At the end of every school year, my school counseling team and I get together to conduct our yearly audit. We take a look at our programming from the year to determine what was successful and what could be improved upon. I believe that taking time to reflect on your work is an important part of any successful school counseling program.

For MASCA, the 2016-2017 year was a busy one. Although we did deal with a leadership change when President Kate Salas stepped down due to family health issues, MASCA had a very successful year. We thank Kate for her long service to and continued support of MASCA.

Here are some of the highlights of our year:

- Completed transition to our user-friendly Wild Apricot membership system and website
- Continued to increase membership numbers. At last count, our membership was over 800 and our numbers continue to grow!
- Excellent annual conference with over 400 participants. Our partnership with NCYI led to a very successful and well-attended professional conference.

We are excited to be heading back to Cape Cod for the 2018 annual conference on April 30 and May 1. Keep an eye out for more information as we get closer to the event.

- Exciting professional development partnership with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on our workshop series “Helping Students Reach Higher by Digging Deeper with Data” which included a MASCA/ESE Data Usage Certificate and 15 PDPs. Meetings were held in several parts of the state with approximately 100 counselors attending.

We expect to repeat this professional development opportunity in the 2017/2018 school year and hope that even more counselors will take advantage of tremendous PD opportunity.

- Continued support of Reach Higher efforts in Massachusetts
- Launch of Mass Model 2.0

- We extend many thanks to the Mass Model 2.0 writing team for their time and effort to revise this important blueprint for school counseling programs in our state.

- MASCA was pleased to participate in the advisory committee, led by the Executive Office of Education, studying the development and implementation of six-year career plans in the Commonwealth. MASCA has agreed to take the lead on this project and will work with the Office of College, Career, and Technical Education at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on this initiative.

- We were pleased to welcome our newest MASCA affiliate, South Coast School Counseling Association to our ranks.

Although we have continued to make great progress, there is still a lot to do. We hope to focus on school counselor advocacy in the year to come and we look forward to great leadership from our president-elect, Megan Krell.

Thank you for all you do to support students in Massachusetts and please know that there is always a place for you in MASCA if you would like to take on a leadership role in your state association. I wish you a safe, happy, and productive summer break!
As the MASCA Awards Committee Chair and on behalf of MASCA, I was honored to recognize six outstanding professionals who have demonstrated dedication and passion for the school counseling profession. I would like to take this opportunity to share a little more about each of these individuals.

**Kristina Haugh** from Mattachese Middle School was awarded the Rising Star Award as a new counselor who demonstrates outstanding contributions to the school counseling profession. Her nominator recognized her due to her willingness to learn and dedication to the students. During her first years as a school counselor, she created a newsletter, implemented a school-wide career day, and implemented classroom lessons to support the development of a comprehensive school counseling program. Her contributions to the school have been deeply appreciated by the entire school community.

**Kendall Downing** from Ipswich High School was awarded the MASCA Special Award for his unusual contributions to the school counseling profession. His nominator expressed appreciation for Kendall’s work within the counseling department as an academic support teacher. He is acknowledged for his collaboration with colleagues, such as organizing weekly Response to Intervention meetings and bringing innovative ideas to the discussion. He has also been recognized for his dedication to students, promoting their advocacy, and always willing to lend a helping hand.

**Dr. Laurie Dickstein-Fischer** from Salem State University was awarded the School Counselor Educator of the Year Award for outstanding contributions to school counseling education. Her nominator recognized her dedication to making significant improvements to counselor education programming as the only program coordinator in her department. She is also appreciated for the development of new course offerings that provide counselors-in-training with the knowledge and experience they need to advocate for future students, schools, and communities. She has been identified as someone who holds the highest standards for school counselor training.

**Carrie Kulick-Clark** from Braintree High School was awarded the Leadership Award in recognition of outstanding leadership in school counseling. Her nominator emphasized her talents as a caring leader, providing support and mentorship to students and her colleagues. She is also appreciated for her leadership skills assisting new and experienced school counselors.

**Susan Federico** from the Doering School in Agawam, MA was awarded the Administrator of the Year Award for outstanding administrative contributions to support school counseling. Her nominator recognized her for the tireless efforts she has made to promote positive youth development through her support of school counseling. As an administrator, she is committed to positive change and improvement through the countless hours she spends working with colleagues, parents, students, and behind the scenes, scrutinizing data, instructional support, and curriculum. Her support and dedication to school counseling is deeply appreciated by her colleagues and the school community.

