100 College Drive, PO Box 5002
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Web: www.nusu.com

Nipissing University Student Union

AGM Report from the VP Finance and Administration

Prepared By: Tayler Sullivan
Tuesday, October, 29th, 2019

This Report:

The current Executive team is 6 months into their term, and things at the NUSU office are going very smoothly. Working for NUSU is an amazing experience to have, and helping students has been the most rewarding part. I would like to say a special thank you to our full-time staff for assisting with the Executive transitions, and for the work they do every day. This report contains the most notable work that I have accomplished since starting my term in May 2019. There will be no building reports in this document, as Warren will be doing a presentation during the AGM.

<u>May Report</u>

Goals for the year

My goals for this year as VP Finance and Administration are to ensure our student union can operate at the same level of trusted student advocacy, to provide the same quality services, despite provincial cuts. As well as assisting students with their health plan. Whether that is informing them of their basic coverage details, how to submit claims and use their insurance, or completing an opt-out application.

Sponsorship

With the budget set sponsorship has been getting some much needed attention. Because NUSU has been trying to strengthen our community involvement, we have become a partner with “The Bay and Area” newspaper. We will be distributing their newspaper and in exchange they will be providing us with a full page of advertising.

Interoffice Meetings

NUSU has been meeting with the different departments throughout the university including the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Record of Student Development, and Residence. In short, we have discussed our respective and collective goals for the year.

Building Update

The swap has been booked on the building loan, marking the last step in the process of finalizing the NUSU Student Centre. It is very exciting to finally start seeing the construction

coming together, and some framework has already started to come together amongst the foundation.

Clean, Green, Beautiful

Nipissing University and NUSU have been working collaboratively with the North Bay community on the clean, green, beautiful initiative. Students can clean up a portion of the city, take a photo of their project, and then post the photo in order to win a prize. This is a community engagement project that will continue through until the fall, through different initiatives.

Budget Changes

I have worked with Executives, and staff to change the budget. Cuts have been made where necessary. For example we have significantly cut back on any inter office, and travel costs. So we may focus the incoming funds which will benefit our students further. Adding extra money to our student-focused programs, such as clubs, events, and activities. All while lessening our expected deficit, based on a pessimistic budget.

Dean of Teaching

As of now, there are 3 candidates in the running for the new position, Dean of Teaching. I have been acting as a student representative on the search committee, and participating in the interviews and voting on a recommendation. The recommendation, as of today, has been sent to the president, and a decision will be announced in the coming weeks.

Ancillary Fees

We have been working with Dr. Casey Phillips, Assistant VP of Students, to determine essential, and non essential ancillary fees for opt-out. as well as their definitions. Definitions are important so that students will be informed to the fullest extent regarding why they are paying these fees.

Health Plan

We have been working with our benefits account manager, for “We Speak Student”. The price students pay for insurance will not change. As our contract will be up next year with the insurance provider, we will be sending out an RFP to get the best fiscal deal for our students. This decision will be made by next year’s Executives.

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June Report

Fifty-Two Coffees

I met with Adam McLandress from PosPro Financial and Kennedy Horton from the Business Center. Adam and I discussed the option for the summer jobs they offer to students to be RSD approved. Kennedy and I discussed the business center's summer company program for young entrepreneurs. the program enlists those between the ages 15-29 and supports them in building a summer business. The program offers an opportunity that benefits students and North Bay.

Swap/ Interest Rate

Per our last meeting, there was a larger question regarding what our original rate was. The swap consisted of a swap between floating rate (current rate + stamping fee) & fixed rate (3.762%) NUSU will be paying interest based on a fixed rate of $3.762% (Base rate 2.512% + 1.25% Stamping fee) instead of the actual or current rate. There was no fixed rate previously because it was a floating rate which changed every minute.

Interns

NUSU has hired two new interns through the Canada Summer Jobs Program. We have welcomed Lee Rockburne as our Sponsorship Intern and Nicole Seeley as our administration Intern. The interns' salary will be supplemented by Canada Summer Jobs.

Mira's Report

"Over the past month, the Finance Department has worked on various administrative and financial tasks to improve NUSU's financial status and administrative performance. The Finance and Administration Department plans to continue implementing strict budget compliance which is our driving focus to maintain NUSU's financial stability and sustainability. The department will address challenges along the way to ensure competitiveness, support NUSU's needs, develop and maintain good relationships with our stakeholders, the students, NU, and the community".

July Report

Budget

The budget has been revised to match our approved ancillary fees. Our fees are still based off of the original 18 dollars per 3 credit course with a "pessimistic" opt-out. Although the fees were set some time ago, not all were reflected in our operating budget. We had to add

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in the NUSU Awareness Campaigns & Initiatives fee at .50 cents.

Health Plan

There are no more negotiations to be done for the health plan. The $225 fee and benefit coverage will be staying the same. We will also be receiving an extra iPad stand during the opt-out dates.

NSO

NUSU's participation in NSO week this year was in the form of panels, volunteering at check-in at driving golf carts, table time at the resource fair, etc. It was great to meet all the new students and seeing their excitement while touring the school. NUSU received a lot of great recognition and attention regarding the work we do for students. Many of us got to speak with the student's supporters and parents who expressed the importance of our organization to their students. The week was a huge success.

