

Represent. Inform. Organize.



2012 Annual Report

Dear Friends,

Over 40 years ago students at Minnesota's state universities recognized that by coming together they could create a powerful voice for all state university students. Those students created the Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA), an independent, nonprofit organization funded and operated by students. MSUSA is dedicated to educating and informing students about higher education issues that affect their lives, and providing opportunities for them to advocate on behalf of all Minnesota state university students. MSUSA has been a strong and respected voice for students on the campus, system, state and federal levels since 1967.

The past year has been one of increased and successful advocacy for students. The Pell Grant, a federally funded grant program that provides low-income students with assistance in paying for college, is a critical resource for many students. Many students would not be able to enroll or continue in higher education without it. When Pell Grant funding was threatened in the fall of 2011, students sent legislative alerts, letters to the editors of newspapers, and collected thousands of signatures in a Save the Pell Grant Petition. Students also traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with the Minnesota Congressional delegation in order to convince legislators to fund the Pell Grant program. These efforts were successful as not only was the Pell Grant funding protected, it was actually increased.

In addition, students quickly mobilized to protect federal student loan interest rates. Without Congressional action, the student loan interest rate would have doubled from 3.4% to 6.8% on July 1st. An interest rate increase would have resulted in additional debt over the life of the loan for 7.5 million low and moderate-income students who borrow new federally subsidized Stafford loans. In June students completed a federal lobbying trip in which they met with each member of the Minnesota Congressional delegation and told them how important it was to keep interest rates low. In July, MSUSA students were invited to the White House to take part in the bill signing ceremony of the provisions that kept student loan interest rates from doubling. This victory is another important step in getting rising student loan debt under control.

On the state level, students worked with state legislators to draft a bill to address the rising costs of college textbooks. In addition, MSUSA distributed a Textbook Survey to state university students which received over 1,200 responses. Legislation was passed which created a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Textbook Affordability workgroup, charged with bringing stakeholders together to look for innovative ways to bring down costs for students. Also during the 2012 legislative session, groups of students from the universities traveled to St. Paul to connect with their local legislators about the importance of funding for capital bonding and repair projects on campus.

Furthermore, the MSUSA updated both physically and virtually. In September the staff moved to a new professional office closer to the State Capitol. This location increases efficiency and effectiveness while offering convenient meeting space. A redesigned website was launched in the fall, allowing students and the public to have easily accessible information about the organization.

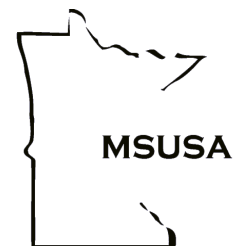
Lastly, we are excited to celebrate the 25th anniversary of MSUSA's Penny Program. In its 25 years, the Penny Program has awarded nearly \$220,000 to almost 250 students who pursued public service opportunities and served their communities. Students have told us how transformative the program has been to their lives, allowing them to gain skills and experience that they otherwise would not have been able to learn, and setting them on eventual career paths.

The past year has included many constructive changes and advocacy achievements. We thank our hardworking students and supporters as we build on our accomplishments and continue to work for all state university students in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,



Elsbeth Howe
Executive Director



Accomplishments in Federal Advocacy

Prevention of Pell Grant Cuts and Federal Student Loan Interest Rate Increases

Preventing Pell Grant Cuts

MSUSA worked tirelessly to prevent proposals to cut the Pell Grant Program. Along with the Minnesota State College Student Association (MSCSA), the MSUSA collected more than 4,000 signatures in opposition to the U.S. House of Representatives' proposal to cut the Pell Grant Program by \$4.2 billion.

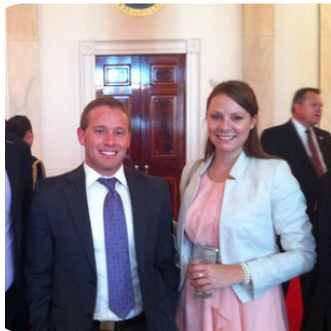
MSUSA State Chair Amanda Bardonner and MSCSA President Geoff Dittberner held a press conference calling on the Minnesota Congressional delegation to preserve eligibility and funding for the Pell Grant program.

In addition to collecting signatures and holding a press conference, student leaders made several trips to Washington D.C. throughout 2011 and 2012 to express the importance of funding the Pell Grant to the Minnesota congressional delegation.

Thanks in part to these efforts the Pell Grant avoided drastic cuts that could have eliminated 13,200 Minnesota students who currently receive the Pell Grant from the program, costing students \$76 million in grants.



Maintaining Student Loan Interest Rates



Without congressional action, Federal Student Loan interest rates would have doubled from 3.4% to 6.8% on July 1st, 2012. However, thanks to a number of actions taken by MSUSA, this was prevented.

In June 2012-2013, MSUSA State Chair Moriah Miles along with Board Members Russel Ferguson (MSU-Moorhead) and Kyle Berndt (Southwest MN State) completed a federal lobbying trip in which they met with each member of the Minnesota Congressional delegation and told them how important it was to keep interest rates low. 2011-2012 State Chair Amanda Bardonner also participated in a roundtable with Rep. Betty McCollum and a press conference with Sen. Al Franken to speak to the importance of keeping interest rates for student loans affordable.

