

## Round 1

**1. PACT often helps our members handle intensely personal and emotionally laden issues in their life and dealing with the club. Are you comfortable handling these sorts of matters for individuals you do not know well?**

I am more than comfortable. I am frequently someone friends come to in order to vent, rant, or get advice, and am happy to help as I can, or direct folks to the people who can better help them if necessary.

**2. What if any previous experience do you have that you feel helps prepare you for this aspect of the role?**

I'm a member of a number of topical support groups for LGBT folx of all stripes, and have always tried to be a good listener, and a good provider of potential solutions. Years upon years as a sounding board for folx has given me insight as to how to be an approachable figure.

**3. Part of PACT's role is to be able to provide the Board of Director's with feedback and observations about current problems in the club or about possible improvements or general membership temperature checks. This generally requires being pretty strongly engaged with the membership whether through travel or our lists or facebook groups. How are you engaged with the membership and how strongly?**

I am decently connected to folks in multiple regions, and though I took a break from lists that weren't directly pertinent to the local/regional game, I'm working my way back into things of a more national level. I am a pretty social person and try to get along with most people. I have also done a bit more traveling recently and plan to do more in the future - gaming with new faces is super fun.

**4. What changes if any would you make to the office if you could?**

I am hesitant to suggest procedural changes to something without being a part of it directly for a time, but I'm eager to put a transgender face in representation for accessibility and diversity reasons.

**5. Do you have any projects or programs you would like to develop in the first 12 months?**

I'd want to start projects relating directly to DC-to-member interactions and problem solving on topics pertinent to LGBT people, and run a survey enlisting feedback from members who identify under the LGBT umbrella.

## Round 2

**1. It's the duty of PACT Members to be available to listen to and advise on matters of great personal and emotional distress. Have there been times that issues within the club have caused you great distress personally? How did you handle those issues? If you take this position, how will you handle the stress and distress it may cause you?**

There were plenty of times in the past where bleed happened, emotion ran high, and I took breaks from the club. I actually took a very long break partly for life reasons, partly because of some things that happened between myself and other members IC where the bleed was VERY heavy. Some of the issues of those days truly came down to both parties being young a\*holes (myself and the other individual) and

we've both grown a lot since then, and some of those issues were a very early aughts standard of anything to do with feels being brushed off as something to deal with personally and not a Club issue. Being a bit longer in the tooth now, and the Club and our culture as a whole having matured, I have coping mechanisms that are a whole lot more healthy, and we have clear procedure within the club and a lot more support for the processes than I personally experienced back when I first joined. As for dealing with stress or distress, I've found unplugging for an hour or two to be quite useful, and have wonderful friends and fellow Club members here who I spend time with (like my DC, Duckie, who is supercool fantastic people to be around and if you haven't spent time with him, you totally should, he's great!) along with artistic hobbies. Also, naps are great stress relief. :D It's my intention to be extremely responsive and accessible, but to balance my own needs with those of others.

**2. Part of the PACT teams role is: "Listens and understands issues while remaining neutral with respect to the facts." How would you approach representing a member's concern that you personally disagree with?**

I'm of the personal opinion that when handling something for another member, if it's come to the point they're coming to me, then whatever I feel should be set aside, and the problems they come to me with should be considered with compassion and care as if they are my own for that time. I don't have to agree with someone or their take on their issues to be able to sit down and find solutions for them.

**3. Much of the club interacts through text. How would you approach an officer or player that appears rude or defensive?**

While not the ideal answer for everyone, sometimes moving a conversation to voice or video chat can be really helpful for context, tone, and emotion. Some people truly come off dry or patronizing via text, or may not be able to convey the whole of their issue that way. I know that I have an easier time of things discussing my feels via text, where I can erase and rewrite until I read words that match my intention and emotion. It's not foolproof, text communication. I'm comfortable discussing things either way. As far as what I do when folx get rude or defensive, I try to address how their words are coming across without nullifying their issue. Addressing the issue/complaint/etc before addressing how they came across, to provide priority to their concerns has worked well for various interactions I've had in the past. Rude/defensive appearances may be the product of a number of problems, and be entirely related to something else they need addressed and have nothing to do with me, and I completely delight in my ability to compartmentalize that fact. Also, a lot of times once solutions start to become clear, the initial rudeness/defensiveness fades away, so I always try not to take it too personally, ever.