**Courtney Selig** from Whitman-Hanson Regional High School was awarded the MASCA Counselor of the Year Award for her outstanding contributions to school counseling. Her nominator recognized her dedication to the school community and students through her collaboration with colleagues in implementing comprehensive school counseling programming. An example is the Panther Pride Program that she took charge in delivering, helping to promote positive youth development. She is appreciated for the lesson plans she develops and shares with colleagues and the school community. She is also recognized for her dedication to sharing her knowledge with stakeholders both locally within her school and broadly in the field through conference workshops and presentations. Courtney is an outstanding school counselor and is deeply appreciated by her colleagues and school community.
Graduate Students: Ready, Set, Practicum!
By MEGAN KRELL, Ph.D., MASCA President-Elect

Congratulations to those of you who are ready to start your school counseling practicum this coming fall! These tips can help you get prepared for your practicum so that you are ready to go once school starts back up. School counseling supervisors: please feel free to pass this along to your supervisees, along with any other school-specific tips you might suggest.

Touch base with your site supervisor: You can ask if there is any preparation that would be helpful to do over the summer. Perhaps there is a curriculum the site uses that you can research, or maybe there is a new initiative with which you can familiarize yourself. This will also show your enthusiasm for and dedication to the upcoming practicum experience.

Plan out your hours: Beyond the work of completing your practicum, many of you have a myriad of responsibilities, including family, work, and school. Time management will be essential throughout the next year. Look at the calendar and plan out your schedule. Don’t forget to exclude holidays and school vacations. Make sure you know your university policy for completing hours in between semesters.

Set mini-goals: In addition to planning your calendar, set mini-goals for completing your hours. For example, by what date do you need to have 100 hours completed? 250 hours completed? 450 hours completed? This will help you stay on track and let you know if you are ahead or behind once you are in the midst of your practicum.

Create a mechanism for tracking tasks: In order to make sure you are meeting all of the required competencies and standards, simply tracking your hours is not sufficient. You will also need to also track the types of tasks with which you are involved. Some find using a teacher plan book useful to make sure all parts of the day are documented, while others prefer online methods such as spreadsheets. Whichever style you prefer, just be sure that you are adhering to confidentiality protocols.

Have a self-care plan: Completing a practicum is challenging work! Consider how you will keep yourself energized during this time. Even better, make self-care part of planning out your schedule. Having a go-to toolkit of relaxation and just-for-you activities can provide some direction when you encounter a stressful week. While you might be familiar with tips such as exercising, going out with friends, reading a book, or doing yoga, an internet search for self-care ideas will yield many more unique possibilities that might be a better fit for you. Perhaps a painting class, beekeeping seminar, or trip to the planetarium are more your style!

Best of luck with this last step in your graduate program!
One of the greatest challenges facing elementary school teachers today is finding a way to incorporate social/emotional learning (SEL) into daily lessons. School counselors have the training and resources to support teachers in their efforts to include SEL in their classrooms. School and district administrators in elementary schools are often wary of taking time away from the teaching of academic core subjects due to increased standardized testing and the rigor of the Common Core State Standards, but SEL can be impactful without being time consuming.

SEL can be incorporated into the classroom through the provision of school counseling core curriculum. One such lesson sequence utilizes the story, *Max’s Magnificent Choice*, and the Tacky Box® program, created by Chris Kent Phelps, Emma Phelps, and Cindy Kent. The story follows a young monkey, Max, who has trouble making friends because he keeps choosing to use tacky, rude words. Max is very confused and disheartened until a wise old owl challenges Max to make the magnificent choice to use kind words instead of tacky words. The owl gives Max a special tool: a tacky box. Each time Max hears or uses a tacky word, he writes this word on a slip of paper and puts it in his tacky box. This action symbolizes removing the word from his mind and heart forever to use only kind words instead.

Beginning in October, *Max’s Magnificent Choice* and its authentic tacky box were incorporated into the monthly school counseling core curriculum lessons for six first and second grade classrooms at a Peabody elementary school. Students quickly realized why Max had trouble making friends. They reacted with laughter and surprise when Max used tacky words, but then quickly realized that these words would not be funny at all if they were directed toward them.

After finishing the story, the students practiced using their own classroom tacky box. Each student wrote down a tacky word or phrase they had previously heard or used on a slip of paper. Some students desperately wanted to share their tacky words and phrases out loud, but they were reminded that putting a word or phrase in the tacky box signified removing it from their vocabulary and replacing it with positive words. Students shared the kind...
words and phrases they committed to using in place of the rude, hurtful words they had put into the classroom tacky box.

