



NORTHWEST MISSOURI SCHOOL COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION

COUNSELORS - HELPING - COUNSELORS NEWSLETTER

– April 2010 –

Outstanding Counselors Recognized

Each year Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association recognizes those who provide exemplary support of counseling and guidance services. This year we recognized three outstanding individuals at the spring meeting March 12.



The Elementary Counselor for 2009-10 is **Mrs. Cami Aebersold** (pictured with sons Collin and Coby) from Ellis Elementary, Clinton County R-II School District. Cami has transformed her elementary position from one where the majority of time was filled with non-guidance activities into a job where student contact has become first and foremost.

Her office is the hub of activity where students are checking in to monitor their attendance, sharing journal entries, divulging issues they are having, or recounting some great feat they have accomplished. Cami visits 15 classrooms each week, hosts groups based on students needs, and offers support to the entire school. Along with several staff members she has organized a Kids Care Club which promotes service projects with the elderly, the environment, the school, and the needy. She has also become a Pen Pal to students who struggle with the writing process. This allows her to learn more about her students as they practice their skills. Her strong interest in at risk students has led Cami to organize high school students and teachers as mentors for elementary at risk kids. She is a team player who doesn't use the word "no". She serves on the PLC Leadership Team, the Academic Cadre, and helped develop the building's Response to Intervention and Positive Behavior Support. Cami is a true advocate for counselors. She has served NWMSCA in a variety of positions including being a past president.

The K-12 Counselor is **Mrs. Linda Denton**, counselor from Pattonsburg R-II. She has one of those positions that anyone who hasn't tried may not understand. It doesn't matter how many or how few students are in the school. Linda has to know EVERYTHING. On any given day she may be dealing with a kindergartener's separation anxiety, the drama of



middle school girls, and helping a student contact a military recruiter. The major focus of her guidance curriculum is character education and careers. She stresses the importance of service projects and partnering with others. Additional duties include NHS Sponsor, Smokebusters, District Test Coordinator, MOSIS reporter, Selective Service Representative, Registrar, grant writer, Scholarships/Financial Aid/ACT facilitator, and monthly columnist for the school newspaper. Linda is very active in her local community, and as it is in most small schools, serves as assistant principal when the need arises. She works closely with other multi-level counselors and serves on NWMSCA's governing board. Linda wears many different hats each and every day.



The School Counselor Educator for 2009-10 is **Dr. Shelly Hiatt**, Director of the Master's School Counseling Program of Northwest Missouri State University. She is a woman who has made monumental contributions to the field of school guidance and counseling in the state of Missouri. Shelly has spent years building her program into a rigorous course of study that

consistently produces award winning school counselors and is dedicated to promotion of the Missouri Comprehensive Model for school counselors.

Dr. Hiatt is often described as one who has a strong dedication to scholarly activity. She has served as editor for The Counseling Interviewer as well as having a strong publication record. Often she is called on to teach overloaded classes on the college level. A major accomplishment of Dr. Hiatt's was her spearheading the Building Bridges Program, a regional effort to bring together high school teachers, counselors, and university professors to explore college readiness issues. She facilitates a mentoring program for School Counselors, pairing up and supervising the activities of professional school counselors and new counselors just out of graduate school. Shelly is an amazing woman, and if it were not for her diligence and hard work, many members of NWMSCA would not be the school counselors that they are today.

These three women along with **Dr. Tyran Sumy**, Counselor Advocate award winner, will be submitting nomination packets to the Missouri School Counselors Association in early June. State award winners will be recognized at the MSCA Fall Conference in November.

–Submitted by Debbie Fite & Natalie Adkins

Presidential Perspective



by Sharon Evans, NWMSCA President



The cowboy culture is still alive, evidenced by the young men and women competing at rodeos across our country. We all choose the life style we live. Although many people blame the economy, their jobs and other external factors for becoming stressed out; we all choose how we deal with life around us. The rodeo camaraderie exemplifies, "Live well, Laugh often, Love much".

