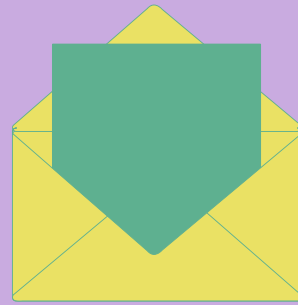


Western Suffolk Counselors' Association

WSCA Newsletter



DR. DAPHNE ALI, WSCA NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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CELEBRATING YOU: A YEAR OF IMPACT



As another school year comes to a close, WSCA would like to wish all of our dedicated members a restful, joyful, and well-deserved summer break! ☀️ Whether you spent the year championing student success 🎓, supporting mental health ❤️, navigating challenges ⚖️, or simply surviving the day-to-day 🚫—please know **your work matters**, and we are so proud to stand alongside you. 🙌 As we recharge and look ahead, we encourage you to stay connected and consider getting more involved with WSCA in the year to come. 🤝 We're also excited to share that WSCA has launched a brand-new website—stay tuned for more updates, resources, and opportunities to engage with our vibrant counseling community!

Inside this edition, we're wrapping up the school year in style! 🎉 Take a look back at all the amazing moments that brought us together—from celebrating excellence at our End-of-Year Awards, to honoring careers at the Retiree Luncheon, gaining insight at the Spring Conference, connecting futures at the College Fair, and so much more. You won't want to miss a single highlight!

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Two Years, One Mission: Reflecting on Our WSCA Journey



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR OUTGOING WSCA PRESIDENT - SARAH TAICLET

It has been an honor and a pleasure serving as president of Western Suffolk Counselors' Association (WSCA) for the past two years. A lot of people have been asking me how I feel now that my term is ending. Well, I still have two years to serve as "past president" and I can't believe how quickly time is flying. The presidency is a six year term: two years as president-elect, two years as president, and two years as past-president. I feel hopeful and excited for the future. There is still so much to do to keep our momentum. If you haven't been actively involved, why don't you join us?

Our membership continues to grow and participation is increasing. We continue to offer professional development programs for counselors of all levels- elementary through university. Graduate students to retirees.

We have accomplished so much and have implemented many changes in the past two years. WSCA has been strategically managing organizational change to enhance our operations, efficiency and effectiveness. We secured a new domain (WesternSuffolkCounselors.Org), a new email system moving away from gmail, and we have purchased and are in the process of implementing our new CRM. We have revamped our college fairs, and have kept our costs to a minimum while still delivering amazing opportunities for students to explore higher educational places of learning. Our goals are to keep our members engaged, provide continuing education, leverage technology, and ultimately bring people together so we can continue to support, train, coach, mentor, encourage, and share information in order to be our best selves for the students-the next generation-our future leaders.

Going forward, I challenge you to "show up" by literally showing up to our events. When you show up for others, you are showing up for yourself. How do I know this? I showed up! Join a committee. Initiate something new. Learn from a seasoned professional or mentor a rookie.

A big thank you goes to members of our executive board, council, SUNY Old Westbury, all of our generous sponsors, and of course to you- our members. I am so grateful to all of you for your hard work, support, encouragement and participation. This has been an incredible learning experience and I thank you for your time, talent, and expertise.

Sincerely,
Sarah Taiclet
President 2023-2025
Past-President 2025-2027
Western Suffolk Counselors' Association
The Voice of Counseling on Long Island



GUIDING WSCA FORWARD: PRESIDENT 2025-2027



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR INCOMING PRESIDENT

Hello WSCA Members,

My name is Peter Franzese, and I am honored to serve as your new Western Suffolk Counselors' Association President starting July 1st. Having been a proud member of WSCA for nearly 32 years, I am excited to give back to the association that has meant so much to me.

My career in higher education began at Dowling College as an Admissions Counselor, followed by roles in Student Services, Transfer Admissions at LIU Post, and Financial Aid at Stony Brook University. Currently, I serve as a Lead Undergraduate College Advisor at Stony Brook University, advising freshmen and sophomores as they navigate their academic journeys.



I look forward to leading WSCA over the next two years and seeing you all at our upcoming events. Wishing you a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer—and I can't wait to reconnect this Fall!

Warm regards,
Peter Franzese
Incoming WSCA President

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36th Annual WSCA Spring Conference Shines Bright!

NAVIGATING PARTNERSHIPS TO EMPOWER STUDENTS

WSCA proudly hosted its 36th Annual Spring Conference at Farmingdale State College—a vibrant day filled with collaboration, inspiration, and professional learning.

Keynote speaker **Dr. Matthew Boccanfuso** energized the room with “Connect to Succeed,” emphasizing the **power of relationships in education**.

