



REPORT

From the office of the...

President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Simranjeet Singh, President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
SUBJECT: SRA 22E Report
DATE: Sunday, July 17th, 2022

INTRODUCTION

Hello everyone, I hope you are well! In this report I will outline my activities in the last few weeks and progress that has been made within my role. I will also summarize plans for the upcoming weeks. This is the second report I have done in my role as President, and the one with the shortest time interval separating it from the previous report. Thus, it is also shorter than most will be. This report will mainly summarize the conversations I have had and progress on goals in the past three weeks, how new revelations have augmented my plans, and goals in place for the coming weeks.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS, ACTIVITIES, & SUCCESSES

I have chosen to include successes within this section for conciseness and ease of communication. This section summarizes the main events, projects, activities, and successes, with smaller or less long-term tasks excluded for brevity. Nonetheless, if there are specific queries about events unmentioned in this report but discussed in Executive Board or in public MSU statements, I would be more than happy to speak to them.

I will first begin by discussing the Choose 2 Reuse, reusable container program I hope to champion. I was able to have good conversations with potential external partners which started this initiative from a good basis. Nonetheless, I have faced less support from McMaster than was initially envisioned or communicated to me. Thus, this proposal has been modified in how I hope to pursue it. Firstly, McMaster is reintroducing the original version of its Choose 2 Reuse initiative, - the one which inspired mine, though it will remain focused only on first year students, unlikely my proposal which aimed to focus on all years. Furthermore, this will go hand in hand with a "Bring Your Own Container" (BYOC) program that will be aimed at upper year students by McMaster. As these initiatives have a similar goal of ensuring reduction of waste production and thereby reducing emissions, I will support these and help ensure that the largest portion of the student body takes part. Nonetheless, I feel there is still a need to pursue my original initiative not only because it will help make reusable containers more ubiquitous and directly accessible to all students, but also because it will also be used help foster the original goal of ensuring widespread application of reusable containers within the Hamilton community and ideally build a stronger sense of continuity between McMaster and the local Hamilton region. The process by which this year plan goal will be modified to fit the changing situation is still be discussed, and I look forward to sharing more concrete changes to my original plan in the coming weeks and months.

Further, all the Board of Directors had the pleasure of visiting the MSU Childcare Centre, the first official Board visit in multiple years. It was a wonderful experience to meet all the staff, interact with parents, and spend time with the children who give the service a character all its own.

I also had the pleasure of chairing the first President's Council, a monthly meeting of the Presidents of the Student Societies and MSU President in which we can share goals, problems, and brainstorm future collaborations as well as solutions. These conversations brought up important issues pertaining to reimbursement of faculty societies for 2021 Welcome Week, goals the various President's shared, and unique initiatives being pursued, such as a more environmentally friendly means of branding apparel being instituted by the DeGroot Commerce Society. I will be working more closely with some of the student society presidents in the coming months to discuss next steps to see how we may collaborate more closely and ideally succeed in shared goals.

As shown by the other items on the agenda this SRA Meeting, I have also worked closely with First Year Council (FYC) on a notable series of changes to the structure of the governance body. These changes are proposed to make FYC more democratic, expand the amount of representation of a diverse array of voices, and give the opportunity for there to be more

upper year mentorship of FYC elected representatives. Furthermore, I hope these changes will help elected representatives to plan and execute more ambitious events, and ideally allow many first-year volunteers to also be involved, thus expanding the impact of the body.

Conversations have also begun regarding the Housing & Marketing Demand Study being led by Housing and Conference Services. I had the pleasure of being interviewed as a stakeholder in this initiative. I have begun the process of planning with the consulting group leading the study and other stakeholder regarding next steps, specifically if we can get more incorporation of scientific research already done on the subject, and if there can be an element of strong student involvement to ensure student voices are captured in the results. I am currently in the process of planning a series of potential next steps to garner even more information with the use of MSU resources. I hope that by potentially recruiting volunteers, we can expand the knowledge of the housing marketing around campus and use the information to inform our advocacy.

