CSTA 2015 Board of Directors Elections

The 2015 CSTA Board of Directors Elections will run from April 2, 2015 to May 4, 2015. In addition to three open positions on the Board, this year's ballot will contain two proposed changes to the CSTA Bylaws. Each CSTA member, including institutional members, should receive an email on April 2 containing a personalized link to the election ballot. This email will originate from electionbuddy.com, our election service provider, so be sure to look for this email and/or whitelist the sender in your spam filter. If your email address has changed recently, notify customerservice@csta-hq.org with your correct address.

The three open Board positions in the 2015 election are:

K–8 Representative (1 position): A K–8 classroom teacher who is currently teaching computer science at the high school level.

9–12 Representative (1 position): A 9–12 classroom teacher who is currently teaching computer science at the elementary and middle school levels.

At-Large Representative (1 position): An educator with responsibilities for K–12 CS education.

The nominees for each of these positions are listed below, along with their personal statements and Q&A responses.

K–8 Representative: DYLAN RYDER

Personal Statement

My name is Dylan Ryder and I am thrilled by the chance to serve as K-8 Representative on the CSTA Board. As Educational Technologist at The School at Columbia University, I develop CS curriculum and technology integration plans for our K-8 environment. I also teach weekly technology classes and mentor two after-school clubs devoted to CS and technology. My mission is to help teachers and students use technology safely, responsibly and creatively, with particular attention to computer science and engineering. I challenge students to engage in the full scope of the technology spectrum - from examining prehistoric tools to designing with code and modern digital fabrication methods. Always pursuing innovative pedagogy, I also write about CS education and deliver workshops on integrating computer science and engineering into K-8 education.
What experiences and/or interests in K-12 computer science/information technology education qualify you to serve as a leader for the organization?

My experience in CS and technology education stretches back over ten years. I have a strong commitment to Computer Science education advocacy locally, nationally and globally. I have presented at conferences in the USA and abroad including ISTE, ASEE, Scratch@MIT, and I am thrilled to deliver my first workshop at the CSTA Annual Conference this year. I also promote CS education through my writing and have authored pieces on coding in the classroom for Edutopia.com and Creative Teaching & Learning magazine.

What previous experience do you have with CSTA?

I have been using the CSTA K-12 standards and advocacy tools in my own teaching practice for many years and I have been a member of the CSTA since January 2014. I am also very excited to be a workshop presenter at the 2015 CSTA Annual Conference.

What leadership skills do you have that would enrich the Board and the organization?

I lead by example and encourage others to develop and share their own passion for technology education. My dedication to this aim includes:

• Presenting CS education workshops at conferences.
• Inspiring student-led coding workshops at our local Scratch Day events.
• Coordinator of the Innovation & Design Camp at the Marymount School of New York: planning curriculum, events and mentoring instructional staff.
• US Peace Corps service – teaching computing classes, delivering technology PD to host-country teachers, and training new incoming volunteers from the US.

What do you think are the most important issues for K-12 computer science education?

Increasing awareness of the CSTA K-12 standards: I meet teachers who declare that they want to integrate CS into their classrooms but wish they had a scope and sequence to guide them. Events like the Hour of Code have brought interest in CS to new heights - now is a crucial time to connect educators to the great many resources provided by the CSTA. Strengthening the “Code to Learn” narrative: Just as one learns to read and then reads to learn new things, we should highlight the benefits of "coding to learn" as a valuable new literacy for creative problem solving.

K–8 Representative: SHEENA VAIDYANATHAN

Personal Statement

My motivation to serve as the K-8 Representative at CSTA is to help bring computer science education to every student through strong school programs. I want to help CSTA be the unbiased teacher’s voice in computer science education and to develop the best student-centered resources. My focus on creativity and collaboration in computer science has made my district program very
successful with both girls and boys and I want to work on the CSTA board to expand my work beyond my own local area. My extensive (5+ year) computer science curriculum development and teaching experience with proven success in the classroom combined with my advocacy work through conferences and articles, makes me a strong candidate for this role.

**What experiences and/or interests in K-12 computer science/information technology education qualify you to serve as a leader for the organization?**

I have taught computer science for 5+ years to approximately 500 students per week in a public school district wide program in California. Besides developing curriculum and teaching 4th-6th graders, I have also conducted professional development for teachers in our school district to bring computer science to K-5. I have volunteered at hackathons and at low-income after-school coding clubs and have experience with diverse populations. I have advocated for computer science education by presenting at multiple conferences like ISTE, CSTA, California STEM Conference, SxSwEdu, ASCD as well as by writing articles for ISTE’s L&L, EdSurge, and NPR’s MindShift.

**What previous experience do you have with CSTA?**

I have presented at the CSTA conference and connected with many CSTA members at the conference and online. I have contributed to the CSTA blog and am active in my local CSTA chapter. For the past year, I have served as the K-8 Representative, the Chair of the K-8 Task force and a member of the CSTA Conference planning committee. As part of the K-8 Task force, I have helped set up a Google+ community, hosted K-8 chats and advocated and helped grow the K-8 section in the CSTA conference. I have also been the K-8 voice on the CSEdWeek committee, providing lessons for CS teachers in this area.

