



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

## MSU Maroons Coordinator

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TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Karan Chowdhry  
SUBJECT: MSU Maroons Report 8  
DATE: March 23, 2018

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### UPDATE

Thank you for an amazing year working together and all the work you do. In my last report of the year, I've focused on yearlong successes, failures and challenges, as well as reflected on my original year plan. I've done most of this in this update section and have used the remainder of the report to discuss what's happened since my last report. As such, I chose to not include the successes and challenges because I go over them here. In the budget section, along with an update of the budget, I also have included year end projections.

Overall, my main vision coming into this year was to understand how our service reaches its mission statement, and critically analyze our approach. The Maroons are a service, which above all, aims to connect students to the MSU and create a community within our university. This year we aimed to find ways to solidify our outreach and connection to the McMaster community. All of the objectives listed on my year plan revolved around this goal, as we hoped to create a foundation of student engagement. By achieving this, we hope to give future years the opportunity to use a solid foundation to then create and implement initiatives aimed at how students can be connected to the resources, services, and opportunities within the MSU.

My first objective was to find ways to bridge the gap between the Maroons and the general student body, which is very closely tied to our third objective of finding ways to operate more engaging social media. Both of these were largely accomplished by completely rebuilding our public relations pillar. Throughout the year, we created and published new material online for students to engage with our service. Over the summer, this started with the Maroons School Survival Guide, where we worked with the SSC to provide incoming first year students with a unique way to engage with upper year students, to discuss a wide range of concepts around transition. Throughout welcome week, we found ways to use social media to complement our physical presence, by holding contests throughout the week. On the yearlong front, we started the Maroons@Mac street style video series, which had wonderful outreach, and gave students a unique way to connect with other students around common themes of undergraduate student life. These new strategies of using videography as a focal point of the material we used, finding ways to connect our social media with our physical presence, and having engaging material such as contests and sign ups, we were able to really create lasting engagement with our student body. This is best quantified by increasing our Facebook likes by over 1400 and having had an attendance of over 50 students at all of the events we've run since the start of February.

To develop the professional experience of our volunteers, my second objective was increase the transparency of our operations within our team. Throughout the year, we hosted open leadership team meetings, had multiple methods of feedback, hosted general meetings with semester-based updates, and provided weekly updates via email. By actively keeping volunteers informed about our operations and providing them with many ways to provide feedback (open meetings, anonymous google doc, specific feedback forms, face to face, and through pod leaders), volunteers had the opportunity to be involved in what we did in a way that did not previously exist. This was further supported by the introduction of the promotions committee, which would meet to discuss our public relations initiatives, and assist the Promotions Coordinator and Public Relations Coordinator in creating the initiatives we implemented.

Beyond the public relations pillar, we also analyzed and changed our approach to our remaining pillars of events and athletics. Along with changing the executive structure from two social executives to one Events Coordinator, our fourth objective dealt with ensuring that the events we created had very clear goals, priorities, and audiences. Throughout this year, these goals were to host more frequent smaller events, to engage a broader audience, and to work more frequently with other campus partners on our events. This year we saw collaborations with SCSN, FYC, SWELL, Athletics and Recreation, Bread Bin, Maccess, Campus Events, SHEC, and PSL. By working together in creating and implementing new events and initiatives, we were able to collaborate the specific and unique knowledge of our partners, with our strong outreach and volunteer team, leading to successful events.

In terms of athletics, our fifth objective was the broad goal of revisiting our approach to athletics. This year, we tripled the number of students who engage with our service via athletics, and this was done by introducing new ways to engage a more diverse set of students through this pillar. By having more engaging promotions for our athletic initiatives, having sports streaming events throughout the year, hosting fantasy leagues via social media, and playing a bigger and more engaging role at varsity games, we were able to use this pillar as a very effective outlet for outreach.

Our last objective was to create a strong and positive team dynamic. In the past, the Maroons have had issues with volunteer retention and attendance, as volunteers would be less active when the academic year would get busy. By actively creating and maintaining a positive team dynamic, this year we did not have that issue, as volunteer retention and attendance has constantly been stellar. By creating opportunities for volunteer bonding, being accommodating and understanding, providing volunteers the opportunity to get involved, and dealing with conflicts immediately, we were able to let volunteers feel empowered. The volunteers on this team have been absolutely phenomenal, and without them, none of the success we've had would have been possible.

Our long-term goal was to solidify our outreach and create a foundation within the McMaster community, and by breaking that into more specific goals, we were truly able to accomplish this. In future years, I hope to see the maroons use this foundation to build our operations, by fostering relationships with our campus partners, in order to find ways to use the strengths of our service to connect students with the other resources and opportunities that exist.

Although we faced many challenges throughout the year, there are a few areas of improvement worth highlighting. Firstly, although volunteer retention and attendance was not an issue, a more formal method of volunteer deployment would've been nice. Throughout the year, the workload taken on by individual volunteers was not the most consistent, as some reps took on a lot more shifts than others. Although this is bound to happen with differences in life throughout the year, by having a more formal method, representatives can be held accountable in a more quantifiable way. The introduction of a volunteer coordinator is already one step at solving this, and I think this should be a priority for future years.

