



**SOCIETY OF PHYSICS STUDENTS**

# **Associate Zone Councilor Candidates**

## **2018-19 National Council**

**Ballots Due: May 2, 2018**

**For more details, visit:**

<https://www.spsnational.org/about/governance/national-council/nominations-elections>

**Zone:** Zone-1

**Name:** Molly McDonough

**Chapter:** Suffolk University

**Biography:** Molly McDonough is currently serving as Vice President of her University's chapter of SPS. She is attending Suffolk University for a Bachelor's of Science in Physics with a minor in computer science. She is very active inside her schools department and out. She is currently working on starting her own non-profit called STEM is for the Girls to give minorities and women in STEM the help they need to succeed in STEM.

**Candidate Statement:** As Associate Zone Councilor of Zone 1, I plan to work to create more of a community between SPS chapters in New England and help create more opportunities for women in physics.

**Zone:** Zone-2

**Name:** Chloe Leigh Ong

**Chapter:** Adelphi Universtiy

**Biography:** I am a junior who has served our SPS chapter for two years--initially as a Public Relations Officer and then currently as a Vice President. During my term as the Public Relations Officer, I helped advertise for our chapter for both majors and non-majors alike. I also helped to represent our chapter during PhysCon 2016 and attended as a reporter. As a Vice President, I still continue to support chapter advancement towards networking and outreach by setting up talks that introduce career opportunities to physics majors, meetings that incorporate exciting physics experiments, and events that are geared towards outreach to high school students and non-majors. Along with my leadership positions, I conduct undergraduate research at NYU Winthrop University Hospital. I work along side medical physicists to conduct a study about dosimetry assessment. I intend to graduate with a physics bachelors and a math minor. After my undergrad, I plan to pursue a masters in medical physics.

**Candidate Statement:** My goal is to improve the relationships between SPS chapters within our zone. There is little to no interaction between any of our chapters, therefore making it difficult to help or improve struggling chapters. I aim to start this network by doing outreach, through email, to chapters within the zone. Through this initial contact, I hope to talk to fellow chapter leaders and help create a resurgence plan tailored to increase activity based on each chapter's specific needs. I intend to always be in constant contact with leaders to help them successfully see their chapter bloom. Through strengthening our chapters, it will be easier to promote outreach and involvement to majors and non-majors.

**Zone:** Zone-3

**Name:** Ibukunoluwa Akintola

**Chapter:** Seton Hall SPS Chapter

**Biography:** I am an international student from Nigeria, West Africa. I am currently a sophomore majoring in Physics and Mechanical Engineering at Seton Hall University with a partnership at New Jersey Institute of Technology. I just joined a biophysics research group that hopes to find the important structural uses of microtubules that can eventually lead to applications in the drug industry. I have attended the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics in the years 2017 and 2018 as well as some other regional conferences hosted by the American Physical Society. This has given me the opportunity to network with like-minded people, listen to their wonderful research, and explore the various fields that Physics has to offer.

**Candidate Statement:** If I am elected, I hope to further spread awareness of the benefits of students receiving degrees in Physics. As a student growing up in a developing country, it was highly unusual for girls to be interested in STEM majors and it was also taught that Physics was too difficult a subject and too boring. My hope as an elected official would be to ensure that high school students across my zone would get to see the benefits of attaining a degree in Physics. It would also be to have a liaison with current undergraduate students so as to help keep a great retention rate in Physics programs as well as to help connect them with great opportunities that SPS will be able to provide them as members.

**Zone:** Zone-3

**Name:** Evan Ulrich

**Chapter:** Juniata College

**Biography:** I am Evan Ulrich, a sophomore physics student at Juniata College—a small liberal arts college in central Pennsylvania. I have a deep love for physics, and hope to continue my education in this field after my undergraduate experience. As of now, my interests involve many different fields: including optics and nuclear physics. I have taken many intensive physics and mathematics courses as an undergraduate, of which I have enjoyed greatly. Aside from classes, I am an active member in our college's Society of Physics Students, an introductory lab assistant, and a tutor. Teaching and promoting physics has become a main component in my everyday life and will continue to be.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected, I will push towards promoting physics and the natural sciences to the younger generations. More outreach programs dedicated to high school students and even those younger would be an amazing way to grow interest in this field. Inclusion and diversity is key in bringing new ideas and great minds into this expansive field, and starting with the youth is a perfect way to do this. Coordinating and working with each SPS chapter to create nation-wide outreach programs and demonstrations will not only bring students into physics, but will also strengthen each individual chapter as we strive for a common goal. Physics should not be seen as a field that leads only to research in a lab—it opens doors to multitudes of jobs from engineering and computer science to public service. If

elected, I will build on the existing outreach programs SPS already has in place and work with other members in the council.

**Zone:** Zone-4

**Name:** Victoria Palmaccio

**Chapter:** University of Maryland

**Biography:** I am a sophomore physics major at the University of Maryland. I am an active member in the Society of Physics Students, and I am currently on the organizing committee to host the Zone 4 meeting here at UMD. I am a scholar in the S-STEM program funded by the National Science Foundation, an Angelo Bardasis Scholar, and a member of the Delta Delta Delta Sorority, which promotes and develops strong character and broadens the moral and intellectual life. As an undergraduate, I have participated in research at the University of Maryland Observatory and will be participating in a research internship this summer! My goals are to finish my degree in physics and continue my education in graduate school to attain my PhD in physics.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected as the Associate Zone Councilor for Zone 4, I would strive to unite all chapters within the zone to promote strong bonds and trust within the physics community. My goal would be to encourage chapters that are not as involved in the local and national Society of Physics Students to become more involved! To accomplish this goal I would develop and provide guidelines on how to turn an inactive chapter into a healthy chapter. Also, working with my Zone Councilor, I would recruit one to two new chapters in our region. The opportunity to be a part of the SPS national council would allow me to better connect students to the people and resources that SPS has to offer. Overall, my goal is to build the physics community as a whole by uniting SPS students and sharing best practices that we all need to succeed in our future physics careers.

**Zone:** Zone-5

**Name:** Jacob Glenn Anderson

**Chapter:** UNC Asheville

**Biography:** I am currently a junior at UNC Asheville, majoring in Physics and Math. I started UNC Asheville as a freshman and immediately got involved with SPS. I help a lot with volunteering for SPS especially when we have middle schools that come and tour UNC Asheville. I am also a physics tutor for calculus based physics 1 & 2. Over spring break and this coming summer I will be doing an internship at Akerman Cancer Center in Jacksonville Florida. I will be shadowing the doctors there and be able to learn about all the different methods that they use to treat cancer. I will be working one on one with their own private proton beam. After I graduate I would like to pursue a PhD in Medical Physics with a concentration in nuclear medicine.

