

President Elect:

Lisa Fontaine, Curtis Corner MS

I have been in education 20+ years. I am currently the Middle School Counselor at Curtis Corner Middle School in South Kingstown, serving in this capacity since June, 2017. I have been a special education teacher for 16 years in South Kingstown after transferring from Narragansett High School.

As a fairly new school counselor, I am looking forward to becoming involved in this organization at its foundation. Serving in the role of President Elect for RISCA will allow me the opportunity to learn first hand how our professional community can provide support to counselors working with our students in Rhode Island.

I would like to see RISCA support school counselors by helping to bring information to our educational leaders about the role of school counselors, and to help facilitate building collaborative working relationships between principal and school counselors. I am hoping to have the opportunity to review curricula on mental health needs at elementary and middle level, as well as high school level. I would like to learn more about how data collection analysis can help create innovative programs in our K-12 schools. As noted in the ASCA standards, our school counselors need to be equipped to establish, maintain and enhance a comprehensive school counseling program addressing academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development. I envision RI school counselors taking the lead to meet the rigorous demands of our school counseling profession!

In addition, I look forward to the opportunity to network with other counseling professionals across the state. I truly believe it takes a village!

Board Members At-Large:

Joseph Batiano, Rhode Island School for the Deaf

I have worked in a wide range of roles with students ranging from an inpatient treatment facility as a licensed mental health counselor, to an academic advisor/counselor in a college setting to now as a school counselor for the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. I currently hold the following certifications/licensure: National Certified Counselor from NBCC, Licensed Mental Health Counselor and School Counselor Certification from the state of Rhode Island. I've been a school counselor for K-12 students for the Rhode Island School for the Deaf since 2012.

I have been a member of RISCA since 2014. I have learned so much from the current officers, conferences, articles from RISCA as well as through my role as the 2018-2019 School Counselor of the Year. Because of this award, I envision my role to give back to our profession. Through giving back, The Rhody Show did a segment about the National School Counseling Week, ABC 6 did a segment about the award plus the importance of school counselors, the Providence Journal did a front page article about the award as well as why school counselors are critical to students' successes in all areas of their lives. Other advocacy work that I was involved with also included a meeting with the RI Department of Education Commissioner Ken Wagner during the

National School Counseling Week, a meeting with the Governor's Office regarding Governor Raimondo's push for more mental health services in schools. I also was able to ask the State House to recognize the National School Counseling Week. As a result of that experience, I see areas where I would like to contribute to through advocacy for to meet the ASCA's recommended ratio of 250:1 as well as to mandate elementary school counselors through collaboration efforts with the state as well as partnering up with other organizations to reach this. I also want to bring much needed attention to people with disabilities through our organization locally and nationally.

I would like to see RISCA continue to support school counselors in all settings including its shortcomings and how we can improve/expand on that. I hope through this role that we can continue to be active listeners by listening to what members need from the organization. To be visible locally and nationally. I would like to see increased effort to push for the ratio of 250:1 to be achieved, to increase numbers of elementary school counselors in our school systems, to partner with other state associations/organizations, and more importantly to ensure our school counselors continue to be proud members of a fine association.

Barbara DiSaia, Admissions Representative, Johnson & Wales University

I have been with Johnson & Wales University Admissions for 28 years and have worked with RI school counselors for the past 20 years. I am currently an active member of RISCA and have served on the board since 2012.

I would like to continue to serve on the RISCA Board and support RI school counselors with the planning of the fall and spring conferences along with any other initiatives throughout the school year. I will also provide the link for high school and post-secondary guidance.

I would like to see RISCA support school counselors by providing opportunities for workshops, professional development and networking along with increasing communication within our organization. RISCA is a resource for counselors with the main goal of helping students succeed and making a difference in student lives. I would like to see RISCA continue to support this mission and would be honored to be a part of the Governing Board.

Kristi Lombardo, The Hope Academy

I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Human Relations from St. Joseph's College and my Master's Degree in School Counseling from Long Island University, CW Post. I have completed my Post-Master's Certificate in Advanced School Counseling at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. By also obtaining my National Counselor Certification (NCC) , Certified Clinical Trauma Professional (CCTP) certification and my Professional Counseling Licensure (LMHC) it is a continuing source of pride and career enhancement.

