



Executive Officer's Exit Report 2021-2022



Jess Dela Cruz
VP Events & Student Affairs

Executive Summary

Hello everyone,

I have now come to completion within the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) as Vice-President Events & Student Affairs (VPESA). Thank you again for the support and trust to have elected me in this position. I have and continue to do this work on the Unceded and stolen territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-Waututh), kʷíkʷəłəm (Kwkwetlem) and q̓ícəy̓ (Katzie) Nations. This position has continuously encouraged me to build relationships, advocate with and for Indigenous Student rights and community, and to continue to celebrate their joys. Furthermore, it has pushed me to continuously challenge this colonial institution of Simon Fraser University (SFU) to do better in the inclusion of marginalized students within their decision making processes.



Since the beginning of my university experience, I always knew I wanted to run and hold one of these positions on the SFSS Executive Committee. I wanted to make a positive impact within our community and advocate for student needs.

It has been a unique experience to be running with the SFSS Executives and as the SFU Progressives. We spent months preparing for our roles and campaigned all in an online environment. We spent our first few months together working remotely and slowly transitioned to an in-person and hybrid model. Individually we have had our own successes and struggles within this role, but I am thankful to have continued support from each of them. And, how they continuously challenge me to do better.



Most importantly, I am so thankful for our wonderful and supportive Staff who has always been there to answer my questions, fill in the gaps, add the small but important details that I may miss, and provide their experience and knowledge to support me, the Execs, Council, and our undergraduate students. It is so evident how hard they work and how they genuinely care for us. Seeing each of them in person for the first time after a few months of working remotely was so special.

I also want to recognize that the majority of our board is comprised of Black, Indigenous and/or People of Colour. The work we do is not easy at times. It is emotionally and mentally draining when the discussions, motions, and advocacy work we do has direct impacts to ourselves, communities, our families, our relationships, and our friends that may make us sad or bring up hard parts of our lived experiences. Yet, we continue to push on and do the



work. It has been heartwarming to feel and have solidarity amongst each other when it becomes difficult.

I worked on the back-end and front-end of various tasks, projects, and events. This position also taught me many administrative and managerial skills that I know will be so extremely helpful once this position ends.

This year was filled with growing pains, but I look forward to the opportunities and challenges to come. Thank you once again for electing me into this position, and I hope I have been able to serve you well and make you proud!

In solidarity,

Jess Dela Cruz (she/her)



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Spring 2021

May 2021

Council Orientation Onboarding

May was the first month of our term. We spent the first few weeks having onboarding sessions as Council Members. I assisted our Council by taking quick notes and I try to do this every Council meeting and dev session when I have the capacity. During our onboarding, we learned the core components of our job that includes but are not limited to society governance, Robert's Rules of Order, Equity and anti-oppression training, and more.

Carry-Over Events

- SFSS Wilderness Workshop
- Disability Awareness Workshop

During this month, I had the opportunity to carry-over two events that my predecessor, Jennifer Chou (VP Student Life 2020-2021) had: SFSS Wilderness Workshop and Disability Awareness Workshop. For the SFSS Wilderness Workshop, guests learned how to stay safe in the wild from learning what to pack, how to call for help, how to stay warm, and what to do when you are put in precarious situations. For the disability workshop, guests learned how to create spaces in the online and physical world in which disabled folks are included, heard, seen, and represented. And how as non-disabled folks can work as allies to uplift and support their voices and needs.

Club Management

While these incidents remain confidential for the privacy and safety of the student, I worked with our President, VP Internal & Organizational Development, and members of our Society Staff and our Excluded Society-Staff to ensure these matters are dealt with appropriately.

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Memorial

Trigger Warning: This section discusses Residential Schools and unmarked graves.

So-called Canada was met with the news of the discovery of unmarked graves of 215 children whose lives were lost due to residential schools at Kamloops Indian Residential School in Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. This greatly affected Indigenous community members and their families. I worked with VP External & Community Affairs to hold a memorial service and vigil in front of the SUB to remember and honour the children lost and families affected. Together, we created resources and I helped in minor ways with the statement. For the day of, I helped with the preparation, take-down, live-streaming and hosting the vigil. There was singing and drumming and we invited Indigenous community members and a small number of SFU administrators to join in person and live-streamed the event due to Covid-19. We were extremely disappointed that SFU did not act quick enough and had to count on the labour of Indigenous students to yet again call for action and support. We called on SFU to lower their flags at half-past and pushed President Joy Johnson to do more and to do better. The search for more unmarked graves across so-called Canada are continuing until today, and the number has increased. We must continue to always support and be there for our Indigenous communities.

See statement [here](#).






June 2021

Communications Coordinator Hiring Committee

I served as one of the employer representatives for the Communications Coordinator Hiring Committee. The other employer representative was Ayesha Khan (Operations Organizer) and employee representatives: Nancy Mah (Member Services Coordinator) and Shelley Durante (then, Member Services Coordinator and now, Building Coordinator). This was my first time being on a hiring committee within the SFSS and I prepared by reading our hiring handbook and asking so many questions. We also took part in making sure the Job Description (JD) was inclusive, and we always stress in our JD's that we encourage folks from women, Black, Indigenous, and members of racialized communities, disabled folks, and members of LGBTQ+, cultural, religious, and linguistic communities. We had incredible



candidates to interview and making the decision was extremely difficult. The SFSS is extremely lucky to have Ilham Benttahir as our Communications Coordinator, who continues to support us and our campaigns we do within this organization.

Collaboration with SFU Rec

This was my first ever event and collaboration with SFU Recreation. We planned to make quick-bites recipes that could easily be done in the microwave (because hello - we are broke university students). We made easy breakfast, snack, and dessert recipes. SFU Recreation was a pleasure to work with, as they did the bulk of the planning. SFSS helped provide support in monetary ways with giveaway winners. The challenge was making sure that the pricing and gifts weren't too expensive, and that we had multiple winners win smaller prizes for participating in the contest. The other difficult challenge was wi-fi and Instagram Live. We had to restart the live three times, and ended up having to save it on @sfss_events Instagram. However, I was pleasantly surprised with how many viewers we had and how many people participated in making the recipes and following the rules.

We Were Here We Were Queer x SFSS Zine Launch & Poetry Open Mic

I reached out to We Were Here We Were Queer (WWHWWQ) as this month was Pride Month. Coincidentally, WWHWWQ was also doing their zine launch. It was a perfect time to collaborate. Together, we planned the logistics of the poetry, open mic, and zine launch event held on Zoom. It was such a beautiful event, with the labour and voices done by queer folks on campus. There was song, poetry, and speeches of what their art meant to them. Queer folks and allies joined in and listened, supported and celebrated an important day and month!

WWHWWQ Instagram [Link](#)

WWHWWQ Website [Link](#)



#CancelCanadaDay Campaign

Especially since the continuous discoveries of the unmarked graves, I was reflecting on what this day meant and its history. For the council meeting right before July 1 (Canada Day), I presented the following motion (view [here](#)):

Whereas Simon Fraser University (SFU) and Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) are currently situated on the Unceded Traditional Territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam),

Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Sel̓íl witulh (Tsleil-Waututh), kwikwə́ł 'əm (Kwikwetlem) and q'íca'y' (Katzie) Nations and we formally acknowledge that these nations have been here since time immemorial,

Whereas canada day dismisses the history of colonialism, genocide, and forced assimilation that has and continues to, harm Indigenous People(s) living on Turtle Island since time immemorial,

Whereas the colonial states' anthem known as the "canadian national anthem," is a colonial patriotic song that may be triggering for Indigenous Community Members and does not honour Indigenous People(s) and their sovereignty, language, ceremony, culture, and Indigenous Ways of Knowing,

Whereas canada day covers up the racist, inequitable, and discriminatory laws and regulations that make it difficult for Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, immigrants, non-English speakers, and other equity-seeking groups to have equitable treatment and supports within this country,"

Whereas celebrating canada day means to celebrate the genocide, systemic racism, trauma, lack of mental health and monetary support, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit folks—all that our so-called canadian government so chooses to ignore nor provide any sustainable assistance and fair reparations,

