

Noah McAllister

SGA Senate Elections - Spring 2021: Platform



Hi, Everyone! My name is Noah McAllister and I use he/him pronouns. I am a second year environmental engineering student in CEMS and the Honors College. In addition to being an undergraduate research assistant and a teaching assistant, I am involved with UVM Hillel, previously as a marketing intern and currently as a committee member on the UVM Hillel Student Board. I also get to safely spend time with my friends and of course take care of my plants (the number of which, has only grown as the pandemic has gone on, now 16...). Regardless, I will be able to represent you well, both because of my experience and my strengths. Below you will find some of the topics I am most passionate about addressing on campus. To all of these issues, I plan on bringing my skills of complex problem solving and collaboration to the table where our campus's most pressing issues are resolved.

## Sustainability

I will be a champion for you when it comes to sustainability. While my credibility mainly lies in environmental sustainability, it is hard to fully separate that from other fields of sustainability. My credentials are that I am a LEED Certified Green Associate (GA). Much like how several buildings on campus (Davis Center, Aiken Center, UHN, and UHS) are certified by LEED for meeting strict sustainability goals, I am trained and certified in understanding these goals in their totality. It is my duty as a LEED GA to encourage sustainable growth and development in my community. As a Senator, it would therefore be my duty to hold the University to its promises of sustainability and how to develop them further. I have also been awarded the Barrett Scholarship for environmental research. This scholarship affirms that UVM and CEMS see me as a leader in environmentalism and its practical applications. Beyond environmental sustainability, part of my job as an environmental engineer is to understand the broader impacts of infrastructure projects. Discussions of social and economic inequalities are not a foreign concept among my peers and professors, in and out of the classroom. I promise to always be an advocate for those who face injustice environmentally, socially, and economically.

## Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is a larger problem on our campus than most of us realize. SGA has already done great work in diminishing this problem on our campus, particularly in the creation of Rally Cat's Cupboard. I think that the next step in addressing this issue is to defeat the stigma around it. A campaign should be created to inform the student body better on what food insecurity looks like; how it is about the uncertainty in if your next meal will be one in which its

benefits outweigh its sacrifices. From there, we will be able to work with the University to truly address the problem. The basics of government tell us that we pay the University to provide us certain securities, food being among them. Right now, as has been made clear in my own life and in discussion with my friends and peers, the University is not upholding their end of the social contract in this regard. One does not need to be overly picky to face insecurity on this campus, and those that have various food restrictions only struggle more. The lack of true effort against food insecurity by the University fosters poor nutrition and eating disorders.

### Campus Waste Management

We are all quite aware of the fact that there are very minimal outdoor waste bins on campus. As a fairly environmentally aware and responsible campus, there is common sentiment that this is wrong. The University is only hurting its image in the lack of ‘public’ waste bins in that we pride ourselves on being green, but there is noticeable litter. The University also proclaims this campus is “dry”, but the litter they allow to collect tells a different story. There are plenty of ways to defend this decision the University has made, but that does not mean that there is not a solution. As a final project for a class last Fall, I had worked on developing a system in which students would provide the solution. The Campus Litter Initiative (CLEaN) will provide students with small washable, reusable, and sealable bags that can fit in or clip onto backpacks, which can be emptied at any number of indoor waste bins. This avoids the detraction I think most of us would feel about putting trash directly in our bags. It also avoids confronting the University with providing more waste bins, which comes with a wide set of disadvantages as well. CLEaN allows us to be actively involved in maintaining our campus’s image.