



**School Counselor of the Year, Finalists, Semifinalists
To be Honored in White House Ceremony**

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ALEXANDRIA, VA – As part of her [Reach Higher](#) initiative, the First Lady will honor the 2015 School Counselor of the Year, finalists and semifinalists on Jan. 30 at 1 p.m. in a ceremony at the White House with actress Connie Britton, who portrayed a school counselor on the TV series, "Friday Night Lights." This is the first time the ceremony will be held at the White House.

The First Lady believes it is critical to show school counselors appreciation for all the hard work they do to put students on the path to and through college.

The School Counselor of the Year program selects a winner and finalists each year based on several criteria: creative school counseling innovations, effective counseling programs, leadership skills and contributions to student enhancement. It is in its eighth year and is the launch event for National School Counseling Week. When tweeting about the School Counselor of the Year ceremony, the hashtag #scoy15 can be used.

The event will be livestreamed on WhiteHouse.gov/live. This event will be open press, but space is limited. Members of the media who wish to cover this event must RSVP to firstladypress@who.eop.gov by Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2015 at 5 PM ET. Press who do not have a White House hard pass must include their full legal name, Social Security number, date of birth, country of citizenship, current city/state of residence and gender in their request.

The 2015 School Counselor of the Year is Cory Notestine of Alamosa High School in Alamosa, Colo.

The finalists are:

Jennifer B Degruise, Montegut Middle School, Montegut, La.
Jennifer Diaz, White Oak Elementary School, Sugar Hill, Ga.
Cory D. Notestine, Alamosa High School, Alamosa, Colo.
Liz Parker, Dumbarton Elementary School, Laurel, Va.
Tawnya W. Pringle, Hoover High School, San Diego, Calif.

The semifinalists are:

Arizona

Julie Vandenberg, Horseshoe Trails Elementary School, Phoenix

Colorado

Christina Campos-Krumholz, Minnequa Elementary School and
Fountain International Magnet School, Pueblo

Connecticut

Vanessa Montorsi, Cheshire High School, Cheshire

Delaware

Robert Bassett, Polytech High School, Woodside

Florida

Herele Oakley, Crystal Lakes Elementary School, Boynton Beach
Isabel Parrado, Okeeheelee Community Middle School, Greenacres

Georgia

Andrea Hodgin, Lanier Middle School, Sugar Hill
Julia Richardson, Campbell High School, Smyrna

Hawaii

Alaina Valite, Iao Intermediate School, Wailuku

Illinois

Dustin Seeman, Prospect High School, Mt. Prospect

Indiana

Sarah Altman, Sycamore Elementary School, Avon
Jaime Hamm, Connersville Senior High School, Connersville

Iowa

Teresa Keefe O'Meara, North Tama Elementary School, Traer

Kansas

Bruce Turner, Royster Middle School, Chanute

Kentucky

Stephanie Stambaugh, Longbranch Elementary School, Union

Louisiana

Christina Falgout, South Terrebonne High School, Bourg

Maine

Elena Perello, Eddington Elementary School, Eddington and Holden Elementary School, Holden

Maryland

Wendy Carver, Shady Spring Elementary, Baltimore
Sonya Ford, Matthew Henson Middle School, Indian Head
Jeremy Goldman, Pikesville High School, Baltimore

Minnesota

Margo McKay, Owatonna High School, Owatonna

Missouri

Dee Anna Kelley, Pickett Elementary School and Carden Park Elementary, St. Joseph

Nebraska

Linda Janzen, Nathan Hale Magnet Middle School, Omaha
Cheryl Kreikmeier, Wisner-Pilger High School, Wisner

New Jersey

Ann Marie Carey, Troy Hills Elementary School, Parsippany
Dana Kurilew, Hunterdon Central Regional High School, Flemington

New Mexico

Freida Trujillo, Tony Hillerman Middle School, Albuquerque

New York

Beth Westerheide, Gowanda High School, Gowana

North Carolina

Kerri Bridges, Salem Middle School, Apex
Lisbeth Fillard, Middle Creek Elementary School, Apex
Laura Inscoe, Wakefield High School, Raleigh

Oklahoma

Lori Pettus, Eisenhower International School, Tulsa

Pennsylvania

Colleen Tortorella, Gateway High School, Monroeville

South Carolina

Anna Rushing Duvall, Lexington High School, Lexington

South Dakota

Shelia Anderson, Britton-Hecla Schools, Britton

Tennessee

Beverly Anderson, Bearden High School, Knoxville

Texas

Marinell Clark, Liberty Elementary School, Flower Mound

Amber Moffitt, Young Men's Leadership Academy at Kennedy Middle School, Grand Prairie

Utah

Jana Houle, Orem High School, Orem

Virginia

Elizabeth Beatley, Pole Green Elementary, Mechanicsville
Virginia

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, career planning and personal/social development 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 approximately 30,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit www.schoolcounselor.org.

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