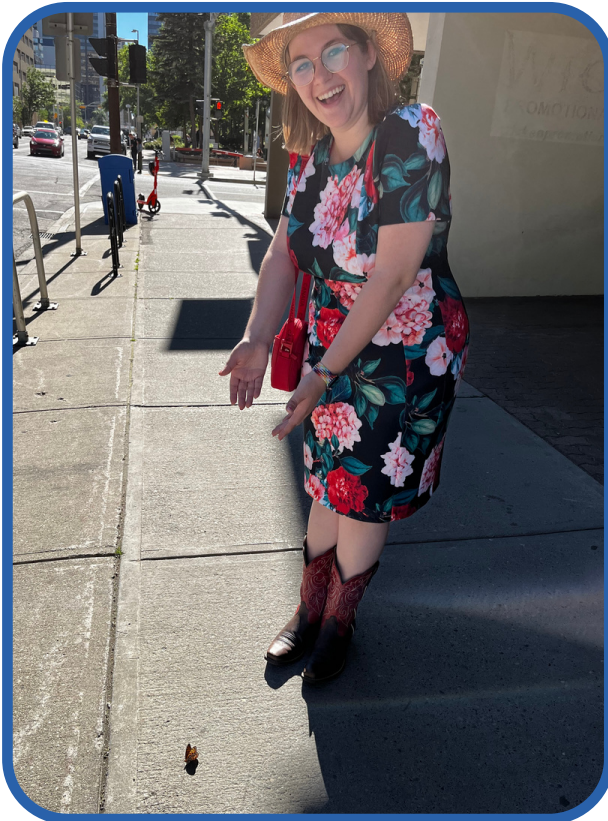




# Stampede Advocacy Report 2022

Prepared July 12th 2022  
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# Friday, July 8th

Our first day in Calgary began with pancakes at the Foothills Group: Renfrew Education fundraiser. Renfrew Education is an organization that supports education for special needs children, and it was extremely important for us to show that we support education at all levels, especially given that this year the U of L saw its first Inclusive Education Program graduates.

After a brief stop at MRU to have our CAUS Board meeting (special shout out to Tera and SAMRU for arranging that and welcoming us into their offices), we made our way downtown to the Stampede Roundup BBQ at the Mustard Seed. There, we met **Marie Renault**, the MLA for St. Albert. She was very receptive and is excited to work with us moving forward. Our final stop was at the ABES College Stampede BBQ, and while unfortunately there were no politicians, there were sheep and goats (who were themselves very busy with constituents).





# Saturday, July 9th



We began right and early at The South Calgary MLA's Stampede Breakfast. There, we briefly met **Tyler Sandro**, **Jason Copping**, **Jason Kenny**, **Travis Toews**, **Rebecca Schulz**, and **Tany Yao**. We had great conversations with **Whitney Issik** and **Tanya Fir** regarding the prevention of sexual violence on campuses (with Issik we talked about Voices, the organization she funded, and with Fir, we discussed the standardization of policies across Alberta campuses). **Ric McIver** was very interested in discussing Work Integrated Learning, and was very receptive towards our conversations surrounding brain-drain and making Alberta a place that students want to stay. Moving to non-provincial politics, we also had the chance to have some great discussions with **Jean Charest** (who commended all students who are involved in student government), as well as **Amarjeet Sohi** who we chatted briefly with about Community Outreach Transit Teams.

Our next stop was MP **Jasraj Hallan's** BBQ. He was very eager to discuss PSE and demonstrated tremendous support for CAUS/CASA and the advocacy that student leaders partake in. We also had the chance to talk to **Pierre Poilievre** regarding Brain Drain and investing in Alberta's future. Although Hallan and Poilievre are not involved in provincial politics specifically, they were very receptive to the struggles that PSE students in Alberta face.

# Saturday, July 9th (cont.)

The group then made our way to the Ismaili Muslim Community's 25th Annual StampEid Breakfast. There, we met **Gurindr Brar**, **Irfan Sabir**, and **Parmmeet Singh Bopari**. We also managed to have a great discussion with **Brian Jean**, who was very receptive to the affordability and accessibility of PSE in Alberta, as well as the brain drain that is occurring. He described that his own son's program had been cut from the U of A, and recognized that funding towards PSE in Alberta should indeed be a top priority of the government (we also took a video with him, so keep your eyes open for that!). On the federal level, we also managed to make a great connection with MP **Greg McLean**.



Our final stop for the day was the Crestview Strategy Hootenanny, where we connected briefly with **Lorne Dach** and **Jon Horstman**. We also had great (separate) discussions with **Danielle Smith** and **Todd Loewen** surrounding Brain Drain and Work Integrated learning. Finally, we talked with **Heather Sweet** about rural economic development and agriculture. She was also excited to meet a student leader from Lethbridge and is planning to stop at our campus for a tour when she is in Lethbridge in September. We also had a great time with **McKenzie Kibler** and **Sam Blackett**, the Chief of Staff and press secretary (respectively) for **Minister Nicolaides**.

Overall, it was a very successful day for student advocacy!

