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Independent- May 1, 2002

Brian Blaszkowski

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Exclusive Interviews!
Check out pages 3 -5!

Students speak about SGA!
photo poll on page 2!



*Voice of Campus
is not finished
with the SGA!*
details on page 7

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Independent

Vol. 18 Issue 15

SERVING NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY INTO THE NEXT CENTURY

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY

MAY 02 2002

ARCHIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2002

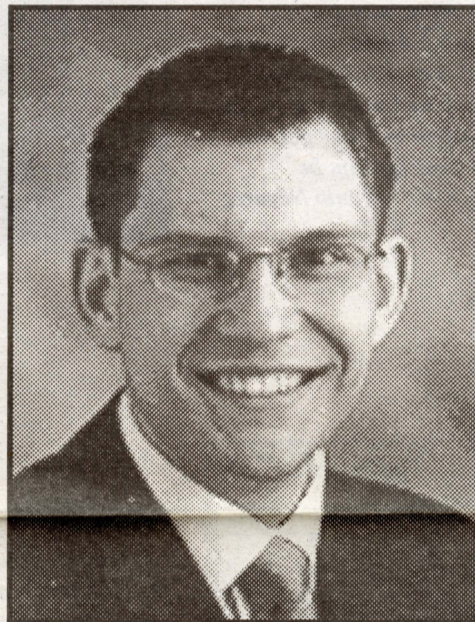
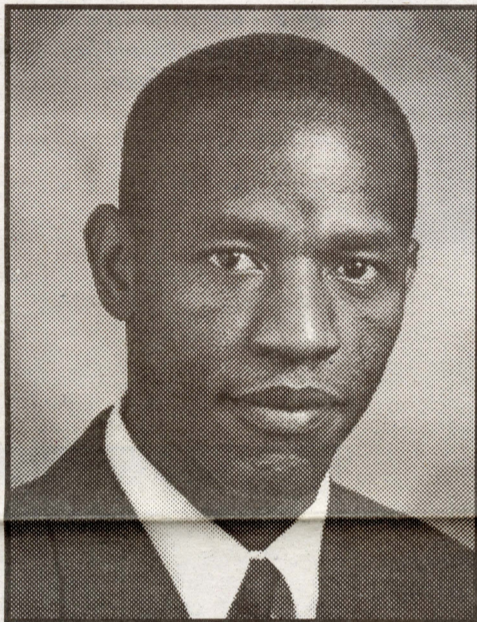
Independent Special Issue: Student's Guide to The Student Government Association

Interviews, commentary, letters to the editor, and statements from SGA

*"The election
is over...let's
move on."*

*"We should
choose a leader
who follows the
rules."*

*"We [SVP] are
the victims
here."*



*"We followed
the rules 100%"*

*"Students have a
right to know
what happened."*

*"Rules were
broken...we
cannot let it
happen."*

*"President Gaspard is an
exemplary leader." - Young*

**"You can't trust a blatant liar like that
to follow procedure." Logothetis on
Sheree Cole**

*"In this particular situation, the Senate made the best decision to ensure
fairness for all students." -Sen. Andrea Daniels on SAL disqualification*

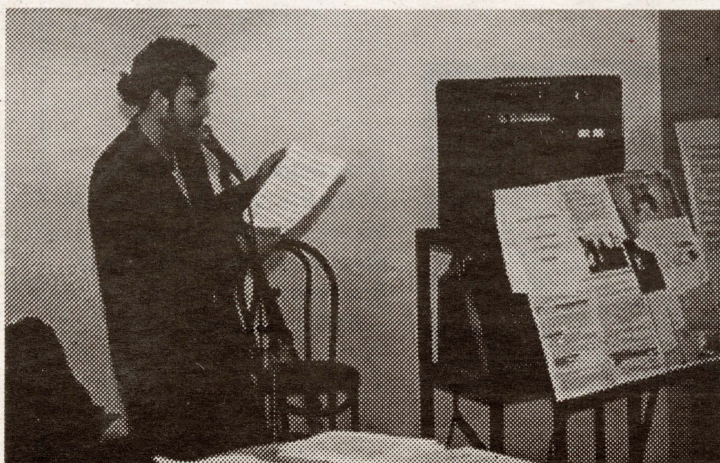
"We did nothing illegal..." - Gaspard

**"This whole problem stems
from a weak constitution..."
- Haptonstall**

*"It's when everybody is too scared to say
anything that the people who are breaking all
the rules maintain their power." - Jacob Heiss*

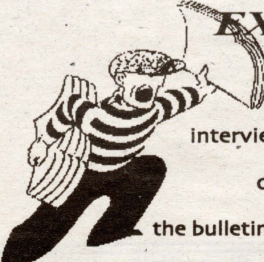
**"Please read into all of
the facts." - Young**

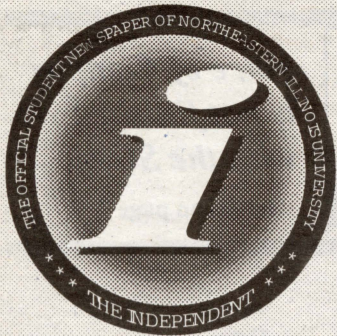
**"He was just a Hispanic name to get
some votes..." - Gaspard on Jason Cruz**



Senator John Haptonstall speaks at an open forum, focusing on the Student Government Association. Students were given an opportunity to voice their concerns and complaints about SGA.

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!

 Students get *their* chance **Photo Poll page 2**
interviews and statements from SGA **Senators Speak page 4**
opinions on SGA from all sorts **Perspectus page 6**
the bulletin board you can bring with you **Golden Opportunities page 8**



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Students speak, answer question about SGA

What do you think should occur? Should the Vision Party remain in office, or should the election results stand, allowing the Student Action League to take office?

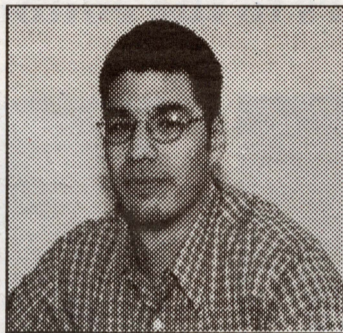


I think Luke should be president because we all voted for him and he won. It defeats the purpose of student elections. --Angela Vogel.



I think that the parties that won originally in this election should take office because they deserve it. They won it fair and square. -- Nancy Brunetti

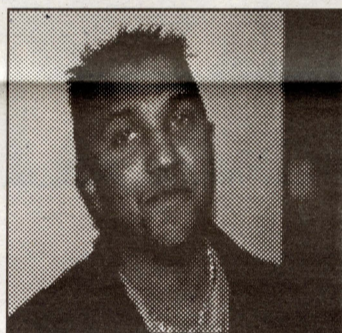
I believe that a 3rd neutral party should have supervised the elections to see if they were run fairly or not, and the current SGA had too much to lose so they shouldn't have been allowed to have a say in what happens. Luke got the most votes. Let him be president. -- Antonio Nevarez



If Luke won, he should take office. I don't know the whole deal, but Gary should just move on. -- Sugey Barrados

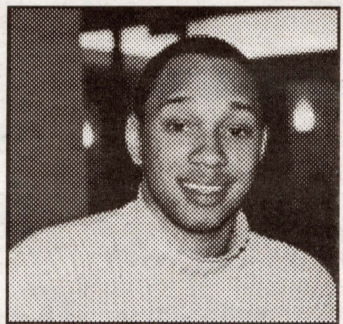


I was upset because I voted for the SAL party, and it's as if my vote didn't count. -- Noreen Beig-Mirza

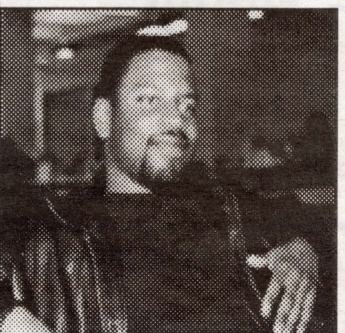


What's the point in taking a vote if it doesn't count? Without viable reasoning, I think the vote should count. If there was an illegal election with proof, then this would count as a viable reason. -- Isaac Philip

I believe that justice should be done regardless of what price it takes. I believe that the Vision Party should be in office because when they nullified SAL I believe that they were justified. -- Antonio Ellais



I think they should suspend all S.G. for a moment and clean the whole thing from the bottom up because it's sad to see that there's corruption even in student elections. This is the 2nd year in a row that there are corruptions. -- Pablo Alvarez



I don't care what happens as long as we get a positive outcome. -- Jerome Crowell



If the students voted for the SAL party, then they should be the ones in office, as opposed to the Student Vision Party that just wants to take over. -- Elvira Camargo

FMLA speaks about the elections and SGA

Why did you support S.A.L. as opposed to the Vision party, or the party of Cruz, Pulido, and Reed?

