

**Prepared by:** Colten Yamagishi, Vice President (Student Life)  
**To:** Students' Council 2011/12

Greetings councilors!

I hope that the start of your term has gone well and that you are prepared for the upcoming midterm season. I am glad to say that though it was very hectic and tiring, September has been a great success for all of the executives. Meetings and e-mails are starting to slow down for me so I am revisiting a number of my platform promises to gain some serious ground on accomplishing them this year. Here is an update on my last two weeks!

### **Programming Alumni Events:**

The executive was invited to a number of the Alumni Weekend events including the Alumni Recognition Awards at the Winspear Centre, the Golden Bears football game, the CCIS grand opening event and the Stargazer cocktail party, and the Big Top Tuck Shop in quad that was serving delicious cinnamon buns. The events were extremely well planned and attended and showcased many of the amazing contributions that UofA Alumni have made to the world. We also attended the Celebrate! Teaching awards and helped congratulate some of the amazing work that is being done by current students and staff on and off campus.

### **Athletics and Go Centre Grand Opening:**

I have been attending a number of sporting events with the VP Academic and the VP Operations & Finance including two Golden Bears soccer games. Two weekends ago I also ran an SU booth at the GO Centre grand opening event at South Campus. The new athletics facility sports over 9000 square feet of bookable gym space as well as a state-of-the-art gymnastics facility. Not many students attended the event but I had the opportunity to mingle with a number of university administrators and members of the community. We also met again with Trix Baker from UA Athletics and rehashed discussion on the promotional contract between UA Athletics and the SU.

### **Humans vs. Zombies:**

Councillor Sumar is organizing an enormous game of Humans vs. Zombies through his position as VP Programming of the Residence Halls Association. The game will run primarily through the UofA residences but anyone is able to signup. The game involves headbands, sock hitting, ID cards, and everything else that you normally associate with flesh-hungry monsters. Contact Councillor Sumar or visit [uarha.hvzsource.com](http://uarha.hvzsource.com) for more info.

### **Speeches:**

I have been busy attending a number of student group events and have been invited to speak at occasions such as the Shinerama ShineDay fundraiser for cystic fibrosis research, a Monday night dinner recruitment session for my Fraternity Phi Gamma Delta, as well as the Intrafraternal Council general recruitment evening. This Friday the VP Academic, the VP Operations &

Finance, and myself will be getting pied for charity at the Relay for Life event at 9:25pm this Friday in quad. Come out! It is a great event for a great cause.

### **Services**

#### **Awards:**

We have almost completed the new SU awards expansion. All we have left is an update of the GAC standing orders to reflect the changes to the awards program and we will be all set.

#### **Student Group Granting:**

I have been busy reading through a gigantic pile of student group grant applications. I am happy to see that so many involved student groups are taking the time to apply for support from our granting resources to strengthen their organizations and events.

#### **Volunteer Training:**

Many of our services have recently completed their volunteer training either through the Joint Training session held for Safewalk, SUSTAIN SU, and the Peer Support Center volunteers this past weekend or through individual service volunteer training sessions such as those held by the Campus Food Bank. I was able to do a short introduction for the SU to the CFB group as well as a quick presentation with the rest of the executive at the joint training session this weekend. I am extremely excited to see the huge number of students coming out to support their fellow students by volunteering for our services. I heard that some of our services had so many volunteer applicants that they unfortunately had to turn some of their prospective volunteers away.

#### **Health and Dental Plan:**

I am not sure if my e-mail address is broken or if Studentcare has just become amazing at advertising the Health and Dental plan opt-out because I have only received one complaint this entire year for someone who missed the opt-out deadline. Overall the opt-out/change of coverage period has gone extremely well. We have an HDPC meeting next week to review uptake data and to discuss the success of the plan in the first few months of the year.

#### **Peer Support Center:**

The PSC has purchased new furniture for their office and is now fully operational.

#### **Safewalk:**

Safewalk has received their new radios and so far the response to them (no pun intended) has been extremely good. Supposedly you can even send text messages on them. I will be signing up to do a Safewalk shift sometime in the near future to get a taste of the true volunteer experience.

#### **Student Group Services:**

Tada! The student group offices and lounge have finally been cleaned up thanks to the hard work of the SGS staff (a special shout out to SGS Coordinator Bill Pickering who was cleaning up the lounge all by himself when I visited). All of the student group office locks have been changed and the area should be fully operational without clutter right away. SGS also hosted the Student Group Leadership Summit this weekend. The event was very well attended and it looked like the students in attendance were having a good time. I sat in for a session about “exhilarated learning” and public speaking from Dr. Billy Streat, a recent 3M National Teaching Fellowship winner.

