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

I was introduced to ACPA during my time in University of West Georgia's M.ED College Student Affairs program. After joining ACPA I applied and was offered the Coordinator for Professional Engagement position in the Graduate Student and New Professional Community of Practice. I have now held the position for two consecutive years. As a Coordinator for Professional Engagement, I have held programs with a focus on graduate students and new professional needs. My most recent event was held September 2021. The program, emPOWER Hour, is a bimonthly series that is a roundtable discussion that will allow graduate students and new professionals to discuss current topics in the field. The first installment was "Who's on your ship: Mentorship, Allyship, and Relationships". I attended the 2021 convention among other professional development and social programs presented by ACPA.

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

By utilizing an abundance of resources, not only those dedicated to student affairs but those that affect education early on as well as business trends to ensure I am knowledgeable of current issues that affect students and the profession. Being aware of upcoming trends and not only current issues will help me to advance ACPA's outreach efforts. Advocacy at all levels is important, but I believe it to be most effective when it creates long term solutions for higher education. If selected as a member of the Governing Board, I will have the opportunity to learn from more experienced professionals with skills I do not currently possess. Simply being a member of the board will allow me to continuously engage in professional development and open exchange of ideas. I will commit to being an active member in discussion and spaces I am granted the opportunity to be a part of. Through my practitioner and research experience, I have become skilled at taking abstract concepts, ideas, and theories and correctly applying them to create programs that serve not only students but professionals as well. I am currently at an institution not associated with ACPA. If selected, I would utilize my position to encourage leaders in my department and the university to become members to ensure I am using my network to advance ACPA'S core values at individual institutions as well.

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 position, I believe my diverse set of experiences has prepared me to serve ACPA as the Member at Large-Entry Level efficiently while continuing to lead with passion. The position requires the individual to attend and actively participate in Governing Board meetings as well as on additional committees in the organization. I am familiar with managing several responsibilities. In the last year, I simultaneously managed a graduate assistantship, coursework, an internship, GSNPCoP directorate responsibilities while maintaining a healthy social life. In recent months, I have transitioned into my full time professional role while also maintaining a position on the directorate, teaching a First Year Experience course, and being an active member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated. Despite sometimes having conflicting responsibilities, I rely on my strong organizational skills and ability to effectively communicate problems and solutions well before deadlines. Being involved in different areas has given me the opportunity to work in a variety of diverse settings. Working with those from diverse backgrounds and age groups has helped me to shape my communication style while also becoming aware of my own biases to be a more inclusive and active team member.

I completed an internship with the Opportunity Network, an educational program designed for high school students. Prior to this I completed an internship with the Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions where I helped to conduct research on virtual internships. My work with both organizations, serving as faculty for a First Year Experience course, and student affairs experience has familiarized me with the process of working with confidential information. My past work experience and professional service has allotted me the opportunity to view higher education from multiple perspectives, including but not limited to student transition into college, student transition into the workforce, and the impact student affairs can have on student retention and overall college experience satisfaction.

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

I would bring vulnerability, humility, and a variety of perspectives to contribute to the work of the Association. By being a leader that practices vulnerability, I aim to use it as a source to confront difficult topics to begin creating sustainable solutions that center the whole person. It would be a high honor to be selected as the Member at Large-Entry Level, I believe remaining humble in the role will create space for continuous learning and constructive critique. Leading as a continuous learner, I will remain open to new knowledge and ideas that may challenge my own in effort to do the best for the Association and its members with the overall goal to enhance the profession. As a new professional and member of Generation Z, I will contribute a distinct and important viewpoint. As Gen Z begins to enter the profession, while simultaneously making up the majority of college students, it is important the collective voice is heard. Oftentimes student affairs professionals reference “meeting students where they are”. As a member of Gen Z, I have the goal of helping the Association to meet Gen Z where they are professionally by helping them to acclimate into spaces that do not always recognize the diversity and resilience Gen Z carries. I plan to remove the communication gap that can result from multiple generations being in one space. As a result, I will contribute not only my voice but the voice of my peers to ensure a symbiotic relationship between entry level, middle level, and senior level professionals.

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 identify as: Black, heterosexual cis-gendered woman from the South. Since elementary being a "good student" has been central to my identity. In recent years, I have realized my identity as a woman has become my salient identity. I have had to justify my desire to focus on education and occupational success instead of marriage and having a family. At the intersection of managing the external and internal expectations of what it means to be a "woman", I have undergone the transition from student to full time professional. This has led me to realize the emphasis I have routinely placed on being a "good student" and the need for instant gratification from good grades. Centering academic success and now the lack thereof, I am constantly torn between taking responsibility and proving myself in my new role while also ensuring I am not seen as an overbearing woman. The internalized conflict can sometimes negatively impact my mental health. However, when thinking of mental health we in the context of being Black in the South (with religious upbringing), it is not uncommon to ignore declining mental health or utilize all resources available. As a new professional, transitioning does not often make room for prioritizing self care and rejuvenation. I am tasked with performing active self care to combat the lack of community care that exists. My individual identities as well as the intersection of these identities continues to inform my approach to student affairs. For example, my positionality has allowed me to realize creating spaces for outward identities such as race are needed, but these spaces are often still surrounded by oppressive systems that only caters to one aspect of the individual's identity. As a Career Specialist, I encourage students to participate in internships even if unpaid to gain experience. However, the individuals I advise like me exist in multiple forms. If the student is from a low socioeconomic background, an unpaid internship is not practical. My personal and professional experience has taught me that the intersections at which we exist can not be ignored. To help students that are unable to participate in unpaid opportunities, I tailor my approach to provide resources on how to articulate their academic experience or part-time job experience as industry related work.

I strive to ensure my practice does not focus solely on the one identity I perceive, but on the complexity of identity. I use that understanding to periodically assess my bias, connect empathetically and authentically, and provide a holistic approach. Lastly, what I consider as my salient identity has changed over the course of time and I do not believe that is an experience that is just mine. In my work, I remain informed on social and historical trends to have a basic understanding of group ideologies. I use the information to make shifts in my advising strategies to move with students' identity. Without this, I would become stagnant using an outdated approach that does not benefit the student or the profession.