My professional responsibilities have included teaching classroom lessons, conducting small groups as well as providing individual and family therapy. I have piloted career related and school-wide violence prevention activities. I am an advocate for my students

and my profession by following the comprehensive approach to program foundation, delivery, management and accountability. I believe in helping meet the academic, career and social-emotional needs of every student. Professionally, I ensure success through partnerships with students, staff, families, and the community. Through a collaborative approach I have also provided proactive leadership that engages the students to become enriched and successful members of society.

I have had the opportunity to work with families from various cultural backgrounds through my internships, volunteer work and as a professional counselor. I have extensive experience with families from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, students with disabilities, and students that are considered "at-risk". All of my efforts are an integral part to the total educational process. Prior to moving to Rhode Island I participated in grassroots efforts to support the ASCA National Model in North Carolina with elementary, middle and high school counselors in my District. I have also gained invaluable experience as a Partial Hospital Clinician and Substance Abuse Counselor.

I am currently a School Counselor at The Hope Academy in Providence since December 2016. We serve as a local and national replicable model of inclusive education. The Hope Academy is committed to an educational model focusing on the academic and social success of each individual, preparing students to meet the challenges of secondary education and to become lifelong learners. I also enjoy working part-time as a private practice therapist in Barrington.

This is the perfect time in my career, both personally and professionally that I can see growth and change. I am relatively new to the area and would like a chance to have a successful and positive impact on my home state like I had while living and working in North Carolina. Advocating for our profession is essential so that we may implement our comprehensive programs as they were designed. The opportunity to make an impact on each student in Rhode Island is my current passion and mission.

As one of the few and fortunate Elementary School Counselors in Rhode Island, it is imperative to collaborate our efforts for a united voice and vision. In doing so, RISCA can provide the opportunity for all students K-12 to benefit from the development of social-emotional skills, achieve academic success and expand their understanding of career opportunities for the future.

It is also important for students, families, community members and stakeholders to understand who we are as professional School Counselors. We impact the lives of every student, every day. RISCA's support will enhance leadership, advocacy and collaboration so that professional school counselors can promote equity and access through a variety of opportunities and rigorous educational experiences for all students. RISCA will highlight how professional School Counselors support a safe learning environment and work to safeguard the human rights of all members of the school community. I find myself in teachable moments almost daily when it comes to our job description and why we are so important. My hope is to be a part of RISCA's support team to improve the lives of all who call Rhode Island home.

These attributes are just a small glimpse of who I am as a Professional and as an individual. I am confident that with my experience and positive character traits I would be a valuable addition to the RISCA Governing Board. Thank you very much for your consideration and I look forward to working with all of you in the future.

Casie Staruk, Ocean Tides

Background: Associates Degree in Special Education. Undergraduate degree from The University of Rhode Island; Human Development and Family Studies. Master's degree from Providence College; Master of Ed in School Counseling. Interned at Classical high school for a year. Present date I work at Ocean Tides School in Narragansett as their School Counselor for the past 3 years. Have been a RISCA At Large Board Member for the past 2 years.

Other info: Certified in Youth Mental Health and first Aid from Bradley Hospital.

Fun fact. Have ridden horses for the past 19 years and recently brought a Therapeutic Riding Program to the school in which I work to help support our students psychological and emotional needs. We work with the Horses Bring Hope program.

I wish to continue to be a part of the RISCA board because I see how valuable our work is and I hope to be able to continue to provide up to date information to our fellow colleagues within the state of Rhode Island. I share a desire along with fellow counselors on the RISCA board to help advocate for all students, as well as advocating for our roles as school counselors within our state. I enjoy being a part of the board because I am surrounded by amazing woman who share great ideas on ways to make the role of the school counselor an important one in all schools. I also love how we are so supportive of one another!

I would love to see RISCA continue to advocate for and push school counselor positions at all levels to our state officials especially for elementary school counselors.

***The other candidates did not supply information**