

# Maine Counseling Association

*News & Views*

*Winter 2017 Edition*

## From the President

*Tracy Corbin, Caribou Regional Technical Center*

### Courageous Conversations

Happy New Year Colleagues from around the beautiful state of Maine! There are many, many things happening in MeCA that I could write about, but I feel as though the most timely is to share with you my journey with courageous conversations.

In late October, I had the opportunity to represent MeCA at Michelle Obama's 5<sup>th</sup> convening on her Reach Higher Initiative, held in Washington D.C. The theme of the 5<sup>th</sup> convening was multiculturalism, diversity, and closing the achievement gap. Our group of a few hundred counselors listened to several high profile and diverse speakers, and participated in facilitated breakout sessions themed around how to initiate and engage in what was referred to as Courageous Conversations. Being just a week prior to election, attendees and presenters alike were abuzz with the upcoming election and the events unfolding in the media. In between sessions and during meals, I had the opportunity to hear stories from many counselors across the nation about how their students and clients were affected by the unfolding election campaign, most of these stories were underlined with fear.

In the month following the convening, our country elected a new President and we moved into our current post-election world, perhaps most accurately described as the Deep Divide. We saw riots, hate crimes, blatant acts of discrimination, and the falling apart of families and friendships. We've all likely heard fallout stories from counselors right here in Maine... school counselors who consoled undocumented students who feared deportation, college counselors whose LGBT community feared further marginalization, and clinical counselors whose clients who endured sexual assault felt somehow as though their experiences were reduced to permissible locker room talk. It seems as though professionals from all areas of expertise and parts of the state want and need to discuss and process our post-election world.

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## From the President *(Continued)*

The ACA, along with many other national organizations, released a post-election statement, which the MeCA Executive Board overwhelmingly found to fall short of speaking out on the infractions against human rights and dignity that we all hold sacred. In response, the Board released our own statement, and for some, the statement went too far, and for others, not nearly far enough. To be quite honest with you, the crafting and releasing of MeCA's post-election statement unveiled that the deep divide goes further than just across our nation and within our counseling offices, it also permeates our organization.

What was so different about this election that would cause families to cancel their thanksgiving plans, relationships to dissolve, and professionals to argue with one another? I've spent a lot of time reflecting upon this, and I know I'm not alone, otherwise I may not dare write such a brazen article as this. But we, the profession of listeners, the ambassadors of normalcy, are in a unique situation where we have the opportunity and the responsibility to really hear and understand what people are saying. One reoccurring comment I've heard from students, clients, colleagues, and acquaintances who are upset with the election results is some sort of variation of... "I feel like a vote for Trump is a vote against me". That's a pretty powerful statement, and yet one that goes unacknowledged if we fail to engage in courageous conversations. By engaging, and by teaching others to engage, in respectful dialogue we can begin to examine whether or not statements like this are really true. Unfortunately, what we often see is quite the opposite of respectful dialogue. We've seen one party accuse the other of being racists, bigots, or misogynists, while the other party accuses them of being sore losers, whiners, or crybabies. Or perhaps even worse, voices are simply silenced all together.

And somehow, the counseling profession finds themselves feeling unequipped, and on the frontlines of the fallout. I'm going to propose the argument that perhaps we feel unequipped because of the long history of separation of politics and the counseling profession. The ACA's stance has been like a pendulum swaying from statements such as "Counselors are to maintain a neutral and centrist position" to "Political neutrality is virtually impossible within the work of counselors". I tend to agree with Past ACA President Patricia Arredondo (also the upcoming Keynote speaker at our annual MeCA conference), who says "All counseling is political. All theory is political." I'm certain that we can all agree that advocacy and social justice are central to our profession. We make a conscientious effort to stay on top of proposed legislation that affects our profession and those we advocate for, and we deploy resources to lobby against or in favor of such legislation. If we can begin to acknowledge and accept our profession's relationship within the political arena, perhaps we can better equip ourselves to counsel in the aftermath of political divide, especially when fueled by insensitivity towards diversity.

