

From: Aaron Sinclair - Campaign for Vice President

Aaron Sinclair (Incumbent)
a.k.a. JATS

About the Candidate

I wish I could tell you I was born in a log cabin on the edge of some frontier and cut my teeth plying goods between the United States and France at the ripe age of fifteen. I think that would make for an interesting story.

In reality, I'm a born and bred Columbus native who spent his formative years attending a wide variety of public schools– from Parkmoor to North Linden to Cassady to East Columbus to Champion to Clinton to Northland– beginning with interests in mathematics and science, later turning to a passion for the Fine Arts. In high school I started my meager theatre career as a lowly freshman Euchre playing costume runner, learned and moved up to a technical director position, then, my senior year, turned a 90 degree angle and began acting.

An overcompensation, really, at the time. I can thank a terrified moment in front of my classmates, running for Sergeant at Arms, for that quirk in my life path. What better way to overcome a down moment, a great failure in my young mind, then to confront it directly on that same stage a year later.

I received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing in 1995 from Bowling Green State University. Interesting, considering I had a scholarship for acting and spent more time pondering over scripts than novels. Besides, maudlin poetry was more my thing then.

Study and schoolwork were never quite enough, so I joined several extracurricular organizations:

- Theta Alpha Phi– Theatre Honorary, member of several committees
- Lambda Chi Alpha– Greek Fraternity– served one officer term as High Rho (Alumni Relations)
- Relationships on the Road– social education improvisation troupe– served one term as Assistant Director

Just before graduation, I was a member of the Huron Playhouse, balancing both technical theatre and acting, during the hot summer of 1995. I was privileged to explore Sound Design, lightboards, and soundboards for several of their productions– sometimes running offstage as an actor to meet a simultaneous lighting and sound cue as part of the technical team!

I've been a professional actor (sans a 7 year hiatus) ever since. Since 2004, I have been represented as an actor locally by both Heyman Talent and CAM Talent. My professional interactions range from SOS Video Communications, Production Partners Media, Seventh Son Creative, and further. My independent film relationships

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encompass Arbor Ave. Films, Two-Bit Films, LLC, Wright State and Dennison Film programs.

I've also been fortunate to write screenplays for Dream Thirteen LLC and Arch and Pillar, and entrusted as director for the Downs webseries.

Since I was able, I've been employed. I started as a paper boy at age 11, ramped into pizza kitchen work in high school, waited tables, worked in a manufacturing facility as a lead and supervisor, and now find myself as an Associate Project Manager at IBM. It's been a wide, but fruitful journey.

I also served as a three term Secretary for the Glenchester Homeowners Association, two terms as a member of the IBM Spirit team, and three years in IBM Corporate Challenge engagements.

Some highlights:

- Twenty-one IBM Thanks Awards- 2004- 2009
- IBM Merit Award- 2001
- Metatec Leadership Award- 1996
- Dean's List- Summer- 1995
- Officer of the Year- Lambda Chi Alpha- 1995
- Eva Marie Saint Scholarship (Performance)- 1993-1995

General Principles of Service

Whether I am participating in philanthropic activities, event planning, or fine arts, personal or as a volunteer for my company, I am thankful for the opportunity to serve and participate. More importantly, I am thankful for the trust placed in me in the execution of that service.

To that end, and to facilitate that trust, I'll summarize some of my outlook and philosophy:

- I believe a member of a Governing or Executive board should hold no bias toward the members they represent in the execution of their duties.
- If a member or Executive/Governing member acts in a way egregiously counter to the rules, regulations, etc. of the organization, it is an obligation of those in service to handle the issue as documented in organizational charters. If no charter exists or is unclear, it is the duty of the people in service to mitigate holes in charter coverage and/or act through the general organizational members to derive fair conclusions and actions, if any.
- Executive/Governing members should be neutral and community minded in their actions and station as representatives, in so far as their charter and organization dictates.

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- Executive/Governing members should not execute their duties for overtly personal gains and bias at the expense or detriment of the organization they represent.
- Executive/Governing members should freely critique and disagree during executive and committee meetings if warranted, but respect the final decisions of the executive/governing body, except in cases of egregious disregard of organizational objective and charter.
- Executive/Governing members should be familiar with parliamentary procedure.
- Executive/Governing members should be familiar with officer and committee head roles and responsibilities and commit to conforming and teaming as their position dictates.
- Expansion of organizational mission and objectives should conform to charter regulations, unless a majority of general membership petitions to the counter.

Tenure as 2008–2009 Vice President of the Mid Ohio Filmmakers Association

For MOFA's inaugural year, I was approached to serve as a member of the Executive Committee because I was trusted to act in a neutral, positive way as a representative. I was honored to be referred, honored to be asked, and I have had the honor of serving. I wish to continue my service and strive to challenge myself to better serve as the organization grows.