We left early for the most recent high school rodeo on our spring schedule. A blizzard was poised to hit the Midwest and we hustled to set up camp before it reached us, getting to sleep well after midnight on Friday night. Our rig has a six by seven foot living area that can sleep three, created with recycled barn wood, a hanging denim bunk and a fold away bed. Thankfully, it can be heated and cooled with a generator we purchased during an ice storm several years ago.

The rodeo started slightly behind schedule because the

stock contractor who was to provide calves, bulls and broncs had trouble with the worsening road conditions. Because we were blessed with an enclosed arena the competition went on. Despite the cold temperatures, snow accumulation of nearly ten inches, followed by rain and eventually a solid layer of ice which took out the electrical power, cowboys and girls rode nearly ten hours on Saturday and again on Sunday.

Several families brought in generators to run the arena lights, timer and speaker system and after the arena had to close their restrooms, people with toilet facilities in their trailers shared them. The family parked next to us even shared their shower. We could have complained, grown irritable or angry because of weather that was out of our control; instead we snuggled in, stayed warm and enjoyed the time with our daughter, the youngest of five children.

We have made new friends, met new challenges and have a multitude of memories to carry with us. Live well, Laugh often, Love much; not always the easiest thing to do, but the clearest way to appreciate the moment, keep your sense of humor alive and love the way you choose to live your life. Your attitude is the single most important part of your life, choose well.

Thank you for a wonderful year as NWMSCA President, what an awesome group of people to be surrounded by. Making memories, enjoying old friends and finding new ones, while meeting the challenges of the profession we have chosen; making a difference in the lives of children.

New Officers Elected

By Michele Veasey, Past President

We are pleased to have elected two new officers to the NWMSCA Governing Board. Geoff Heckman will serve as Secretary, and Laura Shelton will serve as Elementary Vice President. Both new officers come to us from the Savannah R-III School District. We thank them for offering their service and look forward to their guidance throughout the upcoming year.

Counselors Support Unique Therapy Opportunity for Students

By Kristine Carey

Broken Creek Youth Ranch exists to promote and improve physical, mental, and social wellbeing through equine assisted learning, therapy, and therapeutic riding. This organization provides unique, highly effective, equine assisted therapy programs. They provide these services to the youth they assist at no charge to the child or their families. Their funding relies on the generous support of others, which is why they were selected as the NWMSCA Human Rights campaign for the spring. In total, \$130 was raised in donations at our Spring District Meeting!

If you would like additional information regarding their valuable programs or would like to make an additional donation you can contact Broken Creek Youth Ranch at 816-261-8307 or brokencreekyouthranch@gmail.com. The Ranch is located in Stewartville, MO, and is also looking for volunteers to help run these beneficial programs, please contact them if you are interested in helping them with their worthy endeavor.

Spring Meeting

Submitted by Kim Hill, President-elect

The annual spring meeting was held Friday, March 12th at Empower U. All those in attendance were fortunate to hear a presentation by Mrs. Linda Kozminski, MSW, on anxiety. Mrs. Kozminski shared that the number of students affected by anxiety is on the rise in her private practice, and she does not see it getting better any time soon due to the high level of stress and anxiety many parents are experiencing in these difficult times.

Her presentation began with an overview of how anxiety originates in the brain and its effects on the body. She explained why logical reasoning does not work with students who are in the middle of a full-fledged anxiety or panic attack. She shared a packet of strategies for helping students who suffer from anxiety that includes the following topics:

- Therapeutic Toolbox for Working with Anxiety in Children
- Four Common Roadblocks
- Four Basic Skills for Reducing the Symptoms
- The Obedient Student versus The Responsible Student
- What Do We Do to Help?

She also offered tips for selecting an outside mental health professional to share with parents advising them to be smart consumers when making a selection.

NWMSCA appreciates the generous time Mrs. Kozminski shared with us from her busy private practice schedule and academic pursuits. Her presentation was timely and informative, and judging by counselor comments, contained worthwhile information to take back and use when counseling students individually for this problem.

