



Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association

Counselors Helping Counselors

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September 2012



Presidential Perspective

Geoff Heckman
NWMSCA President

There's a Path for That!

He had brooded for days. The student who normally was disrupting class with his borderline off-color jokes, backwards compliments hurled at students, and daily pushing every button I had so carefully put in check was abnormally quiet and sullen. Normally I would have quietly celebrated to myself in the classroom and then proudly to my huddle of colleagues as we sat eating our lunches in hurried gulps, the stories coming as breaths of air to a swimmer. But this was not a victory on my part, a behavioral modification moment to be savored. He was quiet for all the wrong reasons and somehow I just could not take any joy in that.

As I kept him after class to ask what was the matter – why the change? – it became quite clear to me that this was more than “my dog died” or “girlfriend broke up with me” situation, not that in itself those things wouldn't be equally devastating to some

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Camp Quality Service Project

by Peggy Payne, Human Rights Chair

NWMSCA has adopted Camp Quality USA, Inc. as its service project for 2012. Camp Quality is completely supported by donations and contributions. This program works with children suffering from cancer, along with their family members. Each and every donation benefits more than 900 children who participate in Camp Quality. More than 75 cents of every dollar donated goes directly toward program expenses. Your generosity allows children with cancer to attend camp free of charge year after year. There are 15 Camp Quality programs nationwide with 4 here in Missouri. Please do your part and bring a donation with you to the September 28 Fall Meeting. Your generosity will go directly toward the Camp Quality located in Stewartsville, Missouri.

Fall Meeting / Speaker

The annual NWMSCA Fall Meeting will be held on Friday, September 28, 2012 at Missouri Western State University. Registration and breakfast will start at 8:00 a.m., with the business meeting starting at 9:00. Please watch your mail for the information and registration packet. This is a great opportunity to network with other counselors in the “Great Northwest”! Please consider attending to learn about what's going on in our district this year.

David Slawson, MA, has 24 years experience in health care with the past 21 being specifically in Mental Health. Mr. Slawson received his undergraduate degree from the University of Central Missouri and completed his Master's in Education from the University of Missouri – Kansas City. Prior to accepting his current position as Director of Business Development at Two Rivers Behavioral Health System, he has held positions as Director of Admissions, Director of Mobile Assessment, Director of Utilization Review and Director of Marketing at other Kansas City hospitals. Additionally, he is the Regional Office Director for the Jason Foundation, Inc., a non-profit suicide awareness organization throughout the United States. He frequently speaks at state and area workshops and programs on the topic of suicide. The title of his presentation will be “Coping with Troubled Teens and Teenage Suicide”

Perspective . . .

— Continued from Page 1 —

students. The information came slowly as he recounted the friend that had been in the car wreck, the hurried dash to the hospital, the nights spent by his side believing in recovery. I tried my best to put on the band aids: You're such a good friend, sounds like he's pulling through, I'm sure he'll be fine... But that wasn't the problem and while I'm sure the math teacher was checking the tardies with every tick of the clock, I asked him to sit and did more than to hear the sound of his voice – I listened.

In opening up he recounted how his other friends had inquired as to where he had been spending his time and offered their unsolicited advice on how he was wasting it on someone whose future looked so grim. And then the tears started to fall as when he asked them if he were in the same situation would they come visit him? The answer, in one word, "no". He was hurt and scared. The people he had come to know and trust, the ones who had his back and encouraged his usual aggravating behavior had taken it all away in a single moment. My broken heart berated itself for wanting to take joy in his newfound classroom modesty just moments ago. I asked him why he hadn't talked to someone before now – his parents, a coach, the counselor? He looked right at me and said, "Because you are the only one I can talk to."

Have you ever had one of those moments where everything in your life suddenly collides into a spot of clarity? All of the things you took as mistakes, accidents, strokes of luck, and even carefully planned decisions melt into understanding. It happened for me then as I understood without a doubt that everything that I had encountered was setting me on this path to be a school counselor.

As I head back to school for another year of adventure, I am energized and renewed by the thought of what has brought me to where I am today. It is my hope that the same is true for you and as you start the 2012-13 school year, you are reminded of and re-energized by the memory of what put you on the path to being a school counselor. Have a great year as a school counselor – you're already on the path for that!



Northwest has TWO State Award Winners

by Kim Schank, Nominations and Elections Chair

Each fall we look forward to the MSCA fall conference in Tan-Tar-A. It's an amazing opportunity for networking, professional development, and a break from the craziness of work. This year the Northwest district has two more reasons to look forward to fall conference – Dee Anna Kelley and Alicia Saunders are state award winners!

