

Cajun Counselor

Volume 27 Number 1

Fall 2020



LOUISIANA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

Cajun Counselor

LSCA is the state branch of the American School Counselor Association



Clawdette

Presidential View

Faith, Mission, and Vision!

Dr. Ariel Encalade Mitchell, PhD, LPC/S, LMFT, RPT/S, LSCA President 2020-2021



Today, I am stepping out on faith with a mission and a vision. I am embarking on a new journey as your President of the Louisiana School Counseling Association. I approach this opportunity with fidelity and passion to advocate for this esteemed profession and the students we serve. I come to you with over a decade of experience working in school settings from elementary to post-secondary. My experience reaches outside the school counseling realm through my previous work with the Department of Health and Hospitals. Currently, I am the Owner/Director of Cognitive Solutions LLC (a counseling, consulting, and mediation practice) and Assistant Professor of Counseling at Xavier University of Louisiana. Given my experience, I believe that I am in the best possible position to be of service to you and LSCA.

This year, I have three main goals. I will engage LSCA members to plan and provide professional development geared to navigate the post-Covid-19

(Presidential View, continued on page 2)



State of the Division Message

Veronica Douglas-Johnson, LSCA President 2019-2020

Dear Colleagues,

I pray that this message finds you and your families safe and well. For the final time as the Louisiana School Counselors Association President, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Louisiana School Counselor Association Executive Board as well as the dedicated School Counselors who serve families and communities tirelessly throughout this state. It has been my honor to serve!

I am excited to report that LSCA remains committed to advocating for school counselors and school counseling programs, staying at the forefront of our profession as well as providing opportunities for professional development. Over the past year LSCA has accomplished a great deal. School Counselors remain the 2nd largest division within Louisiana Counseling Association.

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Louisiana School Counselor Association Mission:

To support professional school counselors as they assist students and their families in their academic, career, personal/social development.

Inside this Issue...

- 👉 Presidential View from Dr. Mitchell on page 1
- 👉 State of the Division Message from Mrs. Douglas-Johnson on page 1
- 👉 Summary of Legislative action pertinent to counseling provided on page 3
- 👉 LSCA Area Vice Presidential reports begin on page 5
- 👉 2020 LSCA Track includes 14 great selections! Take a look at page 8
- 👉 Nomination Form and support of school administrator for candidacy are found on pages 8-9
- 👉 LSCA Leadership Roster for 2020-21 is on page 10
- 👉 Message from Incoming President Elect x3, on page 12

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landscape of the profession. I would like to also focus on our efforts to obtain government support in reforming the non-counseling responsibilities assigned to our Louisiana School Counselors. Lastly, I will promote advocacy and social justice throughout the profession as a lens filtering out daily roles, responsibilities, and experiences. This is the time for us to show up for our profession!

If you would like to be a part of this cause, please reach out to any one of our board members to participate in our meetings, join a task force, or nominate yourself to run for an elected position. With your help I will **accomplish my goals in support of LSCA's mission and we will all have a productive year!** I look forward to hearing from you and serving as your President! 🙌



2020 LCA Annual Fall Conference Will Be Online!

Vinetta Frie, Cajun Counselor Editor

Due to the ongoing concern about the novel Covid-19 virus, and the difficulty of our state to reduce the rate of infection, the LCA Executive board, now headed by Eric Odom, made the difficult decision to cancel the hybrid portion of the annual conference. LCA has contracted with TPN.Health to host the LCA Fall Conference on line. The registration link is now live, <https://virtualevents.tpn.health/lca-annual-conference-2020/> When you use this link, you will be asked to join TPN — please do! It is only for the registration process and is no cost to you! Please remember to list the Louisiana School Counselor Association as your primary division. This will mean a larger share of the conference profits will come to LSCA.

In this issue, on pages 8 and 9, Past President Veronica Douglas-Johnson has included a call for nominations in this issue. We are seeking President Elect-Elect-Elect, Elementary, and Middle School Vice Presidents. Dr. Stephanie Eberts, Post-Secondary VP has submitted the 14 sessions **which comprise this year's LSCA Track. While where will not be an annual LSCA Awards Luncheon, rest assured that Awards co-chairs Danielle Cole and Dr. Alice Cryer-Sumler are finalizing the logistics of how we will honor and recognize the counselors and advocates of the year.**

There will be a special pre-conference Cajun Counselor issue in September to provide additional details. You are encouraged to register as soon as possible for the conference to qualify for the lowest rate. And list LSCA as your primary division. Stay tuned for more details closer to the conference in October. 🙌



Government Relations: 2020 Wrap-Up

Brenda Eccles, Co-Chair

In spite of the challenges COVID 19 has presented to the entire world, our State legislative sessions met from April to June 2020. There were several bill issues relating to school counseling and mental health counseling in a school setting.

