



# Ohio School Counselor Association

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## 2022 OSCA Board Elections Slate of Candidates

Elections for those who will serve on the 2022 OSCA Board of Directors will take place during the period of October 27-29, 2021. All eligible professional and retired members of OSCA will be invited to vote via an electronic ballot. Emails will be sent on October 27 and the voting window will be open until 11:59PM on October 29. Below is the slate of candidates and their statements for your review prior to voting.

### President-Elect (Vote for 1)

#### **Diane Zimmer, School Counselor/Counselor Educator, Firelands Local Schools/Wright State University**

I am writing to introduce myself as a candidate for the President-Elect position on the OSCA Board. I have been fortunate to serve the school counselors in our state for the last five years as Secretary and At-Large High School Representative. My years of experience as a school counselor, my passion for teaching, my desire to impact the profession, and my doctoral training, have all prepared me to take on an important role. I love being a school counselor and have been fortunate to spend over twenty years of my life assisting young people and their families. However, I also realize that not all school counselors have the support to implement high-quality, comprehensive school counseling programs. Therefore, I obtained my Ph.D. in Counselor Education and currently work as a part-time Associate Professor at Wright State, preparing future school counselors to fill this need. As an educational leader and social advocate, my goal as President-Elect is to continue advocacy to allow school counselors to spend 80% of their day providing direct services to students. I hope you all remember to take care of yourself and show yourself self-compassionate during this historical moment. Thank you for taking the time to consider me as your President-Elect.

### Middle School Level Representative (Vote for 1)

#### **Emily Stamm, School Counselor, Port Clinton City Schools**

My name is Emily Stamm and I am running for the Middle School Level Representative position on the OSCA Board. This is my sixth year working as a School Counselor and I have worked at the middle school level for the last five out of those six years. Over the last year, I have had the opportunity to serve as the Middle School Level Rep on the OSCA Board and have learned so much in that time. I have a much better understanding of the mission of the OSCA Board and all the work that the directors and members of the board do on behalf of School Counselors. I am also a member of the Advocacy and Outreach Committee through OSCA. At my school I am fortunate to have administrators who understand the importance of the School Counselor's role and because of that I am able to focus on counselor specific tasks and responsibilities. As a member of the OSCA Board I would like to continue to advocate for the need to have a defined School Counselor job description. Additionally, I think it is important to create opportunities for School Counselors to learn more about how to collect, interpret and share program data in order to advocate for our role with a variety of stakeholders. The more I listen, learn and engage with other counselors the more passionate I become about supporting the profession as a whole. In order to fully support our students and be the best versions of ourselves, we need to support each other. It would be a privilege to be a part of the 2022 OSCA Board. Thank you for your consideration!

## **College Educator Level Representative (Vote for 1)**

### **Leslie Neyland-Brown, Assistant Professor, University of Toledo**

My name is Leslie Neyland-Brown and I would like to submit my intent to serve on the 2022 Ohio School Counseling Association Board of Directors as the Counselor Education representative. I am a licensed professional counselor and licensed professional school counselor in the state of Ohio. I recently joined the faculty at the University of Toledo as an Assistant Professor of Counselor Education where I will teach school counseling courses, supervise school counseling interns and work with doctoral students. Prior to this appointment, I served as the department chair and an Associate Professor in the department of Human Services at Wright State University. During my time at WSU, I served as the director of the school counseling graduate program, advised all school counseling students and interns, and worked closely with schools in the greater Dayton area. As a counselor educator, much of my work has focused on ensuring school counseling students are receiving coursework and professional opportunities that are appropriate for the roles and responsibilities of a school counselor. This can be challenging in graduate programs that are primarily made up of clinical mental health faculty, but can be achieved through integrating school counseling specific modules and assignments throughout the curriculum, developing courses specific for counselors and working closely with practicing school counselors to increase training opportunities. My research has focused on supervision in school counseling, professional roles and responsibilities of school counselors, addiction in the K-12 setting and counselor wellness. In 2019-2021 I worked on the ODHE HOPES Grant in which myself and two other colleagues developed a professional training for K-12 educators on supporting students who have been impacted by the opioid crisis and other traumatic experiences. I hope to continue to explore issues related to the training and professional needs of school counselors while addressing issues of social justice as both counseling professionals and educational leaders. I believe it is imperative that school counselors in training are trained by faculty who hold a strong identity as a school counselor. Although I am dually licensed, I have been very intentional about keeping my identity as a school counselor at the forefront for students, with an emphasis on the importance of maintaining professional memberships and active engagement in professional advocacy. I have held leadership positions in both the Ohio Association of Counselor Education & Supervision and the Northwest Ohio Counseling Association and have also served in the Ohio Counseling Association, NBCC Minority Fellowship Program and as the advisor for the Omega Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota. I believe that serving on the OSCA Board of Directors will provide me with the opportunity to connect my work as a school counseling educator and researcher with professional advocacy efforts focused on strengthening the professional identity of school counselors and school counselors in training. I am hopeful to collaborate with school counseling leaders in the state of Ohio to promote the mission of OSCA in connecting school counselors in unity and to support the students we serve.

