

GAIL BUSH

CANDIDATE FOR OAKTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Candidate Name: Gail Bush

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Occupation: Professor emeritus of education

Education: Ph.D., educational psychology, Loyola University Chicago; M.S., library science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; B.A., anthropology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Civic Involvement: Evanston Public Library, Former Trustee; Illinois Library Association, Past President; Dewey Community Conference, Evanston, Board Member; Reaching Across Illinois Library System, Charter Board Member; Illinois State Library Advisory Committee, Springfield, Committee Member; Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy Handler, Libraries and Schools: Glenview, Morton Grove, Niles, Evanston, Chicago Public Schools; Project Linus, North Suburban Chicago Chapter, Northbrook, Blanketeer; Meals at Home, St Francis Hospital, Evanston, Delivery Driver Volunteer; *Indivisible: Poems for Social Justice* Grant Program Founder, Chicago Public Schools; Evanston Township High School, ESL and ABE Adult Education Classroom, Volunteer; Battle of the Books, Chicago Public Schools, Judge; Poetry Foundation, Board Member; International Federation of Library Associations, United States Delegate

1. Why are you running?

There are many ways to serve in our communities. For those of us who are impelled to be of service, the best fit seems to be one that matches our educational, professional, and life experiences with that of the organization. I am well versed in both the role of board governance and education access and equity issues within the state of Illinois. I am confident in this match between my background and the opportunity to serve the community through the Oakton Community College governing board. If granted the privilege by the voters of our district, my tenure will bring significant benefit to Oakton. My background in higher education teaching, administration, advising, and accreditation balances well with those trustees currently serving on the board with experience in engineering, law, finance, and K-12 education. We each have a role and a responsibility in this educational and cultural enterprise. Yours is to support the Oakton community by determining the best options for the future of its governing board. I am hopeful that you will support my candidacy.

2. What are your qualifications?

Experience matters when considering qualifications for a governing board that has the public trust of its community. I am a professor emeritus of education at National Louis University. I worked as work-study, classified staff, adjunct, faculty, and administrator. In 2002, following my career as a library practitioner, I transitioned from Maine West High School Curriculum

Librarian into academia as director of the Dominican University Graduate School of Library and Information Science School Library Media Program. In 2006, I resurrected the School Library Program and co-founded the Center for Teaching Through Children's Books in the Department of Reading and Literacy at National Louis University. After a career in academic, corporate, and school libraries that included the National School Library Media Program of the Year award, I was recognized as the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana Graduate School of Library and Information Science Distinguished Alumnae of 2008. In 2010, I was elected the president of the Illinois Library Association whose membership includes over 3,600 librarians statewide. At that time, I also served as trustee on the Evanston Public Library board. I completed my five-year term as the United States Delegate to the School Libraries Committee of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in 2014. I served as a trustee of the Poetry Foundation from 2010 – 2015 and was inducted as an Illinois Library Luminary Honoree in July 2015. In each endeavor I advocated for equity for all constituents involved and was active in supporting state and national legislation that fostered increased access to educational opportunities, and financial and informational resources.

3. What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure on the board?

I am a collaborative, disciplined, and dedicated educator and administrator. I listen, research, question, and engage. I seek best practices and have an outcomes-based, project-oriented mindset. My focus starts at the individual learner – educator experience and expands to include not only the overall mission of Oakton but also the community colleges and the communities served in our region and our state. I hope to provide context and commitment to ensure that Oakton remains open yet safe, responsive yet diligent, and to seek robust partnerships both within and outside the college. My approach will be respectful of the tenets, goals, and objectives and expressed in the Mission, Vision, Values statements; the Success Matters Strategic Plan; and the Higher Learning Commission Assurance Argument. Shaping a governing board with a breadth of perspectives is now in the voters' hands. From my vantage point, it is a credit to Oakton that so many candidates are invested in contributing their time and talent to further the mission of this innovative higher educational institution.