UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Annual Report
2023-2024



ALIA BAIG
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Serving as Student Body President of the University of Akron during the 2023-24 academic year has been an honor. This was never something I envisioned doing, but when the opportunity arose to create a platform and run in an election to serve students at UA, I was drawn to it. The YouAkron platform, created by myself and Vice President Cam Feezel, has encouraged projects and initiatives across campus to better the student experience. Its three pillars, Elevating the Campus Experience, Encouraging Student Excellence, and Developing a Lasting Community centered on areas most important to UA students.

Throughout the past year, YouAkron has delivered on the promises made while campaigning. Senators have improved campus through their Accessibility Tours which ensure all Zips can equally utilize our facilities, and the Campus Dining Experience Committee has collected your concerns and addressed them. Student excellence has been encouraged by providing recommendations to faculty and administration about revising course evaluations, and by highlighting campus resources through the Judicial Branch's advocacy events. Finally, the central theme of all projects and initiatives pursued under my leadership of USG has been community. Each and every program USG has planned and executed has served to connect different areas of campus and cultivate Zips pride.

The Zips Around the World Dinner celebrated the diversity of our student body, and the second annual Student Leader Summit helped student organizations develop deeper connections with one another. Our Giving Grams initiatives recognized the UA physical facilities staff and dining service workers, groups whose work often goes unnoticed. USG has also connected with community partners and encouraged more collaboration with the University. Our two events at the Akron Art Museum, Keith Haring Day and Night at the Museum, along with our annual Zips RubberDucks game have given you all the opportunity to go downtown and enjoy everything Akron has to offer.

It was an incredible opportunity to represent students across campus and to ensure that your experience at UA is the best one possible. You put your trust in myself and Vice President Feezel to create a team of dedicated USG members to pursue projects in your best interests. USG's success throughout this year would not have been possible without your support.

I'd also like to thank the many people who strengthened our impact on campus, including President Miller, Dr. Messina, university administrators across departments, Faculty Senate, and University Council. We appreciate their willingness to listen to our feedback and collaborate to support our goals. Finally, none of this would have been possible without USG's Directional Leadership Team, the amazing members of USG, and support from many areas of campus. Specifically, I would like to recognize Vice President Feezel for his support throughout the year along with USG Advisor Brandon Alexander.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I wish the best for USG and the University of the Akron in the future. Go Zips!

USG
FINANCIAL REVIEW

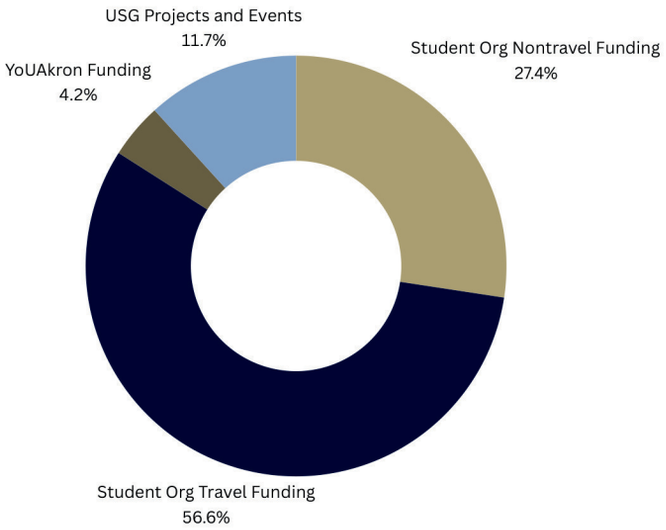
Undergraduate Student Government has the privilege of managing funds that sponsor travel and projects for the more than 300 student organizations on the University of Akron's Campus. We have been able to provide support to over 120 student organizations through the course of the 2023-2024 academic year and have pledged our support to various programs that will benefit the Zips community for years to come.

Student Org Allocations

Through the Undergraduate Activities Fund, USG has provided $147,555 to student organization. They have provided funding for...

- 55 student organizations to travel to conferences or professional development opportunities,
- 68 students organizations' projects and events

Additionally, the YouAkron platform fund has provided $6,927 to student organizations and co-sponsored initiatives and functions that fall under the platform pillars of Elevating Campus Experiences, Encouraging Student Excellence, and Developing a Lasting Community.





