

**NAGPS Board of Directors Meeting
Sunday, June 27th, 2021**

7-9PM ET / 4-6PM PT / 6-8PM CST

Topic: BoD Meeting

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Meeting

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Attendance: [Note here](#)

[ProTrack](#)

Meeting called to order at 4:02 PM PT; 6:02 PM CT; 7:02 PM ET

1. Approval of Agenda
 - a. Motion to approve by Dir. Klein, seconded by Dir. Potter; agenda approved by general consent
2. Approval of [May Meeting Minutes](#)
 - a. Retroactive amendment by Dir. Potter to approve May meeting minutes along with agenda approval.
3. Old Business
 - a. Position Recruitment & Vacancies
 - i. Appointment of Interim National Board Members
 1. Vice President
 - a. [Candidate Resume](#)
 - b. James Rowe, Individual member from Cornell

- i. Prior experience with Public Administration and the Marine Corps; GSA President at Cornell; viewpoint of NAGPS as very collaborative and supportive among Board and members
- ii. Very excited to tackle issues faced by graduate students
- iii. Question, Dir. Potter: what got you interested in doing advocacy work?
 1. GSA at Cornell doesn't do a great job of advertising itself and its work; GSA Presidency made available/known to Mr. Rowe by a fellow Veteran and his work with the Cornell GSA made him much more aware of issues faced by graduate students; became a perfect fit because of prior public administration experience and U.S. Congress internship. Knowing the right people can play a key role in addressing issues as much as implementing legislation. In example, Undergrad student govt. Put forward 75 resolutions, most of which were not approved.
- iv. Question, Dir. Suri: Have you ever been in a situation where you had to resolve conflict among colleagues or students? If so, how did you resolve the issue(s)?
 1. As Marine, worked out of Belgrade in U.S. Embassy with Marines in the 18-21 age range; fights, disorderly conduct, and other similar issues occurred and required connection, interpersonal management, and diplomacy by helping people see the bigger situational picture through empathy.
- v. Question, IPP Sommer: The VP serves as a chief of staff type position, what do you think are the biggest challenges in that sort of role and what do you think you do best to tackle those sort of challenges?

1. While in Belgrade, often determined what issues needed to be elevated and what issues could be resolved at lower levels as assistant attachment commander; from a content perspective, was involved in setting up annual Marine Corps Birthday events that were appropriate and fulfilling for the group.
- vi. Question, Dir. Klein: Could you please speak to your banking background?
1. Came to investment banking from the public sector; went to three different programs from public finance to private sector financial advising and viewing banking as an advisory role. As an associate, put together management presentations, scheduling events and road shows, marketing to potential buyers, analysis, and generally a little bit of everything. In second role, worked with middle market clients; dealt with human resources constraints by serving out different roles normally filled by others and advising, helping, and working with clients from the ground up. Many of these experiences will be useful in this role too and skills will carry over.
- vii. Question, Dir. Wang: What challenges do you see impacting NAGPS from the perspective of the VP?
1. Was able to speak with Thad about some issues during member forum on Friday; the biggest challenge with an organization using a national outlook, managing changing dynamics between various people involved while also ensuring relationships are maintained.
- viii. Closed deliberation period from 6:26PM - 6:31PM

- ix. Motion to approve candidate Rowe by Dir. Suri and seconded by Dir. Potter; voting commenced; confirmed by vote of 8/8
2. Director of Social Justice Concerns
- a. Bayan Alfathi, University of North Texas
 - b. Masters student in advanced data health analytics at UNT Frisco and academically trained as a pharmacist; from a Syrian background, lived in Saudi Arabia and Turkey and came to U.S. in 2015; worked in politics in Istanbul, Turkey to serve as Syrian representative and chief of staff for the Syrian National Coalition; attended workshops and had experience with dialogues about social justice, peacemaking, and conversation. Takes the advice of “wherever you are planted, you should bloom” very seriously and worked hard to be involved in communities were stationed; involved currently in Dallas Compassion Coalition, Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council to build relationships, and co-chair of the Community of Conscience to build diversity and bridges between different communities and show compassion, respect, and care between different groups.
 - c. Question, Dir. Suri: how do you see your experience helping NAGPS when it comes to being in the Social Justice Concerns Directorship?
 - i. Has a very good practical understanding of what social justice is and how to create a sense of justice and understanding among people, to be able to create connection to build acceptance without judgement, hard feelings; not anyone can fill these sort of roles or build these skills easily or academically only. Has built the skills, especially in communication and dialogue, to understand others to bring them to common ground.
 - d. Question, Dir. Kidder-Wolff: Do you have any plans, thoughts, or ideas for social-justice oriented projects to leverage the diverse populations of graduate students that NAGPS brings together?

