



USM Student Council Report for the USM Board of Regents

Date: September 16, 2022

Meeting: September 2022 Full Board of Regents Meeting

Organization: University System of Maryland Student Council

Representation: Arsalan Siddiqui, President of the University System of Maryland Student Council

Good Morning Chair Gooden, Board of Regents, and Esteemed Colleagues,

My name is Arsalan Siddiqui; I am an undergraduate student here at the University of Maryland, College Park. It is my great honor to serve the University System of Maryland Student Council for the 2022-2023 term as President. If I may take a moment, I would also like to introduce the Vice President of *Undergraduate Affairs*, Vainavi Ghambir from the University of Maryland, College Park and Vice President of *Graduate Affairs* Emily Madison from the University of Baltimore.

Since our term started in July, the executive team and I have been busy meeting with the SGA and GSA presidents from the 12 active USM institutions. Earlier this week on Sunday, we had our first USMSC General Body Meeting. We invited Dorien Rogers from the NAACP to lead a discussion with the representatives on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on our campuses and roles we as student leaders can take on. The Executive team and I also had an opportunity to meet with the representatives in smaller groups in weeks prior. The general consensus is that students and campuses are getting in the groove of things, students seem to be settling in pretty well; many clubs and organizations are starting to gear up if they were inactive in years prior.

We have a few goals for this coming academic year:

1. Financial Wellness Orientation Program

- a. Mental Health is something we discussed a lot about last year, and of course it still remains an issue but one thing I and the Executive team want to work on is understanding how we can mitigate the root cause of mental health. And one of the biggest causes of anxiety and depression in college students (and frankly even for some adults) is money. So we wanted to introduce the idea of having a financial wellness or financial literacy training that students can take when they are joining their respective university for the first time, similar to how they take those training related to drug/alcohol abuse, academic integrity etc.
- b. We have been browsing to see what is already out there, what other universities use, and what would be good topics to include. University of Maryland, College



Park offers various free personal finance and financial wellness programs for college students as well as adults, and we are hoping to build a partnership with them and see if this something we can extend throughout the system

2. Election Day Holiday

- a. As you all know USM has one of the most civically engaged student populations anywhere in the country. For that reason, we firmly believe that we should encourage our students as well as our faculty and staff to continue being active in the election process. Giving students faculty and staff off is an initiative that we would like to partner with the System Faculty and System Staff Council, as well as with the Student Affairs Vice-Presidents and Provosts this coming year.

3. USMSC Awards

- a. This year, the USMSC would also like to recognize the wonderful talent the students bring to our system. We feel it is very important that their efforts and achievements don't go unheard. That is why we will hopefully be able to introduce for the first-time ever our history, a series of awards that acknowledge and appreciate students who lead in areas such as innovation and creativity, civic engagement, leadership, community service and others.

4. USMSC Mental Health Awareness Campaign

- a. As I've mentioned earlier, mental health is a dominating issue on all of our campuses. This year, we will continue on last year's project to have a system-wide singular day virtual event on methods of dealing with anxiety and depression. As an example, there will be yoga masterclasses and deep-breathing and meditation exercises that anyone from the system would be able to partake in.

With Respect and Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arsalan Siddiqui".

Arsalan Siddiqui

University System of Maryland Student Council President