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Nipissing University Student Union

Vice-President Communications AGM Report

Prepared By: Xander Winter
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The NUSU executive rolls over May first every year, meaning that I have now been in my position for around five month. As VP Communications I am responsible for the student health plan, social media, awareness and motivational campaigns, Shinerama, media communication, and more. My time in office had flown by, and it still feels like the elections were just yesterday. Overall this job has been extremely rewarding

This Report:

- Calendar
- Health Plan
- Shinerama
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- Community Engagement
- App
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- Welcome BBQ
- Wellness Week
- Building
- Movember
- Conferences

CALENDAR

The first main task I had this year was to put together the NUSU Student Calendar. We received important dates from the departments around school, as well as athletics to best advertise as much as we could, and chose photos taken by Paul Ritter, a Nipissing employee. The cover art was chosen through a photo contest amongst students. Most of the work on this project was done by Sarah McGowan, the Director of Communications as it was during my transition period.

HEALTH PLAN

One of the main focuses of my job role is to run the student health plan. In



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May Jonathan and Melody from We Speak Student came to meet with us about the health plan, and it was a very productive meeting. One of the main points coming out of the meeting was the potential to hire a student worker for the health plan. This would be a student hired by NUSU, and paid for by ACL, who's job is to answer students' questions about the health plan. All we have to do on our end is find the student and log their hours, and ACL will take care of training, as well as payment. We can hire this student any time prior to their start on September 1st. The position would last until approximately a week after the opt out date of October 5th, and we can rehire the same student, or another one, for January, lasting until a week after the second semester opt out date of February 8th. We chose to take advantage of this and hired someone for the position.

Another conversation that was ongoing with the health plan was surrounding OHIP+. When I took office this was in place, and we were looking into possibilities as to how we could not charge our students for the drug coverage that was included in OHIP+. However, it was quickly removed so these conversations stopped.

The biggest change to the health plan this year was the loss of Aspiria and the addition of Real Campus. Real Campus provides a toll-free number that will connect you directly to a Clinical Response Centre, which is a 24/7 confidential service. This is a multilingual counselling and support network. It also provides telephone and online counselling or assistance for many student related issues.

Throughout the opt-out process we experienced some hiccups but nothing that proved to be a major problem. Hopefully each year we go through this process it becomes smoother and there are less errors.

SHINERAMA

The first main fundraiser we ran for Shinerama this year was the Shineball Slo-Pitch Tournament. This event was hosted at Steve Omischl Sport Complex in conjunction with NU Lakers Crew, and saw 10 teams play. We obtained a sponsorship from New Ontario Brewery donating beer for us to sell, as well as a sponsorship from Athletics to help us in purchasing food for the barbeque. On top of this we also sold Somersby and Palm Bays. At the end of this one day tournament we were able to raise \$2628.13! The event received great media exposure and everyone left with a smile on their face.

Shine Day itself went very well and we raised \$9,347.80! Overall the day went very well, although we did not have the highest turnout, and one location ended up leaving early to join another due to lack of community turnout at that location. Our guest speaker Vicky Foster spoke very well, and CFC North Bay helped us out by serving breakfast. All in all the event was a huge success, however, in future years



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finding a way to cut costs would be recommended. Our locations consisted of: No Frills, KIA, Independent Grocers, Bay Truck Stop, Best Western, Capitol Centre, Sobey's, Caisse Populaire (Sturgeon Falls), Gd2Go, The Beer Store/ Food Basics, North Bay Mall (Lakeshore), and 250 Clark (Powassan).

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our social media accounts have been very active this year, and we are gaining great traction. We have noticed the level of student engagement growing on our social media, both in number of followers and interactions with posts. Our Facebook is currently sitting at 3,616 followers, our Instagram has 1,360, and our Twitter has 1,385. As these numbers continue to grow as does our student engagement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of our focuses this year has been to become more involved with the community. Not only does this allow us to create relationships and partnerships within the community, but it also allows us to highlight everything that North Bay has to offer to our students so that they can take full advantage of this city that we live in. Some of the ways that we have tried to create, strengthen, and further these relationships are: attending community clean ups in Thibeault Terrace, working with TP North Bay, attending Cystic Fibrosis Canada North Bay Chapter events, attending the community living opening, supporting the Military Family Resource Centre, helping at a Family Fun Day for Epilepsy Awareness at Sugar Daddy Cupcakes and Catering, becoming involved with Ignite North Bay, working with habitat for Humanity, walking in the Pride Parade, hosting a Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours event, and much more.

APP

Unfortunately the Canadian Federation of Students has decided to no longer subsidize our app. Without this funding we will be losing the NUSUtalks app at sometime in the near future. We had put in a lot of work to make sure that it was updated for the beginning of this year, and adding everything for Lakers Orientation, however, this will no longer be necessary.

FROSH

Frosh week was extremely successful, and I will leave most of that report to Nicolai. One thing that I would like to touch on was Goose Chase. Goose Chase was



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an online scavenger hunt that students could download and participate on by completing various challenges. This went over extremely well and all feedback we received on it was positive. It provided the introverted Froshies something to do while others went to search for spirit points, and was a great way for teams to bond. I highly recommend that this is run again next year, and stay with the Communications Department so that it is not added to the plate of Services as they are already extremely busy.

Throughout Frosh week I was very busy supporting Nicolai, dealing with media, and trying to help the Frosh Coordinator team run the week as smoothly as possible. It was an unforgettable week, and ran very well.

