



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

## Vice-President Finance & CFO

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TO: Student Representative Assembly  
 FROM: Ryan MacDonald, Vice President (Finance)  
 SUBJECT: Vice President Finance Report  
 DATE: October 10th, 2016

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### **Student Representative Assembly,**

This is my first report to this assembly. Because it has been nearly six months since I have taken on this role, I will use this as an opportunity to update you on the progress of my platform as well as a variety of other projects. I've made significant progress on just about everything - but still LOTS to do. Let me know if you have any questions.

### ***PLATFORM***

#### **Business Unit Communications Plan**

A part of my platform has been ensuring that our business units have a well defined and well supported communications plan. With the successful transition from our Student Life Development Coordinator and Administrative Assistant position into the Operations Coordinator and Marketing and Communications Director, our businesses are more well prepared for strategic and coordinated communications efforts across our organization.

#### **Digital Media Support**

I'm excited to update the assembly on changes to our digital media structure. With the Marketing & Communications Director we have a leader in coordinating digital media support in our organization. Secondly, we have hired an additional graphic designer to support our services and business units while evaluating potential areas of support at the Underground.

#### **Services Promotions Training**

While Shaarujaa did the majority of the work on this front along with our Marketing & Communications Director, for the first time ever this September our services PTMs and their promotions exec received formal promo training which is a huge win!

**Space Audit**

The space audit for part time services is complete. Maccess will be re-located to MUSC B111 with a successful vote to renovate the space to create a barrier free environment. Beyond this Shaarujaa and I will continue to evaluate our ongoing space needs and possibilities when new space becomes available.

**Campus Events / AvTek Rebrand**

Campus Events rebranded their service in terms of both their staffing structure and their logo and communications presence. We have seen significant improvements with respect to the financial performance of the service and will continue to evaluate our programming performance moving forward.

**Governance Support Review**

This is a project that in my year plan I outlined for second semester. I am excited to take on this project and after seeing some significant interest from members on the assembly, I'm excited to see this happen.

**Evaluating Clubs Funding**

We increased the MSU Dollar allocation from \$50 at all MSU Services to \$150 with a new process of evaluating and reconciling this system I think this will provide a significant benefit to our clubs system. Further, the Clubs Administrator was given permission to allocate beyond totals, which means that the MSU expects that not all clubs will spend their money so it is important to allocate more than our maximum to compensate for this. More funding for clubs = awesome for student life.

**TwelvEighty Business Plan**

For the first time in two years, we've completely revamped both the menu, price structure courtesy card system and communications strategy. I'm happy with the direction we have for TwelvEighty for this year, and look forward to implementing ping pong nights piloting November 7th and hopefully if successful implemented in second term.

**Full Time Performance**

A big priority of the board has been supporting full time staff and making sure that we are taking support and direction at the full time issues committee and making full time socials a priority to promote a positive team dynamic. We have designed new feedback mechanisms to hear out concerns from staff who might not necessarily be comfortable speaking their mind at a staff meeting.

**Accounting Manual**

The accounting department is nearly finished the accounting manual and will be a valuable tool for the department moving forward.

### **HSR Negotiation & Agreement**

We have both an exciting update and a frustrating one to report. Frustration stems from the director of the HSR being a vacant position for the last number of months and we've had to wait until the beginning of October to really begin negotiations. What I am excited to report is that we have received word after pressing the issue that presto integration and metrolinx negotiation is possible. Metrolinx sent a package to all post-secondary institutions in ontario about a new program for their presto cards that could have an effective post-second day pass integration available for September 2017. We will continue to update this group as negotiations progress and will aim to produce minutes of the negotiations if that is acceptable to all partners.

### **SoBI Negotiation**

Its done. The agreement just has to be signed by their board of directors and students have to vote on it next month - exciting stuff! This has been a pleasant experience and I'm confident that with the evaluation process we've outlined we can keep SoBI accountable to their commitment in providing adequate bike availability on campus.

### **University Budget Submission**

Blake is naturally taking the lead on this project. Over the summer the MSU was asked to comment and make recommendations with respect to student affairs as articulated in my platform. The recommendations were focused on efficiency in student affairs, focusing on core service delivery and supporting student life on campus. Faculty specific budget submissions will begin second term - look for an email from me over the next month to get the wheels spinning on this process.

