

# **GEORGIE BRITCHER'S PLATFORM FOR STUDENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT**

## **Affordability. Advocacy. Accountability.**

### **Affordability**

#### **Financial Assistance**

The GW Office of Financial Assistance can be difficult to navigate. Many students on campus, including Georgie herself, have found themselves spending countless hours attempting to communicate with financial assistance employees without receiving answers to their questions. Scholarship displacement has affected many students, and with the loss of Fixed Tuition, students fear that GW will become more unaffordable for them.

Georgie will address issues with financial assistance through establishing a Vice President for Financial Advocacy. At the moment, the SA does not have an official liaison responsible for maintaining communication and advocacy on behalf of the student body with the Office of Financial Assistance. By creating a VP position for financial advocacy, Georgie will help support students who struggle to navigate the barriers of financial aid alone. The VP of Financial Advocacy will work with the Office of Financial Assistance to ensure students' needs and wants are understood and put into action. This collaboration between students and the Office of Financial Assistance will address concerns such as scholarship displacement and a lack of financial transparency. Georgie will work to ensure that the Office of Financial Assistance's website is easier to navigate and has more resources for students such as a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section.

#### **Resident Advisors at GW**

As a Resident Advisor (RA) in Hensley Hall on the Mount Vernon Campus, Georgie understands the importance of RAs as student leaders at GW. RAs have an important perspective on residential life and the student experience. However, as RAs advocate for students, they also need someone to help advocate for them. Georgie will amplify the voices of RAs in the decision making process through establishing a Director of RA Affairs at GW to communicate with administrators about the needs of RAs on GW's campus.

#### **Free Metro Access**

Many students commute by Metro for off-campus housing, internships, jobs, and recreation. Georgie will help make student travel more affordable through asking administration to provide all students with a UPass, allowing them to

have free, unlimited Metro access to commute and explore the city beyond Foggy Bottom without the financial burden of individual Metro fares.

### **Transferring and Counting Credits**

Currently, CCAS and Milken students cannot use transfer credits after enrolling in GW to count towards their GPAC (a.k.a. general education) requirements. Students who take summer courses outside of GW should be able to have those credits count GPAC requirements in addition to major requirements.

At GW, the grades that IB students entering GW need to attain course credit are much higher than the grades needed at our market basket institutions. Georgie will advocate for full matriculation for CCAS students so that they may transfer credits to fulfill GPAC requirements. She will also push to have the university accept 5's to receive IB credit at GW.

### **Laundry and Printing Credits**

The available laundry and printing credits do not go far enough to make GW affordable for students. As SA President, Georgie will propose increasing laundry credits by fifteen credits a semester over the course of the 2020-2021 academic year. Under this proposal, students will receive 45 laundry credits in the fall of 2020 and 60 credits in the spring of 2021. She will also suggest increasing printing credits by 15 dollars, allowing students to receive 45 dollars in free printing next academic year.

### **Dining**

Dining at GW is unaffordable and unsuitable for many GW students who have dietary restrictions. Georgie will collaborate with GW Dining to raise awareness about meal deals on campus through advertisements. She will also continue to partner with GW's affordable dining partners such as Twenty Tables and GW Hospital to make healthy and quality food accessible to all students regardless of income level. Georgie will push to increase affordable Halal, Kosher, Vegetarian, Vegan, and gluten-free dining options. Georgie will collaborate with vendors to bring more GWorld dining options to the Mount Vernon Campus and expand the hours of Pelham Dining Commons.

### **Account Holds**

Often, students do not become aware of holds that exist on their student account until those holds prevent them from registering for classes. Account holds can impede the ability of students to take the classes they need to graduate on time. Georgie will ask GW administration to implement a policy that says that all holds must be placed on a student's account at least 72 hours before their class registration period starts. Additionally, Georgie will work to ensure that all students are notified via email when a hold is placed on their account.

# Advocacy

## **Sustainability**

Georgie believes that GW should make the health of our planet a top priority by fully divesting from fossil fuels. As SA President, Georgie will continue to advocate for fossil fuel divestment and support the work of the environmental impact task force at GW in whatever way she can. Georgie will formalize the relationship between the divestment movement on GW's campus and the SA through meeting with divestment leaders monthly in the SA office to discuss shared goals and priorities.

