

Sarah Marie Bruno: GSG Exec. – Health and Life Officer



I am a third-year Ph.D. student in Physics. I joined GSG in Fall of my first year as the off-campus housing representative. In my first two years at Princeton, I represented the off-campus perspective in the Graduate Housing Project. This past summer, I joined the newly-formed Graduate Mental Health Initiative. I had the idea to organize the first ever Graduate Mental Health Week and took a leadership role in planning this week of events. When the previous Health and Life Officer had to step down in October, I decided it would be a fitting role for me to fill.

Graduate Mental Health Week was held November 12th-16th and included mindfulness-based meditation sessions, a meet-and-greet with CPS counselors and therapy puppies, Princeton Distress Awareness and Response training with Dr. Calvin Chin, and a panel on work-life balance. Anecdotes submitted anonymously by graduate students addressing their experiences relating to mental health were also featured on the GSG Facebook page. My goals were to aid in reducing stigma and to help graduate students feel less alone in their struggles. The week was a huge success based on positive feedback and excellent attendance at all events.

Currently, I am working on health resources brochures to be printed and distributed to graduate student mailboxes. After becoming Health and Life Officer, I scheduled a tour of McCosh to be informed of all the available services. I learned about some incredible resources that are insufficiently advertised to graduate students such as McCosh's 24-hour infirmary and an office to assist students in navigating insurance difficulties. I hope my brochures will help graduate students become more informed. I am working with Dr. Valerie Lewis to establish the brochure's content and with Lily Secora to secure funding for printing.

I have greatly enjoyed my work so far as Health and Life Officer. I would like to continue in this role, building on the momentum I have established. I am especially eager to see Graduate Mental Health Week become an annual tradition. Plans are already underway for next Fall's Mental Health Week—we formed a planning committee and are writing a grant proposal for Campus Conversations funding. This time, we will host an exhibition featuring graduate student artwork inspired by mental health. If we secure sufficient funding, we will also sponsor visiting speakers and host a film screening. Please vote for me to support these endeavors.