

# Summit School at Nyack Student Success is a Result of the Coordinated Therapeutic Effort

*Dr. Barbara Baker, Director of Clinical Services, takes us behind the scenes to better understand her role and some of the challenges she continues to overcome.*

NYACK, NY, US, November 12, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Q: What does the Director of Clinical Services do at [Summit School at Nyack?](#)

A: I oversee the social workers who provide the therapy, the psychologist who administers the testing, and the Health Center, which consists of our psychiatrist and registered nurses. I also am part of Summit's Leadership Team, so I work closely with the department heads of other areas at Summit regarding the daily management of the agency, the creation and implementation of policies and procedures, and the communication with our licensing agencies.



Dr. Barbara Baker, Director of Clinical Services - Summit School at Nyack

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*Dr. Barbara Baker*

Q: What led you to work at Summit?

A: I have worked with many different populations during my years in social work, but always found myself drawn to adolescents. I love their energy and passion! I also know that the possibility of growth is always there, even if the student doesn't experience it immediately. I have heard from many teens that, well after a therapy session, they remembered something said that suddenly began to make sense, so I've learned that there are no wasted efforts. I

began at Summit in 2004 and was excited at the chance to work long term with students and their families, as there are even more opportunities to see that growth.

Q: What is it about this work that is important to you?

A: I want every student here to have every opportunity to make a positive change that sustains long after their time at Summit. I love working closely with the social workers to review their

cases and discover interventions that can help facilitate this change. I also feel the work of the Leadership Team, guiding the agency as a whole, mirrors the work with the students, as the agency itself needs to continue to make positive changes that will benefit our students and staff alike.

Q: What makes your work here successful?

A: The people I work with. I have a team of talented social workers who truly care about every child on their caseload. Our new psychiatrist is absolutely wonderful and doesn't hesitate to take the time needed to get to know the students and their parents. Every student here understands that they can count on our Health Center nurses, not only for medication and first aid, but to provide a smile and encouragement whenever needed. And I guarantee that the [Summit School staff](#) outside of my department are equally dedicated to their work with the kids. The people that come to work at Summit every day make my work successful here.

Q: What are some of the challenges you expect to overcome at Summit?

A: There are always going to be challenges at Summit, and I hope we can overcome each and every one of them. Dealing with residential care during a worldwide pandemic obviously is a huge challenge currently, but I am proud of the way that Summit's students and staff are handling what can be a very stressful situation. Our Health Center has recently undergone a new licensure that has expanded services for students, so the challenges faced with that upgrade were daunting, but, thankfully, are being met. But there are ongoing challenges that will never go away - helping students learn to trust staff and, more importantly, themselves, is a challenge faced with every new admission. The means to overcome this type of challenge rarely can be accomplished with a set formula, so taking an [individualized approach](#) is an important tenet at Summit.

Q: What would you tell a student about what they can expect from working with you?

A: I let the students know that my work is often "behind the scenes," working closely with their social workers and not directly with the students themselves. I also explain that there are times when they may meet with me to discuss incidents, but that these discussions are focused on helping them learn from mistakes and applying these lessons to future actions. But I definitely want all students to know that I am available if they need to talk.

Q: What might you tell parents about what to expect?

A: Similarly to what I would say to students, I would explain my role to parents, note that I am not necessarily directly involved, but offer my time to them if needed. I would want to assure them that we recognize that they know their child best, so their input is critical to the success their child experiences at Summit School.

Q: What is the team approach like at Summit School?

A: We value the input of all team members, recognizing that it could be anybody in any position that has the strongest relationship with a particular child. We can see that each staff member comes with their own skill set and strengths, so Summit strives to integrate those strengths in

various duties and roles here. I have been amazed by the contributions of many staff members to the community, and those contributions have led to easier processes for staff, engaging teaching methods, new activities and events for the kids, and so much more. It is clear to me that the agency as a whole operates much better and stronger using a collective wisdom rather than relying on any one person.

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