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Message from the Dean

2011 was a year of great change in Student Affairs. One of the most notable changes was the creation of the Student Wellness Centre (SWC). The project was led by the long-time director of student health, Julie Fairservice. For Julie, this was a bittersweet creation as she announced her retirement soon after the Student Wellness Centre opened its doors this past summer. More can be read about the SWC in the Highlights section of the report.

It was also announced in the fall that the ancillary units of Student Affairs (Titles Bookstore, Hospitality Services, Housing and Conference Services and the Student Affairs Business Office) would be moving to the portfolio of the Vice-President (Administration). However, the “student life” components of the Housing department would remain part of Student Affairs as we move towards a student development model.

In May, McMaster President Patrick Deane issued his “Letter to the McMaster Community: Forward with Integrity” where he lists as one of his top priorities the development of a “distinct, effective and sustainable undergraduate experience”. Student Affairs is being positioned to provide great support to the student experience. We continue to work extensively with our partners in the McMaster Students Union (MSU) to provide the best possible experience for our students.

Another outstanding achievement happened in November when McMaster won the Vanier Cup! You can read all about it in the Achievements section of the report. I have been a staunch supporter of the Marauders for all of my 29 years at McMaster. I was even part of the CFMU team that broadcast the games for a few years so you can only imagine how proud I am of our team, our Head Coach Stefan Ptaszek and our Athletic Director Jeff Giles.

As you may be aware, my second term as Associate Vice President (Student Affairs) and Dean of Students ends on June 2012. However, my boss, Dr. Ilene Busch Vishniac, was recently announced as the next President of the University of Saskatchewan. As a result, I was asked to stay here at Mac for an additional one year term that will end June 2013. This will enable the new Provost to have a large role in the selection of my successor. I am proud to be the leader of such an outstanding team of professionals and I’m looking forward to another great year in 2012!

- Phil Wood

About Student Affairs

Mission

As partners in learning we provide our students with opportunities to discover, learn and grow.

Fast Facts

• Number of full-time staff: 200
• Number of part-time staff: 180
• Total undergraduate student enrollment: 20,703
• Total graduate student enrollment: 3,367
The former Campus Health Centre and personal counselling services of the Centre for Student Development have worked diligently over the last year to become a united team. This collaboration has resulted in the development of the new Student Wellness Centre which provides care, support and education to facilitate student success.

At its simplest, the vision for the Student Wellness Centre is to have “healthy McMaster students.” The team of health care providers, wellness educators and administrative staff have developed a partnership – through collaboration, communication and consultation – that has consistently kept McMaster students at the heart of its mission to become a centre of excellence in the provision of services and education related to health and well being.

With one central point of contact, receptionists from both former units work together in a shared space in order to give students timely access to assistance for all of their health, wellness and counseling related concerns.

Counsellors, physicians, nurses and wellness educators have developed strong relationships with one another to enhance the understanding of their independent roles and highlight the benefits of working together to provide a coordinated service for McMaster students.

The volunteer/student leadership program that for years ran as separate entities (peer helpers and peer health educators) is now successfully providing education programming across campus under the title of Wellness Outreach Student Success Leaders. With guidance from the wellness education team and valuable input from the amalgamated wellness professional staff, they are continuously developing new initiatives and strengthening collaborative efforts with campus partners.
With a vision to become a leader in sustainable operations, Chef and Manager Robert Dew from East Meets West Bistro introduced a number of exciting initiatives last September. The new menu reflects students’ desire to experience healthy, nutrient-rich, flavorful cuisine. With a “Fresh Tastes Better” philosophy, the Bistro has sought out local and organic produce and adjusted its menus seasonally.

Guiding these initiatives is a new partnership with Ocean Wise, the Vancouver Aquarium’s program to promote education about the issues surrounding sustainable seafood. Accordingly, the menu includes five seafood choices with more to come in the form of various “Ocean Friendly” dishes. Currently, these items include Pacific Halibut, Albacore Tuna, West Coast Salmon, Shrimp and Local Ontario Whitefish.

