Scott Chamberlin, Ph.D., At Large

My involvement with NAGC started at Purdue University under the direction of John Feldhusen and Sidney Moon. Sharing a common passion with them for advocacy in gifted education, I completed my dissertation in affect and mathematical modeling with gifted and general population students. As an elementary teacher initially, I found that my interest gravitated towards challenging and teaching advanced students in mathematics. Several decades later, I am involved with the single greatest organization in the world in which the needs of young gifted learners are the focal point and I feel called to serve at another level, having been a chair of the STEM network, a reviewer for nearly all academic journals, and having conducted professional development in gifted education and mathematics.

Personal Statement
Fortunately, in the United States, myriad demographics of student are served in some capacity. Programs, often mandated by law, exist to serve English Language and Dual Language Immersion students, students with special needs and learning disabilities, early childhood students, and students pursuing their GED, to name a few. However, the forgotten student in the American educational system is more often than not, students of promise (Neal & Schnazenbach, 2007). This approach is patently unacceptable.

The attitude of educational stakeholders (i.e., that not adequately challenging and serving our most capable students is a sound one based on the notion that next year all students will be at the same level) is not only antiquated, but it never was a sound approach upon its inception. Gifted and talented students demand academic and intellectual challenge, or they risk perishing academically. To that end, it is incumbent upon NAGC Board of Director members to serve as a liaison between the organization (NAGC) and educational stakeholders while simultaneously serving as an advocate for the greater GT field with policy makers at the national, state, and local (school district) level. Given my leadership experience, I am highly motivated and uniquely qualified to serve in this capacity.

Please answer the following questions:
How would your knowledge, experience, abilities, and vision contribute to increasing the public’s urgency to support the needs of gifted and talented children and youth (i.e., Minds)?
My research background is in the area of affect (feelings, emotions, and dispositions) of GT learners. As one-third of the learning equation (Goldin, 2019), student affect is paramount to student success in learning. Too often educational stakeholders live under the myth that all GT students are highly motivated to learn and research disproves this myth as many GT students are disengaged in the learning process. Hence, I would invest considerable attention as an advocate for meeting GT learners’ affective needs with the ultimate goal to extend and maximize learning among our most promising students.

How would your knowledge, experience, abilities, and vision contribute to advocating for the adoption of policies that promote programs and service in which gifted and talented children and youth will thrive (i.e., Policies)?
Countless programs are mandated for virtually every demographic of learner in education. Perpetually, researchers, teachers, and parents see GT students as the last in line for services. Underserved GT students are the first to lose on services, and as Donna Ford states, “A mind is a terrible thing to erase!” GT programs often exist literally on a yearly basis, when excess funds exist in budgets. This practice speaks of the second class nature of GT learners in society and the only recourse is to lobby for legislation mandating that GT students receive similar attention and funding as peer demographic groups.

How would your knowledge, experience, abilities, and vision contribute to empowering supporters to implement effective practices for all gifted and talented children and youth in homes, schools, and communities (i.e., Practices)?
At the heart of NAGC is the word children and being able to deliver the best educational experience to them, in order to maximize learning is imperative. Given the fact that most pre-service teachers never learn about gifted education in undergraduate experiences, perhaps the single greatest influence that NAGC could deliver to promote the education of the most promising is to dramatically impact how teachers are prepared. My knowledge of how to navigate teacher education programs could positively influence such an initiative.