



Executive Committee Short Answer Questions - Tanya Sue Maestas, Texas-Houston '18

1) *What leadership experiences have equipped you for this national role?*

Serving as a leader is something that truly fills me with passion. I have been fortunate enough to serve in a variety of different leadership roles that have prepared me for this national role. I served as The University of Texas at El Paso Student Government Association President where I represented the voice of over 22,000 students and advocated for issues that directly affected our institution and its students. I also served on The University of Texas Student Advisory Board which is composed of students from each of the respective UT schools to discuss matters that were important for each of the 14 institutions composing the System. I currently serve as the District 9 Trustee where I have had the privilege to work with our chapter presidents on some of their new initiatives and challenges that they have faced throughout the year. Additionally, I have had the honor of working with a tremendous district cabinet many of whom put countless hours into planning the D9 Summit in Breckenridge, Colorado. Being D9 Trustee has also allowed me to serve on the Board of Trustees where I have expanded my knowledge on ASDA, the licensure process, midlevel providers, student debt, and other subjects that directly impact us as dental students. I also currently serve as the Houston ASDA President where I work alongside a team of 72 student leaders who are dedicated in advocating for our profession and creating events that our Houston ASDA students can participate in.

2) *How do you work with or lead a team?*

I have served in a variety of leadership roles. There have been times where I have had the opportunity to lead and times where I have stepped back and taken direction from others. I have enjoyed working in these leadership positions that have been available to me for I have been able to work alongside various leaders and have grown in my own leadership skills by embodying many of the attributes that I admire from them. When given the task to lead a team, I make sure that everyone has a designated task and that the deadlines are outlined and clear. I look for feedback to see if there are any areas that are not adequately being addressed or if there is anything that can be improved. I always welcome criticism both positive and negative as it is an opportunity to grow and improve in future occasions that may present themselves. In turn, when working on a team where I am not leading, I make sure that the tasks assigned to me are completed in a timely manner. I do not shy away from stating my opinions but always ensure that it is delivered in a professional manner. I always look to see if there is anything else that I could help with to help complete the task at hand.

3) *Why are you interested in this leadership position and what skills do you possess that would benefit the association?*

Being involved in ASDA the last 3 years has really made my dental school experience absolutely unforgettable. I have learned that beyond the books there is an opportunity to have your voice be heard on a local and national level. For me advocating for the profession and being involved in organized dentistry is a passion that ASDA helped fuel in me. Throughout this past year serving as District 9 Trustee has allowed me to learn even more about ASDA and all the efforts that are behind everything that the association accomplishes. The fight against live patient exams and dental student debt is not a one-man fight, but rather is advanced everyday by the efforts and unified voice of the entire association. As President, I hope to continue to work with our ASDA leaders and members in steering our association in the right direction. I possess various skills that would help benefit the association such as passion, organizational skills, and capability to listen. Many might believe that passion is not a skill, but for me passion is what drives me to continue to work towards what I believe in and I think this would truly benefit the association in reaching our goals. My organizational skills will allow me to keep track of the tasks at hand and deadlines in the horizon. Being able to listen will allow me to embrace the opinions and voices of our students and other organizations whom we may meet with.

4) *What are 2-3 issues important to dental students and/or the position of president?*

Throughout dental school I have become more aware of the many issues that affect us as dental students directly. Licensure, student debt and post-graduate plans are 3 important issues that dental students face. Licensure is a process that all students must complete in order to become a licensed dentist. This process is currently a one shot opportunity where we are faced to put our best interest first instead of that of our patients. As president of the association, I will continue to advocate for a more ethical and valid licensure process like the one outlined in our ASDA L-1 policy. Student debt is an issue that all dental students face on a daily basis. With accruing interests and tuition continuing to increase, it is hard for us students to find relief. Though the value of dentistry is present, the thought of paying back loans post-graduation is truly a daunting one. As president of the association, I will continue to encourage our students and the association to continue discussions held with state representatives, the ADA and ADEA to find ways to decrease this burden. With increasing student debt, post graduate plans for dental students are always in question. The uncertainty of the opportunities available after graduation can be worrisome. As president, I hope to promote the career resource center that will be available on our new national ASDA website. I hope to help find added benefits to loan repayment programs and other post graduate opportunities.