Local ingredients take center stage with the introduction of local pork and beef. The popular Bistro Burger, for example, is made from local beef from cattle that have been raised in a natural environment without the use of growth hormones or antibiotics.

As for pizza lovers, they have been able to enjoy their choice of pizzas baked on fresh organic white, multigrain or gluten-free dough.

As well, all of the chicken used in the restaurant is fresh and natural. To complement this initiative, all of the eggs that are used are from free range hens.

The Bistro has also introduced a “Raw Food” section on the menu for guests interested in a plant-based diet and lifestyle. The items in this section are never heated higher than 118 degrees in order to maintain maximum nutritional value and superior flavor. Items in this section of the menu include the “Sun Burger” made of base sunflower seeds and flax seed, “Spaghettini” in the form of kelp noodles and “Rawsangna,” made from fresh zucchini ribbons— all vegan and gluten-free.

In addition to the menu changes, the Bistro also introduced a new Eco-Container Program in the fall. While customers enjoy sustainable gourmet cuisine, they can also help keep McMaster GREEN with less waste! The program is simple; sign up for a membership or purchase the Eco-Takeout container for only $5.00 plus tax, then have the wonderful meal to-go with it; when the container is dirty, simply exchange it for another container or a membership for any future take-out.

East Meets West Bistro is located in the Mary E. Keyes residence building and Bridges Café is located in the Refectory Building. Both are only a short walk from all residence buildings and a 5-minute walk from the Student Centre.

East Meets West Bistro is listening to the ever-changing lifestyle and/or dietary needs of today’s student. Embracing fresh, local and sustainable ingredients is a great way to offer the McMaster community the healthiest and best tasting food. Hospitality Services is proud of its commitment to operate in a sustainable direction and help save our planet, one meal at a time.
80 years in the book industry and still evolving

The traditional book industry is changing and Titles Bookstore is adapting right along with it. While the focus is more than ever on its book systems, the variety and selection of merchandise and services offered by the Bookstore has increased significantly over the years. In order to meet the challenges posed by an industry in transition, the Bookstore has undertaken some significant changes to its appearance and operations.

Titles Bookstore underwent its last renovation in the late 1980s. Last summer, it began a series of further renovations in order to increase the functionality and flexibility of the space. As McMaster’s student population increases and student needs evolve, the renovations are critical in allowing Bookstore staff the flexibility to reconfigure floor space accordingly. Whether it is to accommodate the thousands of textbooks that arrive at the beginning of each semester or to create event space to host author readings or even to feature McMaster Spirit Gear – the new space can be configured to suit almost any need.

The store’s interior is not the only thing that has changed at the Bookstore. In the past year, the Bookstore has revamped its online presence with a fresh new look and continues to upgrade online features and functionality. Some of the new or upgraded services the Bookstore now offers include greater accessibility to online course materials, the launch of over 3 million eBook titles available for download on the website, expansion of the print on-demand services and, most recently, the introduction of an online textbook rental program.

While the look of the Bookstore may be changing, the focus remains the same – supporting student success through the provision of services, products and financial contribution to the University.
Community development model launched

This year marked the launch of a new Community Development Model (CDM) by Residence Life which focuses on relationship building, student success and student learning.

Specifically, the CDM in residence focuses on ways to engage residents in developing and strengthening the student living and learning experience. Residence Life staff facilitate a sense of community through relationship building, formal and informal learning experiences, intentional creation of positive social norms and identification of shared values within their community. The goal of this work is to empower all members of the community to develop healthy norms, practice inclusivity and learn together while helping to support the achievement of social and academic goals.

Residence Life staff continually assess the needs of their community and respond to those needs through the experiences they design and provide for their students. Students have the opportunity to engage in at least one formal experience (academic support, diversity or life skills) as well as countless informal experiences (movie nights, community dinners, group study sessions, etc) each month.

Initial assessment results indicate the new Community Development Model is having the desired effect, with 95% of residents reporting they feel welcomed, invested and accepted within their living community. Additionally, 86% of residents report their residence experience has positively influenced their academic success.

