

Dear SQL Community member,

Greetings. Thank you for taking the time to read my application for the PASS Board of Director position.

As an active volunteer in the SQL Server community, I enjoy spending time meeting and getting to know other SQL Server and BI professionals and helping them on things that can impact their careers. Over the last decade, I received great assistance from the community. Specifically the North Texas SQL Server User Group (NTSSUG) has helped me grow as a better professional and have a great career. I shall forever be indebted to the community for this. I hope with the service I will provide via the PASS organization, I will find a nice way to give back to the community at large.

Should I be elected to this position, I commit to doing everything I can to grow the organization and take it to newer levels of success while remaining approachable, transparent, setting reasonable goals and expectations, and making known the progress toward those goals.

I hope as you go through this application, I have clearly articulated my background, accomplishments, vision, and goals to bolster the PASS organization into new horizons.

Warm Regards



[Sri Sridharan]

## **PART ONE - CONTACT**

### **1. Please provide your Contact Information:**

Name: Sri Sridharan  
Home Phone: <NOT PUBLISHED>  
Home Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>

Employer: VHA Inc  
Department: MIS  
Job Title: Data Architect  
Work Phone: <NOT PUBLISHED>  
Work Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>

Email: [sri@ntssug.com](mailto:sri@ntssug.com)

Years of Experience  
in SQL Server: 17 years

**PART TWO - EDUCATION****2. Education (list all appropriate types of educational experience - Degree, Diploma, University - please detail location): <sup>(\*)</sup>**

Bachelors Degree in Physics  
Masters Degree in CIS  
MBA in Finance

**PART THREE - COMPANY/PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND****3. Describe your company's business:**

VHA Inc is a group purchasing organization (GPO) for hospitals. The hospitals are members of VHA and VHA negotiates contracts with various suppliers to provide goods to our members at a special price.

**4. Please provide your current job title:**

Data Architect

**5. Please describe your primary job responsibilities:**

- Responsible for Data Governance initiatives in the company.
- Provide consult/advisory services for various projects in the company as a Data Architect, including data modeling, database design, operational help, performance tuning etc.
- Help the Data Management Team on day to day activities related to DBA tasks and key initiatives.

<sup>(\*)</sup> These degrees were from India with a slightly different title, so I have labelled them with equivalent titles more commonly recognized in the US.

**PART FOUR - STATEMENT OF INTENTIONS (Short Essay Format)**

*(Please note that these answers should relate to your public campaign platform)*

**6. Please discuss why you would like to serve on the PASS Board of Directors:****Vision Statement**

- *Ensure every member of PASS and its chapters are able to articulate the values that PASS and its chapters provide.*
- *With my international background and experience, help enable PASS to grow in other countries.*

At a grass root level, I want to make sure that every member of a chapter or PASS is able to articulate the value PASS is providing and how it has benefited them.

About 4 months back when we had our SQLSaturday, a person walked up to me and said, "I just got out of college and thanks to the career and networking opportunities with the chapter (NTSSUG), I was able to get a job as a junior DBA and jump start my career." That made my day. It made it all worth it.

I want every member to be able to tell that PASS has influenced their careers and they are more successful today because of PASS, whether it comes in the form of education and/or networking. Some of that is already happening but the message is not strong and consistent and I want to strongly influence that. This is one of the key reasons I want to run for the PASS Board of Director position.

Born in India, growing up there for 20+ years with my family of bankers, accountants and tax professionals, I am very aware of the business and cultural environment that exists there today. PASS is committed to growth in English speaking countries. Approximately 11% of the Indian population speaks English, which is almost half the population of the United States. With my background and experience, I can play a huge role in growth of PASS in India and potentially other countries.

**7. Tell us about your accomplishments in other volunteer organizations; detail the key things you learned from these experiences:**

Over the last few years, I have successfully helped lead the North Texas SQL Server User Group in the following areas:

1. Increasing membership.
2. Increasing attendance meeting over meeting. We have grown our physical attendance in the meeting to 3X in the last 2 years.
3. Delivered 3 SQLSaturday events within 12 months.
4. Financial stability for the chapter.
5. Campaigned to bring SQLRally to Dallas. See our application to host SQLRally, [here](#).