HB 64 Amends the crime of unlawful disruption of the operation of a school and expands its application to certain acts committed by students, teachers, and nonstudents. [Full Bill](#)

HB 432 Revises procedures relative to students investigated for threats of violence or terrorism [Full Bill](#)

HB 656 Requires instruction relative to eating disorder awareness and prevention in public schools. [Full Bill](#)

SB 290 provides for a comprehensive school counseling program to be
(Government Relations, continued on page 4)

State of the Division Message, continued from page 1

During the 2019 LCA Annual Conference; School Counselors led their division with more than 300 registered conference attendees. I am optimistic **about what's to come.**

The recent unprecedented challenges presented by both a global pandemic and racial unrest has affected each of us one way or another and has further highlighted the need for school counselors to address the well-being (social and emotional needs) of our students, families and communities.

Louisiana School Counseling Association is dedicated to providing school counselors with a professional identity and membership in a dynamic organization dedicated to promoting the role of school counselors. LSCA encourages all school counselors to be members of their local, state (LSCA) and national (ASCA) school counseling associations.

We know that many of you are on summer break and we hope that this downtime from the hustle and bustle of your daily work will provide ample opportunity to take time for yourselves and your families.



“I cannot say whether things will get better if we change; what I can say is that they must change if they are to get better.”

– Georg Lichtenberg

“Denouncing evil is a far cry from doing good.”

– Philip Gourevitch

“When we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find our opportunities to make real change.”

— Ijeoma Oluo



Government Relations, continued from page 1

implemented in each public school in the state in order to support equitable access to public school counseling services. [Full Bill](#)

SB 291 requires the state Department of Education (DOE) to establish a program for training and certifying persons to be counseling volunteers. [Full Bill](#)

SB 340 provides for the state Department of Education to develop and implement a pilot program to provide an annual mental health screening to each student in participating school systems. [Full Bill](#)

SB 128 requires the principal, prior to suspending a student, to ensure that the student is assessed using an instrument, such as the Adverse Childhood Experiences Assessment developed by the Centers for Disease Control, that is designed to determine if the student has experienced trauma. Further, it requires the results of the assessment to be used to determine whether the student's behavior may be better addressed in a manner other than through suspension [Full Bill](#)

Thanks to Denise Latour and other LSCA members who have helped on the summation of the bills above

The Louisiana Register, May 2020 issue, Title 28, Education, Notice of Intent, Part CXV, Bulletin 741-Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Chapter 9, Scheduling 901, had a policy change concerning school counselors and graduating seniors. LSCA opposed the policy change presented by the BESE Board and issued a Position Statement addressing the rationale behind the Position Statement. Thanks to Dr. Wendy Rock (Co-chair of LSCA Government Relations), who is familiar with the Louisiana Register and noticed the policy change, which prompted LSCA to present a Position Statement.

If you are interested in becoming involved in bills relating to school counseling and mental health counseling in a school setting, please contact us either on our website (www.louisianaschoolcounselor.com) or through one of the LSCA board members. 🙌

LSCA Vice Presidents Report



From Hope to Perseverance

Miriam Davis, Elementary Vice President

Greetings everyone! I am excited that I get the opportunity to represent you one more year!

As we approach another school year, there is much discussion and uncertainty about the future of our schools. The pandemic and recent movements have redefined what is considered normal for us, our students, and their families.

Over the past few days, I have reflected on the article I wrote at the same time LAST year. I encouraged you to choose a theme or a word that would help you through the year. Last year, my word was HOPE. While it would still be appropriate for this year, I have chosen a new one: perseverance. Even though we will face many challenges this school year, we must press on with the hope of knowing that things will not always be this way. We must put into practice the same principle that we teach our students: never give up.

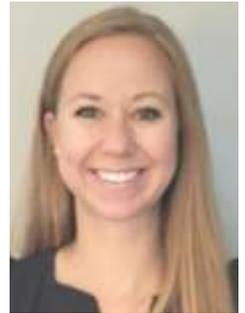
I would love to hear from you and know some of the awesome things that you are doing to help your students this school year! You can contact me by emailing me at mxdavis@lpssonline.com. Have a great school year!