Shine Ball

On Saturday the 20th NUSU held our 3rd Annual Shine Ball Tournament for Cystic Fibrosis. A special thanks to VP Advocacy and Awareness Charlotte Foster, Director of Services Warren Lindsay, and Sponsorship Intern Lee Rockburne for their dedicated work in organizing the tournament. As well as a special thanks to Directors at Large Xander Winter and Zach Cooper for volunteering their time. Overall we raised $2818.72 from the tournament!

Mira's Report

1) **Went with KPMG for HST expert opinion re: non-essential ancillary fees**
2) **Prepared and provided financial reports to auditors**
3) **Prepared year-end working papers and schedules for auditors**
4) **Ensured filing is complete**
5) **Ensured employment contracts are in the respective files**
6) **Assisted in Shine Ball event, prepared revenue & expense report for Charlotte**
7) **Drafted various policies templates**

<u>August Report</u>

Associate Dean Hiring Committee.

A hiring committee was formed to interview for a new Associate Dean for Arts and Science. I was selected by the committee as a student representative to sit in on an interview for the current

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candidate.

Sponsorship Contract

I revised the sponsorship contract to reflect the current model of sponsorship that NUSU uses. Every sponsor now must sign this contract outlining what services they will provide us, or monetary value, and vice versa. It is a standard practice to include a sponsorship contract with all sponsorship packages.

Office Administrator

We have hired a new Office Administrator, Rebecca Dubeau. We expect her to be a great addition to our team, considering her experience, and her love of the Nipissing University student community.

Town Hall

Nipissing University hosted a town hall meeting to discuss community safety. Member of Parliament for Nipissing-Timiskaming Anthony Rota and the Minister of Border Security and Organized crime Bill Blair were the representatives from parliament in attendance. The key points the community touched on were, geared to income housing, Children, youth, and families at risk**,** as well as the opioid crisis. I spoke with the minister about graduate retention in North Bay.

<u>September Report</u>

Board of Governors retreat

September 8th to 9th President Hannah Mackie and I attended the Board of Governors Retreat at the Mattawa Ecology Center. The focus of the retreat was the internationalization of Nipissing University. The board discussed multiple strategies for international recruitment. The board also welcomed 3 international students to come as guest speakers. They discussed their perspective as students coming to Canada and adjusting to university life.

OUF

September 27th-29th I attended the Ontario Universities Fair, or OUF, along with President Hannah Mackie and Vice-President Student Life Shannon. The fair is for prospective university students, typically in grades 11 and 12. We traveled to speak about NUSU and the new student building, along with what it's like to be a student at Nipissing. As well as what programs we are in, the requirements needed, and how to maintain grades while at school. Something notable from the fair was that we seemed to be the only student union invited. This is a great example of the wonderful relationship we have with Nipissing University.

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Student Health Plan

This month the majority of my time in office went to the student health plan and assisting with the opt-out. As of writing this report, 1933 students have opted out of the health plan. Whereas 3826 are still using their benefits. I was able to put an extra opt-out kiosk in the Office of Indigenous Initiatives for those who do not receive band funding for insurance. This was requested by OII staff, as it was a very useful resource in the past.

Meeting with Mayor Al

On Monday, September 23rd we met with Mayor Al McDonald to speak about the NUSU Block Party/ Community Fun Fair, Bay days, and graduate retention in the city. Mayor McDonald was very interested in combining student and community events, which is beneficial considering part of NUSU's goals for the year is to increase student involvement in the community.

Mira's Report

This month Director of Finances Mira Hotte has been working on paperwork for the Canada summer jobs program. As well as keeping track of the construction draws. As well as keeping up with our overall bookkeeping, which is what the majority of her time is spent doing.

October Report

Homecoming

For Nipissing University Student Alumni Homecoming, Vice-President Student Life Shannon and I attended the Alumni Awards, held Friday, October 4th. The awards and recipients are as follows; the Dr. James Jamieson Influential Alumni Award was received by Julio Viskovich, the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award –was received by Alicia Gal, and the Rising Star Alumni Award was received by Alysha Young. The Honorary Alumni Award was given to Gordon H. Durnan, the previous chair of Nipissing's Board of Governors**.** The award ceremony was very well-received by all who attended. The speeches from the award recipients were very well put. It was very nice to see that so many graduates still continue after graduation with the same mindset that Nipissing tries to instill into all students.

RFPs

We have sent out 3 requests for proposals for our new auditor for the coming fiscal year. the three auditors chosen for consideration this year are BDO, KPMG, and Grant Thorton. Our last year's auditor position was awarded to BDO, as they were able to provide us with the lowest price, and best service. At this coming AGM, we will choose this year's auditors.

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Student BBQ

On Wednesday, October 9th, NUSU held our welcome BBQ, which was renamed the "Student BBQ". It was originally supposed to be held on Wednesday, September 25th. However, the weather did not allow for the event. Many of our sponsors attended on October 9th and the event was an amazing success. I myself sat with Mira, our Director of Finance at the NUSU table to speak about the AGM, and the services provided by NUSU.

Things to Come

- Auditor choice at AGM
- Nipissing November 2nd open house
- Santa Claus Parade
- Executive elections