Through this process, I have learned:

- Goals take more time to accomplish in a volunteer driven organization as compared to an organization where people are paid to do their jobs.
- One has to lead a volunteer organization by example and effort and hope that others follow your way.
- Volunteer organizations take less risk.
- Finding venues for events is hard. There are just so many factors involved in dealing with hotels and convention centres. I have a better appreciation of what PASS HQ does after I went through the SQLRally venue selection process.

**8. If elected to the PASS Board, what goal would you set to contribute to the benefit of PASS? How would you work to accomplish that goal?**

As I mentioned above in my vision statement, I want members of our community to be able to articulate what value they get out of PASS and the same for the members of the chapters.

To accomplish these, the following items would be top level strategic directions that would help.

1. Connecting PASS members to their local chapters.
2. Making PASS more visible at the local chapter level.

To drive international growth, I want to see PASS partner strongly with international chapter leaders at a level where they feel PASS is there to help them along the way and make them successful.

**PART FIVE - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT (Short Essay Format)**

9. Please describe your management and leadership background, listing specific examples of teams or projects:

Over the last 8-10 years, there were opportunities that helped me develop my leadership skills. I had to have crucial conversations with customers around their business challenges. These conversations typically revolve around:

- Understanding **p**ain points.
- Do you have access to **p**eople who can make decisions or are you just beating your head on the wall?
- Painting a **v**ision around the solutions you can bring to the table.
- Helping customers understand the **v**alue of how the vision can solve business challenges.
- Do you have **c**ontrol over the process?

I called this out on my [blog](#) as the **PPVVC** experience.

Typically you see this statement at most places, "A good leader always listens". I strongly believe that a "Strong Leader listens with both ears and eyes". Apart from what you hear directly, one also looks for other latent signs, like body language, demeanour, tone etc. These provide subtle hints on a lot of things that just cannot be said in a professional setup.

Whether it is projects I am involved in at my work place or things that I have done for the user group, I try hard to use my methodologies above. It helps me get unprecedented success.

10. Are you or have you been a member of any board (volunteer or professional)? Please describe:

I am and have been the President and the Board of Director - Marketing at the North Texas SQL Server User Group for the last 2 years. Prior to that, I was the Director of Logistics and Communication on the same Board for 3 years.

If it does not conflict with my user group activities, I participate in condo-owners association and home owner association meetings. It is an opportunity to be heard about issues and discuss priorities on things that the boards care about (like painting, roof repair, common property maintenance, etc.). I am able to help the board understand the pain the home/condo-owners care about and help them effectively prioritize goals.

11. Do you have formal management or leadership training? If so, please provide details of this training and an example of a time this training was directly beneficial:

My formal training in management comes in the form of a Masters Degree in Business Administration with a specific focus on Finance.

Apart from the above Management training, I have spent a lot of time reading Harvard Business Journals and reviews specifically around leadership and non-profit topics. Every 6 months, I try to pick up a topic from the Harvard Business Journal that can help add value to what I do. Here is my current reading list:

- **How 'Hybrid' Nonprofits Can Stay on Mission?**
- **The Difficult Transition from For-Profit to Nonprofit Boards.**
- **The Limits of Nonprofit Impact: A Contingency Framework for Measuring Social Performance.**
- **Searching for Better Practices in Social Investing.**
- **The Hard Work of Measuring Social Impact.**
- **The Many Faces of Nonprofit Accountability.**
- **Gender and Competition: What Companies Need to Know?**
- **How Small Wins Unleash Creativity?**
- **How Dangerous Is Common Sense to Managers?**
- **Collaborating Across Cultures: Cultural Metacognition and Affect-Based Trust in Creative Collaboration.**
- **Looking in the Mirror: Questions Every Leader Must Ask.**
- **Sharpening Your Skills: Motivation.**
- **Why Leaders Lose Their Way?**

12. Have you participated in any strategic decision-making processes? Please provide details of specific instances:

Strategic planning is required in both my work at VHA, and my leadership position with the North Texas SQL Server User Group. While I cannot go in great details about our strategic initiatives at my work place, I would like to share with you what we accomplished as a team at the NTSSUG.

