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### **Meredith Lindsey Draughn Selected as 2023 School Counselor of the Year**



ALEXANDRIA, VA – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is pleased to announce Meredith Lindsey Draughn is the 2023 School Counselor of the Year (#SCOY23). Draughn is the school counselor at B. Everett Jordan Elementary School in Graham, N.C.

A school counselor since 2014, Draughn is the first national School Counselor of the Year from North Carolina.

A National Board Certified School Counselor, Draughn received her bachelor's degree from Wake Forest University and her master's degree from Appalachian State University. She is an ASCA U School Counseling Leadership Specialist; Mental Health Specialist; Anxiety & Stress Management Specialist; Cultural Competency Specialist; and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Specialist. B. Everett Jordan Elementary School is a Recognized ASCA Model Program school that serves 355 students in grades K-5.

"As the daughter of a school counselor and someone who is lucky enough to work with incredible colleagues, I have witnessed the positive and life-changing impact that school counselors have on school communities my entire life," Draughn said.

Upon returning to in-person learning after the COVID-19 pandemic, many students at the school were struggling, some more than others, Draughn said. "We were all in the same storm, but we were certainly not all in the same boat."

To support students' needs, Draughn worked with Elon University to become part of the "It Takes a Village" project. The university sends college students to Alamance County elementary schools to work with students after school on targeted educational concepts. Draughn helps facilitate weekly tutoring for the more than 10% of students "who have potential for growth but likely do not meet the criteria for intervention services during the school day." In 2021-22, more than 97% of students who participated in the program showed or exceeded growth on end-of-year assessments.

"While it is clear that Ms. Draughn is well-versed in school counseling skills and programmatic structures, her true value lies in how she uses those strengths to enhance our community as a whole," said Terri H. Drummond, the school's principal. "Although it can be easy to forget about B. Everett Jordan, a small, rural, Title 1 school in a mid-sized district, Ms. Draughn views every day and every action, no matter how small, as an opportunity to make a difference."

"ASCA's School Counselor of the Year program shines a valuable spotlight on the school counseling profession, bringing attention to exceptional school counselors who are supporting K-12 students every day," said Jill Cook, CAE, ASCA executive director. "School counselors are vital to students' academic achievement, social/emotional development and plans for life after graduation. The 2023 finalists have demonstrated their commitment to the values and mission of the profession to help all students succeed."

The School Counselor of the Year and finalists will be celebrated in Washington, D.C., in February 2023 and will participate in webinars and additional online events during National School Counseling Week, Feb. 6-10, 2023.

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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 50 state and territory associations and a membership of approximately 43,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org).