And this brings me back to courageous conversations... what does it really mean to have courageous conversations? It means that we engage in respectful dialogue with one another to listen, explore, understand, and ultimately accept our differences. It means that we can respect a differing opinion, even if we don't agree with it. It means that we first call upon our patience and empathy, instead of pulling out our defenses, which we all too often will package under the guise of advocacy. Courageous conversations aid to align, not alienate, those with differing beliefs in working towards common goals. Whether it is within our nation's borders or within our households, we are stronger together than we are standing divided.

I hope that you may find the chance to join the Executive Board at our annual conference as we continue to explore and offer practical tools to help you engage in courageous conversations.

## From the President-Elect

*Nick Umphrey, John Bapst Memorial High School*

As I write today on December 30, I am trying to reflect positively on 2016. The last several months for me being new to MECA leadership was a positive in a very strange year. In July, I attended the American Counseling Association's Institute for Leadership Training (ITL) in Washington DC. Aside from the conference, I had not been to Washington DC since I was in the eighth grade, so I was excited to go and see a couple of new additions to the National Mall since my last visit: the World War II Memorial and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

As the grandson of two World War II veterans, I was emotional standing in the middle of the memorial at the thought of how proud both of my grandfathers would have been to see it. Both men were humble, working class, proud men from Aroostook County. In their post-war lives, they were both delighted to see their children and grandchildren have opportunities they did not have growing up during the Great Depression. As a student of history, I understood that the World War II Memorial honored my grandfathers in the same breath as many others who served including: African American men in segregated units, Navajo Windtalkers, and Japanese American men that fought while many of their families were placed in internment camps. This fitting memorial made all who served one in spirit.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial was located across a body of water from the Jefferson Memorial in a small park area. I sat in the shade on that 90 degree day and watched for several minutes as families and groups of people from all the world over took photos next to the monument. Since I was alone, I was often asked if I would mind taking their group photos by the monument. I happily obliged and was able to talk to people from India, Korea, and Alabama about this memorial and its significance. Martin Luther King Jr. was an inspiration to me for the way he helped initiate change through civil disobedience and peaceful interventions.

In my visit to Washington I felt pride in the United States and the people in our past and present. My grandfathers and thousands of ordinary people like them from all parts of the United States put themselves at risk and helped to end the expansion of Axis powers. Men and women, of all races and creeds marched together also putting themselves at risk as they protested in the Civil Rights Movement. In both monuments I was reminded that extraordinary things can happen when ordinary people unite and work toward a common goal.

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### A Note From Our Newsletter Editor

*Jill Bouchard Cairns*

Please do not hesitate to send articles for our next newsletter. As a counseling organization we believe it would also be exciting to hear from some of our students of any age. Additionally, if you would like to submit an advertisement send or email a camera-ready ad. Your advertisement will run in three consecutive issues of News and Views. Please send your check for \$100.00 (made payable to MeCA) to:

**Jill Bouchard Cairns  
U of Maine at Fort Kent  
23 University Drive  
Fort Kent, ME 04743**

If you have any ideas, articles or questions you can email Jill at [jillb@maine.edu](mailto:jillb@maine.edu)

### A Note From Our Historian

*Kevin O'Reilly*

Each year at the conference business meeting, the historian is called upon to read a list of those members who have retired or who will be retiring at the end of the school year. The historian also announces the names of current or past members who have died. Please contact me prior to the conference with any updates so that I might recognize the members at the conference.

