GRAND MARSHAL - PRESIDENT OF THE UNION
UNDERGRADUATE PRESIDENT - ALUMNI PRESIDENT
2020 CLASS PRESIDENT - 2019 CLASS PRESIDENT - 2018 CLASS PRESIDENT
CLASS OF 2020 V.P. - CLASS OF 2019 V.P. - CLASS OF 2018 V.P.
CLASS OF 2020 SENATORS - CLASS OF 2019 SENATORS - CLASS OF 2018 SENATORS
Justin Etzine

Since I first joined student government almost three years ago, I have gained a great deal of knowledge and relevant experience that student advocacy and self-government can have in bringing changes that benefit the student body. However, that impact has not always been consistent.

I am running to be your next Grand Marshal because I believe I am the best fit to lead the student body to both maximize this impact in the coming year and solidify this role for the student body as a whole. I have been heavily involved in many areas of student government for years to follow. I understand the importance of simultaneously supporting a student-run Union, advocating for the interests of students, and maintaining productive and respectful relationships with administrators.

During my tenure as the chairman of the Senate’s Student Life Committee and Web Technologies Group over the past two years, I have tested and developed my ability to coordinate the organization of multiple projects and lead teams to bring changes that improve the overall student experience at RPI. I believe I am best equipped to take the Senate into a new implementation.

From working closely with the past three Grand Marshals, I have seen firsthand what approaches are most effective in advancing student priorities. My platform is a reflection of these observations and experiences, and it forms a detailed schematic for how the student government will further student interests. What makes you the best fit to lead the student body?

Justin Etzine

What do you think are the incumbent Grand Marshal’s strengths and weaknesses? What would you do to improve upon them if you are elected?

Justin Etzine

Paul has worked hard to promote a sense of “directness” in the Senate; if he feels that a topic needs to be addressed, with administrators or otherwise, he is not afraid to relay the concerns and student opinions across as directly as possible. Paul has also made substantive efforts towards “cutting the red tape” of the Senate by advocating for senators to embody that similar directness.

I believe that, in pursuing this candidness, Paul sometimes can appear unprofessional to those who are unfamiliar with his personality. He does provide the disclaimer of not taking his jokes seriously, but he can lead to some seeing the Senate in the same light as the jokes. Paul has proven his passion and productivity and seriousness when needed, but sometimes his comments can reduce productivity and turn people away from the Senate and its committees.

As chairman of the Student Life Committee, I plan to build upon blending Paul’s efforts toward candidly representing student opinions with an increased focus on ensuring professionalism and proactive communication. From my involvement in student government, I have a heightened ability to advocate for changes that benefit the group without the core message being diluted.

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If a situation arose in which students’ rights or privileges were being encroached upon, or otherwise was a crisis, I would give it my full attention as the role of Grand Marshal would be my top priority. Firstly, I would work to get accurate information on the situation as swiftly as possible; to uphold the professionalism needed for the position, I would still maintain level-headedness and caution, both for myself and for the Senate.

I would inform the student body as soon as possible, especially if they did not already know. I would call on fellow student leaders, such as the presidents of the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils, the class presidents, and the presidents of the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils, to pass on the accurate information, stressing the importance and time sensitivity.

Then, I would work to act on the information with the objective of solving the concern as swiftly as possible. This could mean a meeting with the relevant administrators or the Institute president, a recommendation for a resolution by the Senate, meetings with other student leaders, or a combination of these approaches. I would ensure that frequent and pertinent updates are provided to the student body whenever possible.

I believe that these situations are when the true importance of the Grand Marshal’s role are exemplified. Persistence, respect, and directness are all simultaneously necessary to effectively address student body concerns to administration. As Grand Marshal, I will be prepared to fulfill those duties to the fullest extent.

What qualities should a leader have? How does the Grand Marshal differ from a senator?

How are you a leader?

Justin Etzine

The effectiveness of a leader depends on more than their own position—a leader needs to be able to use personal passion to get others involved and inspired with that same level of passion. A leader must be able to build their legitimacy through their reputation, their ethics, and their authenticity. Finally, an effective Grand Marshal must be able to build close relationships with leaders across campus, not just with a particular portfolio or division.

