



STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF MACEWAN UNIVERSITY

SAMU

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

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WHO WE ARE

The Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU) is a not-for-profit organization working independently from MacEwan University to support students. With over 40 full- and part-time staff, SAMU exists to serve students' non-academic needs. This past year marked the 50th Anniversary for both SAMU and MacEwan University – a milestone that we are very proud of.

We are governed by the elected student representatives who set the strategic vision on behalf of students. In 2021, our student-elected representatives approved a new 3-year strategic plan, which includes a refreshed vision, mission, values, and goals for the organization, beginning July 2021. This annual report represents the first time we report our accomplishments based on the 2021-24 strategic plan and our four new strategic goals.

Mission

SAMU builds a positive student experience by creating a place to engage and connect, being a champion for all students, and providing opportunities that allow them to get the most out of their educational journey.

Vision

All students benefit from a vibrant student life and a culture of empowerment.

Values

- Students First
- Inclusiveness
- Adaptability
- Relevance
- Accountability

Good Governance

Good Governance, as practiced by a Students' Council composed of individuals who are well-informed and team-oriented, provides strategic direction for SAMU that aligns with the vision of the Association as a whole, anticipating and responding to the needs of present and future students through the effective stewardship of the bylaws, policies, and strategic plan of the Association.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Another year has come and gone, and what a time it's been! Being your President for two terms has been the privilege of a lifetime, especially during SAMU's 50th Anniversary this past year. I'm eager to see what lies ahead for our organization as we return in a big way for 2022/23. As the COVID-19 pandemic continued last year, none of us could predict where that journey would take us. From pivoting online in September with the delta variant to the emergence of omicron and a subsequent pivot to in-person after the winter reading break. As an organization, SAMU's values have been tested throughout these years of uncertainty and difficulty, but I'm proud to say we exemplified them and have gone above and beyond our commitment to adaptability.

Both the world around us and our organization has seen change, including the appointment of our Director of Building Operations, Darryl Kostash, to Acting General Manager. He is someone who knows the organization and is dedicated to our mission while having a great pulse on the crucial issues and opportunities that are present for students. In his role as head of our organization's operations, he has been vital in ensuring we deliver on our Strategic Plan on behalf of our students and provide the student experience you deserve.

As for SAMU's Executive Committee, it's been exciting to champion our Strategic Plan that was put forward in April 2021 and see the implementation of this direction. While the way we engaged as your elected representatives changed last year by virtue of COVID-19, we have been actively advocating on your behalf to our university and every level of government. We've heard you loud and clear that affordability and the cost of living are top of mind for students, while ensuring there are wrap-around supports as we navigate our way through the post-secondary experience. These continue to be ongoing concerns that we'll continue to advocate for on behalf of students, and our Executive Committee is eager to bring students more wins.

SAMU is continually improving our programs and services to ensure they meet the needs of our current students. Whether it be the offerings through the Pantry or novel and exciting events, our students' association is filled with big thinkers and innovators. One other way we continually improve is through our processes and systems, like our enhanced 2022/23 budgeting process. For nearly a week, elected student representatives came together to discuss the budget presented by SAMU staff and what it meant for students. Not only were there stronger linkages between budget metrics and the Strategic Plan, but feedback from student leaders was integrated in a meaningful way. Our budget for the 2022/23 year was passed unanimously by the committee and Students' Council, showing how it meets the needs of students. I want to give my sincere thanks to everyone who participated in our budgeting conversations, as our budget is a vital component of how we ensure we're meeting the needs of students.

Lastly, I want to thank the staff and elected representatives of SAMU. Everyone was present in full-force this past year, providing you with the services you know and love. Their dedication to students and the mission of SAMU continue to inspire me, and I can't wait to see how we can create an even more vibrant student life and a culture of empowerment. All the best in the upcoming year and the next 50 years as we start our journey to our 100th Anniversary!

Best,

Myles Dykes

SAMU President 2022-23

A NOTE ABOUT COVID-19

The novelty of a Pandemic, along with all the restrictions, lockdowns, and challenges, started to wear off in 2021. This past fiscal year, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022, marked the year we started living with the Pandemic. We accepted that it was here to stay, we had a vaccine to fight back, and we did what was necessary to break through so we might finally find out what our new normal would look like.

