



**TO:** UMSU Board of Directors  
**FROM:** VP Advocacy, Victoria Romero  
**DATE:** October 6th, 2022  
**RE:** **Report to the Board, October 2022**

---

## New Updates

### **Students with Family Responsibilities**

I will be teaming up with a variety of passionate individuals who have been working hard to improve The University of Manitoba experience for students with family responsibilities, through creating more family-friendly events, more + more easily accessible information for students with children, etc. Professor Lisa Bednar, and Brandy Usick, Executive Director of Student Engagement and Success, are leading this initiative, and I will be meeting with them throughout the coming months to improve UMSU's resources for students with families.

### **Fair Wages + Treatment for On-Campus Student Employment**

After various concerns raised by students employed on campus, I am currently doing a probe of employment and wage standards across on-campus jobs for students. Although the Province of Manitoba has raised the minimum wage to \$13.50 (up from \$11.95) as of October 1<sup>st</sup> 2022, and it will be going up to \$15 in 2023, this is simply not enough. We must be proactive in ensuring our student employees are paid a proper living wage and are treated with high standards. Please stay tuned for updates about this ongoing project.

*If you are student and have been employed on The University of Manitoba Campus(es), please contact me at [vpa@umsu.ca](mailto:vpa@umsu.ca), I would love to hear your experiences.*

## Continuing Updates

### **International Student Healthcare**

Thank you to everyone who attended our UMSU x MAPSS advocacy town hall and our MAPSS #HealthHasNoBorders rally! We had a great turnout and lots of students and citizens interested in the cause. The Manitoba Liberal Caucus attended and spoke at our town hall. At the rally, both provincial opposition parties came out to show support, with both their party leaders and MLA team members. Thank you to everyone who spoke at these events and to all those who assisted in organizing them.

Please sign our petition, or pick up a copy and gather your own signatures! We will be continuing to collect signatures, please contact me if you need more printed copies or anything else. We already have around 1200 signatures - the more the merrier!

MAPSS has been in contact with the provincial government for an opportunity to present the international student healthcare proposal, but engagement on the side of the government has been



**TO:** UMSU Board of Directors  
**FROM:** VP Advocacy, Victoria Romero  
**DATE:** October 6th, 2022  
**RE:** **Report to the Board, October 2022**

---

lackluster still. Hon Mr. Jon Reyes, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration has yet to respond to our request for a meeting after we had sent over the agenda. The minister has, however, affirmed that he wishes to meet with us, but has yet to make any action to do so.

I will be meeting with both the Manitoba NDP and Manitoba Liberal Party, alongside President Jaron Rykiss, to discuss a coalition of some support in favour of free healthcare for international students. Both parties support the cause and have been vocal about their desires to work with UMSU and MAPSS on this issue.

### **Menstrual Products Accessibility**

UMSU Women's Representative, Christine Yasay and I have submitted our costed proposal for free menstrual products in University Centre to University of Manitoba Administration, as of last week. We are collaborating with University of Manitoba Vice-Provost Students Laurie Schnarr and University of Manitoba Vice-Provost Administration (Naomi Andrew) for this initiative, and are waiting on their response.

The University of Manitoba Libraries has taken action into their own hands on this issue and will be installing a free menstrual product dispenser inside the Elizabeth Dafoe library. This is yet another call on University of Manitoba Administration to provide these products instead of other areas of the universities having to pick up the slack on their behalf.

### **Manitoba Alliance of Post-Secondary Students (MAPSS)**

The Manitoba Alliance of Post-Secondary Students (MAPSS) is currently creating our annual Post-Secondary Education policy recommendation document, and planning our Lobby Week which is set to take place in November. We will be meeting with various Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) to discuss student-centric advocacy issues, including addressing rising costs of tuition / general affordability of education, OERs, and more.

The MAPSS International Student Committee has completed its' elections, congratulations to

- Ivan Nunez Gamez, Vice-Chair
- Dhruvi Bharat Shah, Secretary
- And once again congratulations to MAPSS ISC Chair, Kunal Rajpal!

The Manitoba Alliance of Post-Secondary Students is pleased to announce that Brandon University Students Union has join our membership – expanding our representation to over 75,000 students across the province of Manitoba.



