



## 2024 Executive Board Election Candidate

### President-Elect

**Name:** Nathan Mack

**Title:** Associate Director

**Institution:** University of Southern California

**Location/Region:** United States/Canada & U.S.

**Member Group:** Post-Secondary (College & University)

### All Applicant Questions

**Discuss your involvement with International ACAC, highlighting specific roles (with dates) and contributions made during your volunteer or leadership tenure.**

I have been actively engaged in the field of International Admission since 2013 and have maintained my membership with International ACAC during this entire period. Since 2018, I have played a pivotal role as a member of the Conference College Fair Committee, assuming the position of Chair in 2021. Concurrently, I volunteered on the Advocacy and Outreach Committee from 2019 to 2021. My most noteworthy contribution lies in steering the organization through a dynamic period — from fully virtual conferences to hybrid fairs in the initial stages to successfully orchestrating a return to a fully in-person traditional format during the recent summer. Another key accomplishment was the implementation of the Global Fair, an initiative highlighting non-U.S. universities at our annual conference. Collaborating with the fairs team, I take pride in facilitating the execution of this important event, which reflects my dedication to the success of our organization and to heeding whatever calls the membership may make.

**Identify and articulate a critical issue in college admissions for international students that you would like to or have championed, emphasizing its importance and potential impact on the community.**

An issue that consistently motivates me is addressing the underlying causes of escalating stress and anxiety in international college admissions. The intricate landscape of university options and application requirements, and the pervasive lack of clarity surrounding admission and aid processes contribute significantly to the pressure felt by students. This, in turn, makes counselors' jobs difficult as they strive to provide accurate and meaningful information to their students and stakeholder groups. Universities, navigating political and legal challenges and uncertainties, grapple with the task of meeting everchanging enrollment goals. I firmly believe that, while some issues are beyond our organization's control, it is imperative for our international admission family to proactively foster trust and transparency with each other as we can. We together can aim to alleviate the burdens and pressures experienced by students. In my professional endeavors, I have consistently championed honesty and transparency, providing students and counselors with a clear understanding of the admission process within my country and at my institution. If entrusted with a leadership role at International ACAC, I am committed to advancing these principles for the betterment of the entire community.

**Detail additional experiences that have equipped you with skills and insights applicable to the position you're applying for, emphasizing transferable accomplishments.**

My experiences have equipped me with valuable skills and insights that align seamlessly with the requirements of the Presidential positions. I have important exposure and insights gathered through my role as Chair of the Fairs Committee for the annual summer conference. In this capacity, I have collaborated with the on-site team, the executive board, the dedicated full-time staff, various conference planning committees, and member volunteers. This experience has honed my ability to ensure a seamless experience for our members; it has presented both challenges and meaningful learning opportunities and I have gained a lot from it. I anticipate applying these insights on a larger scale in planning the summer 2025 conference at Northeastern. Beyond International ACAC, I served as the founding chair of the Union Friends Organization, an outreach and fundraising initiative associated with my university alma mater. This role was instrumental in imparting crucial lessons on organizational development, idea generation, and fostering

effective teamwork. Together with the team, we established bylaws, crafted agendas, orchestrated events, and successfully conducted significant fundraising efforts, breaking new ground. Additionally, my tenure as a member of my alma mater's alumni board involved planning events and programs for local alumni, further enriching my experience in organizational management and event coordination.

**Outline your comprehension of the role you are applying for, specifying changes you'd like to implement while acknowledging current practices or programs you feel are effective.**

As President-Elect/conference planning chair, I am enthusiastic about elevating the conference experience. I envision enhancing its impact for attendees by recognizing and further leveraging the unbelievably valuable collaboration and knowledge-sharing that occurs during it. As a lifelong learner, I view the conference as a valuable opportunity to gather insights beneficial to our students, employers, and profession. I aim to use this learning perspective to continually work to provide exceptional PD and networking opportunities for attendees. In my subsequent role as President, my foremost responsibility would be to support the various committees of the organization, and through them, serve and represent the membership. This involves ensuring substantial value through networking and knowledge-sharing, maintaining a global presence listening to the diverse voices in our international family, and ensuring efficient operations, given that our members' dues facilitate the organization's existence. I would emphasize collaboration, communication, and connection. It would also be important to me to help facilitate the sharing of updates about international regions and curricula, our students' experiences across the globe, and the collective needs and goals of our members. I aspire to explore avenues that will continue to promote this exchange of knowledge, thereby (hopefully) increasing trust and transparency in the international admission process. I believe that collectively, we can harness International ACAC's role as a conduit for positive change and alleviate stress and anxiety. To these ends, my focus will be on productive listening and conversation, ensuring accurate representation that adds value for all.

