



Director Candidate for the 2023 Election

Name: Dave McCombs

Title: Rewriter

Affiliation: NHK Global News

I am running for a second term on the Board of Directors and asking for your support. My goal as a director is to help ensure continuity as we improve services at the club and implement two programs to add more new members. These two projects, the Free Press Fellowship and the Corporate Membership plan, are essential to improving the club's finances by increasing the number of members. Both have had the board's full support but need more time and attention.

A second term on the board will provide greater scope to fully develop and maintain these efforts to draw new members, apply for and win foundation/donor grants and boost corporate support for the club.

As for my professional background: I've worked as a journalist for more than 40 years, including as an editor at Bloomberg News in Tokyo 1998 to 2021. Since 2021, I've been a rewriter for the Newslines, Biz News and In Depth TV programs at NHK World. I also produce podcasts, including AI Transform with Ryo Katsuki.

It has been a pleasure and a learning experience to serve on the board. I can thank the directors and President Peter Elstrom for their patience and willingness to educate me on the director's role. It will be essential for the new board to maintain momentum on key initiatives to better serve existing members, attract new members, negotiate reductions in building maintenance fees, add functionality to the workroom and improve food and beverage operations. We must also continue to increase member engagement and satisfaction with the club – improvements that are already happening since COVID restrictions were eased.

As a board, we have strived to do things the right way. We have also sought to do the right things. But we need to do both without pitting one against the other. An over-emphasis on process and turf should never be allowed to stymie efforts or experiments essential to improving and expanding the club. If elected, I will work to sharpen the focus on doing the right things to ensure the club's financial sustainability by smoothly disposing process-for-process sake dawdling.

While increasing membership is the club's most urgent need, there are some other goals I will work toward:

1. Revamp membership categories to better reflect changes in the journalism industry. This includes narrowing the gaps in fees and in privileges between member categories. If we get this right, we can maintain the club's prestige as a venerable institution for quality journalism, while also making the club fairer and more attractive for non-journalist members, freelancers and digital creators who are reshaping the media landscape.
2. Continue to increase the prominence of press freedom as the club's most important *raison d'être*. We have a significant opportunity to draw corporate, foundation and industry support to the club by promoting its role as one of the world's most important free-press bulwarks. We have the potential to transform the club from an institution some journalists feel they need to one that virtually all journalists know they must support.
3. Reward long-time members with discounts and privileges tied to milestones. We need to do more to make sure long-time members realize how much the club appreciates them. While we are working hard to draw new members, we must also find affordable, workable ways to reward members who have continuously contributed to the club over time. At a minimum, we should offer free dinner vouchers to members that reach one-year, five year and 10-, 15- and 20-year milestones as members. Some paid events can also be made free for members at such milestone years. The club's finances are extremely tight, but we can and will find ways to add significantly to the rewards of long-term membership.