

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR

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**Ben Wade**  
Deep Run Elementary School

**Words Used to Describe Ben:**  
positive, supportive, leader, respected, trusted

### **Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:**

- Coordinates the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Mentoring Program
- Created a program to address student attendance concerns
- Co-leads the School Student Council
- Member of the Student Services Advisory Committee
- Member of several countywide policy committees
- Implements a comprehensive school counseling program
- Trained staff in non-violent crisis intervention
- Meets with every new student
- Active member of the Howard County Association of Counseling and Development

**Some Final Words about Ben:** Ben's impact extends outside of Deep Run because of the many initiatives he supports.

**Nominated by:** Cindy Hankin,  
Principal, Deep Run Elementary

## MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR

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**Aniece McClure**  
Bonnie Branch Middle School

**Words Used to Describe Aniece:**  
calm, collaborative, leader, professional, advocate

### **Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:**

- Provides support for all students but especially those students who are difficult to reach
- Coordinates the articulation process with the feeder elementary schools
- Facilitates KidTalk
- Works hard to reach out to families in the community
- Implements lessons on Anti-bullying, peer mediation, and study skills that have the students asking for more
- Supervises counselor interns on a regular basis
- Writes individual notes of encouragement to her students
- Runs many groups for students

**Some Final Words about Aniece:**  
After 29 years, Aniece still displays the caring, positive attitude she did when she started in the profession and continues to grow and learn.

**Nominated by:** Linda Martin, Pupil  
Personnel Worker

## HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR

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**Kami Wagner**  
Mt. Hebron High School

**Words Used to Describe Kami:**  
sincere, dedicated, collaborative, caring, positive, leader

### **Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:**

- Facilitates a student-centered, collaborative group as the leader of the counseling department
- Provides strong leadership and support during crises
- Increased communication with the community through the time and energy put into Naviance
- Participates on the School Improvement Team, Student Support Team, and the Leadership Team
- Implemented a "Challenge Day" with the senior class
- Co-leads a group for students who to students who need academic support
- Co-leads Viking Service Club and coaches cross country

**Some Final Words about Kami:**  
Kami provides strong leadership for the counseling department which has created a positive working environment for all.

**Nominated by:** Administrative Team,  
Mt. Hebron High School



## ADVOCATES OF THE YEAR

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Crystal Hood and Kecia  
Holliday, Swansfield  
Elementary School

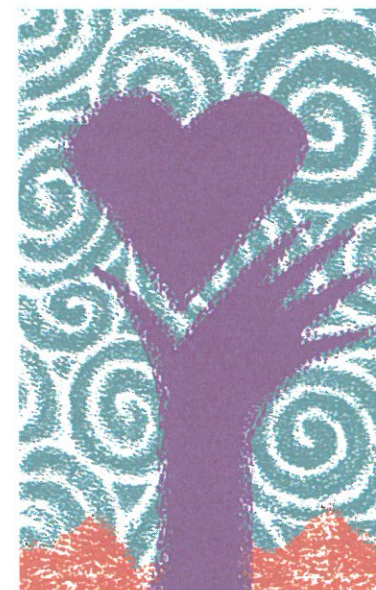
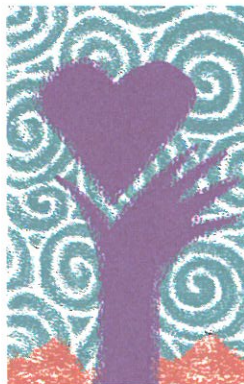
**Words Used to Describe Crystal and Kecia:** team players, supportive, calm, encouraging, advocates

**Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:**

- Coordinate after school programs to provide support for their students
- Look for strengths in students and create programs to highlight these strengths
- Work within the classroom to provide effective interventions
- Play an important role on the Helping Hands Committee to identify students in need of support
- Participate in many outreach activities for families in the community
- Create strategies and activities to engage students and continually monitor their behavior

**Some Final Words about Crystal and Kecia:** These two individuals make a difference not only with the alternative education students but with the whole school population at Swansfield Elementary.

**Nominated by:** Jonathan Davis,  
Principal, Swansfield Elementary School



Howard County Association of  
Counseling and Development  
Presents...

## 2009 SCHOOL COUNSELOR AND ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

April 3, 2009

## Elementary School Counselor of the Year

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Susan Castelbaum  
Hollifield Station Elementary School

### Words Used to Describe Susan:

Child-centered, Committed,  
Dedicated, Role Model, Leader,  
Enthusiastic, Energetic

### Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:

- Created and implemented a character education program that was recognized by the Maryland Center for Character Education.
- Advocated tirelessly through her Guidance Advisory Committee to ensure full-time elementary counselors for every school.
- Assisted in the creation and implementation of a successful schoolwide behavioral expectations program.
- Chairs the Human Relations committee.
- Invited to participate on several countywide committees to share her expertise.

### Some Final Words about Susan:

Susan is approachable to students, staff, and parents. She is liked, respected, and trusted by all.