### **Welcome Week Equity & Analytics**

This year, we implemented a rep-suit bursary for the MSU Maroons and recently presented to Welcome Week Advisory Committee about the larger concept. Shaarujaa and I have prioritized effective programming spending with respect to analytics. Our hope is that the MSU will be allocated some programs traditionally run by the University (and subsequently receive a larger part of the levy). We are very optimistic about the work on this front.

### **Transition Program Policy**

The transition programs policy will be something that I am excited to work on second term. With the changes to FYC being a priority, I look forward to engaging with this group and support it's success in collaborating on this policy in second term, potentially at policy con.

### **Sustainability Advocacy**

A big part of my platform has been supporting Justin on his focus of sustainability. Union Market will stop selling plastic water bottles starting in

January and we will continue to push the university to join us in this endeavour. Further, as we begin to formulate plans for the upcoming student space referendum in January, our submitted priorities for this space included a sustainability brief and student priorities.

### **Career Support & Entrepreneurship**

To be totally fair on this issue - this has not been a priority for me thus far. I hope to work on it second term. Some exciting developments include an MSU partnership for young professionals to attend HiVEX this November as well as MSU consultation on changes to the Forge, continuing to support it on campus through TwelvEighty, Consultation and program planning for the student space expansion has saw a potential plan drafted for an entrepreneurship incubator on campus. Lots to be done, but with the support of Dean of Students Sean Van Koughnett, I'm confident some good progress can happen.

### **Emergency Bursary**

The bursary has been successfully implemented with student financial aid and scholarships and the \$10,000 has become available starting September 1st. Last year Dan suggested looking into an endowment fund that could exist in perpetuity. It is of my opinion that to invest \$250K into an endowment is not an effective use of student funds as it allows us to continuously re-evaluate our program and respond to student needs.

### **PTM Financial Training Support**

This year I've made a big priority of supporting PTM and keeping my door open. I've also made a priority of re-designing our financial training and providing them a budget tracking sheet to evaluate their spending. Thus far feedback from both PTMs and our accounting staff has found both resources are much more useful and effective than past years. Saving time for our accounting staff and PTMs = big thumbs up.

### **Event Planning Packages**

I wanted to create an event planning package to make things easier for PTMs in estimating costs for program elements such as food, AV or promo. This has been developed in concert with all of our wonderful business unit staff and feedback thus far has been very positive! Happy that this easy thing has made a big difference.

### **Part Time Staff Wage Review**

This will end up likely being our most complex and largest project of the year. We will have a part time staff wage review completed by the end of this term and the new system should be implemented by May 1st. The wage system will be focused on pay equity and roles being reviewed based on their contribution and potential impact to the organization. Shaarujaa, Jess and I

have invested a lot of time into this and I'm excited about seeing this come to fruition.

### **Budget Review Period**

Tuesday November 15th- be there or be square! This will be the first ever MSU financial transparency fair (name to be changed FOR SURE) focused on giving students the opportunity to browse where their student fees actually go and ask questions if they have any with the board of directors. This will allow us to get feedback in a more tangible and substantial way towards making important decisions in the future.

### **Marmor + CFMU Fee Review**

The Marmor fee has been sent to referendum and hopefully a new system will be implemented next year. I think that this is really important for students to decide what they want to see with the Marmor. CFMU has taken a backseat on my priority list. CFMU has taken significant strides this year in terms of designing a new website which will be implemented second term and I think its really important to wait for their new multimedia focused approach before reviewing the value of the fee. They are evolving and we should allow them to evolve prior to putting them under the gun to be evaluated formally.

### **SRA Project Consultation**

This summer I spent some time meeting with SRA members and consulting on their projects. This gave me a good understanding and identified areas of support for those who took the time to meet with me. I will continue to identify myself as a resource to this group. If you need me - please come chat!

### **Courseware Strategy**

I supported Justin in the initial gathering phase of information with respect to courseware. As a board we decided this was a project that would be more effective if he took on the lead for this project. I will continue to make myself available should he need support.

