



# STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION

📍 2020–2021 ANNUAL REPORT





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# WELCOME FROM THE MSA PRESIDENT

Hello Mohawk College students,

It is an honour to be able to present to you my welcoming message for the 2020/2021 Annual Report. I know the year was full of new challenges due to COVID-19, but all of the Board helped make it a great year. After reviewing the contents of this Annual Report, I think this document can be described as 'moving forward together'. The MSA has continued to represent students through some of the most trying times over the past two years, and we continue to strive for excellence, and when it is achieved, we strive for higher.

My time at the MSA was a surreal experience. I was able to learn a lot, work with countless students, and have had some amazing experiences. Last year, I said I viewed myself as a transitional President. I think that was a 100% accurate assessment of my year. We transitioned from the old hat ways into a modern, proactive, progressive Student Association. These past four years have not been ideal for students, with the Teachers Strike in 2017, Student Choice Initiative in 2018, COVID-19 throwing off the end of the 2019/2020 Winter, Spring/Summer, and Fall terms and the complete online school year for most of our students. However, we saw, came and overcame adversity every step of the way. Students lead the way, and together, you have all overcome incredible obstacles.

Garrett Blair



**Garrett Blair**  
*MSA President*



**Ashik Ashik**  
*Vice President,  
Internal Advocacy*



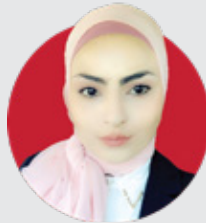
**Pameer Sethi**  
*Vice President,  
External Advocacy*



**Tyler Harnish**  
*Vice President,  
Finance*



**Tina Vineham**  
*Fennell Director*



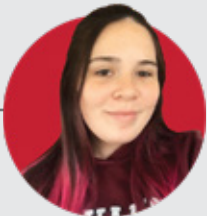
**Samar Alkhawaja**  
*Fennell Director*



**Mohi Ahmed**  
*Fennell Director*



**Teagan Myers**  
*Fennell Director*



**Catirina Ekonomidis**  
*Fennell Director*



**Kishan Patel**  
*Stoney Creek Director*



**Samira Malik**  
*IAHS Director*

**2020–2021  
Board of  
Directors**



# WHAT IS THE MSA?

## What is the MSA

The Mohawk Students' Association (MSA) is a Non-Profit Organization that was built for and is led by Mohawk College students. The Association empowers students to create a community they can lean on for positive experiences, relevant supports, a listening ear, and a strong voice so they can achieve personal success in their college experience and beyond. In short, the MSA exists to support students.

## Who We Are

Together, the student Board of Directors, student staff members, the Executive Director, and full-time staff members make up the MSA. However, once registered, all Mohawk students are also members of the Association.

## What We Do

COVID-19 drastically impacted the way the Association functioned during the 2020-2021 year. Employees (both student and staff) primarily worked from home. Nonetheless, the MSA was still dedicated to working towards achieving its goal – to enhance the Mohawk College student experience by providing high-quality services, supports and resources to help students succeed academically and socially.

The hope with this goal is that students know they can lean on the Association for support – or, as the MSA tagline puts it 'Lean on We'.

# VISION, MISSION, & VALUES REVAMP

In December of 2020, the Board of Directors approved the decision to revamp the MSA's Vision, Mission, and Values, along with the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. Board Members and Staff Members all contributed to this revamp to develop a Vision, Mission, and Values that are more impactful, inspiring, and that give the Association a clear direction for creating change. The new Vision, Mission, and Values are as follows. →

## Vision:

All Mohawk students achieve personal success in their college experience and beyond.

## Mission:

We empower Mohawk students to create a community they can lean on for positive experiences, relevant supports, a listening ear, and a strong voice.

## Our Values:



### Student-Driven:

We are passionate about Mohawk students and all our efforts are devoted to enhancing their experiences.



### In This Together:

Collaboration built on trust across the Mohawk community is essential to ensure every student interaction matters.



### Believe It's Possible:

Fueled by outcomes and insight, we strive to find solutions for how we can meet the evolving needs of students.