Students were getting more comfortable with online classes, with 62% of students preferring online delivery due to COVID risks, as reported in the January 2022 COVID survey conducted by SAMU. There were hopeful indications that the Winter Term would be a normal return to campus, but another COVID wave ultimately ensured classes remained online. A full return to an in-person campus would have to wait until Fall 2022.

Through the starts and stops of the Pandemic and this past year, SAMU continued to monitor and adapt so we could ensure continuous delivery of our programs, services, and events to students and reduce the Pandemic's impact on the student experience as best we could. As our fiscal year started coming to a close, COVID began to finally appear in the world's rearview mirror, and plans were underway for both staff and students to return to in-person.

STRATEGIC GOALS & OUTCOMES

To achieve our vision, focus our priorities, and guide our actions, SAMU is driven by four strategic goals and five values as outlined in the 2021-24 [Strategic Plan](#). The Annual Report provides a summary of SAMU's achievements and progress on each strategic goal:

1. Student Experience & Engagement
2. Student Voice
3. Student Supports
4. Strengthening SAMU Operations

1. STUDENT EXPERIENCE & ENGAGEMENT

The overall student experience is enhanced by the opportunities provided by SAMU.

What It Means

The student experience goes beyond attending classes. SAMU offers the people the fun and social side of student life by hosting programs and events and providing students space to connect. SAMU also provides volunteer and employment opportunities while also supporting Student Groups on campus. All of the above reflects SAMU's commitment to making on-campus life more accessible for all students.

Strategies

1.1 Put the finishing touches on the SAMU Building, enhancing the safe and intentional spaces for students to gather, relax and study.

Another year of the Pandemic meant another year of our new SAMU building being vastly underutilized. With a hybrid class model in place, some students chose to take advantage of the quietness of our building to study or do work. As restrictions eased, we started increasing seating capacity back to normal levels.

SAMU was happy to have our first food vendor, Chachi's, open in September, followed by Deville Coffee in the 2022 Winter Term. Student traffic remained relatively slow due to the unexpected COVID lockdown in January and February, which caused classes to stay online. Construction work was underway throughout the Spring/Summer Term for Edo Japan and OPA! of Greece, both scheduled to open at the start of the 2022 Fall Term.

The student Benefits desk opened and closed due to COVID restrictions, much like the year before, so most Health & Dental benefit inquiries were handled off-site. Our event space (The Lookout) sat empty and was not utilized for most of the year. A few events were held when restrictions allowed, such as Executive Committee meetings, SAMU all-staff meetings, Edmonton Mayoral Candidates' Forum and the SAMU Holiday Market. The Spring thaw brought an unexpected leak in the ceiling of The Lookout, which closed the facility for a couple of months. It was hard to pinpoint the cause, but Engineering had some suggestions we will look at next winter to mitigate the risk of another leak.

Preliminary work has started to bring the SAMU brand to life within the building. Watch for some subtle changes as we brighten up the space and add a little more character. SAMU is extremely excited to fill the building with students and share all our incredible space starting in the Fall.

1.2 Increase student awareness of SAMU and its opportunities through strong communications and engaging marketing and branding.

Ever since doing our first Spring Student Survey in 2020, it was clear that SAMU needed to focus more effort on raising awareness of not only who we are but all that we do for students – and we needed to get the message to students in their first year. The Pandemic and not having students on campus has lowered our awareness even more than the 11% drop to 23% of students aware of SAMU, we experienced in the previous fiscal. SAMU has

developed a few new initiatives and enhanced others to strengthen our ability to communicate and engage with students.

The first visible sign to students that we were improving our communications was the September 2021 launch of our completely redesigned website. The website is core to our communications strategy, as all communication channels drive traffic to the website. The website is now much more user-friendly and interactive, leading to increased traffic and time spent on the site. SAMU received 297,176 website visits, with 79% returning and 21% new users. We will continue to work hard to ensure our website is a valuable resource for students.

