

CEO Member Profile - Mark J. Golden, CAE

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Name: Mark J. Golden, CAE

Title: Executive Director and CEO

Association: National Court Reporters Association

City/State: Vienna, VA

1. Why are you a chief executive? What do you like best about your current position?

Like many, I fell in to the association profession by accident. Today, almost thirty years into that career, having served in a number of different capacities for a very diverse range of organizations, I can't imagine myself doing anything else.

Forming into voluntary associations we are able to accomplish things together that we could never accomplish separately. Associations are the infrastructure and engines for converting aspirations into outcomes. We achieve things that advance our unique and defining special interests (as a profession, an industry, or a cause) in a manner that also serves and advances the larger community within which we exist.

2. What idea or contribution to your organization are you most proud of?

Every trade or professional association I have worked for has offered opportunities to have an impact and leave a mark. At the wireless association, it was fighting against all odds and succeeding in creating the legal, regulatory and business environment that would allow for the explosion in availability and affordability of wireless services. Here at NCRA, it has been working to marshal the resources (financial as well as knowledge and expertise) to support expanding the recruitment and education of the next generation in the profession ... professionals needed in order to, among other things, ensure the availability of captioning and other interpretive services that will assist the nearly 30 million deaf or hard-of-hearing Americans participate fully in civic, cultural and professional life.

3. What is the biggest opportunity or challenge you see in the community in the next five years?

Overcoming a low intensity but persistent level of skepticism and distrust of associations (indeed, of most institutions), viewed by the general public as special interests in the most pejorative sense. Operating with clarity and transparency, associations have the opportunity to build trust and cohesion within society by demonstrating real accomplishments in making the world a better place.

4. If you weren't an association or nonprofit chief executive, what profession would you most like to try?

I would like to imagine I would be suited to and fulfilled in two roles: teacher or music/opera critic.

5. Forgetting about work, if you could be anywhere in the world doing anything you wanted right now, where would you be and what would you be doing?

Spending my days reading and gaining insights into new ideas and in different ways of thinking and engaging with others in civil but vigorous intellectual debate over what we have learned. Spending my evenings at the opera preferably German, best of all Wagner, and hopefully in exotic and luxurious surroundings.