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CHAMPION FOR STUDENTS NAMED SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR

Julie Hartline from Smyrna, Georgia Wins National Contest

Alexandria, VA, January 22, 2009 — Julie Hartline, a school counselor from Campbell High School (CHS) in Smyrna, Georgia, has been named the top school counselor in America. Hartline is one of more than 400 elementary, middle, and secondary school counselors nationwide that competed for the School Counselor of the Year award. The program, presented by Naviance and the American School Counselor Association, honors the professionals who devote their careers to serving as advocates and often lifesavers for the nation's students.

Hartline began working as a parole officer twenty years ago because she wanted to make a difference. When she discovered 85% of her caseload had never graduated from high school, she saw the need to make a difference earlier. She decided to become a teacher, which ultimately led her to her true calling as a school counselor. Now in her tenth year of counseling, Hartline continues to work tirelessly for the best interests of her students.

"Julie is a social change agent and is on the front lines advocating for excellence in education for her students," said Gail Smith, Supervisor of School Counseling, Cobb County School District. "She makes her vision a reality because of her commitment, her ability to collaborate, and her undying desire to provide her students with a meaningful and purposeful school experience."

The School Counselor of the Year awards program was open to all 100,000 members of the school counseling profession. The top ten school counselors were nominated by their peers and administrators, and judged by a select panel to be the "best of the best." The candidates were judged on several criteria, including: creative school counseling innovations, effective counseling programs, leadership skills, and contributions to student advancement.

Currently the Cobb County School Counselor Association President Elect, Hartline has introduced a variety of initiatives and programs to better serve her students and community. She revamped the CHS counseling program to include a registrar, allowing the remaining counselors to spend the majority of their time directly addressing student needs through classroom guidance and small group lessons. Hartline also developed a counselor appointment request system, so students have direct access to their counselor who is often the only trusted adult they can turn to in times of personal need.

One of Hartline's greatest accomplishments was the creation of the CHS Career Center. Having realized that a majority of students at CHS were not adequately prepared for the world of work and that many of them were first-generation college applicants, she worked with parents and her school foundation to receive funding to open and run a career center at the school. The center provides students with the individualized attention and guidance they need to pursue their post-secondary dreams.

"The fundamental goal of our counseling program is to support students so they can achieve academically, personally, and in the future," said Hartline. "School counseling is my passion and I aim to make a difference for students each and every day."

Another initiative under Hartline's leadership was Campbell's participation in the district pilot of the ASCA National Model, which included the establishment of the Counseling Advisory Council with community, parent, and faculty representation and the completion of a closing the gap project. Because of the successful pilot, Hartline is now assisting Gail Smith in Cobb County's three year roll-out of ASCA model training. In 2008, CHS became one of only two high schools in Georgia to receive the prestigious Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) award and Hartline is sharing her expertise in this area across the county and state.

"School counselors make significant contributions to the overall well-being of students and their success," said Richard Wong, Executive Director, American School Counselor Association. "They have unique qualifications and skills that allow them to address students' academic achievement, personal/social and career development needs."

The ten finalists for the 2009 School Counselor of the Year are: Marilyn Agee, Concord East Side Elementary, Elkhart, Ind.; Margaret Cheeley, Collins Hill High School, Suwanee, Ga.; Vanessa Gomez-Lee, Valley View High School, Moreno Valley, Cal.; Karen Griffith, Berkeley Lake Elementary School, Duluth, Ga.; Julie Hartline, Campbell High School, Smyrna, Ga.; Laurie Huntwork, Aloha Huber Park PK-8 School, Beaverton, Ore.; Michael "Brian" Law, Valdosta High School, Valdosta, Ga.; Ana Maria Leon, Wilton Manors Elementary School, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Diane Reese, T.C. Williams High School, Alexandria, Va.; and Steve Schneider, Sheboygan South High School, Sheboygan, Wis.

Hartline, along with the other nine finalists, will be flown to Washington, D.C., on January 28, 2009, for three days of celebratory events. The honorees will have meetings with their Members of Congress, attend a Congressional briefing and reception, and be formally recognized at a black-tie gala.

Co-chairs of the 2009 School Counselor of the Year program are Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-Cal.) and Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-Mich.). The 2009 program is presented by Naviance, a provider of planning and advising systems for secondary schools, and the American School Counselor Association.

For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, please visit www.schoolcounselor.org.

About the American School Counselor Association

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) professional organization based in Alexandria, VA. ASCA promotes student success by expanding the image and influence of professional school counseling through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change. ASCA helps school counselors guide their students toward academic achievement, personal and social development, and career planning to help today's students become tomorrow's productive, contributing members of society. Founded in 1952, ASCA currently has a network of 50 state associations and a membership of more than 25,000 school counseling professionals.

About Naviance

Naviance is the leading provider of planning and advising systems for secondary schools. Nearly 40,000 educators and counselors serving more than 3.5 million students in schools across the U.S. and in 60 other countries use Naviance products to manage academic and post-secondary advising, communicate with students and families, and analyze data. For more information about Naviance, visit www.naviance.com.

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