

2014 STUDENTS' UNION ELECTION SUPPLEMENT



The Supplement Reviewshounds

Reading week is normally a time for students to de-stress and unwind from a semester half finished. If you didn't neknominate yourself into oblivion over the break, you will be happy to know that we didn't either. We were here at the office interviewing the executive and Board of Governors candidates running in the upcoming Students' Union election. Here's what you need to know.

Every year, we craft our election supplement to better inform U of C students about the candidates who are vying to represent student interests on campus. We invited the candidates up to our cozy nest of an office to sit in front of a panel of 12 *Gauntlet* staff and volunteers (reviewshounds, for the sake of this supplement) to pitch their platforms

and answer a few questions.

With only one that didn't sign up and one dropout, we feel like we have an informed opinion of each of the 17 candidates we spoke to. Trust that we grilled them to perfection and looked under every nook and cranny of their platforms to provide students our take on who will be who in the SU once the current batch of representatives fly off to greener pastures.

After reading through our critiques, look to the last page of the supplement for our personal endorsements.

Not all candidates are the same, and a poster can only tell you so much.

Be critical, have your say and vote online between March 4-6.

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President

The president is the leader of the Students' Union who maintains relations with the university administration, chairs many committees and has a vote on the Board of Governors. The president oversees the work of the SU executives and the Student Legislative Council.

Jarett Henry

Jarett Henry is a capable and committed candidate for president. Although some of his ideas need work, his experience gives him the practical knowledge necessary for the position.

At the top of his platform was improving campus-wide wireless Internet. In his term as arts representative he worked with vice-president operations and finance Eric Termuende and U of C IT to improve Wi-Fi coverage in MacHall. Now he wants to ensure the other dead zones on campus are taken care of.

Henry wants to introduce an open textbook policy. Open textbooks are created and published under the creative commons licence. These textbooks are free to download and can be tailored to a specific course. Open textbooks would lower student ex-

penses, but the initiative might face opposition if the faculty do not get behind it. Henry's timeline is ambitious — he aims to have the open textbook program introduced by fall 2014 — and it will be interesting to see if he can follow through.

Henry plans to bridge what he sees as a gap between students and clubs. He feels that Clubs Week is chaotic and, to some extent, ineffective. To remedy this, Henry is working on an e-Harmony style 'club matchmaker' that quizzes students via email and matches them with a list of compatible clubs. He hopes this would personalize and simplify the clubs-week experience. The idea shows promise, but we have doubts about its necessity and potential effectiveness.

Henry has put together a transition plan to help faculty representatives hit the ground

running when they take office. This includes having new representatives meet with faculty and SU members early in their term.

To increase SU transparency Henry wants to implement daily open office hours in MacHall. He also looks to email students easy-to-follow financial information concerning the operation of the SU budget.

An impressive resumé and practical platform give Henry front-runner status in the race for president.

Selected Qualifications:

- SU arts representative
- Member of five SU legislative committees
- President of the Residence Students' Association, 2012–13



"The best way to save students money, outside of the Board of Governors, is open textbooks."

Jacob Nasser

Jacob Nasser's proposed 'dead week' is his most intriguing platform point. Nasser would advocate for a full week off between the end of classes and the start of exams to give students more time to study, rather than push for a fall reading week.

Nasser claims that it will be easier to negotiate for a dead week since universities are already moving in that direction, and U of C students and their GPAs are suffering due to this disadvantage. However, we could find only four major Canadian universities that get more than the two days the U of C gets off between classes and exams — and none of them get a full week off. Nasser would have to negotiate for one week off in each semester rather than just one in the fall. This does not seem attainable.

Nasser would also push for more 24-hour

quiet floors at TFDL during midterms and finals. He believes the two floors currently open 24-hours all semester are too loud between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m. during exam season. The necessity of this will rely on student demand and another floor will not guarantee students a tranquil study space.

Nasser is campaigning to increase communication and transparency between students and the SU, but unfortunately did not have any concrete plans for making improvements.

Nasser could not offer an answer when asked about the MacHall lease negotiations. This is disconcerting, as the negotiations will likely continue into his term. Additionally, Nasser could not speak with authority about the redevelopment of MacHall. His unfamiliarity with these subjects is a sign

that he is not prepared for the position.

Nasser's platform lacks specifics and factual accuracy in the case of his dead week proposition. His inadequate knowledge made it difficult for him to communicate his ideas — not a promising start for someone who aims to improve communication with the student body. Underprepared and uninspired, Nasser does not have what it takes to be president.

Selected Qualifications:

- 2013–14 faculty of science representative
- Sat on the General Faculties Council



"We all want a better education and a better quality of life. That's what I want to help do."

Dave Beninger

The *Gauntlet* first noticed Dave Beninger last March. He had just started the Student Empowerment Project after the provincial budget cuts. The project fizzled out, but it gave Beninger his start and helped define his political persona.

