



Save the Date: The Fall conference will be October 20, 2005 at Ascutney Mountain Resort

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Conference Preview

The fall conference will showcase ASCA presenters. The key note speaker is Judi Bowers, President of ASCA. She will be speaking about leadership and advocacy. She will also do a morning and afternoon session on Using Data to Save Your Job. Barbara Blackburn, ASCA's president elect, will be presenting in the morning and afternoon sessions on Using the National Model To Help Students Use Life Skills. Additional workshops are still being planned. Stay tuned--more to come.

Fall Conference Moves South

For the first time, the Vermont School Counselor Association brings its fall conference into southern Vermont--the Ascutney Mountain resort is the site of 2005 conference. With its easy access to Interstate 91, counselors from the Burlington area can make it in under two hours. The Association hopes more counselors from the southern part of the state will participate.

As you head south on I-91 from the junction of I-89, the mountain will be directly ahead of you beckoning in the distance. However, don't get too excited because you will have to pass through border patrol check point near the rest area before being allowed to proceed. We don't let just anyone into this part of the state. If your visa is not in order or you just look suspicious, get off the Interstate at White River Junction and go south on Route 5. Here is a hint from those of us who deal with this hassle on a regular basis: When the border patrol officer asks you if you are a U. S. Citizen, do NOT respond, "Yes, I am....Are you?" They will pull you over and question you for a long, long time.

Make the trip, you'll be glad you did.

VSAC Helps Adult Students

Free counseling and information for adults considering education.....

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation's Adult Outreach Program (also known as Educational Opportunity Center or EOC) offers a variety of services and resources to adults in all areas of the state. The program is funded, in part, through a federal TRIO program and especially seeks first generation, low-income participants.

Staff in the Adult Outreach program hope you will help share information about this service with the parents of your students and with former high school students who may return to your school for assistance.

The information below summarizes the Adult Outreach Program's services. If you print a newsletter on a regular basis,

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www.vtsca.org

President - Greg Martin
President Elect - Cindy Edson
Secretary - Bobbi Rood
Treasurer - Barbara Bloom

Newsletter - Wayne Blanchard
Send news items to Wayne at Springfield High School
wblanchard@springfield.k12.vt.us

you might want to include the information below. Or please simply pass the information on to students you'd like to refer to the program.

Summary:

Are you interested in continuing your education or changing your career? The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation's Outreach Program provides information and counseling about entering and financing a college education or changing career directions. Through this free service, you can:

- Arrange to meet individually with the Outreach Counselor in your area
 - Attend a workshop on career, education, and financial aid
- For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call VSAC toll-free at 1-800-642-3177 (or 655-9602 in the Burlington area) and ask for Outreach. Feel free to visit our web-site at www.vsac.org.

"I will act as if what I do will make a difference."

-William James

Matt Conn Wins Essay Contest

Congratulations to Matt Conn, winner of the VTSCA "Barbara Bloom School Counselor Essay Contest". Matt was a senior last year at Essex Junction High School. Students were asked to write a short essay on the topic, "How My School Counselor Helped Me". The prize was a savings bond. Here's Matt's essay:

"My guidance counselor, Mrs. Bergeron, has helped me out in so many ways that it would be impossible to count them all. Not only has she guided me through the extremely difficult process of getting into college, but she has also been a friend I can turn to. She also assisted me through my OCD, a problem that I have had since middle school. Mrs. Bergeron is far more than just a counselor, but an advisor, a psychiatrist, and most importantly, a friend.

"I am not writing this essay because I want the savings bond, but because I want this amazing woman to be recognized for the work that she does. She has facilitated my life through high school and taken a great deal of stress off my back. College planning has been a cinch with her guidance, and I know that I will be able to enter it prepared. I know that I would be completely lost without her aid and support. Mrs. Bergeron deserves to be recognized for all the selfless hard work she exudes day in and day out."

Dirty Jobs - Exploring Career Development

On a recent episode of the TV show, *Dirty Jobs*, the host spent a day making beer at the Long Trail Brewery. Who knew that making something that tastes so good had so many disgusting tasks that workers had to perform. At one point, he had to climb inside a big stainless steel tank that was very hot and scrape the walls down by hand. Later he had to clean clumps of yeast off of filters to get them ready for the next batch. Fortunately, no one has invented a way to add smell to a TV program.

We all know that school counseling programs should address the academic, career, and personal/social development of our students, but many times career development is the dirty job that gets put last in the list of things to do. Making room for it will enhance your program because it can be a very visible part of what you do, and it may help students boost their self-esteem and encourage them to improve their academic performance.

In May, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation and the Vermont School Counselors' Association co-sponsored a conference called "Creating Pathways Between Learning and Earning". With Bob Bates from Essex High School moderating, the day opened with a panel of K-12 counselors to give an overview of the types of activities that are part of counseling programs in the state.