Krystan McLean, Senior Community Advisor in McKay Hall, notes that “our communities are closer than ever this year and attendance at experiences has been fantastic. The whole reason we plan these events is for the development of a strong, positive community. I think students notice when you’re genuinely trying to help them succeed.”

A strong focus on Community Development has helped the Residence Life unit of Housing and Conference Services achieve its goal of supporting student success by encouraging growth, educating character and enhancing the university experience.

What’s in a name?

Judicial Affairs has changed its name to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards. This change reflects the philosophical approach to student behaviour and conduct on campus. Use of the word “judicial” conjured associations to the criminal justice system.

The change is more in line with the department’s goal to be educational and restorative in their approach to student conduct.

The Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards contributes to student success by holding students accountable for their behaviour and by supporting students as they grow and learn at McMaster. This change is also in keeping with North American trends as many other colleges and universities move away from punitive, discipline centered language.

More information about the office can be found at http://studentconduct.mcmaster.ca/
Marauder pride

In 2011, something very special happened at McMaster: It was an event that impacted students, staff, faculty, alumni and just about everyone else with even the slightest interest in what goes on at the university. On November 25th, the McMaster Marauder football team defeated Laval 41-38 in double overtime to claim the Vanier Cup. For the first time ever; McMaster became Canada’s national football champion.

Never before in McMaster’s 125-year history has a single event captured the imagination and enflamed the passions of the campus community in such a way. The effect on the campus was incredible – over 1,400 students packed the Burridge Gymnasium and 800 more squeezed into campus pub TwelvEighty to be a part of history.

“The atmosphere on campus rivaled what it was like to play in a national championship,” explained Parrish Offer, Coordinator of Marketing and Business Development for the Athletic Department. A former varsity volleyball player; Offer organized the campus viewing event in the Burridge Gym. “The vast emotion of the event stood out...it felt like we were there in Vancouver. I don’t know when I’ve seen the campus so captivated and engaged.”

As the football team made its playoff trek from the OUA Final in London to Moncton for the Uteck Bowl and then finally to Vancouver for the Vanier Cup game, McMaster University became a trending topic across Canada. The exposure for McMaster was measurable and immense, as television ratings for the Vanier Cup game revealed that 3 million viewers across the country had tuned into at least part of the telecast from BC Place stadium. The amount of post-game media impressions was valued at almost $1-million. Clearly, the number of eyes that were focused on McMaster was unprecedented.

What is not so easily quantifiable, however, is the level of pride that was generated by the victory of an underdog team that defied the odds and fought to earn a special place in McMaster’s history. Director of Athletics and Recreation, Jeff Giles, finds it difficult to discuss the achievement objectively, explaining, “It was a magical experience for everyone involved and I still find it difficult to put in perspective. While it was a remarkable accomplishment on its own, one of the major benefits was the light it shone on all the great things that we do, not only in our Department, but right across this great University.”

Having won a Vanier Cup as a player at Wilfrid Laurier University, Marauder Coach Stefan Ptaszek brings a unique perspective on how bringing home the biggest prize in Canadian university sports can impact both a campus and the surrounding community.

“For an institution that is world renowned academically, winning the most coveted trophy in CIS (Canadian Interuniversity Sport) demonstrated that McMaster is pursuing excellence in all areas, including those beyond the classroom,” Ptaszek said. “To walk through the grocery store in my Marauder shirt and get approached by a lady who said she never usually watched football but saw the Vanier cup game and then offer her congratulations is very telling. I’m sure she didn’t know who I was but just responded to seeing the Marauder logo.”

The full impact of the victory has not yet been completely felt, but Giles confirms that interest in ticket sales and corporate sponsorship for McMaster Athletics and Recreation has already been affected. The spike in sales of branded merchandise and apparel at the Maroon Shop in the Athletic Centre has been remarkable.

As a rallying point for the entire campus community, winning the 2011
Vanier Cup broke new ground and the Department of Athletics and Recreation is working to maintain the momentum that was generated to create a new legacy for McMaster. From student liaison to campus life and alumni relations, being the best is something everyone can aspire to be.