What better way to introduce SAMU to new and returning students than dedicating a whole week of fun and activities to it. Fall 2021 was the first year that we offered Meet SAMU Week, and due to the success, we decided we should also have one at the beginning of Winter Term as well, although due to students not being back on campus, it was a subdued version. The goal of Meet SAMU Week is to create fun ways that students can engage with us and each other. Along the way, they have chances to get some free swag, have fun, enter to win some great prizes and learn about all our events, programs, and services available to them. The whole organization pitches in to make this event successful. We estimate that we engaged with 932 students throughout the Fall week, which is not bad considering the limited number of students on campus.

Our 12 Days of Giving campaign debuted in December 2020 and became another instant hit with students. We decided to rerun it in December 2021. Overall engagement was down significantly from the previous year but still resulted in good engagement numbers. The 12 Days of Giving campaign helps to raise engagement with students, awareness of SAMU and gives students a little boost before the holiday break. As with many of our initiatives, the Pandemic and lack of students on campus hindered our efforts. The 2021 campaign still achieved 4955 entries over the 12 days, with an average of 482 student engagements per day.

SAMU's Executive Committee (EC) also did what it could to help raise awareness. Where they were able to, EC conducted classroom visits across various faculties to talk to students about SAMU and the resources and initiatives we offer.

Our most effective method of communicating with students is our email newsletter. A majority of students told us it is the most preferred way they want us to communicate with them (based on results from the 2021 Spring Student Survey). At first, we had to rely on building our email subscription base, starting from zero in 2020 and reaching over 5,000 in 2021, which represents approximately 1/3 of our SAMU student members. In 2021, we finalized an agreement with MacEwan University, allowing us to reach all SAMU student members by email. We now reach over 15,000 students with each newsletter and maintain a very strong open rate of 66% and a click rate of 15% - 20%.

Social media is another channel we rely on to communicate and engage with our student members. While not as high of a reach as the newsletter, it is another communication channel we use regularly. Gaining an approximately 11% increase in followers over the past

fiscal year, Instagram is the most popular with students, followed by Facebook, which showed a 30% increase in likes and finally Twitter, which decreased by 49 followers. We constantly strive to evolve, enhance, and adapt our social media channels to be relevant to students. Student Groups, EC and *the griff*, run their own social media channels and increased their presence through enhanced content and gaining followers.

1.3 Increase student engagement by offering relevant and meaningful events, programs, services, volunteer activities and employment opportunities for students.

Providing events, programs, and services is at the core of what SAMU does, but doing so while most students take classes from home remained a significant challenge. Your EC and SAMU staff were up to the challenge and figured out ways to maintain and enhance student engagement.

The largest event that SAMU puts on is the annual Fall Fest. Pandemic conditions made us hold off on planning one for the second year in a row. Winter Fest was scheduled for January 2022. The artists were booked, and the venue was confirmed, but the resurgence of COVID and the Omicron strain caused us to postpone. As the acts were already booked and Fall 2022 was looking hopeful for a return to campus, plans were shifted in anticipation of a complete in-person 2022 Fall Fest.

Other unique events that allowed students to participate from home included Edventure Week (Fall and Winter editions), where students could enter contests and explore free activities to do in the Edmonton area during reading week. Speaker Series Chef Edition had students taking an entertaining three-course cooking lesson from Sorrentino's chef in the comfort of their own home through video.

The Vice President Student Life planned SAMU's Holiday Market, which allowed students to showcase and sell their handmade crafts and products to other students, staff and faculty looking to do some holiday shopping. The three-day event was a big success, with some student merchants saying they sold more at the Holiday Market than at a farmer's market.

Our Oilers ticket program continued as hockey came back for in-person spectators. By purchasing annual season tickets, SAMU can sell the tickets to students at a discount, allowing them to experience the excitement of a hockey game. The Oilers were looking hopeful going into the playoffs, and we had few issues selling out the tickets, which gave students the opportunity to purchase hard to get playoff tickets.