Discussions regarding LinkedIn Learning-related advocacy are going well. I am currently collaborating with Jeannie An to develop steps to better promote existing resources and theorizing ways by which we may have monthly initiatives to better promote the resource, - one which all students pay for through ancillary fees but only 42% have accessed, to the student body.

The MSU Board of Directors and General Manager also had the pleasure of meeting most members of the Office of Equity and Inclusion. There are two main collaborations with this Office in my purview. Firstly, I am in the process of planning next steps to understand how we can garner more student data and perspectives to inform the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review. It is my hope this will help modify the SVPR Policy to be in keeping with the needs of the student body. Secondly, I will be aiming to work with the Acting Associate Vice-President Equity and Inclusion

I have had the pleasure of working with Pauline Taggart, the Director of Information Technology, and Gang Wang, the newly hired Senior IT Technician, on assessments of the MSU's Microsoft Office licenses. Pauline and Gang have done an analysis of the usage of the different services under the license, the cloud data storage space offered to individuals, and security implications of changes among other considerations. With this in mind, they have proposed modifications to the Microsoft Office licenses which will save the MSU approximately \$15,000 per annum, a marked improvement in our efficiency.

McMaster's Teaching and Learning Strategy has also been continuing to develop. I was able to meet Dave Heidebrecht, in the Office of the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning who is currently taking a specific focus on experiential learning and the incentivization for student to take varied educational paths with content from different faculties. This information has helped me gain a better understanding of next steps at McMaster regarding education, and I will be investigating how to work with the various faculties and central departments to have clear methods to increase experiential opportunities for students. This may also come through the form of a proposal to increase experiential opportunities of a form similar to the proposal described later regarding OERs.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS, & ACTIVITIES

As mentioned in the previous section, I have a near term goal to write a series of proposals regarding OERs, LinkedIn Learning, financial aid advocacy, student wellness, and potentially other topics. The first of these proposals, - which will likely be the one regarding Open Educational Resources (OERs), will likely serve as a model on which future proposals are based. To reiterate previous statements, Open Educational Resources are tools by which researchers can collaborate, but also allow for the development of free or at least more affordable supplementary course resources for students. The aim of this proposal will be to request faculties as well as central McMaster units to bring forth significantly increased funding for OERs and allow for there to be paid student research assistant positions to support in the development of these resources. Ideally, this will allow access to a far greater number of accessible, high quality OERs, increase awareness of them amongst students, faculty, and staff, while also allowing for prominent leadership and professional development opportunities for students. I am working closely with McMaster Library and MacPherson Institute partners regarding next steps and to determine the specifics of what this proposal will look like. The information gained from the development of this proposal will be used to inform potential future proposals. Information from other student unions, - specifically the University of Saskatchewan Student Union, will also be used to guide these proposals as these other institutions have also made significant strides in student support at their specific institutions.

As another near-term goal, I am working closely with the MSU General Manager and the Director of Human Resources to review the internal structure of the MSU. There is a sense that the MSU internal structure is overly flat, thus we feel these changes may help in create a more pyramid shaped hierarchy which will allow for employees to progress up the organization as they gain experience and seniority. These changes in-keeping with best business practices and we hope it will create a stronger organizational structure. There is a potential for Student Opportunity Positions (SOP) as well, which I feel is always a good opportunity to increase avenues for students to progress professionally and be more directly involved in the MSU's internal functioning.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

No major challenges currently.

CONCLUSION

I would like to thank the other Board of Directors, General Manager John McGowan, Administrative Services Coordinator Victoria Scott, Director of Information Technology Pauline Taggart, Human Resources Generalist Renee McIntosh, Executive Assistant Daniela Stajcer, Clubs Administrator Nardos Tedros, and Director of Marketing and Communications Michael Wooder, as well as all the other full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff of the MSU for their support. In addition, I would like to thank all McMaster University, Hamilton community, and other more wide-ranging partners for their willingness to collaborate and assist in my initiatives. Thank you for reading my very second Presidential Report! Feel free to ask me questions via email or in the SRA meeting.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sijet', written in a cursive style.

Simranjeet Singh, President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

McMaster Students Union

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