**What leadership skills do you have that would enrich the Board and the organization?**

Prior to my work in education, I have been in leadership roles in the technology industry in Silicon Valley and of local community organizations. In the education area, I have served on our district technology committee, helped the administration in building the STEM program and led the creation of a successful district wide CS program (our K-8 district now integrates CS in every grade - approx. 4500 students). I have advised teachers from other districts on CS curriculum and integration. In each of these roles, I have been successful in building relationships and working with diverse teams.

**What do you think are the most important issues for K-12 computer science education?**

The shortage of strong computer science teachers is the most important issue facing K-12 computer science education today. We must provide professional development to develop and retain these teachers. The other important issue facing K-12 computer science education is the need to find the best resources among the many solutions that have emerged to meet the demand of 'teach kids to code.' It is important to focus on the pedagogy and assess what students are really learning in terms of computer science.
9–12 Representative: DEREK BABB

Personal Statement
I think that computer science is the most exciting, entertaining, and engaging subject we are teaching today. It is unfortunate that not all students have access to CS due to lack of qualified teachers or lack of vision by schools. I have advocated for CS education in two school districts and at the state level. I would like the opportunity to do the same at the national level where I can have a greater impact.

What experiences and/or interests in K-12 computer science/information technology education qualify you to serve as a leader for the organization?
I have taught Computer Science for the past 9 years and have served as president of our local Omaha CSTA chapter for the past two years. I have been an advocate for computer science education in the Omaha metro participating in many workshops and conferences. I have also been active in computer science activities that help to engage students. I have found competitions, projects, and industry tours to be helpful in exciting students about CS. I would like to help create these relevant projects and advocate for student participation.

What previous experience do you have with CSTA?
I was involved with the creation of a local chapter of CSTA started in Omaha and have been fortunate enough to act as president since it began. I am now in my second year in that role. This past summer I was able to attend the CSTA conference. Over my career I have attended many state technology conferences and I have also attended ISTE. The CSTA conference has been the best professional development I have experienced. I would like to help to maintain this high level experience for CS teachers.

What leadership skills do you have that would enrich the Board and the organization?
I am good at working with people; I rarely encounter a person with whom I cannot get along. I have gained many ideas through my experiences and I love to explore new ideas, especially with regard to CS education. I love new ideas though I am skeptical of many attempts to automate education until I see success. I am passionate about Computer Science and that gives me an advantage over someone who just does it as a job. I have never rested on what I’ve done before, I am always trying to improve and make my classes better.

What do you think are the most important issues for K-12 computer science education?
I think there are two issues facing CS education today. The first is the lack of exposure to CS by most students. Not knowing what computer science is and what a CS professional does is keeping potential CS majors out of the profession. The second issue is the quality of education. Computer Science is not dull but many of our classes are. Students need to see CS as a means to change the world, to make life better, and to solve challenging problems. This takes experienced, excited, qualified teachers.
9–12 Representative: STEPHANIE HOEPPNER

Personal Statement
I have always had a passion for computer science and earned my Bachelors of Science specifically in Computer Science Education. Before becoming involved with CSTA I assisted in rewriting my district’s CS curriculum and presented at our state technology conference on CS curriculum and topics that schools should incorporate. I have actively served within CSTA having been a founding member of the Ohio Chapter (serving as Vice-President), an active CSALT member, and most recently a 9-12 Board of Directors Representative. I stay current with CS, participate in CS professional development as well as provide CS professional development to others. I feel confident that my CS teaching experience and my continued involvement with CSTA gives me the experience needed to serve as a Board Member.

What experiences and/or interests in K-12 computer science/information technology education qualify you to serve as a leader for the organization?
I have taught computer science for sixteen years now and have rewritten 7-12 CS curriculum at two different schools, created new courses, and increased enrollment in CS. I am passionate about CS and giving our students experience they need as they graduate. As a CSALT member I have advocated at the local and state level for more CS education laying the ground work for CS to count in Ohio. Through the Ohio Chapter I have scheduled and run several professional development days for CS teachers including a 3-Day summer workshop.

What previous experience do you have with CSTA?
I have served as a CSALT member since inception in 2008 and am a founding member of the Ohio CSTA Chapter, where I served as Vice President for 4 years. For the past 2 years I have served as 9-12 Board Representative chairing two committees and working on increasing CS education through support of the membership. I have presented at and been a volunteer for the CSTA Annual Conference multiple years and I am privileged this year to be a part of the Conference Planning Committee. My different involvements give me a multifaceted understanding of CSTA.

