

Taylor Mertens

vp finance



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Experience

McMaster Student Union

Services:

Food Collective Centre:

Director and Part-Time Manager 2017-2018

Community Kitchen Coordinator 2016-2017

Volunteer 2015-2016

MSU Clay — SET Member 2015

Governance:

University Affairs Committee — MSU Member 2019-2020

SRA — Commerce Caucus Member 2016-2017

Internal Affairs Committee — SRA Voting Member 2016-2017

Finance Committee — MSU Member 2015-2016

McMaster University

Student Wellness Centre — Program Support 2019-2020

Mental Health Student Advisory Committee — Commerce Representative 2019-2020

Hack the City — Financial Officer 2016-2017

ResLife (Welcome Week) — Residence Orientation Representative 2016

DeGroot Operations Association — Promotions 2015-2016

External

Empowerment Squared — Homework Circle Volunteer 2019-2020

IKEA Burlington — Living Room Sales & Cashier 2015-2018

Introduction

Dear Members of the Assembly,

The SRA is a very unique leadership position. It is an opportunity; what you put into it, can drive so much change. It never felt like that during those long Sundays meetings or during the second straw poll on the same business item, however the SRA has made the MSU what it is in its entirety. Student life would not be what it is today, without the democratic project that is the SRA. The SRA has helped facilitate so many student life moments. Whether it is the leap of courage diving into Welcome Week, finding a club that you're passionate about, learning and unlearning from friends and services, or standing up for what you believe in; all these are some of the best moments of student life.

However as SRA members, you can recognize the good things, yet recognize where we can improve.

The status quo is not working. I argue (and my platform reflects this argument) that the status quo has stopped working because of the one-side treatment of volunteers in which they are to be managed, as opposed to leading them and providing resources to them. We need to bring our service delivery to the next level, differentiating ourselves from McMaster student affairs and other businesses on campus. When we differentiate ourselves, we need to let students know that MSU did this, because we are for students, by students.

We need to provide more opportunities within SRA and MSU Governance, our service volunteers, our club volunteers, and our employees who run our day-to-day operations. We must live up to our ideal of being for students, by students. As VP Finance, I will provide as much as I can to change these relationships through expanding on workshop-style clubs training, providing connection and career support for our volunteers, and unleashing our Business Unit employees insights. To have the change necessary to change the status quo, we need to break the cycle of low-retention and low-meaningful engagement.

From my experiences **as the Director of MSU Food Collective Centre (FCC), I changed the way we worked with volunteers and how we delivered our services.** Three major achievements from my time as the Director of FCC are: the creation of the physical location to allow for flexible and choice in food orders, working with MSU Staff to partner the good food box program to implement a delivery system, and partnering with Hospitality Services for a food rescue program which became what is currently the Ladles of Love program. These possibilities would not be possible without expanding our volunteer training and as a PTM being on-shift with our food rescue volunteers and helping. I want to see all Part-time Managers of our services take that same opportunity of improving how they engage with volunteers and providing development opportunities.

When our democratic institutions are systematically attacked (through an overreach of the Ontario government), we need to change. When OSAP cuts further divides students by their socioeconomic class, we need even more change. When our brand is being outflanked by McMaster, and the MSU is seen as a department of McMaster, we need even more change. As VP Finance, I hope to be one of the many necessary changes to our Business Units, Breakeven Services, MSU Clubs and Services, and Governance to revitalize what the ideal MSU should be.

So congratulations on being on the SRA & thank you for taking a leap of courage!

Taylor Mertens

Explore an Online Pickup Printing Service

I want to explore, with the new POS system, along with the recently developed MSU website that VP Alex has started, Underground should try an online pickup printing service for a premium, in which customers who have special print jobs can use a completely online system and pay for it online, and pick it up at Compass Information Centre by the next day.

MSU Underground

Over the last year and a half, the MSU Underground has done a 100% turnover in design and full-time service staff. The MSU Underground is going through the necessary operational changes to streamline their Point of Sales system, as VP Finance, I want to capitalize on this (and the newly developed MSU website) to create a new Online Pickup Printing Service which will shorten the line up at the self-serve and ensure all materials are paid for before printing on them.

Updating Point of Sales System:

From consultation with the Manager and Creative Director, Paula Scott, I learned that the Underground has three different invoice systems which creates accounting errors and takes valuable time away from the design department. As the Underground is the only Business-to-Business (B2B) service, the MSU must quickly increase non-student revenue until the results from the appeal of the Student Choice Initiative are known. Streamlining internal issues like this are essential. VP Alex has included in her Capital Budget the necessary \$16,000, so I hope the SRA approves of this budget.

