



# Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association

*Counselors Helping Counselors*

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December 2013



## *Presidential Perspective*

**Shelly Vertin**  
NWMSCA President

### Greetings Fellow School Counselors!

Welcome to the Holidays! Ready or not, it is that time of year again. We are busy everywhere – at home, in our churches, in our community, shopping, baking, wrapping, etc. And last, but not least, we are busy in our schools! We have many students who struggle this time of year – missing the presence and support of a deceased parent or grandparent, feeling the stress of their parents' struggles at home, and a myriad of other issues. It always catches me off-guard the number of students who dread the holidays because of the extended time they *have* to stay home! Some will come right out and say it, and others who either feel bad saying it or can't really identify their mixed emotions, may come to us just to talk. Also, there are times when our fellow staff members seek us out for support and encouragement.

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## NWMSCA Fall Meeting: Power Pose, Leadership, and Self-Care

by Laura Shelton, Secretary

On September 27, 2013 our annual NWMSCA fall meeting was held at Missouri Western State University. We were greeted by the Assistant Director of Admissions, Tyson Schank. He encouraged us as counselors to use a power pose to increase our willingness to try new things and feel confident. We can also teach our students this technique.

Master Sergeant Brent Young from the Missouri Army National Guard discussed recruiter recognition and introduced the audience to each recruiter and the areas they serve.

Sandy White spoke about four critical bills that were defeated thanks in part to the efforts of the Missouri Public School Retirement System organization and encouraged us to stay abreast of legislation. Charlene Piel reminded everyone to attend the upcoming System of Support meetings in October.

Geoff Heckman was presented with a plaque in gratitude of his service as NWMSCA President for the 2012-13 school year. He thanked everyone for their support during his term and encouraged everyone to get involved in leadership roles. We also received great news that Kay Moore and Jody Nelson would be recognized as state winners at the MSCA Fall Conference! They were honored at the awards ceremony at Tan-Tar-A.

NWMSCA was able to award a counselor with a scholarship for \$100 to assist with costs of going to the MSCA fall conference. The recipient this year was Angela McDaniel, counselor at Winston. This is a new scholarship that our organization will continue to fund. Students who are seeking certification as a school counselor may apply for the \$300 scholarship NWMSCA offers to help with university costs.

After the business meeting, members moved across the hall to hear our speaker, Roxanne Renee, speak about the "Seven R's of Mental Mojo." Members enjoyed breakfast and lunch thanks to Missouri Western State University and the Missouri Army National Guard.

## Perspective . . . — Continued from Page 1 —

At the end of some days – we are but a shell of the person we were when we woke that morning!

Hopefully, this is when the **leader** in all of us steps up and is a role model of “self-care”.

The speaker at our Fall Meeting, Roxanne Renee, offered her “Seven R’s: The Secrets of Mental Mojo.” She included proven, very doable lifestyle choices that support our mental wellness. I personally have added some of the vitamin supplements suggested and switched to using stevia, and have noticed a positive difference. Now if I can just make regular exercise a priority! If you missed Roxanne’s presentation, I would highly recommend her book: *Laughing Again: A Survivor’s Guide to Healing Depression*.

This holiday season, give a gift to yourself. *Say yes to the dress (or to a pedicure, or a hot chocolate with your children, or anything else you would enjoy) and say no to stress!*

May the peace of Christmas fill your hearts. Enjoy the break from school and the time with your family and friends.

Take care, Shelly

## NWMSCA SCHOLARSHIP

Which counselor-in-training will be our 2014 winner? Perhaps you have someone in mind right now! **Don’t wait!**

The applicant has an opportunity to be awarded a \$300 scholarship just by filling out a form! All that needs to be done is go to the NWMSCA website at [www.NWMSCA.org](http://www.NWMSCA.org), click the “Application/Forms” link, and proceed to the NWMSCA Scholarship. From there, just key in your application information.

It is that simple, so get started on helping a student taking graduate classes toward a school guidance and counseling degree get some extra money!

