



Candidates' Statement

Elections 2010/11

Table of Contents

Election Rules/Guidelines 2

Elections Committee..... 2

Candidates Speeches: 3

 President 3

 Secretary 4

 Vice-President Communications 6

 Vice-President Internal 7

 Vice-President External..... 8

 Vice-President Finance..... 10

 Vice-President Student Life 11

 Vice President Social Advancement 13

Election Rules/Guidelines

Assalam Alykum Warahamatullah, Wabarakatuh,

It is very crucial that you go through the details below before casting your vote. Any deviation from any of the stated or outlined guidelines would result in a loss of votes cast.

RULES:

1. Read all instructions on the ballot carefully before casting your vote.
2. Choose ONE candidates for each position.
3. Use a ball point pen to ensure clarity.
4. When completed fold your ballot and drop it in ballot box.

Elections Committee

Aisha Chaudhry

Asma Desai

Ebadur Rahman

Zoheb Taher

Candidates Speeches:

President

Mueen Hakak

Asalaam Alaikum,

I am humbled and honored to be nominated for the President of the MSA. Previously, I have served as the Vice-President of the MSA (2008-09) and have worked on finances, policies and events. Currently, I sit on the Board of Directors of the University of Toronto Student's Union. I have had experience working with all the MSA's in the GTA, besides other external Muslim organizations. On campus, I have good working relationships with individuals in the MFC, Hart House and UTSU.

If elected, I will diversify social events; initiate thought-provoking discussions; engage with other clubs with substantial Muslim memberships; form better bonds with like-minded non-Muslim faith groups; form partnerships with off-campus Muslim organizations; work with admin to implement no-exam policy on Muslim holidays; re-establish the MSA scholarship; provide more creative space and freedom to TMV and OSP; reach out to Muslim students in the often-neglected parts of the campus; etc.

For the last five decades, MSA has been serving Muslims students on campus in numerous ways. The legacy of the MSA is that it has always been a non-sectarian, non-political and a non-profit group that tries to enrich the spiritual, social and intellectual lives of its members. If elected as your President, I will relive that legacy every day of my term. I will earnestly attempt to make MSA a unifying ground for Muslims on campus, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds and religious inclinations.

Next year will be rewarding and exciting; make sure you are a part of it. Vote!

Secretary

Attiya Waqqas

I view myself as someone who has an excellent educational background and relevant work experiences. But more than these attributes, I believe I also have the right leadership skills, by years of experience as an active member in the Muslim community. I believe I am adept at communication, planning, and organizing. More than having the desire and the commitment to lead, however, I am also a good follower and valuable team player. I've been working with various Muslim organizations and have taken part in some of the MSA activities, although this is my first time running for an executive position and alhamdulillah I got a chance to really help.

This coming year inshallah, I plan to meet some goals – meeting new members, enhancing Association positions and attending new and interesting events as secretary if elected. For 2010, with the will of Allah, I will try my best to be organized and well planned in my duties as a secretary. I have excellent communication skills, which will make a contribution at the meetings. This past year, I recommended event-planning tips and developed active programs in various Muslim organizations as an active volunteer. These skills will contribute to MSA as a secretary.

As a secretary I will commit myself to the duties and will try to make the MSA a better association.

Mohammad Sami Ul Haq

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful.
Whatever I mention here is intended only for the sake of Allah(SWT).

I, Mohammad Sami Ul Haq, am running for MSA's executive positions of Secretary and VP Communications. Over the past year, through serving MSA, I have learned to face and overcome several obstacles while serving my Ummah. My determination and motivation for this, and for running for these positions, is ultimately to seek the love and pleasure of Allah(SWT); and I seek any form of reward only from Him.

This year, I served as the secretary of the Community Affairs committee. The skills required for this position were reliability, dedication, and organization. I gained several new skills from the tasks involved with this position which included keeping the Head organized, arranging meetings, booking rooms, mass-mailings, keeping committee members updated of all events, requesting volunteers, advertising, maintaining listservs, creating online forms, keeping and circulating minutes, and suggesting new methods to improve efficiency.

In addition, I've also volunteered in several events, and coordinated two of the Blood Drive events of the Community Affairs committee, through which I gained several additional skills.

I share a goal with another who intends to open a Muslim Community Center as seen of other faith groups, either on or around the UTSG campus area. The purpose of this being to serve the many Muslims we see around us today. I intend to originate new ideas or goals during the summer.