- i. No ideas right now this moment, but happy to email over ideas after the meeting/over time with drafts for different project ideas.
- e. Question, Dir. Miller: What is an example of a past project you worked on that you think is a great example of your work or work that you are really proud of?
 - i. The Syrian revolution started peacefully and involved putting on workshops to pull people together from different religions, ethnic backgrounds, cities, and so on to facilitate negotiations and build tolerance between the groups. The talks/workshops were very successful, bringing both public members and leaders together.
- f. Question, Dir. Klein: Are you involved in UNT GSC?
 - i. No.
- g. Question, VP-Elect Rowe: When you are trying to help disadvantaged groups, you often have to take from other groups; how do you deal with that balance with important issues?
 - i. In reality, there is no social justice 100% of the time. One group always has to give something up--resources, rights, etc. In practicality, it is impossible to give both groups in conflict everything they want. One group often has to give more through compassion or kindness; to overcome this, we have to create the compassion needed to resolve the conflict and build tolerance, and avoid losing everything. Hopes we can get to a point of true social justice one day, but in the meantime we can get closer to that point by facilitating conversations and promoting compassion, even in situations with long histories of bloodshed or hatred.
- h. Closed discussion period commenced from 6:57PM - 7:10PM
- i. Motion to move into period of voting by Dir. Klein, second by Dir. Wang; confirmed by vote of 9/9

j. Vacancies

3. Western Regional Director
4. Southeast Regional Director
5. Assistants
6. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1doa3v_BU6Za-Bb1q6FiHxETQrmK30Adskq5tXos9mW0/edit - Leadership Nomination

b. Upcoming Events

i. [Leadership](#)

1. Planning Meeting 7/1; 3:30-5pm PT (6:30-8pm ET)
 - a. Zoom invite forthcoming
 - b. Send President Chodur message if interested in attending meeting!
 - c. Leadership to be held end of July/early August

ii. NatCon

1. [Applications](#)
2. President Chodur believes the application is tentatively ready to go, with minor tweaks; need to push out on membership email lists and social media ASAP
 - a. Hoping for Wednesday send out
 - b. Dir. Wang will have everything ready on the Comms end
3. Event will likely be majority virtual, although hybrid event is possible; this could be better for smaller schools interested in hosting to leverage lower overall costs of hosting an online or hybrid event.

iii. Town Hall

1. Lower overall attendance compared to May forum, so looking at framing this as more like “brainstorming session” or “office hours” for organizations/members. Will also work on increased promotions.
2. Confirmed for final Friday of each month moving forward
3. IPP Sommer noted that summer attendance is generally lower; Dir. Suri indicated that GSO’s are generally dormant during the summer months.
4. Asst. Dir. Smith suggested that we send day-of reminder emails to promote attendance
5. Pres. Chodur indicated that link generated earlier in new membership outreach materials may also be helpful--encourage new members to attend the Forum hosted closest to their join date!

4. Board Reports

- a. [President's Report](#), Presiden Gwen Chodur
 - i. Highlights:
 1. Leadership Conference
 2. Outreach to new members
 3. Student Debt Crisis nonprofit group that pushes federal advocacy around student debt and student financing; pushing for total debt forgiveness and more middle ground efforts too; offer debt counseling, income-driven forgiveness programs, student loan debt workshops,
 - a. Grad students make up ¼ debt holders, but hold 50% of student loan debt
 - b. Dept. of Education Committee ruling out major rule changes on student loan debt, so this topic will become more impactful and important to track
- b. [Administration Report](#), Dir. Miller
 - i. Highlights
 1. Website updated extensively, still much work to do; problems crop up and we're trying to address them both reactively and proactively.
 2. Please be watching your emails for requests for information, reports, committee breakdowns, etc.
- c. [Communications Report](#), Dir. Wang
 - i. Highlights
 1. Newsletter Promotion
 2. SC Director of Legislative Affairs Recruitment Efforts
 3. Promoted Membership Forum
 4. Increased readership and engagement on social media posts
 5. Updated emails for new membership
 6. Promoted AGIA partnership
 - ii. Dir. Suri requested readership analysis/interaction numbers for newsletter, if possible. Dir. Wang to follow-up on this request.
- d. Employment Concerns Report, Dir. Seto
- e. [External Affairs Report](#), Dir. Kindred
 - i. Possible expansion of Smylen partnership
 - ii. Compiled and shared completed partnership list
 - iii. Continued conversation about AGIA partnership and the nature of that contract; main takeaway is that our membership cannot be used without our permission and communications come directly

from AGIA. Attempting to receive copy of contract, but as far as understood the contract obligations are in line with those held with other partners and meet all rules/guidelines.

1. Admin. Asst. Welfer indicated that contract was established by previous board with privacy agreements in place to protect membership.
- iv. External Affairs drive is posing issues in terms of organization and information location.
- v. **Motion to extend meeting by 15 minutes made by Dir. Suri, seconded by Dir. Klein**
- f. [Finance Report](#), Dir. Klein
 - i. Highlights (Monthly)
 1. Expenses: \$18.76
 2. Revenues: \$333.96
 3. Liabilities: \$0
 4. Cash flow is positive
 5. Concerns about membership delaying payment of dues to get 50% reduction after July 1st;
 - a. Admin. Asst. Welfer indicated that the reduction historically (4 years) only applied to new members, not renewals of previous membership
 - i. Admin. Asst. Smith indicated that Bylaws do not indicate this only applies to “new” members, so this is a point of clarification in the Bylaws/possible for resolution
 - b. Dir. Suri indicated that there are current members advising others NOT to sign up for membership until July 1st; requested for us to please not do this in order to avoid bias between members.
 - c. Admin. Asst. Smith also brought up issue of need for clarification to who the reduction applies to--individual vs. organization membership--and whether or not the reduction take PayPal fees into account.
 - i. Dir. Klein indicated that goal is to move away from PayPal to different system called Pinnacle
 1. Pinnacle would allow for direct transfers that reduce fees associated with paying.

