

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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Committee: Student Life

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Creation of the *Cameron Barrett Determination Award*

Whereas, the 55th Administration Student Body President, Cameron Barrett, has continually provided support to each successive administration, in various capacities;

Whereas, Barrett served heavily on university committees throughout the 52nd-54th administrations, became a Graduate-At-Large Senator in the 54th administration, the 55th administration Student Body President, Graduate-At-Large Senator the 56th administration, and finally the Attorney General in the 56th and 57th administration for a 5-year tenure in the organization;

Whereas, Barrett founded the 'Students Unite' party, based on the slogan, "Workers of the world, unite!", on the premise of "represent[ing] the working class students"¹;

Whereas, Barrett pioneered the 'count-me-in' card method for utilizing the pre-voting weeks of election campaign periods and maximized the flyering method during election week to effectively change the culture of campaigning 2018 SGA spring election²;

Whereas, successive administrations under Barrett's guidance and the 'Students Unite' banner won continuous elections and furthered policies and

¹ <https://thedailycougar.com/2018/02/21/cameron-barrett-students-unite/>

² <https://thedailycougar.com/2024/02/27/winning-an-election-101-sga-parties-discuss-campaign-strategies/>

initiatives to empower socio-economic vulnerable populations during their tenures³;

Whereas, during his tenure as senator, Barrett established the Senate Committee on Graduate and Professional Students in order to build a stronger relationship with the Graduate and Professional Students Association (GPSA) and address unique circumstances of graduate students⁴;

Whereas, authorship of legislation increased dramatically under Barrett's tenure as President in order to be held accountable to initiatives and solicit senate feedback for policy development⁵;

Whereas, Barrett fostered a culture of collaboration between the senate and the executive, breaking tradition by inviting senators to meetings with higher administration such as the Provost, the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance, and facilitated meetings between senators and other administrators which focused on the policies they were passionate in;

Whereas, Barrett instituted heavy volunteering requirements for senators, executives, and members of the justice and judicial branch in addition to creating the Department of Outreach, which created a culture of service present between the student government, university departments, and the student leadership among registered student organizations (RSO's);

Whereas, under Barrett's leadership, the Student Government Association successfully achieved all campaign objectives by the conclusion of the summer⁶;

Whereas, Barrett spearheaded the implementation of a recall system, empowering students to directly hold elected leaders accountable through a special election⁷;

Whereas, Barrett was the driving force behind the implementation of rank-choice voting, increasing competitiveness of elections and resulting in future

³ <https://thedailycougar.com/2020/04/22/president-khadem-akbar-is-path-sga-presidency/>

⁴ https://uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/54/_files/sgab-54007.pdf

⁵ <https://www.uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/55/>

⁶ <https://thedailycougar.com/2018/08/15/wage-disparity-president/>

⁷ https://www.uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/55/_passed/sga-bills/sgab-55005-better-sga-act.pdf

administrations' senate being more proportional with the preferences of the student electorate⁸;

Whereas, Barrett led extensive reform of the SGA Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Code which resulted in better financial transparency and expenditure mechanisms, a significant decrease in conflicts of interest between the executive, legislative, and judicial branch, in addition to the Department of Justice, and the election commission⁹;

Whereas, these reforms laid down clear processes and language for the carrying out of all responsibilities throughout the executive, legislative, judicial branch, and Department of Justice, in addition to establishing legitimate mechanisms for checking and balancing powers between branches;

Whereas, the collaboration for the End the Stigma event, during the 55th administration, reached unprecedented levels of participation for Fresh Check Day, with Counseling and Psychological Services, UH Wellness, and the Student Program Board, culminating in a campus-wide mental health awareness initiative;

Whereas, through his advocacy efforts, UH facilities committed to developing designs and plans for repaving the University Drive sidewalks and those in front of the Student Center¹⁰;

Whereas, during his tenure, Barrett actively advocated for increasing the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$8.00 for all student workers¹¹;

Whereas, Barrett authored in partnership with faculty and the then-GPSA President Spruiell-Eldridge the 'Graduate Student Bill of Rights' in order to establish standards for labor and academic practices across the university for graduate students¹²;

Whereas, Barrett's efforts laid the foundation for the establishment of Cougar Cupboard on campus following his term¹³;

⁸ <https://thedailycougar.com/2018/04/25/sga-election-code-changes/>

⁹ https://www.uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/55/_passed/sga-bills/sgab-55004-the-bylaw-update-and-structural-reform-act.pdf

¹⁰ <https://thedailycougar.com/2019/01/16/sidewalk-renovations-summer/>

¹¹ <https://thedailycougar.com/2019/06/28/minimum-wage-student-workers/>

¹² https://uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/55/_passed/university-bills/ub-55020-the-ratification-of-the-graduate-student-bill-of-rights.pdf

¹³ <https://thedailycougar.com/2018/11/28/food-pantries-campus/>

Whereas, Barrett decreased the cost of meal plan prices for homeless students by seventy percent (70%), saving students tens of thousands of dollars and set them as priority status for the Cougar Experience Scholarship¹⁴;

Whereas, Barrett's efforts set the precedent for all future administrations to conduct extensive parking citation food drives and other activities in partnership with Parking and Transportation Services and the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to address on-campus food insecurity¹⁵;

Whereas, Barrett advocated for the expansion of funding to the Center for Student Empowerment to further the "development for students most in-need"¹⁶;

Whereas, the Student Government Association Senate wishes to recognize the involvement and leadership of students who exemplify the character of Cameron Barrett's contributions in a prominent and privileged form.

