

LSA SG candidate profile: Bonde-Casson Ticket

by Michal Ruprecht
March 26, 2019





As students gear up for the University of Michigan’s Central Student Government elections on March 27 and 28, The Daily sat down with LSA presidential and vice-presidential candidates to talk platforms, vision and plans. In this installment, we profile the Bonde-Casson ticket.

LSA junior Nicholas Bonde, LSA presidential candidate, and LSA junior Kevan Casson, LSA vice-presidential candidate, both said they are active listeners and open to criticism in their leadership. Both emphasized their belief in utilizing input from others.

“I think that my leadership style is more inclusive and enthusiastic,” Casson said. “I think that the only way to be an effective leader is to — and Nick and I both believe this a lot — is to get everyone’s input all the time. So you really can’t lead a group if you don’t know the group itself and what its needs are. And also in terms of building my government morale, and recruitment and retention, and all that it’s impossible to do that without enthusiasm and making it an environment that everybody really wants to be a part of.”

Bonde added he and his running mate both have experience in various aspects of LSA student government.

“I’ve kind of had my foot in pretty much all the different blocks of LSA Student Government,” Bonde said. “Through that I’ve learned the amount of change that we as individuals and together as a government can make on campus and I think that I can help lead everybody else in the government to make the most effective change possible.”

When Bonde asked Casson to be his running mate, she said their previous experience with working together made it an easy response.

“It was definitely an easy answer,” Casson said. “We’ve had a really great time coming up with our platform, and it’s really something we believe in — just making sure we build the government from the inside out and doing what we’re supposed to do and connecting the student body with the administration, so it’s really been great.”

Bonde said one way they differentiate themselves from other opponents is through their internally based platform focusing on LSA SG membership — recruitment and retention.

“Overall, our platform is very different than the other tickets that are running because ours is very internally based,” Bonde said. “I think the most important thing would be to increase government participation and retention.”

The Bonde-Casson ticket **platform** is broken down into four points: increasing LSA SG participation and retention, strengthening the relationship with the Dean’s Office, implementing constant recruitment efforts and increasing student familiarity with the **LSA Opportunity Hub** and its resources.

Casson said she hopes to increase the diversity of students involved in LSA SG so more voices can be heard. She added the government has begun this process by making the appointment position interview process focused more on diversity and inclusivity and by expanding social media to reach more people.

“Our student government is definitely not representing the needs of all students,” Casson said. “In order to properly represent the students of LSA, of which there are like 16,000, we need to have the opinions of people, especially those who are minorities at this university. We need even more of their voice than we need anyone’s because otherwise we absolutely cannot represent their interests.”

Bonde said one way they hope to get more students involved is by having a constant recruitment process.

“We’re definitely looking forward to having some sort of more constant style (of recruitment), whether it’s tabling in the Diag, tabling in any sort of LSA building,” Bonde said. “We’re thinking about possibly creating

another committee just strictly for recruitment or maybe amending a certain committee to become that sort of committee that fulfills recruitment and make sure that our meeting rooms are always full.”

Bonde and Casson hope to cultivate a stronger relationship with the LSA Dean’s Office, specifically to create open communication on the needs of the students.

“Making sure that we update (the LSA Dean’s Office) through our more streamlined communication so they can get back to us with certain ideas ... when drafting legislation and ideas with undergraduate education,” Bonde said.

The two also hope to increase student involvement with the LSA Opportunity Hub in order to help students gain access to post-grad resources.

“LSA students deserve the same opportunities as Ross and Engineering and that’s there through the Opportunity Hub and to let students know we’re there and to let the Opportunity Hub know what students need,” Casson said.

Through the campaign, Casson said she hopes to get more students involved in LSA SG by emphasizing the importance of the government.

“I think that overall it’s really important to stress just how much of a difference we as a government can make,” Casson said. “We both really believe in the government. Over the course of our time here, we’ve come to see the potential of our committee leadership and our executive leadership and we really know what we can do for the University, so we encourage anyone and everyone to get involved and we really look forward to potentially being the next leaders of the student body.”