

### **What is your background, professional experience and education?**

My professional background is very diverse. When I reflect on my good fortune to have had so many varied professional opportunities, I feel incredible gratitude and satisfaction. As a school psychologist, I have performed “traditional,” school-based duties, but I’ve also helped develop and implement several large-scale, district-wide initiatives. I have published articles in both the Protocol and the Communique, as well as present at district, state, and national conferences. I have taught graduate courses in school psychology at Towson University, and I have guest-lectured throughout the state. I take pride in having mentored many interns and novice practitioners.

As a member of MSPA, I have been named Outstanding Practitioner of the Year (2012), have served on the Board as Secretary (2012-2014), and served as the School Safety Ad Hoc committee Chairperson (2014-2017). As Chair of the School Safety Committee, I lead the efforts to author and ensure the adoption of MSPA’s *Best Practices Considerations for Maryland School-Based Threat Assessment*. Along with colleagues, I have presented my work in prevention and intervention at MSPA’s Legislative Breakfast many times. I was lucky to be asked to attend NASP’s Public Policy Institute on behalf of MSPA, and advocated for our profession nationally.

Throughout every professional opportunity I’ve been privileged to experience I have found a way to improve my abilities as a leader and mentor to my colleagues and to advocate for our chosen profession. I feel that all of these amazing experiences have led to this opportunity for state leadership, and to maintain our state’s role as a leader for the nation.

### **What leadership capability do you possess which unite the rural, urban and suburban areas of Maryland?**

I have the good fortune of being born in Cumberland, and growing up in the rural Potomac Valley (though just south of the Allegany County boarder). I have lived and worked in Baltimore City, and currently live in the suburban Laurel area. I know this state because I’ve lived this state. These real-life experiences have helped position me to understand and empathize with educational concerns, no matter the professional environment. When writing the school safety best practices statement, I took great pains to ensure that a state-adopted document was meaningful to all practitioners in our state, and that the information therein would be useful.

I think that no matter where you live and practice in Maryland, one issue that we all face is the growing need for cultural competency. Across the state, our population is become more and more diverse. As advocates for children we must advocate for understanding and compassion. This responsibility is true whether your population has seen an influx of refugees from embattled nations, to an increase in migrant workers seeking local opportunity. School psychologists are leaders in cultural competency in education, and we must put that leadership to good use.

### **What are the future issues that will impact school psychologists now and during**

An issue that concerns me is professional stagnation. School psychology is a field that advocates for practitioners to be “utility players” or good at serving in any need that might arise in schools. I love the comprehensive approach, because it offers so much opportunity to gain training and insight, continue our education, put new skills into practice, and spread our wings. Our training programs and the current needs in education complement each other, and we can be the greatest troubleshooters in any role we need to play. That’s why I have always been so concerned with professional stagnation. Professionals who feel unsupported and apathetic communicate those feelings to others. However, school psychologists are looked upon as mentors, leaders, supporters, and givers of compassion. Communicating apathy is antithetical to our calling.

Should I be elected as President-Elect, I will hold the office of President in the 2019-2020 school year. In February of 2020, the national convention will be held in our state. This is an opportunity for growth, development, networking, and professional reflection. I believe that my enthusiasm for professional growth, along with the opportunity to help host the national convention are complementary.