

Sandy Henry, Candidate for BEA Board of Directors Academic Director

It is an honor to be nominated as a Candidate in the upcoming BEA Board of Directors election. I have had the privilege of serving Ex-Officio on the Board since 2020, first as the Chair of the Festival of Media Arts, then as the Faculty Fellow for Student Programs, and now as the Chair of the Festival Advisory Committee. I am lucky enough to have had a front row seat to some of the conversations that have led BEA to this moment in time. The changes in structure that the Board is undertaking (moving from Regional representatives to Academic representatives assigned to Interest Divisions) is both exciting and nerve wracking. There is a lot of work to be done, but the opportunities this change will bring to the members of BEA are immense. I'm excited for the chance to work directly on this!

Communication will be at the heart of this change and communication has been at the heart of my leadership roles in BEA. As Festival Chair and Festival Advisory Committee Chair, I've worked closely with Division Chairs and Competition Chairs to ensure that all established processes run smoothly and to help manage any issues that arise. As the Faculty Fellow of Student Programs, I've collaborated with Institutional Members to support their BEA Collegiate Media Chapters, to help their students apply for AERho Honor Society, and to ensure events such as the 48-Hour Film competition run smoothly and are meeting their needs. I've helped individual BEA members on new initiatives, such as the RAB Audio Competition and the professional networking event "You Wrote a Script, Now What?" hosted by the Scriptwriting Division. I've devised and led new panels for students-only at the annual convention. On a smaller level, I've worked closely with members of divisions as Chair of IMET and Student and Faculty IMET Festival Competitions, as a Festival judge in PAC and as a panel reviewer in CCA.

Communication doesn't mean I talk and you listen; in fact, it means I usually listen more than I talk. For this new structure to reach its true potential, implementation must be collaborative. The new Academic Directors will need to establish a strong rapport with leadership of their Divisions so they can effectively represent their needs to the Board, and so that they can work together to develop processes and policies to meet those needs going forward. That means I use any and every means necessary to create connections, whether it's email, Zoom meetings, phone calls or meet-ups in Vegas (likely all of the above). I also envision the newly elected Academic Directors working together closely, not only to accomplish the above but also to evaluate where BEA has been and where we are now, and to brainstorm innovative ways to serve our members into the future.

I have worked in academia for 30 years, split between faculty and professional staff. Before becoming a full-time faculty member, I spent more than 20 years in the industry as a producer of everything from sports to strategic communication. My favorite class to teach at Drake is our intro-level video production course that combines the foundations of good production with live studio production. Students start the semester rather nervous because they've never done "live" before, but 14 weeks later have become a team, celebrating what they have accomplished together. They even spontaneously write notes to those that will follow in their footsteps, encouraging them to ignore their fears, talk to each other and trust the process. Those lessons stick with them well beyond work they pursue in the industry, and their messages stick with me as I approach this transition for BEA. It is slightly nerve wracking! But I have seen what BEA can accomplish when we come together to collaborate and innovate, and I trust the process. I ask you to trust that my experience with BEA will allow me to create an environment where communication and teamwork allow us to accomplish exciting things to benefit all the members of BEA!