

# GIULIANA GUARNA



for  
**VICE PRESIDENT (ADMINISTRATION)**  
2015-2016



## Dear Members of the Assembly and the MSU,

Thank you for taking the time to engage in the Vice Presidential election process and for investing time into reading my platform. Electing the remaining members of the board is one of the most stressful jobs of an SRA member and I thank for being informed about the process.

My reasons for running for the Vice President Administration role are twofold. The first is that I see the inherent value, and immense opportunity, that is a direct product of engaging with our organization. I myself first became involved with the MSU by attending Horizons as a delegate, and subsequently joining a little club called Absolute Pitch. Overtime, my MSU involvement was deepened through my time on the SRA. Each of these roles allowed me to interact with a diverse spectrum of individuals, that have all played a pivotal role in enhancing my connection to McMaster, and the growth I have experienced over the last two years. The second reason deals with the experiences that make me a great candidate for this job. Having been involved with a number of leadership roles across campus, I have developed a varied skillset that will allow me to easily transition into this role, whether that is through my Welcome Week experience as a Residence Orientation Advisor, or on the opposite end of the spectrum, through my time on the Executive Board.

Important to the role of Vice President Administration is the ability to manage and collaborate within the MSU and with various university stakeholders. It is also important to always advocate on behalf of the thousands of students that the MSU represents. I am confident in my ability to deliver in each of these areas, as a direct result of my previous experiences on and off campus. I believe that to ensure success within our organizations we must empower those around us to do better, and take the time to appreciate the countless hours of work members of our organization put in for the betterment of the student experience. As one of my friends recently said "When people are appreciated, they go beyond expectations". I hope that as the Vice President Administration I instill a sense of support and appreciation amongst our staff and volunteers, so that they can implement their wildest dreams and positively impact the McMaster community.

With that said, I am very excited to present you my platform and my vision for the coming year and the years to come.



Giuliana Guarna

# Experience

## Student Representative Assembly

### SRA Science Caucus Leader (2013-2014, and 2014-2015)

- Caucus of the Year, 2014 & 2015
- Caucus Leader of the Year, 2015

### SRA Standing Committees

- Executive Board (2014-2015)
- Operations Committee (2014-2015)
- Women and Gender Equity Network Advisory Board (2014-2015)
- Clubs Executive Council (2014-2015)
- External Affairs (2013-2014)
- University Affairs (2013-2014)
- Peer Support Line Advisory Board (2013-2014)
- All-Ages Programming Committee (2013-2014)

## MSU Services

### Creating Leadership Amongst Youth Conference (CLAY)

- Leadership Developer (2012)
- Leadership Developer Logistics (2014)
- Fundraising Committee Member (2012, 2013)
- Events Committee Member (2012)

### Horizons Conference

- Delegate (2011)
- Leadership Developer (2013, 2014)

## McMaster University – Residence/Welcome Week

### Welcome Week

- Residence Orientation Advisor – Bates Hall (2014)
- Residence Orientation Representative – Woodstock Hall (2013)
- Residence Orientation Representative – Hedden Hall (2012)

### Inter-Residence Council

- Floor Level IRC Rep (2011-2012)
- Frost Week Rep (2011-2012)
- FLIRC of the Year (2011-2012)

## McMaster University – Student Affairs and Other Departments

McMaster Health Forum Student Subcommittee - MSU Representative (2015)

### McMaster's Absolute Pitch Show Choir

- President (2014-2015)
- Social Coordinator (2013-2014)
- General Member (2011-2013)

Canadian Conference on Student Leadership – Assistant Sponsorship Coordinator (March 2013-March 2014)

Mission2Mac Twitter Volunteer (2013)

# Platform

Consultation is an important element of creating meaningful and effective new changes. I have taken the time to consult with numerous members of the SRA, both incoming and outgoing, as well as the following Part Time Managers.

| Services            | Outgoing        | Incoming        |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| SHEC                | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| Horizons            | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| CLAY                | Did Not Consult | Consulted       |
| SPARK               | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| Maroons             | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| SCSN                | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| TAC                 | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| Diversity Services  | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| QSCC                | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| Advocacy            | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| Elections           | Consulted       | Consulted       |
| MAC Bread Bin       | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| Peer Support Line   | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| WGEN                | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| Shinerama/Terry Fox | Consulted       | Did Not Consult |
| SWHAT               | Did Not Consult | Consulted       |

Consulted:  Did Not Consult:

## Planning For Success

*We are an organization that experiences rapid turnover. This factor often makes it challenging to begin, and see through, projects that span across two or three terms. To ameliorate this, I see a need to strengthen both our year-planning and transitioning process in order to allow our staff and volunteers to work towards, and implement, long-term projects more successfully.*

### Year-planning

- Currently year-plans are filled out and submitted to the VP admin for feedback by both PTM's and SRA Caucuses.
- I would like to re-evaluate our current year-plan template and include a long-term planning aspect. In an organization with one-year terms, any project longer than a year is considered long-term. I would like to implement a three-year planning outlook into year-plans, which will enable PTM's and SRA members to break down their projects into smaller, more manageable pieces. This will allow them to have tangible and deliverable outcomes at the end of each term.

