New Updates

1. COCA Report

In June, alongside the VPCE, I attended the national conference for the Canadian Organization of Campus Activities (COCA) in Niagara Falls. It was an incredible opportunity to sample potential talent to bring to our campus, to expand our knowledge about running events on campus, to bring value to conversations surrounding student initiatives, and to learn more about the general conduct of other student unions across the country. Kyra, VPCE, and I made sure to attend as many different sessions and workshops that were relevant to our positions as possible, to maximize the value provided for our respective positions on the Executive. As well, at provincial components Kyra and I were both nominated for spots on conference planning and awards committees.

While Kyra will be mentioning the large percentage of the conference that focused on marketing and event planning in her own report, the following is a short summary of some of the most valuable sessions of which I attended:

- Resolving Club Conflict: Facilitators at this session spoke about the best methods to deescalate conflicts involving clubs, staff, or managers. Key take-aways included strategies for consultation of which all parties involved would mutually benefit.

- Bridging Clubs and Events: This session was primarily about uplifting the existing programming that clubs and societies already do, using the resources of the student union, and working in collaboration for special events like campaigns.

- Managing Your Team's Mental Health: This session was one of the most valuable in my opinion. Through our work as student leaders, we often forget to consider our own well-beings and look out for signs of concern in our colleagues. At this session, we discussed methods that are the most helpful in creating a meeting environment that accounts for the entire team’s mental health and potential stressors that may not only contribute to the quality of work that we are doing, but our health in the long run.

- Clubs Roundtable: This was a more informal session of which different representatives expressed issues that were pertinent to their various campuses and the degrees to which their functions were effected by them. We helped one another sort through complications ranging from funding cycles, liability, club event risk, and general club management. Many organizations were also from Ontario (central caucus) and so there was plenty of discussion about the Student Choice Initiative and how their representatives were reorganizing their existing systems to combat the changes.

- Intro to Media Relations: This session was fairly smaller than anticipated, while there were some more prestigious media personalities in Niagara that were present to offer
their insight. A small group of us had the opportunity to learn from a handful of experts who have been working in the media (whether that be in the office, behind the camera, or in front of the camera) for years. We learned all about proper media etiquette, preparing for interviews, and knowing the nature of media cycles.

- Art of Being Assertive: Being a session that was focused on personal professional development, as opposed to the more niche intensive structural student group sessions I had been attending for most of the conference, I found this workshop very enlightening. This session was facilitated by a phenomenal talent from the Speakers Bureau lineup and addressed how we can fight self-doubt in professional settings and use the seats we occupy accordingly through a handful of methods.

- Strategies to Engage Campus Activities: In this session, we looked at different barriers that face students when they come across different events. For example, we discussed the optimal time of day to host events and activities that are the most convenient for the students that we hope to attend. Another example is targeting satellite campuses and bring programming to them.

- LGBTQ* Inclusive Programming: In this session, we highlighted activities, events, and general programming ideas that are inclusive to the queer community and looked deeper into dates of significance.

If anyone would like access to my detailed notes for any of the particular sessions mentioned above, please feel free to e-mail me at vpsl@umsu.ca and I would be happy to send everything over.

2. **Member Services Committee**

Congratulations to the new members of the 2019-20 Member Services Committee! We’re excited to have you on board and look forward to our first meeting on August 1st, preceding Finance Committee.

3. **BOD/BOSS Retreat**

Please save the date for **Sunday, August 18, 2019**. We will be spending a day at Inn at the Forks with activities and presentations throughout the entire day.

Since there was some overlap in interest for a retreat this August, we decided as an Executive to merge the two retreats (consisting of professional development and bonding activities) into one, as it was the most cost-effective.

Fun fact: It’s on Salsa Sunday!!
4. Hardship Update

Recently, individuals from external relations reached out to discuss the possibility of fundraising to contribute to the available hardship funds. Working closely with Sarah, as this is a project that she oversaw last year, we are working to compile documents to provide to external relations that will provide insight into the spirit of the fund and why it would be worthwhile for contributions from young alumni. Ultimately, we welcome growth of the hardship fund, that provides many students in need with the supports to get them through difficult times within their undergraduate degrees, and this is a great opportunity for such.

5. Consent Culture Training

As many of you know, UMSU requires at least 75% of every student association’s body of councilors to complete consent culture workshops, as facilitated by Justice for Women’s volunteers. While groups have begun communicating training date and time preferences, we will soon be scheduling sessions in. UMSU reps: please remind your senior sticks and student associations that this is mandatory and may result in withheld fees that councils require for their programming, should the council fail to complete this practice.

6. Community Initiative Funding

This week we’ve have the first set of CIF meetings with UMSU’s community representatives about important dates and town hall structures. A chart outlining funding cycles for both SGPAC and CIF applications can now be found on the UMSU website for everyone to view.

