



DR. WILL FRANKENBERGER

Chief Learning Officer
Delta Zeta National Sorority

Candidate, AFA President

Please concisely outline your professional volunteer experience (most recent position first) and any other volunteer experience, both within and outside of the association, that is directly related to association management, board service, or the position for which you are accepting a nomination. Be sure to include both the position held and dates of service.

Professionally, my extensive experience in association management and Board service is marked by a strong focus on strategic leadership, professional development, governance execution, public health, and stakeholder engagement. I currently serve on the Board of Directors for AFA and on the Resolutions and Finance Committees. I have also served on the Personnel Committee. Additionally, I led a task force to explore our Awards and Recognition program. Past Board and volunteer service includes roles such as President of the Midwest Color Guard Circuit, Director of Educational Programs for the Association of Fraternal Leadership and Values, and Awards & Recognition Chairman for the Association of Fraternity and Sorority Advisors. As President of the Midwest Color Guard Circuit, I managed a small nonprofit in the pageantry arts. As President of the Board, I streamlined our communication practices, increased our reserves by 350%, and clarified the roles of Board members and the functions each officer plays. Within AFA, I have served as the Awards and Recognition Committee Chairman, Exchange Chairman, and Firesides Chat Chairman.

Describe your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the AFA board of directors (BOD). What strengths or characteristics do you possess that would make you an effective BOD member? How, specifically, have you demonstrated this?

The AFA BoD serves as the strategic and fiduciary governing body. The BoD is responsible for advancing the strategic plan, stewarding resources responsibly, and ensuring that decisions align with the long-term needs of a diverse membership. Unlike a working board model, AFA's Board focuses on governance, strategic oversight, and empowering staff and volunteers to execute initiatives while maintaining accountability to the mission and the organization's financial health. This requires analysis that aligns with a broader strategic vision and supports the long-term execution of the plan, while considering the financial impact and the priority of where money is spent. My experience as both a current Board member and an executive headquarters professional has strengthened my ability to think strategically, communicate effectively, and balance competing priorities within limited resources. In my

professional role, I regularly set priorities informed by the member experience, organizational goals, and available resources, then galvanize stakeholders charged with implementing initiatives effectively. As a Board member, I have contributed thoughtfully to discussions and worked with stakeholders to better understand member needs. I bring a governance-oriented mindset grounded in data-informed decision-making. When data is incomplete, I ask questions and seek additional information to ensure decisions are thoughtful, equitable, and aligned with the AFA's broader strategic goals.

The fraternity and sorority profession (and higher education in general) is a complex, interdisciplinary space with many key stakeholders. Who do you see as some of the Association's primary stakeholders? What do you see as the greatest opportunities to build stakeholder alignment, consensus, and partnership? How would you effectively lead the association through this exercise in alignment?

AFA's primary stakeholders include campus-based fraternity and sorority professionals, headquarters professionals, volunteers, and educational partners. These stakeholders all influence the health and future of the profession, but they often operate with different priorities, pressures, and measures of success. Because of this, AFA is uniquely positioned to serve as a convener that helps bridge perspectives while advancing the broader goals of advancing our profession. I believe the greatest opportunity for stakeholder alignment is to create stronger, intentional partnerships across these groups while recognizing the changing realities of higher education. As institutions experience restructuring, enrollment pressures, and position consolidation, professionals are increasingly expected to work across multiple functional areas. This creates opportunities for AFA to collaborate more intentionally with organizations like NACA or ASCA through joint professional development, collaborative educational resources, research partnerships, and potentially innovative membership models that expand access and professional connections. I also believe educational partners are essential stakeholders in this alignment work. Graduate preparation programs, faculty, and researchers help shape the future workforce and strengthen the profession's evidence-informed practices. Building stronger relationships between practitioners and educational partners creates opportunities to better connect research, competency development, and practical application. To effectively lead AFA through this work, I would focus on transparent communication, data-informed decision-making, and authentic stakeholder engagement. I understand the importance of listening across perspectives while maintaining focus on strategic priorities. Effective alignment requires trust, clarity of purpose, and consistent communication about how partnerships strengthen both the profession and the member experience.