### Transition Reporting

- Currently, transition reports are filled out by both PTM's, and SRA Caucuses near the end of their terms. This means that transition reporting requires people to reflect on their last year of work and may potentially cause the important, finer details to be missed.
- I would like to implement a bi-monthly transition reporting structure.

### Feedback

- The job of the VP Admin is to manage and support the PTM's and SRA members. The only way for someone to improve is to receive feedback. I would like to implement monthly feedback forms for all PTM's and SRA members. This would allow me to see the areas that people feel like they need more support in, as well as ways in which I can improve my own management and support strategies.

### Caucus Meetings

- Year after year we see the SRA developing ambitious platforms. Being on the SRA for the last two years, I found finding the right avenues to implement your ideas was one of the biggest challenges. I would like to have meetings with individual caucuses to touch base with them and get a feeling for what projects they're working on, where they need support, and to help keep them accountable to the ideas they ran on.

## Fostering Collaboration

*As an organization with limited time and resources, it is important that we focus on collaboration between our services and our assembly. By fostering increased collaboration, we will be able to empower our services and assembly members to provide better programming and greater overall service provision, while also reaching out to a larger number of students.*

### Clustered Think Tanks

*Ensuring that our PTM's feel empowered to collaborate in ways that make sense with their operating policies and mandate is critical for effective collaboration.*

- Our services appear to fit into four clustered areas: 1) Outreach, 2) Programming, 3) Peer Support/Health, and 4) Sustainability
- Currently PTM's have monthly meetings where they deliver updates to the VP Admin and the other PTM's. By having monthly Think Tanks we will foster a culture of collaboration from the initial stages of planning. This will allow services to contribute their expertise and best practices to one another, as well as allow services to leverage the similarities that they share between one another.
- One great example of this was the "Do You Want to Become a Better Applicant" workshop that was run in collaboration between CLAY, Spark, and Horizons.

### Exec Mixers

*While PTM's play an important visionary and management role in our organization, the executive members are a critical component in ensuring that services are able to operate according to their mandate. It is important that as an organization we invest the time into empowering and appreciating the individuals that make our organization run.*

- I would like to hold informal mixers specifically for service executives that allow them to meet other individuals within the organization. Meeting other executives and creating friendships, will organically foster collaborative relationships. As one of my friends recently tweeted "those who are appreciated go beyond expectations". It is important that in an organization of our size, we invest time in appreciating our staff and volunteers, so that they feel empowered within, and connected to, the organization as a whole.

## Improving Service Provision

### Anti-Oppression (AOP) Training

*Ensuring that our staff and volunteers continue to get meaningful and well-implemented training is a critical objective for AOP training.*

- Currently all PTM's, SRA members, and Maroons receive AOP training.
- Human Rights and Equity Services (HRES) have identified that our current training model needs improvement. Firstly, I would like to evaluate who receives this training and why. Secondly, I would like to create specific learning outcomes that we hope to accomplish from this training. Lastly, I would like to work in partnership with HRES to develop a better training model. One of their current suggestions is to move this training towards a Peer-to-Peer based teaching model.

### Accessibility Checklists for Event Planning

*Inaccessible spaces and programming are ever present on campus. It is important that we as an organization empower those who plan and execute events, with the tools they need in order to create accessible programming.*

- Human Rights and Equity Services currently has a Planning for Accessibility Checklist available on line. In talking to the outgoing Abilities Coordinator of Diversity Services, as well as the incoming Clubs Administrator, we discussed adapting this checklist to be more relevant to the types of events that are typically held by the MSU. I would also like to create an additional document that includes all fully-accessible rooms on campus, and their relevant capacities, to facilitate the hosting of physically accessible events within the MSU.

## Forward Thinking

*Despite being an organization with very rapid turnover, it is important to continually look toward the future and plan for upcoming challenges and successes.*

### Peer Support Network

*We currently have four Peer Support Services (WGEN, SHEC, QSCC, and PSL) with the potential for a fifth Peer Support Service on the horizon (Abilities). There have been talks of moving all of our Peer Support Services into a Peer Support Centre/Network, similar to that which is currently in place at the University of Western Ontario. In doing so, we would need to re-adjust our staff personnel. I would like to look into (and thoroughly research) the creation of a Student Opportunity Position that will manage and support this Network/Centre. I believe that the addition of this position addresses four concerns.*

- **VP Administration Alleviation:** It is critically important to address the fact that with the addition of services, the VP Admin becomes continually strained and can provide less support to each service. As an organization we need to ensure that each service continues to receive the support that they need.
- **Expertise:** By creating a hired position we would attract candidates that are well versed and passionate about peer-support and can provide more specialized support than your typical VP Administration.
- **Training:** In talking to the WGEN, PSL, and QSCC coordinators, developing training to ensure that your volunteers are equipped to deliver peer support is both time intensive and mired by uncertainty. By having a full-time staff member who can dedicate time to developing training, we can ensure that our peer support is consistent across services and that volunteers receive all of the training and support necessary to provide impactful peer support.
- **Transition:** It will be critical that a lot of research and planning is completed before a move to a permanent space, and I believe having a dedicated full-time staff member critically analyzing and working towards this transition will be necessary.