Power of Commitment

By Glenda Fine, Elementary V.P.

Troubling times: budget cuts – affecting every aspect of our jobs; trying economy – affecting the homes from where our students come (on top of the everyday challenges many of them face); uncertainty everywhere.

With the exception of one thing – our students. We can be certain they will keep coming to us no matter what and they will continue to expect us to teach them and help them grow. As educators, we all entered this field for a love of children and a love of learning. As counselors we took that love one step further – to helping guide young people. We begin with helping them develop personal and social skills – making friends and keeping them. We stand closely by throughout their academic development and we continue to help guide their career paths. With our roles as guidance counselors comes great power and as Spiderman was once told, “with great power comes great responsibility.”

One of our greatest powers is the power of commitment. As Kenneth Blanchard said, “There’s a difference between interest and commitment. When you’re interested in doing something, you do it only when it’s convenient. When you’re committed to something, you accept no excuses; only results.” So now we have a choice to make. Are we interested in being good guidance counselors or are we committed to being the best guidance counselors we can be? Commitment changes things. Commitment leads to success.

Think about other areas of your life where you are committed -your marriage, your family, your exercise routine, your favorite TV show, book or store. What do you mean when you say you’re committed to one of those? Let’s look at family. Whatever your role (parent, child, sibling, or spouse) are you your best in that role only time to time – when it’s convenient or are you committed to those around you full time? Regardless? (Even when you’re sound asleep at 2:00 in the morning and someone calls your name?) When do you experience the best results with an exercise plan – when it’s convenient or when you’re committed? How do you feel if you miss an episode of your show or a big sale at your store?

Now let’s put that focus and those feelings into our roles as professional school counselors. Just how committed are we? These are uncertain times – career ladder, summer school, Race to the Top – who knows what it all means or where it will take us? What we do know is that students are counting on us. It’s time to consider our level of commitment. Are we at a full level or have we been struggling and sliding?

I’d like to leave you with two thoughts. One, take the summer to enjoy yourself and your commitments outside of school. Relax and rejuvenate. And, two, plan on coming back in the fall fully committed and with the support of other counselors in the Northwest district. Just as having a partner to cheer you on at the gym can help you stay focused and committed, so can surrounding yourself with a supportive community of counselors. There is no better team to be a part of as a school counselor than the Northwest District of MSCA!

Upcoming Events

- May 9 Happy Mother's Day!
- June 23-24 Character Education Conference in St. Louis
- July 26-29 MOACTE Summer Conference in Springfield
- Oct. 6-7 My Success Event
- Nov. 7-9 MSCA Fall Conference at Tan-Tar-A

Summer Workshops

This summer, the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg and DESE are offering a Summer Counselor Institute. Check out www.ucmo.edu/workshops.

The 16th Annual Character Education Conference is June 23-24, 2010. Hyatt Regency Hotel, St. Louis, Mo. Go to www.characterplus.org for details.

American School Counselor Association Annual Summer Conference is July 3-6 in Boston. The theme is “Celebrate School Counseling”. Go to www.schoolcounselor.org for more details and registration information.

Dennis Wins Scholarship

by Linda Denton Scholarship Co-Chair

Erin Dennis, K-12 guidance counselor from North Nodaway R-VI School for the cities of Hopkins and Pickering, is the 2010 recipient of the Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association Scholarship. Her award was announced at the March 12th NWMSCA Spring Meeting hosted by NWMSU and held at the Empower U building located in St. Joseph.

In her application, when asked why she wanted to become a school guidance counselor, Erin replied, “In the beginning I felt my life’s goal was in social work, but here I am a K-12 School Counselor working and enjoying it even though it’s sometimes challenging because of the varied backgrounds of our students.” My thoughts are: “If a child is having trouble at home, how can they be expected to learn about grammar, mathematics, or science? Children must know that school is a safe place where education is important and their opinions and feelings are valued. I want to make a difference in those children’s lives by making their school years a positive and fulfilling experience.”