Workshop highlights included:

-  Trauma-Informed CBT with Dr. Adriana Silva
-  Letters of Recommendation with SUNY admissions leaders
-  Elementary Supports & Collective Care with Lysa Mullady
-  Guiding Hope for Students in Crisis with Dr. Heather Parrott
-  Restorative Practices with Gregg Scheiner

Plus more impactful sessions on self-care, college admissions trends, and choice theory.

Thanks to all who attended and helped make this year’s event a success!  





Spring College & Career Fair a Huge Success!

INSPIRING FUTURES, ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME

WSCA's Spring College & Career Fair was a fantastic event filled with opportunity, energy, and future plans! Hosted at Hauppauge High School, the fair welcomed **over 130 college and career representatives** who met with students and families to share information, answer questions, and help them take the next steps toward their post-secondary goals. The event was open to all students exploring college, careers, trades, and military pathways—and the turnout did not disappoint! 🙌

Beyond the information tables, the fair was also filled with **laughter, meaningful conversations, and valuable networking** between students, counselors, and admissions professionals. 🤝

🌟 **Big Attendance Bonus:** One lucky student went home with more than just college brochures—a **scholarship** was awarded to a randomly selected attendee! **Just another reason why showing up really does pay off.** 🎉

We extend a heartfelt thank you to Hauppauge High School for generously hosting this event and helping us create such a welcoming and informative experience for students and families.

Mark your calendars! Our next College & Career Fairs will take place on October 16th, 2025 and April 20th, 2026, and we can't wait to see your students there! 📅





WSCA Retiree Luncheon: Celebrating Legacy & Laughter! 🥂

WHERE EXPERIENCE MEETS A GOOD TIME!

This year's WSCA Retiree Luncheon was a heartfelt and joyous gathering held at the cozy and classic J&R's Steakhouse—where our retirees truly showed they know how to turn up and engage in fun!

The room was filled with laughter, stories, and plenty of shared resources as these seasoned counselors embraced both the rich legacy they've built and the exciting journeys ahead. From swapping tips to reminiscing on unforgettable moments, our retirees reminded us all why their **wisdom and spirit remain an invaluable part of the WSCA family.**

Here's to honoring the past and cheering on what's to come—thank you to all who joined us for this memorable celebration!





SCHOLARSHIP RECEPTION

Celebrating Student Success & Community Commitment

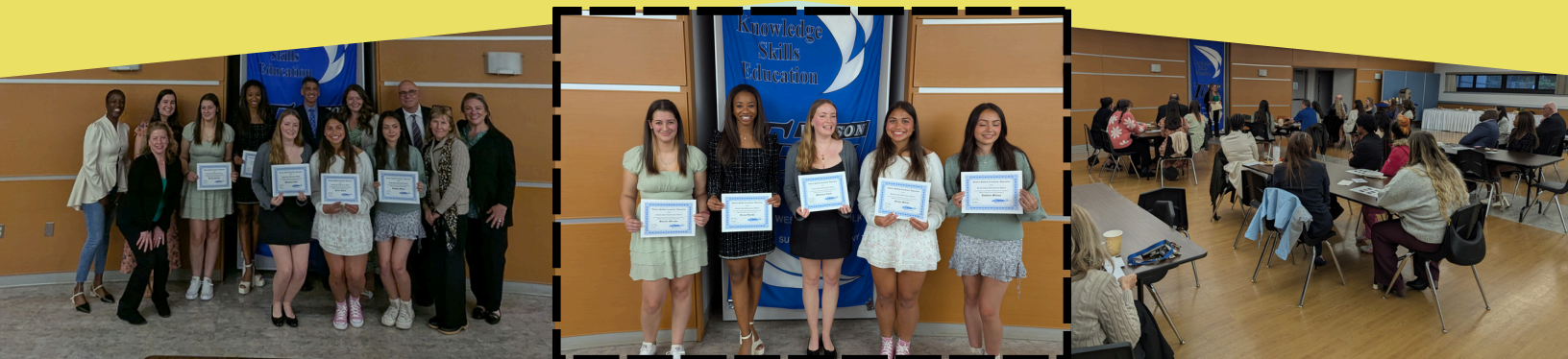
In a warm and inspiring evening, WSCA hosted its Scholarship Awards Night at the Dix Hills campus of Wilson Tech, honoring graduating seniors from Suffolk County high schools. This special event recognized students who demonstrated outstanding promise, leadership, and dedication to their future. 🎓 The atmosphere was filled with pride, hope, and joy—students beamed as they received their awards, surrounded by family, counselors, and mentors. 🧡 We heard powerful stories of resilience, achievement, and service. These scholarships not only support financial needs, but also celebrate each student's unique journey and potential. 🚀

We are proud to recognize the 2025 WSCA Scholarship Recipients:

