

Platform Statement: Tenell Zahodnik
Director at Large Candidate
SEMPA Board of Directors Election 2021-2022

Jennifer Lee once said, "Be fearless in the pursuit of what sets your soul on fire." Prior to my time as a PA, I was sales. I had a natural ability for it and created a successful career of convincing people to put their name on the dotted line. While I had the aptitude, talent does not always equate to passion. In a moment of realizing I was in profession that did not marry my strengths with purposeful meaning, I quit my job and went back to school to become a physician assistant. Since my time as a PA, I found not only medicine itself, but truly emergency medicine is the kindling that sets me on fire.

My first job out of school was in emergency medicine and realized I had chosen a field that had a learning curve as steep as Space Mountain. On advice from my lead APP, I joined SEMPA to get plugged in and to fine-tune my learning and craft. SEMPA is the hub of emergency medicine resources for physician assistants and I have been nothing other than thoroughly impressed with this organization and the quality of support it makes available to our field. Immediately after attending my first conference in Phoenix in 2017, I applied to be on the Education Committee. I have served as a member on the Education Committee since and it has given me even more insight to how SEMPA operates. I have enjoyed the collaboration with my colleagues on how to bring the most relevant speakers and topics to SEMPA 360. At this point in time, I would like to further my involvement with SEMPA and run for a Director at Large position.

I am applying for the Director at Large due to the wide array of responsibilities the job entails. I like the diversity and the broad spectrum of opportunities in which to serve. This position mimics what I love about EM to begin with the chance to be flexible, see a wide variety of operations, and problem solve. I feel that one of my most applicable qualities as a candidate is the career I held before I entered medicine. Though sales did not invigorate me, it did give me the skills of poise, polish, and the artistry of collaboration.

My story of changing my entire life to become a PA additionally gives me a background that is unique. I graduated in 2016 which compared to the long tenure of many SEMPA members, makes me a rookie in many ways. While some might see this newness as a weak point, I believe it gives me a fresh perspective on the recent graduate and the struggles of starting your first job and working to build resources to support your knowledge. Additionally, I am the Adjunct Faculty of EM at the Hardin-Simmons PA program in Abilene, Texas. This has given me the chance to work closely with those who will be our newest colleagues and to see the profession through their eyes.

I would like the opportunity to have a seat at the table to serve and represent my fellow EMPAs as a Director at Large. I feel I have the communication abilities as well as the personal poise to handle a variety of situations. COVID-19 has changed the world as we know it. The pandemic has highlighted those on the front line, and I can say with certainty it has been one of my greatest honors to serve with my fellow healthcare workers in this time of fear and uncertainty. I feel that being a physician assistant in emergency medicine is the greatest job in

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the world and I would like to offer my time and gifts to give back to the SEMPA community that has supported me on my journey.

Thank you for the consideration.