He was elected to the U of C Senate in a by-election last October. As a senator, he was a consistent critic of administrative spending and provincial budget cuts. He also proved himself to be an adept politician, building relationships with clubs on campus, pumping the hands of party leaders and garnering a loyalty rarely seen in student politics.

Beninger plans to expand his following and use it to put pressure on the usual targets of student resentment — the provincial government and university administration.

He is a fierce critic of Progressive Conservative policies on post-secondary edu-

cation and has proved himself able to ask uncomfortable questions. If you agree with him, these are signs of his courage and commitment. If you don't, he can come across as brash. It's uncertain whether his style will bridge gaps or burn bridges, but Beninger lobbies hard for student interests. His power of influence will only expand as president.

In terms of internal policy, Beninger wants to develop a web application for SU services. He said this would be different from the smart phone application that the SU tried to develop two years ago.

"Web applications are better for a long-term vision," Beninger said.

He also wants to use his position to encourage students to shop at MacHall businesses, as the money goes back to student services. He said he could do this through inspiring a sense of pride, but was vague on the details.

Beninger has a passion and commitment unmatched by most of the executive candidates. And if he's elected, he'll defiantly ruffle some feathers. But with no experience on Student Legislative Council, he is not necessarily the most qualified.

A vote for Beninger is a vote to change the culture within the SU. Whether that change is necessary is a different question.

Selected Qualifications:

- U of C senator, 2013–14
- Founded a Student Advocacy Group responding to provincial budget cuts
- Experience lobbying the Alberta government



"I am running for president because it's time students get a fair deal."

Heather McCreedy

Heather McCreedy is confident and articulate, qualities that would help her as president. But her platform seems vague and uninformed. She does not have a strong enough grasp on pressing university issues to effectively take them on.

McCreedy wants to make the SU more transparent by updating their website so it's more accessible for students. If she is able to find the money in the SU budget or through Quality Money, this proposal could improve a crucial avenue between the SU and the student body.

McCreedy said that the SU's title over MacHall is loosely defined and leaves the university in a more powerful position during lease negotiations — a dubious claim. Though management and control of

revenues are the most pressing issues with MacHall, McCreedy chose to concentrate on ownership title for the SU.

A big part of McCreedy's platform is mitigating program cuts by keeping U of C administration accountable when it comes to spending. She overestimates the president's marginal influence over program cuts in the university. She cites her relationship with the provincial government as a main tool for keeping administrative spending in check. However, McCreedy did not mention the circumstances in which she felt the administration was mispending funds. Going over the administration's head to an external body does not seem like a tactful strategy when dealing with internal program issues.

McCreedy wants to continue plans that are in motion such as the study space review and continue to ask for a fall reading week. This is an essential part of taking over the position of president and is to be expected.

She can hold her own in conversation and comes across as capable, yet her platform is problematic and her expectations will not fare her well as president.

Selected Qualifications:

- Women in leadership president, 2013–14
- Interned with Human Services Ministry with the Government of Alberta
- Founded the Coalition to Eliminate Relationship Violence



"I would like to be a voice for students to keep the administration accountable for our expenditures."

VP Academic

The vice-president academic is responsible for all relevant academic matters, including liaising with faculty representatives, promoting undergraduate research and increasing the quality of education and teaching.

Hana Kadri

After taking a year off from student politics, Hana Kadri has stepped back into the ring. After a failed run last year, her platform is focused, concrete and to the point.

Her platform rests on three pillars: quality of teaching and learning, mental health and research. Kadri wants to establish an English-language proficiency program for instructors to decrease language barriers in the classroom. She also wants to ensure instructors put course outlines online one week prior to the beginning of classes. Although these initiatives would benefit students, they might create friction between faculty and the SU.

Kadri wants to audit study spaces so students are aware of where they can get their work done. Already initiated by current

president Raphael Jacob, a continuation of the study space review is both necessary and practical.

Kadri promoted the Community Helpers Program, which teaches and certifies members of the university community to understand how to help those dealing with mental health issues. She hopes this program would be offered to club executives because they are in close contact with students. Kadri understands the benefits of Mental Health Awareness Week, an annual campus event, but wants to increase student knowledge of the many mental health programs the U of C offers.

On the research front, Kadri wants to increase funding for the Undergraduate Research Symposium, which she feels would encourage more people to participate as

well as increase the symposium's importance.

Kadri feels the best way to accomplish her goals is by connecting with the student community, though she was short on specifics.

Kadri understands that none of her goals will be met overnight. She claims her goals are tangible and attainable, and we are inclined to believe her.

Selected Qualifications:

- Faculty of arts representative, 2012–13
- Sat on General Faculties Council
- Former committee member of clubs committee, teaching excellence awards committee, operations and finance committee



"Last year I wasn't prepared, but now I have tangible things I want to accomplish."

