

Candidate 5

Describe how your background and experiences could contribute to being the Vice President of Membership for the MAR-AMTA.

I have had the honor and privilege to serve the profession in various capacities throughout my career. This includes being elected, and appointed, to serve on Executive Boards, committee, and task forces at both the National and Regional level. I am also fortunate enough to have served as a pre-internship and internship supervisor, and internship director for the majority of my career. Through my work with students and fellow professionals, I have had the opportunity to dialogue with colleagues at various stages in their career, hearing their concerns, struggles, triumphs, and ideas for the continued evolution of our professional organization. Now more than ever, we need the courage to listen, and the resolve to act on behalf of those we serve.

What motivates and interests you about being Vice President of Membership for MAR-AMTA?

What type of organization do we want to belong to? What is our collective identity, and how could that be represented in a professional organization? How does a professional organization continue to evolve to meet the diverse needs of members? While this organization has created community for some, others struggle to find their sense of belonging and representation. The Vice President of Membership position is a crucial link between members and the board of directors. I am interested in serving as that bridge because I am committed to facilitating dialogue, information, and improving what membership ought to be. We are a stronger, more effective organization when we can all feel like this community represents our voices and interests. The MAR executive board has laid out a long-term plan for some of this systemic change. I see this position as playing a vital role in that change, and I am eager to be a part of the work needed to invest in this type of organizational change with and for members, and the greater music therapy community at large.

The current Executive Board of MAR-AMTA is invested in a long term plan to examine and dismantle oppressive structures that create harm for historically marginalized groups within our region. If elected, how will you commit to engaging in this process with humility and awareness of the impact of your sociocultural identities? What do you feel you could contribute towards the goal of creating a more inclusive, equitable, and just environment for all members and non-members of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the American Music Therapy Association?

As a music therapist, and more importantly as a white person, I continue to do my own work to understand the impact of my presence and privilege in this community (and my own). I am learning to recognize the ways in which I have

been complicit with, or contributed to, oppressive organizational structures. With any assumption of service on behalf of others, I believe we are called to step into such roles with great humility and the understanding that we are part of systems designed to disadvantage some of our colleagues from marginalized identities. Our mere presence continues to perpetuate these systems without the cultivation of awareness and the commitment to action. I come into the space committed to continued learning from sources available to me, giving credit to the true authors of that knowledge. While we have much to gain from our music therapy community, care should be taken to source our learning from the spaces designed for such efforts, rather than continually leaning on our colleagues from marginalized communities to teach us. From that learning comes the knowledge to act, while maintaining the courage to listen.