

2025/27 SoACE Board Election

Candidate Statements

[Please vote by Friday, January 24](#)



Candidate for Director - Targeted Knowledge Groups

Karen (Ivy) Martin

Texas A&M University-San Antonio



Why are you interested in this Board position?

I am excited to express my interest in serving on the Targeted Knowledge Groups Board for SOACE, inspired by nearly two decades of impactful experiences within this organization. Eighteen years ago, I began my journey in Career Services, and SOACE became a pivotal force in shaping my career. Through its guidance, mentorship, and collaborative spirit, the organization nurtured my ideas and fueled my professional growth in ways that words cannot fully capture. As a Career Counselor, the knowledge groups empowered me to engage with peers and develop innovative strategies to support students on my campus. When I advanced into leadership roles, the Administrative Knowledge Group (Admin KG) provided an invaluable space to learn from (in my opinion) "the best of the best" directors across the nation. Serving as the Admin KG Project Manager, Co-Chair, Chair, and now Past Chair has been an honor, enabling me to contribute to initiatives like the online development programs/workshops/panels, mentorship matching within the LEAD program, facilitating sessions such as the Directors' Think Tank, and supporting the Emerging Leaders pre-conference event. Committed to fostering professional support and development, I aim to continue strengthening this network in all its areas as a board member if selected.

What qualifications do you have that would make you a strong fit for this Board position?

I've had the fortunate opportunity to actively contribute to professional organizations and initiatives, demonstrating my dedication to leadership and development in higher education and career services specifically. I have been involved with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) as a member and committee member and the Southern Association of Colleges and Employers (SOACE) as an active Past Chair of the Career Center Leaders Knowledge Group and on various other committees. Locally, I have served as a past President and current reviewer for the South Texas Association of Career Champions (STACC), formerly SACUCCA. I am a member of the National Career Development Association (NCDA) and certified Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) instructor. I co-chair the A&M Career Services Directors Community of Practice and former Board Member of the Career Services Technology Meet-up (CSTM-East Coast). Additionally, I am a Certified Etiquette Trainer through the Institute of Professional Etiquette. My leadership extends to university committees, including serving as Co-Chair for Strategic Plan efforts, a heritage month, and other efforts. I have led professional development programs (e.g. Supervision Circle) and have been a key facilitator for the A&M-SA's Leadership Academy, contact/event lead for HACU, and Albert Briseno Leadership Development Program. I hope you can see my unwavering commitment to professional growth, and I think that would be even better evidenced by the list of engagements I was able to encourage, empower, or support of those who I supervise/have supervised. Professional growth and development and giving back is imperative to me.

What leadership roles have you held within SoACE and other similar organizations?

My qualifications align strongly with the Targeted Knowledge Groups Board Position, rooted in my extensive career in Career Services and active engagement with SOACE. Over the years, I've contributed

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to this organization in roles that reflect a deep understanding of its mission and goals. I've served as an active Past Chair of the Career Center Leaders Knowledge Group, collaborating with and learning from directors across the nation to address pressing topics in our field. My experience leading initiatives like the Directors' Think Tank, the Emerging Leaders pre-conference, and mentor matching for the LEAD program demonstrates my ability to represent and advocate for diverse professional perspectives effectively. Additionally, my leadership roles across various professional organizations have sharpened my ability to address the needs of multiple constituencies. For example, as Co-Chair of A&M Career Services Directors Community of Practice, Board Member of the Career Services Technology Meet-up, and Chair of multiple strategic committees, I've worked closely with professionals in assessment, advising, employer relations, experiential education, and technology. My role as a GCDF Instructor and certified etiquette trainer further highlights my commitment to professional development. Through these experiences, I've gained a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by colleges, universities, and employers. This enables me to represent these knowledge groups with insight, advocate for impactful initiatives, and foster meaningful collaboration. My goal is to uphold the supportive network and knowledge-sharing culture that has been so instrumental in my own career and to empower others within SOACE to thrive.