A Mosaic Mural project was initiated in a collaboration between SAMU and MacEwan University to create a lasting legacy and recognize our 50-year anniversaries. Granting students an opportunity to leave their legacy within SAMU, our Programs team created Bob Ross-inspired paint sessions that encouraged students to find a sense of community within the SAMU Building. The overwhelming interest left our students wanting more opportunities to express their creativity through art and find outlets away from academics. Over 400 individual tiles were painted by students, staff, and faculty to make up the beautiful mural currently on display in the SAMU Building on the main floor.

We began displaying our Artworks collection of student-made art throughout our new building. The Gray Gallery was transitioned to an online blog series where students could work with our team to develop a look into the artists' creative process, teaching, and finished works.

Practicing an environmental and sustainable lifestyle can happen whether learning on campus or at home. The ECO Ambassadors and ECO SAMU programs continued to engage and support students by providing opportunities to engage and learn about urban beekeeping, urban farming, hydroponic gardening, environmental research and social justice initiatives.

Our student magazine, *the griff*, returned to print in 2021 after going fully digital the year prior. Pickups from stand were down approximately 36% from before the Pandemic but is to be expected with only a partial return of students to campus. The return of the printed magazine and a continued focus on producing more digital content meant a return to hiring seven students to work part-time at the griff. Between staff and volunteers, 177 articles were published by the griff in the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Another year of COVID may not have been quite what some students expected as they entered their final year, but SAMU was able to help them mark the momentous occasion through the facilitation of grad photos. Over 730 students had their grad photos taken in the SAMU Building.

Our volunteer program is vital to helping students gain real experience while, in turn, helping SAMU to help students. This past year saw a significant increase over the previous year. A total of 138 volunteers put in a combined 5052 hours, making it a 146% and 48% increase, respectively. Students also impressed us with zero issues due to missed shifts or tardiness! Another key to SAMU continuing to offer our services to students is our part-time staff. All part-time staff positions are filled by students. We are proud to provide employment opportunities for students to not only help them financially while attending school but also help them grow their skill set and offer the practical experience they can use to pursue their careers. We have a number of part-time staff who reapply the following year and even have full-time staff who started their journey as a SAMU volunteer, then as a part-time employee and eventually becoming a full-time employee after graduation. During this past fiscal year, SAMU hired 22 part-time staff who worked an accumulative 8,857 hours.

1.4 Support Student Groups by offering networking opportunities, meeting space, outreach support and online platforms.

Like many areas of our new SAMU building, the Student Groups (SG) area has been vastly underused due to the Pandemic and a continued hybrid approach to classes. While Student Groups activity has been significantly lower than before the Pandemic, work continued behind the scenes to enhance the Student Groups operations and start planning for a full return to campus.

The integration and transition to SG Connect (the new Student Groups online platform) were completed. Other platforms were also integrated into workflows for better and easier access to booking rooms within the SG spaces.

A Student Groups Mingler took place mid-fall semester with approximately 30 attendees. This occurred online through Discord, where participants chatted, got to know each other, and played games. All other planned Minglers were cancelled due to COVID restrictions. The in-person events, including Student Groups Expo, were cancelled due to COVID. As an alternative to this event, a social media version of the Student Groups Expo was developed to highlight active groups.

The SG Operational Grant available to the various Student Groups was drastically underused due to in-person events not being permitted. The suggestion was made to individual groups to apply for the operational grant or event grants to pay for a one-year licensed Zoom account, so groups could meet and have virtual events through Zoom. Student Groups will be ready to serve all groups and students in the Fall.

2. STUDENT VOICE

The Student Voice is amplified by SAMU

What it Means

SAMU is a Students' Association, meaning it provides ways for students to be heard collectively by the University and at all levels of government. Students also have a voice through its democratic processes, electing Students' Council and Executive Committee members to govern SAMU.

Strategies

2.1 Develop an Advocacy Plan and implement processes to strengthen SAMU's advocacy program.

SAMU introduced a new planning process and timeline for Executive Committee initiatives, which are the core of SAMU's advocacy work on behalf of students. With the new process, we've been able to ensure the alignment of the advocacy goals we pursue with SAMU's strategic priorities, as well as further developing the ability to allocate time and resourcing effectively to these projects.

