

# ASW STRATEGIZES TO INCREASE INTEREST IN STUDENT GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

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Campaigning for the ASW 2022–23 election began Feb. 23 after ASW members strategized to increase interest for students to take up candidate positions.

“For ASW, I think a government that is stagnant is doing less of its job,” said Brynlie Green Morris, current speaker of the senate, presidential candidate and junior justice studies major, in the candidate debate held over Microsoft Teams Feb. 24.

Green said they hope to keep adapting ASW’s structure continuously, encouraging the government to be the best it can be for supporting students.

Voting opens for president, vice president and clubs president Wednesday, March 2 and results will be announced Friday, March 4, according to chief justice and junior biology major Claire Mischel.

## ASW’s Strategies to Reach Interested Students

The 2021–22 election was extended due to low interest last year, according to Mischel as quoted in a previous story from *The Forum*. For the new election cycle, Mischel said low student interest was a concern again.

“[There are] new students that come in, there are students that leave,” Mischel said. “And I think it’s just that turnover of new ideas and new personalities coming to campus that’s really gonna help that optimism stay present and keep [campus] moving forward.”

A few strategies were used to garner interest in this year’s election.

“We do generalized outreach to the entire community, but then really seek out specific students,” said ASW president and senior communication major Brendan Sudberry.

Reaching out to a selection of students — a strategy called shoulder tapping — is utilized because students often have an interest in running but might need



Brynlie Green Morris, a junior justice studies major and current speaker of the senate, and Ashlee Szwedko, a sophomore neuroscience major and current ASW events president, talk outside the ASW office on Feb. 28. For the 2022–23 ASW election, Green is campaigning for the ASW president position and Szwedko is for the ASW vice president position.

an encouraging push, according to Sudberry.

Ian Troost, the student involvement and orientation coordinator, said he emailed faculty for ASW candidate suggestions. Troost said he then reached out to those recommended as strong potential student leaders.

“When I did get answers from students, they said they didn’t feel they had the time,” Troost said. “Or they weren’t necessarily looking to take on another commitment right now, because they’re still trying to find the rhythm with school and [jobs].”

Recently appointed Vice President Gaebble Jones, a senior international business major, was selected using this shoulder tapping method, according to Sudberry.

“We really reached out to folks on campus who we knew are directly engaged with [campus], active students or student leaders and other capacities,” Sudberry said.

## Restructuring Student Perception for Engagement

ASW has not operated at full capacity in light of COVID-19 restrictions, according to Troost.

The emphasis on hosting, or trying to host events has altered student perception of ASW, according to Sudberry.

“ASW, the structure, is dysfunctional,” Sudberry said. “Events is everything the student body knows about ASW.”

This events-only student perception of ASW impacts engagement, according to Sudberry.

“I think there’s a trend where [ASW’s] just not taken that seriously, just because [students] don’t see what all it is,” Sudberry said.

Sudberry said some of the candidates have talked about restructuring ASW moving forward and discussed what changes are necessary for “ongoing success and increased engagement.”

Brynlie Green Morris, current speaker of the senate, 2022–23 presidential candidate and junior justice studies major, said they hope to bring structural changes to ASW.

“I hope to encourage feedback and for everyone to be constantly in this growth and restructuring period,” Green said.

## 2022–23 ASW Candidates

Presidential candidate:

- Brynlie Green Morris, junior justice studies major

Vice president candidates:

- Cris Mora-Rubio, junior public health major
- Ashlee Szwedko, sophomore neuroscience major

Clubs president candidates:

- Juanita Galvis, first-year marketing and communication custom major
- Grace von Mettenheim, junior environmental studies major

“I want to make an impact,” Mora-Rubio said in the candidate debate. “I want to leave something behind and I want to make at least the last year that I was here the most memorable one that I had, and hopefully I can do that with other people.”

Elections for the senate and the chief justice positions will be held after spring break, according to Mischel.

Voting opens Wednesday, March 3.

Mischel said, “please vote, make your voice heard.”