

2007/08 MB4Youth Advisory Council

Annual Report

Encouraging young people to get involved is a priority for Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. With advice from the Youth Advisory Council, we are developing new opportunities for youth to be informed and involved members of their communities.



MB4Youth Advisory Council Annual Report 2006/07

Background

The MB4Youth Advisory Council was announced by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth at the Youth Town Hall Meeting with Ministers on April 25, 2003. The MB4Youth Advisory Council was established to provide feedback on a regular basis to the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth through the MB4Youth Division. The MB4Youth Advisory Council will provide feedback and consultative advice on issues such as education, employment, career development, citizen engagement, leadership and on broader youth issues such as environment and health.

Mandate

The MB4Youth Advisory Council will:

- Facilitate and participate in youth conferences and events;
- Recommend policy direction and suggest adaptations to youth programming in the areas of education, training, employment, career development, volunteerism, citizenship and leadership to the Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth to make programming more youth-friendly, relevant and accessible;
- Collaborate with government-wide Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Committee on Youth and other intergovernmental agencies on strategies and action plans focusing on key youth issues;
- Review and provide feedback on the Division's communication strategy and communication products like the MB4Youth web-site;
- Increase awareness of Manitoba government programs and services to all youth.

Membership and Selection

- The MB4Youth Advisory Council is made up of youth who are leaders in their communities and schools. The Council is made up of up to fifteen Manitoba youth ages 15 – 24. In 2007/08, there were 13 members on the MB4Youth Advisory Council.
- The Department's selection committee released an annual call for applications in February 2008. Selection of the Council was made to reflect the population of youth in Manitoba and to include diverse perspectives: gender, regional, ethnicity, education, experiences and language.
- Council members committed to a one year term beginning September 1, 2007 and ending August 30, 2008. (Council members could indicate their interest in a second or third consecutive term by March 31, 2008.) Any member who reached their 25th birthday by September 1, 2007 was not eligible to re-apply.
- In the future, the MB4Youth Advisory Council will have a working group focused on recruitment and selection of future MB4Youth Advisory Council members.

The members of the 2007/08 MB4Youth Advisory Council were:

Michael Alty, Howden, Chair
Brittany Leschasin, Winnipeg
Courtney Schwegel, Gimli
Danelle Chaput, Lorette
Vanessa Kozak, Winnipeg
Jean Gaultier, Winnipeg
Laura Dutfield, Winnipeg

Nathan Peto, Brandon
Amber Darling, Rathwell
Erin Wall, Winnipeg
Gladys Yeung, Winnipeg
Richard Avila, Winnipeg
Victor Le, Winnipeg



(For Members' Profiles, refer to Appendix A)

The 2007/08 MB4Youth Advisory Council had the opportunity to participate in a variety of valuable conferences, workshops, committees and meetings. These conferences and workshops help to provide the Council with a broad perspective on the issues impacting and affecting youth in Manitoba.

1. Meetings and Workshops

Teleconference, September 26, 2007

The MB4Youth Advisory Council had their first meeting by teleconference on September 26, 2007. Council members had the opportunity to share information about themselves, their education, work experience, interests and expectations of the Youth Advisory Council.

The Youth Advisory Council discussed the Terms of Reference and identified representatives to sit on the Career Development External Advisory Committee and the Manitoba Educating for Sustainable Development Working Group.

Meeting, October 12, 2007 Murdo Scribe Centre

The MB4Youth Advisory Council had their first in-person meeting on October 12, 2007. Veronica Dyck, Executive Director of the MB4Youth Division welcomed Youth Advisory Council members and discussed the importance of the Youth Advisory Council in making connections between youth and government. The Youth Advisory Council discussed their expectations for the year and things they would like to be involved in as members.

Ximena Munoz and Erick Pay from the Department of Labour and Immigration presented a workshop about Newcomer Youth Settlement in Manitoba. Two areas of focus were identified for the Department of Labour and Immigration as being employment and centralized orientation for newcomers. The Youth Advisory Council discussed the importance of council members being informed about the priorities and changing demographics of Manitoba.

