**Local Position Candidate Personal Statements**

**Local 101 Vice President**

**Connie Stauffer**

Connie just began her 6th year at the DNR as a MAPE full member.  During the 6 years, she has acted as Central Office Safety Chair 3 years, participated on the Lafayette Park Commuter Team before it disbanded, and has participated in 3 Meet & Confer events at the DNR representing the need for a Metropass subsidy at the DNR.  She is interested in learning about the MAPE organization and supporting the Local 101 in its mission.

**Harland Hiemstra**

Harland Hiemstra – Public information officer. Nearly 24 years at DNR. Local steward, vice-president, past president, Meet & Confer, contract negotiations representative (2019). “As I near the end of my career with the state, I find that helping the people I work with is what’s most important and satisfying to me, both in my capacity as a communications and public affairs professional and in various roles as a MAPE volunteer. I’d like to continue bringing my experience, knowledge and passion to bear as local vice-president on behalf of DLI and DNR St. Paul staff. I’m here to serve and to help.”

**Local 201 Delegate**

**Bobbie Miller Thomas**

My name is Bobbie Miller Thomas.  I have worked for DHS in St. Paul and been a MAPE member for one year.  My union experience includes serving on the Executive Board, as the Member Action Team Coordinator, Negotiations Committee member, and participating in the Minnesota Union Leadership Program with AFSCME Local 34.  It is my goal to serve as a Delegate to familiarize myself with MAPE’s structure, MAPE leaders, and to be involved in the process of making decisions that will help my fellow union members.

**Charles Dixon**

My name is Charles Dixon. I work for the Department of Human Services in St. Paul. I have been a State employee for 3 years, and a MAPE member for all 3 years. It is of vital importance all members’ voices are heard in MAPE. If I am elected, I will work hard to solicit opinions from other members in my Local, in addition to bringing their voices to the MAPE leadership.

**Chris Cimafranca**

It is important that your concerns and priorities are heard and communicated to our MAPE leaders at the delegate assembly. If elected to represent our local at the delegate assembly, I will listen to each and every one of you so I can understand your priorities. I will advocate for MAPE policies that ensure job security and stop the rise of employee health insurance costs. I have defended your contract rights as your local steward for many years. I hope you will now give me the opportunity to fight for you at the delegate assembly.

In Solidarity,

Chris Cimafranca

**David Sandbeck**

**Name:** David Sandbeck

**Department:** MNIT at DHS

**Work City:** Saint Paul

**Years of state service:** 4

**Years as a MAPE member:** 4

**Position Sought:** Delegate Assembly

I am David Sandbeck, I have ideas to advocate for in MAPE's highest governing body. I would like to advocate for progressive leadership to use its authority to establish progressive MAPE policies. Approve responsible budgets, levy responsible dues, amend the governing documents when necessary, and adopt fair procedures for statewide, regional and local officer elections. I am excited to contribute.

**Elizabeth Bosneag**

My name is Liz Bosneag. I work for DHS, in the Office of Inspector General and Licensing Division. I am a licensed social worker and have been a State employee and MAPE member for 6.5 years. I am proud to be a MAPE member and want to show my support by serving as a delegate. I have not previously been involved in MAPE’s DA, but have served as a delegate for my social work association. I see the value in the delegate assembly model and if elected, I will be intentional about my work in this role.

**Mariam Mokri**

My name is Mariam Mokri. I am a Human Services Judge for the Department of Human Services in St. Paul. I have been a State employee since 2005 and a MAPE member since 2014. Prior to my membership in MAPE, I was very involved with my prior union in its fight to obtain better pay and benefits for state public defenders. I am passionate about working to obtain fair compensation and zealous representation for union employees. If I am elected, I will be a passionate advocate for my member constituency in my Local.

**Mary Alice Jouppi**

Hello, my name is Mary Alice Jouppi. I work for MNIT serving DHS in St. Paul and am also a Legi BA. I have been a State employee and MAPE full member for almost ten years. I participate in every MAPE campaign in which my schedule allows and assist with local 201’s charity work. I come from a union family and have never been to delegate assembly, but would love to attend and learn more to help raise awareness of important member issues around the state. If I am elected, I will do my very best to represent Local 201.

