

Vice President Student Life, Executive Summer Report 2018

This summer flew by, the first few months consisted of a lot of learning and finding my footing. Though I was well educated on different aspects of the job, I had a lot to catch up on. It was a busy summer, but I feel I accomplished a lot, given what I needed to reconcile both of file organization and relationship building. I have broken down each month into a summary of what was begun and accomplished.

May:

Once we officially stepped into office, there were some immediate shocks that followed. I found myself overwhelmed and stressed. I began to settle into my office and workspace, and started by going through all files and computer hard drives, to get a grip of what I would be doing. I chatted with Nathan Hood and Kaylee Jabbour, both previously in this position, and they offered me some great tips. I began to brainstorm for the year, creating lists and charts that would help guide me through the summer.

The first couple weeks of office was in the midst of Grad Week, meaning there were many events to be executed and assisted with. Overall, Grad Week was a success, but there were some minor issues that had arisen that had to be dealt with. As an executive team, this was an interesting way to build a first relationship as there were some stressful moments. In the end, we decided along with the Grad Week Coordinator, that some changes to the week needed to be made - it was a good way to start the first bit as VPSL.

We also spent a lot of time this month meeting many people on campus that we would be working with for the year. I found this very beneficial as many of these people would be very helpful in the future. We met with Residence, the Registrar, Student Affairs, ITSS, etc.

Coming into this position, I was fairly confident in what I wanted to get done this year. Not too much wavered from this. I figured it was a great idea to create a summarized schedule for the year, before June came and I was gone for conferences. I broke down each campaign week and Wet-Dry into dates, and placed some other events within this, so I had a general idea as to what the year would look like.

During this time, we also hired our Clubs and Campaigns Coordinator for the year - Tessa Rogers. She had a stellar interview, and once we officially offered the job to her, she stepped in immediately. We had an initial meeting to go over the campaigns I had planned for the year, and she took a jump start into researching new and exciting ways for these to be executed. She was not living on the island, which caused some confusion for a while, but she knew what she was doing and did not require too much guidance from myself.

June:

June was conference month for the executive team. Over the first weekend, we all attended the first ever Maritime Student Congress, which included most maritime universities, and their executive teams. This was an awesome time to meet our counterparts and brainstorm ideas. It gave me some peace of mind and helped me very much to feel confident in this position. We made some great friends and had a lot of fun.

Next, Sweta and I moved into the COCA conference. This conference was amazing! It consisted of most VPSLs/DOCs across Canada and different performers and acts. The educational aspect of this conference, was more than I ever could have imagined - I took so many ideas away from it, and shared many ideas with everyone. We made some great friendships, and networked with so many people across the country. Coming out of this, some of the acts we watched were so great, I decided to book a couple. Sweta and I loved Headphone disco, which I booked for November, and everyone on the East Coast loved the Recklaws, which I booked for January.

Once the chaos from the first few weeks had died down, I came back with fresh ideas. I confirmed my dates for the year, and began to nail down details with campaigns and different programming.

I also needed to work out details for clubs. When I stepped in, there was no system to organize files from the previous years and no contacts had been updated. I decided to send out a mass email to all contacts I had, and hoped to update some. I began a fresh list of contacts, and had also requested a brief description of the club which I added to the list. With the help of Sweta, we updated the website as these came in. I also began to re-organize each club's data into Google folders in order to keep things organized when clubs began to re-ratify. I also began brainstorming how to increase club engagement and sustainability. I began to work on a Club Membership card, by contacting local businesses asking them to offer a discount. I had great responses from popular student businesses (Upstreet, Gojis, Taco Boyz, etc.) and began working out the details.

Tessa and I began working on club programming, and decided on some dates for Clubs Cup and some new events. We developed a new educational program for club executives, similar to the FIDP. It will require future planning, but seems like it will go over better.

I also began to follow up with some of the people we met with in June. Specifically Athletics and Residence. I met with Upstreet to discuss some possible partnerships and Josh to go over some pairing we can do at the pub.

July:

Once July hit, all details need to be figured out. I first started with Back to School Pub, and worked on hiring a DJ and contacting production. I really wanted to spice up the events for the year, so I reached out to a few businesses. The PEI Liquor Commission kindly donated \$800 to B2S Pub, and with that I decided to do a “Hydration Station” and free BBQ.

The donation ties well into the fact that the University signed onto the PEP-AH Act, an awareness group for healthy drinking on campuses across Canada. I met up originally with Heidi MacDonald from SA, who then reached out to a public health promoter. We met and discussed releasing a survey in the fall, to determine what the drinking scene was like at UPEI. With this data, we could then proceed in deciding a plan for campaigning and promoting healthy drinking. To begin, I decided to offer food at all Wet-Dry events following Back to School Pub.

We also spent lots of time meeting the NSO Coordinator and discussing the SU’s role in NSO. We wanted to make sure we had a large presence and could do anything to help. We also decided to print event calendars, stickers, and tattoos to give out.

I began finalizing details for Consent Week and Environmental Week, and had meetings with OurTurn and the Environmental Society, to go over how they could help. These were very productive, and brought lots of ideas to the table. My goal was to gather as many resources as possible, to ensure each campaign touched all demographics of students, and was as educational as possible. We decided who would tackle which event, and with more heads, the better planned each week was.

Will and I also spent a lot of time planning for the Welcome Back Day on campus. We wanted the first day of classes to be huge, and to draw in large crowds - similar to what everyone sees in movies. I worked specifically on planning a clubs and societies fair, and bringing Island Hill Farm to campus, while Will tackled PEI Inflatables and the food. All together it was pairing up to be a great event.

August:

August consisted of finalizing details and executing what needed to be done. We were past the point of planning new events, though the brainstorming never stops.

Because it neared the school year, I began to contact clubs and societies. I re-made and sent out this year’s ratification form and created a form invited clubs to join clubs fair. I began to fully re-organize the system in which clubs’ files were organized, and kept better track of all activity. I re-did the SU club’s handbook and created a confirmation email response - as one of the major complaints in previous years was clubs not knowing their status with the SU. This found itself to be beneficial, as it allowed myself to keep track, and allowed any follow up questions from

clubs. Attached to this email was a PDF outlining all of the benefits of being a ratified club, and a list of important dates (clubs orientation, clubs cup, etc).

Clubs also began to book rooms and contact me about events, meaning we needed to finalize our “Risk Management Form” and “Fox and Crow Booking Form”. These were very helpful in ensuring we kept up to date with what our clubs were doing.

The executive team went on our road trip this month as well. We visited St. FX, St. Mary’s, MSVU and Acadia and met with their executive teams. This was an awesome way to steal some ideas and work on networking across the maritimes.

This summer, I also spent time learning the ins and outs of the new program “Aspiria”. Under co-CEO Rob’s wing, he taught me how to deliver the presentation, and give people a run down on what the app entails. We delivered this presentation to key groups on campus to begin spreading the word, and will continue to do so as the school year continues. This app seems to be a great resource, I am hopeful it will help students.

Once the end of the month hit, things started to get busy. We held a successful staff training, were heavily involved in NSO and finished planning our first week events.

This is a quick summary of what was accomplished this summer. I am very proud of my team, and have full confidence that this will be a successful year for the UPEI Student Union.

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