Lauren Voss

Lauren Voss is a motivated and sincere. Her passion for the position stems from her desire to empower students, however, she does not seem to fully understand the scope of the position.

Voss wants to increase awareness about the resources available to students. She plans to achieve this by creating an easy and accessible website with all the relevant information. This is a popular idea, so hopefully she could work with other executives if elected.

Voss's second platform point is to help make the cost of education more affordable. She wants professors to use academic articles that can be found online and are free to students, instead of textbooks. While this is a good idea in theory, there are issues with it. Most academic articles are focused on applying learned theory in

order to understand current research, and are not written with the intent to teach the basics that are required to read them. Also, Voss did not know until recently about the reserve reading lists available in the library, which is not a good thing for a candidate running for this position.

Voss wants to add mid-semester distress initiatives, and wants to pair them with Mental Health Awareness Week. She doesn't offer many new ideas. However, she does want to add more puppy rooms, which was successful in its first run this year.

Voss's third and final platform point is to increase awareness of research opportunities and experiential learning. Her speed-date-a-researcher idea is interesting, though the feasibility and effectiveness of this idea remains to be seen. She had no clear-cut plan on how to sell professors on

the idea and there is no applicable benefit to the broader community who do not attend the event.

Voss has the drive and desire to fill the position, but she might be in over her head.

Selected Qualifications:

- SU faculty of kinesiology rep, 2013–14
- Sat on the curriculum review steering committee, teaching excellence awards committee and General Faculties Council, 2013–14
- O-Week orientation leader, 2012–13



"I want to improve the quality of education by engaging students to become more active in their education."

VP External

Vice-president external is the SU's representative to federal, provincial and municipal governments. The vice-president external represents students at lobby groups, community committees, campaigns and sits on many internal committees such as Quality Money.

Levi Nilson

Targeting what he believes students care about most, Levi Nilson's focus will be centered on increasing advocacy, bringing open textbooks to the U of C and regulating mandatory non-instructional fees.

While these platform points aren't very inventive, Nilson has a good grasp on how to attain his goals.

With SU experience as an arts representative, Nilson believes that one of the biggest problems with the SU is advocacy. He stresses the importance of allocating more resources to expand the SU's level of public support, as well as creating new positions to expand the SU's current media relations team.

Nilson, like so many other hopeful can-

didates, might find that student apathy cannot be easily thwarted. Creating positions to combat this issue is a sensible step, but without novel ideas trying to make students care more is a fool's errand.

Nilson is opposed to an international college operated by a third-party corporation at the U of C. He stresses the risk it gives to the institution's integrity as a whole.

Nilson claims to be one of the only faculty representatives to oppose the college from the beginning. With strong opposition from faculty and student organizations, Nilson has a legitimate base of support if he lobbies against it being operated by a third-party corporation.

Nilson said what sets him apart for the

role of vice-president external is his knowledge of the issues at hand and his preparation to be in office, and we believe him. He has plenty of SU experience, which will make his potential transition from arts rep to vice-president external relatively quick.

Nilson can speak with authority about important university issues and is prepared to take them on. Though it is difficult to share his optimism about tackling everything he aims to, he would make a great executive.

Selected Qualifications:

- SU faculty of arts representative
- Sat on five SU legislative committees
- Co-founder of the Faculty of Arts Students' Association



"I've had real executive experience with all these issues."

Tsering Asha

Tsering Asha's platform is innovative and fresh, while also building on existing SU foundations.

Asha wants to tackle the apathy she has seen in town-hall meetings. She plans to solve this by creating a digital town hall to bring together students, politicians and external stakeholders to start conversations surrounding the issues that are affecting students. Students would ask questions via Twitter and, as the kids do, use hashtags to track trending topics and conversations. This idea does have some potential if marketed properly because hey, everyone is always on their smartphones anyway.

Asha wants to address mandatory non-instructional fees. Students do not like paying \$450 in unregulated fees. Her specific experience in lobbying and advocacy gives

her a foundation to put in the effort needed to tackle MNIFS. Asha wants more student input to support a strong backing to confront the administration on these fees.

Asha does remain humbled by the issue and admits that it is one that will be difficult to solve. While her cause is noble, in all reality, MNIF reform is bigger than any one candidate.

Asha's third point is to expand the availability of open source textbooks. She wants to follow the example set at the University of British Columbia that has lowered the cost of textbooks for students. Since open textbooks have already been adopted in another province, Asha has a great foundation to work with and it is likely that Alberta will get on board soon.

