



MEMO

From the office of the...

Vice-President (Finance) & CFO

TO: Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Vice President (Finance)
SUBJECT: Report and Update
DATE: December 29, 2018

Members of the SRA,

It has been my pleasure and privilege to work as your VP Finance these past 8 months. Each day, I come in to work excited and driven to do my best to work on behalf of students. Alongside what I feel has been a fantastic year of strengthening the MSU and improving student life, I've been able to grow and learn so much. I've been able to tackle complex problems, involve myself in major infrastructure projects, and craft programs that will see fantastic benefits for years to come. I am constantly grateful to each of you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as VP Finance, and I hope that I have impressed you with my work this far. The following is a synopsis of my progress since my report in early October.

Thank you again.

Union Market Development

The development of Union Market has been an interesting, rewarding and surprising project this year. Although the project was not included in my initial campaign platform or my year plan, the desire to improve Union Market has come forward as a priority because of four main forces: desire from students, opportunity to generate new revenue, strong leadership from the UM management team, and marketing neglect in recent years. Because of these, significant efforts have been taken to improve the store, and ensure that it continues to be a vibrant experience for the MSU.

In late October, we were informed that the UM hot beverage cups that we've used for the past 8 years would be running out of stock in January. Because of this, we were presented with the option to order more of the old cups or redesign the cups and print new ones. This initiated a process to review and reimagine the Union Market brand. The logo with the Muskoka chair and bucket of gummy worms has been used for the past 16 years, since the store first opened. At the time, this logo reflected what the leadership of the time imagined the store to be, a country store-esque space with lounge chairs, barn wood and focusing heavily on cheap candies. That vision lasted for close to 5 years before the store was revamped to a more modern and hip style – quickly making the UM logo an oddity in the store. Looking back on this, we felt it was time to revamp the

logo, branding and design of the store as the replacement of cups provided us with a unique time sensitive opportunity to make significant change.

We began the rebranding process with numerous brainstorming sessions involving the MSU General Manager, AVP Finance, Underground Senior Designer, Food & Beverage Manager, Union Market Manager, Marketing & Communications Director, and myself. Conversations focused around what icon or typography would reflect the MUSC convivence store. After numerous rounds of drafts and designs, we decided on a simple and modern choice.

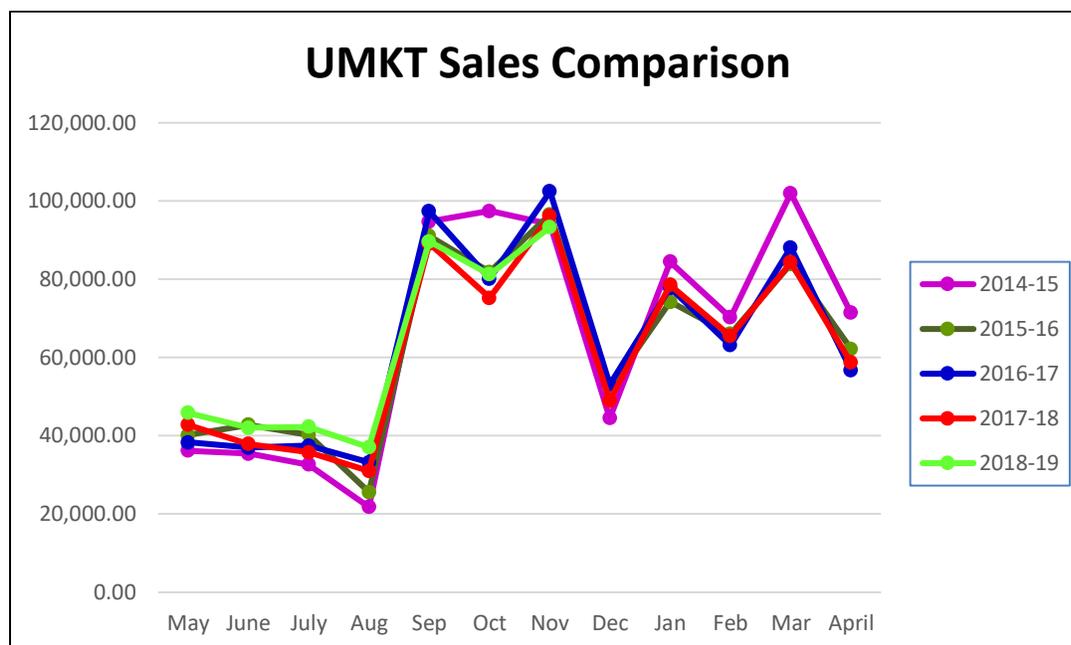
Notably, the logo would simply include the words “Union Market”, eliminated the “the” which has fallen out of colloquial use. We also chose to solidify the navy blue and orange as the official logo colours, as it has become prevalent in the store through both signage, uniforms and wall colours. Finally, we have distinctively pushed the U and M forward to the eye, as a large majority of customers and clients refer to the store simply as “UM”. The official logo is just the typography with the colour choice. However, the large majority of the time, the logo will be complimented with an icon of an item sold within the store. This gives us the freedom to market new product sold within the store, while also advertising current top sellers such as coffee and bagels, without being tied down to including these in our logo for the next 16 years.



The new logo was presented to the Executive Board on November 29th, and after some discussion, was approved. Future rebranding steps will include a capital request in the 2019-20 capital budget to replace the sign at the top of the store, some new print materials including new in store signage, and the updated hot beverage cups.

The (now outdated) white cups will be out of stock in the coming weeks. As such, we have designed and printed custom java jackets to be placed on plain white cups. These java jackets are an interim solution as we develop a cup design with which, once agreed upon, we will purchase cups in a bulk order for multiple years. New cups should be in the store by early March.

This summer, we saw improved sales within Union Market. This likely due to our promotional campaigns regarding new bagels, and our push to inform the campus population that Union Market has the most affordable coffee on campus. We've continued to push this messaging throughout the school year, and have seen slight improvements over last year.



Student Activity Building

I continue to work diligently on the Student Activity and Fitness Expansion project. Construction efforts have begun on the pulse expansion, and staging and preparation for development of the Student Activity Building have been underway since October. I meet regularly with project leaders including Facility Services, the Dean of Students and the Director of Ath + Rec to discuss the project and iron out new complications.

In an effort of transparency, I have set in motion a plan to inform students of the project's progress, as well as the plans for both the SAB and Pulse Expansion. The first phase of this was to equip the elected representatives of the MSU with the knowledge to inform their constituents, as well as open myself publically to questions. To do this, MSU General Manager, John McGowan and I led a moderated discussion with the Executive Board. During this discussion, EB members discussed the floorplan designs, construction progress and consultation process. Following this, on November 25th, I presented a delegation to the floor at the Student Representative Assembly meeting. During this presentation, I reviewed the floorplan designs in detail, gave updates on the project's assumed budget and outlined the future steps for the process. The livestream for this meeting has been viewed over 1,700 times. Future steps to inform students will involve an online campaign to drive students to the MSU website, which will feature detailed information, as well as an in-person information fair in late February.

John McGowan and I recently met with the Project Manager from McMaster Facility Services, Wade Beitel, to review the progress so far and learn about the construction timeline. We were assured by Wade that construction was continuing to progress according to the original schedule, and that the planned timeline for early Fall 2020 was still an expected and achievable opening date for the SAB.

In February, students will have the opportunity to vote on the official name for the new student space. "Student Activity Building" is an unofficial name, which was given to the project casually during the fee referendum campaign in 2017. The thought from both the MSU and the University is that the official naming of the space deserves further consideration. As such, we have set forward a process in which students will get to decide the final name! In September, while the SAB Consultation Committee was running its campaign, they included an opportunity for students to submit their naming ideas. Close to 360 students submitted a name idea, and this data was taken to a joint committee of MSU and University members. After some consideration, a few options for names will be brought forward to the SRA to approve, and the question will be released to students to vote on.

Finally, the work from the SAB Consultation Committee has received significant interest from staff within the University. Senior administration from Student Affairs, Athletics + Recreation, the Student Success Centre, the VP Administration, and Facility Services have all been sent the report and have reviewed it with positive comments. This work will well inform these stakeholders as they make decisions on student space in the future!

Financial Transparency

As the VP Finance, it falls under my scope of role to ensure that the financial operations of the MSU are as transparent as possible. This has been a priority of mine since my time on the SRA in 2016-17, and will continue to be until the end of my term. Throughout the year, I have been presenting the up-to-date information of our financial information to the SRA, and have opened myself up to questions. In addition, in late October, I released and presented our annual financial audit report, conducted by KMPG.

In addition to this, I worked with our Communications Officer and Underground Senior Designer to redesign the online financial transparency sections of the MSU website, and produce a financial transparency video. We have now updated the /YourMoney tab on the MSU website to feature new infographics, and give students a quick and easy way to understand where their money is spent. In addition to this, we developed a video which details how the MSU spends the \$130.26 that students pay to the MSU Operating Fee. This video was posted on November 12th, and within this week has garnered over 4,400 views! Response to this video has been incredibly positive, and I am excited to see its effects in the year to come, as more students begin to understand how their money is spent. The description of the video links to the updated /YourMoney tab, where interested students could dive deeper into their research of where the MSU spends student money.



McMaster Students Union (MSU)

Wednesday at 5:24 PM · 🌐

As a full-time undergraduate student at McMaster, you pay a fee to operate the McMaster Students Union. Learn more about where your fees go by visiting msumcmaster.ca/yourmoney



4.4K Views

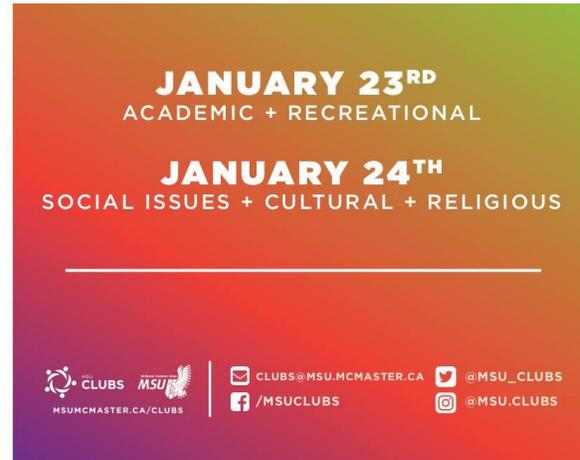
Clubs

Supporting our 350+ MSU clubs, and developing systems to build strength within our Clubs Department have been major focuses of my term. In addition to the updates provided in my October 12th report, we have built upon our success and continue to work on projects that will help clubs in their efforts.

We held our skill building workshop for clubs members on September 17th, focusing on budgeting, sponsorship & community engagement. These sessions were very well attended, with largely positive feedback from people who went. As such, we continued to host skill building sessions throughout the semester. Additional sessions focused on event planning and effective promotions. When asked how helpful they found the workshops, the average score was 8.4/10! This shows a strong desire from clubs to continue this project into the second semester, and to absolutely continue hosting similar workshops in future years.

In my election platform, I outlined my commitment to develop the MSU Campus Events/Clubs collaboration funding initiative set forward last year. \$25,000 was allocated for clubs to collaborate with MSU Campus Events and receive additional support for student initiatives. Last year this fund only used 10% of it's funding, due to an unclear application process or derective from either the clubs department or Campus Events. To improve this, we have now developed an online application form via the Campus Events webpage. Interested groups are able to submit their event idea, and apply for funding in a streamlined way. After an application is submitted, the Campus Events Programming Coordinator will follow up with the club president, as well as the Clubs Administrator to determine if the event will receive additional funding. This online process should streamline applications, and make it easier for clubs to access this fantastic opportunity!

Another platform objective was to bring back the winter ClubsFest. After some work determining the logistics of the event, ClubsFest2 will happen on January 23rd and 24th, and will give groups an additional opportunity to promote their clubs to students. This will also be beneficial to students who are looking to get involved with a club, as often the first semester can be overwhelming, but students, especially in first year, might feel able to join a club or group as they are now more settled into a routine. I'm looking forward to the success of ClubsFest2!



Continuing on our work from the summer, we released the second of three feedback surveys for clubs executives. This is an opportunity for students to submit their opinions, comments and ideas directly to the Clubs Department, and an opportunity for the Clubs Department to collect data and qualitative information on how we can improve the clubs experience! We released the second feedback survey in mid-November, and received 46 responses. This is a decrease from the 84 responses received in the summer, however it is significantly higher than the one survey released last year with only 10 responses.

The following are a few of the interesting data points from the survey:

- How well does the MSU Clubs Department communication important information?
Average: 8.2/10
- How effective is the MSU Clubs Department at replying to your inquiries?
Average: 8.3/10
- How well has the MSU Clubs Department supported your club so far this term?
Average: 8.1/10
- How helpful have you found the workshops hosted by MSU Clubs this year?
Average: 8.4/10

Overall, the responses were very positive. They also outlined key areas in which the MSU can improve its support of clubs. We will be releasing a final feedback survey in March to hear from clubs about their year.

Student Life Enhancement Fund

Another key focus of my year has been executing the Student Life Enhancement Fund, and formally defining its processes. In my earlier reports, I outlined my progress on readjusting the campaigns timelines, planning promotional campaigns and working with Student Affairs to determine the idea submission, validation, voting and approval

processes. Now, as of late November, the first phase of the project was successful and we are well on our way towards the completion of phase 2.

A change I made late last year was to task the Finance Committee with the coordination of two promotional campaigns annually, for idea submission and idea voting. Following the implementation of the idea submission campaign this fall, we've seen the benefits of this result in a significantly higher number of ideas submitted than last year! The committee promoted their campaign through in-person tabling in libraries and MUSC, as well as online promotions on social media, physical posters and instagram takeovers of both the MSU account and the McMasterU account. In February, the committee will run a similar sized campaign to promote the opportunity to vote on submitted ideas.

I was able to secure funding from Student Affairs to match the MSU's investment in these promotional campaigns. This is a pilot investment from their department, but will likely see continuation should the promotions prove an obvious benefit to the project.

Phase 2 includes:

- The vetting of submitted ideas by a joint committee of student representatives and university staff.
- The launch of the online portal for students to vote on submitted ideas.
- A promotional campaign coordinated by the Finance Committee to encourage students to vote.
- The review of voting results by the Student Services Advisory Committee, and the final approval of the distribution for the \$100,000.

Life After Mac

Last year, the 2017-18 Board of Directors led the project to reimagine what was historically "Frost Week" in early January, to a new week of events titled "Life After Mac". This was a collaboration between the MSU, the Alumni Association and the Student Success Centre, focused on implementing events and programs for students thinking about life after graduation. In my election platform, I expressed my commitment to expanding this project to better serve graduating students. As such, we began conversations early in the year with our partners to add and enhance the programming offered in Life After Mac 2019.

The largest event this year will be our Friday speaker, Ken Jeong. Ken is famous for his acting work in movies such as *The Hangover* trilogy and *Crazy Rich Asians*, and his television work on the show *Community*. Ken went to school to become a doctor, and completed his medical residency. After becoming a registered physician, Ken dedicated his life to acting and comedy. His performance will focus on his changing career path, how he found success and will provide humor and advice to students. Following the performance, there will be a moderated Q & A with audience questions! Opening for Ken will be Salma Hindy, a McMaster Engineering graduate, who found success in stand-up comedy while completing her Masters of Engineering! I am confident that students will love these two performers. One of the criticisms of last year's program was

that Hasan Minaj did not focus on anything related to finding career success or changing career paths – so this should be a fantastic success!

Returning this year are events which were received really positively last year such as the President's New Year's Levee and The Game of Life: IRL. The President's New Year's Levee is an event for graduating students, hosted by President Patrick Deane, and will feature a champagne toast and inspirational words from senior administration within the University. The Game of Life: IRL is a program run by the Student Success Centre and is a role playing game where students can delve into real life problems while a moderator walks them through decision making processes.

We've expanded the Alumni Launch event hosted by the Alumni Association to include a series of 5 events in CIBC Hall. These events include two money management sessions led by professionals from TD Bank, resume critiques and a LinkedIn photoshoot, networking lessons presented by McMaster alumni, and a moderated Q&A with recent alumni from different faculties!

Finally, we've brought in a new partner this year – the Hire McMaster campaign. The objectives of this campaign (which I touch on later in this report) align perfectly with Life After Mac, and the partnership was an obvious choice. This year, they will be hosting an event on the Tuesday titled "Networking for Success" led by business professional Neil Thornton. This workshop will teach students tips and tricks to stand out in the job market, while building their professional network along with their presentation skills.

Overall, I am looking forward to Life After Mac 2019! The work here once again solidifies McMaster and the MSUs commitment to helping students transition to life after graduation, and the events planned this year should be a great success.

<p>LIFE AFTER MAC</p> <p>January 8th—11th</p> <p>A series of events and programs for students thinking about life after McMaster University</p>	<p>PRESIDENT'S NEW YEAR'S LEVÉE</p> <p>Tuesday, January 8th 2:00pm—4:00pm</p> <p>Come out to celebrate your time at McMaster with your fellow classmates and toast to your final semester at Mac.</p> <p>McMaster Alumni Association</p>	<p>NETWORKING FOR SUCCESS</p> <p>Tuesday, January 8th 6:00pm—8:00pm</p> <p>This powerful workshop will help you strengthen your presence, human relations, understanding body language, and leave a strong impact on others.</p> <p>Hire McMaster</p>
<p>THE GAME OF LIFE: IRL</p> <p>Wednesday, January 9th 11:00am—2:00pm</p> <p>It's time to play The Game of Life, but this time, In Real Life.</p> <p>Student Success Centre</p>	<p>ALUMNI LAUNCH</p> <p>Thursday, January 10th 1:30pm—6:30pm</p> <p>Visit any of the numerous speakers in CIBC Hall on the third floor of MUSC, to learn about everything you need to succeed in your Life After Mac.</p> <p>McMaster Alumni Association</p>	<p>KEN JEONG</p> <p>Friday, January 11th Doors: 5:30pm Show: 7:00pm</p> <p>The actor, producer and writer, known for his scene stealing abilities, began his career as doctor, before establishing himself as one of today's top comedic stars.</p> <p>MSU Campus Events</p>

Campus Events

Since my last report in early October, Campus Events has fully implemented its fall events calendar. Following Welcome Week, this included 4 Trivia Nights, 2 alcohol-focused club nights, 2 all-ages club nights, 3 Karaoke Nights, 3 Discover New Music Nights (Rock, Pop & Country), a Dirty Bingo Night, the Homecoming Concert, Homecoming Expo and the HoCo Street Festival. We met in late November to review the success of these events, and develop our plan for the second semester.

Overall, the Trivia Nights have been a massive success. The event centre in TwelvEighty was consistently packed with students, and all 4 nights were great fun for the participants involved. Themes focused around general trivia, Harry Potter trivia, FRIENDS trivia & holiday movie trivia. The nights were also financially successful for the TwelvEighty staff, who saw increased average revenues of \$1,300 each Tuesday that trivia was held. This success has led us to increase the frequency of these events for the second semester!

The alcohol focused club nights have continued their trend of being unsuccessful overall. Although efforts were made to effectively promote the events and bring in new and exciting DJs, attendance was low at both events and sales were also low. This is however offset by the fantastic response we have seen to all-ages club nights. We hosted 2 all-ages nights on October 31st and November 15th. The Halloween club night was understandably more successful than its successor, due to the nature of the night as a busy party night for students. Revenue from entry fees to the Halloween club night exceeded \$5,500!

Karaoke has proven itself to be a lucrative event that continues to grow with each iteration. From the first event to the third, bar revenues increased 59%, indicating that more students were coming out and enjoying the event as time went on. For second semester, we will continue working to grow the karaoke nights, and have redesigned the event layout to make a more enjoyable experience for patrons.

Discover New Music nights were something that our team was really excited to experiment with. The concept behind the events were that students could come out and see up-and-coming artists, and the genre would switch each time. Our first event, rock night with The Static Shift, was fairly unsuccessful. The event itself looked and sounded great, but attendance was low. To combat this for the second event, pop night, we hired a larger and more recognizable name, Tyler Shaw. This in the hopes that the larger name would invite a larger crowd to come and enjoy the night. Although attendance was more than triple the first event, it was still not at a sustainable level. Finally, for country night in November, we hosted the Reklaws, and the night was a great success! TwelvEighty was busy with excited fans, the bar was busy all night, and students loved the performance of the Reklaws and the openers. From this success, we have derived that our initial concept of small up-and-coming bands is not what the current market of students is interested. Instead, we have shifted our focus in second semester to more concert focused events in TwelvEighty as opposed to bar style with background live music.



Dirty Sexy Bingo was a slam dunk once again. The event was packed in the event centre, and students loved the night. This year, instead of being hosted by Spenny as had been done for many years prior, the host was Drag Queen Miss Drew. Response to this change was overwhelmingly positive and we plan to bring back the event in second semester. In addition, we have heard numerous comments from students interested in attending a drag show in TwelvEighty, and we are planning to host that in the second

semester. The night will feature a contestant from RuPaul's Drag Race, which should be really exciting!

Finally, we have initiated conversations with the partners involved in Light Up The Night to expand the celebration. More updates to come hopefully in the coming months!

January Programming

As mentioned previously, the MSU previously coordinated a series of events in early January titled "Frost Week". After a few years of somewhat unsuccessful events, the focus was changed to the new "Life After Mac". Although this change has been received positively, there exists a gap for students who wish to engage in social events and join new communities in the new year. As a part of my election campaign, I included a plan to develop new events to welcome student back to McMaster in 2019.

We are bringing back ClubsFest in late January. ClubsFest 2 will allow students to learn about communities on campus which are actively recruiting new members. This will allow students who were perhaps hesitant to join a club earlier in the year the opportunity to access our extensive system of clubs. It will also allow clubs who wish to expand their outreach the opportunity to promote themselves again to students!

In January, the MSU Maroons will be hosting an event to PACK-THE-HOUSE at a Volleyball game. This event will invite all students to cheer on our awesome athletes and join in the marauder pride. Planning has already begun with invites to rep groups, and promotions will take place in January to invite all students out to cheer on the teams!

I mentioned our headline event of Life After Mac, Ken Jeong, previously in this report. It is my belief that a stand-up comedy show is an excellent addition to our programming on campus during this time, and invites students who may not wish to participate in other activities and opportunity to enjoy top quality talent on campus.

In my year plan, I outlined my plan to reinvigorate the second semester faculty night, in collaboration with faculty societies. The last coordinated faculty night outside of Welcome Week took place in my first year, in January 2015. Although I did not invest enough energy into revamping this event, I still believe that it would be incredibly successful. It will not occur this year, however I will advocate that this be a priority for the next board.

Finally, our Campus Events team has prepared numerous events to take place throughout January. In addition to the programming in Life After Mac, they will host Trivia Nights, Club Nights, Karaoke Nights and more!

MUSC Improvements

Throughout the first semester, the Director of MUSC, Lori Diamond, and her team were hard at work implementing plans which had been approved in previous years by funding from the Student Life Enhancement Fund. This included new tables in chairs on the first

floor in the food court and Starbucks area, as well as new lounge furniture on the second floor in front of MUSC 201. Some funding remains, with which Ikram and I plan to advocate for renovations within MUSC to install more plugs in student spaces.

Facility Services Consultations

During my election, I spoke passionately about my desire to optimize space and improve the student experience on campus. Alongside my work with the Student Activity Building and Pulse expansion project, I've been happy to work with McMaster Facility Services to continue to improve the campus.

I've been consulting on design committees within Facility Services regarding McMaster's landscaping plans. Two projects currently in the works are a redesign and reconstruction of BSB/JHE field, and a masterplan of landscaping around the North and West Quad residences. For both projects I have worked with their team to bring student priorities to the forefront of design and functional use.

It was of high importance that the MSU gain an understanding of the functional program and design of the Peter George Centre for Living and Learning, as well as the University's plans to bring existing offices into the new building. To do this, I sat down with the project manager, Mohamad Abdel-Nabi to review the designs and plans for the building. I also consulted with Dean of Students, Sean Van Koughnett on the Student Affairs department plans to fill the space of the Student Wellness Centre, which will transition to the new building throughout 2019-2020.

