This weekend, students from McMaster will meet to the University of Waterloo for the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) General Assembly. OUSA General Assembly is the highest governing body of OUSA and is held twice annually at OUSA member schools through a rotation which includes Queen’s, Brock, Waterloo, McMaster, Trent, Western, and Laurier. Each full-time undergraduate student pays $2.85 into OUSA, by way of the OUSU Surcharge. OUSA’s provincial lobbying focused on enacting changes and has been instrumental in securing government funding for growth, access, infrastructure, and other policy improvements. Movember 1st through 4th, students from associations across Ontario will come together at the University of Waterloo campus to discuss policy papers on Student Financial Aid, students with Disabilities and Northern and Rural Students. These three papers are to become the standing policy papers of the organization and will be used to effectively lobby the government at any future opportunity over the next three years. Furthermore, there will be focus groups on communication strategies, advocacy and future policy opportunities for the organization. You can follow the conference via a livestream we will be hosting on the MSU website.

I have personally been working on an addition to the Student Financial Aid paper. One of the biggest themes in this research has revolved around the need for government to recognize the student financial assistance system in Canada is exceedingly complex with many different sources of funding, each with various eligibility rules and applications. High school students applying for college or university for the first time often have little knowledge about various types of student financial assistance that they are eligible for and are allowed to individuals with the least amount of experience with consumer loans. Despite a lack of a credit history or credit rating of their own, they are asked to make important decisions on how to access their own very complicated financial products. Counseling is rare and published information is sparse. And students who opt for loans rarely have a choice about doing so; taking a loan is usually a last resort when family contributions and work alone do not suffice to cover the costs of tuition, academic materials along with room and board. These facts were demonstrated via a 2010 survey published by the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) which reported that over 75% of students failed a simple seven-question quiz on aspects of the student loan system, amongst other troubling results. Moreover, as of October 2011, out of the estimated 300,000 students eligible for the Ontario Tuition Grant, only appropriately 20,000 students claimed the grant. This means there is potentially over $100 million in unclaimed government funding out there for you! You can find more information on it: https://osap.gov.on.ca/

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JOIN THE McMaster McMOSTERS FOR MOVEMBER AS THEY RAISE AWARENESS AND FUNDS FOR PROSTATE CANCER
BOYS - GROW THE STASH! LADIES - MAKE IT NO-SHAVE NOVEMBER!

For a full list of events, as well as a complete list of services provided by the QSCC, visit us at www.msumcmaster.ca/qssc.

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