



*Andrew Lee, PhD*

*Director Counseling & Psychological Services*

*Monmouth University*

*College Counselor for 11 years*

*Candidate Statement:* I am humbled and grateful to have been nominated for the ACCA President-Elect position.

I have been in the college mental health field for the majority of my professional career and consider it my professional identity. I began my college counseling center career as a Master's practicum student and then began working as a staff psychologist at that same center a decade later. I have since transitioned to being the director of college counseling centers at two different institutions.

Through my time in this field, I am aware of the changing landscape of the students that we serve and the issues affecting them, and consequently, the ways that the work itself has shifted. It is clear that what it means to be a college counselor has been drastically altered over the last 15 years that I have been in the field. Our work encompasses more than dealing with "adjustment issues," as was the common refrain in the past. The acuity and complexity of students' presenting issues leaves us more akin to community mental health centers housed on college campuses, which intensifies the need for collaboration, communication, and connection with other like-minded professionals. This is where I see the power of this organization. The creativity, ingenuity, and teamwork that I have witnessed as I have become more involved with ACCA has been inspiring.

My involvement with ACCA began in 2012 at the national conference in Orlando, where I attended my first preconference session on what it meant to be a college counselor. Since that time, I have been a presenter at an ACCA regional conference, the ACCA national conference, and have served on the bylaws committee of the organization. In addition, I currently serve at the Member-at-Large for the New Jersey College Counseling Association.

I am pursuing the presidency of this organization as I believe in the power of college counseling. We are blessed to be one of the few professions to be able to say that we save lives. Sometimes we save lives directly through emergency intervention and response. But more often, we save lives through the installation of hope, as we are the holders of hope for our clients. It is this hope in themselves and their new and different futures that is so powerful. It is not a mistake that hope was the last thing left in Pandora's Box, as it is the thing that allows us as people to soldier on through the myriad of difficulties life presents. It is this hope that we offer so many students that allows them to continue on trying roads, whether that leads to completing their degrees or choosing a different path, but ultimately our work is about helping our students change their futures.

Thank you again for this nomination. To serve this wonderful organization, filled with such talented and giving people, would be an incredible privilege and honor.