



## **Judicial Council Media Release on the 2021 Student Body Elections**

*Thursday, February 25th, 8pm*

The Student Body Elections concluded last evening at 8:00pm. A total of 4030 students casted valid votes in the President and Vice-President Election and Referendum 2021-01. The turnout for this election was 45.63%, the highest recorded in three years. The Judicial Council commends the candidates and the Election Committee for their outreach efforts, which facilitated this increase in turnout despite a small number of tickets and University restrictions on in-person student activities due to community health concerns. The Judicial Council also commends the candidates on a clean, constitutional race in which no violations of election misconduct occurred, nor were any sanctions issued.

An allegation was submitted at 11:58pm on Election Night, and therefore, pursuant to Article XV, Section 1(j) of the *Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Body of the University of Notre Dame du Lac*, the results of the election had to be delayed. While unfortunate in timing, the Judicial Council considers each instance of an allegation of election misconduct seriously. Regardless of the time they are reported, the Judicial Council diligently entertains the evidence provided and makes a decision on the issue independently from the rest of the election process, including a pending tentative scheduled release of results. The Judicial Council meticulously reviewed this allegation to determine if it merited a hearing of the Election Committee. In doing so, we presumed the allegation to merit a hearing unless there was simply no plausible constitutional argument under which a violation of election regulations occurred.

As is explained in Advisory Opinion 2021-08, which lays out our reasoning in detail, we decided that no such argument existed, and therefore, that this last minute allegation lacked merit. This year, in order to increase the transparency of our operations, we have begun releasing these opinions to the public so that we are accountable for our decisions to the student body. We therefore encourage you to read our opinion in the press and on our website. While these advisory opinions do not name parties, they do lay out the nature and facts of allegations in depth. Because this meritless allegation has been resolved, we are now free to share the results of the election.



Beginning with Referendum 2021-01, this referendum, ordered by the Senate to gauge student opinion, asked, “Raise the standard of valid signatures required of petitioners to the Student Senate from 200 to a number between 5-8% of the undergraduate student body (442-707) to be determined by the Student Senate?” There were 794 valid votes for “yes,” and 2698 valid votes for “no” and 538 students abstained. Thus the referendum failed by a 23% / 77% margin.

In the Student Body President and Vice-President Election, the Webb-Calpey ticket finished with 757 valid votes, the Siegel-Holland ticket finished with 1037, and the Njomo-Bisner ticket finished with 1881 valid votes. 355 students abstained. These tallies correspond to 21%, 28%, and 51% of valid votes, respectively.

Article XV Section 5(a) of the *Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Body of the University of Notre Dame du Lac* mandates that a ticket must receive a majority of valid votes cast to win the election. Because the Njomo-Bisner ticket received more than half of the valid votes, they are now the Student Body President- and Vice-President-Elect. The Judicial Council congratulates juniors Allan Njomo and Matthew Bisner on their victory, and congratulates the other tickets on a fair, well-fought race.

**Thomas Davis II**

*Judicial Council President*

**David Haungs**

*Judicial Council Vice-President of Elections*