

Equity Advisory Board
Applicant Package - Youth Member

Equity Advisory Board - Youth Member

Term 29 Aug 2025 - 30 Nov 2026

Positions Available 1

Number of applicants in this package 1

- Weber, Ashley

Name: Weber, Ashley

Address: 1231 Sw 3rd Ave, 204, 32601

Email: a.weber@ufl.edu

Board Name: Equity Advisory Board

Primary Phone:

3215936444

Please list any civic and professional accomplishments/honors, training or experience related to this appointment::

My experience is directly aligned with the Equity Advisory Board's position, particularly regarding citizen participatory research, reviewing policies for bias, and engaging with historically impacted communities. My most relevant work stems from my ongoing community-based participatory research project within the 5th Avenue community, conducted through a mentorship with nonprofit founder Levy Odera, who actively serves on the Sustainable Economic Development Board. This project has provided me with notable insights from actively studying the current and historical impacts of development and overall struggles within the 5th Avenue community and East Gainesville. Hence, I am already conscious of and invested in mitigating existing struggles, and have made myself aware of current issues like gentrification, lack of infrastructure revitalization, historic preservation, struggles over obtaining historic district designation, maintaining single-family housing zoning status, disproportionately expensive energy bills for low-income renters, economic stagnation, and food deserts. I have cultivated this knowledge through my experience of physically exploring the community's built environment, directly speaking with residents, attending community meetings for deeper insights, talking with an urban planner, community advocates, city commissioners, and through my own research. Collectively, reflecting my familiarity and passion for bolstering advocacy for neighborhoods and communities that are impacted and disadvantaged by racial and social inequity, which can crucially be mitigated through conscious, considerate policy development. This same passion is precisely why I strongly advocated for and pushed my own UF Sustainable Food Systems Cohort to first evaluate with the community and then expand our focus to the 5th Avenue community's holistic well-being amidst our main initiative. Practically, through working with Levy, my systems thinking training and associated ongoing social research project, the UF sustainable food systems cohort, and in studying sociology this semester, I already possess experience with and awareness of ethnographic research and qualitative data collection within communities. Moreover, my training in systems thinking has taught me to predict and look for unintended impacts that arise as a result of emergent properties from complex interactions among diverse actors. This effectively makes me more apt to spot issues if I were to review equity action plans. Furthermore, my first-hand civic engagement experience through my dedicated involvement in Gen Cleo's Youth Movement GRU referendum initiative has equipped me with notable, relevant experience. Primarily, I have canvased, gained an understanding of our local democratic processes, attended town hall meetings, spoken with the mayor and other public service and city officials, and advocated for environmental justice for low-income renters. In doing so, I have both learned from and informed diverse stakeholders and actors, such as politicians, local community members, engaged student organizations, and unaware students, which has also equipped me with familiarity with diverse perceptions, opinions, and motivations. Specifically, though, Gen Cleo has granted me direct political advocacy, lobbying, policy evaluation, and interpretation training, which are directly applicable to this position. Lastly, my experience with Model United Nations parallels what this position would entail, as to prepare for conferences, I review background guides and pursue supplementary research to effectively strengthen my understanding of any issue, for which I then develop creative proposals.

Please list any current/previous Advisory Board appointments:

N/A

What Contributions do you feel you could make if you were selected to this board?:

Mainly, my unique background and notable relevant experience allow me to contribute not only educated recommendations and input but also a highly sensitive, empathic, and foresightful perspective aligned with my experience, training, and core characteristics as an individual. Foremost, this position would serve as a significant means for me to contribute to advancing the well-being of the Gainesville communities I have already dedicated myself to. My most valuable contribution to the board itself, however, would be my vocalization of my valuable knowledge and insights I have already collected from the community during my engagement. Furthermore, as a trans man, I am more sensitive to and aware of gender bias and the subtle and covert means in which it can manifest and be embedded within policies. As I am uniquely more aware of how male privilege manifests, yet also the experience of women and gendered disadvantages/related impacts, I can provide more nuanced input when reviewing policies and programs, even with the best of intentions, that may bestow embedded gender bias. Moreover, as a student studying sustainability and its economic, environmental, social, and cultural dimensions, I can contribute my interdisciplinary knowledge on these dimensions, their interconnected manifestations in most social initiatives, and most notably, my experience in logically and realistically balancing posed solutions among these critical dimensions, whilst ensuring justice, equity, and cultural preservation. Finally, given my experience of collaborative conferences thanks to Model United Nations, I am confident in my ability to ensure all voices are heard and bolster, integrate, and consolidate diverse ideas into cohesive proposals. Thus, I can contribute to not only the success of the proposals but also the overall educated, effective, and equitable nature of our collaborative process.