**Candidate Statement:** SPS is a organization and also a community of like minded people that are here for one another. SPS is all about outreach and community building but also building relationships that will last a lifetime. I understand what it is like to feel shy or awkward in social situations. I know many people have a lot to say and contribute to our society but just do not feel comfortable enough to do so. In my experience, getting over this hesitation simply requires practice and opportunity. Through SPS I was able to overcome these obstacles and also I can help other people into joining and being able to break free from that shell. Opportunities and community outreach in not only scientific discussion but also gaining new friends and colleagues. This is why I want to get involved in meeting new chapters and attending meetings to gain experiences and help progress my own chapter.

**Zone:** Zone-5

**Name:** Sam Frederick

**Chapter:** Davidson College SPS

**Biography:** I am a Junior at Davidson College where I am majoring in Physics and minoring in Math. I became involved with SPS as a freshman and have remained active under the strong leadership and guidance of fellow SPS members. Last semester, I conducted independent research under the guidance of Dr. Kristen Thompson. My goal was to study intermittent pulsars and add to the current manifest of data via frequent observation and data collection with radio telescopes at the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI) where I was an intern last summer. A valuable lesson I learned from my experience was the role of communication in establishing remote data collection with the institute, as well as in diagnosing setbacks. I currently serve as Vice President for Professional Affairs for the Davidson SPS chapter. My role has been to establish meaningful and lasting bonds between majors and prospective majors via a mentoring program as part of a larger effort to promote a strong sense of community and belonging in the Physics Department. After graduation from Davidson, I plan to attend graduate school to pursue a PhD in Astrophysics where I seek to be involved in numerical relativity research.

**Candidate Statement:** As Associate Zone Councilor, I intend to take what I have learned in leadership in the Davidson SPS chapter and apply those lessons to supporting Zone 5. Community is an extremely

important aspect of not only easing the road towards involvement in physics, but also in helping to bring about meaningful experiences that can serve to strengthen one's feeling of belonging in physics. Having attended PhysCon 2016, the most recent quadrennial meeting of the entire Society of Physics Students membership, I noticed how widespread the notion of impostor syndrome was among physics majors, but I was also encouraged by the ways in which SPS works to build community and promote belonging. If elected, I intend to reach out to other chapters in Zone 5 for holding joint meetings and other day trips to build a broader sense of community outside our respective institutions. It's often all too easy to rattle off plans and not support them with deliberate commitment, but it is my intent to remain committed to building community within Zone 5 if elected.

**Zone:** Zone-5

**Name:** Austyn Long

**Chapter:** NC State

**Biography:** Austyn Long is a senior studying Physics and Environmental Science at NC State. She immediately became involved in the SPS program, working with friends in the student lounge and participating in outreach activities. Her junior year, she was President of the NC State SPS Chapter, working to make the department more inclusive and creating more vertical connections between undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff. Though she elected to not run again in her senior year, she remains involved in the department, working as a receptionist in the main office and as a demonstration assistant. After graduation in 2019 she hopes to spend some time exploring different career options in energy policy. She then plans to go to graduate school to study either law or pursue a Ph.D., a decision that will be informed by her professional experience. She's enjoyed getting involved and bringing good programming to her school's SPS chapter, and is hoping to bring that vision further. In April, she will also be running for an executive position for NC State's SPS.

**Candidate Statement:** While I was SPS President, I was able to see a lot of good things happen in our chapter, but more or less, we did them alone. I would work as an AZC to create opportunities for students across Zone 5 to network and learn about how other departments operate. I think that we have real richness in our zone, and that it could be highlighted by us coming together to not only network, but to brainstorm ways we can improve as a whole region, as individual chapters, and as individual physicists. My main goal would be to put on a Zone 5 conference and build the bones for that to happen annually, so that chapters who can't travel to PhysCon have a more accessible undergraduate conference. I would also hope to build the networks between executive members in this zone so that collaboration could continue outside of the conference. More generally, I want to connect the SPS Chapters in Zone 5 and work together to focus on region-specific issues we're facing.

**Zone:** Zone-5

**Name:** Nolan Roth

**Chapter:** High Point University SPS Chapter

**Biography:** Originally from the town of Yutan, Nebraska, I graduated high school before moving to Boone, North Carolina, and attending High Point University as a double major in physics and computer science with a minor in mathematics. I am currently a sophomore on that track and am heavily involved

in the High Point University SPS Chapter. I have had the opportunity to participate and help with outreach events hosted by our SPS Chapter, including HPUiverse Day, a large community outreach event to help peak the interest of local kids in the sciences. For this event and others like it, I have performed repeated demonstrations for children and have given presentations to large general audiences. In addition, I have worked as a University Ambassador for High Point Admissions. Through this, I've gained experience working with and communicating to the public—be it through giving tours, participating in and leading student panels, and coordinating other ambassadors for admissions events. Following my work as an ambassador, I am the Shift Leader Coordinator for our campus Food Recovery Network. This position entails ensuring volunteer involvement at daily recoveries, coordinating recovery events, reaching out to other organizations, and administrating shift leaders to hold network meetings and updates.

**Candidate Statement:** The position of the Associate Zone Councilor works to communicate with zone chapters and work as a liaison between the chapters and SPS at a national level. I would work to do as such—keeping regular communication with chapter executives and encouraging inter-chapter communications in general; reminding local chapters of SPS opportunities; and pushing SPS chapters within the zone to pursue achievements that build activity within their university, in the community, and in SPS at a national level. First of these, I want to encourage inter-chapter communication. I believe that if the chapters of the zone knew more about the actions and activities of the other chapters, it would help build a stronger, more successful network. I want to jump start this communication and begin building this network. Second, I feel that reminding students of local chapters of SPS opportunities and pushing them to apply would indirectly help represent the zone as a whole—if more students from this zone's SPS Chapters acquired internship positions or scholarships, presented at conferences, attended SPS meetings, and more, then we could get our ideas out there! This would come hand-in-hand with regular communication with other chapters. Sending out regular emails to chapter executives about deadlines and SPS opportunities can bring these things to the forefront of conversation and increase national activity.

**Zone:** Zone-6

**Name:** Keith Anderson

**Chapter:** Morehouse College

**Biography:** Keith Anderson is a junior physics major and math minor at Morehouse College, holding a 3.56 GPA. He is also the president of our chapter here at Morehouse. Keith has been an undergraduate research assistant both at Colorado State University EUV Engineering Research Center and at Los Alamos National Laboratory during his summers in college.

**Candidate Statement:** If I am elected as Associate Zone Councilor, I plan to increase the communication between Zone 6 chapters, offer opportunities for Zone 6 chapters to meet together before the annual meeting, and be active in planning the next zone meeting for Spring 2019.

