

Student Union of Satakunta University of Applied Sciences SAMMAKKO nominates:



**Atte Mannila
for SAMOK Chairperson 2027**

Hi everyone!

I'm Atte Mannila, a 24-year-old fourth-year student of production engineering and production economics at Satakunta University of Applied Sciences. I live in Rauma, but my own journey began in Pori, where I graduated from upper secondary school – and where my interest in advocacy and making a difference first began.

After upper secondary school, continuing my studies was by no means a given. I was essentially faced with two options: continue working in the Finnish Defence Forces or see if I could get into higher education. My previous positive experiences at SAMK encouraged me to apply, and eventually my path led me to Rauma as a student.

In my free time, you'll most often find me around football. I play myself, and recently I've also taken on a new role by commentating on my team's matches. Commentating has been a surprisingly fun way to challenge myself. As a counterbalance to the fast pace, I enjoy reading books and writing poetry.

Over the past few years, I have had the opportunity to work for the interests of students and young people from many different perspectives. I have been involved in youth participation, student union activities and various leadership roles. Along the way, I have learned a great deal about advocacy, organisational work and, above all, people.

Now I want to take the next step.

I want to lead SAMOK.

Not because becoming Chair would simply be the next line on my CV, but because I believe in the student movement and in what we can achieve together.

What do I want to achieve for students?

A functioning everyday life for students

Financial uncertainty, the cost of housing and the adequacy of financial support have a direct impact on students' ability to study and build their future. No student should have to choose between making ends meet and being able to study full-time.

I want SAMOK to stand firmly for students' financial security and put students' everyday lives at the heart of decision-making.

Well-being is education policy

Student well-being is not a separate issue from education policy.

Mental health, study ability, a sense of community and access to support at the right time all have a direct impact on whether a student is able to study and graduate.

We need to stand up for students before problems become too serious.

Universities of applied sciences build Finland's future

I want the importance of universities of applied sciences in the Finnish higher education system to be better recognised.

Universities of applied sciences educate the professionals that Finnish working life needs. They create practical expertise, research, development and innovation, as well as solutions to the real needs of society. That is why we must safeguard the funding of universities of applied sciences, the quality of education, and research, development and innovation activities.

From graduation to working life

Graduation should not be the end point of a student's journey.

The role of internships, employment and Master's-level degrees at universities of applied sciences must be strengthened. Higher education should give students genuine opportunities to build their own future.

At the same time, we need to find better ways to encourage international students who are already studying in Finland and building their expertise here to stay in the country.

Finland needs skilled professionals. We cannot afford to educate people here only to then see their expertise leave the country.

Why me?

I have built my leadership and advocacy skills in three very different environments: youth participation, the student movement and national defence.

As First Vice Chair of the Pori Youth Council, I learned how to influence decision-making over the long term. Young people's voices are not heard in decision-making simply because they are given the opportunity to speak – you need to know how to bring those voices forward, make the case for them and pursue them with determination.

Student union activities, in turn, have taught me what advocacy means in practice. This year, I have served as Chair of the Student Union SAMMAKKO, and last year I was involved as SAMMAKKO's tutor coordinator. Through these roles, I have gained a close-up view of everyday student life and taken responsibility for ensuring that students' voices are heard within our higher education community.

At the Reserve Officer School, I have gained leadership experience in an environment where taking responsibility and making quick decisions are essential. I have learned to perform under pressure, make decisions and trust the people around me.

These experiences have shaped me into a leader who wants to listen, but also to make decisions. Someone who wants to build cooperation, but also take responsibility.

I believe this is exactly the kind of leadership SAMOK needs.



As Chair, I want to take responsibility.

I do not promise to have ready-made answers to every question.

But I do promise to listen.

I promise to have the courage to ask difficult questions and challenge old ways of doing things.

I promise that once we have found a common direction, I will be ready to pursue it with determination.

And above all, I promise to always remember who we are doing this work for.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch!

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