Please Agree with the following statements:

I understand this application is the property of Alachua County and subject to public records laws. I hereby certify that the statements made on this application are true and correct. I understand that Appointees to advisory board/committees are required to attend scheduled meetings as specified in the "Guidelines for Citizen Advisory Boards and Committees". I understand that some boards and committees require Financial Disclosure (Chapter 112, Florida Statutes) and I am willing to file if required. I affirm that my personal and business (if applicable) affairs within Alachua County are in substantial compliance with all county regulatory and taxing authorities rules and regulations?:

Yes

I do hereby attest that, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- 1. I have maintained good moral character throughout my personal and professional life.**
- 2. I have not engaged in any conduct or behavior that would reflect adversely on my honesty, integrity, or ethical standards.**
- 3. I have not been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor involving dishonesty, fraud, or moral turpitude.**
- 4. I have adhered to all applicable laws and regulations in my personal and professional dealings.**
- 5. I strive to uphold the principles of fairness, respect, and responsibility in all my interactions.:**

Yes

Time of Submission: 11/09/25 6:42:15 PM

Attachments

- Resume .pdf

Ashton Weber

| a.weber@ufl.edu | www.linkedin.com/in/ashton-ryan-weber-9b020b377

Professional Summary: Driven by unwavering determination, untamable curiosity, and earnest passion, my educational and professional pursuits are a direct manifestation of innate values and core characteristics. An interdisciplinary foundation in environmental and social sciences, extensive experience in nonprofit service, educational outreach, and community engagement, has resulted in the cultivation of robust collaborative, innovative problem-solving, and leadership qualities.

Education: University of Florida Honors Undergraduate Student | Anticipated May 2029
Earning a Sustainability Studies BA, International Development and Nonprofit Operations Management Minors, and an International Relations Certificate.

Cocoa Beach Jr/Sr High School | May 2025
International Baccalaureate Diploma (Weighted GPA: 4.65, Unweighted: 4.0 as Valedictorian)

Community Involvement & Leadership Activities: UF Sustainable Food Systems Cohort Community Engagement and Outreach Team | June 2025 – Present

- Planned and helped revitalize the 5th Ave Community Garden
- Helped form the cohort's two-year formal project proposal to include a community needs evaluation, holistic wellbeing focus, nutrient-dense produce, and interactive workshops

Mentorship with Nonprofit Founder (Systems Acumen For Youth-Led Development Solutions) | June 2025 – Present

- Began a community-based participatory research project on the 5th Ave community, including sociological survey design, data collection and analysis, and social network mapping software
- Was trained on addressing complex social issues with complexity science and systems thinking; studied food deserts in East Gainesville and had virtual Kenya exchanges for international insight

Gen Cleo Youth Movement Member | August 2025 – Present

- Enacted civic leadership, political advocacy, and climate action for municipal utility referendum
- Attended town hall meetings, canvassed, and interviewed/filmed for a documentary project

Lead UF Professional and Leadership Development Program Completion | August 2025

- Participated in a selective leadership development conference with 100 other participants to developed conflict management, active listening, networking, delegation, and collaboration skills

Model United Nations Preparatory Committee Team | August 2025 – Present

- Provided background research, proposal ideas, and individual training/review for all five of the fall semester competitions; received this position within my first semester doing Model UN
- Joined the mentor program and was selected to receive ongoing training/insight from my senior mentor, who is the club's current president

Nonprofit/Volunteer Work: (Graduated with 525 Total Verified Hours) Dance Marathon | Executive Board Business Sponsor Manager | 2022 – 2025

- Appointed to Executive Board and was promoted to Corporate Business Sponsor Manager, working to obtain local business financial contributions for Arnold Palmer Children's Hospital.
- Received an initial leadership position as morale team leader after a year of involvement.

Brevard Zoo & Florida Wildlife Hospital | Volunteer and Educational Outreach | 2023 – 2025

- Guide: Volunteered as a guest guide, giving tours for 3.5 hours every weekend.
- Educational Outreach: Formulated research-based recommendations on impactful actions to disseminate to guests via oral presentations, signage, and digitally to bolster the zoo's impact on climate change behavior and fundraising for external conservation efforts.
- FWH: Contributed lots of physical labor and was later promoted to work in the nursery.

Paid Work Experience: Entrepreneurial Business Sole Founder/Operator | 2023 – Present

- Earned total revenue of \$4,000, digital storefront with 70,000 views, 5,000 clicks, and 5-stars
- Created a registered storefront, created shipping labels, wrote buyer policies

Lux Life Ecotourism Tourism Company | Personal Assistant

- Supported a local, start-up ecotourism company to gain exposure to the logistics involved
- Registered the business, obtained an EIN from the IRS, applied for city permits, developed monetary projections with graphs, and wrote website content

Rockledge Gardens and Vacation Bible School | Camp Counselor | Winter/Spring 2023 – 2025

- Led activities/educational nature lessons for 12 children (ages 4 to 12) with one other employee

Honors and Achievements: Seal of Biliteracy with a current competency of Spanish proficiency | Academic Scholar Designation, Science Departmental Award, National Merit Scholar Qualifier