

BSU President Micah Oliver resigns

Former VP Golbourne steps into presidential role of SA's largest club



KAINAN GUO, THE SPECTRUM

Black Student Union President Micah Oliver speaks at the open forum held on Sept. 23 about the controversial "White Only" and "Black Only" signs.

TORI ROSEMAN

SENIOR FEATURES EDITOR

Micah Oliver has resigned from his position as Black Student Union (BSU) president.

Deidree Golbourne, formerly BSU's vice president, has stepped into the role of president and on Monday night, BSU unanimously elected Samirra Felix as its new vice president, causing a major shakeup in the executive board of the club with the largest budget in the Student Association.

Oliver declined comment about why he left his position, but did say he would eventually be open to speaking to *The Spec-*

trum.

Golbourne, a junior history major, said the shakeup would not affect BSU's plans for the semester, including events like Black Explosion and Black Ice.

"It's an internal change that won't impact any events we're holding," Golbourne said.

Oliver, a senior business major, and BSU were particularly active on campus last semester after the "White Only" art project controversy. The organization held open forums to discuss the signs, issued a public statement, protested President Satish Tripathi's annual address and, along with other campus organizations, met with university

leaders about a potential policy on displaying art in public spaces on campus.

Toward the end of the last semester, Oliver received what university officials called a racist and discriminatory letter, accusing BSU and other organizations, like the NAACP, of being racist. Oliver told *The Spectrum* at that time that he's made himself "intentionally accessible for things like this because that has been BSU's strategy for making the progress that we have this semester."

Felix, sophomore geological sciences major, ran unopposed in a closed election for vice president in which she was given time to make a speech and take questions from members of the e-board and general body.

SA Vice President Sean Kaczmarek said clubs have their own guidelines for handling e-board elections and members resigning, and that the policy should be outlined in their constitutions.

Felix previously served as activities chair for the organization and felt that she had what it takes to move up to vice president.

"I have a thorough understanding of every position on the e-board and I know that my team members need improvement as well where I need mine, and I believe that's what makes me a great candidate for the vice president position," Felix said.

The e-board as a whole is confident in its ability to juggle the responsibilities that come with such a large organization.

"We're realistic as an executive board and remember that we're students ourselves," Golbourne said.

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"We know that sometimes we need outside help and we want to strive to succeed as do other organizations. We lean on other organizations and they lean on us, I think that camaraderie is something that's necessary between all of the organizations. Even within our own organization we lean on each other. We don't always agree, and that's necessary sometimes."

Golbourne didn't want to speak much on Black Explosion, since BSU strategically releases information about the annual culture and fashion show event over time to increase interest and excite the audience. The event has been in the works for many months involving multiple other organizations that put the event together.

Historian Chynna Brown, a sophomore

nursing major, is particularly excited about her posts for BSU for Black History Month. Every day of February, she will make three separate posts on all of BSU's social media pages with information about black leaders, history and other interesting facts.

Other events they plan to attend and host are leadership conferences in order to become more involved in the Buffalo community.

The BSU holds general body meetings on Wednesdays at 5 p.m. in the Student Union. It works closely with other organizations including the Caribbean Student Association and the African Student Association in order to plan events. In addition to meetings, the group hosts regular events for both their members and the general student population.

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The e-board of BSU (from left to right: Jason Hamlet, Jalyssa Gordon, Randy Ollivierre, Deidree Golbourne, Leslie Veloz, Chynna Brown, Samirra Felix, James Battle, Alexandra Louigarde) prepares for the upcoming semester which is full of events for both general body members and the undergraduate population.