Marauder Coach Ptaszek summed it up perfectly for his players and his words still resonate with everyone who wears Maroon with pride. “Playoff games are always live or die, but I told our players that this was die or live forever because I can say from experience that winning the Vanier Cup is something you hold onto for your entire life.”

“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair.”

– Nelson Mandela, President of South Africa
Facilitated learning groups

This past year, Residence Life initiated a pilot project, “The Facilitated Learning Groups (FLG) Program” in collaboration with Dr. Joseph Kim, Assistant Professor, Pedagogy and Applied Cognition Lab, which has evolved to become a major research project in 2011/12. The program is a form of supplemental instruction offered outside the classroom to students who live in residence and are enrolled in Introductory Psychology. The goal of the program is to improve soft skills such as critical thinking and self-regulation, as well as grades and retention as a means to better support students’ transition to post-secondary education and living away from home.

It is anticipated that the study results will confirm a direct and positive correlation between participation in curriculum-based supplemental instruction sessions and an improved learning experience and enhanced personal development, both of which are determinants of successful transition to living and learning at McMaster.

Pending the study results and assessment, the FLG program will continue in 2012/13 with the Faculty of Science, and Housing and Conference Services will explore partnerships with other Faculties to complement and inform their student success and retention efforts.

Paige Burgess, an FLG Leader and 3rd year Biology and Psychology student believes that “FLG is a fabulous program that effectively facilitates learning and development in a pleasant and safe environment. It is beneficial for residence students to practice skills required for success through their post-secondary education and beyond. I love sharing my experiences with residents and encouraging them to get the most out of their academic experience at McMaster. I strongly recommend the FLG program for all incoming McMaster Psychology students.”
In early 2011, Residence Life Coordinator, Kevin Beatty, had a vision to create a real-life fire experience on campus as an enhancement to the University’s existing fire safety training program for residence students.

At the same time, Jennifer Kleven, Manager of the Off-Campus Resource Centre, was exploring a similar vision she had for off-campus students. The two merged their ideas and put together a proposal for funding through the “Student Life Enhancement Fund”. Their proposal was accepted and plans were put in motion to develop a program that would run during Welcome Week 2011.

A committee was convened to include a variety of campus stakeholder representatives: Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS); Security Services; Housing & Conference Services; Facility Services; McMaster Students Union (MSU); Alumni Advancement and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Of course, support was garnered from the Hamilton Fire Services, as well.

When Welcome Week finally approached, there was a small setback as the original scheduled day was hit with rain showers and high winds, meaning that the event had to be cancelled at the last minute. However, thanks to everyone’s determination and flexibility, the event was rescheduled to a later date in September.

After much anticipation, this innovative event finally took place on Thursday, September 22nd. A mock student bedroom was set on fire as an illustration of how quickly fire can spread and to stress the importance of being familiar with key campus fire safety measures. This was an opportunity for students and others within the campus community to gain a first-hand perspective on the actual effects of a fire.

The fire demonstration was videotaped and along with interviews from key campus representatives, the initiative has come together as a documentary film to be used for future educational purposes. The burned-out shell was also put on display in the centre of campus for two weeks following the fire to allow those who could not attend a chance to witness the drastic effects of fire.
On November 10th and 11th, 2011 the Student Success Centre held a Social Media + Job Search Conference at McMaster Innovation Park. The conference, a first of its kind at an Ontario university, was held to immerse students and alumni in the social media landscape.

Sessions at the conference ranged from building your own “buzz,” creating and maintaining social media relationships, improving your online brand and social recruiting.

Keynote speakers included: Max Valiquette, Innovation and Trends Expert, Terry Fallis, Novelist and Social Media Advocate and Martin Waxman, Social Media Strategist and Communications Professional.

115 students and alumni and 25 social media experts participated in the conference. The conference received Student Life Enhancement funding.