Hiring the Campus and Commercial Partnerships Coordinator position:

As VP Finance, one of the first things I will do is hire a new Campus and Commercial Partnership Coordinator (CCPC). The CCPC role sells advertising space for CFMU and the Sil, design services for the MSU Underground, and businesses who want to advertise on our Screens program. They are one of the key people who can increase the amount of non-student revenue, which will be necessary to fully develop depending on if the Student Choice Initiative is appealed or tried to be implemented in some way again.

As MSU Underground has gone through a full transition of all full-time professional designers and the service manager over the last year, the previous CCPC moved from full-time work to part-time work and now has left. Within the past year, MSU Underground has hired a full staff of designers (who have been increasing in capacity for more design work), it is important to fulfill the CCPC role. As VP Finance, one of the first things I will do is hire the salesperson, the MSU can in the short, seek vendors for Welcome Week and begin the process of building a long-term plan for MSU Underground.

Create a new Promotions Coordinator position for the Underground:

Based on the two-year-old role called TwelvEighty & The Grind Promotions Coordinator role, this role has helped increased sales and allowed the content creation for the Business Units, all while providing a unique student job. I believe the MSU Underground needs a role like this to develop both its print sales, binding, and other revenue generation like the Almanac and Wall Calendar.

While keeping the long-term planning of this new MSU Underground in mind, I believe that a new promotions coordinator position within this business unit can help pull people towards printing with us. Some students do not know where Underground is located so ensuring that all people know about it and also know that printing with us leads to more student services provided for students, by students.

Explore an Online Pickup Printing Service:

We all have left an essay or project to the last minute and it needs to be handed in physically at a certain time. Oftentimes, multiple classes have deadlines right at the same time, creating delays and a huge line that can go all the way to the Grind. Additionally, some print jobs are more complicated; often involving special paper, sizes, binding, etc. With these special print jobs, it can take away student employees from maintaining a steady flow in the self-serve for regular print jobs. I want to explore, with the new POS system, along with the recently developed MSU website that VP Alex has started, Underground should try

an online pickup printing service for a premium, in which customers who have special print jobs can use a completely online system and pay for it online, and pick it up at Compass Information Centre by the next day.

As an example, consider Thesis Academic Poster printing. Historically, it has been a huge issue where the Service Manager would print these huge 4 ft by 3' ft with colour, fine paper and the students would never pick them up. While the current Service Manager has a proactive system requiring them to come to the Underground to pay beforehand but this process can be streamlined by putting it online. The ordering process can benefit both customers and the front-of-house, allowing for reduced wait-times for students, and guaranteeing Underground will have their cost of materials covered.

Re-Evaluate Summer Operations:

With COVID-19 shutting down the operations of business units, the MSU will need to be prepared for hiring and training necessary for the front-of-house print shop to open back up before school begins (assuming "normal" activities occur by the beginning of school). Using an economic term, this is a "natural experiment" which we should critically evaluate in light of the Student Choice Initiative, should the print shop operate during the summer time? Given that the Online Pickup Printing service could potentially handle special prints and poster approval, this will save a lot of operational cost, allowing the BoD to decide on a case-by-case basis to open up the business units for the summer. The BoD already currently do this for TwelvEighty, so as VP Finance, I will investigate if summer operations of the front-of-house print shop should be chosen on a case-by-case decision.

Accessible Design & Ensuring AODA-Requirement Is Met:

As AODA has (slowly) been phased over the last couple of years in the upcoming years, how businesses and universities in Ontario needs to operate needs to fundamentally change to be universally accessible. While AODA is a requirement and there are many more needed steps towards true universal access, McMaster is legally required to communicate needs to ensure accessibility in design. As the Underground works with certain McMaster departments, it is beneficial for our designers to have AODA and accessible design training to ensure our clients meet their moral and legal responsibility.

As VP Finance, I will work with Underground to ensure that the designers receive AODA and Universal Accessible Design training during the summer term (pending end of COVID) to ensure accessible designs before the busy season of Welcome Week and the upcoming academic year.