The MB4Youth Advisory Council had the opportunity to have lunch with the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth, the Honourable Peter Bjornson. Individual council members had the chance to introduce themselves and speak with the Minister over the lunch hour. Minister Bjornson spoke about the importance of having a youth voice and about the importance of the Youth Advisory Council's contributions and feedback.

The Youth Advisory Council discussed the terms of reference and discussed the importance of conference and event feedback and reporting. The Youth Advisory Council also spoke with representatives of the MB4Youth Division about the upcoming Youth Citizenship Conference and Youth Town Hall Meeting with Ministers at which council members would facilitate groups and record discussions. Council members received facilitator training, focusing on the role of the facilitator and troubleshooting. The Youth Advisory Council discussed issues such as silence, conflict, conversation dominance and agenda hi-jacking.

Council members voted Michael Alty to be the chair of the 2007/08 MB4Youth Advisory Council.

Meeting, January 25, 2008

The MB4Youth Advisory Council had their second in-person meeting on January 25, 2008. Council members were invited to the upcoming spring Youth Leadership Network meeting and had the opportunity to report back on events and committees they were participating in.

A representative from the MB4Youth Division facilitated a focus group with the Council about the Lieutenant Governor's Youth Experience Programs and potential rewards for students participating in the program. Council members also discussed the Citizenship Education Seminar where members would host and facilitate group discussions. Council members had the opportunity to ask questions about the day and review the sessions.

The MB4Youth Advisory Council participated in a focus group regarding the MB4Youth Newsletter and potential changes to the Newsletter.

Roberta Hewson of Partners for Careers provided council members with an overview of Partners @ 510 Selkirk. Council members also expressed an interest in meeting with the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth to discuss youth priorities and concerns.

Teleconference, June 9, 2008

2007/08 MB4Youth Advisory Council members requested an opportunity to meet in-person with the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth. By teleconference, council members discussed key issues and priorities in their schools and communities that had been identified through a survey process for Youth Advisory Council members. Based on survey results potential questions were developed to ask the Minister.

Meeting, June 17, 2008

Legislative Building

MB4Youth Advisory Council members met with the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth to discuss the priorities and issues in their communities and schools. Youth Advisory Council members had the opportunity to have lunch with the Minister and ask questions based on their discussions.

2. Planning and Facilitating Conferences

Annual Youth Citizenship Conference and Manitoba Youth Town Hall Meeting with Ministers, November 1 & 2, 2008

Since 2003 Council members have been on the planning committee for the Manitoba Youth Town Hall Meeting with Ministers. The MB4Youth Advisory Council played a very large and important role in the planning and implementation of the 2007 Youth Citizenship Conference and Manitoba Youth Town Hall Meeting with Ministers. Council members spent the majority of the day facilitating groups of 20 youths through a highly interactive consultation process. Information gathered from the consultation was used to help guide MB4Youth Advisory Council discussions throughout the year.

Citizenship Education Seminar, February 28 & 29, 2008

MB4Youth Advisory Council members hosted and facilitated at the 2008 Citizenship Education Seminar. The Citizenship Education Seminar provided educators from across Manitoba with ideas and resources that support the implementation of the Citizenship component of the Social Studies Curriculum.

3. Additional Council Activities

Members of the 2007/08 MB4Youth Advisory Council also attended and participated in several conferences, committees and workshops including the Career Development Advisory Committee, Manitoba Education for Sustainable Development Working Group, YouthQUAKE 2008, United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Youth, Impact Leadership Conference and the Youth Leadership Network.

Appendix A - Members' Profiles

Michael Alty

Michael spent his formative years in the village of Howden. His interest in politics, travel, and community service began early on, triggering a long sequence of adventures. His travels, schooling, and volunteer work have taken him abroad to Haiti, Southern Africa, China, and beyond. On the occasions he is not wanderlust, you can find him at Canadian Mennonite University, studying for a degree in Political Studies. Michael has been in numerous positions of leadership, including Vice-President of the Student Council, Director of the Sports and Recreation committee and an organizing member of the Student Political Association. Michael also volunteers for the Canadian International Development Agency as part of the Youth Speakers Program. When not at school or traveling the world, you can find Michael snowboarding, lawn bowling, volunteering, or trying to stay in shape.

