



# — the — PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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## SIOBHAN OUTLINES ACTION TAKEN TO KEEP HER CAMPAIGN PROMISES



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Dear McMaster Community,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my excitement for the academic year that lies ahead. Since beginning my term as MSU President, I have been consistently pushing forward with my campaign agenda, whilst learning the nuances of the organization. This article is my opportunity to sum up some of the work that I have been doing over the past few months. I will focus on what has been accomplished over the summer to advance my platform for students.

### Something Old:

#### *Bridges Study Space*

My predecessor Matt Dillon-Leitch was very dedicated to creating more study space on campus and I have been actively continuing that effort. Before I ran for President, I met with the Hospitality Services management team who were supportive of the idea of allowing the physical space in Bridges to be accessible to students for extended hours during the exam period. I will be working this semester to ensure that something is in place for the December exam period in collaboration with MSU Diversity Services.

### Something New:

#### *MSU Peer Support Line*

A large amount of work has been done over the summer in order to establish a peer support line on campus. To that effect, the steering committee consisting of myself, VP (Administration) David Campbell, MSU Club presidents of Kids Help Phone and COPE: A Student Mental Health Initiative, along with staff from the Student Wellness Centre met several times. Currently, volunteer applications are available via the MSU and Student Wellness Centre websites, due by October 12, 2012. If you are interested in becoming a Peer Listener, please visit [msumcmaster.ca/peersupportline](http://msumcmaster.ca/peersupportline) for more details on the application process. Training for the Peer Listeners will be held on November 17 and 18 and we expect a soft launch of the service in during the second term.

### Something Borrowed:

#### *Green Roof Initiative*

This summer I hosted several meetings with the steering committee for the Green Roof Initiative, comprised of the Office of Sustainability, MUSC Administration, MacGreen, OPIRG and the original drafters of the Green Roof Initiative proposal. We also conducted a survey which garnered over 600 responses and counting. The preliminary findings of the survey will be posted shortly and we now have a project manager assigned to this initiative from Facility Services. We are currently searching for an

architect that will draft several designs for the space. Once we have the drafts to our liking, we will circulate them in a survey to gather student opinion as to which design is best. With student preference established, I will begin the process of soliciting vendors and forming a contractual agreement.

### First Year Street Team

The Street Team will help enhance the visibility of FYC on campus. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that more first year students are engaged with the vision of the MSU. I have been working with SRA Science representative Christine Ung, as well as the Inter Residence Council (IRC) and the Society of Off-Campus Students (SOCS), who are interested in helping to facilitate the project. I will also be communicating with faculty society presidents at our first Presidents Council Meeting this month about inviting first year representatives from their societies to participate in the street team. This initiative focuses on three main areas: Advocacy, Mentorship and Events/Promotions. The First Year Street Team meetings will be facilitated by the elected members of FYC and the first meeting for the Street Team will be in October. The First Year Street Team is open to any first year student at McMaster. Visit [msumcmaster.ca/fyc](http://msumcmaster.ca/fyc) for more information.

### Something for You:

#### *Fall Break*

As planned, I used the summer months to hold meetings with a number of different stakeholders regarding the concept of a fall break. Having met with the vast majority of Associate Deans, as well as the University Registrar, staff from the Scheduling and Examinations Office and senior administrators including President Deane and our new Provost Dr. David Wilkinson, I believe that the concept of a fall break is gaining traction amongst decision makers.

It is my sincere belief that something will be achieved this year, to take effect in 2013-2014. The Scheduling and Examinations Office has started a beta project looking at what alterations can be made to the exam timetable structure to allow for greater flexibility over the academic term. Once they have gathered the exam requests from professors, Scheduling and Examinations will formulate the data for a trial run. At the same time, I plan to initiate a survey of McMaster students to gauge the appetite for a fall break. Having student voices in hand, I will continue a multi-faceted approach to advocating for a fall break. First will be the discussion about potential alterations of the exam schedule to allow for more flexibility in the general timetable. Secondly, I will continue meeting with faculty leaders and University administration to define the parameters of a fall break, in order to account for the academic requirements needed for the completion of a variety of degrees. My vision is of a uniform break across campus, in the fall semester, for all students. Stay tuned to [msumcmaster.ca](http://msumcmaster.ca) for updates.



Application Deadline: **Oct. 12th**  
Offers for interview go out by **Oct. 17th**

For more information please visit:

[msumcmaster.ca/peersupportline](http://msumcmaster.ca/peersupportline)



## WAIT... THERE'S MORE!

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I would like to take just a few more lines to bring you up to speed on a number of initiatives that are underway within the operational side of the MSU. This year Mac Farmstand opened in June, much earlier than usual. Mac Farmstand is a great example of an MSU service that has blossomed and become integrated into the McMaster experience, as the earlier opening was well received by the McMaster community. Look for Mac Farmstand every Tuesday and Wednesday through October (weather and produce dependant).

Also, the Student Walk Home Attendant Team (SWHAT) has a new logo this year, making it the latest service to adopt the visual identity guidelines the MSU instituted in 2011. Be sure to check out SWHAT and get connected to the opportunities that are available through that service located in MUSC

204 or [msumcmaster.ca/swbat](http://msumcmaster.ca/swbat). You can follow SWHAT @MSU\_SWHAT.

Additionally, funding is available for great ideas that you might have to improve your experience on campus. The deadline for the Undergraduate Student Initiatives Fund is fast approaching (for proposals/projects taking place before November 30, 2012). This pool of funds is available to undergraduate students (18 units or more) and MSU Clubs who seek capital to pursue extra-curricular endeavours and goals. Visit the MSU homepage and find the link to the USIF on the bottom right of the page. The deadline for first semester funding requests is September 28, 2012.

The MSU is also involved in several pan-university initiatives. For example, a number of MSU clubs and services are participating in the First Annual Open Streets McMaster event, taking place this Sunday, September 23 on campus. Also, be sure to check out the 2nd Annual Leadership Summit for Women, happening October 20th at Hamilton City Hall.



The President's Page is sponsored by the McMaster Students Union. It is a space used to communicate with the student body about the projects, goals and agenda of the MSU Board of Directors.

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