# Sunday, July 10th



The morning began at the Calgary-East Stampede fest hosted by MLA **Peter Singh**. There, we met **Peter Singh** and **Devinder Toor**, who were both very receptive to our concerns surrounding PSE. We then ate breakfast with **Travis Toews** who is keenly aware of the brain drain occurring in Alberta and wants to focus on keeping the individuals we educate in our province. **Nicholas Milliken** was also there, and we had a fantastic discussion surrounding the Rural Broadband Strategy and its importance for Indigenous and rural communities.

We then moved to an event hosted by Equal voice, an NGO that supports women and diversity in politics. There, we managed to briefly catch **Janis Irwin** and **Rakhi Pancholi** as they made their rounds. We also had a fantastic conversation with **Salma Lakhani** (the Lieutenant Governor), who was very receptive to us and is interested in creating a youth council. **Roger Reid** is very focused on affordability/accessibility for rural PSE, Alberta brain drain, and the importance of digital infrastructure across Alberta, so he was very receptive to CAUS priorities. We also connected with **Leela Aheer**, who is focused on prevention of sexual violence across Alberta, student grants, and Work Integrated Learning programs. She expressed interest in meeting with us to discuss how policies can be created including student perspective.

The day then took us to the Enterprise strategy event, where we met **Jason and Jeremy Nixon**, and **Dan Williams** (who is very focused on PSE in rural areas). We also connected with MP **Pat Kelly**. Once again, it was a very successful day!



# Monday, July 11th

The day began at 7:00 am at the Premier's Breakfast (many VIP attendees suggested the new leader of Alberta should make it the Premier's Brunch at Stampede 2023, and we can't say we disagree). There, we connected briefly with **Peter Guthrie, Matt Jones, Garth Roswell, Jason Stephan, Nathan Cooper, Josephine Pon, Rick Wilson, Raj Sherman, Demetrios Nicolaides, and Jason Copping. Martin Long** is very interested in connecting with us regarding career centers and student perspective on the transition from highschool to PSE. **Glenn Van Dijken** is very invested in the Rural Broadband strategy and how that can help rural students attain their PSE. We also had a great conversation with **Garth Roswell** regarding the lack of seats in in-demand programs, as well as the significant brain drain we are seeing across Alberta.



**Rajan Sawhney** had lots to say about mental health and the prevention of sexual violence across Albertan campuses, which she said are key focuses for her. Our discussion with **Adriana LaGrange** was regarding pathways into PSE, and she mentioned she would love our consultation on the issue. Finally, our discussion with **Kaycee Madu** was surrounding brain drain and international students. It was a busy morning catching MLA's between their shifts of flipping and serving pancakes.

# Monday, July 11th (cont.)

We ended the day with the Alberta NDP Stampede Road Show. At the event, we connected with **Joe Ceci**, **Sarah Hoffman**, **Nicole Goehring**, and **Rachel Notley**. They were all very receptive to student issues and expressed interest in more funding towards PSE. We mainly discussed the NDP's recent announcement that, if they form government, that they would return the STEP Program.

It was a great day for University students across the province.



# Conclusion



Overall, this was an extremely successful trip. When else (other than Advocacy week) would we have the opportunity to have face to face interactions with over 45% of the sitting MLAs? While we are working on strengthening our relationship with **Minister Nicolaides**, we cannot forget the importance of building connections with other MLA's across the province. Private Member Bills have the potential to play a large role in both PSE and Student's Unions, so making sure that we are demonstrating our importance is always a key priority!

Although CAUS is a provincial organization, we had some great conversations with federal politicians, municipal politicians and MP's. These connections are so important because federal politics often involve concessions due to the size of our great nation. Talking with these individuals and making sure that they are aware of the struggles PSE students in Alberta face is of crucial importance, especially with the federal Conservative Leadership Race underway. Even if only one of our priorities stays in the back of their minds, we will have done our jobs successfully.

Over one of the busiest weekends we will have in this role, we also made connections with political staffers, GR employees, prominent individuals at Universities, and members from other advocacy groups. These relationships will also be extremely important moving forward as we build networks with prominent figures across Alberta. These networks will demonstrate where we need to focus our attention, as well as help us connect to those who want student consultation.



# Conclusion (cont.)

On a personal note, I (Samantha) had a GA member ask me how being CAUS Chair benefited the ULSU and U of L students as a whole. It is a very valid question, as this role takes up quite a lot of my time and has me out of the city frequently. Over the weekend, I had an individual tell me that is radical in and of itself to be a woman from the ULSU as CAUS Chair.

With the ULSU having the smallest student body within CAUS (and by extension the smallest Student Union capacity), the role of Chair often goes to larger schools. Being able to attend these advocacy events and show that we may be small, but we are mighty, goes an extremely long way. There were multiple MLA's this weekend whose interest peaked when I mentioned I was from the University of Lethbridge, and it was a fantastic opportunity to discuss rural issues that the U of A (for example) does not face. Further, there were multiple individuals who expressed interest in touring our campus if they are ever in town. These connections, especially after the tough time that we had over the last few years, re-assert our importance as an academic institution in Alberta and will force those who don't to take us seriously. I am honoured to be in this role and I look forward to continuing this advocacy for the rest of my term.

We are very optimistic about the year ahead, and we look forward to continuing our advocacy for the rest of the term!

Sincerely,

Samantha Scott  
ULSU VP External and Chair of CAUS

Kairvee Bhatt  
ULSU President

