

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
March 24, 2021

DEAC Announces Candidates for Election to Board of Directors

The DEAC Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following candidates for the DEAC Board of Directors:

Khalilah V. Burton, Ed.D.

Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Compliance, Columbia Southern University

Cheri St Arnaud, Ed. D.

President, Chief Academic Officer, Aspen University

Stephen Haas, Esq.

Director of Education, National Paralegal College

The Nominating Committee has worked closely with the Board of Directors to review and recommend candidates for the DEAC Board of Directors to serve as institution members. Throughout its deliberations, the Nominating Committee took into consideration the appropriate involvement of DEAC's communities of interest as well as the diversity of DEAC's membership and stakeholders. In addition, the Nominating Committee's work involved a meaningful assessment of the organization's present and future leadership needs reflective of mission; attention to continuity and orderly succession of the organization's leadership; and upholding a practice of good governance. DEAC is holding this election to fill positions currently held by Caulyne Barron, Chief Academic officer, Dunlap Stone University, and Michael Curd, Vice President, Director of Education, Harrison Middleton University, when their terms expire on March 31, 2021.

An electronic ballot will be available to all DEAC members beginning Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at the close of the 95th Annual Business Meeting, and continuing through 6:00 pm eastern time on April 28, 2021.

Dr. Leah Matthews, DEAC's Executive Director, encourages members to attend the virtual Annual Business Meeting and contribute to ongoing discussions of the ever-changing landscape in distance education. "The 2020-2021 academic year brought about unprecedented challenges and opportunities," she said. "We are fortunate to present strong candidates for Commissioner who are highly capable of addressing these challenges and opportunities for the future."

Background information for the Board of Directors candidates is provided on the following pages.

ABOUT DEAC

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1926 that operates as a national accreditor of distance education institutions. DEAC's goal is to ensure a high standard of educational quality in the distance education institutions it accredits and a quality education for the more than two million students who annually study at its accredited institutions.

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Khalilah V. Burton

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



I believe accreditors are the gatekeepers of quality education in our country that validate and legitimize the value of our higher education institutions.

Currently, I am the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Compliance at Columbia Southern University (CSU). My responsibilities at CSU include executive leadership in the areas of compliance, institutional effectiveness, academic quality and assessment, accreditation, governmental affairs, and strategic planning to include institutional budget impacts, and information and technology infrastructure. Having led in these areas for

many years, I have experience in institutional leadership, decision making, and collaboration through teams at the staff, executive, and board levels.

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) is the leader in safeguarding quality distance learning in the United States and abroad. I am committed to the work of the DEAC. I am committed to offering and supporting sound business practices of the commission regarding financial management and corporate planning, quality education practices that are aligned with integrity, excellence, and the goal of student achievement.

After being awarded the DEAC Rising Star Award in 2016 I immediately got to work! Since then, I've served as an educational standards evaluator, team member for DEAC pilot studies on reporting, DEAC conference host, general session presenter, and in 2019 I became a member of the Standards Committee. In these roles I have had the opportunity to apply DEAC standards consistently and gained an understanding of the diverse population of schools that DEAC accredits. I've gained insight into the needs and achievements of schools having 30 students to schools with over 30,000 students. I've learned how to measure and support operational quality from DEAC schools with an administrative staff of five to schools with an administrative staff of 500. I'm familiar with the DEAC's protocols for international offerings as well as institutions with multiple administrative sites. I've evaluated schools with a specific program focus to institutions with multiple academic colleges and educational offerings. My recent involvement as one of CSU's institutional representatives for the Coalition for Student Opportunity and Success has allowed me to witness and communicate the needs of institutions on a broader platform to remove roadblocks for our students.

My recent academic research and the literature support my philosophy that accreditation is the floor of institutional quality of which sound, innovative, and effective schools stand on. As such, my philosophy regarding accreditation is grounded in theories of continuous improvement, institutional effectiveness, sound operations, quality peer review, and academic stability. These beliefs and experiences will posit me as an effective member of our DEAC Board of Directors. I humbly ask for your support of me serving in this capacity.



Cheri St Arnauld

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



I am honored to be a candidate to serve on the DEAC Board of Directors. As an academic leader for over 20 years, quality education and student success have been my passion. I believe in using a continuous improvement process within an organization as the foundation for institutional growth. Only when we look at ourselves through the eyes of data and use that data to improve, can we measure our success. I am a strong believer in the peer review process which allows institutions to demonstrate effectiveness and learn from each other. At the heart are the standards that provide the quality assurances that consumers expect.

As Provost and Chief Academic Officer in my work history and President, CAO of Aspen University, I have navigated both regional and national accreditation successfully, as well as programmatic accreditation across the spectrum. I have managed program growth, faculty assessment, student assessment, online learning environments, and academic services for many years. I have also navigated through distance education changes over the past 15 years including state authorizations/SARA, Title IV, and regulatory changes and challenges.

As an active member of DEAC since 2014 I have participated in workshops, site visits, committees and steered the institution through a successful reaccreditation process. I presented the Framework for Institutional Effectiveness at an evaluator training workshop and am a member of the Coalition for Student Opportunity and Success. I believe that DEAC makes a tremendous difference through peer review improvement, advocacy for our institutions in the world of regulators, implementing rigorous standards as institutions strive to improve, and through educating its membership to look to the future of distance education and be at the forefront of change.

I believe that I can contribute an experienced, well-rounded, academic voice to the Commission.



Stephen Haas

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



I helped build National Paralegal College from the ground up, joining the school in 2003 and accepting the position of Chief Academic Officer in 2009. In that capacity, I have been involved in all facets of the school's operations, from academics to administration to outcomes assessment to strategic planning to student services. I also do extensive educational consulting work and have developed or supervised the development of hundreds of courses in a variety of disciplines.

I enjoy the process of innovating systems to improve content development, delivery, and assessment, and sharing my ideas with others in the industry. I have presented at several distance education conferences, including those held by the DEAC, United States Distance Learning Association and University of Wisconsin Extension Distance Teaching and Learning conference.

These days, I spend much of my time on building NPC's project, LawShelf Educational Media, a project whose goal is to produce high-quality law-related video content for students and for the general public. The project requires a challenging mix of legal research and writing, interest stimulation and pedagogy.

In my previous "life," I practiced law for a small law firm, worked for federal and state prosecutors' offices and taught extensively at the high school and college level. I hope to bring my passions for teaching and educational innovation to the Commission.