### Nominated by:

Jeannie DeCray, Hollifield Station  
PTA President

## Middle School Counselor of the Year

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Tina Flynn  
Elkridge Landing Middle School

### Words Used to Describe Tina:

Counselor, Mentor, Facilitator, Leader,  
Planner, Teacher, Advocate

### Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:

- Created the Student of the Month program and Positive Postcards that are sent to every student.
- Coordinates Mix-It Up Day by implementing a series of lessons designed to break down cliques and stereotypes.
- Promotes student leadership through the Student Ambassador Program and the Youth Empowerment Summit.
- Mentors aspiring and new counselors.
- Created the Holiday Help program where the staff adopts students to provide gifts for the holidays.

### Some Final Words about Tina:

In countless ways, Tina has given of herself to students, families, and colleagues with whom she works. Our school is a better place to work and learn because of Tina Flynn.

### Nominated by:

Tom Saunders, Principal, Elkridge  
Landing Middle School

## High School Counselor of the Year

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Donna Ueckermann  
Oakland Mills High School

### Words Used to Describe Donna:

Energetic, Hardworking, Juggler,  
Organized, Creative, Motivator,  
Empathic

### Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:

- Expert at assessing students' needs and providing supports for them.
- Designed a grief group to support students dealing with loss.
- Coordinates the peer mediation program.
- Developed an effective Career Day by surveying students to see what careers they are most interested in.
- Coordinates the mock interviews and works closely with English teachers to help students prepare resumes.

**Some Final Words about Donna:**  
Donna manages to give 100% to her job as a mom and homemaker and 100% to her job as a counselor.

### Nominated by:

Oakland Mills School Counseling  
Office



## Advocate of the Year

Debbie Goins, Guidance Secretary,  
Hammond Middle School

### **Words Used to Describe Debbie:**

Valued, Trusted, Approachable,  
Happy, Calm, Knowledgeable,  
Compassionate, Empathic

### **Outstanding Contributions to the Profession:**

- Takes the time to know the names of 600 students.
- Takes every opportunity to help families in need.
- Makes families feel welcome and comfortable at Hammond Middle School.
- Knows all aspects of her job and goes above and beyond to perform them.
- Provides outstanding support to the school counselors and other staff at Hammond Middle School.

**Some Final Words about Debbie:**  
Students appreciate the small acts of kindness that Debbie displays and continue to seek her out after they move to high school and beyond.

### **Nominated by:**

Kerry McGowan, Principal  
Hammond Middle School

Thanks to the leadership of Howard County Association of Counseling and Development for planning this event. A special thanks to Ben Wade, Laura Propert, and Ingrid Morton for their efforts in making this event possible.

HOWARD COUNTY  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNSELING  
AND DEVELOPMENT  
PRESENTS...

# 2008 School Counselor and Advocate Of the Year Awards



April 4, 2008  
Coho Grill

# Advocates of the Year

Vanessa Hooks

*Middle School Counseling Secretary*

and

Terri Parker

*Elementary Teachers' Secretary*

Cradlerock School

Nominated by: Kim Flyr, Bettina Hartgrove, and Bruce Thornton; School Counselors; Cradlerock School

## **A few words about why they were nominated...**

Cradlerock is a school with a high transiency rate where students are enrolled and withdrawn from the rosters on a regular basis. It would be easy to let it become “business as usual” or even “another Interruption” and forget what a big deal it is to be a child starting over in a new school. Ms. Parker and Ms. Hooks have never forgotten this simple fact and have made a point to welcome each family and student in a personal way where everyone feels cared for and special.

The positive effect that Ms. Parker and Ms. Hooks have had on the school counseling program at Cradlerock is evident in so many ways. These selfless women have always been ready to offer a helping hand to their school counselors. They have stopped in the midst of their own tasks to assist with judging entries for the Ben Carson Scholarship, select students to invite on a field trip, or fill folders for a counseling event. Often times, Ms. Parker and Ms. Hooks triage phone calls or visits from parents, students, and staff members asking to speak to one of the counselors.

Over the past five years, these women have made the Cradlerock Counseling Center a first rate environment to visit,

Howard County Association of Counseling  
and Development presents

# 2011 School Counselor and Advocate of the Year Awards

April 14, 2011

# Elementary School Counselor of the Year

Debbie Wolf

*Rockburn Elementary School*

Nominated by: Barry Polinsky, PTA President,  
Rockburn Elementary School

## **A few words about why she was nominated...**

Mrs. Wolf provides on-going emotional, social, and academic support to all the students at Rockburn Elementary School. She is supportive, caring, and friendly and has the gift of making everyone feel comfortable. Parents value Mrs. Wolf's "open door" policy and valuable resources she sends home including ongoing educational materials on social issues.

Mrs. Wolf has implemented over 35 programs to establish a comprehensive program reaching children and families in a multitude of ways to increase her effectiveness and ability to support a diverse school population. An example of one her Mrs. Wolf's programs is Kind Kids which was created to encourage respectful encounters between students. During Choose Civility Week, over 700 students voluntarily made a pledge to think about how they treat others on the bus, in the cafeteria, and at recess. Each student received a special bracelet that can be worn as a reminder to be a kind kid. Kind Kids promise to Include others, Never tease or put down, and Do good deeds.

