



Mohawk Students Association

Annual General Meeting – November 25, 2020

ANNUAL REPORT,

Hello Fellow Students,

It is an honour to welcome you to our Annual General Meeting, and present, to you, the MSA Annual Report for 2019-2020. To the previous board members, thank you for making last year truly special. I know it didn't end the way we wanted it to, due to COVID 19, but all of the previous board helped make last year successful.

After reviewing the contents of this Annual Report, I think the word that describes this document the best is Hope. The MSA has continued to represent students through some of the most trying times over the past 2 years, and we continue to strive for excellence, and when it is achieved, we strive for higher. I think Hope is a good word, because with everything that has gone on, there is hope for a better tomorrow, and when there is, the MSA will be there for you, as always.

Being the MSA President has been a surreal experience for me. I have gotten to learn a lot, work with countless students and have had some amazing experiences. I view myself as a transitional President. These past 3 years have not been ideal for students, with the Teachers Strike in 2017, Student Choice Initiative in 2018 and then COVID 19 throwing off the end of the 2019-2020 academic term. I view myself as someone who is here to help the MSA transition from these previous 3 years into the future. Also, to provide consistency and forward thinking that will help the MSA continue to represent all students to the best of our ability.

The purpose of this report is to highlight achievements and provide updates for what the MSA was able to achieve over the 2019-2020 academic year,

I want to share some information about the MSA's Lean on WE tagline. This was a project that was launched in 2019 with the goal of showing students that the MSA can assist them in many aspects of their personal and student lives. These were broken down into four pillars: Student Advocacy & Engagement, Events & Activities, Life Services, and Academic & Career Support.



I will now briefly explain what the 4 pillars entail

Student Advocacy & Engagement

This pillar focused on prioritizing student representation, student advisory committees, the Annual General Meeting, student elections, A Better Community Day (ABC Day), and student appeals.

Event & Activities

During the year, as their built-in best friend on campus, the MSA took pride in helping students create unforgettable memories by hosting FROSH/FROST Week events, having student-led clubs, pub nights, and common hour events, along with providing access to community events.

Life Services

To help students balance their education and personal life, the MSA provided several services including an HSR bus pass, health and dental insurance plan, the food bank, legal counselling, Zipcar, The Personal, discounted attraction tickets, along with MSA Days.

Academic & Career Support

Students who are looking for academic and career support can count on the MSA.

Throughout the year the MSA provided students with gently used professional clothing through the Career Closet, equipment rentals, a used textbooks service, a graduation photo service, and student appeal support.

MSA Food Court

Prior to the 2019-2020 year, the MSA food service operation was operated as a subsidized business model. This ensured that the MSA was able to provide the value for students, while operating at a loss. When the Student Choice Initiative was mandated by the provincial government, which took place effective September 2020, we were no longer able to subsidize food services. Under the guidance of the Food and Beverage management team, the MSA was able to transition to a business model where Food services make a positive contribution back to the organization, without sacrificing one of our core principles of value and services that the MSA is known for.



The MSA food court consists of

- The Cellar
- The Arnie
- Booster Juice
- Brewed Awakenings
- Pizza Pizza
- Urban Fork
- MSA Catering

MSA Events

The 2019/20 school year had a lot of events to choose from. From the Bryce Vine and a surprise appearance from Loud Luxury at FROSH 2019, and a few months later, The Dirty Nil performed during FROST 2020. There were tons more events throughout the year. From a FROSH Carnival, paint party, pub nights, goat yoga, trivia night and many others, these were some of the events the MSA put on. Some of these events were there to benefit students socially, while others were created to help students with academics, mental health and critical skills. All of these events were student focused, and it is always nice to see students having a good time at the events.

MSA Clubs

During the 2019-2020 school year, the clubs program expanded to 37 clubs, all led by Mohawk College students. Many of the clubs participated in 2 club fairs in order to encourage student involvement. Over 500 students attended. The Club's Program also expanded to Mohawk College's two satellite campuses - Stoney Creek and IAHS.

How the MSA Supported Students

The MSA continued to support students through services, such as the career closet, used textbooks, food bank, legal counselling and more. During the 2019-2020 year, the MSA launched Empower Me as part of its health and dental plan. Empower me is a mental health support system offering services ranging from counsellors to consultants to life coaches. These supports can be reached 24/7, 365 days a year. Another huge change was HSR U-Pass was



switched from a sticker model to a PRESTO card. This change saw the MSA take a much larger role in working directly with students to set up and manage their cards. Lastly, the MSA launched a breakfast program at all campuses, which ran bi weekly.

