J. Barry Mascari was a visionary leader in the field of counseling. He advocated for counselors to be trauma centered, not trauma informed, and used a humanistic approach to connect himself to his clients and students. As a professor at Kean University, Barry became a strong advocate for school counseling and related professions. He co-authored the first ever counseling evaluation model for school counselors, and “reinvented'' school counseling programs comprehensively both at home in New Jersey and around the country. Additionally, Barry implemented a model Student Assistance Counseling program in New Jersey Schools. Barry and his wife co-authored *Disaster Mental Health Counseling: A Counselor’s Guide to Preparing and Responding*, and mastered the art of mediation and family dynamics. His loved ones described Barry as enthusiastic, passionate, and humorous, and believed that he could change the world by being present and helping only one person at a time.

Barry was a model of professionalism, kindness, and presence. Today, in Barry’s memory, we honor a new cohort of exceptional school counselors. These young professionals carry forward the same courage and open-heartedness that Barry demonstrated regularly throughout his career. Without further ado, here are the recipients of the Barry Mascari Memorial Award for Outstanding School Counseling Interns.

Nominated by Dr. Kristina Donovan of Georgian Court University, and Ms. Sara Bateman of Toms River Regional School District, our first award recipient is Michelle “Shelby” Nagle. Dr. Donovan calls Shelby a true mental health advocate. Please allow me to share Shelby’s Philosophy:

“As a future school counselor, I believe in the effects that unconditional positive regard has on building rapport with your students. I have, and always will have, a deep appreciation for school counselors that are able to express genuine empathy, understanding and acceptance of every student. This leads to positive relationships and allows students to see that their counselor accepts them for exactly who they are and students understand that their counselor wants to help them reach their academic, social, and emotional goals. With my practicum experience, it has been clear to see that school counselors have a tendency to naturally be integrative with their practices and do so in order to meet the needs of every individual student and to help them succeed. I am confident that certain techniques such as motivational interviewing and solution-focused counseling work well with my style as a counselor and allow me to meet the students where they are at. As I grow in my career, I am eager to learn more techniques that will help me meet the needs of my students and I’m looking forward to contributing to the school community!”

According to her site supervisor, “She treats each student as an individual deserving of fairness and respect and demonstrates uncommon compassion when helping them deal with their issues.” Congratulations, Shelby.

Nominated by Dr. Kristina Weiss of Rowan University, and Mr. William Shane McNichol from Delsea Regional High School District, our second recipient is Raymond Philipp. Dr. Weiss says “In his current internship class, Ray consistently proves himself as a leader. He often provides support to his fellow classmates through offering resources to aiding them in developing lessons for their sites. Ray is often the first to volunteer to participate in group activities or offer his opinion. During our class discussions, Ray is consistently challenging systemic norms and helping to identify ways our schools can better support our marginalized populations. Ray’s level of critical thinking and advocacy is beyond what we may expect from a school counseling intern.” Using passion, innovation, and his presence, Ray did a lot of great work at Delsea Middle School. Here’s one of many programs that Ray implemented:

“I was involved with the creation and implementation of our Culturally Responsive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (CRPBIS) program, #DelseaHasHEART. The middle school recently got a grant to help with the implementation of the program to improve the overall school climate. I have created many different videos, pictures, lessons, and announcements using a variety of platforms to do stakeholder outreach as well as make the CRPBIS program fun and engaging for students. All of my videos that I created were posted on YouTube, the middle school Facebook page, and were shared with all of the students, their families, and the staff. In addition, I have been able to participate on the school climate team and receive professional development focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provided by Rowan University.”

According to Mr. McNichol, Ray’s greatest strength is his ability to bridge the gap between all stakeholders, and be present with the group. Congratulations, Ray!

Finally, nominated by Dr. Leslie Kooyman at Montclair State University, as an intern for Ms. Yesenia Rivera-Carney from Morris Hills Regional School District, we honor Selena Rokeach Brown. Selena shared her philosophy as follows:

“As a school counselor in-training and future school counselor, I seek to create an inclusive environment that is welcoming and meets the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and abilities. It is empowering to know that school counselors can help build equity. Additionally, I work with students so that they can feel empowered to use their strengths to find personal success and overcome obstacles. Being a culturally competent and empathetic counselor is important to me, as I try to understand one’s worldview and values.”

Ms. Rivera-Carney says, “Mrs. Rokeach-Brown has demonstrated excellent leadership skills and is an outstanding staff developer who has earned the respect and admiration of staff, students and parents.” Aside from her numerous classroom contributions, Dr. Kooyman shares, “Selena, is a warm, caring, passionate, personable professional who takes initiative well and works well with others. She also has a demonstrated commitment to social justice initiatives and marginalized populations. She is an active member in our CSI Chapter and serves as a CSI mentor to a first-year graduate student and serves on our CSI Social Justice Advocacy Committee. She co-chaired our community giving project and helped in the donation of personal care items to a local pantry for those in need.” Remembering Barry, Selena recalls “Although I didn’t have the opportunity to personally meet Dr. Mascari, I had attended his workshop that he co-led with Dr. Webber on counselor self-care at the 2019 NJSCA annual spring conference at Kean University. His enthusiasm and passion was evident! I know that the community feels deep loss and I am honored to be considered for a possible award in his name. I hope that his memory will be a source of inspiration to his loved ones and for this profession.” Congratulations, Selena!

Congratulations to all three award recipients! Our recipients will be published on the NJSCA website as model school counseling graduates. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors.