



## SGA candidates vow to make improvements at UMKC

*Advocates and Vision promise significant change for UMKC students*

Fadhel Kaboub Mar . 29 . 2004

Less than three weeks separate us from the UMKC Student Government Association (SGA) election which will take place April 19-21, 2004 online as well as in several poling locations on campus.

The *Kansas City Aurora* asked the two competing parties (Advocates and Vision) one simple but challenging question: "If you could make one improvement at UMKC what would it be?" The question is simple because there are a lot of things that can be improved at UMKC; however, what makes this question difficult to answer is that any improvement at UMKC necessitates student involvement, which is exactly the thing that UMKC lacks, partly because of the commuter nature of the UMKC campus, but also due of a puzzling student disinterest in what happens at UMKC.

What follows is the text of the two responses the *Aurora* recieved from Eugene Lickenbrock who is running for SGA President on the *Vision* ticket, and Geoff Gerling, current SGA President, running for reelection on the *Advocates* ticket.

| Eugene Lickenbrock ( <i>Vision</i> )   | Geoff Gerling ( <i>Advocates</i> )  |
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| <p>The number one change that I would make here at UMKC would be to increase student pride in UMKC. I think this change is one that could occur whether or not I am elected Student Government Association President. I feel that this is something that can be started by a few people and over time will catch on.</p> <p>During my three years here at UMKC, I have been to several programs and sporting events which have lacked in student participation or walked around campus on a "Blue Day" and found many not wearing either blue or UMKC clothing. I have also heard it said many times by students that they came to school at UMKC because of some various academic program. I have also heard people say that "I only go to class at UMKC; I do not go to any of the activities." All of this deeply upsets me, especially at this time of the year with March Madness taking place.</p> | <p>The biggest mistake that anyone can make with me is providing an opportunity to speak publicly about whatever I want.</p> <p>I was a candidate for Courtwarming King this Winter and all candidates are given a chance to speak at a dinner after all voting had ended, so it was meant to be more of a 'thank you' and motivating kind of a speech. I love to take opportunities like this to truly make people think. My big push for the entire week was about how UMKC students have a hard time 'getting behind' something and I felt that Courtwarming was a good example of what we could be doing every day in different ways to make UMKC a better place for all students. My speech this particular night was not going to be full of glitter and pep. Instead, I said that I was tired of people coming to me and complaining about how they don't like this campus and always wanting me to fix it for them. On a campus of 14,000, I can find hundreds of students that are unhappy about</p> |

I sit in my room of the Residence Hall and watch all of the basketball games being played and see the thousands and thousands of fans that are at the games supporting their teams, either by just being there or wearing their school's clothing, or painting themselves; and I begin to wonder why that could not happen at UMKC. I find it deeply disturbing that almost no one attends the basketball games. I know that not everyone may like basketball, but I think it would be an awesome display of school spirit if Kemper or Municipal Arena was full of UMKC students cheering for their Kangaroos.

I have also been to several APC programs or hosted several programs in the Residence Hall in which there is a very low turn out, and this too upsets me. I would love to see a program hosted in Pierson and there not be enough space for everyone who wants to attend because there are so many students there.

I feel that in order to accomplish any changes at UMKC, this change must first take place. If students have an immense pride in UMKC, then they would want to get involved in all of the various organizations on campus or the various programs offered by APC. Plus, if students have an immense pride in UMKC then they will help facilitate the necessary changes to make UMKC an even better institution than it already is currently.

parking, tuition, class size, or administrators, but there are only a handful that will actually want to do something about it. Essentially, I pointed a finger at every student in Pierson and said that they were to blame for their grievances with our university. In the end, I think that I made a lot of people mad, but some went out of their way to say that it was nice to hear some honesty.

The point that I am making in regards to answering this question is that for UMKC to truly progress as a student-driven campus, we all must be passionate. MU has passionate basketball fans, Rolla has passionate St. Patrick's Day partiers, UC-Berkley students are passionate about politics. UMKC students are so luke-warm that they can't even complain about UMKC with passion.

Tom, Francesca, Aretha and I have long histories of working to make UMKC a better place. We are passionate about serving this community and leaving it better than when we found it. I know that I have personally fought with faculty, administrators, and the Missouri government to advocate for student's interests and all four of our candidates will most certainly continue these efforts if we are elected. It is a lot easier, though, when you know that you have the backing of the students.

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