



## Responses to candidate questionnaires

*Responses are unedited, presented as received up to the allowable word count*



### **Matt Conover**

*Candidate for Board Vice President/President*

**1. Describe the leadership experiences you have had. Include significant accomplishments at the local, state, and or/national levels.**

Building on the leadership opportunities I had in high school theatre, I have led teams of all sizes, from 4 to 4,000, in a variety of settings, including remote work, touring and large operating businesses. As an executive leader at Disney since 1999 a key focus has been leadership development and proudly 6 of my 7 peer leaders around the world were once my direct reports. Outside of Disney, I have served EdTA in board leadership capacities including Board Member, Treasurer and Foundation Board Chair. Additionally, I served a decade on the OC School of the Arts Board and as president of the Ladera Ranch Little League Board for 6 years. I also have served in multiple volunteer leadership capacities with USITT including direct involvement with their Jefferson Fund for Diversity and Inclusion.

**2. Share other information about yourself (education, personal and/or professional experiences, publications, awards, personal strengths, etc.) that you think would make you a qualified candidate and benefit the EdTA Board of Directors.**

My experiences developing and leading teams through empowerment, cultivating differing points of view, and championing the expansion of thinking as it relates to people, product and process provide me a foundation from which to serve. I have transformed my current leadership team by ensuring representation from individuals across the inclusion spectrum - including 7 of 9 being women and 3 being people of color. Additionally, more than 10 years experience on the Board enables me to join the team with little learning curve and able to readily support educators, the current President and our new executive director. Serving as EdTA Treasurer for 8 years also provides me key financial understanding into the organization. Participating as co-chair of the ED Search Committee gave me the opportunity to hear from staff, members, educators in the field and volunteer leaders across the organization about the needs, goals, desires and challenges the organization has.



**3. The EdTA Governing Board establishes policy guiding the Executive Director, staff and members to develop programs which advance our mission. Explain how you could help the Board forward EdTA’s mission and strategic priorities.**

The foundation of what EdTA does lies with teachers. The Board continuing to support the staff in ensuring a “teacher first” perspective enables us to achieve our stated goals. Teachers shape the lives of our students — providing professional development, honor society support and advocacy tools and leadership are some of the best ways we can further our stated goals and support the mission. I believe it is the Board’s role to focus on the future, ensuring the health of the organization and the ability to continue delivering on the mission well beyond our 100th anniversary. Doing so will require ensuring access to theatre education to a much wider spectrum of students. A set of programs under the Foundation are focused on this, and more coming in the future, all with the same goal of shaping lives through theatre education — further — shaping MORE lives through theatre education EVERYWHERE.

**4. How have you committed yourself to understanding and aiding in the pursuit of equity and inclusion in your professional and/or personal life?**

The commitment to pursuing equity and inclusion is a personal one. Organizational adoption is only the result of a collection of individuals similarly aligned. I have worked over the past couple years specifically on a process of education, listening and questioning myself. I have enlisted several colleagues to share their personal stories and also “check me” regularly. I have found the follow up discussions to be revealing — enabling me to focus on specific instances and change my perspective. It is not a “one and done” scenario — it has and will continue. I encourage anyone willing to explore a change in their personal point of views to find those allies and allow them to challenge you, question you, support you as I have done.

*“A seasoned entertainment executive with more than 20 years of leading high-performing teams in the creation and delivery of world class live experiences around the world.”*

## **Matt Conover**

### **Vice President, Disneyland Resort Entertainment**

*Spring 2017 - Present*

#### **Disney Live Entertainment**

*Leadership for team of more than 2,500 performers, technicians, costuming cast and more than 400 professionals responsible for the ideation, development, production, delivery, operation and sustainment of all live entertainment at the Disneyland Resort and off-site. Disciplines led include: Art/Scenic Design, Music Production, Casting & Booking, Technical Design & Development, Creative Development, Strategy & Planning, Facility Development, Scenic Fabrication and Outreach/Diversity & Inclusion/Academic Relations, Stage Management and Documentation and Sustainment.*

### **Vice President**

*Spring 2010 - Spring 2017*

#### **Disney Live Entertainment**

*Leadership for Executive Producer team which provide resources for live entertainment production at all 6 Disney Parks sites around the world, Disney’s Aulani - A Resort and Spa and on Disney Cruise Line.*

### **Executive Producer Special Events**

*Spring 2010 - present*

#### **Disney Live Entertainment**

*Leadership for overall development and production teams and process on large scale corporate/marketing special events. Events include: Grand Opening of Shanghai Disney Resort; Grand Opening - Disney’s Aulani - A Resort and Spa; Christening of the Disney Fantasy and Disney Dream cruise ships. Events included significant media coverage components as well as live entertainment production and senior executive participation.*

### **Executive Leadership Roles**

*1998 - Spring 2010*

#### **Disney Parks, Experiences & Products - Live Entertainment**

*Leadership of teams in a variety of locations and scopes in three different businesses.*

*Disney Cruise Line - Sr. Show Producer*

*1998-1999*

*Disney-MGM Studios - General Manager/Sr. Show Producer*

*1999-2002*

*Walt Disney Entertainment - Director, Production & Planning*

*2002-2005*

*Disneyland Entertainment - Vice President (Production & Operations)*

*2005-2010*

### **Board Director and Treasurer**

*Fall 2008 - Summer 2019*

#### **Educational Theatre Association**

*Member of the Governing Board for the Education Theatre Association (EdTA). EdTA the national/international association whose mission includes supporting/honoring achievement for secondary school students in theatre, overseeing the International Thespian Society program, a High School honor society, providing support and resources for theatre educators and advocating on a local, regional and national level for arts and theatre education.*

### **Chairman, Board of Trustees**

*Fall 2017 - present*

#### **Educational Theatre Foundation**

*Founding Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Educational Theatre Foundation. ETF is the development arm of the Educational Theatre Association.*

### **Education**

State University of New York - College at Purchase

1988

Bachelor of Fine Arts - Theatre Design/Technology / Lighting Design