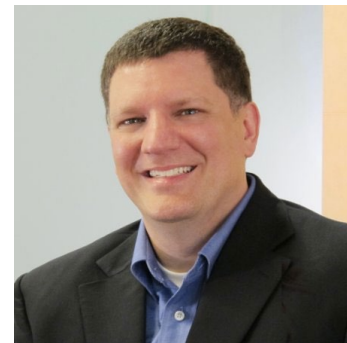


Position: Affiliate Board Member

Candidate: John A. Schwartz, JD

Organization: EIIA (Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators)

Title: Executive Director, Risk Management



Biography: John Schwartz joined EIIA in 2016 and brings extensive experience in higher education administration to his role as Executive Director of Risk Management. Schwartz previously served as the Director of Insurance and Risk at Pepperdine University. Schwartz also consulted with more than 200 colleges and universities during more than a decade working at United Educators. Schwartz held positions at Iowa State University, where he helped lead the Office of Risk Management, Texas A&M University, where he coordinated the Student/Academic Affairs risk program, and the University of Kansas, where he served as an Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs. Schwartz holds BA, MA, and JD degrees from the University of Kansas.

Please describe your past Risk Management experience and previous involvement with URMIA.

As detailed in my brief bio, above, I have extensive experience in higher education risk management. I have held administrative roles at four universities and worked with two large risk retention groups. I am looked to as a national thought leader on insurance, legal, and higher education risk issues, especially those related to college students. I have been a member of URMIA since 2004 and have attended every national conference since that year. I have also attended many regional conferences. I regularly present during these conferences, as well. I have volunteered time serving the URMIA community in the past and look forward to continuing to do so in the future. Finally, I have volunteered with the Board's Affiliate committee since 2018.

What leadership skills and talents make you a good candidate?

Through the years, in a variety of roles, I've tried to hone one very specific talent: listening to other people and hearing what they say. Once that is achieved, we can work together to come up with solutions to problems – or, as is so often the case in our profession, potential problems we want to avoid. I am also a powerful advocate for action, especially after issues have been discussed and a course charted. Finally, I relish the opportunity to collect information and present it to others, noting potential challenges and opportunities which might be encountered.

How would you get the membership more active in URMIA?

I've encountered variations of this challenge at every stop in my professional career: how to get students more engaged in RM efforts, how to get staff more active in injury prevention, how to get schools more active in broad-based ERM, how to get a Board more engaged in oversight responsibilities. There may not be a one-size-fits all solution to these issues, but the answer almost always involves identifying a key motivating factor for the constituency and then making it happen. For URMIA members, there will be different answers based on the school. Some will need basic information, while some will have easy access to resources. Some will need an outside voice of authority, while some will need comps to make an argument. One value of a group like URMIA is that we can be many things to many different people – but one size (solution) might not be right for every single member of the group.

Briefly outline your vision for continuing to move URMIA forward.

URMIA has broadened its reach in the last 10 years and can continue to do so. A few ideas: teams of Board members identifying opportunities to partner with other higher education/industry advocacy groups, cross pollinating our organization; the Board/staff working even more directly with smaller institutions who may not have access to resources; expanding knowledge of insurance and risk into other, related fields to help train the next generation of campus risk management leadership. Finally, we should explore whether potential new institutional members might be initially “sponsored” for membership in some way by one of their key current Affiliate partners. This would allow deeper connection between Affiliate and new member and also quickly show how URMIA membership benefits the institution.