



Dear Council,

I am honoured to present my first report to you as SGPS President. Over the past four years, I've had the privilege of working alongside the SGPS Council, listening to and advocating for our students' concerns and ideas at Senate as the Graduate Student Senator. For those I haven't yet met, my name is Emils, I'm a second-year PhD student at the Centre for Neuroscience Studies.

Joining me on the executive team this year are several passionate and experienced student leaders. Maya Kawale continues her role as VP Professional, while Katie Zutautas has transitioned to VP Finance after serving as deputy speaker. We welcome Zaid Kasim as VP Graduate, who brings extensive experience from his tenure as former AMS president, and Simran Sharma, a dedicated grassroots student leader, as VP Community.

As we embark on this term, I am eager to share my vision for the upcoming year and highlight recent progress.

This year, we will persist in advocating for the needs of graduate and professional students, particularly addressing the cost-of-living crisis that has been intensified by stagnant stipends, rising inflation, and increasing rents. This situation forces many students to juggle multiple jobs, which detracts from their focus on studies and research. Beyond financial challenges, food insecurity remains a significant issue affecting many of our members. We are dedicated to continuing our support in this area and will seek further assistance from the university to ensure that our most vulnerable members can meet their basic needs while striving for academic and professional excellence.

Despite these challenges, the future holds promise. The recent federal budget's increase in tri-council funding, which will lead to larger graduate awards, is a significant step forward. Although it will not benefit the majority of students, it will positively affect graduate students at Queen's. We will continue our advocacy efforts, ensuring that through the services we provide and the community we cultivate, we are paving the way for a brighter future for all graduate and professional students.

Turning our attention externally, we are focusing on collaboration with the AMS, the Rector, and other key stakeholders within the university. We are making progress in finalizing the JDUC (John Deutsch University Centre) agreement and remain hopeful that it will be ready for student use by the fall semester. I also had the opportunity to underline SGPS member needs at the May Board of Trustees open session, where I shared many of the points discussed in this report.

In conclusion, I am immensely proud of the contributions we collectively make to our community. Although the executive team is only one part of SGPS, it is through our combined efforts with our officers, commissioners, staff, and you, the council, that we accomplish remarkable work benefiting all our members. Let's continue this excellent work together!

Warmly,  
Emils Matiss  
President



Hello SGPS Council,

My name is Zaid Kasim (he/him), I am entering my 3<sup>rd</sup> year as a Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, and I have the privilege of serving as the SGPS Vice-President (Graduate) 2024/2025. Within my first few weeks, I have been busy transitioning into my new role, completing required training, building working relationships, and getting a head start on some of the projects I hope to focus on over the summer months.

To remind everyone, I wish for the emphasis of my tenure as VPG to remain focused on alleviating the rising cost of living in Kingston via food insecurity initiatives, affordable housing advocacy, and improvements to graduate student stipends & increasing the total amount of available graduate awards offered by Queen's.

### **Food Insecurity**

In an exciting collaboration aimed at supporting graduate students, the SGPS and GCS are sponsoring Health Promotion's Fresh Food Box program. Health Promotion initiated the Fresh Food Box program in 2019, providing all the necessary ingredients to create a fresh and simple recipe for 4-6 servings. This initiative, tailored for graduate students, will feature three Fresh Food Box sessions in May, June, and July. Additionally, Health Promotion will continue to offer Fresh Food Boxes for the SGPS during the fall and winter, with dates to be announced at the end of summer. Keep an eye out for those dates! I am working with Erin Burns (Director of Faith & Spiritual Life) on a "Mason Jar Meal Program" to be launched within the next handful of weeks. The idea is like that of the Fresh Food Box program, the distribution of pre-made & nutritious meals targeted at graduate students. We are still confirming the # of meals to be distributed and when, but I'm hopeful it will be a significant enough number to provide some relief to our community over the summer.

