



Winter AGM Report
Vice President Communications

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To: Augustana Students' Council

From: Alex Ho

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Accomplishments

- My campaign for the year focused heavily on increasing volunteer and leadership opportunities for students who are working on building stronger resume for grad school or job applications post university. One of my accomplishments for this term was to re-activate the Volunteer Corps. that allows students who are interested to have more volunteer opportunities through the ASA and work towards receiving a certified reference letter from the ASA. This accomplishment was only the start to a project that I hope can become a more impactful program. (more in the ongoing projects section)
- Another goal that I set forward for myself this year and as chair of the Sexual Violence Awareness Committee was to organize a Sexual Violence Awareness Week program that happened during the Fall semester in hopes that it would create a more impactful experience that would set the tone for the rest of the year. (more in the Ongoing Projects section). General Wellness was another large focus of mine that extended past just two Wellness Weeks per year. We worked on different initiatives that would help identify student issues and to be more present throughout the semester, by using the Wellness Wagon much more throughout this year, we were able to help students with their mental health through advocacy and programming.

Events

- PRIDE WEEK - 20+ hours

PRIDE Committee consisted of four members this year, Melissa Wilk (AQUA Co-President + PRIDE Committee Co-Chair), Carol Breitreutz (Community Member + Camrose Pride Member), Cindy Roose (ASA Executive Director) and myself (PRIDE Committee Co-Chair). This year our focus was to make PRIDE Week bigger and better. With doing so we all worked tirelessly to host a wide variety of events that were engaging and well received by not only students but community members as well.

- Off-Campus Supper - 15+ hours

The second Off-Campus Supper was organized heavily with the ASA Awareness Committee but also with the Off Campus Student Reps who decided on the foods that were going to be provided, location of the event and distribution of tickets to the supper. This term we focused on providing students a more intimate dinner where councilors were able to come together and cook perogies, and various other foods. This term, we were able to feed all students and ensure that no one left feeling hungry or wanting more. This event was a great success and lots of good feedback was received by the students.

- Wellness Week - 20+ hours

Wellness Week is quickly approaching as it happens during the week of our Winter AGM. There are a lot of amazing opportunities for students to relax and take part in fun activities that are being organized all over the campus. There will be tons of food being given out to help students not worry about cooking and focus on their studies. Pet therapy, self awareness session, Booster Juice, and Chopped Leaf are all different activities and food opportunities for all students.

- Last Lecture - 5 hours

Last Lecture is an event that is organized in partnership with the Augustana Alumni Office where one staff member is chosen after a nomination process where they will be invited to present a "Last Lecture". We as the ASA help in the decision making process, advertisements, and generating awareness around the last lecture. This event will be taking place on March 03.

- Provincial Election Political Panel - 10 hours

This is an event that is in the works as of now and will hopefully be held on April 02 during the day so students are able to hear what parties are planning to do in case of entering office. We will be guiding this session with a student focused forum where student issues will be addressed and students will be given opportunity to ask questions to candidates as well.

- Orange Crush or Blue Wave (Co-hosted with Augustana Alumni Office) - 5 hours

This event was hosted alongside the Alumni office to promote governance as well as creating awareness on the upcoming provincial elections that will be called this spring. We had a great panel of staff / faculty / community members where politics were discussed and questions were asked by members of the audience. The event was full with around 30 students in attendance.

Campaigns

- Provincial Election Campaign

There is an upcoming election that will greatly influence the lives of the students that will be attending post secondary institutions across the whole province. There will be a series of different programs that will be hosted on campus and will be worked on alongside other groups on campus that will be engaging to the students. The main goal of the election campaign will be to get students aware that there will be an upcoming election that they should get educated as to what the campaigns are. The ASA will be impartial as to what each party is campaigning for but more of that the election will be taking place and when.

- Get Out the Vote Campaign

The Get Out the Vote Campaign was a program that was organized by the Students' Union which has spearheaded by Stephen Raitz who partnered with the ASA to promote governance engagement with post secondary students. Stephen was able to come down this year and we worked together to recruit as many students as possible to enroll them in the GOTV program which helped reduce the barriers when coming to election processes. With the partnership, GOTV held a competition this year to engage as many students as possible and we were able to sit on top when challenged against all the other faculties part of the competition.

