James Moschella for GPSS Vice President of External Affairs

Statement of Objectives
I am pursuing the office of GPSS Vice President of External Affairs because I am confident that I can further the essential work GPSS has begun by advocating for graduate education. My past and recent experiences representing GPSS at state and federal levels provide me the necessary tools to improve graduate education at UW. I will do this by working with the revamped GPSS Federal and State Legislative Advisory Boards to develop a platform that best-fits UW’s graduate student needs. Next year I will:

• Further GPSS’s work on student debt at federal and state levels
• Push for state resources for mental health support at UW
• Advocate for funding for UW’s graduate student veterans

Student Debt
Many bills in support of reforming the student loan system were introduced last session in Olympia, and I want to continue this push. I will work with the state legislature to introduce and explore student debt refinancing plans for graduate and professional students. I also plan to push the federal government to institute equity on student loan repayment plans. Finally, I will advocate for hearings to bring graduate student debt to the political forefront at state and federal levels.

Mental Health
UW needs a more concerted effort to provide useful mental health resources on campus. I will push representatives at UW and in Olympia to allocate much-needed resources to our university, starting with financing the requisite number of full-time staff to serve our population. Graduate students need these resources as much as any other population, and I will aim to bring graduate student needs to the forefront of the discussion.

Supporting Veterans
Veterans make up a large proportion of graduate and professional students, as much as any individual graduate academic department. Graduate students should support veterans in developing and implementing initiatives to fund vocational training, and support services for veteran’s mental health. As Vice President of External Affairs, I will work with the newly developed Office of Veteran Student Life to support veterans by advocating for increased funding dedicated to mental health resources.
**Professional Background**
As Vice President of External Affairs, I will draw on both my past experiences and skills I have developed as a graduate student, as well as my experience as GPSS's Policy Analyst this academic year. I have worked for Senator Harry Reid on constituent casework and outreach. I have also worked at Dana Farber Cancer Institute on groundbreaking cancer research, in institutions supporting veteran entrepreneurship, in Turkey teaching English to international students, and have volunteered on a multitude of campaigns. Finally, I bring community-organizing experience on many government levels.

This past year, I was given the opportunity to experience lobbying at the Washington state level and the federal level. I helped to organize Huskies on the Hill in Olympia, attended Student Advocates for Graduate Education's (SAGE) Day on the Hill, and was elected SAGE’s Political Director for 2016-2017. I have contributed to GPSS’s push to reform student debt in Olympia by providing background analyses, and plan to push even further with stronger interim work in this pivotal election year. My graduate program has provided me high-level understanding of management practices, budgeting, and policy analysis as well.

This combined experience working in politics nationally and locally provides me the best opportunity to push forward for stronger support for graduate students in Olympia as well as in the United States.

I would be honored to represent our University's Graduate and Professional Students as the 2016-2017 GPSS Vice President of External Affairs. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

James Moschella  
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MPA Candidate, Class of 2017