Many students expressed a desire to continue the lesson of Max’s Magnificent Choice at home. For the following month’s school counseling core curriculum lessons, the first and second grade students were challenged to create their own “tacky bags” to use at home by folding, stapling, and cutting a small hole in a sturdy paper bag. Students decorated these bags with colorful reminders to replace tacky words with kind words and pledged to share the message of the tacky box with their family members.

These lessons only required two, 30-minute sessions with each class, but they had a lasting effect on the academic, behavioral, and personal/social development of the students. When students use rude, hurtful words, they are referred by teachers and classmates to the classroom tacky box. This quick redirection promotes kindness and fosters a more cooperative work environment. Students encourage one another to use kind words during partner work and group work, preventing squabbles between classmates from adversely affecting students’ academic learning. The tacky box positively reinforces the kind words and actions that are expected in the classroom. This allows teachers to focus their precious classroom time on building positive interactions between students instead of punishing them for negative interactions. Through this efficient incorporation of SEL initiatives, teachers have re-focused time previously spent managing negative behaviors and conflicts between students on the direct instruction of academic learning objectives. The collaborative partnership between school counselor and teacher has fostered a positive, welcoming, and cooperative learning environment for all students, enabling them to develop positive peer relationships and remain focused on their academic learning.

References:
Phelps, C. & Kent, C. (2014). Max’s Magnificent Choice. Dallas, TX: Tacky Box, LLC.
If you ask students about their future plans, you will get a variety of answers. You might hear, “I want to be a nurse,” “I want to build airplanes,” “I’m going to travel the world,” or “I’m enlisting in the army when I graduate.” Some students can articulate goals, but most of them are expressing their dreams. The dream is the big picture, the vision, and comes from a passion. The goals are where the work gets done; the work of the student and, for counselors and educators, the work of the school. The work includes obtaining accurate information to help students make informed decisions. The work also includes identifying and building on students’ natural strengths while providing them opportunities for learning and practicing the skills they’ll need to achieve that dream. This acknowledges students’ self-identified passion and dreams, while assisting them in taking the concrete steps that are needed to move toward those dreams.

However, the path to reach that dream is rarely easy. Even with steps planned out, students face obstacles. One of those obstacles is how others perceive them. For example, we don’t historically see many male nurses, which may then influence a male student’s choice in career, which, in turn, perpetuates the absence of males in the nursing field. Unfortunately, stereotypes affect children’s preferences at an early age. Add to this the continued pervasive messaging that reinforces stereotypes, making it more difficult for some students to achieve their goals. Of course a male can become a nurse, but he will face obstacles associated with the perceptions of what a male should or should not do. The same will be true for a student with a disability and any student who is associated with a group where stereotypes and discrimination have resulted in limited access to careers. What a nurse actually does, and what it takes to become one, are essential pieces of information for decision making that can affect students’ paths. What society has suggested a nurse looks like may influence both students and counselors in a deeper way.

How can counselors address these obstacles? Begin by checking your own perceptions. The Code of Federal Regulations includes that counselors shall not direct students into specific programs or careers, or measure or predict a student’s prospects for success in any career or program, based upon the student’s race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. This is applicable to counseling of any student aspiring toward their dream.

Perceptions have real consequences. Build in the practice of regularly assessing your own perceptions as an avenue for professional growth. Students listen. No matter how often a student may have heard “You can’t” or “You shouldn’t” before, as educators, we can be the voice that says, “You can; let me help you get started.” A practice of self-reflection brings integrity to the work. Imagine the difference that makes to a female student who is given the opportunity to work with hand tools for the first time.

Be informed of the landscape in which students will be living and working. What skills do all students need for employment? What are the specific skills that nurses now need? Be aware of biases that still persist in training and hiring practices. Educate yourself on emerging trends and practices in workplace equity. This knowledge will prepare you to discuss obstacles with students as well as provide them with new tools.

Get to know your students as individuals. Knowing how students understand and see themselves is foundational to a trusting relationship. What are they passionate about and why? What motivates them? What do they have to say? Listen. It provides you with insight on your students’ self-concept, their culture, and their aspirations, all of which play a valuable role in decision making. It allows students to trust when you say, “Let me help you get started.”

Put into place established activities that progressively move students toward goals. A counseling curriculum that is current and based in career development will lend itself to more equitable counseling. Individual Learning Plans are tools that support student self-efficacy by empowering them through informed decision-making.

