The Stewart platform for Senate Member of SGA

I am interested in becoming a senator for the UVM SGA for a multitude of reasons. I want to be not only an advocate for various sects of the student body, but also a member of the SGA as a means of facilitating meaningful change alongside some of my peers. UVM is an incredible institution with many ambitious and motivated individuals who have much to contribute to not only the university, but the greater community as well. I want their experience at UVM to be as worthwhile an endeavor as it possibly can be. And to succeed in this, their concerns should be met with solutions.

Aspects of student life I would like to see addressed would be the undue financial burden many students face due to a rise in administration. Obviously I’m not suggesting that the entire administration should be wiped out, however, I think it’s important that students know where their tuition money is going. Moreover, I have recently learned that the University will no longer be considered a research university unless something is done to lower administration spending to allow an increase professor hiring, and retention. This is disturbing considering how much money the school is investing in their science buildings and programs.

Mental health is another facet of student life I would like to see changed. Speaking from personal experience, having to wait over a week for a CAPs appointment that I thought was crucial, is miserable and can put students at greater risk for depression and a multitude of anxiety-related issues. I think that there should be a greater emphasis put on accessibility to mental health care. UVM does a fantastic job at de-stigmatizing receiving help for mental health, yet there is a severe shortcoming in how the school then helps students who suffer from mental health issues.

Greek life is a small but influential part of the UVM community. It raises more money for charity than any other organization on campus, and its alumni are active donors to the school as well. However, in recent years, there seems to be a target towards Greek life here, as it is not subtle. More than just philanthropic pursuits, Greek life provides hundreds of students with a community and network that they have a sense of belonging to. Due to the recent removal of the tax-exempt status, many members of the Greek community have had to withdraw their membership due to rising costs. I believe that it is the schools duty to protect and advocate for all members of their community, especially those who are so active in aspects of student life the school advertises, such as philanthropy.