As SA President, Georgie will increase the number of available composting options for both the Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon campuses, establish a garden on Mount Vernon Campus to provide additional healthy food options for GW students, and install more water bottle filling stations around campus to reduce the adverse environmental impact of plastic bottles.

## **Naming**

Many names at our institution are inaccurate, insensitive, and inappropriate representations of the GW community. GW has both a mascot, George Washington, and a moniker, the Colonial. Georgie will advocate for changing the Colonial Moniker, which is both historically inaccurate and deeply offensive to many students at GW.

Georgie will also push to rename the Marvin Center. Cloyd Heck Marvin, GW's president from 1927 to 1959, was an avowed racist who did not believe that students of color should be allowed to attend GW with white students. Georgie believes that if GW is to properly acknowledge its fraught racial history, we must not allow Marvin to be honored at such a prominent location on campus.

However, addressing names and symbols does not stop with the Colonial Moniker and the Marvin Center. As SA president, George will work to establish guidelines for adopting names and symbols that better represent an inclusive campus.

## **Multicultural Student Org Council**

Student organizations are places where students feel at home and find their place at GW. However, student orgs sometimes struggle to effectively communicate with each other. This problem is especially prevalent in new orgs. Many times, the executive team of a new org encounters problems with communication and planning due to a lack of previous student org experience.

As SA President, Georgie will work to close this knowledge gap through creating a Multicultural Student Org Council. This council will allow multicultural student orgs to collaborate on events and provide each other with advice and resources. There would be at least one representative from each multicultural student org on the council. The council will have the ability to coordinate with the SA on diversity and inclusion events and issues. Georgie believes that we must give new student orgs every possible opportunity to succeed and enrich the GW community.

### **Relocation of the MSSC**

The MSSC serves as an important hub for our multicultural students on campus. However, the space is inaccessible and cramped for the greater community it serves. As SA President, Georgie will work to relocate the MSSC to a more accessible, modern, and larger space at a more central location on campus.

## **Accountability**

### **Improve Student-Administration Relationships**

Usually, administrators at GW only hold town halls and discussions with student groups after an incident on campus arises. As SA President, Georgie will work with administration to facilitate regular town halls, focus groups, and other types of discussions so that administration is fully aware of the problems facing GW students. Georgie will also find new and innovative ways to advertise office hours with administrators like President LeBlanc.

### **The Mount Vernon Campus**

The Mount Vernon Campus needs to be incorporated into all discussions on safety, accessibility, and dining. Georgie will work to improve the processes by which students are placed on the Vern, listen to the Athletic community's perspective on how the Vern can better meet their needs, and bolster the water system and kitchen facilities in the Mount Vernon buildings.

### **ADA Accessibility**

GW needs to improve its level of accessibility for students with disabilities. Currently, none of the buildings on the Foggy Bottom or Mount Vernon campuses are fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. As SA President, Georgie will establish a Vice President for Accessibility in her Cabinet to assist her in advocating for solutions to accessibility issues. The VP for Accessibility will fight to make sure that the Marvin Center restrooms have a push button to automatically open up their exterior bathroom doors. The VP for Accessibility will work to

incorporate more breil writing on GW signs and place strobe lights in certain residence halls for use during fire alarms.

### **Incident Response Team**

As SA President, Georgie will establish a group of students from varying backgrounds to work together in response to campus incidents that require immediate attention. This group would consist of approximately eight to ten students to help write response statements instead of just relying on students from the community affected to draft a response. This group will draft incident response statements in collaboration with SA members, students, and organizations who feel they can add an important perspective and contribution.

### **Health Care**

Quality health care is a crucial aspect of the student experience, and part of quality health care is making sure that students have privacy when giving health providers sensitive personal information. Currently, students who go to GW's health care spaces have to input personal information on iPads in a public waiting room, which could lead to privacy violations. As SA President, Georgie will rectify this issue by urging GW to purchase privacy screen protectors for all health center iPads so that sensitive health information will not be seen by unwanted eyes.