

Application for SSMU Award

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SSMU CLUB OF THE YEAR

Club: Muslims Students' Association

Dear Committee:

I am nominating the Muslims Students' Association for this year's SSMU Club of the Year Award. The Muslims Students' Association (MSA) has done a huge amount on campus in the past two semesters, and it has impacted students in many different ways.

The MSA is McGill's biggest campus club with a membership that I have stopped counting. The active student participation of the MSA is phenomenal, and thus there are two committees designated for specific tasks:

1. Social Service Committee (SSC) – Thus committee is active in providing assistance to underprivileged in the Montreal community. This is either through assistance programs or fundraising projects
2. Muslim Educational Group (MEG) – This group within the MSA was started up just this year. The main mandate is to educate Muslims within the MSA on psychological issues such as self-esteem, leadership, and emotional-awareness. Each member of this group is part of a subgroup which researches a certain topic and then educates the rest of the group on that topic. Eventually, MEG plans on educating the Montreal community through workshops and events.

The MSA holds many events throughout the semester that give it a unique presence on campus. Some trademark events of the MSA are the *Islamic Economics Conference*, *Fast-a-thon*, *Ramadan dinners*, and *MSA FROSH*.

What made this year an exceptional year for the MSA, and the reason I believe the MSA is worthy of this award, is the amount of interaction and outreach that the MSA has done in the past 2 semesters. The MSA started the academic year with a first of its kind in Canada, the *Islamic Economics Conference*. Specialists from across the globe were flown in to present. The events success has encourage students from a variety of campuses both in Quebec and Ontario to make this conference an annual one. Throughout Ramadan (the holy Muslim month of fasting), the MSA served dinners to Muslims students but also actively invited different campus clubs to share the breaking of the fast. The *Fast-a-thon*

was another new addition to MSA's events were McGill student were invited to fast the day and break their fast with their fellow Muslims.

The winter semester kicked off immediately with events that further fostered interaction with the McGill community. 'Hajj: The Journey of a Lifetime' was screened to give insight to those interested in learning about the yearly pilgrimage. During the second week of February in collaboration with Council of American Muslims Professionals a panel discussion was held to address the recent developments associated with the caricatures depicting the Prophet. The weekend of March 10th Maha Hamawi a well known and versed speaker on women issues was flown in from California to present a series of workshops and lectures related to Muslim women in the west.

This year, the MSA has done a truly remarkable job of outreaching beyond its Muslims membership and to the general McGill community. All these events and activities have exemplified the active participation of the student body that the SSMU prides itself upon. And the MSA continues to grow and add the SSMU's diverse and multifaceted nature. It is without any reservation that I nominate the MSA of the **SSMU Club of the Year**.

Sincerely,

Bassem Ghamian
Microbiology and Immunology U3

(Enclosed: List of MSA Event)

LIST OF MSA EVENTS 2004-2005

MSA Graduation Dinner June 11th 2005

sports

Lac Tamaracouta Reserve 10th July 2005

To enjoy the summer a trip was organized by MSA McGill, to the gorgeous and breathtaking Lac Tamaracouta Reserve. Activities included swimming canoeing and other sports (e.g. football, volleyball etc). Breakfast and a huge BBQ were also organized at the park. For transport buses were hired.

MSA Frosh 29-30th August 2005

To provide new Muslim Students an Islamic alternative to Frosh MSA held its own Frosh. The activities included BBQ at Mt. Royal, Ice Skating, laser quest and Go-carting. A trip to the botanical Gardens was also scheduled but due rain it had to be cancelled. All participants were given a Frosh which included a mug, agenda and various tourist maps.

Islamic Economics Conference 23-24th September 2006

Welcome Dinner Sept 2005

To introduce the new Muslims students to other Muslims on campus a outdoor welcome dinner was to be organized at the three bears at center campus yet due to rain it was moved inside to the Shatner cafeteria. The dinner was free for all new students and returning students were charged \$4.00. Speeches were given by the MSA president as well as other members of the MSA. After dinner games were played (e.g. tug of war and three-legged race)

Ramadan 2 Oct -1 Nov 2005

During the month of Ramadan MSA McGill organized free dinners in the Shatner Cafeteria open to all Muslim students and guests. The food was cooked at Concordia University and many students from McGill helped in the cooking. Food was served every weekday for the 4 weeks. Along with this congregational evening and night prayers held everyday.

Fast-a-thon 30th Oct 2005

To increase awareness of Ramadan and the show how Muslims pray and open their fast on the 30th of October. Students were encouraged to fast the day and join the Muslims to break their fast, in addition numerous students groups were invited to join this experience. When it was time to open the fast dates and milk were passed around. After praying a 3 course dinner was served. Sponsors raised funds on behalf of all those who fasted. All funds raised went to the Montreal Children's Hospital and AMAL center for children and women.

Eid-ul-Fitr 2nd Nov 2005

The end of the month of Ramadan the festival of Eid was celebrated first by congregational prayers in Shatner ballroom followed by refreshments.

Pakistan Quake Fundrasing October 2005

To raise money for the people affected by the October 8th quake which hit the sub-Indian continent the Pakistani Student Association (PSA) in collaboration with MSA organized a fundraiser. For three days members of the PSA and MSA stood at the Roddick and Milton Gates with donation boxes. In addition donations were collected after the Friday congregational prayers, altogether almost \$11000 was collected.

Eid-ul-Adha 11th Jan 2006

Eid-ul-Adha (Festival at the end of the Hajj) was celebrated first by congregational prayers in Shatner ballroom followed by refreshments.

Movie Night: "Hajj: A Journey of a Lifetime 13th Jan 2006

To enlighten those who are interested in learning about the yearly pilgrimage both Muslim and non-Muslim 'Hajj: A journey of a lifetime' was screened in Shatner's Luv Buckman

Ice cream Social 9th Feb 2006

Coinciding with the end of the Genocide event was the Ice Cream Social. This event was especially for the students who had started McGill in the winter semester. Students who had recently comeback from Saudi Arabia after performing Hajj spoke about their experience. In between the speeches Ice Cream was served.

Movie Night: 'MuslimBoarders' and 'The Corporation' March 2006

CAMP panel on the caricatures

Rockcliming 18th Feb 2006

Ski Trip to Mont Bromont 23rd Feb 2006

After the success of the second Ski Trip Organized by MSA last year another Ski Trip was organized during the study break. Many Muslims are international students and had never skied before and therefore it was a very exciting experience for them. The Ski Trip was organized to Mont Bromont and buses were arranged for transport. Over 80 skiers and boarders hit the slopes.

Maha Hamawi 10-12th March 2006

Asalam u alaikum (peace be onto you),

We, the MSA, would first like to congratulate everyone here tonight for their immense participation and hard work this year at McGill. You people, here tonight, are amongst a distinguished group of individuals who have truly made the SSMU a remarkable experience for all students. It is with great humbleness that the MSA accepts this award tonight. Countless individuals from all walks of life have had something to do with the MSA. To all these people, we say thanks you, and wish you the best in all your endeavors.

On a last note, the issue of the prayer space has been draining for many people, inside and outside of the MSA. To all those who are involved in this issue at any level, the MSA extends a special thank you, as your actions do not go unnoticed.

To everyone, keep us in your prayers, as we will do the same for you.

Wasalam u aliakum, (and peace onto you)

The Muslim Students' Association