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## Past-President, Conference Co-Chair

*Stan Pelletier, Bucksport Middle School*

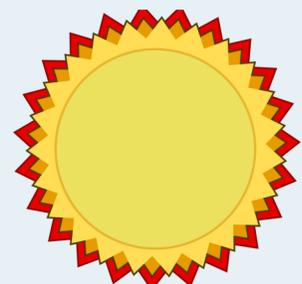
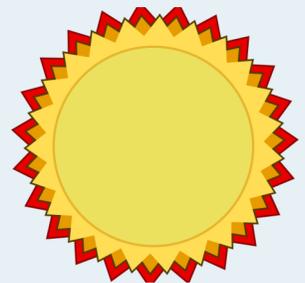
It is early January, 2017 (how did *that* happen?), and I'm in my office. I'm looking at a picture with a quotation underneath. The words read "in the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends." I use the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to teach students with whom I work the importance of standing up and speaking out for each other, especially those who are vulnerable and need our help. I'm proud to belong to a profession of guides and healers who care for others by speaking up and revealing the truth. By mindfully uncovering and speaking truth and fact, we help our students and clients confront mistaken or damaging mental formations and overcome barriers, some imposed from without and some from within. Let us continue to work, as we are called to in the preamble of the ACA code of ethics and the ACA mission statement, to promote respect for human dignity and diversity and to promote social justice. To promote is defined as "to further the progress of something, especially a cause, venture, or aim; to support or actively encourage"; it is active. Promoting respect for human dignity, diversity, and social justice does not permit us to sit by in the face of discrimination and injustice. In our work, let us continue to rely on fact and speak truth, with our students and clients, with the public, and with those in power. I look forward to being with many of you at the conference, and I wish you healing, hope, strength and resolve in this new year.

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### **2017 Maine Counseling Association Awards**

The Maine Counseling Association is accepting nominations for the 2017 **Distinguished Counseling Professional** and **Service to the Profession of Counseling** awards. These awards honor Maine Counseling Association members working in a variety of settings across the profession including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, community-based agencies, clinical facilities, and private practice. Counselors considered for the awards are ethical, effective, and diligent advocates for clients or students. They are leaders, mentors, and positive examples of professionalism within the counseling community, with consistent accomplishment throughout their careers. They exemplify integrity, patience, and compassion in their empowering work with students, clients, families, or colleagues. They advance the reputation of our profession by their work and example. Recipients of the "Service to the Profession" award, particularly, have demonstrated a high level of involvement and commitment to our professional organizations.

***To nominate a member for one of these awards, please contact the  
Maine Counseling Association President, Tracy Corbin at  
tcorbin@rsu39.org or at (207)493-4270***



## Public Policy Update

*Ben Milster, Mount Blue High School*

The 128th Legislature is just getting started, and the Legislative requests are being documents and added to the growing list of bills (Legislative Documents) to be considered for approval. One LR (#1756), An Act to Enhance Workforce Development for Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse Workers, may be of significant interest to us as the session develops. Other bill of interest so far:

### **LD 43 - Resolve, To Establish the Task Force To Study Higher Education Attainment and Completion Goals.**

This resolve establishes the Task Force To Study Higher Education Attainment and Completion Goals. The task force membership consists of Legislators, representatives of quasi-governmental and business entities, state agency commissioners and one member of the public. The task force's duties include examination and review in the areas of college completion, statewide postsecondary education attainment goals and metrics, college affordability and completion initiatives and college and university support of state policies and strategies to enable college completion and support workforce development. The task force is required to submit a report containing its findings and recommendations, including any necessary implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 15, 2017.

### **LD 94 - An Act To Provide a Source of Funding for Drug Abuse Resistance Education**

This bill requires that the funds generated by forfeited firearms that are auctioned to federally licensed firearms dealers or the public be used to fund educational programs taught by law enforcement officers that target prevention of substance abuse, violence or high-risk behavior and teach students good decision-making skills to help them lead safe and healthy lives. These educational programs are known as the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program.

### **LD 95 - An Act To Provide a Method for a Student To Be Excused from Standardized Testing**

This bill requires a school administrative unit to excuse a student from a standardized assessment at the written request of the student's parent or guardian and establishes requirements for school administrative units and the Department of Education related to excusing a student.

### **LD 105 - An Act To Create a Centralized Authority To Combat Opiate Addiction in Maine**

This bill establishes an office within the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate efforts in the State to combat addiction to opiates.