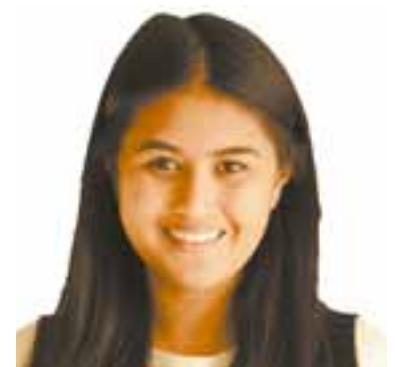
Asha touts her time interning in parlia-

ment as necessary experience required to effectively lobby for political support. This experience sets her apart from other candidates and it shone through in the way Asha conducted herself in the interview — she does not seem fazed by pressure.

In sum, Asha is an articulate, innovative and hopeful candidate for the position.

Selected Qualifications:

- Interned for Stoney Creek NDP MP Wayne Marston, 2010 and Skeena Valley NDP MP Nathan Cullen, 2012
- Developed communications strategies with clubs, focusing on social media



"I can try new tactics to build on the foundation that has already been set."

Kyle Schole

Although eager and interested, Schole is not ready to fill an executive position in the SU. He does not have enough knowledge about the organizations and issues a viable vice-president external needs to.

Schole wants to increase post-secondary affordability with cheaper, online options for textbooks. However, his ideas feel underprepared. While he is right to recognize high-priced textbooks as an issue, his knowledge of CampusBC's Open Textbook program is not as extensive as the other candidates who want to bring the program to Alberta. E-books are a viable alternative to hard-copy textbooks, as Schole suggests, but the Open Textbook program is an exciting step forward that other candidates seem to have a better grasp on.

Hoping to tackle student housing concerns, Schole suggests offering tax rebates to first-

time renters. Big on incentives, Schole hopes to incentivize homeowners to open their houses to students. Rental reform is a huge issue in Calgary, but if Mayor Naheed Nenshi can't make it happen, godspeed Schole. While recognizing that all he may be able to do to is to build momentum, Schole may find his position is better suited for lobbying the provincial government on budgetary or mandatory-non-instructional-fee reform.

However, Schole's familiarity with student umbrella organizations like the Council of Alberta University Students and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations is inadequate. These are the organizations that lobby and push for governmental reform, and Schole will have to sit on these bodies if he gets elected. He claims to have an extensive network of friends in student government, but he

was short on specifics and offered unrelated, anecdotal answers when questioned on CAUS and CASA. With a cursory knowledge of MNIF and the international college, Schole did not inspire confidence.

Schole could identify important issues, yet he is still in the phase of recognition, not solution. He's got a political demeanour and with another year of preparation, Schole will be a viable candidate. Look out for him next year.

Selected Qualifications:

- Vice-president events international relations club
- MLA For a Day
- Member of U of C firearms association and campus conservative club



"Students shouldn't have to choose between going to lunch and buying a textbook."

VP Student Life

The vice-president student life chairs the clubs committee and represents the SU at the Senate, with Active Living and the Dinos and is responsible for getting students engaged. They run Orientation Week, Frostbite and Bermuda Shorts Day among other events. Candidate Amir Ahadzadeh did not sign up for an interview at the all candidates meeting. Our endorsements for this position do not take him into consideration.

Mallory Lupick

Overall, Mallory Lupick is a strong and capable candidate. Running for a second time, her campaign and platform have vastly improved. She learned from her loss last year and is back with clear ideas and renewed passion.

Lupick's platform includes making events such as Orientation Week, Frostbite and Bermuda Shorts Day "bigger and better." She wants a festival feel to these events, though it's unclear if students would be interested in carnival games or if a slip and slide is feasible.

Regarding health, Lupick wants to add to the Five Days of Fitness, including mental health programs that would couple with the fitness classes. She suggested offering different styles of yoga, not just those focused on

fitness but also on meditation.

Lupick pointed out that spending 15 minutes with a puppy, while a great attraction, might not actually help with mental health. She said more long-term strategies need to be offered in combination with events like the puppy room. She wants to create a nutrition guide about eating on campus and offer vendors incentives to provide healthier options. She mentioned how wait times to see a counselor or psychologist at the SU Wellness Centre were too long, though she realizes this will not improve overnight.

Lupick wants to restructure the clubs workshop to focus on setting goals and looking at how they can be successful. She will need to expand her ideas for clubs, as they

are a huge part of the portfolio.

She was very skeptical about the possibility of a fall reading week, remarking that it was a silly promise. However, the results of the survey about what students are willing to sacrifice for a fall reading week will dictate her actions.

Lupick has specific and attainable goals to improve student life, though she might be shocked by how slow the workings of the SU and university administration can be.

Selected Qualifications:

- Quality Money grant recipient for accessibility upgrades in residence
- RSA vice-president traditional life, 2012-13
- Snowboard Club vice-president finance, 2012-13



"I want to give different groups on campus more opportunities."