Therefore, be it enacted by the Senate of the Student Government Association of the University of Houston:

A recognition award, administered through the Center for Student Involvement, shall be issued on a discretionary basis to honor students and alumni who demonstrate exemplary determination and service to their community during their tenure at the university;

Be it further enacted, this award shall not be bound by an annual cycle but shall be distributed as warranted by the submission of compelling cases for eligible applicants. To be considered for this recognition, recipients must be nominated by currently enrolled students, who shall submit a letter of recommendation not exceeding three (3) pages in length;

Be it further enacted, the letter of recommendation should underscore the applicant's commitment to assisting the student government and other student organizations on campus, thereby contributing to the enrichment of campus culture. In addition to the recommendation letter, a copy of the nominee's resume shall be attached;

¹⁴ <https://thedailycougar.com/2019/01/16/sga-bill-the-most-ambitious-yet-to-help-homeless-students/>

¹⁵ https://uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/56/_passed/university-bills/ub-56005.pdf

¹⁶ https://www.uh.edu/sga/legislative/legislation/55/_passed/sga-resolutions/sgar-55003-supporting-the-expansion-of-the-urban-experience-program.pdf

Be it further enacted, applicants must maintain good academic standing or have graduated in good academic standing and have committed no prior offenses in violation of the Student Code of Conduct;

Be it further enacted, applicants must have authored and successfully passed at least five (5) pieces of legislation through the Student Government Association Senate, addressing a variety of issues, with at least one piece focusing on the needs or actions to better support working students, address campus affordability, or advance the needs of economically vulnerable students;

Be it further enacted, the Center for Student Involvement will nominate an individual to the Senate, requiring a majority vote of the senate present and voting for the approval of the nominated recipient;

Be it further enacted, the Award shall read the following:

“Cameron Barrett’s tenure in the Student Government Association was characterized by delivering on promises, empowering student voices, and advocating for working students.

Barrett served heavily on university committees throughout the 52nd-54th administrations, became a Graduate-At-Large Senator in the 54th administration, the 55th administration Student Body President, Graduate-At-Large Senator the 56th administration, and finally the Attorney General in the 56th and 57th administration for a 5-year tenure in the organization;

“Throughout his tenure, Barrett continually provided invaluable support to each successive administration, offering guidance, expertise, and assistance in various capacities.

“He actively advocated for various changes, including successfully lobbying for the increase of the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$8.00 for all student workers, thereby significantly improving the financial well-being of countless students on campus.

“His tireless efforts and unwavering commitment laid the groundwork for the establishment of Cougar Cupboard on campus following his term, ensuring that students facing food insecurity have access to essential resources and support.

“Barrett decreased the cost of meal plan prices for homeless students by seventy percent (70%), saving students tens of thousands of dollars and set them as priority status for the Cougar Experience Scholarship.

“Under Barrett's exceptional leadership, the Student Government Association diligently worked to achieve all campaign objectives by the conclusion of the summer, delivering on promises made to the student body and effecting tangible positive change within the university community.

“Barrett was the driving force behind the implementation of rank-choice voting, increasing competitiveness of elections and resulting in future administrations' senate being more proportional with the preferences of the student electorate.

“Barrett led extensive reform of the SGA Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Code which resulted in better financial transparency and expenditure mechanisms, a significant decrease in conflicts of interest between the executive, legislative, and judicial branch, in addition to the Department of Justice, and the election commission.

“Through Barrett's steadfast advocacy efforts, UH facilities committed to developing comprehensive designs and plans for repaving the University Drive sidewalks and those in front of the Student Center, ensuring the safety and accessibility of these vital campus pathways for all students, faculty, and visitors.

“Under the leadership of the 55th administration, heavy volunteering requirements for senators, executives, and members of the justice and judicial branch were instituted, in addition to the creation of the Department of Outreach, which strengthened a culture of service present between the student government, university departments, and the student leadership in registered student organizations (RSO's).

“Barrett fostered an unprecedented culture of collaboration between the senate and the executive, breaking tradition by inviting senators to meetings with higher administration such as the Provost, the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance, and facilitated meetings between senators and other administrators.”

“His term in office has been characterized by what it means to “represent working students”, and is an embodiment of what it means to display

determination and service for all students and alumni in the University of Houston community.”

Sophia Wilson

Sophia Wilson
Speaker of the Senate

Date of Senate Approval: 3-28-2024

