



UNITED COUNCIL

of University of Wisconsin Students, Inc.

14 W. Mifflin St. Suite 212 Madison, WI 53703 www.unitedcouncil.net p. 608 263-3422 f. 608 265-4070

April 2, 2010

Dear event planner,

While planning our Building Unity Student Empowerment Conference, several students suggested Angus Johnston as our keynote speaker, offering glowing reviews of his speech at USSA's 2009 Congress. Angus's work in studying, chronicling, and supporting student activism made him the perfect choice for our weekend of events, including not only the Building Unity conference but also United Council's 50th Anniversary Gala, with students, alumni, and other friends of higher education in attendance. Angus happily agreed to keynote the conference and the evening gala, and further offered to present a workshop during the conference as well. For all of these services, Angus's fee was incredibly reasonable, especially compared to other speakers we had considered.

The mission of our Building Unity Student Empowerment Conference is to foster an inclusive, effective student movement that recognizes the experiences of all students. Finding a keynote speaker who would be familiar with the current student movement and also comfortable talking about the need to make it inclusive and diverse was our initial challenge. Angus's work demonstrated unquestionably that he would rise to this challenge, and the results were phenomenal. For the keynote speech of the conference, Angus spoke about the student movement today, including new ways for students to be involved and how today's activism is only getting stronger. Student reactions were enthusiastically positive, calling the presentation "so universally relevant" and raving that, "I loved the speech by Mr. Johnston because he spoke on how regardless of where a student stands politically, they can all rally around tuition and student rights." Our staff was also very pleased with Angus's presentation, including his readiness to engage with students during the question and answer period and following his speeches. From Angus's academic background and extensive blog, we knew that he would bring a great perspective on national student organizing. His expertise in exciting and connecting with students, however, was definitely the most memorable aspect of his work during our events.

During United Council's 50th Anniversary Gala, Angus gave a speech about the experiences of female students on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus during the immediate pre- and post-WWII era. Angus spoke to a large mixed group of UW System students, administrators, United Council alumni, national and state politicians and other community members. His speech effectively engaged the entire group. Angus skillfully linked the initial subject of this speech to the current student, the history of United Council's work and its purpose going into the organization's next 50 years. Many students commented that they especially appreciated how Angus varied his speeches between the two events but still stayed true to the tone and subject of the weekend.

Sincerely,

Kelley Schacht

Inclusivity and Shared Governance Director

United Council of UW Students

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Below are some direct quotes from Building Unity evaluation forms about Angus's presentations:

"So universally relevant"

"Angus's speech was my fav."

"I loved the speech by Mr. Johnston because he spoke on how regardless of where a student stands politically, they can all rally around tuition and student rights. I, being a conservative, have always felt out of place at UC even though it's a nonpartisan org. I just wanted to say I really appreciate this speaker and UC new direction."

"Guest speaker was freakin' amazing!!"

"I don't think I heard a single negative or even a don't care comment about the guest speaker. Everybody loved Angus!"

"Angus in particular was amazing."

Sincerely,

Kelley Schacht

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