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ALOHA HUBER PARK SCHOOL COUNSELOR
NAMED AS FINALIST FOR
SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR
Laurie Maheen Huntwork from Portland, Oregon Among Top Ten

Alexandria, VA, January 22, 2009—Laurie Maheen Huntwork, a school counselor from Aloha Huber Park PK-8 School, has been named one of the top ten school counselors in America. Huntwork is one of more than 400 elementary, middle, and secondary school counselors nationwide who were nominated for the School Counselor of the Year award. The program, which is presented by Naviance and the American School Counselor Association, honors the professionals who devote their careers to serving as advocates and often lifesavers for the nation's students.

A counselor for over twelve years, Huntwork is able to communicate in three languages and is widely regarded as an expert in working with diverse populations of students. Aloha Huber Park is home to students speaking 30 different languages, 80% of whom live in poverty. Huntwork is a strong advocate for student equity and works as a part of the newly formed Student Equity Response Team (SERT) to ensure student access to opportunities for success. She is also the co-founder of Project Warm-Up, a non-profit event which provides parents with warm clothes for their children during the coldest months, serving over 400 students a year.

One of Huntwork's greatest accomplishments was facilitating the implementation of her school's Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) to improve school wide behavior and influence student achievement and now serves as one of the district's lead trainers for PBIS. Most recently, Huntwork was appointed to the Regional Leadership Team for PBIS. She also served as a member of the district's Counseling Leadership Team, which focuses on the ASCA model.

"Laurie easily manages to make each student, each family member, and each staff member feel as if they are the most welcome, most valued, and most equal," said Cynthia Lam Moffett, Assistant Principal, Aloha Huber Park. "I am in awe of her ability to touch lives in the most positive way."

"Laurie has taught me the meaning of authentic service and dedication to the well being of children," commented Patricia Book, Executive Director of School Improvement, Hillsboro School District. "She is an innovator and leader in her profession."

The School Counselor of the Year awards program was open to all 100,000 members of the school counseling profession. The top ten 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.

"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."

Huntwork, along with the other nine finalists, will be flown to Washington, D.C., on January 28, 2009, 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.

Co-chairs of the 2009 School Counselor of the Year program are Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-Cal.) and Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-Mich.). The 2009 program is presented by Naviance, a provider of planning and advising systems for secondary schools, and the American School Counselor Association.

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 25,000 school counseling professionals.

About Naviance

Naviance is the leading provider of planning and advising systems for secondary schools. Nearly 40,000 educators and counselors serving more than 3.5 million students in schools across the U.S. and in 60 other countries use Naviance products to manage academic and post-secondary advising, communicate with students and families, and analyze data. For more information about Naviance, visit www.naviance.com.

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