I believe that my involvements in student government, both as a senator and as Senate chairman, has enabled me to achieve these qualities. The Student Life Committee has seen a record year, both in terms of student involvement and project throughput. Over 30 students have been newly involved in the projects, 13 new community and campus partnerships have been formed, and every one felt impassioned about enacting changes for the benefit of their classmates, both current and future. I believe that I played a substantive role in growing their passion for the projects, and I am confident that I will bring that same passion to a Senate-wide level.

Furthermore, I have been able to establish productive relationships with both student administration, and campus partners over the past three years, so I will be able to spend more time on working with them to find middle-ground that is amicable for all parties, which is vital for delivering on our promises to the student body.

Justin Etzine

I have been involved in student government at RPI since freshman year elections. I was first elected as a representative to the Class of 2018 Council. I was also elected internally as the treasurer of the class council. Freshman year I helped out with the class tree planting ceremony and freshman hockey night. I continued to be a representative and the class council sophomore year when I helped with another hockey night and a class barbeque. At the end of sophomore year I was elected as a 2018 Senator. I have continued to be a representative and the class council sophomore year when I helped with another hockey night and a class barbeque. Then, I would work to act on the information with the objective of solving the concern as swiftly as possible. This could mean a meeting with the relevant administrators or the Institute president, a recommendation for a resolution by the Senate, meetings with other student leaders, or a combination of these approaches. I would ensure that frequent and pertinent updates are provided to the student body whenever possible.

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What are the roles of the Undergraduate President, the Undergraduate Councils, and the Class Councils?

The roles of the Undergraduate President are to assist the Class Councils in putting on successful events as well as hold meetings for the Undergraduate Council members to collaborate and provide advice for their events and activities. The Undergraduate Council has the role of keeping all of the Class Councils informed of what each Class Council is doing as well as approving budgets proposed by the Class Councils. The roles of the Class Councils are to create and run events within their class as well as provide constituents with the opportunity to participate in traditional class activities such as planting the class tree and buying the class ring.

Matt Heimlich

The objective of each Class Council is to unify their class and create a legacy for their class on campus. The unifying comes from events such as hockey nights, senior events and other fun events. The legacy of their class comes from the class tree, class rings and class gifts.

The role of the Undergraduate Council is to approve the expenditures of each Class Council and to share information between the councils. It is vital for the working of each council. I am confident that I will get all the information they need to plan their events.

The Undergraduate President presides over the Undergraduate Council meetings and makes sure that each council has what it needs to succeed. The President makes sure that all positions are filled and follows procedures for those that need to be filled. It is important that the President holds each officer accountable for their Class Council.

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Hello, my name is Sean Waclawik and I am a junior-year Computer Science major who is running for Class of 2018’s Vice President. I have been serving as Vice President for the Class of 2018 since my freshman year. During that time, I have planned and assisted in the planning and execution of numerous class events such as class hockey nights, BBQ’s, the Class of 2018 Tree Planting Ceremony, our class ring dinner, and more. I have consistently been involved in Rensselaer’s student life and clubs on campus. This includes my work with RPI Ambulance, RPI’s chapter of Knights of Columbus, Big Brothers Big Sisters and Greek Life though Sigma Chi. If elected, I will continue to work to promote class unity through my effort planning quality class events. If you have any questions please contact me at waclas@rpi.edu.

Senators
Varun Rao
CSE/CSCI
Ellie Mees
ELEC
Hannah Merrow
PSYC/STSO
Steven Sperazza

Representatives
Hined Rafeh
Spencer Scott
Amanda Youmans

As an incumbent, I will continue working on projects that improve the student experience here at RPI. The projects I am currently working on include being the class ring committee chair, the fight for more diverse food options in the Union, and the creation of a campus wide sustainability definition. I am passionate about sustainability projects and believe that RPI should be addressing such a pressing global issue on its campus. By working with sustainability clubs and the Union, I hope to make Rensselaer a more environmentally mindful campus.

I will be a voice for all of my constituents. An issue currently facing student government is the lack of general student body involvement. Without student concern and their passion for change campus would not be what it is today. I plan to cultivate student ideas/concerns and act on them to produce tangible results.

Representatives
Mark Birkbeck
Yuvi Chopra
Stephanie Tan
Benjamin Morrison
Adi Mitra
Samantha Spano
CSCI/ECON
CHME

Serving the Rensselaer community since 1824
As Class of 2020 Representative, I will ensure that in navigating our class through the many traditions and events, contribute to a record-surpassing RPI experience. Senior week. As a representative, I will ensure that in committee initiatives, and survey my peers regularly to get an accurate picture of my constituency’s views.