**Zone:** Zone-6

**Name:** Christopher Car

**Chapter:** Society of Physics Students at USF

**Biography:** Christopher Car is a 4th year undergraduate student pursuing a B.S. in Physics and a B.A. in Mathematics at the University of South Florida. For the last year, he has served faithfully as the Vice-President of his University's SPS chapter and soon plans to run for the office of President. As VP, Chris has helped his SPS chapter host 4 physics professor talks, organize several outreach events to motivate middle and high school students to pursue a career in the physical sciences, and arrange over a half-dozen fundraisers including a campus-wide sale of liquid nitrogen ice-cream. This Spring semester, Chris was the Lead Traveler in charge of a group 8 physics students from USF, where he arranged for their full funding to attend this year's week-long APS March Meeting in Los Angeles, California.

Outside of his SPS involvement and class curriculum, Chris does research in designing Optical Chiral Meta-materials under the guidance of Professor Shi of Photon Lab in USF's Physics Department. He also serves as VP of his University's POWUR (Physics Organization for Women and the Underrepresented) chapter and is Treasurer of the Math Club. Chris is currently employed by USF's Physics and Math departments where he grades papers, peer leads Calculus 1 classes, and tutors fellow students in General Physics and Calculus classes. His passion for spreading knowledge amongst his peers is trumped only by his own pleasure in hearing new ideas and finding things out.

**Candidate Statement:** If given the opportunity to serve SPS National as an elected student Associate Zone Councilor, I will dedicate my time to promoting the ideals and agenda of young physicists in my region, as well as assist the Zone Councilor in whatever tasks I can. I plan to focus on supporting all those who are interested in achieving success in physics, regardless of their racial, ethnic, economic, or cultural backgrounds. Physics is one of the many beautiful subjects where it doesn't matter who is a student; the knowledge and potential for success should reach all equally, rewarding only the passionate with the splendor of discovery.

With an SPS AZC position, I would push for more opportunities in research funding for motivated undergraduate and graduate students. I would also like to facilitate more collaboration within my zone amongst the physics students and seek to provide them with additional opportunities to socialize and

get to know each other. As is stands, it seems unnecessarily difficult for partnerships to form amongst university students from different schools in the same region. I would do my best to change this culture.

Finally, it is my hope to provide more students with opportunities to serve the physics community with issues in the realm of scientific policy and bureaucracy. I've noticed a disconnect between what many physics students would like to see change politically, and what they personally take action in changing themselves. I believe this is not due to a lack of motivation, but rather a lack of knowledge; knowledge about what their options are for getting involved. If elected, I vow to do everything in my power to uphold these goals, as well as any others that might benefit my regional peers in the physics community.

**Zone:** Zone-7

**Name:** Gabrielle Feeny

**Chapter:** Kettering-A

**Biography:** I am an undergraduate student finishing up my Junior year studying applied physics. I have served as vice president of my school's SPS chapter, and currently serve as president of it. As president, I run weekly meetings, organize events, and oversee projects. In addition to this, I am president of my sorority and a member of my university's Shell Eco Marathon team. I have always been involved in extracurricular activities and feel as though I have developed my leadership and communication skills through that involvement. In terms of professional experience, I take part in a cooperative education program; every three months, I work as an intern for an aerospace company, where I have the opportunity to employ and strengthen those skills. I served on the National Council as Zone 7 AZC this past year.

**Candidate Statement:** Through SPS I've realized just how encouraging it is to be surrounded by like-minded, driven people. If I were to be elected for a second term as Zone 7 AZC, I would love to keep working on improving communication between chapters within my zone, encourage National involvement, and help revive dormant chapters.

**Zone:** Zone-7

**Name:** Kadeem LaFargue

**Chapter:** Allegheny College

**Biography:** My love of Science evolved in High School where I was fortunate enough to experience from both the practical and theoretical perspective. As a member of the Biotechnology and Medical Research Academy my learning also covered investigation and research which I thoroughly enjoyed. It was a very early introduction and usage of a fully functional state of art research lab where I learned to use a variety of equipment. Along with the practical experience I understood the ethics of research and process of taking a product from the lab and making it market ready. In high school I also enrolled in honors and AP Science and Math courses, with a fondness for Physics. My accomplishments earned a membership in the National Science Honors Society.

I continued my Physics studies at Allegheny College, where I am exposed to a wide range of courses. Being at Liberal Arts College I can further develop my report writing skills and delving deeper into Physics. Again, I felt very lucky when I was one of only three out of my freshman class selected to participate in a group study of theoretical math based Physics and was introduced to LaTeX. In the last 3 years I have clocked in several lab hours working with various types optical equipment and lasers. I have also self-taught and enjoyed learning how to operate our lock-in amplifier and temperature cooler controller. At Allegheny we each research different topics but come together during poster sessions to present the materials. Along with the various poster session presentations on campus, last Fall I was the sole representative for my school at the CU2MiP. I am also the two term Historian for the Society of Physics students on my campus where along with my responsibilities I get to participate in numerous events. Some of the computer languages covered within my major included FORTRAN and Java, and

then I independently covered Python. I am also one course away from completing my minor in Economics.

This upcoming semester I will embark on another independent study with Dr. Statman looking for the minimum reacting voltage of liquid crystals and the potential benefits in the current industry, this will be my first published piece. Spring semester I will also be selecting my thesis topic, to then commence a yearlong study for presentation at the end of my senior year. Although this past year I've focused mainly on optical study, I intend to further my education in a graduate Physics program and then work in research.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected to be Associate Zone Counselor I would like to utilize my school's potential because we aren't taking full advantage of our resources especially their large alumni community. Allegheny College has a vast alumni network I believe bringing those successful individuals who either majored in physics or are currently working within that field, would be quite beneficial for networking. For example, we have the Tippie Alumni Center which is a forever home for alumni and can provide an excellent setting to host an array of event such as panels, discussions and presentations. With the usage of the alumni I would also like to in cooperate social media to share current events and research going on in my zone. I ideally want to get everyone more in tune with what's going on in the area and not just what is going on their campus since the more connected we are the more that knowledge gets shared and circulated. With the combination of these I would like to engage and educate more people with the multitude of opportunities within our vast field.

**Zone:** Zone-8

**Name:** Justin Craig

**Chapter:** Millikin University SPS

**Biography:** Justin is currently a Freshman at Millikin University double-majoring in Physics and Mathematics. He is very excited and passionate about Physics and Astronomy and hopes to study as an Astrophysicist one day. He is an excellent student and as a Freshman currently has both three semesters of calculus and physics classes completed. He is also a part of the Millikin University's Honors Program. Justin currently has a job through the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Millikin University as the Student Assistant at the Requarth Observatory and as a Teaching Assistant for the Planets and Stars Astronomy Lab. As the Student Assistant at the Requarth Observatory, Justin helps maintain a variety of 8" telescopes, a 12' telescope and a large 20" telescope. He also runs weekly Public Observation Nights at the Requarth Observatory where the campus and surrounding community is welcome to come to the Observatory and use the telescopes and have an opportunity to learn about space. Furthermore, Justin is a part of a small group with his Physics professor studying of dark matter halos with relating galactic radii and the velocity dispersion of stars. Justin is also involved in many volunteering opportunities as each summer in high school, with a group of peers and adults, takes a week-long work trip to help out communities across the United States. These trips include community outreach and minor construction work.

