

Cajun Counselor

Volume 17 Number 1

Fall 2011



LOUISIANA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

Cajun Counselor

LSCA is the state branch of the American School Counselor Association



Clawdette

Presidential View

Time For Change and Action

By Michael Lefort, LSCA President 2010-2011



In the tradition of LCA, a most successful conference was hosted this past September in Baton Rouge. Rich in professional development opportunities for Louisiana's school counselors, this conference is often the primary one where we gather as education professionals to advocate for school counseling, collaborate with peers, and display leadership, all to create systemic change...and, change has occurred. It's about time!

With the release of the Louisiana School Counseling Model, it was quite apparent that school counselors were hungry to receive education about this model and also acquire implementation ideas. I personally detected vast numbers of school counselors embracing this change and eager to take action and begin putting it in place. This prevailing attitude was indeed befitting of this year's theme, "***Time for Change; Time for Action.***"

As your president, I urge you to harness the positive energy you experienced at the conference. Whether you obtained it from one of the many productive sessions or from the inspiration by our luncheon speaker, Lafourche Parish Superintendent Jo Ann Matthews, gather those messages and apply them to your school counseling programs. As you know, once we return to "reality",

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Professional Development Opportunity

LSCA Partnership with the U. S. ARMY

Submitted by John Hudacek



The US Army would like to host a continuing education seminar for counselors in Louisiana in 2012 and we are looking for someone in the LSCA who would like to help plan this event to insure CEUs can be earned according to the needs of the counselors and the Association. The trip is to be paid for by the Army: transportation, lodging, food, all we would like are participants

(LSCA Partnership, continued on page 2)

Louisiana School Counselor Association Mission:

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

Crossroad for Secondary Counseling

By Frank J. Phinney, M.Ed.,
LPC, NCSC, NCC, Secondary
Vice President



As I begin my term as Secondary Vice-President for LSCA and only a month out from a wonderful LCA conference I am encouraged; encouraged to hear about the great things that other high school counselors are doing across Louisiana. When I first began my career as a school counselor there were only a handful of my colleagues who had implemented a comprehensive school counseling program; in a few short years that number has multiplied exponentially. I do not advocate smoking but the old Virginia Slims had said it best “we’ve come a long way baby!” Though we have made great strides I encourage you to not become complacent and to continue to expand your programs. Education in our state and the students we serve are at a crossroads; a crossroads that will place a heavy burden on the shoulders of school counselors.

In order for our profession to remain relevant it is important that you begin to emphasize career education in your school counseling programs. Career education should be the foundation of your program; a foundation that allows for students to be informed and explore viable career pathways. If we are to impact the students and communities we serve then we MUST increase the role that career plays in our programs. To be truly successful consider some of these ideas when implementing a career program:

- Establish working relationships with local community and technical colleges
- Develop partnerships with local businesses and industry
- Integrate career lessons across the curriculum
- Educate parents and guardians about career options
- Increase numbers of students participating in Industry Based Certification programs

(Crossroads for Secondary Counseling, continued on page 5)

Presidential View, continued from page 1

quite often, some of that energy wanes. We must always remain diligent and put into practice what we have learned and continue to show our worth in student success. We cannot become complacent anymore; today’s budgetary crises statewide will simply not allow it.

If you attended the conference, I thank you for your capitalizing on this professional growth opportunity. If you could not attend, I encourage you to network with peers who did and ask them to share their knowledge with you. It is more important than ever to remain professionally active. The presence of school counselors at LCA is always evident and the usual high numbers of school counselor attendance were once again noted. That, my colleagues, speaks volumes. We are professional school counselors who impact student achievement with data-driven services...we are not your “guidance counselors” anymore! ■



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who would like to earn some CEUs by learning about the 150 jobs that are available as a viable career option for young adults.

A similar session is conducted for the state of South Carolina, tying the 16 Federal career clusters with Army jobs: they already have a syllabus/outline of classes ready for reference, we just need someone to spearhead the effort to insure the training will meet Louisiana needs and desires.

If anyone is interested in helping in this endeavor, please contact: John Hudacek, Education Services Specialist Baton Rouge Recruiting Battalion via e-mail at John.Hudacek@usarec.army.mil or by phone at his office at (225) 769-1038. ■

Presenting the 2011 LSCA Award Winners

*By Deona Austin and Dr. Alice Cryer-Sumler,
Professional Recognition and Awards Co-Chairs*

The school counselors, family members and friends' professionalism and enthusiasm filled the room as we prepared for the special presentation of our most honored counselors and advocate this year. The warm greetings, friendly smiles and supportive comments in the room imparted a spirit of love, hope and caring. The Louisiana School Counselor Association was honored to acknowledge the work of school counselors at the Professional Recognition and Awards Luncheon Program.

