



# Maine Counseling Association

## *News & Views, Winter 2018 Edition*

### From the President

*Andrea Hallett, Presque Isle High School*

Greetings from the frozen North! It's hard to believe my time as President of The Maine Counseling Association is over half way complete, what a whirlwind year this has been. Change will forever be the theme of the year for 2017-2018. So. Much. Change. My fabulous Nana always used to say in her French accent, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." She also said things like "There isn't enough meat on their bones to make pants for a hummingbird." (Which I think got lost in translation) so you generally had to take her with a grain of salt. She was wise, and since she has been gone I find her wisdom gives me peace. My adult career has shown me that loss, and dedication, and hard work, and uncomfortable choices are not always helpful in the moment, but they all teach. They teach you things that you will pull from in different ways every day. And in every single truth, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." That is my mantra this year. How do we remember that as counselors in any avenue change is also essential for our well-being? Whether it be in our pedagogical thoughts or practices, or in our own self-care, it is essential. The feet of snow, and severely below zero temps that we have here in Northern Maine has forced me to find new ways of release as my Winter go to was skiing or snowshoeing. Now what? My family has become a casserole eating, sweat pant wearing, and lumps of flesh that may or may not take daily grooming as a priority without some prodding. Not ok. Not ok on any level, teeth must be brushed people. We have found our outlets, books, family games, technology time outs. (Those are for the big people in my house too, not just the littles!) We have made the laughs, and the distractions, and forced the walls to not close in. Why? Sitting in heaps under fleece blankets is really a fabulous idea in my 29 (+ something) mind. Because I have to commit to change. If I want happiness and good, I have to say "By GOSH! Today is a happy day!" Or else teeth brushing may be a thing I find unnecessary as well. You have to embrace the change and decide if the change of letting go is an option for you, because the weights we carry in this career are not only our own. They are of our spouses, our children, our families, our clients, our jobs. There comes a time in every season where we must step back, and look at our change. Decide where we are going to focus our energy and where we can let go. Change can kill you or it can make you stronger. In this New Year, which do you choose?

In my last article I spoke about making change and getting involved. In keeping with that trend, I would like

*Continued.....*

## From the President *(Continued)*

to remind everyone that the Treasurer, Vendor Representative Position, and President-Elect are all open positions for the 2018-2019 year with terms to begin July 1, 2018. If you are interested in joining The Maine Counseling Association and helping to facilitate change for the counselors of our great state, feel free to forward me a brief bio and picture as soon as possible. We would love to have you!

Don't forget: We have so many great things on the horizon for our annual conference, the committee has been working diligently to get some fabulous sessions in place and our keynote speaker Michael Mascolo sounds dynamic with his talk on "Oppression with a Focus on Poverty." We look forward to seeing you all at the Samoset on March 26-27, 2018!

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**SAVE THE DATE!!**  
**Annual Conference**  
**March 26 & 27, 2018**  
**Samoset Resort—Rockport, ME**

**The Maine Counseling Association is pleased to  
announce the dates for this year's Annual  
Meeting and Conference.**

**Featuring Key Note Speaker, Dr. Mascolo.**

Dr. Mascolo will deliver a dynamic and inspiring keynote address on oppression with a focus on poverty. He will engage the audience in a head-space game which will help to identify our own oppression and privilege so that we can better understand how to empathize with those we serve and assist with removal of barriers.



**Don't miss out—register today at [maineca.org](http://maineca.org)!!!**

### **A Note From Our Newsletter Editor**

*Jill Bouchard Cairns*

Please do not hesitate to send articles for our next newsletter. As a counseling organization we believe it would also be exciting to hear from some of our students of any age. Additionally, if you would like to submit an advertisement send or email a camera-ready ad. Your advertisement will run in three consecutive issues of News and Views. Please send your check for \$100.00 (made payable to MeCA) to:

**Jill Bouchard Cairns**  
**U of Maine at Fort Kent**  
**23 University Drive**  
**Fort Kent, ME 04743**

If you have any ideas, articles or questions you can email Jill at [jillb@maine.edu](mailto:jillb@maine.edu)

### **A Note From Our Historian**

*Kevin O'Reilly*

Each year at the conference business meeting, the historian is called upon to read a list of those members who have retired or who will be retiring at the end of the school year. The historian also announces the names of current or past members who have died. Please contact me prior to the conference with any updates so that I might recognize the members at the conference. You can email me this information at:

