

Vivian Schmolke, BA '16, MA '19  
Assistant Director, Student Engagement  
UO Alumni Association

During my time in higher education, I have been a student worker at the University of Oregon at Big Mouth Burrito in the Hamilton Complex (for those of you who know and miss those burritos, I'm there with you), a student worker painting the residence halls over the summer at the UO, a graduate teaching fellow in the English department, an adjunct instructor both at the UO and at Oregon State University, a student account specialist at Lewis & Clark College, a graduate instructor at the University of Utah, and am proud to state that I am now the assistant director of student engagement at the UO Alumni Association. While I am committed to the UO and its community, I have experienced and heard the ways in which the UO (and higher education in general) has room to improve and grow.

If elected, I would advocate for more actions and tangible strides towards diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) efforts that improve the retention rate of our most marginalized and underrepresented communities on campus. We need to address the colorblind racism that is insidious within all higher education and understand that we must be willing and open to making real structural changes and improving the conditions for our most marginalized and underrepresented communities to uplift everyone on campus. I will also strive to serve the OA community's needs by voicing the concerns OAs have and by being willing to ask the "tough questions" that hold the decision makers on campus accountable. I have had my share of experiences within higher education, which informs my goal to champion DEIB as well as retention on campus.