Lastly, I will be sitting on the Food Insecurity Working Group hosted by Queen's Division of Student Affairs to continue advocating for our membership and propose further projects to increase the total allocation of support available. Stay tuned!

### **Community Housing Supports & Resources**

To start off this section, I'd like to bring forward the Community Housing Fair Access Policy changes for those of you who are unfamiliar:

Rationale (Note: not my rationale, THEIR rationale and general wording...):

- Queen's has approximately 4,000 graduate students and 1,800 professional/second-degree students.

- The university owns 393 rental units at An Clachan (AC) and John Orr Tower (JOT), housing around 7% of the graduate student population.
- Limited supply of off-campus university-owned housing.
- Low tenant turnover and “non-equitable practices” reduce available units each year.
- Long tenancies result in less access for new students.
- Rents are currently 50% below market rates, limiting the university’s ability to make improvements.

The Changes:

- *Revised Allocation Process: Introduction of a lottery system for vacant units.*
- *Improved Access: Easier lease termination, elimination of lease assignments, and increased turnover through renewal limits.*
- *Eligibility Changes: Requirements for student status and full-time enrollment, limited access for Post-Doctoral Fellows.*
- *Maximizing Occupancy: Ensuring the number of tenants matches the number of bedrooms.*
- *Rents to increase above provincial guidelines due to rising operational and capital costs.*
- *Rent increases effective September 2024, with notice given in December 2023.*

In the coming years:

- Redevelopment of An Clachan is in early planning stages.
- Potential to quadruple the number of units, accommodating 900+ additional graduate students.

The SGPS is concerned for those students who will be losing their units and require emergency housing for September. Consequently, we will be putting together some emergency resources together for those students as they are our #1 priority during the lease turnovers. More information to be coming out in the coming months.

### **FAS/FEAS Graduate Councils & Faculty Boards**

Nothing too major to report – mostly graduate course approvals and deletions. I gave a report at both Graduate Councils focused on food insecurity. There has been lots of chatter on both councils regarding the recent announcement from the Canadian federal government regarding funding increases to tri-agency awards for graduate students. Very exciting news, but there is very little information on how the funding allocation & distribution will work. Ideally more information is made available before the September Council meeting so I can update everyone there.

### **Marketing & Communications**

I am working with Andria, SGPS Executive Director, on marketing & communications for the SGPS moving forward – thought it was worth noting since we’ll have a student touch on some of our correspondences moving forward! I’m also developing a marketing & communications training program for our transient staff to better understand how to make effective posts, increase post visibility, and overall increase engagement with our events & services.

I would also like to applaud the previous SGPS Executive for their leadership and excellent transition – the new Executive is extremely thankful!

For any inquiries regarding the contents of this report, please contact me via email at [vp.graduate@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.graduate@sgps.ca), and I will aim to respond to you within 2 business days.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Zaid Kasim', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Zaid Kasim (he/him)

Vice-President (Graduate)

Society of Graduate & Professional Students



## **Introduction**

Good evening everyone! I am very excited for this upcoming year and to begin my second term as the Vice President Professional. For those of you that are new to council and that I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet, my name is Maya, I am going into my final year of law school, and I am currently working at a corporate law firm in Toronto for the summer.

I am excited to extend a warm welcome to all the fresh faces joining us this year and express my gratitude to the SGPS community for their trust in me to continue in this role. As your representative, I eagerly anticipate championing the professional student community at Queen's University and being an advocate for our members. In this report I have highlighted some current initiatives and my plans for the upcoming year.

## **Initiatives**

### **Commissioner Hiring**

The SGPS hired our new Social Commissioner, congratulations to Noah Mirembe Gabigogo and a new Graduate Student Advisor, congratulations to Graham McVeety. I sat on the hiring committees for both of these positions and aided in conducting the interviews for all of the amazing candidates for these roles alongside other members of the executive team. Noah and Graham are both excellent and we look forward to welcoming them to the SGPS team!

