Over April vacation, I had the opportunity to chaperone an educational student trip to Germany, Poland, and Austria. Our tour included a profound and somber visit to Auschwitz/Birkenau, concentration camps in Poland where millions of people, mostly Jewish, were exterminated during World War II. This visit was a powerful experience for me, my students, and my colleagues, and it showed me in vivid detail what happens when hate and intolerance are allowed to run society.

As we made our way back to our hotel after our visit, I reflected on the experiences of the day and started to think about what is happening in our country today. All you need to do is turn on the TV news to find that it often filled with hate and disrespect by individuals that hope to lead our country in the highest office of the land. It seems a little crazy and scary that we hold our students to a higher standard of behavior than presidential candidates. Where are we headed as a country if we can’t respect others and tolerate opinions that are different than our own?

As school counselors, we can play a role in building a culture of respect and tolerance at our schools. If your school doesn’t already have a formal plan or initiative around school culture, I encourage you to check in with your school administration to see how you can work together to make a positive impact in this area. You may want to check out programs like Teaching Tolerance or the Great American Kindness Challenge for implementation ideas. If you are already running a successful program, I hope you will share your success stories and expertise with colleagues by submitting an article for the Counselor’s Notebook.

As always, thank you for the important work that you do every day. I know that school counselors across Massachusetts can impact the future by promoting respect and tolerance in our schools and communities.

Don Coverdale introduces attendees to swing dancing

The Massachusetts School Counselor Association Spring Conference was held on April 4th and 5th at the Holiday Inn in Boxborough, MA. The conference started off strong, despite the snowy weather, with Attorney Gini Tate, who discussed a variety of legal issues school counselors face daily, from student record regulations, to custody agreements and subpoenas. Attorney Tate answered questions from the audience and reminded school counselors that in this electronic age, legal issues for schools are pervasive.

The President’s Reception, sponsored by Bryant University, allowed school counselors a chance to network and also celebrate the MASCA Tributes, Pillars, and Graduate Student award winners. MASCA members closed out the night with swing dancing lessons hosted by Don Cloverdale. Many brave counselors put on their dancing shoes!

On Tuesday, the conference started bright and early with breakfast and the President’s Welcome, followed by a morning full of engaging learning sessions, exhibits, and graduate student poster sessions. Attendees got an update on College and Career Readiness and

(continued on pg. 3)
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CONFERENCE (cont'd from page 1)

Individual Learning Plans from keynote speakers Keith Westrich and Dr. Scott Solberg. Award winners were announced, and then attendees were off for an afternoon of more informative learning sessions and a visit from the Taco Bell Truck!

The day ended with the MASCA General Session in which the new bylaws were voted on, and the new board members were elected: Megan Krell, President-Elect, Kathleen Scott, VP Middle School, Amy Cook, VP Counselor Educators, and Helen O'Donnell, VP Retirees.

Attorney Gini Tate discusses legal issues at the pre-conference

Byrant University Admissions rep speaks to MASCA members

School counselors kick up their heels while learning how to swing dance

A festive beach theme helped attendees forget about the snow outside

Conference attendee Bill Stiles checks out the Taco Bell food truck

Graduate students share their research during the poster sessions
School counselors work tirelessly to advocate for and support their students. Often this work goes unrecognized. School counselors help families locate clothing, food, or other support services that ensure the child’s basic needs are met. School counselors explicitly teach students success skills how to get along with others, how to get organized and be a better student, as well as guiding them to making the best post-secondary decisions.

At the spring conference, MASCA celebrated 7 individuals who, through nominations by their peers and voting by the awards committee, were recognized for their impact in helping the school counseling profession, and most importantly supporting programs that have yielded a positive impact for students. This year there were several outstanding nominations, making the choices difficult. Thank you to everyone who submitted a nomination. Thanks also to the awards committee that consisted of previous award winners and the MASCA executive board.

And finally, thank you for all you do - for all of those big initiatives, as well as small instances that make such a big impact in helping students succeed.

