MASCA Leadership
Nominations Due Feb. 1

If you have a desire to be more involved in MASCA, we definitely have a place for you to serve. Our MASCA volunteers are crucial to our organization and are the driving forces behind many of our important initiatives. We can use your help on a variety of committees or in a more formal leadership role.

The VP Elementary position is still open for this year. Elected positions opening up for the 2016/2017 school year include: President-Elect, VP Middle/Junior High, VP Administrators, VP Counselor Educators, VP Retirees, and Coordinator of Professional Development.

Descriptions and additional information about each of the positions can be found in the MASCA Bylaws and in the General Policies and Procedures Manual, both of which can be found at www.masca.org. Candidates need to collect a minimum of 10 signatures from MASCA members and submit nomination forms and a resume before February 1.

If you are interested in taking on a formal leadership role or in helping serve at the committee level, please reach out to any MASCA leader or contact Ruth Carrigan at president@masca.org.

Explore Massachusetts' Career Information System
By DONNA M. BROWN, MASCA Executive Director

It’s almost the middle of the year and you still have to develop and present lessons addressing College and Career readiness. You look longingly at schools that have purchased programs like Naviance and wonder how you and your school can possibly compete. Well, for starters, take a look at the Massachusetts Career Information System (https://masscis.intocareers.org). If you haven’t visited this site in a while, you will be pleasantly surprised at the updates and enhancements. If you’ve never used it, you’ll be impressed by the materials available for use by students from grade 5 through high school and beyond. Best of all, it’s free for everyone in Massachusetts.

The program has adult, high school, and middle school versions. Students create an online portfolio to store results from inventories, career information, and reflections. Beginning with an interest profiler and a career cluster inventory, students can learn about themselves, their skills, their values, and areas of interest. Through activities in the “Who Am I?” section, students can learn about their community, school offerings, things that influence their decisions, and networking.

In the “Where Am I Going?” section, students have two guiding questions: “What are my personal and career goals?” and “How do I make decisions and plans?” Through a series of activities, students explore careers, develop an understanding of the workplace, and build a personal career plan. Video clips accompany many of the careers in the CIS database.

The last section, “How Do I Get There?”, teaches students to be proactive in learning about careers. Developing employability skills, volunteering in order to “test drive” possible career areas, and understanding the importance of course selection are all part of this section, in addition to writing a resume, honing interviewing skills, and understanding employment laws.

One activity that is a real eye-opener for students is called “What lifestyle can I afford?” What quickly becomes obvious is that it takes much more money to rent an apartment, buy necessities like food and toilet paper, and have a social life than most students anticipate. Students can also compare two careers side by side for everything from education needed to salary.

The makers of MassCIS recognize that access to students for full class periods varies widely between schools. Sometimes the school counselor has few opportunities to deliver career information, especially at the middle school level. A “CIS Junior Implementation Framework” shows three ways to deliver the Career Plan depending on available time. However you choose to utilize it, this site can be a great resource!

Seeking MASCA Award Nominations
Nominate a deserving colleague at: http://goo.gl/forms/eoS1d8fey1
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**President’s Message: Goals for the New Year**

By RUTH CARRIGAN, MASCA President

When this article reaches you, we will be past the holiday season and making plans for 2016. For me, the start of the year brings with it the pressure of thinking about a New Year’s Resolution. This year, I encourage all school counselors to make a goal of sharing your best practices.

One of my favorite components of the school counseling curriculum at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School that I am happy to share is “The College Essay Project.” I first heard about this idea 12 years ago from Pam Heroux, a college admissions representative who was working for Sacred Heart University. During a fall counselor visit, she told me about a program that she was doing with Marshfield High School where she would work with the counseling staff, read and evaluate student college essays, and then visit the high school and meet with students to share feedback.

Based on that conversation with Pam, I decided to implement “The College Essay Project” at Whitman-Hanson when I took over as director. Although it was time consuming and it required quite a bit of extra work on my part, I thought it was an important and worthy project that could benefit the students at my school. Now in our 11th year, the “College Essay Project” has been a wonderful way for the school counseling staff to collaborate with WHRHS senior English teachers and college admissions professionals from colleges and universities across New England on a project that includes every member of our senior class.