Zainab Malik

Zainab Malik is using her experience as an arts representative to launch her campaign. Her platform centres around increasing club funding, introducing a charger bank to the TFDL, integrating the Wellness Centre into Stress-Less Week and introducing more food options on campus. Malik's campaign is focused. However, it is unclear how she plans to achieve her goals.

Citing her experience on Clubs Committee, Malik has first-hand knowledge of the process students go through to obtain funding. She noted that science clubs in particular often book multiple rooms for mock interviews, and these clubs must incur the funds for extra booking. She would alleviate this stress by waving more room-booking fees. However, Malik fell short in outlining how exactly the clubs funding

could be increased as a whole. She defaulted to consulting with SU staff and university administration on this issue.

While the charger bank in the TFDL might prove to be a popular initiative, she did not specify where the money to purchase the chargers would come from and could not explain how the TFDL could accommodate different models of chargers necessary for students' gadgets.

She praised current vice-president student life Ben Cannon for engaging a large number of students during Stress-Less Week. She wants the Wellness Centre to play a role by educating students on long-term stress management strategies like healthy eating or time management.

She spoke to the possibility of having councillors on hand for events like the

puppy room. It's hard to envision students yearning for puppies turning their focus to counsellors soliciting advice while waiting in line at That Empty Space.

Her proposed expansion of food options would include halal, lactose-free, gluten-free, vegan and kosher options. Malik has focused on expanding halal food options during her term as arts rep but did not outline how she would address the other dietary restrictions.

Malik had a solid term as arts rep, but it remains to be seen whether or not she is poised to take an executive role.

Selected Qualifications:

- SU faculty of arts representative, 2013-14
- Sits on the clubs committee, committee of 10,000 and volunteer of the month committee



"I keep my door open. I'm very approachable. I'm not a scary person."

Jonah Ardiel

Jonah Ardiel is an enthusiastic candidate. Clearly ambitious with what he wants to achieve, Ardiel has a plan to get reach his goals. However, it seems that he underestimates the amount of work his main initiatives will take to see through.

These initiatives include improving student space with charging stations and more microwaves, increasing student engagement with a giant event listing and promoting mental health with public art.

The charging stations Ardiel wants installed are called Power Towers and double as Wi-Fi hotspots. He said he has contacted the company that manufactures them and received a quote. The towers look cool and would be a convenient way of combining the need for cellphone chargers with increasing wireless access if the cost can be justified.

Regular and large models cost \$5,000 and \$6,000 respectively.

Ardiel wants to place microwaves in Science B. He says the main difficulty with this idea is finding someone to clean them regularly. Fortunately, he offered to clean them himself, though this might not be the best use of his time.

The event listing would be a huge calendar installed in the glass case between Stör and the club offices and would feature club, SU and Dinos events. Ardiel seems to underestimate the work required while overestimating the demand for a physical calendar. Most students look up events on their phone and may not stop to read a calendar in MacHall. There is not enough benefit to justify the cost and time for an event calendar.

For public art, Ardiel wants to seek out

spaces around campus to display student art. He also wants to introduce an open mike on the south side of the MacHall courtyard for student musicians and artists.

Some of Ardiel's ideas will run into the issue of funding. While public art spaces could be done on a reasonable budget — assuming the university is willing to allocate space — the Power Towers would require a Quality Money proposal. The event listing would be most effective as a website.

Overall, Ardiel is keen but needs to think about what would be most efficient.

Selected Qualifications:

- Haskayne student levy committee, 2013
- Co-founder of U of C Creativity Club
- Sits on the committee on sustainability initiatives



"I truly want each individual's experience at the U of C to be maximized."

Operations & Finance

The vice-president operations and finance chairs the operations and finance committee, sustainability board and refugee student board. They also report on the SU's financial position and interact with university administration regarding capital planning and development.

Adam Swertz

Adam Swertz communicated his ideas with confidence. Simply put, he killed it. He knows the ins and outs of SU operations and finance and evaded the trappings of a vague platform.

Swertz has the chops to competently manage SU funds. He blew us away with an adept knowledge of the SU's inner-workings and the responsibilities of the position.

Acknowledging that the SU generates a sizable margin of its revenue from MacEwan Conference and Events, Swertz plans to increase this by expanding the MacEwan catering service. With Chartwells's contract up in spring 2015, Swertz is right to recognize the potential for increased revenue if the SU can be the sole provider of catering services on campus.

Swertz is big on legacy, and he makes a strong case for maintaining the SU's control over MacHall in the upcoming lease negotiation. While he recognizes that MacHall is not an undergraduate centre but a student centre, Swertz is unwilling to cede a physical stake-hold in the building to the Graduate Students' Association. With a strong knowledge of the negotiation process, trust that Swertz will make a compelling case to keep the SU in command of MacHall in case negotiations spill into next year.