- **Mackenzie Clark, Kings Park High School - nominated by Michelle Manzelli**
- **Alexis Ebanks, Comsewogue High School - nominated by Brenda Hirko**
- **Nicole Matute, Islip High School - nominated by Nicole Hall**
- **Daniela Mercado, William Floyd High School - nominated by Amalia Kouloglou**
- **Isabella Milana, Kings Park High School - nominated by Sharon Cohen**
- **DeAndre Simmons, Huntington High School - nominated by Dr. Daphne Ali**

A heartfelt thank you to Wilson Tech in Dix Hills for being such a welcoming host, and to our WSCA members and donors whose generosity made this celebration possible. 🙌 To all of our amazing scholarship recipients: your journey is just beginning, and we can't wait to see where your path leads. 🚀

📅 Looking ahead: Scholarship applications for 2026 will open in February. Start encouraging your students now—because WSCA loves to recognize the best and brightest! ⭐ 🇺🇸



2025 SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING & ANNUAL AWARDS LUNCHEON

Honoring Excellence by the Water 



On a beautiful afternoon by the waterfront, WSCA members gathered at The View to celebrate another impactful school year—and what a day it was! 🌟 Surrounded by stunning scenery and great company, the End-of-Year Ceremony was the perfect way to reflect, reconnect, and recognize those who go above and beyond for students every day. 💬🍷



🏆 WSCA proudly honored four outstanding professionals for their commitment to education:
Administrators of the Year:

- Annmarie Freund, Assistant Principal, Smithtown High School West – Smithtown CSD
- Dr. Ricky Papandrea, Jr., Director of School Counseling, Huntington UFSD

Counselors of the Year:

- Diana Bonilla, School Counselor, Huntington High School – Huntington UFSD
- Stacy Murphy, School Counselor, Amityville Memorial High School – Amityville UFSD

Retirees:

- Elizabeth Anderson – Smithtown Christian
- Lynne Brown – East Hampton High School
- Dolores Ciaccio – SUNY Farmingdale
- Robert Citrano – Half Hollow Hills High School East
- Steven Lashin – Huntington High School
- Adrienne Mahoney – Great Neck Road Elementary, Copiague
- Chris Martin – Riverhead High School
- Mark Matvya – Selden Middle School
- Carol Murray – Mepham High School
- Rob Pertusati – Stony Brook University
- Clarissa Porrello – Comsewogue High School
- Karen Skoldberg – Eastport-South Manor Jr./Sr. High School

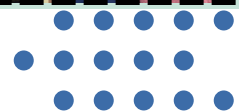


★ WSCA also honored Gloria Schetty-Plante, longtime Office Manager, whose retirement marks the end of an incredible chapter. Her dedication and behind-the-scenes impact have been pivotal to WSCA's success, and she will be deeply missed. 🌸

With delicious food, great conversations, and a picturesque view, the afternoon was a true celebration of connection, gratitude, and the profession we love. 🍷🍷 If you missed it—mark your calendars for next year! 🌟 It's more than just an awards luncheon—it's a celebration of you and the community that lifts each other up all year long. 💙



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READY TO BE MORE THAN A MEMBER? JOIN THE WSCA MOVEMENT!

Make sure to follow
"Western Suffolk Counselors
Association—WSCA" on FB.



We post relevant conferences, helpful tip sheets to reprint for your parents, students and teachers, latest news on regulation changes, solid resources for everyday practice, photos of our members at events, etc...

Please email Melissa Solomon with any questions or goodies to post. If you would like to be tagged in any photos, please let me know.

msolomon@copiague.net

WSCA WSCA
@WSCA-WSCA



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This year, don't just be part of WSCA—**help shape it!** We're calling on passionate, creative, and committed school counselors (yes, YOU!) to step up and help lead the charge as we advocate, connect, and grow together. 🌱💬

Have ideas to spark change? Want to network with incredible professionals who just get it? Looking for ways to uplift students—and your fellow counselors? Then it's time to **take your seat at the table.** 🪑🌟

We have exciting opportunities on our WSCA Executive Board and Council, and we're looking for voices like yours to help guide our mission forward. Whether you're new to the profession or a seasoned pro, your perspective matters. 🌟👏

🗣️ We're not just building a committee—we're building a community.

So, what can you do?

- ✅ Join our Board/Council/Committee
- 💡 Share your ideas or resources
- ❤️ Support with a donation
- ✉️ Reach out with questions or to say, "I'm in!"

**Join
Us!**

Just email us at wsuffolkcounselors@gmail.com to learn more or jump in.

Let's make this year **bigger, bolder, and more connected** than ever before. We're saving you a spot—and we can't wait to welcome you in! 🎉👋

UPCOMING EVENTS

*Be
Present*

wsuffolkcounselors@gmail.com
WSCA, P.O. Box 100,
Commack, NY 11725

Fall Membership Meeting
Committee
Sept. 29
Fall College & Career Fair
Oct. 16
LICAC
Nov. 7
Holiday Happening
Dec. 8
PD Breakfast
Feb. 26
Spring College & Career Fair
Apr. 20