



# Fall 2021 Newsletter



Welcome back! We hope your school year is off to a great start. This new normal has been challenging, to say the least. Your efforts do not go unnoticed. Continue to do your best everyday and remember to take time to take care of yourself.

## COLLEGE CARAVAN

Thank you to the college caravan committee members for organizing this great event! Fourteen colleges were able to visit 7 local schools and meet with students. If you would like to be part of the planning committee, please email Paige Collins at: [collip3@gmail.com](mailto:collip3@gmail.com)



## WELCOME BACK MIXER



CDCA was able to partner with NYSSCA Region 4 to host an IN PERSON mixer! It was great to reconnect with colleagues and meet new members! The Tipsy Moose in Troy was a great spot!



# 2021 Counselor of the Year



AFTER A DIFFICULT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS, CDCA WAS HAPPY TO AWARD THE COUNSELOR OF YEAR 2021, TO KATIE SZALDA, ASSOCIATE DIRECTION OF ADMISSIONS AT SIENA COLLEGE. KATIE'S PASSION FOR HER ROLE, AND LOVE OF SIENA IS PALPABLE. IN HER NOMINATION APPLICATION, HER COLLEAGUES DESCRIBED HER UNBELIEVABLE LEADERSHIP TO THE TEAM AT SIENA SINCE THE PANDEMIC STARTED WITH THE RESULTS SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES. DESPITE A DIFFICULT TIME IN MANY WAYS, SIENA BROUGHT IN THEIR LARGEST EVER FRESHMAN CLASS LAST FALL WHILE WORKING FROM HOME DURING THE MOST CRITICAL RECRUITMENT MONTHS.

HERE IS MORE ABOUT KATIE!

1. WHY DID YOU GO INTO THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS FIELD? -

MY FIRST JOB AFTER GRADUATING SIENA WAS WITH NESTLE. TWO YEARS INTO MY JOB, I QUICKLY LEARNED I LOVE SALES - I'M A PEOPLE PERSON! SELLING FOOD WASN'T QUITE MY THING SO I LOOKED TO SEE IF THERE WAS AN OPEN POSITION AT SIENA. 18 YEARS LATER - I'M STILL HERE WORKING IN ADMISSIONS!!

2. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

WORKING WITH THE STUDENTS!! NOTHING BEATS IT!!

3. DURING THE PANDEMIC, HOW DID YOUR ROLE SHIFT? -

THE PANDEMIC WAS A CHALLENGE FOR EVERYONE. IN THE WORLD OF ADMISSIONS, WE HAD TO GET CREATIVE AND THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX. SPECIFICALLY HOW CAN WE CONNECT WITH THE STUDENTS VIRTUALLY IN A MEANINGFUL WAY. IT WAS CERTAINLY A CHALLENGE BUT A LOT OF FUN TO GET CREATIVE WITH THE TEAM!

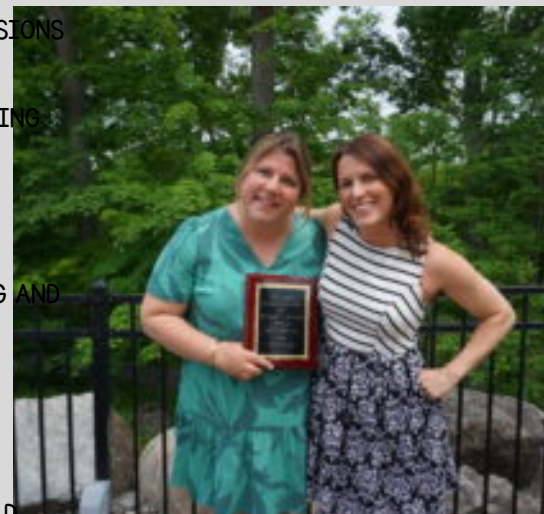
4. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PEOPLE LOOKING TO GET INTO THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS FIELD?

DO IT! YOU WILL NEVER FEEL LIKE YOU WORK A DAY IN YOUR LIFE- IT'S SUCH A REWARDING EXPERIENCE.

5. HOW DOES BEING A CDCA MEMBER SUPPORT YOU AS A PROFESSIONAL?

CDCA HAS BEEN A WONDERFUL GROUP TO BE A PART OF. IT IS FANTASTIC FOR NETWORKING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THE WORKSHOPS ARE ALWAYS RELEVANT AND IMPORTANT TO YOUR GROWTH.

