INTERN ALEXIS MATIJEVIC

BY RYAN MUIR

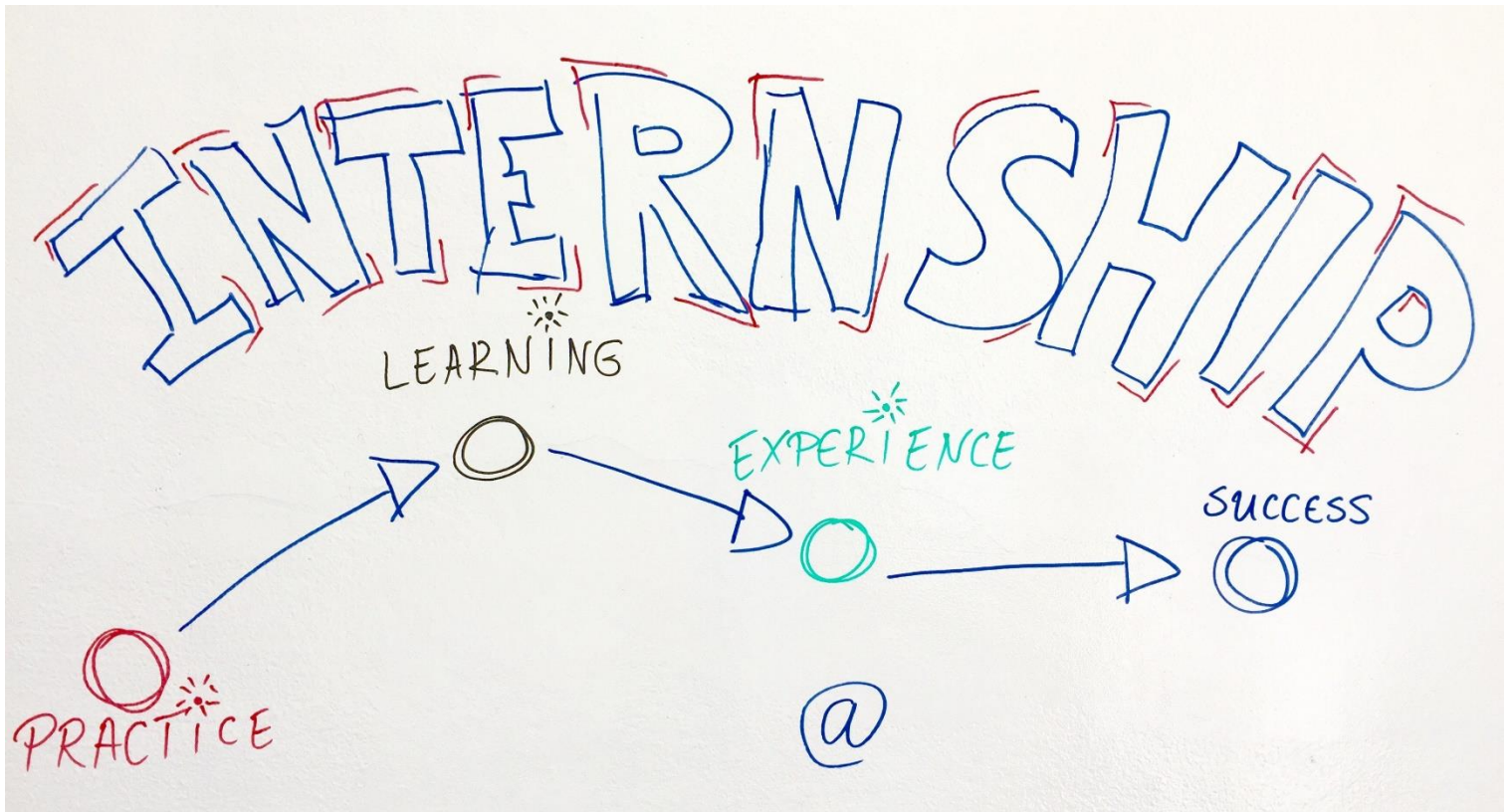
For many of us, deciding what track to commit ourselves to before beginning the practicum/internship experience is challenging. It is a decision that many of our classmates go back and forth with. I think there is anxiety in this decision-making. Having a sense of feeling "stuck" with our decision can add a lot of pressure to our dilemma. I think it is essential for us as students to become as informed as we can about what each track offers. As expected, the school counseling track contrasts the clinical mental health or addictions track quite a bit. While there are still many similarities, it is essential to see what some of the differences are. During an interview with Alexis Matijevic, she provided helpful insight into the school counseling track. To better understand what the day-to-day tasks of a school counselor undergo, I asked the question, "Did working in the field surprise you? Or is reality close to what you imagined?" Alexis responded, "It was somewhat of what I expected, but there has been a lot of shocking things I have come across. I am not sure if it is the school that I am in or just because of what has happened with COVID. There are many things I experienced in high school that I would have assumed were the same, but they have totally changed. For example: at the school I am interning at, there are no gym uniforms anymore, and kids are rarely dress coded." With Alexis's response, it is essential to remember that the school and the district can significantly impact the internship experience.

