

WUSA and UW launch support fund for students

Suhani Segal
News Editor

Student housing advocates are endorsing an emergency fund for UW students.

The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) partnered with UW to launch the Student Emergency Support Fund for UW students who are affected by economic shockwaves from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students will be able to apply for the Student Emergency Support Fund before the end of April.

The fund has received over \$200,000 in donations since the alumni engagement campaign was kickstarted on Monday, Apr. 6.

"We are struggling to sublet our apartments, which inevitably leaves us to pay for places we are not even residing in," Sylvia Skoruch, creator of the Waterloo Housing Crisis student activist group said.

"In addition to rent, students are struggling to pay for tuition

and other expenses. Some students cannot apply for government support because they don't

WUSA's Internal Funding Committee invested \$30,000 in initial capital from this fiscal year's

"With this whole crisis going on, a lot of us students are facing significant challenges, most notably

social isolation outside of our student residences, typically with our families. University classes have also been switched to online, so the need for student housing and accommodations have decreased."

Co-op placement cancellations have caused a major loss of income for students who already faced a competitive housing market.

UW Advancement has been working on getting more donors to expand the outreach of the fund. All donors will receive charitable tax receipts for making a contribution.

"WUSA announced a Student Emergency Support Fund and has successfully raised up to \$200,000 since its launching. I am so pleased with the actions being taken by WUSA and the University," Skoruch said.

"I believe WUSA is doing an amazing job in advocating for students' needs and helping to alleviate some of the stress. They continue to support students in every way that they can. Thank you WUSA," Skoruch said.

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SYLVIA SKORUCH, CREATOR OF THE WATERLOO HOUSING CRISIS STUDENT ACTIVIST GROUP

meet the standards qualified for unemployment, for example not working enough hours."

expendable allowance from the Student Life Endowment Fund (SLEF).

financially and emotionally," Skoruch said.

"Many of us are forced to live in

No layoffs planned for the university

Nicola Rose
Reporter

UW has made no decisions or announcements concerning layoffs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There are still some essential workers on campus and other employees have been instructed to work from home," Matthew Grant, UW's director of media relations, said.

While campus is closed, cleaning and food services staff are receiving the same pay. Co-op students hired by the university have also transitioned to working from home.

"On campus employers have been encouraged to hire co-op students for the upcoming term and to have them work remotely, in line with public health guidance," for the upcoming spring term, Grant said.

For students who ended their winter 2020 co-op work term early, new flexible options were

created for students to earn their work term credit, including shorter minimum requirements for a work term.

"Students may also have the option of working one less term without affecting their graduation requirements," Grant said.

As the situation changes, UW will "continue to focus on ensuring campus safety through physical distancing and providing students

with a quality educational experience through alternative means."

There is no official date for the campus to re-open.

