

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Office of the Vice-President has been working hard throughout the month of August. We have several advocacy points that we have been, proactively and retroactively with various stakeholders, been working on. In terms of federal advocacy, we will be making submissions to various officials in the federal government throughout the week. Our submissions include amending the guidelines to the Canadian Experience Class Express Entry program which does not account for self-employment and part-time work experience. It is imperative that we support entrepreneurial innovation across Canada and support the students who engage in such innovation to gain experience hours towards fast-tracked permanent residency. Furthermore, we are also proposing amendments towards the part-time experience portion of the program. International students working part-time jobs who want to immigrate to Canada should have those hours count towards fast-tracked permanent residency. The submission will also include advocacy towards extending the student loan repayment freeze which currently ends on September 31st. Students and recent graduates, in accordance with July student unemployment rates, are in no place to begin repayment on their student loans. We have also taken the opportunity to introduce our year-long advocacy of the abolition of federal student loan interest rates. In terms of the removal of interest rates, we are working with various stakeholders in British Columbia on campaigns and lobbying efforts. Moreover, we are also working on the formalization of UCRU. On August the 20th, our office completed the first round of Bylaw reviews and are proactively working towards having these Bylaws passed by the Board of UCRU. Once these Bylaws are passed, they will be presented to Councilors.

In terms of provincial advocacy, we will be meeting with the SEEDS Sustainability Initiative next week to finalize our research objectives towards our policy paper which we wish to publish by the end of the year. In addition, we are also finishing our sexual violence prevention discrepancies project by the end

of the month. The project will be used as data-driven evidence to support our lobbying efforts towards the *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act*. Finally, we have also been working with the Indigenous Committee to improve Indigenous emergency funding programs across the province along with improving accessibility to the Youth-in-Care program which has unreasonable and unnecessarily high barriers.

Thank you,

Kalith Nanayakkara

VP External Affairs