



Candidate Statements for 2016-2017 PAW Executive

President: Andrea Di Sebastiano

Over the past year I have been actively involved with PAW, serving a dual role on the executive committee as Vice-President Communications and Social Coordinator. In this position I helped to organize events for Postdoctoral Fellows, such as Appreciation Week and the Research Forum. I also coordinated social events including holiday parties and off-campus excursions. Furthermore, I was instrumental in enhancing the relationship between PAW and the Teaching Support Centre, such that the TSC will now run training workshops specifically for postdoctoral career development 2-3 times annually. I was also responsible for communicating news, information and events relevant to Postdoctoral Fellows via e-mail, Facebook and Twitter to ensure postdocs were well informed of the resources and events available to them.

I have enjoyed my time on the PAW executive committee and hope to continue to serve Postdoctoral Fellows as President of the Postdoctoral Association at Western. As President of PAW I look forward to working closely with the executive council to continue to run events that will help prepare postdocs for a successful career, as well as events that foster a sense of community. I will also work with the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as well the University to ensure the best interests of Postdoctoral Fellows at Western University are continuously met.

Vice-President, Internal: Baraa Al-Khazraji

In the past year, my first year as a post-doc, I was added to the PAW active list so that I could learn more about what goes on “behind the scenes” with regards to the treatment and recognition of UWO post-docs.

I was asked to represent post-docs at the Campus Council meetings (at which President Amit Chakma is present), and I also attended the extra sessions discussing Rapid Transit issues. A few months later, I became Acting Vice President Internal, and worked with Mihaela Harnos to organize the annual Post-Doc Research Forum (where I facilitated accreditation of this event by the Teaching Support Center for acquiring Future Professor Series credits). Having spent over a decade at Western, I was able to reach out within my network and organize a panel of speakers discussing a topic that many post-docs expressed interest in attending. More over, these faculty members are ecstatic to take part in this research forum, as they are happy to know that PAW and other post-docs are making an effort to prepare UWO post-docs for their future endeavours. As VP Internal, I want to both use and expand my network, such that I can work with other post-docs and faculty to turn post-doc ideas and

concerns into targeted workshops or specialized events. My overall goal is to shorten the gap between UWO administration and post-docs by making the “behind the scenes” transparent. With this knowledge, we can all influence the treatment and recognition of UWO post-docs.

Vice-President, External: Jessica Esseltine

Over the last year I have been an active member of PAW. In addition to attending nearly all monthly PAW meetings, I have represented PAW at Western senate, met in person with the senate subcommittee on renewal and the board of governors’ special task force in attempt to increase awareness of postdocs on campus. In concert with Jiro Inoue, current VP external, I penned a letter to the Western budget model task force requesting institutional financial support for extended medical and dental coverage for all postdoctoral fellows.

Outside of PAW, I have also attempted to increase the profile of postdoctoral fellows within my own department and faculty. I successfully campaigned for the inclusion of postdoctoral fellows to various Anatomy and Cell Biology departmental committees, including faculty meetings and the seminars committee. I also represented the interests of postdoctoral fellows at the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry strategic planning retreat and have piloted a new Physiology and Pharmacology data club designed specifically for trainees.

As VP External, I look forward to representing PAW in our interactions with other institutions, national and international associations and other external stakeholders and interested parties. I will execute my duties as VP external in a friendly yet professional manner and will always hold PAW’s values foremost within my mind. I look forward to working closely with the rest of the newly elected PAW executive committee to advance postdoctoral issues within SPGS, Western, the city of London, Canada and internationally.