Dee Anna Kelley of Pickett Elementary in the St. Joseph School District is the **State Elementary Counselor of the Year**.

Alicia Saunders of Central High School in the St. Joseph School District is the **State Counselor Advocate of the Year**.

Congrats to these two very deserving individuals!! This is just another example of the exemplary people we have in the Northwest District. We hope to see everyone at the MSCA fall conference to celebrate the work these two have done for students, parents, and the Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association.

Send newsletter submissions to:



Editor Corrine Allee, BS, MA, EdS
Professional School Counselor, Gr. 6-12
West Platte Jr-Sr High School
1103 Washington St.
Weston, MO 64098
(816) 640-2292, ext. 201
alleec@wpsd.net

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Critical Incident Updates

by Laura Shelton, Critical Incident Response Co-Chair

Karen Taylor and Laura Shelton are your critical incident chairpersons this year. We are trying to get our critical incident response team member list updated at this time. There are 5 teams: Team A serves Atchison, Nodaway, and Worth counties; Team B serves Holt, Andrew, Gentry, and DeKalb counties; Team C serves Buchanan, Clinton, Platte, and Clay counties; Team D serves Harrison, Mercer, and Grundy counties; and Team E serves Daviess, Livingston, Caldwell, and Ray counties. If you have served in the past on any of these teams, you should have received an e-mail from Karen asking if you will be serving again this year. We do have some schools in our area that have only one counselor, so it is extremely helpful when the need arises to have that additional support and resource available. Please let us know if you are willing to serve on this important team.

In addition, we are working on setting up critical incident response training for this fall. We are still working out some details regarding this, but we do hope to have something in place before our NWMSCA fall meeting on September 28. Please stay tuned for more information!

New Counselor Mentoring Meeting

For 1st & 2nd Year Counselors and Mentors
Friday, September 28
MWSU

Immediately following the Fall Meeting Luncheon

For questions contact:
Michele Veasey
(mveasey@nwmissouri.edu)
or Rachel Peek
(rpeek@savannah3.com)

Connected Counselors

by Erin Hunter, Ethics Chair

Technology in today's classroom is essential to reach our students. Students can do more with their phones and computers than some of us can even dream of. Here are a few ideas that I have found that work great in and out of the classroom.

Check out apps for smart phones and ipads. Some universities have come out with apps that can provide virtual tours of their campus, maps of the university, calendar of events, a directory, and even register for classes. During my last search, I found apps offered by University of Missouri, University of Central Missouri, Missouri State, Columbia College, University of Nebraska, and University of Kansas. I'm sure even more will be coming out in the near future. There are even apps that can help students research different requirements for universities and colleges they may be interested in. The College FAFSA Finder provides students with the tuition, fee, room and board cost, main address, admission office address, contact information, website address, and the federal school code.

Missouri Connections is a great classroom tool. This website enables students to research their future career interests. Plus, students are able to create resumes for the future. There is so much information available on this site: www.missouriconnections.org

Have an interactive whiteboard? Check out this site for cool lesson ideas:

http://www.internet4classrooms.com/grade_level_help.htm

Help your students brush up on their vocab! <http://www.vocabulary.com>

Share Common Core lesson planning software with your teachers: <http://coreplanner.com>

Supplement classroom instruction or give your students a tool for homework help:

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>



Missouri School Counselor Association Fall Conference

Dear NWMSCA Colleagues,

On behalf of the Missouri School Counselor Association, it is my honor to extend this invitation to attend the 64th Annual MSCA Fall Conference, "Professional School Counselors: Providing Apps for Life", November 4-6, 2012 at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, Missouri. Thanks to the hard work of the MSCA Vice-Presidents, this year's conference will again feature over 100 breakout session opportunities, all selected to address the wide range of professional development needs of school counselors.

Sunday evening, MSCA is proud to welcome Dr. Todd Whitaker as our keynote speaker. Todd is considered one of the nation's leading educational authorities on staff motivation, teacher leadership and principal effectiveness. His keynote, "What Great School Counselors Do Differently", will reflect upon the qualities and practices of great school counselors that elevate them above the rest. Todd is thrilled for the opportunity to return to Missouri, where he began his teaching and administrative career. On Tuesday morning, our conference will close with a keynote presentation by Curt Steinhorst. Curt's message, "Crossing the Educational Divide in Education: Unlocking the Power of Generations to Best Serve Today's Students" will provide a funny, intelligent, and entertaining look at the challenges involved in working with and communicating across the generations. Whether you're a Baby Boomer, Traditionalist, Gen X, or a Millennial, you are certain to gain some insight into relating to people in the best way possible.