**TO:** UMSU Board of Directors  
**FROM:** VP Advocacy, Victoria Romero  
**DATE:** October 6th, 2022  
**RE:** **Report to the Board, October 2022**

---

MAPSS is currently working with the Association Etudiante de L'Universit e du Saint Boniface (AEUSB) to have them join onto our membership as well. They currently have observer status and will be discussing officially joining MAPSS at their next executive meeting, on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> 2022.

### **Mayoral Forum on the Environment & Survey**

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, UMSU and The University of Manitoba Department of Sustainability hosted a Mayoral Forum on the Environment here at the UM – this forum was the result of the collaboration of 26 environmental stakeholder organizations in Winnipeg (including UMSU & UM Dept. Sustainability), and months of hard work. All mayoral candidates except Kevin Klein showed up (10/11 candidates), and there was fantastic attendance of 250 people. The event received much media attention due to mayoral candidate Jenny Motkaluks' aversion to The University of Manitoba masking policy.

A recorded livestream of the forum can be viewed at this link (forum begins at minute 21):  
<https://www.facebook.com/100066708296052/videos/819267832417484/?idovanity=641886320774065>

Along with the forum, our collaboration group also created a survey on the environment that was sent out to 42 candidates for the Winnipeg municipal election, including all the mayoral candidates. Once we have all the responses we will compile them and publicly post them so they are available to all who are curious on what city council candidates think is the best environmental policies for our city. Please stay tuned for the release of responses from this survey!

It is my hope that this forum and survey are ways our student body can engage with municipal election and stay informed on who they are voting for. Every vote matters – if you will be:

- over the age of 18 on Election Day (October 26<sup>th</sup> 2022),
- a Canadian citizen;
- an actual resident or property owner in the City of Winnipeg for a period of at least six months (since April 26, 2022)

Then please cast your vote in the Winnipeg Municipal Election!

### **Can't Buy My Silence**

Dr Julie Macfarlane (law professor) and Zelda Perkins are running a global campaign to ban the misuse of NDAs. This will be presented in the Manitoba Legislature, on October 11 by Liberal leader Dougald Lamont. He will present Bill 225, a Bill to prevent the abuse of NDAs in harassment bullying and misconduct cases. This bill was originally was tabled in the spring.



**TO:** UMSU Board of Directors  
**FROM:** VP Advocacy, Victoria Romero  
**DATE:** October 6th, 2022  
**RE:** **Report to the Board, October 2022**

---

I will be working with Julie to create a website-page on the UMSU website to educate students around the misuse of NDAs. We will also be supporting this project as they (Can't Buy My Silence campaign) attempt to work with University of Manitoba Administration (Vice-Provost Administration in particular) to make The University of Manitoba the first university in Canada to take the pledge against misusing NDAs.

### **Students with Learning Disabilities**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022, I met with MLA Jon Gerrard and UW student Thomas Ponzilius to discuss advocacy around students with learning disabilities and the resources available to them. It is a common experience among those with learning disabilities to have trying times when attempting to access accommodations in an academic setting. While The University of Manitoba Student Accessibility Services (SAS) is a functional department, there is always work to be done. It was informative to hear about some of the common issues that arise when attempting to get accommodations. Caleigh and I will be looking further into SAS and how we can better our accommodations, and we (with the office of Dr Jon Gerrard) will be working together in the future to spread awareness and reduce stigma around learning disabilities.

### **External Events & Meetings Attended**

- September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022: Meeting with MLA Jon Gerrard re: Students with Learning Disabilities
- September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022: CASA September E-plenary
- September 26<sup>th</sup> 2022: Forum Planning Meeting
- September 26<sup>th</sup> 2022: Mayoral Forum on the Environment
- September 28<sup>th</sup> 2022: MAPSS #HealthHasNoBorders Rally
- September 28<sup>th</sup> 2022: University of Manitoba Board of Governors
- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2022: NSA Walk for Truth and Reconciliation
- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2022: Roundtable Discussion on Online Safety with Federal Minister Pablo Rodriguez
- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2022: Truth and Reconciliation Speaker Series
- October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022: UM Student Energy Cleanup
- October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022: Meeting with Brandy Usick, Lisa Bednar, Emily Kalo, Celina Mendez re: Students with Family Responsibilities
- October 5<sup>th</sup> 2022: Student Senate Caucus
- October 6<sup>th</sup> 2022: University of Manitoba Senate