THANK YOU KATIE FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP, PASSION, AND PROFESSIONALISM TO THE FIELD OF COUNSELING AND FOR TAKING THE TIME TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FIRST CDCA NEWSLETTER OF THE YEAR!



Katie with CDCA President, Janelle

# Meet Counselors in the field



KATHLEEN LESKO

MARIA COLLEGE, ASSISTANT VP OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT, DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

YEARS IN THIS POSITION: SINCE APRIL. YEARS IN ADMISSIONS: 22 AT SIENA AND ST. ROSE

## WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEAR?:

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH ALL AGES OF STUDENTS (18 - 50+) AND HELPING PEOPLE FIGURE OUT HOW TO BALANCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL GOALS WHILE JUGGLING LIFE. MARIA COLLEGE HAS A MISSION THAT SURROUNDS STUDENTS WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THE OPPORTUNITY OF EDUCATION. WE FOCUS ON ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE WITH STRONG STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES BY MEETING STUDENTS WHERE THEY ARE. WE HELP ALL STUDENTS NAVIGATE TRADITIONAL ADMISSIONS, PAST HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES OR PEOPLE WHO EARNED THEIR EQUIVALENCIES RETURN TO HIGHER EDUCATION, OUR HEOP/HOPE PROGRAMS, AND TRANSFER ADMISSIONS. I AM EXCITED TO SEE A FULL CYCLE OF ADMISSIONS AT MARIA, AND FINALLY, I'M MOST EXCITED ABOUT SEEING PEOPLE IN PERSON!

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THIS YEAR'S GRADUATING SENIORS? :

I THINK THE BEST ADVICE COMES FROM ONE OF THE FIRST ADULT STUDENTS I MET WITH AT MARIA COLLEGE, "I DON'T WANT TO BE DEFINED BY MY 18 YEAR-OLD SELF. I'M DIFFERENT NOW. BUT I WISH I COULD TELL MY 18-YEAR-OLD SELF THAT THERE WILL BE CONSEQUENCES TO NOT GOING TO CLASS AND NOT ASKING FOR HELP. I JUST GAVE UP INSTEAD OF ASKING FOR HELP; I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD AFFECT ME LATER, BUT IT HAS." WE MAKE CHOICES EVERYDAY - CHOOSE WISELY.

"I LOVE THE SUPPORT THAT CDCA PROVIDES FOR COUNSELORS. I WOULD STRONGLY ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES! "



# Meet Counselors in the field



CHRISTINA CARLSON

SCHOOL COUNSELOR , BALLSTON SPA HIGH SCHOOL/ CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES & SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIES EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL (PTECH)\*\*

3 YEARS IN THIS DISTRICT/POSITION, 10 YEARS PRIOR IN ANOTHER DISTRICT

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEAR?

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO RECONNECTING WITH STUDENTS THAT WERE REMOTE LAST YEAR AND CREATING NEW MEMORIES THROUGHOUT THIS SCHOOL YEAR

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THIS YEAR'S GRADUATING SENIORS?

EMBRACE EVERY OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED TO YOU AND FIND HAPPINESS IN TODAY.