Mrs. Wolf is constantly connecting with students to get to know them. She does not make judgements and listens with an open mind and an open heart. She has a lot of patience and a positive outlook. She is genuine and truly cares for the students at Rockburn Elementary School.

# Middle School Counselor of the Year

Emy Coonts

*Folly Quarter Middle School*

Nominated by: Staff Recognition Committee, Folly  
Quarter Middle School

## **A few words about why they were nominated...**

Mrs. Coonts demonstrates her strengths as a school counselor every day. She is constantly working with students to help them solve problems related to academics, family, friends, and other aspects of becoming young adults. Mrs. Coonts does not sit back and wait for problems to come to her. She closely monitors students who may have a history of struggling emotionally and tries to involve them in activities to raise their self-esteem. For example, one of the groups she runs is an all-girl book club. She selects books that speak to girl issues and creates a safe environment for the girls to talk.

Along with her co-worker, Mrs. Coonts organizes monthly character-building lessons and activities which helps to make respect a priority in our school. These lessons are implemented in a variety of ways which integrates character education into the daily curriculum. Her lessons are always highly engaging and well-received by the students. She helps them see how the lessons can be applied to their daily lives and the world around them.

Mrs. Coonts' energy, enthusiasm, and positive approach to working with the students are infectious and help create a respectful school community. She is dependable, approachable, and helpful. She truly cares about the students' development and leads numerous programs to promote their academic,

**From:** Kim Flyr Kim\_Flyr@hcpss.org

**Subject:** RE: HCACD awards

**Date:** May 22, 2015 at 11:00 AM

**To:** Beth Lucas Beth\_Lucas@hcpss.org, Kelli Brandt Kelli\_Brandt@hcpss.org, Lisa L. Boarman Lisa\_Boarman@hcpss.org, Laura Probert Laura\_A\_Probert@hcpss.org, Kami M. Wagner Kami\_Wagner@hcpss.org

KF

Thank you all so much for your leadership on this!

Our winners are.....drum roll...

Carolyn Wohnsigl (Deep Run Elementary), nominated by Tricia Collins-McCarthy, Principal  
Alesia Richter (Swansfield Elementary), nominated by Molly Ketterer (Principal) & Heather  
Moraff (AP)

Kara Fick (Oakland Mills High), nominated by Donna Ueckermann & Counseling Staff  
(Counselor)

1. Can you let the nominees know who was selected? In the past, HCACD let the nominator know whether their candidate was selected and then let the nominator notify the nominee. It's fun for them, and they should get the fun, since they did the work! :) Even if their candidate wasn't selected, they can still share the packet with them if they haven't already, which is amazing.

You can let them know that our colleagues at MSDE selected the winners and that they were all awesome.

Can you also give them a deadline to do this so that we can put something out on the HUB telling everyone who was selected? We obviously don't want to do this until they all know.

2. As far as a date for the fall, our calendars are pretty open right now! The only things to consider are the state competition date and also the fact that we can't have the celebration when students are in schools. In the past, we have scheduled it on a day students leave early or have held it after school. It looks like October 30 is an early dismissal for kids, so that is one possibility, but we will work with whatever you decide.

Keep us posted on how we can help, and thanks again for making this happen. It's so great to see good people recognized!

Have a great weekend,  
Kim

Kim Flyr, M.Ed., L.C.P.C.  
Elementary Resource Counselor  
Howard County Public Schools  
410-313-5637  
[kim\\_flyr@hcpss.org](mailto:kim_flyr@hcpss.org)

Connectedness \* Arranger \* Individualization \* Ideation \* Strategic

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**From:** Beth Lucas

HCACD announces the  
Counselors of the Year for 2016-17!

Please join us in congratulating:

Rachael Gustafson - Waverly Elementary

and

Phil Vangeli - River Hill High School

Both of these counselors were nominated by their schools and will  
be celebrated at a banquet in the fall. More details to follow.

*this announcement is closed for comments*





**Howard County Association of  
Counseling and Development presents**

**School Counselor and  
Advocate of the Year  
Awards**

**November 10, 2017**

**Facci's Restaurant  
7530 Montpelier Road  
Laurel, MD 20723**



## Honoring



**Liza Bane**  
Lisbon Elementary

“The HCPSS and the Lisbon Elementary School community is a better place because of the work and leadership provided by our most valued school counselor.”

**Kelli Brandt**  
Glenwood Middle School

“In the course of my nearly 25 years in education, spanning more than six schools and countless school counselors, Mrs. Brandt is by far the best I have encountered.”

**Irene Bademosi**  
Mount Hebron High School

“If there is one thing we know about her, she genuinely cares for her students. She wants all of her students to achieve, and will do everything in her power to ensure their success.”

**Jill Altshuler**  
Reservoir High School

“We are continually in awe of Ms. Altshuler’s creativity, quiet yet constant energy, unswerving focus and support of her students, and her natural ability to lead.”

