

## President's Memo – July 2019

The University of Sydney Union (USU) this year reached the highest membership since 2006 and the introduction of VSU.

This month, I began the honour of leading the USU over the next year as its President.

A few thanks from me, first - Maya, Lachlan and Decheng. I cannot contain my excitement for the next year. We're going to smash it over the next year. I'm grateful for your support, and you guys have the difficult task of keeping me sane over the next year. I'm grateful for Tom. Tom is the best board director the USU never had. He has wonderful things to come and I look forward to hearing what comes from him. I'm grateful for the outgoing board of Adam, Liliana, Zhixian and especially, Claudia. You all gave me love, kept me sane, and ran a USU campaign that we can proud of.

### 1. Welcome to our new board.

I want to give a warm welcome to Nick, Cady, Oscar, Benny, Eve and Irene. This is your first board meeting. So far, your enthusiasm has been promising and I look forward to a productive year ahead with all of you.



*You all sit proudly above my desk.  
Don't let me forget that the President  
is a servant of the Board.*

### 2. Update on CEO

The USU has engaged *Kurtis Paige* initiatives to construct a shortlist of candidates for the role. We have expressly made clear that such a shortlist will be constructed from both external and internal candidates.

Following the construction of such shortlist, a panel will be appointed to interview the candidates and make a recommendation to board.

Currently, we are looking at such interviews taking place in September, with the start

date with a new CEO to be negotiated with he/she/them.

We understand that this period of change and renewal has been difficult, and we express our utter gratitude to our incredible staff for their patience.

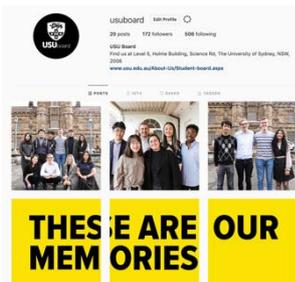
### 3. Update on University Meetings

Over the past few weeks, while the students have been on holidays, I've been filling my time meeting key University figures, and engaging in projects with the University.

- a. Liliana and I met with the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education), and the Vice-Principal (Operations). Liliana was very helpful in making introductions. We discussed our positive relationship, and our goals into the future.
- b. Liliana was also helpful in arranging for me to meet with the Vice Chancellor. That meeting is scheduled for the 5 September. I hope he brings a birthday cake.
- c. Draft Student Charter. The University is revising its Student Code of Conduct to be a Student Charter. I met with the University to have student input.
- d. Revision to policies on Student Unions. In addition, the University is revising its policies related to student unions. Alistair and I had a fruitful conversation about revising this.
- e. Safer Communities – I'm especially glad to be able to continue attending Safer Communities. We had a fruitful discussion about issues such as the consent module and combatting racism on campus. I made the offer that with regards to any events that the University holds, that we would be thrilled to do events in Partnership. They welcomed that offer.

It's been a busy month of meetings, but it's been good to not get lonely in the Winter. We can't all go to Bali!

### 4. Board Kissing Booth/@USUBoard and our focus on engagement



The new executive has a particular focus on engaging students and making sure they're aware of what we do, and what we offer to students. As such, the executive have been working on two projects this month to kick that in action.

Firstly, our new Insta is live and we're working on it.

This will be followed up by further projects in WeChat and Twitter.

We aim to really let students know what we're doing, as soon as it's happening. To increase student access and remind them that we're there for them.

Secondly, we've also been working with S&M on a "Kissing Booth". The idea here is a portable office that we can take to Eastern Avenue, the Con, or Westmead! We would engage with students and let them know the great things the USU has been up to. We look forward to seeing this come to life.



## 5. NUS EdCon

During the first week of July, the National Union of Students hosted their Education Conference here at USyd. This was very useful, as I was able to pop down for the sessions that I thought relevant.

I attended three sessions worth noting.

1. 50% SSAF – it's possible!
2. Talking about Mental Health.
3. Plenary: Sexual Assault Survey

I learned a lot from each of these sessions, and took extensive notes from other student unions about what we could be doing here. Stay tuned for these ideas to be turned into realities. In addition, I hosted my own session with over 100 attendees – about how to focus on issues-based campaigns with social media. While I was not necessarily representing the USU in doing this, I do think it's positive for us to engage in the National Union. ßßß

Also – we assisted the conference in offering the use of our Identity spaces for the conference. As far as I'm aware, there were no incidents from this and I'm sure we're all happy that someone was in these spaces during the holidays!

## 6. C+S Advisory Panel and new funding model

Principal among these developments is the Clubs and Societies Advisory Panel, which I was fortunate enough to chair twice last month, which successfully delivered on our commitment to receive student feedback and guidance on the way we structure club and society engagement and funding moving forward. I'm delighted to report the panel made up of students and programs staff was a great success and that we reached a conclusion everyone was confident about.

Lachlan would also note that a change to funding for clubs and societies was a common theme in many campaign platforms for our newly elected board directors, so you're welcome, you're delivering on your promises already.

I'd like to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of Jodi, Kiriti and the whole programs team, your flexibility and agility with this process in particular has been stellar.

## 7. Finances:

The Exec would like to introduce budget forecasting over multiple years to have some sort of long-term strategy in place for the USU, which Rebecca plans to implement. This is part of our broader plans to emphasise strategic thinking and will tie into the development of our new strategic plan for 2020 and beyond.

As well as our regular meetings, we will be looking towards having monthly meetings with Rebecca and the first year directors to ensure they have a thorough understanding of our financial statements and the financial literacy to ask higher level questions at Board meetings.

There have been a lot of internal and external changes occurring over the past month which may lead to some unforeseen costs to our bottom line over the coming months. We seek to ensure damage from this is limited and are still working towards a positive operating contribution, with a great result YTD (which is a testament to the hard work of our staff).

#### 8. DSP training

Decheng has been arranging sessions with Ruolin and Benny about the introduction of DSP duties. Those sessions will occur soon after this board meeting as Ruolin, Benny and Decheng recently come back from overseas. In addition, Decheng will briefly introduced our new DSPs to our Pulp and WeChat editors. Decheng will exercise DSP dues before training sessions.

#### 9. **The next year**

It's going to be a big, bold year for the USU. I look forward to us all working on it together.

The vision of the USU is **to provide the best university experience in Australia**. Don't let a day go by that we don't think about that.