Whereas the Idle No More #CancelCanadaDay campaign was initiated by the labour and activism of Indigenous People(s) who are committed "to honour to honour all of the lives lost to the canadian state – Indigenous lives, Black lives, Migrant lives, Women and Trans and 2Spirit lives – all of the relatives that we have lost,"

Be it resolved that the SFSS Council support, amplify, and participate in the ongoing #CancelCanadaDay campaign by Idle No More, this year and for the foreseeable future,

Be it further resolved that SFSS Council disregard any form of celebration or idealization of so-called canada at SFU,

Be it further resolved that SFSS Council instead use "Canada Day" to reflect on, remember, honour and support Indigenous Peoples who have been affected by colonization, genocide and

forced assimilation. In particular in relation to the residential school system and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit People(s),

Be it further resolved that SFSS Council help Promote education of the colonial, oppressive and racialized history of so-called Canada through support, amplification and participation in decolonial and anti-oppressive narratives. Highlighting Indigenous knowledge systems, while discrediting settler-colonial narratives,”

Be it further resolved that the SFSS #CancelCanadaDay campaign where participating SFSS Membership and Indigenous Community Members submit a photo of themselves wearing an orange T-Shirt attached with a short statement as to why they are not participating in “Canada Day” be released in relevant SFSS social media platforms anytime between the dates of June 30 and July 2,


Be it further resolved that the SFSS Council hold the current SFU President, Joy Johnson, and future SFU Presidents accountable to ensure that all “SFU’s flags will stay lowered indefinitely to honour the lives and mourn the loss of these discoveries” and that we must oversee that these flags on the Surrey, Burnaby, and Vancouver campuses will never fly at full mast again;

Be it further resolved that there will be a campaign struck and led by VP Events & Student Affairs, Jess Dela Cruz with support from the VP Equity and Sustainability alongside the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour Committee (BIPOC) and Executive Committee, that ensures that the Canadian national anthem will no longer be played or be sung by any staff, student, faculty member, alumni, or guest at all and any SFU events, ceremonies (included but not limited to: remote and in-person convocation ceremonies); nor through any form of recorded audio or video via speaker; and, at any home sporting games where SFU Athletics play; and that we encourage Host Nation members and Indigenous elders to come open up SFU events and ceremonies,

Be it further resolved that the push towards SFU to replace the current flags with Host Nations’ Flags fall under the same campaign as mentioned above

--- End of Motion ---

There is still a lot of work to be done to continue and put pressure to make sure these action items are completed. I understand that there are barriers that may only allow for



parts of the “be it (further) resolved” clauses to occur, however those are at least small steps in the right direction to apply pressure to the university to ensure that they are really following in their commitments to reconciliation. I look forward to striking the first meeting and receiving support from the Executive and the relevant committees to do this work. I also helped write and compile resources for the #CancelCanadaDay Statement. View [here](#).

July 2021

Women’s Centre Assistant Hiring Committee

I served as one of the employer representatives, alongside VP Equity & Sustainability, Marie Haddad, for the Women’s Centre Assistant Hiring Committee. Our employee representatives were Athena Guertin (Women’s Centre Coordinator) and Somayeh Naseri (Administrative Coordinator). We interviewed five candidates and successfully hired one. The questions we had were specifically tailored to the women’s centre mandate, administrative work, SFSS knowledge, campaigns, and how they would act in solidarity with marginalized communities on campus.

In-Person Event Guidelines

The previous board before me voted to suspend all in-person events for Clubs, Student Unions, and Constituency Groups near the start of the pandemic. Student groups have been hosting events, socials, and more through the online platform and remotely ever since. Come my term, there were so many changes happening with the British Columbia Provincial Health Order (PHO). The PHO constantly changed their guidelines of the amount of people allowed, and in what spaces, how masks were implemented, etc. Most recently (September), the implementation of vaccine-status checking was made mandatory for certain spaces, events, etc.

My role as VP Events has been largely based on what the BCPHO has been suggesting over the past few months. Things have been and continue to change and we have to be prepared to go along with it and make the necessary changes to our guidelines and processes of how we run events. I largely thank our staff for helping me in this process, and

members of the Executive Committee with their consultation. Often, I have had collaboration and brainstorming sessions with Student Engagement & Retention (SER) and Meetings, Events, & Services (MECS) to check-in with each other about the changes they made with their events, how they are ensuring how to be COVID-19 safe, etc.

It was then during my term that I was sWe then created an initial set of In-Person Event Guidelines for Clubs, Student Unions, and Constituency Groups to follow. In my opinion, we were more careful about the max number of people, more helpful in providing masks and hand sanitizer to students, etc. than most.

Thank you to Member Services Coordinators, Clubs: Ricky Che, Melanie Ling, and Nancy Mah for their efforts, leadership, and contribution to these in-person event guidelines.

Version 1.0: In-Person Event Guidelines prior August 23

August 23rd was the date the SUB was planned to be open. In summary, these guidelines prior to the open required students to fill out this form and contact-19 tracing list for approval. We allowed students to continue to use spaces external to the SUB only. And, provided masks and hand sanitizer for pick up.

View [here](#).

Version 2.0: In-Person Event Guidelines after August 23

While the SUB was open, we have yet to have full capacity of building management and staff working within the building. It was encouraged to use venues and spaces still external to the SUB, and perhaps look at SFU spaces and their bookings. And, we have entered the beginnings of the fourth wave of COVID-19. We continued to be cautious and thoughtful and continued to extend the same guidelines that were prior to August 23rd, onwards and until further notice.

View [here](#).

Version 3.0: In-Person Event Guidelines & Application October 8th, onwards

At this time, we have hired more building staff and have Staff working in the SUB. It has been such a crazy few months of the start of the semester, as we have seen the SUB be used to its advantage. The space at all hours of the day is constantly being used by our students to study and to connect with others. We have seen folks hunker down for hours at a time and see folks always entering and exiting the space. We have not yet opened up any room bookings as we have been training our staff in its use, making edits and revisions to how we approach this, and working with an external company to make sure we have the appropriate changes made to make sure the self-serve system is good. Therefore, we have not yet allowed any students to host any events within the SUB.

The changes that we made to the In-Person Event Guidelines & Application effective October 8th, were quite significant. The PHO has implemented proof of vaccination for indoor events, in certain cases. And continued to have other guidelines from the previous month's continuation.

For On-Campus Events, we still maxed the capacity to be 25 and have these be hosted external to the SUB.

For Off-Campus Events, the attendance may have more than 25 people, in which the PHO and COVID Health & Safety Guidelines must be followed. As always and in every application and guideline, events at private residences are not allowed.

The completion of the COVID-19 Contact Tracing is still required.

****Updated April 2022****

So, because of the rising cases of the Omicron variant in the Fall and the SUB Closure, we had to change the in-person event guidelines three (3) more times. We made a total of six (6) different versions.

View [here](#).

August 2021

Emergency Response Plan

The Executive Committee continuously reviewed the Emergency Response Plan throughout the year, in order to ensure that there are safety action items and plans in place in various types of emergency situations. This plan was worked on by John Walsh, Building Manager, in collaboration with the Executives.

SUB Soft Opening Week

Yay! After all these years, we finally made it. The Student Union Building (SUB) is finally going to open! We operated at reduced hours the first week as a soft opening, and to accommodate a slow and gradual opening for people to fill in the space.

This event was planned in less than a month. I took a Leave of Absence in the first week of August, and wanted to do a special opening after the restrictions were drastically changing. We didn't think it was possible due to the short time constraint, but we did it.

The hours of the event were early in the morning, to ensure that folks can attend the event and if they needed to go back to their work or have other commitments and responsibilities, they were still able to. COVID-19 was also very precarious, so we had to set up a registration, invite-only, and do multiple sessions to ensure a small group of people (which we had capped at 25 guests per event).

Each session was provided with catered breakfast items, merchandise to take home, and a tour of the Student Union Building (SUB) after we gathered in the Ballroom.