### **Student Services Fee**

We're done! The final draft of the compulsory ancillary fees agreement is nearly complete. Blake and Justin have taken the lead with respect to the agreement while I have taken the lead on the implementation of the new SLEF and USIF structure.

### **Athletic Costs**

This is a big one. Look forward to seeing a lot of big changes in this space. Currently A&R is asking for a referendum of \$105 for increased programming in athletics including a pulse membership for all undergraduate students. I am working with Glen Grunwald, Debbie Marinoff and Mark Alfano from Athletics on the program, the expansion plan with Justin and the proposed implementation and interim plan. More updates to come on this one.

### **Strategic Consultation Campaign**

This will definitely be my big second term project. The evolution of this project may necessitate a change in scope to focus on student space and advocacy priorities working with Blake Oliver our VP Education. With significant needs for space on campus and potential major changes happening into the future, having a clear understanding of what students want to see is critically important. I spent a good amount of time in the summer drafting a proposal on this topic based on a strategic planning campaign designed at Waterloo. This is a future project that I'm excited to be working on and a main feature of my platform.

### **Campus Master Plan Critique**

This one might not be possible as the campus master plan will not be released in the timeline that was initially suggested. From our understanding the master plan will not be released potentially until late next summer. This will become a priority should timelines change.

### **Special Projects Funding**

Our themes for special projects funding include collaboration, sustainability, popping the bubble and community engagement. This should be a cool change that was the brainchild of the last years board for us to implement. The form for submission will be made available to PTMs starting after reading week.

## ***ADDITIONAL PROJECTS***

### **Homecoming**

My first big project in this role I'm incredibly excited to call Homecoming a success. While large parties in the community persisted the number of calls that security services and our community partners received were significantly less than previous years. This concert package set a record as the third largest revenue driven at any Campus concert behind 6fest at Ryerson and Western Homecoming last year with DVBBBS. The weather cooperated with us and we project to stay close to budget. We will be having a committee of the whole discussion at executive board following our debrief with campus partners to decide if this should be a project that we continue to do at McMaster moving forward. What this project showed me is that there is no shortage of a desire from McMaster students to invest in big student life initiatives.

### **Ath and Rec Expansion**

Taking up probably 2-3 hours a week at this point, the pulse expansion and "student community space" expansion is a huge part of Justin and I's week consistently. We look forward to presenting the plan for referendum on October 30th to the SRA.

**Health and Dental Review + SAP Implementation**

As you all know based on our last meeting, the health plan is running a significant surplus and we have to do something about it. Currently I'm excited to take on a fun project to implement a much needed student assistance program to complement our existing resources of mental health and student life supports at McMaster.

**MSU Investments Evaluation**

Currently the MSU has close to \$4 Million dollars in investments in stocks and bonds. I've been working with our General Manager and the Board to start designing a capital plan to shift our investment in markets to focus on investment in this community that will return a profit at an equal rate. What this means is that the MSU will begin looking at retail and service businesses as an option for investment in Hamilton. The thought process behind this being the MSU should make good use of student money and while investments are important to supplement our service delivery and ensure we have sufficient funds in our operating budget to continue growing, we should consider if we can do that simultaneously while achieving a similar objective. For example, why invest 500k in stocks when you could invest 500k in a restaurant in Westdale, return the same profit while also providing a valuable tool for student life and much desired student jobs.

**Permanent Stage in Faculty Hollow**

A recent project that I've taken on is tackling an opportunity to put a permanent stage in faculty hollow. It will be a multi-stakeholder project as both McMaster Facilities and Royal Botanical Gardens needs to be involve but I think the effort is worth the potential cost. Currently between Welcome Week and Homecoming we spend upwards of 70k on staging in faculty hollow. If we are able to build a permanent bandshell, the MSU and other campus partners would be able to benefit significantly both with respect to accessibility of programming costs and new initiatives. Imagine movie nights for residences, coffeehouses in the fall and theatre groups in the summer. Lots of opportunity and worth the time and effort. I'll update you as this progresses.

If you have any questions please let me know.

**Ryan MacDonald**

Vice President (Finance) & CFO  
McMaster Students Union