

## Alumni Spotlight: Vatogna Steward (MACO & MDiv '12)

Urban Ministry Certificate '10



**Current Title:** LCMHC-S, LPC, and LMFT

**Favorite professors:** Dr. Laniak & Dr. Boccia

**Favorite class:** Cross Cultural Counseling

**Favorite memory:** Attending praise and worship in the auditorium before classes on Friday night. I also enjoyed the outreach ministry while working on my Urban Ministry Certificate. These two areas allowed me to understand the different cultures represented at Gordon-Conwell and actually do the work of ministry in the field—and praise God in the process.

**What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and where are you serving now? Do you have a particular specialization?**

I have been building my own private practice and non-profit, Therapy to Inner Peace Center (T2IPC Ministry LTD). I practice in Behavior Mental Health, with one of my specialized areas in trauma. I am a Roster/Certified Trauma Focus Cognitive Behavior Therapist (TF-CBT), and I do individual and family therapy.

**What do you love about your work?**

I love helping people and allowing people to transform their life—helping individuals move from a place of struggling with life, to being able to see their future. It also is a renewing process of the mind to be more Christ centered.

**What are the particular challenges of serving as a therapist in your context?**

One of the challenges that I see in therapy is the need to help an individual face their mental health issues and stay within the process of healing.

**How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your past and current work?**

Gordon-Conwell provided me with the tools and education to do therapy work and has also been a resource for me in addressing various needs in the community. Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact has been to allow me to integrate Christianity with therapy.

**How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?**

As I look back now, I see that it was all part of God's plan for me to attend Gordon-Conwell. I was introduced to the school by a friend of mine, and once I visited the campus, I knew that this was where I should attend. All of it was a result of seeking God for direction and being able to hear Him when He answered and led me to Gordon-Conwell. I attended and completed a dual track, completing both the Master of Divinity and Master of Christian Counseling degrees. Gordon-Conwell helped me to integrate my beliefs into a career path which has now led me to ownership of my private practice.

**What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are beginning therapists?**

I would advise that young alumni starting out as therapists should start practicing the foundational tools they learned at Gordon-Conwell as soon as possible in their counseling endeavors. One way that this can be done is to try to see if they can start doing some therapy work with their church or ministry team. Also, allow the Holy Spirit to guide them in their process of becoming a therapist.

**Do you have any publications or links to share?**

Learn more about [Therapy to Inner Peace Center](#), (T2IPC Ministry LTD) and view Vatogna's [Psychology Today profile](#).