2. Will be meeting with PNC Bank to further discuss and hopefully establish this
6. Question, President Chodur: have we invoiced this year for renewals?
 - a. Dir.Klein, not as of yet.
 - b. Dir. Suri indicated that invoice renewals typically take place 2-3 months before new year and new year begins Jan. 1st
 7. Endowment conversations ongoing, hoping to have update by or before next meeting!
 8. Recruiting new Fin&Fun Committee Members
- g. International Student Concerns [Report](#). Dir. Montenegro
 - i. Highlights
 1. Following bills concerning international students, no action projects at this time
 2. Future action items: will be leading Fulbright/Gateway orientation at Syracuse; will be sharing about NAGPS at this meeting.
 - a. Dir. Suri asked if there was any way that Outreach could assist.
 - b. Pres. Chodur offered slides/presentations to assist with this
 - h. [Legislative Affairs Report](#), Dir. Potter
 - i. Highlights
 1. June 25th, 2021 second Membership Forum commenced
 2. Upcoming Legislative Letter forthcoming tomorrow, 6/28/21
 3. Full board report upcoming
 4. Hoping to set up meeting with Legislative Concerns Committee to address and reform workflow and better distribute workload/divide up labor
 5. Spoke to Westin, tentative date October 1st-5th with main days of conference on 2nd and 3rd for Fall LAD
 6. Hopeful for upcoming month!
 - i. [Outreach Report](#). Dir. Suri
 - i. Membership numbers: Total = 58 (1 new organizational, 3 individual members since last BoD)

1. Individual: 22 (2 unknown regions)
 - a. 3 MW
 - b. 5 NE
 - c. 8 SC
 - d. 3 W
 - e. 1 SE
2. Organizational: 35
 - a. 6 MW
 - b. 6 W
 - c. 9 NE
 - d. 5 SC
 - e. 9 SE
3. Affiliate: 1
 - a. 1 SC
- ii. Board officer of June [nomination](#)
 1. National and regional board members are eligible, including asst. directors!
- iii. Newsletter update
- iv. Membership payment notification issue
 1. Some members joining and not getting notification from website on this potentially because some members are bypassing website to pay directly via PayPal
 - a. Roughly 20% of the membership payments are not appearing in Dir. Suri's email notifications at all
 2. Dir. Miller & Asst. Dir Smith reworked website with fix to address non-sending issue; this fix will not have an impact if members are bypassing the website form entirely, however
 - 3. Motion to extend meeting by 15 min. by Dir. Potter, second by Dir. Miller; meeting extend to 8:30PM**
- v. Strategic planning [proposal](#), biweekly meeting poll
 1. Please fill out ASAP!
- vi. Brochure
 1. Asst. Dir. Malone working on this
- vii. Collab with admin
 1. Outsourcing some projects to Admin to help with workload
- viii. Individual member reach out by Asst. Dir. Sam Malone
- j. Social Justice Concerns Report, Vacant
- k. Midwest Region Report, Dir. Mensah
 - i. Highlights

1. Difficulties arranging meetings with Midwest Board; will keep pushing forward to represent and progress the Midwest
 2. Dir. Frederickson to assist with some of the Regional Director duties to help Dir. Mensah
 - I. [Northeast Region Report](#), Dir. Kidder-Wolff
 - i. Social media campaign to promote board
 1. <https://www.instagram.com/nagps.northeast/>
 - ii. Brochure on mentorship--what makes a good graduate mentor, what makes a bad one, etc--for region forthcoming
 1. Will also include info on how to switch grad programs
 2. Generally geared toward supporting graduate students too
 - a. Southcentral Region Report, Dir. Gurung
 - i. 3 possible new members upon Fall 2021 semester beginning
 - ii. Conducted Board meetings
 - iii. Director of Legislative Affairs vacancy
 1. Pres. Chodur and Dir. Suri to assist in filling this vacancy
 - b. Southeast Region Report, Vacant
 - c. Western Region Report, Vacant
5. New Business
 - a. Dir. Miller, Question: Can we as the NAGPS start looking into federal work hours mandates?
 - i. Pres. Chodur: This would be an intersection of international student concerns, employment concerns, and legislative concerns because of the tie-in with Department of State and Department of Education.
 - ii. Dir. Suri added in the students are both limited by 20 hours per week and also only working on-campus
 - iii. Dir. Wang added in that students can work up to 40 hours per week only during the summer, but that even so it still creates financial difficulties for students.
6. Adjourn
 - a. Motion to adjourn Dir. Admin, second by Dir. Kidder-Wolff
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM ET / 6:30 PM PT / 8:30 PM CT**