Sherry Lussier from Orleans Elementary School described the many activities in her school. These include mentors for all fourth grade students, fifth grade students that get help from high school students, and job shadows for seventh and eighth grade students. Other activities include career speakers, e-mentors that are matched by career interest, career portfolios that begin in kindergarten, use of the Real Game/Making It Real, use of a stock market game for fifth graders, and a parent night for middle school students.

Picking up from where Sherry left off, Doris Bard from Colchester Middle School reported that they use the *Choices* software with every eighth grade student. Working with Colchester employers, the school hosts wide world of work career fair every other year. Other activities include gender equity education in FACS classes.

Moving to the high school level, Lisa Lemieux, the Guidance Director of Spaulding High and the Barre Technical Center, described their ninth grade wellness class that includes a career development component through a contract with VSAC. They also have an IT academy that includes a ninth grade prep class, a tenth grade foundations class, and an eleventh grade pathways class before the students specialize in networking, programming,

CADD, or graphics in twelfth grade. Other activities include community service opportunities and a career fair for tenth grade students. These students take an interest inventory and then choose three business to explore. As an added incentive, students can earn credit for participating from their teachers.

Next, Ann Doran, the Director of Guidance Services at the Windham Regional Career Center and Natalie Brennan, a VSAC Outreach Counselor described the work of the RCDC, a collaborative effort on the part of four school districts and VSAC to bring career counseling to the whole southeastern region of the state. Activities include developing strategies to use portfolios in the Vermont Guidance Central web site, using a standard career assessment, and supporting the use of the Real Game with teachers in their schools.

Valerie Thompson and Laurie Smith, who are counselors at Essex High, described their career focus with tenth grade students. They meet with students to discuss what success means and use such tools as a values inventory, *Choices*, the work values sorter in Vermont Guidance Central. Each student fills out a summary sheet that goes to the counselor. The counselors follow up with students by meeting individually with them. Essex organizes a career fair for tenth graders

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Career Conference

by doing a survey to find the areas of interest and then inviting people to talk to them. A committee of counselors and students found people to represent 60 careers last year. In a separate activity, the counselors invited people to talk to seniors about career and community service gap year possibilities.

With all of the career development activities that this panel described, every student will have a chance to explore their own values and interests, and the information to make an informed choice. Some may still choose a dirty job--let's hope so. All work is important, and some of the things we enjoy in life require people willing to do the job.

Notes From High School Roundtable Discussion

After the morning panel, we broke into groups by level. The notes from the high school group appear on this page. For those who were there, we hope that the notes might trigger further action.

VTSCA Newsletter would like to have a regular feature on career development. If you have a career activity you are doing with your students, and you are willing to share it with others please send it to Wayne Blanchard at Springfield High School - email is wblanchard@springfield.k12.vt.us. If you have details on some of the activities listed here, please send them to Wayne too.

From Creating Pathways Between Learning and Earning Conference

What are your reactions to the morning panel?

- Great info
- Inspirational
- Validating
- Comforting to hear time concerns
- Administration/support important teacher/community
- Time with students – access
- Collaboration
- Invite parents in
- When do we start talking/working with students on their future
- Earlier may be better with teachers support
- Spiraling approach K-12 connections with classroom
- WOW IT IS HAPPENING
- spread that
- Communicate with parents
- Written details
- Breakdown into group levels
- Question time
- Invite other schools
- Parents might want info on changing careers also
- Great k-12 integration, no one talked about money – salary, time, ed
- Professional guidance consortium
- High school transitions – did not address
- K-12 continuance of career portfolio
- Brattleboro – RCDC great
- Helpful to hear the spectrum of activities
- Liked the non-traditional post-secondary options – Dynamy, VFP, Americorps, etc.
- Idea of older students as men-

tors

- E-mentoring/mail mentoring
- RCDC group – structure
- link w/ teachers
- Hearing about necessity of getting everyone (teachers, admissions community) on board with career development
- Gap for students who are taking a non-traditional route after high school – need for more discussion and options
- Not doing enough
- Excited by possibilities
- K-12 coordination
- Tech/Spaulding

What is currently happening?

