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Nipissing University Student Union

Executive's Report to the Membership

Prepared by: Executive Committee

Wednesday, April 29th, 2020

In this Report:

- President - Hannah Mackie
- VP Advocacy and Awareness - Charlotte Foster
- VP Finance and Administration - Tayler Sullivan
- VP Student Life - Shannon MacCarthy
- Thank You From The Executive Committee

Hannah Mackie, President

Overview

This last year serving as the students' president 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. 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.



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I also worked with our VP Advocacy and Awareness (Charlotte Foster) at 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.

Advocacy for me also looks like serving on a large amount 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.

Community Engagement

Community Engagement was another part of my job this year, and I worked with our Director of Communications (Sarah McGowan) on attending appropriate events in the North Bay community to represent students. I also was able to have conversations with people in the community about students and the relationship with the community such as Mayor Al McDonald.

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.

I also worked on some policy development with a large amount of assistance from the staff, and managed to develop a code of conduct for all of our volunteers, employees and representatives of NUSU. With the help of the governance committee, we also rewrote the elections policy. 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 an formalized agreement between the university and union regarding operations.



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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

I was grateful to be able to work on the Student Centre project as I have been involved with this project since 2018. I have worked with our Director of Services (Warren Lindsay) to take on selecting finishes and furniture for the entire space, and begin conversations about operations in the future and what the requirements of NUSU are.

Charlotte Foster, VP Advocacy and Awareness

Overview

Thank you to all Nipissing students for a wonderful term. It has been wonderful getting to know, support, and advocate for you folks during my year at NUSU. Although there were many events and moments I was proud of, here is an outline of some of these events. For a full list of items I have completed in my term, please visit the NUSU website and read over my executive reports.

Shinerama

Overall I am extremely proud of all of our Shinerama events. These events include Shine Ball hosted in the summer, Shine day which was part of Frosh Week, and our Shine Trivia Night hosted in the second semester. These events brought awareness to Cystic Fibrosis, and raised just over \$12,000 for Cystic Fibrosis Canada. This was truly a wonderful experience to be a part of, and I thank all of our volunteers, students, NUSU staff, and those who donated to make these events possible.

Student Advocacy

In my term, I have had the pleasure of advocating for students in terms of academics. It has been a great experience getting to know how to better support our students, and working



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with a caring university to help support students. I am excited for the VP Advocacy and Awareness-elect (Mykayla King) to take on this role in the 2020-21 year, and am confident that she will do a great job advocating for students. I would like to thank Debra lafrate, and the respected deans for their assistance as well.

Wellness Week and Campaigns

Wellness Week was hosted in the fall term in November, and also in the winter term in March. This was a great opportunity to highlight our mental health resources to students, and spark the conversation around mental health. These were wonderful events that the Campaigns Committee of the Board of Directors (Natalie Muylaert, Sarah Pecoskie-Schweir, and Kirsten Cartwright) had helped plan and run. Thank you to the university resources for partnering with us on events, and to the students who served on the Campaigns Committee for their hard work and dedication.

I also like to highlight the campaigns I ran with the campaigns committee, multiple resources within the university, and The Studio for all of their collaboration to raise awareness and money for multiple causes. Together, we raised over \$200 for the Breast Cancer Society, Movember, and Amelia Rising. These were wonderful initiatives to be a part of, and I am looking forward to many more in the future.

Ian Campeau

In February, we had the pleasure to host Ian Campeau on our campus for two events. The first talk was partnered with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives for an Indigenous centered talk. We also invited local highschool students to attend this event as well. In the evening, Ian Campeau spoke to our students and to the community about the impacts of colonialism. These were both powerful speeches and events, and I am forever thankful for all those who worked with me to host these amazing talks.



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Taylor Sullivan, VP Finance and Administration

Overview

The current Executive team has now completed their 2019-2020 term. This report will be a highlight of my year as the Vice President of Finance and Administration. Over the past year I have worked with the NUSU staff and executives to ensure the budgetary spending was well-warranted. I have worked with students to assist them with their health plan, to explain coverage and claim details, and assist with refunds. I have worked with the Director of Services (Warren Lindsay) and the President (Hannah Mackie) to ensure our building is on track during construction. Finally, I have worked with the staff and executives in NUSU's community volunteer and chamber efforts.