One of the main responsibilities of board members is to maintain financial accountability of the organization. Board members act as trustees of the organization's assets and must exercise due diligence to oversee that the organization is well-managed and that its financial situation remains sound. Please describe a time when you have had to make difficult financial and/or resource allocation decisions and how would you use that experience as you serve on the board.

As a current member of the AFA Finance Committee and someone with nonprofit financial management experience, I understand that financial stewardship requires balancing mission-centered priorities with long-term organizational sustainability. One example of this occurred during past budget planning where I faced competing priorities between investing in expanded leadership development opportunities compared to membership recruitment investments. Knowing without membership the leadership development offerings were null, a challenging decision was made to invest in recruitment-based programming and using a small strategic reserve pull to also fund leadership development offerings. To inform the decision, I reviewed participation trends, historical budget data, projected revenue, member feedback, and the organization's strategic priorities. We evaluated which initiatives were most aligned with member needs and organizational goals while also considering operational realities and long-term financial health. I worked to ensure discussions remained grounded in data rather than in reaction or assumption, and to communicate transparently about the rationale for decisions, the data that informs them, and how they align with the organization's mission and strategic plan. As a BoD member, I would continue approaching financial oversight with a strategic, data-informed, and mission-centered mindset focused on the long-term health of AFA.

AFA's strategic plan, 'Forward to 50', will be coming to a close in 2026, and the AFA Board of Directors will be called to think about AFA's future strategic direction. Looking forward into the next five years, in what ways you see AFA being uniquely called to serve our profession? Discuss how you typically approach prioritization and allocation of strategic planning efforts, and what you see as the Board of Directors' role in strategic plan development.

AFA is uniquely called to strengthen and steward the long-term sustainability of the fraternity and sorority profession within a rapidly changing higher education landscape. The BoD's role is to establish priorities, steward long-term sustainability, allocate resources responsibly, and assess emerging trends that may impact the profession. I approach strategic planning as a priority-based exercise rather than a strictly timeline-based framework, as higher education is evolving too rapidly for organizations to remain overly rigid. AFA should establish measurable benchmarks tied to strategic priorities while maintaining the flexibility to pivot as conditions change. These priorities must be informed through intentional stakeholder engagement and collaboration across a diverse membership. Strategic areas I think AFA must be prepared

to consider for our future include: member retention and acquisition strategies; the impact of declining graduate preparation programs which widens the gap of developing the skill of advising; campus restructuring and mergers which create an impact on professionals called to serve in multiple roles and how we maximize the development of professionals to remain solvent and hold those roles compared to other campus professionals given the interdisciplinary tools our professionals uniquely possess; and continued prioritization of investment in professional pipeline development and competency advancement.

The AFA President serves as our board chair and works with our Executive Director to shepherd our board through critical decisions impacting the future of AFA. How would you lead our board of directors through those decisions, and how would you ensure the directors remain focused on discussions relevant to the broader health of the Association?

As President, I see my role as facilitating effective governance and decision-making. Importantly, I believe one of the President's most important responsibilities is stewarding a strong and healthy relationship between the BoD and the Executive Director. The BoD must provide support, accountability, and trust so the Executive Director can effectively lead AFA's operational work. I would work closely with the Executive Director to ensure the BoD has the appropriate context, data, and strategic framing before major discussions. During meetings, I would ensure every Director is prepared and held accountable through contribution to the conversations centered on governance-level responsibilities such as mission alignment, strategic priorities, financial sustainability, member impact, and organizational risk, rather than operational detail. While disagreement and differing perspectives are healthy, as the President, I would mediate those discussions toward collaborative decision making and collective ownership once decisions are reached. I remain committed to sharing and receiving peer feedback and redirecting conversations toward strategic outcomes, data-informed decision making, and the long term sustainability of AFA rather than individual interests or short term reactions. My goal would be to create a culture of collaboration, accountability, and respectful confrontation that strengthens the BoD's ability to govern effectively through complex decisions.