At first the FMLA was not going to openly show support as an organization for any one candidate or party, but after the SAL spoke at one of our meetings, a majority of the members present voted to issue an endorsement. We liked the energy and vision of the SAL, and what their stated goals were for the upcoming year. No other candidate contacted us to get on our agenda.

What do you think about the way the meeting on April 25th, 2002 was conducted?

We think there were some violations of parliamentary procedure, and some unfair censoring of audience members who had followed procedure and signed up on the list to address the SGA during the "audience participation" section of the agenda.

The incumbent Vice President Young censored those from the audience who demanded to be acknowledged, and then would not allow those on the list to speak. Further, Young went on to dutifully reinforce the order from incumbent President candidate Gaspard that all senators stop bringing up the disqualification of the student elected candidates because the election committee decided Gary's team was elected by the students to serve. Wuh? They were not elected, and there have been no fair hearings concerning the election committee's rash decision.

The behavior we have witnessed

leads us to speculate on how many puppets now take up space in the senate. The fact that there is conflict on the Senate floor might lead one to expect the chair to rise to the occasion and work to clarify all misunderstandings and misrepresentations at hand that have created such a disgruntled Senate.

What is your opinion on the disqualification of S.A.L.?

The lack of interest the so-called "Vision" Party members have shown for a thorough investigation into the claims, and the disqualification of the candidates elected by the student body reveals a lot about how the Vision Party administration deals with lack of consensus. Where is the evidence, where is the documentation that proves that formal complaints were filed in the time frame set up, why weren't there any hearings and why hasn't the Student Action League been allowed due process? Something stinks. The SAL candidates were elected as our new administration and they are being blockaded from doing their job.

What would you like to see happen in the SGA?

That the former SGA officers stop this ridiculous power play and acknowledge that they were defeated. Then, that they step down and allow the legitimately elected officers, the SAL, to take office so that the SGA can get on with the business of representing the student body.

The time has come to force Gary Gaspard and his team to face reality. They lost.

Senator Cruz on SGA

Fellow Students,

My name is Jason Cruz; I am currently a Senator in our once proud SGA, and feel as though our freedom to pursue a fair education and justice has become sidelined by a power hungry and abusive group of people.

When I first came to Northeastern Illinois University in August of 2001, my interest in Student Government overwhelmed me. I quickly made a phone call to the SGA President, and informed him of my desires and goals to be a part of our Government. President Gaspard welcomed me with open arms, and told me that I could join the SGA once school had begun.

In the first meeting of three, between Mr. Gaspard and myself, I was taken by surprise by some of the comments that I heard come from our SGA President. Mr. Gaspard quickly pointed out the fact that he liked the fact that I was of Hispanic heritage and that currently in the SGA, there was not enough of a minority voice. He continued in saying that "white people" dominated the current Government and that they (the white people) were trying to hold back the minorities at this school. He went on to say that due to the larger number of "white people" in the senate, it was hard for him to get anything done because it was a battle between the whites and blacks.

At the first Senate meeting I attended, I noticed that the Senate was filled mainly with minorities and I questioned the validity of the Presidents statement. I noticed that there seemed to be no animosity in the room and what appeared to me as a committee working together to accomplish a specific goal, went on with little or no hitches. At our second meeting, I brought up my views to the President and he said that it was a "good day" and that the actions I saw were not the "norm." After

attending two SGA meetings, Mr. Gaspard appointed me to the Senate. Although I was appointed, during the Fall elections I won my seat in the Senate.

The next few months in the Senate began to turn ugly. As more and more Senators became fed up with the administration, Gaspard began appointing more of his friends to Senate positions. The final nail in the coffin came on March 7, 2001. During this meeting, the President and Vice President became dictators. Senators were not recognized and Parliamentary Procedure was thrown out the window. Some Senators told me that Gaspard questioned them on where their loyalty lay, referring to the white vs. black game that Gaspard plays whenever he thinks things are not going his way.

Since that day, there has been no change in the way that Gaspard and Young have acted. They have become more belligerent and detached from the Senate. Their actions during the election only proved their ruthlessness and inability to deal with the fact that the students chose a new administration.

I urge and beg for assistance in rectifying a terrible injustice. This country was brought about because of the atrocities that the colonists were subjected too, and we cannot allow for our proven success at democracy to come crashing to a halt because of an executive board that thinks that they are above the law. I urge all students of Northeastern Illinois University to attend future SGA meetings to see the atrocities that are taking place and to petition our University President, Salme Steinberg, to remove the cancer that has infected our lives.

Respectfully submitted
Jason Cruz, NEIU Student,
SGA Senator

Senator speaks about her old party

April 26, 2002

To: The Independent and NEIU Students

My name is Tineeka Reed and I'm writing you to tell my part in this Student Government Association fiasco. I joined student government in Fall 2001 after I ran for a senate seat and won. I was a member of the Vision Party and our party leader was President Gary Gaspard. During my campaign with Mr. Gaspard I was his right-hand Senator. Anything he wanted changed in student government came through me. I was also supposed to whip other senator to our side. I also found senators to take the place of a senator who fails to support Gary Gaspard and missed two meetings. We found Marlon Davis (his appointment) and Duene Omar Otero (my appointment). These appoints were made and this gave us the majority we needed to get legislation that we wanted passed in the Senate.

Spring term came and it was time for the re-election of the current executive office. We sat in their offices for hours devising a plan of how we would get them (Kendra, Gary, and Natasha) re-elected. We first needed to get someone appointed that was not afraid of Dr. Walt Sommers. They found Sheree Cole, a member of the Black Gospel Choir and a friend of Kendra Young's. She was known for giving the staff of Student Activities a rough time. She was appointed to change the election policy package and to secure our re-re-election. Then came the decision to choose the candidates. Gary and Kendra was sure about running, but Natasha wasn't too sure do to the fact of her transferring because of NEIU not offering her major, International Business. I told Gary about my interest in running and he said that he was still going to run Natasha's name, because he didn't want people to see a split in the party and that he would just appoint me when Natasha resigned/transferred.

We had our first meeting and

nothing changed. The changes came after SGA's trip to MIG (Model Illinois Government). Gary, Kendra and Natasha were to file that Monday morning at 9:00am. They wanted to be the first to file that Monday, because at the next Election Committee Meeting, they had a notion to change some of the election policies. The next meeting was called in complete secrecy of the people who opposed us. The meeting consisted of Tineeka Reed, Omar Otero, Sheree Cole, and Marlon Davis. I made all the motions and they are as follows:
Motion 1: To make the names appear on the ballot on basis of who files first.

They needed this motion, because it was our belief that people didn't care about the election. If they were going to vote they wouldn't take the time out to read the ballot; they would just vote for the people on top. We felt this was especially important for the key positions of President, Vice-President, and Speaker. Plus we hadn't found anyone to run for IBHE-SAC Representative or Student Trustee. Gary wanted me to run for one of those positions and he also wanted Sir Williams (since he already filed) to run with us for Student Trustee on our ticket, but Sir would first have to show his loyalty to the party by voting on a piece of legislation that we wanted passed, and the senator was against us and didn't want it passed. We also had a plan for NPB, too. Last election we were able to get two people elected to NPB, this girl named Vanessa. She put me in because she ended up dropping do to an internship in another state. This election we were going to sweep the election and get four of our people in NPB. This would give us an edge in SGA and NPB. We also needed four people for these positions. We had two senators in mind; Senator Magee and Senator Daniels. Angela Parks was going to run for a senate seat for the Spring Term.

Motion 2: To make let faculty part

in the election as observer only. They were not to be permitted at the table.

Motion 3: To allow student on the election committee to sit at the table.

We decided that we needed our people at the table to let the students see us and vote. Even if they didn't have an NEIU ID card. This was especially prevalent at CICS, because we needed to win there if we were to defeat our opponents. It was also Gary's notion that people of color didn't carry around their NEIU ID cards and it would be easier for them to cast their vote if a student was sitting at the table, a student they knew.

At the next senate meeting we introduced the minutes from the meeting. The minutes weren't passed the first time around, due to a Senator Mendez. She voted with the opposing senators. We took a recess and gather our people and Senator Mendez and told her she needed to make a motion to reconsider the minutes for the election committee minutes. She did and the second time around it passed. That wasn't the only thing we revised that meeting; we also had a revision in the finance committee policy (this was done by Gary and Kendra, my interest was concentrated getting them re-elected). This revision was to lesson Dr. Sommers' and Student Activity's role in the finance committee. These minutes were easier to get passed due to the argument over the election policy we were changing.

We started to devise our election plan at this time. We only knew of one opponent that was worth putting our time into and that was SAL. We knew the conference Luke threw was a bid for presidency. SAL campaign launched in full effect, but our strategy was to wait and let them give it our best shot. Plus we didn't have a full ticket yet; we needed

continued on page 4

Young responds speaks on Senate, SGA

What are your thoughts on each of the following people:

Gary Gaspard?