This year, the Executive Board agreed to change the criteria to focus on counselors who are implementing a Comprehensive School Counseling Program. Therefore, in addition to submitting two letters of recommendation, nominees were asked to respond to two essay questions related to school counseling. We had nine submissions. Three emails were sent to district supervisors asking for nominations as well as their support in sharing the email with their building level administrators and one to all counselors who are members of LSCA.

We will continue to explore ways to increase nominations to recognize the many counselors who are providing services to all students as they attempt to implement a Comprehensive School Counseling Program, which advocates for service to all students.

Elementary School Counselor of the Year nominees:

- Anita Poole, Ossun Elementary School in Lafayette
- Karen Rothell, Riverside Elementary School in Caddo
- Kelly Parker, Westwood Elementary in Calcasieu

Article continues in next column

Middle School Counselor of the Year nominees:

- Jennifer Deason, Maple wood Middle School in Lafayette Calcasieu
- Beth Hebert , Welsh Roanoke Junior High School in Jeff Davis Parish
- Adrienne Kimball, Youngsville Middle School in Lafayette

Secondary Counselor of the Year nominees:

- Carol Brill, Caddo Magnet High School in Caddo
- Hollie Brasseaux, Acadiana High School in Lafayette

Advocacy nominee for the year:

- Jo Ann Matthews, Superintendent for Lafourche Parish School System

The 2011- 2012 Counselors and Advocate of the year in each category are as follows:

Mrs. Karen Rothell at Riverside Elementary School in Caddo Parish School System is the Elementary School Counselor of the year. She is very proud and excited that her district is moving toward full implementation of a comprehensive counseling program system wide. At her school she has



begun the process and developed a philosophy, mission statement, master calendar, and a delivery system that is both proactive and reactive to meet the needs of all students. She works with several systems support projects as many counselors are required to do such as HUG (Helping Us Grow) program to support students with behavioral needs with tier II interventions, and the testing coordinator. Her colleagues, parents and

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LSCA Awards, continued from page 3

students see her as the counselor who:

- Collaborates with teachers and provides guidance lessons in the classroom on a regular basis
- Facilitates the implementation of a year-long character education program
- Collaborates with parents to support students and the community through the local Kiwanis Chapter to recognize students who improve with academics and behavior
- Serves on the PBIS and school improvement teams

Analyzes data such as – DIBELS assessments, progress reports, discipline reports and creates graphs of progress share as she conferences with parents and students

Ms. Jennifer Deason at Maplewood Middle School in Calcasieu is the Middle School Counselor of the Year. She is very involved on several district and school level committees



for the implementation of a Comprehensive Counseling Program in her district. She advocates for students by helping them identify their own voices, accept responsibility for their choices, as well as how to and when to ask for help. She supports career exploration and planning by reviewing the results from EXPLORE in small groups and individually. In addition, she facilitates a special application process for jobs at the school where the students complete applications, write short essays, and ask their teachers for letters of recommendation. She understands her role with system support. For example, she collaborates with grade level and subject area teams weekly to address students' growth and areas of concern. Her colleagues and parents perceive her as the counselor who:

- Coordinates community resources for the First

Monday program, which addresses social issues such as bullying, technology and drug use

- Provides lesson plans for teachers to use
- Coordinates group counseling and peer mediation
- Reviews data and develops interventions for small groups

Makes an ongoing effort to ensure students and parents are heard, supported and a priority

Ms. Carol Brill is a counselor at Caddo Magnet High School in Shreveport is the Secondary Middle School Counselor of the Year. She is an advocate for students as she advocates for them in school and in the community. For example, she volunteers with St. Vincent de Paul where she does many home visits, communicates with legislators, and publishes the Counselors News, a weekly publication. She has also developed of a private blog for Caddo Counselors. To meet the needs of all students on topics that can benefit them, she provides classroom guidance lessons to students on the following topics: study skills, time management, self-esteem, college and career readiness planning programs which addresses the academic, personal and career needs of all students. In addition to advocating for the counselors and students at Caddo Magnet High School, Ms. Brill also supports counselors in other schools in the district. To increase students' opportunities at school and in life, she constantly monitors their progress by analyzing data from assessments, attendance, and discipline. Her colleagues and parents perceive her as the counselor who:

