UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

FALL 2024

A MESSAGE FROM USG LEADERS

As representatives of the student body, it is important that Undergraduate Student Government (USG) is transparent with our initiatives, projects, and events. The success of USG is a factor of our ability to directly communicate with the student body and administration. Transparency fosters trust, and USG is always looking at ways to keep the student body informed on USG's efforts, updates, and opportunities for involvement.

The Judicial Branch holds a unique position in USG since we do not have to run for re-election each year or apply to be reappointed. To elevate our transparency our goal was to create a newsletter that provides a catalog of those initiatives and to keep track of what USG members are proud of and what they wish they could have done better.

Overall, we want to highlight the incredible work of all USG members from semester to semester, and to make sure that their efforts are recognized both inside of the organization and out.

Congratulations to all of USG on an amazing semester! We cannot wait to see what achievements and initiatives are to come.

USG Office, Student Union Room 307A

USG
FINANCIAL REVIEW

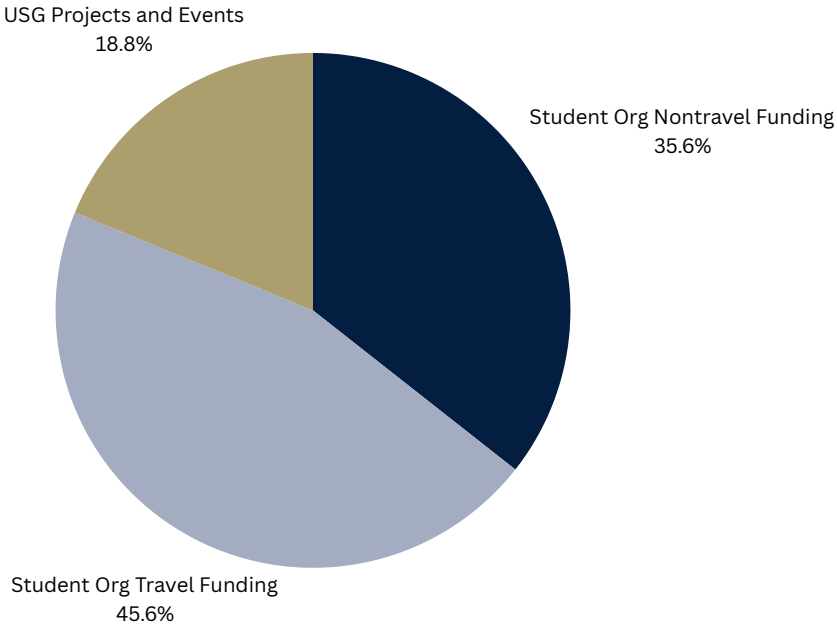
Undergraduate Student Government has the privilege of managing funds that sponsor travel and projects for the more than 300 student organizations on The University of Akron's Campus. Student organizations can submit a request for funding through Presence.

USG Funding to Student Orgs

This semester, USG has allocated **$20,959.32** for student organization travel and **$16,370.10** towards student organization projects and events.

There are two accounts that funds can be distributed from when student organizations are requesting funding:

1. **UAF Account:** used for approving allocations for student organizations for travel requests and projects/events.
2. **Platform Account**: used to support a specific purpose that USG is promoting, allocated to student organizations and relevant to the pillars of the platform. This is open to all events/students that are eligible for sponsorship and must adhere to the values of the pillars set in the platform.



Student Leader Summit, 2024

USG Budget

USG also has an internal budget to fund projects, events, and initiatives, as well as cover other internal expenses.

This semester, USG allocated **$13,302.52** internally.

There are three accounts that can be used to distribute the USG Budget:

1. **President's Account:** used for USG projects and events, elections, marketing, and membership development expenses.
2. **SAF Account:** used for materials and supplies needed for the annual OSGS conference.
3. **Admin Account:** used for office supplies only, including the annual office wall placard, which is changed with every new presidency.

EXECUTIVE **BRANCH**

All-USG Fall Retreat, 2024

The Executive Branch consists of appointed members, as well as the President and Vice President who 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 Committee**. These committees, whose membership includes both USG and non-USG members, facilitate projects and events that align with their mission.

