

To the Graduate Employees,

Duck Squad is a campaign comprised of grassroots organizers and student union members, dedicated to social justice and the collective vision of an equitable university. Our campaign is primarily composed of students of color who come from the Black Student Task Force, Multicultural Center, Veterans and Family Student Association, Mills International Center, and more; like the Graduate Employees, we are engaged in efforts to ensure that all student perspectives-- especially those that are institutionally marginalized-- are represented in decision-making processes on campus.

Our platform includes a comprehensive student debt counseling program, cultural competency trainings for faculty, students, and staff, and tuition that is not just affordable in theory, but in *practice*. We are committed to a transformative change rooted in inclusivity and accessibility, and our campaign is part of a progressive student movement that aims to continue the efforts of students before us. Duck Squad believes that the term “activism” is not to be used casually, and that direct action involves more than attending meetings and allocating funds. We are students who experience real issues and put in the hard work to solve them, advocating for ourselves, our communities, and the rights of all students.

The Duck Squad ticket includes Samara Mokaya for ASUO President, Abel Cerros for Internal Vice President, and Sophie Albanis for External Vice President. Samara Mokaya is from a town outside Nairobi, Kenya, is co-director of the Coalition Against Environmental Racism, and outreach coordinator of the Multicultural Center. A Political Science major, Samara is interested in revolutionizing power structures in order to protect those they have historically harmed. She is running for President because she hopes to address the University’s inadequate treatment of urgent issues impacting the student body. Samara is especially motivated by the belief that our actions today will affect change for future students, like her younger brother, who is a freshman.

Abel Cerros is a first-generation student majoring in Ethnic Studies. Coming from a community whose population is vastly different from Eugene, Abel became involved on campus and holds leadership positions in MEChA, the Coalition Against Environmental Racism, and has served two years on the ASUO Senate. Ultimately, Abel’s goals include giving back to UO and Eugene communities, and eventually doing the same for the community in which he grew up. Sophie Albanis is a Women’s & Gender Studies major who became invested in community organizing during her freshman year, dissatisfied by the lack of safe spaces for survivors and female-identifying individuals. Sophie serves as the sexual and mental health advocate of the ASUO Executive, and the managing editor and former editor-in-chief of the Siren Magazine, the only feminist publication at UO. Central to Sophie’s interest in student government is belief that direct action is essential for strong, equitable communities.

Duck Squad humbly asks for the support of the Graduate Employees in our campaign this election season, as we aim to foster alliances and build coalitions that represent the critical needs of graduates and undergraduates alike.

In solidarity,
Duck Squad