Rohan M. Arjun
RECIPIENT OF THE RISING STAR AWARD

Developed by the Admission Leadership Council and a sub-committee of EMA’s Board of Trustees, this award honors professionals with 10 years or less experience who have distinguished themselves and/or their schools in the field of enrollment management.

You’re officially a Rising Star! As someone who has distinguished themselves in fewer than 10 years in enrollment management, what advice would you give other newer professionals in the field?

RA: I’ve always tried to pay it forward because I remember being the young admission professional at the conference, or on the road traveling at fairs, and having colleagues who were more seasoned take me under their wings. So today, when a new admission professional reaches out to me to talk, I make time for them—and when they ask how they can thank me, I tell them to do the same when someone emails or calls them for advice in the future. In addition, it is very important to have a network of mentors and friends in the admission field, who you can reach out to, share ideas, learn from, and confide in. Seek out mentors. Find your people.

What does it feel like for your work in the field to be recognized in this way?

RA: I’m honestly humbled. I’ll never forget sitting at an EMA conference a few years back and watching them announce the winners of the Bretnall Award and the Gourley Award, and the recipients were people who were big names in the industry. I thought, this is wonderful—but what about the newer professionals? How do we acknowledge and motivate these people? Especially because, at the time, there was data from the State of the Industry Survey that showed individuals stay in the admission field for five years on average.

So, I tweeted EMA about it. Fast-forward three years, and I had the opportunity to join the ALC and contribute my ideas as they were developing this new award. To now be the recipient of the award, and to stand on that stage, made me feel seen and heard. It helped me realize how my work has an impact—and that’s important for other young admission professionals to understand. They can see that making a difference is really possible.

This past year has shown that the industry is constantly changing. What do you think you, and other enrollment professionals at the beginning of their careers, need to do now to prepare for the future?

RA: Helping your school identify and clearly articulate their value proposition is more important than ever. Gone are the days when your school’s only competition is the other private school down the street. Today, your competition includes all the ways that a family can spend upwards of $25,000 a year. That’s a new car, vacations, saving for retirement, college tuition, mortgage payments, country club memberships—all of these things are your competition. You need to articulate why a family should spend that money with you, and how the value and outcome of their investment in an education at your school will last a lifetime.

Influencers + Innovators

Rohan Arjun
Director of Enrollment & Financial Aid
Friends Select School

ROHAN ARJUN is director of enrollment and financial aid at Friends Select School (PA). Prior to his appointment at Friends Select, Rohan spent time at George School (PA) as director of admission where he is also an alum. He spent five years at St. Mark’s School (MA) holding several titles including assistant director of admission, associate director of admission, acting director of community & equity affairs, and associate director of admission & financial aid. Before St. Mark’s, he served as an admission, global service & scholarship, and multicultural affairs fellow at The Taft School (CT).

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