The schedule was as follows:

Monday, August 23	Opening Ceremony	8:30am-10:00am	Selected Staff, All Execs, Elders, Singers/Drummers + First Nations Student Association Board + Indigenous Student Centre
	Stakeholder Appreciation	10:00am-12:00pm	Selected Staff, All Execs, SFU and Burnaby Stakeholders



	Welcome		
Tuesday, August 24	Alumni Tours	8:30am-10:00am	Selected Staff, Selected Execs, Registered Alumni
		10:00am-12:00pm	Selected Staff, Selected Execs, Registered Alumni
Wednesday, August 25th	SFU Bring-Your-Own- Lunch (BYOL)	10:00am-1:00pm	Selected Staff, Selected Execs, and Selected SFU Staff
Thursday, August 26th	Constituency Groups Welcome	8:30am-10:30am	Selected Staff, All Execs, Constituency Groups (Coordinators & Volunteers)
Friday, August 27th	SFSS Staff & Execs (Past & Present), & Council Opening Celebration	8:30am-10:30am	Staff, Execs, and Non-Execs (Council)

Monday, August 23: Opening Ceremony

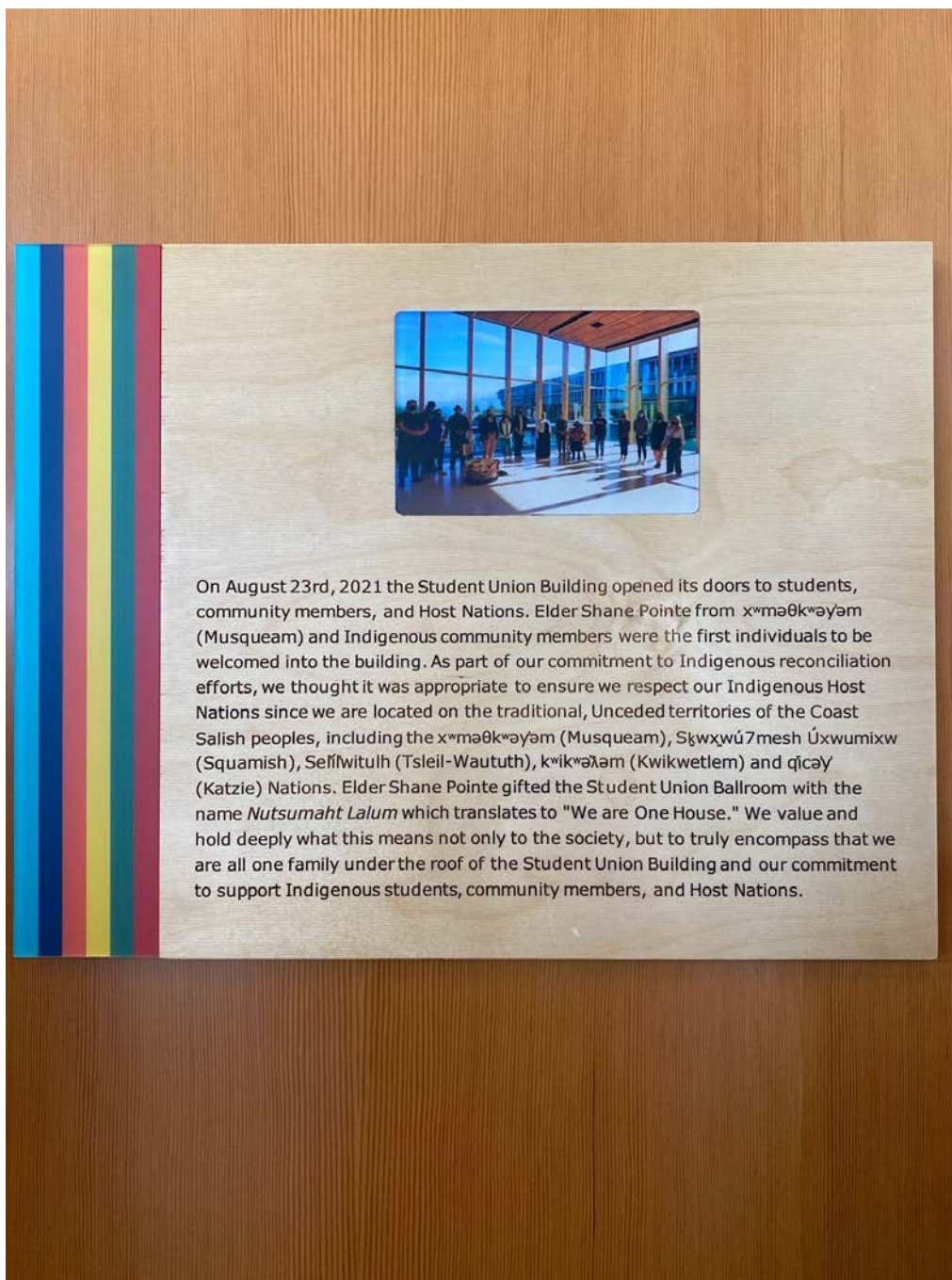
We wanted to open the space up in a good way, and in the right way. We are extremely grateful and blessed to be the first group of Executives to have full access to the space upon completion after so many years of construction.

VP External & Community Affairs, Matthew (Matt) Provost and I wanted to do this in the form of an Opening Ceremony, where we invited Elders from the Host Nations of xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-Waututh), kwikwə́łəm (Kwikwetlem) and q̓ícəy̓ (Katzie) Nations to help with the opening and give a blessing. We invited Elder Shane Point (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm - Musqueam) and Elder Margaret from Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-Waututh). We also invited folks from the First Nations Student Association (now known as the “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Association”) and Indigenous Student Centre Staff for this first day, as it was important to us that they are the first people to be welcomed into our shared space and be a part of the ceremony. In the past, SFSS never really centered or included Indigenous Community Members in a good way, and we wanted to correct this in our community and relationship building and advocacy work.



Elder Shane Point gifted the ballroom with a traditional name, *Nutsumaht Lalum*, which translates to “We are One House.” The memory and knowledge I hold from that day is so extremely special and important to me, and I am thankful to have been there.

Matthew Provost and I wanted to commemorate this special day by creating a plaque to be forever acknowledged for the Opening Ceremony. We worked with John Walsh, Building Manager, to create a beautiful plaque that is placed on the wall near the back doors of the Ballroom.



Monday, August 23: Stakeholder Ceremony

Various stakeholders from SFU and the City of Burnaby were invited in a separate event, after the Opening Ceremony. Ella Droko (Board Organizer), Matthew Provost, and myself,

reached out to various community members and invited them to this opening. Some notable names include but are not limited to:

- SFU President, Joy Johnson
- MLA For Burnaby-Lougheed, Katrina Chen
- Burnaby Mayor, Mike Hurley
- SFU VP External Relations, Joanne Curry
- Director, Student Engagement and Retention, Annette Santos
- Director, Meeting, Events and Conference Services, Lynda Hewitt
- Executive Director, Student Affairs, Tracey Mason-Innes
- ...and more

Without their involvement and support over the past few years, the Building could not have come to completion!



Tuesday, August 24: Alumni Tours

A big thank you to SFU Alumni, who was able to contribute in a monetary way in the building of the Student Union Building. Due to the many years of construction and the pandemic, the building's completion was long. We wanted to invite some alumni back in order to say thank you and have them be one of the first few people to enjoy the building, that they never really got to experience in their undergraduate degree.

Wednesday, August 25: SFU Bring-Your-Lunch (BYOL)

For this event, we collaborated with Meetings, Events, and Conferences Services (MECS) as they were leading an initiative titled, "SFU Bring-Your-Lunch (BYOL)." This was to help SFU Staff slowly ease back to returning to campus for the very first time since the start of the pandemic and remote working, to get comfortable again with the space and being with people. We provided tours and a place for them to eat their lunch!

Thursday, August 26: Constituency Groups Welcome

A *huge* congratulations to all the equity seeking groups and Constituency Groups who were originally housed in the Rotunda, and had fought so hard to be in the Student Union Building (#SaveOurSpace campaign) - because now they finally have a permanent home in the level 1000!

- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Association (FNMISA - formerly known as the First Nations Student Association, FNSA)
- Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry (SOCA)
- CJSF 90.1FM Radio
- Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG)
- Embark Sustainability
- Women's Centre Collective
- Out On Campus

We wanted to invite the Coordinators and Executives of these groups to say thank you for all their hard work, advocacy, and dedication they have all through an equity-seeking lens for the membership. And, also congratulations to them on their new home.

These groups will continue to furnish their space, and make it more fitting for the Staff, volunteers, and membership. And, I cannot wait to see their spaces come alive!







Friday, August 27: SFSS Staff & Execs (Past & Present), & Council Opening Celebration

We had a celebration with our Staff, as they were now returning to in-person work and we wanted to say thank you for the past few months for their support. And in a way, prepare for the upcoming months ahead as we transition back!

We also invited past SFSS Executives over the years for a reunion so they can see the building finally opened. And, we invite current Non-Executives (Council Members) to join us

as well. For many of us, it was the first time we were seeing them off of Zoom!









Fall 2021

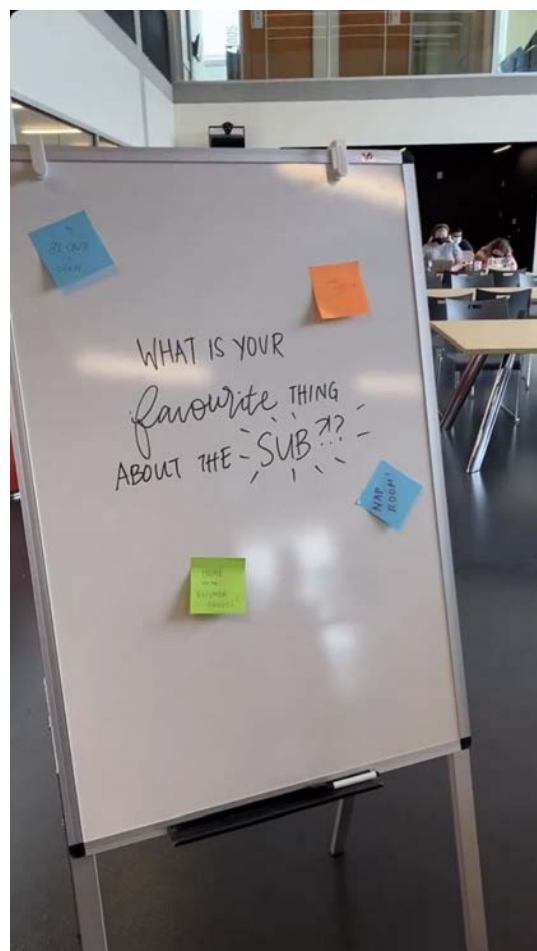
September 2021

First Day of School!

It was everyone's first day back at school...but in-person (finally)! It was scary and exciting at the same time.

Dipti Chavan (Events Coordinator) helped the Executives with the merchandise and snacks to giveaway for the students. We gave away water bottles, tote bags, drawstring bags, sticky-notes, granola bars, masks, and hand sanitizer!





Federal Elections Campaign

I helped Matt and his VP External & Community Affairs Committee raise awareness of the Federal Elections that was happening through tabling inside the Student Union Building. We encouraged students to vote either by mail or by registering to vote since there were no polling stations on campus.







National Day for Truth & Reconciliation / Orange Shirt Day

In 2022, September 30 was officially recognized by the Federal Government as “National Day for Truth & Reconciliation,” also known as “Orange Shirt Day.”



The SFSS contributed to a month-long campaign for September. Matt, Dipti Chavan (SFSS Events Coordinator), and I were able to have an event to share and interact with students about the history of Orange Shirt Day as well as advocate for Indigenous communities who have been affected by the recent news of unmarked graves.

We were able to create resource guides as well as share other events being held by spaces on campus for students to participate in. The SFSS was able to create a banner, hold screen printing workshops to make orange shirts and banners, we also created print and digital material.

This work has been very meaningful not only to the SFSS but to Indigenous community members to remember that we are in solidarity and will continue to do so.







Fall Clubs Days

I attended SFSS Fall Clubs Days, virtually on Hop-in and connected with some folks of our SFSS Membership.

October 2021

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

On October 27, we had the SFSS Annual General Meeting. This was a remote event, as we were still being cautious of the rising cases of the COVID-19 pandemic. One point we had over 500 attendees, we were able to make changes and clean up the by-laws, as well as introducing a new By-law Proposal for SFSS Divestment.



To prepare for this day, we worked with various SFSS Staff. Some include but are not limited to, Ella Droko (Board Organizer), Dipti Chavan (Events Coordinator), Trish Everett (Student Advocacy Coordinator), Beaty Omboga (Policy, Research, & Community Affairs Coordinator), Muriel Adarkwa (Campaigns and Mobilization Coordinator), Nancy Mah (Member Services Clubs Coordinator), and Brianna Price (Accessibility Coordinator).

I assisted in this event by screensharing the whole event, and doing a successful draw and raffle prize giveaway at the end of the event, finishing at 10:30pm.

Halloween Photobooth Booth

Dipti Chavan (Events Coordinator), myself, and the Events & Student Affairs Committee planned a Halloween Photobooth Event at the Social Stage, inside the Student Union Building near the end of October.



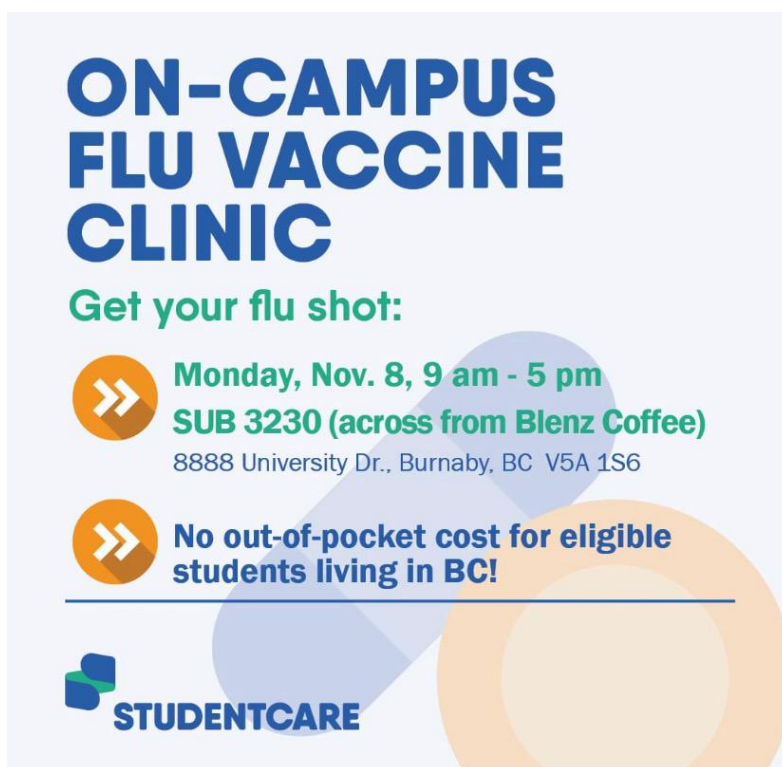
We partnered with Blenz Coffee, to provide some hot chocolate. And, Dipti purchased chocolate and photobooth supplies!



November 2021

Flu Vaccine Clinic

Almas Phangura (VP Finance & Student Services), Serena Bains (VP University & Academic Affairs), and Matthew Provost (VP External & Community Affairs), and myself organized a Flu Vaccine Clinic, in partnership with StudentCare to be housed within the Student Union Building.



It was a total success, and hundreds of students were able to get their vaccines to protect themselves!

SFSSxSFU Rec Holiday Bags

SFU Recreation (SFU Rec) reached out to me in hopes of collaborating to provide students with some treats for the upcoming holiday season. Together, and with the help of some Council Members, we packed 400 bags to give away!