## Round 3

### **1. What approaches might you take to reach members or domains not active on the lists to raise awareness of the office?**

I'd probably reach out to the Regional staff to pass reaching out messages along to their region's domain coordinators. That way, it raises awareness for the coordinators that there are extra tools at hand, which is often spread to their own membership. In my domain, when the DC learns something that's useful to the general membership, he's pretty good about passing that info along. Engaging via Facebook groups would be an extremely economical use of my time given how connected I am to that particular social media platform. Brian raises a very good point, however, in mentioning that level of engagement is on the members. Short of a giant neon sign saying "Hey, you can talk to me!" and reaching out to coordinators directly, becoming a more visible presence is a goal if I'm brought on for this role.

### **2. How should PACT office engage with social media?**

Facebook has grown a much more involved tool for communication for the club as a whole. Between that and Discord, there are opportunities for outreach and I think it may be a good idea for PACT to be as active as possible on those mediums. We live in a social media world, and while email is really great, we're going to find more and more engagement over there on social media, and I'm totally there for that.

### **3. Where do you draw the line between "venting" and harassment?**

Venting to me is about needing a safe venue for relieving stress/pressure. It usually slows down, or stops, and once that pressure is done you can generally talk to the person and get to the root of issues. Harassment is different, though, and deals with a level of aggression that isn't appropriate in a grand majority of settings. Venting there is a place for, harassment is no bueno. Our membership handbook is clear on the stance on harassment, and I think it's something worth talking about, raising awareness over. Harassment isn't just the big directly aggressive repeated and unwanted contact. It's also something that can happen as a microaggression. Talking to someone who clearly doesn't want to be spoken to by you can be considered harassment, which I think can cause some crossover from venting to harassing a person. The key is, I think, to know that the individual you're speaking with, no matter at what level of passion or intensity, has agreed to be spoken to that way. If not, don't do it.

### **4. The WoD is a complex setting full of dark and adult themes. Many 'dark' themes can result in triggering issues or concern for members. How might you advise an ST who wants to incorporate dark themes in a considerate and thoughtful manner?**

I would encourage an ST to provide a content warning to their players through whatever communication methods they get the most engagement from, and again provide a gentle warning prior to the introduction of said themes. I would also advise an ST to try and get a pulse for the overall backgrounds of players to some degree before dropping especially twisted content. This is a great time for the ST staff to remind players of the OK-Check In, and providing an opportunity for player feedback after scenes are over. If necessary, fade to black and/or ST proxy of sheets can keep a character who \*would\* be involved but whose player may wish to step back from the themes could be employed, and I would suggest that to the storyteller(s) involved if they did not themselves suggest such a thing.

**5. Have you had the opportunity to get familiar with or use the [OK-Check In](#) system? Do you think this is an effective tool to help manage player comfort during RP? Why or why not?**

Yes! I love this tool, as it provides a relatively non-intrusive method of ensuring players are alright even if characters may be going through something awful/emotionally intense. Our local domain supports this tool strongly and it was encouraged at MESCON and used on a few occasions to success. Every tool we can use as players to make sure we're all having a good experience, no matter the content of said experience.

**6. What specific challenges do you believe the membership and the club faces at present in relation to the role you would be asked to occupy as PACT? What would a potential plan of action to address those challenges look like if you were elected?**

Challenges presented that I have encountered are through the lens of a pre-surgical trans man, so I hope everyone will bear with me as my experiences with the club at present align with a smaller subset of members of a community that experiences constant issues.

