



[
Date: June 17, 2022
Meeting: June 2022 Board of Regents Meeting
Organization: University System of Maryland Student Council
Representation: **Yvonne Harper**, University of Baltimore
Master of Public Administration Candidate
University System of Maryland Student Council President

Good morning, Chairwoman Gooden, members of the Board of Regents, Chancellor Perman and Presidents,

It has been an honor to be the President of the University System of Maryland Student Council. I would first like to say "Thank you" to the entire University System of Maryland. I genuinely believe the University System is a treasure filled with greatness. I am proud to continue my studies within the system and extremely excited for the future of all our faculty, staff and students.

This year, the University System of Maryland Student Council focused on building a "community" between students, faculty, and staff. All parties' voices should be heard throughout the system. Yes, we are a council representing the student's voice; however, working together will only help create healthy environments throughout our campus communities. I believe we are all here for the greater good of one another. Building community takes dedication, consistency, hard work and sacrifice. I have led with the motto of "Enjoy the journey" because no matter what happens on the journey, we must learn to navigate challenges and grow through adversity.

Overview of the Connection with students

Throughout my term as President, I have focused on connecting with students through one-on-one sessions, group sessions, and attending SGA and GSA meetings, all while creating a safe space for students to be transparent about their concerns as a student. Students have expressed the need for more mental health resources, support, and flexibility. I have had countless meetings

with Mental health professionals, counselors, advocates, and politicians to understand how to help the students navigate throughout college, especially during a global pandemic, a national economic crisis and the injustice of gun violence.

During this Spring 2022 semester, The University of Maryland Student Council performed case studies with students regarding their mental health. The case studies are evidence that students are dealing with severe mental health issues affecting their ability to focus throughout the academic year. These issues are related to family issues, excessive growth of deaths throughout the last two years, affordability, housing, and unemployment.

Mental health: Students need more mental health services to deal with the effects of covid and other life-altering concerns. Life has changed for everyone since March 2020, and we are living out our "new normal" with old techniques that are not working. Students are requesting more support from faculty and staff during this time. Support from faculty and staff is still a significant request from students. In an earlier report, we asked faculty and staff to empathize with students and be more aware of students going through challenging times.

Mental health concerns will always be a topic in any system or workplace; I request that the University System of Maryland ensure that mental health will always be a top priority for all students.

Executive Team

Following the 2022-2023 elections, we have elected Arsalan Siddiqui of the University of Maryland, College Park, as President. Re-elected Emily Madison of Salisbury University as Vice President of Graduate Affairs. Along with Vainavi Gambhir of the University of Maryland, College Park as Vice President of Undergraduate Affairs.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve the University System of Maryland. I am forever grateful, and I wish everyone the very best life has to offer.

God bless,

Yvonne Harper

University System of Maryland Student Council President

2021-2022