

July 2011 Regents Report

Michigan Student Assembly

Received by the
Regents July 21, 2011



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "DeAndree R. M. Watson".

DeAndree R. M. Watson
President

President Coleman, members of the Board of Regents, and Executive Officers of the University, it is with honor that report to you on behalf of the students of this University and the Michigan Student Assembly. Below is a brief update of the activities and vision of the Michigan Student Assembly.

Welcome Week:

- Pre-Class Bash – On September 5, 2011 from 6-9 pm the Michigan Student Assembly and the Residence Halls Association will host the annual Pre-Class Bash to welcome incoming and returning students to campus. The event will take place on Palmer Field and will include free food, t-shirts, live music, and several fun activities.
- Gayz Craze – The Michigan Student Assembly will host the annual Gayz Craze event on September 5, 2011 from 1-5 pm on Palmer Field. This event is designed to connect incoming students of the LGBT community with the plethora of resources and student organizations available on our campus, and to promote and demonstrate the University's inclusive and respectful campus climate. Gayz Craze is organized by the LGBT Issues Executive Commission of MSA.
- Day of Reflection – The Michigan Student Assembly is currently working with representatives from over thirty (30) student organizations across campus on this new and exciting initiative. Day of Reflection is a concept designed to promote activism by empowering and inspiring students to take active roles in our global community, in an effort to strengthen society by motivating students to challenge the present and enrich the future. On September 7, 2011 several student leaders will gather on the central campus Diag to deliver short but impactful speeches to encourage a spirit of campus activism.
- Festifall – On September 8, 2011 the Office of Student Activities and Leadership will host the largest annual student organization forum of the year, as hundreds of student organizations gather on the central campus Diag to recruit new students and showcase our dynamic University community. In an effort to make the event more environmentally friendly, the Environmental Issues Executive Commission of MSA will conduct a recycling and composting program at the event.

Notre Dame Tailgate:

The Michigan Student Assembly is currently in the process of planning an alcohol-free tailgate for the Notre Dame football game scheduled to occur on Saturday September 10, 2011. Mindful of the potential health risk many students face, we believe it is important for MSA to provide a fun and healthy alternative to the other activities available to students for this day. We are

currently working very closely with the administration and several other student governments and student organizations to participate in a campus-wide initiative to keep students safe as we all enjoy this historic moment for the University. The event will take place on Elbel Field and will include free food, giveaways, non-alcoholic beverages, entertainment, fun activities, and much more. We hope that this event will not only protect our students, but also serve as a responsible form of celebration for pre-game activities for the rest of the academic year.

Mass Meeting:

On September 11, 2011 from 3-4 pm the Michigan Student Assembly will hold a Mass Meeting to engage the student-body. At this meeting, students will have the opportunity to learn about all of the exciting initiatives of their student government, express concerns they may have regarding campus issues, and talk face-to-face with all of their student government leaders. Students will also have the opportunity to join one of our twenty (20) Executive Commissions and learn how to get involved with the Central Student Judiciary and the Legislative Committees of MSA. At this meeting we hope to educate students about the unique opportunities and resources associated with MSA and establish a positive relationship with students that will be mutually beneficial for the rest of the academic year.

Farmer's Market

On September 14, 2011 the Michigan Student Assembly will host a Farmer's Market in the Michigan Union, in collaboration with several University departments and campaigns. In an effort to promote healthy meal choices and a healthy college lifestyle, the event will not only provide students with the opportunity to purchase fresh locally grown produce, but will also serve as an educational program, allowing students to witness live demonstrations of healthy recipes, converse with the farmers and nutrition experts on site, and learn about all of the University resources and initiatives related to healthy living and eating. This event is being organized by the Health Issues Executive Commission of MSA.

MSA Transformations:

The Michigan Student Assembly has a long history at the University of Michigan, and has grown continuously throughout its existence to meet the needs of the student-body. After evaluating the current work of the organization and the issues that students raise everyday, we believe that the time has come, once again, for MSA to adjust its role on campus. As a result, we will work over the next few months to make MSA more of a service-oriented body that will serve as a direct link between the students and the University administration. Under my administration, Executive Commission heads will be directed to establish a relationship with their University administrative counterpart(s), to represent students in all relevant University initiatives, and to be educated about them. It is our hope that with this functional adjustment, MSA can serve its students better by being both an educational source on University resources and initiatives, and an effective body designed to address the concerns of students.

In addition, over the next several months MSA will continue to complete the constitutional transition process that was initiated as a result of the implementation of a new Constitution two years ago. In March of 2010, students voted to ratify a new Constitution of the Student Body of the Ann Arbor Campus of the University of Michigan that substantially restructured the Michigan Student Assembly. This Constitution was produced by a group of students in an effort to make student government more transparent, accessible, efficient, and democratic. Although most of the major structural transformations were completed by the previous administration, we still have some adjustments left to make; including formalizing the newly established University Council, which is a collection of student government leaders from across campus; developing the team of legal advocates who will assist students through the student government judicial process; fine-tuning the Executive Cabinet of the President, which houses all of the Executive Officers and Commissions of MSA; and redefining the name and terms of the various aspects of the student government to put them in alignment with the new Constitution. I believe that all of these adjustments will greatly enhance the productivity of MSA, making it a more valuable and appreciated resource for the students of this great University.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

DeAndree R. M. Watson
President