The Class of 2020 Council plays a fundamental role in navigating our class through the many traditions and events that will create memorable experiences for us long after we’ve graduated. One short-term goal is to support the creation of junior positions on the Board of Trustees for recent alumni. These members will be in a position to provide the Board of Trustees with a current perspective of the campus environment and students’ preparedness for post-undergraduate opportunities.

As Class of 2020 Senator, I will focus on improving life at RPI for our class. To achieve this goal, I will work to push forward innovative ideas, dedicate myself to committees and survey my peers regularly to get an accurate picture of my constituency’s views.

As Class of 2020 Senator, I will address the issues of student housing and student representation. I aspire to work with hospitality services on the Hospitality Services Advisory Committee to address issues pertaining to dining hours and quality of food. I also believe it is important for the Student Senate to advocate for a change in policy to allow for registered service animals for the benefit of the mental and physical well-being of my constituents.

My top priority will be promoting our legacy as the Class of 2020 for future generations of RPI students. As Class of 2020 Representative, I will achieve this goal through two major tenants. Firstly, I will prioritize the importance of finding a class gift that embodies our class’s unique personality. Secondly, I will work to mentor future class councils by creating best practice records for future councils to benefit from.

As Class of 2020 Senator, I will focus on improving life at RPI for our class. To achieve this goal, I will work to push forward innovative ideas, dedicate myself to committees and survey my peers regularly to get an accurate picture of my constituency’s views.
Why do you want to be President of the Union?

Keegan Caraway

I would like to be President of the Union for a few reasons. I want to continue the legacy of a student-run union here at RPI, which I feel has been threatened in the past. I want to help improve and rebuild the lines of communication that student government has with the administration. I want to help plan for the coming summerarch and future summer arches and their effect on Union operations. I want to ensure that the search for a new Director of the Union moves forward and that the position is filled with an adequate candidate so that the position doesn’t sit vacant for another year.

Rasika Ekhalkar

The Union is a place where people of all backgrounds are able to come together to support and connect with one another. The Union is an integral part of student life that provides students with the opportunities to get a full collegiate experience and improve themselves through activities not available anywhere else on campus. I have loved representing students and clubs on the Executive Board this past year. I want to be the President of the Union because I believe I can positively impact the Rensselaer Union community by increasing club collaborative events, spreading knowledge about the services the Union provides, exposing students to different experiences to increase personal development, and leading Rensselaer Executive Board to better decision-making. I have shown my dedication, passion, innovative ideas, and ability to lead to advance students’ vision for the Union.

Harrison Leinweber

My leadership ability and experience qualify me. The President of the Union needs soft skills more than hard skills. They need to appoint an excellent quality Executive Board to be able to interface with clubs, administrators, and Union employees. Because of the Union’s best interests. They also need to be quick on their feet when negotiating with others, but patient enough to wait out bureaucracy. I have been fighting with unwavering tenacity to reverse the Union’s operations, budgeting, needs of clubs and the ability to get things done. For the past two years I have been the chair of the Business Operations Committee of the Executive Board. During my time as chair, the committee has replaced the McNeil Room carpet, chairs and tables, opened the basement for club storage, and increased communication among the businesses in the Union and students. In addition, we have begun preparing for the future by identifying areas in the Union that need to be upgraded and making plans for those renovations. Being chair has given me the opportunity to learn about club and student’s needs and make changes to the Union with those requirements in mind. It is a rewarding experience for leadership development as well as problem solving skills. Meanwhile, it has prepared me to be President of the Union by exposing me to students’ needs and what Union can provide for them.

Matthew Rand

I want to be President of the Union because I believe that the work of the Executive Board positively impacts the lives of all students at RPI. After two years on the Board, I want to take the next step to lead the Board in this endeavor. I have a vision for the Union that will ensure that it remains the hub of campus life for years to come. I want to help my fellow students not only have a better student experience, but build a stronger sense of pride for our Union and for our Institute.

What qualifies you to be President of the Union?