- Promotes and enhances the learning process for all students, specifically trying to eliminate barriers for marginalized students
- Adds additional guidance classes and programs for parents to help them understand TOPS and the curriculum requirements
- Makes as many calls and home visits as necessary to support students
- Spends countless hours meeting the needs of students during the day and after school
- Puts her own needs aside to serve others

Article continues in next column

(LSCA Awards, continued on page 10)

Relationships Are Key

By Kelly Hinote,
Counselor Intern,
Louisiana State
University



As a graduate student in school counseling, I have found myself on a path of self-discovery and learning. My path is an awkward one; I feel as if I am nearly bursting with knowledge, while I simultaneously wonder if I will ever know enough to succeed. Through all the confusion of this awkward time, I have found myself examining the theme of relationships in school counseling. As much respect as I have always had for students, educators, and parents in schools, I never realized just how vital cultivating strong, positive, and healthy relationships with the other school stakeholders would be.

Relationships with the students have actually come pretty naturally. Counseling is what I have studied and trained to do, and notwithstanding the ups and downs, it is the one type of relationship I was prepared to work on. Being able to relate to the other counselors at the school has also fit within the prior perceptions that I held about this profession. What has surprised me, though, is how much effort I must place into my relationships with parents and educators at school. Saying it out loud makes it seem very obvious, but I think too often we forget to focus on how important it is for us to be generous in our interactions with parents and educators.

We all know how important parental involvement is to the success of students. We see the difference academically, as well as socially and emotionally. When parents play an active role in education, everyone wins. What happens, though, when a parent seems uninvolved or disengaged in the student's educational process? Often the assumption is made that the parent does not care or is unwilling to be



Ethics and Facebook

Submitted by Walda Gibbs,
Ethics Chair

When conveniences such as technology become so much a part of our everyday lives, we often fail to consider the consequences of our actions. However, we are responsible both legally and ethically for our ac-

tions.

First and foremost, we must keep in mind the Louisiana law that requires, "Any communication between school employees and students outside the school-provided system must be reported by the employee and logged by the school board."

Below are some recommendations from ASCA*:

- Myspace and other social networking sites can easily create dual relationships between you and your students if you don't exercise caution. A student befriending a school counselor on social networking sites could constitute a dual relationship.
- A response approach from an ethical school counselor will also include policy and implementation. As an educational leader, you can assimilate the research literature and propose school policies that will protect students while also protecting the integrity and

(Ethics and Facebook, continued on page 6)

*Crossroads for Secondary Counseling, continued
from page 2*

These are just a few ideas that I have begun working on in my school. If you have things that you are doing to make careers more visible, please share them on the LSCA Facebook page. ▣



Ethics and Facebook, continued from page 3

intent of the school’s Facebook page.

- Technology is here to stay, but not in the same forms as we know it now. As this element of the world grows, it changes our culture. With each new technological discovery, unintended consequences erupt that often affect students. We can’t afford to bemoan the ever-changing cyber-world and all the hassles it may cause. We must intervene and protect our students, using whatever means available.

*Excerpts from ASCA’s website ▣

Candid photo from the Awards Luncheon.

Photo by Jackie Bennedik



LSCA By-Laws Changes for 2011

By Wendy Rock, By-Laws Chair

At the 2011 LCA Annual Conference held in Baton Rouge in September, the membership voted to approve six changes to the LSCA Bylaws. The proposed

changes were published in the previous edition of the Cajun Counselor. The changes have been made and LSCA's most current Bylaws are posted on the website and are available for viewing. ▣

Relationships Are Key, continued from page 1

involved. This is a potentially harmful assumption for us to make. Times are tough, and parents often have to work hard just to make ends meet. Parents cannot always be involved even when they want to be. Instead of believing the worst and making assumptions, we need to be positive and uplifting, providing parents the opportunities they need to engage in their child’s education. As counselors, we can try to meet the needs of students and parents—offering education, resources, and referrals.

