



Mississippi Counseling Association
A Branch of American Counseling Association
Serving Mississippi since 1950

MCA
PO BOX 353
LONG BEACH, MS 39560

ELECTION 2019 SPECIAL ISSUE

MCA Officer Candidate Process:

This year we are voting on candidates for **President Elect -Elect** and **Secretary**.

- The **President Elect** is responsible for coordinating conference programs and has the opportunity to shadow the President and Strategic Planning Committee in order to learn the role and continue the forward progress towards MCA's mission and goals.
- The **Secretary** is responsible for taking the official minutes of the organization and maintaining the records of the organization. This position requires a good mind for detail and numbers.

Last April, MCA Executive Board approved electronic voting to allow all members the opportunity to vote for state officers. I will post a link to review the candidate's pictures and credentials by August 7 for your convenience.

On September 1, 2019 members will have the opportunity to sign in and vote for President Elect-Elect and Secretary. Voting will be open until 5:00 p.m. on September 30, 2019. The winners will be announced at opening general session of MCA Fall Conference on Wednesday morning.

THERE WILL BE NO VOTING TAKING PLACE AT THE CONFERENCE. Please make sure you take the opportunity to select your choice for MCA future leadership.

Carolyn Anderson

Executive Director

Now for a look at this year's candidates!

THE COMPASS

Candidate for President Elect-Elect

Mary Bess Pannell



Dr. Pannell began her career in 2006 as a professional school counselor. In 2008, she transitioned to the community college level as a counselor and academic advisor at Mississippi Delta Community College. Mary Bess graduated from Mississippi State University in 2016 with a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision with an emphasis in School Counseling.

Mary Bess is currently an Assistant Professor at Delta State University in the Counselor Education and Psychology Department. Working in collaboration with her DSU colleagues, she has encouraged Delta Region members and DSU Counselor Education students to volunteer and seek leadership opportunities within MCA.

In her role as Counselor Educator, one major focus has been to expose, engage, and initiate school counseling students toward the implementation of the ASCA National Model. Many of these students have been recognized and won research awards for their integration of SMART goals within their internship sites.

Mary Bess currently serves as past president of the Mississippi Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (MACES) and she has also served as president and past president of MCA's Delta Region working to create a greater social media focus within MCA to increase advocacy and education about the counseling profession. As MACES president, she worked to develop MCA Career Connect. This initiative is designed to provide a space for new Provisional LPC's to find Board Qualified Supervisors and for employers to find counselors of all disciplines providing another valuable benefit for all MCA members.

Dr. Pannell is a member of the American Counseling Association (ACA), American School Counseling Association (ASCA), Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), and the Association of Creativity in Counseling (ACC).

Mary Bess is extremely honored to run for President-Elect-Elect in order to continue to serve MCA and the counseling profession. Her goal is to grow membership and to lead MCA with its national reputation in continuing to establish a broader counseling presence in Mississippi.

Candidate for President Elect-Elect

Suzanne Stokes



Suzanne Stokes, a school counselor, is currently in her fourth year at Eastlawn Elementary School in Pascagoula. She loves working with pre-K through 4th grade students on social, emotional, and academic growth. Suzanne completed her Master of Science degree in Counselor Education at Mississippi State University where she was recognized as the Outstanding Graduate Student in the Division of Education at the Meridian campus in 2016. She was also inducted into Chi Sigma Iota and Phi Delta Kappa. Suzanne completed her undergraduate degree in Communication with an emphasis in Public Relations at Mississippi State University. She is working on completing her specialist degree in School Counseling from The University of Alabama. Suzanne is a

National Certified Counselor (NCC) and National Certified School Counselor (NCSC). She is dedicated to growing professionally and is a member of the Mississippi School Counselor Association (MSCA), American Counseling Association (ACA), and American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

Prior to becoming a counselor, Suzanne worked extensively in the corporate world in customer service, sales, and administrative roles. Additionally, she volunteered with local organizations to develop special events that benefited the local community including the Care Lodge, a battered women's shelter in East Central Mississippi. Her experience outside of counseling will help her effectively perform the duties of MCA President

Suzanne has been a member of MCA for five years. After graduating with her master's degree in counseling, Suzanne was selected as a participant in the MCA Emerging Leader Class of 2016-17. Suzanne is the current editor of the Compass, MCA's quarterly newsletter. She has also served MCA as the Secretary for the Gulf Coast Region (2017-2019), First Timer's Session Co-chair (2018), and Printed Program Chair (2017). She has also assisted with Emerging Leaders, provided the Instagram feed for the Social Media Committee, served as a conference facilitator, and helped with the conference Printed Program.

In her free time, Suzanne enjoys hiking, singing with the praise team, and traveling with her two boys.

Candidate for Secretary

Candice Allison



Dr. Candice Allison is currently a counselor at Velma Jackson High School in the Madison County School District. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Jackson State University and her Masters of Education, Educational Specialist, and Doctoral degrees from Mississippi College.

Having worked in the field of education for more than twelve years, Dr. Allison's objective is to help empower students to identify their personal, educational, and career goals to become

productive citizens of their communities.

As a candidate for MCA secretary, she seeks to maintain an accurate record of the administrative council meetings as noted in the by-laws.

Candidate for Secretary

Karla Weir



Karla Weir is an experienced counselor holding the credentials of Licensed Professional Counselor, MDE Certified School Counselor, National Board Certified Counselor and, National Board Certified School Counselor. Karla earned a Bachelor of Science in Education, English and Social Work, a Masters in School Counseling, and a Specialist degree in Counselor Education, all from Mississippi State University where she is completing a Doctorate of Philosophy in Counselor Education, and is a doctoral candidate.

Karla became a member of the Mississippi Counseling Association as a graduate student more than 18 years ago. During her membership she has been an active member holding office as treasurer for the Mid-eastern region of MCA, president of Mid-Eastern region of MCA, the Co-Chairman of the Government Relations and Advocacy Committee, and a member of the MCA Executive Board. Currently Karla is working as a Behavioral Counselor and Interventionist for the Choctaw Tribal Schools where she was awarded Support Staff of the Year for 2013-14 and 2018-19 school years. Previously she worked in private practice for four years, as an adjunct instructor at Mississippi State University for four years, as a K-12 counselor for 8 years, and teacher for five years. During this time she was an active member of MCA, ACA, MSCA and MLPCA.

Karla also balances her career with family. She has been married for 23 years, and has two children ages 20 and 17. She is actively involved in the community where she is an active member of the church. She has volunteered her time through community, church and school activities. Karla enjoys travel and cultural experiences, cooking, and attending activities and sporting events for her children. Karla's wealth of knowledge and experience qualifies her as a candidate to serve MCA as secretary.