



Vice-President External September report

Phew, what a month it has been!

Hope everyone is surviving the midterm. Due to the secretariat changing how we are presenting our report this year. I am going to write this report more like a letter, so you can get an in-depth look at what's happening in the external affairs portfolio.

Political campaigns

Let's talk about the political campaigns first, because that has been on the top of everyone's mind recently due to the upcoming Quebec election. By this point on Thursday, we will know who will lead this province for the foreseeable future. This would mean that our strategy for handling the provincial government will be adjusted depending on who is elected and what type of government it is. My government relations coordinator and I will sit down after the elections to conduct a policy analysis of what this could mean for us.

The election debate was the big event we planned as part of our effort to educate students about the provincial government. The event was done in collaboration with Law student associations (shout-out to Alexandre) and Black student Network (Shout-out to Eza). The invitation and question preparation were done between the four of us and sent to all of the major parties almost three weeks in advance. We had to, at one point, go door to door knocking on party offices, trying to get them to send representatives to the McGill Campus. Ended up getting PLQ, QS, and the leader of the Green Party to come to our debate after a series of last-minute changes and declines.

The turnout was fantastic. We had around 150-200 students turning up for the debate. Here are some photos:

<https://maisongildedbyg.pixieset.com/quebecprovincialdebate2026/highlights/>

Many news media also came. Here is the interview I did with CBC News regarding the debate:

<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-15-daybreak-montreal/clip/16237133-what-university-students-concerns-provincial-election>

Vice-présidence (affaires externes) de l'AEUM
SSMU Vice-President (External)

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external@ssmu.ca | ssmu.ca | 3501 rue Peel, Montréal, QC, H3A 1W7



As part of the effort to get people out to vote, we tried to table around campus, but it didn't seem to draw much attention. Then we tried social media, which seems to be working a little better.

Either way, still a lot to learn about engaging with students on political issues.

Community engagement

Our second big event was the community engagement day in collaboration with CL&E. This event was also planned months ahead. The primary purpose of this event is to engage students with volunteerism within the city of Montreal. We ended up getting 40+ non-profit organizations to come to the event to talk to students, and we had roughly 150 students come out to chat with them. While the event went pretty well, the turnout did not meet my expectations despite advertising way in advance in almost every possible way. Future brainstorming and planning will take place with CL&E to determine how we can drive engagement.

Nevertheless. Here are some more photos:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AIVndxEshYZu0VoWlftxdqNNUfTczUny?usp=sharing>

On other fronts of community engagement, we are in regular chats with CCMP starting this month as well, regarding Milton-Parc relations. The plan is to review the CARE agreement, host a community town hall, inviting all citizens/organizations/students, and begin maintaining a list of partners and organizations within Peter-McGill riding, and start a listserv to inform them of the opportunity to engage students on campus.

Our other big project is with the reformation of the Community Solidarity Fund. The application is open to all of the organizations in Montreal! We are hoping to use this fund to bring everyone together and see how we can collaborate further on things.

You can take a look at how this fund is going to run now:  CSF

External affairs

In terms of external affairs, one biggest development is with transportation.

Along with other universities, we have recently been trying to explore the U-Pass model, this will be presented soon to the council more input. Essentially, what we are hoping to do is to see whether or

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not something like this would be an viable options for students and if that's something students will be interested in having. If so, this will be a huge difference in how transportation is used for our student.

For those who are not familiar with a U-Pass model, this will be a mandatory fee charged to students per semester to be able to use unlimited ARTM services (STM, REM, BUS). There will be options for opt out if they live off ARTM's service area but otherwise it will be mandatory and part of the student fee. The pros of this is that it will make monthly transportation cost much cheaper. The work on this is still in the research phase and consultations is still underway. Several steps still needs to occur before this can be presented at council to be voted on.

- 1) Figure out how many people are using the services currently. Our affordability survey needs to roll out soon.
- 2) Consultation with ARTM, STM, Municipal government, as well as experts in transit at McGill are underway at the same time.
- 3) Consultation with McGill administration needs to occur before council decision.

Once I have a full plan on what this would look like for students, we will be able to proceed and submit a question for winter referendum.

We are also in the work of a Long-term SSMU strategic plan! This will be share in much more detail once the proposal is finished!

Other smaller projects are underway! Next legislative council the external affairs portfolio will do a presentation on Quebec and federal student politics 101. We think these are key information that you need to know and learn as councillors. So stay tune for that.