

The McMaster Students Union

PRESIDENT'S PAGE



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Those who have attended McMaster for the last several years are likely familiar with the annual MacTalks campaign. Through MacTalks, the MSU aims to reduce mental health stigma on campus, provide disability-related programming, and inform students about the supports available to them. This year, the MSU University Affairs Committee, Advocacy Street Team, and peer support

services are organizing a two-week campaign designed to continue the MSU's support and advocacy around student mental health.

This year, MacTalks will run from February 22 to March 4. The first week is a "Tell" campaign, focused on education and awareness, while the second week is a "Talk" campaign, focused on the ways in which different communities and individuals experience mental health. A "Share Your Story" initiative will run throughout both weeks, wherein students can anonymously submit their personal stories about mental health. "Share Your Story" will continue the important work of de-stigmatizing mental health on campus, while providing the safety and support that the McMaster community deserves.

The highly varied programming will include an *Abiliteas* event by MSU Diversity Services, as well as an event detailing the **particular difficulties faced by people of colour in accessing mental health services**. Another MSU service, the Student Health Education Centre (SHEC), will host a **self-injury awareness day**, while the MSU's newest accessi-

bility-focused service, Maccess, will collaborate with the Hamilton Mad Students Collective on a **hangout for students who have experience with both mental illness and the mental health system**.

In addition, the Women and Gender Equity Network (WGEN) will host an event titled **Sexism and Mental Health**, while the Queer Students Community Center (QSCC) will discuss mental health alongside a **board game stress-relief event**. Other stress-relief activities throughout the week will include a **Movies for Mental Health** series and free drop-in tours of the **Picturing Wellness exhibit** inside the McMaster Museum of Art.

The MSU will continue to advance conversations around improving mental health care on campus. Significant work has been done this year around academic accommodations and through the establishment

of a Student Mental Health Network. In order to address the remaining problems concerning lack of capacity, frontline care, and funding, MacTalks will host a panel, titled **'Where are the Counsellors?'** Panellists for the event will include McMaster's Associate Vice-President (Students & Learning), MSU Vice President (Education), and a psychiatrist from the Student Wellness Centre. This conversation will focus specifically on how the University can improve professional support for students.

... providing the safety and support that the entire McMaster community deserves.

The MSU encourages all students to engage with the campaign through its events and advocacy initiatives, as well as on social media via **#MacTalks**. If you're interested in getting more involved, please feel free to contact me via **vped@msu.mcmaster.ca**, or reach out to the great staff on the Advocacy Street Team, University Affairs Committee, and peer support services. All information can be accessed at **msumcmaster.ca/mactalks**.

#MACTALKS

MSU'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

FEBRUARY 22 - MARCH 4

MSUMcMASTER.CA/MacTalks

MSUMcMASTER.CA/ShareYourStory



The President's Page is a space sponsored and used by the McMaster Students Union (MSU) Board of Directors (BoD) to communicate with the student body. It functions to highlight the Board's projects, goals, and agenda for the year, as well as the general happenings of the MSU.