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## ***ATTENTION GRAD STUDENTS!***

MeCA has partial scholarships available for you to attend the 2018 Annual Conference! We'd love to hear from you. If you are a grad student at Husson, UMO, or USM, please inquire about our scholarships with your counseling faculty. If you are a grad student in another program, please email me directly at [past-president@maineca.org](mailto:past-president@maineca.org). All graduate students are invited to attend the President's Reception on Monday night and will receive a complimentary beverage voucher. We welcome you to use this time to connect with the Executive Board to talk about ways that you can get involved in our organization. We also encourage you to attend the session on Professional Identity and Association Leadership. Regardless of whether or not you intend to apply for a scholarship, please reach out to me and let me know if you plan to attend so that I can keep you all updated on special events exclusive for our grad students!

***Looking forward to seeing you there!***



**is currently recruiting for  
Psychiatric Clinician Adult/Child  
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We are currently looking  
for Clinicians (LCSW, MCSW,  
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Review the full job description  
and access the online  
application at [careers.emhs.org](http://careers.emhs.org)

**If you have any questions,  
please email [talent@emhs.org](mailto:talent@emhs.org)**

Two photographs of healthcare professionals. The top photo shows a woman in a white lab coat smiling at a young boy in a blue shirt. The bottom photo shows a woman in a white lab coat smiling at a man in a dark shirt. Both photos are set against a light green background that curves around the text on the left.

**EMHS** *and You!*  
Access to Quality Healthcare  
**TOGETHER WE'RE STRONGER**

## From the President-Elect

*Ruth Ann Cowger, East Grand School*

*Greetings from the border of Washington and Aroostook County. I am excited to be embarking on this adventure within our association, and thankful to have been chosen for a leadership position. I have to admit, though, that it feels a bit odd to be starting mid-year, and even stranger to be asked to write an article for the newsletter when I do not even feel like I have my feet under me yet. But I will persevere...*

As I write this, the end of first semester is looming. As a school counselor, reaching the midpoint of the year marks an important shift in focus: it's time to start planning for the next school year. *There is no down time in this job, folks.* As frenetic as we frequently are in our jobs as counselors, the challenges to reflective practice are many. For me, one of the biggest challenges is taking new information, new programs, or new practices, and integrating them into current practice. It's difficult to focus on new or unmet needs when you're scrambling though the day putting out fires (which on a good day is only figurative, not literal).

I've had more than my fair share of professional development opportunities over the last few years, as I've been serving as a Project Manager for a federal school counseling grant and have had plenty of funding. Even that doesn't insure change, because—let's be honest—sometimes it takes months after a new training before there's time to sit and really decide how and where to apply the new learning. *That isn't just my life, is it?*

Last July I attended the ASCA national conference, and found my way to a session on the Girls Index Research Brief, "a first-of-its-kind, large scale, national survey designed to develop a deeper understanding of the thoughts, experiences, perceptions, beliefs, behaviors and attitudes of girls throughout the United States," developed by Ruling Your Experiences, Inc. You would think that as a mother of three daughters (aged 16, 14 and 8—you can insert any comments of sympathy here), I would feel confident in my understanding of the issues girls face in this country, but the title of the session, "Selfies, Snaps, Sexts and Self Esteem: Girls and Social Media," sounded intriguing. I have to say that the majority of the research findings didn't raise my eyebrows too much—but the statistics did. Frequently.

It isn't much of a shock that in the 5th grade more girls like coming to school than they do in 11th grade. But when the numbers show that 87% of 5th grade girls like coming to school vs. only 55% of 11th grade girls, the scope of the issue becomes a little scarier. Other concerning statistics: only 20% of high school girls believe that guys their age are respectful of girls; 30% of the girls with the highest GPAs do not think they are smart enough for their dream careers; the percentage of girls who describe themselves as confident declines more than 25% throughout the middle school years, dropping from 86% to 60%. For me, one of the most horrifying statistics: 41% of girls in the survey report that they do not trust other girls. Globally. *Yikes.*

During her presentation, Dr. Lisa Hinkelman, the founder and Executive Director of Ruling Our Experiences, Inc., shared that she asked some middle school girls in a group she was running how many "likes" on social media were "enough." One girl responded that if she posted a picture, and it didn't have at least 100 "likes" within an hour, she would take it down. The feedback is instant, pervasive, and extremely powerful. The study actually showed that "girls who spend the most time on social media were the least likely to say that they trust other girls and that they have supportive friends to talk to about serious issues."

