



Austin Arias is a speaker, facilitator, and leadership educator who helps campuses build belonging, confidence, and community – and his commitment to this work is personal.

He was once the over-involved student leader who couldn't say no. Student director of this, chair of that, always raising his hand for the next opportunity. He thought doing more meant being more. And for a while, it worked – until it didn't.

What changed everything? Mentors and peers who really saw him – and helped him reframe what leadership could be. They taught him that saying no creates space for others to say yes. That being a "work in progress" isn't something to hide. That collective action brings deeper impact than individual hustle. And that being part of organizations is just as much about discovering who you are and finding your people as it is about the work itself.

Austin brings 14+ years of experience in student affairs, leadership development, and higher education consulting – partnering with colleges and universities across the country to strengthen student leadership, guide values-driven organizational development, and build cultures where students feel seen and connected. His campus career has spanned director-level roles in student engagement, orientation, and retention. A proud brother of Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity, he also volunteers in leadership and harm reduction initiatives across the fraternity and sorority community.

He's a firm believer that every program should leave participants with a plan of action – not just inspiration. Known for his warm, energetic presence and what students consistently describe as "golden retriever energy," Austin creates spaces where people feel comfortable being real, taking risks, and growing together.

This work is how he pays it forward. Every time he steps on a campus, he's thanking the people who invested in him – by investing in you.

EDUCATION

M.S., Higher Education, Illinois State University | **B.A., Mass Communications** University of South Florida