

# OFFICE OF THE VP External

## Council Report TLDR #1



### ESA



I had the opportunity to attend the Mayor's State of the City address. During this event, the mayor highlighted the inequities in our City and outlined a path for what is needed to overcome them. Following his address, the Mayor will engage with youth and students to hear how we can make Edmonton an attractive place to live



### CAUS



President Monteiro, former President Ley, and I all attended the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) changeover conference. The CAUS board elected a new Chair and Vice-Chair and got an Alberta political landscape update from one of Alberta's best pollsters from Janet Brown.



### CASA



I had the opportunity to speak before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on their study of top talent retention. I spoke about the need for more investments in student scholarship programs within the tri-council agencies.



### PSE IN THE NEWS: Enrollment Growth in Edmonton

On Thursday May 12th, The Minister of Advanced Education was at Elko Garage in ETLC alongside President Flanagan and other PSI Presidents in Edmonton to announce the expansion of seats in Edmonton's post-secondary. The UofA is set to receive \$48.3 million to expand 3,231 additional new spaces.



## Photo of the Week:

### Mountain Vernacular:

A Picture of an  
Esso Gas  
Station in  
Canmore  
Alberta.



Christian Fotang, Vice President External

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For more information on some of these highlights you can read them in my full report and as always as me questions.

**Date:** 2022-05-13

**To:** Students' Union Council

**Re:** Vice President External 2022/23 Report #1

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Dear Council,

Firstly, I would like to begin by saying how excited I am to be working with you all this year. This year, like many years past, will have its challenges, exciting adventures and certainly we will have our work cut out for us, but I know that together, we can accomplish many things this year.

I have had a very busy week and as you will read below there are lots of things to update you on.

Firstly, President Monteiro, former President Ley and I attended the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) changeover conference in Canmore. Throughout this 3 day conference, we got to meet Janet Brown, one of Alberta's best pollsters. She gave us an update of the political landscape in Alberta, taught us the history and context of polling in Alberta and provided an insightful analysis of the current thinking and feelings of Albertans. Unfortunately, some of the results she shared with us are confidential so I cannot delve much into it in my report. During this conference we also elected our new CAUS Chair and Vice-Chair. I am pleased to announce that Samantha Scott the VPX for the University of Lethbridge Students' Union is the new CAUS Chair and Terra Cardinal, the VPX for the Student Association of Mount Royal University is the new CAUS Vice-Chair. President Monteiro and I along with the rest of the CAUS board are confident that Sam and Terra will do a great job and especially in an upcoming election year, will provide the direction and leadership to ensure that PSE is a major topic for this upcoming provincial election.

This past Tuesday, I was invited to the Mayor's State of the City address at the Edmonton Conference Center hosted by the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce in my capacity as the Chair for the Edmonton Student Alliance. This was a fantastic event in which I was able to meet prominent business and community leaders and even UASU alumni (former VPSL) and President of the Edmonton Elks, Victor Cui.

The State of the City is a formal address that outlines the current conditions of the City, as well as key priorities for the Mayor and Council moving forward. In his address, the Mayor highlighted some of the inequities that currently exist in our City and the role that the Municipal government as well as other stakeholders such as the Provincial government can undertake to make our city a welcoming, accepting and thriving place. His speech was also a message of how Edmonton often feels forgotten by the Provincial government. He highlighted the cuts that have been made to the UofA and the impacts they have had in "stifling innovation and hurting students" I was also particularly struck by the Mayor's message about how "Ending Racism, discrimination and hatred is integral for our economic growth." Following his State of the City Address, the Mayor will be engaging in focused roundtable discussions with various sectors. The goal is to have an active engagement component that allows the Mayor and stakeholders to discuss relevant issues pertaining to Edmonton, as well as find possible alignments with the Mayor's priorities. **I am pleased to say that The Mayor will be collaborating with the Edmonton Student Alliance and the University of Alberta Black Students Association to host a roundtable session focused on the interests and needs of Edmonton's youth.**

Lastly, in my capacity as Chair of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, I had the privilege of speaking before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research as a witness on their

study of Top Talent Retention and attraction in research and innovation. This was an opportunity to share the importance of increasing federal government investments in scholarships in CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC to expand Canada's research excellence in a way that matches the growth in Canada's student population. For context, while many investments have gone into the tri-council agencies over all budgets, the student scholarship programs have stagnated and not kept pace with the cost of living and overall investments being made into the research granting agencies. More specifically, at its peak, the student scholarships represented 16.9%, 13.3% and 6.3% of the SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR budgets respectively. Today that has fallen to 13%, 8.3% and 5.5% respectively. As a result this is why CASA has called on the government of Canada to increase funding for student scholarship programs by \$120 million on a recurring basis, thus re-establishing the importance of student scholarships within the overall envelope of the Tri-Councils, an ask I reiterated at the committee hearing. I was also able to highlight the struggles faced by international students and the role that mental health supports play in being able to attract and retain talent not only within Canada but outside of it.

### **PSE In The News:**

On Thursday May 12th, The Minister of Advanced Education was at Elko Garage in ETLC alongside President Flanagan and other PSI Presidents in Edmonton to announce the expansion of seats in Edmonton's post-secondaries. The UofA is set to receive \$48.3 million over three years to expand 3,231 additional new spaces. Specifically:

- 450 new seats will be created in the Bachelor of Science Program,
- 81 new seats in the Graduate Engineering program
- 336 new seats in Undergrad Engineering seats by 336
- 132 new spaces in nursing degree program
- 2200 new spaces for the business program

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me by DM or email if you have any questions or would like to contribute to any of these initiatives.

Cheers,



**Christian Fotang**

Vice President External

University of Alberta Students' Union