

Apperson Award

The Richard L. Apperson Award, named in honor of PCACAC's first president, is the association's highest honor presented to a PCACAC member. It is awarded annually to a member whose career embodies the ideals of the association - providing extraordinary service to students, to PCACAC, and to the college counseling profession.

This individual has worked on both the college and K-12 side of the desk. They have shared that they appreciate having opportunities in college admissions and as a school counselor which allowed them to see the bigger picture along the way.

A Direct quote from this individual on getting into the profession: (this was) “The gig I was going to do for two or three years, 20+ years later, I’m still here.”

So many good stories that myself and colleagues could share about this individual, but I’m going to try hit many of the high notes and we’ll take requests for more stories later...

When asked about his favorite part of the job – he once shared:

“I love puzzles and problem solving, and that defines a lot of the college search process. Each student I meet has their own puzzle to solve. Some are easier than others, some are familiar and others challenge me to expand my knowledge base. That’s the other fun part of the job – when you’re dealing with colleges and teenagers, there’s always something new and different to learn. It’s never dull, and just when you think you have a handle on it, some new wrinkle appears to keep you on your toes.”

It's about to become obvious to some of you, but if you're still guessing, you may or may not know that this individual has his private pilots license and he once appeared on Jeopardy.

This individual recently shared a lyric during a podcast from the John Lennon song Beautiful Boy (a personal favorite of mine) “Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans.” I know there are plenty of things that keep him busy, but his service to PCACAC has definitely contributed to his busy schedule over the years.

This individual has been a great friend and colleague to many of us and here are a few things that others who have worked closely with him have shared with me:

Jake Talmage, former PCACAC President, shared:

When I think of this person, I think of how much he has accomplished while serving PCACAC, never asking for accolades. Many may not know this, but this individual regularly runs long distance. He has a collection of medals hanging in his office, and does quite well. But, he never rubs it in others’ faces, nor does he brag about personal record. Instead, he trains, keeps up a solid pace and sets strategic goals. In many ways

those three traits reflect his service to PCACAC—he plans, works hard and sees the big picture.

In addition to the day to day demands of running a member based organization when he was in the presidential cycle, Anthony Ambrogi has directly impacted **today's** PCACAC in many ways. Some of these were after serving in the presidential cycle which shows the dedication and commitment he has for PCACAC.

- After a hiatus, Anthony reintroduced a summer planning retreat for the board. This planning retreat was an important opportunity for committee chairs, officers and other leadership to make plans for the upcoming year, establishing goals, priorities and so much more.
- On the national level, Anthony was a key voice in getting affiliate past presidents included in the Affiliate President's Council at NACAC. By doing so, Anthony helped make sure that PCACAC's, as well as other affiliates', voices would be better heard in future years.
- Anthony also started a committee which would re-think delegate service and the tied-relationship to committee chairs. While many may not realize this, the results of this committee's work helped opened the door to more board positions which helped diversify the board. The work also helped PCACAC establish a three year cycle for delegate positions.
- Most recently, Anthony spearheaded the leadership certificate program. Joined by his colleague, Damian Garcia. This program has served hundreds of professionals in PCACAC through the webinar series with many earning leadership certificates for their attendance. Serendipitously, this program was started before Covid and served as a model for PCACAC, and even NACAC, to move other programs into a virtual space.

Anthony has done all of this with a smile, even his noteworthy chuckle, as he has kept a positive attitude even when running over some bumpy roads (or maybe cobblestone when we were in Williamsburg, during his president year of PCACAC).

From working at your HS alma mater, Benedictine, to serving as the Director of Admissions at Randolph-Macon College and now the Director of College Counseling at St. Catherine's School, that "gig" you were just going to do for a couple years has turned out to be pretty great - especially for those of us that have gotten to know you along the way.

Another quote Anthony is known for is: "Do not let perfect be the enemy of the good." How many times did we all need to remind ourselves of that these past couple of years?

Anthony is calm, collected and cares about his students, colleagues and of course, his PCACAC family. He continues to find the time to make contributions and lend a helping hand to others. He does expect you to say "yes" when he calls you and appoints you from vice chair of PD to chair of PD (which was tied to a delegate role at the time) – or

was that just me? He didn't ask any more of others than what he was willing to roll up his sleeves and do himself...which is what a good leader (in my humble opinion) does. And as a matter of fact, Anthony, you share this in common with last year's recipient of the Apperson Award, Mildred Johnson. I've actually enlisted Mildred to help with another surprise for you, Anthony. Laura (your wife) has joined us this evening to see what all the PCACAC fuss is about.

Anthony, we celebrate you are excited to recognize you tonight. Please join me in congratulating, Anthony as our 2022 Apperson Award Recipient.