



MONTANA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

Making a Difference

Letter from the President

Volume 2, Issue 1

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Don't miss the MCA Fall Workshop offered this Saturday, October 23 at the Red Lion Inn in Helena. For more information, contact Mika Watanabe-Taylor at (406) 243-6535 or mikawt@mso.umt.edu

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."

(Leo Buscaglia)

As many of you know by now, my name is Joy Jones. I am currently the President of the Montana School Counselor Association. This October marks one year that I have been President of the MSCA, and I have one year to go before my tenure is up. This past year has been absolutely amazing. My involvement in the MSCA has changed me both professionally and personally. I have met school counselors, school counselor educators, ASCA board members, state presidents and president-elects, from across the nation. I have forged relationships with individuals in our profession that I hope will last a lifetime. To date, the opportunity that I have had to serve as President of the MSCA has been one of the best experiences in my life.

This past summer, I attended the ASCA Delegate Assembly and the ASCA National Conference in Reno, NV. Barb Holden, our current President-Elect, and I were members of Delegates from all 50 states that spent two long days prior to the conference pouring over ASCA's Ethical Guidelines, Bylaws, and Position Statements regarding the role of a school counselor. We met in our regional caucuses and had our voices heard as to the changes that we would like to see made in these documents. The point in my telling you this is to impress upon you that our association is alive and well and concerned not only with issues that face school counselors within our state, but also with the issues that face our profession nationally.

In my day-to-day life, I work as a Middle School Counselor at Florence-Carlton Middle School (FCMS) in Florence, MT. This is my 4th year on staff at FCMS, and my 4th year as a school counselor. It was in my second year as a school counselor that I fell into being involved with the MSCA. I remember well attending the MCA conference that Fall in Missoula. Then President, Darrell Stolle, requested to meet with the current membership of MSCA. There were about 20 of us at that meeting, maybe 30. The showing was small. The numbers were dismal. The motivation to be involved was all but nonexistent. Darrell made a call for help to the membership to get involved, serve on the board, and help to get the association moving again. I found myself raising my hand along with a small group of others.

From that initial meeting, our Governing Board was born. That year, I found myself in the role of treasurer. Due to my close proximity to Missoula, Darrell and I worked closely together. I was constantly amazed at how tirelessly he worked on the behalf of our association. During that time, I viewed him as my mentor. His passion for our profession transferred to each of us on the board. When his tenure as President was up, and I was approached to move into the position, I was scared to death. I did not believe that I had the experience necessary to fill the position, but I knew that I had the passion for our profession to take the chance. The last thing I wanted was to see the strides that were made under Darrell's tenure as President come undone.

The rest is history. Since stepping up last year, MSCA has hosted a wonderful Spring Conference that was funded by a grant from Gear Up. We will be holding our Fall Conference in Helena at the time that this newsletter comes out. We are beginning the planning for another Spring Conference in either late April or early May of 2005. We have a state School Counseling Model that can be found on-line at our website www.mtschoolcounselor.org. The work of Dr. Mark Nelson, Counselor Educator at Montana State has been critical in this process. Almost every day, I have school counselors from across the state contacting me with ideas for how our association can grow and asking where they can be a part of the process.

Nearly a year ago, I said that the train was moving and invited each of you to join the journey. We are by no means at the finish line, but oh the progress that we have made. I hope that you too are as hopeful and as optimistic about the future of our association as I am. I look forward to this next year and the opportunity that I have to once again be a part of, as ASCA likes to say, "One Vision, One Voice" in the profession that I love so dearly.

College Goal Sunday

2005 will mark the first year for College Goal Sunday in Montana. Student Assistance Foundation is the lead organization spearheading this event in Montana. Other major partners include the Montana Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Montana GEAR UP, Montana Post-Secondary Education Opportunities Council, TRiO/Mount Aspire members and the Montana School Counselors Association. College Goal Sunday is for all families who want assistance in completing the FAFSA form and have their financial aid questions answered. It's primary focus is on low-income families and those with no college going tradition. The goal is for participants to leave with a completed FAFSA form. All are welcome to attend

College Goal Sunday is scheduled for the afternoon of Sunday, February 13, 2005 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the following locations:

MSU - Northern: serving the Fort Belknap and Rocky Boy's Reservations, and target schools in Hill, Blaine, Phillips, and Choteau Counties.

Blackfeet Community College: serving the Blackfeet Reservation, and target schools in Glacier and Pondera Counties.

Salish Kootenai College: serving the Salish Kootenai Reservation and target schools in Lake and Sanders Counties.

Flathead Valley Community College: serving Kalispell, Libby and target schools in Lincoln and Sanders Counties.

