

ANNUAL REPORT

2018
2019

WHO WE ARE

The Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU) is a non-profit organization working independently from MacEwan University to support students.

OUR PURPOSE IS TO ENRICH THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE BY FOCUSING ON THEIR NON-ACADEMIC NEEDS THROUGH AN ARRAY OF STUDENT-DRIVEN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

We are governed by elected student representatives who set the strategic vision on behalf of students. With support from over 50 full- and part-time staff, we keep our mandate student-focused to achieve the vision. SAMU is proud to be an organization serving students, inspired by students.

VISION

The Students' Association of MacEwan University will be a strong advocate, exceptional resource, and clear voice for the MacEwan University student. We will have one aim — to create a one of a kind university experience by recognizing the student as our greatest asset and inspiration.

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.



PARVIN SEDIGHI
PRESIDENT



JACKIE KENT
VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC



EMMA PATTERSON
VICE PRESIDENT OPERATIONS & FINANCE



TANSY SPYKER
VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT LIFE



ANDREW BIEMAN
VICE PRESIDENT EXTERNAL



RUAN BOUWER
COUNCILLOR



RACHELLE DRUMMOND
COUNCILLOR



JADEN MELECH
COUNCILLOR



SPENCER NEWTON
COUNCILLOR



ALYCIA STEWART
COUNCILLOR



KENT STRAYER
COUNCILLOR



LUIS RUIZ
COUNCILLOR



MATTHEW YANISH
COUNCILLOR



MYLES DYKES
COUNCILLOR



AHSAN HASSAN
COUNCILLOR



KIRAN MIRZA
COUNCILLOR



MICHAEL SIMPSON
COUNCILLOR



STEPHAN VASQUEZ
COUNCILLOR

GOVERNING BODY


MESSAGE

ANOTHER YEAR HAS PASSED AT SAMU

and like its predecessors, 2018-2019 brought about celebrations, challenges, and opportunities for growth. We saw lots of new faces join the university community, and students who made the move from CFAC had the opportunity to settle into their new home at Allard Hall.

On the home front, the organization worked hard to build a solid foundation of practices and people that will ensure our success in the soon to come SAMU building. With a significant portion of the construction on the building project happening this year, we were able to witness the creation of a milestone for SAMU. From choosing vendors for the building, to picking the furniture and carpet that will decorate the space, we have been privileged to build this space up to be what students need.

FROM THE


PARVIN SEDIGHI

We battled with the weather this year to give students a proper welcome back to campus with our annual Fall Fest event, which was a wonderful success, hosting a variety of vendors and thousands of students. Within the university, we've been busy consulting with students, faculty, and staff on a full week Fall term reading break, and we're very hopeful about the progress made there. Student wellness is a priority for SAMU, and we made sure students were provided for through hosting events like Wellness Week and StressLess.

Continuing with our emphasis on student engagement, we held our annual Food for Thought town hall, which enabled us to hear from hundreds of students on their thoughts and concerns about being a MacEwan student. We also elected a fresh batch of students' councillors in our students' council election, who have been hard at work representing your interests.

With the cost of education being a continuous worry for students, SAMU focused on tuition this year, running a letter-writing campaign with our peers across the province, which saw thousands of letters sent to the Minister of Advanced Education, outlining our concerns about the accessibility of education.

We were thrilled to see the results of our years of advocacy with the introduction of new legislation that outlines how often and how much tuition can be changed by, ensuring long-term sustainability for our students. We also saw the increase of student representation at the university's highest governing body, with an additional voting seat being added to the Board of Governors for students.

We also witnessed a provincial election, and collected over 700 pledges from students who committed to voting in the election with our Get Out the Vote campaign, contributing to the record high voter turnout in the province.

This has been nothing short of an extremely eventful year on the student life and advocacy front, and we are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be your chosen representative at various tables. We exist for students, we are led by students, and we serve students, and we strive to keep that front of mind as we go about making decisions on behalf of students. 2019-2020 will undoubtedly be a big year for SAMU and for the students of MacEwan, and we can't wait to take it all in alongside you.

