

## **Roberto Clemente Middle School Counselors Celebrate During National School Counseling Week, Feb. 2–6, 2009**

National School Counseling Week, sponsored by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), will be celebrated from Feb. 2-6, 2009, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of professional school counselors within U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week highlights the tremendous impact that counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

The special week honoring school counselors provides recognition for school counselors who "implement comprehensive school counseling programs, a vital part of the educational process for all students as they meet the challenges of the 21st century," according to Dr. Shawn Joseph, principal of Roberto Clemente Middle School.

In a proclamation, Dr. Shawn Joseph, cited school counselors for being actively engaged in helping students examine their abilities, strengths, interests and talents; for working in a partnership with parents as they encounter the challenges of raising children in today's world; for focusing on positive ways to enhance students' social/personal, educational and career development; and working with teachers and other educators to provide an educational system where students can realize their potential and set healthy, realistic and optimistic aspirations for themselves. Professional school counselors are certified, experienced educators with a master's degree in guidance and counseling. The combination of their training and experience makes them an integral part of the total educational program.

"Every day, school counselors work with school counseling programs that address the personal/social, academic and career needs of all students," said Jim Bierma, ASCA 2009–2010 president. "Their ultimate goal is to enable all students to achieve success in school and to become responsible and productive members of our society."

More than 24,000 school counselors nationwide will be participating in the week's festivities. Many school counselors will be hosting

special events and activities to call attention to the myriad benefits of a comprehensive school counseling program.

Roberto Clemente Middle School proudly salutes its 6 counselors: Ms. Karen M. Joseph-Resource Counselor (Dept. Director), Ms. Linda Ramos-8<sup>th</sup> grade, Ms. Stacy Dobres-7<sup>th</sup> grade, Ms. Ellen Berman-6<sup>th</sup> grade, Ms. Susie Ikpemgbe-Kaigler-Center for the Highly Gifted and Ms. Melissa Nagy-Center for the Highly Gifted. Ms. Nancy Britton, Counseling Dept. Secretary, is an active and essential part of the department. As part of its celebration for National School Counseling Week, Roberto Clemente Middle School will highlight the role and importance of counselors.

Any parent or other community member with specific questions or concerns about school counseling programs should contact the individual counselor at his/her school. More general information can also be found on ASCA's Web site, [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org) Clemente's counselors invite you to visit their website for helpful information at [http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/clementems/academics\\_counseling.shtml](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/clementems/academics_counseling.shtml)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a worldwide nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Va. Founded in 1952, ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they not only achieve success in school but are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. The association provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to more professional school counselors around the globe.