



## The Fight Against Tuition Hikes is Here

SWSA plans to hold a general assembly on the prospect of participating in the March 22nd student strike in solidarity against tuition increases soon. The fight against tuition increases has been all over the news in the past few months, and it's clear that the November 10th protests were not the end of the conversation. More protests are in the works with another province-wide protest and general student strike planned for Thursday March 22nd.

Many students have approached SWSA asking what our stand is on the tuition hikes. SWSA executive members are against the tuition hikes. But we would like to hear from students regarding how and if

to express this opposition as a group. Therefore, we encourage all students to attend the general assembly.

The protests regarding the tuition hike are specifically related to the fact that the Quebec government is raising tuition rates \$325 per year over the next 5 years (\$1625 total). That's an unprecedented 127% increase in present rates. SWSA, along with many other student groups, believes that affordable education minimizes social exclusion and increases opportunities. We encourage students to become informed on this issue. For more information visit: <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/tuitiontruth/research/>.

## Would You Like to Plan SWSA's Next Event?

In response to student demand, SWSA will be planning a number of social events (including graduation celebrations) this term.

SWSA held a number of informal 5 á 7 social events in Fall Term, as well as the End of Year Potluck in December. This term, we have held a movie night. All the events were modestly attended by social work students, many of whom have prohibitively packed schedules. Therefore planning a well attended and successful social event for BSW students takes great persuasive power and a lot of vision on behalf of the planners.

We would like social work students to have a *direct* say in what kind of social events are planned this term. We feel that this may increase attendance to, relevance of, and diversity of the events offered. If you have ideas about something you would like to see happen, such as a SWSA prom, a spring BBQ, or another movie night, we want your help! If you want to help build a stronger and more supportive student community, please join us for our first ever Events Committee Meeting on February 8th at 2:30pm in Wilson 314. For the rest of the term, meetings will be every other week on Wednesdays at the same place and time.

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## Find SWSA Online!



[www.mcgillSWSA.blogspot.com](http://www.mcgillSWSA.blogspot.com)

[www.facebook.com/McGillSWSA](http://www.facebook.com/McGillSWSA)



# SWSA External Coordinator Makes Good on SWSA Election Promise, Aims to Introduce Carte Campus System to McGill 2

External Coordinator Echo Parent-Racine has introduced the following question regarding implementing the Carte Campus' Project at McGill to the SSMU. The referendum question, if approved, would be put on the spring ballot for all students to vote on. The referendum question is as follows:

"Do you support a fee of \$149 per semester that you may opt-in or opt-out via Minerva in order to support funding on a student transport project?"

*Whereas*, the province of Quebec is proposing to increase tuition rates in the fall of 2012;

*Whereas*, as a result of said tuition rate increases some students are disproportionately affected and the more vulnerable students may become susceptible to financial difficulties;

*Whereas*, the STM (Societe de Transport de Montreal or the Montreal public transport system) has a current discriminatory policy in banning students over the age of 25 access from student rate fares. As a result, full time students over the age of 25 must

pay the adult fare which is double the price, at \$75.50 compared with \$43.37 monthly;

*Whereas*, the student union of Université de Montréal ( FAECUM) created a similar pilot project for university student transport in order to grant all university students access to student rate fares. This project was supported in a referendum by 80.2% of the student body;

*Whereas*, this project is a special agreement between the U of M student union and the STM, 20,000 students of Université de Montréal have access to a student rate of \$37.25 that is 10% less expensive than the regular monthly fare of \$ 43.37. The proposal would be to reach an agreement between SSMU and the STM in which the student body would agree to pay a fee at the beginning of the semester in order to ensure lower university student transport rates over the course of the semester;

*Whereas*, the implementation of a public transport agreement would be beneficial to all McGill students

because it would encourage exploration of the city beyond the immediate McGill surroundings and heighten cultural experience;

*Whereas*, this plan is viable and can be endorsed by the STM upon request;

*Whereas* with this student initiated project, all students must contribute via a student fee, but all students have access to affordable student fares, regardless of age;

*Whereas*, that as a way to combat the rising tuition rates which disproportionately affects some students over the age of 25, SSMU would take on this project to promote social justice in the face of adversity and to promote equality for all McGill students.

Do you support a fee of \$149 per semester so that you may receive a monthly student transport cost of \$37.25, of which you may opt-in or opt-out via Minerva to support funding on this student transport project?"



## Do You Want to Help Pass this Referendum Question?

There is opposition to this project and Echo needs YOUR help to make it happen. She states that she feels the opposition comes from a resistance to help and denial of McGill students in need on behalf of more privileged students. Information needs to be submitted to the SSMU legislative council regarding the impact of the proposed referendum.

Echo needs the disclosures & possible written submissions of volunteers willing to share their stories of why this project is important, how the tuition hikes will affect him or her/ how this proposed McGill "carte campus" would be beneficial to him or her. Would a major reduction in transit fares via a campus-wide subsidy help you? How have transit fares impacted your budget? Have you recently turned 25 and can no longer receive reduced rates? What is the impact of this?

EMAIL HER AT: [vp.external.2.swsa@gmail.com](mailto:vp.external.2.swsa@gmail.com)

## Volunteer Voice: St. James Drop-in Centre a Welcoming Community

By Sivan Havusha

I can't go a week without feeling the urge to go to the St. James drop in centre.