Financial Implications to Underground:

Pending your approval of the 2020-2021 capital budget, the POS system has been approved by VP Alex, thus not needing additional capital. The Campus and Commercial Partnership Coordinator position will be an increase in wages to Underground, but they are one of the key revenue sources that needs to be trained and retained if SCL is deemed lawful, so the position will bring more sales than it will take out with wages. As the promotions coordinator role is a part-time student position, assuming the same timeline (30~ weeks) as TwelvEighty and The Grind and pay scheduled at B3 (\$146.50 per week), at most \$4500-5000 in wages. These wages could be more than paid for by closing summer operations depending on if future BoD deem that these business units do not have to operate. As the new website has been developed and capital is being made for our invoice system, with our existing part-time staff and service manager, the online pickup printing service should bring in revenue using existing costs.

Live Bus Times for HSR, GO Buses, and a MSU- Controlled Screen

Compass can expand on their mandate of being a transit-oriented and general information centre and grab students attention. Using a third, non-bus screen, we can promote the MSU's "For Students, By Students" brand in general, specific student services and use this as an advertising opportunity for more non-student revenue.

Compass Information Centre

As Compass is the only place on campus that provides transit-orientated information, provides a service through in-person engagement, and has a prime location, Compass has a natural pull on customers. Thus it is the best situated service to connect others to our business units, connect with those who need help getting to work or getting Campus Events tickets, and to commercialize through advertising sales. Compass can be the tool to promote the MSU brand and, for a price, can market to students and push them to our partnered vendors. To become the connecting service for the MSU, it will involve low capital funding over the summer which will open up new revenue streams, catching up with any deficit it runs to be a true breakeven service.

Live Bus Times for HSR, GO Buses, and an MSU-Controlled screen program:

Working with the VP Education, the General Manager, and Compass Manager, I will facilitate with the appropriate government bodies in order to take busing information and display it in MUSC. By displaying bus timing, Compass can expand their mandate of being a transit-oriented and general information centre and grab students attention. Using a third, non-bus screen, we can promote the MSU's "For Students, By Students" brand in general, specific student services and use this as an advertising opportunity for more non-student revenue.

Expand Compass Retail Offerings:

With the introduction of NOW Prepaid phone and data services (which sold more than 800% of what was planned), I will investigate other needed, student-demanded services that Compass can act as a retail operation for. By providing convenience for students, Compass is still acting as a breakeven service and would help create revenue to pay the cost of Compass' wages. Specifically, the retail operation will provide premium products that the Campus store does not already carry. Premium, quality products obviously have more revenue (thus profit) and take up less space since you need less quantity of units to break even and profit, given Compass' lack of storage.

Some products could come from sponsors, which could be sold on consignment. Consignment means we do not buy the inventory nor get the total sale, but get a percentage of each sale. The benefit of that is not taking the risk and spending money on inventory, in which our consignment revenue would be little risk and can strengthen our relationships with outside vendors.

The MSU has an important relationship with the Campus Store, given their contributions to MSU Campus Events' Light Up The Night and towards MUSC vendor sales with their discounted shirt sales. As VP Finance, I recognize the need for both of these necessary funds, and will take a proactive approach to our relationship and what our retail will provide.

Sponsor-Readying Compass:

As Compass is a prime location and space in which people naturally engage with Compass for any of their travelling needs, it can also be a sales opportunity for our Campus and Commercial Partnerships Coordinator. If someone with an existing or a brand-new vendor wants to promote (and thus pay for) a coupon specifically for McMaster students and people on campus who are traveling, Compass is a prime service to do it. Whether it is handing out coupons, promoting a vendor service that needs it, and/or creating standardized advertising scripts for the vendor's goods or services, Compass staff can create more advertising revenue for the unit and deepening our relationship with vendors.

Re-Evaluate Summer Operations:

With COVID-19 shutting down the operations of business units, the MSU will need to be prepared for hiring and training necessary for Compass' retail service to open back up before school begins (assuming "normal" activities occur by the beginning of school). Using an economic term, this is a "natural experiment" which we should critically evaluate in light of the Student Choice Initiative, should Compass operate during the summer time? Given that students can still receive presto services online and from the Metrolinx Kiosk, this will save a lot of operational cost, allowing the BoD to decide on a case-by-case basis to open up the service for the summer. The BoD already currently do this for TwelvEighty, so as VP Finance, I will investigate if summer operations of the front-of-house print shop should be chosen on a case-by-case decision.

Financial Implications to Compass:

To achieve the two Bus Screens and the one MSU-Controlled Screen, their cost would likely be around \$3250 each (\$9,750 total). These will be roughly the same size as the Underground Screens Program which costs \$2833 each, the extra budget is for mounting and data necessary for the live bus times. As of the audit 2019 statement, the capital fund has \$633,041. If VP Scott's Capital Budget is accurate and the SRA approves VP Alex's Capita Budget, then there will be \$277,846, so this additional capital request would be 3.51% and is my main capital request during the year. Both the MSU-controlled screen, sponsorship-readying Compass, and the retail space, will allow for Compass to expand their revenue to make up the capital cost.

