

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Kristina Hefty

October 28, 2009

Greetings GAPSA Assembly,

This past month has been a busy month of learning and development for me in my new position. I've stepped into a very busy agenda and I am very excited about several things that are going on in Public Affairs for GAPSA this fall.

At the end of September, a few GAPSA Executives took a trip to Washington D.C. for the NAGPS (National Association of Graduate-Professional Students) Legislative Action Days. Kristi Kremers, GAPSA President, and I met with representatives from all 10 of the Minnesota delegates' offices. We discussed issues on the NAGPS platform (H1B Visas, Open Access to Research, and Tax Incentives) as well as student indebtedness and how it affects graduate and professional students at the University of Minnesota. Kristi and I presented each of the offices with a copy of the *Indebtedness: Report and Recommendations* document that Kristi authored, as well as a framed copy of the Adam Turman print that was designed for GAPSA. Our hopes are for delegates to hang the art and be reminded of graduate and professional student issues. I have now established e-mail correspondence that goes out bi-weekly to these office members including GAPSA news and any resolutions or public affairs work we have completed.

To increase student engagement in public affairs, GAPSA hosted its first session (of four) in the Organizers Breakfast Club Series on October 9, 2009. Monica Howell, GAPSA At-Large Director, Jacob Chin, Public Affairs Assistant, myself and 8 other students attended the training conducted by Dennis Donovan with the Center for Democracy and Citizenship. We learned and practiced the community organizing skill called "one-on-ones" and established issues and groups that we'll be working in for change in our communities.

This coming weekend, I will be attending the SAGE (Student Advocates for Graduate Education) Conference hosted by the University of Washington along with five other GAPSA colleagues. We will be there Friday through Sunday voting on many issues regarding the organization. SAGE was created for legislative purposes and the sharing of best practices. I will have a more detailed report at the next assembly meeting.

This next month, my goal is to work on setting up a legislative event for graduate and professional students at the University of Minnesota for the spring semester, writing at least 3 resolutions to be voted on at our next assembly meeting, and setting up meetings with state legislators to discuss student issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

GAPSA is still looking for a Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Representative. As Jasmine reported at the last assembly meeting, we are continuing to partner with the Student Neighborhood Liaisons program through the Office for Student and Community Relations. Any graduate or



professional student living in the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood is encouraged to get involved. Interested students should contact Jacob at gapsapa@umn.edu with a statement of interest.

Our next Organizers Breakfast Club session will be on Friday, November 6, 2009 (8:30-10:30am) and will focus on “Power” as it relates to community organizing. We would love to invite those who are interested in attending; please contact Jacob at gapsa@umn.edu to RSVP. Participants will receive organizers training and will be coached through three more sessions on power, self-interest and relationship building, and advocacy/lobbying leading up to our annual Support the U Day at the capitol. More information can be found on the Government Affairs section of the GAPSA website.

Every Wednesday morning for the rest of the fall semester, I will be working with Public Affairs Assistant, Jacob Chin, on writing resolutions related to public affairs matters. If you have an issue that you think the GAPSA Assembly should have a written stance on, or if you would like to attend the Wednesday resolution sessions, please contact me via e-mail at heft0020@umn.edu.

Thank You,

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