

## **Executive's Report to the Membership**

Prepared by: Executive Committee

Wednesday, March 24th, 2021

### **In this Report:**

- President - Hannah Mackie
- VP Advocacy and Awareness - Mykayla King
- VP Student Life - Shannon MacCarthy
- Thank You From The Executive Committee

---

### **Hannah Mackie, President**

#### ***Overview***

Being able to serve the student body as President for a second year has been an amazing and humbling experience. I have gotten to know so many students and witness their uniqueness, strength and passions. In my report, I would like to provide some highlights of work I accomplished this year for the student union.

#### ***Advocacy***

Advocating for students at a variety of levels was a part of my job this year. Part of that included standing on the Ontario Executive Committee for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). As the representative for CFS, I attended conferences, general meetings, and phone conferences with other student unions across Ontario speaking about student issues in Ontario and different tactics to address these issues. I was also able to serve as the Chairperson for the Northern Regional Caucus in the CFS, and guide advocacy efforts for Northern Ontario Post-Secondary Institutions as well. This has been a great network for support and connectivity. This group does a lot of lobbying on behalf of students at a provincial and federal level.

I also worked with our VP Advocacy and Awareness (Mykayla King) on a high-level scale on individual student issues and how we advocate for our students at Nipissing. This is a

great way to keep an eye on trends with student concerns and opportunities to address larger-scale issues. I was also happy to participate in the organization of another student survey. We are constantly looking for unique ways to hear student feedback. The largest piece of advocacy taking place currently is around the use of the LockDown browser and encouraging the university to research and invest in other platforms that are more supportive and accessible to students.

Advocacy for me also looks like serving on a large number of committees in the university. Our belief is that decisions being made that impact students, should include students. This year I sat on many standing committees through the Academic Senate and also the Board of Governors. This included the Operational Readiness Committee within the university that acted as an advisory group for the operations of the university in relation to COVID. I also sat on a large portion of the executive and decanal search committees this year.

### ***Managing the Office***

In the job description of the president, it states that they are the general manager of the office and responsible for managing the affairs of the NUSU. For me, that looked like ensuring communication was flowing smoothly, and that our team was functioning effectively. I also took the lead on our strategic planning efforts, to ensure that the office was working towards the same goals and objectives. This included a lot of participating in the planning and organization of different efforts.

The last notable piece would be the time put into developing an MOU with the university with the AVP Students, Dr. Casey Phillips. The two of us are working together on this document to have a formalized agreement between the university and the union regarding operations.

Lastly, assisting the other executives and staff with projects and initiatives as they come up was a large part of my job this year as well. Typically in the role of the president at NUSU, it is your responsibility to be what the organization needs at the time.

### ***Building Project***

The building project has consumed a large part of my time over the last few months. We have been working diligently with the university around transitioning from the construction period to occupancy and operations. Currently reviewing the lease agreement, budgeting and negotiating service agreements is at the forefront of work being done. I will leave more details to our Director of Services, Warren Lindsay.

### ***Health Plan and Finance***

As of December, I absorbed many of the health plan duties and finance duties into my role. This has looked like managing the communication between ACL (our provider) with the support of the staff team. In the scope of this, I provided communication to any students struggling with the fall opt-out or did not receive funds, as well as coordinate the winter opt-out process as well. We also have to revisit the fees and coverage for the student health plan for the next academic year, so I have been involved in that process as well as taking point on the review of ancillary fees for the next academic year. With the fall remittance, I also took point on the budget revisions mid-year and I am now working with our Director of Finance on next year's budget proposal.

### **Mykayla King, VP Advocacy and Awareness**

#### ***Overview***

My term as the VP Advocacy and Awareness has been incredibly rewarding and fulfilling. I would like to thank all Nipissing University students for a wonderful term. While this year may not have been what we had hoped for, there were many campaigns, events and advocacy initiatives that I am proud of. In my report, I will be giving some highlights of what I have accomplished throughout my term with the student union.

#### ***Shinerama***

This year was difficult for Shinerama initiatives, due to the ongoing pandemic. We, unfortunately, did not raise as much as last year, however, it was a great learning experience. Due to the pandemic, we had to shift from our typical Shinerama events that were done in person, to an online format. The events included Shine Day Zumba that was a part of

O-Weekend and an online car washing fundraiser, Shine Your Ride for CF. Based on the experience we had this year, I will be able to provide some recommendations and suggestions for next year, especially if the year will be online like this year.

I would like to thank Sarah McGowan and the other NUSU staff for providing me with tremendous support throughout the year. I would also like to thank all students and those who attended our events and donated, these events wouldn't be possible without you!

