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| MSU-logo-2001. | REPORT*From the office of the…*Vice-President Administration |
| TO: | Members of the Student Representative Assembly |
| FROM: | Christina Devarapalli, Vice-President (Administration) |
| SUBJECT: | SRA 20E Report |
| DATE: | 09/06/2021 |

Hello,

I have tried to keep this short for the sake of screen time, but there’s a million things happening at once! I have very briefly outlined some of the projects and tasks currently in the works. Planning to get more projects rolling this week and meet more of you!

**Progress on Yearplan: Completed & Current**

(All items are currently being integrated into my Year Plan)

**Building interpersonal relationships:** As per my platform point on fostering community, communication, and collaboration, I have formed many working relationships and friendships in this virtual environment through connecting with other or connecting other individuals to each other. It has been amazing working with MSU and University staff alike and seeing tangible progress on projects come to life. I have been making PTMs a priority, and I am delighted at how our dynamic, workflow, and transparency with each other and staff has been so far.

**Training:** I am currently ensuring all previously created avenue modules are accessible, have captions, or a script available so that our PTMs, execs, volunteers, and staff can view them without issue. Completed asynchronous content is being uploaded so that each training section (ex. Leadership) in the avenue courses will have resources.

**Mental Health**

The board and I are looking to determine and finalize the feasibility of utilizing EmpowerMe (which includes crisis support as a main feature) in comparison to Real Campus services for a number of reasons. We have been in consultation with GSA (Graduate Students Association) and the Student Wellness Centre regarding the positives and next steps to assessing its’ fit for MSU members.

**PTMs**

**Support:** A large platform point of mine was communication and creating maintaining positive relationships with PTMs. I am happy to say that I am offering a wide range of communication avenues to suit varying needs. Drop-ins are slated for twice a week, I offer schedulable 1-on-1 meetings as per Services’ requests, and if urgent, Services can reach me via my cell phone number (with short notice of course). Especially with a lack of HR support, I have been emphasizing the support network currently available: mainly myself, Victoria, Daniela, and any other BoD and staff members as needed. For example, VP Finance has been extensively involved in clarifying budgets and equipping folks with the necessary financial skills. Conflicts of interest have been mediated via open meetings with expectations laid out, reducing miscommunication and fostering compromise. I have also been involved in Service proposals, reviewing JD/OP changes, and have been reading transition documents to get a better idea of where Services have been and the potential for this year, so that I can better understand and support changes PTMs would like to make.

**Hiring:** I have been helping finish up the hiring process for Directors and ADs (EFRT, Macademics) in terms of sitting on hiring boards and providing input for questions and the overall process, making sure our procedures are as consistent and standardized as possible. I have also been supporting PTMs during their varying executive hiring timelines, and we are shifting positions and JDs around as needed to meet the needs of the upcoming year.

**Training:** An introductory almost full day session was held on May 3rd to meet and welcome PTMs, lay out their roles, responsibilities, allow for lots of questions! All PTMs were required to also complete onboarding training (Due Diligence, WHMIS, etc.). Throughout the weeks, I have been ensuring that newer PTMs have completed required training and have watched the recorded synchronous session.

**Hour Tracking:** I have been ensuring that all PTMs understand how the hour tracking template and system works, in terms of overtime and lieu hours. A priority is to make sure that no one is being over worked or burnt out, and I have asked that PTMs send me their hour trackers so I can keep up to date on the overtime hours I previously approved (with reason) and lieu hours taken. I already know how easy it is to stock up and forget to use lieu hours, and this system of being there to support folks even before they are beginning to experience increased burden has been working out well so far.

**Year Plans:** I have been tweaking some of the Year Plan and EB templates which the past VP Admin created this past year with Victoria. The first drafts of Year Plans are due June 16th so that we can review them before the final copy is due in July.

**Other:** The SAS is hiring a Peer-Support Specialist, and I was able to help Heidi Mitchell (Student Support Specialist) with the hiring process by getting PTMs’ input and feedback in terms of what they believe is crucial when hiring for a peer-support role. I was able to also provide input regarding our hiring practices and interview questions as well as getting PTMs involved from the MSU side.

**AVPS**

We have hired our AVP Services, Simranjeet, and just recently finished hiring our AVP IG, Armin. I have been meeting with Sim to discuss the service review cycle and my role of support in proposed projects for this year. Aside from mandatory onboarding training, I plan to explore some role specific training and resources for both roles. I will be having weekly check-in meetings with our AVPs and ATRA once hired.

**SRA**

**Training:** Dates are set for June and July. As per the itinerary, June training will be facilitated by our speaker, BoD, and select staff. I will ask SRA for feedback regarding this session in planning for the July session.

**Support:**

**Meetings/Rotational Drop-Ins:** As per our platform point on increased communication and connection,Denver has held a casual drop-in session so far for year plans, questions, concerns, etc. I would imagine more folks will come out as they begin working on their year plan more extensively. I have had one SRA member reach out to me so far regarding their caucus year plan, and I encourage folks to do the same if a drop-in seems far away. The BoD would also love to go through Year Plan drafts with folks for feedback and specific resources if they would like to do so!

