

2018-19 OCPA Executive Board Nominee Information

Nominee Name: Sam Filkins

Nominee Institution: Kenyon College

Title: Assistant Director of Student Engagement

Positions for Consideration: 4 Year Private Member-at-Large

Please describe your involvement with OCPA.

Since moving back to Ohio in 2013 I have felt welcomed by the OCPA community. I have had the opportunity to present seven different sessions in that time at the annual conference along with at the Mid-Managers Institute. More importantly, I have had the great pleasure of learning from inspiring practitioners by being an engaged participant in sessions and conversations between sessions at the annual conference. It is in these moments, between the sessions, where I have been able to establish a network of professionals across the state that I know I can call to share ideas or ask for perspective.

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

The strength of any professional association comes down to the engagement of the members and even more so the diligent work of the executive board. I have been able to benefit from the great work of many different folks on the executive board in the past and it is time for me to step up and return the favor. If selected to join the executive board my goal would be to continue to advance the organization by providing an energy and passion that only comes from a newly added member.

What qualities and skills do you think you can bring to the indicated positions, and to the OCPA Board?

I have had the opportunity to work at many types of institutions, but have felt particularly connected to 4-year private schools since graduating from Baldwin Wallace University nearly ten years ago. Professionals at 4-year private institutions need strong professional associations to help expand their sounding board to make up for the smaller staff size. We can learn from one another and share resources to enrich the educational experience on campus. My goal would be expand the membership of 4-year private schools and increase their participation in the annual conference, professional development opportunities, and the careers conference. Representation of presenters from 4-year private schools hasn't always been the strongest so some potential attendees may not be able to see the benefit of participating. I would try to raise up the voices of those at 4-year private schools to encourage them to not only attend but to submit presentation proposals to share their knowledge.

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

The funny thing about student affairs is that even though we are constantly around people we can sometimes feel isolated. It is as if the issues facing our students are so unique that we can't

find someone who will understand us. It is in these moments that the support of a professional association is the most helpful. To realize that we are not alone in this work. Instead, there are others who have faced similar challenges that you will face and are willing to help guide you through. They are also there to help celebrate accomplishments because the members all know that sometimes a seemingly small win to outsiders takes real work. State associations can have an even greater impact than national organizations because there is a shared knowledge. We know each other's schools not just by headlines but by the people who work there. This familiarity offers an opportunity for deeper connection than can only be established in state-wide associations.