

SGPS Speaker Candidate Bios

Harshavardhan Thyagarajan

I'm a PhD candidate in the department of biological sciences. I work on problems of genetic variance in the field of Evolutionary Biology and have an outsider's interest in the history of production and primitive accumulation. I did my undergraduate and graduate education in the field of Biology, writing a thesis on speciation patterns in the context of sexual conflict. I hold no experience as a potential Speaker, but have a reasonable level of familiarity with the Robert's rules of order from a teenage obsession with Model United Nations attendance. I currently hold a role in the Biology DSC as an International student rep, and have previous experience in student bodies from my undergraduate years.

Sydney Prince

My name is Sydney Prince I am a second year Juris Doctorate candidate at Queen's Law. I graduated from the University of Guelph in April 2018 receiving a Honours Bachelors of Commerce, specializing in Hospitality and Tourism. At Guelph I was involved in many levels of student government. I was a part of the executive committee for the College of Business and Economics as the Director of Events, was a Student Senator and on Student Council for my program. Through those roles, I took part in various executive meetings and board meetings where Robert's rules of operation were in effect, to ensure order was maintained and everyone had the chance to voice their opinion. At Queen's law I also strive to be involved, both on campus as well as in the community. I am one of the incoming Student Senior Editors for the Canadian Labour and Employment Law Journal, an Executive Member of Queen's Venture Law Society, and just completed my position as a Student Caseworker at Queen's Business Law Clinic. I also am a Teaching Assistant to a Undergraduate law course at Smith School of Business, where I am able to assist others learn about an area of law I am passionate about. I would greatly enjoy being even further involved at the University, specifically with the Graduate and Professional programs, and believe I would be a good fit as Speaker for the SPGS.

Mary Rita Holland

I am a third year doctoral student at Queen's School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, working with Dr. Elaine Power. My research interests are health policy and income security in Canada. Along with my academic work, I have considerable experience as an elected representative and chair of various committees and organizations. As I approach my final year of graduate studies at Queen's, I would like to explore governance within the university sector and am therefore applying for the position of Speaker with the Society of Graduate and Professional Students.

I have been the municipal representative for District 7, Kingscourt-Rideau, in the City of Kingston since 2014. As a City Councillor, I am required to adhere to procedural by-laws for Council and committee meetings and, when applicable, Bourinot's Rules of Order which are similar to

Robert's Rules of Order. I have served as Chair and Vice-Chair for a number of municipal committees, including Administrative Policies Committee and the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee. I have also served as Deputy Mayor for a period of 4 months which required me to chair Council meetings when the Mayor was away or involved in debate. Most recently, as co-chair of the Mayor's Task Force on Housing, I facilitated bi-weekly meetings to produce recommendations for improving the vacancy rate in Kingston. The task force consisted of stakeholders from a wide range of organizations and interests – private, public, and non-profit sectors – with divergent views on how to address Kingston's housing problems. I used my governance experience to ensure the task force collaborated effectively over the course of our mandate, which culminated with a final report to Council. As the President of Ontario's New Democrats, I have worked closely with labour and political organizers to increase membership and engagement across the province over the past 5 years. My role also requires me to chair monthly administrative and executive committee meetings and quarterly council meetings. The ONDP provincial council consists of delegates representing 127 riding associations across the province. As such, council meetings usually consist of approximately 300-400 members who must approve the business of the organization through consent or resolutions. Robert's Rules of Order are used at all committee and council meetings of the ONDP. I am therefore fluent in Robert's Rules and have considerable experience using the rules to ensure respectful debate and efficient use of meeting time. It would be a pleasure to serve the SGPS, an organization that I have been a part of through the course of three graduate degree programs. Thank you very much for your consideration.