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### **ASCA Announces 2019 School Counselor of the Year Finalists**

**ALEXANDRIA, VA** – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is pleased to announce the six finalists for the 2019 School Counselor of the Year awards program (#SCOY19). The award honors the school counseling professionals who devote their careers to serving as advocates for the nation's students, helping them achieve success in school and in life.

The six finalists are:

- Roberto Aguilar, Milwaukie High School, Milwaukie, Ore.
- Brian Coleman, Jones College Prep, Chicago, Ill.
- Jan Desmarais-Morse, Goshen Middle School, Goshen, Ind.
- Desiré DeSoto, Waianae High School, Waianae, Hawaii
- Sarah Kirk, Monroe Elementary School, Norman, Okla.
- Nwakaego Edordu Oriji, Dr. Billy E. Dade Middle School, Dallas, Texas

From these six finalists, one will be named the 2019 School Counselor of the Year.

Nominations for the School Counselor of the Year awards program were submitted by the state school counselor associations. The School Counselor of the Year awards panel was composed of representatives from AASA: The

School Superintendents Association, ACT, the College Board, the National Association for College Admission Counseling; and representatives from: Brambleton Middle School, Ashburn, Va.; Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, Ill; Dominion High School, Sterling, Va.; George P. Mullen Elementary School, Manassas, Va.; Georgetown Middle School, Georgetown, Del.; St. Theresa School, Ashburn, Va. The panel selected the finalists based on several criteria, including school counseling innovations, exemplary comprehensive school counseling programs, leadership and advocacy skills and contributions to student advancement.

“The School Counselor of the Year award is an esteemed recognition for our profession,” said Richard Wong, Ed.D., ASCA executive director. “School counselors make significant contributions to the overall well-being of students and their success. Their unique qualifications and training allow them to support students’ academic achievement, career development and social/emotional needs. This award highlights their commitment, dedication and excellence.”

The finalists and their principals will travel to Washington, D.C., in late January for special celebratory and educational events. The finalists will be honored in an award ceremony and be formally recognized at a black-tie gala.

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### **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 school counseling through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change. ASCA helps school counselors guide their students toward academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development to help today’s students become tomorrow’s productive, contributing members of society. Founded in 1952,

ASCA has a network of 52 state and territory associations and a membership of more than 36,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org).