

Rachael LaPolla

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Community-focused counselor dedicated to empowerment and collective growth. Committed to trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices with diverse populations. Skilled in securing grants, fostering partnerships, and driving community initiatives.

EXPERIENCE

Counseling Internship John Barry Elementary School Philadelphia PA 2023

- Provided 1:1 and small group counseling services to students in grades K through 8, employing solution-focused and person-centered approaches to address academic performance, social skills, self-esteem, and attendance issues.
- Educated eighth-grade students on career awareness, high school options, and scholarship opportunities.
- Implemented the 7Mindsets SEL curriculum for grades K through 8, emphasizing topics such as self-esteem, accountability, and gratitude.
- Spearheaded academic and career partnerships, securing grants and scholarships from organizations including Stroud Water Research Center, PECO, and PA Sea Grant.
- Led community enrichment efforts, establishing a community garden and organizing community cleanup events in collaboration with Philly Spring Cleaning
- Developed and led extracurricular activities promoting cultural preservation and community engagement.
- Provided individual and group interventions, contributing to strategic planning with counseling team.
- Sunshine committee leadership fostering community and boosting staff morale.

Counseling Practicum Kensington Health & Science Academy Philadelphia PA 2023

- Provided academic planning support to students, assisting them in identifying future goals related to high school, college, and dual enrollment programs.
- Guided students through the school's admissions process, including applications, admissions essays, scholarships, and financial aid.
- Offered career planning assistance, helping students secure job placements, internships, and develop financial planning and time management skills.
- Conducted one-on-one and small group counseling sessions for students dealing with social conflict, academic stress, and mental health issues.

S.T.E.A.M. Specialist Lewis Elkin Elementary Philadelphia PA 2021-2023

- Piloted STEAM curriculum, engaging 600 K-4 students in inner-city public school settings.
- Successfully obtained grants and materials through partnerships with LaSalle University, Riverbend Environmental Education Center, and Delaware Valley Fairness Project.
- Organized partnerships and field trips with community organizations like DaVinci Art Gallery.
- Led afterschool clubs and provided mentorship for students needing social-emotional support.
- Implemented sustainability initiatives, including creating green spaces and integrating composting practices.

Teacher as Researcher, St John's Episcopal Preschool, Washington, DC 2018-2020

- Conference presenter: led emergent curriculum workshops for educators
- Facilitate learning and development of children aged 3-5.5 within an arts-based Reggio inspired classroom

Mentor Teacher, Isidore Newman School, New Orleans, LA 2015-2018

- Develop a 2-month summer arts program for children aged 6 mo- 4 years.
- Design & implement IEPs with therapists, educators, and families of children with special needs.

EDUCATION

Eastern University St Davids, PA- M.Ed School Counseling 2022- 2024

Northwestern State University Natchitoches LA-MAT Early Childhood Ed 2015-2017

Fashion Institute of Technology New York, NY- BFA Toy Design 2009-2011