The Student Government Association

90th Administration Mid-Year Report
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Executive Address

The Student Government Association was one of the first organizations I was interested in joining at Georgia State University. I knew exactly what I wanted to do coming into State. I wanted to make change. I wanted to change what I didn’t do in the past, what I saw my first year at State, and change my perception of what I am capable of. However, I stopped myself from joining because I thought I wasn’t fit for the job. I joined every other organization on campus except the one I truly wanted to become a part of. I finally pushed myself out of my comfort zone and joined SGA as a senator. I quickly realized the extent of the role and I was okay with that. I was okay with attending meetings, the occasional committee gathering and night outs. I was in my comfort zone. Come spring, I pushed myself out of my comfort zone once again and ran for president. Now, I’m in a position I never imagined I would be in. I was always the one behind the scenes letting someone else fulfill their dream. Today, I am living my dream which is representing each and every campus and leading a team of so many possibilities.

As Student Government officers, we have the sole responsibility to represent our student body to the best of our ability. This is not an easy job and can get frustrating at times, but it’s absolutely worth it. Knowing you tried your hardest than doing nothing at all to represent your constituents is an inspiration to others, and it can also create future leaders. You know you’re doing the right thing when you feel slightly uncomfortable—and leaving our comfort zones to help our students succeed will always be what comes first.

The Student Government Association at Georgia State University has been around for ninety consecutive years. Georgia State University has developed tremendously through those years and so has SGA. We have our first Latina president and the diversity in our senate continues to grow each continuing year, so it is necessary we continue representing our campuses fully.
So, what exactly is the legacy the 90th administration wants to leave? Do we want to be remembered as the administration who actively fought for inclusion? Who actively fought for students who are facing homelessness or food insecurities? Who actively fought for the accountability of the Financial Aid Office? Or for increasing food options at our cafes so all students can enjoy their time on campus? The choices are endless, but we cannot do this as our own individual units. We need to work hand-in-hand to come together as one and make change happen at Georgia State University. After consolidation, Georgia State University became stronger. We have increased our active leaders—our go-getters, the game changers who want to effectively and proactively do more for their school. We need to unite and use the forces and voices of our 53,000+ students to accomplish our goals. We need to proactively reach our students before a problem arises. We will constantly be seeking out events, student gatherings, and opportunities to find and listen to the voices of those we represent rather than waiting for students to come to us.

“Whenever you feel uncomfortable, instead of retreating back into your old comfort zone, pat yourself on the back and say, “I must be growing,” and continue moving forward.” — T. Harv Eker

I am here today because students saw the potential in me and voted for a positive change in the university. Our officers are here today because your campuses saw the potential in them and also saw positive change occurring on your campuses. As we begin this administration, we cannot forget the reason that we all ran. We are here for our students because of our students. We are their voice for the greater good of all of Georgia State University. A university is nothing without their students and we need to make sure we fight for and give it our all to accomplish the needs of our campuses. Now is our time to take action. Now is the time to create a state of change.

Jazmin Mejia
University-Wide President
90th Administration
#AStateOfChange
Campaign Promises and Legislation Passed

Campaign Promises

While campaigning for SGA President, I ran on the hashtag #AStateofChange and I came across three items countless of students repeatedly told me they wanted to see a difference in. Those three items being the following:

1. Financial Aid/Financial Literacy
2. Access to clubs and organizations/organization collaboration
3. Unification of the campuses

As I began my term as SGA President, I quickly realized a lot of what students want to see change require a lot more time and man power than anticipated. However, through the help of SGA and making these concerns known, we were able to help out students see these changes slowly but surely. As well as, continue initiatives from the previous administrations and beginning and completing our own (continued on page 5).

Legislation Passed

Bills

1. 90-UWB-02 to Define Roll Call Voting Procedures for Legislation

Special Orders

- 90-USO-CL-01 to Seat Members of the Bylaw Review Committee
- 90-USO-CL-02 to Seat Members of the Safety Committee
- 90-USO-FC-04 to Establish an Ad Hoc Committee for GILEE
University-Wide President – Jazmin Mejia

University-wide Initiatives

These University-Wide initiatives tie into my 3rd platform point of unifying the campuses. We are a university of diverse people with similar interests – those being having a safe place to go where they know they will be able to find the help and resources they need no matter what campus you are on.

1. *Flower Initiative*: EVP Yasmin Henry has been tirelessly working on providing free menstrual products to the Clarkston campus since the Spring of 2019 which has turned into a university-wide initiative. There have been countless meetings with Dr. Jill Lee-Barber who is the Director of the Health and Counseling department at GSU. We are very close to completing this initiative.

