

Office of the **VICE PRESIDENT EXTERNAL**

Conference Report: CASA Advocacy Week

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations hosted their annual Advocacy Week from November 25 - 30. To say I am not exhausted, would be an understatement. This week was amazing from beginning to end. I am constantly reminded that there are amazing



student leaders and advocates from all over the country. As a member of the Board of Directors



for CASA, I had a pretty good idea what to expect from the week, but it definitely exceeded all expectations. I am so thankful for my fellow Board members and the CASA home office staff. Without months of dedicated work, this advocacy week would not have been what it was. CASA had over 150 meetings on Parliament Hill with MPs,

Senators, and Stakeholders. We took 6 really important asks to the Hill, which ranged from advocating for changes to immigration legislation to improve post-secondary access for international students, talking about how important work integrated learning is, and even advocating for a standard be set for gender based sexual violence policies across the country. All in all, we advocated on behalf of about 350,000 students from across Canada, and that's something to be incredibly proud of.

The first couple of days of the conference were for learning and preparing. CASA has a strong reputation of ensuring that our delegates are prepared and professional in and out of meetings. Thanks to the home office staff and external bodies, we were able to ensure that our delegates had all of the tools they needed to succeed. On the 26th, I had the opportunity to take over the CASA Instagram Story and highlight all of the things our membership were doing. If you have the chance, pop on over to casaacae on Instagram and watch our highlight reel for the week!



On Tuesday, we hit the Hill for 3 crazy days of meetings. I was in a total of 7 meetings, while president Laura Bryan had 8. Laura and I had the pleasure of meeting with MP Rachael Harder for the first time. MP Harder is my MP and the MP for the City of Lethbridge. It was

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lovely getting to finally meet, and we will definitely be following up later. In addition to MP Harder, I met with MPs from across the floor. I met with MP Mark Strahl (CPC), Minister Navdeep Bains' Policy staff (LPC), MP Charlie Angus' staff (NDP), Leader of the Official Opposition Andrew Scheer's Office (CPC), MP Mike Bossio (LPC), and Employment and Social Development Canada. As a Political Science nerd, and someone who adores Canadian Foreign Policy, I also ran into Minister Chrystia Freeland while she was on a run. They say Ottawa is the smallest town ever, and I learned this week that sentiment is true!



In addition to meetings, I worked with CASA's Policy Analyst, John, to run a session with our policy committees to gauge our next steps and to talk about what is going well and what needs to change. This session was really well attended and John and I took a lot from it. We will be sitting down and going through all of the feedback with how we would like to structure things from here on out. John is my right hand guy at CASA. Without John, my job would be increasingly more difficult and I would have mini explosions more than I already do.

On the final day of the conference, we held Plenary and the Board of Directors gave their updates on what they have been working on since we last met in July. CASA welcomed a new member this week as well! Camosun College Students Society was welcomed unanimously to the CASA family, and we couldn't be happier. As I previously said, membership and the Board always put a giant smile on my face. I can't imagine what this year would look like if I had a different Board or a different membership. All in all, I left CASA Advocacy Week with such a giddy feeling.



If you have any questions about this report, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.



Victoria Schindler
VP External