Media Contact
Kathleen Rakestraw
(703) 683-2722 • krakestraw@schoolcounselor.org

For immediate release – Nov. 20, 2026

Brianna C. Patterson Selected as 2027 School Counselor of the Year



ALEXANDRIA, VA – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is pleased to announce Brianna C. Patterson, Ph.D., is the 2027 School Counselor of the Year® (#SCOY27). Patterson is a school counselor at Jean Ribault High School, Jacksonville, Fla. The school serves nearly 1,700 students, grades 9–12. Patterson has been a school counselor since 2017. She received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Florida and a master's degree in counselor education, specialization in school counseling from the University of North Florida and a doctorate degree in counselor education and supervision from the University of the Cumberlands.

"I can honestly say I do not know anyone who is more committed to making a difference in the lives of others via their profession than Dr. Patterson. After only nine short years as a school counselor, she has made a lasting impact that reaches far beyond the students," said Shonne Robinson, school counselor, Jean Ribault High School. "I have had the privilege of working with many dedicated professionals, but few possess the combination of vision, humility, advocacy and commitment that Dr. Patterson demonstrates daily. She is not only an asset to our profession, she is helping shape its future."

Patterson works to ensure students have access to opportunities and the support to pursue them. One way she does this is through her March Madness Scholarship

Challenge. “I created this initiative to make scholarship applications more engaging and manageable while helping students at my Title I school address financial barriers to college,” Patterson said. Modeled after the NCAA tournament, the challenge encourages seniors to complete five scholarship applications each week for five weeks, totaling 25 applications. “Through partnerships with alumni, local businesses and community organizations, we have awarded a $1,000 grand prize to the winner for the past three years, along with prizes for every student who completes the challenge. The challenge has become an annual tradition that builds excitement around scholarships and strengthens our college-going culture.” Alongside the school’s broader college-readiness initiatives, scholarship awards increased from $13 million for the Class of 2023 to $24 million for the Class of 2026. “This program reflects my belief that creativity, consistent support and community partnerships can help students turn their postsecondary goals into achievable plans,” Patterson said.

“What I appreciate most about working with Dr. Patterson is that her advocacy is rooted in a genuine belief that our students deserve better and that we have a responsibility to find a way to provide it,” said Andrea R. Talley, assistant principal of curriculum, Jean Ribault High School. “She makes me think differently about what is possible for our school. She is the kind of school counselor every student deserves, every school needs and that we are beyond blessed to have.”

“Each year, the 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 Washington, D.C., in January 2027.

###

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 53 state and territory associations and a membership of approximately 38,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit *schoolcounselor.org*.