2. *Food diversification*: GSU is a very diverse school ranging from campus to campus and within each location. This is why we began the task of adding more dining options to our campuses. EVP Hamza Rahman (ATL) and EVP Henry have been talking to their respective dining directors. EVP Rahman has met with Dr. Lenore Musick to discuss options such as halal, kosher, vegan and vegetarian at the dining halls and in the cafes around the campuses. So far, the Clarkston and Atlanta campus has successfully added vegan options to their café and dining halls and the Dunwoody campus has successfully added Halal options to their cafeteria.

3. *Financial Aid/Financial Literacy*: I have met with multiple representatives from the financial aid office to discuss the concerns students have had over and over again with each passing administration. The financial aid office introduced and marketed a lot more
their PantherAnswer feature on their site. With the help of SGA, we were able to share this important and quick new feature on their site. I also had the amazing opportunity to give a speech at the Student Financial Success Summit where many representatives from the financial aid offices around the country attended. I spoke about the importance of their diligence and the concerns many students such as myself have encountered while navigating financial services. A couple of SGA members were able to attend the conference as student representatives. The Atlanta SGA had a meeting with a professor of philosophy who was very interested in the implications financial literacy has on college students. Through our conversation and insight, he provided a crash course and panel where professionals came and spoke to students about financial literacy and gave them tips and tricks on being financially literate.

Spring Goals

1. Create a university-wide Census and Voting initiative
2. Continue and complete the Flower Initiative
3. Prepare for SGA elections with an almost-full cabinet

Atlanta Executive Vice President – Hamza Habibur Rahman

Campus Initiatives

A. Academic Affairs: Nigel Walton

1. Finals Week Study and Chill Event

As finals can be a stressful time for students, SGA held an event in collaboration with the Testing and Counseling center to help students destress in preparation for finals. Academic Affairs Chair Nigel Walton included hot and cold teas, catering from Rosa’s pizza, and “throwback” music. While the Testing and Counseling center brought coloring books, activities and
other items to help students destress. Around 400 students showed up to this 4-hour event located in the ballroom.

2. **Development of financial health and literacy classes**

Academic Affairs has been working tirelessly to advocate for the establishment of classes to help students and young people learn about finances in order to make sure students have the resources they need to be successful. SGA officers attended the Student Success Financial Literacy conference prepared by Dr. Maltese to gain more insight on how financial aid offices around the nation are helping their students.

3. **Discussion of initiatives to tackle diversity in academic programs**

Faculty diversity is as important as student diversity. As a student body, we are incredibly diverse, yet as a faculty, our university is not. We have begun dialogue with upper administration to guide this in the right direction as faculty diversity is part of the next strategic plan at GSU.

B. Student Services: Jonathan Tshizubu

1. **Mental Health Services**

Student Services has been working with the Counseling and Testing Center to create a better support system for students facing mental health crises. This has included QPR classes for student leaders and signage placed in prominent places with Mental health assistance information on them to prevent any tragic events from occurring.
2. Food Options

Student Services has been working with Panther Dining to add Halal and Kosher Options to the meal plan. More vegetarian and vegan options have also been added to the dining halls and cafeterias around the Atlanta campus.

3. Sustainability

SGA is proud to announce that the efforts from previous administrations has come to fruition. The Panther Café located on the 3rd floor of SCW now offers reusable containers called OZZI machines! The OZZI containers were free of charge during the pilot program but are now a one-time charge of $5. They have also transitioned to paper food containers and using less Styrofoam.

C. Student Engagement: Audrey Abraham

1. Co-Sponsorship

During the Fall Semester ’19 the Student Engagement Committee was able to successfully allocate funds to facilitate 8 co-sponsorship events through different organizations.

2. Engagement

We successfully mapped out plans and events for the Spring Semester '20 and were also able to interact with different departments and organizations on campus. For example, we joined Civic Engagement in the Homecoming Day
of Service, tabled with Spotlight and New Student Orientation while provide supplies and information to our student body.

Legislation

Over 21 Campus Special Orders have been passed seating various positions.

