



REPORT

From the office of the...

Executive Board

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Tasneem Warwani, SRA Arts and Science Caucus Leader
SUBJECT: SRA 18H Report
DATE: October 9th, 2018

Dear Members of the Assembly,

It's been a little longer than usual since our last SRA meeting, so I'll be reporting on three Executive Board Meetings this week, particularly 18-10, 18-11, and 18-12. This will include updates on Farmstand, Macademics, MACycle, SHEC, SCSN, PCC, Maroons, Maccess, Diversity Services, WGEN, and SWHAT. Feel free to reach out to me, or any of the other EB members (Shemar, Devin, Selene, Connor) if you have any questions!

Farmstand – Shailee Siddhpuria

Farmstand has been really busy with students back at school! They've had lots of exposure to first years through Clubsfest, and continue to promote the use of student cards for payment. They had their 4th annual Local Food Fest after their last EB report which was really exciting! Sales have ranged from \$700-900, and in September, they saw many of their produce sold out by the end of Thursday! Farmstand participated in Horizon's Successfest and they also ran a session in the evening with Mac BreadBin where they had over 70 students! In the future, they're looking to plan a few events with Rez Life in their healthy, active living building (McKay). From Clubsfest, they recruited and trained 6 volunteers.

One of Farmstands continued challenges is a decrease in participation of the Local Food Discount Card. Partners have not found greater student sales from this discount card, so many are not willing to extend their partnership with us.

Macademics – Angel Huang

Macademics has done lots over the summer and past few weeks! They've facilitated an academic success workshop at Horizons, attended Clubsfest, developed plans to revamp the Course Wiki, met with Spark about a joint event in October, started a new blog via Buzzfeed Community, launched a weekly promo campaign (#MacademicsMonday), and closed subcommittee volunteer applications! This year looks busier than past years for Macademics, but Angel is optimistic that her team can handle the increased workload. Macademics and the Campus Store now also control the "McMaster Used Textbook Sales [All Years]" Facebook page. Angel, Wooder, Kristina, and the Campus Store were set to meet to discuss the direction of their administrative partnership for the Facebook group. Angel and Stephanie also met with MacPherson about a newsletter and Student Partners Project. For their volunteer applications, Macademics received 37 applications, and they hired and trained 20 folks on September 28th. Overall, Angel and the Macademics team are doing an incredible job!

MACycle – David Zaslavsky

MACycle was reported on last SRA meeting, but since then, they had their bike auction and attended Clubs Fest. Their bike auction was very successful bringing in \$4000 profit. This is a lower number than last year, but given that they had fewer bikes to sell, this was still very successful. There was some miscommunication with Maroons for set-up, but the Maroons who were present during the auction were really helpful. David also has a 10 person volunteer team this year due to MACycle's presence at Clubs Fest – training for these folks took place on September 19th. Service usage has gone up significantly, and they're often running at full capacity which is great but tiring for the team – hopefully their new volunteers help alleviate this problem. Lastly, MACycle is in the midst of planning a Bike Safety campaign so that will be an exciting thing to look out for!

SHEC – Adrianna Michell

SHEC has continued working on past projects this month. Welcome Week was busy as they were present at Horizons Successfest, Peer support tents, Keyes Mini Clubsfest, Clubstfest, Therapy Dog at Moulton, and the Wellness Fair. They got lots of first year engagement and finished first year hiring! Training was good but challenging and they now have a cohort of 43 volunteers and 4 execs allowing them to operate from 9:30 am to 7:30 pm longer hours than anticipated. SHEC is doing great and operating smoothly!

