



Friends' Central School

February 13, 2021

Recommendation: Alessandra Loffreda-Mancinelli

For me, taking on interns is always a big decision. Mentoring takes a lot of time and effort, and if I don't get someone who is a self-starter, it can really take a toll on my work as both a clinical counselor and as an administrator. When I received a request from Alessandra to work with us, I was already committed to only taking interns from the University of Pennsylvania - but as a graduate of Villanova University myself, I was intrigued by her resume and decided to give her a chance. The more I talked to Alessandra in that initial interview, though, I realized that she had so much to offer - such varied interests - and such energy. A very important aspect of being a school counselor that you can't teach either in graduate school or during an internship.

What I like most about Alessandra is her passion. For both interns and for counselors that I hire, I want someone who really, truly cares about kids - who is student centered. She gets young people and she is eager to care for them, help them, and move them along from point A to point B, whether she is helping with academics, social, emotional, or family related dynamics. I know that our students feel Alessandra's support when she works with them. She does her best to make every one of her students feel heard and supported.

Counseling during this pandemic has been a big adjustment. Last spring, when COVID first hit, we were really just working day to day. Over the summer, when we realized that we would continue to be virtual in to the fall, we worked diligently to figure out how we would do that successfully. When I thought about having interns on top of all of this, I was hesitant. Again, though, Alessandra rose to the challenge. She has been nothing but supportive during this time. Many of our students have needed additional support, and she has been there to do that. Further, Alessandra comes to as many meetings as her schedule permits. She is a thoughtful observer, taking in everything around her and at the same time offer feedback or support. She is always eager to help in any way she is able to.

I think that Alessandra has learned so much during her time at Friends' Central School. She has the basics down... just being a great person! But there is so much to learn about systems, how to work collaboratively with other counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents, - so many different things to know! Alessandra never shies away from these challenges; she wants to learn everything she can. I appreciate that so much about her.

Sincerely,

Frederick Clemens Pratt, NCC, LPC
N-12 Director, Student Support Services