



Quesuan Wigfall

Job title: School Counselor

Employer: Manassas City Public Schools

VDOE Region: 4

Years of professional (K-12) experience: 11

Brief Biography:

I was fortunate to earn an athletic scholarship to Virginia Military Institute in 1996. I had dreams of playing in the NFL and one day working with young people. The NFL did not materialize, so I went back to school to earn my Master's degree from Cambridge College. I followed that by earning a Education Specialist degree in Counseling from Old Dominion University. Professionally, I have served as a High School Special Education Teacher early in my career. This is currently my eleventh-year as a School Counselor. I have worked at three large universities that include the University of Maryland-College Park, University of California-Berkeley. I am also an Adjunct Professor with Vanderbilt University.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

My leadership experience dates back to being a captain on my junior varsity football team. I continued to lead throughout high school and college and earned a minor in Leadership Studies from VMI. I have led both adults and students as a high school, assistant head coach; I have been an Equity Lead and serve as Co-Lead for our Collaborative Learning Team at my current high school. I advocate for marginalized groups by first, showing support and being a voice. Speaking with stakeholders and attacking current issues with solutions in mind. Also, understanding that solutions are not always immediate.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

My goals as a VSCA Board of Director are the following: 1)Ensure counselors voices are heard locally, regionally, and at the state level, 2)To collaborate, encourage, and facilitate, that best practices are occurring and school districts are following state mandated guidelines, 3)Actively listen to School Counselors needs, wants, and paths for growth, and 4)Communicate clearly and have fun!



Kelsey Travers

Job title: Lead School Counselor

Employer: New Kent Middle School - New Kent County Public Schools

VDOE Region: 1 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 3

Brief Biography:

I am a 2013 graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University. I started my career as a therapeutic day treatment counselor after graduation. I also served a Youth Counselor at a residential treatment facility. After about three years post-graduation, I decided to further my education to become more involved with shaping future minds. I received my M.Ed in Counselor Education from the University of Virginia in 2018. I also received my NCC that year. I began my career as an elementary school counselor in Albemarle County. I spent one year there before moving to Williamsburg. Since 2019, I have been a member of the New Kent County Public School System. I am currently the Lead Counselor at New Kent Middle School. In this role, I have created a shared vision with my team and have advocated for our roles as school counselors. I have a deep passion for social justice and the practice of mindfulness.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

During the 2019-2020 school year, I served as a practicum supervisor for a future counselor. I was very honored to assist a graduate student in their journey towards becoming a member of the greatest profession ever! I am currently in my third year as a school counselor. I was given a promotion to Lead Counselor during the current school year. I have been able to advocate for my team to school and district level leaders. This has allowed us access to funds to help us all develop as professionals. I advocate for marginalized groups by advocating to be able to provide classroom lessons in regard to social justice. I have also received funding to begin book studies amongst staff and students on the topic of anti-racism. In my district, this has not been easy but I refuse to give up on this very important call to action. It would be an honor to serve and advocate for all Virginia school counselors as a member of the board.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

It is my goal to continue on with the great advocacy of this organization. I would love to help with planning/promoting events, managing social media accounts and advocating at the state level. I want to be an active member of the board to help carry out the mission of the VSCA.



Alixandra Tate

Job title: Director of School Counseling

Employer: Kettle Run High School; Fauquier County Public Schools

VDOE Region: 4 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 6

Brief Biography:

Hello! My name is Alix Tate and I am currently the Director of School Counseling at a high school in Fauquier County. I grew up outside of Philadelphia, PA and have called Virginia my home for six years. I have experience as an elementary and high school counselor in central Virginia. As a lifelong learner, I often have a book or article in my hand and I love sharing what I learn with others. As a school counselor, it is my mission to challenge traditional ways of thinking and advocate for a more equitable education system. I am passionate about social justice and using our unique role as school counselors to disrupt and dismantle white supremacy within the education system.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

