

Donny Edwards

University of North Carolina Charlotte

Director of Housing Facilities Operations

Qualifications: Please discuss the job positions, professional development activities, and other qualifications that prepare you for the board position for which you are applying.

I bring over twelve years of progressive leadership experience in housing facilities operations, supported by extensive professional development and sustained service to the profession, which prepare me well for service on the ACUHO-I Board. My facilities experience began at Davidson College, where I served as Associate Director of Residence Life with responsibilities including furniture purchasing and project participation. In 2014, I joined UNC Charlotte as Associate Director of Facilities Planning and became Director of Facilities Operations in 2019. In my current role, I oversee a multidisciplinary team including maintenance, housekeeping, projects, and inventory staff, supervising more than 60 employees. My responsibilities include budget oversight, staff leadership, and operational planning. I have been directly involved in three new construction projects, seven capital renovations, two demolitions, and numerous smaller renovation and equipment replacement projects, providing me with broad experience in capital planning, resource management, and risk assessment. My professional development includes attendance at twelve ACUHO-I/APPA Housing Facilities Conferences, four years of conference leadership culminating as Chair of the 2019 conference, service on the ACUHO-I Housing and Facilities Services Committee, graduation from the APPA Institute for Facilities Management and Leadership Academy, and attainment of the Certified Educational Facilities Professional credential.

Thought Leadership and Technical Credibility: Please describe what you would bring to the board in the realm of this competency.

I bring more than 15 years of sustained engagement with the campus housing profession, supported by active involvement in both ACUHO-I and APPA. I stay current on local, national, and international trends affecting housing and residence life through regular conference participation, committee engagement, and ongoing professional development in facilities, capital planning, sustainability, and compliance. Within ACUHO-I, I have served for four years in leadership roles on the Housing Facilities Conference Committee and continue to engage through the Housing and Facilities Services Committee, where professionals collaborate on critical operational and policy issues. This service has strengthened my understanding of ACUHO-I's organizational structure, culture, and core programs and deepened my commitment to advancing the Association's mission. As a Certified Educational Facilities Professional (CEFP), I maintain a strong commitment to continuous learning and applied expertise. Professionally, I have overseen the purchase of furniture valued in the tens of millions of dollars, contributed to nearly \$200 million in construction projects, led sustainability initiatives, served on a university physical accessibility committee, and provided leadership across housing maintenance and custodial operations. I would bring a practitioner

driven, forward thinking perspective to the board that supports ACUHO-I's strategic initiatives and elevates the profession.

Openness to a Multitude of Perspectives: Please describe what you would bring to the board in the realm of this competency.

I would bring a collaborative, inclusive, and mission focused approach to the board that prioritizes the organization's goals above individual interests. I value diverse perspectives and intentionally work to create space where differing viewpoints are respected, heard, and leveraged to strengthen decision making. I listen carefully, ask clarifying questions, and remain open to new information, recognizing that strong governance depends on thoughtful dialogue and adaptability. I am comfortable navigating change and uncertainty and approach unexpected challenges with a problem solving mindset grounded in collaboration - this was very evident when Covid hit our campus. When new information or conditions emerge, I am willing to reassess assumptions and adjust course in service of the board's shared responsibilities and long term vision. I believe effective board service requires setting aside personal priorities to focus on what best serves the organization and its members. In working with volunteer leaders, staff, and members, I strive to foster a positive, respectful culture built on trust and transparency. By modeling professionalism, courtesy, and cooperation, I aim to support an environment where people work together productively and feel aligned around a common purpose.

Strategic Thinking: Please describe what you would bring to the board in the realm of this competency.

I would bring to the board a strategic, future-focused perspective grounded in my experience as a facilities director and my commitment to innovative, mission-aligned planning. In my current role, I regularly think in 5–10 year horizons—assessing building conditions, projecting capital needs, and prioritizing projects that reduce deferred maintenance while ensuring housing remains safe, functional, and responsive to evolving student needs. I have led long-range facilities planning efforts that balance immediate operational realities with long-term sustainability, helping my institution make informed investments rather than reactive decisions. I apply this same approach to broader housing challenges, analyzing current conditions such as aging infrastructures, affordability pressures, and changing student expectations, while anticipating trends related to wellness, flexibility of space, and technology integration. As a board member, I would contribute strategic and innovative thought leadership by helping ACUHO-I anticipate these challenges and develop programs, resources, and professional development opportunities that equip housing professionals to plan proactively. I value collaboration and bring an adaptable mindset, recognizing that higher education housing requires flexibility, creativity, and the ability to adjust strategy as circumstances evolve.

Developing Others: Please describe what you would bring to the board in the realm of this competency.

I bring a strong commitment to developing people by fostering a culture of continuous learning, accountability, and constructive feedback. At the board level, I focus on asking the right questions that encourage leaders to invest in talent development, knowledge transfer, and succession planning. I believe development is most effective when it is ongoing, practical, and tied to real organizational goals. I actively model growth by seeking diverse perspectives, reflecting on feedback, and sharing lessons learned—both successes and failures. I support creating opportunities for others to stretch their capabilities through mentorship, cross functional collaboration, and exposure to strategic decision making. I also believe informal learning moments—coaching conversations, timely feedback, and peer learning—are just as critical as formal training programs. By balancing high expectations with support and guidance, I help create an environment where people feel empowered to develop their skills, contribute meaningfully, and build capacity that strengthens the organization for the long term.