



## 2022 Executive Board Election Candidate

### Vice President for Professional Development

**Name:** Marsha Oshima

**Title:** University Guidance Counselor

**Institution:** International School of Geneva, La Grande Boissiere Campus

**Location/Region:** Switzerland/Europe

**Member Group:** Secondary (High School)

### Background and Experience

**Years of experience in post-secondary admissions counseling or related fields?**

10+ years

**Please describe any professional or volunteer experience you feel would be relevant for serving on the International ACAC Executive Board.**

In my professional experience and as a committee volunteer, I prioritize assessing and synthesizing others' perspectives and concerns when making decisions and creating programs, for example, gathering information on internet connectivity issues prior to the Annual International ACAC conference, or advocating in other committees for perspectives I hear as a DEI committee member. My career working with diverse teams based in multiple locations makes me adept at sharing information with all parties, seeking reactions, questions or potential concerns, and finding solutions. Given the chance to lead Professional Development, I will use my knowledge from creating and managing training activities for global programs such as Fulbright and international professional exchange tours to motivate the committee to offer such new opportunities as professional certificates and additional online programs to reach a greater number of members. We will also enhance in-person favorites such as the bus tour or

regional conferences. On the Executive Board, I can make difficult decisions and communicate change to members by looking at both the big picture and the details of individual components, a skill colleagues have recognized in my work. Our organization must meet growth and new admissions realities, and each Board member must contribute ideas and step up to implement them. I have proven through my committee involvement that I show up, actively share opinions, take the lead on large and small projects and see them through. Learning continuously and being willing to reconsider my opinion are also traits that will make me an effective Board member.

**Please describe [how you have engaged in the international community](#), and the impact this has had on your professional life. Describe any [International ACAC Committee experience](#) you have.**

My career has focused on the international community through managing professional and educational exchange programs and by being a university advisor. I personally benefitted from studying and working internationally and feel motivated by providing opportunities for others. International ACAC was the major source of professional development for me as a new counselor and now I try to give back as much as I can; for example, chairing panels at the 2014 and 2021 annual conferences and recently being a mentor in the new Mentor Year Program. During my experience on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Governance and Nominating and 2021 Annual Conference Planning Committees, I have heard from many members who have increasing needs for access, professional development and peer support. I consistently sought ways to move tasks forward within committees and took more public roles such as representing the DEI Committee at general membership meetings during our name change amendment process or facilitating regional member feedback sessions. Last year, I proposed and moderated a nano PD video on member engagement featuring Scholar alumni. I eagerly participate in regional and affinity group (AAPI and anti-racism) sessions to share and hear from peers. I value connecting people and ideas, always looking for ways to collect and draw in resources and share them. On the Board, I will use what I learn from these exchanges and networks to contribute meaningfully to organizational change. I will continue to engage members and build more ways for them to participate in large and small ways.

### **[VP Professional Development Specific Questions](#)**

**Please list or describe any professional development projects that you have led or with which you have been involved. List specific roles and dates.**

Much of my career focused on project design and management, working with counterparts in multiple international locations. I ran study tours for international professionals for a U.S. government program (International Visitor Leadership Program 2009-2011) which included coordinating with local host organizations across the U.S., US Embassies and State Department officials, and the professionals representing a wide range of fields including education. I was Director of the Fulbright Teachers Exchange Program and Distinguished Fulbright Awards (2011-2012) which sent US teachers abroad and non-US teachers to the US for classroom exchanges and graduate level research. I supervised my team to design orientation programs and supported the teachers during their exchanges. I have also been the lead organizer for professional conferences for international Fulbright graduate students studying in the US and Humphrey Fellows (mid-level professionals from countries undergoing development or political transition). These programs rely heavily on volunteers. I value the expertise of volunteers, respect their time and understand the importance managing the expectations of all participants. When my husband's career brought us to Europe, I embraced the change as a new professional development path. As a university advisor, I am active in attending and presenting at admissions conferences since 2013 (International ACAC and CIS; wrote the proposals and led panels at 2013 and 2021 International ACAC and 2016 2017 and 2021 CIS Forums on International Admissions), and was on the 2021 International ACAC Conference Planning Committee. I value peer-to-peer training and am eager to recruit more members to be active contributors.

