

Meet Your Presidents

BEA President: Matt Dufon

Colby Campbell
Staff Reporter

Being president of the Brighton Education Association can be tough at times but French teacher Matt Dufon embraces the challenge because he wants to remind the teachers that he is able to be their microphone. "I think that I have reminded the teachers that they still have a voice, and they still have power. They have a right to the paid benefits that we fought for over the decades, and I would add to that I hope I have reminded teachers that they gave up a lot to help the district," Dufon said.

The teachers' hard work at BHS show that they are able to overcome obstacles, and come together as a whole. Dufon has been in many other leader roles such as department head, and the leader of the BEA. This has helped to make him care even more about the other teachers and the sacrifices he, and others have had to make to get fair pay and benefits. It's helped show how much of an important tool the teachers union is to get fair benefits, pay and much more. As president, he sees a different side to union members.

"It's kind of like when you're a teacher and you get to know students come from all kinds of backgrounds, not all of its pretty and some of it's really emotional and you see that with teachers too," Dufon said.

All different school are diverse in their own way, and Brighton has its own diversity in its backstories and everything that everyone has done for the school. The teachers union shows that with hard work and overtime, the district can change for the better and help everyone stay in a job with, good pay and a fair environment. The idea of the teachers union is to help with the teachers environment and to fight for their rights.

"To be honest with you there hasn't been much negative commentary, I would say the one negative thing is that now that Michigan is a Right to Work state, we have a small number of former members who have opted out of the union so they don't pay dues anymore," Dufon said.

Sophomore President: Bailey Bomen

Morgan Townsend
News Editor

Bailey Bomen may not have as many duties as the junior or senior class president, but he has contributed a great amount of success and leadership to Brighton High School, that no one else in the sophomore class has.

Bomen has acted like a leader and shown his role modeling skills in the classroom, but hasn't participated in something like this until his freshman year of high school. This is now Bomen's second year in a row of being class president.

"He's been doing a pretty good job from what I've witnessed and he's truly a leader in our school," sophomore principle Henry Vecchioni said.

Although the sophomore class council doesn't have quite the responsibilities as the senior class council, all councils end up helping each other for different reasons. Sophomore class council is responsible for organizing events with other councils and Winterfest, and this year was without a doubt a challenge for them.

Throughout the years, Winterfest has been going downhill with the population of the student body decreasing year by year. Council decided to do something different this year with the help of other councils and leadership class. They all gave their opinions, and shared their ideas. In the end, Winterfest this year will be different than ever with a "blackout party" right after the Winterfest basketball game on February 12th.

"We really needed to mix things up to fundraise more money for the junior and senior prom this year. I really like the idea and I'm excited to hear what the student body will say about it when all's said and done," Bomen said.

All class presidents have had a vision of changing something drastic for the high school, even if they really can't. Bomen says he would love to change the dress code and make a more strict policy to enforce the rules.

"Some people would agree with me and some won't but I really think we should start enforcing this rule," Bomen said.

Bomen's greatest challenge and accomplishment this year has been getting out of his antisocial shell and begin to publically speak more often and meet more people without being as shaky and nervous as he used to be. Bomen has become much more social than ever and is truly improving each year.

"I think he has great ideas and has really worked hard as president," sophomore Jordan Fransik said.

Bomen will again run for president next year because he loves being able to bring the school together to improve and create new ideas to keep Brighton High School upbeat and new.

Senior President: Jolin Cramer

Lauren Suda
Managing Editor

Jolin Cramer is the Senior Class President. This is a vital year for class council because senior class council plans graduation. On top of graduation, student council also does senior hall decorating, senior gifts, posters, senior float building, and more.

Every year freshmen class council visits Scranton to encourage students to run for student council. This is how Jolin was introduced to high school student council. Running for president sounded like a fun way for Jolin to get involved in high school so that's what she decided to do.

"During my high school years I have helped expand Pink Week tremendously throughout the community and also used my talents in graphics and video production to help promote different events at Brighton High School," Cramer said.

Some of Jolin's positions as a leader have been Freshmen Vice President, Sophomore President, and co-teacher for Leadership Junior and Senior year. Since senior year is almost over, Cramer doesn't plan on doing anything huge in the next few months. She will, however, be leaving her mark as a senior leader.

"Becoming involved has impacted my view on the school because I have gotten to know so much of the staff that I wouldn't have known otherwise. It's an incredible feeling after we finished a homecoming parade or a fundraising week and it really impacted me to appreciate all of the work that other people put into their activities. A lot of people don't realize how intense putting together a blood drive can be!" Cramer said.

If Jolin could change one thing about Brighton High School, she would have less separation between the students. It is hard to know everyone's name in a big school and she thinks it's important to bond with peers and reach out to more students because you never know who you could have something in common with.

