



AMERICAN  
SCHOOL  
COUNSELOR  
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## **LAGUNA BEACH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR NAMED AS FINALIST FOR SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR**

*Jami Parsons from Laguna Beach, California Among Top Eight*

**Alexandria, VA, January 25, 2010** – Jami Parsons, Ed.D., a school counselor from El Morro Elementary and Top of the World Elementary, has been named one of the top eight school counselors in America. Parsons 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 fifteen years, Parsons is known for her dedication, expertise, and compassion. She is innovative and creative in her approach to working with students and has developed a number of programs to meet their unique needs, including a Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) mentoring program which has grown to over one hundred students. Parsons also serves as the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) Coach for both elementary sites and chairs a committee that meets to analyze behavior data and identify intervention programs to address or prevent behavior concerns.

“Jami Parsons represents the best of the professional school counselor in the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” said Nancy Hubbell, Assistant Superintendent, Laguna Beach Unified School District. “She is a collaborative leader who truly understands the value of creating and sustaining an educational system that anticipates and responds to the needs of all students.”

Parsons is a true leader in her school, community, and the field of counseling. She is a founding member and first president of the Orange County Regional Chapter of the California Association of School Counselors and is an adjunct professor in the School Counseling graduate program at Chapman University. One of Parsons' greatest accomplishments has been developing a counselor evaluation tool for the district, which is aligned with the ASCA standards. A strong advocate for lifelong learning, Parsons earned her Doctor of Education in K-12 Educational Leadership from the University of Southern California in May 2007.

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.

“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.”

Parsons, 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](http://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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