Keegan Caraway

My qualifications for the President of the Union would probably start with my experience in student government. I’ve been on the student senate for two years and of those two years I was secretary for the senate for most of that time in addition to my senator duties. In that time, I worked on a range of senate projects and senate sub-committees. For the past three years, I’ve been sitting in Executive Board meetings, attending Executive Board committees, and meeting with union administrators to make sure I fully understand the finances of the union. In the past 2 semesters I worked with the policies committee, the Business Operations committee, and the UAR committee which have given me a breadth of knowledge about what the President of the Union needs to do to his job in an informed manner. One unique experience I bring is having been on both the committee that approves new clubs and been part of a group trying to build a new club; I was one of the founding members of the Destination Imagination club who worked to get the club union recognized and union funded.

Rasika Ekhalkar

This past year, I was an Executive Board Club/ICA Representative, and it has been an extremely rewarding and exciting experience. Through my experience of being on the Executive Board, I have the knowledge of Union operations, budgeting, needs of clubs and the ability to get things done. For the past two years I have been the chair of the Business Operations Committee of the Executive Board. During my time as chair, the committee has replaced the McNeil Room carpet, chairs and tables, opened the basement for club storage, and increased communication among the businesses in the Union and students. In addition, we have begun preparing for the future by identifying areas in the Union that need to be upgraded and making plans for those renovations. Being chair has given me the opportunity to learn about club and student’s needs and make changes to the Union with those requirements in mind. It is a rewarding experience for leadership development as well as problem solving skills. Meanwhile, it has prepared me to be President of the Union by exposing me to students’ needs and what Union can provide for them.

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Matthew Rand

I joined the Executive Board as a freshman in the fall of 2015 as the Class of 2019 representative, which I still serve as. In addition to this role, I serve as the Chairman of the Policies Committee where I led projects to update the Executive Board’s Bylaws, Budgeting Guidelines, and Club Classification system. I have worked with the Business Operations committee on upgrading the McNeil room and implementing a new system for allocating storage space within the Union. For the past two years, I have gone above and beyond my obligations as a Board member by joining several committees, by working with Chip and Nick on smaller projects outside the scope of my specified position, and by working with the Administrative Staff to understand the issues they see within the Union and how the Executive Board can alleviate those. I have also served as the Vice President and Treasurer for the Men’s Club Lacrosse Team, so I understand just how the Union operates from both the club side and the Executive Board side.

Name three short-term goals and three long-term goals that you have for the Executive Board.

Matthew Rand

As far as short-term goals for my term as president of the union, I would like to see the position of Director of the Union filled, or at least the next phase of the process started. In conversations with Union administrators I have heard that there are no prospects for the position and I believe that these prospects should be looked at to see if they can fill the seat of Director of the Union adequately. I want to create a committee or subcommittee with the sole purpose of helping news clubs through the club formation process; I hope to accomplish better lines of communication for new club officers to talk to the Executive Board so that they can fulfill the requirements to become Union clubs. While I’m in office I’d like to create a stronger public media presence for the Executive Board. Recently the Executive Board approached the senate to create their own communications committee, I believe the better option to be for the Executive Board to communicate with the Student Government Communications Committee to accomplish a public media presence. In the more long-term picture of things I’d like the lines of communication with administration to be reinforced, with the reorganization of the administrative portfolio I would like to see a conversation had about where certain student issue should be heard by the collection of Assistant Vice Presidents. I think one lack luster area of student government that could use long term work would be improving student retention and more involvement with the community. I think the best way to address this would be to push for more initiatives with clubs that have effects outside the university. Lastly I’d love to see an improvement on long saving for clubs for larger projects and emergency funds. This could be addressed by allowing clubs to create savings funds for projects that require more planning or equipment that wears out but is necessary could be placed on plans for purchase.

Rasika Ekhalkar

Short Term Goals

1. Ensure Executive Board members and club officers are knowledgeable about club operations and budgeting procedures by frequently holding financial, travel, marketing and leadership workshops to continue supporting clubs in a smooth and organized manner.
2. Make information about the Union’s operations and services more accessible for students and clubs by updating Union guidebook.
3. Encourage club collaboration in programs and events to allow more horizontal collaboration in between different clubs as well as larger participation groups in order to enlarge student involvement in the Union in terms of both size and extent.

Long Term Goals:

1. Investigate Union facilities to ensure the Union is providing services that cater to the needs of clubs and students and incorporate new ideas into a future renovation plan.
2. Increase communication among the students, Student Government, and the Administration through regular meetings to discuss student concerns.
3. Create a Summer Arch model that would allow year-round programming for clubs, and ensure continuity between semesters for clubs and students.

