

# CDCA Newsletter

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Fall 2023

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## Kick off the Fall

Kick off the fall with CDCA was a success! The social took place on October 26th at Ryans Wake in Troy, NY. The event was full of new members and past members with lots of laughs, and professional conversation. To those who were unable to make it, we hope to see you at our winter event on December 6th!



### Shoutout to our new members who joined at our fall event!

Allison Bazanos  
Matt Farnan  
Krista Gogis  
Rebecca Marincelli  
Caroline Lydon  
Jennifer O'Brien  
Abrielle Vincent  
Lyba Waraich



# A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Katie Lesko, President of CDCA**

What a start to the semester! I'm settling into Russell Sage and my final year as CDCA acting president

As we come into the Thanksgiving season, I would add CDCA to the list of things for which I'm grateful. It's a community of people who care. They care about their students and their colleagues.

To connect with why CDCA matters to you, I just recently read a book called, *Best Team Ever! The Surprising Science behind High-Performing Teams* by David Burkus. He talks through three components of team building: common understanding for all, prosocial purpose (why it matters) and psychological safety for the team. It reminded me of the community you are building with your students and the community the CDCA is building. For CDCA, the common understanding is to advocate for our profession, connect with our peers and build our resources. Why is it important to take time to go to events? People need a network to help their students. Learning best practices or trying out new ideas is so important to helping students and not feeling alone. [I liked this article about networking](#). And finally, psychological safety provided by CDCA is to give you a space to talk through challenges and frustrations with no judgement. That's how we help create better experiences.

I hope you all take advantage of the bigger team you have in CDCA. Engage in conversations and events. Be an active member of the Facebook groups sharing articles or ideas, bring back information to your team, or even suggest other topics for CDCA.

Plan on being at the December 6th Winter Session at Shaker Ridge Country Club. See you there!

Katie, Sage, Paige, Trish, Colleen, Kim, Katelyn, Shanell & Alicia

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

<i>Sage Fulgan</i>	President Elect
<i>Trish Poupore</i>	VP of Professional Development
<i>Katelyn Baker</i>	VP of Communications, Co
<i>Shanell Brown</i>	VP of Communications, Co
<i>Collen O'Flaherty</i>	VP of Membership
<i>Kimberly Leva</i>	Treasurer
<i>Alicia Caldara</i>	Recording Secretary
<i>Paige Collins</i>	Chair of Committees

Are you a part of CDCA but also would love to spend more professional development time with counselors at your building level?

Reach out to Paige Collins at [pcollins@brunswickcsd.org](mailto:pcollins@brunswickcsd.org) for more information on how to get involved with committees. Look out for events planned by committee chairs.



# ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & LUNCHEON 2023



Members of the Capital District Counseling Association got together on June 7th at The Hideaway at Saratoga Lake Golf Course for the annual business meeting and luncheon. Together, members engaged in a lot of professional and social conversation to celebrate the end of another great school year and things to look forward to for next!

## **We honored Mrs. Megan Beauchamp as CDCA's Counselor of the Year!**



As we start the 2023-2024 school year, please start to consider who you think should be nominated for Counselor of the Year for 2024! Nominees need to be members of CDCA and have contributed to the counseling field in a positive way!



## *Thank you Dr. Jennifer Bashant*

Dr. Jennifer Bashant joined the luncheon as our honored keynote speaker to talk about 'Building a Culture of Connection'. Dr. Bashant is a strong advocate for compassionate classrooms and came with a wealth of knowledge to share with our members! She serves as a MWBE outside evaluator for grants and implementation studies. Dr. Bashant has also served as a research scientist for the NYS Office of Mental Health and the Center for Human Services Research at the State University of NY. Everyone valued Dr. Bashant's guidance on improving culture and connection through social emotional learning and building resilience!



# Counselor of the Year 2023

**Congratulations,  
Megan Beauchamp of  
West Sand Lake Elementary  
in the Averill Park CSD!**



Megan Beauchamp was recognized as counselor of the year at the June luncheon. As a school counselor and a member of CDCA, she has gone above and beyond in terms of service and achievement.

All of the students, and faculty at West Sand Lake would agree that Mrs. Beauchamp has had a positive impact on all in many ways.

In a recent interview by Averill Park CSD, Principal Rosher said "Mrs. Beauchamp is an exceptional counselor. She has a huge heart. She is thoughtful, generous and truly cares about helping others."