Amber Darling

Amber is a first year University of Manitoba student who is originally from a small rural Manitoba town. Her future plans include getting a PhD in psychology. This is Amber's second year on the MB4Youth Advisory Council. Her other leadership experiences include: peer helpers, student council, student leaders in high school, tutoring, camp counselor at a Co-op Youth Leadership Camp, and volunteering every year at the Manitoba Agricultural Museum's Thresherman's Reunion. Outside of university, Amber enjoys movies, scrapbooking and being with friends and family.

Laura Dutfield

Laura Dutfield is completing her final year at Fort Richmond Collegiate. Actively involved, Laura works as a Page at the Legislative Assembly and volunteers at 10 000 Villages, a Fair Trade establishment. Within school, Laura busies herself with Amnesty International, Dance Club and Student Council. She works for Amnesty International, currently planning the youth aspect for the national Annual General Meeting. When there is time to spare, she finds herself reading, dancing and watching the odd film. Laura is planning on studying International Development and Philosophy in her university years.

Jean Gaultier

Jean is in his second year of the MB4Youth Advisory Council. After taking Business Administration at Red River College, Jean worked in the youth sector of an economic development council for two years. After moving back to his rural home town he is now working as an employment facilitator for community members and newcomers to Canada.

Vanessa Kozak

Vanessa is a First Nation youth who grew up in Winnipeg. Vanessa is in her first year at the University of Winnipeg and is currently sitting on the Board of Directors as Secretary. Vanessa also represents youth in her community at the Urban Shaman Art Gallery and works as a Member Service Representative at a local bank. This is Vanessa's second year on the council and she looks forward to meeting new people and learning new things.

Victor Le

Victor is a grade 12 student at Vincent Massey Collegiate. In the future, he would like to pursue a career in neuroscience or medical research. He is an active participant in the student body; involved in the Key Club, Youth in Philanthropy, and Sustainable Development Committee. He also volunteers teaching judo and wrestling, delivers newspapers for the St. Boniface Hospital and Health Sciences Centre and attends to the elderly with the H.E.L.P program. He enjoys participating in a variety of sports such as tennis, track, and badminton and he is also on the provincial team for Judo and Wrestling.

Brittany Leschasin

Brittany recently completed her degree in the Creative Communications Program through the University of Winnipeg and Red River College. Aside from school, Brittany works for a local advertising agency. This is Brittany's second year on the council, although in the past she has also volunteered for various causes including the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Winnipeg Harvest, Boo at the Zoo, the Teddy Bear's Picnic and various student media outlets and events at three of Manitoba's major campuses. Brittany is honoured to have been reaccepted to the council and interested to see what new opportunities and challenges will arise this term.

Nathan Peto

This is Nathan's third year on the MB4Youth Advisory Council. Nathan is in his fourth year at the University of Brandon majoring in History and Political Science. He has been very involved in all types of community organizations such as the Student's Union where he currently serves as President, YMCA, YWCA, Habitat for Humanity and the Brandon food bank. Nathan is honoured to have the opportunity to represent young people in Manitoba on the MB4Youth Advisory Council.

Courtney Schwegel

Courtney is in her first year in the integrated Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Education program at the University of Winnipeg. This is her second year being a member of the MB4Youth Advisory Council. Courtney graduated from Gimli High school, where she was involved with the school social committee and Youth Community Partnership. Her volunteer experience includes teaching Canskate at the local figure skating club,

delivering Meals on Wheels to seniors, and Special Olympics bowling. Improving her French language skills and dancing up a storm at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet are a few of the things she enjoys doing.

Erin Wall

Erin is a first year student studying at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. She graduated from Kildonan East Collegiate in June of 2007 and this is her first year on the council. During high school Erin was very involved in many leadership projects. She served as the leader of her Key Club, a Kiwanis-sponsored youth club, participated in Student Council as a member of the executive team, and was a founding member of Tanzania 2010, a group of students traveling to Africa in 2010 to complete a four-year community-building project. Erin loves playing basketball and staying active, and enjoys coaching and mentoring young girls playing basketball in her community. Erin is honoured to have the opportunity to represent young people in Manitoba with this position.