I have years of leadership and service to the profession and look forward to expanding my experiences statewide to reach more school counseling professionals. I consistently advocate for systemic change through the use of a data-driven, comprehensive school counseling program — it is critical to bring these practices to under-resourced school divisions. In addition, I have led local and national professional development related to mental health, student and staff wellbeing, and trauma-informed practices, all with a focus on equity. As a fierce advocate for marginalized groups, I firmly believe that everything school counselors do either disrupts or maintains the status quo. I am devoted to continuing to learn and share knowledge with colleagues on a regular basis in order to promote equity, growth, and ensure the delivery of best practices.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

My main goal is to widen the impact of my advocacy efforts statewide. If elected to the VSCA Board of Directors, I will advocate for lower ratios and consistency among the school counseling profession in Virginia in terms of job roles and responsibilities. Too many school systems do not have access to the tools needed to develop and implement data-driven, comprehensive school counseling services and through intentful collaboration with the VSCA, the VDOE, and other educational stakeholders I hope to improve this. The development and continued use of anti-racist comprehensive school counseling programs is non-negotiable. Through my service on the VSCA Board of Directors, I will help others learn, grow, and develop the capability to advocate for just systems. Lastly, I aim to serve as a resource for school counselors in the Commonwealth of Virginia, especially as we navigate through the pandemic, civil unrest, continued trauma and subsequent mental health issues our students are experiencing. Virginia is home to the best school counseling professionals; I hope to continue to work together as we continue to become stronger social justice advocates and change agents.



Katie Mihaly

Job title: School Counselor **Employer:** Valley Elementary/Bath County Public Schools **VDOE Region:** 5

Years of professional (K-12) experience: 6

Brief Biography:

My name is Katie Mihaly and I have been an elementary/middle school counselor for six years now in Bath County, which is in a rural area in Northwest Virginia. I work with around 200 students that range from preschool to seventh grade, and I love that I am able to know every single one of them and they know me. Being able to build those relationships makes every day special and so fun. I work with students one-on-one, in small groups, and in classroom settings. My passions revolve around social emotional learning and career development. I am the Student Assistance Committee and 504 chair, and I am on the Leadership Team, Safety Team, PBIS Team, and PTO. My students are my “why” and while this year has been an experience to say the least, my students keep me going and always help me see the positives in any situation.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

I am very passionate about helping new school counselors, social emotional learning, career development, and using STEAM in the counseling field. Since becoming a member of the VSCA, I have presented at conference three times, including this past year, about these topics. I have also presented multiple times at my local school board, demonstrating and explaining how school counselors are fundamental in these areas, and advocating for our role. At my school, I am on the Leadership, PBIS, and Safety Teams and I am constantly using my position to advocate for the mental health of my students and staff. I have spoken with my local representatives to advocate for mental health and our role as school counselors, and have been a part of local town halls and summits to continue gaining knowledge and to advocate for the growth of mental health supports in my rural community. As I am in a rural area, I work closely with other mental health specialists and I am excited to say we are slowly gaining ground creating that awareness and getting supports into place.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

Two of my goals, if elected to the VSCA Board of Directors, is to make more connections within the VSCA community and to have more professional development opportunities made available, especially for the rural regions. Being in a rural area I don't have as many resources, so I am always on the hunt for more supports and professional development trainings that I can attend and/or bring back to my community. This virtual year has been a blessing for me as a rural counselor because some conferences I normally couldn't attend were made available and I want to continue this moving forward. While virtual, I have discovered so many wonderful organizations, people, and opportunities that I would love to share with VSCA members. These resources can support our role as school counselors no matter what region you are in. Also, if you're like me, you love our conferences and the connections we make. I would love to create a school counselor support network that doesn't just last those couple of conference days. I really think this year has shown us that it's okay to ask for help and it's okay to not be okay, because together we are stronger.



Phylcia Littleton

Job title: School Counseling Consultant

Employer: Pearson Online & Blended Learning **VDOE Region:** 2 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 8

Brief Biography: I am Phylcia Littleton and I currently serve as a school counseling consultant at Pearson Online & Blended Learning. I work with a team of other counseling consultants to support programming which ensures that school counselors in Connections Academy schools have the skills needed to implement a comprehensive virtual counseling program.

