

# 5 Minutes with SGA President Johnelle Simpson: Looking forward to spring 2016

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SGA President, Johnelle Simpson, poses in Athens, Ga., on Aug. 20, 2015 (Photo/Austin Steele, Staff)

As the University of Georgia community picks up speed during its second full week of classes, The Red & Black sat down with Student Government Association President Johnelle Simpson to find out what students can expect from SGA during the semester.

**The Red&Black:** What are some of SGA's most exciting upcoming events?

**Johnelle Simpson:** We have elections of course, which are always a pretty big event ... Another big event that we do in the spring is Professor Recognition Reception ... It's a great way to say thanks to our faculty who are going above and beyond their call of duty ... Students can begin nomination [of their favorite professors] next month. The Majors Fair is also coming up soon, and we are really encouraging those students who don't know what they want their major to be to come out to the Majors Fair.

**R&B:** What issues will SGA focus on?

**JS:** We plan this year to continue addressing the topic of downtown discrimination. One of our best platform points is inclusive post-secondary education...meaning that it is a program that will allow students with intellectual and developmental disabilities to come to UGA. There is a lot of work that is currently being done at

the state level about that. Here on campus we have Destination Dawgs. [The university] is looking for the first students to come in the spring of 2017.

**R&B:** How can students get involved in the upcoming SGA election?

**JS:** The biggest way to get involved is to run in the election. There are a lot of Senate seats available, and there are the other positions like president and vice president that you can also run for, but of course that is a ticketed process. You have to have three people to run with. The second way that you can get involved is to work on someone's campaign. A lot of people have found that by working on a campaign, they continue to stay involved in SGA. The third way to get involved is to vote. We don't always have a big turnout here at UGA. A little over 2,000 students voted last year, but I think that those numbers could get much bigger in the upcoming elections.

**R&B:** Looking back at your time as president, what are you most proud of having accomplished through SGA?

**JS:** The GOTCHA Ride program. Last semester we were around 250 to 300 rides per week, and that's a lot compared to the 20 rides a week ... that were reported in previous years. I think that we've gotten off to a good start. Now the biggest thing is for students to understand that in order for a program like GOTCHA to continue, it has to be utilized. We have done some improvements to the app to eliminate some of the initial bugs, and we hope that that will encourage students to utilize the service more.