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T.C. WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR
NAMED AS FINALIST FOR
SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR
Diane Reese from Woodbridge, Virginia Among Top Ten

Alexandria, VA, January 22, 2009—Diane Reese, a school counselor from STEP Center/Academy 1, T.C. Williams High School, has been named one of the top ten school counselors in America. Reese 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.

In her tenth year of counseling, Reese serves as counselor for Alexandria City Public School's smaller learning community for at-risk (at-promise) students and has created a college bound and school-to-work approach to serve this student population. She is widely respected for the development of several unique programs including Project GOAL (Girls Having Opportunities for Academic Success and Leadership Development), an after school leadership program, and The Reading Circle Club, a literacy program that engages staff and students. As the Parent Involvement Coordinator for the school, Reese initiated traditions such as "Take Your Parent to School Day." She currently serves on the Advisory Board of the Graduate School of Counseling at George Washington University, where she completed her PhD program.

Reese is constantly motivated by her students and asks herself daily what she can do to be a better counselor. She maintains a very open relationship with her students and they often view her as family. "Helping students find success, stay in school, and realize a future – that is what Dr. Reese does – for me and many other students," wrote Sean Sanborn, student, STEP Center/Academy 1. "She helped me see that I could graduate and I felt a sense of renewed hope."

"Diane's dedication, strong work ethic and loyalty are remarkable," said Carolyn B. Lewis, Principal, STEP Center/Academy 1. "She is a very strong advocate for the school counseling 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."

Reese, 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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