Raised and educated in Hampton City Schools, I decided to return to the district as an educator, serving eight years as a middle school counselor in which six years, I was the school counseling director. I earned my Bachelors of Science degree in Psychology with a minor in African American Studies from Virginia Commonwealth University and my Masters of Education degree in School Counseling from the College of William & Mary. During my educational journey, I became the vice-president of the Black Psychology Student Association and was inducted into Psi Chi, The International Honor Society in Psychology. During graduate school, I was inducted into the Alpha Xi chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, the International Honor Society in Education and was awarded the 2012 Exemplary Professional School Counseling Student of Hampton Roads Award. I currently serve as a member of both the Virginia School Counselor Association and American School Counselor Association.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups: Previously working in Region 2, I am currently employed as a Counseling Consultant in which I serve as a point of contact for Managers of Counseling in virtual schools. I also provide lessons to students on a national level via a virtual platform. Although I am new to the role, as an African-American woman, I emphasize the importance of including diversity and inclusion within the school counseling profession by providing resources that align with ASCA's Awareness calendar as it attributes to groups that are marginalized.

I am also an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the first black Greek letter sorority in which I serve on various committees. One committee is called HBCU for Life which houses our signature program #CAP which stands for College Admissions Process. As the chairman, I partner with local high schools to bridge the gap between high school and college. My committee and I accomplish this task by breaking down the college application and enrollment process.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors: During my time of service on the VSCA Board of Directors, my goal is to represent the needs of ALL school counselors which includes those who actively serve as a virtual school counselor. Full-time virtual school counseling preceded the COVID-19 pandemic and I want to ensure that counselors within this setting have the tools that they need in order to yield success within the students that they serve as they have been overlooked. Another goal would be to advocate for those school counselors in our Title I schools. Serving in a Title I school presents its own unique set of challenges for school counselors. We eagerly serve underrepresented populations that are constantly in a state of crisis. Collaboration is key amongst other professional organizations in order for our students to be successful beyond their academic endeavors. My goal for my time of service on the VSCA Board of Directors is simply to be a voice for those that are underrepresented and those that serve underrepresented communities.



Melissa Leischner

Job title: School Counselor **Employer:** Prince William County Schools

VDOE Region: 4 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 13

Brief Biography: Working as a School Counselor for 13 years, I have delivered comprehensive school counseling programs at two schools, earned RAMP distinctions at both schools and was selected as a finalist for the ASCA School Counselor of the Year Award. I also received an Above and Beyond Award and a Business Partnership of the Year Award (for a partnership with the US Marines). I successfully completed the School Counseling Leadership

Specialist program through ASCA in 2020 and also served as a RAMP Reviewer. I worked as an Assistant Principal for four years before returning to school counseling to work directly with students. My six years of work as a School Counselor at a school where more than 90% of the student population received free/reduced lunch was the most rewarding and impactful years of my career. From that experience I worked to create successful and innovative programs that improved behavior and school climate. I have enjoyed sharing data and information to better assist other schools at four division-level meetings and at a VSCA Conference. I also enjoy publishing articles to help other school counselors including one for the ASCA Magazine called "Good Groups: It's Elementary."

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

I enjoy assisting other counselors in the school division as the Elementary School Counseling Lead Mentor. Through this role I work with new counselors and their counseling mentors. I provide professional development and support meetings throughout the school year. To assist counselors with their programs in Virginia, I presented at a VSCA Annual Conference about the positive impact of mentoring partnerships. Collaborating with local organizations to establish successful mentoring partnerships has been critical to my work as a counselor in helping to assist and advocate for at-risk populations. I have seen first-hand the awesome impact that mentoring partnerships has on students. To assist counselors at the national level, I wrote articles that were published in the ASCA magazine and successfully advocated for changes in the RAMP rubric directly to ASCA. Assisting those entering the profession is important to me, and I have welcomed nine interns to the schools I have worked at. To assist future leaders and to continue to advocate for marginalized groups, I presented about the school counseling profession and the importance of multicultural competence to an undergraduate class at the University of Maryland.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