In recognition of these efforts, incoming State Chair Moriah Miles and Director of Government Relations Jonathan Bohn were invited to take part in the bill signing ceremony that kept student loan interest rates from doubling. After all the hard work of MSUSA students it was an honor to be recognized and invited to this exciting event.

Also, Amanda Bardonner was featured as a live guest on CNN to speak to the importance of this piece of legislation and urged Congress and the President to continue to find a long-term solution.

Reducing Textbook Costs

Preparing for the Future

Textbook Survey

The Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) surveyed students in the spring of 2012 regarding textbook use and the impact that the cost of textbooks and other course materials has on students. 1,231 students responded to the voluntary survey, which was sent out via email to all state university students and promoted on state university campuses. The data collected in the survey support the anecdotal responses frequently heard from students regarding this issue.

This survey was developed in an effort to gather information about the cost and use of textbooks by students, with the hope that data would provide some guidance for change. We hope this data will be used to inform decision makers and other stakeholders of the issues related to textbooks for students, as well as contribute to system, statewide and national conversations about how to resolve this growing concern.



Legislative Progress on Controlling Textbook Costs

MSUSA worked to include language in the higher education omnibus bill that included the establishment of a work group to study methods that result in lower textbook costs for students. The goal of this workgroup is to help assess current practices, present various business strategies, technologies and campus plans that are effective in driving down the cost of learning resources for students while offering greater access to no- or low-cost academic content for faculty.



In addition, MSUSA's work on this issue created language that requires Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to publish course schedules and include course material lists on their websites. It also requires that campus bookstores and students be notified of selected course material by MnSCU academic departments or instructors 45 days before the start of the term the selected material will be used. Additionally, bookstores are now required to make a reasonable effort to notify students at least 30 days prior to the start of the term of the most recent copyright date of the printed course material as well as the copyright date of the course material's most recent prior edition.

2011-2012 Leadership Team



Amanda Bardonner
State Chair
SCSU Student



Nikki Sabby
Vice Chair
MNSU Student



Tyler Ulferts
Treasurer
MNSU Student

Penny Program 25th Anniversary

Celebrating 25 years of Student Service

Timothy J. Penny State and Federal Fellowships

The Timothy J. Penny State and Federal Public Service Fellowships provide MnSCU students with the financial opportunity to grow as public servants through participation in federal, state or local government internships.

Barbara J. Penny Community Service Scholarship

The Barbara J. Penny Community Service Scholarship recognizes MnSCU students who have demonstrated a commitment to community service and promote their growth as community leaders.

Commemorating the Penny Program 25th Anniversary



www.pennyprogram.org



As part of the 25th Anniversary a number of events and campaigns were held. The 19th annual Golf Scramble raised twice as much money as the previous year. Notable sponsors included Morgan Stanely Smith and Barney- The Blackridge Group, SKB Environmental, the Minnesota State College Student Association, the MSUSA Alumni Association, Winona State University, Anchor Bank, Christianson Interiors, Minnesota State College Southeast Technical, Nelson Tietz & Hoyer, and the Southwest Minnesota State University Alumni Foundation.

In addition, the founder and namesake of the program, Tim Penny spearheaded the \$25 for 25 Years Fundraising Campaign, providing matching dollars for all 2012 donations up to \$5,000. The festivities will cap off with a 25th Anniversary Reception held at the Minnesota History Center in November where donors and students will have a chance to hear from past and current recipients of the program.

MSUSA Staff

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Financial Statement

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	FY 2012 Totals	FY 2011 Totals
Revenues:					
Association Fees	\$ 725,254	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 725,254	\$740,013
Special Events	0	26,861	0	26,861	27,632
Contributions	0	4,832	0	4,832	5,646
Grants	0	3,374	0	3,374	3,539
Interest and Dividend Income	989	26,533	0	27,522	18,109
Reimbursements	2,741	0	0	2,741	920
Gain (Loss) on Investments	(23,392)	(6,867)	0	(30,259)	151,435
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Assets	16,243	0	0	16,243	(1,110)
Net Assets Released from Restriction	60,570	(60,570)	0	0	0
Total Revenues	782,405	(5,837)	0	776,568	946,184
Expenses:					
Management and General	196,114	0	0	196,114	207,676
Program Services	421,165	0	0	421,165	449,909
Fund Raising	43,976	0	0	43,976	62,192
Total Expenses	661,255	0	0	661,255	719,777
Changes in Net Assets	121,150	(5,837)	0	115,313	226,407
Net Assets at Beginning of the Year	1,387,930	47,432	67,000	1,502,362	1,275,955
Net Assets at the End of the Year	1,509,080	41,595	67,000	1,617,675	1,502,362

2011-2012 Board of Directors

Charlie Woodson	Bemidji State University
Matthew Lexcen	Minnesota State University Mankato
Diane Poss	Metropolitan State University
Kim Ehrlich	Minnesota State University Moorhead
Samantha Ivey	Saint Cloud State University
Kyle Berndt	Southwest Minnesota State University
Jack Linehan	Winona State University

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www.msusa.org



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