Craig Coleman

Experienced Leader

My leadership journey began in 2004, four years after I finished my Master’s degree at the University of Pittsburgh. I saw an announcement in the ASHA Leader seeking nominations for the Legislative Council. The job description sounded very interesting, so I decided to self-nominate. I was very excited until I saw the ballot and thought “There is no way I will win this election!” There were two open spots for Pennsylvania representatives and three very famous candidates. And me. So, I decided to personally contact as many speech -language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists in the state as I could, via email, and describe why I was running and what I hoped to accomplish. I won the election and was on my way. During my three-year term, I worked really hard to improve communication with ASHA members in PA. I got to know many of the issues they were facing and developed effective methods of communicating with them on ASHA-related issues.

When my term on the Legislative Council ended, so did the Council! The Legislative Council was switched to an Advisory Council, with a different charge and mission. Rather than seek re-election, I decided to become involved in my state association to specifically help the people I had spent the last three years communicating with, as their representative on the Council. I ran for President of the Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association (PSHA) and served two terms during a critical licensure re-write. I found that work to be extremely rewarding and developed friendships with colleagues that will last a lifetime.

After my terms as PSHA President, I was elected to the Coordinating Committee of ASHA SIG 4: Fluency and Fluency Disorders. I spent two years on the committee, then served as Associate Coordinator during my third year. I was then elected to a three-year term as Coordinator. During that time, we created the Childhood Stuttering Practice Portal and led efforts to rebrand Perspectives into a peer-reviewed journal. I really enjoyed my time as Coordinator of SIG 4, as I had the opportunity to interact with many of my colleagues in the field of stuttering, and work closely with the other SIG Coordinators. During that time, I also served on the ASHA Scope of Practice Ad-hoc Committee to rewrite the scope of practice.

In 2017, I decided to run for the ASHA Board of Directors. I lost the election, but it was a great experience. I decided that if I ever ran again, I would reach out to more members and get to know their needs better, as I did when I ran for the LC. Running for the Board of Directors is a little intimidating and I think I played it safe, rather than running a campaign that I really believed in and felt excited about. In 2019, I decided to run again and this time I made a very strong effort to reach out to members and identify their needs. It was one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. At some point of the election, I forgot that I was running a campaign and started to just listen and talk with people. The work that our colleagues do is so amazing and inspiring. This time, I won the election. I am so excited to work with such great colleagues on the BOD and to continue working with amazing ASHA members for the next three years and beyond.  I wish you the best on your leadership journey. If I can offer any advice or assist you in any way, please don’t hesitate to contact me: [ccoleman@edinboro.edu](mailto:ccoleman@edinboro.edu). Go make a difference in the world!