If you ask students about their future plans, they will share their dreams. Listen with an open mind. As educators, providing guidance, activities, and support that are free of bias is both a responsibility and an opportunity.
The MARC process guides counselors through research and analysis to gain a deeper understanding of program delivery and communicating their school counseling program’s impact data. The MARC and MARC Jr. templates provide a structure for presenting that information in simple terms to allow students, families, and the school community to see clearly how a comprehensive, developmental program benefits all students. Using student outcome data, these documents share a powerful story about how students are positively affected by school counseling programs. MARC/MARC Jr. templates and rubric plus sample documents are posted on the MASCA website.

David Elsner, chair of MASCA’s MARC committee, presented MARC Recognition Awards honoring the largest group of school submissions in the 10 years of the initiative. Congratulations to the following recipients:

**MARC:**
- Framingham Middle Schools (3-school collaboration)
- Framingham Elementary Schools (9-school collaboration)
- Smith Vocational High School – Max Weiner
- Walsh Middle School, Framingham – Ezzy Languzzi
- West Springfield High School – Dina Sibilia, Shamis White, Bonnie Cofer

**MARC Jr.:**
- Cape Cod Tech High School – Mark Bonavita
- Cyrus Pierce Middle School, Nantucket - Dauna Coffin
- Fitchburg Middle School – Margaret Magennis and Suzanne Caron
- Grafton High School - Laura Rohan and Erika Murphy
- Smith Vocational High School – Max Weiner
- Walsh Middle School, Framingham – Ezzy Languzzi
- West Springfield High School – Dina Sibilia, Shamis White, Bonnie Cofer

**June Awareness Dates**
- Fireworks Safety Month
- National Hunger Awareness Month
- National Safety Month
- International Children’s Day
- World Environment Day
- Flag Day

Visit the Counselor's Corner section of the MASCA website to learn more about events, resources, and information not officially sponsored by MASCA, but which may be of general interest to the counseling community.

https://masca.wildapricot.org/Counselors-Corner

** register:** conference.kurnhattin.org

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**26th Annual Conference**
with —
Lynn Lyons, LICSW
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2017
8:45AM – 3:30PM WESTMINSTER, VT
— Lunch is included —

Please direct all inquiries for the conference to Terry Andrews at (802) 721-6913, or email tandrews@kurnhattin.org.

EARN CE CREDITS!

**Beyond Calming Down**
Teaching Process-Based Strategies to Help Anxious Kids

Register: conference.kurnhattin.org
Career Activities Corner: K-12 College and Career Readiness Activities

Reach Higher MA Working Group #1: Viable Careers and Citizenship for All invites counselors to submit career activity that can be delivered in diverse settings to encourage the infusion of career development into school counseling curriculum. Include learning standards alignment, measurable student learning objectives and outcomes, and interdisciplinary curriculum links.

Email to: Helen O’Donnell, Ed.D, MA Model Institute Trainer at helenod@att.net.

Academic Goal Setting: “Take Your Passion. Make it Happen!”
Submitted by: Patricia Dargie and Kathleen Hatch, Southbridge High School
Grade Level: High School

Essential Question: Does personal goal setting and goal progress monitoring provide motivation to persevere and achieve personal and life goals?

Topics: Introduction to Goal Setting, Setting an Academic Goal, and Perseverance to Monitor Progress.
Note: All students will set and monitor attendance and career goals during follow-up advisory seminars and track progress towards goal achievement during the academic year

Focus Question: Are students able to identify, set, and monitor personal academic goals?

Materials:
• Advisee folders; Activity sheet: Writing SMART Goals
• Flashdance Song: “What a Feeling” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKejZSh5xs0)
• Goal Setting video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-gQLqv9f4o&list=PL4Fgbxj8w1xc_y2BN_Ts-L13y3RDSEUOhw)

Lesson Activities: Activators for the 22-minute Advisory Session include the Flashdance song, “What A Feeling,” and the identified Goal Setting video. During the guided discussion, students will be introduced to goal-setting and the SMART goal components. Advisory brainstorms will identify examples of school year academic goals and follow-up achievement monitoring action plans. All students will identify and draft goals, participate in collaborative peer discussions to vet the goals as SMART, and review the advisory action plan for monitoring personal progress on goal attainment. Bi-quarterly, in future advisories, all students will analyze their progress toward goal achievement, discuss barriers that might interfere with goal success, and brainstorm strategies to improve goal attainment. School counselors will collect data on progress toward goal achievement bi-quarterly and at the end of the year.