## From the President-Elect *(Continued)*

As a parent, and not just as a counselor, I strongly encourage anyone who works with girls to visit [www.rulingourexperiences.com](http://www.rulingourexperiences.com). The whole research brief is available without cost, and I guarantee that, no matter how "in the know" you think you are on the issues girls face in this country, you will have at least one "aha" moment when reviewing this data. Do I know what to do to help mitigate these negative effects? The researchers make some reasonable recommendations. *Now to find time and opportunities to make that happen...*

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### **2018 Maine Counseling Association Awards**

The Maine Counseling Association is accepting nominations for the 2018 **Distinguished Counseling Professional** and **Service to the Profession of Counseling** awards.

These awards honor Maine Counseling Association members working in a variety of settings across the profession including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, Community-based agencies, clinical facilities, and private practice. Counselors considered for the awards are ethical, effective, and diligent advocates for clients or students. They are leaders, mentors, and positive examples of professionalism within the counseling community, with consistent accomplishment throughout their careers. They exemplify integrity, patience, and compassion in their empowering work with students, clients, families, or colleagues. They advance the reputation of our profession by their work and example. Recipients of the "Service to the Profession" award, particularly, have demonstrated a high level of involvement and commitment to our professional organizations.



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### ***Service Opportunities are Available!!***

Thinking about getting involved? Or "nudging" someone else?

The Maine Counseling Association is looking for members to step up and claim positions of service and leadership in our professional organization for the coming year. "What would I have to do?" MeCA officers are happy to discuss leadership positions and responsibilities with any who are considering them.

**Open positions currently include the MeCA President-Elect , Vendor Chair & Treasurer.**

Please contact current President Andrea Hallett if you are interested!



## From the Past President

*Tracy Corbin, Caribou Regional Technical Center*

As Past-President of this wonderful organization, I am keeping busy with planning the details for our upcoming annual conference at the beautiful Samoset Resort and I would like to highlight a few of those details that I am very excited about...

I'm very pleased to announce that our keynote address will be delivered by Dr. Michael Mascolo, Professor of Psychology and Developmental Psychologist. His keynote will focus on a subject very dear to me, Poverty and Oppression. Dr. Mascolo will touch base on all forms of oppression and help us understand our own privilege and power, but will particularly focus on issues related to the oppressiveness of poverty. I selected Dr. Mascolo to speak on this subject because I feel that the topic transcends all counseling professions and is timely given the unfolding of current events locally, nationally, and globally.

Shifting gears to Monday evening's entertainment, I am so excited about some of the things we are planning for you. We've decided to really mix things up this year in what the Conference Committee is calling an evening of "Creating and Connecting". We've finally convinced our esteemed MeCA artist, Marty Gallant, to lead a Paint with Marty, where those who are interested can grab a canvas and a brush and be lead through an easy, yet memorable, masterpiece of your own! At the same time, there will be a carnival-like atmosphere full of games including Life Size Plinko and Corn Hole. And for those of you who prefer to enjoy some music or dance the night away, we'll also have a DJ available, who will be playing only your requests and supplying an evening of lively entertainment! There's no need to choose which activity you'd rather participate in as this is an a la carte, free flowing evening of creating and connecting, with a little bit of something for everyone!!!

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## News From the North

*Rani Belanger, President, Northern Maine Counseling Association*

Hello from the Northern Maine Counseling Association!

We have a few updates to share with you. We have had some changes in officers this year with a new president -Rani Belanger, a new secretary-Jill Cairns, and a new Treasurer-Jacqui Martin. All are excited to be taking on new leadership roles within the group.

Our main focus in our region this year has been on incorporating Professional Development in to our meetings. Thus far we have had a Virtual Job Shadow presentation at our November meeting in which members learned more about what the program is and it's practical applications in working with students at all grade levels from Elementary to College. We are making plans for another PD opportunity at our January meeting to be held at NMCC on January 26th.

We also are prepping for our annual Sophomore Career Fair to be held at UMPI on March 14th! We hope that you all are staying safe and warm!

## Public Policy Update

*Stan Pelletier, Bucksport Middle School*

Greetings colleagues,

I extend to each of you my wishes for a year filled with hope, compassion, resolve, and progress, as we strive to help others by making known the truth and dispelling the harms wrought by irrational thinking and damaging mental formations in our clients and those around us.