On Saturday, November 3, prior to the start of conference, MSCA will host its Saturday Institute. This year's institute will again feature a two-topic format. MSCA is proud to welcome Julia V. Taylor, author and Professional School Counselor, who will present "Beyond Body Image: Empowering Students to Resist Societal Pressures, Fight Unrealistic Media Standards, and Develop a Positive Self-Image". This workshop will provide empowerment activities and resources to help school counselors provide solution-focus groups, classroom lessons, and parent education programs. Our second topic features Dr. Pam Conway, a former principal, teacher, and educational consultant. Pam will present a workshop on "Behavioral Coaching", a different approach to working with students than the behavior management programs typically applied in schools. If you are looking for a way to make a long lasting difference with your students and provide them with skills for a lifetime of success, this is the workshop for you.

One exciting change to this year's conference will be the Professional Recognition Awards, scheduled to be held on Sunday, November 4th at 4:30 p.m. in Salon C. This event will honor our MSCA state and district level award winners with a special ceremony and reception in front of their friends, family and professional colleagues in attendance. MSCA will be recognizing two members of NWMSCA with state



Go Bearcats!

Be challenged. Be noticed.

Be involved. Be successful.

Be a Bearcat.

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Missouri State University

level awards: Dee Anna Kelley, Elementary School Counselor of the Year, and Alicia Saunders, Counselor Advocate of the Year. Both Alicia and Dee Anna work for the St. Joseph School District.

Many popular events continue this year, including Exhibit Hall, Trivia Night, Hospitalities, and the Sunday and Monday evening dances featuring Kansas City's own Rich Linden as our "musicologist and spin doctor". The Sunday Social, Fun Run/Walk, Zumba fitness, and the Silent Auction will all support MSCA's service project, Camp Quality of Missouri. Camp Quality serves children with cancer and their families by providing year-round programs, experiences, and companionships at no cost. These donations will go towards supporting Missouri's four Camp Quality locations.

The 2012 MSCA Fall Conference is one of the best professional development conferences available for school counselors of the state of Missouri—perhaps even in the nation! Attending the MSCA conference shows your dedication to your students and your district's comprehensive school counseling program. When you approach your professional development committees or administrator with your request to attend this conference, let them know that you are attending an event that not only specializes in school counseling topics, but one that also provides you with the tools and knowledge necessary to support 21st century learners.

The 2012 MSCA Fall Conference, "Professional School Counselors: Providing Apps for Life", promises to be packed with fantastic opportunities for gathering resources, networking, and professional growth. I look forward to seeing you this November!

Jennifer Grossman, MSCA President

Retired! Retired! Retired!

by Sandy White, Emeritus Chair

As has become the custom for NWMSCA at their annual spring meeting, those who would be retiring at the end of the year were recognized and applauded by their peers for their dedication to their students, school, community, and NWMSCA.

Edd Green, Cameron School District; Linda Denton, Pattonsburg School District; Debbie Fite, Lafayette High School; and Gloria Craig, N. Harrison School District, after many years of service announced their intentions to embark on a new, hopefully more relaxing, adventure. Others retiring that we know of, but not present are Connie Ward, S. Harrison School District and Diana Vernon, S. Holt School District. If there are others who I am not aware of, I humbly apologize for the omission.

Six excellent counselors no longer counted among the ranks of NWMSCA counselors. Six counselors no longer sharing their expertise, caring, talents, and dedication to their students and the counseling profession. Six of them! Just think, if each of them has dedicated 30 years to the education and counseling of Missouri students, that is a total of 180 combined years of experience. WOW!

I have had the privilege of working with each of the four who were recognized at the meeting in a variety of ways (NW & MSCA Governing Boards, committees, crisis training and crisis teams, testing workshop (ugh!) and so much more) and know they will be missed in their districts. I found each to be consummate counselors, always striving to do the best they could and always willing to learn more. Not only are they all hard working and dedicated, they are fun people with a strong sense of humor—so necessary in the profession. Like all counselors, they have worked hard and they play hard. They have brought the best of their best to the profession and to NWMSCA. If you've never had the privilege of experiencing Debbie Fite's bubbling personality and infectious giggle, a ride to Tan-Tar-A with Edd Green and laughing all the way there and back (not to mention the good sport shopping expeditions), or a good conversation with Gloria and Linda with their open sense of humor, you have certainly missed out.

You will all be missed as counselors, but more importantly as good friends. NWMSCA wishes the best to you all in your new adventure.
