

# NIOA NEWS

**Newsletter of the National Information Officers Association**

## Ballots due Nov. 21

**Berry, Judge, McDonald  
seek Vice President seat**



The resignation of newly-elected Vice President Ben Tobias requires a special election be held to replace him on the NIOA Executive Board.

The following three candidates have met the required qualifications and declared their intention to be considered for the position. In alphabetical order, they are:

*Steve Berry*  
*Mesa Police Department*  
*Mesa, AZ*

*Genevieve Judge*  
*Sarasota Police Department*  
*Sarasota, FL*

*Ashley McDonald*  
*Murfreesboro Fire Rescue Department*  
*Murfreesboro, TN*

Information on all three candidates can be found on the following pages, as well as on our website, [www.nioa.org](http://www.nioa.org).

Every current member of NIOA is eligible to cast a ballot. Please vote for only one candidate. You may return your ballot by US Mail to:

Lisa McNeal, Executive Director  
National Information Officers Association  
PO Box 10125  
Knoxville, TN 37939

All mailed ballots must be received at NIOA by Wednesday, November 21, at 5:00pm EST. Ballots received after that time will not be counted.

Members may also scan and return their completed ballot by email to [nioa@comcast.net](mailto:nioa@comcast.net). The same deadline applies.



STEVE BERRY, Mesa (AZ) Police Department

At this time, I would like to submit my name as a candidate for the open position of Vice President.

I have been a proud member of the NIOA family for the past seven years. During that time, I've attended every conference and continue to learn something new every year. The friends and networking have been invaluable in allowing me to quickly call someone who may have dealt with the same type of issue.

Having been a PIO for the Mesa Police Department in Arizona for the past 12 years, I now find that I often get the chance to help newer PIOs in the area deal with their own media situations. I am also an active member of AIOA, Arizona Information Officers Association. I regularly attend the meetings and was a presenter at the most recent quarterly meeting. For the past few years, I have also coordinated our local law enforcement PIO group meetings. Law enforcement from around the valley and state attend this quarterly meeting to discuss events impacting us all on the local level.

If I were to be elected as Vice President, it would allow me to continue on a larger scale in assisting and collaborating with other PIOs to provide our organizations with the highest level of communication service.

For the past 4 years I have been Regional Director for Region 9 of NIOA. Acting as RD has given me a

clearer understanding of the inner workings of what keeps NIOA running. Not just running but excelling as the leading public information organization in our field.

My hope, if elected, would be to learn from the current and past board members as to how to best serve our membership. I certainly recognize that by coming into the position late in the year, the learning curve will be steep. I would absolutely do my part to take care of my assignments as quickly as possible in preparation for next year as President.

Thank you all for your consideration and I look forward to the opportunity to serve as your Vice President in the coming year.



**GENEVIEVE JUDGE, Sarasota (FL) Police Department**

Please allow me to introduce myself and explain why I want to be your Vice President.

Since 2013, I've served as the sole public information officer for the Sarasota Police Department in Sarasota, FL. There, I regularly interact with media from my city and reporters from Tampa just to the north; Tampa-St Petersburg-Sarasota is the 13th largest media market in the country.

Before becoming a PIO, I was a TV news anchor and "one-woman band" reporter for nearly a decade in Florida, West Virginia, and Idaho, covering every story imaginable. Working with numerous strong PIOs around the country during those years gave me a strong foundation to build on when I became a PIO.

I regularly partner with the men and women of the Sarasota Police Department, both civilian and sworn, to share their incredible stories of law enforcement and public safety excellence.

At my first NIOA conference in August 2013, just three months after becoming a PIO, I was educated and inspired and felt an immediate sense of comradery. I discovered I wasn't the only PIO who had at times wondered: "does this only happen to me?" I found I'm not the only sole agency PIO in the country. I'm a 'recovering reporter' and met many other PIOs who are too! I left that conference knowing because of NIOA, there are professionals throughout the country who I can reach out to 24/7 for guidance and support. That network has only grown in the years since, as I've had the pleasure of getting to know many of you.

