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Michelle Obama to Address Nation's Top School Counselors at Kennedy Center Celebration

American School Counselor Association to host annual School Counselor of the Year celebration in collaboration with the Reach Higher Initiative

ICYMI: Mrs. Obama called the 2018 School Counselor of the Year awardee, Kristen Perry. Watch the reaction [HERE](#).

ALEXANDRIA, VA [UPDATED]– Michelle Obama, former First Lady of the United States, will honor the 2018 School Counselor of Year® at a special celebration at 10:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 2, 2018, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

The celebration, presented in collaboration with the Reach Higher Initiative, which was started by Mrs. Obama during her time at the White House, will honor Kirsten Perry of Chicago, Ill., as the 2018 School Counselor of the Year. Forty state school counselor of the year recipients also will be recognized.

Mrs. Obama will be the keynote speaker and will recognize Perry. Ted Allen, the Emmy award-winning host from the Food Network, will serve as the master of ceremonies. Confirmed guests also include former Education Secretary, John B. King, La La Anthony (Starz series "Power"), Amanda Freitag (Food Network) and Carla Hall ("The Chew"). The celebration also will feature a special performance by the Lethal Ladies step team, featured in the award-winning documentary "Step."

The School Counselor of the Year award, introduced by ASCA in 2008, honors professionals who devote their careers to advocating for the nation's students and addressing their academic and social/emotional development and college

and career readiness needs. In 2015, Mrs. Obama, in collaboration with her Reach Higher Initiative, hosted the School Counselor of the Year ceremony at the White House and continued the tradition annually through the end of the Obama administration in 2017. This is the fourth year Mrs. Obama and Reach Higher have collaborated with ASCA to celebrate the work of school counselors across the country.

The event will be viewable via livestream on ASCA's website at www.schoolcounselor.org/SCOY.

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This event is open to press, however space is limited. Please submit your media RSVP by noon, Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2018, via the following form:

<http://bit.ly/ASCAMediaRSVP> or contact Lachelle Metcalf, lmetcalf@schoolcounselor.org, 571-329-4199.

****Note: RSVPs do not guarantee access. If we are able to accommodate your request, you'll receive an official approval notification via email from a member of the American School Counselor Association staff after the RSVP deadline has passed.***

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 50 state associations and a membership of more than 34,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit www.schoolcounselor.org.

About the Reach Higher Initiative

The Reach Higher Initiative, started by former First Lady Michelle Obama during her time at the White House, works to inspire every student in the U.S. to take charge of

their future by completing their education past high school, whether at a professional training program, a community college, or a four-year college or university. Reach Higher continues to help underserved students navigate the college-going process by raising awareness about helpful tools and resources; meeting students where they are and tailoring technical assistance to meet their unique needs; and building the capacity of the school counseling profession. The Reach Higher Initiative now lives at Civic Nation, a non-profit focused on innovative engagement and awareness initiatives.