

NAPE/AFSCME Local 61
2025-2027 Board of Directors Election
Candidate Statements
Listed in Ballot Order (Order of Nomination)

Candidate for Eastern Area Representative (Vote for no more than 1) - Declared Elected

Daniel Buchanan (DHHS, Beatrice)

Daniel is a Waiver Services Specialist for DHHS. He has been a member of this great union for over 10 years and has served in many elected and appointed capacities for most of his time as a member. He is currently on the Board of Directors and has spent more than half of his state service as such and is willing to continue to serve with your support. He has friends and family in multiple agencies and divisions and he has experience fighting for everyone regardless of their position. He is a Volunteer Member Organizer and will continue to work hard building our membership to majority level and beyond. Regardless of whether Daniel is reelected to the board, he will always be a steward and an advocate for state employees of all agencies and locations.

Candidates for Western Area Representative (Vote for no more than 1)

Chasity Jenny (Foster Care Review Office, North Platte)

Chasity works as a Systems Oversight Specialist with the Foster Care Review Office. She has worked for the State of Nebraska for almost eight years, and prior to her current position, was a case worker with DHHS. Chasity has been a member of the union since she was hired with the State and enjoys keeping informed of matters that have impact on fellow employees of the State. Born and raised in rural Nebraska, Chasity has an appreciation for the advantages and also the challenges that are associated with living in the Western Area. Chasity's educational background is in the areas of family studies, counseling, and clinical psychology. Aside from working a job she loves, Chasity stays busy with her active children and pets, and she enjoys reading and traveling.

Adam Hathaway (Transportation, Sidney)

Adam is a Highway Construction Tech III. He is running to help his fellow union members thrive. He wants to be their voice not only at NDOT but all departments. Adam's background is thick with work history and working with a previous union including a clinical medical setting as well as being a local first responder, ranching, construction, and union steward. Adam is a fighter for his fellow union members. Adam wants to make a difference for members and their families. Adam envisions a work force that is well taken care of and strong in their voice as well as their opinion and firm on where they stand. If elected Adam will listen to concerns and, together, come to a conclusion that benefits the workers as a whole. "We are the ones that keep the blood pumping in this state, let's also make this the best place to work."

Candidates for Southern Area Representative (Vote for no more than 1)

Ruben Adams (Transportation, Grand Island)

Ruben is a Highway Maintenance Crew Chief and has worked for the State of Nebraska since 2007. Ruben has served as a NAPE union steward and Volunteer Member Organizer.

Lindsey Eads (Veterans' Affairs, Kearney)

Lindsey is a Supply Technician II at the Central Nebraska Veterans Home. She has been employed with the State of Nebraska for over 23 years and has the experience of working for 2 agencies during this time (DHHS and NDVA). She was proud to serve on the 2023-2025 negotiations team, 2021 midterm negotiations team and

the 2021-2023 Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs appendix negotiations team. She currently assists our union with New Employee Orientations, Volunteer Member Organizing. She currently sits on the Board of Directors as the Southern Area Representative and was previously an at-large representative.

Candidates for Northern Area Representative (Vote for no more than 1)

Carrie Leffler (DHHS, Center)

Carrie is a Child/Family Services Specialist Trainee with DHHS. She has worked for the state for 29 years and has experience working for two agencies during that time. Carrie's career began in 1996 working in DHHS as a Child Protection and Safety Worker, a Service Coordinator, a Child Support Enforcement Worker, and the Department of Revenue - Compliance Division as a Revenue Agent. She had been a union member since her career began. As a union member, she has witnessed first-hand how our union stands up for worker's rights against injustice to our employees and how they continue to fight for our rights. If elected, Carrie would be honored to serve on the Board of Directors.

Kitty Guthmiller (Transportation, Fullerton)

Kitty is a Senior Highway Maintenance Worker and has worked for the NDOT since 1995. Kitty has been a NAPE member for 26 years. A fierce advocate for members' rights, Kitty would love the opportunity to give back to her fellow union members by sitting on the Board of Directors.

Candidates for Omaha Area Representative (Vote for no more than 1)

Brianne Bushlow (DHHS, Fremont)

Brianne has been a Social Services Worker in Fremont for over nine years. She currently serves as the Omaha Area Representative on the Board, and would like the opportunity to continue representing her union brothers and sisters. She will push herself to grow as a steward and leader to make sure we have the strongest voice possible on the job.

Francisca Morales (NDVA, Bellevue)

Francisca is a Licensed Practical Nurse at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home. She is running for the Board of Directors because she believes in the power of collective strength. As nurses and union members, we face growing challenges—mandatory overtime, staffing shortages, and policies that do not always reflect the realities of our work. These are not just professional obstacles; they impact our well-being, our families, and the quality of care we provide. As a nurse, union steward, and active community leader, Francisca has spent her career advocating for fairness, transparency, and policies that support the workers who keep the system in which they work running effectively. Francisca has served as President/Member of Mid-Nebraska Community Action Agency/Head Start, Member of the Chase County High School Board of Education, and TEAMMATES Mentor—which have strengthened her ability to listen, lead, and create change.

