



REPORT

From the office of the...

Diversity Services Director

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Nishan Zewge-Abubaker
SUBJECT: Diversity Services Report 2
DATE: October 22, 2015

UPDATE

October has been a busy month of programming for Diversity Services. Our service has been fully hired, and is hitting its stride. Two of our pillars have already hosted their large-scale event for the semester, and we have working on a variety of projects!

SERVICE USAGE

Diversity Services has highlighted our service usage in the past month through estimating attendance for several of our events, as well as gauging some of the engagement with our promotional work.

Stories for the Soul had a high turnout, with approximately 70 attendees.

What's in a Name has received 400 views since we launched it two weeks ago.

AbiliTEAS – had 10 students attend.

Bridges Café – consistently booked 4 nights a week, however the Bridges Coordinator cannot attend Wednesdays.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Our service has been incredibly active through many of our projects, and

Anti-Oppressive Practices Training – Since our last report, Giuliana, Ryan and I have met with Glenn from Human Rights and Equity Services to continue to build on the successes of this past summer and develop next steps for the training. We discussed a variety of outcomes, including a ‘train the trainer’ model to implement consistent and sustainable trainers for our services, different levels of this training for students who have gone through it multiple times, and discussing procedure regarding who to contact for different groups. We look forward to implementing and building on these shifts throughout the year.

AbiliTEAS – One of the main goals of the Abilities Pillar this year is to promote solidarity and community-building amongst students with disabilities. AbiliTEAS represented programming that our Abilities Coordinator was keen to develop, and has demonstrated a lot of potential for the upcoming year. The first of the series was hosted

on October 1st in the SWELL, and we had 10 students attend this closed programming event. Our next of the series is to be hosted next Thursday, in Clubspace. The event is primarily promoted through the Hamilton Mad Students Collective listserv to gain outreach to students with disabilities, and we will continue to do so. We will re-evaluate how effective the spaces are in providing a comfortable and closed space for students with disabilities in the upcoming months.

Stories for the Soul – We hosted a coffeehouse and story sharing night in Bridges Café on October 8th through the Multiculturalism Committee that was incredibly well-received by attendees. This event promoted multifaced narratives of students cultural identities, and ranged from powerful performances of spoken word to dances. As an indicator of the impact of this event, multiple attendees came up to the members of the Multiculturalism Committee to request this same event be repeated in second semester so they could perform.

What's in a Name – This video created by the Multiculturalism Committee hoped to reflect some of the deep rooted identities tied into our names. Since its release, the video has reached 400 views and has been shared by groups including the Student Success Centre. We hope to continue on this momentum through hosting a discussion night for the Cultures in Conversation series in November.

Accessibility Forum – Although at the time of writing this report, the Accessibility Forum has not yet happened (October 21st), however there have been many successes connected to the planning process of the Accessibility Forum. We have our volunteers and facilitators trained and a lot of campus partners prepared for the forum happening this Wednesday!

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Service-Wide

Volunteer Training

Abilities

AbiliTEAS

Accessibility Forum

Multiculturalism

Anti-Racism Workshop

Cultures not a Costume Campaign

Interfaith

Faith in Action

BUDGET

Item	Amount	Amount Spent	Amount YTD	% Remaining
Diversity Week	6000			0.00%
Programming for Multiculturalism	1000	200	200	20.00%
Programming for Indigenous Affairs	1000			0.00%
Programming for Interfaith	1000			0.00%
Programming for Abilities	1000	25	25	2.50%
Cultural Gathering	1000	1000	1000	100.00%
SoulFoods	250			0.00%
Tshirts	500			0.00%
Supplies	250	209		83.60%
	12000	1434	1225	2.061

This is the amount our service has spent going into Reading Week. We are currently in the process of spending for the Accessibility Forum and Faith in Action. The Accessibility Forum is our largest event in first term, and has a budget of approximately \$1900, however a lot of it involves funding from external groups and our partnership with University Affairs Committee. We have been able to gain funding for approximately \$1300 of the costs, and will provide a more in depth update in our next report. Otherwise, our service budget is in great shape!

VOLUNTEERS

We are incredibly excited to have hired our full service! Committee members for three of our pillars, in addition to the Promotions Coordinator have been selected and the transition into their roles have begun. Each volunteer has received an introductory session by their respective Committee Coordinator, and we gave role-specific transition to our Promotions Coordinator. On October 25th, we will be hosting a training session for all our volunteers. Topics covered will involve a comprehensive Anti-Oppression Training that is customized for our service volunteers, developing tools for event planning and brainstorming for Diversity Week.

We are also hoping to expand on volunteer appreciation this year in meaningful ways. We are planning to host a volunteer social in the next month and find ways to further engage them online and continuously in a larger Facebook group rather than in siloed niches in each pillar.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

As a result of students engaging with our service on multiple platforms, we have had many reach out to us to ask to get further involved in Diversity Services. I received one email recently that read, "Hi! I just watched the What's In A Name video that you just released and it was beautiful. I was wondering if there are's any way I can volunteer and get involved, thank you!". As exciting as this is, the current structure of our service includes four structured committee volunteers under each pillar. Both Ryan and I look forward to creating discussions at future executive meetings as to how best allow further opportunities for more students to connect to our service in a volunteering capacity.

Another challenge that our service has been working through regards the hours of our services' paid staff. On the Bridges side, this has resulted in Both the Bridges Coordinator and the Assistant Director consistently go over their hours, and to begin to address this I have created tracking sheets so we understand where they are dedicating

their time on a weekly basis. In two weeks, we will evaluate what aspects of their roles can be better streamlined and supported, and if needed we will take further steps to address the amount of hours they are allocated to work per week.

A final issue we have been having regards the AV equipment in Bridges. Our Bridges Coordinator is familiar with the AVTEK set up in the space and can operate it well, however there have been multiple occasions where the configuration of the equipment has been completely changed by AVTEK staff without notice and our Coordinator cannot use it at all. We have attempted to reach out to AVTEK multiple times for various reasons in the past few months, to no response. Dan has been very helpful in connecting us in the past, however we hope to build continuous communication directly between the AVTEK office and Diversity Services in the future.

SUCSESSES

Many exciting things have happened since our last report that our service has celebrated!

The first success we have recently celebrated is that our service has been fully hired from the first week of October! This is the earliest we have had every role in our service filled, and we look forward to continuing to creating better structures so in the future this can happen earlier. In addition, the Diversity Services Director has the additional role of student vice-chair for Presidents Advisory Committee for Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC). I have recently been able to connect with Jane Aronson, the chair, to discuss the terms of reference and find opportunities for greater student representation at this committee. With the hiring of our Promotions Coordinator, we have been able to create strong promotional representation on a continuous basis, and that is something we are very excited about. In the past our service has not maintained a consistent individual in the role, and we have created effective transition resources and support so this position does not get overwhelmed, given the amount of programming our service puts out. Our Multiculturalism pillar has also proved exceptionally strong this year, despite planning events that occurred relatively early in the year. On a whole, our service has really fallen into stride, with a balanced dynamic of people with event planning skills and diversity-related knowledge, and as a result working productively and smoothly

OTHER

With the ratification of both Maccess and WGEN over the past year, our service has sought to offer programming and education that did not overlap with current resources – as indicated by the removal of our Gender Equity pillar for the 2015-2016 year. A similar recommendation was put forward regarding the Abilities pillar for the 2016-2017 year. As a result of these discussions, we look forward to planning for the future of our service and the impact in structural changes that come from that. To proactively address this, we have scheduled a meeting with Giuliana to talk about the potential for our service in the upcoming year.