



# ANNY 2019 Election Candidate Bio and Statement

## Salvatore D'Amato

### Assistant Dean of Assessment at D'Youville College

#### **Brief Personal Bio**

During the past seven years, serving as D'Youville's go-to assessment person, I have worked industriously to foster and nurture a community of reflective practitioners for the purposes of informing instructional and administrative decision-making, enhancing curriculum and services, and improving student learning outcomes and experiences. Over time, my responsibilities grew to include assisting schools and departments in authoring and editing accreditation self-studies and other compliance reports. I think assessment came naturally to me because as a teacher in grades N-12, I was constantly enrapt in a cycle of observation, reflection, and action: monitoring my students' progress, noting their interests and needs, researching and weighing possible interventions, and deciding on which strategies would most likely foster their success. As a full-time professor of education at Medaille College from 2003 – 2009, I raised an army of compassionate elementary- and secondary-level teachers resolved on transforming the lives of their students. The move from professor of teacher education to assistant dean of assessment was seamless. The same skills that I had practiced alongside novice and veteran teachers transferred dexterously to the area of programmatic and institutional assessment. As a teacher-mentor, I continue to serve as a confidant for colleagues' quandaries about instructional delivery, classroom management, and assessment. And as an originator and facilitator of professional development workshops, I spark and rekindle educators' fervor for taking risks and discovering innovative ways to connect their students to subject matter through authentic, challenging, and enjoyable activities. Currently, I am engaged in a number of assessment-related initiatives led by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, including implementing Watermark's accreditation management system for self-studies, strategic planning, program-level assessment, and the assessment of student learning outcomes; instituting the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) self-assessments for refining functional areas' procedures and services; revitalizing the College's general education program; developing surveys for measuring students' learning in interprofessional education; and establishing a centralized systematic process for monitoring and advancing campus-wide community-service activities and partnerships.

### **Statement of Interest**

ANNY embodies the true spirit of assessment. Its leaders and members understand that assessment is not equivalent to evaluation: assessment is about observation, reflection, collaboration, revivification, and celebration—and it drives instructional and institutional decision-making. Often, faculty members and administrators tend to complicate assessment, confusing it with research and thinking that they must collect years-worth of data, uncover long-term trends, and establish a preponderance of evidence before taking action. While this approach is as admirable as it is complicated—and often required by accreditation—this belief impedes faculty’s ability to be agile, creative, and daring when responding to evidence of student work and data. Assessment need not be complicated to be effective. Fortunately, ANNY provides a safe and constructive forum for faculty and administrators to share their approaches to assessment and their stories and to learn from one another—and that’s what assessment is all about: sharing the stories about what we observed, noted, and did to improve student learning outcomes and enhance our student services. ANNY is the model of the type of focused and uplifting organization with which I am proud to be affiliated and for which I would be proud to serve in any capacity.