A few items of concern to counselors:

1. Medicare reimbursement issue: as of this moment, 3 of our 4 congressional representatives have signed on to either the House (HR 3032) or Senate (S 1879) versions of the Medicare fix legislation for mental health counselors. Reps. Pingree and Poliquin, and Sen. King have formally co-sponsored the relevant legislation. Sen. Collins' office has stated that she intends to co-sponsor the legislation, as she has done with past versions as recently as 2015. As of Monday, January 15, 2018, she did not appear as a co-sponsor on congressional legislation tracking sites. We will continue to keep our membership apprised.

2. The state Board of Education is considering changes to Chapter 115, which deals with certifications and endorsements for teachers and education professionals. Of particular note: sections 11 (Endorsement 075, School Counselor) and 17 (Endorsement Career Development Specialist) [new]. MeCA officers have discussed these items and developed a statement, shared with the board, as well as providing in person testimony during a Dec. 27 hearing on the proposed changes. In brief, the changes to section 11 are mostly a step in the right direction, as the requirements for certification as school counselors become somewhat more rigorous, closer to current CACREP standards. We conveyed the opinion that state standards should be in step with best practice standards set forth by our accreditation organizations, irrespective of geographical location of particular training programs. Section 17 is another matter. We believe that trained school counselors already exceed the standards set forth in this section, and we suggest that school counselors be utilized as career development specialists. We advocate that, if the state goes forward with this special endorsement, that it be granted to trained and certified school counselors. If the Board believes an alternative pathway is necessary or desirable, we suggest that such a pathway to certification be based on the extensive and rigorous standards set forth by ACA (American Counseling Association), ASCA (American School Counselor Association), and NCDA (National Career Development Association) and their state branches, not based on the language contained in section 17, which sets the bar too low. A link to the complete text of the MeCA statement on this matter may found on the MeCA website. Special thanks here to Deb Drew for her timely work on this, especially her testimony at the hearing on Dec. 27, as well as MeSCA president Cameron Reny.

3. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a government agency run Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), has been directed by the Trump administration to halt the work of the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP). Since 1997, NREPP has helped providers and consumers separate evidence-based, effective treatment interventions relating to substance use and mental health from useless interventions and quackery. NREPP's website details over 450 behavioral health programs, with the most recent additions having been added in September 2017. The process for updates to existing reviews found on the website (which has not yet been taken down) and vetting of new research and/or programs is unclear. Despite assurances from officials, critics

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## Public Policy Update *(Continued)*

are pessimistic about what this will mean for the direction of SAMHSA with respect to review of behavioral health programs. These changes follow directives from the Trump administration to government agencies (including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]) that they were to avoid using certain words in budget documents, including “evidence-based,” “science-based,” “fetus,” and “transgender.” By way of example, official replacement language guidance directs agencies like CDC or SAMHSA to say that they “[base their] recommendations on science in consideration with community standards and wishes.” This is an insidious instance of repressive government action, which seeks to censor best-practices and replace evidence-based treatment recommendation with benign-sounding but potentially destructive, biased, and harmful “community standards and wishes,” whatever the hell *that is*. *Scenarios of this sort of malignant social engineering are being repeated every day in dozens of government agencies and departments, often unnoticed by the general public, and in some cases, our elected officials. I have contacted my congressional representatives to express my displeasure with these actions. If you agree that this form of governance is not acceptable, please do likewise. One way is to text “resist” to 504-09, provide a couple of details (such as zip code), type your message, and the service will relay your message to your congressional representatives. Thanks to John Yasenck for relaying information about this worrying assault on the hard-won programs which protect the health of our citizenry. [Reference: Sharon Begley, Scientific American (online), January 11, 2018.]*

4. I want to thank each of you for the hard work you do every day to make a difference in the lives of those we serve. I want to ask you to help safeguard the well-being our students, clients, and profession by watching out for and resisting attempts both subtle and obvious to erode or eradicate the laws, policies, and programs which protect us, especially those who are most vulnerable and whose voices may go unheard. I continue to be honored and humbled by the trust you place in me to serve as your Public Policy chair.