### Foster Belonging:

We connect the Mohawk Community to ensure everyone feels invited, welcomed, and included as their authentic self.



### Storytelling:

We strive to tell, share, and learn from stories in meaningful ways.

# BOARD ADVOCACY

Over the course of the year, the Board of Directors approved the hiring of a few new full-time staff members: an Engagement Specialist, Advocacy & Governance Specialist, while also enhancing previous roles in Clubs and Communications. A new Executive Director, and People & Culture Manager was hired. The purpose of these hirings and restructurings was to have roles that better aligned with the Vision, Mission, and Values. Along the same lines, the MSA strategic plan was redeveloped to be more equity-focused in order to benefit all students.

Additionally, in light of the unprecedented times and many students facing financial challenges, no non-essential MSA fees were raised during the 2020-2021 term. Essential fees were increased by 2%.

A few other Board achievements:



Increased participation and retention of Student Representative Committee members



Greater representation from all campuses (Fennell, IAHS and Stoney Creek)



Brought student concerns surrounding COVID-19 to Mohawk College Senior Leadership to be addressed



Advocated for the removal of the Respondus Test Software



Board members also continued to serve the needs of students by adding their voices to the following committees:

- Student Information Technology Enhancement (SITE)
- Sustainability Initiative Fund (SIF)
- Mohawk College Alumni Advisory
- Residence
- Board of Governors
- DBARC
- Sexualized Violence Task Force







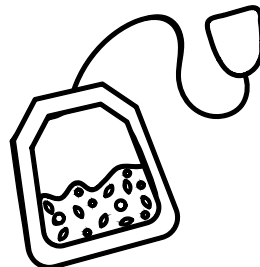


# MSA FOOD COURT

## MSA Tastes

MSA Food and Beverage operations were shut down for some time and continued to be drastically impacted by COVID-19. Regardless, here are some noteworthy points and achievements:

-  The MSA Board of Directors voted to continue to pay contract workers from the shutdown through April till the end of their contracts (the 2019 – 2020 Board supported this initiative) – contract employees working in other areas were also included in this decision.
-  Launching an online ordering system to prevent lineups, and to provide students with the convenience of pre-ordering.
-  Food and Beverage donated over \$4,000 worth of overstocked product to Mission Services.
-  The Board also voted to allow some operations to stay open during COVID (following a shutdown) while operating at a deficit to ensure students on campus had affordable food options as the sole food service on campus.



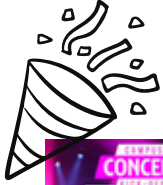


In the spring and summer of 2020, the MSA Food and Beverage, and Marketing Teams worked together to rebrand some of the Association’s food operations. The result of the rebrand was the formation of ‘MSA Tastes’ – which consists of the Urban Fork, Brewed Awakenings, Booster Juice, and Pizza Pizza. The purpose of the rebrand was to create a stronger MSA Food and Beverage brand presence to increase student familiarity with what options are available and MSA-run.

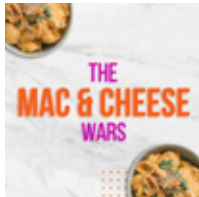
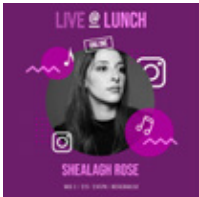
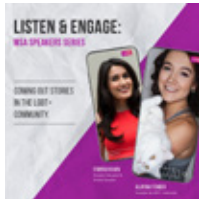
## The Cellar Restaurant & MSA Catering

Both The Cellar and the MSA Catering services closed in March of 2020 due to COVID-19 and remained shut down for the rest of the 2020-2021 school year.





# MSA EVENTS



During the 2020-2021 school year, the MSA Events Team completely re-structured and re-imagined events - starting with how they were offered. As a result of COVID-19 all events during the school year were virtual. Some events that took place included the Campus Kick-Off Concert, Psychic & Tarot Readings, Free Daps, Trivia Nights, Live @ Lunch performances, Twisted Toonz, Online Escape Rooms, and the Mac & Cheese Wars.