**Candidate Statement:** Justin hopes to bring his passion and energy to the Associate Zone Councilor position and hopes that he will engage in exciting high school students to study physics. He wants to encourage different chapters in Zone 8 to create an outreach with their local communities. Justin also wants to help current college students to find a way to get involved in a variety of research opportunities whether it is with a professor over the school year or over the course of a summer internship. He will advocate the use of the SPS website to search for summer internships and REU's. Justin also wants to see more inter-University research collaboration as to establish a network between current physics students as they will eventually become each others peers in the broader physics community.

**Zone:** Zone-9

**Name:** Aaila Ali

**Chapter:** DePaul University-ZONE9-SPSChapter1535

**Biography:** Aaila Ali is a third year undergraduate student studying Physics at DePaul University and Computer Engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology. She joined the DePaul University SPS chapter her freshman year, becoming an officer the next year, and is currently serving as president of the chapter. Aaila worked to organize events to create a nurturing community to help advance physics students of all backgrounds in their professional development and academic success. She successfully turned the previously quiet chapter into a welcoming community and resource for all students. Her primary chapter goals include finding ways to support students looking for opportunities to perform undergraduate research and present research at conferences. Professional development workshops, technical workshops, and fundraising allowed her to promote those club goals. She has also worked to bring the Chicagoland SPS community together through city-wide SPS events and collaborative research projects. While balancing coursework and community involvement, Aaila has worked on computational cosmology research under Dr. Jesus Pando at DePaul University, and won an Outstanding Physics Poster Presentation Award on this research at the 2018 Illinois Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (ILSAMP) Symposium. Aaila will be doing experimental condensed matter research at the University of Utah under Dr. Christoph Boehme over this coming summer, and plans to pursue a PhD in the field of Quantum Computing.

**Candidate Statement:** In her interactions with other Zone 9 chapter members and officers, Aaila has come to realize that one common issue chapters have is how to go about fundraising. Not being able to properly fundraise means chapters struggle to host events and to send members to attend events. If elected Associate Zone Councilor, one of Aaila's primary objectives will be working with chapters to find ways to hold successful fundraisers and realize the financial resources available to them. Aaila also hopes to bring the Zone 9 community closer together by making sure chapters have access to current information on how to contact other local chapters. This is only possible if chapters can successfully transition leadership and resources from year to year. This, along with helping chapters successfully promote SPS membership to new students and retain membership, would be more of Aaila's primary goals as Associate Zone Councilor of Zone 9. From experience, Aaila knows that SPS chapters have the potential to provide a supporting community to students, and allow them succeed in all stages of their academic careers.

**Zone:** Zone-9

**Name:** Jacob Hanson-Flores

**Chapter:** University of Wisconsin - River Falls

**Biography:** I am a junior attending the University of Wisconsin-River Falls majoring in physics. Prior to enrolling as a full-time student, I served as a marketing director for a multi-billion-dollar home improvement company which provided me with a strong background in management, leadership, marketing and networking. Ultimately, it was my passion for education and curiosity about the laws that govern our natural world that led me back to college.

Outside of my classwork I am very active in my local community. On campus, I have held jobs as a learning assistant, tutor, research assistant and even as the Spanish round-table facilitator. I am treasurer of Ski and Snowboard Club, Vice President of the Latino Student Organization(LSO), and the team lead for the UWRF High-Powered Rocket Team. In my spare time, I play for the club lacrosse team, snowboard, surf, travel, and do a lot of reading.

Last spring, I was chosen to join the McNair Scholars Program which has exposed me to a lot of the barriers presented to underrepresented groups; moreover, it presented me with some of the most successful efforts to combat these barriers and diversify the academic community. Growing up in a Hispanic family has provided me with a unique background. This, alongside my recent experiences, has given me a multi-faceted perspective and valuable ideas on how to enrich the social and academic environment of those around me.

The Society of Physics Students has been an unprecedented source of my academic growth. My first semester in physics, it was the avenue that led me to build relationships with my peers and upper-classmates. It has given me consistent support in the midst of a moderately erratic barrage of coursework. I was proud to serve as our chapter Secretary for a semester when the serving Secretary had to take a leave of absence. Participating in SPS also gave me the amazing opportunity to attend PhysCON in the fall of 2016.

After graduation, I plan to pursue my PhD in physics and eventually become a professor. My goal is to one day provide students with the same opportunities and encouraging environment that I have been fortunate enough to experience.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected to AZC, my goal would be to assist other chapters in developing an inclusive and accessible environment for all physics students(most notably freshman). I have a strong belief that student involvement is one of the keys to academic success and retention. Events, such as PhysCon, will be key to integrating incoming freshman into the community and building relationships with their peers. My goal would be to assist chapters in developing effective methods for fundraising so that interested students are able to attend these events free of financial burden.

To supplement this, I would like to build a communication network amongst the different chapters in our zone. At our last zone meeting I came to realize how diversely the cultures and methods of each chapter had developed. Building a network where we can share our ideas and successes will benefit us all and effectively improve the physics community as a whole.

**Zone:** Zone-9

**Name:** Oscar Peterson-Veatch

**Chapter:** Augustana Physics and Engineering Society

**Biography:** I am a student at Augustana College. Next year I will be a sophomore. I am currently majoring in Music and Physics. I am a member of the Augustana Physics and Engineering Society, the local Society of Physics Students chapter. I am fascinated by physics and thoroughly enjoy challenging myself and learning about the subject. I have a passion for engaging in thoughtful conversation, particularly about physics. I love outreach and getting the opportunity to engage and inspire people

younger than myself. I plan to get a graduate degree in Acoustics after I graduate from Augustana. I aspire to work in an acoustics lab after college as this is my favorite sub-topic in Physics.

**Candidate Statement:** My goal as Associate Zone Councilor is to facilitate greater communication between chapters. I also want to facilitate inter-zone communication, as I think this will greatly increase the resources available to all members of the society. I intend to use my position to help grow the society, both in my own chapter and regarding the society as a whole. During my time as Associate Zone Councilor, I will assist in the reactivation of chapters that have recently become less involved.

**Zone:** Zone-10

**Name:** Swapnil Bhatta

**Chapter:** University of Southern Mississippi

**Biography:** I am an international student at the University of Southern Mississippi double majoring in physics and mathematics. I am currently in my junior year and serve as the social media and outreach manager for the Southern Miss SPS chapter. My current responsibilities include supervising online content for the chapter's official social media accounts, interacting with new and potential members while helping boost community outreach.

