

Date: 06/30/20

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President External 2020/21 Report 06/16/20

Hello Council,

I hope you are all well and enjoying the beautiful summer weather. It has been a lovely past couple weeks, as I have discovered bike routes I didn't know existed and got another model plane (I think it's time to stop after this one). It is also a very dynamic time at work, with the Alberta 2030 review hanging over everything and the provincial fiscal update coming up soon-- an update that we know will not be good news.

Campus Saint-Jean Advocacy

As you know, CSJ is facing the potential loss of 40% of its course sections next year. Myself and President Agarwal met with Pierre-Yves Moquais, the Dean of Campus Saint-Jean, to get a better sense of the faculty's financial position and ways in which more course sections could be saved. We were able to determine several advocacy action items that could help support CSJ in getting through the next year.

The two largest projects I will be working on for CSJ advocacy are a policy on Francophone education I intend to propose to the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)'s Policy Committee over the summer. This policy, if it passes, will guide advocacy to the federal government on French post-secondary education outside Quebec. I will be getting in touch with the Canadian Association of Francophone Colleges and Universities (ACUFC) to discuss how we can coordinate our approach with theirs where it makes sense.

I will also be working to try to get more exposure in anglophone media for CSJ, as right now most of the pickup has been in francophone media. There are good arguments for why Anglophone Albertans should care about CSJ in light of the recent Fair Deal Panel report, which highlights the underrepresentation of Albertans in the federal civil service. This is a broader issue in Canadian media and other sectors, and is largely because Alberta has very few bilingual professionals. CSJ is vital to addressing this and we want to help showcase that.

Relationship-Building and Meetings

We are just starting to kick off our summer advocacy season. Usually, this means we go meet all the MLAs and MPs in metro Edmonton, and discuss our priorities with them. I met on Friday with the Official Opposition Critic for Advanced Education, David Eggen, and we had a great conversation about the ongoing changes in post-secondary. I'm

going to be meeting many more politicians, but I also want to expand our relationships into community groups and anyone else who can be an ally for students.

Starting that effort, this week I spoke with Tony Clark from the Alberta Federation of Labour and Edmonton Public Schools Trustee Michael Janz. Our conversations were very pleasant and productive. We discussed the campaign CAUS is planning to do in September and ways we can work together to make the outcome of the Alberta 2030 review as good as possible for all our members. We plan to step up this work throughout the summer, and we will be reaching out to all kinds of groups ranging from school boards to chambers of commerce to Rotary clubs. This is a great opportunity for us-- the more friends we have speaking up for students, the stronger we are. If you know any people or organizations that you think share an interest in a strong post-secondary system, let me know and maybe we can add them to our list!

CAUS Planning and Administration

At last week's CAUS meeting, we passed a budget with funding for several important one-time initiatives. We will be participating in a large-scale advertising campaign in the winter with other PSE stakeholders before the provincial budget, and we will be hiring an Indigenous Post-Secondary Research Analyst to create a report on how the Alberta government can make university accessibility and experience better for Indigenous students. These two measures will result in a deficit budget for CAUS this year, but it is not a structural deficit-- without important one-time investments our operational budget is balanced.

If you know anyone who would be a good fit for the Analyst position, suggest it to them! We want to make sure we have the widest possible number of applicants. The posting should be up soon, and I will send it around to Council. The position is well-compensated at \$25/hour and is a chance to do really meaningful and important work with a great team and offers flexible hours and work conditions. If you want to offer your opinion, or you're curious about anything else I am working on, let me know. I am always happy to chat and discuss the exciting world of external relations.
Cheers,



University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President External
Rowan Ley