

Rachael LaPolla

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Community-focused counselor with a focus on mindfulness, art therapy, and CBT. Experience and commitment to trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices with diverse and high-need populations. Invested in building stronger communities utilizing grants, enriching opportunities with local resources and holistic practices. Excelling at building trusting relationships that empower students to meet their goals in school and life..

EXPERIENCE

Counseling Internship John Barry Elementary School Philadelphia PA 2023

- Academic and career oriented partnerships including grants, scholarships and programing with Stroud Water Research Center, PECO, Let's go Outdoors, PA Sea Grant, Land Health, Mill Creek Urban Farm, Women in Natural Science and more.
- Community enrichment establishing a community garden, and organizing a community clean up event with Philly Spring Cleaning
- Extracurricular activities for students K-8 building with a focus on cultural identity, community building and career development.
- Individual and small group interventions and strategic planning with counseling team.

Counseling Practicum Kensington Health Sciences Academy Philadelphia PA 2023

- Support students in a high-needs inner-city community school in grades 9-12
- Led individual and small-group counseling and facilitated advisory meetings
- Assisted with college planning and scholarship workshops in afterschool 12+ program
- Updated 504 Plans and communicated needs with parents/guardians
- Attended School Leadership, Attendance, and Student Support meetings collaborating with administration, teachers, counselors, and outside service providers

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

- Design curriculum and hands-on learning to engage 600 students K-4 in an inner city public school
- Wrote grants and participated in training to obtain funding, materials, and educational experiences for students with LaSalle University, Riverbend Environmental Education Center, and Delaware Valley Fairness Project.
- Lead partnerships and field trips with DaVinci Art Gallery and other community organizations.
- Lead afterschool clubs and mentorship for students seeking additional social-emotional support.

Lead Teacher, Columbus Preschool, Manhattan NY 2020-2021

- Facilitate in-person learning for children aged 4.5-6 in Reggio-inspired and Emergent Curriculum learning models
- Create a curriculum for children focusing on emerging literacy and math skills utilizing TERC, Handwriting Without Tears, and phonics curriculum.

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

- Use formative and ongoing assessments to monitor each child's development, communicating and partnering effectively with parents and service providers of children with special needs
- Partnered with community members to engage in outreach with homeless shelters, and senior citizen groups.

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

- Use ongoing assessments to track development Brigance, COR & DRDP.
- 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- Med School Counseling 2022-Expected 2024

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

