

EXECUTIVE REPORT 2014/2015

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENTS' UNION

LOCAL 98, CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

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EXECUTIVE REPORT

Letter from the Executive Committee

Happy June!

Since we met last, the Executive Committee has been hard at work completing our transition and preparing for a busy summer and the year ahead.

We are celebrating World Pride in Toronto with the third annual and biggest ever Pride Picnic yet. We are building a UofT float for the parade on Sunday, June 29. This month, we've also organized a Mega Commission to allow our members to learn about and get involved in the events and campaigns the UTSU.

In the past few weeks, we have also been all over campus doing outreach around the provincial elections, ensuring students are aware of the issues and knew how to go to the polls. This work will continue with the upcoming federal by-elections in the Trinity-Spadina riding, which includes part of the St. George campus, and the municipal elections in October.

Unfortunately, last month was also marked by the tragic loss of Ali Saeed, a former associate and a close friend to many of us. We invite all members of the University of Toronto community to join us in celebrating his life at a campus memorial on Monday, June 24.

We look forward to seeing most members of the Board of Directors at this year's retreat, as we learn about our collective rights and responsibilities and shape the work of the UTSU over the next year.

All the best,

University of Toronto Students' Union Executive Committee



EXECUTIVE REPORT

President

IN THIS REPORT:

1. OISE
2. Mega Commission
3. Tri-Campus Undergraduate Meeting
4. Meeting with the Varsity
5. Memorial for Ali Saeed
6. Pride
7. Pride Pub
8. Pride Picnic
9. Pride Parade
10. Tiananmen Vigil
11. Family Care Office

1. OISE

On Thursday, June 13 we participated in an information exchange session on the recently announced cut to the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), UofT's Faculty of Education. The University of Toronto has received significant negative media attention and has been condemned by other universities for this controversial decision.

At this meeting, we had the opportunity to hear from members of the University of Toronto Faculty Association, the Graduate Students' Union, United Steelworkers (Local 1998) the Canadian Union of Public Employees (Locals 3902 and 3907) and other groups that represent students, staff, and faculty within OISE. Representatives from each of these groups expressed significant concerns regarding the lack of consultation and exclusion from the decision-making process, and the rushing of a monumental decision that could have a far-reaching impact on the University of Toronto and education within the province as a whole.

We spoke to the consequent termination of various successful concurrent teaching education programs, a significant loss for undergraduate students at the University of Toronto. We also raised concerns about the increased unaffordability of pursuing a teaching degree at the University of Toronto, as the two Master's teaching programs offered by OISE cost over \$2000 more in tuition fees.

We will continue to work with the various stakeholders around this issue, and to address the broader concerns around the lack of democracy and transparency in University decision-making processes.

2. MEGA COMMISSION

On Thursday, June 23, we will be holding a Mega Commission. It will begin with a brief introduction highlighting the structure and mandate of the Union. Members will form breakout groups based on which of the five commissions they are interested in joining. This is an opportunity for students to learn more about their students' union, and share their ideas for events, campaigns and new services. Refreshments will be provided to all attendees.

3. TRI-CAMPUS UNDERGRADUATE MEETING

On May 23, we attended a tri-campus meeting and training session with the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union, the Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students, and the Scarborough Campus Students' Union. Discussion included key priorities and opportunities for collaboration over the upcoming year, including the celebration of Pride, Orientation events and voter awareness campaigns for the provincial and municipal elections. There was training on the complex governance structure of the University, which was particularly helpful for new Executive Committee members.

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4. MEETING WITH THE VARSITY

Members of the Executive Committee met with Danielle Klein and James Flynn, Editor-in-Chief and News Editor of The Varsity newspaper, respectively. This was an excellent opportunity to learn about The Varsity's plans for the upcoming year, and to identify new opportunities to promote events and campaigns to the membership.

