Leadership Profile – Melissa Passe

*“I think you should co-chair MSHA*.” My friend and former chair told me that I would be good at managing our state convention. As an organized person I felt that I “might” have the necessary skills to take that task on. And so I did. That was it. It was 2002. I was HOOKED on volunteer leadership.

Following my co-chairing our state convention I decided to run for MSHA VP for Professional and Public Relations. I happily served in that capacity for two years after which I ran for the President-Elect of the association. That was a three year term but because our outgoing president could not fulfill her term I stayed another year and thus served as president for four years. As I was doing this I also served as the volunteer chair for the convention.

As I was completing my state presidential term ASHA was moving from a Legislative Council model to the Advisory Council model for state participation. It was also during this time that ASHA launched its Leadership Development Program. I applied for and graduated from that inaugural program in 2007. In 2009 ran for the SLP rep for the Missouri AC and served that term happily. While there I served as the vice-chair of the AC although that was really in name only because I was unable to travel for one of the meetings.

Clinical Supervision is my first love and I was soon selected to serve on the SIG 11 steering committee. Following this I was privileged to serve on the CFCC for ASHA, working my up to SLP vice chair and finally chair of the CFCC. Because the work we were doing at the time (inheriting specialty certification and conducting a standards change I was asked to stay on the CFCC for an additional year which I happily did. It was during this time that I was representing the CFCC as a member of the ETS Praxis National Advisory Committee where I still sit today.

Once finished on the CFCC I was fortunate enough to be asked to serve an abbreviated term on the ASHA Board of Ethics to fill in for someone who was leaving. I was thrilled to have that opportunity and stayed an extra year on the Ethics Education Subcommittee to fill in for another absence.

During all of this I applied to be a CAA site visitor and was so happy to be chosen. I am fortunate to get to serve in that capacity as well.

Throughout all of that time I served at the local level as well. I have served as the chair person for the Region II Council for Developmental Disabilities, a member of the Senate Bill 40 Board and as both secretary and president of our local Catholic School Board. It is my ASHA work though, that has been the most meaningful to me. Giving back to an association that I love is pure joy.

Currently, I am serving as the topic chair for supervision and perception for the ASHA 2020 convention and could not be more excited. My ultimate goal is to serve ASHA as a Board of Directors Vice President and then as the president of the association. It’s a lofty goal and I truly understand that. I’m just a gal who serves as the Director of Clinical Education in a very rural Liberal Arts and Sciences Institution. I have no other previous faculty peers who have been involved with ASHA leadership so I often feel as though I am blazing this trail alone. However, in 1993 in Anaheim California one young newly certified girl attended her first ever ASHA convention. I sat in the back of the theater at the opening general session and was in awe of simply sitting in attendance in such a huge space with so many other people who do what I do. And then the ASHA president walked out to give her address. My volunteer leadership *dream* began on that day in that theater in California with my journey and my call to action beginning later in 2002 with *“You should co-chair MSHA.”* I am now and forever will be a lover of (ASHA) leadership and laughter!