**All applications must be postmarked or submitted on or before February 1, 2014**

Additional information can be obtained from

Kim Schank at [kim.schank@sjsd.k12.mo.us](mailto:kim.schank@sjsd.k12.mo.us)

OR Lorraine Bowers at [Lorraine.bowers@sjsd.k12.mo.us](mailto:Lorraine.bowers@sjsd.k12.mo.us)

What can you find  
on the  
NWMSCA website?  
[www.nwmsca.org](http://www.nwmsca.org)

by Becky Houtchens, Technology

### 2013-14 membership list

- Includes members’ names, schools, and contact information. Great for networking.

### 2013-14 Critical Incident Teams

- Find out who to contact for support in the event of a crisis or critical need.

### Applications/Forms

- Counselor Advocate of the Year nomination form (due Jan 9, 2014)
- Counselor of the Year nomination form (due Feb. 14, 2014)
- Counselor-in-training Scholarship application form (due Feb. 1, 2014)

### Past and present NWMSCA newsletters

### School counselor websites maintained by NWMSCA members

- Add yours to the list using the contact form on that page

### Contact Form

- Use this for any questions, comments, concerns regarding NWMSCA.

## Send newsletter submissions to:



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# Change Your Brain, Change Your Life

by Glenda Fine, President-Elect

“Change Your Brain, Change Your Life” was the theme of the Northwest MSCA Fall Speaker, Roxanne Renee. Having suffered and recovered from suicidal depression, Roxanne shared simple, daily steps we all can take for better mental and emotional health. Roxanne’s combination of scientifically researched information and her own personal experience kept audience members entranced. For someone who has suffered so much, she was able to apply humor and keep the heavy topic of suicide from weighing everyone down. Her “Seven R’s for Mental Mojo” combined some information we all, as professional school counselors know-but sometimes fail to apply-with some new ideas. As caregivers, not only in our professions but also in our home lives, we often need to be reminded (and given permission) to take good care of ourselves in order to better care for those important to us. As we approach the busy holiday season, remember to **Restore** your body with adequate sleep, **Refuel** your body with proper nutrition, **Reset** your body daily with bright light, **Rejuvenate** your body with physical exercise and deep breathing, **Relate** each day with people who breathe life into you, **Refocus** your mind, and **Renew** your spirit.

## Is Retirement In Your Near Future? Information Needed

by Sandy White, Retired; Emeritus Chair

It’s mid-year and those who have spent many years in education begin turning thoughts toward retirement in the spring. This is a huge decision and we wish you well in making it.

The Northwest Governing Board Emeritus Co-chairs, Debbie Fite, Retired; and Sandy White, Retired would like to personally congratulate all who are looking toward retirement and a new adventure in their lives.

We would be most appreciative if you would let us know of your plans to retire as we are in the process of putting together a list of NWMSCA retirees. What we need from you: name, home address, home phone number, and email (other than school). Please send this information to: [slwhite\\_64429@yahoo.com](mailto:slwhite_64429@yahoo.com)

Thank you so much and good luck in your decision making as well as your future plans.

## The My Success Event was a Success!

by Alicia Saunders, Career Guidance Co-Chair

The My Success Event was another huge success thanks to all the schools and businesses attending. The change of location from the Civic Arena to Wyatt Park Church worked out well and the flexibility of all involved was greatly appreciated. There will be additional changes next year, but at this time, the location of Wyatt Park Church will remain the same for 2014.

The excitement of giving away over \$5,000 in prizes was a highlight. Two laptops were given away this year and the winners were: Thomas Cecil from South Nodaway High School and Roni Busick from Newtown Harris High School.

For more information,  
check out the website:

[www.themysucsessevent.com](http://www.themysucsessevent.com)

— Save the Date —

**School Counselors/Administrators Breakfast**  
**Thursday, February 6, 2014**

**Missouri Western State University, Blum 218-219**

**Keynote Speaker will be Ed Douglas!**

He is the author of the book, *25 Truths: Life's Principals of the Happiest and Most Successful Among Us*. Ed will share his wisdom on creating a strong moral compass with each other and our students.