I want to serve as Vice President of NIOA to help PIOs of all experience levels and from departments large and small, who share the passion and commitment I have for this profession. Together, we become better. Together, we work hard. Together, we sacrifice day in and day out,

nights and weekends, holidays and family events, to get our message out in the most effective way possible.

I have a strong record of event and conference planning. Since 2016, I've had the honor and privilege of serving as the Vice President of the Florida Law Enforcement Public Information Officers Association (FLEPIOA). As part of the FLEPIOA Executive Board, I've been involved in planning three successful training conferences for Florida PIOs, including recruiting speakers, making sure the conference stays on budget, incorporating social media and providing the best training and networking available, as well as the countless conference details that can be like sand in the gears of an otherwise well-oiled machine. I continue to learn the value of diligence, delegation and diplomacy.

I hold a Bachelor of Science in communication from Endicott College in Beverly, MA. I've been active in NIOA since 2013, FLEPIOA since 2015 and I've been a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police PIO Section since 2016. Learning and sharing my knowledge with fellow PIOs is what I have a heart and passion to do.

I've completed multiple training courses through the Florida State Emergency Response Team (SERT). The SERT is comprised of branches and Emergency Support Functions. Training courses include Basic PIO, Incident Command System (ICS) for Law Enforcement, ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents, an Introduction to National Incident Management System (NIMS), and Continuity of Operations (COOP) Awareness.

I promise to continue to use my knowledge, skills, abilities and experience to build on the foundation laid by those who have given their blood, sweat and tears to NIOA, and I will work to grow NIOA into an even more diverse and dynamic organization. This is why I'm asking for your vote for Vice President of NIOA.



**ASHLEY McDONALD, Murfreesboro (TN) Fire Rescue Department**

In July 2012, I was appointed the public information officer for Murfreesboro Fire Rescue Department. I had no formal PIO training, par for most of us placed in this position. My qualification for this role was basically my bachelor's in mass communications with an emphasis in public relations.

Just one short month after being appointed, I had the chance to attend my first NIOA conference in Nashville. I was so nervous as to what this week of training would entail. Being a little naïve, I just “knew” I was going to have to get up in front of a bunch of people I didn't know and host a press conference or do a media interview on the spot. Little did I know, this would turn out to be one of the best training opportunities I would ever receive!

The relationships I developed through networking have proven valuable time and time again and have led to great opportunities that I might not have otherwise been privy to. The sessions were not only interesting, but they contained so much useful information.

After that first conference, I was hooked! I

attended every year since, with the exception of the summer I gave birth to a beautiful baby boy.

I am passionate about what this organization has to offer the newly-appointed PIO, all the way up to the most experienced. All of NIOA's members have something unique to add to the mix, giving us a wealth of experience, knowledge, and assistance nothing short of a phone call, text, or email away. It is, by far, the best training conference out there for people in our field.

That passion has recently caused me to reflect on my desire to do something more for the organization. It would absolutely be an honor for me to serve as Vice President, alongside Stephanie Slater, who I've come to admire. I believe that together, we can positively lead the efforts to progress the NIOA, as well as create new and exciting networking and training opportunities for our membership.

Thank you for your consideration and support in this endeavor.

# SAMPLE BALLOT

NIOA VICE PRESIDENT ELECTION NOV. 21, 2018

Please circle your vote for one candidate only:

- Steve Berry  
Mesa Police Department  
Mesa, AZ
- Genevieve Judge  
Sarasota Police Department  
Sarasota, FL
- Ashley McDonald  
Murfreesboro Fire Rescue Department  
Murfreesboro, TN

• All ballots must be returned by either USPS or email. Mailed ballots should be sent to the address below. Emailed ballots should be sent to [nioa@comcast.net](mailto:nioa@comcast.net)

• All ballots must be received by Wednesday, November 21 at 5:00pm EST.

• The winner will be announced on Monday, November 26.

Lisa McNeal  
Executive Director  
NIOA  
P.O. Box 10125  
Knoxville, TN 37939