After having worked at the First United Church, a unique homeless shelter on Vancouver's downtown east-side this summer, I have made a conscious decision to always be involved with those who are placed on the outskirts of society in one way or another.

I was welcomed with open arms the minute I stepped in to the church's drop-in centre. The friendly members and dedicated staff make St. James a great space to be in. You can tell that the members really enjoy being there. The environment of the drop-in in centre is warm and comforting. The art space that's been created is very impressive. It provides the members with an opportunity to express themselves through different art mediums. The art work that is produced by members is both admirable and inspiring. St. James is a place of expression where interactions are real, and to me, a true sense of community!

## Social Justice Days

Social Justice Days is an annual event series co-organized by the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at McGill and the Equity Commissioner of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU). This year's co-sponsors include QPIRG McGill, SSMU, CKUT Radio, Solid'Ayiti, and QPIRG Concordia.

This year, one of our own is presenting! Instructor and PhD student Edward Ou Jin Lee will be presenting a workshop titled: "Building a People of Colour Centred Student Movement". Check out the full schedule at: <http://bit.ly/SocialJusticeDays..>

## Colloque interuniversitaire de travail social 2012: Le travail social, une façon de changer la société?

The *Colloque interuniversitaire en travail social*, which is now at its 6<sup>th</sup> edition, is an amazing student-run conference hosted by a Quebec school of social work each year. Students travel from all over the province to the host university for a weekend of learning, sharing and fun! It is a great way to get to know future colleagues and to explore a range of interesting topics. Run by students and for students, the Colloque allows

participants to meet with a number of inspiring workers and researchers from various



organizations and backgrounds. After being hosted in Sherbrooke in 2010 and in Gatineau in 2011, the 2012 Colloque is now being organized by our friends at UQÀM, right here in MONTREAL!! This is an intense and unforgettable experience - a must for all students!

This event is really popular and the number of spots is limited. We encourage you to sign up ASAP: the deadline is on Feb 20<sup>th</sup> but registration is on a first-come first-serve basis. Please note that the Colloque is in French - but of course, all are welcome! All the information you need to know can be found at: [http://bit.ly/CITS\\_2012](http://bit.ly/CITS_2012)

## Field Placement Support Groups Have Started for Year One and U2 Students

In the student consultations and Fall term town hall, students and instructors appeared dismayed at the fact that U2s and Y1s don't have a place to talk about their field placements outside of their respective placements. First year students have an Intro to Practicum class and third year students have the Integrative Seminar. When students begin their first full-time stage in U2 or Y1, there is very little academic and emotional support for them. Moreover, many students voiced concern that they did not have a neutral person to speak to about their experiences.

A peer support model was brought up in the town hall, and instructor/PhD student Kim Coleman spearheaded a campaign to make a peer support group a reality for these students. SWSA members helped along the way, and now we are all happy to announce that the group will begin this term! Kim and Shawn-Renee Hordyk (also a Social Work PhD student) have volunteered their time to facilitate these groups. SWSA will cover snacks for everyone, as well.

The times are listed below. For more information contact Aric at [finance.swsa@gmail.com](mailto:finance.swsa@gmail.com)

FEBRUARY:	Mondays: February 6, 13, 27	9:30-11:30am
	Wednesdays: February 8, 15, 29	2:30-4:30pm
MARCH:	Mondays: 5, 12, 19, 26	9:30-11:30am
	Wednesdays: 7, 14, 21, 28	2:30-4:30pm
APRIL:	Monday: 2	9:30-11:30am

# UPCOMING SWSA/SOCIAL WORK EVENTS

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## Events Committee

- When: Wednesday February 8th @2:30pm
- Where: Wilson 314
- Who: Anyone interested in planning events for BSW students
- What: A preliminary meeting to decide on events for winter 2012 and delegate tasks

## Lunch & Learn!

- When: Friday February 17<sup>th</sup> @ 12pm
- Where: Wendy Patrick Room in Wilson Hall
- Who: Anyone interested
- What: The school has been offering professional development seminars for students to further their understanding of various topics. This session's topic is vicarious trauma.

## BSW Student Consultation Groups

- When: Week of March 5th-9th
- Where: Wilson Hall
- Who: All students are welcome to attend their cohort groups
- What: Hit us with your best comment! We want to hear what you think! Your comments about the BSW program are highly valued to the planners of the program itself!

## KANATA Seeks Your Related Submissions for its Fifth Journal

Did you write an amazing paper for your First Peoples in Social Work class, or the Indigenous Field Studies course? Don't let it sit on your hard drive and waste away! KANATA wants your submissions!

KANATA is an interdisciplinary journal with content that focuses on topics relating to Indigenous Peoples of North America. Now in its fifth year, KANATA is seeking to

publish more diverse works from the student body. If you have written an amazing paper on social work with Indigenous Peoples or related topics, please consider submitting your paper for review. The deadline for Submissions is February 14th, 2012

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT KANATA ONLINE

AT: <http://kanata.qpirgmcgill.org>



## SWSA UPDATE!

Social Work Student elections will be conducted during the last week of March (the 26th-30th). This means that if you're thinking of running for next year's council, and we really hope you will, you should start planning at the end of February. Nominations week is March 12th-16th, and campaign week is March 19th-23rd.

Open positions include: executive coordinator, activities coordinator, internal coordinator, external coordinators (2 positions), finance coordinator, communications coordinator, U2 representative, U3 representative, and Y2 representative.