And Allah's(SWT) decision is best.

Noor Baig

I would like to help the MSA run as smoothly as possible as Secretary next year. I found my home on campus with MSA during first year and I cannot think of a better way to give back than to facilitate that experience for other students by allowing the Executive to remain organized and by making it easier for the General Body to be aware of what is being discussed by their Executives.

I am highly organized and responsible. I have plenty of record keeping experience as I have been involved in a number of student groups and organizations in the past. I work well with others and would do well with other members of the Executive as well as others for any tasks and activities required.

One of the key objectives of Secretary should be allowing the MSA to run transparently and efficiently. I would maintain digital copies of minutes and records. These would make recording, organization and dissemination straightforward and as well as provide easy access to any information when required. I would make certain that all minutes are also made available to the General Body through the website. I would also encourage using available online tools to allow the Executive to plan activities and communicate ideas easily outside of meetings.

Saajida Khadim

At the end of the day, there is no better satisfaction than the pleasure felt when you have been of service to another solely for the sake of Allah. This is my main motivation for running for this position; for the opportunity to contribute, and be part of a community that may stand as a witness for me on the day of Judgement.

For me, the MSA has been a facilitator of friendships, growth and development, religiously, academically and personally. It would truly be a great opportunity for me to assist in facilitating such rewarding initiatives.

As secretary of MSA I will strive to ensure that the history, official records, decisions and other documents under the secretary's mandate are preserved and accessible when required. I will also work co-operatively with other executives to implement policies and procedures to improve the dynamics of the MSA.

I am very organized and diligent, both qualities which would be of service to me and the community as a secretary. Documentation is essential for this position and I believe my organization and attention to detail will help in this area.

I am also open and friendly, enthusiastic and motivated as well as I try to do everything to the best of my ability.

I am committed to pursuing excellence, in response to the words of Allah's Messenger: "Verily Allah has ordained excellence in everything that you do".

Vice-President Communications

Huda Idrees

Assalam'alaikum! My name is Huda Idrees, I'm currently a second year engineering student and I'm running for the position of VP Communications. As an overseeing officer for all forms of communication including publications and advertisement, I believe an ideal candidate would know how it is to work the jobs of those s/he is overseeing.

I am the Editor-in-Chief of The Cannon - the official engineering student newspaper. I headed up the publication and advertising for "You're Next 2010!" – the engineering & science career fair exposition. I've also helped revamp the skule.ca website to make it more intuitive and graphically appealing. I was also sub-chair for of the Ramadan Committee during Orientation 0T9. Furthermore, I have served on the Elections Committee for the Engineering Society for two years. This year ~25% of the engineering students voted in our elections – more than double in past years! These various projects have not only given me a sound background in layout, publication and advertising, but have also helped me appreciate the value of teamwork.

As VP Communications for MSA, I plan on using my experience to reach out to more students across campus, make the MSA even more inclusive, ensure the delivery of TMV to every newsstand possible, help redesign the MSA website and continue to use facebook as a means of advertising.

So on March 30th and 31st, vote inclusivity and effective outreach. Vote Huda Idrees for your VP Communications.

Mohammad Sami UI Haq

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful.
Whatever I mention here is intended only for the sake of Allah(SWT).

I, Mohammad Sami UI Haq, am running for MSA's executive positions of Secretary and VP Communications. Over the past year, through serving MSA, I have learned to face and overcome several obstacles while serving my Ummah. My determination and motivation for this, and for running for these positions, is ultimately to seek the love and pleasure of Allah(SWT); and I seek any form of reward only from Him.

This year, I served as the secretary of the Community Affairs committee. The skills required for this position were reliability, dedication, and organization. I gained several new skills from the tasks involved with this position which included keeping the Head organized, arranging meetings, booking rooms, mass-mailings, keeping committee members updated of all events, requesting volunteers, advertising, maintaining listservs, creating online forms, keeping and circulating minutes, and suggesting new methods to improve efficiency.

In addition, I've also volunteered in several events, and coordinated two of the Blood Drive events of the Community Affairs committee, through which I gained several additional skills.

I share a goal with another who intends to open a Muslim Community Center as seen of other faith groups, either on or around the UTSG campus area. The purpose of this being to serve the many Muslims we see around us today. I intend to originate new ideas or goals during the summer. And Allah's(SWT) decision is best.

Vice-President Internal

Hosam Helal

(no statement was provided)

Saajida Khadim

Friendship. Growth. Development. Grounded in faith and tested through history.