Working with the Board of Directors and members of the VSCA, I hope to be able to serve in this capacity as an advocate on behalf of all Virginia School Counselors and students. If I am fortunate to receive your vote, I promise to support you by helping to provide a listening ear, leadership, resources, advocacy, and access to exceptional professional development opportunities. I am very responsive to emails and calls and would want to hear from you about what you need to ensure your thoughts and ideas are represented on the Board. I believe in the power of advocacy and speaking up for our profession to assist our students in achieving success. The school division where I work has reduced the counselor to student ratios below the state mandates, and I truly understand the awesome impact this has on students. Achieving lower ratios at the state level and continuing to educate others regarding our profession would be a focus of mine. I would also look forward to helping all school counselors provide comprehensive school counseling programs to meet the needs of every student. I appreciate your time in reading this and hope to have the honor of supporting you.



Madiha Jamil

Job title: School Counselor **Employer:** Fairfax County Public Schools

VDOE Region: 4 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 10

Brief Biography: Madiha Jamil has been a School Counselor at South Lakes High School in Reston, VA for the past 10 years. She received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Education with a focus on School Counseling from George Mason University. Ms. Jamil is currently a Doctoral Candidate at Hampton University for the Counselor Education and Supervision program, graduating in May 2021. Madiha is a visionary leader in her field and work. Her

dissertation topic focuses on adapting mindfulness practices for educators during disruptive situations like COVID-19. Her work is ground-breaking as it will shed light on ways mindfulness can be used to reduce stress for teachers and school counselors. The research also evaluates if the exposure to mindfulness practices can help educators become more receptive to using mindfulness techniques with their students to promote overall wellness. With over 10 years of experience, Madiha is a seasoned counselor with expertise in topics such as restorative justice, cultural competencies, and has hosted mindfulness workshops for students and staff. She has a passion for learning and hopes to inspire future school counselors in promoting social justice and equity in their communities.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

When I became a school counselor, I quickly identified gaps in our school counseling programming with one of our marginalized population, English Language Learners. Within my first year, I developed classroom lessons for our ELL students to teach them about graduation requirements, post-secondary options, pathway to graduation, and increase student engagement. The work with our ELL population helped students see a pathway towards graduation and enhanced their sense of belonging in the building. As a school counselor, I believe in reducing barriers to academic success for all the students. Another goal I worked on was to increase minority student enrollment in honors and advanced level courses in our building. I encouraged students to challenge themselves and provided group support as they navigated those classes to ensure student success. As a school counselor, it is our ethical mandate to promote equity and equality for all our students. One way to do that is by teaching staff the cultural competency skills and promote restorative justice practices. I've led school-wide cultural competency training for our staff and became a certified Restorative Justice practitioner in our school.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

I would like to promote diversity and wellness initiatives for our organization. I would like to establish a committee that can focus our efforts in providing tools to our school counselors in advocating for our marginalized populations and become change-agents within our communities. As mental health professionals, we are facing these unprecedented times with the pandemic and the rise in mental health concerns. I think it is imperative that we equip school counselors with tools to reduce stress and promote self-care. By endorsing programs such as mindfulness for staff and students, we can begin to shift the perception and response to these tumultuous situations. Plus, mindfulness programs have shown to reduce stress and anxiety, improve attention and focus, enhance academic performance, and emotional regulation for students. By training counselors in mindfulness practices, they can become experts in their building and teach these skills to their students. Thus, I would like to create training programs that will prepare our school counselors to spearhead these initiatives and promote a safe and positive school climate.



Dr. Crystal Hatton

Job title: Assistant Professor/Counselor Educator

Employer: Liberty University **VDOE Region:** 5 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 13

Brief Biography: My name is Dr. Crystal Hatton and I am excited and humbled to earn your consideration for a position on the VSCA Board of Directors. I am an assistant professor in the school counseling program at Liberty University. Before joining Liberty, I served as a professional school counselor for 13 years. I have also

served as clinical faculty for the school counseling program at the College of William and Mary and as an adjunct professor for school counseling students at Old Dominion University. After graduating from the College of William and Mary with a B.A. in Psychology and a M.Ed. in Counseling with a concentration in school counseling, I earned an Ed.S. in Counseling and Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from Old Dominion University. I am a National Certified Counselor, National Certified School Counselor, and Approved Clinical Supervisor. I am also an ACSA certified legal and ethical specialist and cultural competency specialist. My school counseling interests include legal and ethical issues, clinical supervision, social justice and advocacy, and virtual school counseling. I am from southeastern Virginia and currently reside there with my husband and two children. I look forward to serving Virginia's school counselors and students!

