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QUAKER VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELOR NAMED AS FINALIST FOR SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR

Christy A. Clapper from Sewickley, Pennsylvania Among Top Eight

Alexandria, VA, January 25, 2010 – Christy A. Clapper, PhD, a school counselor from Quaker Valley Middle School, has been named one of the top eight school counselors in America. Clapper is one of more than 250 elementary, middle, and secondary school counselors nationwide who were nominated for the School Counselor of the Year award. The award, which is presented by the American School Counselor Association, honors the professionals who devote their careers to serving as advocates and often lifesavers for the nation's students.

An educator for over thirty years, Clapper constantly aims to give her students hope for the future and help each child find their mission. From making it her personal responsibility to assist grieving families and staff through tragic events to spearheading efforts to help her middle school staff remodel a needy family's home in the spirit of *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, Clapper is always focused on what is best for her students and community. One of her greatest accomplishments while at Quaker Valley Middle School was the production of *Power in the Middle*, an instructional video to augment the school's bully-proofing curriculum. Clapper collaborated with a team of nearly 100 people to develop this engaging film, which was the capstone project of her years of research and work in student to student relationships. The curriculum and video have made a great difference in student safety in the school and district-wide for K-6 students.

"Christy puts her heart and soul into working with her students and colleagues," said Rose Ann Bergandy, School Counselor, Quaker Valley School District. "School counseling is Christy's passion and because of her work, many children have entered the school, under her care and direction, and have left filled with pride, ambition, hope, and a great desire to make the most of themselves."

The School Counselor of the Year awards program was open to all 100,000 members of the school counseling profession. The top eight school counselors were nominated by their peers and administrators and judged by a select panel to be the "best of the best."

The candidates were judged on several criteria, including: creative school counseling innovations, effective counseling programs, leadership skills, and contributions to student advancement.

Clapper is a leader in her school and in the field of counseling. She serves as School Counseling Department Coordinator for Quaker Valley School District and is often sought after to present at state, regional, and national conferences on topics such as the ASCA model, conflict resolution, and the education of high-end learners. Clapper received her Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership from Pennsylvania State University in 2008. Her deep interest in student and teacher relationships was the basis for her doctoral dissertation and a published article. Most recently, Clapper was awarded the AAUW (formerly known as the American Association of University Women) Educator of the Year in 2009.

"School counselors make significant contributions to the overall well-being of students and their success," said Richard Wong, Executive Director, American School Counselor Association. "They have unique qualifications and skills that allow them to address students' academic achievement, personal/social and career development needs."

Clapper, along with the other seven finalists, will be flown to Washington, D.C., on January 27, 2010, for three days of celebratory events. The honorees will have meetings with their Members of Congress, attend a Congressional briefing and reception, and be formally recognized at a black-tie gala.

The legislative co-sponsors for the 2010 School Counselor of the Year program are: Senators Lisa Murkowski from Alaska and Arlen Specter from Pennsylvania and Representatives Raul Grijalva

from Arizona and Vernon Ehlers from Michigan. The 2010 program is sponsored in part by Naviance, the Universal Technical Institute (UTI), and the American Federation of Teachers.

For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, please visit www.schoolcounselor.org.

About the American School Counselor Association

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) professional organization based in Alexandria, VA. ASCA promotes student success by expanding the image and influence of professional school counseling through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change. ASCA helps school counselors guide their students toward academic achievement, personal and social development, and career planning to help today's students become tomorrow's productive, contributing members of society. Founded in 1952, ASCA currently has a network of 50 state associations and a membership of more than 26,000 school counseling professionals.

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