Harrison Leinweber

My short term goals are to improve club officer training, increase communication across the student body, and improve transparency in club saving.

Matthew Rand

My long term goal is for the Union to become a more student driven organization where the Union remains student run, keep the Union on track for upcoming renovations, and provide a platform for future Executive Boards to build on for Summer Arch.
transparency and redefine how the bodies work together, I want to redefine the structure of Joint Committees.

2. Establish bi-weekly committee meetings between head of the five branches of Student Government: The PU, the GM, the Presidents of the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils, and the Chairman of the J-Board. By increasing communication between the heads of the 5 bodies and their roles and responsibilities to students and to each other, we can establish a more efficient, more transparent student government.

3. Create educational documentation for Club officers and hold more training sessions (once a month) in order to not only educate our club leaders on Union Policies, but also leadership skills. We need to use these tools to implement to better guide their clubs (Bystudent Intervention, Leadership styles).

Long Term goals:

1. Establish the outline of a long range plan for the Rensselaer Union. Develop guiding principles for the Union to operate under and for future Executive Boards to make their decisions. Project productive outcomes to bring the Union to focus programming and services around, such as Inclusivity, Work-life balance, Personal Achievement, etc.

2. Increase the public media presence of the Rensselaer Union. This goal will be supported by the Executive Board Marketing and Publications Committee, but also the Communications Specialist position within the RU staff that will be filled in the near future. By increasing our social media presence, we must get the word out to students more effectively, but also out to our Troy community and even into the National spotlight. Our Union is unique, not only for its structure but for its people who make it up. That is something I want the world to realize.

3. Focus on establishing more space for students, both within the Union and in the facilities the Union operates in. Many of the changes needed to be made in the Union have not been made because of their usefulness, I want to establish renovation plans for these spaces to be more accessible to students.

What do you think are the incumbent President of the Union’s strengths and weaknesses? What would you do to improve upon them if you were elected?

Keegan Caraway

One of the things I admire most about Chip is his ability to interact with people. His level of positivity is seen in every Executive Board meeting by the air of calmness and level of happiness that Chip brings to the Executive board members. It seems as though everyone has a real passion for student government and likes being at Executive Board meetings. The only thing I think Chip has struggled with this past year has been some slight organization of issues. I have attended meetings where I felt a lack of organization resulted in less productive meetings.

Rasika Ekhaliar

Charles Kirchner has done a lot for the Union over the past year and has been a great President of the Union. I admire Chip’s ability to stay level headed during discussions over controversial issues. He also has been a great leader by being professional, leading by example, and motivating people to be better E-Board members. Chip has been able to make his decisions with the best interest of the students in mind and this margin could have been avoided focusing on more communication with committee chairmen to make sure the committees were operating to their fullest capacity. If I were elected as PU, in order to make sure communication is focused and accomplishing their goals, I would meet with the chairs regularly and create a list of goals and timelines at the beginning of semesters to increase accountability and maintain efficiency.

Harrison Leinweber

Chip is great at accomplishing projects. He is also an effective coordinator of the Board. He’s amicable and easily approachable, and enroaches productive dialogues for meetings. Chip doesn’t provide enough communication back to students on policy and accomplishments of the Board. He has also been relatively quiet about administrative encroachments on the Union and what’s being done to prevent them.

If elected, I will explore additional avenues communica-
ting information back to the student body. I’ll also ensure the public is well informed about projects and policy developments. I will make sure the students know that I am working with them to protect the Union and comment on student rights issues in the Derby and online.

Matthew Rand

Chip Kirchner has been a phenominal President of the Union. He has been a strong leader, he has stayed impartial and allowed his Board to make their own decisions, and he has been an advo-
ate for student rights in the administration. However, I believe in some cases he has allowed for a lack of communication and transparency with the operation of the Executive Board, by not publicizing our operations and out ongoing projects. My goal is to improve communication between the Board and the student body to ensure concerns are met and that all students are aware of the work of the Board and our vision for the future of the Union.

What is your plan for dealing with the changes that will accompany the rollout of Summer Arch?