Updating Catering Event Furniture + More Studying Space in the Grind

Updating Catering Event Furniture has the two purposes: First, of providing more studying space in the Grind (when events are not being hosted). Secondly, it will allow for a better event space feel for our Catering event service, leading to retaining and expanding our catering event business.

TwelvEighty & The Grind

Updating TwelvEighty's Aesthetics

The Grind has the main focus of capital funding and for good reason. From VP Tuba's creation of the The Grind (VP Finance 2017-2018), to Scott's investment in the catering event space (VP Finance 2018-2019), which would then be used for The Grind to be expanded on by VP Alex, to allow for the Grind seating space to take up some of the catering event space. Her efforts have reduced the deficit now and in the future because of the Grind expansion! All these changes however have left the uniformity of TwelvEighty dining as feeling out dated, which matters because the lunch and dinner service need to for creating service and feel like a uniformed experience, to both attract new customers, maintain relationships with regulars, and cross-promote between the Grind and TwelvEighty.

As VP Finance, I will task Gabby (TwelvEighty Restaurant Manager) to price out small but aesthetically appealing things like painting or vinyl coat all the tables to look like the Grind's dark wood colour, painting behind the bar to match the aesthetics of the bar renovation, and potentially a light dimmer that broke two years ago. Capital funding for this should be less than \$3000.

Updating Catering Event Furniture + More Studying Space in the Grind

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Updating Catering Event Furniture has the two purposes: First, of providing more studying space in the Grind (when events are not being hosted). Secondly, it will allow for a better event space feel for our Catering event service, leading to retaining and expanding the amount of events we have.

From my consultation with Gabby, the Restaurant Manager, the current catering event service is doing well and the business needs that revenue stream. However the catering tables and chairs are mismatched to the aesthetic customers want, they tend to gravitate towards The Grind and that experience. By updating the catering event furniture and matching it to the Grind aesthetic catering furniture, this will provide a better experience for catering event service and they will leave the space open for students when catering events are not running.

On average events run once a week which means that for the four other days, the Grind will effectively expand their seating available, leading to more study space for students and more sales for the Grind. While this would not be a silver bullet for sales, this investment will allow the Grind to engage more with the community and provide a necessary third space.

Updating the Menu with more Unique Variations

As the menu is changed and tweaked every year, as VP Finance, I would argue for more creative variations to be added to the menu. While keeping classic and quick things like chicken fingers and power bowls, I would argue that TwelvEighty needs unique different taste palettes that are quite different from the typical La Piazza menu choice. Both La Piazza and the Phoenix, have about 40-45% of the same menu choices. TwelvEighty has solidified its strategic location as a dining experience, meaning TwelvEighty needs to offer more unique, dining food offering to differentiate itself. Take as just some brainstormed ideas: Fried Chicken and Waffles, Deep-fried Cauliflower, Burgers with different flavour profiles like onion rings or blue cheese or grilled pineapple or secret sauce, etc. These options require very little additional training for that extra step but that is what is expected of sit-down dining experiences (and we can charge a little bit extra too). Then, using the Promotions Coordinator role, I suggest we do something similar in style to those Instagram food videos where you go through the whole process in a highly cut way to launch some of these unique food menu items.

More Ladles of Love programming in collaboration with MSU Food Collective Centre

As VP Finance, I will work with the PTM of the Food Collective Centre and the Food and Beverage team to see if they want to expand their service line in regard to Ladles of Love programming.

Ladles of Love provides a unifying experience which is needed in our current political context and how OSAP cuts have impacted students. It allows for an event in which all can participate, which dampens the stigmatizing experience of using a food bank.

By allowing and expanding the amount of Ladles of Love programming, it provides TwelvEighty and The Grind with more foot traffic and familiarity but also maintains it as a space in which all are welcome and we can all eat together as equals.

Financial Implications to TwelvEighty and The Grind:

Like the Promotions Coordinator role and general marketing efforts, the aesthetic designs will help pull people by checking out the new aesthetic and retain people, yet it is hard to trace the direct increase in all of these aspects. The aesthetic catering event space, as previously stated, will provide a better experience that matches the \$125 room charge and will provide additional sales to the Grind through the 3-4 days of expanded seating. Overall this will be a long-term asset which I believe will be less than \$5000 over 5 years, or less than \$1000/year of depreciation (depending on the account's useful life). Ladles of Love would cost whatever the charge is to make the free soup, which would not go over \$500.