As you reflect on your work, what are you doing in your school counseling program that is new or different? Do you have a school counseling curriculum that can serve as a model for others? Have you found a new way to make a difference in the lives of your students? If so, I hope you will think about sharing your best practices with your colleagues across the Commonwealth. A great place to do that is the annual MASCA Conference and MA Reach Higher Convening in April. By attending, not only will you have a chance to network with other school counselors to talk about the work you are doing in your schools, you will have the opportunity to choose among 28 sessions that will help improve your practice. It is going to be a great conference, and I hope you can be part of it.

As you settle into 2016, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year. I hope you’ll make a goal this year to share your time, talent, expertise, and best practices with your professional colleagues across the state. If you have any questions about the College Essay Project at WHRHS, or if you have your own best practice to share, please contact me at Ruth.Carrigan@whsd.org.
We invite you to join us at the **2016 MASCA Conference & MA Reach Higher Convening** on Monday, April 4th (Pre-Conference starting at 3 PM) and Tuesday, April 5th (Full Day Conference). This state-wide conference and Reach Higher Convening will draw school counselors, counselor educators, and career and college experts together with a goal of helping all of the students in the Commonwealth find success in the areas of college and career readiness, academic preparedness, and social and emotional well-being.

**Preconference Program Highlights—Monday, April 4, 2016**
- Legal Issues for School Counselors by Attorney Gini Tate
- President’s Reception Celebrating MASCA’s 55th Birthday
- Graduate Student Awards
- MASCA Tributes
- Swing Dancing & Entertainment

**Full Day Conference & MA Reach Higher Convening Program Highlights—Tuesday, April 5, 2016**
- Twenty Eight Excellent Learning Session options focusing on College and Career Readiness, Social/Emotional and Academic Domains
- Reach Higher Program Track
- Keynote Address
- Breakfast for all Conference Attendees Including a Special “First Timers” Breakfast Gathering
- MASCA Awards Luncheon
- Graduate Student Poster Presentation
- Exciting and Relevant Exhibitors, Sponsors, and Vendors

Although attendance is not confirmed, First Lady, Michelle Obama, and members of her Reach Higher staff have been invited to attend as special guests.

Our goal is to provide relevant professional development that you can bring back to implement and effect positive change in your schools. Early Bird registration is available through **March 1, 2016**. The cost for registration past that day increases by $25. After April 1, onsite registration will be available for an additional $35. Go to https://masca.wildapricot.org/event-2089890 or the MASCA website [www.masca.org](http://www.masca.org) to register.

If you have any questions regarding your registration, please contact Jen Jameson, Conference Registrar, at springconference.masca@gmail.com. General questions can be addressed to Ruth Carrigan, MASCA President & Conference Chair, at president@masca.org.
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Visit the Redesigned, Updated MA Model Site

With feedback from MA Model Institute cohorts, the MA Model Tab of the website has been reorganized with a Table of Contents that aligns to components of the ASCA 3.0 and MA Models for easy access to resources. Look for standards-based lessons with student learning data, MASCA recognized MARC’s and MARC Jr. documents, school counseling department mission and vision statements, etc. Continue to check in as Maria Paoletti, webpage designer, and Helen O’Donnell, Ed.D, Institute trainer, review and prepare additional materials for posting. For inquiries or to suggest additional resources, email: mamodel@masca.org

MA Model Institute Showcase

Monday, April 4th - 8:30-2:30
The 2015 cohort of the MA Model Introductory Institute and 2015 Institute 2.0: Next Steps invites former and future MA Model Institute participants to join them for a workshop day of data, resources, discussions, breakout sessions, and presentation of poster sessions showcasing the cohort’s implementation initiatives.

Counseling the College-Bound Student

Dates: TBA
Instructor: Bob Bardwell
Inquiries: Helen O’Donnell, Ed.D
helenod@att.net

MASCA Retiree News

Join our hands-on workshop, “Stay Connected with Technology” on April 5th at the MASCA Conference to have fun getting and staying connected. BYOD (bring your own device) or partner with a colleague to explore technology resources.

