

**Donna Douglass Williams, Ombudsperson, World Health Organization  
Personal Statement**

I am interested in bringing my experience as an organizational ombudsperson, attorney, mediator, educator, facilitator and consultant to the IOA Board to 1) promote inclusive dialogue among our membership on the challenging issues facing our organization (certification, membership categories, diversity of practice methods, etc.), 2) ensure that our organization (and its name) appropriately represents the membership and the work we do, 3) encourage the organization to live up to its international name and foster collaboration with other ombuds/related organizations, 4) offer members professional development opportunities that are current, relevant, and accessible, 5) explore how we can impact our communities in the areas of mentoring, scholarships, conflict resolution education, and pro bono work that reflects and promotes the foundational values of our profession.

**Questions for Nominee**

1. Why are you interested in serving on the IOA board?

(See personal statement above)

2. Do you have any previous leadership or volunteer experience in TOA/UCOA/IOA or in other organizations?

Co-Chair annual conference committee  
(UCOA and UCOA/TOA Joint Conference Committee)  
UCOA mentor  
IOA conference presenter  
ENOHE conference presenter  
Southeast Ombuds Group (SEOG) presenter, contributor  
UNARIO participant, presenter  
Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys Juvenile Court Mentoring Project

3. Do you have an area of expertise that IOA could possibly utilize - such as finance and accounting, grant writing, etc.?

Attorney, Mediator/Facilitator, Trainer

4. What IOA activities or areas are you most interested in committing time toward?

International Committee, IOA's collaboration with other ombuds (and related) professional organizations, professional development, civic and community contributions

5. Describe how you would advance IOA's Strategic Plan.

The areas of IOA's Strategic Plan that I am most interested in providing leadership and support are professional development, awareness and outreach, and building strategic partnerships, alliances and networks. More specifically, I would commit to strengthening the mentoring program for new members, contribute to the process of determining professional development needs of the membership, particularly the offering of specialized skill building courses (e.g. mediation training) to enhance the practice of members. I will also contribute to exploring partnerships with universities and professional organizations to offer collaborative training programs relevant for our members. As I believe awareness and outreach are key to our organization's growth and advancement of our mission, I would contribute to the development of effective outreach plans designed to foster an understanding of the role and value of the Ombuds locally and globally. As an ombuds in an international organization, I am quite committed to building partnerships and alliances with international ombuds and related organizations (dispute resolution practitioners, etc.) to explore training collaborations and other mutually beneficial exchanges of experience and expertise.

6. Describe an issue impacting the profession that you are most passionate about and the actions you would take have taken related to this issue.

One of the areas I am most passionate about with respect to the profession in promoting education and understanding of the Ombuds role and its value in our organizations--locally, nationally and internationally. I believe that this can be accomplished largely through strong outreach and awareness programs that target professionals with whom ombuds will work in the organization/institution, and also business and professional groups who can advocate for the creation and support of strong organizational ombuds programs. I would also encourage the exploration of speakers bureaus within IOA to identify members willing to share information and expertise regarding the profession with organizations considering creation of an ombuds office, as well as providing information and education generally regarding the role and profession. Education and training collaborations with university and professional programs are also key, in order to provide relevant training to those entering the profession as well as for current practitioners. I have and will continue to work towards strengthening collaborations with international Ombuds and related associations to encourage a mutual exchange of professional expertise and to further common values and goals.