


HCA NEWSLETTER

Houston Counseling Association

Notes from the President's Desk

This has been an eventful year to say the least! Hurricane Ike may have knocked us down, but we counselors are back on the job, making a positive difference in our world. We have too much to do to let Old Ike keep us down.

Houston Counseling Association is the host chapter for the Texas Counseling Association 52nd Annual Professional Growth Conference. This event will be held on November 5-8 at the Westin Galleria Hotel, Westin Oaks Hotel and the J.W. Marriott Hotel in the Galleria. Of course you will want to come out and be a part of this wonderful event. Besides the opportunity to learn and grow by attending the many informative programs, you will certainly want to volunteer to facilitate a session or serve on one of the many com-

mittees. You may contact Sharon Takahashi at cougar77449@yahoo.com for more volunteer information.

This year, 2008-2009 is also a legislative year, and counselors are needed to attend Lobby Day in Austin and bring our issues to the attention of the legislators. We must speak up for ourselves and be proactive concerning our profession.

Finally, I hope that you will attend some of the many exciting programs that Houston Counseling Association has planned for this year. Check the Calendar of Events and come out and be a part of a great organization.



LAUREN ASKEW
President
Houston Counseling
Association
2008-2009

Volume 1, Issue 1
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Special points of interest:

- *Notes from the President*
- *Legislative Updates*
- *Awards Information*
- *Calendar of Events*

Officers for 2008-2009

Lauren Askew
President

Becky Hayes
President Elect

Virginia Hayward
Treasurer

Gerry Aitken
Secretary

Denah Duren
Secretary Elect

Susan Putman
TCA Senator

Gail Rosenthal
Past President

Legislative Updates

By Robin Exum

Each year the Houston Counseling Association participates in the Texas Counseling Associations Lobby Day at the State Capitol in Austin. Here we get to speak to our State Representatives and Congress in support of issues which affect the recognition of and respect for Coun-

seling Professionals. This is our chance to let our voices be heard on the Policies, Senate Bills and Parity Legislation that affect Rehabilitation, School Counseling and Professional Counseling.

Our first Lobby Day is planned for February 17, 2009 and then

again on March 25, 2009 then concluding on May 5, 2009. Counselors will have these three days at our Texas State Capitol to advocate for the current issues affecting our profession and make our voices heard in order to move our profession forward.

Legislative Updates (continued)

Current Legislative issues include:

➤ **Medicare Coverage of Licensed Professional Counselors.**

Despite being recognized by Private Sector Health Plans, Licensed Professional Counselors have yet to be recognized under Medicare.

➤ **Parity of Insurance Coverage for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment.**

House and State negotiators have reportedly reached an agreement on a final version of Legislation (H. R. 1424, S 558) to require most Private Sector Health Plans to provide parity of insurance coverage for Mental and Addictive Disorder Services.

➤ **Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program (ESSCP) and FY 2009 Federal Education Funding.**

On June 26th, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a draft spending bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (Labor-HHS-ED) that would boost funding for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This story can fit 75-125 words.

Selecting pictures or graphics is an important part of adding content to your newsletter.

Think about your article and ask yourself if the picture supports or enhances the message

you're trying to convey. Avoid selecting images that appear to be out of context.

Microsoft Publisher includes thousands of clip art images from which you can choose and import into your newsletter. There are also several tools you can use to draw shapes and symbols.

Once you have chosen an image, place it close to the article. Be sure to place the caption of the image near the image.

On July 30th, Representatives Edolphus “Ed” Towns (D-NY), Linda T. Sanchez (D-CA), and Senators Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), Hillary Clinton (D-NY), and Thad Cochran (R-MS) introduced a bipartisan bill to increase the number of school counselors in qualified low income schools.

➤ **Legislation was Introduced to Increase Counselors in Low Income Schools.**

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Other Legislative actions include:

➤ **A New Bill to Improve Mental Health Services on College Campuses.**

➤ **Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).**

➤ **Access to Counseling in Department of Defense’s TRI-**

*“ To make a dream come true, the first requirement is a great capacity to dream; the second is persistence.”
Cesar Chavez*

Awards Information

By Robin Exum

It is, it is said, easy to sit up and take notice. What is difficult is standing up and taking action. Each year the Houston Counseling Association (HCA) celebrates the enthusiasm, commitment and sheer hard work of the Associations members by honoring them with awards. These are the members of Professional Counselors who worked late into the evening and early in the morning to find solutions and wouldn't take "NO" for an answer. These are Professional Counselors who did not

just perform the duties expected of them, but performed their tasks in exemplary fashion over a specific period of time, contributing greatly to the success of the Houston Counseling Association and attainment of our goals.

Some of the Awards presented each year are:

HCA Professional Service Award
HCA Laverne Carmical Memorial Award
HCA Outstanding Counselor of the Year Award
HCA Humanitarian and Caring Award
HCA Research Award
HCA Professional Writing Awards
Molly Gerold Human Rights Award

Awards Information (continued)

By Robin Exum

In addition, scholarships are awarded to outstanding students pursuing academically the qualifications necessary for the counseling profession.

The recipients of these awards are the members who not only "Stood Up", but "took action" and advanced the professional counseling field not only in Houston, but all across the state of Texas. They have also had the example of many other HCA members through the years who have worked in their professional fields and who have given them enlightenment and inspiration.

HCA Award Recipients

2007-2008

Outstanding Counselor Award—Susan Putman

Laverne Carmical Award—Irma Billette

Professional Service Award—Betty Porter

HCA Events Calendar

October 21	<p>Program – "Eat, Pray Love" With a Counselor's Twist</p> <p>Presenter-Lucia Bettler – (1.5 hr. LPC Credit)</p> <p>Lucia's Garden-2216 Portsmouth, Houston, 77098</p> <p>Delicious plate of pasta included. 5:30-7:30 p.m.</p>
November 5-8	TCA Conference – Westin Galleria – All Hands on Deck!
December 4	<p>Winter Banquet-Silent Auction-Fund Raising</p> <p>Location to be determined</p>
January 21	<p>Board Meeting-Program Planning</p> <p>Becky Hayes' home, 2523 Swift, Houston, TX 77030</p> <p>5:30-7:30 p.m.</p>
February 3	<p>Program-Houston Area Women's Center-</p> <p>"The Nature of Assault" (LPC Credit)-TBA</p>
February 14-15	Secondary School Counselors' Conference - Austin
February 17	TCA Lobby Day – Austin Capitol
March 25	TCA Lobby Day – Austin Capitol
April 7	Program-Ethics-Houston Baptist University-TBA
April 23	<p>Board Meeting-Banquet Planning</p> <p>Gail Rosenthal's home, 2611 Cason, Houston, 77005</p> <p>5:30-7:30 p.m.</p>
May 3-5	Elementary School Counselors' Conference - Austin
May 5	TCA Lobby Day – Austin Capitol
May 7	<p>Awards Banquet – Installation of Officers</p> <p>Location to be determined</p>

YOU'RE A SPECIAL COUNSELOR...

YOU ARE A GIFT OF LOVE

Author Unknown

You're a special gift of kindness

Reaching to the heart.

You're the reigning master

Of a warm and loving art.

You're the extra bonus,

From you compassion gets its meaning

You're a caring force

So good at thoughtful intervening.

You're always here and there

To lend a helping hand;

Giving life that extra touch

That only a counselor can.

You have mastered parenting,

The secret of concern.

You deserve the ultimate

Respect that you can earn.

Every life you touch

Accepts with love your fond attention,

Magic such as yours

Gives life a rare and new dimension.

You're a Special Counselor....

You are a Gift of Love