

**The University of Michigan
Regents' Communication**

Received by the Regents
May 17, 2007

ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Subject: Michigan Student Assembly Report

Attached is the June update on the projects and activities of the Michigan Student Assembly.

Respectfully Submitted,

Zack Yost,
President, Michigan Student Assembly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. H. Dar', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends across the page.

Mohammad Hussain Dar
Vice President, Michigan Student Assembly

June, 2007

President Coleman, Regents, and Executive Officers,

Thank you for your time and continued support. Listed below are some of the endeavors that MSA is currently working on.

MSA Projects and Initiatives

Collegiate Readership Program - The CRP was brought to MSA by USA Today as a program to bring free newspapers to students on campus. MSA has been working with USA today to contact various university groups and departments and seek sponsorship to establish a pilot program in the fall. There has been a high level of interest so far and we anticipate a successful launch. The list of newspapers we wish to make available includes USA Today, the New York Times, the Ann Arbor News, and the Detroit Free Press.

Off-Campus Lighting - The MSA External Relations Committee and other representatives have been working with the joint MSA-City Council committee to install street lights in under-lit off-campus housing areas. We are working out a deal where the cost would be shared between property owners and external donors. The total project costs are estimated at \$20,000. We are currently trying to get more detailed plans from the City's planning office.

Textbooks - MSA members had been working with the Textbooks Taskforce out of Vice Provost Mont's office. The taskforce completed their report and submitted it to Provost Sullivan and the report is currently making its rounds around the university. One of the key recommendations in it is the building of an online tool to simplify the input of required textbooks for faculty and allow students to see this information as well. It is our hope that this effort will gain more support from the university community.

Homecoming Event - This event was conceived by an MSA representative and is an effort to strengthen overall school spirit and revive homecoming. This year is the 111th homecoming and MSA is looking to establish a yearly tradition in which the entire campus is invested. The current plan calls for a parade with floats, marching bands, a notable alum, and daily events on the Diag the week leading up to homecoming. We are working to find co-sponsors and MSA has thus far met with the Alumni Association, Inter-Fraternity Council, Pan-Hellenic Council, Dance Marathon, Business School, Division of Kinesiology, and the University Activities Center. The Alumni Association has pledged to fully back this project and has assigned a staff member to be officially on board.

Virginia Tech - MSA worked with LSA-Student Government and the Dean of Students' office to hold a forum on campus resources and a candlelight vigil. Approximately 350 people attended the vigil and Channel 7 aired the events on their 11:00 news. In conjunction with VP Royster Harper's office, MSA distributed several thousand maroon and gold ribbons (Va Tech's colors) for graduates and family members to wear at

graduation. The response was overwhelmingly positive—nearly every graduate was wearing a ribbon.

Lease Signing Ordinance - one year ago, MSA and the Ann Arbor City Council worked to draft an ordinance allowing students more time to search for houses and apartments. The ordinance passed last year. Since then, some areas for improvement have been identified and proposed changes have already been presented to City Council for first reads. The changes proposed are to close a loophole in the law that allows it to be circumvented (which was abused this year) and to adjust the timeline the ordinance specifies for the benefit of both students and landlords.

The changes are going to Council for first reads on Monday, May 7th and will go for second reads on the 21st.

We have recently met with the following Administrators and Other Key Stakeholders.

- a. Cynthia Wilbanks
- b. Bob Winfield
- c. Sally Churchill
- d. Phil Hanlon
- e. Linda Green
- f. Sue Eklund
- g. Royster Harper
- h. Susan Wilson
- i. Alumni Association
- j. City Council

We have done outreach with the following Groups/Events on Campus

- a. Inter-Fraternity Council
- b. Pan-Hellenic Association
- c. University Activities Center
- d. Leadership Connection - MSA sent five representatives to Leadership Connection, a five day conference designed to bring together leaders from various organizations to engage in dialogue and develop plans to improve campus.
- e. Dance Marathon

FINANCES

Summer Assembly Funding - We have notified student groups about the summer funding we provide and, with a fiscally responsible mindset, have begun meeting to financially support events and projects around campus.

Fall Budgets - We are meeting with our committees and commissions to establish budgets and plan events for the upcoming semester.

Thoughts and Concerns We Would Like You to Consider

Recreational Sports Hours - MSA addressed this at your last meeting, but we strongly believe that the hours of our recreational facilities should remain at the level they have. They have been open until 2:00 AM but will only be open until 11:00 PM starting in the fall. We realize that cutting the hours may have been the best financial decision at the time, but we need to seek a solution as soon as possible as we believe the restoration of these hours is in the best interest of the students, staff, faculty, and others who hold membership.

Add Freedom of Gender Identity and Gender Expression to Bylaws - MSA strongly supports the addition of "Freedom of Gender Identity and Gender Expression" to the University's bylaws. We are willing to work with the Board of Regents and do whatever is asked of us to achieve this goal.

Same Sex Domestic Partner Benefits - We want to say thank you so much for your attention thus far to this issue. As you know, domestic partner benefits has a significant effect on retention of quality faculty and staff at the University, and can also be considered through the lens of equal rights. MSA understands that the University is facing a legal bind here, but we appreciate your attention and encourage you to continue exploring other ways to afford people these benefits.