Union Market - Reusable Mug \$1 Hot Beverages Pilot

We as a university community need to reduce how many single-use coffee cups we use. By bringing in your own reusable mug for a discounted coffee or tea, we can incentivize purchase without single-use coffee cups. It is both environmentally sustainable and business savvy through the habitual nature of coffee and tea purchases.

Union Market

Reusable Mug \$1 Hot Beverages Pilot:

As President-elect Giancarlo's platform discussed, we as a university community need to reduce how many single-use coffee cups we use. Giancarlo's platform point provides a solution, incentivizing purchase without single-use coffee cups. It is both environmentally sustainable and business savvy. Union Market (UM) will continue to undercut Tim Hortons and be the lowest priced coffee on campus, with the pilot program offering a way to break the habitual nature of coffee drinkers, and create a new habit of bringing in reusable mugs.

The pilot will be once a week, likely Wednesday although the date is dependent on Union Market weekly sales figures are. The decision will be made with the PTM of Union Market and the MSU's Food and Drink Manager.

Selling UM Branded Reusable To-Go Mugs:

Alex has begun this process of sourcing To-Go mugs, in which I will continue the purchasing process to ensure that those who do not have a To-Go mug can purchase one from UM. The sale of To-Go mugs will add another small revenue source for UM and reduce the need for single-use coffee cups.

While most of UM's product line is meant to sell high quantities at an affordable rate, something reusable should be sturdy and higher quality. As this is UM branded, it is beneficial to still price this at an affordable rate or breakeven due to the branding power that comes from students going to lecture, tutorial, seminar, group meetings, etc. and placing down a MSU UM branded, quality to-go mug.

Create a new Promotions Coordinator position for Union Market:

Based on the two-year-old role called TwelvEighty & The Grind Promotions Coordinator role, this role helps with increasing sales and Business Units managers can have the content creation they want, all while providing a unique student job.

Back in 2018-2019, UM was run by a Student Opportunity Position (i.e. a 35 hours a week, salaried, recently graduated student), however due to lack of work it was downsized to a PTM position. Without those extra hours that the SOP provides, social media usage and marketing efforts fell to the wayside, so a part-time student promotions coordinator could step UM's marketing to the next level. UM has constant specials with bakeries across Hamilton and with the new UM Mugs and \$1 coffee, this can be a very rewarding and exciting student opportunity which will increase sales.

Financial Implications to Union Market:

If the concept of a big weekly sale was applied to something like a restaurant dining experience, it would drastically impact sales the day before and after, because students only go out once or twice a week (or less). Coffee, on the other hand, is much more habitual. While a big weekly sale might invert some sales the days before or after, with coffee people have it daily or twice a day or beyond. Coffee is demanded at a much different rate, and it is competitive. The weekly sale will reward those who are already regulars and bring new customers from competitors. Overall the concept of weekly sales will increase revenue. Reusable To-Go Mugs will be mostly a breakeven, quality, branded opportunity for UM, which in turn will promote people to come on weekly sale days and potentially becoming new regulars. As the promotions coordinator role is a part-time student position, assuming the same timeline (30~ weeks) as TwelvEighty and The Grind and pay scheduled at B3 (\$146.50 per week), at most \$4500-5000.

The Sil

Updating the website and having a website launch:

With VP Alex's upcoming capital budget, the Sil will be publishing more online and printing less. From my consultation with the outgoing Editor-in-Chief Hannah, there has been an application for a (Federal) Summer Job program. If the application was successful, I will apply for the new Federal COVID-19 economic response of 100% wage subsidy for summer student jobs for the role.

As VP Finance, I will chair the Board of Publication to oversee the production of the website, ensure that COVID-19 subsidy for the Sil, and work with the Campus and Community Partnership Coordinator to ensure that they know and communicate with vendors what the new sponsored articles and online advertisements look like.

Facilitate with the Editor-in-Chief a standardize transition and training:

As with many services, a lot of institutional and technological knowledge can be lost because of high turnover. As the Sil is currently run by a student opportunity position (meaning recently graduated student on a one year contract), with no other direct supervisor, I want to explore ways to ensure the quality of transition and training of the Editor-in-Chief role.

As VP Finance, I will chair the Board of Publication to oversee that this will be the last year without a transition and official training for the Editor-in-Chief to ensure that costly mistakes are avoided, and that focus can be taken away from discovering from scratch how to run a newspaper towards focusing on stories and increasing the amount of readers they have.