In January 2022, MacEwan announced plans for a full or partial return to in-person classes on February 28th. We started hearing concerns from students about this announcement and knew we had to take action. A survey was developed, and we had a very high engagement with over 2400 students filling out the survey. The results were clear, 62% of students currently preferred remaining online for course delivery and 65% of students were concerned with the return to in-person classes in February (a time when another wave of COVID was rapidly spreading). The top two concerns were the impact on their mental wellness and the personal health risks associated with in-person classes. The results were shared and discussed with MacEwan, who ultimately decided to remain with online classes for the rest of the term.

Due to students' strong support of mandatory COVID vaccines required to be on campus, SAMU also worked with MacEwan to host a multi-day Vaccine Clinic in our event space.

2.2 Enhance awareness and interest in SAMU's democratic processes through education and encouraging student participation.

The annual Executive Forum was held to discuss topics of importance to students. Students and EC discussed the proposed return to campus, COVID-19 Advocacy, U-Pass and other supports for students. Of the students who attended, 51% stayed for 2/3 of the forum, showing the importance and interest in the topics discussed.

Another first for EC was the launch of GovWeek, held in both Fall and Winter. The objective of GovWeek is to increase engagement, participation and education with the Students' Council and Executive Committee elections. Fall GovWeek saw a 120% increase of Students' Council candidates from 5 in 2020 to 11 in 2021, and a voter turnout increase of 1.5% (see pages 14 - 15 for election analytics). The annual Food For Thought initiative provides a two-way feedback mechanism for students and their Executive Committee. The online session was held as part of GovWeek in the Winter term.

The fall of 2021 was a heavy election period, with both a municipal and a federal election happening back-to-back. It's important that students understand and exercise their right to vote, whether for SAMU Student Elections, for Edmonton's Mayor and Councillors or for our provincial and federally elected leaders. In collaboration with CASA, SAMU ran two Get Out the Vote campaigns to encourage students to become actively involved with current events as it pertains to elections. SAMU was honoured to have planned and hosted a Mayoral Candidate forum in its building. The event was well attended by students who asked the candidates some engaging questions.

2.3 Continue to build collaborative relationships with other Students' Associations and organizations to enhance the collective student voice with all government levels.

SAMU's Executive Committee was busy building connections both internally with MacEwan University as well as externally. The VP External was elected as Vice-Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), our provincial advocacy group. Advocacy wins from CAUS this past year include:

- Province created a \$15 million New Beginnings Bursary for low-income students
- Province invested \$2.5 million to address on-campus sexual violence
- Worked with Province to ensure that every student qualified to get the Alberta Full-Time Student Grant got the grant after the government had announced that the funds had run out

The VP External was also elected Director of Membership of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), our federal advocacy group. Advocacy wins from CASA this past year include:

- Government doubles the Canada Student Grant for the 2021-22 & 2022-23 academic years
- Government provides \$9 billion COVID aid package to post-secondary students & recent graduates

- Government launches the National Standard for Mental Health and Wellbeing for post-secondary students
- Successfully advocated to expand the definition of a 'disability' to improve eligibility in the Canadian Student Financial Aid Program – leading to 40,000 more students being able to receive funding for accessible education

2.4 Foster positive relationships with MacEwan University to better serve students.

SAMU staff and EC take pride in the collaborative relationships we have built with MacEwan University. Whether for a good cause or celebrating a milestone, we know that working together will yield the best results.

The 50th Anniversary celebrations had SAMU and EC working closely together on a couple of initiatives. The Time Capsule presented to MacEwan by the Students Association more than 25 years ago was opened. SAMU's President and MacEwan University President & Vice Chancellor Dr. Annette Trimbee revealed the contents, which were then displayed throughout the campus. Plans are in place, and items are already being gathered to reseal the time capsule, which will be opened in 50 years for the 100th Anniversary of SAMU and MacEwan. SAMU has created a new plaque that will be gifted to MacEwan University and used to seal the time capsule in the Fall of 2022.