Presenters:
Maxine Rawlins, Ph.D, Professor Emeritis, Bridgewater State University
Joe Fitzgerald, Ed.D, Former MASCA VP Retirees and Technology Trainer
Helen C. O’Donnell, Ed.D, MASCA VP Retirees, Fitchburg State University

School Counselor Professional Development Opportunities

Legal and Ethical Issues and Professional Practice
5 Saturdays: Late January - April
Instructor: Helen O’Donnell, Ed.D

MA Model Institute Showcase

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To create a competitive workforce in our 21st century economy, it is imperative that our students graduate from high school both college and career ready. We know that academic proficiency is essential for preparing all students for the future, but we have become increasingly aware that personal/social skill attainment along with acquisition of workplace readiness skills are equally important for career and life success. The question for K-12 educators is how do we ensure ALL students graduate from high school college and career ready?

Across the country and within our state, districts are using learning plans to engage students in their education and to personalize learning. The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a student-directed, multi-year, dynamic tool that maps academic plans, personal/social growth, and career development activities while taking into account the student’s unique, self-defined interests, needs, and goals for the attainment of post-secondary success. The ILP is designed to increase students’ understanding of the connection and relevance of what they do now to their future success.

The ILP is intended for ALL students and can be thought of as an instrument and a process. An online instrument (such as YourPlanForTheFuture, Naviance, Career Cruising, MassCIS, etc.) provides a place to organize and record progress related to academic, personal/social and career development information. As a process, it encourages students to set goals based on individual interests and strengths while identifying the actions needed to achieve those goals. The ILP promotes relevant communication between students, school staff, parents, and other influential adults. Finally, the ILP as a process can support school and district improvement efforts to be responsive to student interests and needs.

The ILP research studies by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (NCWD) indicate that ILPs show promise as an effective strategy for delivering quality career development opportunities that improve several student outcomes. Students who were more engaged in ILP activities reported stronger goal setting skills, increased motivation to attend school, and increased academic self-efficacy which leads to better academic achievement, stress and health management, and readiness to engage in career decision-making. Teachers, school counselors, and family members highly value ILPs and believe that it helps students become more focused learners who complete more challenging coursework in order to reach their self-defined career and life goals.

In response to inquiries from schools and districts regarding the implementation of ILPs, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released the Massachusetts Guide for Implementing Individual Learning Plans. Implementation of ILPs is optional and the information in the document is intended as guidance for a comprehensive plan. District-wide implementation is ideal but it is also appropriate to start smaller e.g. with one school, one grade, or within an established structure such as Advisory periods.

To learn more, you’re invited to participate in an ESE sponsored webinar on Individual Learning Plans scheduled for January 12, 2016 from 3:00 – 4:00PM.
Six Year Career Plan Advisory Committee Being Formed

By direction of the Massachusetts Legislature, an advisory committee is being formed that will investigate and study a development and implementation process for a 6-year career plan to be coordinated by licensed school guidance counselors for all students in grades 6-12. Secretary of Education Jim Peyser has designated the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) as chair of the Committee. Katie Gray, past president of MASCA, has been appointed to represent the Massachusetts School Counselors Association on the committee. We will keep MASCA members posted with updates as we get them. More information can be found at https://malegislature.gov/Laws/Sessions/Laws/Acts/2014/Chapter449.
COUNSELOR’S NOTEBOOK

2016 Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship
Seeking Nominations

The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance, a division of the Department of Higher Education, is accepting nominations for the 2016 Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship. The Herter Scholarship was created in 1972 by the Massachusetts Legislature to identify and recruit disadvantaged high school students in 10th or 11th grade who display strong academic promise but whose socio-economic background and environmental conditions may inhibit their ability to attain a post-secondary education and degree.

The Herter Scholarship provides an incentive for students to complete high school and pursue higher education at an eligible post-secondary institution. Each year, 25 deserving students are selected.

