

## The Presidents Summer report – Will McGuigan 2018-2019

Dear council, fellow returning students and first years of the University of Prince Edward Island. It is my pleasure to welcome you all back to UPEI for the 2018-2019 academic year. It is also my honour to be serving this year as your President of the UPEI Student Union, alongside my team of amazing individuals who are working at The Fox & Crow, The Yearbook Office, The Cadre, Office Staff, Councillors, Executive team, and the countless volunteers, I couldn't accomplish anything without our amazing staff. This year it will be my goal to ensure your voices are being heard at all levels of the Student Union, University, and Government. I hope to meet you all and make this year the best year of your lives. UPEI is such an amazing and special place and we can't wait to meet you all.

I was elected in the UPEI Student Union Spring election alongside Vice-President Academic & External Emma Drake and Vice-President Student Life Sarah MacEaren. I however took office a month early due to the recognition of President Chelsey Perry. Since this time, I have been working on quite a bit of major things that will have huge effects on the lives of students at UPEI.

### **The renovations**

Several years ago, the UPEI Student Council started the process of exploring the idea of renovating the UPEI campus Pub The Wave. After years and a lack of renovations and up keep the business had be in a state of discuss. The brand and reputation was upsetting and unappealing to some students. Two years ago, council voted in favor to start renovations of our beloved Wave, however due to cost and timing we were unable to start the project. This summer however we were able to get approval once again from our Student Council and received a loan of \$410 000 from the University Board of Governors. Renovations started in the Month of May with a lot of cleaning and gutting of the business. Marjory of the former Wave was thrown out, some items donated to those who reached out to us, and the rest that could be salvaged was reused. The vision of the project was to turn the atmosphere into a place to study, relax, and enjoy your day with friends. All while keeping the excitement of our major events and entertainment during. A major part of the transformation was combining our coffee shop Mickey's Place with the current business. This was decided for two reasons. In the last few years Mickey's Place has struggled to sustain its self since Tim Hortons opened. This is why we wanted to branch out and change the business plan. Combining the business would mean less expensive between our two business. We also wanted to expand the menu and drink options. However due to spacing this was not an option. Now we will be offering a full coffee menu with our state of the art espresso machine.

This summer I oversaw the project with our General Manager Melissa Morrow and our hospitality Manager Josh McInnis. While working with university administration, Sable Arc, and MacLean's Construction we had by-weekly meetings to go over the project in detail as the project took place. I am happy to report the project was a success and we had very little issues

with everything. Majority of the issues that came up were very minor and didn't take the project off track.

Naming the business was also a very fun and exciting time for our organization. We made the decision to reach out to the student body and have them come up with a name and suggest options. We really wanted them to have fun with it because this is the students pub. For about a week we had a survey out which collect over 160 responses. The team met with key people around campus including athletics, Alumni, and Marketing for feedback and then the executive team voted for the best three options. They of course included The Fox & Crow, Mickey's, and Panthers Pub. After this we conducted an online vote to have students, staff, faculty, and visitors to vote for their favorite options. With 49% of the votes the students voted for The Fox & Crow. Once a name was chosen we quickly had to reach out to UPEI Marketing and Communications to devolve a design and logo for the new business, and they were amazing and got everything done for us very quickly.

We had hoped to be open for the first day of classes, however due to a delivery hiccup we were unable to. The furniture for The Fox and Crow was to arrive the last week of August. However due to delivery it did not arrive until Sept 5<sup>th</sup>. Because of this we made the decision to wait one day to ensure we open on the right foot and students get to see the new business once it is 100% completed.

Moving forward the business may need some more touch ups and moving forward we should be putting more into the business so it does not need to go through such improvements again. We will also be looking for different items to place around the business to make it homier. This could include student art work and panther memorabilia.

## **Aspiria**

Last year the organization set out to revamp and develop a new way to outreach and help students dealing and struggling with mental health on our campus. before we worked with students to develop events in relation to mental health and ways to increase support for our students. After a long discussion, it became clear we need to do more! This is why we undertook a major project of bringing a new program to our campus! Last semester Aspiria was passed and approved by our campus. Over the Summer myself and the entire team have been working hard to prepare for the launch this fall. We invited the Vice-President Rob to come to campus who delivered info sessions to key groups on campus, including the IRO, athletics, Sister Sue, and other organizations. We placed promotional material into NSO bags, dropped business cards around campus and have posters made for the year which will be placed around. Working with the students, council, and the company we will be taking this on for a one year trial and then putting the question out to students in the spring for a vote. If the vote passes we will add a fee to students accounts for this program. If it does not pass we have the option to try again the year after or try something different.

## **The Unknown Flags**

Another project that I started in August was the updating of the UPEI Flags. Currently we have flags placed in our building that represent students who attend UPEI from that country. They were installed years ago when the IRO office was located in the now student affairs office. However, since then they have gone without up keep and updating and no one wanted to take over the flags. This is why I decided the SU should and we would ensure they are updated. Some flags are in disrepair and need to be updated. Over the last year I have been made aware that we are missing some flags in our building, but I had no idea how many until I conducted a count and realized we need about 30-35 new flags for country's we represent. In the beginning I was going to just take this project on and order all the flags online. However, to stay within our means I have decided to reach out to government officials and offices for a donation of flags. This is where the original flags came from and this is a common practice for most countries. After speaking with the University about this project they were delighted and are going to assist with a formal letter and assist when needed. Currently we are in the process of getting information and measurements of the flags and hope to have letters sent out by the end of September.

