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Sarah Flier Selected as 2021 School Counselor of the Year Finalist



ALEXANDRIA, VA – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is pleased to announce Sarah Flier as a finalist for the 2021 School Counselor of the Year awards program (#SCOY21). Flier is the school counselor at Willow River Elementary School, Hudson, Wis., where she provides school counseling services to the urban school’s 320 students, grades K–5.

“Mrs. Flier shows all of her students that life should be a ride that you love, and you never want to get off of, so do all things that make you happy and let your light shine,” said Adreanna Johnson, former student. “I have known Mrs. Flier for almost 10 years, and I am proud to say that she has helped me grow into the person I am today.”

When an achievement gap was found on the state exam in English/language arts (ELA) for students who were economically disadvantaged, Flier collaborated with teachers, parents and her School Counseling Advisory Committee to develop the school’s Literacy Toolbox program. The program collects donations to support a book club that provides a self-selected book each month to students in need. By choosing their own literature each month, students are able to build their own personal library and foster a lifelong love of reading. “Ms. Flier has an abundance

of energy, natural ability, magnificent rapport with students and staff, and no end to creative ideas,” said Kimberly Osterhues, principal.

In 2019, her school set a goal for 65% of students meeting their ELA growth target on the Measures of Academic Progress assessment. Flier disaggregated the data and found that third-grade students were the farthest from reaching this goal, with only 45% doing so. She focused school counseling classroom instruction on academic success while also facilitating a small group to further address study skills, growth mindset, test-taking strategies and goal setting. In spring 2019, 76% of third-graders reached their target goal in ELA on the assessment.

“Each year, this School Counselor of the Year program shows us what the research tells us – that school counselors have a significant impact on students’ academic achievement, social/emotional development and plans for life after graduation,” said Jill Cook, ASCA executive director. “Through their dedication, contributions and excellence, these finalists have demonstrated their commitment to the values and mission of the school counseling profession.”

The School Counselor of the Year and finalists will be celebrated in a series of virtual events and will participate in briefings and webinars during National School Counseling Week, Feb. 1–5, 2021.

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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 nearly 40,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit www.schoolcounselor.org.