- School to work – Bennington
- Sophomore Career Summit
- Conference/workshops
- College campus
- Learn to Earn 8th
- Career Exploration 7th
- Elective Classes: 1. Community service, 2. coop – 180+/-, non-profit, and 3. field study – 30-40+/- anywhere - transportation is an issue
- Rutland and VSAC – 7-8-9 graders career fair, 1700-1800 students, blocked scheduling, career clusters, demos, every other year, College of St. Joseph
- Workforce Investment Board
- Learn to Earn - list of people willing to go out and talk
- MVU, Swanton – business class – literacy requirement, complete applications, unit on careers
- Thetford – panels of first year alums, college and work world
- District has picked up the costs

- Grants are gone
- Skills USA
- Not enough
- RCDC teachers taking on career development and going on
- Portfolios – career piece
- Career class – juniors semester long, required for graduation
- Grade 9 or 10, one trimester business department
- Career work experience two weeks a year in area of interest in tech
- Job coach 9-12
- Class-based – academic career, electronic, Juniors
- college preparation, Seniors
- undecided – job shadows portfolio, career development center
- Career staff – required 9th grade help people doing class transition to class, more teachers involved with
- Community-based learning course credit
- Branching out independent study – e. mentor
- Program apartment learning life skills, 5-7 year learning D. population
- Community service learning
- Barre – only non-profit organizations – incorporate private businesses as well
- Plan for diversity in career development activities – take into account learning differences/styles
- Graduation requirement ‡ portfolio based transition plan (capstone project?)
- Freshman Academy – class for all freshman – covers study skills, career development, life skills, etc.
- Career Academies ‡ drawback

- leave home high school, integrated academics ‡ influence on college choices
- Color Code – personality assessment related to careers

If you attended the May Career Conference and can provide information about your roundtable discussion or if you have an activity you are willing to share with others send it to wblanchard@springfield.k12.vt.us

What would you like to see happen? What is your wish list?

- Comprehensive Career Curriculum K-12: Vital results
- Career Development? Who does it? Plan?
- Collaboration with sending schools
- Philosophically – be on the same page
- Teachers buy in – more access to students
- Career exploration courses
- Integrating reading, writing, critical thinking, math
- Follow-up data – where do our kids go / what do they do after high school
- Alumni support
- VSAC – tutorial/in-service, VT Guidance Central, middle and high school, teachers, counselors, parents
- Want to find out more about involving parents

- Class requirement
- More professional development for teachers
- Leadership in state standards integrate
- Integration from state with agencies
- Funding
- District-wide priority
- Parent involvement
- Close gap of haves and have nots
- Monthly seminars, college planning for juniors and seniors
- Plan for all graduates – six-year
- Tech center program of studies, 9-12 work – college
- Regional connection between sending schools
- Buy in – top down
- Time
- Parental involvement
- Partner with teacher
- Internship program

What does career development look like?

- Gender equity?
- Why aren't boys heading to college?
- Dave Landers, St. Michael's – Vermont boys, why they are not succeeding statistics
- Women making less still
- Non-traditional career role models
- Social issue
- Getting into classrooms
- Vermont Guidance Central
- Training teachers
- Students not going on to college

VTSCA Board Member Profile - President Greg Martin

Board members volunteer their time to serve on the Vermont School Counselor Association Board. Each month we will feature board members to show why they serve, and what they would like to see happen to the profession.

Name: Gregory J. Martin
School: Westford Elementary School, Pre-K-8th grade

What in your academic and or professional career led up to you becoming a school counselor ?

I was deemed a “youth at risk” in my high school years. I had the support, encouragement, and guidance from my high school counselors to enable me to make better decisions for my future. I completed an Outward Bound course, hiked the Appalachian Trail for a month as a senior project, and started my journey towards becoming a counselor by working summers at a wilderness camp in Ossipee, NH for a few years while in college. My liberal arts program encouraged exploration in many schools of thought, however, I gravitated towards psychology. I eventually found my calling and landed my first job in education at a private school for learning disabled students. I was hooked! I worked in the residential program and became a remedial language instructor. I started taking classes for my Master’s degree to pursue the requirements to become a school counselor. I worked as

an Assistant Dean of Students, Special Educator, and Planning Room Director while finishing my degree. I was fortunate to find a job as a school counselor in Westford, VT. How we behave, experience, and interpret the world around us fascinates me. I’m currently in my fifth year and find the job of a school counselor demanding, however, very, very, rewarding.

Do your duties consist of things not specifically in your job description ?

I think it’s in our nature to always want to help, no matter what the situation. Probably, one of the hardest things for me to do personally is to say, “No.” I’m still working on establishing better boundaries between my job as a school counselor and the numerous requests to take on duties that do not pertain to my role.

What have been some high points and low points in your job ?

Believe it or not, I feel that the high’s and low’s are often tied to one another. For me, it’s always difficult to see an individual or family that is struggling or in some stage of crisis. The unique position that we are in to understand human behavior, foster positive change, and support those who need it completely reinforces the reasons we do what we do.

Has the job or career field of school counseling changed any since you started and was

it for the better or worse?

