

## Personal Information

Discourse ID:

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Name:

Justin Van Buren

Country of Residence:

United States

Educational Background:

MA - International Commerce and Policy; Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University.

Professional Background:

Work Experience:

- Strategy and Community Direction in Web3 (2020-2022) - The Timekeeper, gh0stly gh0sts, Tom Sachs Rocket Factory, Schillerverse, Dirtybird Flight Club, Dizzy Dragons, Chicken Derby, NFTtheo, Zed Run, & others. Have built and directed many esports/gaming communities since 2016.
  - Manager - Baltimore Soundstage (2020-2009). Managed operations including budget and cashflow processes, marketing, beverage direction, and customer relations.
  - President - GMU Graduate and Professional Student Association (2015-2016). Pushed forward policy changes in line with student interests, sat on the GMU Board of Visitors to solve policy issues related to the University's corporate body, and founded GMU Graduate Council Subcommittee on Graduate Student Funding to correct uncompetitive stipend and graduate research assistant compensation.
- Volunteer Experience:
- Community Foundation of Howard County, MD - Served on Scholarships and Grants Committees (2017-2019) to allocate award funding to students and organizations through the County.
  - West Point Leadership and Ethics Conference (2014-2016) - Mentored high school students by incorporating an ethical decision-making model.
  - Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity - Served as Leadership School Faculty, Chapter Advisor, and Alumni Association President (2012-Present). I have entirely too much experience with by-laws.

## Nomination Statement

I am running for special council so that I may contribute to ApeCoin DAO with the greatest impact possible. I am passionate about ApeCoin and truly believe that the ecosystem surrounding ApeCoin can be the experiential hub at the center of digital entertainment and expression...

## Motivation

I have been taking active roles in the service of others since Scouting as a child. The opportunities to serve my various communities have grown and changed in line with my experience, but the joy I receive from giving back to important projects and causes has remained constant. I have a vision for ApeCoin that sees the DAO shaping not just the future of Web3, but the future of digital culture and experience. I want to help us all realize that future while still remaining impartial and objective as a member of the Special Council. I have done just that in previous organizations as a firm believer in decentralization and the value of consensus, and I want to help ApeCoin DAO continue to be a beacon of light and a driver toward a more equitable future.

## Rationale

Whether in entertainment, academia, local government, or Greek life, at every step of my journey I have been tasked with maintaining confidential information. It's important to do the same here when knowledge of proposals may precede public promotion. I have established and maintained effective working relationships with a wide array of peers and stakeholders, an

important trait so that the DAO might pursue the greatest quantity and quality of opportunities. As a student representative on the George Mason University Board of Visitors and my fraternity's national body I furthered my understanding of the legal and fiscal complexities of large community organizations while advocating for the interests of those I served. Sure I solved numerous policy issues, secured funding, and planned a research conference, but I also founded a subcommittee that investigated and improved previously uncompetitive stipend and graduate research assistant compensation. Knowing when a proposal might be DOA is just as important as listening and deferring to the community. In Web3 in particular, I'm fortunate to have been recently involved with two powerful proof-of-concept projects, one innovating Web3's relationship with traditional entertainment outlets and another that's a powerful step on the path to a chain agnostic future. I believe in proactively exploring what is out past the horizon. I carry that curiosity and spirit of exploration with me every where I go.

## Specifications

I have spent a lot of time mulling over what to improve and steps that can be taken. I think that going forward, participation initiatives and onboarding need to be prioritized with a focus on two core elements: what is powerful, and what is easy to understand. I have been a voting member of enough DAOs to recognize that they all struggle with participation at scale. That's not too dissimilar from societal governance. In my experience (mentioned in previous sections), while serving private, public, and academic communities I have learned that simplicity is key. We are blessed that the first steps have already been made to address this; there is an incredibly competent, passionate Ape Comms team working to improve community communications. I would like for a representative from the team to be present at my Special Council meetings for two reasons:

1. NDAs aside, our entire space is under a microscope right now and transparency has never been more important, and
2. the forums can require a serious time commitment to keep up and it's critical to have a comms outlet that succinctly summarizes sessions as well as proposals and community discourse. Whether regular digests or just a central source for news, it will reduce barriers to understanding.

It's necessary to expand upon the in person presence at events championed by outgoing Special Council member Maaria Bajwa. EthGlobal events are a great short-term focus and it's imperative to build relationships with the builders of decentralization. However, as the ecosystem grows so too must our outreach. ApeCoin is irrevocably tied to Otherside, and I see a future where ApeCoin has a powerful presence in entertainment. Maybe there's a ticketing solution, and concert—goers will wake up the morning after a concert to discover an autographed moment from the previous evening airdropped into their ApeCoin-holding wallet. Maybe ApeCoin DAO will have a booth next to Epic Games at a future E3 event where we're explaining how ApeCoin can be used as in-game currency in every game across an entire decentralized gaming universe. You don't have to log on right at midnight or get creative for a username in every new title – just connect your wallet and the only username that has ever felt perfect to you, MountainDewCodeRed.eth, is right there where you expect it. Skins can be purchased on our ApeCoin marketplace and used across multiple game titles. Best of all, you don't have to mindlessly grind when a new installment of your favorite game comes out because your gold gun or your highrolled staff can be used from the previous iteration. But when you do get that coveted legendary item... you can sell it for ApeCoin. That's both powerful and easy to understand.

## Concluding Statement

A vote for me is a vote for a candidate who listens, a candidate with a vision, and a candidate who understands the restraint necessary to not impose oneself in a decentralized community. I understand what the job requires and will work with my colleagues to ensure a vibrant, accessible, and equitable ecosystem.