Reports continue in next column

Sounds great! But now **what...**

Mary M. Speed, MA, NCC, LPC, Middle Level Vice-President



Hi everyone! Wow, what important times we are in. My name is Mary, and I will be serving as the Middle Level Vice-President for the 2020-2022 term. I graduated from Xavier University in 2017 and have been working as a **School Counselor in Gretna, LA since then. I've worked** with multiple grade levels ranging from K-9th and have clinical experience as well. I decided to run for this position to stay connected to fellow School Counselors, to be able to learn and grow as a professional, and to further advocate for our profession. One thing that I am focused on is advocating for professional developments and continuing education that incorporates **experiential and interactive sessions. I love learning, as I'm sure we all do. But, over the past year or so, I've found myself thinking... "This all SOUNDS GREAT! But NOW WHAT?!"** How are we putting theory into practice, and how are we fitting this ideal literature into our diverse world? So, let's see it. Let's see the sessions in action and how to practice your technique with real, applicable scenarios (especially in schools!).

In addition, wrapping back around to the important times, I would like to stay connected with you. I will be hosting a monthly virtual get-together. We will be able to stay connected, discuss current times, discuss how to better advocate for our students, and to simply support each other. I have seen a huge push in self-care over the past several years, and it is especially needed now. If you are anything like me, though, you may be tiiiiirreeedd of hearing about self-care, **but I do think it's important to connect with each other and have a safe space to be authentic about what's going on in our world.** We are all growing together; we will have a ton of

(Vice Presidents Reports, continued on page 6)

Vice Presidential Reports, continued from page 5

new questions; we will all need extra support. If you are interested, please email me for more information at maryspeed.ma@gmail.com.

I am ready to begin this new journey with you and am looking forward to connecting with you and learning with you. I hope to see you (in some fashion) at **the LCA conference in October and don't forget to list LSCA as your primary division!**



Thank You LSCA!
Amanda Duplantier, Middle School Vice President

I know it feels like so much and yet so little has happened in the last few months. I hope that you and your family and friends have stayed healthy and well. It has been a privilege to represent the high school counselors for the state of Louisiana. As I reflect on my time over the last two years as your Secondary Vice President I am beyond thankful for your support and feedback. I would like to thank the LSCA board and committee members for always being so knowledgeable.

As your term comes to an end, I would like to challenge YOU consider a role you can play in LSCA. The feedback and experience I gained was and is invaluable to me. I know that reading this right now are so many individuals who have great ideas and resources to share! I hope you will consider how you can become more involved in our amazing organization-send an email, attend a board meeting, or join a committee. We are better when we are all working together.

I hope whatever your fall semester looks like in your setting you take care of yourself and do not hesitate to reach out to myself or the board. Thank You!

Reports continue in next column

My Experience on the LSCA Board and Other Musings

Wendy Rock, Post Secondary VP 2018-2020



I have been so blessed in **my career but at first, I didn't** think so. Beginning as a teacher, I left work every day feeling so ineffective. My students were great; however, due to the lack of resources and support in the New Orleans public school where I taught, my limited teaching experience, and social issues that impacted student learning proved to be greater than my ability to overcome. I was **blessed because I didn't just despair** -- it led me to school counseling; I wanted to make a difference in the lives of my students and did not feel I could do that through teaching. I planned to be an elementary school counselor, but sometimes the universe has different ideas. I was offered a position as a high school counselor, where I stayed for nearly two decades. Desiring change and professional growth, I entered the doctoral program at the University of Holy Cross. One year after completing my Ph.D. I was offered a position as assistant professor of counseling at Southeastern Louisiana University. Now I have the privilege of preparing future counselors, including school counselors, to make a difference in the lives of their clients and students.

In addition to having a gratifying career, I have had the pleasure to serve on the Louisiana School Counselor Association (LSCA) Board since 2007 (minus a few years during my doctoral program). The experience of serving on the board has been a highlight in my career. In 2014, at the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) national conference, Michelle Obama said **in her keynote speech, "...we make all kinds of demands on our school counselors, but we often don't give you the support you need to meet**

*Vice Presidential Reports, continued
from page 5*

those demands. And this is unacceptable. School counseling should not be an extra or a luxury just for school systems that can afford it. School counseling is a necessity to ensure that all our young people get the education they need to succeed in **today's economy.** LSCA's Mission is **"To support professional school counselors as they assist students and their families in their academic, career, social/emotional development."** Through professional development, advocacy, support in the way of awards, scholarships, and grants, and sharing timely and relevant information through a variety of media like our website, Facebook group, Twitter, and newsletters, LSCA aims to provide support for school counselors that is so often lacking as First Lady Obama described.

