

Date: 14/12/2021

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Student Life 2021/22 Report #18

Hi everyone,

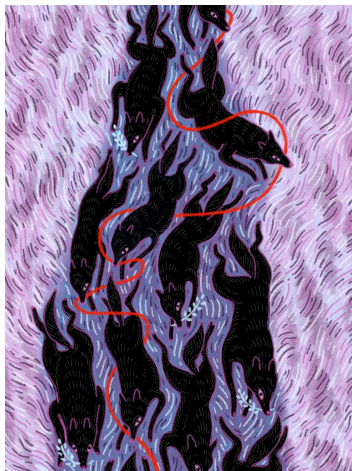
I hope you are all doing well. Three council meetings in three weeks is a lot, particularly during exam session, so I hope you are all taking the time you need to rest and relax even though I know you are all crazy busy!

Here are some of the things I've been working on over the past two weeks:

Indigenous Celebration Week

Planning for Indigenous Celebration Week is going super well. We are in the process of finalising the schedule, food menu and all the little details. *Next week promo materials will start coming out for the event, and sign up for the sessions will open in early January!*

To make the materials for the event, marketing commissioned an Indigenous student artist. You can see their work below. Here is what they said about the artwork: "I wanted to do a pack of coyotes running together in tall grass at night. I was thinking like a current of coyotes. Coyotes are an animal that are pretty widespread, they exist in urban spaces and rural, northern and southern, etc, I think everyone has a relationship with coyotes. The red ribbon emphasizes their unified motion and symbolizes the future/moving forward. The other coyotes are carrying sage which, I think, many indigenous cultures use for healing. I want to use purples and red, it's a colour combo that I've been pretty into, purple is such a great partner to red." - Halie Finney the Indigenous Illustrator who created this amazing work.



Peer Support Center in Residence

One of my goals this year was to expand the Peer Support Centers (PSC) services into residence. Since the summer, I have been working with the PSC and residence to make this goal a reality. While we are still sorting out the details, a pilot project will launch in the winter semester (probably February) to test this system out. The goal of this project is to provide support once a week in residence to make the PSCs services more accessible. I'm really hopeful this will be helpful and well used!

The Family Lounge

One of the projects I have been working on throughout the year is the creation of the family lounge. I haven't given an update on this in a long time because this project has been slow-moving. Last week I had a promising meeting with Libraries to discuss the creation of a family lounge in Rutherford. They have secured some funding for this project and a potential location. NOTHING is finalised (so this is more of a hopeful FYI more than anything), but I will be sitting on a committee to discuss the potential creation of this family lounge starting in January.

Sexual Violence Advocacy Update

There have been some major developments in terms of sexual violence advocacy in the past two weeks. These developments are important because they will improve the lives of students and show the power of direct action and student collectives. These wins only happened because of the collaboration between the UASU, student representative organisations, faculty associations, residence associations, and the GSA. So BIG shout out to everyone involved!

In the past three weeks, we have launched a public letter with our demands that was signed on to by 22 student representative organisations, launched a petition to support our asks that has over 1000 signatures, and staged a successful walkout of GFC. Since then, the university has publicly committed to:

- Improving training for Residence Assistants by working with the Sexual Assault Center
- Creating a committee in January to develop a campus-wide training focused on consent, how to disclose, healthy relationships etc
- Making more resources accessible to Augustana
- Translating resources into french and making resources for CSJ
- And improving both restorative justice practices and the sexual violence policy

While we are happy that the university has committed to these asks, we still have a lot of work to do to ensure that these promises are fulfilled in a good way, particularly as most of them depend on the sexual violence prevention coordinator. But these are relative wins, and I'm grateful that everyone's work is paying off.

In the next month or so, I will follow up on these promises, continue my advocacy work, and see what role the SU can play in developing consent culture on campus.

Best,
Talía Dixon

Talia Dixon

University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President Student Life

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2-900 SUB | 780 492 4241 | talia.dixon@su.ualberta.ca