I have held leadership roles in my community in the past and also have experience gained from the various leadership summits I've attended both in my native country and in my current school. I believe I possess the professional communication skills and diligence required for the post.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected, I would like to work on a platform for better communication between members of the society in my Zone. I believe this will help build a professional network and create a valuable resource amongst students. I would also want to improve on the activities taking place during the zone meetings, events that require more participation would result in more initiatives which would further the society's outreach and overall impact.

**Zone:** Zone-10

**Name:** Joseph Brown

**Chapter:** University of Mississippi

**Biography:** Hi, I am Joseph Brown from the University of Mississippi's SPS chapter. I am currently a sophomore majoring in Physics and minoring in Computer Science. I have been an active member of our SPS chapter for the past 2 years, recently attending the Zone 10 meeting here and our local science field day.

**Candidate Statement:** As the Associate Zone Counselor of Zone 10 I would attend the National Council meeting and be a voice for our chapters. I would like to create a support system for the presidents, where they could share struggles, solutions, and best practices, so they could better lead their respective chapters. I would also attempt to visit several chapters during the course of the year to experience different meeting formats and content. During our most recent zone meeting, I was intrigued by how unique and interesting each chapter was and I believe we have much to learn from each other.

**Zone:** Zone-10

**Name:** Evan Norris

**Chapter:** Louisiana Tech University Chapter

**Biography:** Evan Norris is a junior in Louisiana Tech University's Physics program. He is from Southwest Louisiana and currently works in a computational materials group at Tech's Institute for Micro-Manufacturing. Evan is president of the Louisiana Tech University chapter of the Society of Physics Students.

**Candidate Statement:** If I am elected I will work to improve communication between chapters and seek to build collaborations beyond the yearly zone meetings. I will use information gathered from other zone reports to improve our zone and look forward to 2020 when Louisiana Tech University plans to host the zone 10 meeting.

**Zone:** Zone-10

**Name:** Josh Ortega

**Chapter:** Rhodes College SPS

**Biography:** Graduated Henry W. Grady High School in 2016, currently enrolled in Rhodes College double majoring in physics and theater.

**Candidate Statement:** I hope to collaborate with other zones and exchange ideas for outreach and campus events.

**Zone:** Zone-11

**Name:** Nathan Dvorak

**Chapter:** Coe College

**Biography:** I am a junior physics and mathematics major. I have had two summers of physics research specialising in material science and biochemical physics. I am also the student founder of the Coe College Makerstudio, which is a place that allows students to let their 3D creativity flow. Students caused the makers space to design and 3D print anything they wish.

**Candidate Statement:** I plan to increase communication and activities between zone 11 chapters. I have a vision for more frequent smaller zone meetings which would consist of two or three chapters meeting for tours or outreach opportunities.

**Zone:** Zone-11

**Name:** Michael Thompson

**Chapter:** South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, SPS Chapter 6506

**Biography:** Michael Thompson is a junior studying Physics, Mathematics, and Computer Science at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. Currently Michael conducts undergraduate research in low radioactive backgrounds for various dark matter detection experiments. Michael is also a veteran of the United States Armed Forces and the Iraq War. Currently, Michael is the vice-president of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology SPS chapter.

**Candidate Statement:** When elected I plan to increase intra-zone cooperation, participation, and communication. This includes not just our annual zone meeting but reaching out to every individual chapter. I will attempt to call into every chapter in our zone to hear what other students are thinking, doing, and researching during my year as AZC. I plan to pass on what I hear from you, the members of Zone 11, to the national council to be acted upon. Most of all I plan to be available and accessible to every member of Zone 11.

**Zone:** Zone-12

**Name:** Megan Anderson

**Chapter:** WJC Society of Physics Students

**Biography:** Megan Anderson is an undergraduate double-majoring in Physics and Oxbridge History of Ideas at William Jewell College (Class of 2019). By studying the history of both human thought and scientific progress, Meg hopes to strengthen her ability to communicate complex technical and conceptual material to a variety of audiences.

Meg has lived in the Kansas City metro area since she was born, and she enjoys increasing her involvement in the community. She has experienced this especially through her work as a classroom assistant at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, her summer as a strategy intern at Barkley, and her time as a student at William Jewell College. On campus, Meg is involved in EPR physics research, the WJC First-Year Mentor program, and the student representative group for the Office of the President. Additionally, Meg is a University Innovation Fellow through Stanford. Meg has been a member of the Society of Physics Students since her first year of college, and she served as the 2016/2017 secretary for the SPS chapter at William Jewell College.

Meg is currently studying abroad at Oxford University where she has been involved with the physics department and volunteered for the UK Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics. She has loved her travel experiences but looks forward to returning to the Midwest this summer.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected as an Associate Zone Councilor, I would focus on promoting connection and communication between the chapters within Zone 12 as well as between Zone 12 and the broader SPS community. I have been amazed by the vibrancy of the Society of Physics Students, and I would like to encourage its continuation.

I see encouragement as involving three different areas: Zone meetings, SPS scholarships and awards, and chapter activities. I helped plan and host the Zone 12 meeting last spring, and I would like to contribute to plans for next year's meeting. Additionally, I have been impressed by the many scholarship and award opportunities available through SPS, and I would like to highlight these to the students within my Zone. Finally, I think that a special part of SPS is the way many individuals come together to enjoy physics-related activities throughout the year. I would like to be in correspondence with the different chapters regarding the events that their chapters find most engaging. I could share what I learn in both internal zone communications as well as in an article for the SPS Observer. A cool event from one chapter might just become the new favorite event for another chapter!

**Zone:** Zone-12

**Name:** Kaitlyn M Kelly Gonzalez

**Chapter:** Missouri Southern State University

**Biography:** Kaitlyn Gonzalez is a U.S. Army veteran who served as a cryptologic linguist. She is in her junior year of a double physics and mathematics degree at Missouri Southern State University. She is currently working on a research project which tests the strength of a wall against various calibers of weaponry. In January she attended the Conference of Undergraduate Women in Physics. Kaitlyn is

currently the president of her local chapter of SPS and has implemented changes this year to make the local organization more successful. Her favorite quotes are; "No man is an island unto himself" and "Be the change that you want to see in the world."

**Candidate Statement:** If she is elected she plans on helping to improve current programs that involve community outreach. She also plans on shedding a brighter light on mental health awareness as well as suicide prevention programs that are pertinent to SPS.

**Zone:** Zone-13

**Name:** Niyousha Davachi

**Chapter:** University of Texas at Arlington

**Biography:** i am a Physics junior studying at University of Texas at Arlington. Astronomy and Particle Physics fascinate me, and that's why i teach our Astronomy Labs and do research in Particle Physics. Who knows, maybe Dark Matter is indeed the Particle that rules Astronomy!

i love little kids, and that's why i do Astronomy and Physics Outreach for little kids all the time to spread the word and have fun!

We are working on a neutrino detector project in our school, and hopefully we can make that our official SPS Research Project.