### **SGPS Handbook**

I am building on the SGPS Handbook that I created last year. This Handbook will be for future Executive teams so that there is a centralized source of information regarding all things SGPS and the roles and responsibilities of the Executive team. This will also aid in addressing queries, thereby reducing confusion during transition periods, and lessening the volume of questions directed to Andria during busy times.

The Handbook will hopefully aid in the transition from Executive team to the next Executive team year to year. I found that through creating this Handbook I gained a better understanding of what my fellow Executive members are responsible for which improved my understanding of the SGPS as an organization. I hope that this document will help the other Executive teams to come so that the transition period can be smoother with a reduction in information being lost on a year-to-year basis.

### **Med Law Games Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

One of the big events hosted by the Vice-President Professional is to oversee and facilitate the planning of the Med Law Games. I am working to create a MOU so that future Vice-President Professionals do not have a chaotic time figuring out how to plan this event from scratch on a year-to-year basis.

I aspire to have the SGPS, Aesculapian Society, Law Students Society, and the Athletics and Recreation Centre (ARC) all sign on to this document to aid in the planning of the Med Law Games. This will aid in providing a general guideline agreed upon by all stakeholders so that this event can be executed in a simpler way.

## **Planning for the Upcoming Year**

During the summer, the SGPS team will be strategizing events and initiatives for the upcoming year and gearing up for the arrival of new and returning SGPS members on campus.

In this report, I aim to outline some broader objectives I hope to achieve during my second term as the Vice President Professional.

### **Infrastructure**

I aim to enhance the infrastructure for transitioning Executive Teams through the creation of the Handbook and other relevant resources. My goal is to make the transition period seamless, with well-defined processes for document transfer and ensuring that there is no loss of information on a year-to-year basis.

### **Fostering Community**

Given the ramifications of the pandemic on the Queen's community, I aim to restore our sense of community and rebuild our long-standing traditions. I want to encourage greater participation and turnout for legacy events. I look forward to seeing the SGPS community connect and engage in these activities this term. I hope to see many familiar and new faces and have the opportunity to get to know more of you.

### **Deepening Communication**

In the coming year, I hope to foster more communication between students and the Executive team. We love hearing from students and, to effectively advocate for the SGPS community. We need input from all of you. Understanding the diverse and complex issues facing the community, including those impacting minority groups, is essential. Please do not hesitate to share your ideas or concerns with us. We will do our best to address them to ensure everyone has the best possible experience at Queen's!

### **Conclusion**

I am excited to engage with each of you throughout the year and look forward to connecting! Your feedback is invaluable and always welcomed so please feel free to reach out to me with any ideas or concerns.

You can reach me at [vp.professional@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.professional@sgps.ca).

Sincerely,

Maya Kawale  
Vice-President Professional, SGPS



Hello everyone!

I'm Simran (she/her), and I'm very excited to be elected as the Vice President Community at SGPS for this upcoming year! I'm a first year PhD student in the department of Global Development Studies, researching on water rights and water knowledges in South Asia. I look forward to working with the graduate student community and advocating for our diverse membership. And also looking forward to getting to know our council this year.

### **Hiring**

SGPS had a lot of interest and competent applications for the position of social commissioner this year. Out of all the applications submitted, Maya (VP Professional), Tony (VP Community 2022-23), and myself shortlisted five candidates for interviews. The three of us interviewed the candidates and unanimously reached a decision that Noah Mirembe Gabigogo – a PhD candidate in the department of Cultural Studies – will be the new social commissioner. They officially started from May 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.

### **Liaising with Commissioners**

As VP community, I'll be taking a more hands-on approach with the commissioners this year. While they have their own independent portfolios, it would be greatly generative to foster better communication with the commissioners and the executive members. I plan on having a monthly 1:1 check-in with each of our commissioners as well as a monthly group call where we can share experiences and challenges and potentially collaborate on events and advocacy efforts. All the commissioners are required to submit plans for an event they want to organize this summer to Andria by the end of this month.