President Gaspard is an exemplary leader. He has proven great strength and character to the NEIU student body, administration, faculty and staff. Working with him this past year has enhanced my leadership and determination for a lifetime.

Sheree Cole?

As a former Senator and Election Committee Chair(Spring 2002), Sheree Cole has demonstrated her ability to be a positive leader. Dr. Walt Sommers, who is the Director of the Student Activities office along with other members of his staff, gave her a card to compliment her as a fair and impartial Chair.

Georgia Logothetis? Luke Dorbrzynski?

Regarding Georgia and Luke, I refuse to state any negative comments about them. I do not know Ms. Logothetis nor Mr. Dorbrzynski personally; I cannot say anything about them. As an elected student, Vice-President of Student Government, I'm here to serve them. But, my experience with them during

the election has caused me to learn that they would do anything to win. Let me also say this: my mother taught me to take responsibility for my actions. Luke and Georgia have slandered me and committed fraud with my name on the world wide web for no reason. That was illegal and a violation of the election code.

What are your thoughts on Dennis and his decision to remain "neutral" (ie; not voting) in the Supreme Court case?

I would applaud Dennis Sagel for remaining neutral in his decision if he allowed the other two Justices to vote on the appeal (Mr. Sagel could have voted abstain and the other two would vote on their conscious). No, Mr. Sagel dictated to the Justices not to take a decision on the matter.

Justice can be acquired *only* when factual information is taken under consideration. It is unfortunate that Mr. Sagel was inconvenienced. According to the SGA Constitution and By-Laws, the Supreme Court was not suppose to hear this appeal (Article VI, Sec. 5).

A passage in Robert's Rules of Order suggests that "Senators

should not vote themselves into office." It does not specifically disallow that action. However, do you believe it to be unfair for senators to be able to vote themselves into office in a Senatorial vote, especially after the Student Body made its decision clear?

All matters concerning students must be approved by the Senate, including the ratification of the election: some Senators voted themselves be into office and others voted themselves out of office.

Why wasn't Georgia Logothetis allowed to speak in the SGA meeting, even though she followed proper procedure?

As you know, the SENATE voted not to allow members of the Senate to yield the floor to anyone in the audience.

Are the SGA meetings open to the Public?

Yes, SGA Senate meetings are open to all students and the public. Under certain circumstances, the Senate meeting may go into an Executive Session which will exclude non SGA members.

Old Party continued from page 3

more candidates for NPB (4) and Senate (10.) Gary told me to recruit Angela and I did, but he also told me to start looking around by the Wednesday before the date the Friday that the package was due in (this was the last date you could turn in the package for your name to appear on the ballot). By this time we decide that to dilute Senator Cruz's vote we need another candidate for presidency with a Hispanic last name. This would throw the Hispanic vote off at the north campus and El Centro. We also discussed the up-coming finance committee meeting where we had to approve the budget for different organizations and hope the Black Heritage Gospel Choir needed more money in order to operate. We also talked a little about the choir director. I explained how good of a director he was.

After Spring Break I had a chance to think and talk to different people about my actions in the SGA. Former Senator Sir Williams and I had heart to heart talks about what was wrong with SGA and why I was part of the problem and not the solution. I started to distance myself from the party. Kendra and I were good friends and use to talk about everything, but I found that our relationship was also suffering. At the meetings, I started to abstain from voting and voting against the party. During a meeting, President Gaspard tried to appoint Brian Miller to a senate seat and I had enough. I rallied all the support I could to stop the appointment of Brian Miller. He had just joined their party and is known for starting arguments and voicing his opinion about people, sometimes not even stating the facts. This was the last straw for my run with the Vision Party. I was told numerous times by Senator Otero that I was out of the party and that I was going to pay dearly for the choices that I made. I then told senator Otero that he didn't owe Gary anything and that he needed to

start thinking on his own and vote for what is right even if it does go against Gary. I decided to file my election package with student activities and then withdrew my name as co-chair of the election committee.

Campaigning time:

I knew it was going to be a hard campaign. We were up against the same person that got the majority of the student government either elected or appointed. The Vision Party had the election committee on their side. He appointed Sheree Cole to Senate and as Chair of the Election Committee. Plus he appointed people to the election that he knew were on his side, regardless of what his party did. Senator Reed on the election committee (this was before our fallout), Senator Otero, Senator Anderson, Senator Cole, and Senator Sylvestre were open Vision party supporters. He also appointed people from the other side to fill the seats; Senator Kurtz, Senator Pulido, Senator Haptonstall, and Senator Lattimore (he was unsure of her vote). Our plan was to lock or over-vote the people that were against the Vision Party. In a lock vote the chair gets the final vote, which was Chair Cole and she was partisan to the Vision Party. We knew that the other teams were going to file campaign complaints, because we knew we were going to do what ever it took to win. The idea was for the Election Committee to overlook these complaints and deal with the other teams harshly.

In the end, I now know that my actions at the beginning of this year were wrong and underhanded. I would like to take responsibility for most of the bickering and confusion that the Senate is still pressed with today. I now realize that I had the power to change the outcome of my participation and/or lack of participation in these events. I would like to apologize for my actions and I hope the decision is fair and just.

Sincerely,
Tineeka Reed.

Senator Andrea Daniels

What are your views on the Vision Party? What are your views on SAL?

The Student Vision Party represents the intelligent foresight for all NEIU residents. In my opinion, the Student Vision Party is the utopian for Northeastern students.

The SAL's campaigning strategies didn't provide specific goals as to what its candidates' objectives would cover if they were elected into office.

What are your views on the disqualification of SAL?

The Senate decision on approving the disqualification of the SAL falls within the scope of the duties vested in all Senators. Thus, in this particular situation, the Senate made the best decision to ensure fairness for all students. **Do you think the Senate is split/divided? Between whom? Why?**

The Senate is composed of a

diverse group of students who have distinct goals and ideologies. It's very unfortunate that some students join the government with a purpose other than serving students.

What would you like to see happen in the SGA? (as in, how would SGA work better to serve the students?)

I would like to see the SGA mission preserved. I would like to see the SGA members fulfill their roles and honor their limitations.

For example, the Senate voted to disallow SGA members to yield the floor to any one in the audience during the last meeting; however, Senator Haptonstall disregarded the vote (which was the Senate decision) by rendering the rest of his time to someone in the audience. Perhaps, he felt he was challenging the Chair, but in fact he was challenging the Senate.

Logothetis responds to questions

What are your thoughts on each of the following people:

Kendra Young?

Having attend several SGA meetings this year, I must conclude that Kendra Young is unable to properly fulfill the duties of the Vice-Presidency. Time and time again, she has violated parliamentary procedure and has deliberately ignored senators who have a legitimate claim to the floor. Furthermore, she has demonstrated a gross abuse of power. For example, during the April 25th meeting, Ms. Young said "I will not allow any member of the senate to yield the floor to any audience member." By not allowing students to speak at SGA meetings, Ms. Young has effectively muted the student body. To demand anything solely on the basis of personal interest or opinion, without any regard to established procedures and regulations, is to be unworthy of the position of Vice-President.

Sheree Cole?

Senator Cole chose to ignore every single one of our officially filed complaints, while she used unsigned, undated, and unregistered false allegations to illegally disqualify us. Furthermore, Senator Cole has deliberately and continuously violated proper procedure and has used her bias to dismiss serious violations committed by the Student Vision Party. I hope that future Election Committee Chairs will prove act with more professionalism and impartiality.

Gary Gaspard?

I disapprove of the hypocritical nature of President Gaspard's politics. One the one hand, he vehemently argues that we have no right to file cases with the Supreme Court because the SGA Constitution says "The Student Supreme Court shall hear Election appeals from the Senate" (we did not file appeals, we filed a *writ of certiorari*). Yet when

Luke speaks about election, Student Vision

What are your thoughts on each of the following people:

Kendra Young?

Ms. Young is totally unqualified and incompetent as a Vice President. First of all, she cannot keep order in the Senate because she fails to follow parliamentary procedures during the SGA meetings. I honestly believe Ms. Young has never read Robert's Rules of Order. Secondly, she has zero objectivity and is blinded by her loyalty to the SVP.

Sheree Cole?

As we all know, Ms. Cole was appointed by Mr. Gaspard and her recent actions are not only illegal and unconstitutional, but also extremely biased. I would like to refer students and especially Ms. Cole, ex-Chair of the Election Committee, to the SGA Election Packet's Article VII Section 1 and 2 (Violations) and Article X Section 3 all subsections (Hearing Procedures for the Election Committee) to see all the rules she ignored. Nice try, Ms. Cole, but next time, please take the time to read the Constitution and Election Packet before you take any action.

Gary Gaspard?

