

University of Alaska - Board of Regents

Stephen "Joey" Sweet

Stephen "Joey" Sweet is the student member of the University of Alaska Board of Regents, and was appointed by Governor Walker in May 2017 to serve a two-year term.

Regent Sweet was raised in Wasilla, and was a member of the first graduation class from the Mat-Su Career and Technical High School. He enrolled at the University of Alaska Fairbanks to pursue a degree in political science and transferred to the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) to complete his degree. Regent Sweet was highly involved in campus life at UAA, working as a resident advisor in the freshman hall; serving as the government relations officer for the Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage ; serving on the executive board of the Residence Hall Association; participating in three Model United Nations of Alaska Conferences; was the founder of the UAA Education Club and he graduated from the Emerging Leaders Program.



Photo by Monique Musick, Univ.AK

In his spare time, Regent Sweet enjoys true crime podcasts, watching professional wrestling and discussing politics. During his service on the board, Regent Sweet will be pursuing a graduate degree in criminal justice.

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Joey Sweet and I am a candidate for Student Regent from the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). My interest in this role stems from my personal, academic, and professional growth during my undergraduate experience. I began college in 2011 at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, pursuing a degree in Political Science, where I would spend my first two years before transferring to Anchorage. My story is that of a usual first-year college student; nervous and unsure of himself, but later transforming into a deeply-involved student leader at the University and statewide levels.

I was nervous about beginning college. So nervous, in fact that I almost took a gap year following high school graduation. As a freshman, I simply could not find a place to fit in. It seemed that no matter where I went, I just did not belong. Ultimately, this is what drove me away from UAF - a lack of connection to the campus community. Upon arriving at UAA, I made it my goal to get more involved than ever before. I joined the Emerging Leaders Program, participated in local politics, and made a choice that fundamentally changed the course of my education and life: I joined the UAA Department of Residence Life (DRL) as a Resident Advisor (RA).

Becoming an RA had been a goal of mine since I was a senior in high school. The idea of being a single point of contact for a student on their own unique academic journey fascinated me then, and still does. Upon starting with the DRL, I was first assigned the position of Peer Mentor. Roughly akin to an RA, a Peer Mentor's duty was to focus on the academic side of a residential student's time in college. I was able to interact with a variety of students from all walks of life: students who were only able to attend college because of the Alaska Performance Scholarship, students who worked their way through college, taking classes only when they could afford to, and students from out of Alaska who moved here for the outstanding programs we offered.

During my time at Residence Life, I sought out other leadership opportunities available throughout UAA. I involved myself in the Residence Hall Association as an Executive Board member serving as a liaison between our organization and the Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage (USUAA). I volunteered my time organizing, planning, and executing staff-wide training sessions for Residence Life trainings, in the spring and fall semesters. I increased my involvement in student clubs, including Club Council and the Justice Club. I loved my involvement in student clubs, but I decided to take a brief pause following my acceptance into the UA Legislative Internship Program for the spring semester of 2016.

Working in politics has been my career goal since before high school, and my participation in this program helped make it a reality. I felt fortunate every day of my internship that the University had provided me with this opportunity. Working for Senator Gardner was a genuine honor and being able to help others fulfill their own career goals became a priority for me following my

experience. Seeing the program facing budget cuts for the 2017 legislative session, I worked to establish a scholarship for this year's interns through USUAA. Without a precedent to rely upon for the scholarship, I worked with University staff to allocate funding, create and implement the application review processes, and oversee the disbursement of the funding. In total, the full funding amount was disbursed to the recipient, meaning I was able to allow the opportunity I was provided as an intern to continue. Although the funding for the Legislative Internship Program remains uncertain in the future, I know I have done everything I can to contribute to its continuation.

As a student, University employee, and student leader I have seen firsthand the seriousness of the financial situation facing the University. Over the next two years, UA will face very difficult decisions and undergo substantial changes. Having an experienced voice representing the student population will be critical. I believe that my experiences as a student in Fairbanks and Anchorage, combined with my extensive experience in system governance, clubs, and employment, will make me that effective voice.

Thank you.

Stephen “Joey” Sweet

Education

University of Alaska Fairbanks Political Science	Fall 2011 – Spring 2013
University of Alaska Anchorage Political Science	Fall 2013 – Present

Work Experience

Department of Residence Life

Peer Mentor

08.2014-05.15

- Focus on residents' academic well-being in the form of scholastic programs, face-to-face contact, and networking
- Maintain Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) compliance
- Help plan, coordinate, and execute staff training sessions

Resident Advisor 08.15 – 01.16 and 08.16 – Present

- Focus on residents' social well-being through outreach efforts, social programs, and face-to-face contact
- Serve at least 15 “duty nights” per semester, which requires responding to incidents, noise complaints, lock outs, and general incidents
- Perform at least three sets of “rounds” per duty night, which consist of walking throughout the residential campus to check for policy violations
- Host a series of unique social programs, including Virtual Reality Video Game Night and other programs to involve students in the residential community
- Interact with a diverse student body while maintaining professionalism as the face of UAA for many first-year college students