## Focus on Equity Diversity and Inclusion

The outcome of events during the year, aside from providing students with something fun and educational, was that the Events Team learned how to better meet the needs of students. This included a greater focus on representation in program offerings like an American Sign Language workshop, SICKBOY: Changing the Conversation Surrounding Mental Health, and through a Listen and Engage Speaker Series that featured:

- Sandy Hudson - Founder of Black Lives Matter: Toronto
- Harnaryan Singh - Punjabi Hockey Night in Canada Announcer
- Candy Palmater - Indigenous Lesbian Comedian
- Farrah Khan & Alayna Fender - Coming Out Stories in the LGBT+ Community

# MSA CLUBS

During the Summer and Fall of 2020, the MSA Marketing and Services Teams worked together to rebrand MSA Clubs. Over the years, there had not been much consistency when it came to messaging surrounding Clubs – the purpose of this rebrand was to create consistency while enhancing aspects of MSA Clubs (website content, graphics) to make the concept of starting or joining a Club more enticing. This was a good time to initiate a rebrand since MSA Clubs also operated virtually as a result of COVID-19.

Two virtual Club Fairs were held during the school year. One took place throughout November 2020 and the other took place during the first week of March 2021. The purpose of both was to inform students the MSA Clubs Program was still running despite being virtual.

MSA virtually supported the following student-led clubs during 2020 – 2021:

- The BVP Club (Blogs, Vlogs, & Podcasting)
- Dragon's Lair
- Enactus
- His House of Latter Glory
- Islamic Student Clubs
- Latin American Students Club
- Open Music Club
- Cyber Security Club
- Hispanic Community Club
- Student Design
- The New Developers
- Planting Roots
- Shelf Indulgence
- Smash Bros
- W.I.T.T (Women in Technology and Trades)

“

I really want to thank [the MSA] for hosting such creative events and workshops. I am taking my course from outside of Canada due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of your constant support, I always feel connected with College,

”

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*Himja Nareshkumar, Business – Financial Services student.*

# MSA STUDENT SERVICES



## Major Changes

The Services Team successfully switched to online or alternative formats to continue to support students during the pandemic. The Association was still able to support students in several ways. The Food Bank and Career Closet both transitioned from in-person services to an e-gift card model. The Equipment Loans service was restructured to offer students semester-long loans as opposed to two-day loans, all Legal Counselling and Affidavit Appointments were done virtually, Grad Photos were taken in a studio off-site (when able and safe to do so), and a Chat Program was added to the MSA website so students could connect to Staff Members directly – replicating the front desk experience.

Additionally, the HSR U-Pass Program was suspended for the Summer and Fall 2020 Semesters and Winter and Summer 2021 Semesters. The City of Hamilton refunded over \$300,000 from the Winter Presto HSU Bus Pass, and the MSA worked with Financial Assistance to use the funds for bursaries for students (domestic and international) who were experiencing financial needs due to COVID-19. Empower Me was still available to students virtually. Additionally, the Health and Dental Plan was still operational along with the MSA Home and Auto Insurance Plan. However, the MSA worked with partners in International Education and Studentcare to provide a year-end refund of the Health and Dental Plan fee for International students who were not able to come to Canada, due to COVID-19, as they would not have been able to use the Plan.



# SERVICE STATISTICS



Legal Counselling  
& Affidavit  
Appointments



Career Closet  
Uses



Grad Photos  
Taken



Equipment Loans  
Issued



Food Bank  
Uses

“

The MSA did such a great job keeping students involved and connected to the campus and student life during our virtual year,

”

*Sabrina Thompson, Early Childhood Education student.*



# FINANCIAL REPORT

BY TYLER HARNISH, VICE PRESIDENT FINANCE

MacGillivray Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors have audited MSA's financial statements for the year ending April 30, 2021, which was led by Senior Partner, Jamie Mitchell. The audited financial statements include the statement of financial position, statement of operations, statement of changes in fund balances, and statement of cash flows.