B.C. Flood Drive

Myself and Matthew Provost organized flood relief for remote communities across British Columbia, we collaborated with SFU Departments such Ancillary Services, SFU Communications, and Student Engagement.

We needed to act urgently due to how many people in our communities were being affected. We utilized the Student Union Building as a hub for all donations to be collected as well as sorted with help and support from our building staff. From this point we were able to collaborate with West Coast Pilots in order to get the donations relocated to remote Indigenous communities. We also contributed to the Toy Drive as a portion of goods we collected since this was around the holiday season, these donations were dropped off at a location in Chilliwack.

A *huge* shoutout to the Building Staff (Building Manager, Building Coordinators, and Building Assistants) for being such a central core group the facilitation of this flood drive. The Building Team would collect donations from the community at all hours of the day, sort through them, track them, organize, and help us load it onto carts and bring it to the appropriate spaces of the building. I am forever grateful.





At our November 23rd Council meeting the SFSS passed unanimously a motion to contribute \$10,000 which was proposed by myself and Matthew. \$6000.00 was intended to go towards essential items which were purchased by myself, Matthew, and President at the time Gabe Liosis at Costco through various trips. The remainder of funds has been donated to the First Nations Emergency Services Society.



We also had various Departmental Student Unions, Faculty Student Unions, and Constituency Groups donate either monetary or physical items. It was greatly appreciated.



Matthew, John Walsh, and myself loaded all the donated items in a truck, provided by Guru Nanak's Free Kitchen. We did this during a power outage too!





The items were then loaded onto some helicopters from West Coast Pilot Club, who delivered them to remote communities.



We collected over 2400 donations from toiletries, toys, clothing, menstrual and hygiene products, food, and much more.

Thank you again to all our students, staff, and faculty for the incredible support. Thank you SFSS, West Coast Pilot Clubs, GSS, SFU Childcare Society, University Highlands Elementary School, Point Church and UniverCity Communication Association, SFU Engagement, and SFU Ancillary Services, Chartwells, and our other partners for all your labour in putin this together.

Here is the [News Statement on the SFSS Website](#).

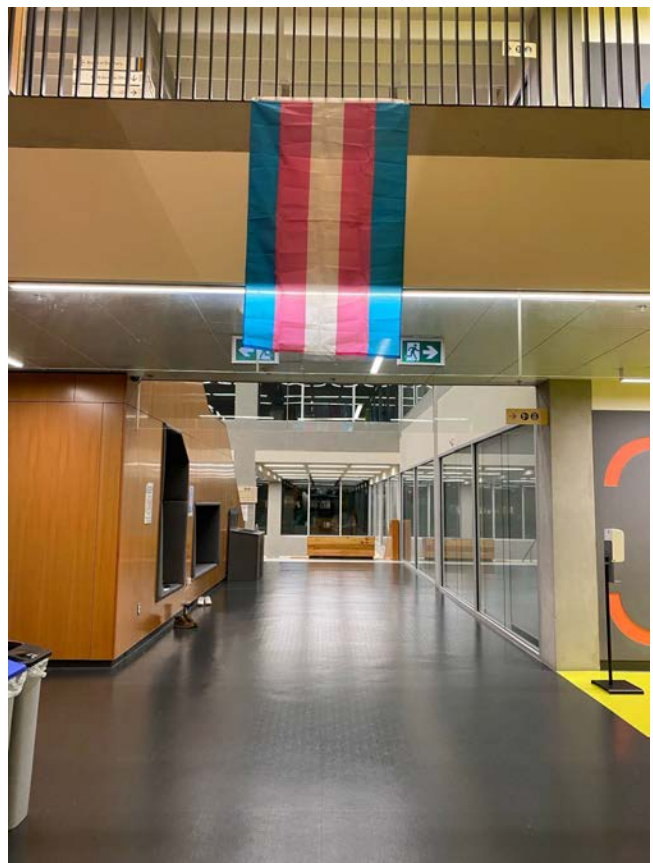
Trans Day of Remembrance

In collaboration with Out On Campus, we helped host a memorial at the Social Stage for Trans Day of Remembrance. Constanin Lozitsky, who was the temporary Out On Campus Coordinator ta the time, initiated this memorial.



It was a remorseful and beautiful event. Guests read the names out loud of Trans folks who have passed away to due to violence and harm inflicted upon them in the past year.

Matthew Provost and I borrowed the Trans Pride Flag in the Student Union Building to honour this day, and it was left up for one week.



December 2021

Christmas Care Packages for Residence

The Events & Student Affairs Committee, Dipti Chavan (Events Coordinator), Council Members (Chi and Deanna), Matthew Provost, and myself helped with packaging for the Christmas Care Packages for students staying in Residence over the holiday break. These students are unable to go home and be with family, so we thought it would be sweet to continue this tradition that Dipti has organized for the past few years.



SUB Holiday Decoration

For this project, Matthew Provost was able to receive funds through the Executive Committee for the purchase of Christmas decorations for the Student Union Building. I helped decorate, alongside the Building Staff to ensure that the SUB was decorated for the holiday season.

This was considered a one time purchase since these decorations will be used throughout the years in the Building.



Christmas Photobooth

Myself, Matthew Provost, Dipti Chavan (Events Coordinator), Mary Phan (Building Coordinator), and Building Assistants worked on setting up the Christmas Photobooth at the Social Stage. We needed this many people because it was the largest photobooth ever! We left it for students to take photos of it throughout the last few weeks before winter break.



SFU Seasonal Reception

Myself, Matthew Provost (VP External & Community Affairs), Gabe Liosis (President), Kalie Stierle and Audrey Heath (both First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Association Executives) were invited to the SFU Seasonal Reception.

We enjoyed our time meeting with SFU President Joy Johnson, and SFU Donors and Stakeholders.





Spring 2022

January 2022

Temporary Student Union Building Closure

The SUB Closure work was done between December Break when the SFSS Offices were closed and continued in the month of January.

The COVID-19 pandemic was an up-and-down rollercoaster ride that was unpredictable and so precarious, every single month. We had to be ready to make drastic adjustments for the safety of our Staff, and our students.

At this time of the year, the rise of Covid-19 cases was extremely high, due to the Omicron variant. Therefore, the Executive Committee and Management were meeting in the last week of December when the SFSS offices were still open, and even during the holiday break when the offices were closed. We continued to have these meetings in the month of January. We met often and regularly, for an hour to one hour a half throughout the week and did so multiple times. In those meetings, we discussed Staff Safety, Student Safety, Student and Staff Supports, SUB social distancing and the possibility of a closure and/or reduced capacity, and communications.

This decision to temporarily close the SUB was not easy, but it was necessary and I would do it again in a heartbeat.

We ensured that proper communications were made to membership through website notice, social media, and various emails to membership. We worked with the Communications Department and Ella Droko (Board Organizer) to have a "COVID-19 Safety FAQ For Students" and a separate one for SUB Tenants and Stakeholders, We hosted various town halls with the SUB Tenants and Stakeholders because they too would be affected with their jobs and services, but were in full support of the closure to ensure the

safety for all. These town halls ensured safety, proper communication, reassurance, and care.

Re-Allocation of \$25,000 for PPE for Students

I worked with Matthew to help with the re-allocation of the COVID-19 Relief Fund (\$40,000) that was set from the then-called, Board of Directors (2020-2021) were able to contribute and reallocate funds of \$25,000 towards proper PPE for students during the remainder of the pandemic. We wanted to ensure that funds were made available so that students could have access to proper KN95 masks that were medical grade.



We wanted to ensure that funds put aside to support students throughout COVID-19 were being utilized especially during times that were uncertain. The SFSS Executive wanted to

continue to support students by providing resources, supplies, and materials to continue to ensure safety on campus while amidst a pandemic.

We also had staff support from John Walsh (Building Manager), and Jenny Lu (Building Coordinator) and Mary Phan (Building Coordinator) in this process.