### **International Students Working Group**

I was reached out to by the newly formed International Students Working group both as an international student and SGPS VP community. The working group is keen to build a relationship with the SGPS so they're able to collaborate with us and extend their efforts to the larger international graduate and professional students membership. The international commissioner and myself – with the advice of the exec members – will be coming up with a plan on how SGPS can support this student body.

### **Committees and meetings**

- Provost's Advisory Committee on the Promotion of the Arts  
The previous Vice President Community represented SGPS members on the Provost's Advisory Committee on the Promotion of the Arts. I will continue representing SGPS members on the Provost's Advisory Committee on the Promotion of the Arts. The Committee will meet on May 30, 2023.
- Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario  
I will not be able to attend their 2-day executive committee meeting in Toronto this month because of the last minute notice, however, I'm looking forward to working with them and fostering a stronger relationship between SGPS and CFS. Their campaigns are very aligned with my goals as VPC as they lobby and advocate for equity, divestment, post-secondary education crisis, mental health awareness, trans healthcare, campaigns against homophobia and queerphobia, amongst others.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact me at [vp.community@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.community@sgps.ca). I work remotely, and will aim to respond within 2 business days.

Sincerely,  
Simran  
VP Community, SGPS





Hello SGPS Council,

My name is Katie Zutautas (she/her), I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD student in the Department of Biomedical and Molecular Sciences and have been the Deputy Speaker for the SGPS for the previous two years. I am very excited for this upcoming year to transition into my new role within the SGPS as the VP Finance and Services.

In this report I look to highlight what I will be working on over the summer:

- 1) **2024/2025 Budget:** I am currently working with the new executive and our executive director to set the budget for the 2024/2025 year. This budget will be presented at our next Council meeting in August, for a first reading.
- 2) **Financial Assistance Program:** I am working on restructuring the Financial Assistance Program to ensure it is meeting students' needs while maximizing use of the available funds. Currently, this program is closed while I make said adjustments, but we look to reopen the application portal in June/July. We will alert students when it opens through our email newsletter as well as other social media posts.
- 3) **Financial Assistance Committee:** To assist me in reviewing applications for our Financial Assistance Program, I am looking for up to 5 graduate or professional students to join the Financial Assistance Committee. As part of the committee, you will review applications on a bi-weekly basis throughout the year, contributing to the administration of financial subsidies. If you're looking for more information or to apply, position advertisements have been released in our newsletter and social media platforms but also feel free to reach out to me at [vp.finance@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.finance@sgps.ca) with any inquiries or interest! Application deadline is Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup>.
- 4) **Food Insecurity Relief Programs:** The SGPS is committed to providing students access to food resources given the financial constraints of many members. As an executive team, we look to keep this topic at the forefront of discussions with the University administration to ensure that access to these much needed resources persist over the summer as well as through the next academic year. As the VP Finance I look to continue to find financially sustainable ways to support the various food insecurity initiatives that have been started and additional ones that may arise through the coming year.

I regretfully will be absent from this May Council due to a conflict with my holiday schedule, but I look forward to connecting at our August Council meeting. In the interim, please do not hesitate to reach out at [vp.finance@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.finance@sgps.ca) if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,

Katie Zutautas  
Vice President Finance and Services  
Society of Graduate & Professional Students



Hello Council,

I am very excited for this upcoming year and to begin my first semester as the Social Commissioner.

To introduce myself, my name is Noah, a first year PhD student in the Cultural Studies department where I am working with Prof. Marc Epprecht on a project on gender history in East Africa. I look forward to strengthening the graduate and professional student community at Queen's University and collaborating with other commissioners.

I would like to discuss my plans for the upcoming year, and I look forward to getting to know many of you soon.

#### Current Initiatives

##### i. Commissioner onboarding

This is the first month of the role, so I am currently onboarding myself to the role in the following ways:

- I have completed a couple of onboarding meetings with the outgoing social commissioner, Gabby, and current commissioners Maya and Simran who provided helpful insights for priorities this summer.
- I have access to a detailed Transition Manual for the role which provides detailed guidance on the role, the orientation schedule and budget for the last financial year which will all be helpful for planning in the current academic year.
- I am reviewing the work of my predecessor.

