**Statewide Political Council Candidate Personal Statements**

**Ajeet Yadav**

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

I started my union journey while I was serving Minnesota State College in Brainerd. This was my first opportunity to get involved locally and experience the work of union leaders. It was very inspiring to see the work of MAPE members and their contributions towards improving the quality of life that is enjoyed by all Minnesotans. I felt the energy, the passion and the power of collective engagement dedicated towards greater good. Since then I have been actively involved. I have facilitated discussions with management where MAPE members were unable to settle the dispute individually, hosted several listening sessions for meet and confer meeting, recruitment and new employee orientation.

We live in time where building relationship and collaboration have become essential, especially when negotiating contracts and developing polices. If I am elected for the political council, I will engage our MAPE members in building relationship with elected officials to strengthen our union.

I am Humphrey Policy fellow. I hold bachelor’s degree in Environmental Science and master’s degree in Business Administration. In the past I have worked as an Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) consultant serving 23 School Districts in Southern Part of Minnesota and Minnesota State College in Brained. For eight years I served on City of Marshall, Minnesota Board of Human Right Commission, Public Housing commission, and currently chair the City of St. Paul-Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission representing District 7.

My academic, professional and real-life experiences will allow me to be a productive member of the political council and serve MAPE with my full potential.

**Amanda Hemmingsen-Jaeger**

Hello! My name is Amanda Hemmingsen-Jaeger, and I am running for a position with the Political Council. I am currently a Legislative Analyst for DVS at the Department of Public Safety in St. Paul, and have been a MAPE member since the beginning of my state employment in 2011. My experience in MAPE includes sitting on the Board of Directors for Region 12, Membership Secretary for Local 1203, serving as a local steward, member of the DPS Meet and Confer team, member of the Government Relations Committee, and delegate for Delegate Assembly.

I believe in inspiring and empowering others. Before the Government Relations Committee (GRC) became a part of the Political Council, I was a part of organizing committees for statewide Days on the Hill, multiple contract rallies, and the Paid Parental Leave initiative. I have seen the power of people coming together. I also earned a Master’s degree from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, so I possess the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze, research, implement, and communicate policies and initiatives. Finally, I have an appreciation for the political realm by participating in my local party unit, local election campaigns, and networking with elected officials. I would like to utilize my experience, education, and relationships to advocate for my fellow MAPE members to make sure working for the state is the best job in Minnesota.

I have a strong record of collaboration, am a good listener, and will comprehensively examine issues in order to take the best course of action. I am excited for the opportunity to represent YOU on the MAPE Political Council. I greatly appreciate your time, and hope to count on your vote in May.

**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.

**Nicole Juan**

**I’m Nicole Juan. I’m running for the MAPE Political Council because I believe strongly in the power of organized people to make political change. Uniting labor, politics, and community through the council makes MAPE stronger, and builds a better life for all Minnesotans.**

I’m a Community Relations Specialist at the Department of Human Services, previously working in health policy at MDH. I’ve been an active MAPE member since beginning state service in 2015.

**What’s at stake?** 2020 is an incredibly important year for politics. We have our contract, the census, and the presidential, state legislative, and local elections to organize around. Now more than ever we need to share our stories, engage in legislative and electoral actions, and hold elected officials accountable to the workers of Minnesota.

My experience as an organizer and lobbyist in Minnesota and Wisconsin for nonprofit advocacy organizations and my experience in MAPE’s PAC, Government Relations Committee, Political Council, and as a steward make me well qualified to carry this work forward. 2019 was the Political Council’s first year; we accomplished a lot of framework building. Now it’s time to act on those plans and really make a difference in Minnesota politics.

As a child in a Wisconsin public service union family, I began political action at a young age. I saw firsthand what happens when anti-labor legislators are elected. In 2011, I fought back through organizing and electoral action while over 100 years of progressive policy was reversed in mere months. That experience instilled in me the vigilance and passion needed to maintain and advance the worker protections that we hold dear in Minnesota.

**Current Leadership:**

* Political Council
* MAPE PAC Vice Chair
* Local 2101 Steward

**Former:**

* Vice President Local 2101
* MAPE Government Relations Committee Chair
* Paid Parental Leave organizer/negotiator

**Let’s talk.**

* Twitter: @nmjuan
* LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/nicolejuan

**Stuart Orlowski**

What’s a union

If not a collection of individuals

Unique in skills, goals and background

But united together to seek a better life for all of us.

Sisters and brothers, members new and old

We are facing a new world and new challenges

Our rights are threatened by federal leaders

Our wages and healthcare will be under threat

While a virus halts our economy and our lives.

It’s time for our union to think big

On what we can do together for the future

Of our state and our union

We can increase the minimum wage

We can improve our healthcare system

We have allies in the capital now

But we must buttress our political power in the good times

To prepare for the bad

I ask for your vote. My name is Stuart Orlowski and I’m a 5th year MAPE member.

**Tanya Belanger**

Hello, I am Tanya Belanger. Please vote for me to represent MAPE on our statewide political council. 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. Stewarding has taught me A LOT about the enforcement side of our contract. I have seen our members face discrimination and real hardship. 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 on the political council.