

Vice-President (Student Life) position second-most competitive

THE VPSL PORTFOLIO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NON-academic matters such as planning campus events, working with residences, and advocating for students' health and well-being on campus.

Compiled by Scott Fenwick

1 What ideas do you plan to implement for next school year?

Kristen Flath: I would really like to implement some initiatives toward promoting a greener campus. That would include getting rid of the styrofoam within the SUB businesses and replacing it with something more sustainable. As well, that would also include making sure that we're being accountable to our ethical purchasing policies by investigating the way we're doing business right now.

Some other initiatives I would like to work on is building a closer relationship with residences and giving them the support they need to provide a service to students. As well, I would also like to work towards a health plan for students with an optional opt-out.

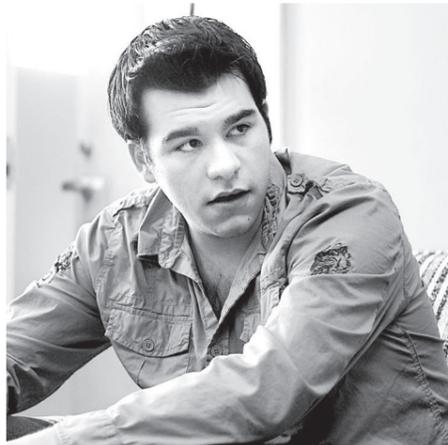
Alena Manera: Every VPSL candidate comes in with a different vision of what the portfolio is, and there's no continuity in that sense. The position entails a spectrum of things, but there's no definite purpose for the portfolio. Still, I think VPSL is a programmer, an advocate, a manager, and I want find a way to tie that all together. The lowest common denominator is making sure that people leave with more than a degree—making sure that their time on campus is positive and as enriched as they want it to be. So it's really finding a real definition of the portfolio I'm going forward with.

Sean McQuillan: I believe the greatest thing we're facing right now is a lack of campus community. So one of my many ideas is just providing students with the tools and resources they need to get whatever they want done. Part of that is with a student group venue I want to implement. Also, the revitalization of the old Powerplant. Additionally, the student group office space needs to be reworked and redone.

Another thing to go on that is the U-Pass, which is something that has been serving students now for a year but hasn't been serving them adequately. I believe any kind of petition from Students' Council to get increased frequency and increased service hours would benefit students greatly. Pretty much that, and any kind of exploration into some kind of health plan. There's a lot of other things I'm looking into. I'm just open-minded right now at this point on what exactly I need to do.

2 How do you plan to get students involved in major campus events outside of Week of Welcome and AntiFreeze?

Flath: I would like to see more support for student groups, especially in the way of events. They have shown in the past year the variety and the quality of the events they can put on. For example, the pumpkin drop that we had



PETEYEE

A TRIO OF HOPEFULS Sean McQuillan (left), Kristen Flath (centre), and Alena Manera all want your support in their quests to be elected as VP (SL).

was widely attended by students, and that was a student group. If we can provide them with the resources and funding that they need to put on events to get students involved on campus, I really think we can work towards creating a stronger campus community.

Manera: As a member of the Programming Committee since 2006, student involvement in SU events was something I personally struggled with. I think when tackling the issue of programming, we have to look to student groups, the power of student groups. LHSA's Rez Fest, the BSA's beer gardens—these are huge events put on by student groups. If elected, I would encourage partnerships with student groups and the Students' Union to work towards that "for students by students" ideal.

McQuillan: The best way to get the campus at large is to make it available readily right now. The registration process or any kind of information for any of these events are out there, but only in an indirect fashion. If this is something that is brought to each student directly with information regularly, it may be something they may be willing to participate in. Forms or surveys I believe can be released at the beginning of the year [...] can find out what exactly are students interested in and find out how many would like to participate in Week of Welcome or AntiFreeze. These are things that are consistently being done and need to be expanded upon. It's just a year-to-year basis to take it.

3 There's the perception that the VP (Student Life) isn't active in between events like WoW and AntiFreeze. What aspect of the VPSL position is most important?

Flath: I would really like to see a stronger position of the VPSL on issues of non-academic advocacy. That includes working with the residences and promoting a greener campus and initiatives such as this that fall under the VPSL portfolio [but] often aren't as strongly supported. I would also like to see the VPSL continue to play a strong role in services throughout the year. That includes services that

are providing support to student groups [such as] the Student Distress Centre. Initiatives such as that make a difference in the life of students and need support from the Students' Union.

Manera: That question is based off a traditional idea that the position is built upon three pillars. I don't see it that way—I see it built as one pillar, which is enhancing the undergraduate experience. Programming, non-academic advocacy, services—those are just tools in the toolbox that the VPSL uses to accomplish that one goal and, that being said, I don't think you can cherry-pick tools. I think that you have to use them all or you're really doing a disservice to students.

McQuillan: Well, I'm not running for VP (Arts and Crafts) here. This is something important to me. This is about all aspects of student life, which includes campus community and anything that serves our needs. The other aspects I really want to look into is all the services that we provide. The Students' Union provides over 20 services, and many of them students are not aware about. Getting people more aware and getting people more active into what we can provide for the campus at large is something that I'm extremely passionate about.

4 The SU has set up a committee to investigate the future of the Powerplant. How important do you think non-academic social space such as the Powerplant is to students, and how do you think the SU should move forward with the Powerplant?

Flath: Non-academic social space is incredibly important to students. We have seen in the past little while, especially in the past year since the 'Plant has been closed, a shift from events being on campus to off campus because they don't have an affordable place to hold them. So if we could get that student space back, it really increases the ability of the students to hold events for students. I would really like to see possibly a shift of moving Cue over from the basement of SUB into the Powerplant to draw students back into the 'Plant and increase student group space in the basement of SUB.

Manera: The current idea floating around the SU right now for the Powerplant is excellent. It's going to provide bookable student space, and it's going to relocate Cue to the Powerplant, which is excellent because that gives us the space in the lower levels to do a redesign, and that will give things like the Campus Food Bank adequate space. That being said, the Powerplant redesign's still a ways off. I'm more concerned about the interim solution. RATT and Dewey's are too small. No one can afford to rent Dinwoodie. What are we going to do for student groups to make sure that they're running efficiently? We're either going to have to lower the cost of Dinwoodie, or we're going to have to appeal to the University for some space. We can't leave student groups in limbo like that. They need that space to run efficiently.

McQuillan: Because we're primarily a commuter campus, many people go to class and they go home. Having non-academic student space is essential for any form of campus community. Ensuring that something like the Powerplant is used appropriately to serve the needs to the students, especially the student groups, is something I think needs to be looked into much further.

5 How are you going to survive the Zombie Apocalypse?

Flath: I have wooden stakes in the back of my car. I'm going to attack with full force.

Manera: I've been playing a lot of video games lately, and one of the video games I've been playing is *Zombies Ate My Neighbours*. And I can tell you with the utmost confidence that I would not survive the Zombie Apocalypse. I wasted all my lives on that level with that hedge maze and chainsaw guy. I fail at that game and, therefore, zombie apocalypse.

McQuillan: I have already provided myself with a large number of rations and several shotguns in the basement of CAB. I figure it's the best amphitheatre to defend myself in.

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