##### ii. Planning for the Upcoming Year

Over the summer, the SGPS team will be planning for events and initiatives for the year to come and will be getting prepared for the new and returning SGPS members to arrive on campus.

##### iii. Deepening Communication

During this upcoming year I would like to engage in more communication with students and the Executive team so I will be meeting and building connections within SGPS with the new executive team and commissioners. I will also be working on expanding and strengthening connections outside SGPS with student groups and other student bodies.

#### Conclusion

I look forward to connecting with all of you this year! I am always open to hearing student feedback, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out at [social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca)

Noah Mirembe Gabigogo (he/they)  
SGPS Social Commissioner  
Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
[social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca)



Hi everyone,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the warm weather! For those who don't know me, my name is Kana, and I am a master's student in Translational Medicine, also serving as the Graduate Student Trustee. On May 10th and 11th, I participated in the Board of Trustees meetings. As a reminder of the confidential nature of my role and my duties to the University, I cannot disclose specifics discussed in the closed sessions. However, I will provide a summary of the contents from the open session. If you are interested in learning more about the Board and its responsibilities, please visit [this link](#).

During the open session, each committee provided updates and motions. As a member of the University Culture Committee, we addressed matters concerning the quality of workplace culture, university culture, and risk management. In the context of student engagement and well-being, I continued to highlight prominent issues affecting graduate students, including the high cost of living, which is intertwined with challenges such as food insecurity, housing insecurity, and threats to mental and physical well-being.

Though not a member, I also observed the Finance, Assets, and Strategic Infrastructure (FASI) Committee, where several motions were passed. This included the approval of the final operating budget, AMS and SGPS ancillary fees, the residence society fee, property and liability insurance fees, course-related fees, and tuition fees for 2024-25. The Provost, in his presentation on the budget, explained that the total operating budget for 2024-25 is \$685.4 million. With increasing government grants (\$9 million) and investment income (\$10 million), revenue is forecasted to rise by \$19 million. Given the current financial state of the university and the significant deficit in the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS), the university has issued a Deficit Mitigation Fund (DMF) charge, which includes a 4% contribution from other faculty revenues, 1.5% cut in base funding for shared services, and transfers to the capital fund and university funds which will be allocated to FAS for 2024-25.

The discussion around the operating budget continues to underscore the need for mindful financial decisions that consider all stakeholders. As we navigate through these allocations and cuts, it is crucial to balance fiscal responsibilities with the university's mission to support student success. I will continue to advocate for graduate students, ensuring their concerns and needs are addressed. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [kana.ogawa@queensu.ca](mailto:kana.ogawa@queensu.ca)

Sincerely,

**Kana Ogawa (she/her/hers)**  
Graduate Student Trustee



Hello Council,

Hope this report finds everybody well! Here is an update for the past month.

### **Meeting Re-organization**

I have concluded my scheduled meetings with various organizations for the spring term and I am working to re-schedule them as the summer term starts. The main organizations I have been meeting with include several committees at the QUIC, the Ban Righ Centre as well as VP-Global Engagement. If connections with other organizations can potentially benefit the international commissioner's portfolio please feel free to let me know.

### **Resume and CV workshop for international students**

Sangeetha, our equity and diversity commissioner, and I are planning another career session in June and we are going over details about promoting the event and the content. If council has suggestions on international students' needs on career guidance please feel free to let either of us know.

### **International Commissioner Guide**

I am putting together a guide for the role of international commissioner to make the role more structured. The guide would include resources available on/off-campus, potential year-round events, etc.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns at [international@sgps.ca](mailto:international@sgps.ca).

Sincerely,  
Vina Li  
SGPS International Student Affairs Commissioner



Dear Council,

I hope you are all doing well! This report offers some information on fitness and wellness opportunities over the summer, recaps a recent social media initiative, and provides an update on the ARC space issue.