The leadership team at NTSSUG was quick to recognize that the success criteria for an effective community are:

- Bring and sustain vibrancy to our SQL community.
- Grow the community through learning and networking.
- Achieve financial stability for the chapter.

These became our strategic goals.

During the 2011 PASS event, I met a well regarded regional mentor who told me that he keeps referring new chapter leaders to join the NTSSUG distribution list and see how we run things here. I take immense pride in that since, we as a team strive hard to do things correctly and our strategic goals are aligned to what we do.

Regionally, we recognized that discussion groups do not work as well as a distribution list does. This keeps our community healthy and people participate in meaningful technical and professional discussions.

Personally, I strive hard to not waver from goals that are set and always ask the question, "Is our action today aligned with our goals?". If not, the action needs to be revisited.

Using NTSSUG chapter meetings and our SQLSaturday events as the key vehicle, today we have over 1200 active SQL professionals within our user community. We have used our revenue from these events in a manner that has demonstrated success, responsibility, our commitment to the community, and made us financially strong.

I am extremely proud of this accomplishment.

13. Please describe your background/experience in dealing with organizational finances, including the size of the organization and sizes/types of budgets involved:

From an educational perspective, I have an MBA in Finance.

As I mentioned in the above question, "Achieve Financial Stability" was a key strategic goal for our chapter. When I took over the leadership role in the chapter, we had very little money left, and some folks had already put in their personal money to help keep the chapter going.

By bringing vibrancy back at the chapter level, we have achieved unprecedented success in the areas of chapter meeting attendance and financial success. We are strong enough to fund our user group meetings for many years today (5+ years). Our sponsor slots are filled for the next 3 months and the next 3 are already pencilled in.

At this point, due to the non-disclosure agreements I have signed with my current and past employers, I am not able to go into budget details of my work group.

**PART SIX - ACTIVITIES (Special Interest Groups, Committees or other activities)**

14. Please describe your past volunteer history with PASS. Specifically cover both event speaker and non-speaker volunteerism:

Speaking at Dallas Launch events for SQL 2005

Speaking at Dallas Launch events for SQL 2008

SQLSaturday 35 - Dallas (speak + volunteer)

SQLSaturday 56 – Houston (backup speaker + volunteer)

SQLSaturday 57 – BI Edition – Dallas (volunteer)

SQLSaturday 63 – Dallas (backup speaker + volunteer)

SQLSaturday 90 – OKC (speaker)

SQLRally 2011 – Orlando (Volunteer)

PASS Summit 2011 (Program Committee)

SQLRally 2012 – Dallas (Volunteer). Our application to host SQLRally is [here](#).

15. Please give an example of a project you worked on for PASS that you followed through to completion. Describe how your specific contribution has benefited the PASS organization:

1. Our first effort at SQLSaturday #35 : ~ 600 registrations , 400+ attendees

I led the NTSSUG team with its first ever SQLSaturday. This resulted in increased membership, increased networking opportunities for members, and financial stability for our chapter.

2. First to recognize a BI market for SQLSaturday: Launched a dedicated SQLSaturday #57 BI Edition – 300+ registrations , 250+ attendees – SOLD OUT IN 12 HOURS

I had the vision to have the first ever BI focused SQLSaturday. This was an effort to get the entire SQL group to embrace BI and thus provide the free BI learning day.

We also brought in BI Product Team Members from Microsoft. This helped Microsoft get some direct feedback from customers and members got their opportunity to interact and help shape future releases of SQL Server and BI.

3. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> SQLSaturday #63 : ~550 registrations , 375+ attendees

This SQLSaturday had more focus on networking. We encouraged people to introduce themselves to their neighbours in the opening session. This helped break the ice. We encouraged people to continue doing that throughout the day. This drove attendance to networking events by 3X from earlier SQLSaturday events.

4. PASS Program Committee Volunteer

As a PASS Program Committee volunteer, I helped scrub through the initial excerpts of submissions. This ultimately helped shape the sessions for SQL 2011 PASS summit.