Personal Highlights

The summer was busy, as usual for NUSU. In the beginning we focused on team building and setting out goals for the year. During the summer our volunteer work was thriving due to the nice weather. We volunteered with the Heritage Gardeners to assist with the annual waterfront clean up. NUSU partnered with Clean, Green, Beautiful to run community clean ups around North Bay.

We also volunteered with the Gathering Place to serve those who came to dine in. 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. I attended the donor social hosted by Nipissing to hear the student testimonials of thanks for the bursaries they received.

Health Plan

The health plan was a large part of my day to day. Many students reached out regarding their coverage, how to use the health plan, and how to submit claims. A large benefit this year was the addition of the Pulse system. This is an online portal which assisted me in assessing students' health plan profiles. The portal was a huge help in assisting students with their refunds, or coverage details.

This year I was also able to extend the health plans IUD coverage to include more



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brands. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we arranged for the Real Campus on-demand online therapy component of the health plan to be accessible to the students who had opted-out of the health plan. Real Campus will be available to those students until the end of August.

Sponsorship

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.

Our focus for sponsorship mainly involved the building in the second semester. This includes planning for potentially larger partnerships such as the retail space. As well as working with local companies to include their products and services in the bar and restaurant.

Budget

The budget this year was set originally from a projection of 4500 students, and 25% opting into optional ancillary fees. I am very pleased to announce that our funding was at 99% of what it normally is yearly. This is partly because the student choice initiative allowed us to charge distance students. Also, that students care about the services they have on campus, and choose to continue to fund them. Our team this year has followed the budget very well by staying within their individual operating budget lines. As well as keeping their spending justified by the ancillary fee descriptions. Because of the staff and executives due diligence we came in under budget this year.

Administration

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 candidate.

I attended a town hall meeting to discuss community safety. I spoke with minister Bill Blair about graduate retention in North Bay and how it can improve our schools community.

I joined the Nipissing Research committee which discusses the important research that Nipissing students are doing, the funding sources, and what research to prioritize. I met with the MPP of Spadina to discuss the issues students unions are facing because of the student choice initiative. He was very interested in hearing what we had to say, and it was a very successful afternoon.



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I also attended the International Student orientation to discuss the health plan and how to use it, as well as welcome the new students to North Bay. We applied to have two students interns through Canada Summer Jobs, which are currently pending approval. This is a program we had a lot of success with last summer, and feel students get great experience from as well.

Shannon MacCarthy, VP Student Life

Year Recap

This year as Vice-President Student Life 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 Frosh Week to introduce incoming students to Nipissing University and North Bay, and more.

Clubs and Societies

There were a number of new clubs and societies that were approved club status this year, including the Nipissing University Math and Computer Science Club, The Nipissing University French Club, and the Nipissing University Education Society. While the Education Society and French Club were inactive as they were approved in March before the pandemic, NUSU is excited to see their contributions to student life in the 2020-2021 academic year. The Math and Computer Science Club had an incredible year as a new club as they actively engaged and represented their members.

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. If this continues we are on track to see 4 times the usage of last year. Once the campus closed on March 20th, we moved the food bank to the Chancellor's House games room temporarily so it could still be accessed by students living on and off campus. The university has been very supportive during this time not only by finding us an alternate space to operate, but by also



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allowing us to repurpose the Student Initiatives Funding that was going to be used for the Student Appreciation Lunch which was cancelled. We have also had some outstanding support from the community and some Nipissing Alumni, Staff and Faculty, including food and monetary donations. Students have been very thankful that we are still offering this service during this pandemic, and I would like to continue doing so until things return to 'normal' since we typically would be open throughout the summer months.

Events

This year 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 first semester, we executed and participated in the following events; Community Fun Fair, Block Party, Adult Fright Night at Leisure Farms, Pumpkin Carving Photo Contest, the North Bay Santa Claus Parade, Holi-Slay Drag Night, and a Jonas Brothers Concert (Ticket Giveaway). For the winter semester, we did the following events; Spirit Week, Sexy Bingo, Movie Night, Sexy Trivia, Paint Night, and Goosechase.

Frosh Week

Frosh Week 2019 was a great success, with 387 first year students participating in the week. It was a 6-day event, with incredible competent leaders helping transition the students into university through social events like Muddy Olympics, the Amazing Race, Beach Day, Movie Night, Zumba, Sports, Shine Day, and more.

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, we want to thank you all, and say it has been a pleasure serving you all as the 2019-2020 NUSU Executive team.