The club has been overwhelmingly positive and welcoming to me with regard to my both coming out to some members who knew me in the 2002-2004 time frame prior to my gender exploration and new folk I've met since my return in 2011-2012. That being said, there is a bit of social awkwardness especially when it comes to casual handling of trans folk with regard to presentation and pronouns. Pronouns in particular seem to be one of the bigger stumbling blocks for cisgender people. I think that having a trans man as male PACT representative helps reach a hand out to transgender members, but also provides some helpful representation. One plan of action I have if elected is to when reaching out to regional coordinator staff, offer the additional support of being a go-to person for them to help with any concerns that have come across their desks from trans members. I have also been looking into pronoun pins or buttons that could be made and sent to domains at members' requests.

I want to reiterate that from all I've seen/experienced, I believe the general membership treats trans folk and nonbinary folk with the courtesy and decency that I would expect from an inclusive environment, and my personal investment in tackling specific bumps in the road so to speak is with the hope to fill in any gaps small or large if possible and help guide the club's culture so that issues have no space to grow on the local, regional, or national levels.

**Round 4**

**1. Conventions are a prime opportunity for our membership to come together on a large scale. How active are you at conventions? If elected, how active do you intend to be?**

I'm not nearly as active at conventions as some. It's a money issue. Travel is expensive, and while I have plenty of time on my hands, I do not have the money to fly around the country during convention season. I did attend MESCON, and if it's within a not-horrible Greyhound distance I'd consider it (or if there was a caravan of folks going from New Orleans) but realistically, until money tree seeds start appearing and working - it's not in the cards. Were travel expenses taken out of the equation, I'd be at \*every\* convention. They're fun and a fantastic way to connect with big events in the games and a whole lot of members in one fell swoop.

**2. How familiar with you with our national offices (NC, NST, NCA, Standards, etc) and how they function?**

I believe I'm as familiar as most members are, I know what the job titles are, what their roles are, and can appreciate all the juggling and time that goes into performing their jobs well.

**3. Which National Offices do you anticipate working with the most on a proactive (rather than responsive) level?**

The first office that comes directly to mind is the NC's office. I've known Kay for a very long time, and feel like she's one of the most approachable people I've ever met. Additionally, like Brian said, the NST's office may be a go-to, though my hope is that when presented with concerns members have, I'll first be going to the officers closest to the issue if it calls for that. I would hate to think that I'd taken on advocating for someone and jumped over someone who could've helped. Officers are empowered to perform their duties, and when you take that away by skipping over them in a conflict resolution process, it can cause unnecessary strain and bad feelings. So I'm not sure I'd just foist a problem to the National staff without very clear, very solid reasons.

**Round 5**

**1. PACT is often called on to work with and represent protected classes in our org. Given that, knowing your own privilege and preparing for how it could affect the members you're advocating for is crucial. What are your privileges and what efforts will you take to be an ally to members who don't have them?**

I am white, was born in the US to white parents who are middle class. I am able-bodied, capable of physical labor and my visual impairments are corrected fully by eyeglasses. I am employed and have enough income that my basic needs are met. To be an ally to communities for whom I embody the classic oppressor, I always strive to put their voices first, to validate their experiences and to listen when spoken to on topical issues, preventing any sort of -ism from bleeding into the club and club functions. I think it's incredibly important that we are inclusive and hold to common courtesy and dignity for the individual.

**2. Bleed, the spill over of emotions between the character and the player in either direction, can be the cause of or exacerbate player conflicts. How do you identify when bleed is occurring? What steps might you take to assist a member struggling with bleed?**

Bleed is inevitable, I think. We, as players of these characters, become invested in them. They are the product of many hours of work, many dollars spent on costumes and site fees and socials, they are narrative gems that start in our heads and over time become larger. How we handle our emotions is what makes bleed a good or a bad thing. It's important to acknowledge your feelings as they come, but understanding the why of them is also important. I have also always been big on the idea that you can have whatever feelings you want - it's what you do with them after you understand that you're feeling them that is vital to forward momentum. Always try and do the right thing, Golden Rule and Wheaton's Law and all of that. If you deny bleed being a thing, you're repressing the full experience of immersive roleplay situations.