Candidates for Lincoln Area Representative (Vote for no more than 2)

Erika Robles (Revenue, Lincoln)

Erika is a Senior Revenue Agent and has worked for the State of Nebraska for 9 years. She currently serves on the Board of Directors and has previously been elected as a delegate to represent NAPE at the delegate assembly, bargaining conference, and AFSCME convention. In these roles, Erika has been a strong advocate for our members. Erika is a steward and Volunteer member organizer and is committed to growing our union so workers have a stronger voice on the job.

Mackenzie Marrow (Library Commission, Lincoln)

Mackenzie is a Librarian and has worked for the state for the past three years. As a member of the contract negotiations team, Mackenzie helped secure necessities for state employees like a \$15 minimum wage and paid maternal leave. Mackenzie wants to continue helping our union stand up for our worker's rights against discriminatory practices.

Shawn Michaud (DAS, Lincoln)

Shawn is an IT Applications Developer/Senior. He enjoys building software that actually works (most of the time). He's spent his career designing and developing applications that make life easier for users. Shawn is excited for the opportunity to be part of the NAPE/AFSCME Board of Directors, where he hopes to bring a mix of problem-solving, creativity, and a little bit of punk rock energy to the table.

Candidates for Statewide DHHS Representatives (Vote for no more than 2)

Kerrin Packard (DHHS, Sarpy County)

Karen is a Program Specialist and has been a member of NAPE since her very first day working for the State. She immediately became a steward and she is a Volunteer Member Organizer. Kerrin served as a delegate to the 2023 delegate assembly and does all she can to promote solidarity in her office.

Brian Bierschenk (DHHS, Norfolk)

Brian has worked for the State of Nebraska as a Developmental Disabilities Quality Control Specialist since 2018. He has also represented the Northern Area on the Board of Directors for the 2021-2023 and has served as a delegate to both the bargaining conference and delegate assembly.

Miguel Nieto Lopez (DHHS, Lincoln)

Miguel works as an Administrative Technician for DHHS at the Nebraska State Office Building. Miguel's career with the state of Nebraska started in 2023 as a SOS worker with NDCS. Miguel feels that there is a great disconnect between upper management and the majority of DHHS employees. That hurts employees but also hurts every single resident of Nebraska. "When we can't do our jobs well, either because we are overworked, underpaid, or mistreated, we are unable to provide the vital services Nebraska needs to exist." Miguel wants to do his best to fight the upper management and fight the governor. Miguel will do anything and everything he can to do as the representative of DHHS. Whether or not you vote for Miguel as your DHHS Representative, vote for a Representative who won't be afraid of the governor, or of any other obstacles in our path to improving our work environment.

Michael Henry (DHHS, Lincoln)

Michael is a Medical Claims Investigator, and is approaching his five-year service anniversary at the State of Nebraska. As a union steward who has attended state legislative conferences and the NAPE biennial Delegate Assembly, Michael wants to bring a "fresh eyes" approach to growing membership and solidifying our collective power. There are many ways NAPE can stand fast in a changing landscape, and Michael hopes to be a guiding hand as we move forward. Thank you for your consideration!

Candidates for Statewide NDOT Representative (Vote for no more than 1) - Declared Elected

Tim Miller (NDOT, Ravenna)

Tim is a Highway Maintenance Crew Chief with more than a decade of experience. Tim currently serves as the NDOT representative on the Board of Directors and served on the 2025-2027 contract negotiations team. Tim is also a union steward and has attended steward seminars to sharpen his skills to advocate for his fellow

NAPE members. Tim is passionate about making sure employees' voices are heard and would be honored to continue serving on the Board.

Candidates for Statewide Agency Representatives (Vote for no more than 3)

Jason Baker (Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Kearney)

Jason is a Vocational Rehab Counselor II. He is running for a position on the Board of Directors because he feels there are smaller state agencies that often get overlooked. Jason wants to provide a voice for state employees who may not know much about the NAPE/AFSCME union, or how they can become a member, or get active in the union if they are a dues paying member. At NCVBI, Jason feels our labor union is never brought up by any employees, and Jason imagines other small state agencies are the same way. As a member of the Board of Directors, Jason would change that by opening a line of communication and ensuring those agency employees get the information from the union.

Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez (Military, Lincoln)

Mary is a graphic artist for the Nebraska Military Department and has worked for the state for nearly 20 years. Mary currently serves on the Board of Directors and has helped grow our union by serving as a Volunteer Member Organizer and steward. Mary is passionate about talking to state employees about the importance of union membership. Mary believes strongly in the power of our union and she would be honored to continue to be your voice on the Board of Directors.