The Special Award is an award given to an individual who has made a contribution of unusual significance that substantially affects the counseling profession. This year’s special award goes to Sherry Brass from Kaplan Test Prep. Sherry was nominated by Helen O’Donnell, MASCA VP Retirees.

Sherry Brass

The Leadership Award is given to a current MASCA member and licensed counselor serving during the current school year who demonstrates leadership in the counseling profession. Maggie Cate Cunha nominated Mary Dooley, Guidance Director for Bridgewater-Raynham High School (no picture available).

The Rising Star Award is an award given to a school counselor who has worked in the field for less than 5 years. The award winner is a model for new counselors, demonstrating the highest standards of professional competence, outstanding contributions to the school community, and has demonstrated a strong rapport with students, parents, and school personnel. This year’s Rising Star is Meghan Wasiak, from Gateway Regional High School, nominated by Christine Soverow.

Meghan Wasiak

The Administrative Award is an award given to an administrator who has made an outstanding and significant contribution to the counseling movement, developed and or implemented an innovative program, or initiated unusual improvements of school counseling services in his/her area of responsibility. This year’s recipient of the administrative award goes to Cheryl Clarke, superintendent of Monson Public Schools. Cheryl was nominated by Monson’s guidance director Bob Bardwell.

Cheryl Clarke

The Counselor of the Year is an award given to a current MASCA member and licensed counselor serving during the current school year in an elementary, middle, or high school who has made outstanding contributions to his/her school and is running a top-notch, comprehensive school counseling program. This year’s counselor of the year award goes to Maureen Garrett of Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. Maureen was nominated by guidance director and MASCA president Ruth Carrigan. Maureen will now be in the running for ASCA’s National School Counselor of the Year!

Maureen Garrett
MASCA 2016 Graduate Student Scholarship Winners
By MEGAN KRELL, MASCA VP Counselor Educators

MASCA recognized four graduate students who received the Graduate Student Scholarship at the annual spring conference. These students are emerging leaders in the school counseling profession and are already doing great work in the field. Congratulations to our scholarship recipients!

Janake Christensen is in her second and final year of the school counseling graduate program at University of Massachusetts Boston. She is completing her internship at Dennis-Yarmouth High School. Janake is actively working on expanding her network and professional toolbox to be able to jump right in as a future school counselor. Janake served as a session moderator at the conference.

Peter Legere is currently completing his internship and getting ready to graduate in May from the University of Massachusetts Boston. Peter employs a multicultural perspective and equitable educational practices when working with students and has enjoyed his experiences in urban communities. Peter served as a session moderator at the conference.

Jennifer Mathews is in her last year of her school counseling graduate program at Bridgewater State University and is currently completing her internship. Jennifer’s dependability, creativity, and organizational skills will serve her well as a school counselor. Jennifer assisted with registration at the conference.

Elizabeth Vassallo is in her final year of the school counseling graduate program at University of Massachusetts Amherst. She is completing her fieldwork at Watertown High School. Elizabeth strives to give back to the community whenever possible, and views her role as a future school counselor as a great way to do that. Elizabeth served as a session moderator at the conference.

MASCA President’s Award Winners:
Keith Westrich and Nyal Fuentes
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Ruth Carrigan and Tina Karidoyanes present Nyal Fuentes and Keith Westrich with the President’s Award for their hard work and dedication to Massachusetts School Counselors
For first generation and underrepresented students, early college is an opportunity to engage in college-level work, to develop a deeper understanding of the college experience, and to envision themselves as college students. As postsecondary education becomes increasingly necessary to participate in a 21st century economy, early college has the potential to close the educational attainment gap between advantaged and disadvantaged youth. Early college opportunities can increase all students’ ability to engage in an economically viable educational and career pathway.

