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Hail to the Chief(s)

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Mimi Mudd ('14), a leadership major from St. Louis, is the 2013-2014 President of the Westhampton College Government Association. Mimi spoke with Molly Rossi from the Forum to discuss her goals for the upcoming year and to reflect on how her involvement with WCGA has affected her college experience.

As a freshman, how did you decide what to become involved in?

I did the classic freshman thing where you go to the activities fair and pick up 60 flyers, then attend 20 different meetings, and get a little involved in everything. As time goes on, you narrow it down to three or four things you really care about. That is how you begin to find your passion. When I first joined my class cabinet, I never imagined that down the road I would be thinking about running for WCGA president.

What is the goal of WCGA as a campus organization?

Our central goal is to act as a student-elected and student-run body that represents campus as a whole. We want to function for the needs of the student body, while acting as a liaison to efficiently relay information from the administration to the students.

What issues do you intend to focus on this year?

I want to improve student government's visibility as a campus organization, and make sure that we are getting the full scope of student concerns and ideas. We need better ways to reach out to students. To address this, WCGA will begin to offer an anonymous way of contacting WC Student Concerns. Also, we want to develop more schoolwide traditions that foster Richmond pride and bring everyone together. Pat Love and I both want to increase collaboration between WCGA and RCSGA, and we hope that the increase of WCGA-RCSGA joint meetings from once per semester to monthly meetings will allow us to work towards our goals quickly and effectively for the entire student body.

What advice would you give to freshmen who have interest in student government, but are intimidated by the idea of becoming a candidate?

Just go for it. It was something that I never imagined I would do. I was never part of student government or any groups like that in high school, so I was nervous, but running for class president my sophomore year was one of the best things I have ever done. Just the candidacy itself is an important experience, whether you win or lose. You are able to meet so many different people. I have become more outgoing because student government challenged me to put myself out there. As you transition to college, do things you wouldn't have done before, because that's when you begin to grow the most.

- MOLLY ROSSI
Patrick Love ('14), president of the Richmond College Student Government Association, is an economics and environmental studies double-major from Long Island, NY. Also a dedicated cross-country runner and a leader in student environmental efforts, Love thrives at the intersection of academics, athletics, and campus politics. In a momentary lull during a hectic summer of work at a D.C. consulting firm, he shared some thoughts with Jenni Swegan on student life and his upcoming presidency.

**With such a staggering schedule, how do you prioritize and manage your time?**

My priority is always academics. Other things are extra-curricular. And I try to manage my time by not wasting it. I don’t have Facebook, for example, and I ride a bike on campus. Everyone should have a bike—little things like that save so much time.

**Why did you choose to parcel out some of that time to RCSGA?**

As a freshman, I joined RCSGA because I found it to be the best way to participate directly in campus life. I always found in high school that student government was the most direct outlet to create positive change. So I joined senate. The older guys paved the path and helped the younger guys understand Richmond.

**And now that you’re an older guy, how do you hope to see UR change during your presidency?**

One of my main goals is to increase transparency and student participation in campus decision-making. This summer I’m creating a database showing all the committees students can join and work with faculty, staff, and administrators to improve campus life. Other projects include getting a shuttle to the river and improving access to the health center.

**What do you consider UR's best and worst qualities?**

UR is incredibly eclectic. That’s both its best and its worst quality. Everyone’s focused and very passionate about diverse interests, which is good. But what’s missing is a sense of unity, a collective Richmond student ethos. One of my main goals is to bring that ethos to RCSGA. If the senate is reflecting that commonality to the student body, and upperclassmen are reflecting it to incoming classes, then UR can really come together.

**Do you think the coordinate college system has something to do with that lack of unity?**

The coordinate college system has its strengths and weaknesses, but I support it. It’s always been that way, so it will continue to be. Richmond’s traditions are pillars, experiences of commonality, and that’s important. But being from UR should be more than just going to Pig Roast together. We should be proud to be here.

- Jenni Swegan