I've also been working on advocating to Facility Services on project plans outlined in the 2018 Capital Plan and the Campus Master Plan. Many projects are currently in progress, and my advocacy work has focused around projects which are currently rated as priority D and below. These projects include a \$63M renovation of the Arts Quad teaching and learning spaces, a \$148M DBAC & IWC expansion, and a \$47.5M project to cover the Arts Quad outdoor space in glass and create 39,000 square feet of beautiful programmable interior space.

Recently, the University officially announced its plans to add 100,000 square feet of additional space to be built over the existing building of Innis Library. This is fantastic news for the MSU in both that it will increase the amount of study space on campus and space for Commerce students, but it also gives additional strength to our decision making when moving the Student Activity Building to the west side of DBAC. I have a meeting with the AVP Facilities, Debbie Martin, in January where we will discuss the plans for this.

Finally, after a few months of work, I have finally gained a seat on the design committee for the new residence off campus. Beginning in the new year, I will be invited to represent students at meeting with the architects and developers, and I will work to ensure that the student experience is at the front line of conversations.

The Silhouette

I sit as the chair of the Silhouette Board of Publication, a focus of the board this year has been to track and increase the Sil's online impact, monitor costs of printing and production, and increase ad revenue.

In regards to online impact, the Silhouette team has done fantastic work. Since beginning in May, the Sil has released 37 videos on Facebook, with the most engaging videos being campus news such as the new nap pods announcement, recap videos for events like Welcome Week, and office culture videos like their Sillies series or the Office-style videos. Web page views on thesil.ca have increased 51% from the 2017-18 year, which is largely due to their increased focus on digital media and social media promotions. 87% of their website traffic is driven through Facebook, which proves the effectiveness of their social media strategy. The most popular articles by far have been breaking campus news such as the Commerce 2FA3 petition story, pride sidewalk paint story, and the Westdale crime report story. Those three stories together made up close to 25% of all web traffic to thesil.ca so far this year

In the beginning of the year, we began conducting a cost benefit analysis of the printing expenses of the Silhouette. This involved opportunities to reduce the number of copies printed per issue, the number of pages per issue, and the number of issues per year. Decisions have yet to be made from this analysis. Because of effective purchasing through the Underground, we've reduced the cost of printing by 10.8% so far this year.

As of November 30th, ad revenue for the Silhouette has increased by 14.8% compared to November 30th, 2017. This is largely due to the work done by our Campus and Commercial Partnerships Coordinator, Vlad Motorykin and his work last year in developing comprehensive marketing packages across the organization. In addition, we have begun selling the opportunity for outside groups to write sponsored articles within the Sil. So far, the Student Success Centre, Alumni Association and BMO have purchased this form of advertising, and we have been constantly reviewing the process to ensure that the articles are well marked and still appropriate for the publication.

Online Ticketing

After multiple stages of development, the system is up and running on the MSU website, and we are ironing out the bugs. It was originally tested for the Welcome Week and Homecoming concerts, with a considerable number of issues which pushed the project back from being released to student groups. After working with the development company on the issues, we tested the system with Campus Events Discover New Music Nights, Spark Formal and with the Ken Jeong performance – and so far, everything is looking great! For both the Campus Events nights and Spark Formal, we saw no noticeable issues which would prevent us from releasing the program to student groups soon.

We've planned for two more trials before instituting the system within Compass. Should the system work well at the Ken Jeong performance, we will be running trials with the McMaster Musical Theatre club's performance of Company in early March, as well as

Campus Events second semester programming. This will give us experience with ticketed events on multiple nights, as well as events with multiple entry points.

The current plan is to house the system under the administration of the Compass Internal Coordinators. Groups will be able to coordinate with the IC's to develop an online web page for customers to purchase tickets, and the IC's will see each event through to completion as the liason between our system and the event organizer. Our system will be able to operate at a significantly reduced cost to third party vendors, which will save student groups money, while bringing in revenue for the MSU.

TwelvEighty & The Grind Analysis

In September, I began working with a group of Engineering students for their Capstone Management project. The scope of their project would be a financial analysis of TwelvEighty & The Grind, as well as consulting on operational improvements to the business unit. I have been overjoyed working with them, as their scope fit perfectly into my plans to analyze the Grind and my work to reinvigorate TwelvEighty. In early December, the group finished their report, and the findings and suggestions will undoubtedly prove incredibly valuable in our decision making processes going forward.

The group conducted a thorough review of TwelvEighty's finances for the past 6 years. This included a financial analysis of annual trends, revenue volatility, and operating costs, as well as a competitive analysis of the surrounding environment and the student experience. They conducted primary research with surveys for customers eating in TwelvEighty, and collected data on demographics as well as information on their experience and trends. After an in depth environmental scan of the business, they determined that the largest area for growth and development for TwelvEighty was in it's marketing and in increasing the number of first time customers. As a solution to this, they crafted a detailed marketing plan for TwelvEighty.

For The Grind, their work focused mainly on determining it's success and the determination of whether or not expanding the capacity and physical space was the ideal decision. They again conducted a financial analysis of revenues and expenses, as well as an environmental scan of competitors. Their primary research on The Grind focused on the seating capacity, and it's effect on revenue. With a current seating capacity of 45, they found that The Grind currently operates at peak capacity up to 62% of the time, however capacity never exceeded 28 people because of the seating arrangement.

The group proposed detailed solutions for expanding The Grind, including two detailed renovation plans. Their suggested plan adds 39 new seats, and would bring in between \$12,461 and \$18,546 in additional revenue per month during the school year.

Accounting Computers

In mid-December, we upgraded our accounting software to Microsoft Great Plains 2018. This came with a server upgrade and 8 new computers. Funding for this upgrade was approved in the 2018/19 capital budget in April 2018. Overall, the transition went very

smoothly, and the new software will allow the accounting department to work more diligently and more efficiently.

Compass Information Centre

A few months ago, GO Transit notified us that they would no longer be renewing their relationship with Compass. This is because they have signed a nation-wide deal with Shoppers Drug Mart to sell GO Tickets and Presto reloads at their locations. We negotiated with them, and were able to extend the service until the end of the first semester. However, as of mid-December, Compass will no longer offer GO Ticket sales. Since 2015/16, GO Ticket sales have decreased at Compass by 37.6%.

