



*2017 Executive Council
Candidate Written Interview*

David Alexander

1. Why are you running for a position on the TBSAA Executive Council?

I am running for a position on the TBSAA Executive Council to give back to our organization, and to inspire others to get involved, and stay involved and engaged at a level that is appropriate for them. Making the transition from an active member to an alumni member can be a challenge for a lot of people. As an active member, we are highly involved, but upon graduation, we no longer have the same routine or involvement in the active day to day runnings of our organization or band programs. We also move away from our active chapters, and start our careers that we have worked our entire college careers for. Our priorities in life shift. I want to work with our National Council, Board of Trustees, and District Leadership to create a platform to show our members that Tau Beta Sigma is a life-long membership, and while our lives may change, and our priorities may shift, our membership in Tau Beta Sigma will evolve as well. It is possible to stay involved and continue to support the purposes of Tau Beta Sigma, including leadership development and recognition, appreciation for college bands and music, and honoring leaders in their respective fields. We have a legacy of 71 years with thousands of talented members who have transitioned into an alumni role, and we can utilize that wealth of knowledge, varied backgrounds, and history as a resource to make the TBSAA an even stronger organization, and strengthen all of Tau Beta Sigma as a whole.

2. Briefly describe your previous and present involvement with the TBSAA.

As a member of the TBSAA, I had the privilege of serving on the Finance Committee at the 2015 National Convention in Lexington, KY. As a member of this committee, I worked with a dedicated group of individuals with a background in budgeting and finance to review and recommend the implementation of the TBSAA operating budget. We also reviewed ways to strengthen the TBSAA budget by brainstorming effective fundraising ideas that could be implemented on a National level, while respecting the boundaries of the local and district alumni associations. Currently I am serving on the Programs Committee for the TBSAA. Through this committee, we are working to strengthen the programs of the TBSAA including the grant programs and mentorship programs, as well as promotion and selection of the TBSAA award programs.

3. What do you feel was a success for TBSAA in the last biennium? What areas do you feel the TBSAA could improve? (Maximum 3)

I feel that the biggest success of the TBSAA over this past biennium was evolving the TBSAA For Greater Bands 5K into a virtual race. By transitioning from a physical location, into a virtual race, the TBSAA was able to reduce the manpower and number of resources that were needed to make the race a reality. It also reduced the capital investment needed to make the event happen. By having a virtual 5K, it also allowed more people to become involved and engaged in the process and participate in the race that were otherwise limited because they could not attend the race due to logistical challenges such as timing and travel constraints. I feel that this transition showed outside the box thinking, and the ability to change and evolve based on the changing needs of our membership. A character trait of a strong organization is the ability to consistently evaluate their way of operating and adjusting to environmental factors to make sure that they stay relevant and are meeting the needs of their members.

An area where I feel that the TBSAA could improve would be to promote, brand and engage our organization better. I have a goal of educating our active members what being an alumni member means not only for the member but also for our organization. By working with our National Council, Board of Trustees, and District Leadership, we will be able to create a program that meets the needs of all parts of our organization, and also an understanding of how our involvement in Tau Beta Sigma does not end at graduation but rather evolves to a level that is appropriate for the members as they begin to navigate their transition from college into the corporate world. Through strategic planning, we can ensure that there is a place for all alumni, whether they have lost contact with us, or have recently graduated. The key will be to continue to evolve our organization, promote and brand ourselves, and educate and engage our alumni throughout our 71-year legacy.

4. In which area do you feel you would most be an asset to the Executive Council and why? (Programs, Communications, Membership, Finance, Affiliate Relations)

I feel that the area in which I would most be an asset to the Executive Council for the TBSAA would be Membership. My platform is around educating our members around what being an alumni member of Tau Beta Sigma means. Through the education of potential members, we will ensure a consistent base from which we will be able to grow our organization. I also have a goal of engaging members of our organization who may have taken a break from Tau Beta Sigma due to the changing priorities that have happened in their lives. By increasing our membership base we will be able to increase the pool of candidates available to serve our organization beyond graduation, whether it is in a National Leadership capacity, or serving as a mentor or advisor to those looking for or in need of their guidance in Tau Beta Sigma or a professional field. This will also expand our donor base, which will ensure the financial stability of Tau Beta Sigma and the TBSAA and allow for the expansion and development of current and new programs to benefit all members of our organization.