### **LD 107 - An Act To Increase the Effectiveness of Opioid Addiction Therapy**

This bill repeals the 24-month limit on MaineCare coverage or reimbursement for 11 buprenorphine and naloxone combination drugs, also known as Suboxone, for the 12 treatment of addiction to opioids.

### **LD 169 - An Act To Support Sexual Assault Survivors**

This bill enacts protections for alleged victims of gross sexual assault that mirror protections provided in federal law. The bill contains the following provisions. 1. The bill requires a prosecutor or law enforcement agency to provide written information to an alleged victim concerning the right to undergo a forensic examination and the right to receive the results and any report resulting from a forensic examination unless disclosure to the alleged victim could impede or compromise an ongoing investigation or an ongoing prosecution. 2. The bill requires the prosecutor or law enforcement agency that has

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## Public Policy Update *(Continued)*

custody of the results and any report to retain the results and any report without charge until the expiration of the period of the statute of limitations. The bill requires the prosecutor or law enforcement agency, at least 60 days prior to destroying or disposing of the results and report, to provide notice of the intended destruction or disposal to the victim and allows for further retention upon the objection of the victim. The bill provides for routine technical rulemaking by the Chief of the State Police regarding retention and destruction or disposal of the results and any report.



### Service Opportunities are Available!!



Thinking about getting involved? Or "nudging" someone else?



The Maine Counseling Association is looking for members to step up and claim positions of service and leadership in our professional organization for the coming year.



"What would I have to do?" MeCA officers are happy to discuss leadership positions and responsibilities with any who are considering them.



Open positions currently include the **MeCA President-Elect** and **Treasurer**.



Nominations will be accepted up to and including the annual conference. Advance nominations should be forwarded to the Maine Counseling Association Nominating Chair, Stan Pelletier at [stan.pelletier@rsu25.org](mailto:stan.pelletier@rsu25.org).



## Conference News from ACA



The American Counseling Association annual conference is coming right up!

In response to the enactment of discriminatory legislation by the Tennessee state government which directly impacts clients and counselors and is in violation of our professional code of ethics, the governing council of ACA moved our annual conference from Nashville to San Francisco, at substantial cost. The conference will run from March 16–19, 2017.

The pre-conference Learning Institutes are March 15–16. The event takes place at the Moscone West Convention Center, San Francisco, CA.

Registration information is available at the ACA website, [www.counseling.org/conference/sanfrancisco2017](http://www.counseling.org/conference/sanfrancisco2017). Join Tracy and the rest of the Maine delegation!

## Maine Career Development Association News

### *How to make an impact with K - 12 career development in your school*

Do you wonder how to better help your students with career education? Are career standards becoming a higher priority in your school counseling curriculum? Do you spend too much time in crisis management mode instead of preparing your students for their future? Career development is now expected at all levels of education. In today's dynamically evolving work environment it is even more important that students begin thinking about career development as early as possible. As you think about positioning your students for success, keep these three themes in mind:

#### ***1) Successful employees understand their strengths.***

A good first step for students is to work on their self understanding. Through a combination of self reflection, feedback from friends, parents and teachers and tools such as skill, interest and work style inventories, students can gain insights into what they are good at and consequently careers that they are likely to enjoy. This self awareness will direct a productive academic path through school.

#### ***2) Students need to be adaptable and prepared to change jobs.***

Most adults change careers several times, but advanced degrees necessary for career changes are costly. The job market and the nature of the workplace is also changing rapidly. Career education needs to be ubiquitous and honoring all occupations while acknowledging the fluid nature of one's career. Each student should be able to identify career opportunities that lie ahead for them. With respect to multiple intelligences, educators can help students understand their individual strengths and define types of work that play to these strengths.