Allocations at Work

The Exercise Science Club attended the National ACSM Conference in Denver, Colorado where they had the opportunity to attend lectures, learn from research posters, and participate in testing a new E-stim workout equipment through the help of UAF Travel Funding.

UA Ambassadors hosted a banquet as a part of their annual "5 Under 35" Alumni Awards Event, fostering further connections and networking between attendees using UAF Nontravel Funding.

EXECUTIVE **BRANCH**

The Executive branch consists of appointed members, as well as the President and Vice-President that are elected by the undergraduate student body. Members of the Executive Branch work to carry out the USG Platform. Appointed members of USG include a variety of roles that focus on areas such as:

- Project and Event Facilitation
- Finance and Budget Review
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Community and Campus Engagement
- Membership Development
- Image and Marketing

All Executive Branch members play a vital role in USG's mission and activities throughout the academic year! Additionally, the Executive Branch facilitates three committees: Campus Dining Experience Committee, Mental Health Task Force, and Diversity Commitee. These committees, whose membership includes both USG and non-USG members, faciliate projects and events that align with their mission.

The YouAkron Platform

Throughout their experiences within the Undergraduate Student Government and at UA, both President Alia Baig and Vice President Cam Feezel have aimed to represent student thoughts, initiatives, and desires for change to the best of their ability. The YouAkron platform brings the students of the University of Akron to the forefront of USG's Mission. They believe that in focusing on UA students, USG will be able to foster an administration focused on community, growth, and respect

The pillars of the YouAkron Platform are:

Elevating Campus Experience
- Improving the Dining Experience
- Supporting Campus Sustainability Efforts
- Share Students' Experiences

Encouraging Student Excellence
- Fostering Connections Between Students and their Departments
- Enhancing Internship and Co-operative Education Opportunities

Developing a Lasting Community
- Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in all area of campus
- Strengthening Zips Pride
- Building connections between the city of Akron and the UA Community



JUDICIAL BRANCH



The Judicial Branch consists of an appointed panel of Justices including the Executive Justice and the Chief Justice.

Justices interpret and revise governing documents, review student organizational grievances, run both fall and spring USG elections and election events, maintain USG record-keeping, and work towards general advocacy to benefit the student body at the University of Akron.

Advocacy Week

This year, the Judicial Branch underwent many changes in regard to their responsibilities to meet the needs of campus. They organized a week of advocacy aimed at connecting students to various resources on campus, with a focus on mental, physical, financial, and academic health. This initiative involved collaboration from across campus, including The Office of Accessibility, The Student Rec Center, The H. K. Barker Center for Financial Education, The Campus Cupboard, the Counseling and Testing Center, Career Services, Office of Financial Aid, Bierce Library, and Tutoring Services.

Elections Board

During elections season, the Judicial Branch transforms into the Elections Board, the governing body that oversees the USG elections process, election materials, and voting verification. The Elections Board ensures a fair and friendly competition that aims to provide the best representative for the study body.

Spring 2024 Voting Turnout

The 2024 Spring Election cycle witnessed an approximately 3% rise in voter turnout compared to previous uncontested Spring Election Cycles.

Through the elections board's continuous efforts to engage the student body through candidate meet and greets, candidate debates, and social media, they aim to increase these numbers year-to-year to best serve the undergraduate study body.



LEGISLATIVE **BRANCH**





The Legislative branch consists of numerous elected members, including:

- Senate Chair
- Vice Senate Chair
- Senators At-Large (7)
- College-Specific Senators (5)
- Off-Campus Living Senator
- First-Year Senators (2)
- Senate Assistant

Senators pursue projects and write legislation that serves to benefit the undergraduate student body. They work in committees and within their represented demographic to turn ideas into reality to benefit the University of Akron students. Additionally, senate leadership congratulates newly established student organizations and provides them with critical insight about funding and resources.

Senate Committees

Academic Policy and Student Success (APSS)

APSS aims to establish connections between students, staff, and administration. Members work to distribute academic and financial information as well as promote and advocate for the student experience.

This year, APSS has pursued...

