

Letter from the new Executive Director

Dear Members,

I am elated to accept the position of Executive Director for the Mississippi Counseling Association. I have spent over forty years working as counselor in a combination of school counseling and as a licensed professional counselor. I received my undergraduate degree from Ole Miss, my Masters and Education Specialist degrees from Mississippi College in Counseling and Psychology. I am a National Board Certified Counselor, a National Board Certified School Counselor, and a Licensed Professional Counselor by the Mississippi State Board of Licensed Professional Counselors.



In my time as a member of MCA, I have served as the President of MCA twice, Government Relations Co-Chair & Chair, Chair of Strategic Planning, and President of the Mississippi School Counselor Association and while this is not all encompassing, I also served as Co-Chair of past conferences, as a member on the Government Relations, Strategic Planning, and current serve on the Ethics committee.

During my time as a counselor I have won the following awards: Mississippi State University Shilling Counselor of the Year, Distinguished Alumna of the Year for Psychology /Counseling at Mississippi College, Mississippi Counseling Association School Counselor of the Year, Mississippi School Counselor Association Counselor of the Year, American Counseling Association Carl D. Perkins Award, Excellence in Education Award, Northwest Rankin Academic Foundation Excellence in Education Award, and the American Counseling Association Southern Region Leadership Award.

During my tenure as a member of MCA, I, along with another counselor, initiated the legislation that led to the passage of a \$6,000 supplement for counselors who are National Board School Certified in Mississippi (this was the first state to have a supplement for the certification). I also helped to initiate the original legislation in Mississippi to define the role of a school counselor including the requirement of a minimum of a master's degree in counseling. Additionally, I worked with the Government Relations committee, the MLP-CA division of the MCA, the lobbyist for MCA, members of the Mississippi Legislature, and contacts at the Mississippi Medicaid office to have Licensed Professional Counselors in Mississippi to serve as providers for Medicaid to children under eighteen.

I hope that in reading just some of the experiences I have with this organization that I have loved over the years, that you will see I am well equipped to serve in this role, and I am eager to continue learning. I look forward to working with each you in the near future.

Jayme Sullivan

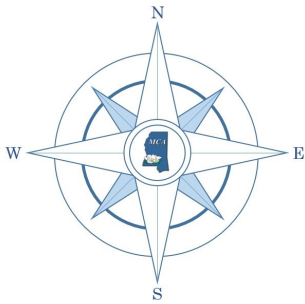
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Calling for 2024-2025 Nominations for MCA Emerging Leaders!

Interested in becoming a MCA
Emerging Leader?

Email President-elect Steven Stafford
(stevenstafford@gmail.com) for details.



Message from outgoing Executive Directors

Membership in a professional organization such as MCA is an integral part of a person's professional identity. As counselors, we all know the importance of collegiality in working with clients and having professionals that we trust to help us do our jobs and do them well. MCA provides many opportunities for professional counselors to connect especially through the Regions and Divisions. Although it appears that School Counselors and Licensed Professional Counselors come from opposite ends of the same pole, MCA provides a common place where both School Counselors and Licensed Professional Counselors can work together to help others.

It seems that in today's world, not enough importance is placed on the value of experience. Some MCA members have many years of experience in both the School Counseling and Licensed Professional Counseling realms, or they may have extensive experience in just one area. What a fantastic resource for all members! Mr. Stafford's theme for this year's conference is Counselors Helping Counselors - that's exactly what MCA is all about. Be encouraged to reach out to other MCA members and seek collegiality. We are all helpers - it's what we do!

Membership in MCA provides opportunities for continuing education. A yearly conference is held in November each year and is well attended. Not only are participants awarded CEUs/CEs/Contact hours, but the ability to network with other counselors in the state is a huge plus. Each region and division is encouraged to hold workshops, limited to MCA members only, throughout the year for members to obtain CEUs/CEs/Contact hours. Before COVID most of these workshops were only available to those who lived in or around the region holding the workshop. Through the use of Zoom, more common after COVID, we have been able to offer regional

workshops across the state, and as a result, reach more MCA members. This is also true for MCA divisions. MLP-CA, MASERVIC, and MSCA have all conducted very successful workshops this year, mostly via Zoom.