Keegan Caraway

When it comes to Summer Arch I believe it is impor-
tant that the Board ensure that Union Services are adjusted to fit the needs of the student body this summer and in the future. I want to redefine the structure of Joint Committees. The Executive Board will need to create a model for Summer Arch operations that can be translated for clubs. One of my thoughts is to have students who are on campus meet once a week as a committee and tackle various projects that can be completed over the sum-
mer. This summer, I would have the committee work with the Admin office to help clubs program and create proposals to allow clubs to spend the money out of the RU Summer Arch Budget. Furthermore, the committee would begin gathering student input on the events they would like to see during the summer. Clubs can use this idea as a similar model, by having members on campus meet once a week and do programs on a smaller scale. The Student Union Committee, the Business Operations Committee has already met with the businesses in the Union and talked about increasing their hours for the summer. The administrative office will also have to increase its hours to provide support for clubs.

Rasika Ekhaliar

There are two main problems that affect the Union for Summer Arch: lack of programming, and lack of E-Board’s ability to be active in the summer. I believe that the first summer, we’ll have to explore what sorts of programming students would like to see as well as what is necessary and practical. The Union Administration Office staff have been working very hard to provide plans for summer programs, but the future summers will require feedback from the student body. To solve the second problem, I foresee monthly virtual meetings as well as monthly checkups by E-Board reps with clubs to make sure everyone is on track during the summer term. While I would not require to have meetings at least twice a semester, and with summer being considered a semester, we should adhere to the bylaws by having at least two large events coming midsummer, so most of the meetings could be quick reports on what’s occurred.

During the calendar year, we’ll need to examine the ef-
fect of third-year representatives going elsewhere for their

Harrison Leinweber

I believe that the best way to encourage students to utilize Union facilities is to invest in the physical plant of the Union and work to upgrade its facilities. I helped work to get new tables and chairs into the McNeil room in the Mathematics building this past summer, and I want to continue that work. I want to increase the availability of outlets in the Union, the availability of study spaces, and increase the space available for club meetings throughout the building.

Matthew Rand

Summer Arch provides new opportunities to our students while also introducing interesting new chal-
gen. The one thing that we must ensure stays constant throughout the rollout of Summer Arch is that the Union continues to stay at the forefront of Student Life. Beyond increasing summer programming (such as movie nights, musicians, and performers), the Union must make sure that facilities like the McNeil room and the Rathskellar stay open to students. Additionally, the structure of the Executive Board will need to be revised for the summer months when our body might not be available. During my time, I worked to rewrite our Bylaws multiple times in preparation for the implementation of Summer Arch. If elected, the Executive Board stays functional and continues to be a resource to students, to clubs and organizations, and to our Administrative Staff.

How do you intend to encourage students to fully utilize the resources of the Union?

Keegan Caraway

In order to get students to use Union resources, we need to make sure students know about them. I propose to use the marketing work-study students in the Union to create a pamphlet that could be distributed to first-year students through the Resident Hall staff during SO. In addition, these pamphlets could be in the Admin Office, so any student could get one. The website also needs to be reorganized to make it more user friendly so students can easily access information about clubs and events.

Rasika Ekhaliar

I intend to encourage students to fully utilize Union re-

sources by encouraging them to be aware of all the services on campus, take part in intramural sports on campus, and use the Mueller center as well as other similar resources. I believe the best way to do this is through publicity campaigns about when and where things are; when intramural sports seasons start, what events are going on in the union and Mueller center. Additionally, I think some of the more auxiliary services the Union provides, like the Union lawyer, should be better pub-
licized so students can utilize these less obvious resources.

Harrison Leinweber

I think the Student Government Communication Com-
mitee and the website need to be reworked. Once that happens, we’ll be able to provide the students with no-
tification of activities, and easier access to information. Since many students currently don’t know everything the Union offers, we could have a monthly feature online. Furthermore, we may be able to work with the Office of Student Living and Learning (previously Residence Life) to promote Union activities and events, thereby establishing a base of knowledge and hopefully developing habitual usage of services.

Matthew Rand

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Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885
President of the Union

The Polytechnic endorses Justin Etzine '18 for President of the Union. The highest elected student official at Rensselaer, the GM serves as the leader of the student body. It is his or her responsibility to understand and voice the concerns of the student body to the proper parties. Consequently, the GM bears a significant amount of responsibility to do so to those in the Senate but also to the entire RPI community. Etzine has been a part of student government throughout his tenure in the Senate, which began as the review of Summer Arch housing. As chairperson of the Student Life Committee, Etzine has led initiatives to improve the quality of life on campus, including the establishment of positions for Greek Life. As a student, club, or other group will not succeed in voicing student opinions.

