



2021 Executive Board Election Candidate

President-Elect Application

Name: Kristoffer Toribio

Title: Assistant Director International Admissions and Recruitment

Institution: Orange Coast College

Location/Region: California/Canada&US

Member Group: Higher Education

Background and Experience

Years of experience in post-secondary admissions counseling or related fields? 10+ years

Please describe any professional or volunteer experience you feel would be relevant for serving on the International ACAC Executive Board.

I am qualified to be President-elect based on my extensive breadth of knowledge in our field and commitment to service. I have worked in undergraduate admissions and international education since 2008 and been a member of International ACAC since 2014. I am currently the Assistant Director, Global Engagement/Manager, International Admissions for Orange Coast College which oversees admissions, recruitment, marketing, hiring and management. Based on the position description, I have extensive experience in event planning, management, project development, representing my institution to prospective students and also advocating for a cause which is education access through community college. Most importantly, I have tremendous support from Orange Coast College which encourages staff and managers to be involved, including leadership roles in professional organizations.

Please describe how you have engaged in the international community, and the impact this has had on your professional life. Describe any International ACAC Committee experience you have.

We are in a mission driven profession and service is necessary to be successful and impactful. My involvement with International ACAC includes being a mentor at the New Member Orientation, serving on the DEIJ workgroup and presenting at the annual conference on topics

such as community college, transfer admissions, and access for leadership opportunities for BIPOC professionals. The most important session I conducted was titled "International ACAC Unfiltered", a member driven initiative to provide a safe space to share incidents of racism as a victim, enabler or perpetrator and how it impacted the work we do. In that same year, I was recognized by my peers and awarded the "International ACAC Distinguished Service Award" through my work advocating for community college and helping students find fit. My commitment to service extends beyond International ACAC. When the announcement of a Trump Administration's SEVIS executive order which would have resulted in the deportation of thousands of international students, I mobilized my social media influence to create content to bring awareness and started a [change.org](https://www.change.org) petition garnering more than 36,000 signatures. I also feel I provide insight and tools to help admissions recruiters do their jobs more effectively. My biggest strength is creativity. In 2019, there was a session at the conference about "Social Media Marketing" and unannounced, the presenters used my work as the example to help our colleagues with content creating to appeal to the Gen-Z student. I am also an active poster on the International ACAC Facebook page as usually one of the first to respond to counselor inquiries, posting content that could serve the greater good and opening and participating in dialogue in regards to issues that would disable access, diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion.

Please describe your affiliation with NACAC, if any. How long have you been a member of NACAC? Do you have any volunteer or committee work or experience with NACAC?

I have not held any volunteer or committee work with NACAC as my institution is currently not a member. However, my career started at undergraduate admissions for a 4-year university and I was trained the "NACAC" way. I have implemented many of its principle of best practices to the admissions and recruitment work I do for Orange Coast College. I do intend to be involved in NACAC if elected President and my goal would be to provide valuable insight to NACAC's guidance of commission-based recruitment.

President-Elect Specific Questions

Please describe your previous role(s) on the International ACAC Board and/or within International ACAC and how you see this as relevant for serving as President-Elect.

I have not served on the International ACAC Executive board. My involvement with the Board was being an active member by volunteering on the DEIJ workgroup and a conference mentor for the new comers' orientation and the Inclusion, Access and Success committee.

Please share your philosophy on leadership and what makes an effective leader. Please provide examples from your previous experience.

I am a proud Hawai'i boy and my philosophy on leadership is based on our motto of "Aloha" which has many altruistic meanings. "Aloha" means being a mentor, being impactful, having a vision, guiding the youth, sharing knowledge and wisdom, honoring respect to those who paved the way, having compassion, having empathy, living through passion, being open-minded, paying it forward, being humble, having integrity, being inclusive, and most importantly it means service without expecting anything back. "Aloha" is guided by the principle of "Pono"

which in Hawaiian means "righteous" or "goodness" and I serve because it's the right thing to do. Leadership is not a title you give yourself. It's earned and validated by how your actions impact positive change for your community. One example is learning why my colleagues nominated me for the "International ACAC Distinguished Service Award" which echoed my belief that selflessly helping students find fit and creating opportunities for students to access higher education keeps our profession sustainable. As a leader, I hope this sets an example of how we conduct ourselves in our association.

Please describe any event planning or organizing experience you have had. Please list the year and your specific role.

I have extensive event planning experience as an admissions counselor and manager. This includes hosting counselor visits, open houses, international student orientation, admitted student receptions, information sessions both domestically and abroad, etc. When I started my role at Orange Coast College, I revamped our orientation program to include an academic and student service resource fair and student led campus tours. In the past, the event was only workshops on how to maintain F-1 student status and class registration. Through event planning I learned skills such as budgeting, assigning tasks, shopping for vendors, creating programming, securing speakers and entertainment, decorating, etc.

Part of this position is managing people, committees, and projects. What is your experience in this area? Describe your management style.