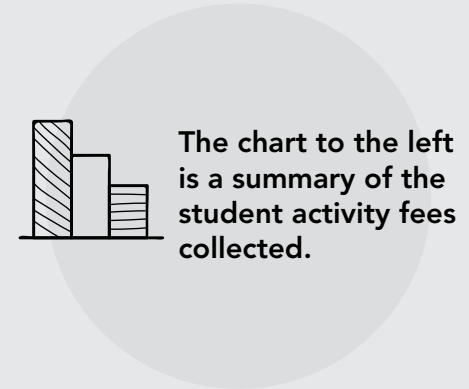
The year brought some unique and interesting challenges, but the MSA continued to bring students the best support and services possible. When things started to look tough, the MSA found ways to bring some light back to the world with things like virtual events, online access to services and supports, and more.

In late November 2019 an Ontario court unanimously struck down the provincial government's Student Choice Initiative (SCI), this would go on to be appealed by the government, but it would ultimately be dismissed by the Ontario Court of Appeal. Mohawk College students would continue to have the option to opt out of non-essential fees until August 31, 2020.

The 2020/2021 audit has confirmed a consolidated net income of \$750,139, which is comprised of a net operating income of \$996,041 and a capital loss of \$245,902. Of the \$996,041 net operating income, \$1,032,435 is unrestricted and \$(36,394) is internally restricted. Given the unique year, the MSA postponed any major capital projects and expenditures until back on campus. There was one capital expense for a Tecumseh LT Compressor in the Urban Fork for a total of \$3,470.



Fee Description	April 30, 2021	Per Semester Fee
Apprenticeship Fee	\$12,233	\$10.40
Student Center Fee	\$532,926	\$20.04
Career Services Fee	\$133,006	\$5.36
Health and Counselling Fee	\$197,668	\$7.91
Academic Support Fee	\$278,493	\$11.22
Student Food Bank Fee	\$64,297	\$2.50
Student Events Fee	\$445,360	\$20.00
Student Clubs Fee	\$128,036	\$5.75
Student Government Fee	\$250,650	\$9.75



With the unforeseen events of the last year, the Covid-19 restrictions would cause the majority of students to no longer have access to campus, as such, the MSA Executive Committee made the decision to suspend the Universal Transit Pass for the Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Winter 2021 semesters. While some students were given access to continue their studies on campus, the Board of Directors approved operations continue in the Food & Beverage outlets with an allowable deficit of \$166,862.

While the students would study virtually, the MSA wanted to continue to bring students the best services and supports possible. This included the Student Care Health & Dental Plan which received a total revenue of \$2,530,578 (\$203.24 annual fee), with the health plan expense amounting to \$2,223,617 (\$183.90 annual premium).

During the year the MSA applied to, and was approved for various government assistance programs which all helped the MSA continue to operate during these unprecedented times. The MSA shifted their events and services to the virtual world so that students were still able to access and experience all that the MSA could offer and the MSA retained as many staff as possible to continue the excellence in service delivery.

The MSA's financial position continues to be strong with \$6,673,062 in cash holdings. This strong financial position can be attributed to stronger than anticipated enrollment numbers, lower than normal spending due to COVID-19, reduced staffing requirements and financial supports from government subsidies.

# MOVING FORWARD

“

I always loved going to all the MSA virtual events! It was such a great way to feel involved with the school while in an online environment. The games were loads of fun and I even got to 'attend them with my friends' through calls,

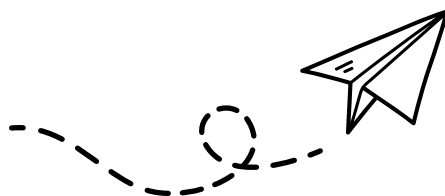
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*Thaesha Buckley,  
Educational Support student.*

The future of the Association is very exciting. Along with implementing the new values daily, the MSA will also be continuing to work towards the new Vision, Mission, along with the priorities and goals identified in the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

Moving forward, the MSA will also continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic - reopening The Cellar with safety and social distancing measures in place when able to, reintroducing Catering, continuing to provide students with Events and Services that enhance their college experience, while also working to better engage, collaborate, and communicate with Mohawk students.



