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President’s Report

Behind any feat accomplished by the AMS there has been a dedicated team. I am honored to have worked alongside senior managers, staff and executives with a strong willingness to collaborate. Our shared understanding that ultimately, we are all here to serve the students of UBC, has been the foundation on which we have achieved the majority of the goals set out at the beginning of the year.

Keeping students and long term strategy top of mind, the Executive team collaborated with all departments of the AMS to see us through the implementation of a governance review, re-opening of the Gallery Lounge 2.0, and overhaul of the AMS website. We applied principles of deliberative and responsive brainstorming by surveying student needs as much as was appropriate in order to prioritize projects based on the most immediate needs of our stakeholders.

Analysing some feedback we realized students would rather receive information via newsletter and not social media so there was a shift in direction and effort around communications in general. After block party last year, we decided to bring the event back to the heart of campus, both successfully avoiding exorbitant venue fees and resulting in a three-year plan for thoughtful expansion.

While advocacy for a fall reading break may not have resulted in immediate changes, the team did successfully advocate to the University for short and long term solutions to the lack of fitness space on campus resulting in immediate construction on space in the old SUB and development of plans for a brand new student fitness centre near the Nest.

The launch of the Blue and Gold society was a celebrated first step in bridging the gaps between the various communities on campus. Looking ahead, we as the outgoing team are ecstatic to introduce THE BIG PLAN 2020 and welcome the new AMS executive into their roles.

“ultimately, we are all here to serve the students”

Ava Nasiri
107th President
Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver
Managing Director’s Report

This has been a tremendous year for the Society. One of great change, with the restructuring of our entire Governance structure, following the recommendations of the Governance review.

We have taken the opportunity of the Governance review to take a hard look at what the AMS means and how best we can serve our members.

As mentioned by our wonderful President, Ms. Ava Nasiri, we have taken the time to develop a multi-year strategic plan that will ensure the AMS has a bright future, and will continue to serve our members for many more years.

In terms of ensuring the financial sustainability of the AMS we refinanced our loan to build our Student Union Building, The Nest.

We have also made some significant changes to the AMS businesses to better serve our members needs and to position the AMS to continue to be a dominant force on campus.

I would like to warmly thank all of our staff and members for their support, for their devotion to the Society that we are all a part of, and look forward to many more years of serving the needs of the students of UBC Vancouver.

Keith Hester

Managing Director

Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver
In the recent Budgetary Re-Forecast that was presented to council in February 2017 the AMS is projected to finish the year with a $564,000 surplus. This was due to responsible spending from departments, reduction of business operating cost, and the elimination of departmental overhead costs.
Budget Overview

This Budget breakdown illustrates the AMS Finances for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year. This however is a reforecast budget for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year and is not the AMS end of the year audited statements. The audited financials will be presented at the AMS Annual AGM in October 2017

Discretionary Revenue

Services Total Discretionary Revenue = $2,462,431

Business Contribution by Outlet

Total Business Contribution = $1,018,143
Breakdown of Department Expenses

Total Expenses by Department = $2,963,124

2016-2017 Fiscal Year Projected Surplus

Total Revenue

$3,480,574

Total Expenses

$2,963,124

Total Projected Surplus

$517,450
Executive Team Projects

Increase Recreation Spaces and Programming on Campus

Recognizing the dire need for more recreation space on campus, the team set out to analyze the current state of athletics fees in order to find relevant and feasible solutions for both immediate and long term needs on campus. What happened next was pretty exciting.

- UBC provided fully transparent access to the Athletics budget for the first time since 2008. We’ve launched a 2 year process of auditing the $21 AMS Athletics and Rec fee, a project that will be carried forward to next year’s executive.

- $5 Million Commitment from UBC to more recreation space built as part of the old SUB renovation project to fulfill immediate lack of fitness space. A further expected commitment of $22.5M for the building of a new student fitness centre to supplement the $22.5M we raised via student referendum.

