



Christopher Ambrose
Immediate Past President
Maryland College Personnel Association

In the space below, please describe your involvement with ACPA, including any leadership positions you have held.

ACPA has been my professional home since I was an undergraduate student. When I was a sophomore, I attended the Maryland College Personnel Association's (MCPA) annual Fall Conference. This conference experience was like no other as I knew I finally found "my people" and solidified I wanted to pursue a career in Student Affairs. I studied College Student Personnel Administration at James Madison University in Virginia and stayed actively involved with MCPA by attending their events, presenting at conferences, and taking my classmates with me. When I finished graduate school, I began my full-time work in Residential Life at Johns Hopkins University and was appointed MCPA Treasurer. After finishing my role as Treasurer, I was elected President-Elect of MCPA making a three-year commitment to leading the Association. I currently serve as the immediate Past-President of MCPA and will finish my term in December 2021. Concurrently, I serve on ACPA's 2022 Convention Planning Team as the Co-Coordinator of Endorsed Programs. In addition to my involvement with MCPA, I was a Directorate Board Member on ACPA's Commission for Housing and Residence Life in 2019 and served on ACPA's Strategic Plan Working Group in 2020.

Please describe how you will work to advance ACPA's Core Values if elected/appointed to this position.

If elected, I will center my leadership and involvement around ACPA's Core Values. As Assembly Coordinator for State and Regional Chapters, I hope to create a space where chapters and chapter leaders feel respected in multiple ways. I hope to partner with chapter leaders to cultivate a collective working group where ideas are exchanged openly and freely. As Assembly Coordinator, I will encourage chapter leaders to lean into their expertise and share their experiences with the group as we are all centered around the same goal of advancing college student development. Additionally, I hope to advance ACPA's Core Values by continually bringing transparency to chapters and their respective leadership. As a representative of the entire group, I plan to be inclusive in my decision-making and will advocate for the needs of chapters as a member of the Governing Board. Lastly, I hope to cultivate a space with chapter leaders where our own professional development as leaders is a priority, in addition to providing professional development and growth opportunities for others.

After reviewing the qualifications of the position for which you are applying, please describe briefly below how you believe you meet each qualification.

After reviewing the qualifications for the Assembly Coordinator for State & Regional Chapters position, I am confident I meet the criteria for election. I have been an active member of the Association and have remained in good standing since 2012. Additionally, the Assembly Coordinator “must have held the position of chair or president of an entity group that they wish to represent.” I served as the President of the Maryland College Personnel Association (MCPA) from 2019-2020. To address the last two qualifications, I am not an employee of ACPA and my term with MCPA will finish in December 2021, thus I will not be holding more than one position with the Association at the same time.

As a leader, how will you contribute to the work of the Association?

As the aspiring Assembly Coordinator for State & Regional Chapters, I understand first-hand the impact state and regional chapters have on this field. For many folks their first interaction with ACPA may be through a state or regional chapter. State and regional chapter leaders are the front line representing their respective organization and ACPA at large as they work hard to provide continuous professional development and personal growth opportunities for prospective and current professionals at all levels. As the Assembly Coordinator, I will contribute to the work of the Association by prioritizing state and regional chapter needs and representing their collective voice as a member of the Governing Board. As the Assembly Coordinator, I am committed to keeping chapter leaders informed with regular large and small group meetings. My goal is to ensure all chapters and their respective memberships feel seen, heard, and understood. I offer my unwavering support to this entity group and stand ready to assist wherever needed.

After reading the introductory statement about the ACPA Leader Selection Process and the Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization, take a moment to self-reflect on your own experiences at the intersections of diversity, equity, and inclusion. How will your identities, experiences, and competence help you in the Association’s work to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion within and outside the ACPA community?

I have done a lot of engagement with the Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization (SIRJD). One of the biggest takeaways I have from the SIRJD is there is a place for everyone in advancing the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion. You do not have to be a Chief Diversity Officer to have influence or make impactful change in these critical areas. The SIRJD has challenged me to turn inward to explore my own identity intersections and how this shows up in my daily work. I identify as an openly gay cisgender male who encourages authenticity who sometimes feels that I must show up differently in different spaces. With this, I can relate in some ways to folks who also feel that they must internally assess and discern whether they can show up as themselves. Additionally, I am white and recognize that my whiteness takes up a lot of space. I recognize my whiteness comes with much unearned privilege and I challenge myself daily to dissect what this means for myself and others. As an example, I have learned to take a step back in spaces like meetings by not always being the first person to speak when a question is raised or when there is an opportunity to provide input. I

take a step back to give space to others so I can actively listen to the valuable perspective they are sharing as I recognize it is a privilege for me to share without hesitation as a white person. I am also a firm believer that it is on us as individuals to do our own work. It is not the job of our colleagues and students of color and other marginalized identities to do the work for us. I take this charge seriously and have and will continue to dedicate resources to providing opportunities for further exploration of diversity, equity, and inclusion for my own campus community and other entities I am involved with. The SIRJD isn't just words on paper – you see it infused in everything ACPA stands for and does. ACPA is an organization that stands above the rest for reasons such as this. I look forward to engaging further with the SIRJD and partnering with chapter leaders and members to further champion diversity, equity, and inclusion inside and outside of the ACPA community.