The Rennie Center recently released a new issue brief, Early College Designs: Achieving College- and Career-Readiness for All. This report highlights innovative Massachusetts programs offering pathways to college that allow students to pursue a postsecondary credential even before earning a high school diploma. Early college designs—which allow students to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously—are among the most effective strategies for promoting higher rates of postsecondary access, persistence, and completion. In its new report, part of the Roadmap to Expanding Opportunity series of issue briefs, the Rennie Center identifies three effective models of early college programs and compiles cost estimates for replicating these models in other districts. See recent coverage of the report release in The Atlantic and the National Journal, as well as a Letter to the Editor published in the Boston Globe.

Complementary to this report, the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reissued its report on early college programming, the Massachusetts Landscape of Early College. This report highlights several early college models throughout the Commonwealth and clarifies the common components found in this type of programming. Most high schools offer some aspect of early college programming, such as Advanced Placement coursework, dual enrollment, articulation agreements, or career pathways in a specific industry or field. In Massachusetts, there is a unique mix of early college programming available to students. As counselors, it’s important to understand these options so all students can take advantage of these opportunities.

To learn more, you are invited to participate in an ESE sponsored webinar on Early College Designs scheduled for May 10, 2016 from 3:00 – 4:00PM.

(Designed by: Equity & Excellence Network,强壮盟，那不勒斯)

(Image from: http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/initiatives/earlycollegedesignlandscape.pdf)
State school counseling associations around the country provided input into the revision of the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. All SCA suggestions were compiled into one document, carefully considered, reworked to reduce redundancy, and then leaders in the field furthered reviewed and edited.

These ethical standards represent the most voices and contributions of any review in memory but the work is not done. Members of MASCA are encouraged to give feedback during the current public comment period. One more extensive round of edits will happen after this period and then they will present the final version during the Delegate Assembly at the ASCA conference in New Orleans.

The draft of the ethical standards can be found at http://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016Draft.pdf, and members can share feedback at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1JMHV2mydB-fDG1XrqIF4bECemAqCoPD6RFThWPcImxw/viewform.

Feedback will be accepted until May 15, 2016. Please let Jill Cook (jcook@schoolcounselor.org) know if you have any questions.
In the spring of 1961, MASCA became an organization to be a voice and advocate for MA school counselors. Groups of school counselors around the state petitioned to be incorporated and affiliated with the new association called MSCA. The name was later changed to MASCA.

The retirees will continue to work on honoring MASCA traditions by preserving MASCA archives, establishing an electronic database of MASCA Counselor’s Notebooks, hosting another Retiree gathering, networking with the MASCA O.S.C.A.R.S, and establishing a protocol for nominations for future Pillars of MASCA.

At the President’s 55th Birthday Reception at the MASCA spring conference, the exciting work of the retirees was presented in several presentations and updates:

Three pending or recent retirees were recognized: Dr. Maxine Rawlins (Bridgewater State University), Ruth Robert (Ware), and Marietta Rapetti Cawse (Pittsfield).

Continuing a tradition established for MASCA’s 50th birthday, MASCA recognized school counselors and counselor educators who have made an impact on our students, our school communities, our professional lives, and our affiliates. The 2016 TRIBUTE honorees were: Rachel Schwab and Maria Paoletti nominated by FHGA and Donna Neary and Carrie Kulick-Clark nominated by SSGA.

Retirees also praised and recognized with one year MASCA memberships the co-authors of the DRAFT MASCA 2.0 Model: Bridget Dulea (Glen Brook MS, Longmeadow) and Mike Furey (Hampshire Regional HS, Westhampton) and their mentor, Katie Gray, Unique Potential. Congratulations and thank you to the entire Draft 2.0 writing team and the guidance by the MA Model 1.0 writing team. Be sure to check out the Draft MA Model 2.0!

