JAMES LEDUC  
State Delegate Candidate: Wisconsin

Statement 1

What are your qualifications that make you a strong candidate for delegate?

In my candidacy for state delegate, I bring eight years of school psychology experience working in a rigorous, urban setting in Milwaukee Public Schools. Success within my practice has been predicated upon my ability to be well-organized, thorough, inclusive, and to build effective relationships with students, families, and colleagues. As part of my practice, I have focused on two important areas of service to our profession—supervision and advocacy. With the former, I have supported undergraduate, graduate, and practicum students, along with early-career school psychologists. Giving to others is an important aspect of our work and I look to focus more attention advocating for, and promoting, the school psychology profession. As an eight-year member of our district’s school psychologist union, I am entering my fourth year of service as an elected officer. In the last year, I served as president-elect and will be our union president for the current year. A benefit of this work has been better understanding in the dynamics of public education, school boards, processes for organizational and administrative decision making, and how our union can advocate for its members. As a NASP Delegate, I wish to continue service to our profession by advocating for school psychologists throughout Wisconsin.

What is the most pressing issue in your state? As NASP Delegate, how do you see your role in working with your state association to address this issue?

A most pressing issue for the profession in our state is adequate service delivery, which is affected by a shortage of school psychologists. Across Wisconsin, the issue is variable and comprehensive. In my district, we have a full staff of excellent psychologists and our ratio is robust, perhaps better than the ideal NASP practice model of one psychologist for every five hundred students. However, we need more psychologists who speak multiple languages (especially Spanish) and practitioners of color that can connect with, and serve, our students. In other areas of the state, that ratio could be as high as one psychologist for two thousand students! For rural areas, the challenge can be doubly tough. These districts may have limited capacity and have to contract multilingual practitioners from other districts. A critical need is to establish a pipeline of diverse, qualified students to proliferate across our state and to build adequate capacity to train graduate students to serve in the next wave of school psychologists in Wisconsin.

In our state association, Wisconsin School Psychologists Association (WSPA), the work to address this issue has been afoot for several years, as has recruiting and training efforts within my own district. I envision my role with WSPA to build relationships at the national and state level that could help develop new, effective practices and to support and refine current practices that create lasting benefits to our members and districts across the state. I expect that my skillset, career interests, and experience will be beneficial in working with NASP and our state association, and I look forward to serving Wisconsin as a NASP Delegate.