## **Strat Plan**

Last semester we started the process of renewing of Strat plan for the organization. Due to certain events, we had to post pone our plan and pushed it onto next year. Over the summer we hired Nathan Hood to review our research & feedback we received from students and then he developed a report for us. Moving forward this report will be brought to NIFD committee and we will be reviewing it this semester and once the committee has had a chance to look everything over we will then come to council for recommendations and thought. I hope to have everything approved by the end of January.

## **CASA**

Myself and Emma had the opportunity to attend two CASA conferences this year. From May 21<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> we were in Ottawa and from July 23<sup>rd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> we were in British Columbia. Attending these two conferences where an amazing experience and crucial to the development of our advocacy this year. I also ran for a position on the national board of CASA and was elected the treasure of the organization for this year. Having this position is a great advantage for our school when dealing with national issues. This will also ensure that issues facing students at UPEI will be brought up at our national federal advocacy group CASA. Also, when deciding to run for this role I did consultate with my team to ensure this won't be a problem and that my number one job and responsibility is the students of UPEI. This position has a very small-time commitment and will be a great asset to our membership.

## **CFS**

Myself and Emma had the opportunity to attend the CFS conference in Ottawa from June 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>. This conference was very informative and the organization has gone through some very big changes this past year. Some of said changes include the removal of the BCFS schools which saw 12 schools expelled from the organization. To cover some of these costs they have decided to only meet once a year as a group, and cut the Ola la app which was previously provided on our campus.

## **Maritime Student Congress Conference**

This summer we had the opportunity to attend a conference at Mount Allison University along with countless other SU in our region including members of Student NS & the NB Student Alliance. This was a great learning opportunity for our team. The conference was open to all executive members and other members could come if they wanted to. Myself, the Vice-Presidents and the Director of communications all attend. The discussion was mostly around advocacy issues and ways we can better work together as a region. I personally found it very beneficial to meet and discuss with other presidents about issues that they were facing on their campus. Moving forward this conference is going to be held at Acadia university next year. We are also looking to have more focus on other issues other than just advocacy, an example would be student life.

## **Elections PEI**

During my campaign, I had the opportunity to meet with Election PEI and talk about my idea of having voting booths on campus. They thought this was an interesting idea and they would look into it. Over the summer myself and Emma have been working with Election PEI and we have come to the agreement that we will have election booths in place for the municipal election. We are also going to be working with the Guardian & East Link TV to set up a live Mayor debate. Moving forward we are hoping to have this for our provincial elections also.

## **Policy's**

Last year it became clear we need to do a complete update and review of our entire organization rules, policy's, by-laws, and consultation. Due to so many changes made in the last several years we decided it was time to reach out to some experts to review and bring our books into line with legal and the most up to date practices. This is why over the summer of legal team Gordon Mackay has been reviewing everything for us and has since presented a copy. We are currently going over everything and Policy committee will be making changes in the coming months as we get through the entire document.

## **Welcome Back Carnival**

Last year the University Alumni Association held a home coming carnival on campus which had a great turn out. This year we wanted to create the same event for our clubs / society's fair &

Welcome back event. In the past on the first day of classes we would hold a BBQ for our students and have clubs fair indoors. This year however we had an amazing Welcome Back BBQ, working with the entire team, council, and volunteers myself, Sarah, and Melissa organized the event. Sarah did an amazing job getting the clubs all set up and I took charge in regard to the attractions. We had goats, rabbits, chickens, snow cones, pop corn, cotton candy, and countless attractions from PEI Inflatables. This project has been something we have worked on and organized for a few months and it went great. We only got great feedback from students about how awesome everything was. Our clubs also spoke about how great everything was and how many students signed up for everything. Moving forward we should do this event again however I would recommend not renting as many inflatables and give more tables to the food station.

### **Other issues & Meetings**

- Meetings with the President of the University of Prince Edward Island. Over the summer I had weekly meetings with President Alaa. Majority of our discussion was around different events that the SU has been up to and what the university is doing or going to be working on this year. The UPEI Strat plan was a big item that was talked about as well as the recent issues with the government of Saudi.
- The SU team took part in countless BBQ, and one Pancake breakfast this summer.
- We also presented the UPEI Faculty, Staff, and Honorary awards at the UPEI staff and Faculty ceremony this year. In years past we invited recipients to our end of year banquet and presented them with an award. Moving forward I would recommend we continue to attend UPEI award session and present at this time.
- We had several meetings this summer with University Administration about the creation and implementation of the \$25 per student funding for mental health funding from the government. We are pleased to see they are investing some of the funding into peer support program and technology for students. Moving forward we will be working with government and administration to better this program.
- Over the summer we had several meetings with NSO staff and worked with the NSO team to ensure we are going to be playing a role and help out in any way we could possibly can.
- I had a few meetings with the UPEI GSA. Majority of the discussion was around funding and support for the GSA and programs for grad students at UPEI. One of the solutions we talked about was to establish a grad committee for the Grad students and the SU to work together when planning events.
- Our team had the opportunity to take part in cultural diversity training this year. We reached out to PEI new comers to conduct the training for the myself, full time staff, and VPs. We also did this training with our full staff in August.
- Over the summer we also signed a 5-year agreement with the university for our building agreement. Nothing was very little changed made to the agreement

from the last contract was signed. This agreement indicated how the building is operated and who pays for what.

- We had Student NS come and provide us with media training for our executives and DOC. This was a major help for us and very help for myself. Learning how the media works and how to operate during interviews was a great help. Moving forward this is something that the team does every year.
- We had a meeting with the International Student Association this summer, the majority of this meeting was around international events and program funding from the SU.