

# CHIEF OF STAFF (COS)

**“A Chief of Staff serves as an air traffic controller for the leader and the senior team; as an integrator connecting work streams that would otherwise remain siloed; as a communicator linking the leadership team and the broader organization; as an honest broker and truth teller when the leader needs a wide-ranging view without turf considerations; and as a confidant without an organizational agenda.”**

**– Harvard Business Review**

## THE SEARCH

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The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) seeks a strategic and forward-thinking professional to join the organization as its inaugural chief of staff (COS). Reporting to NACAC's chief executive officer (CEO), [Dr. Angel B. Pérez](#), and serving on the executive team, the COS will work in partnership with the CEO, the senior leadership team, and the [Board of Directors](#) to operationalize the goals and priorities associated with the organization's new vision and strategic direction. The COS will advise the CEO, manage the daily operations of the executive office, ensure productive collaborations within the organization and the board, and monitor progress and completion of critical strategic initiatives. The COS will implement strategies associated with organizational change management and cultural transformation to further strengthen NACAC's commitment to professional excellence and deepen its value proposition to members and stakeholders.

The ideal candidate must:

- Thrive working behind the scenes on behalf of the CEO, board, and organization
- Find joy and purpose in serving and uplifting others to ensure the individual success of employees as well as the success of the greater association

## THE ASSOCIATION

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NACAC is the world's largest association 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 more than 23,000](#), comprised of postsecondary admission professionals, high school counselors, independent educational consultants, community based organizations, and others throughout the United States and 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](#). These "micro communities" nurture the growing diversity of interests across the association.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

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NACAC is in the process of reinventing itself during a time of disruption for both the college admission profession and higher education associations. New [strategic vision](#), mission, and values statements, as well as a new organizational structure, will ensure the organization becomes a cutting-edge influencer, leading and supporting the transformation of the college admission 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.

Recently, NACAC staff members participated in strategic visioning sessions to reaffirm, as well as reimagine, its organizational values and guiding principles. The newly developed vision statement and values direct the CEO, the senior leadership group, and staff in their work together as they seek organizational and cultural transformation to better serve NACAC's membership and external stakeholders, in service of the college admission counseling profession.

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## Staff Vision Statement

We are the trusted source of information and resources for NACAC members and the students they serve, providing exceptional service and stewardship to meet the evolving needs of the college admission counseling profession.

## Staff Values

- Trust
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Inclusivity
- Accountability
- Sustainability

# LEADERSHIP

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[Dr. Angel B. Pérez](#) became CEO of NACAC 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 admission, he strives to build an educational ecosystem that better represents today's America. Dr. Pérez'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 national media outlets, including the *Washington Post*, *NPR*, *CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Forbes*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Highlights of Pérez's first seven months were featured in a recent [article](#), "How an Association Rebounded, Turning Challenges into Progress," in *Associations Now Daily News*, the daily newsletter from ASAE, the Center for Association Leadership.

# POSITION OVERVIEW & DESCRIPTION

Reporting to the CEO, the COS is a key advisor to the CEO and works with the senior leadership team and Board of Directors in planning, integrating, operationalizing, and implementing goals and priorities in support of NACAC's mission and strategic objectives. The COS ensures collaboration between members of the senior leadership team and administrative divisions to transform and deliver a culture of collaboration and excellence that best serves NACAC's membership and external stakeholders, as well as influences policy and systems change in higher education.

## Advisor to the CEO

- Serve as senior support to the CEO and strategic member of the senior management team; raise critical issues with the CEO and advise in decision-making
- On behalf of the CEO, lead and support the collaborative effort to create a culture that embodies the staff's co-created mission and values statements
- Conduct and manage follow-up regarding CEO's priorities, creating and maintaining systems to ensure goal setting, accountability, and outcomes for the senior leadership group
- Strategize and improve opportunities for cross-organizational collaboration
- Oversee agendas for CEO's meetings and execute strategic time management strategies for CEO; participate in meetings and ensure effective sequencing, coordination, and follow-through of the CEO's activities; prioritize activities for the CEO's schedule and upcoming commitments

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- Prepare and/or contribute to the preparation of reports, proposals, briefing, presentations, and responses on organizational and strategic issues
- Assess internal and external inquiries directed to CEO and determine proper course of action; ensure all issues are addressed appropriately, efficiently, and judiciously, and monitor progress until resolved
- Build and nurture relationships to serve as a resource for the CEO and a point of contact for designated key constituents to resolve complex issues and direct strategic priorities

### Executive & Operational Administration

- (At the direction of the CEO) Assist in all aspects of NACAC administration
- Direct the daily operations of the CEO's office
- Interact with all levels of leadership and administrative divisions to ensure organizational focus and alignment; facilitate communication across divisions
- Participate in key meetings with staff and/or external stakeholders to represent the CEO's position to drive understanding and decision-making
- Support outward-facing priorities and initiatives; consult with divisional leaders on public relations matters, member engagement, policy and research opportunities, etc.
- Serve as an organizational liaison on issues related to human resources and support conflict resolution efforts
- Partner with the CFO and CEO to track the development and monitoring of NACAC's budget and finances

### Communications Management

- Manage the flow of communication in and out of the CEO's office to ensure consistent and responsive message delivery to key stakeholders
- Conduct research and assemble materials for the CEO in connection with speaking engagements, events, presentations, strategic initiatives, and other activities
- Draft and edit correspondence, speeches, proposals, reports, presentations, and other communications projects of organizational and strategic importance
- Draft CEO messages to the board of directors, members, and staff

### Board Management & Governance

- Work closely with the CEO and the president of the board to set direction and strategic goals for the board; develop agendas and coordinate arrangements for board meetings, retreats, etc.
- Manage governance and policy-based inquiries
- Serve as the primary administrative liaison to the board; professionalize policies, practices, and functionality of board operations
- Liaise with and manage committee work-flow to maintain progress towards goals

## QUALIFICATIONS

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The ideal candidate thrives at the intersection of education, executive and administrative management, and customer service.

- Master's or other advanced degree in higher education, business, or related field
- 10–12 years of progressive responsibility in higher education, association management, or related field
- 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, diplomacy, and adaptability
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously, and thrive in an extremely fast-paced environment
- A self-starter with a bias toward action
- 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
- Willingness to work behind the scenes in support of the CEO and the organization
- Attention to detail, highly organized, and endless self-motivation and initiative
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills
- Openness to learning and engaging with new ideas, concepts, and colleagues
- Interest and experience in contributing to organizational effectiveness and cultural change
- Flexibility to quickly shift and respond to new priorities
- Comfort with data and quantitative analysis
- Commitment to supporting diverse populations through diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives
- Exceptional discretion and sensitivity

## TO APPLY

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