Mother’s Day and Grief

By AUBRIE G. HILLS, MA, LCSW, CT; Bereavement Coordinator, Hospice of the South Shore
(from Youth Health Connection, April 28, 2016, Vol. 4, Issue 3)

Mother’s Day can be the perfect time to embrace opportunities to celebrate and honor motherhood. It’s easy to forget that for the bereaved, Mother’s Day grief can be especially painful. Whether you are grieving infertility, the death of a child, the death of a grandmother, mother, or the woman who stepped up to the plate—this holiday may leave you feeling isolated, overwhelmed, depressed, guilty, angry, and even a little resentful.

If you find yourself in these circumstances, first let me remind you: you have permission to be majorly out of sync on Mother’s Day. Grievers may cope through avoidance or remembrance. Both can be healthy and normal responses to loss.

Here are a few suggestions for making it through the holiday:
• Engage in a little self-care. If you can already feel your heart thumping at the thought of celebrating, listen to your body. Instead of celebrating, it may be a good time to take yourself out on a date, or stay in for some customized pampering.
• Tune out those places, sights, and sounds that represent grief triggers. This may not always be possible, as every store may be inundated with flowers and cards. For the weekend, turn off the TV (who needs another Hallmark marathon?) or choose an evening outing over an afternoon one.
• Celebrate your mother’s life. This the perfect excuse for reminiscing about your mom with your children, siblings, or even your father.

(continued on pg. 9)
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MOTHER'S DAY (cont'd from page 8)

Holidays tend to highlight "elephants in the room" anyway, so you might as well lean in! Plan an outing or cook a meal you know your mother would love. Use this time to share memories.
• Send a card, or make a call, to another mother. Yes, you are allowed to do this. You are not cheating on your mom by reaching out with gratitude to another female who has shaped your life. I’m certain they will feel over the moon that you have sent some love their way. Perhaps you are a co-worker, friend, or family member to a griever that could use some extra tender loving care (TLC). This Mother’s Day:
• Reach out to a grieving mother or child and let them know you are thinking of them, acknowledging that this day may be hard for them.

It is best not to assume that too much time has passed for recognition. Grief is not time-limited, nor is it identical. 
• Share a favorite memory of their mom, or even a personality trait that you notice in your friend (remember, you are allowed to laugh!) over a meal or a cup of coffee.
• Let them off the hook for any celebrating. Every griever is different. When extending invitations, let them know that they are welcome to join, but acknowledge that it is perfectly okay to bow out. Your kind permission may be a powerful voice to drive out guilt and shame.

Disclosure: even if you never celebrated this holiday, encountering reminders may leave you with raw emotions and thoughts. I wish you the space to grieve, no matter how you engage.

Grant Opportunity
(from Youth Health Connection, April 7, 2016, Vol. 4, Issue 1)

The State Farm Youth Advisory Board is currently funding service-learning projects between $25,000 and $100,000 that address the root cause of the following issue areas: access to higher education/closing the achievement gap, economic empowerment and financial literacy, community safety and justice, health and wellness, environmental responsibility, or arts and culture.

To learn more visit: http://bit.ly/1PQDbVw
It is May, which means this year’s crop of new counseling grads is attempting to figure out what an MEPID is. They are trying to decipher what different SchoolSpring status updates might mean. Above all, this anxious cadre is scrambling to discover whether years of hard work will land them the vaunted title of school counselor.

If you are part of that group, I just want to let you know that landing that title is going to be challenging. This is just reality. Because there are far more counselors than jobs, you are going to have to be resilient and take the advice you will give your future students: slow down and take it one day at a time. Here are some tips from a job market veteran:

If you want guaranteed work, be willing to travel. Many states are hiring now. If you want to stay in Massachusetts, get ready to be competitive. Who thought this glamorous job with its great pay and fringe benefits like lunch duty would draw so much talent?

When you apply to a job on SchoolSpring, know that districts are legally obligated to post a position. Just because an opening is posted does not mean there isn’t an internal candidate who has been holding down a less desirable job just waiting for this chance. Remember also that many districts have interns just like you who have paid all year for the privilege of working there for free. They are as hungry as you are (could be from too much ramen), and they have the edge in name recognition.

