

# CONVERGENCE

## HEAD STEWARD: AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



# INTERVIEW WITH INCOMING HEAD STEWARD CHARLES PATERSON



**MATTHEW TONG, WILL ROWLEY**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, SENIOR EDITOR

## What inspired you to run for Head Steward?

I was inspired by Head Stewards in the past that have proven to be phenomenal examples of leadership, of making a difference, and also kind of living legends of the school. I want to leave my footprint in the halls when I leave, at the end of grade 12. And I've got a younger brother coming up from the Prep, and ultimately, it's just about making this experience better for him, better for all future students, and ensuring that each UCC student is the best possible version of himself when he graduates UCC.

## What is your favorite pastime outside of school?

I've enjoyed spending my summers both playing sports and being outdoors. So, playing a lot of baseball in the summers, working at summer camps, but especially, being able to spend time out on the water. I really enjoy fishing; it's a time for me to reset in the outdoors, test my own patience, and not need to worry about everything that's going on in that moment. So, fishing, time outdoors, and, of course, sports: baseball, alongside football and hockey. Those are definitely some of my favorite things I like to do.

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## And what's the summer camp that you go to?

It's an overnight camp, called Camp Towingo, in Huntsville.

## You play baseball outside of school, right? For what team?

Yeah. I've played up until now for West Toronto in the West End. And, obviously, now I'm a camp counselor, so I can't play baseball in the summer. So, I'm in Heffernan Academy, here at UCC.

## We know that within the College, you've been involved in the arts, athletics, as well as service. How has this range of experiences shaped your UCC experience?

90% of things that I do, I would never have had the opportunity had I not come to UCC. So, for example, being the singer of the Senior Jazz Band has helped me to just be this whole different persona and discover this whole world of music, through the music program that's so incredible and that has shaped me in a way that I wouldn't have expected it to. And it has taken a lot of time management skills to balance that with sports. With leadership, being a Year Rep takes up a lot of time. And, ultimately, I think that being able to have different talents and work on skills in a lot of different domains is crucial for an understanding of the bigger picture. I'm really grateful for all the opportunities that have been presented to me to explore new activities and pastimes that I'm sure I'll keep with me for the rest of my life.

## How long have you been at UCC? How was your experience? What was it like when you arrived, and how has that changed over the years?

I came to UCC in Year 7, and I met some of my best friends in Mr. Perren's class, 7P. From the get-go, it was, socially, a phenomenal time. It was the first year back from COVID, so it didn't feel like I was the only person that was new to this world of being a UCC student since everybody was kind of at that stage of coming back to school. And over time, it's really just been making more friends, and I've been enjoying the experience in building up new activities

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more and more so that basically every day, it's just cumulatively becoming a more enjoyable experience because I can keep building on it with all the opportunities we have.



## Outside of a personal perspective, how do you view the state of the College when you got here versus how it is now? Have the social customs changed? Has the environment changed?

Definitely certain aspects of the UCC vibe left when the Class of 2022 left the school. They were the class that was in Year 8 at the beginning of COVID, so they experienced pre-COVID UCC. When they left, a lot of tradition left with them — for example, music in the locker rooms. The change of culture from that has been positive in many ways, but also has lost certain energy around the school. I've noticed that since Year 8, that's kind of just been building every year and improving. We've been recovering that energy, and we've created new traditions. In terms of the status of the school, pluralistically, our Calls to Action, for example, were created in 2014, I think. Things like that take time to implement, and on the Truth and Reconciliation Council, I've been watching them develop over the past year, and I've experienced the development through the Year 10 English course. And that's another change that I've been noticing is beginning to grow, and I'm sure will continue to grow as the school progresses.

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**What do you view as the strengths and weaknesses of the current state of the College? Do you find that any communities are underrepresented? Are there any UCC values that are not as present as they should be? Additionally, what are we doing well?**

An example, I think, of a community that has remarkable success without significant recognition would be the music program at UCC where we have some of the best bands in Canada, probably in North America. And that's just not really a well known fact around the school, and it's not hugely celebrated. So I would definitely like to see these bands — and it's not just the bands, it's also a lot of teams like the remarkable Model UN team and the debate team (I'm sure you've had an eye on Ms. Wilcox's emails to the school); they're bringing glory home to UCC. So, there are definitely groups within the school that stick together and don't receive recognition from the whole school, and that is something to work on. But, overall, this is a super supportive community, and it's rare that a success goes without a whole gaggle of peers coming over to congratulate and celebrate the successes.

**You might have seen, for example, in the Student Centre, a lot of people on their computers. There seems to be this sense of a community that has some type of apathy towards being part of the brotherhood. So, what is something concrete that you can work on next year that can build that better unity?**

Without the community's engagement, input, and investment in the brotherhood, we have nothing. So, I know that every student wants to be a part of the greater UCC life, and when the energy is there and when there's programming or whatever the student wants to actually see happening, I know that the apathy will not be present. Apathy has definitely been a problem in the past with low attendance — for example, people leaving Stewards' Madness, and there's only so much you can do about it. But, a lot of the time, it's a systematic error — for example, Stewards' Madness going all the way through lunch. Obviously, people are just gonna leave because they're hungry, right? And they would rather get

food than stay and watch basketball. So, focusing on fixing the systematic issues whenever they occur, bringing the energy wherever it's lacking, and showing those that may feel they're undervalued that in fact they're appreciated and that everyone at UCC is a valuable part of the community — that can solve this problem of smaller groups feeling underappreciated and of apathy.

