

Candidate 4

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

I have been a board-certified music therapist since 2009. I have over 8 years of experience building music therapy programs in pediatric and in inpatient psychiatric settings, and 2 years of experience in coordinating clinical music therapy research in community health settings. During this time, I have made it my practice to position myself as a learner when I am entering communities or cultures where I am a newcomer, whether as a clinician, a researcher, a student, or a volunteer. I believe that the most effective collaboration occurs when everyone's voices are heard. Although my clinical work has been primarily located in large institutions, I am sensitive to the fact that music therapists within the Mid-Atlantic Region operate under a variety of working conditions. I would create opportunities for all music therapists within the MAR to express how they would best like to be supported by the MAR-AMTA organization.

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

Over the past two years, I have served the membership behind the scenes on various committees. Notably, I worked with a fantastic, dedicated group of fellow music therapists to assess how the MAR region is currently responding to the issue of sexual harassment in music therapy. We have much work to do in this area, and the input of member and non-member music therapists was crucial in helping us to assess where to start. I believe that there are many reasons why music therapists may choose to become or refrain from being a member of the AMTA, and that is imperative that we sincerely question why that is. It is with great interest that I learned of the development of an ad-hoc committee charged with the dismantling of systemic oppression and injustice within our institutions. If I were to be elected to this position, I would be wholly supportive of that committee's charge. I believe that the MAR-AMTA organization can only serve our members to the extent that our leadership and our members are willing to examine our own positions of privilege, and to share power with those who are affected by decisions made by those in power. I also understand that changing processes takes time, and a crucial factor in sustaining change is the willingness to learn that each individual brings to their face-to-face interactions with those whose social locations and intersectional identities differ from our own.

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?

I am the child of immigrants and a visible racial minority who practices non-traditional relationship styles. At the same time, I am acutely aware of the privilege afforded me by my socioeconomic status, my abilities, and the way my particular race is sometimes perceived by those in power. As a leader in my community, I have taken many

opportunities to draw attention to the anti-racist work that my community still needs to do. I have made a commitment to educating myself about historically marginalized communities, and I assume the stance of a learner in my encounters with those whose experiences differ from my own. I will commit to this process of helping to examine and dismantle oppressive structures in our organizations, whether or not I am elected to this position. If elected, I look forward to learning from the music therapists in our region how best I can serve all our communities, in the position as VP of Membership.