### ***Student Advocacy***

Throughout my term, I have had the pleasure of advocating for students. I am so fortunate to have a great experience in regard to advocacy. There have certainly been some challenges that were presented with the Nipissing shifting the delivery of education to an online format. I would like to thank everyone for their compassion and patience, as we worked together to navigate this together. I am excited for the incoming VP Advocacy and Awareness, Sarah Pecoskie-Schweir, to take on this role for the 2021-2022 school year. I am confident that she will do a great job advocating for students. I would also like to thank Debra Lafrate and the respected Deans for their assistance throughout this year.

### ***Wellness Week and Campaigns***

Much like previous years, we were able to host Wellness Week, however, this year it would be completely virtual. We hosted Wellness week in the fall term in November and in the winter term in March. This was a great opportunity to highlight our mental health resources to students, host interactive events, and spark the conversation around mental health. Through Wellness Week, we have had the pleasure to host two virtual talks with Erika Eileen, one during the fall Wellness Week and the second during International Women's Day in the winter semester. These were wonderful events that the Campaigns Committee of the Board of Directors (Hannah Mackie, Hannah Brown-Thiesen, Sarah Pecoskie-Schweir, Mercedes Parsons and Warren Lindsay) had helped plan, thank you for all your hard work and dedication. I would also like to thank Sarah McGowan for working alongside me and the campaigns committee to help plan Wellness Week, without you, these campaigns and events would not be possible.

## **Shannon MacCarthy, VP Student Life**

### ***Year Recap***

This year as Vice-President Student Life, and as my second year in this position, I was able to accomplish many of the goals I set myself based on my job description. I worked closely with clubs and societies to enhance student life through diverse programming, I executed successful student events, some that were taking place for the first time, I ran a successful Orientation (O-Weekend) to introduce incoming students to Nipissing University and North Bay, and more. This being my last term, I would really like to stress how grateful I am to have been in this position, and how passionate I am about NUSU initiatives and the student experience as a whole.

### ***Clubs and Societies***

There were a number of new clubs and societies that were approved club status this year, including the Nipissing University Black Association for Student Expression, which has already been doing such amazing, important work in the Nipissing University and North Bay community. NUSU, and I especially, is incredibly excited to see their continued contributions to student life in the 2021-2022 academic year, alongside the many other amazing Clubs and Societies I have managed the last two years.

### ***Food Bank***

Our Student Food Bank usage has increased dramatically over last year even before the onset of COVID-19. From January to December of 2019 we had 145 students take 208 bags and as of March 31st, 2020 we have had about 130 Students take 220 bags of groceries. Over the summer, we ran an online gift card program to help support our students further during the COVID-19 pandemic, and every Wednesday the Food Bank remains open at the Chancellors House Residence with continued frequent student use. The university has been very supportive during this time not only by finding us an alternate space to operate but by also contributing a number of physical and monetary donations. We have also had some outstanding donation support from the community and some Nipissing students and alumni. Students have been very thankful that we are still offering this service during this pandemic.

### ***Events***

While NUSU events looked dramatically different this year, all of which have taken place online, the Services department in collaboration with the rest of the NUSU Staff and Executive team was able to run a number of successful events. In the summer, we ran a number of successful events; COCA Collaborative Campus Concert, NBA 2K Basketball Tournament, NUSUTalks Podcast Series, Common Knowledge Trivia, Virtual Bingo, The House Cup, Athletic Skills Videos, Fandom Trivia, and a Student Hosted Paint Night. In first semester, we executed

and participated in the following events; COCA Welcome-Back Concert, Zumba, Fall Photo Contest, Virtual Clubs Week (with the launch of the NUSU Club Hub), October Hunt Goosechase, Sexual Health Sexy Trivia, Knitting Night, Erika Eileen Speaker, Bingo, Yoga, Grad Studies Trivia, Education Trivia, Winter Traditions Photo Contest, and 12 Days of Giveaways. For the winter semester, we did the following events; Welcome Back Week with Student Feedback Surveys, Helpful Tips, Among Us Game Night, Trivia Night and Sexy Bingo, Grad Student Trivia Night, Virtual Clubs Week, Sex Positivity Week with a Goosechase, Sexy Trivia, Information, Workshops and more, Among Us Game Night (again!), Wellness Week, Fandom Trivia Night, Wellness Wishes, NU Small Business Showcase, and Disney Trivia.

### ***O-Weekend***

O-Weekend 2020 was a great success, with 241 first-year students participating in the Weekend events. We were able to deliver a combination orientation, with a lot of online events, with social-distanced, safe protocol in-person events available for students as well. It was a 5-day event, with incredibly competent leaders helping transition the students into university through social and academic-based events.

### **Thank You from the Executive Committee**

Overall we are beyond thankful to our students who have shown such strength and resilience this year. Although this is not how many of us envisioned finishing this school year,



**NUSU Student Centre**

221 College Drive, North Bay, ON P1B 0G1

Tel: (705) 474-3450 ext. 4801 Fax: (705) 474-7732

Web: [www.nusu.com](http://www.nusu.com)

---

we want to thank you all, and say it has been a pleasure serving you all as the 2020- 2021 NUSU Executive team.