**Describe your leadership philosophy and strategies for effectively managing and leading a volunteer committee, emphasizing communication, collaboration, and recognition.**

My leadership philosophy, particularly within the context of volunteerism, is grounded in principles of respect, support, and effective communication. Volunteers bear a significant responsibility to the organization, yet I acknowledge that they are balancing numerous commitments in their lives. To illustrate my approach, when assuming the role of College Fair Chair each cycle, I begin with an understanding that committee members are managing various priorities. These individuals have obligations to supervisors, colleagues, staff, families, and friends, all competing for their time and attention. This flexible yet collaborative approach hinges on building trust and prioritizing transparent communication. It fosters an environment where we collectively understand our capacities and capabilities throughout the planning process, which results in realistic expectations for all. Moreover, it necessitates recognizing the varying contributions that each team member can make, acknowledging that these may fluctuate throughout each cycle. As the leader, I am committed to providing clear and consistent communication, fostering flexibility, offering unwavering support, and expressing gratitude. By doing so, we establish and maintain trust within the team, recognizing that our strength lies in our collective efforts. Through mutual respect, support, and effective communication, we can achieve remarkable outcomes as a cohesive and collaborative team.

**Explain how you would leverage the position to contribute to International ACAC's strategic plan, aligning your goals with the organization's three pillars: enhancing member experience globally, clarifying the international brand, and optimizing internal operations.**

As aspiring President-elect, my commitment aligns seamlessly with International ACAC's strategic plan. To enhance the member experience, I propose fostering dialogue through initiatives such as virtual regional updates, curricular overviews, networking events, and further spotlighting other organization types that support students like CBOs, non-profits, and governmental organizations. By enriching webinars and events to share best practices and cultivate innovative ideas to support students, we can make our members' investment more worthwhile. Further, I am dedicated to ensuring that decision-making incorporates as many voices as possible, representing the diverse perspectives within our organization not just those of the majority. This involves understanding our global value and impact, advocating for our global membership to organizations like NACAC, and addressing regional disparities in representation. Leading with a global mindset, I am committed to taking decisive actions to include the voices of all members.

Efficiency in our operations is crucial, and I bring a maximizer mentality to the table. I will seek optimization, productivity, and efficiency in every aspect while harnessing the amazing set of skills our teams have. Recognizing the challenges of stretched resources, I aspire to work smarter, not harder, alongside our dedicated staff and volunteers. This exciting challenge aligns with my goal to help International ACAC continue its trajectory as an already amazing organization.

**Share details about a notable contribution you have made in the field, underscoring its impact on the profession and industry. Highlight specific initiatives, programs, or leadership roles that showcase your commitment and expertise.**

My unwavering commitment centers on dismantling barriers of confusion, obfuscation, and misinformation to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of admission processes for students, counselors, parents, and all stakeholders. Over 15 years of experience across multiple institutions, my impact on the profession is evident through a cumulative contribution rather than a single, isolated achievement. Whether in volunteer or professional capacities, I have consistently championed the sharing of information and the cultivation of connections. This led me to the A&O committee to gather and disseminate valuable information. It propelled me to the fairs team, where I could foster meaningful connections. It inspired the creation and implementation of innovative programming for stakeholders at a previous institution. And currently, in my role at a highly selective institution, I address stress and confusion for stakeholders by prioritizing transparency and honesty. While I can't point to a marquee event or program outside of my Fairs involvement, my approach and perspective permeate all my endeavors. When I engage at events, schools, or organizations, I arrive with a commitment to kindness, honesty, and transparency. I am prepared to tackle challenging questions and provide accurate and helpful information. If entrusted with the roles of President-Elect and President of International ACAC, I pledge to tirelessly uphold these principles, recognizing that our ultimate mission is to support students and, by extension, each other.

**Share why you want to volunteer for a leadership role for International ACAC and why this particular position.**

I am applying for this with two objectives: to make a difference and to continue to grow. Working in international admission has been an incredibly fulfilling journey. The opportunity to assist international students in navigating the complex

admission process and finding their postsecondary homes is a privilege I cherish. International ACAC, its network, and the invaluable professional development it offers have been pivotal for me. I am driven by a deep sense of gratitude and a fervent desire to give back. I also look forward to the opportunity to gain experience from our members. As I have mentioned previously, our strength is the collective knowledge and expertise, and I would approach every day as a learning opportunity. I cannot think of a more, potentially, impactful experience. While I have considered applying for significant leadership roles in the past, the timing is opportune. With the backing of my employer and personal network, I have the capacity to engage more meaningfully in this work. As an admission counselor, I am committed to making the admission process transparent and less stressful for students, and I would bring the same mentality to International ACAC. My goal is to contribute to the organization's growth, ensuring robust support for its diverse global members, streamlining processes for effectiveness and efficiency, and planning a summer conference that is impactful and meaningful.