



Presenter: Oghenerukevwe Erifeta

URSU Annual General Meeting

February 2, 2023

VP EXTERNAL AFFAIRS EXECUTIVE REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF POSITION

The Vice President External Affairs deals primarily with the development and deployment of events, campaigns, elections and referendums of the students. They are also responsible for developing marketing and sponsorship opportunities for the URSU. They also educate students about important issues to students in Post-Secondary Education (PSE). The VP External also plays an important role in the development of Welcome Week's Programming and handles public and media relations in conjunction with the President. Finally, the VP External is responsible for overseeing and managing the URSU V-Team. URSU Executives generally work anywhere from 10-30 hours in meetings in addition to regular duties.

Link to Executive Committee and Executive Roles Policy for more information:

<https://www.ursu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Executive-Committee-and-Executive-Roles-.pdf>

My name is Oghenerukevwe Erifeta and this is a report on how I have carried out my duties and responsibilities serving you thus far.

PRIORITIES

Campaigns



Fund The Future

CCPA REPORT

In May of 2023, URSU working with the Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives began a series of meetings, in regards to a report that would later be publicized on the 13th of September, 2023. This report detailed the declining state of post secondary education funding in post secondary institutions in Canada. How Post Secondary institution funding was shifting a massive weight from Provincial government to constantly raised Tuition fees. Following the release of the report on September 13th, URSU commenced Lobby Week.

LOBBY WEEK 2023

Lobby Week for URSU constitutes a series of meetings with Government officials and active Saskatchewan Caucuses, all influential in the decision making that has resulted in the state of funding for post secondary institutions in the past, and will be influential in a possible positive pivot for the future. These lobbying measures bode well for URSU in the Fall 2023 Lobby Week, as a lot of promises were made, and a lot of confidence was built for more funding and financial support in the Future, from the Provincial Government.

CAMPUS RALLY SEPTEMBER 2023

To further emphasize the gravity of the situation outlined in the above mentioned CCPA report, URSU spearheaded a rally campaign march around the University of Regina, chanting three words "Fund The Future". Leading this Rally through the tremendous collaboration of the entire URSU team, students wanted all that were willing to hear, to know that we were united and that most importantly, we desired above all a more reliable source of funding for our Post Secondary institution and education than ever-increasing tuition rates. Leading up to this Rally, a lot of work went into a province wide mobilization of student unions, from the University of Saskatoon, to the Moose Jaw/PA/ Regina Saskatchewan Polytechnic, all student organizations, and student



clubs that could be part of the movement in any and all forms. Although some of these partnerships did not hold, I and the team remain appreciative of the ones like URFA that did. We had several meetings with the Canadian Federation of Students to get major points on student mobilization and material sourcing. All these advocacy initiatives I have led, I hope to continue as we will be meeting with more Government officials in the near future.

Mental Health is a Priority

From the point of my campaigning in the 2023 URSU General Elections, mental health had been a priority goal that I had preached to the student membership on our campus, and this is the gospel I had continued preaching diligently within the Executive and Board committee gatherings. In advocacy, research and support sourcing, we were able to find My Wellness Advanced, an enhanced version of the mental health support service presently provided by Gallivan, our Health and Dental Insurance provider, and proposed as a new service in one of the motions in this meeting. My Wellness Advanced provides three free hours of therapy to every student on a partnering campus (our campus), whether under health plan or not. Considering the scarcity of mental health resources we presently see on our campus, this would be a very drastic improvement that I personally anticipate.

Academic Support: URSU Tutoring

Academic life is the priority of all in a University, as it is our foremost focus and goal for being here. Upon getting into office in May of 2023, I immediately began work on researching the most viable way to set up an Academic Tutoring hub that would both be very affordable for our student membership and easily accessible regardless of level and faculty of study. We have sought it to be a hub for tutors to meet students of all faculties.

After researching a number of outsource options, and meeting with these sources, I and the Executive team decided to go through Q-Pay. URSU is presently in transition to Q-pay for all our student club relations, and while we would like Q-Pay to also take up URSU Tutoring, we



are giving student clubs the opportunity to settle into Q-Pay, before kicking off URSU Tutoring.

Food Provision Must Be Diverse

During the Lazy Owl Menu review I made sure to highlight the importance of having well rounded food provisions in the Lazy Owl that were a representation of the diversity we see in our student membership. On coming into office I and my executive team had sat down with our Lazy Owl and Hospitality management team to restructure the menu and kitchen operations for more maximal results, and to aid its provision of better service to our diverse student community. We concluded on a way to give students this diverse food provision mostly through a feature menu every Tuesday, pop ups on campus, and more. So far, we have had Quesadillas, Jollof Rice, Byriani and look forward to featuring many ethnic dishes that are a reflection of the very diverse student community we have.

