

## **ASUCD Interim Internal Vice President confirmed at emergency Senate meeting on Aug. 13**

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### **Body**

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ASUCD President, Controller commit to improving student conditions by looking at impacts of COVID-19

The Senate table gathered for an emergency meeting called on Aug. 13 to confirm the new Interim Internal Vice President and Controller.

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

The table moved into electing an Interim Presiding Officer. Senator Khalil Malik was elected and confirmed with no objections.

Malik then moved the table into electing an Interim Senate President Pro Tempore. Senator Pro Tempore Samantha Boudaie was confirmed with no objections.

Next, the table proceeded to confirm ASUCD Vice Controller Alexis Lopez-Perez as the incoming ASUCD Controller.

Krueger offered his recommendation, stating that Lopez-Perez would be in a great place to handle ASUCD's \$14.5 million budget this coming year.

Lopez-Perez said that his previous experience as Vice Controller made him uniquely qualified for the position, meaning he wouldn't need to undergo a transition or training period to take on the job.

He also said his biggest concern during his term would be mitigating financial losses from COVID-19.

"I don't have specific projects on mind, because I want to make sure we leave a good [financial] foundation for the next executive team," he said. "If we do that, I'm happy to share projects."

Lopez-Perez added that for students who were upset about tuition and fees, he would be happy to explain which fees were going to ASUCD and which were going to UC Davis itself.

Boudaie motioned to confirm him as Controller, a motion seconded by Malik. Lopez-Perez was confirmed with no objections.

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ASUCD President Kyle Krueger then explained the interviewing process for the Interim Internal Vice President.

In a separate interview with The California Aggie, Krueger said that the former Internal Vice President, fourth-year Akhila Kandaswamy, had resigned from the position because she transferred to UC Berkeley.

"I didn't know she had applied to transfer [out of Davis]," he said. "But I think it was an unexpected opportunity for her and I applaud her for it."

The hiring process, he said, included Krueger posting the Interim Internal Vice President opening on the ASUCD Vacancy website, interviewing several applicants after reading their essays and doing reference checks.

Ultimately, Krueger nominated Internal Affairs Commission Chair Emily Barneond for the position, saying he was "impressed" by her application and that she would improve ASUCD for "the sake of the students."

Barneond, a third-year economics and political science major, said she was excited to embrace the challenges accompanying the upcoming academic year and hoped to see more unity and collaboration across the aisle, something the Senate struggled with this past Spring Quarter.

Member of the public Daniel Lincoln Burkey Wallace asked Barneond how she would set the agenda for Senate meetings in the position.

She said that, in accordance with the ASUCD Bylaws, she would ensure that presentations from ASUCD units-such as KDVS and Unitrans-would be evenly distributed throughout the quarter and that the presentations would be no more than 20 minutes.

"I also want to emphasize that the speakers list is a conversation happening with everyone at the table, not just between two individuals-something that's appropriate to what we are discussing," she said.

In response to questions about ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of the Senate from Boudaie and Senator Juan Velasco, Barneond said that she would seek more accountability from the table and direct her efforts to find out the best communication platform through which to share information.

She also said that she planned to continually check the temperature at Senate meetings, making sure that the atmosphere remained calm.

"I want to see smiles and excitement," she said. "Senate meetings have become, like, 'Sigh, I'm going to a Senate meeting.' I want to see a change in attitude."

Barneond was confirmed as Interim Internal Vice President without any objections.

Six candidates were then brought in front of the table, the nominees for Internal Affairs Commission members. They were all confirmed without objections.

The table then moved to bring up two candidates for Vice Student Advocate and Transfer Director positions, Chloe Awaya and Sasha Lyons. Awaya, a second-year economics major, said she looked into the UC Berkeley model for the Vice Student Advocate position and had developed strategies to better serve students at the Davis campus.

"I see the Student Advocate positions as being public defenders for the campus and am excited to contribute to the community," she said.

Incoming transfer student Lyons said she wanted to apply for the position because she understood how it felt to be a transfer student.

"I want to help incoming transfers navigate that system and have a great school experience," Lyons said.

Both Lyons and Awaya were confirmed without any objections.

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During the public announcement period, ASUCD External Affairs Vice President mentioned that United Students Against Sweatshops had partnered with ASUCD to form a coalition backing the passage of Proposition 16, and an ASUCD mentorship program for incoming first-years was mentioned. After the public announcements, the meeting was called to order at 8:22 p.m.

Krueger said in the aforementioned interview that, though he and Kandaswamy had run on a platform of environmental sustainability, sexual assault awareness, basic needs and organizational improvement and reform, the defining aspect of his and Barneond's term would be COVID-19 and its effects.

"We want to make sure that we're tying in the effects of COVID-19 on the physical and mental health on all our students," he said. "We're hiring different advocacy forces to focus on groups disproportionately affecting certain student populations."

Among those forces, he said, included a group to advocate for international undergraduate students, a group to look at diversity, inclusion and equity overall and a COVID-19 wellness group that would look at improving health and safety through educational activities.

Krueger said in a separate email that it wasn't the campus community's job to support them-instead, he and Barneond were tasked with supporting the student body.

"If any student has a concern about anything-even if they're not sure ASUCD has any purview in the area-they're always able to reach out to us," he said. "The advocacy work we choose to pursue is all in response to what students want and we respond to any emails we receive. If at any point we are not supported by members of the student body, then it is our job to listen and learn from those students, so that we may more effectively meet their needs."

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