Mr. Gaspard lost the elections in a fair and square manner, but because of his ego and desperation for power, he refuses to accept the results. For me, he is a sore loser who not only lost the elections, but through his dirty politics is possibly losing face, good name and the respect of the students (if he has not lost them already). Mr. Gaspard, it is time for you to *leave SGA* and let the people *who were fairly elected* by the students to finally do something positive for the students and the school.

Georgia Logothetis?

I truly admire and respect her.

Senator Cruz wanted to present an amendment that prohibits impeached officers from holding office again, Mr. Gaspard completely disregarded the constitution and claimed that the amendments should have been presented to him in advance (the Constitution explicitly states that amendments need only be presented at a Senate meeting, not to the President). I am tired of his pedantic mode of leadership, as well as his consistent obliviousness to the needs and will of the students.

Luke Dobrzynski?

I cannot overstate my faith in Lukasz's leadership ability and intelligence. The SGA needs a pro-active, ambitious President, and Lukasz is just the man for the job. He constantly amazes me with his perseverance and endurance, especially during recent times of stress. I cannot wait to work with Lukasz and Speaker-elect Caleb Avraham. We are a fantastic team with many plans for NEIU.

What are your thoughts on the allegations of "racism" against your party?

I am saddened by the fact that our opponents lied to the students telling them we are racist. There is only one race for the SAL - the *human* race. The SAL values every human for their innate worth, not for the amount of melanin in their skin. The ability to lead the students in a fair and component manner has absolutely no correlation to race, religion, or sex. When I assume the Vice-Presidency, and when I look upon our Senate, I will not see the gradients of color, but a sea of capable students who are bound together in a common interest to serve the student body. **What are your thoughts on how the Election Committee dealt with the election?**

With the exception of Senators John Haptonstall and Robyn Kurtz, who have tirelessly fought for fairness and justice,

Georgia helped me survive and cope with the rough times we had to deal with recently. We were fellow students and a team before the elections, but now, we are true friends. I know Georgia can handle the job in a professional manner because she is tough, intelligent, and fair. She will be the best Vice President this school has had for a long time when she gets the chance to prove it. I am really looking forward to working with her next year.

What are your thoughts on the allegations of "racism" against your party?

This is a very sensitive issue; nevertheless, I am glad the *Independent* asked about it because this issue needs to be addressed. The allegations of "racism" against the SAL are completely irrational, absurd, and unfair. Any reasonable person who looks at our ticket can see that we promote ethnic diversity. I can assure everybody that SAL members are not racists, have never made racists comments against anybody, and will not tolerate racist allegations. I will not avoid any open discussion about this issue and I will determinedly fight and challenge any unjustified, false, and unfair accusations against me or any member of SAL.

What are your thoughts on how the Election Committee dealt with the election?

Before I will answer this question, I want to clarify that my words are directed *only* to those members of the Election Committee who supported Ms. Cole's actions during the election process and her decision to disqualify SAL. The Election Committee's actions were biased, unprofessional, illegal and unconstitutional. During the

I am extremely offended by the behavior of the remaining Committee members during the April 18th meeting. Only Senators Haptonstall and Kurtz had the dignity to stand up and vote against the illegal disqualification and to contest the legality of the allegations brought forth against us.

Unfortunately, their voice of dissent was muted by a biased, dishonorable chair. I believe that Senator Cole unashamedly and calculatingly threw proper procedure out the window by completely skipping the hearing. -We were denied due process. In my opinion, we were robbed of the right to defend to defend ourselves by the Election Committee.

What avenues are you pursuing with regards to the disqualification of your party?

Our disqualification has caused an uproar in the student body; we, the voters, demand to have the legitimate winners assume their positions. I encourage students to sign the petition that is circulating around campus in support of having the legally elected winners take office. We already have hundreds of signatures, a number of them from former SVP supporters who, even though they voted for Mr. Gaspard and Ms. Young, feel ethically compelled to stand up and recognize this wrong. We have filed cases in the Supreme Court, among them a *writ of certiorari* regarding the disqualification process, a request for judicial review of Senator Cole's behavior, and various other appeals. The Supreme Court chose to defer the decision to University President Salme Steinberg. I am confident that the President will review all documents in a prompt and unbiased manner, and that justice will be served. The protection of our rights as US citizens and NEIU students is inevitable, and if necessary, we are willing to go outside of the University to prevent the disenfranchising of NEIU voters.

elections, the Committee repeatedly disregarded SVP violations and ignored more than 10 SAL complaints against the SVP. SVP flyers were misplaced, stapled, and even today can be found in some of the classrooms. As for our disqualification, the Committee convicted the SAL without evidence, without the proper hearing, without giving us a chance to present our case, and during the closed executive session of the Committee. It broke at least dozen SGA Constitution and Election Packet rules, without experiencing any ramifications for its illegal actions. The evidence speaks for itself.

What avenues are you pursuing with regards to the disqualification of your party?

We are committed to playing fair and according to the rules, so of course, we first pursued a legal avenue to address the disqualification, filing requests for judicial review to the SGA Supreme Court. Now, after the Supreme Court's verdict, the decision is in the hands of NEIU administration, and I deeply believe in its impartiality and ability to make a fair and legal ruling in this case. Mr. Gaspard and his SVP's childish, irrational, and most importantly, unconstitutional and illegal actions must stop somewhere. It is obvious that the whole situation went too far and got totally out of students' hands, and the administration needs to address the issue and finish it definitively before it attracts some outside negative attention. This year, SGA elections have blighted the image of democracy, of the students, and of NEIU as a whole. The issue needs to be handled firmly and immediately.

Incumbent President Gary Gaspard responds to allegations

President Gaspard's comments on Senator Johnny

Haptonstall: Spring 2001 - Last year's elections in which he lost for the speaker position to Lynn Madix, Senator Johnny Haptonstall was a candidate of the Student Vision Party, for which he blamed me for his lost in the election. As you are well aware that during the Summer 2001, the SGA vice president position was vacant. Senator Haptonstall filed for the position. I was unable to offer the vice presidency to him. Not because his qualification did not meet the requirement for the position. Despite my hard effort of my communication's skills to working with Johnny, Mr. Haptonstall has always found great difficulty for communicating with me. Nonetheless, I offered to him, of which he accepted, the chair position of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee is one of the two most powerful committees (Finance and Charter & Rules) in the Student Government. With the respect that I always have for him, I never think of Mr. Haptonstall as an opposition, despite his opinion and position, of which he clearly states and openly shows. Ever since the beginning of my term, Mr. Haptonstall has proven himself to be a challenge (with which I have no problem) to my administration..

As a leader and the head of the association (Student Government), my duties and responsibilities, my profoundly conscious and most of all my temperament, I am dedicated with the best of my ability to serve students. Last Friday, April 26, we just had the end of year banquet for Student Government Award. For "President Choice - Best Attendance Senator of the Year," Mr. Haptonstall was the recipient for that category.

President Gaspard's appointments:

Regarding your critics on the appointees, it is necessary to inform you that, except those (senators) who have just been elected in the past election, exclusive all members in the SGA have been appointed by a president, including myself. It is one of the duties that the president has - power of appointment with the Senate approval.

In Spring 2000, President Gandara appointed Linda Berlow and me as senators. To my knowledge, there is absolutely no difference between an elected senator and an appointed one. As Senators, Berlow and I felt comfortably all right. We did not feel any less than others. All senators have the same rights and duties in the Student Government - exclusively, the rights to vote, reject, ratify and revoke [constitutions and charters of all University student organizations].

After the Spring 2000 elections in which I worked so hard to help him elected, President Tom Foley played an active role in appointment members. Before the fall semester begins, Mr. Foley appointed about ninety percent of the senators; because those who were fans of his successor left the SGA without saying "au revoir" or "à bientôt." - it is the French way to say good-bye. Their abundant from the government has caused major vacancies in the Senate. Quorum was hard to establish. It is needed ten members to have quorum. At some point, SGA was forced to hold a special election for the five-senate seats that were vacant in accordance with the SGA constitution. So, under the past administrations had problem in keeping the joined-members in the association. There was point that it seems students lost interests in joining the SGA. They came and left. On the contrary, under my administration the joined students stay and stay well active. Establish quorum has never been a treat for us. Our quorums regularly meet with no less than three-fifth members. More than twenty-five percent of members, whom I complement every day for their role of challenging and strength are still involved and active; something that one

could not have seen before under the previous administration.

Beside Berlow and I who had the grace of a president to appoint us, your close 'friends' senators, so called "oppositions" were also appointed. Ex-President Tom Foley appointed these distinguished appointee Senators - Johnny Haptonstall, Robyn Kurtz, and Luis Pulido who was appointed twice. So should anyone call the Foley groupies? I do not think so. They have the same rights, duties and privileges as any senators. They have no less or more value than others.