When I think of MSA I think of the genesis of an organization that grew out of necessity for a few, and has now evolved into a mainstream, national movement for Muslim students' affairs across an entire continent.

It is this fact that drives me to play my part, however small, in the evolution of this unique student body. I hope that it will be a witness for me on a Day when witnessing to good will matter the most.

I have grown to acknowledge that true satisfaction comes when one's endeavours have been only for the sake of Allah, a value that I will strive to embody personally and will encourage others within MSA to adopt.

I will build upon the amazing legacy left by our predecessors to cherish inclusiveness, to broaden the MSA volunteer community and to foster respect, love, understanding and dignity as core values of social interaction amongst us.

As a member of a team, I will work diligently to ensure that we listen to the needs of each student and strive to incorporate their suggestions and feedback for continuous improvement.

I think that I am well-suited for this task despite it being an enormous responsibility. I am energetic, open, friendly and motivated to do good. My inspiration comes from the verse in Surah Rahman – "Is the reward for good other than good?"

Vice-President External

Ishraq Alim

Bismillahi ir-Rahman ir-Raheem

My name is Ishraq Alim and I am running for your MSA VP-External. I am currently a grad student and the MSA Communications Director. I have also been on the outreach committee and MSA President at Queen's University. My interest revolves primarily around community building, particularly creating an inclusive Muslim campus community. What this entails is making people feel that the MSA belongs to them (MSA is your community, not some clique) and empowering Muslims so they can work within the community to see what they want come to fruition. Also, to create an inclusive community we need to accept that not everyone will be the same, and we should unite for our common goals, rather than dwell on the small differences that divide us. As your VP-External I am interested in:

- Advocacy/Outreach- Make Muslim needs a forefront issue within the university and for Muslims to play an integrated role within the university community. This can be done by working with: administration, UTSU, Anti-racism and equity officers, campus clubs/organizations and Multi-Faith centre.
- External Muslim Groups- MSA should work with external Muslim groups as long as it is mutually beneficial and they don't treat MSA or Muslim youth in a disrespectful manner.
- Working towards Common Goals- I would like to start fundraising projects within the Toronto community to provide services and facilities for our campus community.

I encourage all students to VOTE for your MSA leaders and hopefully we can all work together for a better campus community.

Rameez Mahmood

In the Name of Allah, the Most-Gracious, Most-Merciful

This is the MSA: the Most-Active, Most-Populated, and Most-Effective single group on campus, AND YET only recently did we get a marginally bigger office space! Additionally, we are also: the Most-Undervalued and Most-Overworked group. This needs to change, Insh'Allah!

The MSA needs to expand internally, within UofT, and externally, within the massive Toronto Muslim community. We need to become relevant!

The first step is to materialize a vision I share with many others: to bring a Muslim Chaplain to UofT. This would be a person whose full-time job would be the advancement of the Muslim community at UofT and beyond. The Toronto Muslim community and UofT Alumni, Insh'Allah, possess the means.

So who am I? Other than a Submitter, I've been a participating member of Community Affairs, Copy-Editor for the TMV, and Co-Director of the MSA Feed Me Campaign. As well, I have also been an Editor for a York U paper; mentor for Trinity's H4H program; Exec on the NMC Union; RA for a Professor; Intern at a law firm; attended Harvard; and will Insh'Allah be attending Al-Azhar in the summer. (Insert massive Alhamdulillah). I pray you forgive my immodesty.

Steps need to be taken that will make the MSA the lifeline of UofT, a shining badge of honour for the Toronto community. Let's do this together. Let us strive. And, let us remember the words of Allah:

"That man can have nothing but what he strives for" (An-Najm, 39)

Sana Rokhsefat

Assalamu Alaikum,

My name is Sana Rokhsefat and I am running for VP External.

As a second year student I believe I have become greatly active in university life. My past experiences have helped me establish great networks that will assist me in my position as VP external. Some of my activities are taking part in New College FLC communities, becoming a Biome moderator and being part of the sister committee of MSA: the Orphan Sponsorship Program. I am also the president of the Toronto Youth Group of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women as well as a youth delegate of CCMW's My Canada Project. My experiences have taught how to become a leader and conversely how to work well in teams. I am comfortable with meeting new people and have always been one to voice my opinion. Though I have more affiliations, what remained a constant fact in all of my experiences was the lack of unity among Muslims. As VP External I will not only be a representative for non-Muslims, but for the Muslims who are hesitant to join MSA. My goal as VP External is to increase associations with U of T and it's participants as well as the general community. I also plan to represent U of T Muslim students as progressive participants with strong female involvement in areas of major decision-making. As Vice President External I plan to improve MSA relationships with other groups in hopes of creating a stronger, more united and approachable society.