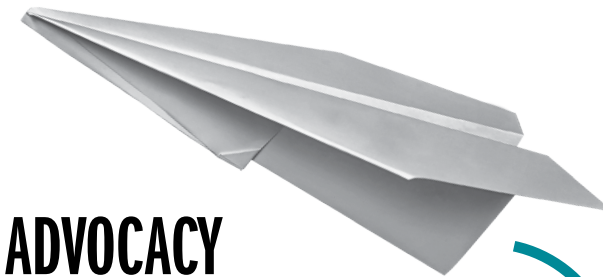
STRATEGIC GOALS & OUTCOMES

The Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU) is a dynamic, fast growing and diverse organization. Our needs are growing and our approach to success is changing to meet the needs of students within the university.

THROUGH CONSULTATION AND CONTINUAL CONNECTION WITH THE STUDENT BODY, WE HAVE BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO FOCUS OUR RESOURCES AND ENERGY ON OUR STUDENTS AND WHAT MATTERS TO THEM.

SAMU is dedicated to advocating for student issues, regardless of political ideologies or opinions. We exist to enhance student well-being while they attend MacEwan University, and to create a positive impact to the student experience.

THE ANNUAL REPORT WILL PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR GOALS AS SET OUT IN THE
2018-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN.



- 1 DEDICATED ADVOCACY
- 2 COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY
- 3 RELATIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY
- 4 STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES
- 5 INTEGRATION OF THE SAMU BUILDING
- 6 CONNECT TO STUDENTS
- 7 ENHANCE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

DEDICATED TO ADVOCACY

AS A VOICE FOR STUDENTS ABOVE AND BEYOND, SAMU HAS MAINTAINED ITS ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN SUPPORT OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND NEEDS.

- Survey results in fall 2018 garnered institutional-wide support for a full week during the **fall term reading break**. The earliest implementation of this would begin in the 2020-2021 academic year.
- The Vice President External of SAMU was appointed as the interim Executive Director of Council of Alberta University Students, further ensuring that **students priorities were top of mind**.
- SAMU's campaigning efforts for the 2019 provincial election aimed at increasing student voter turnout, resulted in **over 700 MacEwan students** pledging to vote.
- The passage of Bill 19 resulted in:
 - The extension of the **tuition freeze** by another year, and thereafter tuition increases being capped at the Consumer Price Index.
 - Guaranteed cost of tuition for **international students** for the duration of their studies.
 - An **additional dedicated student seat** on the board of governors.



COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

AS PART OF SAMU'S DEDICATION TO IMPLEMENT ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY OPERATING PRACTICES:

- A successful implementation of Campus Vibe, a data management and engagement platform for Student Groups was introduced this fiscal year. Investing in this platform allowed for **over 60 paper documents**, templates and forms to move online.
- The organization placed a limit on paper banner promotion to a **maximum of two banners** per SAMU initiative.
- All utensils and plates provided by Breakfast Club are **biodegradable**.



RELATIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY

SAMU IS COMMITTED TO SEEKING WAYS TO BEST ENGAGE WITH THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY, AND WILL SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO BE INVOLVED AND CONNECTED WITHIN THE EDMONTON CORE.

- After a five-year hiatus, thanks to a partnership with NAIT Students' Association (NAITSA), **thirty-three MacEwan and NAIT students** were offered a winter reading break trip to Cuba. The trip was a big hit and was facilitated by the two associations.

ONE STUDENT WON A FREE TRIP TO CUBA.



- SAMU events on campus **featured local entertainers and performers**. Many of those events also included Canadian Brewhouse, Molson or Virgin Radio as top sponsors.
- During the 2018-2019 Awards Ceremony hosted by SAMU, participants donated teddy bears to Treaty 8 Urban Child & Family Services Office, Sturgeon Victim Services and the Edmonton Garrison Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC). While this was the first occurrence for the event, SAMU will continue to **support local charities**.
- SAMU **collaborates with MacEwan University** to create value by leveraging their expertise in project management, information technology, food services and fundraising.

the griff

MacEwan University's student media, *the griff*, made strides in community relations. *The griff* reports:

- Featuring **over 10 downtown businesses** across **seven magazine issues**. The local businesses are ideal for students looking for off-campus study spots.
- Partnering with **seven local downtown businesses** to house magazine stands with issues on a monthly basis.



STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

SAMU ACHIEVED RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS DURING THE FISCAL YEAR.

- SAMU employees invested **471 hours of professional development** to ensure SAMU's student support is relevant and innovative.
- The association attained a **34% increase in investment revenue**, completed the financial year on budget and was able to meet the financial obligation to fund two restricted funds accounts.
- The health and dental benefit coverage provided to SAMU employees accommodated an increase to the service offerings at **a lower cost** to the organization.
- The organization moved **15 cubic feet of paper records** to digital files through an organizational-wide records management initiative.
- An evaluation of the insurance coverage determined that adjustments were needed to the association's policy. The adopted recommendations now **safeguard all risk** related to SAMU affairs.
- Recommendations based on the 2017-2018 **financial audit** were implemented.



INTEGRATION OF THE SAMU BUILDING

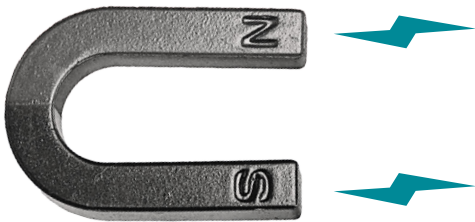
THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SAMU BUILDING CONTINUES, AND ITS COMPLETION IN FALL 2019 WILL BE A MOMENTOUS OCCASION. IN PREPARATION FOR ITS OPENING:

- The building furniture package was completed. It includes furniture provided by a Canadian owned company that meets the **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)** standard.
- The **\$7.5 million** financial obligation for the building was attained.
- The **project management** of the SAMU building construction was executed by MacEwan University.
- The **first operating building budget** was created and approved by SAMU's governing body.
- SAMU achieved a successful vendor submission process and **filled all retail spaces**.




CONNECT TO STUDENTS


ENGAGING, EMPOWERING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS DURING THEIR ACADEMIC JOURNEY IS THE CORE OF SAMU’S MANDATE. CONNECTING WITH STUDENTS THROUGH DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND PROGRAMMING EFFORTS IS A REOCCURRING PRIORITY.




22 MACEWAN STUDENTS WERE HIRED AS PART-TIME STAFF TO SUPPORT FIVE SAMU DEPARTMENTS.




Ten online contests were held and MacEwan students won prizes ranging from \$10-\$500 in value.




An increase in follower count on Facebook by 15% ensued, and over 5,000 website visitors were welcomed on a monthly basis.




The Student Refugee Program was evaluated and the recommendations from the evaluation resulted in the creation of a new operational procedure in the 2019/2020 fiscal year. It will guarantee the appropriate and required management of the program, and ensures the sponsored student's needs are met.




Over 80 initiatives were executed in the 2018-2019 academic year. Programming included events, fundraisers, peer-to-peer active listening, and promotion of support services.



Conducted a focus group in winter 2019 to ensure that outreach efforts were still relevant to MacEwan students. The feedback provided by students helped to streamline organizational best practices.



the griff, SAMU's student-run magazine featured 116 articles. A wide variety of material was produced to appeal to the whole student body, from profiles of MacEwan athletes, to reviews of student plays in Allard Hall. In addition, they welcomed 22 student volunteers.



Approximately 3,500 volunteer hours were accumulated by students who assisted various SAMU programming.

ENHANCED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

SAMU DEDICATES ITS EFFORTS TO LESSENING THE STRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS. THIS IS REVEALED PRIMARILY THROUGH OUR NON-ACADEMIC EFFORTS.



THE SAMU BREAKFAST CLUB SERVICE PROVIDED FREE BREAKFAST TO 12,761 MACEWAN STUDENTS.



THE PANTRY IS A FOOD SUPPORT SERVICE THAT PROVIDES FOOD HAMPERS. THIS YEAR, 186 HAMPERS WERE ISSUED TO STUDENTS.