Photos from the Social Media Conference at McMaster Innovation Park:

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Enhancing student life

The MSU and McMaster Student Affairs continue to build effective relationships and work together as partners in making good investments to enhance the quality of the student life and help create a memorable university experience through the Student Life Enhancement Fund.

Co-Chairs, Matt Dillon-Leitch (2011 MSU President) and Gina Robinson (Director, Student Services) worked collaboratively to provide McMaster undergraduate students with a unique opportunity to share their ideas on how McMaster’s campus, community and institution could be made better through the projects supported through the Student Life Enhancement Fund.

In an open invitation to the McMaster community, the Student Affairs community and undergraduate students were encouraged to think “outside of the box” in order to generate ideas about initiatives in support of diversity, inclusiveness and community engagement. Projects selected for consideration will be announced on the Student Life Enhancement Fund website in March 2012.

Social media + Job Search

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Photos from the Social Media Conference at McMaster Innovation Park:
MacServe

From May 1st to 15th, 2011 a group of McMaster students traveled to Urubamba, Peru as part of MacServe: Global. The students spent two weeks working on a community-identified project which involved repairing a damaged wall, clearing a stream filled with debris and building a school-based garden. In partnership with Nexos Voluntarios, the students had an unbelievable experience engaging in a process called service-learning.

The program had specific learning outcomes related to the theme of community development and explored these themes through service and concurrent learning activities such as lectures, debates and social and cultural experiences. The end of the trip was capped with a visit to Machu Picchu, a site on the bucket list of many of the team members.

The MacServe: Day of Service program is an annual one-day event that facilitates service placements across Hamilton and in Mississauga. Each year, the event includes students, staff and faculty but this year, on its tenth anniversary, the program coordinators extended an invite to another important group as well – McMaster Alumni.

By promoting the event to Alumni, it was a win-win arrangement: student participants were able to connect and network with McMaster Alumni and benefit from their experience and outlook while Alumni were able to engage in meaningful community service activities and work alongside current students and staff.

“It was fantastic to see students, staff and alumni working together to serve the community” says Heather Fisher, Project Assistant in the Student Success Centre and MacServe: Day of Service organizer. “It really goes to show that when the McMaster community is mobilized in an intentional and meaningful way, we can have a great impact.”

Additionally, this was the second year that MacServe: Day of Service offered a placement option in Mississauga for commuter students. “For those who use public transit to get to campus, it can be a real barrier to fully engage in activities at McMaster,” says Adam Kuhn, a Manager in the Student Success Centre. “We began the Mississauga experience to engage Mac students who would otherwise find it difficult to get to campus on a Saturday.” Organizers want students to get engaged wherever they live and hope that by targeting commuter students they can promote McMaster’s community engagement far past the boundaries of Hamilton.
MacServe: Day of Service – By the numbers

280

spots filled
(others to be accommodated later on in the year)

2

cities,
Mississauga
and Hamilton

1,000

Alumni registered
(Several as Team Leaders)

10

Years of MacServe
at McMaster

26

Team leaders

10

Community
placement
partners

sixteen

Students, staff faculty
and alumni who registered
for the day
Student Wellness Centre

While it is wonderful to know that students are accessing a more streamlined wellness delivery model with positive results and that a united staff team is supporting students in achieving their academic and personal goals – there is still more to accomplish. In terms of physical space, providing services from three different office areas in the basement of the Student Centre brings its challenges. Planning continues as options are reviewed to develop an accessible space for all students and move towards finalizing a new facility. The installation of a self-check-in system and student-owned electronic records is in development. Student Wellness Centre, with the support of Student Affairs, continues to move forward to meet its mandate of providing the best quality health and wellness programming for McMaster students.

Athletics and Recreation

Construction of the new track and installation of the new field turf infield is on schedule for completion in 2012. The $1.5-million facility will provide additional training and competition opportunities for McMaster students and community members and will become another attractive rental outlet for external organizations to access for events and activities.

