

CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER (CXO)

*"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,
but people will always remember how you make them feel."*

- Maya Angelou

THE SEARCH

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) seeks an innovative leader who is impassioned to improve college admissions for the public good to serve as its inaugural Chief Experience Officer (CXO). Reporting to NACAC's new Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Angel B. Pérez, and serving on the executive team, the CXO will be a creative thought leader, strategist, and savvy collaborator with deep expertise in creating and cultivating a top-class member or customer experience, and a passion for revolutionizing the college admission role in making postsecondary education accessible, inclusive, equitable, and affordable. The new CEO brings tremendous energy and encourages an organizational culture of creativity, innovation, and collaboration. Armed with a recently released [Ad-Hoc Report on the Future of Leadership in College Admission](#), forthcoming mission and vision statements, and an organizational restructure, NACAC is moving in new and exciting directions. In that spirit, the CXO will ensure that all areas of the association impacting the member experience are unified in providing a seamless approach that embodies excellence and operationalizes the organization's values. The opportunities for impact are endless.

THE ASSOCIATION

NACAC is the largest association in the world supporting professionals who serve students as they make choices about pursuing postsecondary education. The association works to expand access to higher education through policy, advocacy, convening, education, and training. It has a membership of nearly 14,000 comprised of postsecondary admissions professionals, high school counselors, independent educational consultants, and others based throughout the United States and, increasingly, around the world. NACAC is fortunate to partner with 23 state and regionally-based [affiliate organizations](#) that share a common mission to serve and support the needs of admission and counseling professionals. In addition, the organization cultivates [special interest groups](#) (SIGs). These "micro communities" nurture the growing diversity of interests across the association.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

NACAC is in the process of reinventing itself during a time of disruption for both the college admissions profession and associations. A new strategic vision, mission, and values ensure the organization will become a cutting-edge influencer, leading and supporting the transformation of the college admissions profession.

NACAC commits to:

- Leading important initiatives resulting in a more diverse and inclusive student population
- Boldly influencing higher education policy
- Serving as a clearinghouse for readily accessible knowledge sharing, transformative professional development opportunities, and cutting-edge research
- Creating a membership that is reflective of the changing demographics among students

To ensure the organization's success, NACAC is committed to being innovative, nimble, and meeting the moment—working at the speed of light to stay ahead of the curve and to lead meaningful and impactful change.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Angel B. Pérez became chief executive officer of the National Association for College Admission Counseling in July 2020. Prior to joining NACAC, he served as the vice president for enrollment and student success at Trinity College in Connecticut, where he also taught in the educational studies department. A recognized thought-leader on issues of equity and access in American education, he is a tireless champion for underrepresented communities and a creative advocate for reform. Named by a Forbes article in 2019 as the most influential voice in college admissions, he strives to build an educational ecosystem that better represents today's America. Dr. Perez's expertise has been sought by key policy influencers. In 2016, the Governor of Connecticut appointed him to the New England Board of Higher Education, and he was chosen by the Gates Foundation and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators to serve on Forward50, a group of higher education leaders presenting solutions to Congress. In 2019, the *New York Times Magazine* profiled his story in a cover feature, and he is a frequent contributor and commentator in media outlets, including the *Washington Post*, *NPR*, *CBS Evening News*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. To learn more about Dr. Perez, visit angelbperez.com.

The CXO will serve as a member of the senior leadership team. As such, the CXO will work closely with the Deputy CEO, who oversees multiple program areas and serves as Chief of Staff; the Executive Director for Educational Content and Policy, who oversees the association's main knowledge areas, including public policy, advocacy, research, education and training, and global engagement; the Executive Director of Information Management, who oversees all internal and external technology resources and solutions for the association; and the Director of Finance, who is responsible for the association's financial resources and facilities. Additionally, the CXO will partner with the Director of Communications, who is responsible for designing and carrying out an association-wide, integrated communications strategy that reflects NACAC's mission and strategic priorities.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The CXO will help develop and implement strategies to ensure successful outcomes for service, reach, and impact among key stakeholders. The CXO will help identify and develop new programs and member benefits that align with NACAC's revised mission and vision statements and enhance member value through investment in new technologies that ensure seamless delivery of services and information. The incumbent will ensure consistency in messaging across various platforms that meet the evolving needs of members, and the students and families they serve. As a key conduit for cultivating NACAC membership, the CXO will partner with communications and marketing to ensure integrated communications campaigns that highlight NACAC's values. As an inaugural CXO, this individual will have significant flexibility to design and shape the association of the future, as well as design roles for and hire additional membership staff to build out their team.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

Success in the role will be defined by ensuring NACAC is able to attract new members and retain existing members, and that members have a positive experience in every interaction with NACAC staff from their initial joining to annual renewals, registering for and attending events, accessing research and information, being provided information relevant to college admissions that is timely, cutting-edge, and moves the profession forward, and ensuring members receive support for their unique and evolving concerns.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The CXO will engage, with excitement, the following opportunities and challenges.

Build connections throughout the association, the membership, and the larger college admissions and higher education industries to create a top-notch membership experience.

