

# Florida Chess Association Candidate Information and Campaign Statement

## Deadline: July 31, 2022

Requirements for board candidates per the FCA Bylaws <https://www.floridachess.org/By-Laws>

Every nominee must meet each item 1-5:

1. Been continuous member of the FCA and US Chess since before March 1<sup>st</sup> of the election year
2. Must be 16 years or older
3. Meet **one** of the following:
  - a) Have a USCF or FIDE chess rating, either over-the-board or correspondence.
  - b) Be a certified tournament director with one (1) USCF event in the previous two (2) years.
  - c) Participated in the Florida State Championship tournament or at least one (1) of its side events (G-29, G-15, G-5 championships, for example) in the previous five (5) years.
4. Minimum one-year of Florida residency
5. In good standing with the FCA (Article VIII Section 10).

Save and send this form to the Elections Committee Chair at this email address:

[elections@floridachess.org](mailto:elections@floridachess.org). You can also use this email address for any questions about the vetting criteria.

**NAME (First Last):** Derek Zhang    **Florida Resident since (year):** 2020

**US Chess ID #:** 14081435    **US Chess Expiration Date:** 1/31/2025

**Board Status: New, Returning or Incumbent:** New    **Years:** N/A

**If Incumbent, Positions held:** N/A

**If Incumbent, your accomplishments of note while on the board:** N/A

**Chess Bio: (Player Accomplishments, Current Rating/Peak Rating, Coaching, Author, Organizer, Parent, Tournament Director, other applicable info):**

I am a lifelong chess player, organizer, tournament director, and coach who is the current President of the Gator Chess Club at the University of Florida. I'm a native of Seattle, WA, but have been living in Gainesville since 2020. Below, I've listed some of my accomplishments as a player, organizer, tournament director, and coach.

Player:

- USChess National Master (Current Rating 2257, Peak 2263)
- FIDE Candidate Master (Current Rating 2187, Peak 2216)
- Won prizes at numerous national events, including the World Open, North American Open, American Open, US Open, and several National Scholastic Championships
- Represented the US at the 2019 Pan American U20 Junior Championship

**Organizer/Tournament Director:**

- President of the Gator Chess Club at the University of Florida
- USChess Local Tournament Director
  - Chief TD & Organizer of the 2022 Dr. John G. Harris Chess Championship in Gainesville (124 players)
  - Co-Chief Assistant TD at the 2018 and 2019 Washington State Elementary Chess Championships (1241 players and 1403 players, respectively)
- Former member of the Washington Chess Federation Fair Play Committee
- Super-Admin of the USChess club on Chess.com

**Coach:**

- Odle Middle School (Bellevue, WA) Chess Club Head Coach, 2017-2020
  - 1st Place Team at the 2018 Washington State Scholastic Chess Championship
  - 7th Place Team at the 2019 Washington State Scholastic Chess Championship
- Private Chess Coach since 2016
  - Highest rated student has a current USCF rating of ~2100

**Please list skills or experience of benefit to board service:**

I've been involved in scholastic chess, college chess, online chess, and over-the-board chess as a player, tournament director, organizer, and coach for 16 years. I've played in national and international tournaments, directed and organized tournaments of twenty players to more than a thousand, and coached both school chess clubs and private students. Those experiences would help me bring a variety of important perspectives and a wealth of chess knowledge to the FCA board.

**Why are you running for the FCA board?**

To support and grow chess in Florida. To reduce or eliminate barriers for new players, to expand the opportunities available to current players, and to contribute to the governance of chess in Florida. It's an exciting time for chess, from the local level to the international level, and I want to be a part of it. I would be honored to have the opportunity to do so as a member of the FCA board.

**Campaign statement: If elected, what will I seek to accomplish for the Florida Chess Community?**

The FCA does an excellent job of promoting chess in Florida, and I will do everything I can to support that mission. In addition, here's something specific that my club and I can contribute to the Florida chess community: we have access to very low-cost and/or free event venues through our affiliation with the University of Florida, and would be happy to share those resources with the FCA or other Florida chess organizers.