Candidate: Dornswalo Wilkins-McCorey, Ph.D.  Position: At-Large Member

Biography/Personal Statement

Dr. Dornswalo Wilkins-McCorey (Dr. Dorn) is a coordinator in the Department of Teaching and Learning in the Office of Gifted Programs in Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS). The programs and services she coordinate focus on underrepresented populations, technology, and evidence-based gifted professional learning opportunities.

In her 24 years as an educator, she has worked in various capacities in gifted education. Additionally, she was selected as a 2006 Mary T. Frasier Scholar, the 2020 National Gifted Coordinator of the Year for the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and the 2022 Virginia Association Gifted Leader of the Year.

Dr. Wilkins-McCorey serves as an officer in various organizations: the Virginia Association for the Gifted (VAGifted) President, VAGifted conference chair, Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted (VACEG) secretary and Project E-Ignite Board. Additionally, she is a Supporting Emotional Needs for the Gifted (SENG) Model Parent Gifted (SMPG) facilitator.

A. How would your knowledge, experience, abilities, and vision contribute to increasing the public’s urgency to support the needs of gifted and talented children and youth?

The urgency to support the needs of the gifted and talented children and youth is needed now more than ever before. During the pandemic, COVID-19 shined the light on many of our nation’s inequities and disparities in the medical field, mental health field, educational field and within our economy. We must invest in our nation’s brightest students to solve the issues that plague our nation and world. As a gifted coordinator in Virginia Beach, I advocate for gifted students daily. I train teachers, administrators, and parents in both the cognitive and affective domains of gifted students. I provide gifted instructional pedagogy, resources, and strategies during the gifted professional learning opportunities for VBCPS gifted staff. My philosophical beliefs align with NAGC’s campaign “Giftedness Knows No Boundaries.” I partner with community museums and GMU’s Project E-Ignite, to provide culturally, linguistically, and economically disadvantaged students with opportunities to develop their giftedness. Advancing students’ minds is an investment in our greatest resource, our children, allowing our nation to be globally competitive while dismantling boundaries.

B. How would your knowledge, experience, abilities, and vision contribute to advocating for the adoption of policies that promote programs and services in which gifted and talented children and youth will thrive?


I served on the Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted (VACEG). During my first term, the VACEG researched practices to help Virginia’s school divisions achieve equitable representation in their gifted programs. We researched, conducted interviews, and analyzed data to find leaders in this area. Then, we published a report advising best practices. During my second term, we revised the Virginia regulations which will impact future policies. My expert knowledge, twenty-four years of experience, advocacy for all gifted learners, and six years on this committee allow me to effectively influence policy change that will impact Virginia’s gifted learners. For the past six years, I have attended the National Association of the Gifted Leadership & Advocacy conference. I have written letters, visited with senator staff liaisons, and made phone calls to my senator’s office to advocate for gifted education and promote gifted policy.

C. How would your knowledge, experience, abilities, and vision contribute to empowering supporters to implement effective practices for all gifted and talented children and youth in homes, schools, and communities?

I am the president of the Virginia Association for the Gifted (VAGifted). As previous conference chair, my shared leadership style allowed me to create a conference committee that met via Zoom (before COVID-19!). This format provided unity, buy-in, and accountability for our committee, and it allowed us to implement multiple gifted conferences that addressed current trends in gifted education for parents and educators. By leveraging my technology skills and networking ability, we hosted two virtual conferences during the pandemic that included nationally recognized gifted experts while being responsive to the members’ needs. Exemplary professional learning definitely impacts one’s gifted education practices. Through the VA Gifted organization, I ensure that we provide a venue to showcase the gifted gurus and bring them to all the school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. I have worked in an urban, a rural and a suburban school division with diverse needs and demographics. My professional experience allowed me to better understand how gifted resources impact various populations of people. My primary goal is to spread my knowledge to all gifted coordinators, teachers, and instructional staff. A wise person once stated, that “A rising tide lifts all ships” and gifted pedagogy, instructional strategies and models/tools can not only lift all students but also close achievement gaps if used appropriately.