16. Detail your participation in other volunteer organizations/boards (be specific about your contribution and in what capacity):

Give Campaign at Microsoft – 7 years - Donor of time and money  
Community Day at VHA – 2 years - Community Service at Salvation Army  
DFW Hindu Temple - 2 years – Donor of money  
Uplift Education - 2 years – Donor of money

**PART SEVEN - OTHER ACTIVITIES**

17. Detail other professional certifications:

Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist (2008)  
MCDBA (2000)

18. Detail any awards received:

Microsoft Insiders Top Gun Award - 2008

19. Detail some of your more recent published professional articles, books, etc.:

I have not been published.

**PART EIGHT - REFERENCES AND BACKGROUND CHECK**

*(Please note that a short letter of recommendation from your references is highly beneficial, and should be included in the sections below.)*

*Volunteer References - You **must** provide references from 3 PASS volunteers with whom you have worked during your volunteer tenure at PASS.*

20. PASS **volunteer** reference #1 (please provide daytime phone and email)
- Reference Name: [Andy Warren](#)
  - Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Reference Email Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Statement of Support from Reference:

[Andy Warren](#)  
<ADDRESS NOT PUBLISHED>

[August 26, 2011](#)

[Subject: Letter of Recommendation - Sri Sridharan](#)

[I am writing today to express my full support for Sri Sridharan as a candidate for the PASS Board of Directors.](#)

[I first met Sri in very early 2010. Sri had just been elected as the President of the Dallas PASS Chapter \(NTSSUG\) and was also going to be leading their first SQLSaturday \(#35, May 2010\), which was in the very early planning stages at that time. Sri reached out to me with a number of good questions related to running the event. It was a productive call and we talked several times after that as Sri led his team through building and executing their event.](#)

[That initial SQLSaturday in Dallas was so successful that following the successful completion of SQLSaturday #35 they began immediate planning for SQLSaturday #56, the "BI Edition", focused entirely on business intelligence. That was followed by planning for SQLSaturday #63 which was held in April 2011. I was able to attend #63 and it was very well run, a lot of effort put into the small things that make the event fun for attendees. One example is the afternoon gelato break, something that has become a signature of the Dallas events.](#)

[In early 2011 Sri took the lead for the Dallas group for the effort to win the competition for the host city for SQLRally 2012 \(which was subsequently awarded to Dallas\) and he will be the local chair of that effort.](#)

[I've had occasion to talk to Sri a number of times since our initial meeting. He's grown into his role as President of NTSSUG, something I saw firsthand in January 2011 when I attended one of the meetings in my capacity as a PASS Board member. The meeting was well attended and Sri led quietly and comfortably. I saw the same when I returned to Dallas for SQLSaturday #63.](#)

Sri "gets" community. He understands the good that local organizations can do and instills those values in his team of volunteers. He also understands the challenges and possibilities of serving on the PASS Board and I believe he would serve the organization and the members well.

If I could put one person on the Board today, it would be Sri. I know he has the passion, the energy, the willingness to lead, the willingness to learn, and the desire to do good that a Board member needs.

Regards,

Andy Warren

21. PASS **volunteer** reference #2 (please provide daytime phone and email)
- Reference Name: Tim Mitchell
  - Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Reference Email Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Statement of Support from Reference:

Tim Mitchell  
<ADDRESS NOT PUBLISHED>

September 14, 2011

To whom it may concern:

I wish to formally offer my recommendation for Sri Sridharan in his candidacy for the Professional Association for SQL Server board for the 2011 election.

I have known Sri for over three years, and have worked alongside him in the North Texas SQL Server User Group for two years. As a board member, Sri has always been attentive to the needs of the group, consistently bearing a kind and approachable demeanor. As the president of this group for the past two years, he has effectively led the 5-member board to achieve a level of group success never seen before. Under Sri's leadership, the group has grown significantly in numbers and professional maturity. In the past 18 months, Sri has led the charge to host three SQL Saturday events here in Dallas, as well as secure next year's SQL Rally for our city.