Service to students will not be greatly affected, as we have been working with the HSR to have their department be our provider of Presto services at Compass. As such, students will be able to purchase Presto cards, load and reload their Presto cards at Compass the same as before. The difference in operation comes in that customers will not be able to purchase one-way physical GO tickets anymore. However, they can purchase a Presto card and load the card to be able to ride GO busses or trains at the reduced Presto rate.

Over the next few months, I will be reviewing the operations of Compass Information Centre, as the lost relationship with GO Transit will significantly affect the services annual revenue.

Conference Fund

The AVP Finance, Alex Johnston, and I have been working on the creation of a fund through which students can apply for funding to attend conferences. We will be bringing our changes to the Sponsorship and Donations Committee in January, and then to Executive Board. The changes involve redistributing the existing Sponsorship and Donations fund of \$10,000 to include an option to apply for conferences as well. We've conducted an analysis for the current fund's spending over the past 5 years, and have determined that offering the flexibility to the Sponsorship and Donations Committee to allocate funding as they see fit will provide the largest opportunity for success and opportunity for students.

HSR Presto Pass

It's been 4 months since we launched the new online pass loading system for the HSR bus pass to Presto. During this time, we have been consistently reviewing the process and working with the University, the HSR and Presto to make changes to improve the student experience with the program. Key notes are that during next year's HSR bus pass negotiations, the MSU team should request that the HSR pay an additional fee for the administration and assistance that Compass provides during this process – and this should not come with an increased cost to students. During September and October, the line at Compass was very long, and a large number of questions surrounded the process for downloading the HSR pass. Additionally, our Compass Manager, Debbie Good, has spent a considerable amount of time helping students navigate the process and their issues with Presto and the HSR.

Waterloo Trip

In late November, Kristina and I had the opportunity to take some of our staff to the University of Waterloo for a day, to meet with staff from the Federation of Students, and share best practices. During the day, we met with staff from clubs, services, business units, communications and events. This was a fantastic experience both for our staff and ourselves, as we were able to learn about Waterloo's operations, as well as share our experiences and successes.

Financial Affairs Council

Largely this project has gone unfinished. With my attention drawn to more time sensitive matters such as our business units and campus events, the initiation of financial affairs council meetings has not happened. To mediate this, I have set a plan of action for the second semester. In January, I will coordinate a meeting with all of the VP Finance's of the faculty societies with Michael Gourlay, Sr. Manager of McMaster Financial Affairs. Michael facilitates the faculty society financial transition training annually in late April. This training is integral to a successful year for faculty societies. As such, the goal of the Financial Affairs Council will be to review, analyze and critique the current transition training, and recommend changes for April 2019.

Student Assistance Program Promotions

In an effort to inform students about the services available to them through the health plan's Student Assistance Program, the Communications team has been promoting the services and benefits of the program throughout the first term. Promotions have included social media posts, a huge banner in the window of the MSU office, an article on the MSU website, and ads in the Silhouette and the President's page. In addition to this, we coordinated with the Student Wellness Centre to ensure that they were knowledgeable about the program, and could effectively connect students to the resources available to them in the SAP. Over 1,000 brochures have been printed and handed out by the Student Wellness Centre to inform students of the program.

In the 2019-20 budgeting process, I will be including a new line to allocate funding specifically for the promotions of our health plan and SAP. This will ensure that students will be more aware of the benefits available to them, and this funding can be allocated annually.

Student Success Centre Advisory Committee

Each year, members of the Board of Directors sit on advisory committees to the departments of Student Affairs, alongside additional student representatives. This year, both Stephanie and I are a part of the Student Success Centre Advisory Committee. After reviewing the SSC's annual finances, we have decided our focus of this year will be to review the amount of student opportunity jobs that the SSC offers. Our goal for the end of the year will be to instill priorities within the SSC to increase the number of undergraduate student jobs offered.

Hire McMaster

Since last fall the VP Finance has sat on the steering committee for Hire McMaster. This is a University led campaign, uniting offices from across campus in an effort to connect employers with McMaster Students for co-op placements, internships, experiential learning and post-graduation employment. The steering committee is comprised myself, managers from co-op and career offices across campus, as well as partners from the Student Success Centre, Alumni, Social Sciences and Humanities. Goals in the campaigns first year have been to connect with 500 new employers, develop hiring McMaster students as a brand to increase employer interest, and connecting the co-op and career services on campus.

On December 11th, we held an event to bring together all of the staff on campus who work in co-op, career, experiential education or employer engagement. This full day included networking sessions, skill development workshops, best practice sharing and idea generation for the success of the Hire McMaster campaign. The day was an incredible success, and it is interesting to note that this was the first time all of these staff members had ever been in the same room together – as they work in very siloed offices in their own faculties. Takeaways from this event included a cohesive vision to increase opportunities for undergraduate students, an intense desire to collaborate across faculties, and connections in best practice sharing which will prove beneficial for many years.

I'm excited about the opportunities within the Hire McMaster campaign. There is great drive within the university to help students connect to employers, and I think that this campaign will prove to be extremely beneficial. Phase 1 of the campaign is to attract employers to campus and develop the brand of Hire McMaster. We will soon be transitioning to phase 2 in late 2019, which will be to help to prepare students for the professional world.

Programming Advisory Campaigns

Last year, as AVP Finance, I led the Programming Advisory Committee. After a few years of inaction from the committee, we led two consultation campaigns to hear from students what they would like to see in Campus Events Programming. The benefits from these surveys were that Campus Events could now make decisions on it's programming, with data collected on what students wanted to see. This year, Alex Johnston, the AVP Finance is chairing the committee, and they recently released their first survey.



