Thank you whole-heartedly to the 2019-20 UMSU Board of Directors for a great year, full of engaging debate and meaningful discourse. I’m so grateful for each and every single one of the passionate voices we’ve had the opportunity to hear from through both your work and your friendship. To those continuing on the BOD, I’m very excited for the year ahead of us.

Thank you to Tino, Brendan, Kristin, and Savannah for your fire and readiness to take on what’s in store together. From COVID-19 to #SaveTheUPASS to CFS (to who knows what else between the time I write this and the time it’s presented at BOD), you’ve shown such strength and drive to advocate and work for the best interests and empowerment of the students you were elected to represent – all before your terms even began.

Last, but never the least: Thank you dearly to Kyra, Mbuli, Sarah, and Jakob who were my talented co-workers, my support system, and the older siblings I never had throughout all of this year’s highs and lows. You all believed in me during the times that I didn’t believe in myself. I’m incredibly lucky to have formed life-long friendships and to have grown alongside such inspiring and hard-working individuals.

New Updates

1. Peer Tutoring Recommendations

At the last Member Services Committee meeting, Patrick Arevalo, UMSU’s Peer Tutoring Coordinator, presented statistics for the Nimbus tutoring platform over the 2019-20 academic session and we saw a large increase in usership in both tutors and tutees. By looking at the trends over the year, we found that the program’s success this year was heavily dependent on our promotional efforts and programming.

As far as programming and implementation goes, recommendations for next year’s VPSL and VPFO will be to utilize study sessions and snacks next year during the build-up to final exam season. In addition to this, the MSC recommends to continue with 2 e-blasts per term and explore creative programming. Ideas for this programming includes:

- A specific volunteer subset for promoting UMSU services during times of heightened academic stress (including the peer tutoring program and support services)
- Themed academic tutor-involved events once a term (ex. speed-tutoring, exam tricks and study treats, etc.)
- An Instagram campaign & tutor highlight program
- Communicating this employment opportunity to the faculty to recommend their best students for tutor recruitment
- Finding ways to incentivize student organizations for sign-ups and booked sessions

2. International Student Grocery & Rent Relief

These past couple of weeks, we were approached by Victoria Nwabuisi, outgoing UMSU International Students’ Representative, for advice and support to organize some assistance
specifically for International Students in light of COVID-19. As a result and some deliberation at the Member Services Committee, UMISO launched a grocery and rent project through their networks and the application portal was closed after 45 minutes. Next Thursday, we will be reassessing the tabled sponsorship request at the MSC meeting and voting on additional support for the project.

This is an incredibly difficult time for students across the board and I would like to extend a big “thank you” to the thoughtful members of the student body who have been putting in tremendous work to help those who are particularly marginalized. Among the University of Manitoba International Students’ Organization, there are many student clubs who have been putting volunteer hours into organizing to help their fellow students who are in need (ex. the Muslim Students’ Association, Pakistani Students’ Association, and Bangladeshi Students Association).

3. COVID-19 Statement

Last week, Phoenix Nakagawa, voting member on the MSC, came forward with an idea for a statement uniting UMSU, UMFA, and the University in advocacy to maintain teaching as an essential service and to ensure course offerings and degree time-lines remain consistent with the pre-COVID expectations. The hope is that through this statement we would be able to move forward and raise our concerns to the provincial government, focusing on the 30% budget reduction mandated to Universities.

4. Canadian Federation of Students MB – Annual General Meeting

On April 11, Jakob, Alicia, the incoming UMSU Executive team, and myself attended the Canadian Federation of Students Provincial AGM. To be completely transparent, the 10.5 hour long meeting left myself and the new team incredibly worn down and the emotional tolls did not cease at the meeting’s adjournment. I was initially hesitant to summarizing some of these proceedings. However, my support stays with the incoming UMSU executives and our new colleagues at the UWSA whose first impression of the national organization had to be this one.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and student leaders already being swamped with finals, making abrupt adjustments to sustain their finances, coping with the online academic shift, and all of the changes that came with this state of emergency, there was very little leniency with the students who sought out registration – especially for those most marginalized during these uncertain times. As well, there was very little knowledge, outreach, and accessibility for students who may have wanted to attend.

For those who were privileged enough to attend during such unprecedented times, there were still barriers in place to deter them from participating democratically, on this foundation lacking leniency and accessibility. This included myself, after missing the nomination deadline for provincial Chairperson by a single minute - despite the itinerary already running 2 hours off schedule. Due to this decision, the ballot for the position was completely uncontested.
The majority of the extended time (roughly over 2.5 hours) was elapsed because we were not permitted to see a motion that was put forward by Local 6 (the University of Winnipeg, who had 17 members in attendance). After seeing how shaken the members from Local 6 were, many of us stepped up to voice our desires to see the motion. After a large amount of time and deliberation, our request was denied. At the end of the AGM, not only did we learn that this specific motion was ruled out of order by the Chair of the AGM, but it would have permitted members from Local 6 full participation and suffrage rights.

Being unjustly alienated time and time again – this is one of many of the organization’s general meetings that I have attended and yearned to make the most of that I am so deeply disappointed in. As student leaders, we recognize the privilege it is to be elected and trusted in these positions – serving 25,000 students. It becomes severely difficult to perform our duties effectively and ensure that interested students have equal opportunity to participate, if the trusted representatives of these 25,000 voices are consistently silenced.

In addition to the two emergency motions, the only motions submitted were directly from the Provincial Executive, since the deadline for motions was not extended. For a full list of motions that were discussed at the AGM, please e-mail me directly at vpsl@umsu.ca and I would be happy to make them available for you to view.

**Continuing Updates**

1. **Transition Tasks**  
   Please refer to previous BOD report for additional details.

2. **UMSU Services & Community Outreach Plans**
   a) **UMSU Student Club Handbook**: We’ve begun formatting contents. If you have any feedback or suggestions involving tools for student clubs, please e-mail vpsl@umsu.ca! We want the Handbook to be the one stop shop for everything club related, from event planning to marketing strategies. We hope make it both an online interactive resource, accompanied by a physical copy provided to each club at the Leadership Conference and available upon request. Come May 1st, Savannah will be spearheading this initiative.

   b) **Community Representatives**: Last Monday, I requested short bios and professional photos of the incoming representatives to include in an e-introduction, as well as on the UMSU TVs. We will be discussing an online outreach project during meetings with the new team in May, for all Executives, Community Reps, and Directors.

3. **Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI)**

   Due to COVID-19, all in-person EDI consultations and focus groups have been cancelled. To continue contributing your valuable input to this campus’ dialogue surrounding EDI, please
TO: UMSU Board of Directors
FROM: VP Student Life, Jelynn Dela Cruz
DATE: April 23, 2020
RE: Report to the Board, April 23, 2020

visit the following link for updates on the task force and to fill out the online survey: https://news.umanitoba.ca/your-voice-matters/

**External Events & Meetings**
April 11 – CFS MB Annual General Meeting
April 15 – Call w/ CFS MB Chairperson
April 15 – Services Catch-up & VPSL Transition Meeting
April 20 – Student Care meeting
April 21 – Board of Governors
April 23 – Meeting w/ Vice Provost Students
April 23 – VPSL Transition Meeting
*excludes internal meetings

**Office Hours:** Cancelled for the remainder of the term. Please e-mail vpsl@umsu.ca for inquiries.