

## **NACOLE CANDIDATE ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

Candidates are encouraged to fill out the following questionnaire, to give NACOLE members relevant information when voting for Board members.

Name: **CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON**

- 1) Position Sought: Board Member At-Large
- 2) Geographic Location: Honolulu, Hawaii
- 3) Current Oversight Position and Organization:  
Oversight Coordinator – Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission  
Co-Chair of the Jail and Prison Oversight Committee through NACOLE
- 4) Number of Years as a NACOLE Member: 4 years
- 5) Please list Annual Conferences or training opportunities in which you have attended:  
NACOLE Annual Conference 2019 – Detroit  
Annual Conference 2020 – Virtual  
Annual Conference 2021 – Tucson  
Annual Conference 2022 – Fort Worth
- 6) Are you currently a member of the NACOLE Board? No  
  
If so, in what capacity:  
  
\_\_President  
\_\_Vice President  
\_\_Board Member At-Large

**For the following questions, please respond in no more than 200 words.**

- 1) Why do you want to serve on the NACOLE Board?

In 2019, I was the scholarship winner through the Membership Scholar Award. This award was meant to support and strengthen the work of scholarship winners by introducing them to a broad range of oversight information, effective practices, and it offered me the opportunity to go to a conference I otherwise wouldn't have been able to attend. Although I did expect the excitement that comes with a national conference, I did not expect the feeling of being so greatly inspired by every single leader and member of the NACOLE community. It was through NACOLE that I was introduced to more effective, strategic ways to build on oversight practices.

I feel extremely devoted to this association, and I have a strong desire to give back to the community who has given so much to me, professionally and personally. I feel confident in my ability to strengthen NACOLE, particularly by elevating the jail and prison oversight aspects. Oversight has been a deep passion of mine since joining the field in 2014. It is my hope to be a Board member so I can use my commitment and drive to reinforce NACOLE's mission, vision, and values.

2) What skills/experience/qualities do you bring to the NACOLE Board?

I have the unique experience of not only serving in a law enforcement oversight role, but I also have immense experience in corrections oversight by overseeing jails and prisons alike. Although there are many spaces where law enforcement and corrections oversight collide, the fields are also distinctly different. Both need dedicated resources to ensure that the organizations being overseen are successful in becoming more transparent, accountable, and responsive to the communities they serve. I can use my experience to thoughtfully input corrections where applicable without removing law enforcement oversight training opportunities, and I feel confident in my ability to navigate and facilitate those needs.

Additionally, I am someone who leads with kindness and enjoys working with people who have different viewpoints and backgrounds than I do. My skillset in policy analysis, data analytics, complaint investigation and general monitoring can be used to assist, support, and educate jurisdictions who are considering or developing civilian oversight. I will ensure my time is devoted to NACOLE as I value this profession and I value all of the membership's commitment to civilian oversight. I will also be committed to working with the other Board members to best enhance and enrich the important work NACOLE has already accomplished.

3) What challenges does NACOLE face as a rapidly growing membership organization?

One challenge NACOLE faces is continuing to engage oversight practitioners who may need more specific training efforts since so many states are taking the opportunity to create or expand oversight in their jurisdictions. This is especially relevant as the field of oversight has exploded in the last 5+ years. As so many jurisdictions engage in creating or advancing their oversight entities, it creates an immense strain on NACOLE staff since staff and resources are limited. This, however, also creates the perfect opportunity to uplift the NACOLE membership to really engage with other jurisdictions and give NACOLE members the empowerment and resources needed to succeed in not only creating lasting mentorships, but more importantly, allowing consistency across the nation. Consistency is vital in the field of oversight as setting high professional and ethical standards for organizations and

practitioners charged with civilian oversight ultimately defends members against attacks that undermine the effectiveness of civilian oversight. I see the rapidly growing field as an opportunity to truly uplift the membership and I would be committed to engaging the membership and encouraging those opportunities to connect, inspire, and lead with other practitioners across the country.

How have you contributed to NACOLE's work? Please include all committees you have served on or led, as well as any other NACOLE volunteer efforts.

Ever since joining NACOLE, I have increasingly taken on more responsibilities to assist in helping the organization be the best it can be. I have served on the Communications Committee, the Policy Development Committee, and the Jail and Prison Oversight workgroup (before it became an official committee). I have also assisted in organizing social gatherings and assisted in coordinating online social events during the peak of the pandemic. I currently serve as the Co-Chair of the Jail and Prison Oversight Committee and in this role, I assist with creating training standards for jail and prison oversight practitioners. Moreover, I have stepped in as a moderator when members have needed a last-minute replacement. Lastly, I have worked with the NACOLE staff to consider outside consultants to revamp the website and make it more user friendly in addition to helping information become easier to find for our membership. This is yet another reason why it would be such an honor to serve as a Board member – I am truly passionate about NACOLE's vision, mission and values and am completely dedicated to uplifting them whenever possible.

- 4) Please share highlights of your background/experience in law enforcement oversight.

I have built my career around my dedication for corrections reform by working in both city jails and state prisons in Michigan, New York City, and currently Hawaii. Through oversight, I leverage my expert understanding of the corrections system and current policies to impact change at the individual and larger systemic levels. At the Michigan Legislative Corrections Ombudsman, I conducted over 500 fact finding investigations which required prison visits, interviews with incarcerated people and department staff, and meeting with relevant parties to gather appropriate information and evaluate the performance of the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC). At the Board of Correction in NYC, I continuously honed my skills in government and public policy analysis; investigative and analytical work; public speaking and recommendation writing to create accountability on Rikers Island. In the City of Grand Rapids, I presented recommendations of policy change to the City Commission and successfully evaluated and realigned the civilian commissions and boards within the City of Grand Rapids' public safety system. Currently in Hawaii, I am creating the framework for an investigative analysis team which includes designing and launching a new case management

system in addition to drafting various policies and operating procedures for the office. My work is predicated on a superb knowledge of relevant policies, as I find it impossible to conduct effective oversight without an intimate understanding compliance and legal frameworks.

- 5) If elected/re-elected, what would you most like to accomplish as a Board member?

If I were elected a Board member, my biggest accomplishment would be to take the thirteen principles of oversight and encompass them in every aspect of the website and trainings that are offered to NACOLE members. NACOLE has done a phenomenal job at creating copious amounts of effective guidelines for members to use and adjust for their own jurisdictions. However, I'd like to better organize the work that has been done and allow it to be easily accessible to the community and oversight practitioners alike. I would also like to utilize the website to encourage oversight practitioners to sign up as members of NACOLE if they are not already. I see opportunity to offer the community snippets of oversight lessons that would encourage them to want to learn and access more. The additional content and information can be in a, "member-only" section where it would give members more gratification of having specific access, and non-members more interest in signing up. This is vital in keeping dues and donations coming into NACOLE so they can use additional resources towards staffing needs.

Additionally, I'd like to complete much of the work that has been started in relation to embedding corrections oversight into NACOLE. A large part of this is focusing on the website language and ensuring there is room and opportunity for jail and prison oversight professionals to be in the conversation as well.

- 6) Additional information for voters to consider:

I am deeply committed to the field of oversight, and it would be an honor to serve the members of NACOLE as a Board Member. I hope you will consider me to work with all other Board members' multifaceted contributions to the field of civilian oversight in leading NACOLE to continue to be the incredible national organizational leader that it is. Thank you so much for your time.