The finer points of his platform include bringing a halal vendor to campus and updating the SU website. Bringing more halal options to U of C is an idea worth pursuing, and the SU website is in need of a redesign. Swertz wants to include a live webcam

feed of the lines at both Tim Hortons and the Den on the new site's front page. Whether or not the feed will save students the hassle of a long line — Tim Hortons is always busy, as is the Den on Thursday — it's a cool initiative that sets an already strong candidate apart.

Get caught up in the hype and feel confident voting for Swertz. Your money will be well spent under his watch.

Selected Qualifications:

- Sustainability ON Award for Student Leadership, 2013
- Sits on the policy development and review committee and the committee on sustainability initiatives



"This is my dream position. I was made to fill this role. This is how my brain works."

Ilyas Gora

While student union elections are rife with idealism and empty promises, it's a point in Ilyas Gora's favour that he has a realistic idea of what he can achieve as vice-president operations and finance. However, Gora's platform centres primarily on finishing initiatives already begun by the SU and current vice-president Eric Termuende. While one of the best ways to move the SU forward is to build upon previous work, platforms do need an original angle.

The main point of his platform is ensuring greater wireless access for students. Gora said this is already in the works and will be paid for by the university, not the SU, but he wants to make sure the routers are installed where they need to be.

It's an important initiative, and one that

he should be involved in. Wireless service on campus is notoriously shoddy. If Gora keeps pressure on the university, we might see some substantial improvements in the quality of AirUC.

Other points Gora brought up include increasing SU use of social media, upgrading the SU website and getting a larger prayer space for the Multi Faith Chaplain's Centre.

Gora doesn't think the SU is doing enough to connect with students online. He wants to introduce a simpler website that provides information on what the SU is and what it is doing, along with a better guide to study space on campus. He thinks social media is underused and the SU should be engaging students more through Twitter and Facebook.

The prayer space at the Multi Faith Chaplain's Centre is an ongoing concern at the university. Gora has been involved in trying to solve this problem and will be a strong advocate for change if elected.

Although his platform leaves something to be desired, he is a capable candidate who would fill the position competently.

Selected Qualifications:

- SU Senate representative, 2013-14
- Senior advisor, Muslim Students' Association
- Constituency Association vice-president



"The biggest issue with the SU is that they do a lot of great work but they're not getting the message out."

Ahmad Nasser

Ahmad Nasser wants to make the SU a "true democracy" and increase "transparency through communication." We've heard these ideas before, and Nasser offers few original or concrete ideas on how to implement these vague goals.

Nasser is keen on using social media to open up the decision-making process to students. He wants Facebook and Twitter polls so that students can regularly voice their concerns. He mentioned the decision to open a Smoke's Poutinerie on campus as an example where this method of student consultation could have been helpful.

However, Nasser did not communicate a strategy for getting the traditionally unengaged student community to care about these issues enough to want to participate in these polls on a regular basis.

Although he is rightly adamant that students should care about how their money is spent, his build-it-and-they-will-come approach to social media is naive at best, and lazy at worst. After all, students deserve a knowledgeable candidate who can make informed decisions on their behalf.

Nasser is passionate about creating new events to keep students involved in the campus community. While he was able to list some specific ideas, this responsibility does not predominately fall within the scope of the vice-president operations and finance position. Nasser should have run for vice-president student life if he wanted to focus on these goals.

Regarding position-specific policies, Nasser wants to spearhead a green initiative to save energy on campus. He dem-

onstrated an elementary understanding of the MacHall lease negotiation process, although he did not give any specifics and was unable to speak as confidently on the issue as the other candidates.

Voters have two tremendous options for this position in Ilyas Gora and Adam Swertz. Nasser is nowhere close to being in the same league as these two candidates, and his focus on events is a big red flag regarding his understanding of the responsibilities of this position.

Selected Qualifications:

- Finance co-ordinator at Blackberry



"MacHall is the hub of student life. Let's try to give that money back to the students."

BOG Representative

The Board of Governors is the corporate entity of the U of C. All land titles, agreements and leases are held in trust by the governors. The student-at-large representative voices student concerns.

Shubir Shaikh

Shubir Shaikh is an ambitious, albeit soft-spoken candidate. He is passionate about pursuing the changes he would like to see and following through on his platform. Some of his goals fall outside of the scope of the student representative on the Board of Governors, but he believes that a position on the board will give him the power to address issues the SU is not.

Shaikh wants campus vendors to release lists of ingredients for every item they sell. This request should rightly be handled by the SU, but Shaikh indicated that he has contacted the SU about this to no avail. Nevertheless, this initiative is outside the scope of the position. The SU oversees lease agreements with the vendors, not the Board of Governors.