**Melissa Shimitz**

My name is Melissa Shimitz. I work for the Department of Human Services in St. Paul. I have been a State employee for 2.5 years and have been a MAPE member the whole time. I came from a County where I was a part of that union for the 12 years I worked there. I would like to be a delegate to help see what the MAPE brother and sisters are doing around the State and to be a little more active in what is going on in our union.

**Robin Seifert**

Hello, my name is Robin Seifert. I work for MNIT@ DHS at the LAF building in St Paul.  I have been with the State for almost 14 years, and I joined MAPE as soon as I was hired.  Since I had never been in a union before, it has been a learning experience.  I have learned the value of a union not only for our members but also for nonunion members throughout the state by raising the expectations of wage and benefits. If elected I will carry your wishes and concerns to the delegate assembly this fall.   Thank you

**Sarbjit Kaur**

My name is Sarbjit Kaur. I work for the Department of Human Service in St. Paul. I have been a State employee for over 4 year, and a MAPE member for 4 year. I was picket Safety committee represent for my building (Lafayette). Currently I am playing the Local 201 multiple role Like: Secretory, Steward and also part of the union food committee from last 2.5 year What is most important to me is seeing that members’ voices are heard in MAPE. If I am elected, I will work hard to solicit opinions from other members in my Local.

**Wanda Fortune-Stiffin**

My name is Wanda Fortune-Stiffin. I work for MNIT@DHS in St. Paul. I have been a State employee and a member MAPE for 13 years. I am currently the Chief Steward and on the food committee for local 201. I have always been interested in unions and see this as a way to get acquainted with MAPE and with members from around the state. What is most important to me is seeing that members’ voices are heard in MAPE. If I am elected, I will work hard to solicit opinions from other members in my Local.

**Local 501 President**

**Andi Morris**

My name is Andi Morris and I work as a Business Analyst with MNIT at DEED in St Paul. I am currently a member of the MNIT Meet & Confer Team and a Steward. I have previously been a Local President, Local Vice President, a Local Delegate, and a Regional Director.

I want to represent Local 501 as President by engaging more members in the activities of our Local. Members should have a say in what goes on at the Local level – I want to know what’s important to YOU! I welcome ideas on how to make the Local what you want it to be…because it is OURS!

I really like that MAPE is truly run by its members, and that we can work together to make positive changes in our workplaces! I ask for your vote for President of Local 501 so we can work toward these changes TOGETHER!

**Robert Johnson**

MAPE Local 501 President Position

Robert Johnson

Operations Analyst

St Paul, MN

I’ve been working for the State of Minnesota for 33 Years. Beginning with the Department of Revenue as a Research Analyst Specialists, Department of Education 2 years and Department of Employment and Economic Development as an Operations Analyst for 16 years. I have been a MAPE member for 30 of those years. While working at DEED, I have been involved with MAPE Local 501 as Treasurer for 5 years, Vice President for 2 years, Union Steward for 8 years and President of Local 501 for the last four years. I’ve always believed in the purpose of the employee unions. That is the only way employees can get a fair contract to address the needs of the every employee. I promise to do my best to continue to represent Local 501 as President to the best of my abilities.

**Local 701 Delegate**

**Ajeet Yadav**

My name is Ajeet Yadav. I work for the Minnesota Department of Administration. I have been state employee and MAPE members for 6 years. I have served as steward for five years and local 701 vice-president for one year.

I have facilitated discussions with management where MAPE members were unable to settle the dispute individually, hosted several listening sessions for meet and confer, recruitment and new employee orientation.  My academic, professional and real-life experiences will allow me to be the productive members of the delegate assembly. It will be an honor to contribute on policy development and governing documents.