Aside from her professional career, Megan has also served on the CDCA boards in different roles. Most recently, Megan is the chair to the elementary committee and most recently, hosted the Elementary Day of Sharing which was a huge success among

**Q: How did you feel after being awarded Counselor of the Year?**

**MB:** Honestly, in the moment, it was a little embarrassing! In looking back though, I'm proud that my administration and team at school appreciate what I do.

**Q: What is your favorite part of being a member of CDCA?**

**MB:** The relationships with other counselors! School Counselors- especially those of us that are the only ones in our buildings- or districts- need connection with other professionals- that's the best part of CDCA!

**Q: Tell us about what you have going on this school year!**

**MB:** This year I'm working on training Tori (my new therapy dog in training!) to be the best co-counselor she can be. Tori is a chocolate lab! Along with her other handlers, we attend training every Thursday with the awesome trainers from Paws2Connect. Tori has already shown a natural ability to comfort people and read people's emotions- she's a natural counselor!

*(Last school year, Megan applied for a grant through the Averill Park Education Foundation to bring a therapy dog to her elementary school. Megan felt that the students of WSL would benefit from a dog to help regulate emotions, reduce stress or anxiety, improve self esteem and so many more powerful things.)*

**Q: How has it been having Tori with you at school this year?**

**MB:** It is wonderful to have Tori working with me this year. She brings SO MUCH joy to the students and staff at my school. I'm getting used to not being greeted anymore and just hearing "Hi Tori!" or, if she's not with me a disappointed "aw, where's Tori?".

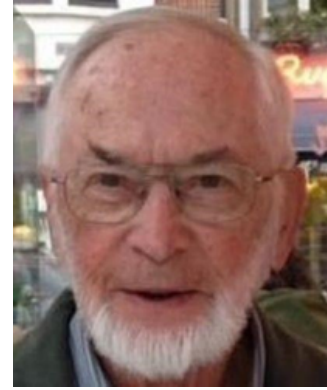
**Q: Any advice for newer school counselors?**

**MB:** My advice for newer counselors is it's ok to admit you don't know something- then learn about it!





# In Memory



As we start a new school year, I want to remember and commemorate a counseling legend in our organization who passed away last school year. Donald Newell, who was instrumental in the creation of both the Capital District Counseling Association and the New York Counseling Association passed away in November of 2022. I'm sure he would say that he lived a full and wonderful life but passing left me sad, especially for those in our field who never had the opportunity to learn so much from him as I did.

I was incredibly fortunate to be mentored by some amazing people. Robin Wheeler and Don were counselors in my school growing up. Miss Wheeler had a way of making all of her students feel special while at the same time reminding us not to be satisfied with less than your best efforts. I admired her.

As my first counseling interview, I reconnected with Mr. Newell. He took me under his wing and helped me to find my own way as a new counselor. His kindness, calm presence and quick wit became his trademarks.

He taught me to take a breath and think. Don helped me prioritize the counseling program and follow it rather than let events of any given day get me off track. It was during these early days in my career that he introduced me to the supportive community of professionals in CDCA and NYCA. There I learned the critical role of professional development in nurturing new counselors who have this most important responsibility of helping students see all of the avenues open to them in their future.

I have learned it is critical to pay it forward and bring new counselors into our organization; to welcome and mentor them in their career as I had been. I absolutely owe my career to Don, and Robin Wheeler as I am so grateful for all the impact they had on my life. Their mentorship and dedication has a lasting impact on the history of the Capital District Counseling Association. Please consider honoring him by his lessons of fellowship, professional development and kindness.

Trish Maloney  
School Counselor, Retired  
CDCA Past President

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# Let's talk about Grief

It can be awkward, we get it. No one ever wants to say the wrong thing! If you have a student in need of support, let The Community Hospice help!

Contact the site nearest you for more information:

**FREE**

The Community Hospice  
445 New Karner Road  
Albany, NY 12205  
Phone: 518-724-0200

The Community Hospice  
47 Liberty Street  
Catskill, NY 12414  
Phone: 518-943-5402

The Community Hospice  
295 Valley View Blvd.  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
Phone: 518-285-8116

The Community Hospice  
179 Lawrence Street  
Saratoga, NY 12866  
Phone: 518-581-0800



*Through art and dialogue, children learn they are not alone in their grief, and that what they are feeling is completely normal.*

Program	Location	2023 Dates / Times
Family Drop-in Support Group (With children up to age 17)	The Community Hospice 295 Valley View Blvd Rensselaer, NY 12144	2nd & 4th Wednesday of the Month 6:00pm – 7:30pm
Wave Riders Family Support Group	The Community Hospice 295 Valley View Blvd Rensselaer, NY 12144	Tuesday 10/10, 10/17, 10/24, 11/7, 11/14 5:00pm – 6:00pm
Camp Erin Overnight Camp	Camp Fowler Speculator, NY 12108	Friday, September 22nd – Sunday, September 24th
Holiday Tea for Grieving Families	Mercy Care for Kids 310 S Manning Blvd # 1 Albany, NY 12208	Saturday November 18th 1:00pm – 3:00pm

We want to hear from *you.*



Do you have something amazing, fun, informative or just something that others need to know about going on ?