What leadership skills do you have that would enrich the Board and the organization?
My most relevant leadership would be the previous two years working on the Board of Directors. I have chaired two committees, completed tasks, served on other committees, assisted with projects, and volunteered at CSTA events. As the Ohio Chapter Vice-President I have coordinated presentations and participation at state conferences and provided professional development opportunities. I have planned communications, presentations, and other advocacy outreach at the state level as a CSALT member, and as a HS teacher I coordinate and run our career day and plan district technology integration.
**What do you think are the most important issues for K-12 computer science education?**

I think the most important issue is supporting and maintaining CS teachers. While there has been a sizable increase in CS awareness there are still budget cuts, changes in school requirements, and legislation that hinder the growth of CS. Our membership is what will make CS succeed long term through their hard work in teaching and by increasing enrollment. We need to focus on our teachers, their certification needs, standards, and professional development. The only way to continue the CS momentum is to have CS teachers. CS education depends on our teachers.

**At–Large Representative: DANIEL MOIX**

**Personal Statement**

As a new CS teacher I felt like I was the only person in the world facing the challenges we all face. The professional development opportunities, research reports, and contacts made available to me through CSTA helped me overcome many of those challenges. I believe CSTA’s role in the coming years will be more critical than ever as additional states recognize the value of K-12 CS and determine the policies which will impact member teachers and their students. I’d like to do my part to ensure the viability and success of this organization so it can continue to support teachers old and new.

**What experiences and/or interests in K-12 computer science/information technology education qualify you to serve as a leader for the organization?**

I’ve known since I was old enough to type that I wanted to spend my life "working with computers." After earning a four-year degree in CS and working as a data manager for the state, I realized I was missing much of what I enjoyed about computing -- sharing these tools and skills with others. Once an opportunity to teach CS became available I took it. Through the alternative certification process, completing an education leadership graduate degree, and serving CSTA as a volunteer, I feel I’ve gained the skills and experiences that could benefit our organization.

**What previous experience do you have with CSTA?**

I joined ACM in college and became a member of CSTA during its initial year. As a Leadership Cohort (now CSALT) member, I’ve broadened my network of CS educators and become a more effective advocate. As a member of the Assessment Landscape Committee, I am working with a team to identify ways CSTA can better meet the real-world assessment needs of high school CS teachers. As the volunteer coordinator for the Computer Science Principles Virtual Summit, I’ve represented CSTA at conferences including SIGCSE and GHC, and I started CSTA Arkansas.

**What leadership skills do you have that would enrich the Board and the organization?**

My biggest assets are the personal relationships that have grown from having worked with so many CSTA members and associates on past projects. Creativity, willingness to consider all possible solutions to a problem, and the ability to collaborate at a distance are also skills which I feel I could use to serve this organization. Within my own district, I mentor first year teachers.
At the state level, I provide support to teachers just starting in CS through mentoring and professional development. Nationally, I serve on several committees including the Council of Chief State School Officers Computer Science Advisory Group.

**What do you think are the most important issues for K-12 computer science education?**
Each district, state, and country faces a unique set of challenges, none of which can be tackled alone. First, we must identify and convey to others exactly what Computer Science is and is not. AP, ECS, PLTW, and others all do this differently. Next, there must be a body of educators qualified to teach CS. Many states have no CS licensure area whatsoever. Without CS Education programs, where will qualified candidates come from to obtain these licenses? Above all, we must work with district and school administrators to find an appropriate place within the curriculum to situate CS.

**At–Large Representative: ALFRED THOMPSON**

**Personal Statement**

I feel like I have done a good job in my first term on the Board and am excited about the possibility of continuing my efforts. Being on the board has given me an opportunity to work on the Equity committee and work to encourage more women and underserved minorities to study computer science. On the governance committee I pushed for and saw passed a code of conduct policy for CSTA events. I also feel that this time of transition to a new Executive Director requires some continuity of leadership on the board.

**What experiences and/or interests in K-12 computer science/information technology education qualify you to serve as a leader for the organization?**

I have taught computer science at every level of k-12 education with the majority of my time teaching high school computer science. I have taught APCS and been an AP reader. In industry I was responsible for providing in-service training, curriculum, software and other resources to CS educators. I was a member of the CS 2013 task force which was a three year project to the ACM and IEEE to make recommendations for undergraduate computer science standard curriculum.

**What previous experience do you have with CSTA?**

I have been honored to serve on the CSTA Board for the last two years. I am a charter member of the CSTA and have been a participant in almost every CSTA Annual Conference since the beginning. I have also served on the conference organizing committee for several years. I have been an attendee and/or been guest speaker at CSTA Chapter meetings in several states.

**What leadership skills do you have that would enrich the Board and the organization?**

During my term on the Board I have served on the Equity Committee (currently as committer chair), the governance committee and most recently the Board Executive committee. I have been a member of a number of boards over the years. A private school board, an elected member of a
public school district budget committee (responsible for creating the district budget), and am currently on the program advisory board for a number of career/technical schools. I can run a meeting and know how to be a working board member.

**What do you think are the most important issues for K-12 computer science education?**
The single most important issue for K-12 computer science education is access. Too many students just do not have the opportunity to get any real CS education in K-12. CS education is not part of most policy maker’s list of core subjects and is often not credited for graduation so it is difficult to fit it into the curriculum. We need to work towards getting recognition of computer science as a core subject. Making this worse is a shortage of highly qualified teachers. We need to promote more professional development to help computer science educators current and relevant.