**Who inspired you, and how did they influence your leadership style?**

I definitely have a lot of inspirational figures in my life from parents to teachers to past student leaders. I would point out Stu Lang who has made himself available to the Lang Scholars and has given us so much. We have events with him every so often where he comes and we can ask him questions, and he takes great interest in our lives. He's very centered on other people and focuses on listening, asking the right questions, and having a high degree of empathy, which I think is super important in a leader. He's shown that leadership can be used to create significant good; it's not a tool for power. He has really influenced my thoughts on how leadership should look. Leadership is about listening and then acting upon what you hear, as opposed to making decisions that you think might be right when you don't know what the broader community actually wants.

**In your speech you mentioned Billy Shi, and his efforts to unify the community even when it was difficult. Do you find that the community is disconnected, and how would you get students to “invest in the brotherhood”?**

Our brotherhood is super natural; that's what I've found. The UCC experience really fosters the brotherhood, the house system strengthens it, and the sports teams cement it. But, within the brotherhood, there are smaller issues that I think we need to work on. One thing I talked about in my speech was blazer theft before assemblies, where it's totally unnecessary that a UCC student should feel the need to do something as extreme as sifting lockers for a blazer that someone will need for assembly. That can easily be mitigated through a program at TUBS, which I'm currently working on to have blazers and ties on loan just for a day. I also think that our brotherhood needs to have more connection with the overall COSSOT family, and I wouldn't call it a COSSOT family

right now; I just don't think we're that close to these other schools. But, I definitely think that next year it can start, and I hope that within the next ten years it will become a true reality where the COSSOT schools are brought together and have much more friendship between them. Especially with our neighbor BSS; it's literally a two minute walk there and back. There's no reason that we shouldn't be able to make an abundant amount of co-ed programming.

**On that programming note, you spoke about increasing accessibility for student initiatives. How do you plan to encourage/enact this specifically? What steps are you going to take to make sure that becomes a reality?**

To plan an event, it's pretty much a set amount of steps that you need to do. Some of them are different depending on the type of event, but first, you find the right people to talk to, then you find the date, then you find the facility, then you find supervisors, and the list goes on like that. So, to find the right people to talk to as opposed to asking around, going by word-of-mouth, asking the wrong people five times until you find the right person — you can just have an online list of contacts in a centralized system where it is much easier and all in one place to find the resources and supervisors you need, instead of emailing Mr. Brown asking about all the fields; he's obviously a busy person as the Athletic Director. Having that be a simplified process overall can just help ease the whole process. Obviously, it's never going to become easy, and it shouldn't be; it should be a learning experience organizing an event. But it's certainly something that we can help promote within the student body, which I think can make a huge difference in strengthening the community when it's the students putting forward initiatives as opposed to administration or even the Board of Stewards.

**So, are you saying that potentially with increased accessibility for anyone to run their own events, people might start running niche programming that appeals to some of these underrepresented communities we discussed earlier?**

Yeah, absolutely.

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**How exactly would this work? Would it be a website where you have all the contact info sheets, or would it be a Brightspace page? What would that actually look like for students?**

It's something that needs to go through a lot of stages of preparation to make it ready for the students, and we'll be launching it in September, but either a website or just an all-in-one document. It doesn't really matter as long as it's a forum. It could even be a physical place in the school where you can go to — physical resources in the library, for example. It just has to be a forum where the information you need to plan your event is readily available, as opposed to, like I said in my speech, it being a scavenger hunt for each piece of information, which is super time-consuming. Time is the one thing that UCC students don't really have a lot of.

**For the past two years, the Board of Stewards has maintained exactly a 3.47 out of 5 star rating in the Convergence Year-in-Review Survey. What goals do you have for the Board of Stewards this year to surpass that score? How are you going to improve the way that they run?**

To improve the way the Board of Stewards runs, you need to have every single Steward working in their best possible capacity in terms of doing the things that they see as meaningful for the community while also being able to manage all the tasks that they have without causing disturbances to their academic life, for example. And, in assisting the Board of Stewards to perform at the best of their abilities in event planning, in working on their pillar at the school within their councils and their initiatives, I think that each of their own unique skills and values that they bring to the Board can be brought out to create the biggest impact for the school and in turn create the most amount of good for the school, which hopefully will bring up the rating.

**Is there something specifically different from the Board of Stewards this year that you want the incoming Board of Stewards to achieve?**

I haven't learned too much about the

Board of Stewards operations yet, and I'm going to sit in on a few meetings soon. But, having an absolute unwavering focus on the student experience at the school is going to be the priority of the Board of Stewards next year, and we will be thinking and acting upon that principle.



**Alright, Charles, time for some rapid fire questions. First, will you bring back the BOS skits?**

I can definitely assure you that no matter what our media program looks like, it's definitely gonna be something that everyone's gonna wanna see.

**Describe yourself in three words.**

Kind, respectful, helpful.

**Describe your predecessor, Chris, in three words.**

Good-looking guy.

**Favorite song?**

I'm gonna go "Hells Bells".

**Celebrity crush?**

Kacey Musgraves.

**What's your pre-test or pre-game routine?**

Hyping myself up with some freezing cold water and shadow boxing while I'm freezing cold.

**As we all know, and as we all can smell, Mr. Walker's cologne game is unrivaled. So, what cologne would you wear to challenge that?**

I've got a little bit of it on right now. It's Mascero Rodriguez For Him. It's a mystery one. I found it in my bathroom, but it works miracles.