

Mitch Joseph

Director of Student Life

Urbana University

**Professional Involvement:**

OCPA: 2007-Present (2014-2015 Innovative Program in Student Affairs Award Winner; Careers in Student Affairs Conference Chair, 2015; Communications Chair 2016-Present) NASPA: National GLBT Knowledge Community Graduate Student Core Member (2009) SOCHE (Southwestern Ohio Council on Higher Education) Young Professionals of Champaign County (Founding Member & Steering Committee member)

**Why are you interested in participating as a member of the OCPA Executive Board?**

I believe that serving on the OCPA executive board is one of the best ways to give back to the student affairs profession in Ohio. Ohio is where I work. Ohio is where I play. Ohio is home. Serving our profession in this capacity can provide profound enjoyment. I enjoy serving others. I enjoy working hard to see an association, and profession, thrive. I enjoy working with a dedicated and driven team of professionals. Through the work of the OCPA Executive Board and our entire membership, we have a great team working together to accomplish great things. Teamwork and collaboration is at the forefront of what we do as a profession and it should be at the heart of how OCPA operates. But most of all, I'm interested in leading OCPA because of the students we serve. If we constantly strive for excellence in our profession, our students will benefit. If we constantly strive to be better, our students will have it better. Our students deserve Student Affairs professionals that are highly educated, highly skilled, and highly driven to provide the best learning experience for our students!

**What qualities and skills do you think you can bring to the indicated position(s) and to the OCPA Board?**

Collaboration. Organization. Passion. Collaboration is important in the role of President for multiple reasons. If we aren't working together as a team, learning from each other, and partnering whenever possible, we won't be able to survive. In an age of fiscal responsibility, we need to work with our partners around the state and beyond to find ways of working together. Leading the entire organization also requires the ability to collaborate with our membership. That's the perfect outlet for the inclusion of more members leading our organization in new and different ways – the opportunities to collaborate are only limited to what can be imagined! Organization doesn't just mean "a place for everything and everything in its place"; it's a detail-oriented approach to accomplishing goals. Digging through the weeds to find the meaning or purpose of the program is ineffective, but clearly stating the program or organization's objective at the beginning will lead to success. Organization can help OCPA by setting clearly defined objectives, plotting our course, and working towards making the objective a reality.

Finally, any leader needs passion. Passion drives at the heart of what motivates a leader and an organization. Without strong desire and passion, the organization cannot succeed. I constantly look for new ways to find passion – celebrating our successes, learning from our fumbles, and finding new opportunities are just a few ways that I find passion. But I cannot have that passion without a strong membership, without our membership succeeding, OCPA cannot succeed.

**What do you believe to be the role of professional associations like OCPA?**

The role of organizations such as OCPA is well stated in our mission and vision. Professional association, specifically higher education associations, should serve as a knowledge community working to better the education and livelihood of our students. OCPA should position itself to be the top state-based higher education association. We've made great strides in promoting higher education research with our Journal of Research, Assessment, and Practice. We work to meet the needs of our undergraduate students by hosting an annual Careers in Student Affairs conference and striving to be the best higher education professionals possible. It's hard work – but that hard work has taken OCPA far. I believe that through this hard work, we together can see OCPA continue its upward path. We can set our priorities and initiatives towards continually growing OCPA; we will position ourselves to be the premier Student Affairs organization in Ohio for all everyone in our field - from graduate students to our SSAOs. Associations, primarily OCPA, brings together a diverse, active, and energized network of higher education professionals to learn from one another – to improve the daily lives of our students and our profession. The passion and drive for what we do lies in our students. That's why OCPA exists. That's why we work to learn from one another. That's why we do what we do. Professional organizations exist to build bridges and learning. We will work hard to make OCPA a premier higher education association.