



THE YOUTH PARLIAMENTARIAN

A Newsletter for alumni and community members

August 2024

Welcome to this issue of the Youth Parliamentarian – your monthly newsletter for updates about the Youth Parliament of Manitoba. To hear more live updates, follow us on social media! Link found at the bottom of this newsletter.

In addition to ***Hear Hear!!*** and ***Stay Connected***, in this issue you will find

- ***Insider: 2024 Coffeehouse***
- ***Alumni Spotlight: Michael Urban***
- ***Archive Entry: Cabinet Orientation***



HEAR HEAR!! Voice your opinion on the newsletters

Thank you for those who have provided feedback to the Newsletter! The writer of this issue (Josephine) is implementing these changes! More feedback is more than welcome by clicking the blue button below!

Voice your opinion here!

Insider: 2024 Coffeehouse

With the cancellation of this year's Speaker's Night, YPM is putting on the **2024 Coffeehouse**! For \$10, you can enjoy a wide selection of **board games** with your friends, watch and participate in amazing **open-mic** performances of YPM's past, current, and prospective members, plus an inclusive **muffin and coffee/tea**! You can also purchase **sandwiches** additionally if you wish! There will also be **50/50 raffle** happening, if you are feeling lucky. It's a great opportunity to **meet the team**, and enjoy a relaxing evening in early autumn!

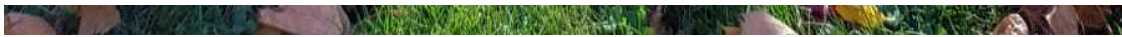
- **Time:** Sunday, September 8th at 6PM
- **Location:** Good Earth Coffeehouse (Bridgewater), 350 North Town road, Winnipeg Manitoba

RSVP September 5th, we look forward to seeing you! For more details, check out our Instagram post @ypmanitoba!

RSVP NOW!

Alumni Spotlight: Michael Urban





I am happy to share our next alumni spotlight, highlighting an alumnus and mentor of YPM.

Michael Urban's YPM journey began as the member from Cardigan in the 79th Session. He joined Cabinet in the 80th Session as the Male Whip, and took on the role of Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Affairs for the 81st Session. In the 82nd Session, Michael served as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Culture and was elected to the post of House Leader at the end of Session. Michael served three years on the Executive, including as the Premier of the 84th Session, and Speaker of the 85th Session. Michael was inducted into the Senate in the 86th Session. Ultimately, however, Michael was always most comfortable in his role as the member from the [Dark Side of the Moon](#).

Michael spent the entirety of his time on Cabinet and the Executive while studying at Queen's University, where he completed concurrent Bachelor's degrees in History and Political Studies in 2006. In 2007, Michael completed a Master's degree in International Affairs at Carleton University. Where he received a [Rhodes Scholarship](#) for study at the University of Oxford. Beginning in 2007, Michael earned an MPhil and then a DPhil in International Relations, successfully defending his [dissertation](#) at the end of 2014.

After living in England for 5 years, Michael returned to Canada to spend the 2012-2013 academic year as the [Cadieux-Léger Fellow](#) at Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa, after which he moved to Toronto. Leading up to and during the 2015 federal election, Michael worked as the Returning Officer for Spadina-Fort York before working at the University of Toronto's [Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation](#) in 2016 as the Practice Lead for Government Transformation until 2019. From 2019 to 2022, Michael worked at the [Diversity Institute \(DI\)](#), a think tank at Toronto Metropolitan University, where he eventually took on the role of Director of Research for DI's contribution to the federally funded [Future Skills Centre](#) initiative. In this role, he and his team focused on identifying the critical skills that Canadians will need to thrive in the future of work, and on making recommendations for how to make these skills accessible to all. Currently, Michael works at the [Canadian Standards Association \(CSA\)](#) as a Manager for Strategic Development. At CSA, Michael's job is to identify sectors of the Canadian economy where CSA has not traditionally been active which might benefit from the development of CSA standards.