The Mosaic Mural was a collaborative effort that created a nice legacy art piece celebrating SAMU's and MacEwan's 50th. Located on the main floor of the SAMU building, this unique art piece will be enjoyed for years to come. The Mosaic Mural and time capsule displays were unveiled at MacEwan's special Anniversary Celebration, which was emceed by SAMU's President, Myles Dykes.

3. STUDENT SUPPORTS

Student supports provided by SAMU are responsive to unique and evolving needs.

What it Means

Student life can be difficult. SAMU offers students a variety of programs and services to help with financial, mental, physical, and social stresses. SAMU is an inclusive organization, supporting diversity and participation of all students. As student needs evolve, SAMU watches trends and listens to students to ensure that SAMU offerings are reflective of those needs.

Strategies

3.1 Develop and deliver initiatives that are inclusive and are responsive to all student needs.

SAMU is proud of all our support services that help enhance the student experience. Being a student is stressful at any time, but the Pandemic and its effect on the economy have made it even more challenging. Our lineup of support services that we offer include:

Student Ombud Support

This new service opened in Fall 2021 to support students going through academic or non-academic issues with MacEwan University. In Fall 2021 through Winter 2022, we supported

over 100 individual students through direct messages, emails, and bookings. The top three issues that students reported were student-professor conflict, campus service issues, and academic misconduct.

Breakfast Club

In Fall 2021 and Winter 2022, we continued mobile and online versions of Breakfast Club. We gave away over 1,000 gift cards to students from local restaurants, a 30% increase from last year. We also saw over 500 students visit our mobile cart in a year with minimal students on campus. We see this as a sign that Breakfast Club will be very busy in the upcoming Fall term.

Safe Walk

SAMU opened SAFE WALK in Fall 2021 for a short period before having to close it again. It was reopened again later than expected in Winter 2022. Even with disruptions of the service opening and closing, we still received interest from students wanting to volunteer for the service.

The Pantry

The PANTRY (SAMU's very own food bank exclusively for students) launched an "ecommerce" website for students. Students can now conveniently order a hamper online, at no cost to the student. The PANTRY website has seen over 3,000 unique visitors within the first year. Hampers distributed to students increased by 21% from the previous year. New users accounted for 78% in 2021-2022, a 5% increase over the prior year. The Pantry continues to see ever-increasing numbers as the Pandemic and economy continue to impact students. Demand is expected to continue rising through Summer and even more so in the Fall.

Peer Support

In Winter 2022, an inclusivity option was released for MacEwan Students allowing them to request a conversation from a Supporter that belonged to a community they identify with. SAMU maintained regular Peer Support hours for both 2SLGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities.

Study Buddies

Study Buddies moved the service to Zoom video conferencing, which students were more aware of and familiar with. This not only saved money in the long run but also increased the service's usability. More enhancements are planned for Study Buddies in the upcoming year.

SAMU also provided some events that sought to both entertain and educate students. SAMU Cinema Series is an opportunity for students to enjoy a free movie with friends, themed for various times of the year, such as Halloween and Valentine's Day. Sexy Sexual Health Trivia is a fun way to remind students of the importance of safe sex and consent. 2SLGBTQIA+ Speed Dating is an event collaborated with NAITSA to provide a way for people to meet like-minded individuals. Dirty Bingo is always a popular event and is another fun way to educate students on the importance of safe sexual health.

3.1 Evaluate and assess student supports to remain relevant and accountable to students.

The Spring Student Survey conducted in 2022 was the third time we have conducted this survey. We received 1241 responses which is down 57% from the previous year. While

significantly lower, the sample size still gives us a very high accuracy level (99% confidence level and 3.5% margin of error). We believe that the lowered engagement was due to students being mostly online for classes making it harder to reach them and, by that time of year, suffering digital burnout. Questions were slightly altered to focus more on what concerns students had and what issues they were dealing with. The data extracted from the survey provides vital insights that SAMU uses in its planning for the following year and helps ensure that what we offer students is relevant and aligned with their needs and wants.