Shaikh plans to issue a survey to U of C alumni. The survey will ask questions about their career prospects following graduation and if they believe their degree was worth it. This is an interesting proposal but it is not clear how he will translate survey findings into something helpful for students.

Shaikh also wants to create more green space by adding plants around campus. The university can seem like a concrete jungle and this idea would likely be well received, but again this is not a task suited for the student representative.

Shaikh feels that both the SU and Board of Governors have not addressed the issue of transparency properly. Shaikh plans to address excessive executive spending by making expenditure reports available to

students. He is optimistic about his ability to take over the role and make the changes he wants to see.

Overall, it is clear that Shaikh cares about the U of C community and that he sincerely wants to make improvements. But he is unclear about the exact responsibilities of this position and what sort of capacity he will have to make changes.

Selected Qualifications:

- Sits on the Town of Cochrane committee on environmental policy
- Vice-president membership of the Banff-Airdrie Liberal Party riding
- Executive of two U of C clubs



"I think the U of C admins aren't really facing pressure from the students right now."

Michael Smith

As the incumbent candidate, Smith has a thorough understanding of the responsibilities and expectations of the position.

Customer service is an important component of any business and one that Smith thinks could be improved at the U of C.

Navigating class registration can be confusing. Long wait times for phone calls and inefficient email correspondence often make getting help from the registrar's office difficult.

Smith proposes two solutions: a callback service if phone hold times are longer than 10 minutes and an email policy wherein students will receive a non-automated acknowledgement email within one business day.

Smith wants to create a campus-wide wellness strategy. While acknowledging the

diverse range of services on campus, Smith noted that a lack of joint promotion prevents these services from reaching a wide student audience. By bringing all the departments that deal with student health together in a round-table discussion, they can formulate a unified campus-wide wellness strategy.

While these seem like strategies we'd hope to see the administration on board with, the initiative requires a lot of co-ordination and co-operation with administration. If they aren't interested, Smith will be powerless.

Smith plans to continue fighting increases in fees and tuition, noting that he has voted against tuition increases in the past. Smith said that while the university has made significant efforts to reduce costs, the administration could still do more.

Smith is serious about saving the university money. As this year's representative, he opted not to take his honourarium. If the university incurred any expense sending him to functions or meetings, Smith donated an equal sum back to the administration. While this is a savvy political move, it feels unnecessary given the honourarium's small sum.

Overall, Smith is a well-spoken candidate whose charisma and experience would undoubtedly make him a great second-term representative.

Selected Qualifications:

- Board of Governors student representative, 2013-14
- One of Canada's Top 20 Under 20, 2013



"As an institution, we do a lot of great stuff. The problem is we don't market it well enough to students."

Michael Geib

Despite his eagerness, Michael Geib has unrealistic expectations about what he can accomplish in this position and is not as qualified as the other two candidates.

Like every other candidate for student representative over the last few years, Geib wants to regulate mandatory non-instructional fees — though he claims to have reasonable expectations about what he is able to accomplish on this front. However, these reasonable expectations disappeared when Geib discussed the rest of his platform.

The central tenets of Geib's platform are increasing student representation and creating more vehicles for undergraduates to voice their opinions to the board. He wants to increase the amount of information communicated to students and to better explain the rationale behind the board's

decisions. In the past, representatives have been limited by the board's code of conduct and required confidentiality during closed sessions.

Geib claims that most students already care about the inner-workings of the administration, and that the only reason they are not already making their voices heard is because they are unsure of how and where to express themselves. Geib seemed convinced that all it would take to get students to finally voice all of their concerns is to create another Facebook page, hold face-to-face meetings with random students and schedule more open office hours. A fundamental misunderstanding of the student body fuels this belief.

The problem of student apathy runs deeper than a simple lack of communica-

tion. The many channels of communication already open to students have yet to make the changes Geib believes would come so easily.

If Geib cannot see this, then his understanding of his potential constituents and his ability to succeed in this position is questionable.

Selected Qualifications:

- U of C Law and Society Association vice-president
- U of C summer camp instructor



"I want people to be able to communicate with me, but I also want to be able to communicate with the undergrad population."

The Gauntlet endorses...

We sat down with the candidates to ask them the hard questions. Some rose to the occasion and clearly defined what they were going to do while others stumbled over weakly articulated goals.



Tendayi Moyo

Supplement Editor

President: Jarett Henry

My heart says Beninger but my brain says Henry. He's serving up hot plates of capable and I'm eating it up.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

Kadri has both feet on the ground and a determined look in her eye.

VP External: Levi Nilson

This one's a dogfight, but Nilson knows his stuff and has experience to spare. If not, go with Asha.

VP Student Life: Mallory Lupick

Go with Lupick. Maybe under her leadership I could get in to see a shrink before I graduate.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Gora is also a great choice, but Swertz seems like an operations and finance cyborg assassin sent back in time to run for this position.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

Vote for this indomitable and unencumbered incumbent. Smith is a great choice. He will hit the ground running next term.



