

**The University of Michigan
Regents' Communication**

Received by the Regents
December 18, 2008

ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Subject: Michigan Student Assembly Report

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

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sabrina Shingwani', written in a cursive style.

Sabrina Shingwani
President, Michigan Student Assembly

December, 2008

Dear President Coleman, Regents, and Executive Officers,

Thank you once again for the opportunity to present to you. This past month was incredibly busy for MSA, and we're looking forward to another month full of hard work. Here is a list of initiatives on which MSA has been working:

Disability Design Challenge – After some initial challenges gaining interest, a strong advertising push, and partnerships with several student organizations to get out the word, several teams of students have submitted abstracts for designs. We will be holding a public forum to present all the designs and allow for the teams to gain feedback from students at large to help further the development of the designs before the next rounds of more in depth design presentations and finally the judging and selection of the winners.

Off-Campus Housing Reviews – Students are constantly facing challenges with off-campus housing, from finding proper housing to lease signing to communication with their landlords throughout their residency. Cost issues have also been of concern, as has the quality of housing available. We hope to hold local landlords more accountable to students by creating a database detailing the quality of specific properties and the landlords that own them. We hope to model the website's operation after RateMyProfessors.com.

Student Organization Funding – We have now completed our semester's funding cycles for our two student organization funding bodies and are reviewing the final reimbursements. We're pleased to have had a successful semester and are on track with our allocation percentages and raw numbers. Our new funding chairs are meeting throughout the upcoming weeks to review the challenges we faced throughout the semester, review and rework parts of the funding application, and plan for the kickoff of online applications in the near future that will facilitate the funding process for student organizations.

Candlelight Vigil for Mumbai – After the unfortunate tragedy that occurred in Mumbai, India late last month, there was a call by the students to honor the victims. We were grateful to be able to stand in solidarity with the families of the victims in the Diag with students, faculty, and staff. We appreciated the support of the Division of Student Affairs not only in helping us coordinate the vigil overnight but for the attendance and support of several administrators at the event itself. Students truly appreciated their kind words.

Voter Turnout in MSA Elections – The student body's voter turnout for MSA representatives' elections almost doubled from the previous two elections. This increase was attributed to polling stations set up in high traffic locations on

campus during the election time. We also encouraged MSA representatives to push the overall elections during designated days rather than only their own parties. With more room for improvement, we have already begun the process of brainstorming new ways of increasing voter turnout for the March elections and have set high goals for ourselves. Some ideas include hiring an Election Director earlier, mandating MSA reps to put in a minimum number of hours to advertise the elections, offering free giveaways at the polling stations and expanding them to other student areas, and continuing to pursue talks with ITCS to advertise the elections through the online system.

MSA Chair Elections – MSA has its internal elections for all committee and commission chairs during the first week of December. We are now in the process of transitioning the new chairs and working with returning chairs on reevaluating the expectations of each committee and commission, brainstorming new projects for the winter semester, and setting the budget for next semester.

I appreciate your time and look forward to seeing you again next month.