So, I am hoping to see a correction with an apology in the next *Independent* issue to the SGA senators.

President Gaspard speaks about Senator Jason Cruz:

Senator Jason Cruz was also appointed by me. I appointed him to the Senate because I felt that he was going to be an effective member in the SGA. I also appointed him to the chair of the Access and Diversity Committee. This is a committee that I created to represent minority, transfer, and special needs students - especially those who are underrepresented. The chair only had that committee meet one time this semester. As we speak no report of that committee has been given to the Senate. Do you call him one of my groupies? No. Because you know where and how he stands, he cannot be called like that. He has his own ideas and gold. Despite his differences, he still has my respect and support. I really like him for who he is. He may be one of those people who could justify that grateful is a weak emotion.

President Gaspard on the FMLA:

One year ago, former Senator Ellen Larrimore was also elected under the umbrella of the Student Vision Party. She did not do campaign for herself. The party elected her to the office as a senator. I also appointed Former Senator Becca Gilmore. She was one of my appointments. First, she did not run as a member of the Student Vision Party. She did not make one of the best ten higher candidates for senators. Then, Ellen and I negotiated in appointing Ms. Gilmore to the Senate. As I mentioned it in my candidate statement this year, I do not regret any decision that I have made. FMLA was one of the most beneficial organizations under my leadership. Besides other funding, last fall we approved \$7,200 for FMLA to organize the Holly Neal's concert on campus. This was the largest amount of fund that ever has ever been approved before. I had been given pressure not to approve. But I did anyway; because my campaign plan was to empower all clubs on campus. Under my first term, we allocated more funds to FMLA than any other club. My thoughts on Tom Foley's action in the last Senate meeting: Mr. Tom Foley, ex-SGA President, threw his shirt from the audience to the SGA Executive Board at the podium. That was unethical in his part; however, I was not surprised of his behavior. First, Mr. Foley wanted to speak at the meeting so he could bring a solution to "this election conflict." I would like to ask ex-President Foley, what happen to the election Spring 2001 that he claimed a hacker got into the computer?

Did he ever find out who the hacker was? Or, did he ever bother to find out who the hacker was? Or, something else... Tom was the Election Committee Chair. We never found out who was responsible, besides Tom, for hacking the 2001 elections. "I am making no formal accusations at this time. I [Tom Foley] am not willing to say if it was a fraud or an egregious error," (his comment about the 1,458 vote discrepancy) - *Independent* Vol. 17 issue 15 p 1. To my knowledge, the Spring 2001 election is still a mystery. How could Mr. Foley bring a solution to this year's election where the SAL team was disqualified for slandering its opponents

on a world wide web? Cause and effect: The SAL's website causes a severe infraction (libel / slander its opponents) of the Election Code. They were found guilty for causing severe damage in the election and disqualified at the discretion of the Election Committee that was approved the Student Senate.

Something I find interesting about Tom. I worked with him. I've seen him deal with managerial issues. I can say this about Tom: In Spring 2000 election, Tom ran for two positions - President and Student Trustee. He won the first and lost the second one. Despite that he lost the Trustee position, he fulfilled it as if it were his. I, myself, was elected to the position of IBHE-SAC representative; he took that position from me. At that time, there were eight committees within the Student Government Association. Ex President Foley was the Chair of every single one of them.

What President Gaspard thinks about attacking someone's character:

It is not my character to talk negative about anyone in order to make myself look good. I refuse to comment. I will not destroy anyone's character.

What President Gaspard thinks of Georgia and Luke:

Georgia and Lukasz? What can I say about them? Hum hum hum...nothing, really. I do not know any of them personally. Vice President Young and I wish that we could say something bad about them too; but it is not in our nature. Not only that, I did not know them prior to the election, except that I am aware that Georgia wrote an article on the paper addressing issues concerning the leadership retreat trip that Vice President Young and I took to Boston back in November. Georgia wrote a lot of negative s about us. She did not bother to make a time and come to us to find out about the conference. With her own personal judgment she proceed to write anything in the paper about the trip. That is all I know about Georgia. As a journalist myself, that I practice outside the school, I know for a fact, writers should have balance on what they want to write about. This is a part of journalistic ethical code. Today, I would like to instruct Georgia that the article that she writes about Kendra and I back in November is incomplete and unethical for printing in a newspaper. You just cannot write an article on an individual without getting his perspective on the issue, unless you have a motive behind it to libel and slander that person. In her case, it seems that is true. Because, look into the past Student Government election, she was one of the first candidates to file for the vice president position. This may well seem that that was her prime reason for having negatively criticism us in the paper. In French, we say "la critique est aisée mais l'art est difficile."

About Luke, I cannot really say anything bad about him, except the SAL Website that slander and libel about the impeachment that is not true. We all know that we are responsible for anything we print on the paper. But for Luke's case, he refuses to take responsibility for his actions. The rule has set. The rule is the rule. We all have to abide by the rule. If we violate it, there is a consequence to pay - who makes the crime will pay the price. I wish I knew the reason why, the Student Action League created such a lie against us, other than to steal the votes from us. They print on their Website that we have been impeached which is not true. What have we done to them? - Nothing at all. But it is so sad to see in a student government college's election, people feel it is ok to slander, libel and dehumanize opponents just to get the votes. I do not understand why some people are still complaining about the SAL's disqualification as if the SAL did (still do) not violate the election law. When are these people going to realize

that it was wrong in the SAL's part to slender their opponents to make their way up? What kind of lesson would you teach for their actions if you refuse to accept their wrongdoing? Could someone justify the slender and libel are right to do so on a Word Wide Website? There was no reason for Gary and Kendra to be (still) slender and libel on the SAL website the news section. Lukasz and Georgia both know that Vice President Young and I have not been impeached. We all have a choice in life to do good or bad things. So the SAL picked what is good for them. Unfortunately, they took the wrong direction. We all know if it were not for the slender, the Student Vision Party would win the past election with a landslide.

President Gaspard's comments on Chief Justice Dennis Sagel:

ARTICLE VII - THE JUDICIAL BRANCH Section 2. At any time prior to the submission of the Supreme Court's final decision the President of the University may refer any cases to a higher level of appeal within or outside the University, if such referral is in the best interest of justice. Such referral shall constitute a continuation of the same case and shall not be deemed double jeopardy...

Section 3. The Student Supreme Court shall...have appellate jurisdiction in all other cases tried by student...decisions are final, unless Article VII, section 2 of this Constitution is invoked.

Section 4. (1)...no members of the court system who is personally interested or involved in a particular case shall sit in judgment on that case... Chief Justice Sagel has priority shown

(2) A quorum of the Court shall be the Chief Justice (or the Action chief Justice) and two other Associate justices.

Section 5. The Chief Justice (2) It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Justice to notify each student of a charge brought against them, to inform them of their rights according to this Constitution and to insure that the proper procedure is used in making such a change. Chief Justice Dennis Sagel did not take his responsibility (as said in the SGA Constitution) to notify each student [involved] of [the] charge brought against them.

I know that Chief Justice Sagel saw Vice President Young and I in the hallway of the Student Lounge - near by our office- and notified us about four (4) complaints that he received against us. Mr. Sagel also sent us a letter that he wanted to rush to have a hearing about the appeals. To my knowledge, Mr. Sagel did make an attempt to contact any member of the past election if he really wanted to have a hearing and make an impartial decision. Mr. Sagel failed to get in touch with two of his Associate Justices: Kristina Khufal and Joliana. Mr. Sagel also failed to make contact with no one in the past Election Committee but, his friend and partner from the radio station, Senator Johnny Haptonstall. While serving in the Election Committee (which is required to be impartial - in the By-Law), Mr. Haptonstall disregards all policies and shows courage to represent the Student Action League (SAL). It shows that Chief Justice Sagel had connections with the SAL who was disqualified by the discretion of the Election Committee. On the 18th of April 2002 - SGA Senate meeting, the Student Senate approved the disqualification of the Student Action League team for using its website to libel and slender its opponents: President Gaspard and Vice President Young, both from the Student Vision Party.

Section 7. Judicial Rights

(1) The enumeration of this Constitution of certain powers, duties, and privileges shall not be meant to diminish or deny orders that are traditionally exercised, performed, or enjoyed by Student Government, its

officers, and departments, and the Student Body.

Dennis' behavior was the worst bizarre move that I have ever seen in the world of politics. First, it was unjustified for him to accept any appeal that was sent from the Student Senate. Second, the Constitution does not say that we should take visit from the Supreme Court. Why Dennis came in the Senate meeting to solicit SGA member to report others of being bias if suspected. That was bias in his part. Dennis does not run Student Government; I do. His role is to interpret the law. Not to rule overrule what the government and the Senate pass.