An Ad Hoc Committee for Governmental and Community Affairs was established by 90-CSO-FC-ATL-01

An opinion resolution to remove the Henry Grady Statue was Passed by 90-CSR-ATL-01

Spring Goals

1. Increase engagement with the Fraternity and Sorority Community

2. Advocate for addition of Mental Health resources into syllabi

3. Increase access to Panther Pantry

4. Advocate for an increase in housing

Alpharetta Executive President – Cole Greenwood

Fall 2019 Executive Vice President: Chase Ritterbusch | Spring 2020 Executive Vice President: Cole Greenwood

During the fall 2019 term of the Student Government Association at the Alpharetta campus, we operated in an innovative and explorative mindset of combining the returning SGA officer's rigid ideology with the envelope-pushing enthusiasm of the new officers. The vision for the Alpharetta campus was crystal clear since the Senate began work during the summer. We pledged to serve and strive for our students to the fullest and highest of our capabilities. To ensure the prosperity of the vision for the Alpharetta campus, we enlisted the cooperation of everyone on campus from Deans to Housekeeping to support our initiatives of elevating the campus culture for students.
Campus Initiatives

1. Alcohol Awareness: This event was spearheaded by Senators Wasi Baig & Ernest Mackey. The purpose of this event was to educate the student body about the effects of alcohol. During this experience, Senators Baig and Mackey had the students playing beer pong, but instead of beer being in the cups, there were alcohol facts. The pair also collaborated with public safety to have students use the beer goggles while playing pong to see how alcohol psychologically affects an individual's motor functions. 76 students attended this event.

2. Voter Registration Escape Room:
This event was spearheaded by Speaker Asya McDonald and Communications Director Allison Guerrero. The pair came up with the idea of the Constitution themed escape room to educate the student body about Constitution Day and voter registration. Speaker McDonald contacted Fulton County registrars Pamela Coleman and Evelyn Goodloe to collaborate to have officials sign the students up to register to vote. Sixty-nine students attend the Escape Room, and eighteen students registered to vote. Speaker McDonald and Communications Director Guerrero were also featured in the Fulton County's newsletter since the news crew was unavailable to film the Escape Room.

3. Halloween Campus Decorations: This initiative was to boost school spirit and get our student body pumped about the Halloween party that would be hosted later in the month. Speaker McDonald and Communications Director Guerrero recruited the student body and other SGA members to decorate the campus in Halloween decorations.
3a. *Halloween Campus Trick or Treating:* This event was spearheaded by Speaker McDonald and Communications Director Guerrero. The purpose of this event was to inform first-year students about services on campus there to serve them. During the trick or treating tours, there were twelve locations on campus that we took the students too. Some of the locations on tour included the Dean's Suite, Access & Accommodations, the Bookstore, and Academic Advising.

3b. *Halloween Campus Party:* This event was spearheaded by Speaker McDonald and Communications Director Guerrero. The purpose of this event for students, faculty, and staff to mix and mingle. We had over a hundred people attend the Halloween party and dress in costume. Students praised all the Halloween events and initiatives because nothing like those events have ever been done on campus before.

4. *Letters to Veterans:* This event was spearheaded by EVP Ritterbusch for students to write letters to veterans. This event was a collaboration with Veteran services on campus. The attendance at this event is unknown.

5. *“Stress Less” Mental Health Space:* This initiative was spearheaded by Speaker McDonald and the hopes of establishing a mental health space on campus for students. Speaker McDonald collaborated with The Deans of Students, Access & Accommodations, and Counseling Center. The 'Stress Less' Mental Health space opened up the students during finals week.
Legislation

A Special Order was passed to amend the University Wide voting Senate allocation.

Spring Goals

1. Speaker McDonald is hosting an event called The Taste for students as a way to get adequate food options on campus.

2. Expand the “Stress Less” Mental Health Space on campus.

3. Advocate for a therapist on the Alpharetta campus since the current mental health specialist went on maternity leave.

4. Fill the vacant positions that we currently have in our campus senate. Speaker McDonald has filled almost all the positions, except for two Senator positions. She is working diligently to fill those two remaining positions to ensure Alpharetta will have a full Senate for the next administration.

5. Senator Margaux Abella is planning to host an event called Panther Talk among the perimeter campuses.

Clarkston Executive Vice President – Kyle Kath

Fall 2019 Executive Vice President: Yasmin Henry | Spring 2020 Executive Vice President: Kyle Kath

Campus Initiatives

1. The Pool: Through hard work and persistence, we were able to get the pool to reopen in the fall 2019 semester. Senator Hassan and P.A.C. President Ford led the charge to ensure this vital space of the recreational center on the Clarkston campus remained a valued and usable asset to our students. Pool hours increased. The pool is now open Monday – Thursday for a total of 14 hours a week.
2. **The Flower Initiative**: The flower initiative aims to provide feminine hygiene products to our student body across all campuses. EVP Henry and Senator Hassan collaborated with other student leaders since Spring 2019 to make sure this project sprung to life. The aim is to have feminine hygiene products available in at least one bathroom of every building on all of the campuses. The implementation of this project is imminent.