**Please describe ideas you have for the future direction of this position, or specific initiatives you would like to develop. This may include this specific position, or may be in collaboration with another Vice President. Be as detailed as possible.**

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**Part of this position is managing people, committees, and projects. What is your experience in this area? Describe your management style. How do you like to be managed?**

Much of my career was managing large international exchange and scholarship programs for the US government, NGOs and universities, and I have managed large teams located on different continents as well as smaller teams in one location. I think effective management is a combination of good planning, excellent communication, being able to see, understand and incorporate other perspectives, and being able to make changes to adapt to new demands. In a volunteer organization, setting clear goals and steps to reach them helps accommodate members' time constraints and competing priorities. Recognizing each team member has a different strength to contribute and drawing out those contributions is important to keep volunteers engaged. I am a planner who often the one in any group to compile the ideas into a comprehensive plan, seek and incorporate input from the team and follow through to make it happen. I believe in management by example and am willing to take any task on the team. I prioritize keeping others informed and giving opportunities for feedback. Gently reminding and keeping others on schedule are skills I use daily. From my experience being managed and being the manager, I find that humor, patience, a willingness to reconsider and seek the other side or perspective builds a strong and collegial team. I value managers who give constructive feedback, respectfully disagree and have time to listen. I have worked to build these skills and have seen them grow by working in different countries and with diverse groups of colleagues.

**Name your three most impactful takeaways from the December 2020 DEI Organization Assessment Report. How would you advance the conversation around diversity and inclusion within International ACAC? How do you believe the Executive Board should function in this capacity?**

My take aways from the December 2020 report are:1.International ACAC is at a critical time for growth and change to meet new realities due to growth in membership, especially outside of North America and Western Europe and the unanticipated changes in admissions practices in the past two years. 2.More members need to be encouraged to be engaged actively with the organization. Data from the report that indicates members are generally satisfied but the

statistics on BIPOC members not feeling as engaged or valued shows the need to build clearer pathways for more members to be involved and use the programs and resources offered.

3. There is a need to professionalize a largely volunteer international organization. We face challenges to meet member expectations when we have a wonderful but small professional staff. Serving a membership of over 3500 members with volunteers providing almost all of the programs requires rethinking how we are organized, funding and capacity. To advance the conversation around diversity and inclusion, we need more members to be involved. Bringing in the perspectives of underserved groups within our membership is important and takes more than putting out the call. Building more shared understanding of definitions, concerns, and perceptions will help draw in more voices. Building different pathways and developing members' understanding of the organization is needed to increase engagement. The Board should listen as much as they speak and each Board member could commit to trying to connect with more members across regions.

### All Applicant Questions

**Please provide a maximum 250 word statement of why you wish to run for the International ACAC Board, and other relevant information you would like members to know about you that you have not previously shared in this application. Your statement will be shared with the general membership if you are slated for a position.**

Greetings from Switzerland! I am thrilled to be a candidate for VP of Professional Development. When I was a new counselor, I relied heavily on International ACAC and its networks to transition from a different educational sector to a new role in a new country. I am motivated to run to help others grow professionally by connecting people and resources. I have been involved in International ACAC in several volunteer positions, including on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Governance and Nominating Committees. In these roles, I have been part of discussions, focus groups and other exchanges where I have heard from members about adapting to new realities, managing change and increased focus on student and staff well-being. I will seek your feedback about your professional needs to work with the PD Committee to enhance and expand current programs and develop new ones. I have a vision to build tiers of professional development for members at various stages of their careers and more formal recognition or certification for this training. I also hope to explore stronger collaboration with other organizations. As a member of the Executive Board, I will be a voice to promote greater communication with the general membership and to build better and more accessible pathways to engage in volunteer and leadership roles. This is a time of change for the organization and I am committed to being part of it. I look forward to contributing to the future of International ACAC. Thanks for your consideration.