If he were so unbiased as he claims to be, why didn't he let the Supreme Court meeting proceed? Than he would cast his vote abstain later. Why didn't he give the other two judges who were present their chance to vote - in their conscious? Apparently, Justice Sagel felt that he was going to lose a vote that would not be in his favor so he broke the Supreme Court meeting. He emerged and dictated the other two distinguished justices from taking a vote that day. He wasted their time for coming in the meeting that day. Now since they were unable to come with a decision to the Senate, it means that the Student Senate's decision stands. Obviously, Mr. Sagel was looking for something negative on behalf of the Student Senate to overrule the SAL's disqualification and the Senate's ratification. It was too bad that he could not find any wrongdoing. I want to say, I do not appreciate what Dennis did last week. No way. It wasn't neutral. If the Senate did what Dennis has done, it would be

.. Both the SGA Constitution and Election Packet 2002 are said, "The Student Supreme Court shall hear elections appeals from the Senate...conviction by the Senate of a violation of the elections rules in the constitution or in the By-Laws may constitute complete disqualification of the candidate for all offices in the election and all votes received by the candidate for office," Article VI - Elections

It is unfortunate to see on this past election Spring 2002, people are crying foul while they're at the time committing it. Now, what is the thing? Let's not interpreting the right thing to our own benefit. We should set a precedent for others who will come us. Do the right thing is being honest not only to yourself also to other. It is ok now to push, slender, assassinate other's character to make my way up? It is ok now to lie about someone of wrongdoing to justify myself as a better person or candidate? Since when do the right thing is what popular? What is now the school's administration going to say and teach its student about what's right and wrong? My name and Vice President Young have been the center of this past election 2002. We have been slender and libel for no reason what's so ever. Do we deserve to be treated like "vaut rien"? How? Vice President Young and I are students as any other students who have character and integrity. We have a constitution that has been written eight (8) years ago. Our student administration did not amend any part of it. Now we are only using what's on the paper as said LAW. If someone did not read it properly, it cannot be our fault. If your intention were good and about to help by representing students, you would not think about destroying other students. Once one is for one student, s/he is for all.

(2) All judicial action must follow the proper procedure of the court. No defendant's right to appeal shall be abridged, nor shall any court deny a defendant due process. Violation of the right to appeal and the tight to due process shall constitute grounds for immediate dismissal of such cases if the violation has done irreparable damage to the defendant's case.

SGA commits high-way robbery

And so ends the legacy of former-President Gaspard's administration; on a note of disregard for the very people he claims to represent. He and former-Vice-President Kendra Young worked desperately at the April 25, 2002 Student Government Association [SGA] to stifle the voice of both criticism and question. In the end, they didn't so much stifle those voices as they did reveal themselves for the pathetic thieves they have become.

Some might question me calling them thieves, but what do you call people who deliberately take possession of something that belongs to others? I call those people thieves.

What former-President Gaspard and former Vice-President Young have stolen is the ability of the students of NEIU to choose their own elected representatives. In addition, they are currently stealing legislative time from the two Senators that they had disqualified. Allow me to explain: Newly elected Senators take office at the first meeting after the election results have been ratified; there have now been two Senate meetings since those elections, and the two Senators whom you, the students, overwhelmingly elected to office are losing legislative time, time that can never be regained. The same will soon happen with the offices of President, Vice-President, and Speaker, who are slated to take office on the first Monday following May 15, 2002.

Writing this about former-President Gaspard hurts me more than most of you reading this will know, even if you're aware of my own past involvement as the SGA President who preceded Gaspard. You see, Gary was one of only a few people who attended my father's funeral in 2000. Not only did he attend the funeral, but he came to the wake and stayed longer than some friends that I've had for over 30 years. In addition, I made Gary a special guest at my wedding in that same year. In short, I considered him a friend. I feel on some level that for me to criticize him at all is to betray his friendship. But my father always taught me during his long and successful life that to criticize a friend when the criticism is justified is one of the

hardest things to do. He also taught me that about the only harder thing on a man's conscience is remaining silent when a friend is truly in the wrong.

That is why I find myself in the peculiar position of reluctantly criticizing a politician.

I first heard about this election

disqualification fiasco on Friday, April 19, 2002, the day after the real winners of this election, the candidates chosen by the student body of NEIU, were disqualified in committee and Senate proceedings that it would be charitable to call a mockery of due process. After all, it can't really be called due process if the party accused of wrongdoing isn't even given one chance to defend themselves.

I immediately realized the kind of trouble Gaspard and crew were getting into, and put in a request to speak for only five minutes with an eye toward solving the situation to the satisfaction of all involved. My request was refused by the hypocritical former-Vice-President Young, who cited "too much on the agenda" for there to be even five minutes in which to speak (incidentally, she must consider two finance committee reports to be too much for the Senate to handle, because that's all the business they had on the agenda). Still with an eye to resolving the situation for my former friend as well as saving the image of the organization to which I belonged for two years, I wrote again to Young, asking her to reconsider. I received no response, and when time for the meeting came and I was seen in the audience, Young announced that the "audience participation" part of the meeting was to be cancelled due to time constraints. She also tried to get the Senate to agree to cease the practice of Senators yielding their speaking time to constituents whom the Senators feel have a need to address the body. Yet for some reason, Young announced a guest speakers list, which I immediately got on, but which was never called.

When Senator Johnny Haptonstall defied Young and recognized me, our hypocritical former-Vice-President played it off as if I never had anything to say, and that Haptonstall was just noting my presence instead of graciously allowing me to use his recognized time to speak my mind. She even went so far as to call for two rounds of applause in order to attempt to keep me silent, but as those of you who know me can attest, I won't remain silent when I've got something important to say. So, when hypocrite Young attempted to move on, I spoke my mind, interrupting the meeting to denounce the actions of this SGA. Basically, I told them that they no longer represented me in any legitimate manner.

As a constituent of Young and Gaspard, I feel that it is their duty as *public servants* to listen to the concerns of the people whom they are supposed

to serve. In effect, that makes me, along with all the rest of the student body of NEIU, their boss. Of course, in the real world, employees who don't listen to their boss tend to not remain employees for long. This will also be the fate of Gaspard, Young, and crew. For, if justice is not swift and forthcoming from within this university, it surely will be from without.

Now, I'm not saying that Gaspard's opponents are as pure as the driven snow. Quite the contrary, some of the charges against them may hold water, although I've yet to see any proof of their alleged wrongdoing. Gaspard and Young, on the other hand, committed disqualifiable infractions that I have seen proof of (actual photographs of Young campaigning in restricted areas, photos of their party's campaign literature in prohibited places). These numerous infractions were officially presented by their opponents to the Election Committee chair, Senator Sheree Cole (probably the biggest hypocrite of the pack - she's supposed to be impartial and fair, yet was seen by numerous people and one camera actively campaigning for Gaspard and Young) who did absolutely nothing about them. Even that Old West guy, Judge Bean (called "the hangin' judge") was more fair. Give me a break!

SGA controls an internal budget of \$50,000 of your student fee money. About \$7800 of that money goes to pay the SGA officers (President, Vice-President and Speaker). These "officers," who were not elected by you, the student body, are actually stealing money from this university by thwarting the ability of the rightfully elected officers to take office. I cannot stand by and watch my money go into the pocket of a thief.

But what can the disenfranchised voter do about it? That's easy. Shine the light of public inquiry onto this travesty of justice. Attached to this article is a letter addressed to the Illinois Board of Higher Education Student Advisory Committee, protesting the actions of this rogue administration. Copy it or tear it out of the paper, but for the sake of justice please sign it and bring it to the *Independent*, where they will be collected and sent off. By the time you read this, I will already have contacted that body. Hopefully, the total disenfranchisement of NEIU's student body will be enough to sway them to investigate this situation and call for the dismissal of these hypocrites, charlatans, and thieves. Tell Gaspard and Young in no uncertain terms that they are fired.

Student speaks up

As I exist in my second year as a senior (with plenty of credit hours, yet none of the classes I really need due to the fact they are rarely offered) I have decided it is high time I took advantage of all that Northeastern has to offer. I've already done time in the Honors Program, so I've been snooping around for more interesting things to immerse myself in. I've enjoyed listening to a number of guest lecturers, I use the gym regularly, I sign petitions, and I really got into the Student Research Symposium- it's amazing, given the chance, what people will present as a "field of research." Not to belittle the hours and hours that students put into their subject of interest, but someone should've done some research and presented it to the entire student body and community on how our student Senate is presently blocked from actually doing anything for the students.

This is the latest step in my self-education curriculum here at NEIU. I have become an activist. Yes indeed. Despite my numerous counts of displeasure with this institution (just like all of you out there), the last few months of observation and conversation have evoked in me something I doubted I would ever feel: a smidge of pride in this blasted school. If I peel off all the onion layers, when it comes down to it, I like this place. I wouldn't continue to enroll semester after semester if I didn't. And yes, I do care who is representing my thoughts and opinions in the student Senate and before the almighty matriarchal administration. AND YOU SHOULD TOO.