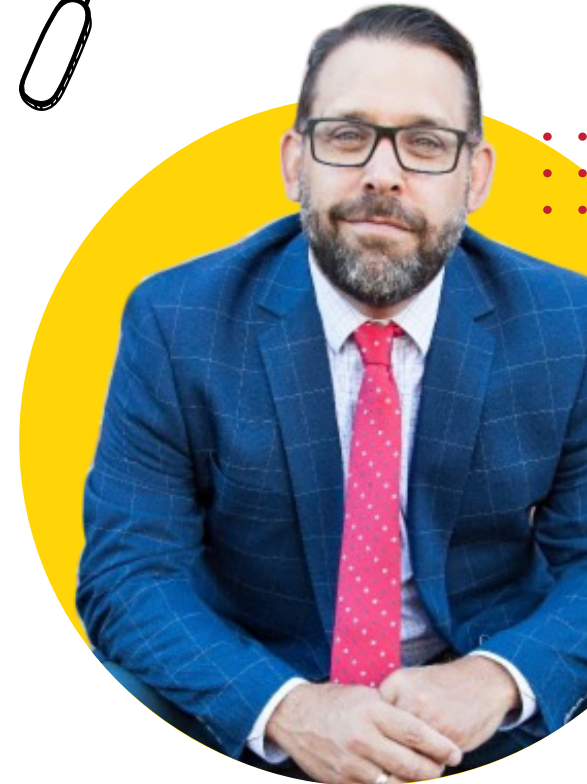
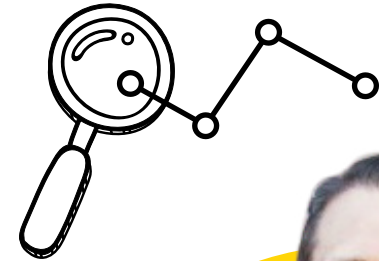
# A MESSAGE FROM THE MSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Living our values has become a mantra within the MSA, and I am so pleased to see that mantra in action during a very challenging time.

Over the last year, we developed a new Vision, Mission & Values statement that not only inspired us, but gave us a beacon to keep us on a path of action. We focused on Equity & Inclusion to ensure that we are serving all Mohawk students, ensuring they can achieve academic and personal success as their authentic selves. We looked at every aspect of what we do to ensure they align with our goals, leading us to the development of our Strategic Plan 2025.

Though we are improving, there is more work and learning to be done. I am so honoured to be on this journey with the incredible MSA Staff and passionate Board of Directors who work tirelessly to ensure that the student experience is the best that it can be.

Marc Iturriaga





# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR INCOMING MSA PRESIDENT



Hello Everyone,

I was the Vice President of Internal Advocacy last year, and I witnessed how the virtual transition took place and how the MSA played a very important role in helping the students with this transition as well. It inspired me to run for President. As I started my term of office, I recognized that the student engagement piece had to be developed in a different way, so students feel they are valued and belong to the campus which are two important factors in our Mission, Vision, and Values. Therefore, this year, we revamped the entire Student Representative Committee program. These Committees have been a great success and it drives us to work towards students' needs, and the support that they expect from us. I am confident that these Committees will grow stronger as we move forward and will have a huge impact. I extend my sincere thanks to all the staff and the Board as they tirelessly work towards achieving all these goals and for their true passion for helping the students at Mohawk College. Last but not the least, I thank all Mohawk students for believing in us and for helping us shape a better community for the students.

Ashik Ashik

President of Mohawk Students Association (2021 – 2022)



## MSA OFFICES

### Fennell Campus

135 Fennell Ave W, Room G109  
Hamilton, ON  
L9C 0E5  
905.575.2393

### Health Sciences Campus (McMaster)

1400 Main St West, Room 112  
Hamilton, ON  
L8S 1C7  
905.575.1212 ext 6411

### Stoney Creek Campus

481 Barton Street, Room A125  
(Fitness Centre) Stoney Creek,  
ON L8E 2L7  
905.575.1212 ext 5005



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[www.mohawkstudents.ca](http://www.mohawkstudents.ca)



@msamohawk