It is important to ask people further along on the same journey if they have any helpful advice that could help alleviate the complexity of a crucial decision, like deciding what tracks to peruse. Alexis's advice to embarking on the school track is, "Go into it with a non-biased mind and be ready for anything. Make sure that you are mentally prepared as well; it can be very draining in the short number of hours being in the school." As interns, we are often thrown into various situations that we may or may not be entirely ready for. This idea of entering with a non-biased mind is fundamental. It can help prevent us from becoming too nervous or anxious about a situation. Biases can prevent us from being effective as counselors. Keeping biases in check and being aware of them is important while we self-reflect on our work.

They say that hindsight is always 20/20. Looking back at significant decisions we make, there always seem to be things we would do differently, whether small or larger scale decisions that we would like to see play out differently. I asked Alexis, "If you were to do it over again, is there anything you would do different?" Her response, "I think if I was to

redo it, I would love to try the clinical route, or I wish that the practicum could be in a clinical setting, but then the internship in a school so that I am able to have both experiences since I will be trained for school and clinical settings."

One overlapping theme between all tracks is to be sure to enter with a non-biased mind. As we learned in class, biases can be detrimental to the therapeutic process and even harmful to the client if we let our prejudices into our counseling sessions. With all tracks in mind, knowing our biases is significant when beginning the practicum/internship experience. Throughout our experience, we will learn a lot about ourselves, especially early on. We will be required to self-reflect and understand ourselves on a different level. Working with people of all walks of life can challenge our own beliefs and morals. Before entering the practicum/internship experience, it helps to understand ourselves and the demographic we want to work with. It never hurts to start thinking about the career trajectory we dream of. I encourage everyone to ask any questions. Ask professors, ask classmates, reach out to members of NLUCA, and even us Graduate Assistants. We are all here to help and pass along information we have picked up along the way. Being as informed as possible is undoubtedly a positive.



validate their feelings and provide an opportunity for conversation to continue. In my experience with the clients, I have worked within treatment, they tend to come from a background where they were often ignored, didn't feel like they mattered, and didn't have anyone they could trust to open-up to. Just being there to validate and listen to goes very far towards effective counseling. It is also important to try not to overthink during sessions. It is essential to rely on what we have learned from class and rely on our natural counseling skills. Practicum/internship is our time to learn, grow our skills, and be successful counselors. Failure and challenges are also part of the process. We bounce back and learn from our challenging group sessions, or individual sessions is where we learn. Learning what works for some clients and not for others is part of the process. To have a successful practicum/internship experience, I think it is important to roll with the punches, always try to put your best foot forward, and respect the process for what it is, good or bad. Counseling requires adaptability on the fly. Counseling also needs us to be comfortable in uncomfortable situations. Keep in mind that we will always be learning throughout our careers. We will always be learning new techniques and skills. We will always find new ways to connect with current and future clients.

Who Writes These Articles? Meet Kim Cho and Ryan Muir. Your Graduate Assistants.



Illinois MS Counseling Faculty



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Dr. Guglielmo



Professor Bryant-Edwards



Dr. Kirkpatrick Pinson



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Dr. Brown



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