Chris Adams

Supplement Editor

President: Jarett Henry

The safe choice isn't always the worst one. Henry knows what he's doing.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

After a year to mull her loss, Kadri is back with a workable platform and a cool demeanor.

VP External: Tsering Asha

Parliamentary experience sets Asha apart. She's got some great ideas and would confidently represent our fair university.

VP Student Life: Mallory Lupick

She's got the experience and personality to bring the party to campus. The other candidates were capable, but Lupick is the most exciting.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Swertz said he was born for this position. Nothing about his interview contradicted his claim. No contest.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

You need Smith and his generous ways on the BOG. Yes, you do.



Susan Anderson

Editor-in-Chief

President: Jarett Henry

With no current executives running, the race appears open, but Henry is honest and competent, which can't be underestimated.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

Kadri is prepared and focused. Voss didn't offer anything to get excited about.

VP External: Levi Nilson

Nothing gets my attention like knowledge of the inner workings of the SU.

VP Student Life: Mallory Lupick

A vast improvement in her platform from last year lets me know that she has thought about the position and is ready to take it on.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

One of the best interviews I've seen in over three years of interviewing candidates. He will do great things.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

Incumbent candidates are hard to beat, and I'd love to see the registrar's office actually seem like they care about helping students.



Riley Hill

News Editor

President: Henry or Beninger

If you want someone steady to man the ship, vote for Henry. If you think a shake-up is in order, vote for Dave.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

During her interview, Kadri was calm and articulate. Her ideas were unique and practical.

VP External: Levi Nilson

Asha really impressed me, but Nilson showed a level of knowledge, confidence and candour that was unmatched by the other candidates.

VP Student Life: Mallory Lupick

Instead of despairing over last year's loss, Lupick proved her determination with an impressive interview.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Swertz gave the best interview of any of the candidates. If you manage to find something wrong with him, vote for Gora.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

An easy choice.



Michael Grondin

Photo Editor

President: Jarett Henry

Henry is knowledgeable, experienced and trustworthy, which, in my opinion, are traits the other candidates lack.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

Kadri needed a year off to get her stuff together, but now she is fully prepared and ready to go.

VP External: Tsering Asha

Asha is personable, intelligent and she communicates her ideas well.

VP Student Life: Jonah Ardiel

Ardiel's platform was intriguing, promoting new artistic events that could bring the U of C community closer together.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Swertz has done his homework. He has a full understanding of the position and he knows what is needed for the job. Gora would also do well.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

Smith is competent, committed and honest, and he will do quite well if he gets another go.



Sean Willett

Production Editor

President: Dave Beninger

Henry is probably the better choice, but Beninger seems like more fun. Follow your heart, etc . . .

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

Kadri has been through this before, and is all the stronger for it. Though she needs to step up her campaign if she wants to win.

VP External: Tsering Asha

She has practical experience and is very well spoken, but what won me over is her amazing energy.

VP Student Life: Mallory Lupick

Like Kadri, Lupick is running for her second time, which makes her extremely knowledgeable about her position. Second time is the charm.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Swertz is professional, smart and experienced, and I want to marry him. Uh, I mean I want him to win. My heart, that is.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

He did great last year. He will almost certainly do great again.



Sean Sullivan

Entertainment Editor

President: Jarett Henry

It comes down to Henry versus Beninger. Beninger has a lot of gusto but Henry has the stronger platform.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

Kadri's platform was stronger and better defined than Voss's.

VP External: Tsering Asha

Asha has experience in Parliament and she is a good public speaker.

VP Student Life: Toss-up

Lupick is back from last year with a strong platform, Ardiel has some great ideas, but Malik had a slightly better grasp of the position.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Swertz was far and away the best candidate for the position. He did his homework and was well spoken enough to prove it.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

Smith claims he was unprepared for the position over the last year. If that's true I can't even imagine what he'll manage to accomplish this year.



Curtis Wolff

Sports Editor

President: Dave Beninger

Beninger is well informed and capable, but most importantly will represent students passionately.

VP Academic: Hana Kadri

Kadri had my vote last election, and she's back in 2014 with an even better platform.

VP External: Tsering Asha

A great communicator whose experience on Parliament Hill will benefit her greatly.

VP Student Life: Mallory Lupick

Lupick learned from last year's mistakes and is back with a vengeance. I was blown away by her improvement from 2013's interview. She is ready.

VP Op-Fi: Adam Swertz

Swertz is a machine forged in the hottest fires of a sweltering operations and finance sweatshop, built on an assembly line staffed by the planet's top CFOs.

BOG Rep: Michael Smith

Students should be thrilled that Smith is running again. He is on a whole other level of professionalism.