3. **Diversifying Café Options**: EVP Henry made sure to help source and implement new foods like the impossible burger here on the Clarkston campus. These foods have seen a great response from our student body. A continuous dialogue with our cafeteria personnel will hopefully lead to more variety.

**Events and Legislation**

SGA events have centered on student feedback and campus engagement:

- At our October Coffee Corner, we saw upwards of 60 students fill out forms about what they would like to see from their SGA.

**CLK-CB-01**: Legislation was introduced to seat Kyle Kath as the new Speaker of the Senate for Clarkston.

**Decatur Executive Vice President – Hadeija Manais**

**Campus Initiatives**

1. **Focus Groups**: The Decatur campus is working on a couple of initiatives regarding the success of their students. We have been focusing on other ways to interact with our students.
2. **State Table Talk:** During the summer of 2019, we decided a way to stay connected with our students and to gather their opinions. We decided that we would host a State Table Talk every month with different members hosting them. EVP Manais hosted the first STT. During this STT, we introduced ourselves and informed students of the programs we were hosting throughout the year. Speaker Reid hosted a STT with counseling services about consent.

3. **Surveys:** During the summer of 2019, we wanted to assure that we were meeting the needs of our students. We provided a survey to students to see some of the changes that they wanted on campus. We contacted the correct departments and expressed to them the concerns of the students. Speaker Reid spear-headed the initiative to offer the campuses with better food options. She set up a meeting with food services for all of the campus.

**Dunwoody Executive President – Michelle Martinez**

The Dunwoody campus focused on multiple initiatives. Although there were very few members, Dunwoody’s Student Government Association accomplished some initiatives. With a bigger team in the Spring, it will be easy to come back and pick up from where we left off.

**Campus Initiatives**

1. **Pothole Initiative:** The parking lots at the Dunwoody campus have potholes and have been there for a while now (about 3 years). After following up with Mr. Brian to see what will be done about the potholes, they were filled in temporarily but were exposed again after a heavy rain. Thanks to President Mejia as well, the initiative was given attention to higher administration and taken care of right away. The parking lot at the Dunwoody campus should be completely repaved by the summer or fall semester of 2020.
2. **Pre-Requisite Initiative:** There was a disproportionate class registration between the Atlanta campus and the other 5 campuses. Some classes on the Perimeter campuses have a higher prerequisite class(es) to register for another class. Specifically, for students attending Perimeter campuses that would like to register for Principles of Chemistry I, the registration system requires a Pre-Calculus course or any higher-level mathematics course as a pre-requisite while for the Atlanta campus students, the registration system requires College Algebra as a pre-requisite. This was resolved, and students should see this change into effect by Fall 2020.

3. **Halal Food Initiative:** We are still working on bringing a greater variety of food options in the cafeteria. This semester halal food successfully became an option on the cafeteria menu.

**Events and Legislation**

There were many successful events that could not have been done without our wonderful Student Life and PAC team such as Happy Hour where we served mocktail drinks and had a drunk driving simulator on campus and Good Morning GSU where we served Chick-Fil-A breakfast to students. Dunwoody’s SGA also actively helped in the Blue Bash Resource Fair to promote SGA to students. We also helped with other traditional events like Homecoming, Military Appreciation, Constitution Day & Trivia, and PantherFest. We had about 60-100 students come out to each of these events.
Newton Executive Vice President – Cassie Turner

Campus Initiatives

1. **Comment Cards**: The Student Services Committee is working with the Tutoring Center (LTC) on the Newton campus to implement comment cards. This would further see how they can help the students.

2. **ACE Center awareness**: The Student Services committee is working with Access and Accommodations Center (ACE) to have the elevator in the 2N building fixed so that students can have access to the facility as well.

3. **Census Awareness**: The Government and Community Affairs committee worked with Congressman Johnson’s office to make students aware of the upcoming census and how to get involved. Around 75 students showed up to this event which is great considering the size of the Newton campus!

Legislation

Seating of Speaker Pro Tempore Bill

Spring Goals

1. Recruit for the 91st Administration
2. ACE Awareness
3. Have coffee corners
4. Have the elevator repaired