My time as the Post-Secondary Vice President of LSCA has come to an end. I will stay involved with the LSCA Board through committee work. In particular, I will assist with Government Relations. Stepping into the role of Post-Secondary VP is Dr. Stephanie Eberts, Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University. She has already begun the work of planning a robust school counseling track at this **year's Louisiana Counseling Association (LCA) conference.** If you have any ideas or suggestions for professional development, I know Dr. Eberts will be more than happy to work with you. I am so grateful for the time I have spent in this position and feel confident that with Dr. Eberts in the role, we are in great hands.

Reports continue in next column

Next

Dr. Stephanie Eberts, In-coming Post-Secondary VP



It is a pleasure to begin serving as the Post-Secondary VP on the LSCA board. Over the past couple of years, I have been learning more about the wonderful work that LSCA does for school counselors in the state of Louisiana. For those of you who do not know me, I am a Louisiana native, born and raised in New Orleans. My studies and work have taken me to Georgia and Texas, but I am grateful to have returned to my home state in 2015 to begin working at LSU. I am deeply invested in training the next generation of counselors, and in my new role with LSCA, I will be focused on professional development for school counselors across the state. Right now more than ever, learning from each other and supporting one another is essential to navigating the pandemic, especially as it relates to our work in schools. As Dr. Rock, mentioned in her statement, the LSCA track at the LCA conference will provide some specific support on topics like student access and equity, trauma, self-care, LOFSA, and working with LGBTQIA students among others. As we continue to plan for this academic year, please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have some ideas or needs around professional development (seberts@lsu.edu). Though 2020 has been challenging thus far, I am very optimistic about our work together this year. 🍷



" Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."
— Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.



2020

LSCA TRACK

 Erin's Law
Emily Williams, Tamara Keys, Raney Chambers, Reynaud

 Trauma Response in Schools: What School Counselors Need to Know
Stephanie Eberts

 Do You Feel Me? Creating Connections with African American Students
Maya Galathe

 FAFSA: What You Need to Know
Chauntreniece Davis

 Is your Schools Multi-tiered System of Support Trauma Informed
Kelle Falterman and Jill Guss

 How COVID 19 May Help to Improve Equality and Access in Schools
Stephanie Eberts

 The Importance of Self Care and Positive Self Talk
Tara Washington

 Align Your School Counseling Program with Multi-Tiered System of Support
Wendy Rock

 Colorism Bullying in Schools
A'Rean Thornton Williams

 Working with LGBTQ+ Students: Why Language Matters
Sharae Vicnair

 Legal and Ethical Issues in School Counseling
Wendy Rock and Verna Estoque

 Comprehensive Program Building
Tara Washington

 Elementary, Middle and Secondary College and Career
Christopher Belser

 LSCA Area Networking Sessions

Register soon for the LCA Conference via the [TPN.Health link](#) You must join TPN — no cost for this — to register. And please list LSCA as your primary division, so that we get a conference rebate!!



Thank you for applying for a leadership position in the Louisiana School Counselor Association. Please submit all of your materials electronically to: Jarelle2npower@aol.com, Veronica Douglas-Johnson, Immediate Past President. Again, thank you for your interest in serving your professional organization.

Name: _____ LSCA Office Sought: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone: () _____ Cell: () _____

School/Office/Agency: _____

Work Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Preferred Email: _____

4 ATTACHMENTS:

1. A high resolution headshot that can be used for our website, the Cajun Counselor Newsletter, and for the Exhibit Hall Booth at LCA for Nominations and Elections voting
2. A brief, one paragraph bio, which includes your current job title and a brief job description
3. A one page statement of interest that addresses **each** of the following:
 - a. Your interest in serving in a LSCA leadership position;
 - b. Professional activities and organizations you are a member of or leader in;
 - c. Any special programs you initiated or in which you participated; and
 - d. Three goals you have for the position you are applying for
4. After sharing your intention to run for office with your supervisor, obtain and attach a completed Administrator's Commitment Form (see next page).

Nominee Statement

I understand and agree to fulfill the responsibility and obligations to the LSCA Office. I agree to release of my personal and professional data for the election process. I also agree to abide by the election policies and procedures as presented in the LSCA Nominations and Elections Policy.

Nominee Signature: _____

Date: _____



ADMINISTRATORS' COMMITMENT TO PERFORMANCE

To Counselor Administrators:

LSCA congratulates you and your institution for employing such an outstanding professional who seeks the nomination for state office in the Louisiana School Counselor Association, LSCA. As part of our election process, your school counselor has completed a Nomination Packet.

We recognize the need for cooperation and mutual understanding shared through commitments to professional activities. Based upon the nomination packet, responsibilities and expectations of the LSCA office, we request our endorsement and willingness to facilitate this commitment to performance:

I have reviewed the nomination of _____, school counselor who is running for LSCA Office and acknowledge his/her intent to pursue election to that position. I verify the above job title and job description as well as the nominee's office responsibilities.