Please reach out to **Katelyn Baker, kdobert1@gmail.com** if you are interested in sharing the awesome work you or your department is doing for students.

Your work is **important** and deserves to be shared with others. Not only do you deserve a shoutout but your programs, events, meetings etc could inspire someone else in their profession!

# Upcoming Events



## **NYSSCA 2023 Conference**

November 16-18, 2023

*Albany Hilton*

## **CASDA Roundtables 23-24**

**9:00-10:00 AM- Virtual**

November 9th, 2023

January 18th, 2024

March 14th, 2024

May 16th, 2024

## **CDCA Winter Program**

December 6th, 2023

*Shaker Country Club*

## **Youth Mental Health First Aid**

Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.

**November & December Online Training**

[Mentalhealthdnys.org](http://Mentalhealthdnys.org)

## **CASDA Virtual Series**

- Adaptive Leadership for Challenging Times
- SEL Through a Student Lens: Empowerment, Engagement & Agency
- What's on our minds? A Space for every educator

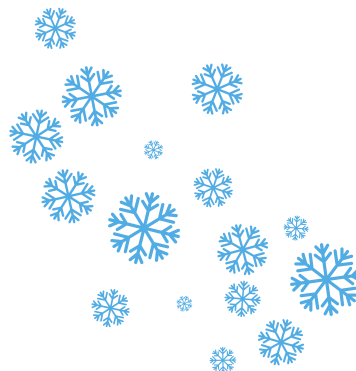
JOIN CDCA FOR  
THE ANNUAL  
**WINTER**  
*Program*

DECEMBER  
**06**  
WEDNESDAY 4:00 - 7:00 PM  
2023

SHAKER COUNTRY CLUB  
802 ALBANY SHAKER ROAD, ALBANY, NY

*Tis the season to eat, drink and mingle!*

JOIN US IN AN INFORMATIVE  
PRESENTATION AND CONVERSATION  
ABOUT LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS WHILE  
MAINTAINING DOCUMENTATION



**[CLICK TO RSVP](#)**

But, hey! Don't forget to take care of YOU!

Happy holidays

**Tips from Therapist to Millions**  
**www.therapisttomillions.com**

The holidays are a time of celebration and joy, but they can also be stressful for many people. The hustle and bustle of holiday shopping, decorating, and cooking can add stress to an already busy life. And if you're a therapist who works with clients dealing with anxiety about the holidays — or even just your family members with whom you want to maintain peace — it can be hard to stay calm and centered amidst all that activity.

*Always remember: we all need help sometimes—even therapists! So don't hesitate to reach out for support if necessary, during this holiday season—whether that means calling a friend who knows how hard therapy can be or reaching out directly to your therapist(s). They want what's best for their clients too, so they'll do whatever they can to provide some extra mindfulness care given all of their holiday responsibilities (which I know sounds overwhelming!). - Therapists to Millions*

- **Take time to Reflect**
- **Practice Self Compassion**
- **DON'T Apologize for Your Needs**
- **Connect with others About How You Feel**
- **Take a Break from Social Media**
- **Eat Well & Exercise**
- **Give yourself Grace**



**A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR**

Coming from someone who pretty much never says no, its because I don't want to miss out or let anyone down. One of my personal goals is to start taking on less and learning it is OKAY to say no. This past weekend, I actually said no to two different engagements... and it felt good. Taking time for self-care, is a journey. I felt truly connected to the piece in this article that said, 'You can't just arrive at the destination and say, "I'm there"'. It's more like a marathon: you have to keep going and going and going, especially when it feels like everything else in your life is stopping dead in its tracks.' Lifes pressures aren't going to just magically stop but we do have the power to take a stance for ourselves. Easier said than done, but lean on your people! As counselors, we are always the ones helping others and its challenging to accept help. Guilty!



Just for  
*Laughs!*



**BEING A**  
**COUNSELOR**  
**IS EASY**   
IT'S LIKE RIDING A BIKE  
EXCEPT THE BIKE IS ON FIRE  
**YOU'RE ON FIRE**  
**EVERYTHING IS ON FIRE**