**Look for invites to be out soon!**

# MSCA 2013 Fall Conference: At the Core of Leadership

by Geoff Heckman, Past President

One of the highlights of my school year is always the MSCA Fall Conference and this year was no exception. The MSCA Fall Conference is the best source of Professional Development for School Counselors in the state of Missouri; giving us all a chance to learn, re-energize, and lead. With a theme of School Counselors: At the Core of Leadership, this year's conference fulfilled all of those expectations.

Sunday night's opening session featured keynote speaker Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg who focused on the importance and need of counselors taking care of themselves. In a profession where we are so dedicated to enhancing the mental and physical well-being of our students, it is very easy to forget that we have to be well ourselves in order to help them. Dr. Ginsburg stressed that need in an energetic and research-based presentation. The Tuesday morning closing session hosted keynote speaker Jerry Mills focusing on "Don't Doubt the Dream." The closing speaker is usually very inspiring and motivational and Mills did not disappoint. In sharing a very moving personal story about his own near death experience, Mills relayed how this experience became the key in turning his own life around. His encouragement to us was to never stop dreaming, encouraging and inspiring others and ourselves. Everything we want to accomplish is possible – a message we share with our own students.

There were several moments of excitement for Northwest. One of the most outstanding was watching two of our Regional Counselors, Kay Moore and Jody Nelson, receiving the honor of being selected as MSCA Counselors of the Year. Another great moment was the regional lunch – an opportunity for all of Northwest to get together again and have great discussion. Jennifer Grossman, Northwest Region alumnus, was honored for her role as last year's MSCA President and several Northwest counselors were given the charge and opportunity to step up to leadership in MSCA.

Lastly, there were the breakout sessions that were led by numerous Missouri School Counselors, including Northwest Counselors. These sessions are the heart of the Fall Conference and allow school counselors the opportunity to delve deeper into their profession, learn more and return to their schools to be better leaders. As always the sessions focused on a variety of grade levels and topics that were as differentiated as school counselors themselves.

Of course there are many components of the Conference that I am leaving out; the time to network with other counselors, the resources of the exhibit hall, the numerous opportunities to support the conference project, the ongoing changes in technology... it is truly a tremendous opportunity for school counselors and a testament to the leadership and drive of Missouri School Counselors that the conference is successful year after year. As a school counselor this Conference is nurturing to every aspect of my profession and the key to staying current. This year's Conference called upon us to step up to leadership and be about it. With everything I take away from the MSCA Fall Conference, I have no option but to do that very thing. I'm looking forward to the many benefits it will provide and already making plans for the next MSCA Fall Conference.



## Season's Greetings

to all the members of  
Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association

Enjoy your winter break!

## SAVE THE DATE

# NWMSCA SPRING MEETING – FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2014 AT THE emPOWER PLANT IN ST. JOSEPH, MO

SPONSORED BY NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Watch for future mailings!

## Nominations Needed for Counselor Advocate and School Counselor of the Year

by Karrie Engel and K'Lea Steeby, Co-Professional Recognition Chairs

School Counselors: In the spirit of the season, please take a minute to think about the administrators, teachers, counselors, nurses, parents, and community members that help make your school counseling program effective. It's the perfect time of year to nominate one of those special people as our Counselor Advocate of the Year. It is also a great time to begin the nomination process for a fellow school counselor that goes above and beyond for the school and community.

In an effort to encourage more nominations for Outstanding Counselor Advocate of the Year and Outstanding Elementary, Middle and High School Counselors of the Year, the Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association is offering an abbreviated nomination form. The form can be found on the Northwest Missouri School Counselor website: <http://www.nwmsca.org/>

**Nominations for Counselor Advocate of the Year must be postmarked by January 9, 2014.**

**Nominations for Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School Counselor of the Year must be postmarked by February 14, 2014.**

Both completed nominations can be sent to:

K'Lea Steeby  
Savannah Middle School  
10500 State Route T  
Savannah, MO 64485  
(816) 324-3126  
[ksteeby@savannahr3.com](mailto:ksteeby@savannahr3.com)

OR

Karrie Engel  
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5655 South 4th Street  
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Be **successful**  
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