Her elementary principal, Brenda Dougan, cites our winner as the calm in stressful situations. Perhaps best summarizing our winner, her principal quotes, “She seems to have an instinct to know how and when to act and react to each situation to help achieve the most positive outcome possible. We are very fortunate to have her on our staff at North Nodaway.”

What a great recommendation!

Erin is pursuing a master’s degree in school guidance and counseling at Northwest Missouri State University.

The Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association is proud to sponsor this \$300 scholarship in an effort to encourage qualified educators toward gaining school guidance counselor certification. NWMSCA again congratulates Erin Dennis and wishes her much success as she pursues her professional goals.

Now Is The Time – MoACTE-July 26-29, 2010

Submitted by Sandy White

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Come one, come all! By order of all MOACTE committees I am commanded to invite you to attend a Career and Technical Educators celebration that is bound to excite and whet your appetite for more! "When is this celebration?" you say and "Where can I get more information?" Just go to www.mo-acte.org to learn all you can about this marvelous collection of both public school educators and Career and Technical educators who are just waiting to share their information with you and make your life easier while assisting your students in planning for their future roles.

The celebration begins at the 10:00 a.m. General Session held in the Springfield Expo Hall on Tuesday, July 27 with recognitions and awards followed by speaker Dr. Rita Pearson, a professional educator from Houston, TX. She has been a regular education teacher, special education teacher, counselor, assistant principal and consultant. She implemented a school/community involvement program and has trained in-school crisis teams for students in need of immediate intervention. She follows the teachings of Dr. Ruby Payne and has presented numerous workshops for Dr. Payne. Hidden rules of behavior, language register, resources, intervention, discipline and creating relationships are the major topics to be discussed in understanding and successfully teaching children who suffer from economic realities.

From the General Session, celebrants can take advantage of the myriad workshops planned for your CTE experience that are held at the Ramada Oasis. You can learn of legal updates, the ACTE/MoACTE connection and PSRS benefits. In addition, counselors along with MSNA and MACS personnel can attend workshops designed just for them that include Converting PowerPoints into YouTube Videos, Missouri Connections: Ideas You Can Use, Perkins Update, Are You

Getting Bitter or Better, by Sue Utter, Developing a Career Companion Document In Your School, DESE Update, Financial Aid Tips and Updates, MOSIS Update, Bringing Learning To Life, Individual Planning: Programs of Study and Personal Plans of Study, Team Building Activities and many, many more. Just go to that web site mentioned earlier and get the list along with descriptions so you will be in the know for this great celebration!

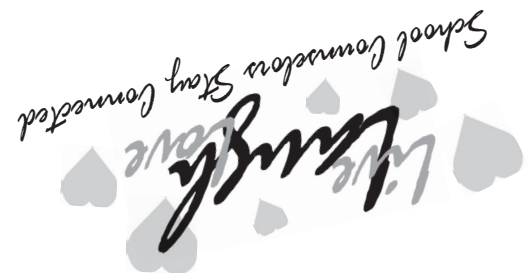
Oh yes, all celebrations must have food and fun! Tuesday night there is a tailgate at the Ramada Oasis Conference Center and Wednesday night an all Divisions Social at the same location. There are two swimming pools, one indoor and one outdoor. There is also a fitness center for Ramada Oasis guests. Counselors who get their registration and room information in early can stay right at the Ramada Oasis where all the fun and activities are held. During your down time you can take advantage of the offerings at the Ramada Oasis or search out all the wonderful shopping opportunities, antiques shops and restaurants for all sorts of appetites and cuisines.

Come and celebrate with other Missouri counselors and CTE educators. It's a low cost summer time get away for you and your family just before the start of another school year! See ya there!

LET'S CELEBRATE!!

This newsletter sponsored by:
**NORTHWEST MISSOURI
 STATE UNIVERSITY**

Maryville, Missouri



Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association
 Laura Shelton, Newsletter Editor
 Minnie Cline School
 808 W. Price Ave.
 Savannah, MO 64485