**Services:**

The BoD will meet with Security Services on June 10th to discuss what security and safety will look like this year on campus. This includes the state of EFRT. While any summer activities may be online, I am hopeful that EFRT will have some in-person functionality as residences are confirmed to be operating at a 93% capacity (3,600 students) in the fall. I am in the process of setting up the EFRT advisory committee for this year, which includes the Medical Director, so we can figure out the delivery mode(s) for this fall.

**Welcome Week:** In addition to WWAC, where we are planning for a blended delivery mode, I am part of a few committees focused on the details surrounding Welcome Week values and the centralization of core framework and hiring for MSU positions, planners and reps. As per the NODA recommendations, WWSTAPC has been dissolved, and WWPIC is next (Dec 2021), a Welcome Week Orientation Board (WWOB) will be finalized in January 2022. Among the staff from the SSC and HCS, I am working with Jacquie Hampshire (SSC Associate Director) and Sean Beaudette (Archway) to integrate the recommendations, such as through establishing positions in the working groups for this future committee, including 2-3 new student positions. I am also beginning conversations around MSU Service involvement in Welcome Week this year, and the mental health initiatives mentioned earlier.

**Upcoming Events, Projects, & Activities**

**HR Hiring:** The HR Director & Admin JD updating needs to be finalized to match the responsibilities they would take on and organizational issues their role would help solve.We are close to the interview stage and are expecting interviews to be carried out in the next few weeks.

**Mental Health Initiatives**

Hargun (AVP UA) and I have been in conversation regarding the organization of mental health campaigns and initiatives throughout Welcome Week in collaboration with faculty societies, as well as continuing this throughout the year. This also includes exploring how Professor Hippo on Campus can be translated into a format for students; more consultations with university partners to come.

**Hiring:** We will have our next ATRA onboarded within the new few weeks.

**SRA**

**Support: Meetings/Rotational Drop-Ins:** As a board, we hope to continue this by doing a biweekly rotation amongst ourselves, so all SRA have the chance to meet with VPs at least once if not more.

**Training:** I have reached out to the EIO regarding SRA training for July, as I believe content can change from year to year and synchronous sessions provideAcquiring

Finalizing coordination, mode of delivery within the next two weeks

**PTMs**

**Training:** I am planning to have another session (synchronous or asynchronous) of training next month going into detail on event planning, team dynamics, work-life balance, etc. As a part 2 of the first session which occurred on May 3rd. I plan to continue to work on the avenue courses so all folks can have access to this information.

**Hiring:** I will continue to support PTMs in their peak workload times; executive team hiring (interview questions, training, connecting their requests to staff, etc.). Volunteer hiring will also begin soon for Services as well.

**Engagement:** Our first point of engagement thus far as BoD has been the Palestine-Israel Statement, including a short video from Denver. Working with Comms, we are planning to put faces out there to encourage a personal connection with students; this includes providing updates on events, fees, Services, etc.and discussing ways to amplify Service PTMs and EB/SRA members on our socials.

**Workplace Violence & Harassment Policy:** This policy had been developed extensively over the past year, the BoD hopes to double check, approve, and have it posted on our website by next week for everyone’s access.

**Welcome Week:** With leftover funding from the Class of 2024’s levy, Jacquie, Thalia (Campus Events), and myself are working on a proposal to SSAC to facilitate some 2nd year programming. Similar to the Welcome Week delivery mode, the finalization of this is yet to be seen. I would like to meet with SRA members soon to gauge interest of involvement in Welcome Week (campaigns, giveaways, caucus initiatives, etc.)

**Current Challenges & Successes**

It has been an increased effort to maintain and foster relationships in an online environment with colleagues and students, I know other Board Members can attest to this as well. I am thankful for their enthusiasm in creating time for frequent check-ins, discussing projects, work, and social activities. As well, the support from the past VP Admin & Full-Time Staff, and their willingness to help with background knowledge, I have been equipped with many of the tools needed to make decisions best suited to the MSU’s needs.

A large but resolvable challenge is the ambiguity revolving around modes of activities and events for the fall. It is difficult to gauge at this point, but we will continue to keep up to date on Government restrictions and University decisions, and I am certain we will keep developing options for each Service’s delivery and Welcome Week activities. As well, it was a great learning experience in carrying out some HR related responsibilities with the HR department expansion and Generalist role vacancy (such as sitting on the University’s Sexual Violence Prevention Response Working Group). Working with the Board, John, Daniela, and Victoria to temporarily spread-out responsibilities helped immensely; I am glad we are making progress in hiring and getting someone situated into the HR Director & Admin role.

Lastly, it had taken myself a while to get situated into the role to the point where I could begin to prioritize certain tasks and projects and create a clear boundary between work and personal hours, but I’m happy to say it is much smoother now. Also, I have finally wrapped my head around the 90-page transition report contents, kindly given to me by Graeme.

**Other**

I am still learning a lot along the way, but since being elected as part of the BoD, I have increased in knowledge and skill immensely. I am excited to continue this journey with you!

Best,



**Christina Devarapalli**

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