Originally, the Vice President was more of an auxiliary role. Much like the United States in its early years, the Vice President, as I understood it, acted as backup to the President when the President could not serve, and acted as a general representative for the general membership. As the organization matured, I submitted the following motions, which were passed by Executive Committee vote:

- Vice President acting as Board liaison and de facto member of all external committees. I felt this would be necessary as the organization expanded, more committees were formed, and Board interaction and updates with those committees would require greater scrutiny and oversight.
- Vice Presidential ownership of MOFA website and its updates and moderation.
- Vice President shall not assume the role of President after the term of the President is expired; President shall also be an elected position. (Originally, the President had a limited term, and the Vice President ascended to the Presidency.)

These were fairly recent updates to the position. It is my opinion that in an organization the Vice President generally takes on one of three forms. They either act as the general executor of Presidential orders and vision (the hands and feet of the President), the leader and auditor of the organizational infrastructure (versus the external Presidential visionary and public relations), or as a subsumed strict backup on the bench in time of need with light to no official duties.

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As Vice President of MOFA in its first year, I feel I have moved the role from subsumed backup toward infrastructural leader. If re-elected, I will continue this objective. I believe in the current environment the President can and should act as the visionary of the organization, the public face, the supreme representation of the outer 'self' of MOFA, while the Vice President acts as a pragmatic conservative mostly charged with the limits, capabilities, and infrastructure maintenance.

In a different environment, say, where a President is more infrastructural, I would expect the Vice President to take on a more public bent.

I also feel the Vice President should act as a Devils Advocate and ensure all angles are presented and discussed prior to implementation of motions or deeds.

Looking Back/Moving Forward

Looking back, there are many highlights and some regrets.

I'm impressed with the wide amount of membership we have subscribed in a short period of time, the widened exposure through festivals, TV, and sister organizations, the implementation of an online election, and the continued attendance of its mixers.

I'm unhappy with our need to move from one location to another over the course of a year, my inability to load a content management and project management system onto our hosted server to replace the current site, and the activation of the President having a vote on all board motions (versus acting as neutral party and tie-breaker).

I think we can do better in many aspects, and I hope to be a part of that.

We can do better at identifying and quantifying what a general member is, what role they play, and how to attract them. I am uneasy that signing up to a Facebook Group or email distribution list is the basis for membership. I worry about opportunities for spoofing or fraud and its affect as the organization moves forward. I am concerned there is no distinction between a general member who went to the mixer once and was never heard from again, versus a general member who is in regular attendance and participates in committees. Certainly, there shouldn't be a barrier to become a general member, but I can't help but feel there needs to be a distinction made, esp. in terms of member benefits, office holding, and committee chairing. I've heard ideas floated, from tiered membership (free general membership, paid sponsor membership, sponsor members having access to greater discounts on goods and services and ability to chair committees and run for election) to status quo.

Executive Board member communication and teaming can be enhanced, and if re-elected, that will be a primary focus of my office- to facilitate and improve our general infrastructural capabilities to that end.

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I believe if we continue with MOFA Movie Night (a primary fundraiser) we need to amend our current mission statement: "Come gather in a social setting with like minded artists and filmmakers to help promote and develop filmmaking in Mid Ohio. No speakers, announcements, screenings or workshops." If amended, I want to ensure that local screenings are fair, open, and not focused on one particular project unless that project has an enormous impact or sterling milestone for the community at large.

We will do better at identifying other sister organizations throughout Ohio and beyond and act as a hub or conduit between them.

We will enable smoother, more transparent Board action by using online tools such as Google Wave or LotusLive Meetings, Project Management tools, and regular audits after the election cycle. A networking event doesn't necessarily have to be limited by face to face interaction.

Other Candidates

As you make your choices during this election period, please keep in mind the experience, demeanor, and philosophy of the candidates. Ask yourself, do you want that person to, say, meet with studio executives, or take, record, and update all the documentation of the organization, or balance the books. What are the candidate's objectives? Are the candidates running for an appropriate role? What is and will be their interaction with the other board members and the community?

I'm currently running against the following:

- * **Jennifer Deafenbaugh**
- * **Robert Foor**
- * **Max Groah**

I have had the opportunity to work with each of these individuals in some capacity or another. Frankly, I wish I worked with them all more. I think we have a solid line-up of choices for the Vice Presidential position. If I were strictly general member, I wouldn't have a strong objection or concern with any of those individuals. We surely have differences in philosophy, execution, or opinion- I think that will be the deciding factor.

- Max Groah has acted on the board this year as PR, and does a commendable job. He works well with the Board and as a team member on various productions throughout the state. I think his strength is PR, second only to his jovial and easy going nature.

- Robert Foor has acted, taught, and crewed several productions I have been involved. He is opinionated and strong, a visionary in his own right.

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– Jennifer Deafenbaugh is a local animator, artist, green screen guru, actor, and supporter of independent film projects. She is enthusiastic and outside the box, pleasant and thoughtful and thankful.

As for the rest of the field, I have worked with most of them, and affirm several of them. I think we are truly blessed.

Be thoughtful and vote. I appreciate your time.