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups: My desire is to be a servant leader to impact school counselors and the profession in positive ways. Throughout my career, I have consistently served as a site supervisor for school counseling practicum and internship students. I have also been fortunate to be a professional mentor to new school counselors. I have presented at state and national conferences on topics that are relevant to school counselors and the school counseling profession. I have also conducted professional development opportunities within my school and overall school division. In my role as a core faculty member, I am excited to continue the work of educating and inspiring future and current school counselors through supervision, teaching, presenting, and writing. As a woman and person of color, I am able to empathize with many of the challenges that individuals from marginalized groups face within our society. Within my personal and professional life, I strive to take steps to promote cultural competence by acknowledging my own biases and assumptions, listening to others, and respectfully initiating courageous conversations that seek to challenge or shift current perspectives and behaviors. I also endeavor to acknowledge injustices and intentionally create opportunities for equity and access for members of marginalized groups.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors: If elected to serve on the VSCA Board of Directors, I would be ecstatic to collaborate with an awesome group of school counseling leaders who endeavor to make a difference for Virginia school counselors, students, and the profession as a whole. I will share creative and innovative ideas, build positive relationships, and advocate for school counselors and students. I will listen attentively and make informed decisions on behalf of my fellow school counseling colleagues throughout the state. I plan to keep my hand on the pulse of Virginia's school counselors so that I may understand their diverse needs, perspectives, and thoughts. I will also uphold professionalism and ethical behavior by adhering to the by-laws, ends policies, and other procedures that govern VSCA. I look forward to working hard to represent the school counselors who are on the frontlines each and every day to serve students, families, and other school personnel.



Dr. Krystal L. Clemons

Job title: Assistant Professor **Employer:** Liberty University

VDOE Region: 5 **Years of professional (K-12) experience:** 6

Brief Biography:

Dr. Krystal L. (Freeman) Clemons is an assistant professor and co-coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion in the Counselor Education and Family Studies department at Liberty University. Previously, Dr. Clemons served as a professional school counselor for six years in Washington, D.C. (secondary), Prince William County (elementary), and Norfolk (secondary). She also served as a VSCA board member from 2013-2015, and ASCA recognized her during Black History Month as one of the Black school counseling professionals who has made significant contributions to the field. Dr. Clemons received her B.A. in psychology from the University of Virginia, and received her M.S.Ed in school counseling and Ph.D. in counselor education from Old Dominion University. Her research interests include the Black Church, Black student achievement in K-12 schools, anti-racism in school counseling and counselor education, and self-care among school counselors and school counseling students. Dr. Clemons has given over 25 peer-reviewed and invited presentations on the state, national, and international levels.

Leadership/service to the profession including advocacy for marginalized groups:

I served as the VSCA Graduate Student Vice President-Elect and Graduate Student Vice President from 2013-2015 as a doctoral student. During my tenure, VSCA implemented meet and greets for school counseling master's students and school divisions during the annual conference. I served as a school counselor in Title I schools, helped to increase community service among high school students, and fostered partnerships with community stakeholders. My research agenda is geared toward advocacy for the Black community and other communities of color, and my efforts as co-coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion in the CEFS department at Liberty University work to implement anti-racist strategies within counselor education.

Goals for time of service on the VSCA board of Directors:

One aspect of my graduate studies that I wish was different is having more opportunities to engage in research with other professors and students. I would like to create a research network among VSCA members that will help develop partnerships with master's students, doctoral students, and counselor educators and further contribute to the school counseling profession. I would also like to increase VSCA engagement among our online graduate students.