Thanks to the support of SPS and our Physics Department, i got to present my research in PhysCon 2016 and APS March Meeting 2018.

i met wonderful people in those gatherings who inspired me to run and represent our Texas Section.

**Candidate Statement:** Going to conferences is so important in my opinion, so i will do my best to spread the word and help coming up with plans for financial supports as those conferences can be very expensive...

Our chapter is very active, but we barely are involved in zone events. i'm thinking some other chapters might be having the same destiny. So, i will do my best to get chapters more connected to one another and to the National SPS.

Lastly, i have never had the chance to be in SPS National Council. However, I would love to have this opportunity and bring new ideas to the table.

I will do my best to learn and contribute as much as I can to this wonderful experience.

**Zone:** Zone-13

**Name:** Daniel Morales

**Chapter:** Texas Lutheran University

**Biography:** I am now a junior majoring in Applied Physics at Texas Lutheran University. I am a very active member/officer of the Society of Physics Students here on campus, helping host a variety of events we take on each year including our largest attraction for the community of Seguin, Texas: Family Physics Night. I have traveled to numerous conferences/zone meetings to present my own work along with spreading the word about the National Council. I am a tutor in math and physics on my campus along when I am not at home in Austin, Texas with my family (including my dog). When I am not doing physics, I spend my free time exercising/being active, reading any good book, or simply working side jobs in the Austin/Seguin area. Once I graduate from TLU I hope to pursue a PhD in applied physics and work in a national laboratory on renewable energy. This summer I am going to be an SPS intern at the research position for NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland. I am beyond excited for the opportunity this summer and the opportunity to run again as AZC.

**Candidate Statement:** My first term as AZC consisted of getting in touch with local chapters about their activity with their community and the National Council along being on the committee concerning Zone Activity. We focused on how to help chapters write Chapter Reports along with making a simpler process for locating chapter leaders via a directory. We also will piggyback off of the "Careers Toolbox" concept for instructions on how to host a zone meeting. I look forward to working with these committees and making progress for the National Council.

**Zone:** Zone-13

**Name:** Zakary Noel

**Chapter:** Lamar University

**Biography:** I began my higher education at Lee College in Baytown, Texas, working with Tom O'Kuma. I went on to start a new chapter of the Society of Physics Students there, and helped it grow alongside a group of interested students who I came to consider as close friends. I found it hard to leave them, the chapter, and Dr. O'Kuma when it came time for me to transfer, but I was proud in the efforts we all made together, and I was confident that the chapter would carry forward despite my absence. I stayed in communication with Lee College SPS after I transferred to Lamar University, occasionally assisting with outreach events or logistical needs. At Lamar, I became part of an undergraduate research team responsible for a project funded by an SPS grant, in addition to running for an officer position within the chapter. It was during my time at Lamar University that my friends within the chapter as well as my mentor, Dr. Cristian Bahrim supported my application to become one of the 2017 SPS summer interns. I received the internship, worked in the SPS office at AIP in Washington D.C., and became intimately involved with some of the efforts of SPS at the national level. Alongside Dr. Brad Conrad and Jacob Robertson, it was my mission to provide a new format for SPS outreach in the way of updating the Science Outreach Catalyst Kits to reference materials and demo ideas available on the SPS national website. Working with the Society of Physics Students, both in starting a small chapter at my two-year college all the way to working in the national office, has been the most rewarding and profoundly inspiring experience of my entire undergraduate career. I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in physics, and to me, the Society of Physics Students is an intrinsic part of that journey.

**Candidate Statement:** I owe much of my success to the Society of Physics Students, and I want nothing more than to see it grow and flourish, at all levels of involvement. From working as a summer intern, I'm familiar with the concerns of the national body of the SPS, such as reviving inactive chapters and communication. I wholeheartedly believe that SPS is stronger when it strives to make connections; in schools, youth groups, clubs, and especially other chapters of the SPS. I believe that the Society of Physics Students throughout the state of Texas only stands to gain from our members being willing to work with one another. If we share our goals, knowledge, and experience, we could accomplish far more than just the sum total of our chapters combined. I'd like to open new pathways for chapters to talk with their communities, their neighboring chapters, their council, and the national body. If we build a support system where chapters are at the ready to help other chapters, we can ensure the impact, presence, and longevity of the Society of Physics Students.

**Zone:** Zone-13

**Name:** Roy Salinas

**Chapter:** Abilene Christian University

**Biography:** My name is Roy Salinas and I am a Physics major with a concentration in Engineering and minor in computer science and mathematics. I am currently a second-year student, the historian for our SPS chapter and an active member. I have helped in several outreach events such as our Physics Phenomenon event hosted during a period where the campus is open to families who are introduced to the different departments around campus. I attended PhysCon in 2016 through my university and have spent a summer at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory(FNAL) for a research internship on E906/SeaQuest. My summer internship consisted of working on PhotoMultiplier Tubes(PMT), analyzing what was destroying the printed circuit boards on the bases of the PMT's and finding solutions to thermally redirect the heat. I presented my summer research with a poster presentation in Pittsburgh at the Conference Experience for Undergraduates that ran parallel with the Division of Nuclear Physics conference. I am currently a research assistant for our Engineering & Physics department working under the guidance of a current professor. Besides academic and professional experiences, I love to play basketball, thoroughly enjoy reading - with my two favorite books being "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" by Douglas Adams and "East of Eden" by John Steinbeck - and playing melee(SSBM). Upon graduation I plan to pursue two doctorates; one in Physics and the other in Aerospace Engineering.

**Candidate Statement:** It is vital as a society and individuals to maintain a strong sense of communication with both our communities and fellow chapters. Communication not just among SPS chapters but communication concerning the spread of STEM interest to communities should be prioritized as it is essential to our growth as a society and our future. Reaching out to communities could include sessions with k-12 students that inform the students what awaits them and what all the possibilities in the field lead to. Further elaborating on improvements, collaboration amongst chapters should be advocated zealously as it provides an opportunity to work together and it manifests a more unified sense of communication. Plans concerning post-graduation could include meetings with the local SPS chapter of the school one attends and host an informational seminar providing future graduate students a sense of direction and being. This provides a network between chapters that evokes a sense of comradery between both graduate students and undergraduate students. With this network/communication among chapters, our undergraduates will stay well informed as to what the next step should be to accomplish what one wants to achieve.

**Zone:** Zone-14

**Name:** Aman Kar

**Chapter:** University of Wyoming SPS 8433

**Biography:** I am currently a junior undergraduate majoring in Physics and Astronomy and minoring in Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of Wyoming. I have also completed a student exchange program during my junior year at Swansea University in Wales. I am an international student from India and I began college in the United States in 2015. I plan on going to go graduate school to pursue Astronomy. My research experience includes working at the Red Buttes Observatory and the Wyoming Infrared Observatory where I have worked on topics that include Exoplanet detections and atmosphere characterizations. This upcoming summer I plan on working on Radio Astronomy at the Green Bank Observatory in West Virginia. I have been an active SPS member since my freshman year and I have served as the Vice-President for the group during my sophomore year. I was a participant at the PhysCon 2016 Meeting in San Francisco. I have helped organized several fundraising events for the group as well as outreach activities, sometimes in collaboration with our Department of Physics and Astronomy. My other leadership roles include community service with the SLCE (Student Leadership & Community Engagement) and I am currently serving as the Treasurer of the Indian Student Association.