Not because it makes any difference on the parking situation or because they might manage to get two more classes added to the education dept. curriculum (big f***ing deal-I'm a biology major- we have problems too, you know), but just by virtue of attending this university. *With or without your vote, the folks who get elected to office represent you.* They serve to voice your thoughts and opinions. And if that voice is ignorant, deceitful, and empty of any sort of dignity whatsoever, you think that doesn't reflect on you? As the *Independent* previously noted with the Vision Party's recent campaign initiatives, if you don't actively campaign AGAINST that voice, then you are ACTIVELY supporting it.

I have complete confidence that the majority of this university is beginning to see our voice for what it really is. The smoke that has surrounded the 2001/2002 SGA is finally starting to dissipate as more people are taking an interest.

I myself attended, as an observer, my first student Senate meeting today. I hoped to see some stones thrown between the Vision Party (our present ignorant voice) and the young upstarts, SAL. And boy, did I get my wish. Without one word spoken from the disqualified SAL election-victors (see, the new voice has not yet risen), the Vision Party's Gaspard and Young won a fairly significant battle in their war to lose all dignity. But, that was a short-lived satisfaction, because when I thought about it, I really just wanted to see the Senate *do something for the students.* An initiative, a motion, an idea, a joke— anything that concerned us as students, outside of the pompous world of Senate sub-committees and hearings (or lack of).

And I got NOTHING!! Not one word that reflected any life outside that particular classroom. The voice has forgotten why it speaks. It now just speaks to hears itself proclaim its own majesty, and in doing so reveals its own incompetence and lack of honor. The Senators that *do* wish to speak for the students with honesty and justice are blocked at every word. They are stripped of the power of their voices by the incompetent majority and the Senate stagnates.

Now, I know that most of you don't give a shit. Hell, I didn't either until I realized that the loud obnoxious voice was mine, too, and I started acting against it. We need to cause the administration to take notice! The Vision Party needs to be replaced. Not that their goals aren't as lofty and honorable as any political group at this school, but their means are despicable. Gary Gaspard in the Senate meeting today blatantly ignored the presentation of at least 5 different points in the Student Constitution that he was violating. Kendra Young talked right through with a "hello/thank you for coming/goodbye" rant when the 2000/2001 SGA President wanted to speak. Aside from being completely rude, there was an obvious air of lack of respect. And it is lack of respect for the Students!!! They are too wrapped up in being important SGA members. For god's sake, its only college. Can't you try and actually help your fellow students instead of flaunting your ignorance with lack of action?

One last fabulous tidbit before I retire. Gary Gaspard, present figurehead of Young's, stated during the meeting that "The administration won't get involved [with resolving the current SAL disqualifications]... the students made their decision." Damn right we did, but it sure wasn't your f***ing voice we voted for. So, in my new role as activist, I will continue to act against your influence. I have another 3 semesters as a senior and believe me, my voice can be louder than yours.

Kristen Verdoia
NEIU Student

Attached letter for IBHE SAC

IBHE-SAC members
Ladies and Gentlemen:
Subject: Violations of NEIU student body rights by NEIU Student Government Association

The student body of Northeastern Illinois University recently got a chance to elect representatives to their Student Government Association (SGA). Unfortunately, the current SGA administration has chosen to disqualify the winning candidates on charges of campaign misconduct. These disqualifications were handed down with a total disregard for the existing statute of limitations and without providing the accused any kind of due process, as is required by the SGA's own constitution. Students-at-large who attempted to speak to the SGA were not permitted to do so.

As a concerned student, I value my right of choosing my representatives, and feel that the current SGA administration has acted in such a manner as to disenfranchise the electoral voice of the student body at Northeastern. They have also ceased to act as my representative when they refused to let the voice of the everyday student be heard. This conduct will no doubt cause increased voter apathy in the next election, which is a chronic problem on many campuses today.

I feel that the SGA of NEIU has acted in such a manner as to deserve an official condemnation from a statewide governmental organization such as yours. As a student whose rights are being violated I urge you to investigate this situation and, if warranted, issue said condemnation to both Northeastern Illinois University and to the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Respectfully,

concerned Northeastern Illinois University student

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Kendra Young defends SAL's DQ

The Spring 2002 Election will be one to remember. Students, Faculty, Staff and Administrators were active participants during the election process. One administrator by the name of Dr. Kathy Kardaras got caught up in the middle of Student Government. Perhaps she thought she was a student. On Sunday (April 7, 2002- the first day after voting), Dr. Kardaras, the director of the University Honors Program, disseminated an email to all students in the honors program. In this e-mail, Dr. Kardaras endorsed the Student Action League Party, and wrote her personal opinion as fact. She discussed earlier meetings of student government as if she had attended them, and erroneously led students to believe that she has been on the frontline of student government all year.

This is inaccurate, unlawful and inappropriate. We contend that administrators should not endorse student candidates and unduly influence students. The power differentials are too great. While we do not doubt that Dr. Kardaras is proud of these students, we feel that the administration should ultimately recognize their role as neutral observers in a student election, not active participants.

According to the governing policies of Northeastern Illinois University which were established by its Board of Trustees: The university administrators (faculty) is a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When he/she speaks or writes as a citizen, he/she should be

free from institutional censorship or discipline, but his/her special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a person of learning and an educational officer, he/she should remember that the public may judge his/her profession and his/her institution by his/her utterances. Hence he/she should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that he/she is not an institutional spokesperson. The SAL party listed the University Honors Program as one of their endorsers. In relation to the Election Code, "all candidates will be responsible for any campaigning done on their behalf" (Article VII. Sec. 5.5).

After the first day of voting, SAL was not satisfied with their results. They then created a news posting on their website. On Sunday, April 7, 2002, the following was posted: NEWS FLASH: We at the Student Action League have just received word that the current SGA President and Vice President, Gary Gaspard and Kendra Young, have been impeached by the SGA. The charges brought against Gary and Kendra include failure to follow parliamentary procedure, SGA constitutional violation, and abuse of office. Our sources notified us that Gary and Kendra will be served their conviction by NEIU's Student Government on Thursday, April 18th; any student may attend this meeting of the SGA. None of the above information was factual. They

created a negative image for President Gaspard and I that has been difficult to recover. Two days later SAL made a correction that was not a correction, writing: IMPEACHMENT CORRECTION: We at the Student Action League found that the information we received regarding the impeachment of the current SGA President and Vice President, Gary Gaspard and Kendra Young, was incorrectly phrased with regard to tense. This information should read that Gaspard and Young will be under trial for impeachment. Again, the charges to be brought against Gary and Kendra include failure to follow parliamentary procedure, SGA constitutional violation, and abuse of office. Our sources notified us that Gary and Kendra will face a trial to determine their conviction status by NEIU's Student Government on Thursday, April 18th, and, again, any student may attend this meeting of the SGA. This correction only repeated the false accusation that we were impeached and scheduled for a trial during the next SGA meeting. These proceedings did not occur.

During the election, it was amazing hear students say, "why should I vote for you when you're going to be Impeached? And, why are you running for office if you are impeached?" This was the result of displaying falsified information on SAL's website. I guess that's why the Election Committee's findings were that SAL's violations manipulated and overly influenced the voters.

Sheree Cole responds to questions

Were you campaigning for the Vision party?

No. According to the Election By-Laws, (Article X Sec. 2) "No member of the Election Committee shall be running for office OR be a campaign staff member for any candidate running for office." As the Election Committee Chair, it was my responsibility to uphold that law.

Who did the allegations against SAL come from?

The Election Committee. The disqualification of SAL was decided upon by the members of the Election Committee: Sen. Sheree Cole (Chair), Sen. Duene Otero (Vice-Chair), Sen. Johnny Haptonstall, Sen. Robyn Kurtz, and Sen. Emmanuel Sylvestre.

Were the allegations brought before the Election committee right before the SGA meeting in which SAL was disqualified dated, sponsored, and stamped by Student Activities?

The Election Committee met to review the election results. Members of the committee found the SAL party guilty of committing "a severe infraction of the Election Code," which entitled them to be disqualified from the election process, at the discretion of the Election Committee (Election Code). The disqualification process does not require certification from the Student Activities office.

How do you respond to the allegations that you were not an

impartial Election Committee chair?

I did not explicitly state that I support any party, nor did my behavior suggest a bias. My main focus was protecting the integrity of the election and the candidates reputation as students.

How do you respond to the allegations that you ignored complaints registered by SAL?

