

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEE APPLICATION QUESTIONS with RESPONSES

a. How have you served the FSMTB in the last few years?

My initial service to the Federation began in 2021 as a member of several committees after submitting my volunteer form. I wasn't certain where I could support the Federation best but was appointed to the Policy and License Renewal committees. In 2022 I served on the Examination and Examination Policy Committees. In 2023 being part of the Finance Committee allowed me to see the strong financial outlook of the organization. Committee work is challenging and rewarding at the same time. At the time I didn't fully realize how important the work of each committee is. Each committee and task force harnesses the experience and broad knowledge of the massage industry and the requirements of regulating massage, benefitting all of us. Beyond that, it allowed me to meet more colleagues who see the value in effective massage regulation beyond the state board I served on.

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, I was elected to the Board of Directors. I was asked to step into the role of Treasurer when the member holding that position resigned from the Board. It was an honor to continue serving in that role the following year. This past year the Board selected me as President. To say that they honored me with that act cannot fully encompass my recognition of the profound depth of trust that my fellow board members placed in me. While it is a lot of work serve on the board, and to serve as President, it is all worth it as we help move the profession forward.

b. What skill set or strengths do you bring to the FSMTB?

Collaboration – I believe we all work better together. While I'm willing to step out to be the leader in front when needed, I am delighted to participate with other dedicated people to solve problems. If two heads are better than one, then a board of eight people is simply amazing. My favorite part of being on a board is seeing conversations and ideas develop as we share and contribute to the final decision. The idea of collaborating to find solutions extends beyond the board table for me. I love discussing other perspectives on issues we face in all areas.

Communication- When I first moved to Nevada, I stepped into some volunteer roles. I joked with others that the people that showed up were the ones that got put to work. Since then, it has occurred to me that that happens everywhere. I continue to show up and do the work that is needed. That work includes having uncomfortable conversations about the illicit actors and sexually oriented businesses that co-opt the title of massage for illegal acts and subjugation of vulnerable women. The industry has ignored the issue for decades saying it isn't a massage problem. The issue persists and creates plenty of problems for the massage industry and the regulation of the industry.

Experience – As a licensee, I moved from Washington to Nevada in 2010, I experienced the same issues with getting a massage license in a new state as so many other licensees do. At that time, I recognized that our systems need work. I am now in a position to help make the changes to allow easy license portability for massage therapists.

Experience – As a regulator – In the summer of 2017 I was appointed to the Nevada State Board of Massage Therapy. I was part of the Board, making broader policy decisions for regulation in the state until I transitioned to the role of executive Director in September 2023. Now, with my team, I handle day-to-day issues with regulating massage. From initial licensing to enforcement to investigations to discipline, I see all aspects of the massage industry.

c. What do you see as the important issues facing FSMTB?

We are all facing increasing change and uncertainty. However, the issues facing the Federation continue to be consistent. The saying that the more things change, the more they stay the same seems as relevant as ever.

The FSMTB was formed over 20 years ago largely due to a recognition of the need for a valid and reliable entry level examination. The MBLEx was developed to fill that need and remains the most used tool offered by the FSMTB for the regulation of massage.

With the progression of AI, bad actors have access to increasingly better tools. Continued identification of diploma mills and fraudulent schools and the collaboration with the states where they operate is critical to helping member boards with ensuring unqualified candidates are not eligible for a license. By properly addressing education and exam fraud we support all our members in licensing qualified, competent therapists.

The Federation was the first national organization with any connection to massage to call out the issue with human trafficking in the massage industry. We need to ensure that all of us can clearly articulate the harm done by human trafficking. The women being trafficked are victims. They are rarely actually qualified to give massage services, whether they are licensed or not. The persistence of illicit acts being offered under the guise of massage robs legitimate therapists and licensees of their credibility. The perpetuation of the connection of sex and massage by these illicit businesses dissuades people who could benefit from massage therapy from seeking valuable, legitimate services.

Efforts through politics and policy to reform or eliminate regulation of massage therapy will persist for the foreseeable future. We need to continue to focus on how to best support member boards in an environment with ongoing pressure for deregulation and reform. Tools that help us explain what we do and why it is needed support our members when they are faced with sunset reviews or budget cuts.

Inconsistent scopes of practice and a patchwork of requirements for licensure contribute to confusion on all levels. While a model practice act has been created by the Federation, the Interstate Massage Compact (IMpact) gives us the single biggest step forward in having a consistent baseline across multiple states. By continuing to support IMpact we are supporting consistency from state to state with entry level requirements.