Counselor Spotlight: Ashley Terry

My name is Ashley Terry. My career as a counselor began 16 years ago and has taken me to various schools in Texas, Florida, and Louisiana. I have had the privilege of serving the students at North DeSoto High School for the past 5 years.

I believe my role as a counselor is to support students' social, emotional, and academic needs, while ensuring every student feels that North DeSoto High School is a safe, loving environment where they can reach their full potential.

My philosophy as a counselor begins with preparing students for life after high school. Regardless of the path that each student takes post graduation, whether it is entering the workforce, vocational training, military, a community college, or a four year university, my job is to guide and support them as they navigate their choices.

Meeting with each student individually to discuss their interests and plans for their future has had an enormous impact on the success of our college and career programs as well as our graduation rate. We have seen an increase in student success every year and I know this trend will continue. We graduated 177 scholars in 2022 and of those, 81% have received either a statewide or advanced credential, and 65% of the graduating class were successful with earning a 3 or higher on an AP exam, a 50 or higher on the CLEP exam, or they took advantage of dual enrollment either at NSU or NLTCC. Twenty-eight
students graduated with the Biomedical STEM diploma endorsement and 4 students were honored as AP scholars with distinction diploma endorsement; this was a first for NDHS. This year we have added several new programs, and we have a group of students whose goal is to be the first group of students at NDHS to graduate with their Associates degree; they refer to their group as “Operation Associates Degree.” This is a huge accomplishment for the students, teachers, the school and the district. The support we receive is nothing short of spectacular.

Informing students, parents, and the community about the options we have available, as well as future program offerings, is something I am passionate about discussing and promoting. Whether you are a student, parent, community member or a stranger in the checkout line at the grocery store I will tell you how amazing our students and staff are and the amazing opportunities we offer. It's so rewarding listening to students explain and discuss pathways, programs and strength of diploma, and encouraging other students. I have found that the more informed they are, the more likely they are to set and achieve their personal goals. These peer discussions don’t just encourage students; they encourage me to seek opportunities that not only benefit them but that excite them as well.

The most amazing part of my job is celebrating students’ and teachers’ success: from LEAP, ACT, Workkeys, AP, and CLEP, to Statewide and Advanced credentials. Seeing the excitement and passion in their eyes confirms that I have the most rewarding job in the world.

Ashley Terry, MA, MS, NCC
School Counselor
North DeSoto High School- DeSoto Parish

Student Opportunities

HBCU Band Combine
Share with school counselors, band directors, and students.

The New Orleans Legacy Association of Bands, Inc. (NOLA-B), is hosting its Third Annual HBCU Band Combine on Saturday, January 21, 2023 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The HBCU Band Combine is designed to give high school seniors and juniors a chance to earn scholarships by auditioning with multiple Historically Black College & University bands in a single day. The objective is to build confidence in our talented musicians by connecting them with the schools they love and wish to join and to prepare students for competitive opportunities to be accepted into diverse institutions.
This event will host workshops, panel discussions and vendor information tables. The workshops and panel discussions will include financial planning hosted by FAFSA representatives, HIV/AIDS education and prevention hosted by a health professional. The event will also offer workshops for the local band directors in the area. Vendors include local businesses and community organizations, members of collegiate fraternal organizations and alumni associations.

For more information, please visit NOLA Legacy Bands or email combine@nolalegacybands.org.

Professional Opportunities

SAVE THE DATE: 2023 Jump Start Convention and CWA Summit

The 2023 Jump Start Convention and CWA Summit will be held Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at the Raising Cane’s River Center in Baton Rouge. Attendees should include CTE supervisors/coordinates, CWA supervisors/personnel, high school administrators and school counselors, Regional Economic Development officers, workforce development officers, and industry leaders.

Registration is currently open, and will close on Wednesday, January 11 or when capacity is reached.

Hotel information is forthcoming.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Financial Aid Planning
Please share with school counselors and those responsible for FAFSA completion.

It is a requirement for graduation for seniors to complete the FAFSA, apply directly in the online TOPS application, or have a waiver on file. In person, online and phone assistance is available for FAFSA completion.

Please contact ldefinancialaid@la.gov with questions.
**Child Welfare and Attendance Monthly Call**
Share with Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) directors, supervisors, and all attendance stakeholders

CWAs are provided with relevant professional development, resources, and tools to support students and families within their systems. As members of the Louisiana Attendance Alliance, CWAs are afforded evidence-based, best-practices to address chronic absence and encourage family engagement during these meetings. This meeting will include a virtual resource fair.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Wednesday, December 7, 2022, 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/98929998429](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/98929998429)
- **Webinar ID:** 989 2999 8429
- **Passcode:** CWALAA
- **Phone Number:** 312-626-6799

Please contact [shelneka.adams@la.gov](mailto:shelneka.adams@la.gov) with questions.