### 1. Fitness Classes at the ARC all summer long!

- The Athletics & Recreation Centre is offering group fitness classes all summer long. Spread the word to SGPS members that these classes are happening!
- The group fitness schedule running from May 6<sup>th</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> can be found here: <https://rec.gogaelsgo.com/documents/2024/4/19/S24 - Weekly Reoccurring Schedule 1 .pdf>
- You can purchase a group fitness pass for \$85 for the whole semester to attend all of the group fitness classes for the semester. You can also pay a \$5 drop-in fee. Participants can sign up for classes 48 hours in advance of the class offering.

### 2. SGPS Group Fitness Pass Giveaway

- On May 9<sup>th</sup>, the SGPS Instagram account launched a giveaway of a free group fitness pass for the summer semester. The initiative intends to inform members about the group fitness offerings at the ARC and encourage members to pursue these activities over the summer months. The giveaway closes May 17<sup>th</sup>.

### 3. Wellness Events for Graduate Students (accessed through [the Student Wellness Services website](#))

Spread the word about the following wellness events tailored for graduate and professional students:

- **Wednesday, May 22, 4:30pm-6pm: [Finding Calm in the Chaos: Strategies for Managing Grad Student Stressors](#)**  
This session equips graduate students with strategies to thrive under the pressures and demands of student life. You will learn practical effective techniques and mechanisms to cope with stress in the moment and to face challenges that arise in the future. *(on Zoom)*
- **Wednesday, May 29, 4:30pm-6pm: [Spice Up Your Social Circle: Cooking & Connections for Grad Students](#)**  
Whether you are a seasoned chef or beginner cook, this session offers everyone a chance to connect and learn new skills. Join us for an immersive hands-on culinary experience that also includes additional activities to get to genuinely get-to-know other graduate students at Queen's. *(in-person)*
- **June 3-July 22, Mondays @ 2pm-3:30pm: [Grad Students Are People Too](#)**  
This 7-week professionally facilitated group is EXCLUSIVELY for Queen's graduate students. Grad students have a unique set of circumstances and challenges that they juggle. If you are one of them, you deserve the support this confidential group of like-minded students can offer you. *(in-person)*

### 4. Representing members in the ARC space issue

- The results of the SGPS fitness programming survey have been shared with the Athletics & Recreation leadership team. Equipped with this data on preferred times and types of classes, we are able to effectively continue discussions on how to implement SGPS-exclusive fitness opportunities at the ARC with the A&R team.

Please don't hesitate to contact [athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca) if you have any questions, feedback, or ideas for fitness and wellness related events.

Sincerely,

Meghan Mendelin (she/her)  
SGPS Athletics & Wellness Commissioner  
Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
[athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca)



Hello Council,

Happy May, and I hope you are doing well! Here is what I have worked on for the past few weeks.

**Soft Infrastructure Network**

I am attempting to restart Soft Infrastructure Network – which has been paused since before the 2022/2023 school year. The Soft Infrastructure Network is an equity working group, and a safe space, where representatives from different departments can share equity, and diversity initiatives, and concerns. I am in the process of emailing representatives from the different programs to see who would be interested – I am hoping to start meetings in June.

If you are interested (or know someone who would be), please fill out this form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/mh7B5RZd6y>

**Summer Event Development**

I am working on some ideas for events in the summer, to help with SGPS community building, as well as to help support equity-deserving graduate, and professional studies students. Once details have been confirmed, I will share!

**Committee Commitment**

I am updating my list of committee meetings for the upcoming year, so if there is a committee that would benefit from having an SGPS Equity position, please let me know, and I will be happy to join.

Please feel free to reach out to me at [equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca) with any questions, concerns, or to chat!

