

Student Gov't Presidential Candidates Question & Answer Session

(Continued from front cover)

John Shaffer**Q: What inspired you to run for SGA President?**

A: I've always believed that one thing in this life is important: giving back. I choose to give back through student government. There is nothing more satisfying than hearing students talk about the new washer you helped to fight for or see them using the hydration stations SGA purchased. I believe I have the ability to fight for student causes and organize the power behind the student voice. Our university is at its greatest not when the concerns of the administration are being voiced, but when the voices of the students are heard. We are at an unprecedented stage in our university's history where strong leaders need to take charge and motivate students. I am the candidate that can do so. We cannot undo the mistakes of the past, but we can build a brighter tomorrow.

Q: What do you think students are looking for in a SGA President?

A: I think students are looking for a number of qualities. First they want a president who is approachable and will reach out to them - something which I have done as an SGA senator. They are also looking for a president who will not be afraid to stand up and fight for the issues that matter to them, something which I pledge to always do. Students want someone easy to talk to and relatable. I believe I embody all of the above qualities.

Q: As SGA President, what impact do you feel you can make on campus?

A: I can cause great change here on campus which I have demonstrated over the past year, but there is much work left to do. Our current President Coty Covert and myself helped to draft legislation delivered directly to our university president about transparency from Penn State. Students are asked to pay exorbitant amounts in tuition and deserve to know where that money is going. Also, a huge item on my agenda will be implementing a commuter meal plan that is sensible and low-cost. I plan to also investigate every available location for additional commuter parking. I also firmly believe that Housing and Food Services should make the nutrition facts of their products more widely available and should offer more healthy and higher quality choices. We also need to look into opening up additional lounge areas in the quad and building a sustainable garden and/or greenhouse on campus for horticulture students. For residents, I would like to get personal heating and air-conditioning for students in Penn Gate I.

Q: What do you feel makes you the best candidate?

A: I have a record of being effective through student government. What our campus needs most right now is a student government that will reach out and connect with every student individually, something which I have been fighting for this semester and something I will continue to do as president. Right now it is crucial that we retain effective leaders in student government. I am approachable and my door is always open for students to voice their concerns and ideas. I firmly believe that every student matters.

Q: What leadership positions have you held before and what have you learned from them?

A: I served the SGA as a senator from Penn Gate this past year. I have learned how to reach out to students and how to be effective in student government. I am also co-editor of our campus newspaper, The Fourth Wall. This has taught me how to organize a team that can get a job done.

Q: Who are your role models?

A: My role models are my mother who has always been understanding and caring, and my good friend Nathan Pallo who taught me that even if you're from a small town you can still go on to achieve great things.

Q: Who in the government has been an inspiration to you?

A: I have always looked up to John F. Kennedy. JFK was able to unite young people and get them excited about government in an unprecedented way. I hope to do the same.

Q: What do you feel makes a great college experience?

A: Being involved is one of the best ways to improve your college experience. Whether it be serving in student government, or joining an activity or sports team, so many opportunities are available. They give students a sense of satisfaction, provide them with a community of friends, and gives them the opportunity to stand out and achieve success.

What's important to students?

"Better commuter meal plan."

-Erik Riess

"Involvement with students."

-Mike Fisher

"Putting the students first, not the position."

-Anonymous

"Bigger commuter discount."

-C. Gingrich

"Making 'public appearances'."

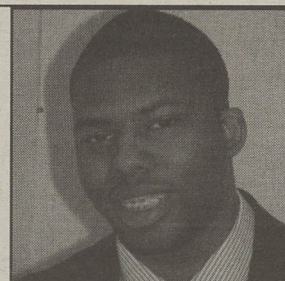
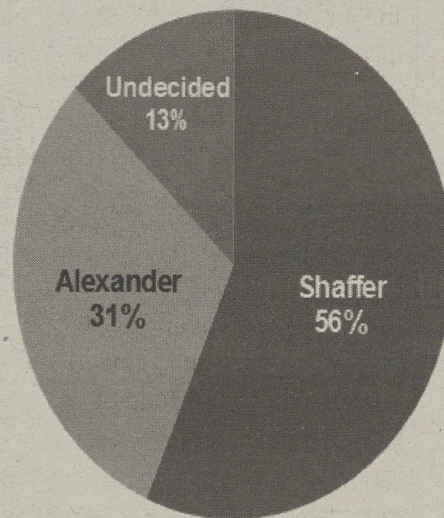
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**The Fourth Wall Straw Poll**

Polling conducted in The Millstream Café with a total of 39 voluntary responses.

Jalon Alexander**Q: What inspired you to run for SGA President?**

A: Mont Alto is a beautiful school with a huge amount of diversity, whether it is with students, nature, political ideology, etc. However, Mont Alto is not diverse when it comes to important issues such as faculty, or classes that study the history of different cultures, races and groups. I pay \$1.74 each day for a salad and drink because I live on campus. As a commuter that cost would be \$6.35. We both are students of the same institution and should be politically, socially and economically treated the same. These institutional inequalities have not been resolved and have led me to believe that the success of Mont Alto desires a leader that can organize the insurmountable strength of students. Because I have been successful with endeavors of that nature I was inspired to run.

Q: What do you think students are looking for in a SGA President?

A: Students want an active, down to earth president. Students want a president they know is committed to serving their needs and wants, one who genuinely cares for them. I feel that above all else, ideological issues on campus are important. One secret blessing to this campaign is the fact that it's allowed me to meet so many amazing people from different backgrounds and groups. Whether it's the president of the campus Veterans' Association or a student who was born in a different country, I have gotten to know the needs and wants of the student body in the way democratic theory intends it to be. That is a voice of the people from the people.

Q: As SGA President what impact do you feel you can make on campus?

A: As SGA president I know I can do the following: First, I will be more accessible to everyone. I know that I can be active among all places on campus in hearing the needs and wants of students. This campaign process has forced me to do many things such as opening myself up to people I don't know, thinking about issues from perspectives that may not interest me and overall just exposing myself to some great but often uncomfortable experiences. Second, I know that right now, after a petition I created and helped lead, the addition of classes on cultural diversity is on the way. As SGA president I can deliver some of the final blows to ending unintended campus inequality toward academic knowledge of groups from different backgrounds. Lastly, I will do the best I can to equalize things economically with housing and food services for commuters and students.

Q: What do you feel makes you the best candidate?

A: During my time on campus I have engaged in many endeavors that have put me in positions of leadership to learn about positions relevant to student needs and wants. Last semester I co-edited the Fourth Wall newspaper. It was a very interesting experience learning about what students found important and reading some excellent essays about them. But the most important experience I had was sitting and advocating for the Student Activity Fund and for important proposals that students cared about and desired. These include The HDFS Tenement Museum trip to New York to learn about immigrants' lives and experiences here, funding for the Fourth Wall newspaper, driving simulators that show the dangers of texting while driving, trips to Hershey Park in the dark, etc. Point being, leadership and skills with advocacy are key, but my genuine care and love for the well-being of students is something I know I provide. This makes me the best candidate without question.

Q: What leadership positions have you held before and what have you learned from them?

A: I served as co-editor of The Fourth Wall newspaper, sat on the S.A.F. committee, and created the petition for more classes for diversity. From all of these experiences, I've learned how to argue effectively in a non-confrontational sense to get things changed or to create compromises for the betterment of the campus.

Q: Who has been an inspiration to you?

A: My mother, God, and grandfather have all served as inspiration for me. They all showed me the value and true impact of selflessness and how it can benefit yourself and others.

Q: Who are your role models?

A: Lyndon B. Johnson, Malcolm X, and Richard Nixon.