

Rosemary Martin Edwards for President-Elect
Personal Statement

It is with the greatest pleasure and excitement that I express my interest in serving as the next President-Elect for the Potomac and Chesapeake Association for College Admission Counseling (PCACAC). Over the past fifteen years, I have had the privilege of working at a variety of institutions including a small private university, two large public universities, and serving in the capacity of Director of College Counseling at a private secondary school in Washington, D.C. I recently made the decision to return to the college admission environment and currently serve as the Assistant Director of Visitor Engagement at the University of Maryland, College Park. These various roles have helped me understand the vast differences within our profession and the challenges both sides of the desk face. My time serving PCACAC began after my first conference when I was tapped as the first co-chair for the Communications Committee in 2011. During that time, I also volunteered for the conference and after a couple years of service was tapped to become the next Conference Planning Chair. In this capacity, I have learned from a number of past presidents and affiliate leaders who have become my mentors and incredibly influential in my career. In 2020, when the pandemic hit, PCACAC had to face the harsh reality of canceling the in-person conference. Working alongside the leadership team, we made the decision to move forward with a virtual conference. We were able to successfully host the conference within twenty-eight days from the decision to move to a virtual environment. In 2021, we were also forced to move the conference to a virtual environment. The last two years have been a pivotal time for PCACAC as we have faced fiscal scrutiny that could have become detrimental. It has been incredibly rewarding to be a part of a leadership team that helped PCACAC prevail through these times. The conference has truly become a passion of mine

because it is so fundamental to PCACAC as an organization, and we get to see the direct impact the conference experience can have on attendees and our professions. I am looking forward to leading the 2022 conference as we come back in-person at Hotel Madison in Harrisonburg, VA. In addition to these leadership roles, I have served as a PCACAC Delegate and represented us at the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) annual conference as an Assembly Delegate during a term of three years. I have also spent time volunteering for the PCACAC Professional Development (PD) Committee serving as faculty for a variety of programs including serving as faculty at PCACAC Summer Institute (SI). In 2015, I received the NACAC Rising Star award in recognition of my passion and efforts in creating programming for Hispanic/LatinX populations in the PCACAC region. That same year, the PCACAC PD committee was also awarded the NACAC Rising Star for the Drive-In Workshops led by Robyn Lady, and hosted all over the PCACAC region. The goal of the Drive-In program was to bring professional development opportunities to public school counselors that may not otherwise have access to such programming. In 2019, the NACAC invited me to take on the role of Co-Chair for the Hispanic/LatinX Special Interest Group. Through this role, it has allowed me to meet and learn from colleagues all over the United States and world. It has been enlightening to learn more about the various regions and their current climate in working with this population. This role has also allowed me to gain valuable insight into the national organization and be a part of impactful decisions. As a first-generation Latina, it brings me joy to be able to be a part of students' educational journey and path towards their next step in life. I grew up experiencing the challenges of many underserved students' educational journey, including translating parent meetings, being labeled for Free/Reduced lunch, being an English Language Learner, and a constant feeling of being alone or different. Navigating the college process was probably the

most transformational part of my journey. My parents lacked the knowledge of the American college application system which quickly translated into a lack of interest to my counselor. These personal experiences have set the stage for my career in education. I genuinely understand that all students' barriers look different even beyond just their race and socioeconomic status. My ability to transcend the admission process and engage families is how I truly found my voice and my confidence in this profession. My goal for PCACAC, if elected to serve, is to expand our programming to continue the theme of inclusivity aligning with our organizational mission. I also plan to continue the hard work of bringing us back to a fiscally sound place. Using various personalized touch points I will also encourage leaders in our region to see the added benefit of encouraging young professionals to get involved. This will ultimately help us develop the next generation of PCACAC leadership. I look forward to the opportunity to serve as PCACAC President-Elect. ¡Sí, se puede! I am excited to have the opportunity to be considered! Thank you!