

2024 International Election



Candidate for

Chairman

LaRae Bakerink

American Mensa

Campaign statement

Mensa has brought joy and become a wonderful addition to my life. I've made lifelong friendships and continue to meet kind and wonderful people through our organization. My hope is that others will find the same happiness that has enriched me and my family. Volunteering for Mensa allows me to bring that joy to others in our organization.

We need to visualize Mensa (the organization) as a business and the members as a social group; and not confuse the two. Providing a strong and relatable strategic plan will give us the guidance necessary to look forward and make good decisions for years to come.

My time spent on international and national boards and committees will help me bring the expertise and knowledge necessary for our endeavors. My varied experience in leadership will help with working with the diverse members of the International Board of Directors and bringing them together harmoniously. Each IBD member has a voice and should be heard. Our differences are what makes Mensa so unique and exciting.

While we may not agree on everything, we can disagree agreeably and still improve our Mensa. My goal is to listen, learn, and help those that desire help.

Biography

Mensa Experience:

Local Offices: Activities, Development, LocSec, Webmaster, Testing Coordinator, Proctor, Treasurer, Scholarship, Assistant RVC 9.

Chaired: Regional Gatherings, Leadership Development Workshops, Mind Games 2010 & 2015.

National: Chair of American Mensa (4 years), 2nd Vice Chair (4 years), National Testing Officer (8 years).

Chaired: Leadership Development, Risk Management, Annual Gathering 2016, Co-Chair Annual Gathering 2017, Testing Team.

International: NatRep (7 years), ExComm member (4 years), Testing Committee member, Chair of Strategic Management Advisory Committee.

Non-Mensa Experience:

- Board of the NASDAQ Stock Market (2 years).
- Board Of Governors of the National Association of Securities Dealers (7 years).
- Service on Membership, Technology, Search, Regulatory, and Audit Committees of the NASD and NASDAQ board.
- President and Chairman of National Association of Independent Broker Dealers (12 years).
- Service on the President's National Hire Veterans Committee under the Secretary of Labor.

Education:

B.S. in Finance and M.B.A. Emphasis Management.

Answers to IBD questions

1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

Communicating effectively with the board members, the membership, the staff, and the public when necessary. Key components of successful communication are good listening and understanding skills.

The Chair must ensure the meeting process is seamless and constructive to provide the best results for discussion and

deliberation when the board meets. The Chair must prepare the board members in advance and let them know what to expect. The Chair may then guide board members in achieving compromise and unity while considering a variety of topics and needs for the organization. The Chair's actions should encourage other board members to carry out their board responsibilities.

Keeping the channels open to the membership is important to discover what they want out of their Mensa leadership and membership.

2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?

Mensa has provided value and a sense of awe to my life. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve in the different roles I have taken. I volunteer because it makes my Mensa experience better.

I feel that I am qualified for this role as I chaired the largest national Mensa for four years and I served on the IBD for 7 years, and the Mensa International ExComm for four years. I served in many Local and National positions and on committees. I served on the NASDAQ Stock Market Board and the NASD Board of Directors, which provided me with corporate experience.

My experience with testing, audit, finance, membership, search, development, marketing, and strategic planning committees gives me the rounded experience to see the overall picture necessary for leadership in a large organization.

3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?

Board Member/Volunteer Training:

Preparing Board Members prior to in-person meetings with some sort of training should be required. Having sufficient volunteers with the proper training to take on different projects within Mensa would help boost our ability to complete projects.

Lack of consistent funding:

Many of our ventures or projects have been cancelled or declined due to lack of consistent funding. We need to find other avenues of revenue outside of the component (the percentage each national Mensa must pay for each member's dues received) that will help us grow and change in a manageable fashion.

Protecting our Trademark and Name:

Trademark battles can be costly and time-consuming, which takes away from our ability to provide services to our members.

4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?

- Listen, learn, and help gather ideas and consensus.
- Make a smooth transition for the new ExComm and the International Board of Directors.
- Provide clear instructions to IBD members on what to expect upon attending their first meeting and as an IBD member.
- Work with the Strategic Management Committee and the IBD to develop relevant strategies for the board to use as a template for their decision making.
- Restart the cancelled project of international marketing and use our brand to bring in revenue outside of the component as we did with the Hasbro project.
- Bring to completion the project to provide our own test and potentially market that test.
- Grow the global community and increase membership on Workplace.
- Encourage ideas, harmony, and learning.