Educators, including high school principals and counselors, and representatives from state and community service agencies who work directly with students are invited to submit nominations (no more than two) for this very competitive scholarship.

The deadline for submitting applications is February 5, 2016. Full applications must be received in the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance by the February 5, 2016 date. Please note that due to the highly competitive nature of this scholarship, we are unable to consider incomplete applications.

The application and instructions can be accessed at: http://www.mass.edu/herter.

Massachusetts Accountability Report Card (MARC, Marc Jr.) 2015 Award Recipients Announced

Through research and analysis, counselors gain a deeper understanding of how their efforts impact student achievement and career readiness. Accountability requires measuring and communicating the results of a school counseling program. The MARC and MARC Jr. provide a template for presenting that information in simple terms so students, families, and the school community can see clearly how a comprehensive, developmental program benefits all students. Using student result data, these documents share a powerful story about how students are positively affected by school counseling programs. In the past 9 years, David Elsner, Chair of the MARC Committee, has recognized over 110 MARC and MARC Jr.

2015 MARC Awards:
Gill-Montague School District
Belchertown High School

2015 MARC Jr Awards:
Fitchburg Middle School
Gardner High School
Great Falls Gardner High School,
Montague
Dr. Paul Nettle Middle School,
Haverhill
Hopkins Academy, Hadley
Minnechaug Regional HS
Page Hilltop Elementary School,
Ayer
Pembroke Middle School
Turners Falls High School
Ware High School

Congratulations to all schools that were recognized!

Youth Health Connection (YHC)
Winter/Spring 2016 Suggested Reading List
(from Youth Health Connection, December 10, 2015, Vol. 12, Issue 2)

The YHC Winter/Spring 2016 Reading List is now available. There are eight books listed on this suggested reading list, including books for both adults and children. In keeping with the YHC Annual Theme of "Building Resiliency Skills in Youth, Families and Communities," many of the titles relate to ways to help youth learn and practice self-calming strategies to help them manage the many challenges life can hold.

To help the little ones there are two books on yoga: I Am Yoga by Susan Verde and Peter Reynolds and Good Night Yoga: A Pose by Pose Bedtime Story by Mariam Gates and Sara Jane Hinder.

For teens there is Stressed Out! For Teens by Ben Bernstein, Ph.D. and Guided Imagery for Healing Children and Teens: Wellness Through Visualization by Ellen Curran, R.N.

For parents there is Ready, Set, Breathe: Practicing Mindfulness with Your Children for Fewer Meltdowns & a More Peaceful Family by Carla Naumburg, Ph.D. and Brave Enough by Cheryl Strayed.

Happy reading!
Developing Resilient Students: The Role of Social-Emotional Learning in Schools

By WILLIAM G. NICOLL, Ph.D.

At the 35th anniversary celebration of the discovery of the polio vaccine, Dr. Jonas Salk was asked what he would be working on today if he were a young research scientist. His response was compelling: “I’d still do immunization, but I’d do it psychologically rather than biologically.” Dr. Salk’s response nicely summarizes the goal of returning social-emotional learning (SEL) back into the school curriculum. SEL programs provide students with that much needed “social vaccine” immunizing them from the myriad of problems they will face in life, from personal failures and setbacks to substance abuse, depression, etc. while also helping them set a positive, productive course for their lives. School counselors can play a pivotal role in developing and implementing SEL programs to teach the essential social-emotional competencies comprising personal resilience.

Remember, there are four, not three, R’s in Education: Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic & Resilience! Historically education included all four R’s, but beginning in the mid-20th century, education moved increasingly toward focusing only on the first three and abandoned the fourth. SEL programs return the 4th ‘R’ back into the school curriculum and thereby contribute substantially to improving the outcome quality of the school’s “product” -- well educated, responsible, and productive young adults.

Resilience can perhaps best be defined as the ability to set a positive, productive, fulfilling, and goal-oriented direction in life while also being equipped to handle adversity, stress, difficulties, rejection, failures, and setbacks in stride. It is the ability to “bounce back” and continue moving forward in that same positive, socially useful, productive, and contributive direction in life with grit, confidence, and determination to succeed. Research now indicates that personal resilience is the single best predictor of academic, career, personal, and social success in life. It predicts success 70% greater than IQ does and is significantly more predictive of success in life than measures such as GPA, SAT/ACT, achievement tests, or self-esteem.