- MoveU Campaign: We advocated that the university runs a campaigns that engages with the broader student body to inspire well-being. The Move-U Campaign was a success and will be implemented again next year.
Blue and Gold Society

The Blue and Gold Society launched in June 2016 with a mandate to fill the gap between student groups and their leadership on campus by facilitating coordination and collaboration. Projects undertaken by the group included:

- Coordination of a campus-wide directory of contact information
- Campus wide involvement in the AMS Referendum Campaign
- Integration into the governance structure of participant groups wanting to opt in to the centralized coordination group

Communications

The goal of entirely overhauling the AMS communications strategy was affected by a four month vacancy in the role, however our new Communications Manager and the addition of a Video Content Coordinator to the composition of the communications team has made for a fantastic start to the next chapter of communications at the AMS. The team is currently undergoing a website overhaul process.
AMS Accomplishments & Highlights
Governance Review Implementation

With the completion of the Governance Review in March 2016, the AMS was tasked with the implementation of the 16 Society-wide recommendations that resulted from the review. The Governance Review Implementation Committee was struck, tasked with spearheading the actual implementation process. This included:

1. Committee Restructure - Council committees were adjusted to become more effective. They have also taken a turn towards policy rather than action, leading to a less bureaucratic AMS. Most notably, the Student Administrative Commission, the Finance Commission, and the Budget Committee were all eliminated and replaced with the Operations Committee and the Finance Committee.

2. Advisory Board for Business Administration (ABBA) - The mandate of ABBA was expanded to including advisory responsibilities for all aspects of the AMS including Society Operations and Services. With the expansion of its scope, ABBA was renamed simply Advisory Board.

3. Reduction of Council size - With the bylaw changes that passed over the election season, the threshold for additional constituency seats was raised from 1,500 to 3,000.
This year the AMS opened two new food outlets to better serve Nest patrons. The Gallery 2.0 has become a popular student hangout and study space, where one can grab a drink or a bite to eat.
Elections & Referenda

The elections team set a goal of 20% voter turnout for this year’s elections and referenda. With meticulous planning and strong advertising, 20.7% of UBC students voted on this year’s ballot.

Additionally, the AMS put forward three referendum questions, all of which passed with quorum.

Nest Refinancing

Managing Director Keith Hester came to an agreement with Royal Bank of Canada to refinance the AMS’ loan for the Nest. In February of 2017, AMS Council approved the agreement, saving students $62 million over the next 30 years.
Investment Policy

In order to restructure the AMS Finances the VP Finance changed the societies investment policy bylaw. The new bylaw will allow the society to construct an internal policy on investing that can be approved by council. This will let the society adapt and be flexible with its investment. The structure has changed from 100% fixed income investing to 70% fixed income and 30% equities investing which will increase the revenue generated from our investments by $400,000.

revenue generated from our investments (may increase) by $400,000
Survey Re-Calibration
This year, with the help of Insights West, we rewrote the Academic Experience Survey with the goal of creating a version that was entirely focused on informing student advocacy priorities within the Academic portfolio. To increase participation in the survey from last year, which dropped by nearly 2/3rds from the year before, we changed our prize to be lower in value but more numerous.

Academic & University Affairs Office Restructure
Development of a new structure for the VP Academic & University Affairs office began halfway through the year. New positions and adjustments have been drafted in collaboration with the incoming VP and AVP, with a mind to creating positions that are more functionally focused rather than topical. The hope is that these positions ready the future Academic & University Affairs offices for any unexpected events the university may encounter, and provide the resources to enable effective and efficient responses.

Sexual Assault Policy
In collaboration with the VP External Office, we ran a campaign to promote student awareness and engagement with the Policy #131 consultation being held by the University.

Notably, a single snapchat photo of the coffee collars we used, which we hope becomes a staple of AMS campaigns going forward, was spread quickly through post-secondary networks both within and outside of UBC.

Following our submission of recommendations for the draft Policy, we had all points addressed, and saw the University strike up a Sexual Assault Steering Committee, with AMS representation. Notably, we saw the creation of a new set of procedures.

As well, there is collaborative work being done toward Sexual Assault Education and party-planning. Lastly, we are updating our external Sexual Assault Policy to reflect the current environment at UBC.

Student Consultations
Following a large influx of new program proposals, many of which include non-tuition program fees, the office has begun work toward an internal set of procedures to maximize the quality of the consultations with student groups that these proponents pursue. As well, we have begun conversations with the Provost, Board of Governors, and Senate regarding the scheduling of curriculum and tuition consultations.