5. MEMORIAL FOR ALI SAEED

The University of Toronto Students' Union mourns the loss of Ali Saeed, who passed away on May 10, 2014. Ali was a dedicated, principled student activist who gave much of his time to the UTSU as a volunteer, as former Associate Vice-President University Affairs, and as a talented photographer who captured many moments at our events. He was also involved in the Muslim Students' Association and as an Executive of the Arts and Science Students' Union. Many students across campus will also remember him as perpetually cheerful; always smiling and quick to offer support when needed. We are inspired by Ali's compassion for others, commitment to social justice and tireless work for students in the various roles he held. Ali's contributions strengthened our community and we are privileged to have known him and worked with him.

We are working with the Arts and Science Students' Union and the Muslim Students' Association to organize a campus memorial for Ali, which will be held on Monday, June 23 from 11:30 to 13:00 at the Multifaith Centre. There will be a short service, followed by lunch. All members of the University of Toronto community are welcome to attend.

6. PRIDE

We have been working the University of Toronto Pride Planning Committee, coordinated by the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office (SGDO) to recognize and celebrate Pride on campus. There are many exciting events being held across UofT this year, with World Pride being held in Toronto this summer. For more information on the various Pride events or to get involved, please contact Vice-President Equity Najiba Sardar at vpequity@utsu.ca

7. PRIDE PUB

On Friday, June 20, the Pride Pub will be held at Hart House. This event will include a community fair and barbecue in the afternoon, and then will transition to a dance party in the evening.

8. PRIDE PICNIC

The third annual Pride Picnic will be held on Wednesday, June 25 at noon, on our lawn. We are proud to collaborate with the UTMSU, SCSU, APUS, the LGBTQOUT Centre, Out@UTM, and SC:OUT to host this exciting event, which grows larger every year. This year's picnic will feature a free barbecue, music, a scavenger hunt facilitated by LGBTQOUT and more.

9. PRIDE PARADE

We are coordinating a float for the University of Toronto contingent in the World Pride Parade, in collaboration with APUS, SCSU, UTMSU, and a group of dedicated volunteers from across the University. The parade will be held on Sunday, June 29. The float will be available as an accessibility vehicle for any members of the UofT community who are unable to march for the duration of the parade. UofT's contingent will also include a samba band, and the SGDO will be providing matching T-shirts for all attendees. UofT will also have a presence in the Dyke March on June 28 and the Trans March on June 27.

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Vice-President Internal & Services

10. TIANANMEN VIGIL

On Sunday, June 1, we participated in an annual vigil held by the Toronto Association for Democracy in China in recognition of the Tiananmen Square massacre. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the massacre. Over two decades ago, we erected a monument to the back of our office in memory of the thousands of students injured and killed by their government for expressing dissent and fighting for social change. President Yolen Bollo-Kamara was invited to give remarks alongside Olivia Chow, a representative from Amnesty International and others.

11. FAMILY CARE OFFICE

We work with the Family Care Office to distribute the Dollars for Daycare grant, which helps offset high costs for our members who have to care for dependents while pursuing their degrees. Every UTSU member pays 50 cents per semester into this fund. We recently received several thank-you letters from recipients of the grant, which are included in an appendix in this package. For more information, please contact President Yolen Bollo-Kamara at president@utsu.ca.

IN THIS REPORT:

1. Associates to the Executive
2. Orientation Coordinators
3. CUPE Employer Training Session
4. BOAR Retreat
5. Homecoming Committee
6. Income Tax Clinic
7. Student Leadership Conference
8. Member Services Handbook
9. Health & Dental Plan

1. ASSOCIATES TO THE EXECUTIVE

In the first week of May, the Executive Committee members began the hiring process for an associate(s). The job postings were posted online and each Executive Committee member received multiple applications. Each Executive member was given the opportunity to choose applicants to interview and ultimately who to hire. We would like to welcome Umair Qadeer, Jess Leduc-Robert, Sania Khan, Hank Ko, Yasmeen Emadi, Bukky Adeyinka to the team! For more information about the Associate application process, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

2. ORIENTATION COORDINATORS

We hired two part-time Orientation Coordinators who have been working on the events and the logistics for UTSUFest 2014. The Executive team would like to congratulate Alex Evangelista and Lis Martinez, our 2014 Orientation Coordinators. For more information about Orientation or to join the Orientation Team, the orientation coordinators at oc@utsu.ca.