Survivors Fund

A confidential and anonymous program to reimburse for medical services, mental health support, and transition costs so Survivors can focus on healing.

Financial Management for Progress

MSU Divestment from Oil and Gas:

Through the 2019 audited statement, the MSU has \$4.6 million in marketable securities (will be less in 2020 audited statement after operating loss and stock market crash). Around 4-6% of our portfolio is Canadian energy. The MSU should be led by example, given the recent Divestment Statement by the previous SRA & Executive Board. Divesting from Oil and Gas for both the impact climate change will have on future students, and because we could be invested in companies like Canadian Solar (headquarters in Guelph). Take companies like Brookfield Renewable Partners and Pattern Energy; last year they had high current yields of 6.7% and 8% respectively and will continue to grow.

These investments are essentially our savings, creating investment revenue that go to our services. Our savings should never go into companies whose operations are to the detriment of our society as a whole and future student experiences. You cannot study in a class or create meaningful communities when the air is polluted or extreme weather destroys our infrastructure. We owe it to future students.

By December 2019, \$12 Trillion \$US have been divested by a total of 1,200 institutions. Investments are effectively bets. For someone to buy stocks (besides Initial Public Offerings), means someone is willing to sell their shares. Right now, people are betting on the Oil and Gas, while others are betting against it. The MSU should be on the side of the \$12 trillion bet against Oil and Gas. The MSU should try to prioritize publicly traded green companies instead. Canadian oil is also a geopolitical issue, where it is mostly profitable when it is \$50-60 USD per barrel, because oil markets are flooded right now, it is trading around \$5-10 USD per barrel (of course, COVID is reducing travel in fairness).

Through an operating policy for both MSU, inc. and CFMU, inc., the policy will require that no stocks, bonds, and other financial instruments will connect to companies involved in extracting fossil fuels.

Audit Student Assistance Program:

The MSU has committed to another full year of the Student Assistance Program (SAP), since the provider of this program was switched early in the fall term, after Welcome Week, and could not be promoted effectively.

After consulting with Victoria Scott, the Administrative Services Coordinator, we agreed that the conditions for promoting SAP previously have been limited financially and changing the services made timely communication about it difficult. The 2020/21 year will be the last year for the SAP to be piloted before the VP Finance will have to sign a long-term commitment to it.

From my experience from working at Student Wellness Centre and as Director of Food Collective Centre, high-quality and affordable mental health and counselling services are so important. As VP Finance, I will commit to: collect feedback from students who use the SAP and advocate for McMaster to implement their own alternative or expand the SWC's counselling department. If SAP does not pass the audit, these funds would be used for decreasing the price of students' health insurance.

Survivors Fund:

Create a confidential and anonymous way to reimburse survivors of sexual violence for:

Emergency medical services of sexual violence,

Trauma-based therapy,

and any transition expenses if they live their assaulters.

Additionally, I will work with McMaster Housing & Conferences Services to expand upon their existing program for LGBTQ+ youth who are made homeless, to include survivors who need to leave their housing arrangements because their assaulter lives there.

If SCI is reinstated (meaning the MSU get less student fees), the MSU will commit at least \$3,000 for the pilot. If SCI is rejected at appeal then the MSU will commit to a \$5000 pilot. I want to work with EIO as a partner in two ways; we will be seeking their interest in matching out pilot (through the McMaster's Women Safety Grant), and potentially in administering it if we can use Mosaic's direct deposit system (if not, the MSU's accounting department will administer it).

With this pilot, while respecting the confidentiality and anonymity of survivors, the MSU can use this pilot to get a quantitative number on how many people have used this fund to have us advocate on behalf of them. This fund will never be used to re-traumatize survivors whether through operating this fund (validation will come through WGEN and EIO) or on advocating on their behalf.

Student Employees Input and Brainstorming Session

As VP Finance, I will coordinate Business Unit meetings with students to brainstorm about improving BUs. These are our workers, they have relationships with their fellow students, understand inefficiencies in their jobs, and how to better achieve the strategic mission of each BUs.

Supporting Our Frontline Students

Our MSU Clubs, MSU Services volunteers, and our Business Unit Employees are what makes our students union excellent. They are our event planners, MUSC tables, peer supporters, cashiers, servers, and they deserve to have a say in how we run things.