The University of Montana: serving the Missoula area and target schools in Superior and Ravalli Counties.

Great Falls College of Technology: serving Great Falls and target schools in Lewis and Clark and Choteau Counties.

MSU - Billings: serving Billings and target schools in Carbon, Big Horn, Fergus, Wheatland, Golden Valley, and Petroleum Counties.

Little Big Horn College: serving the Crow reservation and Big Horn County.

Chief Dull Knife College: serving the Northern Cheyenne reservation and Rosebud County.

Fort Peck Community College: serving the Fort Peck reservation and target schools in Roosevelt, Wibaux, Daniels, Valley, and Garfield Counties.

Montana Tech: serving Butte and targeted schools in Jefferson, Powell, and Deer Lodge Counties.

Visit www.mtschoolcounselor.org to see the new Montana School Counseling Model

Youth Career Opportunities

Inacom Information Systems, Inc., is bringing an innovative approach to healthcare career education to Montana. Accelerated, short-term Medical Coding and Pharmacy Technician Certification training programs are being rolled out in Billings, Missoula, Bozeman, Butte, Helena and Kalispell over the next six months.

High school students for whom traditional college is not appropriate or accessible will benefit from this training. Most students are employed in their field within four to six months after beginning their training; some secure employment while attending school.

Medical Coding and Pharmacy Technician are programs that prepare individuals to enter the healthcare field through entry level jobs. Job openings are plentiful in this industry, driven by the shrinking pool of qualified younger workers, and large numbers of baby boomers aging out of the workforce and requiring additional healthcare services.

Inacom, founded about 20 years ago and based in Madison, Wisconsin, has a worldwide reputation for training excellence. The Montana programs are managed by Diane Shelley-Hellman, Consumer Training Consultant, who is based in Missoula. Watch for an information packet detailing enrollment and course offerings to arrive soon in your mailbox. Or contact Diane directly at 1-877-462-2664, ext 2929.

Ethics and School Counseling



School counselors are in a unique position in regard to operating in an ethical and legal manner. Our clients are our minors. We work in a school setting with different privacy laws and regulations. Guidelines that fit for counselors in private practice do not fit the same for us. We also work so fast that taking time to learn what we need to do is very difficult. Here are several ideas that might be helpful:

1. ASCA approved a new Code of Ethics at the Delegate Assembly at the Annual Conference in Reno in June. Check on-line for the new guidelines for your profession.
2. Ethical and Legal Issues in School Counseling is a new book by Remley and Hermann and available from ASCA. It is a wonderful resource and is excellent for a book study.
3. The ASCA web site has a list of Ethical Tips for Counselors.
4. Carolyn Stone is a wonderful resource and is chair of ASCA's ethics committee. She also is a trainer. If every you see her presenting at a conference she would be excellent to hear.
5. Consult, consult, consult and document. Of all the suggestions given, this one is stressed. A counselor should consult with peers (which may not even be in your community) if she has a situation of concern. If ever you were challenged on your actions, you would want to demonstrate that you had acted in a way that met the standard of practice for your peers.

*"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."
Anne Frank*

MPSEOC: What Does that Acronym Mean Anyway?

The Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council (MPSEOC) is a non-profit organization representing the 24 institutions of higher education across the state of Montana. We work to provide a unified, statewide effort in promoting higher educational opportunities while emphasizing the quality of education available in Montana. Some of MPSEOC's projects that are most visible are:

- Sponsoring and organizing the three week Montana Fall College Fair Tour where over 10,000 high school students and over 75 higher education institutions participate.
- Publishing the MPSEOC Guide to Higher Education. This is a comprehensive guide to the opportunities for education in Montana and beyond plus important information about steps to take in post-secondary planning. The Guide is distributed free to every high school junior and counselor in the state.
- Maintaining a database of all Montana high school counselors and college admissions professionals, new student services and enrollment management staff.
- Distributing quarterly newsletters for Montana high school counselors which include updates from Montana campuses and other valuable information.
- Conducting Counselor Updates in every region of Montana where high school counselors and college admission directors discuss issues facing Montana high school students as they matriculate towards college.

We also host a comprehensive website at www.montanacolleges.com. The website features centralized information about each Montana college and university and allows students to search for schools that match their interests and needs.

As a school counselor, either at the elementary or secondary level, you have important influence on the planning and decisions that students make regarding their life after high school. MPSEOC encourages you to plant the seed early when it comes to thinking about post-secondary plans. Thank you for your support of education in Montana, especially the encouragement you provide to students about achieving their dreams. MPSEOC looks forward to serving you.