### **Jeremy (JP) Oehrtman, Assistant Professor, Bowling Green State University**

I would like to express my interest in serving the Ohio School Counselor Association Board of Directors as a Counselor Educator representative for a second term. I joined OSCA 9 years ago when I began my master's program at The Ohio State University, and I have actively worked to support the profession of school counseling ever since. Since earning my license in 2014, I have had the opportunity to work as a school counselor at both the elementary and middle school level while also working towards my doctorate. I earned my PhD in counselor education from Ohio State in 2018 and began my career as a counselor educator at Bowling Green State University in 2019 with the goal of developing fantastic school counselors. I believe that as a member of the OSCA Board of Directors I will continue to achieve more support for school counselors at a local level and help the advancement of the profession within the state of Ohio. With over 20 years of experience in K-12 schools as both a school counselor and an educator, I have seen the profession gain recognition in the state, and I would like to assist OSCA to continue this progression. A school counselor is an important member of any school and by advocating at both a local and state level, we can continue to foster greater understanding of the role of school counselors, reduce the amount of incongruent duties school counselors are assigned, and improve the lives of students throughout the state. I believe that my re-election to the OSCA board will allow me to

take continued steps to achieving these goals. Not only will I advocate for current school counselors, but as the counselor educator representative, I believe it will be my role to advocate for the future of the profession as well. As a member of the OSCA board, I will continue to assist current and future school counselors improve the lives of all students in K-12 education in Ohio. I welcome the opportunity to serve OSCA through the board of directors, and I hope that my actions will only work to further the impact that school counselors have on students.

## **At-Large Representative (Vote for 2)**

### **Clarissa Bush, School Counselor, North Fork Local Schools**

Being a member of the Ohio School Counselor Association has been a privilege of mine since I was an intern in my master's program. The resources that the association has been able to provide as well as support for school counselors are necessary pillars to being successful and knowledgeable in my current job. The AOCC is a conference that I've been able to attend for three years now as well as being a virtual presenter last year in the area of "Making Workshops Work." I am seeking an office on the OSCA Board of Directors for two simple reasons: 1. To seek out and provide school counselors with resources that help them be the best counselor today and for the future. 2. To improve the measures of how we can best advocate for our profession and the crucial work we do within schools. It's no secret that I'm passionate about advocacy and data that gives us information about the needs of our students and what we are currently doing to best reach them. By being on the board of directors, I hope to bring that passion to the table as I consistently ask questions of what we are doing well and what we can do better in ensuring every student is reached; academically, personally, socially, all while being career and future minded.

### **Cristina Foster, School Counselor, Ohio Virtual Academy**

My name is Cristina Foster. I live in Akron, Ohio with my husband (middle school math teacher), two daughters, a chocolate lab named Junie, and a rescue kitty named Blackjack. I come from a long line of educators. I have been in the field of education for over 15 years. My experiences include traditional classroom teaching, career counseling at the collegiate level, and serving as a School Counselor for the past decade at Ohio's largest virtual school. I love being a School Counselor, and I believe wholeheartedly in the work of the School Counseling profession. This past spring our School Counseling department became a Recognized ASCA Model Program. We are the 5th school in Ohio to receive this ASCA recognition. Through the RAMPing experience, I have become skilled in developing a thriving, data-driven, ASCA model program. For the past three years I have had the privilege of being a Department Lead to 34 wonderful School Counselors. Leading a department this size has afforded me the opportunities to work with students in grades k-12 and to consult on many complex student cases. I hope to utilize this leadership and experience of serving a sizable at-risk student population to support and strengthen the OSCA Board of Directors. Lastly, I have the pleasure of volunteering on the OSCA Advocacy Committee. On this committee, I get the opportunity to work with many School Counselors from across the state. My passion is to promote awareness of the School Counseling field and to educate the next generation of School Counselors. If I am elected, I promise to continue this advocacy for all of Ohio's School Counselors.

### **Marcy McKendry, School Counselor, Northwest Local Schools**

For the first 12 years of my school counseling career, I served on the OSCA board in some capacity. I found the experiences I had on the board allowed me to grow in all facets of being a school counselor. I feel that the contribution that I was able to make in return was fulfilling that part of my professionalism that I no longer fulfill working as an adjunct. I truly believe in giving back to the profession, and this is one avenue in which I can make that happen. I am now in my 15th year as a school counselor and feel that my experiences would make me a valuable addition to the board.