Jolin realized it's important to respect other opinions and you have to learn to agree to disagree. One of the ways she learned to deal with other people's opposing opinions is something principal Gavin Johnson and teacher Arnella Park taught her, that you can't please everyone, just shake it off and do what you think is best.

"I think my biggest accomplishment this year was Pink Week. Last year it was mostly something for Brighton High School. But this year it expanded all throughout the community. Such as, partnering with Skyzone, Brighton Ford, the Chamber of Commerce, and many other local shops and restaurants. Cancer awareness is very important to me and I'm excited to see Pink Week get bigger and better," Cramer said.

Outside of school Jolin stays very busy. She's a competitive dancer and dances five days a week for three to four hours a day. Having to study and do homework while being involved in student council and leadership on top of dancing makes it hard to squeeze things in. She's not sure how she manages it but she still keeps up with it all.



Presidents of their respective group. (Not pictured: Brook Warren, Jay Krause, Gabrielle Wihongi)

Photo by Todd Day

Junior President: Zach Leatherman

Matthew Keska
Copy Editor

Not everybody is cut out to be a president. So it's easy to wonder why anybody would want to be in a position where they represent their peers and have many difficult responsibilities.

One of these presidents, 2016 Junior class President, Zach Leatherman always seems to already have thought out why he does what he does.

"I really am very interested in politics. Also, in High School you'd walk around and go to all of these events, and every once in awhile you'll look at something as a student and say gee I think I could think of some changes to that or I think I could do something better and just because I had that drive inherently I wanted to get involved. Also I like leadership positions so it seemed like a logical step," Leatherman said.

In any leadership role where you're expected to voice your opinion, there is always opposition. The way leaders deal with this opposition can be very important when trying to get something passed. Zach seems to have a professional view of dealing with opposition.

"Usually when we're at a meeting and someone opposes my plans or opinions, we'll talk it out and someone makes a motion to go forth with the plan. Then after a brief discussion session, which is always very respectful and polite, we'll take a vote on the matter and majority wins," Leatherman said.

Zach has been hard at work ever since he got the position saying his passion has been driving him towards his goals. He's expressed his happiness about the expanding course selection and the increasing opportunities this school has to offer. One of his responsibilities along with the rest of the people on his council, is fundraising for, and setting up prom. This is only one of the challenges Zach has to face as president. Some of his biggest challenges aren't from the politics of setting up projects but also him and his peers lack of experience.

"My biggest challenge, honestly, has been coping with some of the realities of student council. Obviously I was inexperienced coming into this position and we did have quite a shuffle from last years line up. So that's been a main challenge, trying to get everybody, including myself, caught up and educated on the procedures," Leatherman said.

It seems Zach truly has a passion for being a leader and trying to make a difference. He says he's satisfied when looking back on all he has done for his class, by nurturing the people with his love, he has brought the Junior class together, a far stretch from when their homecoming votes were suspended their Freshman year. Keep an eye out for more changes around the school in the future as Zach plans to continue his presidency into his Senior year.

The BCPA presents: The Swingles



For more than half a century The Swingles have pushed the boundaries of vocal music. The seven young singers that make up today's London-based group are driven by the same innovative spirit that has defined the five-time Grammy winners since they first made waves in the 1960s. With their forthcoming album Deep End (due 29th July 2015), The Swingles celebrate that legacy by starting a whole new chapter.

Thursday, April 21st, 2016 – 8pm

Reserved Seating
Adults

\$28 – standard seats \$38 – priority seats

Students

\$12 – standard seats \$18 – priority seats

In 1963, American-born Ward Swingle first assembled a group of Parisian session singers to sing Bach's keyboard music. The resulting album, Jazz Sebastian Bach, launched the Swingle Singers to fame. Since then their repertoire has grown to include a huge variety of music, as well as new original songs. They have released more than 50 recordings, winning five Grammy awards and appearing on numerous film and TV soundtracks including *Sex and the City* and *Glee*.

Freshman President: Brooke Warren

Rachel Matuszewski
Feature Editor

Not many students are handed the 'keys to the school' in their first year of high school, but Brooke Warren is opening new doors. A new school didn't scare her; she only saw the opportunities it presented her. Her excitement about the school and bubbly energy lead her to her role as freshman class president. But her spirit wasn't the only factor which compelled her to run for president. Her older sister, Bethany, was a leader she aspired to take after. Moreover, she has experience taking on leadership roles in her youth group. It has become her passion.

Taking on the position as a new leader, Warren likes how independent the school is. She admires the administration for letting her take control of what she sees fit for improvement and allowing the kids to have the 'keys to the school'. Warren likes how comfortable she feels at Brighton with her participation in such a big part of the class council. The more involved she becomes with the school, the more she sees herself becoming a stronger leader.

