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Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications  
Phone: 320-589-6414, [weberm@morris.umn.edu](mailto:weberm@morris.umn.edu)

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer  
Phone: 320-589-6068, [jrray@morris.umn.edu](mailto:jrray@morris.umn.edu)

**Privratsky brothers immersed in University of Minnesota politics**

*Summary: These twins are known for sharing a variety of things—genes, looks, mannerisms, and an interest in University politics.*

(February 25, 2011)-Twins are known for sharing a variety of things—genes, looks, mannerisms, and a plethora of other little connections. For the Privratsky brothers, both Morris campus students, a shared interest in University of Minnesota student government is one more bond to add to the list.

Matt Privratsky, '11, Walker, is the Morris student representative to the Board of Regents. As a student representative, Matt sits on multiple Board of Regents committees, writes reports that represent student opinion across the University, and due to his position as chair of the student representatives, acts as the official voice for all University of Minnesota students to the Board of Regents.

“We essentially give student input on all issues addressed at the Regents level. To give you an idea of what the Regents do: they are essentially like a school board is for a high school, except they make decisions about a \$3.5 billion organization that serves more than 60,000 students,” says Matt.

Mark Privratsky, '11, Walker, is on his second year as a member of the Student Senate. This year, he was appointed to serve on the Student Senate Consultative Committee, which runs the senate, and additionally was appointed vice-chair.

“The senate itself only meets about six times a year, with the Student Senate Consultative Committee meeting every month. My main obligation is to make sure the perspective of each campus is heard, and also to direct and organize the goals of the senate as a whole,” says Mark. He is also required to participate in the University Senate, as is every senator, which is made up of the student and faculty senates combined. “Larger scale issues are discussed there (i.e. the University healthcare program and benefits packages), which makes it fun to discuss those issues with faculty when they come up.”

The brothers, both political science majors, demonstrated their desire to be a part of student life early, starting with heavy involvement in student activities in high school.

“I love to do so many things. There were tons of things I could try while in high school, so I eventually got involved in anything that kept me busy,” says Matt. “When I got to Morris, I didn’t really think I would end up doing anything but going to class and hanging out with friends. Eventually I tried a few things here and there it got to the point where I had gotten involved in a ton of stuff on campus. This year, I finally started saying no to a few opportunities because it started getting a little crazy.”

“I was involved in music, sports, student council, and speech in high school, and I am pretty much able to do all of those types of activities here as well,” says Mark. “Student government specifically is great because you get to one, have a say in student initiatives and processes, and two, be involved in campus government as a whole, which is my favorite

part about it. I like being knowledgeable about the University, and being able to see a direct impact from the work of campus committees and government every week.

Student government serves as not only a common interest for the brothers to share in, but as a tool to help each shine separately.

“I think it’s great that Matt was able to retain the position [of student representative] for a second year,” says Mark “as experience is a great advantage for students in campus government. While we can always help keep each other informed on specific issues, I also like that we are able to do separate things and focus on different avenues of input.”

“Having Mark involved is great because we know each other as well as anyone can, and he keeps me on my toes,” says Matt. “Anytime I need advice on what’s going on in student government or across campus he usually has the answer.

“I think it’s pretty unique that a couple twins from Walker, Minnesota, are the vice-chair for the Student Senate and the chair of the Student Representatives to the Board of Regents at the University of Minnesota. I’m sure my mom did not expect that when she was trying to get us to go on campus visits.”

Photo from left: Mark and Matt Privratsky

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