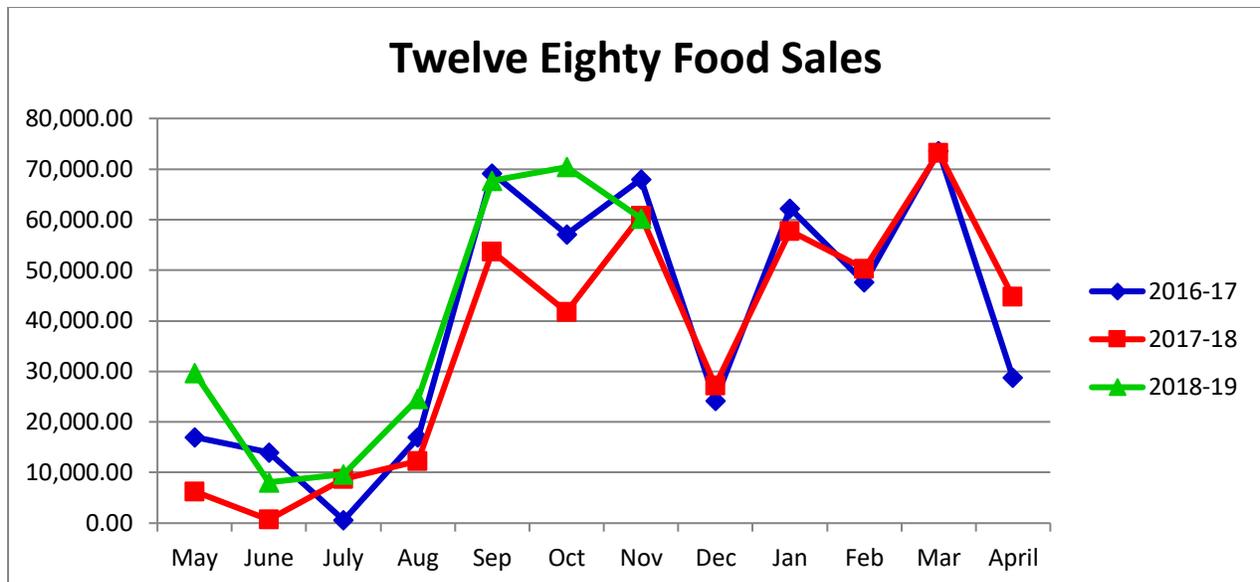
The survey collects demographic data, as well as information on students experiences at events they attended in the fall term. Following that, the survey asks how programming can be improved, and what other events students would like to see in the future. After the survey closes, the committee will review the survey findings with the CE team, and they will use the data collected to inform their decision making in the future.

The Committee intends to conduct another consultation campaign in March and April to gather data on students experiences at events in the second semester as well!

TwelvEighty

In my report to the SRA in October, I explained in detail my progress on the project to redevelop and improve TwelvEighty Bar and Grill. In a concise 1,050 words, I recounted my successes in redesigning the menu, developing a new promotional strategy for the restaurant, renovating the event centre, crafting a plan for new night events, hiring new staff to support kitchen operations, and my work with a group of engineers to conduct a thorough review of business operations. Since the October report, my work has focused largely on the management of the business unit, and the review of each projects success.

As a result of these changes, we have seen considerable improvements and increases to the revenues within TwelvEighty's food sales. Although overall revenues are still down because of the declining sales of alcoholic beverage and club night entrance fees, food sales and event rentals have increased. Below is a graph detailing food sales in TwelvEighty this year compared to recent years.



There is more work to be done to continue to improve TwelvEighty. It is imperative that we reinstall TwelvEighty as a top destination for students looking for an affordably priced high quality meal, as well as a great experience. We need to create a culture in which students are excited to go to TwelvEighty, and will return many times throughout the year. As such, my work in the second semester will surround two key areas, physical space and beverage offerings.

In the 2018/19 capital budget, approved by the SRA in April, \$5,500 was allocated to improve the restaurant dining space of TwelvEighty. I'm currently working with our General Manager, as well as TwelvEighty Service Manager and our Food & Beverage Manager to utilize these funds effectively. Some of this money will go towards contracting touch-ups for the paint within the space which has become chipped or worn. Other funds will go towards developing an enjoyable physical interior with photos, banners and new décor. Finally, we will be working with designers within the underground to create some incredible images of McMaster throughout the years which will be featured in the space. Money was also allocated to install a digital screen outside of TwelvEighty to advertise the menu as well as event and beverage offerings.

Much of my work this summer was focused around redesigning the food offerings in TwelvEighty, and the fall was spent ensuring that these new items were consistent and received positively. Now, I feel confident that the team is ready to move on to enhancing another key area of the business – beverage offerings. We will be developing relationships with craft breweries to offer new and exciting beers, and we are currently brainstorming a collaboration with Campus Events to bring numerous craft breweries into the space for a great night of tasting, learning and music. The hope is that with new beverage offerings that students are excited for, we can increase the number of students coming in to TwelvEighty, and mitigate the lost revenue from club nights.

Communications Team

During my election, I focused heavily on my passion for the improvement and modernization of the MSU's communication strategies. For the past 8 months, I have worked diligently to investigate opportunities to ensure that the MSU communicates effectively with our students.

A departmental review of the MSU's marketing, communications and advertising is currently taking place through two methods. First, I have been in constant communication with our internal managers to develop new strategies including social media, video production and new avenues. This was largely detailed in my October report. Throughout the second semester, job description changes and additions will be brought forward to Executive Board to revamp the department in advance of it's 2019-20 hiring cycle. In addition to this, the Communications, Advertising and Student Engagement Ad-Hoc committee has been working to review the processes as well. This has included consultations with our internal team, a review of our promotions training process, engagement with representatives from other student unions across the country, and will feature consultation with student groups to critique and advise on our strategies. The CASE committee is set to submit reports to the SRA throughout the second semester, which will detail a set of recommendations from their findings.

Apart from social media strategies, promotions training and communications processes, I also detailed in my election campaign my commitment to new video production. It is extremely apparent that our video content is by far our most engaging pieces which the MSU main account releases annually. As such, I have instilled within the communications department a commitment to produce Board Update videos each semester, as well as a year-end State of the Union video. Similar to the Silhouette's President's Page, this work will continue to future boards as well, regardless of their individual commitment to communication. So far, we have released two update videos, which have garnered over 2,700 and 2,200 views. The plan is to release an additional update video in mid-March, and a final year end recap video in mid-April.

Childcare Centre Playground

In early October, we were able to secure a \$25,000 grant from the City of Hamilton to improve the MSU's Childcare Centre. The grant submitted focused on the improvement of the outdoor playground space. As such, construction occurred during the Fall reading week, and a new playground, gazebo and landscape was built for the childcare centre! This renovation has received extremely positive comments from kids, as well as parents and the full-time staff!