**Alternative Education Leaders**
Share with Alternative Education Supervisors, Site Leaders and all AE stakeholders

A webinar for Alternative Education Supervisors and Site Leaders is held the first Wednesday of each month and focuses on supporting AE sites leaders with the delivery of criteria outlined in Bulletin 131.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Wednesday, December 7, 2022, 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95978637476](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95978637476)
- **Webinar ID:** 959 7863 7476
- **Passcode:** 775578

Please contact [terran.perry@la.gov](mailto:terran.perry@la.gov) with questions.

**Counselor Institute Presentation**
Thank you to all who attended the Fall 2022 Counselor Institute sessions, we truly enjoyed seeing everyone again!

The presentation was emailed to all participants last week. Please feel free to share as you deem appropriate. Dates for the Spring 2023 Counselor Institutes will be shared at a later date.
Middle and High School News

**Act 567**
Share with system leaders, data coordinators, school counselors, and school administrators.

In the 2022 Legislative Session Act 567 was passed which requires the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) to share data with LDOE provided a parental permission has been obtained. The legislation is specific in saying that parents must give permission for this purpose similar to the parental consent flag to share transcript data with LOSFA.

Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, the LDOE will be adding a field in STS to accommodate Act 567.

- New Field Name: "Act 567 Parental Consent Flag"
- Field Type: Y or N

STS will be updated to reflect this change before the scheduled mid December opening.

Please contact angela.jordan@la.gov with questions.

**Trade Secrets Apprenticeship Video**
Share with counselors, CTE coordinators, and administrators.

"CBS Sunday Morning" senior contributor Ted Koppel recently met with plumbers and other trades professionals about their chosen career path. Watch on the "CBS Sunday Morning" YouTube channel to hear these individuals talk about their work and why they feel it's stigmatized by others.
Ask CoCo

Q & A With COunselor COnnect!

Q: Is there a rule or policy that says a School Counselor can not serve as Test Coordinator?  
   - The "Everyone Is Thinking It" Counselor

A: The American School Counselor Association has provided a response to this question. I would suggest during your check-ins with your administration, have a conversation about your role and responsibilities and how you can best serve students, families, and your school.

Do you have any questions and you’re not sure who to ask? CoCo is here to support her fellow counselors! Send all your counseling related (or unrelated) questions to CoCo and she will respond in this section. Questions will be reposted anonymously then answered. Some answers may require research, so they may not always be answered in the order in which they are received. All questions will be acknowledged; here or directly to your inbox!

Please email shelneka.adams@la.gov CoCo’s assistant, all questions. The subject line should read: ASK COCO!
Reminders
Information from past Counselor Connects that you may have missed.

**Community Service Diploma Endorsement**
Share with school counselors and students

Students in high school have the opportunity to earn the Community Service Diploma Endorsement if they earn 80 hours of community service during their high school years. Visit the Diploma Endorsement webpage for more information.

Please contact megan.thompson2@la.gov with questions.

**Financial Aid Support**
Please share with high school counselors and student stakeholders.

Reminder: The 2023-2024 FAFSA for the 2022-2023 high school year opened on October 1, 2022, and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the Louisiana Education Loan Authority (LELA) and the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) are available to lend support.

Please email any or all of these offices to discuss your needs.

- LDOE: ldefinancialaid@la.gov
- LELA: carmichael@lpfa.com
- LOSFA: breanna.paul@la.gov

**LDOE Virtual Therapy through Ochsner for Educators**
Share with Counselors, Administrators, all educators

Ochsner Anywhere Care is a secure virtual visit tool offering appointments with licensed psychologists or therapists through your smartphone, tablet or personal computer—so you can get care where and when you need it! Schedule an appointment with the provider of your choice.

What can we treat? Addiction, Adolescent Counseling, Anxiety and Panic Attacks, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD), Depression and Mood Disorders, Eating Disorders, Grief and Loss Counseling, Insomnia, Marriage and Family Counseling, Postpartum Depression, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Work-related Stress Convenient virtual therapy appointments are available Monday – Friday until 8 p.m., with additional appointment times on Saturdays.
Sign up at ldoe.ochsneranywherecare.com and enter Service Key: LDOE

When the system asks for payment, enter Coupon Code: TEACH

Please email anywherecare@ochsner.org or for 24/7 technical support, call 855-667-9711.

Please contact rachel.bunch@la.gov with questions.

Office of Career and College Readiness Contact Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov">highschoolacademics@la.gov</a></td>
<td>General questions about the office and about graduation requirements</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ldedefinancialaid@la.gov">ldedefinancialaid@la.gov</a></td>
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<td>Questions related to well-being and healthy communities.</td>
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