

Meet Your New 2019 – 2021 Regional Vice-Presidents for the Mid-Central, North Central, Southeast, and Southwest Regions

By Kristin Hamilton, JD, NAADAC Sr. Communications Manager

Every two years, NAADAC members have the opportunity to select a Regional Vice-President who will represent his or her state affiliate on the NAADAC Executive Committee, with four of NAADAC's eight regional positions being up for election each year. All 2019-2021 terms will begin on October 4, 2019, immediately after the NAADAC 2019 Annual Conference in Orlando, FL.

This year, the Mid-Central, North Central, Southeast, and Southwest Regional Vice President positions came up for election. NAADAC only received one nomination for each of the open Regional Vice President positions. Accordingly, each of the nominated individuals will take office as the Regional Vice President of his or her respective region without an election. Please find each individual's statements below.

Mid-Central Regional Vice-President Candidate & Uncontested Winner *Representing Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, & Wisconsin.*



Gisela Berger, PhD, MAC, LPC, NCC
Mequon, WI

Summary of NAADAC activities:

Having been an active member for many years and in several states, I have been honored to have been chosen as Vice-President and then President of RAP-WI (Recovery and Addiction Professionals of Wisconsin). During this time, I revived (and, renamed) a dying organization. Today, though small, it is a vibrant part of the addictions treatment community in Wisconsin. Currently, it is the only organization representing treatment providers. RAP-WI advocates for our interests in the state legislature, holds twice-yearly conferences, is active in providing networking opportunities for professionals in the field, and allows members the opportunity to gain leadership experience. This revived, energetic association is the result of many years' hard work, including empowering motivated people toward making RAP-WI the premier organization for addiction treatment providers in the state. On another note, I have been privileged to be a presenter at several local and state-wide conferences as well as for several NAADAC webinars. These presentations are an honor as I enjoy connecting with many, varied addiction treatment professionals.

Philosophy statement on the future of NAADAC:

I believe that NAADAC has positioned itself as the premier provider of educational resources, specialty credentialing, and advocacy efforts from the local to the national level. NAADAC stands alone in providing these many benefits in a cost-effective way to everyone working as an addiction professional. I believe that the current challenge is in crafting an identity that serves to both inform the public and po-

tential clients of our many, varied services as well as indicate to governing and legislating bodies our professionalism. Our field has come a long way in promoting best practices, integrating medical advances, and promoting psychological well-being in every sense of the word. The coming years will challenge us through the current opiate epidemic and through the coming challenge to our authority under the guise of co-occurring disorders. Legislative funds are no longer guaranteed, and insurance funds are also a thing of the past. Therefore, it behooves us to look for alternate funding streams and to share this knowledge across the many states and municipalities represented under NAADAC's umbrella. These are the many challenges we face, and if we face them together, we will all be stronger and our clients healthier!

Other qualifications:

I have served clients in many stages of recovery, have supervised clinicians in many stages of development, and have taught both undergraduate and graduate level students across many disciplines. I still believe that addiction professionals are experts and better trained than any other profession to work with substance use disorders. Our competency and our knowledge far surpass that of any other profession. It is through this diverse experience that I come to you asking for the opportunity to both build my region's identity and to represent us to the national governing body.

North Central Regional Vice-President Candidate & Uncontested Winner *Representing Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, N. Dakota & S. Dakota.*



James "JJ" Johnson, Jr., BS, LADC, NCAC
II, SAP, ICS
West St. Paul, MN

Summary of NAADAC activities:

A Midwesterner by heart, James "JJ" Johnson, Jr., BS, LADC, NCAC III, SAP started his career in addiction treatment and recovery in 1990 with Franciscan Skemp Healthcare in LaCrosse, WI, during which time he had the privilege of working with a Sister City project that took him to Russia to help develop Outpatient Treatment programs in cities outside of Moscow. In 2001, he accepted a position as Coordinator of Substance Abuse Services for New Ulm Medical Center; he remained at New Ulm Medical Center until accepting a position in St. Paul for HealthEast-Addiction Care. He is now Director of Residential Programs for NorthStar Regional in Chaska, MN.

My involvement with NAADAC started in Wisconsin over 20 years ago and has never wavered since. The value I see in being involved with

NAADAC is unparalleled. I served as President of the Minnesota affiliate for ten years until 2014, stepping back as Minnesota Addiction Professionals (MNAP) continues to work. In 2016, when NAADAC was in Minneapolis, I was elected as NAADAC Regional Vice-President for the North Central Region to fill the vacancy left by now president Diane Sevensing.

