Josh Sokol

## 1. If elected, what would be your top three priorities for your first year on the board?

My first priority would be to come up with a new voting mechanism to give the power back to the people. As recently discussed on the OWASP leaders list, I believe that many of the decisions made by the current Board conflict with the needs and desires of the majority of our leaders. Ideally, I'd like to see key topics be brought back to a full membership vote at least once a year (or possibly even more often).

My second priority would be to re-engineer the owasp.org website so that the first thing new visitors see is a social front to the organization. Instead of tracking content via wikis and over mailing lists, we should be having these discussions in forums (with e-mail integration), chatrooms, and other social platforms. The my.owasp.org site has been very effective for the leaders who have chosen to use it and I'd like to explore the effects of making this the starting place for users who are new to OWASP. The other content would still be there, but the first thing people would see is a lot of friendly faces willing to help, rather than a bunch of poorly organized content.

My third priority would be to work with our chapter leaders to create a success template for new leaders which includes how to create a leadership team, how to organize meetings, how to promote meetings, how to record and publish meeting content, and how to become a self-sustaining chapter. Starting an OWASP chapter is often a daunting task and providing new leaders and I believe that a best-practices guide for success would be a huge help.

## 2. What is your style for dealing with complex situations that may impact many people or where other decision makers hold differing viewpoints?

In my opinion, pretty much every decision for the OWASP Foundation leadership is a complex situation with different decision makers holding different viewpoints. I think that the best approach here is being open and honest with all of our leaders and members, laying out the facts, soliciting opinions, and then holding a majority vote. Ideally, I'd like to see these extremely important decisions which guide the direction of the organization be given to the membership instead of the OWASP Board. I'd like to see OWASP be more of a Direct Democracy than the Representative Democracy that it is today.

## 3. Describe your experience leading organizations. Were they non-profits or community based? Please explain both your role and the nature of your involvement.

I have been involved in non-profit organizations for a long time. Many years ago, I co-founded a non-profit organization based in Austin, TX called the Austin Indie Alliance. I assumed the official role of Treasurer for several years and grew the organization from about a half-dozen member bands to over three-dozen when I finally left the organization when my daughter was born.

In 2009, I became the Treasurer of the Capitol of Texas ISSA Chapter where I tracked the finances for the organization, participated in regular Board meetings, and was able to successfully draw in sponsors to aide in revenue for the organization.

In 2010 and 2011, I became the President of the OWASP Austin Chapter. Through the efforts of me and my leadership team, we ran our own conference, became a self-sufficient chapter, organized monthly meetings and happy hour events, and created weekly study groups. In 2012, I handed the chapter reigns over to one of the members of my leadership team and took on the role of Chair of the OWASP Global Chapter Committee where I used my experience to benefit all of our chapters. During this same time, I Co-Chaired the OWASP AppSec USA conference held last year in Austin, TX raising over $150,000 for the OWASP Foundation. I have been involved in OWASP in some form since early 2007.

**4. Describe your most successful contribution to the OWASP community (Project, Chapter, Conference, or other).**

I am very proud of my entire history (discussed in question 3) with the OWASP community, but I'd say that my most successful contribution to the OWASP community is in starting the Lonestar Application Security Conference (LASCON). Run by our OWASP Austin chapter, this event has enabled our chapter to be self-sufficient since it's inception, it has provided thousands of dollars back to the OWASP Foundation, it has provided inexpensive training and education for hundreds of security professionals, it has created an opportunity for security researchers to share their passions with the Austin security community, and it laid the foundation for us to run last year's AppSec USA conference. I would love to see a LASCON-like event in every OWASP chapter around the world.