**Axelina Swenson**

My name is Axelina Swenson and I work for MNIT as a Sr Financial Analyst. As an 8 year state employee, I take pride in using financial skills to review the MAPE annual financial statements produced at the Delegate Assembly, and also work on proposals to make MAPE run more efficiently with long term stability, focusing on fairness to members, policies for equity and transparency.  It is my goal in my roles with local 701 to keep focus on our members concerns, drafting proposals with those who wish to improve MAPE bylaws and policies, and engage with membership about changes.

**Christopher Cocchiarella**

Hello. My name is Christopher Cocchiarella. For about two-and-a-half years, I’ve worked as a Training and Development Specialist at Minnesota Management and Budget in Saint Paul. I’ve also been a MAPE member in Local 701 for the same amount of time. In addition, many of you may recognize my name, because for the last year I have been your newsletter editor for the MAPE Local 701 Monthly Newsletter. As you can probably tell from our newsletters, my main motivation for wanting to get more involved in MAPE is to improve our communication, transparency, and engagement, especially between leadership and members.

**Dennis Billstrom**

Hello my name is Dennis Billstrom. I work for MNIT. I have been a State employee for 16 years, and a MAPE member for all of these years. I’ve been President or Vice-president for Local 701 the last 4 years. I’ve been on the Delegate Assembly team for the last 3 years. I’m probably going to retire this winter so I’d like one more chance to represent my local 701 members one more time. If I’m elected, I’ll bring my experience to the table and work hard to represent my fellow MAPE members.

Thank You,

Dennis Billstrom

**Donna Anderson**

My name is Donna Anderson.  I work for the department of Management and Budget.  I have been a state employee for 11 years and a MAPE member for 11 years as well.  I have been a steward for over a year and have taken both basic and advanced training for this position.  Unions have always been an integral part of my life.  I love what Unions have done and continue to do for our country and I am very proud to be a huge part of it.  I will continue to work hard to have our voices heard.

**Kenneth Jackson**

My name is Kenneth Jackson. I work for MMB in St. Paul. I have been working for MMB for approximately 7 1/2 years, and a MAPE member for most of it.

I would be honored to serve as a delegate, this year as I have served in prior years as well. I’m very much in tune to what’s happening within our local and MAPE Central and continue to participate in various union activities. This is my 6th year as treasurer and 4th year on the DA planning committee. It would be a privilege for me to serve another year. Thanks!

**Russell Schreyer**

I’m Russell Schreyer from the Dept. of Admin. I’m your current Membership Secretary. I’ve been with State Government for 5.5 year all that time with MAPE. Last year was the first time, I attended the Delegate Assembly. I found the parliamentary activities fascinating and would like to return to continue with that learning process. Thank you for your vote!

**Tanya Belanger**

Hello, I am Tanya Belanger. Please vote for me to represent MAPE as a delegate. I work at MNIT as coordinator in enterprise IT Procurement. My education is a B.S. in Business and Economics and a M.A. in Public Policy. I have experience as a legislative liaison and I have been a delegate and steward in 701 for over a year. Being a delegate this year taught me A LOT about MAPE organization and the governance process. I learned about rulemaking and had the opportunity to influence direction through my vote as delegate. Things need to change and we need to look at opportunities to make change systemically and structurally. I am asking for your support to vote for me to represent US as a delegate.

**Local 1001 Delegate**

**Dean Natto**

My name is Dean Natto. I have been with the Minnesota Lottery for 7 years. The last 4 years I have served as Meet and Confer Chair and worked on implementing contract language at our agency.  This past year I was fortunate to be a part of the Delegate Assembly and helped with structuring policies at MAPE. I will continue to work hard to make sure MAPE members have a voice at the Lottery.

**Kolby Sabrina**

I am Kolby Sabrina. I work for the MN State Lottery in Roseville. I have been a State employee for six years, and a Full MAPE member since I started with the state. My Union involvement includes previous DA’s, PAC, & Secretary of our Local.  It is important to see a wide variety of folks involved in Union Activity; this is my way to of making sure that locals voices are heard.   If I am elected to be a part of the DA, I will work hard to see that we are all spoken for.