Networking is important, but understand that it goes beyond your traditional routes. (That said, a well-connected guidance director is a friend I would not neglect.) My first counseling interview was a referral from a restaurant server who happened to have had the hiring principal for a fifth grade teacher. Everyone is a potential referral for your young career, so manage your brand. Having a respected advocate recommending that a hiring manager should look at you makes a difference.

In the crowded counseling field it is also important to be open minded about potential crossover jobs. If you want to increase your options, look into jobs in higher education. College admissions offices love having trained school counselors representing them. Nonprofit work is another option. I work for a nonprofit now and I fill many of the roles of a school counselor, just with a smaller caseload.

Above all, be patient and do not get discouraged — you will get there. This is important work and your energy and passion are crucial to our success.

During my internship in the guidance department at Lynn Classical High School, a student was referred to our office because of her frequent tardiness. As my supervisor and I met with the student, we discovered that the reason she was always late to school was because her family recently became homeless and were living in a shelter in Boston. Each morning, the student woke up before 5:00 a.m. and took the bus, subway, commuter train, and another bus just to get to school.

Our guidance department often does not learn about a student’s homelessness status until a problem arises such as tardiness, falling asleep in class, or a sudden drop in grades. Homeless students and their families are often hesitant to notify the school of their status especially if they moved to a shelter outside of the school district. What many do not know is that under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, homeless students have the right to continue attending their “school of origin” (i.e. the school they were enrolled in when they became homeless) until the end of the school year. The Act also gives many homeless students the right to transportation to and from school.

After learning about this particular student’s long and involved commute, my supervisor contacted the school district’s main office and advocated for transportation assistance. A van now picks up the student and her siblings each morning in Boston and drops them off to school on time. This provided a huge relief to the student who now says she is much better rested since she does not need to wake up as early or worry about transportation schedules.

Since September, I have met with many homeless students and have learned a lot about best practices for meeting the needs of this population. As the school’s designated (continued on pg. 11)
Homelessness Liaison, my supervisor is in frequent contact with the school district and local community organizations to help provide a variety of resources to students and their families. She is often contacted by local organizations who want to help by providing clothing or a free holiday dinner. My supervisor remains cognizant of multicultural issues by suggesting organizations provide a gift card to a supermarket rather than a pre-bought Thanksgiving dinner because many families may come from cultures that do not eat turkey or do not know how to cook it. Through school-wide support, she also helps students meet their basic needs in personal hygiene and clothing by maintaining a stock of toiletries and clothing in the Guidance Department.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education statistics, the number of homeless students in Massachusetts continues to increase with school districts reporting over 19,515 homeless students during the 2014-2015 school year. As I strive to fulfill the ASCA mission of advocating for and supporting the success of all students, I am thankful that my internship at Lynn Classical has taught me the legal implications of student homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act and the local resources available to assist students and families.

Sarah Coffey is a 2016 M.Ed. in School Counseling Candidate at Salem State University. Her faculty advisor is Dr. Laurie Dickstein-Fischer and her Practicum Supervisor is Shanna Comeau.

New National Report Available
(from Youth Health Connection, April 7, 2016, Vol. 4, Issue 1)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has just released a report entitled “Behavioral Health Barometer: United States, 2015.” This is the third edition of the Behavioral Health Barometer: United States, one of a series of national and state reports that provide a snapshot of behavioral health in the United States.

The reports present a set of substance use and mental health indicators as measured through the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, sponsored by SAMHSA (taken from the report).

Within this report you will find national data for both youth and adults on topics of substance use, mental health indicators and treatment. The youth reports compare data from: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Monitoring the Future and National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

To access the 26-page SAMHSA report visit: http://1.usa.gov/1o1t0Y0
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Reminder to Participants of Dr. Trish Hatch’s “Hatching Results” Workshop

Attendees wishing to expand their Certificate of Attendance into 10 Professional Development Points should contact helenod@att.net for details about the Independent Study Project.

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.

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