

I am running as a first-year senator to represent the interests of three main groups at UVM: International(chiefly African) Students, Out-of-State students, and Students of Color. While these groups are the ones of which I would focus much of my attention on as a senator, I would of course additionally represent the interests of the Class of 2029 as a whole.

One characteristic that I have that I believe would serve me well as a student senator is my ability to socialize with nearly anyone. Through the trials I endured during my upbringing, I have created one mantra which I brandish with me wherever life happens to take me: "Believe the best in everyone." That mantra sums up how I interact with people. When there is conflict, I deescalate it and ask "why fight each other? What'll this fix?" When I encounter a stranger on the street and I want to compliment their Star Wars Episode III graphic tee, I will; And I will certainly discuss Anakin's tragic fall. My knowing how to navigate a wide variety of social scenarios would make me a strong leader during times of adversity and serenity alike.

Before attending UVM, I have had a plethora of leadership experiences, many of which have shaped who I am today, as well the organizations I had the privilege of leading. My foray into leadership began as a student council representative at my High School, DeLaSalle. I maintained this position for 4 years, having a hands-on role at school events, and working and communicating in tandem with school maintenance and administration. My second major leadership role was as a senior patrol leader of my Boy Scouts troop, 9060. As a SPL, I was in charge of fostering a fraternal(and somewhat orderly) disposition in our Troop. The final role I would like to share is my role as my school's Black Student Union's resource manager. While on paper I was a resource manager, I would go outside of my commissioned role to inform black students that they had resources, and I would create educational mini lectures to teach Black History.

While I do not currently see any issues with UVM at the moment, I would like to, as a student senator, protect minority students from the uptick of discrimination on account of race and migrant status. This issue is deeply personal for me, as not a week before I attended UVM, I had an encounter with members of a white supremacist group. While I agree with free speech, as it protects everyone equally, hate speech should NEVER be socially accepted, as it can lead to conglomerations such as the pissants who harassed me. As a senator, I will promise to do my best to never let what happened to me happen to even one student.

Thank you for your consideration,

Joseph “JB” Ketter ‘29