Dan DeJong (Environment & Energy, Lincoln)

Dan is an Environmental Specialist II. He has been a steward for nearly as long as he's been in state service (over 4 years). Dan has helped organize and recruit stewards and new members in multiple departments that occupy the Fallbrook office building. He served on NAPE's bargaining team negotiating the 2025-2027 contract, and he currently serves on the Board. Dan genuinely believes in the power of collective bargaining, and the progress of NAPE over the last 6 years is proof that organizing works. Majority membership (>50% of state employees as members) is a big priority for Dan and he hopes to help grow our union in size and strength going forward.

Vicki Vosler (Game & Parks Commission, Ashland)

Vicki is a Food Service Worker at Mahoney State Park and has been a member of our union for nearly 20 years. She currently serves on the Board of Directors, and has previously been elected to serve as a delegate to both bargaining conferences and the delegate assembly. Vicki would love the opportunity to continue serving on the board as we grow our union to even higher record membership.

Dawn Archuleta (Corrections, Lincoln)

Dawn Archuleta has been an LPN with the state of Nebraska for almost 10 years and now works at the NDCS central office in Lincoln. She would like to be on the Board of Directors to help fight the injustices facing her fellow state employees and find ways to improve the current practices for all to benefit.

Candidates for Department of Education Representative (Vote for no more than 1) - Declared Elected

Katherine Knutzen (Columbus)

Katherine works in Vocational Rehabilitation as a Program Associate III and currently serves on the NAPE Board of Directors. Katherine also served on the negotiations team for the 2025-2027 NDE contract. Katherine would be honored to continue serving on the Board for the next term.

Candidates for State Colleges Representative (Vote for no more than 1) - Declared Elected

Kelly Overshiner (Chadron)

Kelly is a Custodian at Chadron State College. Kelly currently serves on the Board and has served as a union steward and VMO. Kelly has organized her colleagues at CSC to propel record union membership on campus. Kelly also served on the past two NSCS contract negotiations teams.

Candidates for Richardson County Representative (Vote for no more than 1) - Declared Elected

Bryan Dettmann (Falls City)

Brian has served as the Richardson County Representative on the Board for the past four years. He has led our union members through difficult contract negotiations and impasse proceedings at the CIR. He would like to continue representing his coworkers on the Board for the next term.

Candidates for Supervisory Representative (Vote for no more than 1)

Bryce Holmes (Transportation, Omaha)

Bryce is a Highway Project Manager for NDOT District 2 in Omaha. While in the bargaining unit, he has served as a steward, and he frequently attends meetings to learn and communicate information to his fellow union members. Bryce would be honored to be the voice of his fellow rules and regulations covered union members.

Mary Schwanke (DHHS, Fremont)

Mary is a Social Services Supervisor and currently serves as the Supervisory Representative on the Board of Directors. Mary would love to continue serving in her position to ensure supervisory members have a strong voice on the Board.

Teresa Menking (DHHS Fremont)

Teresa is a Social Services Supervisor and is a 10 year employee and a long time member of NAPE. She has actively advocated for NAPE Union membership, participation, and knowledge among workers. Teresa completed steward training, participated in leadership training sessions, was a bargaining conference delegate, actively participated in the Labor Management Committee at her work location and effectively communicated site concerns between staff and management. As a Supervisor, Teresa still actively encourages union membership and will work for better communication and action between leadership, union and staff to promote a fair and effective workplace environment.

Candidates for At-Large Representative (Vote for no more than 3)

Amy Peters (DHHS, Lincoln)

Amy is a Scientist I at the State Laboratory where she helps keep our drinking water safe. Amy is a worker advocate. She currently serves on the NAPE Board of Directors, is a Volunteer Member Organizer, steward, and has served as a delegate to our bargaining conference. Amy has represented NAPE at AFSCME events,

including our “stories in action” training in Minnesota. Recently Amy was the winner of the AFSCME Never Quit Award for her service to the State of Nebraska and her fellow union members.

Kelly Kopeitka (DHHS, Fremont)

Kelly is a Program Accuracy Specialist and has worked for the state for more than 8 years. She would like to be on the Board of Directors as she has past union administrative experience. Kelly cares for all union members, not just her unit, and believes that we are stronger as one. Kelly believes she would be an asset to this board as she will faithfully serve this union and fight for what we all deserve. Kelly is proud to be a state employee and a member of this union.

Sally Merker (DHHS, Lincoln)

Sally is a Developmental Disabilities Service Coordinator. She has sat on the human legal rights/program ethics committees for a multitude of agencies in her years of service to the developmental disabilities' community. She works well with teams when it comes to achieving a common goal for others.

Matthew Vajgrt (DMV, Grand Island)

Matt is a Motor Vehicle Examiner and has been a member of our union since his first year on the job. Matt is running to serve on the board because he wants to do everything he can for State of Nebraska employees. Now, more than ever, it is important that we come together in solidarity and fight for each other. Thank you for your consideration.

Nathan Kreutzer (Environment & Energy, Lincoln)

Nathan is an Environmental Specialist II and has been a member of our union since 2021. Nathan has been active as a steward for over a year. He has been working to grow union involvement at NDEE and he would like to help out more.