



**STUDENT HISTORY:** Jordan Smith '18 (left) and Rebecca Mooney '18 are the first all-women team to lead the Students' Association.

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT

# Meet the President and Vice President in the College ...

The 2017–18 academic year marked a milestone in the history of the Students' Association, the organization that represents students in the College. For the first time, an all-women team was elected to the top two jobs in SA. President Jordan Smith '18 and Vice President Rebecca Mooney '18 campaigned on a platform focused on affordability and financial aid, student wellness, and transparency.

### Jordan Smith '18

*President, Students' Association  
New Boston, New Hampshire  
Political science and economics major*

### Rebecca Mooney '18

*Vice President, Students' Association  
Barrington, Illinois  
International relations and Spanish major*

### What are your priorities for the year?

**Mooney:** The approach we took to our agenda was a 33-point, three-pillar platform that included affordability; the second was student wellness, and the third was transparency and the structure of student government and our relationship with the

University's administration.

**Smith:** Within those three broad sections, there are a few that really stand out. One is financial aid. SA hasn't really stepped up and addressed why some students in the past have had struggles with financial aid. We've identified that as a main problem that's very important to us. Another is revitalizing the "It's On Us" program, a national effort to raise awareness about sexual misconduct on college campuses. SA was very involved in establishing the Rochester initiative several years ago, and in the past few years.

### What clout do you have in influencing University policies?

**Smith:** SA is a feedback organization, and we depend both on strong relationships with administrators and trust from the student body. If we don't have either of those, I think we lose a lot of our salience. It's our job to really build both those. The main way we accomplish change is through having strong relationships and being able to say, "This is why this change would benefit students, and this would generate a lot of positive energy for your department."

### What else are you involved in?

**Smith:** I'm a very peripheral member of College Feminists. I love it, and I support what they do, and I go to the events, but I don't have time for a much heavier involvement. I'm involved in Greek Life, and I'm definitely very involved in Students' Association government.

**Mooney:** I am a Meridian, a tour guide for the Admissions office. I'm also president of the Modern Languages and Cultures undergraduate council. And I tutor elementary school children in the local Rochester area once a week or so to learn Spanish.

### What's your favorite class?

**Smith:** Econ 108 with Professor Michael Rizzo. Intro to Economics. It's the best class I've ever taken and will ever take. Professor Rizzo has a very unconventional style of teaching. He steers you away from charts and graphs as much as he can in that first year because he thinks it's important that you understand how it's applicable to daily life.

**Mooney:** Mechanisms of International Relations, which I took with Hein

Goemans, professor of political science. We learned about game theory and the rational actor model as applied to interstate conflict.

His project, which he discussed in our class, is absolutely fascinating. It deals with the way that fluidity along state boundaries in South America can affect civilian perceptions of national identity. I enjoyed learning about that because it gave me better insight as to why the world works the way that it does across state boundaries, which is what my major is all about.

**What did you bring to college from home?**

**Mooney:** This is a bit nerdy, I have to say. But every year since I was a freshman, I've brought a map of the congressional districts of Illinois, and I hang it on my

wall. Every single year without fail. That's the first thing I see when I wake up in the morning.

**Smith:** I brought a few of my favorite books of all time that I find very comforting and good to have around.

And ironically, I actually have a map of New Hampshire, but it's from the 2012 election. So it's our congressional map. I worked on that campaign, and that was my first experience in politics. The Obama 2012 campaign. I have a map of New Hampshire where I've demarcated the areas we won and where I worked.

**Who inspires you?**

**Smith:** I'm inspired by a lot of the strong women in my life and in pop culture. But

the first person in that is my mom, who really taught me from a young age to be an individual, and who really instilled a lot of the values that I have today.

**Mooney:** My dad is my biggest role model. He's taught me the importance of values, humility, and a good work ethic. From him, I've learned that you should always remember where you came from and the people who have helped you along the way. **R**

—INTERVIEW BY PETER IGLINKSI

*The interview is drawn from the University's podcast series, Quadcast. Listen to the entire conversation at [iTunes.apple.com/us/podcast/university-of-rochesters-quadcast/id1210770396](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/university-of-rochesters-quadcast/id1210770396).*

## ... and at the Eastman School of Music

Naoki Toyomura '17, '18E (T5) and Seiji Yamashita '20, '20E were elected this fall to lead the Students' Association at the Eastman School of Music on a platform of improving communication between students and the Eastman administration.

**Naoki Toyomura '17, '18E (T5)**

*President, Students' Association  
Eastman School of Music  
Auckland, New Zealand*

*Piano performance major at Eastman;  
economics major in the College; Take Five  
Scholar, with a program called Japanese  
Language and Culture.*

**Seiji Yamashita '20, '20E**

*Vice President, Students' Association  
Eastman School of Music  
San Jose, California*

*Jazz piano performance major at Eastman;  
international relations major in the College*

**What do you hope to accomplish?**

**Toyomura:** We feel there's been a lack of dialog between the students and the administration regarding things that are important to students—dorm policy, food, where our money's going, that kind of thing. We want to help improve that dialog and advocate for students.

**Yamashita:** I think, additionally, we want a more functional Students' Association. If that means having reports, having student data, and presenting it to the administration in a clearer way, we'll do that.

**What would you like people to know about you?**



**EASTMAN TEAM:** Naoki Toyomura '17, '18E (T5), left, and Seiji Yamashita '20, '20E

**Toyomura:** I'm very interested in business. My business, Music Admit, is a higher education music admissions company. I take people who come from overseas and help them find good schools and teachers. When I was going through the process, I knew the top two or three schools, but I didn't know each school's strengths or which teachers were better. My business helps in that regard.

**Yamashita:** I really like dogs. I'm on pretty much every dog Facebook page you can find. I have a German shepherd named Kenny at home. Dogs are a huge part of my life.

**Toyomura:** I must say, his Snapchat and Instagram accounts do get pretty full of dog videos and dog photos. **R**

—INTERVIEW BY JIM MANDELARO