Student Learning Standards Links:
A1; A2; A3; A4
ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success: www.schoolcounselor.org
   Mindset #3; Behavior Standards: Learning Strategies #3; Behavior Standards: Self-Management #2, 5, 8

Strategy 1-F: Build all students’ social and emotional skills in order to promote wellness and positive school engagement.; Strategy 2-A: Transform the district’s culture into one of high standards and positive regard for all students and staff; Strategy 4-C: Supporting the success of children and youth.
Reach Higher Massachusetts Convening in August

The Reach Higher Massachusetts Convening will take place at Framingham State University, on Wednesday, August 9, 2017 from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The title for the Convening is Reaching Higher in Massachusetts: Exploring College Transition, Persistence, and Retention.

This state convening is part of former First Lady Michelle Obama’s Reach Higher initiative, a national program that was launched in 2014 to ensure more students graduate from high school and continue on to earn some sort of additional certificate, degree, or training after graduating from high school. Although the Obamas have left the Oval Office, this important work continues.

Anyone who is involved with preparing students to graduate from high school or the transition from high school to higher education and training is urged to attend. There is no cost to attend. Light morning refreshments and lunch will be provided.

For more information, please contact Christine Luzi at (857) 231-3177 or csluzi811@gmail.com.

Registration Open for MA Model Institutes Offering Graduate Credit or PDPs

Aligned with the ASCA Model 3.0 and the MA Model 2.0 for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs, geographically diverse cohort training sites and dates for the MA Model Introductory Institute and Institute 2.0 Next Steps are being planned.

Reflect on your program’s Foundation, Management, Delivery, and Accountability practices by completing a self-study to guide action planning. Collaborate with colleagues to develop program resources and strengthen Tier 1 curriculum delivery. Collect and evaluate data to assess student learning impact of your programs and services. Identify strategies and multi-tiered interventions to target academic gaps and identified needs.

Contact helenod@att.net or MAmodel@masca.org for course information, to suggest possible training sites and dates (summer, fall, Saturdays), or inquire about MA Model or Reach Higher MA school counselor graduate coursework.

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At Southern New Hampshire University, our focus is on empowering the leaders of tomorrow. Our campus community is 3,000 strong, and with top-notch career development services and more than 70 student-run organizations helping students develop new skills and leadership abilities, it’s no wonder that organizations like Fidelity Investments, the Boston Celtics, and even the Department of Homeland Security are racing to hire SNHU grads! Visit our website or stop by for a tour to see for yourself that SNHU is anything but typical.
"13 Reasons Why" Causes Concerns for School Counselors
By AMY WHEELER-SUTTON, Counselor's Notebook Editor

The Netflix series "13 Reasons Why," based on a young adult novel of the same name, has caused a stir in the school counseling community. The series tells the story of 17-year-old Hannah Baker who completes suicide and leaves behind audio recordings for the 13 people she believes played a role in her suicide. The series has been very popular with teenagers and schools around the country are working to figure out how to support students and families while mitigating risks associated with watching this series.

To help address these concerns, ASCA, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the National Association of School Psychologists hosted a webinar on May 2nd. The webinar is freely available on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CC-j73LnE&feature=youtu.be.

There is also an article in the May/June 2017 issue of the ASCA Magazine on this topic called, "'13 Reasons Why': A Teachable Moment." The article includes ways to help address issues raised by the series, suicide risk factors, and protective factors.

ASCA has also compiled a wealth of helpful resources on their website at www.schoolcounselor.org/13reasons. There are handouts from the webinar, a model school district policy on suicide prevention, ASCA position statements, articles from past ASCA magazines on the topic of suicide, research articles, and links to other websites. Please take the time to utilize these resources and use this as a teachable moment for your students and families.

National Association for College Admission Counseling Comes to Boston

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)’s 73rd Annual National Conference is coming to Boston, MA Sept. 14-16, and school counselors are invited to join them on Friday, Sept. 15 for Counselors’ Preview Day. NACAC offers non-member counselors local to the conference a reduced registration of $50 for the Friday conference events. In addition, New England Association for College Admission Counseling (NEACAC) has offered to reimburse the $50 fee for a limited number of NEACAC members after attending the events on Friday, Sept. 15. Register now at: http://bit.ly/2q9o09I. Space will be limited so please register early to reserve your spot. For more info: http://bit.ly/2qMYsxS.

There is also a need for conference volunteers. Volunteers do need to register for all or part of the conference to volunteer. For more information on volunteering at NACAC, please check out the following link: https://www.nacacconference.org/information/volunteer-page/.

NACAC will also be hosting a National College Fair on September 17th from 1-4pm. The Fair is free and open to the public. See NACACFairs.org for more information.
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. https://masca.wildapricot.org/

What if you could seize the day?

“
There’s always someone I’m happy to see who is happy to see me, too.

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