CANDIDATE STATEMENT

In the conclusion of her book, "Questions Freshmen Ask: A guide for college girls," Ellen Willis (1962) reflects on the growth a young woman will have experienced upon conclusion of her first year at college. In ruminating on her experience for the benefit of a peer preparing for her first college year Willis posits, she will find herself challenged by the task of answering all of her contemporary's questions because "college is-well-college" (p. 178).

Having read through this book and reached these final words, I chuckle with the satisfaction of knowing so little about college life has really changed since Willis (1962) published her work. Fifty-four years later incoming students still fret over what classes to sign up for; who they will live with in the residence halls; how best to study when challenged by mounting loads of work; how to keep expenses low; and of course, perhaps the most important conundrum, "steady dating versus field playing" (p. xi)! Indeed, little about college life has changed; or has it?

While the priorities of young people remain strikingly similar to those in 1962, the environment in which our colleges and universities must thrive in has. Internal struggles over the tenure process vs. the hiring of adjuncts, faculty representation in strategic planning and institutional decision-making, the extent to which university officials can and should engage with the family/guardians of students, and the ongoing issue of where to park all the cars leaves many a university administrator up at night. Compound those issues with the competing interests of external stakeholders, and one can become easily overwhelmed by the alphabet soup we engage with daily; FERPA, FLSA, and VAWA, oh my! If the modern college admissions counselor can't quickly respond to queries about the return on investment of their institution, they might as well toss their glossy brochures back in their bag and consider new employment. No, the priorities of young people have not changed vastly; the landscape in which we educate them however, has.

It's for this reason I am acutely interested in pursuing the role of your Region I Director. In order for colleges and universities to remain sustainable in the face of a rapidly changing educational landscape, leaders must be nimble, always scanning the environment, and readily making decisions which don't simply impact them today, but which prime their organizations for success in the decades to come. It is in the spaces created for us through NASPA, which higher education professionals engage in much of this planning; seek fellowship with those who understand our challenges and triumphs; and who return to our campuses fortified and prepared to weather the change which is inevitable.
As your Region I Director it would be my goal to expand upon opportunities for engagement among our membership. From our most seasoned professionals to our graduate students, and from those in the middle to those in the first months of their career, I am continuously amazed by the talent in our region! We have so much to learn from one another and even more to accomplish as a united community of professionals following an incredibly contentious campaign cycle. It remains to be seen how our field will be impacted by the outcome of this election, however it's clear there will be need for us to raise our voices as educators and as allies on issues of access, affordability, safety, and policy. If the good work to positively impact the experience of our underrepresented brothers and sisters stands to be dismantled, we will be called upon en masse to challenge that which threatens this progress. Through our shared home in NASPA, it would be my sincere hope we could walk this path together and it would be my honor to do so as your Region I Director. I am grateful for the nomination and thank you in advance for your consideration.