Sanitizer Donation

With the support of staff (John Walsh - Building Manager, Ayesha Khan - Operations Organizer, and Nancy Mah - Member Services Coordinator, Clubs), we were able to secure a 4000 supply of sanitizer that was donated from London Drugs for student use. They were dropped off at the Student Union Building and were approved by myself and other Executives. These supplies are currently being utilized to support students across campus and folks housed in the Student Union Building.

We have been building external partner relationships to access support and build relationships to access resources for students. It definitely has been very helpful since we can access resources as needed. This is one example that has been helpful for student support in regards to COVID-19 relief.

Meeting with Provincial Health Officers

With the return to campus the Executive committee and Student Senate Caucus met with PHO to discuss the decisions being made in the post secondary sector on the decision to return to campus during the rise of the Omicron variant.

We asked questions around masking, as well as support for students, rapid testing, and decision making process for safety of students, faculty and staff at SFU.

We wanted our concerns addressed, even though this meeting was not very helpful we wanted to ensure that we did our due diligence to address key concerns from the undergraduate community. We prepped for the meeting and aligned with other students to collaborate major areas of concern.

COVID-19 Student Survey

The SFSS Executive and Council with staff support created a survey for the undergraduate membership on their experience in the Fall semester with the return to campus. I worked on this working group to create and develop the survey.

“The SFSS released a statement on December 23rd, 2021, calling on Simon Fraser University (SFU) and the Provincial Government to enact stricter health measures and provide immediate support for students returning to on-campus learning, noting concerns amid the rapid rise of the Omicron variant. As a student-focused and student-led organization, the SFSS’ decisions are, and continue to be, made with the intent of fostering community care and limiting the risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19.

The Learning Experience and COVID-19 Student Feedback Survey was made available to students from January 11 to January 22 and received over 5,300 submissions. This data consists of nearly 20% of the SFSS Membership (SFU undergraduates). The findings indicate the main themes of student concern revolve around safety, health and wellness, and institutional action.

The data collected from the survey support calls by the SFSS and the students at large, particularly the calls to consider hybrid class options for courses with large enrollment numbers. Almost 80% of students surveyed wanted some component of remote learning. 45% of the surveyed respondents highlighted the desire for comprehensive remote learning options, whereas 28% preferred a hybrid model, while 5% preferred remote learning with an in-person exam option. Respondents who felt safe about in-person teaching and learning during the Fall 2021 semester largely attributed it to the flexible teaching model adopted by the university.

When analyzing trends seen in the data, the SFSS identified 66% of respondents who expressed varying levels of discomfort in returning to full in-person learning, ranging from ‘uncomfortable’ to ‘fairly comfortable’ and ‘slightly uncomfortable’. 30% of respondents identified feeling ‘very comfortable’ or ‘comfortable’. The remaining respondents identified not applicable. Though students expressed a range of comfort

with the return to campus plans, the data in correlation with the other answers determine that respondents prefer remote or hybrid forms. Many students stated in written responses that they were experiencing mental and emotional strain around in-person classes. You can find the results of the Learning Experience and COVID-19 Student Feedback Survey [here](#).

In line with calls for current student attendance models to be more accessible and equitable, 94% of students shared that they would benefit from lecture recordings for the Spring 2022 semester.

The past year has been difficult for students, staff, and others within the SFU community. Developing a teaching and learning framework that meets the needs of all students, especially those who are more vulnerable and at more risk of contracting COVID-19, is central to the themes continually highlighted in our survey results.

We continue to call on Simon Fraser University to develop a viable contingency plan based on inclusive consultations with its community members. This includes providing flexible and reliable measures on managing absences, developing a robust contact tracing system, and continually checking the validity of vaccine declarations. We also call on Simon Fraser University to adequately provide support and resources to combat COVID-19 exposure for students and staff."

COVID-19 Press Conference

For this Press Conference there was a lot of background organizing that happened internally with Executive and Support staff. In regards to planning we wanted to ensure that this process was being executed in the best way possible. We were able to have a lot of engagement which was supported through our communications department for graphics and social media presence. We also had coordinators support through relaying information through our student survey to report on to membership and community.

SFSS COVID-19 Response Press Conference

President, Gabriel Liosis
Vice-President Events & Student Affairs, Jessica Dela Cruz,
Vice-President External & Community Affairs, Matthew Provost



We utilized information from the Student Survey to relay our results. Myself, Matthew Provost, and Gabe Liosis planned a presentation for the press conference. We coordinated with staff to livestream via YouTube for students to watch remotely. We also contacted media outlets and created a press release to send out to folks who attended. We took on a bulk of the work to make this happen since this was the first press conference in the first few years for the society, and we also learned a lot around coordinating as well as live streaming support. With some technical errors we definitely made sure to follow if information was missed while going through our main points.

[See Presentation Here](#)

A big thank you to our support staff for that day: Ella Droko (Board Organizer), Trish Everett (Student Advocacy Coordinator), Beaty Omboga (Policy, Research, & Community Affairs Coordinator), Muriel Adarkwa (Campaigns and Mobilization Coordinator), and Somayeh Naseri (Administrative Coordinator).

February 2022

Tabling for SFSS Info Sessions

Myself and Matthew Provost planned varying tabling events and information sessions for students to come ask questions and learn more about the SFSS and what we do. We did this a few times within the SUB with the support of staff. We also used this time to hand out masks and donations received from external donations to share our contributions with our membership.



We also used this as an opportunity to update membership on what has been happening at Council meetings as well as upcoming events, committees, and involvement opportunities can happen within the society.

It was nice to connect with students in person as well as building relationships in the SUB as this is an essential part of engagement.

Spring Clubs Days

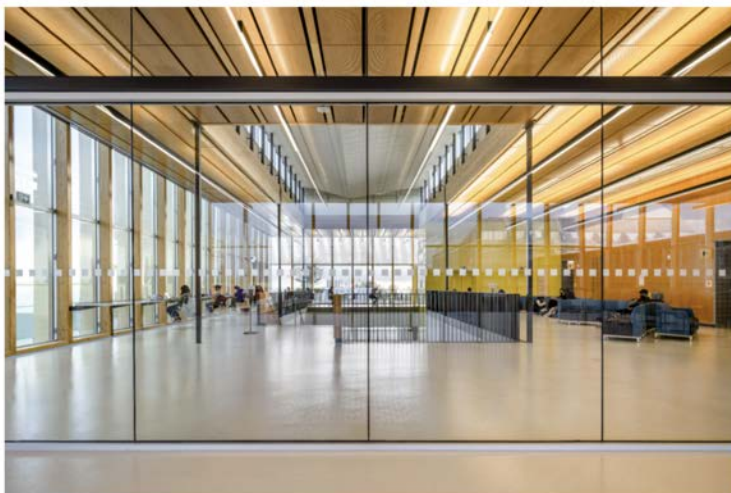
I attended SFSS Spring Clubs Days, virtually on Hop-in and connected with some folks of our SFSS Membership.

2021 Champions for a Healthy Campus Award

Matthew Provost (VP External & Community Affairs) and John Walsh (Building Manager), Ella Droko (Board Organizer) with support from Mark McLaughlin (Chief Commercial Services Officer, SFU) helped the Simon Fraser Student Society be a 2021 Champions for a Healthy Campus Award recipient.

The Build SFU Project is being recognized for its outstanding contributions to SFU student health and well-being through the completion of the [Student Union Building \(SUB\)](#) and is a 2021 recipient of the [Champions for a Healthy Campus Community award](#).

I was invited to attend the online virtual ceremony, on behalf of the SFSS, alongside Matthew Provost, Corbett Gildersleve (now, President), John Walsh, and Almas Phangura (VP Finance & Student Services).