Developing resilience appears to require three primary components: a) the presence of positive, supportive social environments in the home, school, and/or community, b) the active teaching of social-emotional competencies, and, c) communication patterns based in a growth mindset (believing in oneself even when others express doubt). Resilience-focused, SEL classroom lessons and elective school counseling classes have been successfully implemented in many schools both around the nation and the world. These programs teach students social-emotional competencies including managing emotions, self-regulation, understanding and respecting others, empathy, positive communication, cooperation, and responsibility (personal and social).

Research has documented that when schools include SEL in the curriculum, academic achievement improves from 11%-17%, while behavior problems and bullying/social aggression decrease significantly. In his recent book, How Children Succeed, Paul Tough has documented how social-emotional competencies play a greater role in preparing children for success in school and life than do intelligence or test scores, an idea echoed by many in the past from Alfred Adler to Daniel Goleman.

Two cautionary points should be noted, however, when developing a resilience-focused, SEL program. First, counselors often simplistically select “off the shelf,” pre-packaged, one-size-fits-all SEL programs. While these may serve as a starting point, school counselors should seek to develop programs individually tailored to their school’s unique student population and needs. Second, to be effective, SEL programs must be comprehensive in design. They should include not only student lessons, but also include both teacher/staff training in social emotional competencies, as well as a parent component. Narrow, student-only focused SEL programs often fail. All school constituencies (teachers, staff, administrators, and parents) need to be on board and working collaboratively to model social emotional competence in their daily school, classroom, and family interactions.

Dr. William G. Nicoll has served as a counselor educator for the past 30 years. He and wife, Dr. Monica Nicoll, have recently established the Resilience Counseling & Training Center in North Conway, New Hampshire. They also serve as USA Coordinators for the European Network for Social Emotional Competence, an international organization dedicated to developing Social-Emotional Learning in schools. www.resiliencecounselingcenter.com
Happy New Year school counselors! One of the great things about working at a school is the chance for new beginnings. You get to start a new school year each September and you get to start a new calendar year each January. Let 2016 be the year that you define yourself as an amazing school counselor.

As part of the new teacher evaluation (found at: http://massteacher.org/~media/Files/CEPP/cepp_educator_evaluation.pdf), we all have to collect evidence that demonstrates that we help students succeed. It can seem like a daunting task to meet all of the standards and collect evidence, but with a bit of planning and a ton of resources, you can do it all.

The Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice: Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Rubric has four standards with multiple indicators and elements. The rubric can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/PartIII_AppxD.pdf.

Standard I: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment:
Promotes the learning and growth of all students by providing high-quality and coherent instruction, designing and administering authentic and meaningful student assessments, analyzing student performance and growth data, using this data to improve instruction, providing students with constructive feedback on an ongoing basis, and continuously refining learning objectives.

- Plan your comprehensive school counseling program based on the needs of your students, assess the results, and adjust your practice. There are so many resources for lessons but here are a few of my social media favorites:
  - Facebook: Caught in the Middle School Counselors, High School Counselors’ Network, Elementary School Counselor Exchange
  - Twitter chats: Use the hashtags #scchowd on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 8:30pm and #scchat on the 1st Tuesday every month at 8pm

Standard II: Teaching All Students:
Promotes the learning and growth of all students through instructional practices that establish high expectations, create a safe and effective classroom environment, and demonstrate cultural proficiency.

- The social media resources above can be used for targeted intervention groups as well. The key is to show that what you are doing is helping students to succeed. Trish Hatch’s book, The Use of Data in School Counseling, is an excellent resource for measuring results.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement:
Promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.

