Greetings GPSS! My name is Colin Trobough, and I’m proud to announce my candidacy for GPSS Vice President of External Affairs. My passion for helping those in need grew after I graduated high school when I began my work as a caregiver for developmentally disabled adults. It was during this time that I realized how necessary and beneficial community service is to all of our lives. For roughly four years, I served the developmentally disabled population by helping to empower their community integration and engagement, build their life skills, and support their path toward independent living and achieving their dreams. My love for community service evolved into a commitment to public service during the 2019 legislative session when I worked for the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. During the six months I was there, I gained in-depth knowledge about the legislative process and firsthand experience with the state budget-making procedure. Additionally, I drafted and organized the budgets for the office’s Washington World Fellows program, a global leadership program for high school students that offers study abroad and academic experience to students who might not be able to access comparable opportunities, as well as the Legislative Youth Advisory Council, the official voice for Washington State youth in the legislature. If elected GPSS Vice President of External Affairs, I will put my experience to work to fulfill GPSS legislative priorities and maximize the resources provided to UW graduate and professional students in the next legislative session’s biennial state budget.

Objectives

1. Work collaboratively with other GPSS senators, officers, the Legislative Advisory Board, and graduate and professional student interest groups across campus to draft a legislative agenda by the end of spring quarter so that we can lobby effectively on behalf of GPSS policy interests over the summer. This process will include the creation of a feedback system that graduate and professional students, as well as GPSS senators, can use to offer input on legislative goals and guide advocacy.

2. Engage and build on the network of professional relationships that I have within the Washington State Senate, Washington State House of Representatives, Washington State Executive Branch, Washington State Agencies, lobbyists, and advocacy groups to support the passage of GPSS legislative priorities.

3. Increase civic engagement and voter turnout among UW graduate and professional students by conducting presentations and workshops that teach students about the legislative process, the importance of civic engagement, and how to navigate and utilize online bill tracking tools during the legislative session. As a part of these efforts, I aim to increase Graduate Student Day on the Hill participation and also establish remote access opportunities for students who are unable to attend.

4. Utilize my legislative brief and memo writing experience to regularly provide GPSS legislative priority progress reports throughout my term of office, and produce especially detailed reports throughout the 2021 legislative session.

Legislative Priorities:

- COVID-19 Relief Fund
  - I will fight on behalf of the UW graduate and professional students for the creation of a COVID-19 relief fund that will provide resources to students affected by the crisis.
- HB 2252 - Concerning student health plans
  - I will lobby for the creation of a comprehensive and equitable graduate and professional student health insurance plan.
- SB 6127 - Adding a graduate student to the student achievement council
  - I promise to pursue graduate student representation on the Washington Student Achievement Council in order to give graduate student issues greater visibility within Washington’s policymaking and policy implementation process.