

**Eta Sigma Gamma
Professional Member At-Large (PMAL)
Candidate Information Form**

Name: Leigh E. Szucs, PhD, CHES_____ **Degree(s):** BS, MEd, PhD_____

Position: ORISE Research Fellow_____

Department: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STDs, and Tuberculosis Prevention (NCHHSTP), Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), Research Application and Evaluation Branch (RAEB)

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Briefly describe your work experience and duration within the health education profession:

I have been working in health education for the last eight years in teaching, research, and program management capacities, predominately with secondary schools and school-aged youth. My interest in health education started during my undergraduate training, where I became a certified K-12 Health/Physical Education teacher in the state of Pennsylvania. Next, I moved onto graduate education where I received a MEd in Health Education and began my research and teaching efforts to support curriculum-based teen pregnancy prevention programming in schools. Following my MEd, I worked with pre-service school and community health educators to increase their competencies and ability to design and delivery quality health education. Then, I completed a doctoral training programing at Texas A&M University where I focused on teen pregnancy prevention program implementation and understanding barriers and facilitators to effective educational intervention delivery. Currently I work as a Research Fellow the CDC DASH to support research and evaluation projects aimed at helping schools design, delivery, and evaluate curriculum-based sexual health education program to youth across the United States. My tenure in health education has allowed me to work across multiple landscapes (local, community, state, and federal) to target and improve sexual health behavior outcomes for adolescents.

Please respond to the following questions. If selected for the ballot, your responses will be shared with members for election purposes.

1. Please describe your interest in Eta Sigma Gamma and becoming a member on the National Board of Directors.

I am very interested in returning to work with the National Board of Directors for ESG for several reasons. Personally, I am eager to return to my '*GamFam*' and since leaving the board in 2018, as SMAL, I miss the strong relationships and networking opportunities with board members.

Professionally, I am eager to be engaged with the professional member base and welcome the opportunity to engage with a wider audience of Gammans across the country. ESG provides invaluable learning and skills-development experiences for its Gammans and I am interested in being a member of this collaborative group to advance teaching, research, service, and advocacy activities in health education.

2. Describe your experience working with ESG/Gammans at a local (chapter) or national level.

My capacity and skill to serve ESG has the PMAL on the board of directors is strengthened by my past professional service experiences with the Honorary. I held a leadership and national board member position with ESG from 2015 through spring 2018. I was the elected Student Member at Large (SMAL), a voting board member who represented the organization's student membership. My role as the SAL positioned me to provide communication and resources to student members and challenged me to think critically about how the health education profession could better serve its membership in the areas of research, teaching, service, and advocacy. While serving the national board I was also a member of the Graduate Student division of the Alpha Pi Chapter at Texas A&M University. Before my national board member participation, I was a faculty co-sponsor of the Delta Chi Chapter at Texas State University alongside PMAL Jeff Housman. Before becoming the faculty co-sponsor, I was a student leader on the chapter board of directors with Texas State University. I have been involved with ESG as a member and leader since 2011.

3. How have you exhibited leadership in your work or extracurricular activities?

During my tenure in health education, I have worked in national leadership with organizations including the Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG), American School Health Association (ASHA), and Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). I lead the ESG/SOPHE's conference planning committee from 2016-2018 and served as the Co-Chair for the Student Engagement Committee during the 2016 and 2017 conferences. This opportunity to co-chair a national planning committee allowed me to work with diverse partners and strategically plan, implement, and assess national-level events for new and emerging professionals. The working relationships I have cultivated with the SOPHE staff and leaders continue to provide a robust network of colleagues, resources, and expertise I can draw upon with my continued involvement in ESG. I have also served as a leader in institutes of higher education (Texas State University and Texas A&M University) that included a wide variety of leadership positions and tasks. For example, from 2016-2017 I was an NCHEC Campus Ambassador who was responsible for facilitating communication between health education programs and NCHEC. I participated in the first cohort of NCHEC Campus Ambassadors and shared information and resources about the value of CHES and MCHES certification, how to apply, the benefits of the CHES®/MCHES® credentials, and testimonials through interactive presentations with several student groups. Advocating for the health education profession, broadly, challenged me to strengthen my written and oral communication skills, in addition to strengthening my abilities to tailor messaging for target audiences.

4. Do you have experience serving on any boards? If so, please explain.

Yes, as noted above I served as a national board member with ESG from 2015 through spring 2018 as the SMAL.

5. The PMAL candidate is required to serve a three-year term. As the PMAL, you will commit at least 10 hours per month to participate on conference calls with other ESG Board members (average 10/year; 1-2 hours per meeting), review applications for chapter awards, and plan conference sessions for the annual ESG national meeting, attend the annual board meetings (one professional conference and one board meeting associated with the national SOPHE conference), and other duties as needed from the National Office. Explain if you will be able to do this.

Considering my current workload and responsibility through my fellowship at the CDC/DASH I do not anticipate issues in meeting this position's requirement. My fellowship mentor and supervisors encourage me to engage with the field through professional development and service opportunities and will continue their support if I am chosen to serve ESG as the PMAL.

6. Using the table below, please describe the skills that you would bring to ESG National Board of Directors. (Please respond to all that apply.)

Skills	Comments/Examples
High energy level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those that know me know -- I will bring enthusiasm, passion, and a fun disposition to energize the board and the larger professional membership
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to use structure and routine see the long-term goal/mission for a project or committee versus relying on short-term or quick solutions
Communication and interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proficient in verbal and nonverbal communication; and experience using technology to effectively and efficiently communication information
Experience with ESG or other honor societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past ESG national board membership and participation (2015-2018, SMAL) Student member 2011-2018
Experience in organizational work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working with many different public health and health education agencies (ESG, ASHA, SOPHE, CDC) and understand how organizational structure and culture contributes to successful partnerships. When appropriate plan to leverage those established working relationships to enhance ESG's efforts in teaching, research, service, and advocacy
Positive teamwork experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have worked on high performing and low performing teams throughout my careers. For me, the key to a positive teamwork experience that produces high-quality work is <u>communication</u> and <u>transparency</u>. I am skilled in communication and strive for full transparency as key contributions I bring to any team
Problem-solving and decision-making skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently work on inter-disciplinary teams to problem-solve and create solutions to enhance the health and educational outcomes for youth. Will bring this strategic problem-solving experience to the decision making body within ESG.
Time management and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to effectively manage and prioritize tasks for completion. Experience managing multiple on-going projects and have

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organizational skills	demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and deliverables as requested.
Record of responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My teaching, research, and service experiences are evidence of my ability to be responsible and trusted by others.
Working with diverse groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I have had the honor of working with people and groups from a variety of diverse backgrounds throughout my work in health education. My reach and ability to connect with others is enhanced by my open-mindedness and genuine curiosity about others. I welcome other's insights and perspectives and use what I learn from those around me to grow personally and professionally.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In line with ESG's mission to promote the discipline by elevating the standards, ideals, competence and ethics of professionally prepared men and women in Health Education, the national board is uniquely positioned to influence the health and well-being of communities through teaching, research, service, and advocacy – I want to be a part of that!