3. CUPE EMPLOYER TRAINING SESSION

On May 21, 2014, the Executive committee took part in the yearly Canadian Union of Public Employees employer training session held at the Ryerson University Student Centre. In this employer training session, Executives attended presentations about their role as employers, how to properly interact and engage with their employees, expectations and responsibilities of their employees. The majority of the Executive Committee attended the training session including President, Yolen Bollo-Kamara, Vice-President Internal & Services, Cameron Wathey, Vice-President Equity Najiba Ali Sardar, and Vice-President Campus Life, ZiJian Yang. Vice-President External Grayce Slobodian informed us that she was not going to be able to attend beforehand due class. For more information about the CUPE employer training sessions, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services, Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

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Vice-President Internal & Services

4. BOAR RETREAT

The Board of Directors, Orientation Team, and Associates Retreat (BOAR) is taking place on Friday, June 20 to Sunday, June 22, 2014. The retreat will be at the Kempenfelt Conference Centre in Innisfil, Ontario. The Retreat is an opportunity for the Board of Directors to gain a better understanding of their role and responsibilities, as well as the mandate of the Union. We have been working hard to develop sessions and workshops to assist you as a Director during the year. This weekend is also a time to plan our initiatives and goals for the year. On Sunday June 22 from 10:00 – 14:00, there will be a board meeting to conclude the retreat. For more information about the BOAR retreat, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

5. HOMECOMING COMMITTEE

Last year, leaders from colleges, faculties, and campuses across UofT joined together to revive Homecoming at the University of Toronto. We agreed that school spirit around UofT can wane after orientation, therefore, representatives from across our three campuses worked together to develop an amazing event. The first home game of the Varsity Blues football team for the academic year was on September 14. We felt this would be a great opportunity to showcase the very energy we instill during Orientation week for the over 10,000 incoming students. The student representatives from the Woodsworth College Students' Association, New College Student Council, Physical Health and Education Undergraduate Association, St. Michaels College Student Union, Scarborough Campus Students' Union, University College Literary and Athletics Society, Innis College Students Society, the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union, University of Toronto Students' Union and the Victoria University Students' Administrative Council worked side by side to develop a pre-game launch and pep rally for the game.

The staff of Varsity Athletics and the Office of Student Life were very supportive of the programming created and provided the student societies with various resources to help bring excitement to the promotion of the home opener and the game day activities. The first meeting for UofT Homecoming was held on Monday, June 2, 2014 from 16:00 – 18:00 at the Varsity Pavilion room. This meeting was an overview of what we want to do throughout the summer and an overview of last year's event. The committee will meet frequently throughout the summer to finalize the logistics and planning of UofT Homecoming 2014. For more information about the Homecoming Committee, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

6. INCOME TAX CLINIC

Every year, we host income tax clinics in the basement of our office at 12 Hart House Circle. This year, students were able to book appointments online and get their taxes done for free between 9:00 – 16:00, from April 1 to May 7, 2014. Training was offered to volunteers online for the first time this year through the Canada Revenue Agency. Students were also able to access UFile for free through the Union's website and by using the Canadian Federation of Students promotion code FAY1493. In total, we assisted 500 students over the period. Appointments still occurred regularly after the official deadline for submitting taxes had passed. We saw an increase in international students accessing our tax clinic service this year. For more information on the UTSU income tax clinics, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

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Vice-President Internal & Services

7. STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

From Saturday May 10 to Sunday May 11, 2014 members of UTSU attended the Student Leadership Conference hosted by Student Life at the UofT St. George Campus. This conference was held at the University of Toronto Mississauga campus and provided an opportunity for the UTSU Executives to meet with student leaders from colleges, faculties and clubs across campus. We look forward to collaborating with different groups on campus to work on projects that strengthen our members' experiences along with providing better services and events, and promoting student rights on campus. Unfortunately, there were concerns about the conduct of one of the keynote speakers and about the structure of several of the workshops. The UTSU is following up with the Office of Student Life to address these issues. President Yolen Bollo-Kamara, Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey, Vice-President Equity Najiba Ali Sardar, Vice-President University Affairs Pierre Harfouche, Associate Executive Igor Samardzic, Woodsworth Representative Josephine Petrolo and St. Michael's College Representative Lakisha Ledchumanan were all in attendance. For more information on the Student Leadership Conference, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

8. MEMBER SERVICES HANDBOOK

The 2014-2015 member services handbook is complete and has been sent to print. This year we worked diligently with our incredible in-house graphic designer to design both the cover and the interior of the handbook. This year's handbook includes Executive portfolios, Board of Director information, and material on our services, campaigns and events. The handbook's design is based on the theme of university students going "Back to School". For more information, please contact Vice-President Internal & Services Cameron Wathey at vpinternal@utsu.ca.

9. HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

As reported in the March 2014 Board of Directors meeting, the Union group insurance plans continue to be used frequently with increases in paramedical services and high utilization of dental benefits. A fee increase of 6.6 per cent per year, per student for the Health Plan (\$9.11) and Dental Plan (\$8.21) was approved for the 2014-2015 benefit year. The fee increase accommodates the high use of the members' plans, industry inflations, and increase in benefits. With claims for antidepressants leading the list for prescription drug claims, the removal of the co-pay for prescription medication and the addition of counseling/psychology benefits have been included in the plans, effective September 1, 2014.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Vice-President External

IN THIS REPORT:

1. International Workers' Day
2. TTC Riders Rally
3. Provincial Elections
4. Municipal Elections
5. Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario Executive Meeting
6. Skills
7. Canadian Federation of Students National General Meeting

1. INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY

On May 1 we attended a rally on International Worker's Day, also known as May Day. This was to show support for the demonstrations taking place on this day against unfair and unsafe working conditions that are endured by overseas and domestic workers. This was also to show support and raise awareness for seasonal and full-time student workers. This action allowed us to interact with other labour unions and other students' unions that attended the rally as well. President Yolen Bollo-Kamara, Vice President Cameron Wathey, Vice President External Grayce Slobodian, and UTMSU Designate Ebi Agbeyegbe were in attendance. For more information, contact Vice President External Grayce Slobodian at vpexternal@utsu.ca.

2. TTC RIDERS RALLY

On May 5, members of the UTSU attended a TTC Riders and unpaid internships rally. That started at Nathan Philips Square outside City Hall (100 Queen St W), and marched to Queen's Park (111 Wellesley Street W) in the "overcrowded bus". This rally was demanding more TTC funding from the provincial budget in order to lower fares and increase service. For more information, contact Vice-President External Grayce Slobodian at vpexternal@utsu.ca.

3. PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

During May and up until June 12 we have been meeting with residence heads to inform students about the Provincial Elections and how to help students apply for a special ballot when living on residence. We have also done outreach to students on a regular basis to inform students about the elections and which issues may affect students the most. For more information, contact Vice-President External Grayce Slobodian at vpexternal@utsu.ca.

4. MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

We has held meetings with administration heads to collaborate and coordinate how to get students involved and excited about the elections. We have also been invited to be part of creating working groups to meet all goals of this campaign. We have also conducted outreach to students on a regular basis to tell students about the upcoming Municipal Elections and share with them which issues may affect students the most. For more information, contact Vice-President External Grayce Slobodian at vpexternal@utsu.ca

5. CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS-ONTARIO EXECUTIVE MEETING

In May, President Yolen Bollo-Kamara and Vice President External Grayce Slobodian attended the CFS-Ontario Executive Meeting. This meeting is one of four meetings held throughout the year to oversee and direct the campaigns and services of the CFS-Ontario. This first meeting served as an introduction for new Executive Committee members, while allowing them to share local campaigns and services for the Ontario office to support. The initial deadlines for bulk-purchasing orders, along with the annual Skills Symposium and Ontario Semi-Annual General Meeting dates and registration deadlines were put forward. For more information, contact Vice-President External Grayce Slobodian at vpexternal@utsu.ca