Another relationship dynamic we should be looking more closely at is our communications and collaborations with educators. At times our dealings with educators may be strained or difficult. Educators are often the gatekeepers for our access to students and student information. It can be very easy to feel as if we are competing for time with the students. But it is crucial to remain conscious of the fact that educators also have responsibilities both towards the individual students, as well as to the class and the school. Educators do not always work in a supportive environment, and they may lack encouragement and empathy at work. We, as counselors, are strategically positioned to create a more holistic and healthy atmosphere in schools. Strengthening our relationships with educators will assist us

(Relationships Are Key, continued on page 7)



Mike Lefort recognizing Diane Austin for outstanding service to LSCA at the Awards Luncheon in September

From the Mouths of Babes: Advocating for LGBT youth

By: Latrisha Dean, Graduate Student



Recent reports of suicide attempts and suicides among LGBT youth have sparked national attention on discrimination against this population. However, what remains alarming is that this issue is still very much a harsh reality for many students in secondary education. To gain deeper insight of this pressing issue, I attended a Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) meeting at a local high school and encountered a group of incredible young people. The meeting was designed to address advocacy initiatives for LGBT students, but it developed into a discussion on the impact of anti-gay bullying at their school. They painted a vivid picture of the torture they endured regularly and described their experiences as “terrible,” coupled with a daily fear for their lives. The hatred, the looks of scorn, the bullying prohibits them from reaching their full potential. Dejectedly, they stated that no one has offered to help them—until now.

Sadness and hopelessness filled the room, as I listened to their cries for help. My heart ached. My mind raced with questions. Where is the support? Who can these students go to for help? Why isn’t anybody listening? With focus solely on student achievement, issues such as LGBT bullying are ignored barriers that make it difficult for students to learn. Anti-gay

(From the Mouths of Babes, continued on page 8)

Relationships Are Key, continued from page 4

in our profession, and it will also help foster a healthier (more open, honest, empathetic) environment in general.

Our interactions with educators are necessarily different than our interactions with parents, but the principle is very similar. Relationships matter in counseling. How we choose to interact and communicate with others impacts our performance. As we rapidly approach the holidays, we should be examining how we approach the people around us. It is time to think about

(Relationships are Key, continued on page 9)

Welcome New and Returning LSCA Members!

By Diane Austin, LCA Executive Director

Amanda Arsenaux

Dawn Aucoin

Nicole Aucoin

Stacie Ausbon

Ashley Brady

Melinda Breaux

Stephanie Britt

Massey Burnette

Tamarie Butcher

Chastity Craven

Victoria Crawford

Jenny Crowe

Keisha Daisy-Bolden

Crissie Daugereaux

Sadie David

Dymphna Davis

Latrisha Dean

Christina Dominique-Pierre

Lindsay Dornier

Stephanie Ducros

Shawn Dunn

Kimberly Ester

Barbara Gray

Elizabeth Guidry

Allison Guilbeau

Jessica Guillory

Casey Hayes

(Welcome, continued on page 8)

Elementary Greetings!

By Nancy Blanchard, Ed.S, NCC/
NCSC, LPC

LSCA Elementary Vice President



What a wonderful conference in September! Even though it was short, there were lots of super presentations, especially on career topics. Our elementary sharing session was very early in the morning, but the early birds who made it had some super ideas. They are downloaded on LSCA Scene file cabinet. I have invited those who signed in at the sharing session to join ASCA Scene.

I have also posted my power point from the presentation “Elementary Classroom Career Counseling,” and a list of ready-to-use classroom games, along with a list of websites. This list was compiled for the career presentation, but it has links to lots of lesson plans and activities related to elementary counseling. If you take the time to follow some of the links, you will find tons of ideas from other states to print out and use immediately.

Elementary school counselors all over the state owe a huge “thank you” to Brenda Eccles and Jennifer Curry for serving on the Louisiana Blue Ribbon Committee for Educational Excellence. They advocated for our profession in a big way, and I
(Elementary Greetings, continued on page 9)

From the Mouths of Babes, continued from page 5

bullying in schools must cease in order to maximize student success. Attending this meeting ignited a greater passion in me to advocate for this population. As a counseling student and future school counselor, I’m committed to increasing awareness of LGBT issues, joining allies, and combating the spirit of discrimination against this group. I heard the cries from the mouths of babes. Now, it is time for action. Join me.