The labor of the AFA President goes above and beyond that of an at-large Board member, including but not limited to general Board management and accountability, executive supervision and collaboration, and public involvement in the sorority/fraternity industry. How would you approach managing and prioritizing multiple demands on your time in the Presidential role?

If I have the honor of serving in this role, AFA would become my top professional focus, working alongside my daily responsibilities. With the backing of my organization, I feel confident that I have the right skills, both professionally and personally, as well as the needed infrastructure, to succeed. I have a strong ability to stay committed over time, and as a current Board member, I'm able to prepare thoroughly for meetings and dedicate extra time to discussions and planning beyond what's typically expected. I would approach the Presidential role by staying focused on governance priorities, delegating effectively, and practicing clear and respectful communication. I stay mindful of conflicts of interest through transparency and by separating activities if a conflict becomes unmanageable or isn't in the best interest of AFA. The President can't lead effectively by trying to handle every detail alone. Instead, the role involves prioritizing the long-term health of AFA, building a strong partnership with the Executive Director, and leveraging committees and volunteers wisely. Managing the demands of the Presidency also means making sure responsibilities are shared appropriately and that strategic goals stay at the forefront. I would focus on decisions and opportunities that most directly support AFA's sustainability, visibility, and effectiveness, while staying adaptable and ready to lead during moments that require extra leadership or public involvement.

Allocation Exercise

You receive 100 points, each of which can be spent to prioritize the board's time. Allocate these 100 points based on what priority areas you think the board should spend their time on. Allocate more points to those areas that you think are more important.

Priority Area	Points Allotted	Remarks
Annual Meeting Planning	3	Consideration here is limited to conversations that impact the member experience, including pricing and accessibility, as they affect AFA's financial health. BoD members should not be involved in the detailed planning of the meeting.
Educational Program Selection	2	This may have some connection to the strategic development of professionals, but the actual selection is not for the BoD. May also have some relevance as it results in the Foundation relationship for stewarding institutes or other programs, but again, not in actual logistical scheduling or selection.
Budget Oversight and Financial Management	30	Financial accountability and oversight are one of the main responsibilities of the BoD and are thus an active and ongoing conversation.
Developing Strategy for Members' Professional Competency and Mentorship	20	We are mission-driven and intentional with resource allocation and staff time. This task is central to our decision-making and planning, keeping our work mission-aligned and prioritizing the Board's charges for staff and volunteers to execute.
Stakeholder Outreach & Partnership (NASPA, ASCA, FSL Umbrellas, etc.)	12	Strategic relationships are vital to maintaining a healthy association that is engaged with our other peers. While the Executive Director will manage many of the ongoing relationships, it is important for the BoD to support the outreach and fostering connections, as requested by the Executive Director.
Communication Strategy	10	How the BoD communicates that ongoing work "at the table" and how decisions are made continues to be a focus area for the BoD. Here the conversation is around what and how the membership should feel included with ongoing of our time together, less of the broader communication strategy of the Association.
Personnel and Association Human Resources	13	I answered this question with careful consideration, specifically focusing on the President's role. The President, in partnership with the Personnel Committee Chair and the AFA Foundation President, is the agency responsible for overseeing the Executive Director's work. This includes building trust and transparency from the Exec to the BoD, but does not include office staff oversight. This allocation also includes volunteer personnel matters that may require attention.
Creating Professional Community through Technology and Identity/Affinity Spaces	3	This is connected to current strategic priorities, and while this is not a direct action of the BoD, an awareness of its progress is important for ensuring advancement of the strategic plan and accountability.
Advancing Research	3	This is connected to current strategic priorities, and while this is not a direct action of the BoD, an awareness of its progress is important for ensuring advancement of the strategic plan and accountability.
Policy and Position Statement Development	4	This is not a constant need, but is important to have it become a short-goal focus if/when the need may arise. Given these represent the "voice" of the Association I scored it slightly higher as it carries weight for many within the field.
Other (Please describe in the appropriate field)	0	N/A