SCSN – Rohan Lohana

SCSN is busy working on projects for the upcoming month! SCSN has hired a Promotions Coordinator, made changes to the Community Connectors, and started a Door Hanger Campaign at the Homecoming Expo. SCSN unfortunately had an exec drop so they're looking to hire an Events Coordinator and Community Connector. SCSN's Facebook has increased outreach in the past month through their interactive game at Homecoming Expo which is good! They also helped Frontier College promote their literacy Program. Upcoming events include helping the AWWCA in their peer-to-peer program, and the annual Pumpkin Hike. Challenges revolve around neighbourhood safety, and police emphasizing that many students should take more safety precautions. SCSN is looking to a potential educational campaign so students know which safety precautions to take.

SWHAT – Sowmya Karthikeyan

SWHAT usage has gone up significantly this month. While September is always a busy month, they've seen a lot more off campus walks likely due to the Westdale break-in incidents. SWHAT is therefore opening up volunteer applications again, so they can have more walkers available and reduce the strain on their existing volunteers. Upcoming events include a picnic on BSB field for volunteers, and a Humans of SWHAT campaign after reading week. A current challenge, other than volunteer burnout, is volunteer retention with some returners dropping SWHAT given the increased service usage relative to past years. However, SWHAT is continuing to brainstorm solutions to this, and they're hoping more volunteers will help! Sowmya has been really great so if you have any ideas for SWHAT please reach out!

PCC – Miranda Clayton

October will include Pride Week, so this will be a busy and exciting month for the PCC! Volunteers just began tracking service usage with a shift log binder and they've had pretty consistent usage with 1-2 people accessing the space per hour. This number is expected to grow with continuous space promotion. Since the last PCC EB report, they hired and trained volunteers, completed the space renovation, and carried out a very successful Pride Rep Network project! Hiring and training for PCC volunteers took more time than expected, so events have been pushed to early October – they had a Twilight movie night October 3rd and will be running an LGBT Dictionary campaign. Pride Week will be October 29th – November 2nd, so get excited! A challenge Miranda's been facing is some volunteer dropout (they've picked up some more volunteers since), difficulties with the Underground (Wooder was figuring this out), and a lack of space resources relative to the other peer support services who've had much longer to build their space.

Maroons – Dan LaFrance

With Welcome Week and Homecoming so close together, Maroons had a very busy first month! In addition to participating in these two large events, Maroons also had their Year Long Training with near perfect attendance. They also helped with Sidewalk Sale, Clubsfest, and continue to have a presence at Varsity Football Games. The HOCO contest they ran received nearly 300 comments, so their presence on Facebook and Instagram continues to be large. Challenges include volunteer retention and turnout, so they've implemented an accountability tracking attendance sheet. In addition, Maroons have always found Clubsfest challenging given that they have to teardown, transport, and load all the tables, which is an excessive amount of work for them. Upcoming events include a FYC coffee house, streaming games and movies in MUSC atrium, intramurals, a Fantasy Sports League, and a Maroons in MUSC interview series.

Maccess – Hilary Zorgdrager

Maccess is off to an excellent start this term! They have 3x more volunteers than last year and service usage has been way up this year (they're almost out of seating every day they're open). Since many folks show up to the space as soon as it opens, they're considering opening the space earlier (10:30 instead of noon) – they have the volunteers to do so. Hiring and training did take a little longer than expected, so their community focused events will be a little later in the term. Their first event in collaboration with the Equity and Inclusion Office was at full capacity, and they had a Colouring & Complaing event with SAS that we'll hear about the next time they report to EB. Maccess is also implementing drop-in hours with guests from university resources to help folks with disabilities navigate SAS, SSC/CAPS, and graduate school applications. Hil and the Maccess team have been stars!!

Diversity Services – Mijia Murong

Diversity Services was reported on last SRA meeting. Since then, they've continued to build a cohesive team and rethink the team structure. Mijia has concerns that the Indigenous Affairs executive position has been tokenizing, so they're looking at how to better include Indigenous students' perspectives. They're also re-thinking the management of the Bridges Space, and a long term idea to create an equity-seeking-group conference for undergrad students. They've also continuously trying to improve AOP, and are now looking to implement a feedback form.