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Vice-President External & Vice-President Campus Life

6. SKILLS

From May 23 until May 25, members of the UTSU and seven other individuals attended the Skills symposium at York University. During this weekend members engaged in a fruitful workshops such as: how to hold a successful meeting, how to run a campaign, creating a message box etc. Individuals also spent the weekend working and connecting with students from across Ontario to build relationships that can carry throughout the year on campaigns and similar issues our schools may be facing. President Yolen Bollo-Kamara, Vice President Cameron Wathey, Vice President External Grayce Slobodian, Vice President Equity Najiba Ali Sardar, Vice President Campus Life ZiJian Yang, Vice President University Affairs Pierre Harfouche, Executive Director Sandra Hudson, Executive Associate Igor Samardzic, Ne College Representative Nick Grant, Professional Faculty At-Large Representative Andi Musa, Chinese Undergraduate Association at UofT President Robert Wang, Woodsworth College Representative Sydney Lang, Black Students' Association Representative Kadija Tulloch, and Vice-President External Associate Hank Ko were in attendance.

7. CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING

From June 4 until June 9, members from the UTSU attended the Canadian Federation of Students-National Annual General Meeting along with students' unions from across Canada. Along with the workshops, there were discussions on various issues that affected Canadian students such as ESL programs, loans in the entirety of Newfoundland and ending unpaid internships for students. We also participated in the annual decision-making processes for the CFS, with our delegates representing various constituencies at Policy Committee, Budget Committee, Operational Services and Development Committee, and Campaigns and Government Relations Forum. We used these meetings as an opportunity to observe and discuss the proposed bylaw, policy, and campaign initiatives brought forward by other students' unions.

IN THIS REPORT:

1. Orientation
2. Clubs
3. Esports
4. UofT's Got Talent

1. ORIENTATION

Our Orientation team started planning for the 2014 UTSUFest at the beginning of May, and have made very exciting progress. For sponsorship this year, the team have re-established connections with previous partners, as well as being acquainted with some new potential sponsors. The team has created separate committees for the Parade and Homecoming given the tremendous logistical coordination required for both events from fellow college and faculty councils. Extensive planning has been put into the other events as well. The Orientation team is exploring possibilities with the alternative after party. In addition to the movie screening last year, this year we are looking to expand the list of activities to having video game stations, a tea and coffee bar and a board game room, among others. Preparation for Clubs Day is nearly complete and we would like to introduce a cool down station and Executive Meet-n-Greet BBQ in the centre of the lawn for students who wish to relax during the event. For more information, contact Vice-President Campus Life Zijian Yang at vpcluslife@utsu.ca.

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Vice-President Campus Life

2. CLUBS

Club recognition expired on April 30. Every single club that wishes to be recognized by us must reapply for recognition, which opened May 1. More than 150 clubs have obtained recognition for this year already. Registration for Clubs Day and Street Festival are also open, and they are steadily filling up. Last year, more than 300 clubs participated in the events with many remaining on a waiting list. As a result, we have decided to limit each club to a single table unless they request special accommodation that would have to be approved by the Orientation Team. Finally, the first Clubs Executive Training sessions will occur on July 2 and July 12 in order to accommodate both those who are working during weekdays and those who are not free during weekends. The training session is required for all clubs who wish to apply for UTSU funding in the upcoming school year. At these sessions, clubs will learn about all the services the union offers, as well as how to correctly write and assemble funding applications in order to avoid unnecessary delays in their approval. For more information, contact Vice-President Campus Life ZiJian Yang at vpcampuslife@utsu.ca.

3. E SPORTS

The Vice-President Campus Life had a meeting regarding with the University of Toronto League Association (UTLA) in co-hosting the proposed Esports Tournament. UTLA had some questions regarding the details and logistical requirements of the tournament, which were addressed. They were willing to cooperate and the Board will be provided with updates on further progress towards putting together this event. For more information, contact Vice-President Campus Life ZiJian Yang at vpcampuslife@utsu.ca.