Invested in the Open Education Fellowship Pilot Project, which will create Open Educational Resources that will be **free to students**.



SAMU Cares received **\$4028 in donations** to support students in financial need.



Promoted resources for students across **five SAMU social media platforms** and **two Student Groups platforms**.



Over **500 Student Group events** were approved and funded by the association.



Nine student blogs were published on samu.ca that highlighted important MacEwan support services, as well as numerous cost saving options on textbooks, entertainment, on-campus food options and travel.



The SAMU kindness project, Random Acts of Kindness, executed new initiatives that reached **over 1,800 students** at the City Centre Campus.

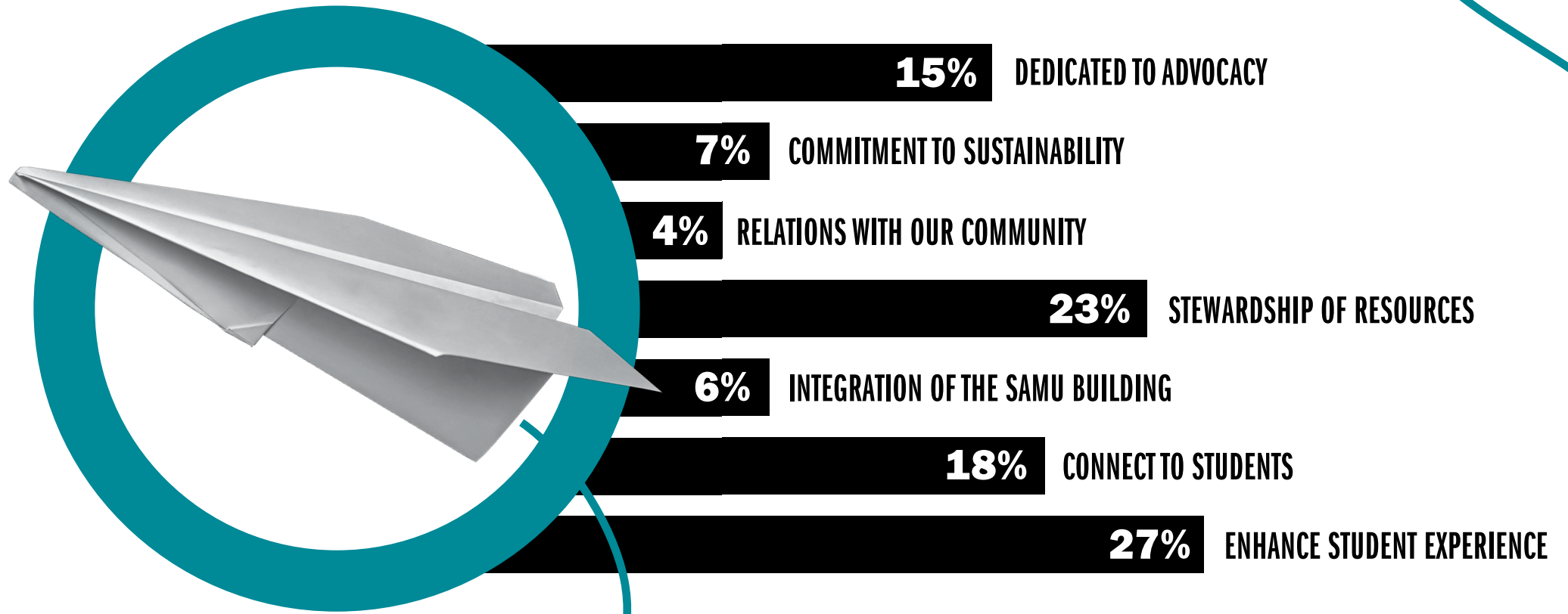


A new e-commerce platform was launched to sell tickets for SAMU events. These events included the winter reading break trip, Speaker Series and the Grayworks auction. In the first year, **670 orders** were completed.



Distributed over **7,000 copies** of free agendas to students, providing an organizational tool and a hub for university-related resources.

SPENDING BY GOALS





SAMU.CA