Sangeetha Saravanan (she/her)  
Equity & Diversity Commissioner

## REPORT TO THE SGPS COUNCIL

Hello Councillors,

It is a pleasure to introduce myself and join you on the SGPS Council. My name is Niki Boytchuk-Hale, and I have been elected by the student body to be a strong advocate and steady facilitator for our best interests. I graduated last spring 2023 with a Bachelor of Fine Art and nearing the completion of a Bachelor of Education. This fall, I will begin a research-based Master of Education in curriculum studies while I serve my term as Rector.

During my five years at Queen's, I have worked for the Alma Mater Society, Undergraduate Admissions, University Relations, and the Human Rights and Equity Office. I recently concluded my term as the Vice Chairperson of the AMS Board where I chaired the Governance Committee and was appointed to the Queen's Journal Advisory Board.

**Transition** | I am grateful for a smooth transition from my predecessor and staff in the Office of the University Secretariat and Legal Counsel. I spent the month of April attending meetings alongside the 38<sup>th</sup> Rector Crawford-Lem to learn more about the role and essential partnerships.

**Community Engagement** | Thus far, I have enjoyed connecting with the community through presenting at the AMS Awards Gala, participating in the [Agnes Reimagined](#) construction commencement photo shoot, and attending the [PhD-Community Initiative](#) capstone event held at City Hall. I will be traveling to Toronto later this month to present two awards at the [QUAA Gala](#). These celebratory moments in our community are easy to come by and I look forward to many more throughout my term. Please keep me in mind and don't hesitate to reach out with your events or programming and I will make every effort to attend when possible.

**Board of Trustees** | During my tenth day in office, I attended my first Board session. As Rector, I serve as a Trustee on almost all [committees](#), including University Culture, External Relations and Development, Finance, Assets, and Strategic Initiatives, Governance and Nominating, and Board-Senate Advisory. In addition to my involvement in closed session, I submit a quarterly report and present oral remarks during open session. The open session agenda and minutes are accessible on the [Governance Portal](#). For future in-person or virtual attendance, email the Queen's Secretariat's Office at [trustees@queensu.ca](mailto:trustees@queensu.ca).

**Convocation** | This month kicks off convocation season with ceremonies scheduled for May 26 and June 18 – 21. I look forward to experiencing graduation from a new perspective on stage, celebrating the class of 2024, and welcoming the honorary degree recipients. Particularly, I am

pleased to have President Rocchi and President Matiss attend for my official Rector Installation where they will robe me on behalf of undergraduate and graduate students.

**Platform** | I am proud of my election campaign, which was informed by meetings with over 50 student and University stakeholders. I have big plans that I know I cannot do all alone and will be hiring a student to work part-time hours to help bring this potential off the paper. I will use these goals to ground my actions moving forward while allowing for necessary flexibility. You can learn more by [reading](#) or [watching](#) my campaign platform.



- **Communication:** enhance the feedback loop between the Office of the Rector and students.

Using my experience and passion for media, I will reignite the Rector social media platforms and expand into new avenues, like a regular column in our campus newspaper. I invite you all to follow me on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#) for frequent updates.

- **Wellbeing:** improve the holistic safety of students.

Students are looking for clearer dissemination of information, a more physically and digitally accessible campus environment, and a plan for recovery after the budget cuts facing our institution. I will work with campus partners to establish solutions that are responsive to specific needs for students who hail from equity deserving backgrounds.

- **Collaboration:** amplify student advocacy goals.

Students and faculty are busy planning conferences addressing sustainable development goals, creating publications that celebrate culture, developing campaigns tackling global issues with on-campus implications, and rehearsing for charity productions that bring joy while financially supporting local non-profit organizations. I am excited to use my role to support critical work already underway.

I want to emphasize that I am here to support you, both in your respective roles and as ordinary students. The Rector is a unique [role](#) and I encourage you to become familiar with it so you can effectively guide fellow students or utilize the resources available within my office when needed.

At your service,



Niki Boytchuk-Hale

39<sup>th</sup> University Rector

T 613-533-2733

rector@queensu.ca