I feel our profession continues to struggle with many of the same issues that it has grappled with in the recent past; promotion and recognition of the valuable work we do to enable student success and finding the means to quantify and evaluate it, the ability to balance our time with an ever growing list of counselor expectations, adopting a clear understanding of what we do compared with other professionals in similar roles (social workers, sap counselors, school psychologists, nurses), finding the necessary time to appropriately access our students when there are increasing demands placed upon students and teacher, alike. All of these issues continue to be challenges for us. Yet, as today’s world continues to change and move at an exponentially fast pace our students are going to continually be in need of school counselors to help educate and prepare them for their future.

What do you see as the future in the field of counseling ?

I see us moving towards a more nationally recognized and more clearly defined profession. I hope that more and more districts and states start to adopt ASCA’s model for school counseling. This will enable counselors all over to specifically detail their roles and responsibilities and also to be properly evaluated on the actual work we accomplish. It would also help build consis- 6

tency into our profession. In the future, I see states starting to recognize a national credential for licensing. I also hope that school counselors become more unified under their state organizations. School counseling positions are getting downsized or eliminated. Research is starting to surface that recognizes the impact we have as counselors on student success. We need to build on this, promote our occupation, and stand together with one voice.

What would you change?

This question was brought up recently by a Vermont School Counselor's Association Board member. I would automatically incorporate the need for supervision for all school counselors. I think it's been often overlooked or dismissed due to time or inability to find the right supervisor that understands our position. We need to be supported ourselves, to ask questions about practice, and receive positive and constructive feedback on how we are doing. This is best practice and will continue to make all of us better at our jobs.

What is something that you do that worked really well?

I've comprised a two part anti-bullying and harassment training for middle school students that encompasses definitions, poetry, and interactive role plays to comply with the Vermont State's mandate from bill H.629 and educate students on what they can do if faced with any of these difficult social situations.

Student Recruitment

High schools are required to release names and address of students to military recruiters under the No Child Left Behind law, but students and parents have the right to "opt out". Be sure to notify families and give them the chance to take their names off the list.

The American School Counselor Association provides a useful guideline about working with recruiters in your school. What follows is the position statement published on ASCA's web site:

Professional school counselors encourage and promote positive and equitable reception of recruiters of careers, career services and educational institutions into the school setting. These recruiters may include individuals from post-secondary options such as:

- apprenticeship programs
- athletic programs
- branches of the military
- career and technical education institutions
- colleges and universities
- private schools

The Rationale

Comprehensive and accurate information is essential for students as they explore post-secondary career and educational opportunities. The professional school counselor has the responsibility of balancing recruiter's access to student information with the guidelines

of state/federal law, school district policies and procedures, and ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors. Federal law requires the distribution of student directory information, but the professional school counselor recognizes the importance of student and family choices in the recruitment process. While school officials and recruiters provide comprehensive information of post-secondary options, including the benefits and consequences of those options, the professional school counselor assists students and their families as they make informed post-secondary choices.

The Professional School Counselor's Role

The professional school counselor is an advocate for students in the recruitment process and ensures that students and parents are informed of their right to prevent the distribution of student directory information under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors. The professional school counselor collaborates with students, their families, and recruiters to educate students about post-secondary options and assists students as they make choices about their future. It is recommended that school administrators and professional school counselors develop written in-

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Recruiting

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formation and/or hold informational meetings with recruiters to inform all concerned parties about the policies and procedures for obtaining student information as well as the student and parent's right to withhold their information. Recruiters should provide schools with their name/address/telephone number and that same information for their direct supervisor.

Summary

The professional school counselor assists students and their families as they make informed decisions about post-secondary options. The professional school counselor collaborates with individuals involved in the student recruitment process to ensure the delivery of comprehensive and accurate information while protecting student rights as specified by state/federal law, school district policies.

Military Deployment

Students who have a parent who has been called to active duty have special needs. Here are some resources that may help.

For More Information
Military Child Education Coalition
www.militarychild.org

Military Family Resources, a division of the Guidance Channel
www.militaryfamily.com

MilitaryStudent.org
www.militarystudent.org

If you are an ASCA member, go to the www.schoolcounselor.org web site and check out the article entitled, *Dealing With Deployment*, by Kelly Collins, LPC, NCC,

Help Needed

The Vermont School Counselor Association runs on volunteer power. Conferences are planned and the business of the association depends on members volunteering their time. The VTSCA board is looking for someone to volunteer for the president elect position. The president elect serves as a "vice-president" for a year with the understanding that he or she will take over as president the following year. The board is committed to sending the president elect to a national leadership conference to help the person prepare for the year as president. People who volunteer usually want to contribute to the profession, and they are committed to furthering the professional development of the school counselors in the state. Won't you consider serving on the board? Contact President Greg Martin. See web site. 8

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