

Board of Directors – Candidate Statement

Candidate Name: Araceli "Sally" Perez-Ramos

Organization: Wake Forest University



Why are you interested in serving on the SoACE Board of Directors?

I am excitedly interested in the board position of Director of Knowledge Groups because I believe my successful 18-year history of hands-on leadership in higher education directly aligns with the core demands for strategic growth and innovation in this role. My experience as Past Chair for both the Technology Group and the Small Colleges and Universities Group has provided me with an intimate, working understanding of the diverse needs and challenges facing our Knowledge Groups. Effective leadership in this role requires more than simple administration; it demands the uncanny ability to manage distributed individuals across varying schedules and, crucially, to devise inventive methods to sustain high member engagement. I am not just interested in maintaining the status quo; I am passionate about driving results. While Chair of the Technology Knowledge Group, I recognized a critical member need and launched the Technology Boot Camp. This initiative, which provides members with vital skills for engaging students and stakeholders, remains a robust and active program to this very day, a tangible example of my ability to translate vision into sustainable, high-value programming. I am committed to leveraging this proven ability to continue the success of the Knowledge Groups and elevate them to a new level of innovation, ensuring all members have access to relevant, cutting-edge resources and a supportive community.

What qualifications or experiences make you a strong fit for this board position?

Within SoACE, I have demonstrated direct success in the Knowledge Group model, serving as Past Chair of both the Technology Group and the Small Colleges and Universities Group. This experience is exemplified by my success in launching the Technology Boot Camp, which remains a vibrant and essential resource today, a testament to my ability to translate member needs into sustainable, high-value programs. In addition to the Knowledge Groups, I possess extensive conference and operational expertise. I have held key roles on the SoACE Conference Planning Committee, serving as Assistant Marketing Chair and Marketing Chair (2023) and Local Arrangements Chair (2024). These positions involved organizing extensive member communications, creating graphics and marketing materials, and managing complex logistics and entertainment to ensure successful member engagement. My leadership extends nationally as the STEM Affinity Group Co-Lead for NACE and has

included state-level governance as Vice President and President of the Texas Cooperative Education & Internship Association (TxCEIA). During my tenure at TxCEIA, I successfully planned the 2013 conference, managing the budget, overseeing marketing, coordinating speakers, and leading the board team to ensure successful registration and member engagement. Furthermore, I have launched two inaugural conferences at Wake Forest University, demonstrating my consistent ability to initiate and manage complex projects from inception to completion, ensuring financial oversight and effective committee coordination. This combination of strategic knowledge group leadership, comprehensive conference operations, and proven governance makes me a strong fit to drive the success and inclusiveness of the Knowledge Groups portfolio.

SoACE Membership & Leadership Involvement

Involvement and/or leadership roles (SoACE and/or similar organizations):

For the past 15 years, I have been a proud and active member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Employers (SoACE), deeply committed to its mission of providing leadership opportunities and fostering professional growth for those in higher education. My long tenure has afforded me the privilege of serving in a multitude of roles, primarily within the Knowledge Groups. I have a proven track record of successful leadership, including serving as Chair for both the Technology Group and the Small Colleges and Universities Group. My most notable contribution came during my time as Technology Group Chair, where I recognized a critical need and spearheaded the creation and launch of the first-ever Technology Boot Camp. This initiative was a significant success and remains a robust, essential offering for our members today - a testament to my ability to launch and sustain valuable programming. Beyond the Knowledge Groups, I have also contributed to the success of our major events by serving on the Conference Planning Committee in dual capacities: as Marketing Chair and Local Arrangements Chair. These roles have given me a comprehensive understanding of the operational and outreach efforts that are vital to SoACE's overall health and impact. I understand, firsthand, the crucial importance of SoACE to our collective professional landscape. I would be genuinely honored to leverage my extensive experience, deep institutional knowledge, and successful track record of innovation to continue serving this organization as the Director of Knowledge Groups, fostering even greater opportunities for our members.