Ongoing/Continuing Work

1. Campaign Prep

- **UMSU Clubs Fest:** This summer I’ve been working closely with our student clubs and services team to revamp Fall 2019’s Clubs Fest, formerly known as Student Club Recruitment week. This week will be happening from September 16th to 20th and consist of the following: (1) student clubs tabling Monday to Friday morning; (2) student associations tabling on the Friday afternoon; (3) a social media engagement contest with the chance to win one of three UMSU gift cards; and (4) ending off the week of recruitment with a Student Club Recognition Ceremony on Friday afternoon. At the recognition ceremony on September 20th, all clubs in attendance will be recognized and a select few (nominated by their peers and determined by the Member Services Committee) will be highlighted through Awards of Excellence. Nominations for these awards will open during early August.
Mental Health Week: There are some exciting events and workshops in the making for Mental Health Week from October 7th to 11th. This week, Sarah and I will have met with the Health and Wellness coordinators with regards to programming during this week. Soon, we’ll be working in consultation with the Mental Health working group to have as many ideas and perspectives represented as we can.

Indigenous Awareness Month: This week, we will have met with UMISA in consultation and collaboration regarding programming for the month of November; outlining key dates and events to focus on.

2. Orientation 2019

Making the Grade: There were a total of 893 incoming students registered for the event. We saw a great turn out and had the opportunity to talk with so many new students. The UMSU Presents: Your Students’ Union session was a success. We had some energetic, enthusiastic, and engaged participants who were more than ready to learn about the work that we do at UMSU. At the session, we addressed the five pillars of the organization and let those who attended know exactly how they can get involved upon their arrival in the Fall. A special thank you to our volunteers: the night couldn’t have been nearly as awesome without you folks!

Welcome Day September 3 @ 11 AM to 3 PM: I’ve now been in contact with all of the senior sticks, along with their student associations, on our current mailing list with regards to participation in our Welcome Day programming. A couple have expressed interest in setting up their own interactive games and rentals. In addition to what we previously discussed, students can also expect the presence of Red Frogs and Justice for Women within the decompression station that we will be setting up on the Quad, in an area further away from most of the crowd and the DJ. This will serve as a space for students to relax in the shade, have some refreshments, and learn about two of the groups that they will be able to depend on at the various events they’ll be attending throughout their time at the U of M.

3. Peer Tutoring

Since the last BOD meeting, we’ve talked multiple times with William and the executives from Nimbus. We’ve also recently been consulted by UPEI, U of T, Carleton, and UWindsor about the platform. Myself, our services manager, and peer tutoring coordinator are now working out a plan for the coming year.
Events & Meetings Attended
*excluding office hours and internal meetings

- June 25<sup>th</sup> – Nimbus Follow-up Meeting
- June 26<sup>th</sup> – Board of Trustees
- June 27<sup>th</sup> – Welcome Day Meeting
- June 27<sup>th</sup> – Justice for Women Catch-up
- June 27<sup>th</sup> – ASBC Meeting
- June 27<sup>th</sup> – Welcome Day Meeting
- July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Nimbus Meeting
- July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Meeting w/ Ed Wellness Rep
- July 4<sup>th</sup> – UMISO Update Meeting
- July 4<sup>th</sup> – Student Care Presentation
- July 4<sup>th</sup> – Meeting w/ MSA
- July 5<sup>th</sup> – Meeting w/ Edgar French
- July 5<sup>th</sup> – Meeting w/ Ali Wood-Warren
- July 9<sup>th</sup> – D. Bannatyne Operations Update Meeting
- July 11<sup>th</sup> – Orientation Meeting w/ Brandy, Ali, and Melissa
- July 15<sup>th</sup> – Indigenous Awareness Brainstorm Session
- July 15<sup>th</sup> – Meeting w/ External Relations re: Hardship Fund
- July 17<sup>th</sup> – Making the Grade (2<sup>nd</sup> Orientation Event)
- July 17<sup>th</sup> – UMSU Presents: Your Students’ Union Session
- July 18<sup>th</sup> – Alternative Reading Week Meeting
- July 18<sup>th</sup> – UMISO Update Meeting
- July 22<sup>nd</sup> – CIF Meeting w/ LGBTTQ Rep
- July 23<sup>rd</sup> – CFS Provincial Executive Retreat
- July 23<sup>rd</sup> – Youth Parliament Speaker’s Night
- July 24<sup>th</sup> – Meeting w/ Intl Rep re: CIF & IHC
- July 24<sup>th</sup> – Staff BBQ
- July 25<sup>th</sup> – D. Bannatyne Operations Introduction Meeting
- July 25<sup>th</sup> – Health & Wellness Meeting
- July 25<sup>th</sup> – Meeting w/ UMISA