### **Christina Menosky, School Counselor, Fairfield Union Local Schools**

I am seeking an office on the OSCA Board of Directors to increase my advocacy role as a School Counselor. I have been in the education profession for twenty-nine years. I was an educator first, in a variety of settings, including inner city, rural, and suburban. I have taught in higher education at Wright State University. I have also taught in both public and private education too. In addition to these experiences, I home-schooled my four children for a year. These experiences have provided me with a large amount of perspectives. I understand the challenges that our colleagues face on a daily basis. I transitioned out of the classroom and became a Middle School Counselor seven years ago, in a rural school district in Appalachia. I was expected to do all of the counseling, scheduling, records releases, lunch duties, as well as being the Building Test Coordinator for grades 5-8. Currently, I am the Elementary School Counselor for two buildings with approximately 800 students. My time at each location is two and a half days. I feel the pressures of increasing demands and being spread too thin. We all have been asked to take on responsibilities that take time away from implementing our Comprehensive-School Counseling Programs. We all know that the social-emotional needs of our students are at an all-time high. We need to continue to advocate for student: counselor ratios and appropriate responsibilities which majorly impact our effectiveness and our ability to meet the needs of our students. This becomes more crucial than ever. Also, we cannot neglect the fact that the culture of the building has changed dramatically since I started in education. School Counselors are part of the solution in helping create a safe environment for students to be vulnerable enough to take risks in order to grow socially, emotionally, and academically. Our profession as a School Counselor is more important than ever. Furthermore, I feel that advocating for our profession as School Counselors cannot be seen as equal, but complementary to other mental health providers that may be coming into our schools or providing other services. We do have a unique training and skill set as School Counselors that other providers do not. We cannot lose sight of this under the crisis of social-emotional needs. Our mission is to also help shape life-long learners that are productive in society and following their individual dreams. Thank you in advance for your consideration. As we continue to navigate uncharted waters in education, one thing remains the same: we are designed for human connection. Never forget that you matter. Continue to let your students know this each and every day they are in your presence.

### **Rebecca School, School Counselor, Bedford City Schools**

As an Emerging Leader member of the OSCA Board of Directors for the past two years, I have been honored to start to learn how to advocate for our role and our organization at the state level. I would be honored to serve as a Member At Large, and give back more to my fellow Ohio school counselors. I'm a school counselor at Heskett Middle School in Bedford Heights. Before that I was the school counselor for the Norton Primary and Elementary Schools, where I have supervised Practicum and Internship students in CACREP School Counseling programs. I was recognized as OSCA's 2020 Elementary School Counselor of the Year. I believe that every student has a right to an excellent education and to feel safe and supported in school. Part of our jobs is to identify the barriers that are getting in the way of those rights, advocate for our students, and teach them how to advocate for themselves. People do the best they can with what they have and what they know; I believe in meeting students where they are, not where they "should be", and helping them grow from there. Using Career Technical Education to springboard career exploration is a passion of mine, and has led to me developing programs that I have presented nationally and written about for the ASCA national magazine. Part of helping our students prepare to be responsible, independent, and contributing members of society is helping them achieve more than a high school education; experience in skilled trades, becoming licensed and certificated professionals, or giving them a boost into higher education. Using that as well as things like motivational interviewing, trauma-informed based practices such as restorative circles, and creating trusting relationships is helping me support our students (and staff) as they cope with more than they ever have before. We are all growing and evolving as we are faced with unprecedented challenges, and I'm grateful to be able to focus on helping my students during this time. As a Member At Large, I will bring my experience of multiple grade levels, passion for career exploration, and understanding of the complex needs of our students and our communities, ready to advocate for our profession.

### **Jessica Thomas, School Counselor, Youngstown City Schools**

For the last 17 years, I have watched education evolve and the needs of our students continue to grow. As a classroom teacher, I felt powerless to help my student as they experienced life situations that I couldn't even imagine. For some students, their lives were in a constant state of unpredictable chaos and unimaginable tragedy, and yet they were expected to be model students in the classroom. I wanted to be in a position where I could do more to help our students be successful, so I became a School Counselor. There are four words that come to mind when I think of why being a School Counselor is the most important job: education, advocacy, growth, and leadership. As a School Counselor, I have mentored and supervised many students from the university. Sharing my experiences and knowledge while teaching my interns how to be successful, compassionate members of the school community has been a valuable experience for both parties. Being a supervisor often teaches me just as much as I teach my interns. I feel that learning from each other is such a valuable experience. Advocating for my students and the school counseling profession is a driving force in my daily work. Being a voice for those who are often marginalized or forgotten about is one of the most important jobs. Students deserve all the opportunities in the world, and I am proud to be the person that stands up for what is right, and what is necessary for student success. I look forward to continuing this journey so that I can not only advocate for my students, but for all students, both at the state and national levels. Growth and leadership are essential components of any school counselor. We must be willing to grow both personally and in practice so that we can be the best possible resource for our students. Being a school counselor and leader go hand in hand. We must be a leader in our school, in our communities, and in our profession. Leaders strive to create safe and inclusive schools for all students so that they grow to become productive citizens of the community. This is my why. Passion and purpose are what drive me to become a better person, advocate, and leader in the school counseling profession. I would be honored to serve on the OSCA Board of Directors as an At-Large Representative.