- This is often an area that gets set aside. We plan great events but then fail to get the word out. Thankfully technology has made that task easier.
  - Email blasts and Connect Ed phone calls: I would suggest you learn to do these yourself rather than have someone else do it. Let your voice be heard!
  - Jeff Ream, otherwise known as The Counseling Geek, has a fabulous blog with a plethora of tech resources to make your life easier. Subscribe to his blog http://www.thecounselinggeek.com/ to learn about ways to spiff up your emails, send out email blasts, etc.

Standard IV: Professional Culture:
Promotes the learning and growth of all students through ethical, culturally proficient, skilled, and collaborative practice.

- Get involved in MASCA and ASCA, as well as your local affiliate. By being involved, you will have ample opportunities for professional growth and support. Attend a conference, workshop, or become more involved by being a committee member. If you have even a little spare time, we would love to have you become more involved. Please email me (drkate-salas@gmail.com) your interests and I will find a place at MASCA for you!
Will You Help Shatter the Myths in January?
(from *Youth Health Connection*, December 10, 2015, Vol. 12, Issue 2)

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) have joined forces to shatter the myths about teen substance use. National Drug Facts Week is now National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week (NDAFW). This year NDAFW will be **January 25-31, 2016**, so now is the time to plan for events in your school or community and order free materials from NIDA and NIAAA.

To help you plan events in your school and community there are many tools on the NDAFW website, such as:
- Learn more about NDAFW
- Planning your event
- Getting ideas
- Register your event
- Resources and on-line toolkits
- Order materials
- Register for Drugs & Alcohol Chat Day

Start planning and brainstorming for your events now!


National School Counseling Week: The Recipe for Success
February 1st-5th, 2016
By AMY WHEELER, *Counselor’s Notebook Editor*

National School Counseling Week (NSCW) is a great time to celebrate and advocate for the profession of school counseling, whether you are a graduate student, practicing school counselor, or retiree. This year, NSCW falls on **February 1-5**.

School counselors choose to celebrate the week in a variety of ways. The main goal of the week is to focus public attention on the unique impact school counselors have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career. Some school counselors host events during the week, while others use it as a chance to educate others on their role. There are many creative ideas on Pinterest if you search for National School Counseling Week.

To help counselors promote the week, ASCA has developed a variety of materials and documents, some of which are free. You need to order your materials by **Jan. 22, 2016** to ensure they arrive in time for National School Counseling Week. You can order materials on the ASCA website or download an order form to fax in.

Materials for purchase include posters, pencils, stickers, door hang- ers, and bookmarks. New this year are t-shirts that will help you advocate for the use of the term "School Counselor" instead of "Guidance Counselor." Shirts are $12 for ASCA members and $18 for nonmembers. ASCA also offers free downloads and samples of advocacy materials including:
- Proclamations – Get your governor, superintendent, mayor, or other dignitary to sign a proclamation declaring Feb. 1–5 as National School Counseling Week.
- Certificates of Appreciation – Show your appreciation to those faculty members, parents, and other stakeholders who help you promote your school counseling program throughout the year.
- Sample press releases – Download a sample press release to customize with information about what your school or district is doing to celebrate National School Counseling Week.
- Sample morning announcements – Get your school excited about each day of National School Counseling Week with these sample morning announcements.

Visit [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org).
Your membership renewal date is indicated by year and month on your address label above.
To renew your membership, go to MASCA’s website, www.masca.org.

MASCA is excited to announce that starting this month we will partner with ASCA to provide members with the State Association Newsletter. Published 3 times per year, it will serve as a supplement to our Counselor’s Notebook and provide MASCA members with research-based articles and resources. The State Association Newsletter will be emailed to you and will be available on the MASCA website.

The Mission of MASCA

The mission of MASCA is to advocate for school counselors in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by providing leadership, collaboration, and professional development.

Stay informed by visiting MASCA’s website regularly. You can share your views with fellow MASCA members by joining in the Forum.

www.MASCA.org

Located on a spacious 300-acre campus, Southern New Hampshire University has a history steeped in innovation. Students have access to an award-winning faculty, a brand new $18 million library, as well as top-notch career development services. Visit our web site to learn more, or better yet, tour our campus. You’ll see that SNHU is anything but typical.

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