- PRIDE Awareness

This year I was able to solidify the PRIDE awareness supports into policy where our committee now exists with a future purpose. This year we were able to host the PRIDE Week which provided many activities and educational pieces not only about PRIDE spirits but also sexual health and safety.

Committee Membership

- Internal Committees
 - Awareness Committee - 30+ hours
 - ASA Executive Committee - 30+ hours
 - ASA Student Council - 30+ hours
- External Committees
 - Sexual Violence Awareness Committee - 20+ hours

- This year the Sexual Assault Awareness Committee had nine members that worked hard throughout the year in order to support sexual assault survivors and raise awareness around Sexual Assault Awareness. One of the biggest goals of this committee this year was to be able to educate and raise awareness to students on campus who may or may not have experienced a form of sexual assault in some way. The committee worked hard on reducing the stigma behind talking about Sexual Assault and worked towards the conversation being more open between peers.
- Another focus this committee had was to create a public advocacy effort on the lack of sexual violence services. By doing so, we were able to ensure that we were engaged with and apart of the Coordinated Community Response Committee which was a community organized response committee tasked with finding resolutions to the lack of sexual violence resources in Camrose that would be servicing the surrounding area.
- PRIDE Committee - 20+ hours
- Sexual Violence Prevention Working Group - 10+ hours
- Sustainability and Building Design Committee - 4+ hours
- Science Department Council - 8+ hours
- Student Life Awards Planning Committee - 5+ hours
- Student Engagement Working Group Committee - 5+ hours
- Residence Budget Advisory Committee - 2+ hours
 - This year was the last year for the committee and some discussed topics were the increase in residence and meal plan fees.
 - coming to the end of the mandate of this committee, it was noted that there needs to be an Augustana Representative that sits on the Residence Advisory Committee which will be absorbing the mandate of RBAC

Decision Process

The reason behind every decision that is made through my role as VP Communications is for the betterment of the students and how the campus can benefit from every decision that I make in each committee that is external to the ASA. When we are exploring new initiatives, the first thing that comes to mind is whether it would be an impactful experience for the students. Every student is deserving of equal representation on this campus and it was my goal and my purpose to ensure that all decisions were of the utmost benefit to the students and not the welfare of the university. It is realized that the University exists for the students and that without the students there would be no campus. Every decision made by myself and the Augustana Students' Association representatives is to create a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment.

Ongoing Projects

The first project that is ongoing is the work that I have done with the Volunteer Corps. I have been working hard to revive the program this year and have not felt like there are enough volunteering opportunities for the students so the next phase to the Volunteer Corps., will be to find other groups on campus (specifically the Learning, Advising and Beyond office) that will be able to partner up with the organization to ensure that the program exists for many years to come. Why I decided that LAB would be a good candidate to approach about having an investment in this project is that they are a great resource for providing volunteer and leadership opportunities that don't fall within the requirements of a CSL class but would fit nicely with the Volunteer Corps. Another benefit to working with LAB on this project is that there may be opportunities on not only giving written reference letters to the students but hopes to implement a certificate that students will be able to receive at the end of their university career when walking across the stage at convocation.

Sexual Violence has been a project that was started by a previous student leader and something that meant a lot to me as the wellbeing of students is one of my main priorities. With Sexual Violence it will be an ongoing project that I hope will continue for many years to come. I think the campaigns that are created from year to year are crucial so that students are consciously aware of the issue throughout the whole year and hopefully through their whole university career. Sexual Violence is a problem that not only affects the students on campus but as a community and society in general. It is our job as student leaders to ensure that students are not leaving the campus and forgetting all the lessons that they are given whether it be formal or informal education. Working alongside the student members of the SVAC, we will be working towards bringing community supports on campus, workshops and guest speakers that will be able to present on the topic of Sexual Violence Awareness and reducing the stigma of the subject being a discussion topic.

Successes

- One great success for this year was the revival of the Volunteer Corps. This was a program that was created years ago and did not see continuation as it was hard to engage students. This year, I reviewed the policy and made changes that were fitting for the program to ensure its continuation into the years ahead.

Obstacles Encountered

As a student leader, the hardest obstacle to encounter was finding the balance between school work and office work. It is difficult to not over commit oneself when it comes to committee memberships as well as organizing meetings on a regular basis. Being a full time student it is hard to always find time to focus on school work when there is so much going on in the office as well as interactions with all other groups on campus.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to email me or find me in the office!

Regards,

Alex Ho - Vice President Communications