**Local 1002 Delegate**

**Elizabeth Stephens**

I have strongly supported both MAPE and MMA unions in my 15 years of dedicated state service. It would be a tremendous honor to serve as a MAPE Delegate Representative for local 1002 at our annual Delegate Assembly on Saturday, September 19, 2020.

I pledge to hear the opinions of our local 1002 members, to be that energetic voice to push the agenda, to support the guiding principles and interest of our elected leaders, as well as the MAPE organization in their duty to achieve justice, fairness and equity for the employed workers of this great state of MN.

**Leah Larson**

Hello! I am Leah Larson. I work for the Department of Education in Roseville. I have been a State employee for seven years, and a MAPE member for two and a half years. I previously worked at Perpich Center for Arts Education and Crosswinds Arts and Science School. Being active in MAPE is a way to connect with my fellow employees at the Department of Education and I would value the opportunity to work with MAPE members form around the state. I was active in supplemental bargaining on our last contract and would appreciate the chance to get more involved.

**Michael Diedrich**

Hello! I joined the Department of Education and MAPE in 2015. I am vice chair of Education’s meet and confer team and the Local 1002 treasurer. Being on the Region 10 team at Delegate Assembly is a chance to strengthen MAPE into a union that commands respect from agency leadership and wins better contracts. I see members’ frustrations at the lack of organizing necessary to be that stronger union, as well as dissatisfaction with unclear decision-making about contract priorities. With these concerns as a foundation, I also want to hear more about members’ needs and wants. Thank you for voting!

**Sarah Weiss**

My name is Sarah Weiss. I work as a Discipline Policy Specialist at the Department of Education in Roseville. I am new to the department and MAPE. Having proudly just passed my probationary period, I am eager to be an active member of our union. I believe deeply in equity, collaboration, and shared power. If elected, I commit to leveraging my research, evaluation, and political organizing skills to actively engage our members and ensure all delegates elevate the diverse needs and perspectives of our members during the convention process and beyond.

**Wai Wong-Lai**

My name is Wai Wong-Lai. I work for the Department of Education in Roseville. I have been a State employee for seven years and a MAPE member since 2016. I was elected an alternate delegate to the Delegate Assembly in 2019, and was actively involved in the supplemental bargaining work at my agency last year. I am most interested in connecting members to MAPE’s statewide leadership and platform. I would also like to help ensure the right kind of leadership is in place in our state’s governing chambers so the voices of our members can be heard and meaningfully supported.

**Local 1302 President**

**Evon Minelli**

Why vote for Evon Minelli for Local 1302 President?

 I bring great organizational experience, knowledge and enthusiasm.

 Served multiple terms as Local 1302 president, vice president, treasurer, Meet and Confer, Del/Alt/Delegate Assembly; and single terms in President’s Club and as secretary.

 Employed by DEED and union member since 1990; work in Burnsville with diverse job seekers.

 We need transparency to become inclusive. To be diverse, board members should represent more than one location, having history of what members’ goals have been and how to organize so ALL are prepared for changes. Throughout my experiences, I’ve had members tell me after the fact they should have seen changes coming.

 I have many contacts with those who can help and have been voted in because I get things done. We need ideas to unite for our future and we need to be involved – it’s OUR union. Strong leadership keeps us all strong!

**Jeremy McNamara**

My name is Jeremy McNamara. I joined Normandale as a MAPE Member in 2010. As a MAPE steward, I am honored to be able to advocate for MAPE members when they need help the most: when contracts have been violated, discipline is impending, or they just need support. I helped form Normandale’s Meet & Confer in 2016 and continue to serve on that team. My job at Normandale is to collaborate with various stakeholders. It is essential for the Local President to build relationships with the constituency and provide opportunities for people to get involved. With a stronger union, we build a stronger workforce. As Local President, I want to improve and innovate on the foundation of the local, such as offering zoom meetings allowing all members to attend. I’ll work hard to ensure all MAPE employees are represented and have a voice on the issues that matter to them.

