



1101 17th Street NW, Suite 808
Washington, DC 20036
202.234.5100 | deac.org

For Immediate Release:
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DEAC Announces Annual Business Meeting

In accordance with Article III, Section 3 of the *Bylaws* of the Distance Education and Training Council (doing business as the Distance Education Accrediting Commission), notice is given to all members that the Annual Business Meeting will take place at approximately 3:45 PM on Monday, April 15, 2024 at the Omni La Mansion del Rio hotel in San Antonio, TX. The *Bylaws* state that the Corporation shall meet annually to elect Directors from its membership, to receive annual committee reports, and to transact other business.

(Please Note: Attendance at the Annual Business Meeting is limited to representatives from institutions currently accredited by DEAC.)

Board of Director Elections to Commence at Annual Business Meeting

The DEAC Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following candidates for three institution member positions on the DEAC Board of Directors. Two of the candidates, Tracey Abell and Stephen Haas, currently serve as members of the board and are seeking re-election.

Tracey Abell
President
American College of Healthcare Sciences

Stephen Haas
Chief Academic Officer
National Paralegal College

Chitpasong Vazquez
President and CAO
California Miramar University

Jessica Park
Vice President and Dean, School of Law
Abraham Lincoln University

The Nominating Committee collaborated closely with the Board of Directors to evaluate and propose candidates for the DEAC Board of Directors as institution representatives, to include expanding the board to six such members. During the process, the Committee carefully considered the involvement of DEAC's communities of interest, as well as the diversity among DEAC's membership and stakeholders. Furthermore, the Committee conducted a thorough assessment to identify the organization's current and future leadership requirements in alignment with its mission. This assessment also prioritized the continuity and orderly succession of leadership within the organization, while ensuring adherence to best practices in governance.

An electronic ballot will be available to all DEAC members beginning Monday, April 15, 2024 at the close of the Annual Business Meeting, and continuing through 11:59 p.m. eastern time on April 16, 2024. Attending the Annual Business Meeting and participating in the election is a way institution members can participate in the continuity or orderly succession of DEAC's leadership and uphold a practice of good governance. Background information for the Board of Directors candidates is provided [at the end of this release](#).

ABOUT DEAC

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1926 that operates as a national accreditor of distance education institutions. DEAC's primary goal is to ensure a high standard of educational quality in the distance education institutions it accredits.

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MEDIA CONTACT:
Leah Matthews, Executive Director
(202) 234-5100 * leah.matthews@deac.org

MEDIA CONTACT:
Robert Chalifoux, Director, Media and Events
(202) 234-5100 * rob.chalifoux@deac.org

Tracey Abell, BS, MS

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



I am honored to seek re-election to the Board of Directors and grateful to contribute to our culture of institutional improvement and peer review in support of institutions and our DEAC community.

I believe accreditation provides a framework to demonstrate academic integrity and value to our students. Our DEAC standards also provide a guiding light for promoting assessment and innovation. As a Board Member, I am committed to bringing a collaborative mindset to advance this work and our student outcomes.

As President of American College of Healthcare Sciences, I contribute diverse experience in higher education, including enrollment management, advising, finance, and compliance. With 10 years experience as a DEAC Business Standards & Title IV evaluator, I also have a broad perspective on how institutions serve the needs of our students. I share our collective mission of educational quality and the advancement of our students and thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve our community as a Board member.



Stephen Haas, JD

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



After almost two decades running a DEAC-accredited institution and working on almost all aspects of a distance education school, I had the privilege of joining the Commission in the Fall of 2022. Since then, I have had the honor of working with and reviewing the work of so many of my colleagues and their institutions. In my service as Commissioner, I have learned the importance of ensuring that accreditation is a collaborative process where we build each other up and use each other as resources to improve our community and benefit our students. I see the Commission as a resource and support structure, not merely as a watchdog or gatekeeper.

I am honored to be a regular presenter at DEAC conferences and workshops, having presented on diverse topics such as institutional effectiveness, quantitative data assessment and artificial intelligence. I have also been involved in working on a partnership with the National College Credit Recommendation Service and strengthening the Commission's Approved Quality Curriculum program, in addition to working on the Commission's other strategic initiatives.

If re-elected, I will continue to devote my efforts and resources to collaborate with institutions for the best interests of our entire community and its students.



Jessica Park, JD

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



I serve as the Vice President and Dean of the School of Law at Abraham Lincoln University (ALU). As a graduate of Stanford University and Stanford Law School, I am a licensed attorney in California and have worked mainly in ALU's academic affairs and compliance departments.

After volunteering as an Educational Standards Evaluator, I was appointed to the Standards Committee in 2015 and served as that committee's chair from 2018 to 2022. In 2022, I received the DEAC Distinguished Service award for my contributions to the organization. I also serve as a dean member of the Committee of State

Bar Accredited and Registered Law Schools, an advisory committee to the State Bar of California's Committee of Bar Examiners.

As a licensed attorney, I know how crucial is for institutions to find solutions quickly while taking care those solutions set up good precedent for decision-making. My time at DEAC has shown me how standards for quality are valuable for innovation at institutions of all types, including family-owned institutions like ALU, which my family has owned since 1996.

If elected, I would be proud to serve the diverse and dynamic community at DEAC.



Chitpasong (Chip) Vazquez, PhD

Candidate – Institution Member
DEAC Board of Directors



I am a senior executive with more than a decade of experience in education and academic leadership and currently serve as the President/CAO of California Miramar University.

Dr. Vazquez holds a Ph.D. in Leadership, a master's, and bachelor's degree in business administration degree. Dr. Vazquez brings business experience in leadership consulting, higher education, global student recruitment and developing strategic business partnerships.

I am driven by a keen desire to serve on a higher education commission with DEAC because of my deep commitment to fostering positive change within the academic systems, I aspire to contribute my expertise to shape the future of higher education through the platforms of DEAC. I aim to leverage my knowledge and skills to drive initiatives that enhance accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity within the higher education landscape domestically and around the globe. I am passionate about exploring innovative approaches to address systemic barriers and promote student success, whether through policy recommendations, strategic planning, or fostering partnerships between academia, government, and industry. By serving on a higher education commission, I see an opportunity to make a tangible impact on the lives of students and communities, fostering a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