The CXO will be responsible for establishing, leading, coordinating, and overseeing the association's comprehensive program to revolutionize and continuously improve the experience of members and for promoting an organization-wide approach to member-centeredness and engagement. To achieve this, the CXO must vicariously "live and breathe" the member experience to ensure we are hearing the "voice of the member." The CXO will identify and continually evaluate all touch points members have with the association to ensure a consistent and positive experience that advances the profession.

Serve as a strategic thought-leader.

As a thought-partner with a broad understanding of the association and larger admissions and higher education landscape, the CXO will participate in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of strategic business and performance goals. The CXO will serve as a change agent and work closely with association leadership in identifying priority areas, developing goals, planning improvement, and measuring effectiveness towards the strategic vision for the association.

Provide strategic leadership to all member-centric areas—membership, advocacy, public policy, research and content development, education and training, global engagement, and convening programs—keeping NACAC's approach aligned with providing best-in-class member experience regardless of the direct responsibility of the functional area.

The CXO will provide strategic direction and leadership across all of NACAC's public touchpoints, as NACAC reimagines its experiences with members and the education community, deepens its connection to diverse communities, and pushes onward as the college admissions landscape evolves. Together with NACAC staff from various areas, the CXO will create new pathways for members and non-members to engage with our content, online and in-person. With the CEO and other organization leaders, the CXO will design and implement cultural and experiential change

centered upon building relationships with members, sharing a passion for experience, and an innovative, continuous process improvement mentality throughout the association. To be successful, the CXO will need to establish and ensure that a member-centric mindset is maintained association-wide. This will entail leading cross-functional collaborations on how to deliver an exceptional member experience and developing strong relationships with other members of the entire staff, board, affiliates, and external partners.

Identify and curate new services and benefits for members.

As an influential thought-leader, the CXO will stay up-to-date on industry research and changing trends in programs, services, and delivery channels and respond to changes with a fresh perspective, identifying new market and growth opportunities that benefit our membership, as well as identifying and monitoring competitors.

Identify, plan, design, and implement practical and creative strategies to drive member acquisition, retention, and relationship depth.

The CXO will partner with association leadership to plan, develop, and implement content strategies to advance the association's programmatic goals, as well as, to optimize engagement for a variety of audiences including secondary and postsecondary counseling and admissions professionals, students, parents, affiliates, community-based partners, and the larger education community. The CXO will oversee the development of marketing strategies that enhance the NACAC brand and create a larger, more-visible presence for the association, increase satisfaction and engagement from members and key constituencies by highlighting our value proposition, and market revenue-producing products and services. A 21st century association must understand the digital landscape and its impact on the member experience. The CXO will seek greater understanding of key drivers contributing to member satisfaction through the analysis of survey data, interpreting complaints, participating in employee training, and working with leadership to identify and fix problems in a timely manner. Identifying and monitoring metrics that measure the experience provided to our members and other key audiences will provide a regular review of the continuity, consistency, and caliber of experience strategies throughout all program areas.

QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will be a seasoned and effective leader as well as an inspirational manager who enjoys processes and strategy and is comfortable working across multiple areas of the association. The CXO will have experience revolutionizing and driving positive outcomes for members or customers. The ideal candidate thrives at the intersection of education and customer service and has a hospitality mindset. The incumbent may come from various industries—higher education, association management, health care, or corporate—and understands how a well-executed customer experience strategy deepens relationships and drives successful returns on investment.

Candidates coming from outside of education and association management must be curious, fast learners. The CXO will possess the following qualifications:

- Experience using innovative thinking to design new and highly creative approaches for addressing strategic initiatives and complex problems. The CXO brings skills in data analysis, technology, admissions counseling industry knowledge, and a broad understanding of political, economic, and technologic factors impacting the US and global higher education landscape.
- Experience and comfort in creating mission-driven revenue strategies and building business development plans around them.
- 10 years of similar or related experience leading and mentoring teams in a senior leadership role, preferably in a member- or customer-facing capacity.
- Success increasing the satisfaction and retention of constituents served.
- Experience with multi-generational and inclusive content approaches.
- Commitment to supporting diverse populations through diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and needs assessments for a variety of communities.
- Strong team management and partner management experience.
- Talent for collaboration and effective teamwork with a demonstrated ability to work with people at all levels of an organization, both internally with staff and externally with members and partner organizations.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills and social emotional intelligence, including the ability to effectively pinpoint key motivations of internal and external constituencies, effectively consult with others, and focus on building consensus.
- High levels of professionalism, transparency, integrity, and adaptability.
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously, and thrive in an extremely fast-paced environment
- Attention-to-detail, highly organized, and endless self-motivation.
- Excellent written and oral communication, including storytelling skills and conveying complex concepts and data to various constituencies.
- A master's or other advanced degree in higher education, business, hospitality, training, or a related field.

TO APPLY

To inquire further, or apply for this role, please email your cover letter and résumé to recruiting@nacacnet.org.

NACAC is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by law. NACAC offers competitive compensation, an excellent benefits and retirement package, and a convenient location in the Washington, DC metro area.