- Brightspace Accessibility initiatives
- First Day Complete educational and advertisement opportunities
- Scholarship opportunity expansion

Student Engagement (SE)

SE's purpose is to create a campus environment that builds community and enhances the experience of undergraduates by working with student organizations.

This year, SE has pursued...

- 2nd Annual Spring Cleanup Day
- Winter Charity Drive and Holiday Party with NPHC
- Spirit Week

Facilities, Amenities, Services and Transportation (FAST)

FAST looks to advocate for the safety of students and enhance the on-campus student experience through housing, parking, transportation, and various other services on campus.

This year, FAST has pursued...

- Accessibility Tours
- Metro Tabling & Inquiry Surveys
- UAPD partnership initiatives to prevent car break-ins

ELEVATING
CAMPUS EXPERIENCES





Dining Experience: The Campus Dining Committee made immense strides in advocating for student interests this semester. From continuing Ramadan accommodations, hosting a Giving Grams event to show appreciation to Dining Services, and working to include better dining options for Adult Focus learners, they found creative and impactful ways to work towards excellence.

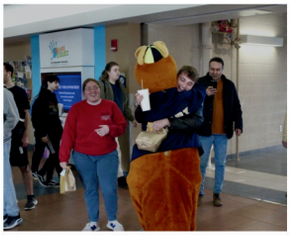




Mental Health Resources: Mental Health Taskforce organized several events throughout the semester to support students and bring awareness to the importance of mental health. From a hot chocolate bar to a stress ball workshop, they worked to advocate for students' wellbeing!









Sustainability Efforts: Throughout various committees and personal projects, USG sought out ways to increase the sustainability efforts on our campus. This included bottle cap recycling projects, the implementation of additional recycling signs, and the installment of a Campus Pollinator Certification!

ENCOURAGING
STUDENT EXCELLENCE



Emphasizing Student Input: USG took initiative to encourage students to fill out the course evaluations by tabling in the Student Union and handing out students' favorite treat, zippy cookies!





Advocating for Academics: USG Senate passed Senate Resolution 23-24-01, legislation urging University Administration to adopt the First Day Complete Program, a textbook program that would provide more affordable options for students. Members of USG also made efforts to research the First Day Complete program education on other campuses to ensure smooth transition for students.





Connecting Students: USG held its second annual Student Leader Summit, and event focused on bringing together students organization leaders to promote collaboration, share campus resources, and discuss common issues. Additionally, USG implemented a sister-event, the Student Leader Showcase, aimed to celebrate student organization accomplishments and achievements throughout the year!



DEVELOPING A **LASTING COMMUNITY**

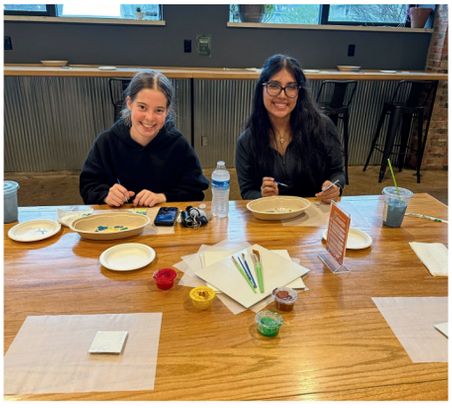


Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Strengthening our campus through celebrating our differences has been a large focus of USG. Various events such as Zips Around the World Dinner, Cultural Fair, and African-Centered Psychology have helped elevate student perspective and bond the campus community together.



Akron Partnerships: USG has formed many partnerships to bridge the gap between campus and city including the Akron Art Museum, Compass Coffee, and DP Dough. Akron Mayor, Shamas Malik even visited USG to speak on his perspective and gain UA student perspective!







Encouraging Zips Pride: USG is committed to bringing out the best of UA spirit in all students from implementing Spirit Week, a week of fun themes to prepare for the Akron-Kent basketball game and hosting a giveaway for student organizations to support women's volleyball!



OHIO STUDENT
GOVERNMENT SUMMIT

The Ohio Student Government Summit, a student government conference dedicated to bringing student government representatives together, was hosted on March 2 and 3, 2024 by the University of Akron Undergraduate Student Government.

Sixty-six representatives from 11 institutions across Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana joined together to exchange ideas, build connections, and foster development within student governments.