Photography: © 2021 Michael Elkan

HEALTHY CAMPUS COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Build SFU Project's Student Union Building Awarded as a 2021 Healthy Campus Community Champion

MARCH 31, 2022

The award description is as follows:

CREATING A DESIGNATED SPACE FOR STUDENT WELL-BEING

Serving as a central hub for the SFU community on the Burnaby campus, the SUB welcomes undergraduate and graduate students to a welcoming and beautiful space designed with student well-being in mind. Corbett Gildersleve, Acting President of the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) describes, "What makes [the SUB] unique is that it's really strongly designed to be a social hub and community hub." Well-being was one of the key principles emphasized in the design of the SUB, and that can be clearly seen through the many ways students are using and connecting in this space. Through its unique considerations of student needs, the SUB offers a variety of spaces from leisure spaces, including a dance studio, gaming lounge, community kitchen, nap room, and multipurpose ballroom, to bookable meeting rooms, and SFSS offices. With designated spaces for equity-deserving groups on campus, including the First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Student Association (FNSA), Out On Campus (OOC), Women's Centre, SFU Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry (SOCA), and the first-ever office for the Disability and Neurodiversity Alliance (DNA), the SUB prioritizes inclusion and celebrates the diversity of students on campus. See [Link Here](#).

Contribution to Global Shapers Community Vancouver Donation

At the Executive Committee Meeting we passed a motion to contribute \$3000.00 to the Global Shapers Community for Black History Month, we wanted to ensure that we made contributions that went towards supporting and uplifting Black Community Members. I wrote this motion, and had support in submitting and editing the motion from Matthew Provost.

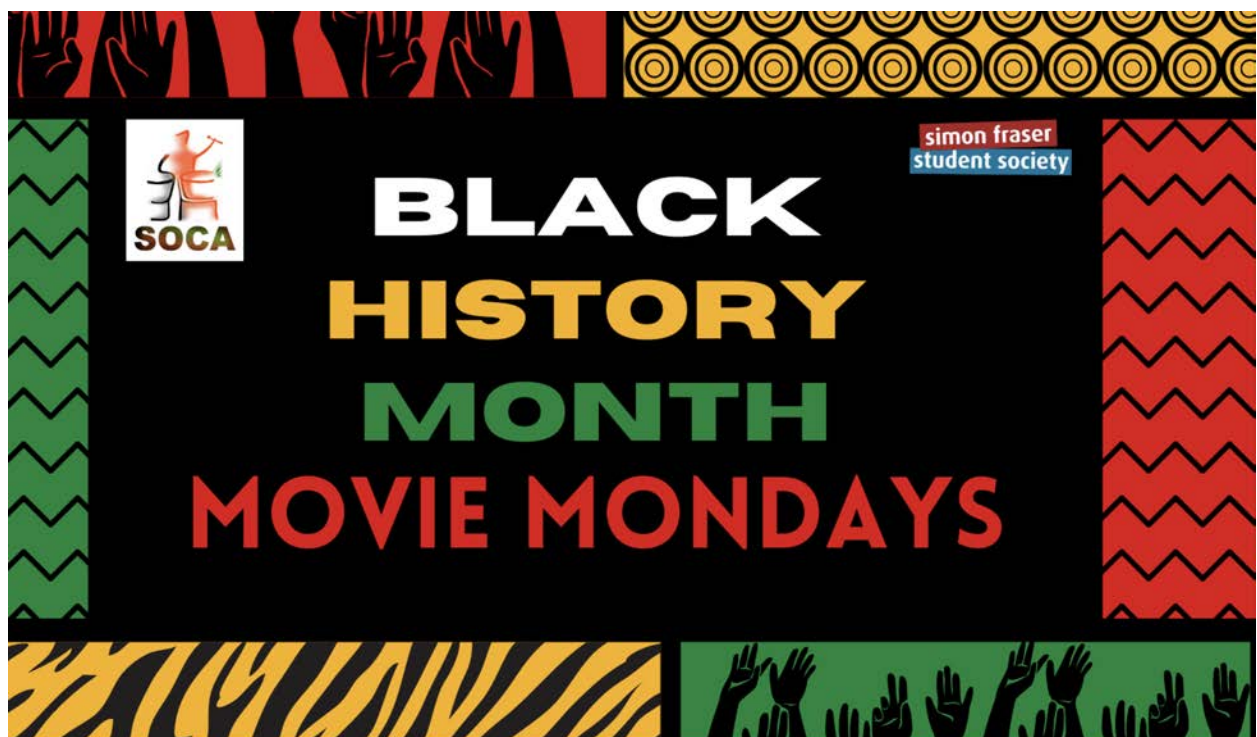
Global Shapers Community Vancouver is hosting on Thursday, February 18th "to host a *virtual* evening of discourse, led by Black voices, to unpack themes such as Black Disability Justice in a panel discussion titled, 'Imagining Black Futures' where the "evening will consist of solidarity building with Black communities and allies here and far; addressing the

linkages between race and class, white supremacy and ableism; and action items on how to effectively act in solidarity with the Black community.”

Black History Month Movie Mondays

Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry (SOCA) Executives reached out in need of support for their event, “Black History Month Movie Mondays.” Essentially, there would be a virtual movie night on two Mondays’ of the month, where folks will watch films with Black actors, learn about Black history and culture, to celebrate Black love, and more!

I helped in finding the movies and creating the Eventbrite page.



Dipti Chavan, (SFSS Events Coordinator) was so helpful in this process, as she was able to help purchase and screen share the movies as I was in my night lecture classes during these times.

The films watched were: “The Photograph (2020)” and “The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution (2015).”

We had trouble in finding ways to screenshare the purchased movies, as Zoom would block it due to privacy issues. In the end, we somehow managed to figure it out!

BIPOC Career Workshops

Ayesha Khan (Operations Organizer) came to Dipti Chavan (Events Coordinator) and myself with the hopes of collaborating to host a Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) Career Workshop series.

These career building workshops are for Black, Indigenous, and Students of Colour to gain assistance with their resume, cover letter, and gain interview skills. We understand that capitalism and many places of work are hard on BIPOC folks. So we wanted to provide tips and support to navigate those spaces.



The application form and communication to membership is as follows:

The Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) is hosting a three-part workshop series for Black, Indigenous, and all other Students of Colour. We understand that applying for jobs as BIPOC students, it may be difficult to navigate the employment sector and we want to provide the tools and resources for you to excel.

The SFSS is inviting SFU Alumni of Colour who currently work in various sectors of the job market, and will be providing mentorship to students who attend.

A note on Time Commitment

Attendance is mandatory and will be tracked. Folks who attend all three workshops will be entered into a giveaway draw for an iPad and subscription to LinkedIn Premium. And, all attendees will be able to receive a free headshot, order placed for business cards, and a certificate of completion.

If you are unable to attend one of the three dates, please consider deferring your application and re-applying again when this series is offered in the future.

Folks who attend all three workshops will be entered into a giveaway draw for an iPad and subscription to LinkedIn Premium. And, all attendees will be able to receive a free headshot and an order placed for business cards!

Come Prepared

This series is a place for you to come prepared with your already existing resume and cover letter. The workshops are tools to give building blocks for what you already have! We will be working on your current documents to strengthen them for an elevated application.

Workshop Capacity

Due to the nature of this series, we have limited spots available. We will be working with only 10 students to ensure quality instruction, mentorship, and guidance. This will encourage relationship building and networking.

*We will be contacting BIPOC applicants who satisfy the *Mandatory fields on the application form on a first come first serve basis. SFSS will be contacting you to confirm your placement, or recommend you to place you on a waitlist for the next session.*

-- end of application form and communication to membership--

It was a complete success! We had so many registrants the first day that we needed a waitlist. Due to the nature of our criteria, we had around six (6) students who showed up regularly to all three sessions, and were qualified to win the prizes.

Ayesha did a wonderful job in organizing, preparing the slide materials, and leading the event. Dipti, with her organizational skills, found so many ways to hand out and provide the students with the prizes. I was there for support in leading the event and working individually with the students on their resume and cover letter.

We had two guest speakers who are involved in student engagement in the post-secondary sector and the labour union field come speak to the students in the last session to share their lived experiences, their tips, and tricks when it comes to finding jobs, going through the union to be protected with worker's rights and compensation and safety, and so much more. There were so many back and forth questions between the students and the guests, and it was so amazing.

