



Chair Cowles and Board of Trustees,

With the academic year coming to an end, we thought it would be worthwhile to reminisce on the accomplishments that we've seen come to fruition over the past 12 months.

During the first week of April, we were finally able to reconvene students in-person for our first non-digital conference in nearly two years. Students were excited to be able to congregate with their peers across the state and attend sessions where they were able to learn about various topics regarding self-advocacy. We would like to give a shoutout to Paul Shepherd and Brent Glass for attending our social on Friday night, as well as to Trustees Morillo and Nishimura for attending our lunch on Saturday.

This year, we also launched the Student Leadership Program. For this program, Students United hires interns from our seven university campuses to work in a cohort throughout the spring semester. These internships cover various positions and responsibilities within the organization, and the interns engage as a cohort on shared learning outcomes throughout the semester. We're happy to say that this program has been quite successful, with both staff and interns finding value in the program, and we are looking forward to expanding this program in the future.

This year has also marked a new milestone for our students' engagement with the system office's councils and committees. This year, we had a record number of student appointments to these ASA workgroups, with fourteen different students serving on twelve separate groups. Additionally, we were happy to be involved in discussions involving the interpretation of Board Policy 2.3 and Procedure 2.3.1, the policies regarding student involvement in decision-making, which resulted in stronger consultative practices with our student senates on each campus. Lastly, we were very excited to see a student-written policy, Operating Instruction 2.3.1.1, reach the point of discussion and voting at the Policy Council. This operating instruction will assist colleges and universities in strengthening their voter registration efforts on campuses and include student input in the processes.

As we stated previously, our Board of Directors voted to fully support Minnesota State's Bonding and Supplemental Budget Requests. We testified on behalf of these priorities in the House Higher Education Committee, did training with student groups from all seven universities, and organized meetings with state legislators from our university communities across the state. From these meetings, and from reviewing the omnibus bills in the House and Senate, we know that Minnesota State is not getting the requested funding to support our students and campuses. However, we know that



student voice is critical, and we are continuing to advocate for these requests. After our comments at this meeting, we'll be heading back to the office to have another meeting with legislative leadership. We know that our universities need these funds to support our students and we will continue to do everything we can to support these requests.

Over the next month we will be visiting our campuses' student senates for the second time this semester to get more student feedback and consultation on our budget for this upcoming year. Since we saw them about two months ago, we have had over 50 students participate in our budget survey and we are excited to hear more and show them how their voices have influenced the budget that our board has approved!

As we move into this next year, there are a few big changes that are in the works. First, we want to congratulate the incoming State Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer that the board elected this month. We will also be transitioning into this next academic year with a new executive Director. We are grateful to Carlee Diggins for the great leadership that she provided over these past few years. She has been the Executive Director since the start of my Students United journey and has been the most influential mentor as I grew into the person I am today. Carlee, we are all excited for you as you move on to your new, exciting experiences, and we cannot wait to see the amazing things that you will continue to accomplish. We are still in the process of selecting a new Executive Director and will be announcing the board's decision in the coming months!

As we wrap up our year in the coming months and as the Co-Chair of the Scholarship and Alumni Board, we have been working towards our fundraising goals for the scholarships to support our students. We would like to invite you all for our annual Penny Golf Scramble, where we'll celebrate 35 years of Penny scholarships and fellowships. Join us as a golfer or sponsor on Thursday, June 2nd at 11:30 a.m. for lunch, a program and golf. We're at a new location: Gopher Hills Golf Course in Cannon Hills. We hope to see you all there, and thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Emma Zellmer, 2021-2022 State Chair



*Arnav*

Arnav Maltre, 2021-2022 Vice Chair

*Pierre Young*

Pierre Young, 2021-2022 Treasurer