Sri has consistently demonstrated traits of an effective leader: he has a very strong work ethic, he is able to delegate well, and is a progressive thinker. He has demonstrated a track record of success at the local chapter level, and I firmly believe that these same characteristics would make him an excellent PASS board member.

For these reasons, I am happy to offer my recommendation for Sri's candidacy for the PASS board.

Sincerely,

Tim Mitchell

22. PASS **volunteer** reference # (please provide daytime phone and email)
- Reference Name: Erin Welker
  - Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Reference Email Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Statement of Support from Reference:

Erin Welker  
<ADDRESS NOT Published>

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I first met Sri when he became the Microsoft liaison to our local SQL Server user group, the North Texas SQL Server User Group (NTSSUG). I was then the President and Sri was responsive to our every need when it came to coordinating our meetings at the Microsoft campus.

Sri subsequently ran for and won a position on the NTSSUG board. He was always actively engaged and provided valuable input into the daily and strategic operations of our user group. When my successor, Peter DeBetta, vacated the Presidency, Sri was right there to take over the reins. Our President is elected by our board, which speaks to Sri's reputation amongst those he worked with the most, in that he won that election over his challenger.

As President of NTSSUG, Sri's leadership has been instrumental in positively changing the foundation of our user group, both locally and within the global SQL Server community. NTSSUG has held three SQL Saturdays and is now an organized non-profit organization. Though the SQL Saturdays are not primarily focused on making money, each one has been profitable and the funds provide stability to the operations of the group. We've also established an official charter and bylaws. Earlier this year, Sri spearheaded the effort to bring SQL Rally 2012 to Dallas, collaborating with both the members of NTSSUG as well as reaching out to all other chapter leaders in our region for their support.

A position on the PASS Board is an obvious next step for Sri, in my opinion. I'm sure his passion and boundless energy for the SQL Server community will result in many valuable contributions to the global SQL Server community.

Regards,

Erin Welker

NTSSUG Board member and past President  
US South Central Regional Mentor

*Public References – You should provide references from people who agree to support you publicly. These references **must** have reviewed this application and provided a written explanation of why they support your candidacy to be published with this application. (These may be the same or different people than your volunteer references above.)*

*Andy, Tim and Erin who are PASS Volunteer references above, also serve as PASS public references and hence repeated here.*

23. PASS **public** reference #1 (please provide daytime phone and email)
- Reference Name: Andy Warren
  - Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Reference Email Address: [awarren@fourdeuce.com](mailto:awarren@fourdeuce.com)
  - Statement of Support from Reference:

Andy Warren  
<ADDRESS NOT PUBLISHED>

August 26, 2011

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Regards,

Andy Warren

24. PASS **public** reference #2 (please provide daytime phone and email)

- a. Reference Name: Tim Mitchell
- b. Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
- c. Reference Email Address:tdmitch@gmail.com
- d. Statement of Support from Reference:

Tim Mitchell  
<ADDRESS NOT PUBLISHED>

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Sri has consistently demonstrated traits of an effective leader: he has a very strong work ethic, he is able to delegate well, and is a progressive thinker. He has demonstrated a track record of success at the local chapter level, and I firmly believe that these same characteristics would make him an excellent PASS board member.

For these reasons, I am happy to offer my recommendation for Sri's candidacy for the PASS board.

Sincerely,

Tim Mitchell  
Director of Finance  
North Texas SQL Server User Group – PASS Chapter

25. PASS **public** reference #3 (please provide daytime phone and email)

- a. Reference Name: Erin Welker
- b. Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
- c. Reference Email Address: erin\_welker@hotmail.com
- d. Statement of Support from Reference:

Erin Welker

<ADDRESS NOT PUBLISHED>

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Sri subsequently ran for and won a position on the NTSSUG board. He was always actively engaged and provided valuable input into the daily and strategic operations of our user group. When my successor, Peter DeBetta, vacated the Presidency, Sri was right there to take over the reins. Our President is elected by our board, which speaks to Sri's reputation amongst those he worked with the most, in that he won that election over his challenger.

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A position on the PASS Board is an obvious next step for Sri, in my opinion. I'm sure his passion and boundless energy for the SQL Server community will result in many valuable contributions to the global SQL Server community.