**Candidate Statement:** I have previously attended two zone meetings and have made several connections from different chapters at these events. If elected, I plan on tapping into these connections and help build bridges between chapters to promote collaboration of outreach events or other such activities that would help connect to the public on a larger scale. I plan on expanding on my predecessor's work to benefit chapters and communities and further promote physics. As an Associate Zone Councilor, I would propose to engage with the public on a wider scale with collaboration from all chapters in the zone, to help the community realize the importance of physics in their daily lives. This includes collaborative group effort as a zone, to organize mass outreach events and science demos. I would expect all chapter representatives to take initiatives to help make this idea successful. Personally, I would look forward to attending other zone meetings and council meetings to engage with chapter representatives from different states and learn their respective techniques and activities they perform at their home school and possibly implement them at other schools.

**Zone:** Zone-14

**Name:** Philip Rich

**Chapter:** United States Air Force Academy

**Biography:** Philip is a sophomore cadet at the United States Air Force Academy, where his major is physics with a dual concentration in laser and space physics. Philip has been a member of SPS since early in his freshman year, and has conducted research on diode-pumped alkali vapor lasers at the Air Force Academy's Lasers and Optics Research Center through SPS grants.

**Candidate Statement:** If nominated, I will pursue a plan that encourages more collaboration between different SPS chapters in our zone. Different physics programs have different strengths, and as an Associate Zone Councilor, I would like to implement cooperative programs wherein different SPS chapters offer exposure with different branches of physics to students that are not necessarily affiliated

with their university. Additionally, I would like to foster more involvement from SPS chapters in their local communities through educational outreach programs like Physics is Fun, thereby exposing more young people to the study of physics.

**Zone:** Zone-15

**Name:** Brooke Burnham

**Chapter:** Idaho State University

**Biography:** Brooke Burnham is currently a first year physics student at Idaho State University. Brooke is an active member within the Honors Program and the Society of Physics chapter. Brooke has a passion for science and wants to have everyone's voice heard. She currently leads science demonstrations at regional elementary, middle, and high schools. Brooke would be an excellent passionate student representative for Zone 15.

**Candidate Statement:** Brooke will bring a passionate leadership style to Zone 15 that will allow for your voice to be heard. The goal is to increase zonal activities and communication between chapters.

**Zone:** Zone-15

**Name:** Vanessa Chambers

**Chapter:** USU SPS

**Biography:** My name is Vanessa Chambers and I am a senior in my physics program at Utah State University. I will graduate in May with my B.S. in Physics, then will continue on as Master's student at USU in the Technical Communication and Rhetoric program and aspire to bridge the gap in understanding between the science community at the interested public. My current research is in the Utah State University Physics Department Atmospheric Lab. I am analyzing data from the British Antarctic Survey run Halley Station in order to study gravity wave propagation in the atmosphere.

I have been an active member of SPS for the past 4 years. I have served as outreach coordinator, chapter president, and AZC. I have served as Sigma Pi Sigma vice chairperson for our chapter. My volunteer work in SPS has included monthly outreach activities and setup of radio telescope equipment for chapter research. I organized a 1-day outreach activity for the Bear Lake Idaho School district where we interacted with over 700 students. In 2017 I collaborated with 2 other female SPS members to organize PhysX, an overnight workshop for high school girls on our campus. Our goal is to foster interest in science among teenage girls and recruit for enrollment in our physics program. SPS is organizing this event again for Fall 2018.

I have had a wonderful experience as part of the SPS national committee and I would love to serve as associate zone councilor for a second term.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected Associate Zone Councilor I plan to build on the work I have done over the past year to strengthen communication between zone chapters, and through this communication, provide camaraderie, assistance, and collaborative opportunities among chapters. I plan to implement multiple strategies to increase visibility and public awareness of SPS. I feel it is important to promote the services that our chapters provide for our respective communities and the service our organization does for students.

I plan to promote and participate in the Society of Physics Students active Facebook page as well as create an additional group Facebook page for Zone 15 students only. I want to create a chat group for Zone 15 leaders, giving a forum for discussion or questions about chapter activities and events. I will use

the Facebook page, group chat, emails, and personal phone calls to try to activate inactive chapters and help interested schools get chapters up and running.

I will work with a host university SPS Chapter to organize and effect a successful Zone meeting. The sheer size of our zone presents some logistical problems, so I plan to include chapters that are unable to attend via Skype and video streaming.

SPS has been an important part of my education experience and has provided me with many opportunities. I would like to represent my zone and chapters to ensure that others can have opportunities like SPS has given me.

**Zone:** Zone-16

**Name:** Nicholas Huntoon

**Chapter:** University of New Mexico

**Biography:** I have served terms as secretary, vice president, and two terms as president of the University of New Mexico chapter of SPS and have just completed my first term as AZC for zone 16. I am active in my local community having helped judge the past 4 science fairs at Jefferson middle school as well as participated in six physics demonstration shows aimed at exposing middle and high schoolers to large scale physics demonstrations. I helped to organize and chair the 2017 physics day conference at UNM as well as won best poster for work I had done with professor Alejandro Manjavacas. I remain active in my chapter despite not holding an officer position.

**Candidate Statement:** Having just served a term as AZC I hope that I can continue my work to bring zone 16 together and have our chapters communicating more actively. Zone 16 is very spread out and can feel a bit empty at times, I intend to help our zone coordinate smaller local meetups and group activities outside of our zone meeting so we might strengthen the connections we have to each other and as a zone. I will continue my work to connect more of our chapters with the national office and improve how many of our chapters are submitting reports and applying for scholarships through SPS national.

**Zone:** Zone-17

**Name:** Erdene E Enkhzaya

**Chapter:** University of Washington Bothell

**Biography:** I was born in Mongolia, moved to the States when I was about 6 and grew up in Tacoma Washington where I live now with my mom, dad, aunt and brother. My mother has been a physics teacher ever since I was born so I natural grew to love science and physics. Now I'm 22, a junior at the University of Washington Bothell where I am studying physics.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected, I want to bring a more social aspect to the meetings as well as a more fluid dynamic to the work flow. From the last meeting that I went to I didn't see everyone there being as social as they wanted to be. It seemed to me that they still felt like they were at a school event or a work event, but I want the meeting to be a place where everyone can be laid back and just themselves. At the same time however, I don't want to lose any of the educational aspect of the meeting.