Vice-President Finance

Marzia Niamah

Assalamu Alaykum, dear brothers and sisters. It is my great privilege to be nominated for the position of Vice President: Finance. To accept this nomination, my biggest motivators were two close friends from the MSA, who have constantly pushed me to do things I did not believe I could. Simply being a member gave me confidence to realize I can. Since frosh, I have gotten to know the executive members, and my determination to be one of them one day has only strengthened.

As great as the MSA is, it could be better. As this year went by, one excuse I frequently heard was, "The MSA doesn't have enough money for that". For any executive position, dedication to improve and time management skills are important and for VP Finance, I believe accountability is as well. It would be my responsibility to ensure the MSA's money is properly spent and reports are made to keep the rest of the executive council involved. I have also volunteered at RIS last year, with Multimedia sales, and insha'Allah, my experience will benefit the MSA. I plan to also work with the appointed fundraising director, and share many ideas to help raise money to make events successful. All the money will insha'Allah be accounted for, with funds and expenses being managed in a systematic manner. If elected, I will try my best to act with the opinion and best interest of all members in mind and make the upcoming year a successful one, insha'Allah.

Noor Baig

I have had an outstanding first year at U of T and MSA has had an enormous role in that. I am always looking for opportunities to grow while contributing to the community, which is what I see MSA as. I am prepared to take a leadership role in the MSA and work with the Executive to improve the group's functioning and to take a step in a direction that would benefit future members.

I have dealt with all aspects of the process around finances from 2 years as treasurer for an active student group in high school to every step of the collection, accounting and forwarding of funds from a large fundraising event in my hometown. I am responsible, and very organized so I would be excellent at keeping track of all funds and necessary bookkeeping.

I would make efforts to maintain easy and secure methods of payment online for those wishing to contribute to MSA activities, including the option to make a note of what part of MSA activities the donors would like to contribute their funds. I would also encourage the establishment of stronger ties to our Alumni as they would help our current students, including the organization financially. I think reaching out to the local community beyond U of T MSA alumni could also prove very beneficial for MSA, and allow us to be less dependent on UTSU funding. I would work toward getting some committees into charitable status so donors would get tax deductions for their contributions, for example Community Affairs initiatives.

Vice-President Student Life

Ahsan Kathana

I am an electrical engineering student currently in third year. I am running for the positions of Student Life. My intention behind seeking this position is to become involved with the largest student group on campus. The position requires me to oversee and coordinate of the various events and activities planned by the committees. I have had little experience with organizing and coordinating events but I am committed to allocating my time and providing the Muslim students their best experiences. The MSA this year had lots of events planned out for the students to participate. But the turnout at these events is way too low for the number of Muslim students on campus. I intend to improve the attendance at these events by trying to get the opinion of the Muslim students in the first couple of weeks of school. This could be done through surveys after Jumma that ask the students for their opinions and suggestions as to what would make them attend these events. I am not going to say that by the end of next year the events are going to be packed but I would try (inshallah) to get students who attend the events regularly to bring along close friends and maybe they can start attending regularly. I intend to improve the relationships of Muslims amongst each other as many brothers and sisters who are Muslims but don't know about the events being held by the MSA. We need to organize more variety of events in which students can come and just get to know each other.

Attiya Waqqas

I view myself as someone who has an excellent educational background and relevant work experiences. But more than these attributes, I believe I also have the right leadership skills, by years of experience as an active member in the Muslim community. I believe I am adept at communication, planning, and organizing. More than having the desire and the commitment to lead, however, I am also a valuable team player. I've been working with various Muslim organizations such as Pickering Islamic Center or ISNA. I have taken part in some of the MSA activities, although this is my first time running for an executive position and alhamdulillah I got a chance to really help.

This coming year inshallah, I intend to create an easier and friendlier environment for local members by developing new events and activities. These events will be more sister oriented to give them the knowledge on how to deal with issues on campus. I also intend to increase contact with other local groups in order to gain more services for Muslim students as a VP for student life if elected.