The McMaster Athletes Care initiative that was instituted in September of 2011 will be extending its community outreach efforts in 2012. The program has seen 339 McMaster varsity athletes get engaged with Hamilton youth through various community organizations like the Kiwanis Boys & Girls Clubs and the Eva Rockwell Resource Centre. Over 200 Hamilton kids have been exposed to the McMaster campus through organized outings to varsity events.

On the 2012 calendar are a series of elementary school visits by McMaster athletes to share their varsity experiences and provide mentoring, a service excursion to Costa Rica where 20 McMaster athletes will spend two weeks helping to build sports facilities for the local population, and the planning and implementation of an Amazing Race event that will engage community youth in an educational activity that will allow them to fully experience the Hamilton community in which they reside.

McMaster Athletics and Recreation has taken on a leadership role in a pilot project, Creating a More Inclusive and Welcoming Environment, intended to promote inclusivity on university campuses across Canada. Addressing issues and developing strategies, the project will put emphasis on sport as it relates to LGBTQ identified persons.
In 2012, McMaster University celebrates its sesquicentennial anniversary. 125 years of creativity, innovation and excellence. 125 years of service, discovery and scholarship. 125 years of learning, collaboration and partnerships.

There is much to celebrate in the coming year and Student Affairs is planning to incorporate the 125th celebration into a number of events and programs in order to mark this milestone in our history. What follows is a partial list of events that are planned for 2012.

■ The Student Success Centre (SSC) is excited to announce the first Hamilton Employment Crawl on April 25th and 26th which will showcase the City of Hamilton and its exciting opportunities for McMaster graduates. Students will engage in conversations, visit places of employment, tour the Downtown Growth Centre and meet members of the Hamilton community. The Hamilton Employment Crawl will help students discover why Hamilton is a great city to live, work and play.

■ On Friday, August 10th the SSC and its campus partners will host Welcome Day to introduce 3000+ first-year students and their families to campus. Students and parents will learn about student life on campus, tour the city of Hamilton and participate in information sessions on academic preparedness, financial matters and getting involved in university life.

■ The Athletes Care Program (Athletics and Recreation) will host the Steel City Amazing Race on August 11th. McMaster athletes will work with teams of kids from the Hamilton Boys and Girls Club as they participate in a race around Hamilton. This event will involve 125 kids from Hamilton working together in teams lead by a McMaster Athlete.

■ During Fall Orientation (Welcome Week), the senior administration will welcome the class of 2016 to campus at the annual McMaster Welcome Program on September 2nd. First year students will pass through the Edwards arch in symbolic entry to the University and participate in the tradition of shaking hands with the President, Provost and Dean of Students. This will be followed immediately by a welcome address highlighting leadership, scholarship and civic engagement as benchmarks of the McMaster identity.

■ MacServe: Day of Service offers students the opportunity to connect with local community organizations. Students will spend a half-day volunteering in groups with a community agency such as senior’s communities, environmental organizations, social service groups and youth centres. At the end of the day of service, participants will engage in meaningful reflection about their experience. This year, on September 29, alumni will have an opportunity to participate in MacServe Day of Service in various communities around the world.

■ Career Fair 2012 offers students a forum to meet face-to-face with employers who attend the event to specifically meet McMaster students and recruit from our talent pool. Students who attend the Fall Career Fair benefit in building their network, exploring career opportunities and connecting to the larger Hamilton community.
Financials

Funding Sources
2011-2012 Budget ($82.3 million)

- Bookstore 26%
- Housing and Conference 26%
- Hospitality 23%
- Student Fees 10%
- Other Revenue 9%
- Operating Allocation 5%
- Ministry 5%

Object of Expenditures
2011-2012 Budget ($82.3 million)

- Salaries & Benefits 37%
- Cost of Sales 28%
- Maintenance, Rent, Utilities 12%
- Other Expenses 15%
- Debt Charges 8%

Program Expenditures
2011-2012 Budget ($82.3 million)

- Housing 27%
- Bookstore 26%
- Hospitality 23%
- Health and Wellness 18%
- Administration 2%
- Student Success Centre 2%
- Student Accessibility Services & International Student Services 2%