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**Save the Date!**  
**ME Development Association**  
**University of Southern Maine**  
**Portland, Maine**  
**June 1, 2018**



**KEYNOTE PRESENTER:**

***Paul Timmins, NCDA President***

***“Future-Proof Your Career in the Changing World of Work”***

**REGISTER TODAY!!**



## Opinion Corner

*From the desk of Sue Pierce, Houlton High School*

### ***An Old Dog's Personal Observations On How Electronic Applications Have Insinuated Themselves Into My Life and Stolen Away Time.***

As mid year grades come due, I think about the changes in my job function and the way I end up spending time. When applications were paper, the Guidance secretary completed sending transcripts, filling out GPA information and other basic data needed on school reports. Now, all of it lands on my computer, and I traditionally have spent hours filling in forms.

There are great things about electronic applications. I can see when something was submitted and when the college downloaded it. I can see the teacher who has not submitted the recommendation, and the student who has not hit the submit button, but, again, these functions come back to me, rather than back to the secretary, who for years, handled this task.

Because it comes to **My Account**, instinctually I feel responsible for it, and have filled in details so I could ensure they were correctly done, or, if not, know that I had the responsibility for the error. I know I should let go of this task and either log my secretary into the account, or give her the login information and let her do the data entry. This fall, for the first time everything went electronic, I had her upload all the optional reports with first quarter grades on an updated transcript, and I am getting ready to have her do the same thing for mid-year reports. However, I find it hard to let go. Will it be accurate; will she notice if something isn't right on the transcript before she hits submit? Am I shirking my responsibility by delegating this task?

As I evaluate where my time is best spent, I know it should be with students, not with data entry. My perception that the Common Application (Commonapp) expects me to take the time comes from my ownership of the account and from the implicit suggestion in the communications I receive from Commonapp that it is my work to do. Starting with mid-year reports, I will no longer allow an electronic platform to dictate where my time is spent. As a counselor, I often work with clients on choosing what they allow to control aspects of their life. With introspection, I realize that self-care includes monitoring the subtle time thieves of electronic platforms, and how they feed off my perception of responsibility.

I'm lucky. Having a secretary is a good way for me to handle the problem. However, there are many counselors who do not have that option. I wonder if this new platform makes it easier for them, or do they find it more time consuming than the old system of sending out transcripts and completing paper

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**Opinion  
matters**

**Do you have an opinion column that you would like to share? Please send it along to the Newsletter Editor at [jillb@maine.edu](mailto:jillb@maine.edu)**

**Share your views with our membership today!**



Reach Higher Maine Webinars Reach Higher Maine has developed this series of free webinars designed to help support school counselors in their work exposing students to career and college opportunities.

**January's Webinar:** Reach Higher Maine Webinar: The New CTE Pathway to Maine's Proficiency Diploma

**Description:** Danielle Despins and Dave Boardman will dispel the myths surrounding the CTE Pathway by showcasing the talent, ambition and resilience of CTE students. Through video, we will share the stories of students who have walked the CTE pathway and turned struggle and uncertainty in to self-confidence and future promise. We will take the time to clarify the

new CTE diploma pathway and discuss how CTE schools statewide can act as a resource and academic partner for students working toward achieving proficiency in an evidence based system

**Presenters:**

Danielle Despins, MOA/CSR Coordinator - Special Populations and Gender Equity Coordinator, Maine Department of Education- Career and Technical Education  
Dave Boardman, Ed.D. Mass Media Communications instructor, Mid-Maine Technical Center

**Handouts include:**

Maine Proficiency Diploma Pathway Requirements  
Maine Proficiency Diploma Requirements

The webinar is free and will provide a certificate of completion upon request as well as access to the Discussion Board where you can ask questions of the presenters or the rest of the attendees. We are hoping this will encourage attendees to share best practices.

Register at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5744339513835796737>

Webinar ID: 144-884-539

The webinar will be recorded and uploaded to the Reach Higher Maine Google Classroom for later viewing. Past webinars, handouts for the presentations and a discussion forum is also available on the Google Classroom where we hope you will ask questions and share best practices. We have created a short [Welcome and Orientation to Education Series](#) video to help you access and navigate the Google Classroom so that you can get the most out of this experience.

Note: You will need to be logged into a Google email (**@Gmail.com**) account to get access to the Google Classroom. Join code is 1bs991n.

***For more information please contact Reach Higher Maine at [ReachHigherMaine@gmail.com](mailto:ReachHigherMaine@gmail.com)***



## MAINE COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

A State Branch of the American Counseling Association

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