## Service Support

*This years Services committee has suggested the following three services for review: CLAY, Shinerama, and MaCycle.*

### CLAY

- After speaking with Ryan MacDonald, I am excited to work closely with him in evaluating the impact that moving CLAY to off-campus, has on delegate registration and the overall delegate experience. If this model proves successful, we may be able to apply some of the changes itowards improving the capacity of the Horizons conference, something that has been expressed as a priority from the current PTM, Michael Coulson.

### Shinerama/Terry Fox Coordinator

- This year the Shinerama/Terry Fox Coordinator has split the executive team to have executive members dedicated exclusively to Shinerama or Terry Fox. I look forward to evaluating the impact that this has on both campaigns respectively. This year will also be the first year that the MSU recovers the costs of our Shinerama campaign and it will be crucial to evaluate this decision.

### MaCycle

- The coordinator for MaCycle has been diligently looking for ways to improve awareness of the service (including better signage at the actual location, as well as looking into signage on bike racks). I look forward to supporting the PTM in accomplishing these goals and the impact they have on service usage. The PTM has also expressed a desire to partner with community stakeholders (such as Sobi), which may provide a unique way to promote cycling culture both on and off campus.

The last two years have also seen the addition of two new services (Spark and WGEN) and the potential for a third new service (Abilities). I look forward to working with Mike Gill, the new Spark PTM, as well as the soon to be hired WGEN coordinator, to ensure that their first year as a full service is a success. In addition, I look forward to working closely with the proposed Abilities Ad-hoc committee, to ensure that whatever iteration of the Abilities service is proposed, represents and addresses the needs of students on our campus.

## Human Resources

*Many human resources departments are tasked with employee relations. While we currently have guidelines in place for dealing with incidents of harassment, discrimination, or other employee relations within our organization, there is no clear path for escalating these issues to the appropriate bodies.*

- I would like to emphasize the mechanisms in place for escalating these concerns during PTM, SRA, and executive member training. In addition, with accordance to the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, I would like to create a harassment and violence policy to be displayed in all the spaces that our staff and volunteers currently use and work in.

## Welcome Week

Welcome Week is something that I am extremely passionate about, as evidenced by my role as a Residence Orientation Representative for both Hedden Hall and Woodstock Hall, and most recently as the Residence Orientation Advisor for Bates Hall. The VP Administration sits on both the Welcome Week Planning and Implementation Committee, as well as the Welcome Week Advisory Committee. In doing so, the VP Admin plays an integral role in the planning and execution of Welcome Week. I believe that having previous Welcome Week experience is an asset and brings a welcome perspective to the table.

This year there will be three strategic themes included in Welcome Week: Mental Health, Consent, and Alcohol/Substances. I am excited to see the recommendations that come from the working groups that were suggested by VP Administration Jacob Brodka, as well as looking into how our services can play a larger role in Welcome Week, particularly in supporting the three strategic themes.

# Conclusion

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read through my platform. I believe that the role of the VP Administration is to provide support to, and empower, our Part Time Managers, Commissioners, and SRA members. With that always at the forefront of my mind, I designed my platform to address both relevant every day needs, as well as some forward thinking to improve service provision.

Throughout my time as an undergraduate student I have been able to partake in a number of diverse experiences. In doing so, I have been able to engage with the MSU from a multitude of perspectives. Through my long career in the clubs system, I have seen how most students experience the MSU, from a distance. As an SRA member, I have learned that our students have a diverse range of needs and viewpoints that the MSU must strive to fully represent and cater to. My time on Executive Board has equipped me with the skills necessary to critique and evaluate services on a day-to-day basis. Perhaps most importantly, my time as a ROA alternate has equipped me with the ability to step into a pre-hired team and adapt to their needs.

My varied experiences on this campus are what have prepared me to successfully fulfill the role of VP Administration. I know that I have both the experience and the passion to enable our staff and volunteers to reach their fullest potential. I look forward to our next year together, where I can dedicate myself to being your critic, your cheerleader, and your friend.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via the platform on which you are most comfortable.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Giuliana Guarna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Giuliana Guarna**

*McMaster Students Union*

**MSU**