Mijia has continued to attend PACBIC meetings; Diversity Services has delivered AOP to services including PCC, SHEC, Spark, WGEN, and Maccess; and Bridges has hosted 9 events.

Diversity Services and PCC are looking towards a collaboration in the future. Mijia has also started to meet with the Services Committee for their service review.

Upcoming Diversity Services events including a Video on Trial where they'll discuss ableist tropes seen in the genre of horror as well as a social political advocacy campaign to celebrate indigenous artists during Thanksgiving. Their Voluntourism campaign is in the works, and they hope to include action-items and impact in this campaign. Through the Interfaith Council, Diversity Services will also look to host some projects, including an Interfaith coffeehouse coming up which Diversity Service execs will be helping on.

Volunteer applications for Diversity Services are live, and volunteers will be trained and hired by the end of October. They're found a lack of engagement with volunteer hiring, so they might extend volunteer hiring to after reading week.

Lastly, keep an eye out for Diversity Service execs in their lovely bright yellow shirts!

Spark – Jane Luft

Spark had a very busy September! Over the summer, Spark hired and trained a team of 34 volunteers (from 163 applications) who helped with tabling during Welcome Week, the Night Before Classes, and Clubsfest, all events that helped with recruiting students. They circulated their first guidebook by Welcome Week focused on taking care of yourself during busy times. They reached full registration capacity, and have about 45 students pre-registered for next semester which is really exciting! However, they've been having problems with session attendance (3-4 students per session instead of 8-10) which is unusual this early in the year. Their newly introduced Hike and Hangout event was a big success with a maximum turnout.

Their upcoming projects include guidebooks, spark ambassadors (first years to advertise Spark), a study session academic event in collaboration with Macademics, and planning their annual First Year Formal.

Something to keep in mind is that their advertising and promo budget will go up significantly this year because it's the first year they don't have an "in-team" graphic designer. This was an unusual situation that caused Spark's year-over-year promo budget to be much lower, but this change will be reflected in future budgets. Another challenge has included ensuring volunteers are available to attend their weekly training, however, they're working to work around these issues.

WGEN – Jocelyn Heaton

WGEN was really active in September, with Welcome Week, hiring and training volunteers, their space opening, and their first two events. Volunteers have been filling intake forms at a rate of about 75% to track service usage; service usage is aligned with last year's numbers but this is likely understated given that not all volunteers have been filling them out. In 2 weeks of operation, they've received three disclosures of sexual violence. The new volunteers have been very impressive, and have not hesitated to ask Jocelyn questions when they've had any. Their Facebook page has been steadily increasing since the beginning of Welcome Week and their Instagram launch has also been a success. WGEN events during Welcome Week included tabling in combination with Maroons which was very successful, and a keynote with Rania El Mugammar who spoke about rape culture which was a niche event that saw a lot of meaningful engagement with the people who did attend. A continuous challenge has been hosting events in

combinations with other campus partners due to communication difficulties. There were also concerns with concert DJs during Welcome Week playing music with racial slurs.

The WGENius event had a great turnout with lots of new faces, while their event in combination with OPIRG saw much less engagement. In the future, WGEN will avoid planning events in such short timeframes given that it brings difficulty in effectively promoting. Homecoming was disappointing from WGEN's perspective – the location was hot, there was no space to get air since the outdoor area was blocked off due to incidents of intoxication, and there were concerns on slow emergency response. Security and police also presented some challenges, and Jocelyn will likely be pursuing a complaint against two of them. WGEN does not think police should be inside the venue, but they can be called when needed.

WGEN will be hosting their annual Spooptacular night at the end of October, Transforming Mac week from November 19th – 23rd, and an event with McMaster Womanists. They're working on updating their library catalogue and reviewing event collaboration requests.

Jocelyn provided Kristina with criticism and points of improvement on peer support training weekend for volunteers, specifically regarding a lack of communication and poor training structure.

Other

That's all for the services folks! It was a long read, but I hope you enjoyed it and actually got to the end.

Best,

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