The Polytechnic endorses Rasika Ekhalikar '18 for President of the Union. Running the juggernaut of the Rensselaer Union is no small task, with more than 200 clubs and millions of dollars to account for. Ekhalikar is the candidate we believe can manage the beast. She is well versed in the workings of the Union, both from her role as an Executive Board representative, and as the chairperson of the Business Operations Committee. This is a skill that knowledge of the Union, and the skillset she has gained while serving on the E-Board will ensure the smooth operation of the Union in the yeal to come.

The Poly was impressed at the thoroughness of Ekhalikar’s platform. Of all the candidates for PU, we felt that she put the most time and attention into her words. Her short term goal about encouraging horizontal communication between clubs was well received—the idea is not one we have seen before in candidates, but would greatly benefit the Union’s clubs. Additionally, we liked her thoughts on adapting the Union for the coming Summer Arch changes. Creating a committee of on-campus students to take on these summer tasks makes sense on how the Union will operate during the summer with only a small portion of the student body present.

Ekhalikar stands out as someone who has grown and appreciable, a quality that we value in student leaders. In difficult situations, Ekhalikar has proven herself to be someone who truly listens to both sides of the story and understands the concerns of the parties involved. A student, club, or other group will not succeed in voicing student opinions.

The Editorial Board of The Polytechnic is confident that the Rensselaer Union will enjoy further prosperity should Ekhalikar be elected.

Endorsements

Monday, April 3, 2017

Grand Marshall

The Polytechnic endorses Justin Etzine ‘18 for Grand Marshall. As the highest elected student official at Rensselaer, the GM serves as the leader of the student body. It is his or her responsibility to understand and voice the concerns of the student body to the proper parties. Consequently, the GM bears a significant amount of responsibility to do so to those in the Senate but also to the entire RPI community. Etzine has been a part of student government throughout his tenure in the Senate, which began as the review of Summer Arch housing. As chairperson of the Student Life Committee, Etzine has led initiatives to improve the quality of life on campus, including the establishment of positions for Greek Life. As a student, club, or other group will not succeed in voicing student opinions.

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Undergraduate President

The Polytechnic endorses Kayla Cinnamon ‘18 for Undergraduate President. The Undergraduate President represents the Undergraduate Student Senate, and it is her responsibility to nominate officers, assume the lead of the Student body, and ensure the smooth operation of the Undergraduate Senate. As chairperson of the Student Life Committee, Etzine has led initiatives to improve the quality of life on campus, including the establishment of positions for Greek Life. As a student, club, or other group will not succeed in voicing student opinions.

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Graduate Council

The Graduate Student Council met with candidates running for Grand Marshal and President of the Union. Candidates were asked to describe their platform along with several other questions about how they would involve and support graduate students in their goals for the Student Senate and the Rensselaer Union. Based on their responses and platforms, the GSC has voted to endorse Justin Etzine for GM and Matt Rand for PU. The primary role of the GM is to serve as the leader of the Graduate Student Council and guide Senate committees in their pursuit of student life, academics, and facilities projects. We were unable to arrange a meeting with Stephen Dandur, the campaign proxy for GM candidate Dorer. After meeting with Justin Etzine, we found him to be a qualified candidate for the GM position. Etzine’s passion for student government has been noted by the GSC, but we find more impressive the fact that, over the last year, Etzine has shown a renewed interest in working with the GSC and its graduate students. We are particularly looking forward to following up on his promises for improved communication with the Graduate Council, such as including the Graduate Student President or Vice President in meetings with the administration.

Our next endorsement is for the position of President of the Union. Each candidate had interesting project ideas, but Rand’s approach to increasing coordination between Undergraduate and graduate councils seemed to offer the most potential for beneficial, rapid, and effective policy changes. Rand’s extensive experience with both the administration and student government make him equally capable of quickly and effectively implementing some of the changes we discussed. In addition, the GSC has sought to more fairly distribute Union activity fees between the graduate and Undergraduate populations. We look forward to working with Rand on his proposal to collect statistics on the usage of the Student Union and its various programs.