In addition to credit-bearing workshops/conferences, MCA provides opportunities to express your inner leader. Each region and division offers leadership options including President, Secretary, and Treasurer. One of the best programs offered by MCA is the Emerging Leaders program. This program allows selected individuals the opportunity to work with current MCA leaders and learn from the best. It serves as a training ground for Region, Division, and/or MCA future leaders.

MCA also offers a student membership rate and a student division. MCA student members volunteer at the yearly conference and work to help attendees have the best experience possible.

The question is: Why wouldn't you want to be a member of MCA? Join today!

It has been our great pleasure and honor to serve the membership of MCA for the past two years. The work done on behalf of the MCA membership is as fulfilling as any that we have experienced in our professional careers. We will not soon forget the many friends we have made during our time as the Executive Directors. So it is with very glad tidings that we introduce to you the new Executive Director for MCA: Jayme Sullivan. We know that Jayme will do an excellent job and wish her only the best in her time as MCA Executive Director.



Paulette Edwards



Lori Parker



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Leaders Voices

President of the Mississippi Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors

by Jessica Reed, LPC-S, BC-TMH

Hello everyone!

I hope your summer transition has been pleasant. My name is Jessica Reed, I am the owner and founder of Reed Counseling and Consulting in Desoto County. I was recently elected president of the Mississippi Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (MACES) division during the 2023 Emerging Leaders training. My reflections as President include the role of self-awareness in leadership. I once read a quote that said, "Some say you can't lead other people until you can lead yourself." I have increased my self-care and professional feedback to ensure voices are heard and our communities feel aligned. Some questions that keep me on track are, "What Self-care practice that I use regularly? What gets in my way of practicing Self-care?"

I am so thankful to be connected with dedicated board members who volunteer their time and experience to reestablish this division for our MCA community. Since my acceptance, we have created community which began with one table at our MCA conference and established a dedicated board that includes a vice-president, secretary and treasurer. We have a current vacancy for the position of Advocacy Liaison, a member to advocate for our members and our division throughout MCA and counseling profession. Please visit our division tab on our MCA website to learn more about us and our mission. On our division tab, you will also notice an updated MACES division tab to include Mississippi Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors Verification link. We are fostering efforts to better streamline the process of identifying resources for therapists of all levels, and an internal active supervisor list, so those a part of our division can have access to supervisors and mentors.

To date, we have almost 50 active members! Our division has facilitated 2 member meetings with our next meeting scheduled for August and we are excited to present our first networking and consultations meeting! Our first "Consults, Conversations and Networking" meeting will be held virtually on **June 27, at 6pm** This is a monthly meeting that allows opportunities for consultation and networking. Our board is busy collaborating and brainstorming ways to support our members and amplifying their voices within the counseling network. The overall mission of MACES, is to offer a supportive place where interns, educators, counselors and supervisors can come together to consult cases, grow together, and build strong referrals networks. In the future, we are working to offer supervision CEUS and partner with other MCA divisions. Our initial eagerness is to support one intern and supervisor directly towards their counseling goals and improvement each year. Together, I believe we can promote the growth of the counseling profession. Stay connected with us to stay up to date on upcoming professional and personal development workshops. Please contact us at if you're interested in being presenter or member at macesofmca@gmail.com We would love to have you!



Mississippi Legislative Session Recap

Pete Smith, Capitol Resources

Mississippi lawmakers adjourned a 124-day regular Legislative Session, rewriting a quarter-century old school funding formula and declining to expand Medicaid coverage despite intensive negotiations over several months. Lawmakers also began to address a potential shortfall in the state’s retirement system.

This session, which began Jan. 2, 2024, took nearly every day of the initially allotted 125 days, and in fact was extended on paper until May 14. The session began with a bang, with Gov. Tate Reeves’s inauguration to a second term and then his announcement (and lawmakers’ approval of) incentive packages to lure two major industrial recruits: a \$2 billion truck-battery manufacturer to Marshall County near Memphis; and a major \$10 billion Amazon datacenter in Madison County, just north of Jackson.