This isn't even hyperbole, based on VP Alex's MSU Wide Feedback Survey, 65.32% of students sometimes, often, or heavily engage with MSU Clubs (in a survey of 975 students). Our business units have high engagement too: 53.80% use Union Market, 44.67% use TwelvEighty, and 38.62% use Underground. As VP Finance, I will ensure that the people in charge of our day-to-day operations get resources to improve their work and other students' experiences.

Student Employees Input and Brainstorming Session:

As the Students Union is a democratic institution, which provides students the ability to create services and improve upon our service-delivery, the MSU needs to include the democratic spirit within our BUs. Student employees are hard-working and brilliant people who probably have ideas about how our Business Units operates or know inefficiencies in our day-to-day operations.

As VP Finance, I will coordinate late Fall term and very early Winter term, Business Unit meetings with students to brainstorm about improving BUs. These are our workers, they have relationships with their fellow students, understand inefficiencies in their jobs, and how to better achieve the strategic mission of each BUs. Without SCI (meaning with the full budget), I will ensure a paid critical, discussion-based brainstorming session. With SCI (meaning with cost-reductions), there will be time dedicated during their shifts to respond to an anonymous online survey and I would probably do one during mid-Fall Term and one during mid-Winter Term.

MSU Clubs Workshop Series:

With the creation of two new full-time roles within the MSU Clubs department, this will be a pivotal time to provide the building blocks for a heavily supported and active MSU Clubs department.

As the new Clubs Administrator position, and the Clubs Accounting and Accounts Receivables Clerk, everything we add this year to the Clubs department will be able to be reproduced without needing BoD support. Let us invest in MSU Clubs, which is a huge chunk of how MSU engages with people, with better training and de-silo clubs from each other.

The mandatory presidents training (which happens mid-September) tends to be a long day. From my consultation with the outgoing Clubs Administrator Aditi Sharma, she felt that club executives were tired and that spreading out any additional training over the year would be more effective. As VP Finance, I will work with the new Clubs roles and the AVP Finance to facilitate workshop training. These will be monthly workshops throughout the fall and winter term in which MSU Clubs President and Executives can attend on various subjects.

Topics could be on:

Training to their specific club-related topics such as: Social Issues, Academic, Recreation, Religious, Cultural specific

How to event budget and yearly budget workshop

Professional development through resume and cover letter session

How to navigate MSU resources and the website

How to transition for sustainable club growth

VolunteerCon:

Volunteers are essential to our services and day-to-day operations, yet the MSU does very little to connect volunteers with other services volunteers, provide professional development, or provide assistance in applying for executive or part-time positions or student opportunities positions.

As VP Finance and in coordination with the VP Admin, I would help coordinate a hands-on, one day volunteer training which will provide a chance to learn new topics that interest them. Our volunteers deserve professional development opportunities. They deserve to know other services and expand our MSU community.

Volunteers will learn from their peers who have previously volunteered before, give assistance with resume and cover letter writings, and give an extra step up for all our front-line volunteers to leadership opportunities in and outside the MSU.

President-Elect Support

While I have taken overtures from Giancarlo's Platform and have weaved them throughout my platform (see: Divestment, Survivors Fund, using the Updated Website for expanding Underground services, Union Market \$1 hot beverage when you bring in your reusable mugs, long-term financial stability of the MSU, etc.). These points are a little more directly related to GC's platform.

Rep Suit Rental Program (Or a Rep Bursary Program):

First, the VP Finance will have to find a laundry/dryer business that can take rep suits and wash them thoroughly enough. We have to test which paints can be used and if the smell of 7-10 days of sweat without washing your suit can be overcome. All this is pending COVID too. Next, I will coordinate with WWAC to coordinate the purchases of new general rep suits and communicate what types of paints can be used with them. By working with the Faculty Coordinator and Residence Coordinator, we can figure out soft numbers of Welcome Week reps, and survey how many are interested in the rep suit rental program.

If the logistics cannot be figured out, I believe we need to keep one of the main spirit of the platform idea: ensuring the financial barrier is reduced for reps. Repping provides a unique experience, as a student who needs to work it was costly to leave my job for 7-10 days (I had to work two evening shifts even), and then to have the cash flow to purchase the suit. I will examine creating a rep bursary to reduce the upfront cost of being a Welcome Week rep.

Environmental Accessibility Audit of MUSC:

As MUSC is owned by both McMaster and the MSU (along with minority ownership of McMaster part-time association), we will use the MUSC board and the MSU's University Student Centre Building Fund to implement accessibility recommendations.

As AODA is phasing into law, we might need to use a company that provides AODA compliance and the necessary legal documents. McMaster already has a relationship with Sterling Frazer Associates, and they seem to specialize in the legality of AODA compliance.