For more information, contact Shannon Marr, Executive Director (406) 761-2432 or smarr@mt.net.

You can attend the MPSEOC presentation at the MEA-MFT Educators' Conference. "College is Possible: Helping Counselors Help Students Grow Toward Their Future" will be offered twice on Friday, October 21 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. at Helena Middle School Room 217.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



***MSCA - Still
growing towards
our Future!***

Times to Note for MEA/MFT
Conference:

**Keynote #1: Proactive Living:
Where Achievement Begins**

Oct. 21st 12:00-1:00

Presenter: Doug Manning, CEO of
Bridges.Com
Domain: Career
Location: MS Auditorium

**Keynote #2: Academic Develop-
ment for All Students**

Oct. 22nd 8:00-9:00am

Presenter: Mark Nelson, Ph.D.,
Counselor Educator at
MSU-Bozeman
Domain: Academic
Location: MS Auditorium

**Keynote #3: The Personal
Power of School Counselors**

Oct. 22nd 12:00-1:00

Presenter: John Sommers-
Flanagan, Ph.D., Counselor
Educator at University of Montana
Domain: Personal/Social

Don't Forget
to register for
ASCA's annual confer-
ence June 26-
29 near Or-
lando, FL!

Know Your MSCA Board Members!

President - Joy Jones (JonesJ@florenc.k12.mt.us)

Joy is currently a school counselor at Florence Carlton Middle School and has held this position for four years. She has served one of her two years as the president of MSCA and has thoroughly enjoyed contributing to its growth. She shares more of her thoughts on page one in her opening letter.

President-Elect - Barb Holden (barb_holden@gfps.k12.mt.us)

Barb is a LCPS and middle school counselor at Paris Gibson Middle School in Great Falls. She has worked as a middle school counselor since 1993. Prior to that she was Executive Director of the Alliance for Youth in Great Falls and coordinator of the Teen Pregnancy Community Coalition. She also was a previous president of the Montana Counseling Association. Barb is extremely proud of the growth in school counseling as guided by ASCA and the National Model. With a changing climate in school with NCLB, counselors also need to be changing their role and focus. She is hoping that her involvement with MSCA will allow her to assist counselors in Montana with growth and professional development as is seen nationally.

Past President - Dr. Darrell Stolle (stolle@selway.umt.edu)

Darrell is an Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Montana. Darrell's past experiences include 8 years of teaching and 3 years of school counseling. He has been pivotal in the direction MSCA has taken, particularly in the area of growth.

Elementary School Vice President - Kristy Savaria

(kristy_savaria@laurel.k12.mt.us)

Kristy Savaria began working in the counseling/social service fields just after high school in 1977. Kristy graduated from EMC with her B.S. in Rehabilitation and Related Services. She completed her Masters Degree in Counseling from MSU-Bozeman, and did her Masters clinical at the Billings Mental Health Center. She worked in the Billings Public School System as a substitute teacher and counselor, home school coordinator and tutor prior to her school counseling positions in Independent, Elysian, and Canyon Creek School Districts. She received her School Counseling Endorsement in 2001. She is a full time school counselor in the Laurel Public Schools District at Fred Graff Elementary School in Laurel, MT and has been in this position for two years. Kristy seeks the President-Elect position for MSCA vote this fall.

High School Vice President - Carrie Stefanatz (cstefanatz@mission.blackfoot.net)

Carrie is a high school counselor at St Ignatius High School in St Ignatius, MT and has served this position for several years. She graduated from the University of Montana in 2000 and is a Montana native.

Treasurer - Laura Simpson (lauras@dodson.k12.mt.us)

Laura is currently a school counselor in Dodson, MT. Prior to this position, Laura was a school counselor at Park High School in Livingston, MT. She received her Masters Degree from MSU-Bozeman in 2001.

Secretary - Tricia Williamson (williamson@sd5.k12.mt.us)

Tricia grew up in Atlanta, GA where she taught high school English for three years. She moved to Montana in 1999 and completed her Masters Degree from MSU-Bozeman in 2003. She is a school counselor at Flathead High School in Kalispell, MT and hopes to stay involved with MSCA.

Advisor to Board - Dr. Mark Nelson (markn@montana.edu)

Mark serves as the Program Director for School Counseling at MSU-Bozeman. Through his limitless energy and efforts, he has been instrumental in strengthening MSCA. His knowledge and expertise continue to help guide the direction of our organization's future.

Middle School Vice President - VACANT!!

If you or someone you know is interested in this board position, please contact Joy Jones at JonesJ@florenc.k12.mt.us or (406) 273-0587 ext 121.