This past year, I recommended event planning tips and developed active programs in various Muslim organizations as an active volunteer. Some of the activities included a sister's event, where there were guest lecturers discussing on the topics facing the Muslim sisters in this century.

As a VP for student life I will try my best with the will of Allah to accommodate the needs of Muslim students efficiently.

Iman Siwalem

Assalam Alaikum everyone!

My name is Iman and I'm running for VP Student Life. And I am the energy bunny that we all need! I did a lot with last years MSA Frosh such as registration and filling in for last minute event planning. In the beginning of the year I initiated sister get-togethers on campus. I'm very approachable, friendly and determined. All these are characteristics that are important when dealing with all kinds of students. Many of you have voiced concerns about the lack of student life due to our huge campus. I hope to resolve these issues by making sure that TGIJ and Yo Bro start off in September with a variety of activities, that we have a successful Frosh event so students are included from the very beginning. I also hope to make the MSA more inclusive by having events that will appeal to a wider group and making sure your needs are met and concerns heard through your feedback and by interacting with you. Most importantly I want to hear what YOU want to see done. From Sport tournaments, to MSA retreats during the break after stressful exams and formal dinners, this is all something I can offer you. Vote for a better student life and vote for the little one!

Zena Chaudhry

Assalam'alaikum, my name is Zena Chaudhry and I am currently completing a specialist degree in 'Crime, Deviance, and Law'. I am running for the VP of Student Life position for the UTSG MSA. As the VP of Student Life, I would be available for consultation to the general body and I would generate feedback from the Muslim students on how their needs are or are not being met on and off campus. I will work towards developing better strategies to meet students' needs and I hope to create a space where every Muslim student feels accepted. I will be working with the directorships which seek to advance student life on campus and I look forward to working closely with those committees to make sure that student needs are being met. I will seek to take care of your needs and I would love to hear the ideas that the students have and work through them with you. I have attended a session with the Office of Student Life, where we discussed options available to student groups and how there can be incentives and more services added to what the MSA already receives. The ideas that I have include, but are not limited to: an interuniversity sports day, more sporting events for sisters and, if possible, a golf cart or Zipcar account in order to make organizing and putting together events, easier. Insh'Allah, I look forward to working with all of you in order to make your MSA fit your needs.

Vice President Social Advancement

Areeba Jawaid

As-salaamu-alaikum.

In the upcoming year I will be continuing my full time undergraduate studies. This year I have been working as a FaithsAct fellow at the Multi-Faith Centre, empowering young adults of different religious backgrounds to use their faith as their motivation to work with others towards a common social justice issue. Our group is just establishing itself on campus and the larger Toronto Community so that they can raise awareness and resources for the millennium development goals and more importantly to reduce the number of deaths caused by Malaria. Last summer, I was blessed to have visited Malawi and learn from religious and community leaders about how they have used their already existing faith networks and friendships to create positive social change. My experiences have enabled me to work with different faith communities, to bring awareness to issues such as Malaria, women/youth empowerment, poverty and many others.

I am keen in advancing the work that MSA already does through the community affairs and students for world justices committees. My goal is to bring together awareness/educational campaigns (i.e lectures, seminars and workshops) and action oriented events (i.e sandwich runs. habitat builds), in order to provide MSA members with enriching experiences where they can both learn about social justice issues and work to resolve them.

Lastly I hope to work closely with other MSA executives and assist them in accomplishing similar goals, in order to raise the profile of Religion and more importantly Islam as a source for good in the world.

Zena Chaudhry

Assalam'alaikum, my name is Zena Chaudhry and I am currently completing a specialist degree in 'Crime, Deviance, and Law'. I am running for the VP of Social Advancement position for the UTSG MSA. As the VP of Social Advancement, I would be offering guidance to MSA Directors and opening up various opportunities to them in relation to social advancement. I will also be overseeing and coordinating MSA directorships which are associated with social advancement which include community development and social justice activism. I would be available for consultation for students who face any issues about anything in the law and in the community. There are committees and groups on campus who are based on social justice issues and I would extend a hand to these committees under the MSA umbrella. I am currently involved in social justice issues and I have previously faced problems on campus and in the community in regards to law related issues. I would be available for any type of help that I can manage to give and I will make sure that the voices of concerned students are heard and taken into consideration. I am very passionate about issues in relation to justice activism and I also take Muslim involvement in the community as something which should be expanded upon and promoted. Insh'Allah, I look forward to working with all of you in order to make our MSA fit your needs.