**Local 1303 Vice President**

**Emily Gunn**

My name is Emily Gunn. I work for the Department of Corrections in Lino Lakes. I have been a MAPE member since my start as a State employee, nearly 5 years ago. I believe this is an opportunity for me to invest in my local union, get to know its members and work to better understand and advocate for our needs. I believe it is vital that we understand our strength and work collectively on a shared set of goals. If I am elected, I will work hard to ensure that we work together, for everyone’s interests and needs.

**Lisa Kelly**

My name is Lisa Kelly. I am a Case Manager at Lino Lakes. I have been with the Department for nine years and a MAPE member for five years. I’ve worked at seven of the facilities and have gotten more acquainted with the union with each. What is most important to me is making sure member’s concerns are heard and addressed, particularly ones that cannot be addressed through policy. If I am elected I will work to ensure that members feel important, taken care of, and safe. I will build relationships and encourage members to share their thoughts without judgement.

**Local 2001 Delegate**

**Jessica Sundberg**

Hi,

My name is Jessica Sundberg and I am a release planner with the MN Department of Corrections in Red Wing, MN. I have been a state employee for the past nine years, and have been a MAPE member since the beginning of my state employment. I previously served as a MAPE secretary for local 1303, and am currently a MAPE steward in local 2001. I would like to represent local 2001 at Delegate Assembly and speak on behalf of all members, along with staying informed so I can continue to provide support to our members with questions or concerns.

**John Ferrara**

My name is John Ferrara. I work for Winona State University as a Computer Systems Administrator, in Rochester, MN. I have been a MAPE officer for seven years, including local President, Regional Director, and Vice-Chair of the Statewide Political Council. I have been to DA every year since 2013. I have a strong understanding of the MAPE governing documents and parliamentary procedure. I have sponsored and co-sponsored resolutions that have been passed by DA. If elected, I will use that knowledge to ensure the needs of local 2001 are properly represented at Delegate Assembly.

**Kay Pedretti**

I work at Winona State University in the Biology Department as a College Lab Specialist. I have been a state employee and a MAPE member for 20+ years. I have held many offices on the local and regional levels in MAPE. I am currently Chief Steward, Local 2001 Secretary and sit on the Statewide MN State Meet and Confer team. I have also been a Negotiator and Regional Director in the past. I have been a Delegate over a dozen times in the past and would appreciate your vote to help shape the future of MAPE.

**Kristen Gallo**

My name is Kristen Gallo and I work for the Department of Corrections in Red Wing. I have been a State employee almost 20 years and a MAPE member for 12 years. I have attended Delegate Assembly for the past four years. I believe it is important that our Local’s ideas are represented in MAPE. If I am elected, I will work to ensure that our member’s voices are heard.

**Paul Omdal**

My name is Paul Omdal. I work for Winona state university as the lead application developer. I have been a State employee at WSU and MAPE member for fifteen years. I have served as a delegate to Delegate Assembly several times and have always enjoyed my experience. Working with the other delegates to thoughtfully consider each resolution and how it may impact our Local is a challenge, privilege, and most importantly, a responsibility that I take very seriously. I will do my best to represent you well.

**Sophia Walsh**

Hi my name is Sophia Walsh and I work for the Minnesota Department of Health in the Food, Pools, and Lodging Services Section. My two year career in state service has consisted of working out of the Rochester District Office for MDH. I joined MAPE immediately after starting my job at the state because I could see how the union had improved the job offer that I received. I have worked hard to fight for my fellow colleagues on the MDH Meet and Confer. As a local delegate, I will gather input from you and represent your interests.

**Steven Speltz**

Hello, my name is Steven Speltz.  I work for the Pollution Control Agency in Rochester.  I have been a state employee for six years, and a MAPE member for five years.  I currently serve as the locals Vice President. I see this as a great opportunity continue engaging with and serving my fellow members. If elected, I will work to bring the stories of my fellow members to the conversation and decisions of delegate assembly.