The Unify UAkron Platform

During their time in Undergraduate Student Government, President Grace DeWitt and Vice President Elena Kozma have been focused on advocating for the student body and supporting positive change at UA. It is their belief that working with administration, faculty, and staff on behalf of students helps ensure the university is offering the best experience for students. The Unify UAkron Platform was created as a framework for USG members to follow in their pursuits of their projects, initiatives, and events. Through these efforts, Undergraduate Student Government can help the university flourish to its full potential.

The pillars of the Unify UAkron Platform are:

Academic Development

- Ensuring students have resources to succeed in their academics
- Strengthening the relationship between students and the colleges

Professional Development

- Supporting student groups on campus (student orgs, athletics, greek life)
- Growing internship and career opportunities

Community Development

- Working to build community among students
- Outreaching to the greater Akron community

First Day of Classes Fall 2024

USG Fall 2024 Intramural Volleyball Team

JUDICIAL **BRANCH**

The Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch consists of an appointed panel of Justices headed by 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.

Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards

In the past few years, the Judicial Branch has undergone many changes in regard to their responsibilities to advocate for the student body. This year, the Judicial Branch worked heavily alongside the Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards to provide a students perspective on many of their proceedings.

Their members volunteered to speak at the Department's presentations in the freshman Akron Experience Courses, reaching most of the incoming student body. The Branch collaborated with the Department at the Rootbeer Kegger during Alcohol Awareness week, providing the student body with on and off campus resources. Each member of the Judicial Branch is a trained member of The University of Akron's Hearing Board.

Fall 2024 Rootbeer Kegger

Fall 2024 Election Cycle

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.

The 2024 Fall Election Cycle witnessed an approximately 9% rise in voter turnout compared to last year's Fall Election Cycles.

Spring 2025 Election Cycle

The Elections Board has already begun work on the Spring Election Cycle. They aim to expand their marketing efforts for this Election Cycle, incorporating interviews and additional tabling events.

Keep an eye on your calendar for any Elections Board events!

Fall 2024 Rootbeer Kegger

LEGISLATIVE **BRANCH**

Fall 2024 Senate Meetings

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 Clerk

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.

Legislative Branch 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 semester, APSS has pursued...

- Working on instituting reading days
- Planning a de-stress event close to finals week
- Tabling to encourage students to fill out course evaluations

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 semester, SE has pursued...

- A Starship Delivery robots Survey intended to gauge student utilization of the service
- Partnered with Health and Safety Officer Ruffin to institute campus safety walks

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 semester, FAST has pursued...

- Accessibility Tours in 12 out of 25 academic buildings on campus
- Grant writing in partnership with Lights Out Akron to get the Goodyear Building modified to decrease bird deaths
- The Akron Zoo found that the Building has accounted for over half of the bird deaths in the Akron area.

Currently, all of the Senate committees are working together on drafting legislation pertaining to unauthorized vehicles that drive on campus walkways. They are trying to figure out whether or not this legislation would be feasible.

USG

EVENTS

Pumpkin Positivity Painting

From the Fall 2024 Semester

USG put on a variety of events throughout the Fall 2024 semester. Each event had a different focus such as: getting to know what's happening in the community, mental health awareness, and simply having a fun break from responsibilities. Some of these events included...