While it might be necessary to use Sterling Frazer Associates for AODA requirement, AODA does not necessarily mean that universal accessibility will be achieved. I wish to strike a MSU Ad-Hoc Committee or a dual McMaster and MSU committee to oversee the cost of getting a disability-based organization to implement more necessary infrastructure projects to have MUSC be truly universal. From my consultation with incoming Maccess Director Calvin Jensen, we discussed the importance of having disabled students and/or a disability organization to ensure that all McMaster students and members of our community can access MUSC.

Long-term Financial Stability:

My whole platform has had this central point in mind. While the KPMG consultants' recommendations have some ideas on how to increase our revenue generation and cost-savings, these reports also tend to advocate for firing employees or whole departments. I do not think that massive cuts and layoffs are what is necessary for the survival of the MSU in the face of systematic attacks against democratic student associations. In fact, that is how they win, they dismantle our grassroots struggle against Ontario's policy failures. The MSU comes from students rising against these systems, and protecting and serving each other. I will consider developing contingency plans to ensure that if there is a recession and then

depression, then we do what is necessary to stabilize the MSU and keep the essentials. Additionally, in this context, I will examine what federal and provincial benefits the MSU qualifies with, such as the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy policy.

SRA & MSU Governance

Finance Committee:

As VP Finance, I will mandate with AVP Finance along with the SRA and MSU members the following policies for debate:

Campus and Commercial Partnership Policy (i.e. who can sponsor or advertise with us, what are the boundaries?)

Space Audit on campus with MUSC audit and Student Activity Building opening (i.e. What should happen with our spaces within MUSC, when some services move over to SAB? How can MSU services, MSU Clubs, and committees expand their work through more space?)

Review Bylaw 5 - 3. Fee Regulation And Review (i.e. how can we ensure good accounting and financial management in student groups that do not have accountants on salary, what should the process be to ensure that student groups are put on the path to good accounting practices?)

SLEF Idea Promotions & Vetting

Ad-Hoc Online Service Delivery & Mental Health Committee:

As a VP Finance and just a concerned person, I want to strike a one-year Mental Health and Mental Illness Committee with dedicated SRA and MSU members to oversee the following questions:

How can MSU better serve those with deteriorated mental health or those living with significant mental illness? How can we better advocate for harm-reduction in our services and McMaster services?

How can we use technology to better equip our services to engage with students?

Oversee the Student Assistance Program (SAP) audit: does the SAP provide the function required given the costs? If yes, how can we even improve it even more to create the most value from it? If not, what should replace it? How can the Student Health Plan Fund be better used?

Why should a VP Finance care about this? (If doing the right thing to a fellow person is not enough, here are some benefits: it is about service delivery and retention of volunteers, these are people who our services want to serve and people that

summer 2020

Underground

Updating Point of Sales System
Hiring the Campus and Commercial Partnerships Coordinator position
Create a new Promotions Coordinator position for the Underground
Explore an Online Pickup Printing Service
Accessible Design Training

Compass

Live Bus Times for HSR, GO Buses, and an MSU-Controlled screens program
TwelvEighty & The Grind
Updating TwelvEighty's Aesthetics
Updating Catering Event Furniture + More Studying Space in the Grind
Updating the Menu with more Unique Variations

Union Market

Sourcing UM Branded Reusable To-Go Mugs
Create a new Promotions Coordinator position for Union Market

The Sil

Updating the website and having a website launch
Financial Management for Progress
MSU Divestment from Oil and Gas
Survivors Fund

President-Elect Support

Rep Suit Rental Program (Or a Rep Bursary Program)
Environmental Accessibility Audit of MUSC

fall 2020

Compass

Expand Compass Retail Offerings
Sponsor-Readying Compass

TwelvEighty & The Grind

More Ladles of Love programming in collaboration with MSU Food Collective Centre

Union Market

Reusable Mug \$1 Hot Beverages Pilot
Financial Management for Progress
Audit Student Assistance Program

Supporting Our Frontline Students

Student Employees Input and Brainstorming Session
MSU Clubs Workshop Series
VolunteerCon

SRA & MSU Governance

Finance Committee
Ad-Hoc Online Service Delivery & Mental Health Committee

winter 2021

Underground

Re-Evaluate Summer Operations for Underground Printing

Compass

Re-Evaluate Summer Operations for Compass

The Sil

Facilitate with the Editor-in-Chief a standardize transition and training
President-Elect Support
Long-term Financial Stability