SAMU Cares applications are now open for the Spring/Summer term, making the bursaries available to students year-round. Over 40 SAMU Cares bursaries were given out during this past fiscal year to provide some financial assistance to students and families. Having the Student Ombud Support being built and run throughout the past year, further gaps in service and need were noticed. Having a more detailed look at what we could do to help students, research was conducted across Canada with other post-secondary institutions, and an updated service will be introduced to our NEW Student Advocacy Centre in Fall 2022, which has more options for students requiring assistance with Academic and Non-Academic issues at MacEwan.

3.3 Strengthen collaborations and partnerships with MacEwan University to expand supports and resources for students.

SAMU is always keen to help advocate for initiatives that benefit or interest students. SAMU and EC collaborated with MacEwan to help promote several worthy causes to students, including: Pink Shirt Day, Black History Month, Pride Week, Mental Health Week, Sexual Violence Awareness Week and Truth & Reconciliation Day. SAMU also supported MacEwan in the creation of a new mandatory non-instructional fee going towards proactive student mental health supports.

3.4 Enhance relationships with external organizations to leverage resources and supplement new and existing initiatives.

The Vice President Student Life led a couple of initiatives in support of students, which required collaborating with partners. Week of Wellness was a week of featured interviews and videos with the various departments and services within both SAMU and MacEwan. It was a way to promote resources available for students to support their personal and mental health, which is a top priority for students, as indicated in the Spring Student Survey.

The second initiative was SAMU's first ever Anti-Racism Week which involved partnering with external professionals to host a week-long event featuring speakers, online information sessions and support for the annual "Understanding Hate" online panel.

Splash and Bash is a collaborative event with UASU, NAITSA and West Edmonton Mall. The event allows students to enjoy an exclusive party at the World Waterpark at a discounted price. Over 350 tickets were sold to students and their friends. The event was initially scheduled for January 8, but was postponed to March due to COVID restrictions.

After going four full terms with no U-Pass, Fall 2021 marked its return, along with the rollout of the new Arc Card and U-Pass process. Students can now activate their U-Pass from

anywhere on their mystudent system. The launch of the Arc Card required significant resources to get the cards in students' hands and the training they needed to activate them.

Fall 2021

12,678 Students Participated in Fall 2021 U-Pass Program

Winter 2022

With COVID restrictions brought back and many classes switched to online, SAMU successfully advocated on behalf of students for a U-Pass Rebate from Transit. All eligible students received a 25% or \$45 rebate.

12,899 Students participated in Winter 2022 U-Pass

Spring/Summer 2022

4096 Assessed

As part of the Student Refugee Program, we welcomed our sponsored student into the MacEwan community. Due to COVID-19, our capacity for public engagement was modified, yet we still found ways to engage and provide social, financial, and well-being support to our students.

4. STRENGTHENING SAMU OPERATIONS

SAMU is an innovative and sustainable organization with an engaging work environment.

What it Means

SAMU can best serve students when its own house is in order. By fostering strong relationships between elected student roles and staff, documenting policies and processes and being responsible stewards of resources, SAMU can be a supportive and sustainable organization for students for years to come.

Strategies

4.1 Review SAMU governance structures and make improvements to reduce duplication of efforts and delays in decision-making processes.

In 2021, SAMU conducted a search and hired a third-party consultant to do a thorough review of our governance processes and structures. The process involved conducting interviews with staff and current and past EC members. The final report provided recommendations for improvement that will be implemented through a phased approach in the upcoming 2022-23 and 2023-24 fiscal years. SAMU and EC are pleased with the results which will provide more clarity and efficiency to various areas in SAMU's operations, policies and procedures.

SAMU established a new full-time position dedicated to supporting students with navigating through MacEwan's policies and procedures, especially in areas like appeals. Previously, this role was a 50/50 split with external advocacy. SAMU's additional investment into this service

has enabled us to provide expanded support to students through the development of the Student Advocacy Center.

4.2 Document main policies and processes to support business continuity and transitions in leadership and staff.

COVID waves and restrictions continued to challenge how SAMU operates and delivers its programs, services and events to students. SAMU's Senior Leadership Team monitored and reviewed changes to restrictions and continued to adapt our COVID processes to ensure staff safety and business continuity.