Currently, I am a Sales Coach for Progressive Casualty and Insurance Company at our Corporate Headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio. In this role, I am responsible for not only developing and guiding our newest Sales employees on the technical state specific insurance laws, and honing their selling skills and techniques, but also ensuring that they are engaged and contributing members of our company. I am responsible for tailoring their training experience to their individual needs and am consistently changing and evolving their developmental tools to make sure that they are relevant to their learning style and the goals of our company. As a Training General Manager for Eat'n Park Hospitality Group, I was able to increase team member engagement by 14% through conducting focus groups, town hall meetings, and keeping an open door policy. I am also a Certified Project Manager through CompTIA Project+. I feel that these professional experiences will transition well into a role on the Executive Council of the TBSAA. I will be able to apply the same skills of engagement, involvement, researching, planning, flexibility, and adaptability which will allow for me to work with all members of the TBSAA to grow, strengthen, and adapt our organization to be the best that we can be.

5. What ideas do you have for future TBSAA Programs or Events? (Maximum 3)

I have several ideas for future programs or events for TBSAA. While I have these ideas, I also feel it is important to gain input from our membership to make sure that our programs are aligned to their needs as well. Here are ideas that I have to add to our organization.

- **Regionalized Alumni Events** – I would like to work with our District and Local Alumni Associations to host and plan events that are in areas where we have large pools of alumni. I would like to look at the demographics of our organization, and see where we have large pools of alumni and co-host events within that area such as theme parks, or picnics. We will be able to engage more alumni through regional activities by reducing the expense and travel time required to attend national events. We will also be able to grow our visibility as an organization co-hosting events in the communities that our members live. This will also allow us to strengthen our working relationships with our District and Local Alumni Associations through partnering with them, and working together towards common goals.

- **Alumni Liaisons** – I would like to serve as liaisons to our Chapter and District Alumni Officers to make sure that they have the support to effectively promote Alumni Membership in Tau Beta Sigma. We need to make sure that they have the tools to continue to engage their chapter and district alumni. By offering this resource, we will be able to engage our active membership base throughout their active career and allow them to gain an understanding of what TBSAA is and does, and how to transition to an alumni member at a level that is appropriate for them. We can also utilize members of the TBSAA to help promote this program to chapters in their communities which will also help to promote alumni involvement in the TBSAA.
- **Alumni Officer Recognition** – I would like to develop a recognition program to honor chapters that have strong alumni programs in their chapters. Whether it is through Local Alumni Associations, alumni newsletters, or hosting alumni events, it is important to recognize the efforts of this office, and the importance of this office to the engagement and lifelong success of Tau Beta Sigma. This office does not always receive the recognition of other offices, but is vital to keeping an engaged alumni base who are potential national leaders, and donors to our organization. I would like to recognize chapters at District Conventions with an award or certificate of achievement, and then of these chapters, recognize a National award winner as well.

6. How do you overcome challenges in life?

Challenges are a natural part of life, and we all have experienced moments where we were overwhelmed or needed support. For me, I try to be proactive and manage processes early to help prepare for challenges that may arise. I am a proponent of planning, and thinking of all possible outcomes prior to implementing programs or processes. By anticipating potential problems, or concerns, it allows me to have a plan of action in mind if those do become a reality. I also plan out my days, and weeks to make sure that I can effectively manage my time, and complete all of my responsibilities. I can always adjust my schedule and move things around if needed, but this ensures that I do not have moments where I have too much on my plate by effectively managing my time. There are going to be times, though, where there are unplanned things that come up, or I cannot manage to complete everything that I need to. It is during these times that I have learned that it is OK to ask for help. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but rather the ability to put the needs of those that you are supporting ahead of your own, and can potentially allow for the development of the skills of others.

7. What is your communication style and how would you manage working over long-distance?

My preferred communication style is direct communication. I am someone that believes that communication needs to be open and honest, as well as a two-way street. I believe in speaking up for what I believe is right and in the best interest of the group, even if it may not be the popular opinion of the group that I am working with. I like to look at all angles of situations before forming an opinion and then making an informed decision around that. I am also open to other opinions as well. The best ideas are formed from the collaboration of many opinions, and evolving those ideas through honest and direct discussion. As far as managing working over long distance, there are so many avenues available today, that these challenges are becoming less of an issue. Whether it is a phone call, email, virtual meeting, Facebook or text message, technology has advanced to make a medium that is appropriate for any group. The challenge to long distance is no longer the avenue of communication, but rather the planning and timing around individual schedules. This can be managed, though, through planning and a respect of the commitments that people have outside of our organization.