

June 22, 2012

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council

Hello friends,

This report is going to be quite concise as I only have about one week of work to report on since half of my time was spent at the Studentcare Health and Dental Plan Stakeholder meetings in Montreal.

I want to preface this report by saying that I am extremely glad and fortunate to be working with all of you and that I am starting to get quite excited for the school year (even though it is still over two months away). We have a year full of opportunity and I think that we will see some major advances for the Students' Union and the students we represent in the near future!

June 15

As I am sure that you are all aware, our UofA community experienced a shocking and heart-wrenching event with the murder of three and the serious injury of one G4S security personnel in our HUB Mall residence on June 15. The violence was tied to an armored security car bank robbery performed by 21 year-old Travis Baumgartner. No students were injured in this event however numerous students have suffered emotional trauma from this even occurring so close to home. At this time I would like to commend the amazing work of our two Safewalk volunteers Ashley Moroz and Sapphira Nuttall who were the first responders on the scene of the emergency and did a fantastic job contacting a number of support services and calling the crisis in to the police. These two courageous women have stood out as true heroes and role models to our community. I would also like to thank our advocacy staff (Simon Yackulic – External Communications and Media Advisor and Justin Williams – Director of Research and Political Affairs) and the Vice President Academic for the amazing job they did handling all of the incoming media regarding the event as myself, the VPSL, and the VP Operations and Finance were all in Montreal during the event. I was able to take part in a number of interviews from Montreal and once I returned to Edmonton. I think that it is important to keep our message strong and consistent.

With the aftermath of these events I have been extremely impressed with the university's provision of emergency mental health services and hospitality in the Lister Centre residence. I would highly encourage any students who experienced any part of these events to make use of the available counseling services. The university also showed compassion by allowing students to defer final exams due to added stress following this event.

Many students have come to me with concerns regarding the university's use or disuse of the emergency notification system during this event. I have been informed that Edmonton Police Services recommended that the notification not be sent out as they were securing the building and campus and that an emergency message was sent out immediately over the HUB communication system. There are obvious flaws with the lack of immediate notice given to students but I truly believe that the university did everything in their power to make what they believed to be the right decision at the time. The

Department of Environmental Health and Safety has contacted me to participate in their discussions on how they can improve the system. With an event of this significance the university must absolutely investigate their response and look for ways to improve their practices and policies regarding crisis situations.

Overall this event has brought a large amount of stress to our campus community but I have been grateful for the outstanding support that we have received from our peers and community members all around the world. Though these events have shaken us, the response from the community is a testament to the strength of our networks and the UofA as a well-respected entity. I am extremely proud of our staff and students and hope that we can remember the past but soon recover from these tough times.

Studentcare Stakeholder Meetings - Montreal

The Studentcare Meetings took place near downtown Montreal in what I would consider to be nearly scorching heat. The conference gave us an amazing opportunity to get a better grasp on the ins-and-outs of our plan and the innovations that Studentcare has planned for the future (website improvements, mobile app, service delivery innovations, etc.) We also got a tour of Studentcare's downtown office and saw presentations on campus projects from a number of our peers across the country. The most interesting piece for me was the keynote presentation on communications from a representative named Stephen Sills from the Student Life Network. Stephen talked about innovative ways to engage students and to promote our message. The conference was an excellent opportunity to discuss current issues with our fellow student executives from across the country and to develop positive relationships that we can leverage in the future.

Summer Management Retreat

We spent Monday in the Summer Management Retreat with the SU's senior staff. This provided an excellent opportunity for the exec to share their goals and to hear the goals of all of our major units (we also recently presented our policy implementation plans to the Policy Committee). I found the retreat to be very refreshing and it gave me insight into the workings of a number of departments that I do not normally work with such as the Gender Based Violence Prevention program. Overall the program was great and I would like to thank the General Manager for the hard work that he put into its organization.

MBAC

The Vice President Operations and Finance and I attended the Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee Budget Advisory Committee on Tuesday. We discussed a number of high level issues such as the Golden Bears and Pandas Legacy Fund fee (discussions with the Faculty of Phys Ed and Rec regarding disbursement), Access Copyright, financial reporting for the COSSS fee, and our dissent for a new proposal from Ancillary Services to modify the Residence Contract. The proposal in short proposes to charge students who move out of residence early the full cost of their term contract rather than just charging them for the rest of the month before they leave. It also proposes a \$300 dollar fee for moving out without providing 30 days notice and other additional costs. We view many of these changes to be extremely unfriendly to students and will be discussing this issue thoroughly at the Residence Budget Advisory Committee. Overall the meeting went well but we have a lot of work to do regarding these issues.

Meeting with Redfrog

I attended a meeting set up by the Chaplains Office to discuss a new program provided by an Australian company called Redfrog. Redfrog works with community groups to provide services and volunteers to promote safe partying. They build up volunteer bases of young people to go to parties and provide service such as giving out food, water, and freezies to keep parties hydrated and can help make sure people get home safely. They also provide after party services such as helping clean rooms and serving pancake breakfasts the morning after. I think that this program sounds very useful so we will be doing some research to look into it further.

Updates

I will be out of town from Saturday night until Tuesday night, as I will be taking my first vacation in two years to Las Vegas! I will try and Skype into Council from the airport but I can't make any promises that this will work. I have a few exciting things happening before I leave such as a TUC meeting today, a meeting with some Liberal Senators on Saturday morning and of course the Vice President External's concert with his band Quordial Fusion who are playing tonight at the Pawn Shop. You should all come out to show your support! The show starts at 8pm. I would also like to inform you that my glasses (that I broke at Council Retreat) have been repaired and are back in action!

This week has been very exciting and I have had the opportunity to take part in a number of fun activities and events such as a soccer game, a video shoot for the online Viewbook with the Office of the Registrar (the video includes a high speed bike ride across campus and the high level bridge) and last but not least, the amazing Orientation Volunteer BBQ held last night in Hawrelak Park (I got drenched in the water fight). Thank you to the Centre for Student Development staff for an amazing event!

If you have any further questions, suggestions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to follow-up with me, either in person at SUB 2-900, by phone at 780-492-4236, or by email at president@su.ualberta.ca.

Best,

-Colten Yamagishi