## **Advocacy**

### **PAW:**

PAW is now in the design/development process and we will make our final recommendations for the general design today at 5:00pm. Over the last two weeks I have attended a number of PAW meetings including a bike library planning meeting, a DD review meeting, a LEED Charette, and a meeting discussing the PAW contract with the GSA. Council will be seeing a presentation on the PAW Centre in the near future.

### **Health Promotion Advisory Committee:**

At the last HPAC meeting we talked about mental health in the workplace and how to address concerns that you have with coworkers mental health. I will be attending a workshop on workplace mental health with the President.

### **U-Pass:**

I attended the U-Pass advisory meeting downtown as well as our internal U-Pass admin meeting. At both meetings I brought updates on the Spring/Summer U-Pass and asked about the city of Edmonton's plans to expand the transit service. Nothing new came out of these meetings (Night ride and SMART Card technology are still delayed) but all of our internal U-Pass goals are coming along nicely. I would like to remind you all to check out the opportunity to sit on the Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board as the application deadline is this Friday, September 30th. You can check out

[http://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/city\\_organization/edmonton-transit-system-advisory-board.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/city_organization/edmonton-transit-system-advisory-board.aspx) or ask me for more info.

### **Sustainability:**

I took part in the first Sustainability Awareness Week planning meeting. The SU/CSL will be running a farmers' market during SAW (October 16-22) and I will be working with APIRG to run the free store that I promised in my election platform. I am super excited to begin working on this project. I had a logistics meeting today with Louise Veillard from APIRG and Marcus Peterson who ran a similar event last year through APIRG. The meeting was extremely helpful and discussion lead to a number of action items to get this project on its feet. If you are interested in volunteering for the free store please let me know ASAP! We will need volunteers to run the booth all week.

### **RHA and Residences:**

This has been a busy two weeks for residences. The RHA Council met to discuss changes to the constitution regarding officer grades and eligibility, the grocery bus initiative, and drafting a letter to Ancillary Services to request more affordable food options on campus. Last week I also had a meeting with the RHA President, the LHSA President, the SU President, and Councilor Sumar to discuss our plans to advocate to the University to improve the food situation on campus. The LHSA President also raised concerns about the quiet and sober floors, which I brought up with Dima (Director of Residence Services). In my meeting with Dima we also discussed security in HUB and an initiative to renovate classic Lister.

### **Lower Level:**

I attended a meeting with the services staff, the VP Operations & Finance, the General Manager, and Dialogue to discuss the services' needs for the lower level renovation. Much of the discussion reflected the need for more open student space as well as open

programmable/bookable space. All of the services staff agreed that it would be nice to improve access to the lower level and to allow for natural lighting.

### **Health Center Advisory Group:**

At our first HCAG meeting we received an introductory to the University Health Centre and its subsidiary units (Health Center, Student Counseling Services which will soon be called the Mental Health Center, The Bookstore Pharmacy, the Sexual Assault Center, the Health and Wellness Team, and the Community Wellness Initiative) from Donna Cave (UHC Director), Kevin Friese (UHC Assistant Director), and Jameela Murji (Health Education Team Leader). We discussed the new umbrella name for all of the health services coined “University Wellness Services” as well as health services usage rates, the overload of students accessing Student Counseling Services, Dean Robinson’s request to review mental health on campus, and our initiative to combine the Student Services Fee with the Health Centre Fee. We also opposed the idea of charging “service fees” to students for the use of UHC services.

### **COSA and CLRC:**

We had our introductory COSA meeting and heard goal presentations from the Dean of Students, the GSA, the SU, the RHA, and the Undergraduate Research Initiative. Overall the meeting was extremely informative and I think that COSA will be a very effective communication tool for the rest of the year to produce some positive results through collaboration with the various student stakeholder groups.

CLRC had an update on the restorative justice implementation in residence as well as the academic integrity task force report that we saw at our last council meeting. There was much discussion on the point of instructors being able to enact informal disciplinary action on students caught cheating before a formal appeal process has been granted.

### **Opportunities for you to get involved:**

Sign up for the Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board before September 30<sup>th</sup>.

[http://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/city\\_organization/edmonton-transit-system-advisory-board.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/city_organization/edmonton-transit-system-advisory-board.aspx)

Sign up to help me volunteer for the SU/APIRG free store during SAW (will be running October 17-21)

### **Summary:**

As you can see the past two weeks have been crazy busy but things are starting to slow down for me. Over the next little while I will be mostly working on the free store, PAW, student group granting, and getting ready for AASHE.

If you have any other questions ask during council, stop by the office, or send me an email at [vp.studentlife@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:vp.studentlife@su.ualberta.ca).

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