"I think Brooke brings a sense of calm and organization to a difficult role," ninth grade principal Henry Vecchioni said. Although Warren does not have as much expected of her as the upperclassmen presidents, Vecchioni looks forward to her continued growth. She has had a great start as a future leader.

As president, Warren takes on tasks such as encouraging freshmen to get involved, keeping the spirits of her classmates high and building homecoming floats. Building the homecoming float was a challenge with the hours of hard work it took to create something magnificent. But Warren sees it as a great accomplishment and is proud of the work her grade presented. She reaped the rewards of the experience in the class's sense of achievement.

"What's great about Brooke is her time management. She figures out what we have time for and makes sure we get it all done. She's a great team player," vice president Maddie Brown said.

Even with her ideas about giving freshmen a great four years, there can be controversy with her opinions. Whenever there is a disagreement, the council always tries to compromise and know what's best for the class. One of her biggest challenges is being confident in her decisions, but she does her best to do right by the school.

Everyone's positive attitude is one of Warren's favorite parts of her presidency. She enjoys excelling in such a supportive atmosphere. She takes pride in representing the class of 2019.

"I love being apart of something so big and good," Warren said.

Board President: Jay Krause

Cameron Kraning
Information Editor

Jay Krause may not always be in Brighton High School, but he is always finding new ways to improve the school and the academics. Krause is the president of the school board and has done many things to help improve Brighton High School. Krause has been involved in the board as president for two years now and was the board treasurer for a few years prior. For the two years Krause has been elected president, he has been elected by his peers to hold this position. The board holds elections yearly in January.

The board has done many things for the school in hopes of improvement. The most notable achievement they have done would be the elimination of the deficit. He also states that the bond was a huge achievement for the school, including the new pool and athletic fields. This year the board is not looking to improve the look of the school, but instead what is taught.

"Academics and curriculum are the focus of the board this year," Krause said.

Working as a president of the school board gives the individual a different view of the school. As the board president Krause's view of the school has definitely altered.

"It puts into perspective the complexity of the day to day operation of the school district," Krause said.

From the executive president to the board president all could say they could find one thing to improve in the school, Krause believes that it's difficult to find anything wrong with our school; him and all the presidents only look for improvement.

As working with others, presidents tend to run into conflicts on opinions and plans, when this happens they need to find ways to satisfy the others views but still follow through with what they think is best for the school. During school board meetings Krause explains his take on thing but in the end the board all get a vote on the idea.

To Krause the biggest challenge he faced as the board president so far was the elimination of the deficit from the beginning of his tenure on the board. Getting the board out of debt took a lot of patience and energy. Krause has also had many accomplishments that have happened by all the board members working together, the accomplishments are not a one man job.

"I think, the work on the bond and the elimination of the deficit were our biggest accomplishments"

Other than working on the board, Krause also has a full time job with an automotive supplier. Krause also enjoys cycling and traveling during his time off work.

Exec President: Gabrielle Wihongi

Justin Bennett
Staff Reporter
Grace Bautch
Staff Reporter

Gabrielle Wihongi is the president of the exec board, which is the group responsible for managing all the behind the scenes stuff for the blood drive, homecoming, and things of that nature. They also manage all the class councils; yes, even the presidents have a president, because democracy. Gabrielle didn't really hold any leadership positions before this, so she's had to learn the ropes real fast.

"I realized it's a lot of hard work to fulfil this job. I finally understand how much work goes into planning the smallest events, and now I realize how underappreciated the behind the scenes stuff is," Wihongi said.

Gabrielle may not have been involved much before, but that's a different story now. Now, she's involved with not only exec board, but also leadership, BKOM, senior serve, BITE, NHS, and peer mediation, and that's not even including her normal schoolwork and life. How anyone is able to juggle all of that without their brain exploding is a mystery of life.

That being said, she hasn't cracked yet, and it doesn't look like she is going to. This year, exec board has put on an amazing homecoming, with the smoothest parade ever as well as selling a record-setting number of tickets. In addition, they've also done back to school wishes, the dodgeball tournament, and winter wishes.

Despite the enormous successes so far, haters are always going to hate for reasons too complicated for a quantum physicist to understand. It's not easy to spend weeks on something grand just to have some people complain about it just for the sake of complaining.

"It's hard because they don't realize how much effort goes into these events. It takes months of planning and organizing, and all they do is show up a complain," Wihongi said.

It's a fact that less and less young people are getting actively involved in their communities, both in Brighton and around the world. If Gabrielle could change one thing, it would be that. Getting involved in the community is the only way for someone's voice to be heard, and every extra pair of eyes looking at something is one more chance to catch a problem.

Gabrielle is hoping to go to school in Washington D.C. and major in either political science or business, and she encourages other students to get involved in these kinds of activities.

"You get to do things that matter to the school and it's always really fun. You get to meet new people, learn new things, and network with people. It really prepares you for the future," Wihongi said.