Alaska Native Science and Engineering Programs

Youth Peer Mentor

05.2015 – 07.2015 and

05.2016 – 08.2016

- Acted as a role model for high school students from rural Alaska interested in STEM subjects
- Maintained the safety of students at all times
- Guided students to classes and activities throughout the campus

Office of Senator Berta Gardner, Alaska State Legialature

Legislative Intern

01.2016 – 04.2016

- Coordinate and plan Senator's day-to-day schedule
- Managed constituent services
- Responsible for Senate Bill 24, an Ethics reform bill
- Responsible for receptionist duties within the office, including placing and answering phone calls on behalf of the Senator and serving as the face of the front office

Involvement

Judicial Review Board

Member

01.2017 – Present

- Serve as impartial student-at-large in determining cases sensitive of a sensitive nature
- Attend six hours of training on the nature of deliberation, privacy regulations, Title IX processes, etc.

Residence Hall Association

Liaison

08.2015 – 12.2016

- Served as the liaison between the Residence Hall Association (RHA) and Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage (USUAA)
- Attended RHA General Assembly and Executive Board meetings, USUAA General Assembly and Legislative Affairs Committee meetings
- Maintained perfect attendance at all such meetings throughout the term
- Drafted, wrote, and secured passage for Resolution #16-02, Resolution In Support of the Residence Hall's Desk System

Staff Representative

08.2016 – Present

- Work with the Executive Board members to coordinate advocacy for the residential student population
- Lead, plan, and execute social programs

Green Fee Board

Project Sponsor

06.2016 – Present

- Work with a staff advisor to write, draft, and present a Green Fee Board project proposal
- Develop implementation options for project, a \$50,000+ light-emitting diode (LED) lighting technology installation project within UAA's residential campus

Union of Students of the University of Alaska, Anchorage

Senator

05.2016 – Present

- Serve as Chair of the Legislative Affairs committee, prepare committee agendas and meeting minutes on a weekly basis, and distribute them to the Speaker of the Assembly
- Coordinate outreach to the student body to fill empty campus board positions, such as the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalition, the Green Fee Board, and others

- Serve as the UAA delegate to the Coalition of Student Leaders, including participation in bi-weekly conference calls, service on the Enrollment Report subcommittee, and represent the needs and interests of the UAA campus at the statewide level
- Draft, write, and secure passage for the legislation 17-01, Statement of Opposition Against Changes In Residential Campus Alcohol Policy

Education Club

Co-Founder

06.2016 – Present

- Wrote the club constitution and bylaws, and recruited a faculty adviser, treasurer, secretary, and Club Council representative
- Ensure club longevity through campus outreach, social and traditional media use, and word-of-mouth

Strategic Pathways Review Team

Student-at-large

10.2016 – 01.2017

- Responsible for development and analysis of options for restructuring Student Affairs within the University of Alaska Statewide system
- Offices examined included Registration, Financial Aid, and Recruitment for each of the three main UA Universities
- Served as only student-at-large in the UA System on this Review Team
- Attended weekly conference calls, and two in-person, day-long meetings held throughout the semester at the University of Alaska Statewide Office

Emerging Leaders Program

Member

09.2015 – 11.2016

- 20 volunteer hours per semester for three terms, volunteering throughout the UAA campus and local community
- Attended three afternoon-long leadership workshops per semester

UAA College Democrats

Various Executive Roles

08.2013 – 08.2016

- Worked to revitalize the organization through recruitment of new members, campus-wide outreach, and hosting club meetings
- Served, at various times, as Vice President, Treasurer, and President over three year period
- Coordinated events such as testimony before the Board of Regents, voter registration drives, and a "Meeting With The Mayor" event

Model United Nations

Various Roles

Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2017

- Responsible for coordinating, planning, and executing the 2015 Model United Nation (MUN) Alaska State Conference
- Created the first MUN delegation at Mat-Su Career Tech High School
- Created the first International Criminal Court as a function of the MUN Conference

Awards And Trainings

- Martin Luther King Jr. Student Appreciation Award, Spring 2017
- Seawolf Student Leadership Award, Fall 2016
- Bystander Intervention training, Fall 2016
- Most Outstanding Academic Program of the Year Award from the Department of Residence Life, Spring 2015
- SafeZone training, Spring 2015
- Mabil Duir Leadership Scholarship, Spring 2014
- Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) training and certification, Fall 2014 – Present

References

Jennifer Edens
Current Supervisor, UAA Department of Residence Life
[REDACTED]

Katie Bruggeman
Former Staff, Senator Berta Gardner
[REDACTED]

Ryan Hill
Former Supervisor, Department of Residence Life
[REDACTED]