The implementation and transition to SG Connect (the new Student Groups platform) were completed. The platform is the operations base for which Student Groups is run. The new platform allows for more centralization of administration, better efficiencies and enhanced communications to the Student Groups. The focus for the upcoming year will be on ensuring full utilization of SG Connect.

Darryl Kostash, Director, Building Operations, was appointed as Acting General Manager in 2022 to fill the vacant position and ensure continuity in SAMU leadership and operations. SAMU's Senior Leadership Team also made minor changes to reporting structures to create efficiencies and better align to individual department responsibilities.

4.3 Diversify revenue streams to reduce reliance on student fees.

The new SAMU Building offers us new opportunities to generate revenue. The Pandemic has reduced our ability to explore these revenue options fully; however, we have continued to sell advertising through our various owned channels. The advertising was offered at a discount due to reduced student traffic and to help attract advertisers. SAMU generated \$8,000 in revenue through posters, digital screens, tabling, washroom posters, email newsletter, and the griff.

Other revenue is generated through specific projects to offset costs by offering event sponsorship and advertising. Examples include the Student Handbook advertising and Fall Fest and Speaker Series sponsorship. These have been drastically reduced or not offered due to the Pandemic, but with students scheduled to be back on campus in the Fall, generating revenue through these advertising channels and project sponsorship is an opportunity that SAMU will continue to pursue.

Tenant revenue was down due to the Pandemic delaying the food vendors' opening. With all vendors planned to be open for the 2022 Fall Term, full leasing revenue is expected from our vendors for the remainder of the upcoming fiscal year.

4.4 Act as financial and environmental stewards and implement effective practices to enhance sustainability.

Applications were submitted and approved to utilize the Information and Technology Fee Fund for a few student-facing projects within the building. These enhancements are underway and planned to be completed within the next fiscal year.

In January 2022, SAMU was pleased to find out that the building had been officially designated as LEED Gold Certified. This is a significant achievement in environmental and sustainability standards and exceeded the original target of LEED Silver during construction.

4.5 Foster a professional and supportive work environment that lives the organizational values and delivers a culture of excellence.

SAMU Awards Night is a chance to celebrate the 47 students and staff nominated for a SAMU Award. The March 31 date allowed us to plan an in-person banquet for this special evening. A total of 69 students and staff enjoyed a buffet dinner at the Matrix Hotel, played a fun and competitive game of trivia and applauded all the nominees and winners. SAMU Awards recognize outstanding individuals who have interacted, supported or assisted with the goals and efforts of the SAMU organization and community.

SAMU conducts a remuneration review approximately every three years as part of best business practices. Ensuring salaries and benefits are comparable and competitive is key to ensuring that we can attract and retain the talent needed to continue to grow as an organization and serve students. A consultant was selected to conduct the review, and a report came back with recommendations on salary bands and adjustments to position levels. Employee turnover is costly and disruptive to any organization, and by implementing the recommendations within the plan in the upcoming year, SAMU hopes to reduce turnover and enhance our organizational culture.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Official 2022 Executive Committee Election Results

Number of Students Voting	Eligible Voters	Percentage
1417	14113	10.04%

7 Candidates ran for 5 positions

Previous Year - 2021 Executive Committee Election Results

Number of Students Voting	Eligible Voters	Percentage
1134	14887	7.62%

6 Candidates ran for 5 positions

STUDENTS' COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS

Official 2021 Students' Council Election Results

Number of Students Voting	Eligible Voters	Percentage
1071	14895	7.19%

11 Candidates ran for 14 positions

Previous Year - 2020 Students' Council Election Results

Number of Students Voting	Eligible Voters	Percentage
875	15,378	5.69%

5 Candidates ran for 14 positions

SPENDING BY GOAL

NOTE: The 2021-22 budget was prepared using the previous Strategic Plan's seven strategic goals. Due to the timing of the implementation of the new Strategic Plan and new strategic goals, reporting on spending per goal is not available for this year. Reporting on spending per goal will commence in the next fiscal year's annual report.