For more information about promoting equitable treatment for all students and resources for creating safe spaces in schools, visit <http://www.glsen.org> (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network). Also, visit www.tolerance.org for more information on teaching and supporting diverse populations and order a free copy of the powerful documentary, *Bullied: A Student, a School and a Case that Made History*. ■

Welcome New & Returning LSCA Members, continued from page 5

Beth Hebert
Terrilee Hill
Brandi Hodges
Shamika Spikes Hooker
John Hudacek
Allison Jones
Alicia Kelly
Eric Knatt
Carolyn Lanaux
Keena Lewis
Zinnia Lewis
Dana Hebert
Vickie Harter
Renata Mahoney
Jessie McCaa
Sherry McHarg
Ashleigh Meaux
Terri Musso
Lauren Myers
Juterh Nmah
Rochelle Orgeron
Robin Pardo-Jackson
April Pierce
Janis Parker
Stephan Pruitt
Barbara Richard
Denise Sanchez
Michel C. Sanders
Shannon Saulsberry

(Welcome, continued on page 10)

*More photos from the
LSCA Awards Luncheon
Photos by Jackie Bennedik*



Relationships Are Key, continued from page 5

how we can forge new relationships, and strengthen the ones we already have. We have such amazing capacity to learn from ourselves and to make change in our own lives. Now is the time to give thought to where you want your relationships to be. ■

Elementary Greetings, continued from page 7

I am confident that the recommendations made by the committee will enable us to be more effective in our work with children.

This is my second term as Elementary Vice President for LSCA. I am proud to work with such caring professionals on the Board and have learned a lot about what goes on at the state level. I would encourage you to consider stepping up and representing your colleagues on this level. Everyone has something to share, and it could be a rewarding experience for you. Think about it! ■





LSCA Awards, continued from page 4

Mrs. Jo Ann Matthews, Superintendent of Lafourche Parish School System, received the Advocacy Award of the Year. Two years ago, Superintendent Matthews set a vision for school counseling in Lafourche Parish Public Schools. Surprisingly, in this age of budget cuts, she created a new position to assist in the implementation of her vision for counselors. Mr. Mike Lefort, our LSCA



president, was hired as the counselor coordinator. He is charged with the oversight and implementation of the school counseling model in all schools. Mrs. Matthews realizes the unique contributions school counselors can have on students' success and honors their work. She allows the school counselors in Lafourche Parish School System to do the work they were trained to do. That is, she allows counselors to provide services to all students through the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program.

School counselors in the district are the only department (ranging from maintenance through supervisory staff) that have not been cut through Reduction in Force. In fact, an extra school counselor was hired this year to replace the one who shared two schools. Her continued support is evident in Lafourche Parish Schools counseling programs and she serves as a prime example that the implementation of the professional school counseling model starts with the vision of one person.

A Special thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate our colleagues for these awards and recognition and to the counselors who volunteered to read the submissions. We salute our 2011 – 2012 nominees and Counselors/Advocate of the Year in each category. ■

Welcome New & Returning LSCA Members, continued from page 5

Pasha Sceroler
Amanda Scobel
Carla Shelton
Sandy Shields
Janet Smith
Bambi Spangler
Catharine Spears
Cindy Stafford
Kristin Tarcza
Vanessa Tolar
Michelle Vaughn
Julie Vincent

Mary Catherine Waguespack
Chantell Walker
Jerri Watler-Schexnayder
Jennifer Willem
Lou Worthington
Katie Young



With much thanksgiving for your continued membership and active participation. Have a happy and safe holiday season!

LSCA Election Results

By Brenda Eccles, Past LSCA President

Congratulations to our winners:

Mr. Frank Phinney, President Elect

Ms. Tara Washington, Elementary/Middle School Vice President

Dr. Mary Ballard, Post Secondary Education Vice President



Cathy Smith, President Elect, Brenda Eccles, Past President and Mike Lefert, current President at the podium

*Mike Lefert, and keynote speaker, Jo Ann Matthews with Dr. Alice Cryer-Sumler and Diona Austin, LSCA Awards Committee Co-Chairs
Photos by Walda Gibbs on pages 3, 4, and 11*



**Louisiana School
Counselor Association**

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 620 counselors statewide.

Submission Deadlines:

Aug. 14, Oct. 29, & Dec. 28, 2010

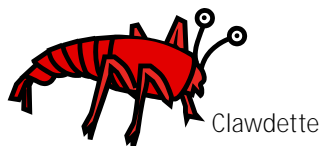
Feb. 12 & June TBA, 2010

Submit articles to Vinetta Frie,

Cajun Counselor Editor:

frienews@yahoo.com

One Voice, One Vision



We're on the Web:

www.louisianaschoolcounselor.org

Questions, Concerns or Comments?
Please contact our Technology
Chair, Wendy Durant, via wendy-qdurant@gmail.com



**Louisiana School Counselor Association
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