I have extensive experience in management. I am currently a manager for my department, the Global Engagement Center alongside my supervisor, Associate Dean, Nathan Jensen. Our operations include international admissions, F-1 student services, academic counseling, "IEC@OCC" intensive English language school, study abroad and the multi-cultural center. Our department has a lot of moving parts and our employees wear multiple hats. The most effective way to manage my team is to provide broad oversight. Every member of our department are experts in their respective areas and it's important as a manager to provide the resources and advocacy necessary to allow them to do their jobs effectively. In addition, I am fully supportive of professional development opportunities and their involvement in cross campus workgroups and committees. Morale is absolutely critical in managing a team and it's built through trust and accountability. This is achieved by prioritizing timely follow-up, empowering our staff to contribute to decision making, collaboration, encouraging creatively and new ideas and getting to know them as people first.

Please share your vision for the future of International ACAC; speak to priorities, growth and change in our association.

Fresh ideas and new perspectives are critical as we are reaching a pivotal point in our profession. The COVID-19 pandemic reignited conversations of racial inequity, injustice and privilege, and a threat to democracy around the world is changing our field and how we have historically "done things". One important area that International ACAC needs to work on, and the reason why I am running for President-elect, is providing access. I have working experience in this as a representative and manager for a 2-year community college. Our membership is becoming more diverse and the association needs to shift its focus on having an equity mindset

in all areas, including the work of the committees. I want to serve to ensure that the membership's call to action for diversity, inclusion, and access is not just a priority, but remains sustainable for generations to come. I do have a track record of producing enrollment results for my institution. I feel I can apply these same principles by implementing measurements, targets and timelines. This includes laying groundwork to provide advancement and leadership opportunities for our historically underrepresented BIPOC membership, amplify regional representation, and diversify membership of higher education institutions, secondary schools, and IEC's that can support the most underserved students. The COVID-19 pandemic has also increased our dependency on technology and innovation and my vision for International ACAC is to provide access to professional development opportunities and training that is on-trend with engaging and addressing the needs of Gen-Z and beyond.

How would you advance the conversation around diversity and inclusion within International ACAC? How do you believe the Executive Board should function in this capacity?

Diversity and inclusion must be the top priority of the Executive board and implemented in all areas within the association. One of the main reasons why I want to run for International ACAC President-elect was because of my own disappointment as an International ACAC member. I was disappointed, frustrated, and confused in the association's lack of immediate response to condemn the murder of George Floyd. I was also even more disappointed to hear the frustration echoed throughout the membership, especially our BIPOC community. This sparked several conversations of inequality, privilege and racism in our field, which brought debate on how the association handled situations where it was felt that diversity and inclusion was not a top priority. As a BIPOC professional, I went through a reconciliation process to understand my emotions and reflect on racism I experienced. I also started to question structures within our profession and the association that enabled it. What I felt was the right thing to do was to unite with our BIPOC colleagues and allies to create space to be unfiltered. This space was so important because victims of racism have their own timeline to process, and forcing recommendations and solutions without creating a space to reflect will leave out important voices who can truly contribute to advancing diversity, inclusion and anti-racism. The most consistent message I am hearing from members is a call for transparency, accountability and mechanisms to report grievances. When members, especially our BIPOC community, share recommendations for diversity and inclusion, it must be understood that it comes from deep reflection and lived experiences. It is the obligation of the Executive Board to respect it with its highest consideration when deciding on policy, which does not require a survey or taskforce. I do acknowledge that International ACAC is taking steps to address this and hopeful that work is being done to ensure diversity and equity is sustainable for generations to come.

Please provide a maximum 250 word statement of why you wish to run for the International ACAC Board, and other relevant information you would like members to know about you that you have not previously shared in this application.

To our members of International ACAC, Aloha e (greetings). My name is Kristoffer Toribio and I proudly represent Orange Coast College a 2-year community college in Costa Mesa, California. I have 12 years of experience in undergraduate admissions and international education. The reason why I am in this profession is to be a mentor to our students because I know what's like

to not have one. I am a proud child of immigrant parents from the Philippines, growing up in one of the most beautiful places in the world, the island of Kaua'i in the Kingdom of Hawai'i. However, I had very little access to college information and global experiences. As I progressed in my career, this profession has given me mentorship I was longing for and a sense of belonging. The reason why I want to be President-elect is my kuleana (responsibility) to give back to our international community that has given me so much. Most critically, I want to serve to ensure that the membership's call to action for diversity, inclusion, and access is not just a priority, but remains sustainable for generations to come. Goals that I will work to achieve as President-elect is centered on numerous recommendations made by our members. This includes laying groundwork to provide advancement and leadership opportunities for our historically underrepresented BIPOC and LGBTQI membership, amplifying regional representation, and diversifying membership of higher education institutions, secondary schools, and IEC's that can support the most underserved students. As transparency and accountability will be key in achieving the association's goal for diversity and inclusion, I will commit toward providing timelines and progress reports for members. The beauty of international admissions counseling is its inherent diversity and my vision is to bridge, integrate and unite as one as we all have a common goal to serve students. As we work together toward a diverse and inclusive association, remember this motto from my alma mater, the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, "Maluna a'e o na lahui a pau keola o ke kanaka", (Above all nations is humanity).