Looking ahead, we observe a concerning trend toward inadequate student consultation, particularly regarding decisions directly or indirectly (tuition; ancillary costs like food or housing) affecting student affordability. Notably, we note a pattern of excluding consultation with elected student representation in such decisions, with many of these consultations occurring in an “after-the-fact” manner.

Academic Experience
We collaborated with Enrolment Services in the creation of a more exhaustive and detailed Awards Database to be made available to students, which has been a great first step toward making alternative modes of financial aid more accessible to students. As well, we consulted on a new structure for emergency bursaries for International Students, which has now been implemented.

Following the creation of the Excellence Fund last year, we have had discussions with the VP Students and Provost’s offices toward future allocations. This year, our discussion focussed on experiential learning, interdisciplinary experiences, and career services. As well, we have set up dates for debrief and future allocation discussions to ensure a timely inclusion of student voices regarding the fund.
VP Administration

This year my team has been hard at work improving opportunities for students to get involved with AMS-sponsored events and activities. The club timeline kicked off last September with our annual Clubs Days celebration and came to a close with new executive orientations at the end of March. We were able to introduce a number of new resources for clubs including a club handbook, a discounted catering menu for clubs, and template transition documents for outgoing club executives. We also renovated and re-launched the Student Life and Sustainability Centre (SLSC), stocking it with rentable equipment, free printing for clubs, and arts and crafts supplies.

The Hatch Art Gallery also saw some changes with the introduction of an art rental program. The 72 piece AMS Permanent Collection is now available for loan to galleries around Canada with the proceeds being reinvested back into the Hatch Art Gallery’s initiatives and the Permanent Collection. The gallery also hosted eleven student exhibitions this year, each running for approximately three weeks.

In other big news, the Sustainability Department joined my team this year, formerly reporting to the Vice-President Finance. The reporting structure change occurred over the summer of 2016. Since then, we have taken a new approach to sustainability by focusing on the AMS’ policies and procedures. With the help of our campus partners Common Energy, Seedlings Eatery, an engineering capstone project team, and the UBC SEEDS Program, we began working on a “mugshare” program to reduce coffee cup waste on campus. Our goal is to place a reusable coffee cup vending machine outside of Uppercase by fall of 2017.

Sustainability also undertook a few other projects including the installation of a green wall in the Great Hall pocket lounge, creation of a Zero Waste Squad with campus partners to help sort-it-out efforts at large events, and the addition of a new Outreach Coordinator position to help coordinate sustainability efforts from the various groups at UBC.

“We were able to introduce a number of new resources for clubs including a club handbook, a discounted catering menu for clubs, and template transition documents for outgoing club executives.”
**Data Driven Research**

This year, we commissioned Insights West to conduct a survey of post-secondary students in BC.

- These survey results were highly appreciated by government and opposition members that the VP External Office met with. Many specifically praised the use of data-driven advocacy and the value that it adds to making informed policy decisions.

- Moving forward, it is critical that all external work include robust and accurate data to support all advocacy positions.

**Student Housing**

This year, the VP External Office worked to address the lack of student housing rights on campus, a major AMS external policy point.

- Over the summer, our team compiled a list of nine recommendations for rights that should be guaranteed to all student renters.

- Three other Student Associations signed onto the lobby document.

- These recommendations were then communicated with the RHA and SHHS.

- Our request for basic student housing rights for students on campus was met with a great deal of resistance from leadership within SHHS, and other student associations reported experiencing generally less resistance from administration.

- In government conversations, we were met with a general agreement that students in student housing deserve basic rental rights. Opposition government has offered to publicly support this initiative through a letter to UBC and any other SA who is interested.

- Moving forward, there are ongoing concerns surrounding the lack of transparency and willingness to have student partnership within SHHS.

**Provincial Elections**

The VPX Portfolio is working to achieve a 70% eligible voter turnout rate. To achieve this, we are:

- Hosting a Point Grey candidate debate with the Ubyssey and UBC C350.

- Publishing a range of promotional material, including a video.