#### ***3) Students should develop tools to evaluate secondary education choices.***

The reality is that most students will need some type of training after high school. It could be short-term certificates or one or two year degree programs or four years or more of college. There is a great demand in Maine for commercial drivers, line workers and phlebotomists, for example, all requiring varying levels of schooling. Opportunities can be also gained from working for one or two years after high school and employers will often reimburse employees for the tuition for post-secondary education. Educators and counselors can help students recognize all of the educational and training opportunities available.

### **Maine Career Development Association is offering a discussion - based webinar about career education for anyone working in the K-12 field on Wednesday, March 15th, 2017, from**

**8:30am-10:30am.** We will broadcast this to multiple sites across Maine and have a facilitator at each site for discussions. Kristen Garceau, an expert in K-12 career development from the Career Resource Connection, will be our presenter.

**Date:** Wednesday, March 15, 2017

**Location:** Online Webinar, Discussion-Based with Onsite Facilitation at Four Locations

**Title:** Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Choices

**Overview:** Preparing today's students for tomorrow's choices means that learning in the K-12 classroom should be connected to career and college information. This session includes information to help students understand choices for meaningful post-secondary decisions. More information and registration at [www.Maine-CDA.org](http://www.Maine-CDA.org)

**Cost:** Free to MCDA members and \$20 to non-members (includes a free membership).

FAME's annual training will be held on Friday, March 24, 2017 at the Augusta Civic Center from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with registration at 7:30. This FREE, day-long training session will provide the latest financial aid updates, training sessions on our most requested topics, and information on events and activities for 2017.

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## Program Spotlight



MaineCAN is a community of college access professionals dedicated to postsecondary success for all Maine students. Our vision is that every Maine student has the knowledge and resources needed to attain the postsecondary education they desire, helping them contribute to the Maine economy. Our members include nonprofits, high school staff college outreach Programs, funders, and government agencies, all of whom are committed to closing the education attainment gap in Maine. MaineCAN has been leading statewide efforts to help increase student aspirations. These include:

- \* **Aspire Higher Maine:** A free resource to help with Summer Melt, College Application Month, and celebrating the post-secondary decision of each senior. Go to the MaineCAN website at [www.mainecollegeaccess.org](http://www.mainecollegeaccess.org) to sign up to be a participating school.
  - \* **A searchable database of college access organizations and services across the state,** helping to connect college access professionals to services and support for their students.
  - \* **A monthly newsletter to keep you informed of college access news from around the state.** To subscribe go to the web address above.
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Reach Higher Maine is part of the national Reach Higher initiative designed to strengthen the support for school counselors as they help students discover and access career and post-secondary opportunities.

In an effort to provide career and college readiness support to school counselors, Reach Higher Maine will highlight events and programs across Maine that provide professional development opportunities for school counselors as well as best practices and programs that support your efforts

# SUICIDE PREVENTION ASSESSMENT ..... TRAINING .....

## DID YOU KNOW...

There are eight suicides for every homicide in Maine



Suicide is a tragic death that is often preventable. Prevention is up to everyone.

This is a six hour training, co-sponsored by NAMI Maine and MeCA, designed to prepare a new or seasoned therapist to understand the risk of suicide in a variety of populations, how to approach and complete an effective suicide risk assessment and recommended elements of response and management for a suicidal client.

Leading the training is Greg Marley, LCSW, NAMI Maine's *Clinical Director*. Greg has practiced in the field of community mental health and suicide prevention for over 25 years.

## JOIN US!

When: Wednesday, February 15, 2016  
8:30am-3:30pm

Where: NMCC - Edmunds Conference Center, 33 Edgemont Drive, Presque Isle



Questions and Registration:  
Amy, MSPP Coordinator  
[amy@namimaine.org](mailto:amy@namimaine.org)  
(800) 464-5767 x2310

**BE SOCIAL WITH US:**



**EVENT PARTNERS:**



"Maine Counseling Association is an NBCC-approved Continuing Education provider (ACEP) and may offer NBCC-approved clock hours for events that meet NBCC requirements. The ACEP solely is responsible for all aspects of the program."



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A State Branch of the American Counseling Association

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