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## Student leader outlines agenda

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

**HIGHLAND HEIGHTS** - The new president of the Student Government Association at Northern Kentucky University has big plans for the coming year.

"I hope that SGA can find an agenda which helps to promote student growth as a whole," Josh Ruth said from Washington, where he is interning. "I want to promote SGA as an effective student engagement group. Also, I want to allow SGA to help President (James) Votruba keep tuition at a reasonable rate by having a strong presence in Frankfort."

There is much room for student growth at NKU, said the Edgewood native who graduated from Villa Madonna Academy in 2002.

"NKU is a great place where you can develop in many ways as an individual and a professional. You have amazing opportunities. The worst part of NKU is that there are so few students who are taking advantage of all of these opportunities while at NKU," Ruth said.

As a member of student government for the past two years Ruth assisted in renovation at the Albright Health Center, organized a variety of community activities on campus and led a student delegation of 60 to Frankfort to rally for increased funding for NKU.

Making the student association an "effective student engagement group" will be a challenge. Only 6 percent of the approximately 14,000 students cast votes in April's election. Ruth attributes the apathy to a lack of knowledge about what student government does. However, he plans to change that was a personal recruiting effort.

"I already started doing that during the election," he said. "People who are active in other student organizations don't go to student government. They are not aware of what we do. I set up times where I went to several student organization meetings and asked them to find individuals who are active there to get involved."

As for keeping tuition costs in line, he believes his prior student government experience has helped him make ties with decision makers.

"It helps you forge great relationships with community members, school administrators and other students," he said.

This is Ruth's fifth year at NKU, a "victory lap" he calls it. Ruth, 22, is majoring in speech communication and political science and minoring in business.

"I decided to attend NKU because I could obtain an exceptional education at a great price," he said. "Since I started there I have discovered that at NKU you can obtain opportunities and take advantage of these much easier than you can anywhere else. Some of these opportunities include studying abroad and co-oping."

Ruth cites the Cooperative Center for Study Abroad headquarters housed at NKU as one of these advantages. The center is a consortium of 24 schools across the country that develops study abroad programs for college credit.

He studied the economics of the European Union in London last summer. This summer is interning in Washington with BITS, an arm of the Financial Services Roundtable, where he is helping write commentaries to government agencies detailing on how their policies may affect the financial industry.

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