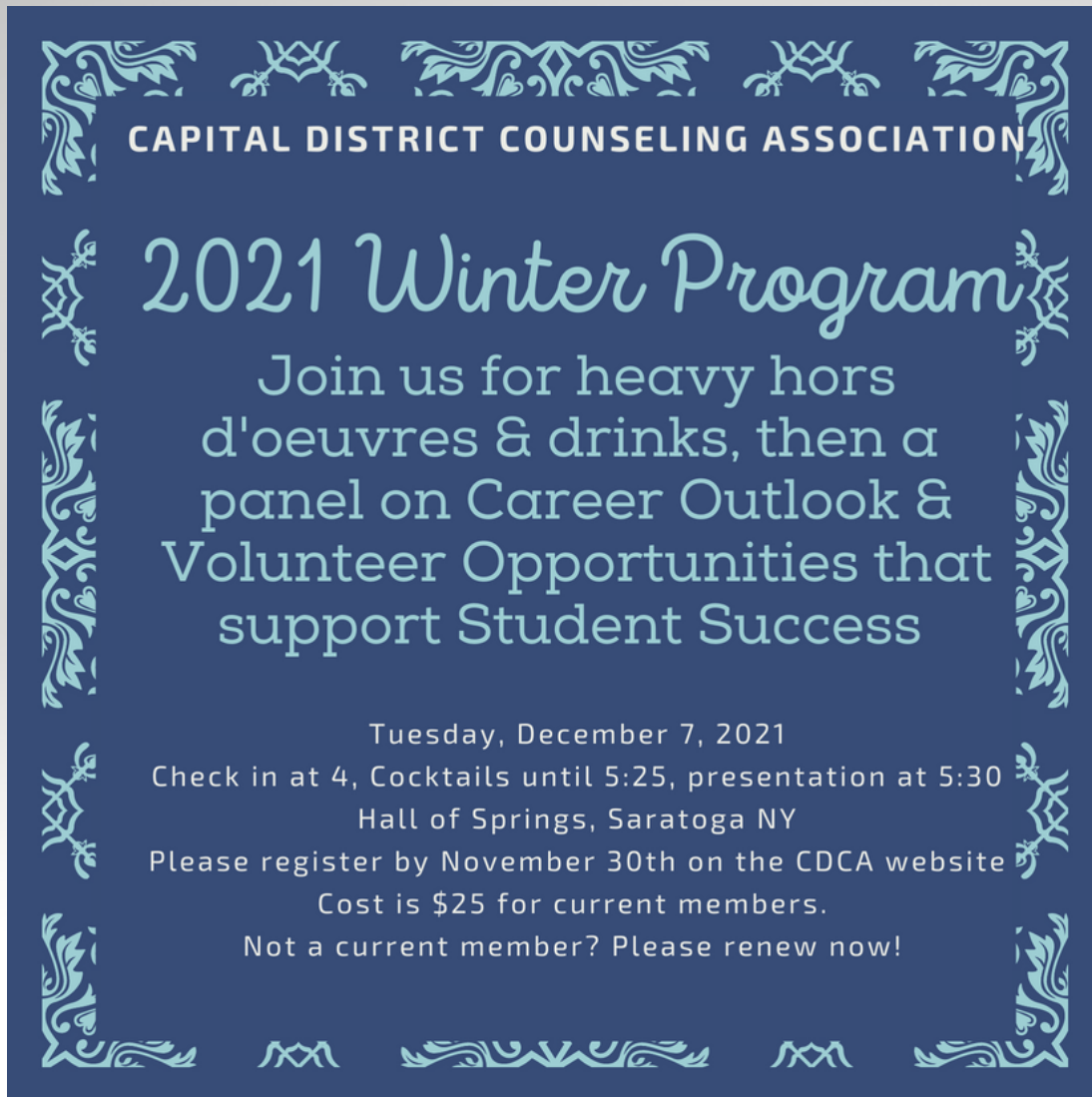
\*\*The Clean Technologies & Sustainable Industries ECHS was developed by the Ballston Spa Central School District in partnership with Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) in 2011. It now has over 50 partners from business and industry, higher education, and non-profit and government agencies. The Clean Technologies & Sustainable Industries ECHS was awarded a NYS P-TECH grant which expanded opportunities for students in the program to take college coursework in one of several career pathways.

High school students in the program have the opportunity to complete an Associate's Degree at no cost to families in one of the program's college and career pathways; Clean Energy, Community Health Navigation, Cybersecurity, Engineering Sciences, Entrepreneurship, Polysomnography, and Surgical Technician.

Students in the program create solutions to real world problems during their experiences in the program through a transdisciplinary approach. They also enroll in college coursework with college professors at Hudson Valley Community College's TEC-SMART in Malta.



# Upcoming Events



If you are not a current member, please renew [here!](#)

The School Counselors Roundtable, a collaborative offering from the CDCA and the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA), is a professional learning community that will focus on strategies for developing and sustaining engagement with students and families during this uncertain period.

Dates for Sessions:

BLOCK 1: 11/16/2021 & 1/11/2022

BLOCK 2: 3/15/2022 & 5/17/2022

Cost: \$10 per Block

Location: Virtual - [Register here](#)