

June 27, 2011

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council

Hello Council,

Below are the highlights since my last report. Please note that, in the absence of the President, my office assumes the essential duties of the President. Should you have any pressing presidential matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grant Allocation Committee

Last year's GAC and Council made influential decisions to restructure the administration and financing of the SU awards program. One of these changes – a partial transfer of Access Fund reserves into the Student Involvement Endowment Fund – is the core driver of the awards program expansion. Today I authorized a 2.8 million dollar transfer, as approved by last year's council. On the other end of this, GAC is in the midst of discussions about guidelines for new awards. Namely, we are establishing financial need and merit criteria, and working out the number and sizes of new scholarships.

Student Group Granting

The Vice President (Student Life) and I have met with Student Group Services as well as the Dean of Students office to discuss Student Group Granting. In particular, we are looking at amending the written policies to better reflect effective practices. This project will ultimately involve changes to GAC Standing Orders and the Granting Committee Terms of Reference.

Lower Level Changes

The General Manager and I have met again with a project manager, and have received an offer for the firm's services. Should we wish to accept this offer, we will bring a request for funding to the Budget and Finance Committee and ultimately to Council. Such a request would be to allocate funds from the Building Reserve, which was created precisely for this type of project.

Finance-Operations Summit

I was in Toronto from June 20-22 to attend a gathering of operations/finance executives from Students' Unions across the country. The purpose of the Summit was to discuss topics that are relevant to our similar portfolios, including food and beverage, capital expenditures and budget practices, among many others. Above all else, it was incredibly valuable to take a step back from the specificity of UASU technical minutiae that I deal with on a daily basis, and to think about our organization's practices within the range of possible alternatives. In doing so, I was able to develop an appreciation for the diversity of student organizations across the country. I will be preparing a report on the meeting to summarize what I learned.

Gateway Board of Directors

The GSJS Finance committee met last week to review the society's 2011-2012 draft budget. The Business Manager provided an overview of the draft document, presenting on key budgetary drivers. It is worthy

of note that the budget does not forecast a deficit position for the upcoming year. The budget will be making its way to the Board for final ratification.

PAW Centre

We have received a detailed response from University legal counsel pertaining to the PAW Centre agreement. The letter addresses points from the most recent stakeholders meeting as well as prior communications. Our next steps are to review the response in detail, and to consult with our own legal counsel as well as the GSA. We will likely proceed with a response once the President has returned.

GST Exemption

Students living in residence are exempt from paying GST when purchasing meals with their meal plans. I am very interested in offering the same exemption at SU businesses to make food more affordable for students. To this end, I spoke with the Canada Revenue Agency today and received confirmation that our food and beverage operations are eligible to offer this exemption! This is excellent news – once a few more details are be worked out, we can proceed with implementation.

Infolink Rebranding

Myself and the Vice President (Student Life) have been involved in discussions about the potential rebranding of Infolink. These discussions are happening in the context of the service's redevelopment and anticipated expansion. Both the service's visual identity and name are up for discussion in an attempt to more closely associate its brand with what it offers.

Strategic Planning

The President, the General Manager and I have been talking a lot about integrated strategic planning. We are trying to develop a coordinated organizational process to align departmental goals and executive goals with the strategic plan and with each other, in a way that feeds seamlessly into the budget process. In doing so, we strive to create a framework within which goals can be efficiently pursued and achieved.

Cheers,
Andy