Fundraising

Every Welcome Week the Vice President External affairs is taxed with the responsibility of leading the sponsorships sourcing done, to alleviate the expenses of hosting the school year's biggest attractions, concerts and shows, and this academic year was no different. In the Fall and Winter Welcome week, our team raised a total of 24,185\$ which went towards our expense budget of 27,599\$. Beyond Welcome Week URSU has also done a number of fundraising initiatives, a major one being the URSU Cook Book.

Welcome Week Report below

Winter and Fall Welcome Week

In the Fall of 2023, URSU hosted one of its biggest events yet, the Fall Welcome Week. It featured Free Breakfasts every morning through the span of the week, where we served long lines of students, with meals put together by The Lazy Owl Kitchen management; a concert that featured some of the best local artists we have in our province, and a few from out of province;



several games and fun on the green; robustly attended club fairs that featured some of the University of Regina's most actively engaged clubs; a much loved Casino Night that featured high wins and low losses, and DJ nights in URSU's very own Lazy Owl.

Winter Welcome Week was in no way any different in impact and joy spread to our student community. The Lazy Owl saw some of the largest influx of students during the mind blowing Magic shows, the spontaneous music-filled Karaoke Night and the tension-ridden CWE Wrestling event. My hope is that no student here today missed these events, as I am sure all that were there can be a testament of their awesomeness.

The Marketing team and I worked very closely together to have continuously pushed and promoted all URSU events through the two Welcome Weeks and beyond, in order to ensure paramount student engagement. Our Social media has also seen some of its best engagement in years, our event turn outs have seen some of its highest numbers.

Volunteer Program

For our student life culture to thrive, and to sustain our programs/services, it is important to build a team of student volunteers, and to empower them with unique experiences and opportunities for developing organizational and leadership skills, as well professional knowledge, that is sure to improve their future prospects of success.

In this term, we have built a brand new volunteer program with better and comprehensive training opportunities and experience. URSU Leaders, on the prompt and organization of our Executive team has effectively been relaunched. It was an opportunity to bring my experience from the few years I spent volunteering within our campus on several fronts, as a resource to setting up the program. Our already existing services: URSU Thrifts, URSU Cares Pantry, and the several events we host, and campaigns like Fund The Future we held, during the course of the semester have been and continue to serve as a great engagement platform for the URSU leaders. I encourage all students to register to become part of the program, and begin garnering



some volunteer hours under their belt.

EVENTS

The Events committee consisting mostly of myself, some of the URSU board members and the Events Manager, have worked together to guarantee a robust school year when on the grounds of events.

Mending student club relationships and engagement had been a goal I had committed to, coming into office and the many event collaborations we had with student clubs during the school year, alongside other relationship building/ outreach efforts taken, were definitely instrumental to this vision. The Fund The Future Campaign was promoted and supported by a lot of our student clubs and centres. Our Events Manager has also done a great job of managing these relationships in order to ensure successful events.

GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Governance structure of URSU that has not been reviewed in the past three years, through the diligent direction of I and the other members of the Executive team and Board, has seen a lot of refurbishing in the past few months. In past years, steps to make some necessary changes in our governance structure had failed, halfway into the process. Our Executive team was able to build on the road blocks faced in the past, follow up with the hiring of a Governance Analyst, and our Board, to ensure the implementation of necessary changes in some of our by-laws, which will be presented to our membership today. The long anticipated review of some By-Laws like our Election By-Laws and the Student Support By-Laws, was instrumented through a working force that included myself and two other of my Colleagues, have all been reviewed and will be part of those presented today.

FAIR HIRING

In the past few months, it was necessary that as an Executive In do my due diligence to ensure a



fair hiring process in URSU. I have worked diligently to ensure accountability and transparency with the management staff of the organization right from the job posting, to staff first day, all within the limited guidance sphere of my position's role, to ensure all transparency, decorum, and integrity of our hiring process at URSU 2023/2024 is preserved.

EXTREME BUDGETARY DISCRETION

Very necessary to note is the fact that our Executive team was charged with the hard job of recovering from a deficit, and while we have done the commendable job of going from a 700,000+\$ deficit to shy of 400,000\$ deficit in this year, this fund management took a big toll on the amount of new services we could add to our service-provision table this year. All campaigns, initiatives, events, and more I have gone over in this report, are despite and inspite of URSU's budgetary concerns and severe management our team had ensured to prioritize this year.

PICTURES FROM MY TERM SO FAR AS VICE PRESIDENT EXTERNAL AFFAIRS **URSU 2023/2024**





**Yours Sincerely,
Oghenerukevwe Erifeta.**