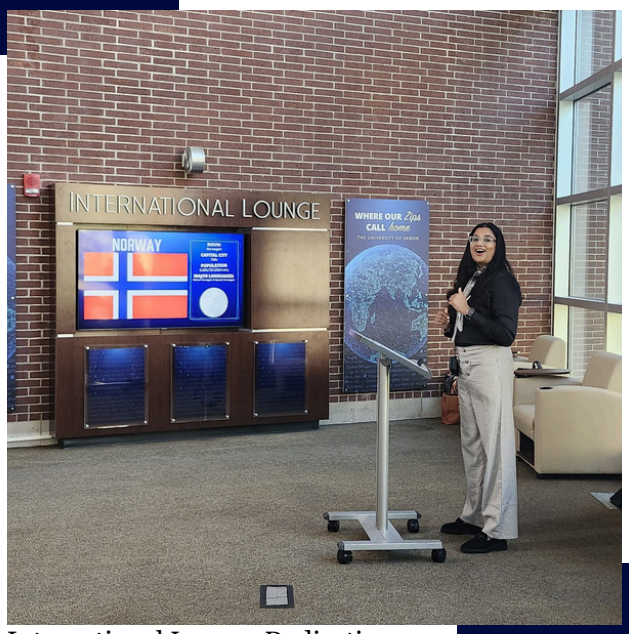
- **UAPD Meet and Greet -** Students got to know UAPD officers and the services that they provide
- **Bridging Campus and Community** - Worked towards building a closer relationship between the city of Akron and the university as well as to help students feel more connected to their local government.
- **International Lounge Dedication** - Highlighted the work done to the International Lounge done in an effort to make international students feel at home and recognized at the University of Akron.
- **Pumpkin Positivity Painting** - Helped students destress and ease their minds by painting pumpkins...because it was *spooky* season.
- **Akron Art Museum -** Collaboration between USG, GSG, Myers School of Art, and the Akron Art Museum to bring students to the art museum downtown for the new GLOW Exhibit connecting campus and community

Bridging Campus and Community with Mayor Shammas Malik

Event Statistics

USG events had over **350** recorded attendees this semester!*

USG put on **30** different events on campus during the Fall 2024 Semester!



International Lounge Dedication

Important Event Planning Info

The deadline to submit the Event Planning Request form is 3 weeks ahead of the events date.

If this form is submitted after that deadline, there is no guarantee that the Events Team will be able to help with your event. *You can access this form in the USG Teams and the USG office.*

Please remember to put away your event items after your event. All of the cabinets in the office are labeled to make it super easy for us to locate where leftover items belong.

*This statistic includes only the number of valid scanned Zipcards

EXECUTIVE BRANCH **COMMITTEES**

Campus Dining Experience: The Campus Dining Committee has lots of ideas on different events and initiatives to bring to fruition this year. So far, they have had an event, called Giving Grams, where students could write thank you notes to the food workers on campus, showing their gratitude during Thanksgiving. Future project ideas include collaborating with the Student Food Committee to organize a Rob's Karaoke Night and collaborating with the dining service media team again!

Giving Grams Fall 2024

Feeding Futures: Bridging the Gap in Food Access

The Diversity Committee: The Diversity Committee is comprised of representatives from the RooClusive space organizations and various students at UAkron. This semester they focused on redefining how the Diversity Committee works to uplift underrepresented students and student organizations to build a sense of community. They are hoping to make the RooClusive space more collaborative and accessible. Their current projects include Refreshing the RooClusive space and assisting a new student organization in getting established (The Native and Indigenous Student's Community Circle). They are working on an event with the RooClusive space student groups to highlight the various student organizations we have on campus to help the student body find community.

Mental Health Task Force: Mental Health Taks Force strives to improve the mental well-being and mood of students on campus. So far, they have had their Mental Health Monday Pumpkin Positivity Painting event, where students could relax and paint pumpkins for the incoming fall season. They have many other Mental Health Monday events planned for the Spring semester for students to destress, as well as some collaborations and events for Mental Health Week.

Pumpkin Positivity Painting

Contact Information

Executive Branch
President - Grace DeWitt
Vice President - Elena Kozma
Chief of Staff - Olivia Lane

Judicial Branch
Chief Justice - Samuel Stillion
Executive Justice - Gwen Bushen

Legislative Branch
Senate Chair / Senator At-Large - Cameron Feezel
Vice Senate Chair / Senator At-Large - Alison Winters

Advisor
Brandon Alexander
Director, Student Union and Conference & Event Services

All USG Retreat Fall 2024

Contact Us!

Questions about positions? Concerns about campus?

@USGUA

uakron.edu/USG

usgpresident@uakron.edu

Student Union
Room 307A

Interested in your project being featured in the next edition? Make sure to fill out the Event Feedback and Newsletter Updates form in the USG Teams!