- Doing some in-person interactions using coffee giveaways and goody bags.

**Education Affordability**

This year has produced a number of successes for student affordability. There include:

- A reduction in the BC student loan interest rate from 2.5% + prime to just prime.

- An increased funding to PSSS (education funding for aboriginal students) by the federal government.

- An increased commitment to BC Campus's open textbook program.

- All of these announcements were advocated for by the AMS. Moving forward, student grants remain inaccessible to UBC students and there are ongoing concerns about the maintenance of the 2% tuition cap for professional programs.
Finance Committee

Revamped the structure of Budget Committee from just approving and amending budget by changing it to the Finance Committee which shall provide oversight and accountability for the finances of the entire Society and advise the Vice-President Finance and the Managing Director on all businesses and financial matters. In addition, Created a timeline that will keep the society accountable for being fiscally responsible by publishing quarterly financial reports and evaluate society metrics.

ABBA changed to Advisory Board

Changed the mandate and structure of ABBA where before it only provided oversight and accountability for the business and administrative operations of the Society. The new Advisory Board shall provide oversight and accountability for the entire Society by providing a long-term perspective on the entire Society’s operations.

Information Technology Committee

Created an IT Committee with the purpose of having an active participation from AMS senior management on prioritization and recommendation for Information Technology (IT) efforts and strategic alignment of AMS IT goals and AMS strategic vision. This was created in order to control spending on IT projects by ensuring proper due diligence and accountability.

Vice-President Finance Office Structure

Changed the Structure of the VP Finance office. This included splitting the Associate Vice-President Finance role into two separate roles one being the AVP Finance and the other being the Financial System Coordinator. In addition, removed the Sustainability Fund Manager from VP Administration portfolio to under the VP Finance.

AMS Credit Card Program

Implemented a credit card program for all department managers in order to consolidate and improve efficiencies for business spending. In addition, expanded this program so Clubs & Constituencies Have access to credit cards for all club & Constituencies related expenditures.

Investment Bylaw Policy

The AMS invests $16.8 Million which is made up from our restricted funds. In previous year the AMS bylaws restricted the AMS to only invest that are rated at or above “Single A”(A) rating, as assigned by the Standard & Poor’s Corporation or its successor. Over the last number of year the AMS has generated approximately between 1-2% in returns or $200,000-$300,000 which is used as AMS General operating revenue. The Investment policy bylaw change just passed in March will allow the AMS to change its investment policy which should generate approximately between 5-6% in return or $500,000-$600,000 which can be used in the AMS General operating revenue. This will result in an additional $400,000 in operating revenue for the society.
The first review of the AMS Services since 2013 was conducted in an effort to ensure that these Services are being delivered in a manner that was most relevant to students, as well as ensuring that all AMS Services continue to fill substantial service gaps on camps. The review resulted in 75 various recommendations that applied to both individual services as well as the Services department as a whole. The Review resulted in the dissolution of AMS Services Volunteer Avenue and Volunteer Team, as well as the development of eHub, a student service aimed at supporting students in the first phase of their entrepreneurial journey. In addition, the Review provided the AMS with recommendations for developing existing UBC services, as well as recommendations to begin tackling service gaps that exist for career, textbook, and housing support for students.
Entrepreneurship Hub

After recognizing a gap in low-barrier support services for students aspiring to develop and get involved in entrepreneurship on campus, the AMS hired a staff position to begin researching the feasibility of launching such a service. As part of the Services Review, students revealed that they value support in entrepreneurship relatively highly, and were dissatisfied with current entrepreneurial support services that exist at UBC. Consultation with current providers at UBC, particularly e@UBC, revealed that there lacked support for “the first 15%” of a student’s entrepreneurial journey, with existing services not being conducive to promoting low-barrier entry to the field. A proposal to develop such a service was approved by AMS Council in February 2017. The three prongs that service will provide include student peer-to-peer consults, a curriculum, and a community & outreach prong. Specific groups of students that will be served by the service include those seeking early stage assessment for their ventures, looking to enter the entrepreneurial field, and those looking to start on-campus ‘lifestyle’ ventures. The service prongs are being built with an intended launch of September 2017.