**Zone:** Zone-17

**Name:** Kiana Kade

**Chapter:** University of Alaska Anchorage Society of Physics Students

**Biography:** Kiana is currently a senior at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) pursuing a BS in mathematics with a minor in physics. No physics degree is offered at UAA, so Kiana is well-versed with creating opportunities with limited resources. She has been president of the University of Alaska Anchorage Society of Physics Students chapter for a year, and before that she was the vice-president and co-founder of the University of Alaska Anchorage Astronomy Club. She worked to organize a trip to the University of Alaska Fairbanks Society of Physics Students chapter to help create opportunities and connections between the clubs and the physics departments. She is currently making plans for herself and two other students to attend the SPS Zone 17 meeting in April of this year; this will be the first time the UAA chapter has attended an SPS event. Kiana has also been involved in research with Dr. Erin Hicks for the past three years. She has attended and presented posters at the 2015 International Astronomy Union Meeting, 2016 AAS Meeting, and plans to attend the 2018 AAS Meeting. She has also worked with the Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program to help bring enthusiasm to STEM in towns and villages across Alaska. She has been interested in physics and astronomy ever since she attended the 2012 AAS Meeting when it was held in Anchorage, Alaska. She is a lifelong Alaskan and loves the outdoors. She is also a black belt in Karate and has played piano for over 10 years.

**Candidate Statement:** As the Associate Zone Councilor for Zone 17, Kiana will strive to bring funding to and increase connections within Zone 17 and SPS as a whole. Previously, Alaska has isolated from the rest of the zone, and she hopes to change this. Alaska is a unique state with many diverse opportunities involving research in space and auroral physics, especially at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and she hopes to share these opportunities with Zone 17 and all SPS chapters across the USA. She plans to increase communication across Zone 17 and hopes to increase enrollment of students interested in physics. As a student at a university with few opportunities for physics, she hopes to increase opportunities for all students across Zone 17. She looks forward to having a real impact within her zone, and Alaska.

**Zone:** Zone-18

**Name:** Dennis Calderon

**Chapter:** California- State University-East Bay

**Biography:** Dennis Calderon is a junior at the California State University - East Bay. He is from the Hayward area and hopes to promote physics in the local community. His goal is to continue his undergraduate education, emphasizing on physics, while continuing to grow a positive community within the College of Science and leading the SPS (Society of Physics Students) club on campus as the chapter president. Dennis is preparing for a career in physics and plans on earning a PhD to become a researcher and professor at a university. He is exploring physics because it fascinates him to understand how the universe works. It entices him to know that studying the fundamental laws of the universe is 'simply' the study of how 'things' move.

**Candidate Statement:** Dennis promises to serve to the best of his abilities as Associate Zone Councilor for Zone 18. His goal is to promote inclusiveness and diversity in the physics community with an emphasis on K-12 outreach. He believes a great physicist can come from anywhere and anyone and we all have the ability to contribute. Dennis brings a unique perspective stemming from his life experiences and upbringing that will bring new ideas to the national council.

**Zone:** Zone-18

**Name:** Annette Lopez

**Chapter:** Fresno State SPS

**Biography:** I am finishing my undergraduate degree in physics and mathematics at California State University, Fresno. I plan to join the physics master's program at Fresno State to continue my studies in particle physics. Fresno State offers a pathway to the professional world of particle physics through our CSU NUPAC (Nuclear and Particle Physics Consortium). Altogether I have spent about 6 months in Europe working at the Large Hadron Collider writing code for an exotics group looking at dark matter candidates and a Higgs group. Doing research in particle physics there afforded me the amazing opportunity to learn from a diverse community of scientists who welcomed and included me in their discussions of breakthrough research methods. I was able to meet young scientists from other countries which has given me a sense of how physics is perceived, valued, and approached by other cultures. From my two summer internships at CERN I realized the importance of tackling a problem by listening to contrasting perspectives through collaboration. I applied what I learned about collaboration from CERN to Fresno State's SPS chapter as president. Together, we created t-shirts that spoke to each area of research offered by the Fresno State Physics Department, we organized an event called STEM Smash Fest to engage the local community with physics, we've held movie nights, and hosted an event at the local indoor climbing gym to provide an opportunity for physics majors to socialize with each other. Currently, we are working on taking our physics majors to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory to expose them to a professional career one could pursue with a degree in physics. Outside of Academia, I enjoy indoor climbing, traveling, and spending time with my family. I am also a Disney enthusiast.

**Candidate Statement:** My passion lies with inspiring the next generation of scientists, mathematicians, and engineers. My plan would center around rallying our chapter officers to reach out to their local

communities to expose the younger generation to all sciences, with an emphasis in physics. For example, I organized Fresno State's physics majors to host STEM Smash Fest. This was a collaboration between Fresno State's physics, chemistry, and mathematics department to engage with the local community by providing hands-on physics and chemistry demonstrations, namely throwing pumpkins off the tallest building at Fresno State. I believe events like STEM Smash Fest can be organized by each chapter's officers to shed a positive light on science and technology. From my experience as chapter president, I understand the importance of members having enthusiasm to participate in chapter events and this is something I would like to address by creating an open platform in which any member of SPS can voice their ideas that will be heard and shared. This would be achieved by revamping a social media outreach to members. I would utilize my resources as Associate Zone Counselor to communicate with each chapter to set a goal of hosting one new event, be it for their own members or be it for their community, that they can take pride in.

**Zone:** Zone-18

**Name:** Jesus Perez

**Chapter:** California State University-San Marcos

**Biography:** My name is Jesus Perez and I am a junior studying applied physics at California State University San Marcos. I was born and raised in San Marcos so it has been an honor for me to attend college in my own back yard. However, I will soon be time to go as I plan to pursue a PhD in plasma/confined fusion physics. My undergraduate research experience at the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory has influence my career decisions. Not only do I want my contribution to physics to have an impact on the environment, but on the people as well. Which is why I am also very passionate about community outreach. Whether it is tutoring kids after school, visiting classrooms to conduct live demos, or starting an engineer's club at the local after school program, to taking middle schoolers to see a planetarium, reaching out to the community is a big passion of mine.

**Candidate Statement:** I am interested in running for Associate Zone Councilor because I want to be part of something bigger. I want to learn about the areas of physics outside of research. I want to have an impact on helping my brothers and sisters who are going through the physics major like me. As an Associate Zone Councilor, I seek to do my part in bringing zones and local schools closer together. My experience at the APS meetings that I have attended have made me realize that they are more than just an opportunity to showcase our research, they are a way of bringing people together. Which is why I will work hard to help bring together the best zones meetings to you possible. I am interested in becoming involved in science policy down the road. I know as a nation science should be a priority. That is why as an associate zone councilor, I seek to grow my skills in shaping how science is structured. I also plan on being be very active in communicating with chapters to help provide them with any resources or opportunities that present themselves.