



**Bradley Mills, Ph.D.**  
**Associate Professor of Special  
Education, Fayetteville State  
University,  
Raleigh, North Carolina, USA**



**What inspired you to apply for the Board of Directors? Learn directly from Brad!**

[Access the video.](#)

### **Biographical Information:**

Dr. Bradley Mills brings a wealth of experience and dedication to the field of Special Education, having devoted 18 years to advancing educational practices and supporting diverse learners. His career began in West Virginia, where he spent three years as a high school special education teacher. Brad then moved with his wife to North Carolina, where he served as a Behavior Support Teacher for nine years. During his final two years in the classroom, Brad took on additional responsibilities as the Special Education Department Chair. In this role, he led a dedicated team of 17 special education teachers and oversaw the educational progress of approximately 400 students.

For the past six years, Brad has been teaching future educators as an associate professor at the College of Education at Fayetteville State University. His commitment to teaching and mentorship was recognized in 2022 when he was honored with the Professor of the Year Award for the entire university. Brad is particularly passionate about building strong relationships with local school districts and supporting beginning teacher programs.

From 2016 to 2024, Brad served as the President and on the executive board of the North Carolina Council for Exceptional Children, where he contributed to the advancement of policies and practices for exceptional education.

Outside of his professional life, Brad enjoys spending quality time with his wife and two young boys. He finds joy in playing soccer with his children, relaxing with his family, and attempting to teach his puppy basic manners.

### **Candidate Statements:**

**What makes CEC's mission meaningful to you? (Limit 150 words)**

For as long as I can remember, my parents instilled in me the need to treat everyone with kindness and help others whenever possible. As I completed my undergraduate degree and started my teaching career, I realized how much my personal values aligned with being an educator. As I continued teaching, I took on more responsibilities within my special education department and the school. I continued focusing on

treating others with kindness and helping whenever possible. Though I did not realize it then, my values directly align with CEC's mission statement, which is focused on service toward educators. I work hard to build meaningful relationships with my college students, provide whatever support they need, and encourage them to be their own students' biggest advocates. Through these strategies, my new goal is that every college student I teach builds the CEC mission statement into their own unique teaching philosophy.

**There is such a great range of individual backgrounds and experiences that cannot be easily conveyed by answering simple demographic questions. Given [CEC's view of diversity](#), what facets of your life provide a context for the various experiences and perspectives you bring to discussions and your work? (Limit 150 words.)**

I have taught in poor rural schools that were almost exclusively Caucasian and in urban Title 1 schools that contained students from an incredible number of ethnicities, religions, and cultural backgrounds. Similarly, at the university level, I have taught at a large Tier 1 university and now at a Historically Black College and University. In each position, I have learned the importance of avoiding assumptions, asking questions, listening to others, and appreciating different perspectives. As the Program Coordinator for Special Education at FSU, I am dedicated to CEC's goal of cultivating an effective and diverse workforce of special education professionals. I instill in my future teachers the importance of listening and learning from their students, fostering meaningful relationships. Even after they graduate, my students are aware that I am always just a phone call away, ready to provide support or an outside perspective, demonstrating my unwavering commitment to their success.

**Provide three specific examples of how your leadership experiences, including professional and volunteer, have had an impact on fostering change or moving an organization/entity forward. (Limit 300 words)**

In 2019, as the President-elect of the NC CEC, it was my responsibility to lead the planning of the annual conference, to be held in February 2020, during the pandemic. We quickly decided to have a virtual conference, which led to our first international and largest-ever conference. This provided an opportunity for professional development at a time when teachers were asked to work miracles behind their computer screens. It also filled the need by providing training in a format that worked for teachers' schedules, as there were few substitutes available and even less district-level spending for professional development.

When I arrived at Fayetteville State University (FSU) six years ago, we had six students across three programs. I met with the Director of Special Education from the local school district to identify areas of need and how our partnership could benefit everyone. Their primary need was for licensed special education teachers. My team proposed pausing our advanced M.Ed. program and focusing on building our MAT program. The MAT program helps individuals with college degrees earn a special education license. Within two years, enrollment increased to 60 students in the MAT program, and we are reducing the number of vacant special education positions locally.

There are 80 special education teaching positions currently open in neighboring districts. I created a survey asking prospective students about instructional delivery. Over 94% of responders indicated a desire for a fully online program. Our new students require increased accessibility to classes that work with their busy lives. By increasing the accessibility, our program will grow, and teacher shortages will be reduced. We are on track to be entirely online in August. The initial projections suggest that our MAT programs will increase enrollment by 30-50%.

**CEC Membership Information:**

**Years of CEC Membership:** 8 years

**Division Membership(s):** Teacher Education Division  
North Carolina Teacher Education Sub-division