I received a message later on from a student who attended the workshops that they were able to receive two internship offers because of their hard work and the improvements they made on their portfolio they learned from these workshops. My heart was warm.

March 2022

Tabling and Rooms Finally Open!

Shelley Durante (Building Coordinator, Events) and John Walsh (Building Coordinator) have been working together to ensure that the tabling spaces and rooms are finally going to open in the Student Union Building! I have been pushing for this project to be completed for months and I was so impressed with how Shelley and John were able to do much back-end labour and work to complete this project.

Shelley created forms and a system so students, Departmental Student Unions, Faculty Student Unions, Clubs, SFU Partners, and external to SFSS groups can book space within the SUB.

Since then, the SUB has continued to be a lively place now that COVID restrictions have been easing up and there is more possibility for students to have in-person meetings, events, and tabling.

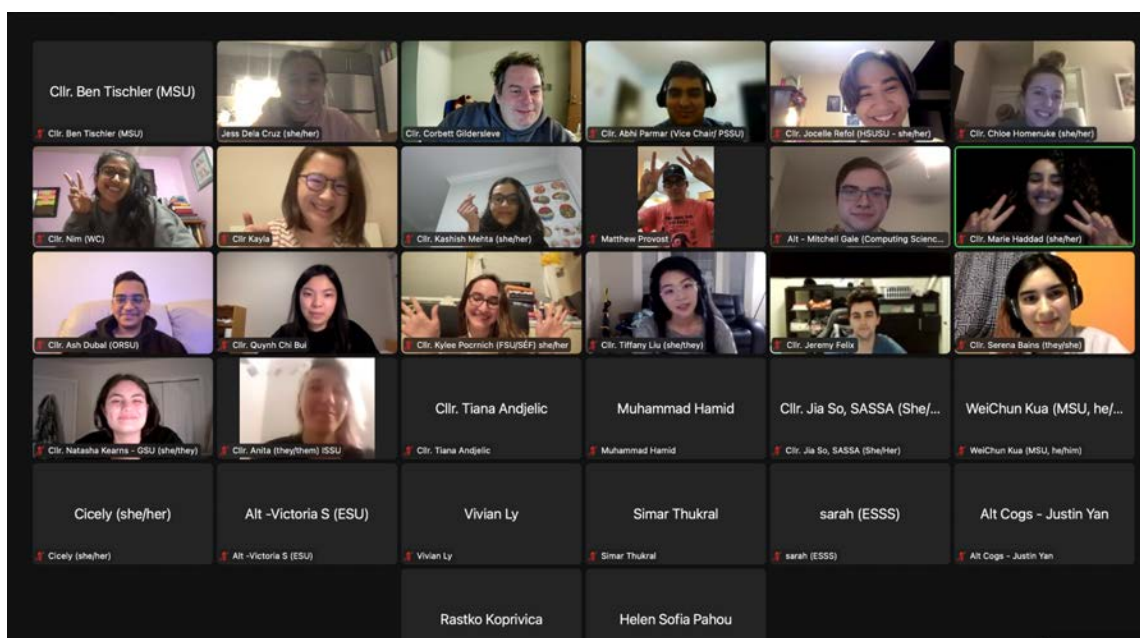
April 2022

End of Year Presentation at Council

The Executive Committee presented at Council our end of year presentation which was an overview of the current year we had as an Exec and Council. We went through various projects, campaigns, and milestones we covered while at SFSS. We also outlined our monetary contributions to the community.

[Link to presentation here](#)

This Council Meeting was so long, ending at approximately 11:30pm. Thanks Council for all your hard work! (We had more people, but this was the rest of us at this time).



Staff Honouring Ceremony



Matthew Provost, Dipti Chavan, and myself worked to plan an honoring ceremony for our Staff at the SFSS to uplift and recognize the work they have been doing throughout the duration of the pandemic. They have been a key part in everything we do, especially ensuring the back end things get done so we are able to continue our work.

We were able to have Indigenous community members come up and blanket our staff, we had catering for everyone, as well as games and activities for folks to participate.

Miscellaneous

Hiring Committees

Over the past year, I sat on the following hiring committees:

- Communications Coordinator
- Women's Centre Assistant
- Digital Media Assistant
- Member Services Coordinator, Generalist

Self-Care Kits with Out On Campus

Jude Mah (Out On Campus) Coordinator reached out to me in hopes of collaborating to create self-care kits for students on campus. The Events & Student Affairs Committee approved \$5,000 in support to purchase items and supplies. Jude sourced out these materials from locally owned and QBIPOC businesses.

They included:

- Seed bookmarks/cards
- Candles
- Tote bags
- Reusable cutlery

Student Engagement & Retention (SER) and Meetings, Events, and Conference Services (MECS)

About every two months, SER, MECS, and the SFSS (Myself, Nancy Mah - Member Services Coordinator, Clubs and Dipti Chavan - Events Coordinator) would meet to re-group on our events and services. These meetings were so helpful so we knew what other groups on campus were doing and what changes were going on during the pandemic. Or, we even

recognized areas of collaboration. This was good for community and relationship building with folks from the University.

Staff Name Tags

I worked with Ayesha Khan (Operations Organizer), Somayeh Naseri (Administrative Coordinator), and Ilham Benttahir (Communications Coordinator) in creating Staff Name Tags. They are on lanyards and are to be worn when Staff go around the building so students know who they are! The Executive Committee also received them.

The graphics looked like this:



First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Association (FNMISA)

In the past, the SFSS has harmed folks within the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Association (FNMISA) - formerly known as the First Nations Student Association (FNSA). This year, I have had the opportunity to work with and re-build the relationship with the FNMISA. We had various meetings together throughout the year as a check-in to see where they need support and where we can collaborate. We were in the process of planning a Pow Wow on campus and to have Cultural Nights within the Student Union Building, but because the pandemic was so precarious over the last year, we had to start and pause the process. I am hoping that the next VP Events & Student Affairs is able to continue this relationship and work together in a good way.

Indigenous Student Centre (ISC)

The SFSS also never really built a connection with the Indigenous Student Centre (ISC). I made it a priority to meet and email with folks from the ISC often to keep them updated on what is happening in the SFSS, where we can support the ISC, and where we could collaborate. The ISC does such great work in providing services for Indigenous students!

Accessible and Equitable Events Issues Policy

Thank you to Serena Bains (VP University & Academic Affairs) and Brianna Price (Accessibility Coordinator) for their leadership on the Accessible and Equitable Events Issues Policy that passed at Council on April 27th. I initially brought this up as an idea and was there in the beginning of the process, with Serena and Brianna flushing it out and making this happen!

Pain Points

While I was VP Events & Student Affairs, I was also finishing the last year of my undergraduate degree and taking full-time semesters. I also had a second job throughout this role. The burn out happened so quickly, and it always was so hard to recover. With the campaigns and advocacy work, they were mentally and emotionally draining at times because you would hold this work so close to your heart. Sometimes, I would get physically ill because of this burn out and had to take mental health leaves (three times during the year). I did what I could in the time and capacity I had, and I hope I did it well and was able to impact folks in a positive way.

Recommendations

Team up and ask for help! This work cannot be done without the support of the Executive and Staff.

Take care of yourself. This work is so labour intensive and do what you can to make sure there is rest and space.

Thank-You Staff!

I could not have done this work without Management and Staff Support. They have taught me so much, have seen me grown, supported me, and encouraged me. They are kind-hearted, and have the ability to foresee what to do next, and catch the smallest details. They are the core of how the Society functions.

Thank you folks for everything.

Good-bye <3

The keys have been returned and the office has been cleaned.

It has been an honour to hold this position and I am very thankful for the Staff, the membership, and the connections I was able to make. I hope I was able to support and impact folks in a positive way, in the time I had



This was the most emotionally and mentally draining job I think I've ever had (lol) and dealt with so much, all the time. But I was able to work on a lot of campaigns, do advocacy work, guidelines, open up the Student Union Building, and so much more! - all during a pandemic that was so precarious for us all.

Thank you everyone, it is all coming to a bittersweet end!



End of Document.