Regards,

Erin Welker

NTSSUG Board member and past President  
US South Central Regional Mentor

*Personal Reference – Optional*

26. Personal reference (please provide daytime phone and email)
- a. Reference Name: Bryan Smith
  - b. Reference Phone #: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - c. Reference Email Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - d. Statement of Support from Reference:

September 25, 2011

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Sri Sridharan to the PASS Board of Directors. As the Microsoft sponsor for the North Texas SQL Server User Group (NTSSUG), the Dallas-Fort Worth PASS chapter of which Sri is the President, I've had the opportunity to work with him for the last three years and observe the impact he has had on the SQL Server community.

Under Sri's leadership, the local chapter has grown and serves as a model for other chapters in this region. The NTSSUG executed the first SQL Saturday event in Texas in early 2010. The success of this event and the encouragement and support of Sri and the other members of the NTSSUG board led to subsequent events in Houston, Austin, and Oklahoma City.

Recognizing a wide-spread regional interest in Business Intelligence, Sri steered the NTSSUG to organize a first-of-its-kind Business Intelligence-focused SQL Saturday even later in 2010. This event pulled in participants from across Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, and its success has encouraged the planning of another focused event on the topic of career development for SQL Server professionals.

While the NTSSUG has been in existence for many years, the impact of the innovative work lead by Sri has earned the group new recognition within Microsoft. Our Marketing team now seeks out sponsorship opportunities for its events and our Application Platform leadership encourages the Database and Business Intelligence Technical Specialists across the region to engage the local PASS chapters to encourage similar activities.

I, my peers, and my leadership within Microsoft are looking forward to seeing the momentum Sri has directly and indirectly created within our regional SQL Server community come together at the 2010 SQL Rally. By accepting Sri to the PASS Board of Directors, I am confident he will contribute greatly to the PASS organization and the professional community it serves.

Sincerely,  
Bryan Smith

Database Technology Specialist

US South Central District

*Work Related Reference – Optional*

27. Work-related reference (please provide daytime phone and email)
- Reference Name: Robert Steinbach
  - Reference Phone #:
  - Reference Email Address: <NOT PUBLISHED>
  - Statement of Support from Reference:

Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011

Robert Steinbach  
Director, Data Management  
VHA Inc

To whom it may concern

Subject: Letter of Recommendation - Sri Sridharan

In my current role as the manager of Sri, I am writing today to express my full support for Sri Sridharan as a candidate for the PASS Board of Directors.

Sri joined VHA about 2.5 years back. In the last 2.5 years, he has been presented with numerous, challenging opportunities. He has responded well to all situations. Sri has demonstrated competence to handle a wide variety of matters and has secured senior management confidence in his abilities. Sri has a very approachable demeanour and always willing to listen and assist people. Sri manages people in his team very well and continues to demonstrate leadership and collaborative skills. He is very well respected by his team and peers. Within his team, Sri has been able to create and sustain an environment where his team members are empowered and self-motivated to attain their goals.

In short, Sri has been an excellent hire within our group, department, and company. I am fully confident that he will bring the above mentioned qualities and traits to all his endeavours.

Sincerely,

Robert Steinbach

28. Have you ever been charged with a felony? If yes, were you convicted, and (briefly) what were the circumstances?

No.

29. I agree to the time and travel commitments required for this office:

Agree

30. My employer is aware of and agrees to the time and travel commitments required for this office:

Yes

#### **PART NINE - SIGNATURE**

31. "I, Sri Sridharan, hereby certify, on this date, October 18<sup>th</sup> 2011, that all information I have provided or will provide in this document is true, and I agree to abide by all the terms and conditions listed within this document.

I agree to be considered a candidate for the position of Director-at-Large for the Professional Association for SQL Server. I understand that my email address may be made available to select PASS bloggers - screened and approved by PASS - during the campaigning period for the purpose of blogger interviews with candidates.

I am aware that the term for which I am applying begins January 1, 2012 and ends December 31, 2013. If elected, I agree to fulfil the duties and obligations of the elected position to the best of my ability." *(Please answer yes or no to all of the above):* **YES.**