Philosophy statement on the future of NAADAC:

NAADAC is the premiere Association for Addiction Professionals and serves its members in multiple unprecedented ways. NAADAC has a mission and vision that continues to be relevant in these times of division. The future is bright and exciting seeing take on more a global identity. I believe that this association needs to be at the forefront of all issues addiction treatment and recovery related. We welcome all addiction professional and that in and of itself makes us leaders in our own right.

Other qualifications:

Global voice in the recovering community. Successfully motivated the Nebraska Chapter to unify. Recognized as a leader in Minnesota Treatment Courts. Understands the issues facing the North Central Region and has a plan to address those needs long into the future.

Southeast Regional Vice-President Candidate & Uncontested Winner

Representing Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, & Tennessee



Marvin M. Sandifer, LCSW, LCAS
Greensboro, NC

Summary of NAADAC activities:

I have been a member of the North Carolina State affiliate of NAADAC, Addiction Professionals of North Carolina (APNC), for a number of years. I was first elected to a APNC Regional Vice President position in 2016 and

am currently serving my second term as a Regional Vice President, ending December 2019. While on the board of APNC, the association has grown substantially in membership, revenue, scope, and advocacy. My direct responsibilities are to facilitate regional training opportunities to provide licensure credits and to expose professionals to the growing science of substance use disorder treatment. Within North Carolina, there remains confusion among professionals between the licensure board's and the professional association's purpose.

Philosophy statement on the future of NAADAC:

NAADAC is an essential voice of reason and science to cut through the emotional issues of SUD and its effect on individuals, families, and communities. The stigma informed narrative around SUD, among the general population, policymakers and SUD providers, fuels irrational decisions that continue to punish and not support with evidenced-based accountability those individuals, families, and communities suffering from SUD. Prevention is ineffective; treatment is believed to be a waste of resources and recovery community development is rejected as undesirable. NAADAC and its state affiliates play a vital role in creating a narrative promoting current science on brain disorder and its effective treatment and management. The new narrative can influence policy development and resource acquisition that is effective in treating SUD.

Other qualifications for Southeast RVP:

I have been a member of the professional SUD profession in North Carolina for 26 years. During this time, I have worked in publicly and privately funded institutions and have first-hand experience with the challenges and strengths of these different funding environments. In response to the opiate crisis, I initiated the formation of a community coalition of public and private providers, with public health and safety, along with public education whose mission is to reduce provider fragmentation and to reduce barriers to treatment access. This coalition was named CURE Triad in 2017. Since its development began, CURE Triad has contributed to the creation of GC STOP. GC Stop is a public, private partnership to respond to opiate overdoses with follow-up... [cut off of form]

Southwest Regional Vice-President Candidate & Uncontested Winner

Representing Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, New Mexico, Nevada, & Utah



Thomas P. Gorham, LMFT, CADC II
Berkeley, CA

Summary of NAADAC activities:

I have been a member of NAADAC since 2001. I have attended both the Advocacy and Annual Conferenced during most of those years. I was the founding President of the "Addiction Professionals for California" in 2019 and have continued in that position up to this time.

Philosophy statement on the future of NAADAC:

I believe NAADAC needs to continue to lead the way in the prevention and treatment of Substance Use Disorders. We need to support, expand and train our workforce to meet the demands of the "Affordable Care Act."

Other qualifications:

I have a rich personal history of homelessness and incarceration that allows me to clearly see the needs of specialized populations. I have been the Clinical Director and am now the Executive Director of a large non-profit treatment facility, which qualifies me both in the business and treatment aspects of our field.



Kristin Hamilton, JD, is the Senior Communications Manager for NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals. She works on NAADAC public relations, communications, and digital media, including the NAADAC website and social media, is editor of NAADAC's two ePublications, the bi-weekly *Addiction & Recovery eNews* and weekly *Professional eUpdate*, and is associate editor for NAADAC's magazine, *Advances in Addiction and Recovery*. She also contributes to the planning, organization, and administration of communication campaigns, administers the PhD Candidate Survey Program, and serves as the affiliate liaison for the Communications Department. Hamilton holds a Juris Doctorate from Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, MA and a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Chemistry from Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI.