

Nominee for Director

Michelle Lonsway, EA

Biography

Music and math often co-exist in my life, since I enjoy the creativity of music (right brain) and the structure of Math (left brain). For 16 years, I was a full-time elementary and secondary music teacher. However, I was also a part-time tax preparer for H&R Block for 10 of those years. Personal circumstances led to a change in 2018 and I resigned both positions to open my own practice. Lonsway Tax was set up intentionally as a virtual practice which made adjusting to COVID restrictions quite easy. Shortly after joining FSEA and NAEA, I became the Space Coast Chapter President and a Director for the Florida Society of Enrolled Agents. I currently serve as the Executive Vice President for FSEA, Director of NAEA, and member of the Tax Education and Leadership Mentoring subcommittees of NAEA. I enjoy working with our various leaders, as well as interacting with our members.

Statement of Goals

Strengthening relationships with Affiliates and members, while increasing membership is key to NAEA's viability. I believe the Board and staff have taken positive steps to remedy issues plaguing our Association. The work done so far is to be commended, but it is by no means complete. We must continue to mend fences, communicate clearly with all stakeholders, and create balance in the "give-and-take" arena so all parties feel supported. Development of the Strategic Plan is in progress and I believe it will become a guiding document that helps us focus on those areas needing extra attention, while maintaining and enhancing those programs and activities that already work well. I'm committed to seeing this work through until its completion.

What needs to change at NAEA and how would you contribute to that change?

I believe that the Board as a whole has lost the trust of many members over the last few years. In listening to comments made during NAEA meetings, the word transparency is mentioned frequently. The President is the voice of NAEA, but Directors and Officers can be sounding boards for suggestions and concerns. It is important that members know the Board hears them and takes action when appropriate. Serving as an Affiliate and National leader gives me the opportunity to see things from multiple perspectives. It also helps to strengthen the flow of information from one organization to the other, as well as to other Affiliates through Affiliate Leader meetings. If elected, I would continue to listen to members during Board meeting Q&As, Affiliate calls, and committee meetings. One Director or Officer can't be present at every event, but we can work collectively to cover as much ground as possible.