The McMaster Students Union

Homecoming is around the corner. Before I get into the details of this annual celebration, several points have to be made unequivocally clear. Homecoming is a celebration of the Marauder spirit. At the core of this spirit is a culture of care and consent. All of our events prioritize student safety. To that effect, moving the concert grounds away from Faculty Hollow to JHE field was a step to safely accommodate the number of students on campus, along with a continual demand for our programs and events. On JHE field, our volunteers and Campus Event staff are ready to host two incredibly exciting artists on September 29 and 30, respectively. Ensuring students have a both a safe and fun experience is central to Campus Event staff and members of the student community, combined with the recommendations of residence representatives has been integral to the success of future events. The feedback provided has been integral to refining future plans

After reviewing our internal processes, staffing capacity, and logistical supports in collaboration with our partners at McMaster University and in the community, combined with the recommendations of residence reps and student leaders across campus, we have made a number of changes to the event layout for Homecoming 2017. Specifically, we have altered the shape of the venue to allow for more space per person and more area from which to view the stage. We will double the efficiency of the line and entry process by opening the gates at 6 PM and filling the line carousel prior to gates opening. The capacity to check bags has increased as well. We have been working closely with McMaster Security Services and Hamilton Police Services to double the amount of security staff present at the venue, ensuring that students have a safe environment to enjoy the concerts. Security support will be more visible inside the venue, as well as along the exterior of the perimeter. As with all of our major events, the MSU’s Emergency First Response Team (EFRT) will be on-site in a clearly marked tent near the washrooms of the concert grounds. Additionally, EFRT will be supported by Hamilton EMS. Volunteers from the MSU’s Women and Gender Equity Network (WGEN) will be on-site inside the venue’s Chill Zone. WGEN and the Chill Zone will be located next to the main entrance. WGEN volunteers are well versed in McMaster University’s Sexual Violence Response Protocol and are available to assist students, should there be a need to do so. Moreover, volunteers from the Maroons and the staff of Campus Events have all received bystander intervention training. These staff and volunteers will play a student liaison role alongside our TwelvEighty security personnel, whom are also trained in bystander intervention and are fully aware of the University’s protocol. Staff and volunteers take reports of harassment or assault extremely seriously. There is zero tolerance for such behavior, nor for forms of gender based violence, at any event on the grounds of McMaster University. In addition, zero tolerance messaging will be communicated across the venue through signage both inside and out, as well as through online communication leading up to the weekend.

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These safety and security measures demonstrate the MSU’s ongoing commitment to student safety and the enhancement of student life. Moreover, they are indicative of the MSU’s commitment to exceed basic levels of security, safety or event resources. However, we understand that for some students, our Welcome Week concert did not meet that standard. Therefore, the MSU and the SRA would like to apologize to those whose night did not align with our shared expectations for a successful environment. Your experiences should not be minimized and the feedback you provided has been invaluable in contributing to the success of future events.

I am extremely thankful to all of the Welcome Week reps, Campus Events staff and members of the student community for their leadership. You embody the true Marauder spirit. This Homecoming, more than ever, we celebrate you. Supporting you is why I serve, and why I will always bleed maroon. Looking forward, I believe we can all await a fantastic Homecoming weekend.

CHUKKY IBE
President

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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.