Immediate Supervisor's Printed Name: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____

Editor's Note: Thanks to YOUR active membership, the board has expanded!! If you wish to contact any member of the LSCA Leadership, simply click on the email hyperlinks below! Many of these committees are still seeking members!

Louisiana School Counselor Association's Leadership Roster for 2020-2021

LSCA Officers

Dr. Ariel Encalade Mitchell,
President
Amitch11@xula.edu

Veronica Douglas-Johnson,
Past President
jarelle2npower@aol.com

Kesha Simmons,
President Elect
kmsimmons@caddoschools.org

Dr. Dymphna Davis,
President Elect Elect
phdddavis191307@gmail.com

Claire Barry, Secretary
chbarry@uno.edu

Pamela Radford, Treasurer

Vacant, Parliamentarian

Miriam Davis,
Elementary Level VP
miriamdavis77@gmail.com

Mary Speed, Middle Level VP
maryspeed.ma@gmail.com

Amanda Duplantier,
Secondary VP
Amanda.duplantier@gmail.com

Dr. Stephanie Eberts,
Post Secondary VP
seberts@lsu.edu

Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs

Awards Co-Chairs:
Danielle Cole and
Dr. Alice Cryer-Sumler,
dtcole@lpssonline.com
acryer-sumler@cox.net

Vacant,
Ethics Board and
Professional Certification

Pamela Radford*,
Finance

Chauntreniece Davis,
Graduate Student Rep.

Membership Committee:
Dr. Ariel Mitchell and all Vice
Presidents

Kesha Simmons,*
Long-Range Planning

Veronica Douglas-Johnson, *
Nominations & Elections

Brenda Eccles,
Policies/Procedures/By-Laws and
Government Relations
bdeccles@lpssonline.com

Vacant
Professional Development

Vacant for this year
Luncheon Program

Vinetta Frie, Publications
frienews@yahoo.com

Tara Washington,
Public Relations/Advocacy
twashington97@ebrschools.org

Vacant
Research Grant & Scholarship
Chair

Rachel Young, Social Media
Rachelyoung43@gmail.com

Leslie Lancaster,
Social Media @ Conference
LLancaster@lsdvi.org

Cathy Smith,
Technology/Website
catz80@gmail.com

***see first column for member's
contact information contact info**

2020
Counselors of the Year:
Laura Smestad, Elementary
Candace Sharper, Middle
Lindsay Carlino, Secondary

2021
Counselors of the Year:
(To be announced)



Cajun Counselor



Rouxfus

Your Newsletter Team ...

In addition to the authors of the great articles, the Cajun Counselor is created by an unseen team. Carefully reviewing each issue are Claire Barry, LSCA Secretary and Chautrice Davis, Graduate Student Award winner in 2020. Cathy Smith, LSCA Technology and Website Chair posts the final copy of the newsletter and maintains the online archive of LSCA documents. Thanks to the entire team, for keeping our division informed!

We're on the Web:

www.louisianaschoolcounselor.org

Cajun Counselor is the quarterly newsletter of the Louisiana School Counselor Association, LSCA. LSCA is the state branch of the American School Counselor Association, ASCA. LSCA is also the largest division in LCA, the LA Counseling Association. Total LSCA membership now exceeds 650 counselors statewide.

Submit articles to Vinetta Frie

frienews@yahoo.com

(please include LSCA in subject line)



Clawdette

Incoming President Elect-Elect-**Elect** ... Hello Again!

Dr. Dymphna Davis, Incoming LSCA Officer



Greetings LSCA, I am excited to serve and advocate for school counselors and the counseling profession as LSCA President-Elect-Elect 2020 – 2021. Last year, when I served as Middle School Vice President, I felt like I was just getting started. There is so much work to be done and I am ready to continue the work I have been diligently part of for the past year.

As President-Elect- Elect I plan to:

- 1) continue to expand the realm of advocacy focused on highlighting the value of having competent professional school counselors on staff to help with school climate and mental health services;
- 2) serve as a liaison between school counselors, the State of Louisiana, and LCA the board in efforts to continue sharing ideas that have been successfully implemented;
- 3) plan professional development opportunities for school counselors that empower school counselors to be confident in the services they provide to their students.

I am looking forward to continuing my service to LSCA Executive Board as President-Elect - Elect. If you would like to contact me please call (504) 356-2206 or contact me via email at phdddavis191307@gmail.com. 🙌

“To serve is beautiful, but only if it is done with joy and a whole heart and a free mind.”

– Pearl S. Buck