On Wednesday, April 10, 2002, the Election Committee met to discuss the complaints that were filed. All the candidates involved were in attendance to hear the reading of their complaints. The Election Committee then went into an Executive Session where everyone had to leave the room, excluding the Election Committee members. As the Election Committee Chair, I allowed Sen. Johnny Haptonstall and Sen. Robyn Kurtz to decide rather than have hearings for the 15 complaints were necessary. Sen. Johnny Haptonstall motioned that the committee write letters in response to the serious complaints. We voted on Haptonstall's motion and it passed. The committee responded by letter to all the appropriate candidates.

Did you present any complaints against the vision party to the rest of the Election Committee?

No. During the election, I received complaints from candidates who were apart of the

following parties: Leadership for the Future, Student Vision Party and the Student Action League. The only complaints that were given by individuals on the Election Committee were from Sen. Johnny Haptonstall to the Student Supreme Court. His vested interest in the election was present during the election. He went around campus tearing the Student Vision Party's flyers down and wrote President Gaspard a formal letter without proper authorization. During the election process, Sen. Haptonstall always fought on behalf of the SAL. To him, the SAL never did anything wrong. Now the truth is out, Sen. Johnny Haptonstall is leading the rally against the Senate's decision to disqualify the SAL party.

Is that one of your duties as Chair of the Election Committee?

Just as all SGA Committee Chairs, I was responsible for leading the committee and making sure that the Election Code was followed. The election committee made the right decision by disqualifying the SAL for slander.

About Georgia and Luke:

I regret that Georgia and Luke did not follow the rules of the election. We cannot tolerate lies and slander at Northeastern Illinois University. It is illegal and unethical. This is a Student Government Election. I wish them good luck for next year.

When will it all end?

IN THE PAST, I'VE OFTEN WRITTEN ABOUT THE SAME TOPIC MORE THAN ONCE. THIS IS USUALLY BECAUSE I'M TOO LAZY TO THINK UP SOMETHING ELSE, SO I JUST RE-



BRIAN BLASZKOWSKI

WRITE AN OLD OPINION, SOMETIMES ADDING NEW CONTENT. WELL, WHY BREAK A STREAK? SGA IS THE TOPIC ONCE AGAIN. MORE SPECIFICALLY, SGA MEETINGS AND WHAT I THINK SHOULD HAPPEN WITH ALL THIS ELECTION NONSENSE. FIRST, LET'S TALK ABOUT SGA MEETINGS.

These things are hysterical and incredibly entertaining. It's funny to see how a group of adults can't even make Democracy work, because of all the arguing and all the political maneuvering. A few select senators are given the opportunity to speak, a couple others are nearly *always* ignored, and the rest just sit there and vote how Gaspard wants them to. I love every second of the drama.

How many students can honestly say they've attended an SGA meeting? Why not? Don't just take *my* word for it. Ever since my last couple columns hit the press, I've been hearing it hardcore. Most people seem entertained by it, some people have somehow managed to increase their disliking for me, and others just don't care.

Well, much like I encouraged people to vote for the Student Action League, I'm now encouraging people to attend an SGA meeting. I don't know when the next one is, because they decided to end the last meeting before a date could be set (that's SGA for you!), so who knows when it's going to happen? But, it should be fun and entertaining, and then no one will have to take my word for anything. You can see firsthand why Democracy doesn't work (as if the fact that our votes were cast aside isn't enough to prove *that*).

So, students of NEIU, why not see for yourselves? See for yourself how Kendra Young likes to close off topics of discussion when things aren't going well for her. See how Young tells the *students* how to get time to speak, and then denies them the chance, even after following her procedures. See how Young violates Illinois State law. I'm not kidding, they break State Law in SGA meetings.

For these reasons and many others, please come to the next meeting. Go to Gary Gaspard's office, and find out when the next meeting is. While you're down there, ask for a copy of the audio-taped April 25th meeting. Those tapes *should* be made open to the public, after all.

But, bear in mind also that *Luke* should be in that President's office. The Vision Party is either making up the rules as they go, or only following the rules that suit them best. I've been complaining about this for a *long* time now, and even I'm sick of it. It's time to end this crap, it's time to take our case to the administration. Come to the *Independent* office for details on how you can let the administration know that we, the students of NEIU, are sick of this bullshit and are ready to get rid of the infestation that is the Vision Party.

The Vision Party keeps saying the same thing over and over; "Let's move on." They'd like us to just move on, and forget the whole thing about Sheree Cole lying and manipulating election complaint forms to get her buddies elected once again. Well, screw that. Criminals would *love* us to move on after they rob a bank. The drunk driver would *love* for the parents of the kids he hit after he knocked back a few and hopped a curb and drove through a park to move on and forget about it.

There's a reason we can't move on and forget about it. Vision Party. You *don't* belong in the SGA. We voted you out. We did it in record numbers, and the majority of the voters want you *out* and want SAL *in*. Why don't you take your own advice and move on yourselves? Get over the fact that you lost, get over the fact that your dirty politics are coming to light, and realize that the students have spoken. For people who claim to "want to do things for the students," you guys sure like ignoring us whenever you feel like it.

Not only do they want us to "move on," but they claim that we students "don't have all the facts." Is that why you disregarded our votes? What if we voted you *into* office? Would you still want us to have the facts, or would you be happy that we foolishly voted a bunch of sniveling crooks back into office? If we don't have all the facts, then where are they? Where are these elusive bits of information that you term "facts"? Are they hiding in the tapes of the SGA meetings that only *recently* you allowed the public to have? Because I sure as hell didn't get the memo entitled "Vision Party's Facts."

The facts I see are that Sheree Cole ignored all the complaints from SAL, set aside 15 minutes to whip up a bunch of bullshit charges, and rushed them into the Senate without letting SAL know about them. Not only that, but she did it a full *week* after the elections were over! There's a 24 hour deadline on those charges, people. *That's* a fact.

I've had enough of this, and over half the students who voted feel the same way. It's time to involve the administration. Send an e-mail to President Steinberg and let her know how the Vision Party robbed us of a Democratic election.

Her e-mail is: S.Steinberg@neiu.edu. I promise that I'm going to send her a very long e-mail tonight. I suggest you all do the same, and tell her that the students who pay tuition every several months are outraged at the lack of credulity the SGA body has with crooks and liars at the helm.

Anyone who claims anything else obviously doesn't know the definition of *fact*.

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Organizations

Hip Hop is Art. It's everything around us consisting of vision, vocals, music, rhythm, B-Boys, DJ's, emcees..... Your opinions! Your Input! Join the Hip Hop Organization every Thursday 1:40-2:40 p.m. in room FA-247.

The Black Heritage Gospel Choir is extending its membership to all Northeastern students. Come join us in singing songs of praise. Tues. and Thurs., 1:40-2:50, FA 152. -- President Staria Berry

WZRD 88.3 FM's "Thursday Nite Live" seeks bands/musicians. All styles considered. No promises. Must have demo. Send descriptions to secretagentbill@hotmail.com

Join the Independent's award-winning staff. Be famous! Make money! Become a part of the student newspaper. We are in search of photographers, writers, cartoonists, and reporters. Staff meetings are held every Tuesday during the activity hour. The *Independent* office is located in E-049, below Beck's Bookstore. Call 442-4577.

As-salamu-alaikum, the Muslim Students Association meets every Tuesday and Thursday in Room FA-153 from 1:40 to 2:50p.m. to discuss the solution to social problems through Islamic means and also to plan public activities on campus. Open to questions and comments. Website: <http://neiu.edu/~msa>

Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance meets on Tuesdays in C-505 at 1:40. To join listserve, send a message to femajority1@neiu.edu.

NEIU's new Yoga Club. Do you want to learn how to enhance concentration and reduce stress while having fun?! Join the BMC Yoga Club! Membership is free and open to NEIU students, faculty and staff. For more information email Damaris Gonzalez, BMC President, at dgonzalez@neiu.edu.

Care about your environment? Let's start a NEIU environmental organization! Contact or leave message for Sarah (773) 561-5131 or revo1@chickmail.com

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Friends of Bill W. and patients of Dr. Bob: AA Closed Meeting. 12 and 12 at Noon, Wednesdays, in C-505.

Personals

NEIU Students: Good luck on finals from SGA! Don't forget, the 30th through the 2nd is the Final Giveaway of the year! Come to Village Square to stock up on "study food!" - SGA

Roses are red, violets are blue, the school year is over, thank

God I'm through!

I'm not bad...I'm just easily convinced.

Lefty and Righty: Shut up, already. - The Middle Finger

Just when you hoped politics were dead, it comes back, screaming and writhing around like a wounded animal.

Professors: Please, be merciful. I truly meant to spend time on that paper. I meant to turn in that assignment. I really was going to study for my test. Can't you give me the benefit of the doubt? - Desperate Student

AZ: This was just a sampling of what we'll go through next semester. Welcome to hell. --King and Tyrant

BB: Thanks for the taste of the newspaper. I'll be around for a while, so this is just the beginning.

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something
missing?
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E-049

Oh goody gumdrops!

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