I want to direct your attention to some of the service statistics, which are very impressive. Legal Counselling & OSAP Affidavits - 698 appointments, Career Closet - 309 visits, Equipment Loans - 4,854 loans, Presto U-Pass - 19,679-semester vouchers redeemed. These services are so important for students, and seeing the value that they provide is both comforting, but also, makes the MSA strive to provide more valuable services.

Major Contributions

A Better Community Day, known as “ABC Day” is an annual event that pairs volunteers with local not-for-profit organizations to facilitate a day of positive action in Hamilton. The vision behind ABC Day is to make tomorrow’s Hamilton better than today’s. Each year, ABC Day contributes over \$10,000 in donations to community organizations. The inaugural event took place on April 3, 2016, with nearly 100 participating students and community members. ABC Day has grown every year since. ABC Day 2019/2020 was planned to take place on March 28, 2020. However, due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled. Despite the unfortunate setback, the MSA remains dedicated to spreading positivity in the Hamilton community and is planning on hosting ABC Day when it is safe to do so. The MSA made the following donations based on Student- focused requests;

Community Donations:

- Native Development Soaring Spirits Event
- Strides for the General Walk
- Canadian Red Cross
- Atmiya Hamilton Music Event

Student Experiential Learning Trips

- Northern Ontario Wood Instruction Tour - \$2,250
- Paralegal Trip to Ottawa - \$1,500



Donations to Support Student and College Activities - total value - \$4,500

- Spring Day 1 Orientation
- Meet the Grads Night (2)
- Student Life Volunteer Fair
- Academic Integrity Council of Ontario Symposium
- Fit to Pitch Event
- Faculty Appreciation Day
- Business Class Presentation Competition
- Mohawk College Foundation
- Carpe Noctem/Study Jam

COVID 19 Impact

On March 17th, 2020, Mohawk College announced that it was closing all campuses, and would be suspending all in person classes and exams. This meant that students completed the rest of their courses and exams online, with the College bringing some in person labs back in July and August. This was the first of many changes that the College made in response to COVID 19. A decision was made to use a hybrid model of instruction for Winter 2020, where classes were online but Labs and assessments done in person.

The MSA saw a drastic impact because of COVID 19 as well. Many employees were able to work from home, but all of our Food and Beverage operations were completely shut down.

The Events department really rose to the challenge and continued to offer a number of events for students using online formats. Some virtual events included trivia nights, game shows, escape rooms, and psychics. The most notable was a concert, coordinated through the Canadian Organization of Campus Activities (COCA), and 13 partner schools. The online concert featured well known Canadian talent and had over 20,000 views.

Something important to note is that most of the MSA services were able to be transferred into an online format. The ones that couldn't be transferred included discount Tickets, faxing, Health study lounge and table rentals. Services like the Health and Dental plan, food Bank, equipment rentals, career closet and legal counselling, amongst others, were moved to an online format.

When COVID 19 shut down the College, the MSA was right there to continue to support students. All of the Food Bank items were taken to the Residence and given to students who were still living on campus. The remaining funds were given to the Mohawk College Financial



Aid department to be used for students who were in financial need. Our Food and Beverage team also donated around \$3,500 worth of food to Mission Services in Hamilton. Lastly, The MSA Board of Directors approved a contribution of \$100,000 to Mohawk College's Emergency Bursary Fund supporting students with financial need as a result of COVID-19. This fund went directly into students' pockets

As 2019-2020 came to a close, the MSA approved its strategic plan which will direct our focus for the next three years.

In closing, I want to thank you all for being a part of the MSA family. Even as we navigate through COVID 19 together, the MSA still has one core purpose- to serve all of our students. Even as we look into the future, with everything up in the air, we will continue to provide excellent services and representation for our students. One of our focus changes that we are implementing is adjusting our programming to have a global lens over it, to ensure that all of our students are able to access and successfully utilize everything we have to offer. The MSA is committed to continue being a hub on campus that students know they can go to for assistance and support. A place that is inclusive and innovative. A place where we all belong.

Thank you

Garrett Blair, MSA President