



REPORT

From the office of the...

Spark Coordinator

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Jane Luft
SUBJECT: Spark Report #2
DATE: Tuesday, August 14th, 2018

YEARPLAN UPDATE

The past month has been exciting for our executive team because we will soon be a team of 41 instead of 7! A lot of the past month has been dedicated to recruiting volunteers for Spark so that we have a team of upper year mentors to support the incoming class of 2022. On top of promoting and marking Team Leader applications, our team has been busy working on our respective portfolios. We've made progress in planning for First Year Formal by choosing a venue and working out budget details, we've solidified all of the weekly sessions for first semester, and we have staff training and socials planned for first semester. Our major challenges have been balancing the workload of Team Leader applications with our other tasks for our individual roles but we have been quite successful in completing work and helping out one another when needed.

SERVICE USAGE

While Spark is still not truly operational, we have seen great interest in our service over the past month from prospective volunteers and first year students. While promoting Team Leader applications, we reached 2375 likes on Facebook with a maximum reach of 3334 at the end of the application period. We received 163 applications for the 34 Team Leader positions available.

We also saw great interest in our mentorship program from first year students attending the Horizons conference. 84 new emails were collected from students wishing to be contacted when student registration opens.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Horizons Successfest: On July 28th, 3 members of our executive team were at the Horizons conference helping promote Spark to students at the involvement fair. We gave away rave cards and lanyards to interested students and managed to secure 84 email addresses to add to our mailing list. The interest in Spark from incoming Mac students is very exciting and we can't wait to invite them to register for September!

Sessions 7-10 Developed: Our Sessions Coordinators have busy over the past month creating the remaining sessions for the first term weekly mentorship program. Some of the new session themes they have created include "Change & Transformation", "Perspectives", and "Stress, Support, & Resources". By solidifying sessions well in advance of the start of the term, we will be well prepared to purchase materials and train volunteers on leading their sessions.

Spark Formal Progress: Our Events Coordinators have been hard at work communicating with the Hamilton Art Gallery about hosting the First Year Formal in November. After doing a tour of the venue and comparing it to other potential venues, we have decided on the art gallery and are in the midst of finishing up a contract for the event. We have met with FYC Coordinator, Melissa Paglialunga, to discuss other details of planning the formal to ensure they are also involved in the planning process.

Welcome Week: Spark has connected with RezLife to have a couple of slides in the opening and closing ceremonies for each individual residence to reach a large number of students during the week. We also plan to set up our table and tent at various points throughout the week to get the word out about registration.

WW Guidebook Creation: Our Promotions & Publications Coordinator has been very busy (on top of organizing Team Leader Application promo) as she developed content for the first Spark Guidebook which is focused on Welcome Week. She has been communicating with the Underground and has received the first proof of the guidebook so that it will be ready in plenty of time for Welcome Week.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Interview Weekend: From August 17th to 19th the Spark executive team will be conducting interviews for the new group of Team Leaders for the 2018-2019 school year. We are in the process of developing 6 different interview stations that applicants will rotate through. It will be a busy weekend with 6 rounds of interviews scheduled over the 3 days but it will be great to finally be all together and hire a passionate team of leaders to help transition first years into the McMaster community.

Volunteer Meet & Greet: Although we hope to see many of our volunteers during Welcome Week at the Spark tent, we really want to have a chance for everyone to meet one another before our training weekend and be welcomed into the Spark family. We will have a casual event in ClubSpace the first week of classes with snacks and activities to help everyone get to know each other.

Volunteer Training: Spark’s volunteer training is scheduled for September 8th & 9th where we will go over a number of important training sessions including AOP, peer support, and other training relevant to being a Spark Team Leader. This will also be a great opportunity to have the Team Leaders get to know one another better and become comfortable in their new role.

First Year Registration: Starting August 25th with Welcome Week, student registration for Spark’s weekly mentorship program will be open. We plan to promote registration throughout the week and have a window banner in the MSU Office as student registration is one of the biggest promotional campaigns for Spark. Registration will remain open until the week before sessions begin.

BUDGET

| <i>ACCOUNT CODE</i> | <i>ITEM</i> | <i>BUDGET / COST</i> |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 5003-0125 | TOTAL SPENT IN LINE | \$0.00 |
| OFFICE SUPPLIES | REMAINING IN LINE | \$60.00 |

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 6102-0125 | TOTAL SPENT IN LINE | \$0.00 |
| ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS | REMAINING IN LINE | \$3,000.00 |

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 6501-0125 | TOTAL SPENT IN LINE | \$449.00 |
| ADV. & PROMOTIONS | REMAINING IN LINE | \$2,551.00 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 6802-0125 | TOTAL SPENT IN LINE | \$0.00 |
| LEADER TRAINING | REMAINING IN LINE | \$750.00 |
| <i>TOTALS</i> | | |
| TOTAL BUDGETED DISCRETIONARY SPENDING | | \$6,810.00 |
| TOTAL ACTUAL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING | | \$449.00 |
| REMAINING DISCRETIONARY SPENDING | | \$6,361.00 |

So far, we have only actually spent money on promotional material at the Underground for our TL Application campaign and for first year registration promotional material. Volunteer training costs are nonexistent until we hire a team later this month. We are preparing to put a deposit on the Hamilton Art Gallery for First Year Formal in the coming months for \$1500 which will come out of the 'Annual Campaigns' line. FYC has agreed to contribute financially to First Year Formal as well and we plan to work with additional campus partners to help with the cost of the event.

VOLUNTEERS

Our team has had few team dynamics challenges so far other than being physically separate from one another for the majority of the summer. We plan to organize an executive retreat in September to do some team bonding and will hopefully spend more casual time with one another once we are all in Hamilton again.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

One of our current challenges is scheduling executive members during interview weekend. A number of us had large commitments during that weekend that we've had to work around and one member is still having difficulty finding out what times specifically they will be unavailable. Their other commitment is a mandatory training for another MSU service (Maroons) that has yet to confirm times for the training and what exactly they need to be in attendance for. We are hoping they will be flexible with this considering the interview weekend was scheduled with set times prior to any confirmed times of this training.

We also experienced the challenge of delayed approval of EOHSS event planning forms and weren't able to book rooms in IAHS for future Spark events and trainings. This challenge has recently been resolved as we received approved forms this past week.

Another challenge that may arise during hiring is ensuring the team of Spark volunteers comes from diverse backgrounds, specifically from which faculty our volunteers are coming. There is a very heavy proportion of Science and Health

Sciences students and while we want to ensure the best applicants are being hired in a fair way, we also want to have good representation of different faculties in our team.

SUCCESSSES

We have had a number of successes over the past couple of months. Our promotion of Team Leader applications was awesome as we reached tons of people through social media and word of mouth, collecting 163 applications at the end. We had lots of interest in our mentorship program from Horizons students when we promoted Spark at the conference and collected many emails to contact students when registration opens. We also have been working very well as a team so far with fun and efficient meetings and giving each other shoutouts for the awesome work that everyone is doing. I can only hope we continue to have many successes as we start the busy months of Spark and continue with lots of highs through the rest of the year.

OTHER

Nothing else to report this time. As always, feel free to reach out if you have any feedback/questions at spark@msu.mcmaster.ca ! Thank you for taking the time to read this report.