Lastly, although we did great on our goal of creating a foundation with the student body, we could have done more to support other services. Throughout the year, its unfortunate when services put a lot of time and resources into events/initiatives that aren't as successful as they could be. By creating a framework in which these services can work with the Maroons to plan their promotional strategies and outreach, I truly think the Maroons can use our strong outreach to connect students with the unique and amazing things our union offers. This year, I circulated a "Maroons Assistance Form" which allowed MSU services to formally ask for assistance with their events. However, just asking for support for tabling, or a facebook share, is not the extent of what our service can offer. Moving forward, I think creating a framework in which the Maroons can play a larger support role in the planning and implementation of the initiatives offered across our union can be beneficial for all parties involved.

## **PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES**

### **OUA/CIS Volleyball Finals**

Over the last two weekends, McMaster hosted the provincial and national volleyball championships. The Maroons attended these events to support our Marauder athletes and try and do our part in protecting our gym. We worked with Athletics and Recreation to provide volunteers with a discounted ticket package. We filmed our own promotional clips to add to the new jumbotron in Burridge gym, which is an amazing outreach opportunity. The gym was full across both weekends with many students in attendance, and it was a really amazing opportunity for our service.

### **Unleash Your Stress Week – Days 1 and 2**

On Monday, March 19, we hosted a Paint Night in MUSC Atrium, with FYC. This was a very successful event with over 50 students in attendance. We offered rock painting and a guided canvas painting session. This was an incredible outreach opportunity, provided students with a great destressor during exams, and was a very successful event. On Tuesday, March 20, we worked with Athletics and Recreation to provide a free Zumba class to students. This event was attended by 22 students, and was a cool physical outlet during this midterm season.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES**

### **Unleash Your Stress Week – Days 3, 4, and 5**

On March 21, we are working with SWELL to host SWELL Unplugged and a walk-through nature. On March 22, we are hosting Smoothies and Ladders with Bread Bin, where students can get a free smoothie bowl, and play various board games. On March 23, we are hosting Slime and Stuff with Maccess, where students can make Slime, play games, get free snacks and drinks, and mingle in clubspace.

### General Representative Hiring

We will soon be hiring for the 2018-2019 general representatives. The tentative timeline for applications is from March 11-March 25, and we have worked out our promotional strategy which includes scheduled graphic posts, as well as a video releasing in the middle of that period. The timeline currently has the new team being hired by April 11<sup>th</sup>. For future years, I would recommend hiring the Maroons Coordinator earlier, potentially in first semester, because the hiring timeline is very tight, which makes things unnecessarily challenging.

### Closing Ceremonies

Hosted as a final event of volunteer appreciation, Closing Ceremonies will be happening on March 27. This is an event where we highlight our year, recognize the work of our volunteer team, recognize our representatives who have volunteered for the service for 3 years and are graduating, amongst other things.

### Exam Destressor

Although this is still being planned, we are hoping to host an exam destressor during final exams in April.

### BUDGET

5003-0120	MAROONS - OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$160.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$141.01
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$18.99
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	0.00
6102-0120	MAROONS - ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS	1,500.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$1,451.55
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$48.45
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	\$0.00
6415-0120	MAROONS - RECOGNITION AWARDS	\$500.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$409.57
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$90.43
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	\$0.00
6501-0120	MAROONS - ADV. & PROMO.	\$1,500.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$20.00
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$1,480.00
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	(I don't have an update on my standing order for this one)
6603-0120	MAROONS - SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$750.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$237.41
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$512.59
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	\$200.00
6633-0120	MAROONS - UNIFORMS	\$11,000.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$4,935.23

	REMAINING IN LINE	\$6,064.77
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	\$6,064.77
6901-0120	MAROONS - TRAVEL EXPENSES * NEW	\$7,000.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$7,771.46
	REMAINING IN LINE	-\$771.46
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	-\$771.46
6804-0120	MAROONS - MEMBER TRAINING	\$2,000.00
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$1,185.85
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$814.15
	Projection of Remaining in Line on April 30	\$600.00
3801-0120	MAROONS - TRAVEL REVENUE	\$6,500.00
	TOTAL GENERATED IN LINE	\$7,890.00
	REMAINING TARGET IN LINE	-
		\$1,390.00
3881-0120	MAROONS - UNIFORM REVENUES	\$7,500.00
	TOTAL GENERATED IN LINE	\$932.25
	REMAINING TARGET IN LINE	\$7,500.00

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteer dynamics continue to be absolutely stellar. This week of events would not at all be possible without the commitment and dedication of my volunteer team. We are hosting a staff appreciation event in Closing Ceremonies, and recently went to an escape room together.

## **OTHER**

I touched on this last meeting but feel the need to give it more attention, I truly believe moving the hiring of the Maroons Coordinator to first semester would make the transition for the incoming Coordinator much smoother. Being hired in the end of January makes it quite difficult to hire a leadership team and general team before classes end, as the current team is set to be hired on April 11<sup>th</sup>, and this is the earliest it was possible with all the steps that need to be taken in the hiring process. As such, there isn't much room or time for transition, as the only thing we focus on is hiring, and don't have time to go over things like Welcome week, the budget, managing a leadership team and many other important things. Furthermore, hiring the PTM earlier would allow for general representative hiring to occur earlier in the year, while other welcome week groups are also hiring. Open hiring after all of the faculties and residences already have their teams deters many people from applying.

Thank you for all your support throughout the year.