4. UOFT'S GOT TALENT

Both the Vice-President Campus Life at the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union and the Scarborough Campus Students' Union were enthusiastic regarding the proposed tri-campus talent show. However, there has been difficulty deciding on the right time to host the events. Input and suggestions from the Board will be appreciated. For more information, contact Vice-President Campus Life ZiJian Yang at vpcampuslife@utsu.ca.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Vice-President Equity & UTMSU Designate

IN THIS REPORT:

1. XAO
2. WOMEN IN POLITICS

1. XAO

Planning for, eXpression Against Oppression (also known as XAO) has began. XAO has a series of social justice based events occurring at least once each year. This year there is interest in bringing a world-famous, local, Canadian director to campus. Oscar-nominated director Deepa Mehta has created many controversial films throughout her career. For example, her film “Fire” (1998) was one of the first films in India to openly display queer relationships. Following the release of the film, there was dialogue in India about sexuality. “Fire” is one of three films in a trilogy Mehta directed. By bringing Mehta to campus we would be supporting local Canadian talent as well as celebrating her fearless work on important issues. To get involved in helping organize this event or other events planned for XAO, please contact Vice-President Equity Najiba Ali at vpequity@utsu.ca.

2. WOMEN IN POLITICS

It is important to celebrate our admirable women Canadian politicians. However, it is also extremely significant to comprehend the constant barriers women face when entering a career field generally dominated by men. The purpose of this event is to invite some of our local, successful, female politicians and have them present on a panel about what barriers and obstacles they have faced and continue to face throughout the course of their careers. This is a conversation that does not take place often enough and this year we hope to focus on issues that affect our students, such as women in male-dominated areas of study.

We also plan to highlight intersectional differences. The goal is to hopefully invite high-profile politicians such as Olivia Chow and Kathleen Wynne and have an informative, educational and inspirational session on successful women in leadership positions. If you are interested in planning this event please contact Vice-President Equity Najiba Ali Sardarat vpequity@utsu.ca.

IN THIS REPORT:

1. Minimum Wage
2. Food Consultation
3. Generation Vote Elections Campaign

1. MINIMUM WAGE RALLY

We attended a minimum wage Day of Action rally on the 14 of May. We educated passerby at College and University Avenue on the push for a \$14 minimum wage and took part in an obstacle course that played on the problems of balancing tuition fees and everything else in life while getting paid minimum wage. For more information, please contact UTMSU Representative Ebi Agbeyegbe at ebi@utsu.ca.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

UTMSU Designate

2. FOOD CONSULTATION

The university recently hired an external company called Kaizen to look into the current food systems at University of Toronto Mississauga to see if it would be feasible to move into an in-house operating system or put forward a plan and recommendations for hiring a new food service provider. On May 8, UTMSU designate Ebi Agbeyegbe, UTMSU President Hassan Havili and UTMSU Blind Duck General Manager, Shane Madhani met with representatives from Kaizen to discuss what roles we will be playing in the process and what our priorities are moving forward. There is a meeting scheduled with Kaizen on May 21, where we will bring forward our priorities and let them know exactly what students need. For more information, please contact UTMSU Representative Ebi Agbeyegbe at ebi@utsu.ca.

3. GENERATION VOTE ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN

During the month of May and June, the UTMSU designate, Ebi Agbeyegbe, President Yolen Bollokamara, Vice-President Campus Life, Zijian Yang, Vice-President Equity, Najiba Ali Sarder, Vice-President External, Grayce Slobodian and the associates and volunteers did various forms of outreach including general outreach, class talks and residence runs to get students to come out to vote in the Provincial elections. We also created a video with the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union encouraging students to vote. Material to educate first time voters on how to vote were created and distributed. For more information please contact UTMSU Representative Ebi Agbeyegbe at ebi@utsu.ca or Vice-President External Grayce Slobodian at vpexternal@utsu.ca.