

Candidate for Board Member:

Lynn Braun, MA, SUNY Oswego
Director of Counseling Services



Prior Engagement / Involvement with AUCCCD:

- AUCCCD Board Member for 3 years
- Chair of Director Development Committee for 2 years
- Served as a conference connector and as a AUCCCD mentor
- Part of the team that authored the recent AUCCCD position paper Navigating a Path Forward
- Presented at AUCCCD annual conference multiple times

Candidate Statement:

When I ran for my first term on the AUCCCD Board three years ago, my candidate statement started with me saying that I couldn't imagine wanting to work anywhere but in college counseling centers. Thankfully, that statement is still as true for me today as it was then. Though my career has led me to work in many different mental health settings, it is college counseling centers that have most felt like a career home to me. From my first experience as a Master's intern at Ball State University's Counseling Center, to my pre-doctoral internship at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, to spending ten and a half years as Director of Counseling Services at Defiance college, to my current position I've had since January as the Director of Counseling Services at SUNY Oswego, it is college counseling centers that have allowed me to use the fullest range of my strengths and interests to help positively impact students and the campus community as a whole. It has been a privilege to be a member of the AUCCCD Board these past three years. I have greatly enjoyed working with the other amazing members of the Board and am proud of the work that we've accomplished together. I'm especially proud of the work I got to do with some of my colleagues on the recently released position paper, Navigating a Path Forward for Mental Health Services in Higher Education. It has been so rewarding to hear the positive impact this paper has had on our field. I am asking you to consider allowing me to serve for my second Board term so that I may continue to serve this amazing organization as a Board member. Along the path that led me to being a counseling center director, I was fortunate to get clinical and administrative experience in several settings including public schools, private practice, and community mental health centers. I believe that the diversity of my work experience has been an asset to the Board, especially as more and more professionals are coming to the college counseling center world, and to directorship, from these settings. I now also have the experience of being the Director at two very different institutions. I began my life as a Director as a one person center. After four years, my center grew to add another staff person, and by the time I left Defiance, we were a staff of three. I have a deep understanding of the challenges of working in small counseling centers on small campuses and believe I've brought that experience to the Board. Now, in my role as Director at an institution that is much larger, I've been able to widen my experience and point of view in ways that I believe are an asset to my continued Board work. AUCCCD has, in recent years, been highlighting the importance of discipline diversity for our profession. As a Director with a Master's degree, who has been a part of this organization for over a decade, I understand the evolution that AUCCCD has had and needs to continue having to ensure that directors from all disciplines feel an equal part of our great organization. When I was offered my

position at Defiance College over a decade ago, I had two conditions. First, I needed a commitment from my Dean of Students that he was going to allow me to work toward having a center that strived for excellence, not just getting by. Second, he had to allow me to attend the AUCCCD conference every year because I didn't know how I could strive for excellence in my work without the knowledge and experience that I could get from AUCCCD. Thankfully, he said yes to both requests and I've been fortunate to attend the AUCCCD conference every year since. I started at the Elements of Excellence day long pre-conference for first time directors and attendees. Now I assist the organization as a conference connector, mentor in the AUCCCD Mentoring Program, Board Member, conference presenter, and volunteer to review materials for board awards and scholars, as well serving on the search committee for our current executive director. Every year as I'm prepared to leave Defiance to travel to our annual conference, my Dean of Students would comment, wondering what essential things I'd bring back to our campus. I'm proud that I helped my campus see the value in this organization and the positive impact that we have on college mental health and wellness. I love working in college counseling centers and it's college counseling centers that have had the biggest impact in forming me into the clinician that I am today. As I begin to start my twelfth year as a Director, a lot has changed since that first year. Our institutions, centers, and our world have dealt with challenges in the past decade that we never expected. We met those challenges head on, using our gifts, talents, and experience to help our students, faculty, and staff get through those difficult moments. We've been essential to that process and I want to be allowed to serve on the Board for a second term to continue the work of getting our institutions to see us as essential to higher education and its mission. I would be honored to have the opportunity to serve this great organization for another three years as we continue to strive for excellence in our work and field. Thank you so much for your consideration