This year introduced the first two-day summit and implemented the Student Government Highlight Series, allowing all student governments to share a project or initiative they are proud of. This year also featured the first Student Government Awards, recognizing outstanding efforts and accomplishments of student governments.







USG
RETREATS & AWARDS

Each semester, all members of Undergraduate Student Government gather together to reestablish organization visions, learn more about activities of other branches, and get to know one another better. There are also plenty of opportunities for professional development from resume reviews to a visit from President Miller!







At the end of the year, USG celebrates their members' many accomplishments through the USG Awards Ceremony, recognizing individuals who go above and beyond to advocate and serve the student body. USG also celebrated the graduation of ten seniors at this ceremony, wishing them the best of luck in all their future endeavors.

LOOKING **FORWARD**

Being the future Student Body President and Vice President is an immense responsibility that we pursue with great passion. We seek to expand on the efforts made by Alia Baig and Cam Feezel with YouAkron while advocating for students through the Unify UAkron platform.



Many central themes of the YouAkron platform will continue in Unify UAkron, which is built upon the pillars of Academic, Professional, and Community Development. These pillars aim to assist students in reaching their full potential through enhancing the aspects most important to them in their collegiate careers. The events and initiatives that will follow in the coming year will reflect the goals of this platform.

We will work to aid students in ensuring successful academic pursuits, providing professional experiences, and fostering a deeper sense of community. The scope of the platform has been carefully curated to encompass a wide range of student interests. We plan to execute these goals through collaboration with various different departments on campus. Unify UAkron is concerned with the aspects of the college experience that are most important to our fellow students, and through it we seek to make a difference at UA as a cohesive governing body. We are honored to be the representatives of the students, and we look forward to supporting our fellow Zips in their future endeavors. Advocating for student voices and creating positive change is a priority that we share with administration. As a united front, we can ensure that students feel like UA is their home and a place for them to succeed.





2023-24 Members

Executive Branch

President - Alia Baig
Vice President - Cameron Feezel
Chief of Staff - Lily Coss
Deputy Chief of Staff - Olivia Lane
Director of Finance - Lydia Lungu
Deputy Director of Finance - Isabella Ackerman
Executive Project Manager - Bryanne Webster
Executive Project Manager - Ijeoma Anaraodo
Project Manager - Bethel Tsige
Project Manager - Brian Nguyen
Project Manager - Preshecca Ragavan
Project Manager - Lana Tamin
Director of Events - Lauren Groen
Event Coordinator - Maeve Goble
Event Coordinator - AJ Stewart
Event Coordinator - Maggie Mahaney
Director of Media & Analytics - Elena Kozma
Social Media Curator - Nathan Flint
Social Media Curator - Julia Stratton
Social Media Curator - Irene Garcia Cruz
Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion - Karima Damson
Deputy Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion - Makayla Minard
Director of Community & Campus Involvement - Eli Strohecker
Deputy Director of Community & Campus Involvement - Katelee Mata
Student Athlete Liaison - Evan Wilson
Greek Life Liaison - Bhumi Patel
Greek Life Liaison - Jose Garcia Barahona
Director of Membership Development - Meghan Teeters / Wyatt Cole

Judicial Branch

Chief Justice - Malaki Fleming
Executive Justice - Emma Barna
Associate Justice - Mia Papatonis
Associate Justice - Samuel Stillion
Associate Justice - Gwen Bushen
Associate Justice - Simara Vines
Associate Justice - Madi Shaw

Advisor

Brandon Alexander

Legislative Branch

Senate Chair / Senator At-Large - Ashley Cosgrave
Vice Senate Chair / Senator for the Williams Honors College - Grace DeWitt
Senator for the College of Engineering and Polymer Science - Cecilia Mainzer
Senator for the Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences - Phillip Martin
Senator for the College of Business - Natalie Gardner
Senator for Off-Campus Living - Carter Ridgeway
Senate Assistant - Julie Muller
Senator At-Large - Isaac Machar
Senator At-Large - Max Pastoria
Senator At-Large - Kylie Cameron
Senator At-Large - Khatonia Ford
Senator At-Large - Alan Jayapandian
Senator At-Large - Renee Clippinger
First Year Senator - Alison Winters
First Year Senator - Mia Latimer