Newly elected House Speaker Jason White combined his Republican majority and Democratic support to rewrite a 25-year-old school funding formula – once a volatile hot-button issue. Speaker White also pushed for full Medicaid expansion. Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, who entered his second four-year term as presiding officer of the state Senate, coalesced his diverse chamber on both issues – Medicaid and School Funding – adding an objective funding calculation to the education bill that passed and insisting on the work requirement on Medicaid bill, that didn’t pass.

Education

MS Lawmakers rewrote the state’s funding formula “Mississippi Student Funding Formula” that divides state dollars among the local school districts. Lawmakers for more than 25 years have used the MS Adequate Education Program (MAEP) formula to distribute funds to schools. That act first broached the concept of providing extra support to school districts that could not rely on a local tax base – rural, impoverished areas, for example. The new formula in [HB 4130](#), takes that concept further and adds additional weights for students who need additional help, such as disabled children, English language learners as well as funding for high concentrations of poverty or for those districts with higher fixed costs due to their rural nature. Lawmakers also added an additional \$238 million to the program. Here is some [media coverage](#) on the issue. [HB 1823](#) is the appropriations bill for K12 funding.

Counseling

A bill to note is [SB 2159](#) which revised the requirements for a marriage and family therapy license to provide that the applicant’s degree may be from an institution accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and to reduce certain hour requirements.

Retirement

Lawmakers expressed frustration with the state’s retirement system leadership, but efforts to reshape the governing board failed early in the Session. Lawmakers ultimately adopted [SB 3231](#) that phases in over four years a recommended 2% increase in employer (state government) contributions; it also requires outside actuaries to review future recommendations of the Board of the Public Employees Retirement System.

Budget

Lawmakers approved a \$7 billion (not counting federal dollars) general fund budget, an increase of about 5.4% percent. Much of that increase came in \$238 million added to the state’s new public school funding formula.





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Presidential Reflections Karla Weir, MCA President 2023-2024

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As I reflect on my year as MCA President, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and the support that I received. There is so much that happens behind the scenes to keep this organization running. The Executive Directors, Administrative Council, and Strategic Planning Committee have spent countless hours with leadership tasks. The region, division, interest groups and committee chairs have all been busy working towards growing and maintaining MCA. There was an amazing class of Emerging Leaders this year that have stepped up to serve. Many of the 2023 class of Emerging Leaders are currently serving as region officers or committee members. I look forward to seeing them all grow professionally and in leadership. I am proud to have served alongside this dedicated group of individuals.

I started my year of service with the Institute of Leadership in Bay St. Louis, MS, where we had our annual leadership training. Participants had the opportunity to earn .5 CEUs or 5 contact hours. Professional development and networking opportunities continued in November with the MCA Annual Conference in Biloxi, MS. Thanks to our amazing Conference Co-Chairs and committee, the conference was well attended with positive feedback on the great presenters. We had an awesome group of volunteers at the conference that helped tremendously as well. Two of the winners from the NCDA Poetry and Art Contest, that was judged at the conference, went on to place at the national level. I am so proud of the students and the Poetry and Poster Contest Chair that made this all possible. I was also pleased that we had legislative attendance at the annual conference to support our efforts for counseling advocacy. In January, our leadership team also participated in MCA Day at the Capitol. I am thankful for all that participated in these events. As we move to the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2024, it brings change. Our current Executive Directors, Lori Parker, and Paulette Edwards are resigning to explore new endeavors. We are thankful for their service and wish them well. Beginning July 1, 2024, we welcome our new Executive Director, Jayme Sullivan. Jayme brings with her many years of experience with counseling and MCA leadership.

THE COMPASS

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PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS
TO
MPANNEL@DELTASTATE.EDU

Calendar at-a-Glance

MACES virtual networking	June 27th
MCA ILT in Jackson, MS	July 19-21st
MCA Conference in Biloxi, MS	Nov. 6-8th

As my year as president nears closing, I believe that we have made great strides in implementing and educating others on the policies and procedures. I see improved communication and cohesiveness among leadership. MCA has been proactive and intentional in providing the best service for our members. We have focused on growing our membership through providing an experience that positive and beneficial to professional development. I look forward to continuing to serve as Past-President. Thanks again for all the participation and support.

Karla Weir, Ph.D., LPC-S, NCC, NCSC