WELCOME BBQ

We had a Welcome BBQ on Wednesday September 12th. This was open to all Nipissing students, and we had partners come in and set up tents to speak with our students. Those that attended were: CIBC, RBC, Algonquin Regiment, Shoppers Drug Mart, Rewire, and CFS. We had a good turn out, and students were very appreciative of the food that they were provided.

WELLNESS WEEK

We ran Wellness Week the week of September 24th-28th. It was a busy but rewarding week! Below is a list of all of the events run throughout this week.

Monday: On this day we hosted Mirrorless Monday and Smash the Scales, events that had been brought to campus last year by Taylor Mueller. These events were received well, and we saw many positive messages left on the paper covering the mirrors.

Tuesday: This day we hosted Act Like a Kid Day in the student lounge where we gave out candy, colouring pages, and played cartoons to help the students manage their stress and relax for an afternoon with reminders of their childhood. This event was very well attended and we had many people come through the student lounge. We also had RBC come in to help students create budgets. On this day not too many students came to speak with them, but those who did were grateful.

Wednesday: We kicked off Wednesday with with Romaine Calm and Carry On, an event based around nutrition. During this event I sat in the hall outside of the



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bookstore and gave out fruits and veggies, as well as cheap healthy recipes, and information on how healthy eating can impact your mental health. I had many people stop at my table to talk about nutritional wellness. We also had RBC come back in this day, and their presence was received much better, allowing them to help many students create budgets. This day was ended with So You Think You Want To Become An Exec. Unfortunately, we did not get anyone out to this event. I think that this is a combination of not pushing it as an individual event rather than as simply a part of Wellness Week on my part, as well as the fact that it is still early in the year, so many people are not thinking about next academic year yet. We had put this event in our calendars ahead of time but due to Tyrel resigning and the elections taking place for VP Governance, it may have confused our students. We are looking to run this again closer to the elections for next year.

Thursday: On Thursday we ran Self Love is the Best Love and Food For Thought. Self Love is the Best Love involved us setting up a table in the hallway for students to take papers filled with positive messaging, information on the changes to the health plan, smile cookies, and various other things. Many people came by to pick up what we had to give out. Food for Thought involved people filling out a survey to help us gather data on student interests, and in return they were given food, including fruits and veggies, as well as brownies and other treats. We did not have amazing attendance at this event, but it was well received by those who were there, and brought some students into the student lounge who had not seen it before, showing off the space.

Friday: We closed the week running a self defence class with Action MMA. Unfortunately, due to bad weather many of the people who had signed up did not show up. This led to only 4 students attending. However, Action MMA ran a very good class, with a focus on mental health, and we are looking to run an event like this again later in the year.

Throughout the week we also ran the Friend Send where people could come into the office and send a postcard to a child somewhere who is struggling with something, whether it be bullying or a loss in the family, with encouraging words to help them get through the tough situation.

BUILDING

With the building beginning to move forward this means that we must keep the media and student body updated. We have sent out a media release about the



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building and announced the awarding of tender over our social media platforms. We have also chosen and announced our groundbreaking date, November 9th, and are extremely excited to see this project move forward.

MOVEMBER

Next month is Movember, so we are getting prepared. We have met with athletics and their iLead team to discuss Movember matches, as well as how their fundraising will run. We have also met with Area 13 Training Systems to discuss having them come in to talk about physical wellness and how that relates to mental wellness. There are four pillars to Movember, mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer. We are looking to focus on one pillar a week for the month of November.

CONFERENCES

Throughout my term so far I have attended four different conferences, Shine National, Canadian Organization of Campus Activities (COCA), CFS Skills, and ACL.

Shine National took place from May 18th-20th. Nicolai travelled to McMaster University for this conference. During this conference we learned a lot about Cystic Fibrosis, Shinerama, fundraising, leadership, and teamwork. The biggest part of this conference was a case competition where we were split into groups and tasked with planning an event. We had to plan the entire event, including sponsorship, budget, and contingency plan. One of the stipulations of this competition was that the profit margin must be at least \$4 raised for every \$1 spent. Listening to all of these fundraisers gave us a lot of ideas for events throughout the year. Unfortunately many of them were school specific and could not be held on our campus. I was lucky enough to be a part of the winning team, with our colour run/family fun day event.

Sarah, Nicolai and I attended COCA in Fredericton New Brunswick from June 11th-17th. Throughout this conference we attended many seminars and workshops on event and campaign running, leadership, clubs, sponsorship, campus crisis, sexual assault, reconciliation, and much more. We also attended many showcases where entertainers and speakers presented for us to try to show us why we should bring them on campus. This conference taught me a lot about what it is to be a student union executive, and gave us stronger connections with student unions all over Canada.

Directly after this the entire executive, along with other students, travelled to



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UTM to attend CFS Skills from June 18th-20th. This conference had workshops on advocacy and awareness, sponsorship, buzzwords, media relations, sexual violence, student action, self care, and much more. This conference taught us how to better make our school and safe and open environment for all of our students.

The final conference I attended this summer was the ACL conference that Andrew and I went to from July 18th-19th. This conference was put on by our health insurance provider. They provided us with the updates to the health plan mentioned above, as well as potential changes that may happen in the future, and went over how to best make claims.

CONCLUSION

My time in office has been eye opening for me. Everyday I learn something new, and I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some amazing people, both community members, Nipissing University staff, and our spectacular students. I have loved this job, and I look forward to the rest of the school year, working with our executive team to try to make the university experience as good as we can for all of our students.

If you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to reach out to me via email, phone call, or in person.