Reflecting on this time as a youth parliamentarian, Michael identified many ways that YPM has helped foster the development of his professional skills. In particular, he learned a lot about democracy, how it works, and its critical importance to well-functioning societies. This background helped him in both his academic and professional life, and it is something about which he continues to be passionate. (Indeed, he now also serves as the Chair of the [Ranked Ballot Initiative of Toronto](#), a grassroots voting reform organization).

Michael believes that parliamentary simulations such as YPM are uniquely powerful, because they not only educate young people, but also inspire them. This inspiration leads young Canadians to become actively engaged citizens, who independently seek out ways to participate in their communities and think critically about public affairs. Eighteen years after his last Session at YPM, this belief continues to drive Michael [as he works to organize](#) a Youth Parliament of Canada (YPC) aimed at inspiring more young Canadians by making access to parliamentary simulations more accessible across the country.

Michael also recalled the friendship he had found through YPM. He stated that many of his closest friends, whom he is still in touch with today, are his fellow youth parliamentarians. One of them even introduced him to his wife Kirstie! With Kirstie, Michael has two children, Eloise (3) and Alfred (5). When asked to offer some advice, Michael highlighted the importance of showing respect and kindness to all members, and of recognizing that the many friendships and connections seeded at YPM have the opportunity to grow, blossom, and bear fruit across decades in ways that are impossible to foresee or understand in the heat of Question Period. He asked the members of YPM103 to cherish and protect the relationships they form with each other, even on occasions when they disagree in the chamber.

Archive Entry: Cabinet Orientation

written by Emily Mann, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources

To officially kick off YPM103's Cabinet duties came Cabinet Orientation in the beginning of August. Fresh off of the bonding that came about during the Cabinet Retreat, it was finally time to get down to business with a briefing of what being on Cabinet throughout the year would look like. As an opener to orientation, members

were given a quick crash course of the history and structure of YPM. It served as a reminder as to what everybody was there for.

Among reviewing by-laws, governance, minute-taking, and expectations for Session & beyond was the introduction of team points. A familiar race to returning Cabinet members, and a new challenge for first-year Cabinet members. Before our Cabinet split off into their teams for a rundown on their upcoming responsibilities, our Equity Officers gave a presentation on the importance of following the Code of Conduct not just during Session, but during all YPM-related events. Then, members followed their team leader off and away for team meetings. Once those had finished, everybody reconvened around the table for final notes.

And with that, Cabinet Orientation had adjourned to let the room fill with plotting of team hangout ideas. Some included poker, creating various video game parties, and simple chats over snacks at members' homes. With the shared goal of making Session the best it can be and the urge to win points for their team, it would be safe to say our Cabinet of YPM103 is ready for action!

Stay Connected: Get in Touch

If you have any comments about this newsletter or simply want to connect, feel free to reply to this email and your message will come to me (Josephine). YPM is always happy to hear from our alumni, supporters, and friends in the community.

You can also stay connected by following us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#), and liking our page on [Facebook](#). If you are receiving this email, you are on the Youth Parliamentarian email list. However, if you know someone who is an alum of YPM but isn't receiving these emails, please encourage them to [join the mailing list](#)!

Stay Connected: Donate

YPM is an independent, non-partisan, non-denominational charity. We receive no direct government funding for our operations and financial aid provisions, and rely entirely on member registration fees and donations from individuals and corporations. We are deeply appreciative of all donations, and thank all of our donors for helping us empower and educate youth across Manitoba.

Not every young Manitoban who wishes to participate in YPM could due to financial barriers, if you wish to sponsor a member, or establish a scholarship fund, please reach out to us!

DONATE NOW

Cheers,

Josephine Zhao

Speaker, 103rd Session of the Youth Parliament of Manitoba



Youth Parliament of Manitoba Inc., PO Box 595 Stn Main, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2J3, Canada

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