Careful attention should be paid to the child care centre in upcoming years, as the university is in the midst of improving it's child care services. They will be moving in to a beautiful new facility within the Peter George Centre next year, which may entice customers to switch child care providers. I will be working with the team throughout the second semester to mitigate this experience, and I expect it will be a continued process for the next Board of Directors.

Food Collective Centre Second Course

A new project in recent weeks has been working with the Food Collective Centre Director, Hannah Phillips, on the development of the Second Course program. This program began last year, as an attempt to combat food insecurity on campus by giving away free food. Last year, the FCC collaborated with Hospitality Services to give away baked goods which were not sold during the day. Hannah approached me with a new perspective for this program, in which the FCC would transition from giving out baked goods (often unhealthy food with empty calories), to giving away healthy and hearty soups. We have been working with the TwelvEighty team to develop a project plan, and this will roll out in the second semester. Now, TwelvEighty will cook a delicious and nutritious soup, and the FCC will distribute the soup once a month in the Grind after hours!

Welcome Week

In my last report, I detailed in depth the pilot project for the Welcome Week Advisory Committee to allocate \$23,500 to supporting Welcome Week Reps with food, sunscreen, subsidized meals and water throughout the week. Following the success of the project, I am now in the midst of ensuring the projects sustainability. To do this, WWAC has been meeting to discuss funding priorities and what can be shifted and reallocated. This will culminate at our meetings in January and February, when I bring forward a new Memorandum of Understanding for Welcome Week, which will include a sustainable funding structure for Rep Support.

I have also initiated a project to ensure that the spending of the Welcome Week Levy is as transparent as possible for students. First time first year students pay the \$120.87 to participate in Welcome Week, and it is a priority for me to ensure that students know how this money is spent. Currently, it is split up between the MSU, Student Success Centre, Residence Life, Off-Campus Resource Centre, Rep Training, SWAG, Special Projects & Strategic Themes Funding. I have been working with Andriana Olaizola from Student Affairs to compile the financial spending information, and create infographics which are easy to consume and understand. This will be the first time that the fund's spending has been publicly released since 2012-13, and I hope to make the release of this information a priority in the negotiations of the upcoming MOU.

The VP Admin, Kristina Epifano, the Welcome Week Faculty Coordinator, Josh Marando and I have been sitting on a Welcome Week sub-committee to discuss the pay equity between WW planners. The current situation is that some WW planners receive compensation for their work (ROAs, OCOAs, SSC & Maroons), while others do not (namely faculty planners). The work of this committee thus far has been to conduct an extensive environmental scan of the current system, and develop standardized job descriptions for WW planners. Future moves from this committee will be to develop a set of recommendations to the Welcome Week Advisory Committee, which will focus on how planners should be paid to compensate their work.

Other

-Ikram and I worked with our team at the Grind to develop a stronger sense of the students union within the business unit. One of these projects was to add a "Presidents

Crepe” to the menu. This item will change annually and the MSU President will design their own flavours.

-I’ve been collaborating with the University Affairs team to secure additional funding from the university to support our Emergency First Response Team. The comments from the University have been positive and we should see an increased investment and commitment from McMaster to support EFRT’s initiatives.

-I have scripted and storyboarded a video detailing the business side of the MSU. This video will explain to students the different services we offer, as well as explain the benefit of investing their money in MSU businesses as opposed to other options. Filming will occur in the early second semester and will star our fantastic MSU President, Ikram Farah.

-I’ve been working with Abbigail Little from the Office of Sustainability to make our Food & Beverage operations more sustainable. In the new year, we will begin offering a discount at The Grind for people who bring a reusable mug. As well we will expand our composting operations within The Grind and TwelvEighty.

-I recently saw one of my favourite bands live. I was in the front row. It was a dream come true.

-In late November, I spent two days in MUSC dressed as Santa. This was in support of MSU Charity Ball and our Campus Events team. The days were long, but we raised a lot of money for charity!



Upcoming Projects

- TwelvEighty Beverages
- SAFE Project Communication Campaign
- Communications, Marketing, Advertising Review
- TwelvEighty Space Improvements
- The Grind Tables
- Food & Beverage Long Term Strategy
- MUSC Fund Investigation
- Financial Affairs Council

Sincerely,

Scott Robinson
Vice President (Finance)
vpfinance@msu.mcmaster.ca

YEAR PLAN UPDATE

1. Student Activity Building Design & Consultation Campaign – Done
 2. Online Ticketing System – In Development, Successful Thus Far
 3. TwelvEighty Event Centre Renovation – Done
 4. SAP Promotional Campaign & Long Term Structure – pt1 Done
 5. Updated Digital Promotions Strategy – Successful Thus Far, Ongoing
 6. Clubs External Business Partnerships – Done
 7. Campus Events Programming Advisory Campaigns – Ongoing & Successful
 8. Welcome Week Rep Support Program – Done, Continuity TBD
 9. New Programming at Homecoming – Done
 10. Clubs Training Workshops – Done
 11. Financial Affairs Council Revitalization – Delayed
 12. Strengthening the Clubs Department – Done (investigated storage)
 13. SLEF Adjustments – Ongoing & Successful
 14. Increasing the Union's Feedback Mechanisms – Delayed
 15. The Grind Continued Development – Done
 16. Life After Mac Expansion – Planning Complete, Implementation Ahead
 17. Optimizing Student Space – Done, Scope Shifted
 18. Investigation of OHIP+'s Effect on the MSU Health Plan – Semester 2
 19. More Opportunities to Aid in the Graduate Transition – Ongoing
 20. TwelvEighty Restaurant Revitalization – Done with More Work to Do
 21. Food & Beverage Long Term Strategy – Semester 2
 22. TwelvEighty Nightlife Development – Done and Review Ongoing
 23. Underground Customer Experience Upgrades – Ongoing
 24. New January Programming – Planning Complete, Implementation Ahead
 25. Increased Financial Transparency & Better Budgeting Process – Transparency Continuing, Budgeting Process Semester 2
 26. Supporting the SRA – Done and Ongoing
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27. Union Market Rebranding – Done
 28. Full Time Staff Hiring – (3 roles in the Underground, 1 in TwelvEighty)
 29. Welcome Week Levy Transparency – Soon to be Released
 30. HSR & Presto Integration – Done
 31. Conference Fund – Soon to be Released
 32. Childcare Centre Playground Improvements - Done