



Introduction:

June 8 – 12, 2022 I was fortunate to attend the COCA Student Life Summit in Ottawa, Ontario. This trip was paid for by the students of the University of Lethbridge through the University of Lethbridge Student Union and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have been able to participate in this conference.

The **Student Life Summit** was held by COCA (Canadian Organization of Campus Activities) which was founded in 1982 (the successor of the Canadian Entertainment Conference). COCA represents more than 60 post-secondary institutions across Canada and provides connections and supports primarily for student associations and administration departments that are involved in campus activity programming and/or student engagement. They provide professional development for campus activities staff and student leaders dedicated to the enrichment of student life¹. (*For more information about COCA, feel free to visit their website at coca.org*) The University of Lethbridge is a member of COCA.

At this conference I was able to attend several workshops, round tables, showcases of entertainers and speakers on various topics, and to connect, learn, and share with many other students and staff who, like myself, are passionate about providing a diverse and quality university experience for the students on their campuses. During the conference we were also able to tour and have events presented on several of the participating campuses in the area which provided me with the opportunity for different perspectives on the possibilities my own campus spaces could have. Being able to both see and discuss ideas with others about what their campuses are doing has provided me with a better perspective and 'tool set' with which to perform my own duties as VP Student Affairs of the University of Lethbridge Students' Union and better understand and address the needs of the students I represent.

Each day of the conference there were 2 education sessions held in the mornings. Meetings were held in the afternoon for representatives from each region (West, Central, and East) to get together and discuss collaborations, hold representative elections, and volunteer for Committees as well as the COCA Annual General Meeting which was held on the last afternoon which I attended as a voting member on behalf of our university. In the evenings we visited venues on local campuses (as well as one community venue in Bytown) to experience various speakers and entertainers who want to come to our campuses and perform or speak to our students.

Workshops Attended:

- **Back to Basics:** "a 'deep dive' into the foundations of a club program."
 - Ideas arising from this workshop included:
 - Workshops for new & returning clubs and/or perhaps mini video tutorials instead of long-winded descriptions. Provide templates for ease of completion.
 - How to do the 'club' thing
 - How to plan your event, etc.
 - Make Clubs Handbook more detailed and digital with links to video tutorials and supplementary supportive resources
 - Succession planning for Club leadership roles, encourage clubs to look for mentorship opportunities to keep the club active and flourishing
 - Club Swag:
 - Individually managed or collectively purchased through SU?
 - SU funds cover a percentage of costs? (subsidizing a portion of the cost)
 - A generic "I joined a Uleth Club" t-shirt (maybe with all the clubs and/or logos listed on it?) made by ULSU


¹ COCA information paraphrased from the *Student Life Summit – Conference Manual* provided for 2022

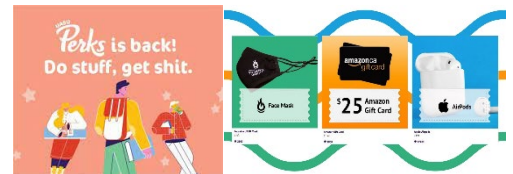
- Start small (small items/small amounts)
 - Avoid putting the year on anything
 - Ask clubs for feedback on Handbook and other processes so improvements can be made quickly. (ASK... don't just expect they will comment if they want to. Be proactive)
 - **BE a lighthouse, not a tugboat.** Provide guidance and do not take away club autonomy. Give clubs the support to be independent. Offer help in circumstances where they are unable to do something, but let clubs try to do it on their own first.
 - **Be transparent.** Let clubs know very clearly what the process time is for their requests of you and keep them updated on the progress.
 - **Central Information and Events Calendar?** Look into '[Campus Labs](#)' platform to support student engagement with clubs and other events.
- **The Clubs Brand:** Discussions on Supporting our Student Groups with Branding
 - Ideas arising from this workshop included:
 - View "Clubs" as its own entity requiring its own brand – ULSU CLUBS with its own branding and logo – to unify club activities and allow promotion of all club activities by use of the brand.
 - Clubs Oversight Commission – to review club forms, events and requests (more than our Clubs Council)
 - Clubs & Societies Conference/ Clubs Expo – to provide club execs with training, motivational speaker, workshops, swag etc.
 - Full day & Mandatory with each club represented and held in one large room
 - We could do this as first Club Council meet of the fall semester (Hybrid options?)
 - Branding Basics, Tips on Promoting Events, etc.
 - Training MUST be relevant to clubs (ask them what they might want)
 - Again, a reference to the '[Campus Labs](#)' platform as a club resource
 - Clubs Open House (online) in tandem with an in-person clubs week. (twitter? Discord? FB?)
 - How to monitor/share club activities (social media?)
 - Separate Clubs website, Instagram, discord, monthly newsletter
 - **Building Programming Partnerships on Campus:** to improve and benefit cross-campus themed programming.
 - Ideas arising from this workshop include:
 - Synergistic concept – to make connections for programming, selecting and communicating.



- Central Calendar to both advertise and sign up for events
- Logistics – share planning docs and be clear on accountability
- Make connections between Source Experts and Planning Experts
- Align calendars with Themed weeks like:
 - Health & Wellness
 - Mental, physical, spiritual
 - Speakers: Health and wellness, nutrition
 - Activities: Cooking classes, Art workshops
 - Career Readiness
 - Right after orientation (don't have to wait until graduation!)

- Useful for International students as intro to working in Canada
 - Guest speakers (dressing for success, various types of work, etc)
 - Link with MyExperience Transcript (co-curricular portals have higher traffic than individual department ones)
- Sexual Health
 - Health, Consent, Violence prevention
- Mental Health
 - Focus is Stress Relief (ie. Week before final exams?)
 - Tournaments (physical games, virtual games, etc.)
 - Speakers (meet a ‘beekeeper’) – or who doesn’t love Fred Penner?
- Celebrating Diversity
 - Raise awareness of Identities/ Cultures etc.
 - Safe Spaces
 - Cultural engagement (workshops etc.)
 - Multilanguage events (music, speakers, etc)
- Passport of SU experiences that lead to a prize at end of semester? (*see notes on Student Life Network below*)
- **Sex Positive Education as Sexual Violence Prevention**: to examine sex positive education and awareness as a tool for sexual violence prevention as part of a two-pronged approach (that includes supporting and believing survivors) with a goal to end sexual violence.
 - Ideas arising from this workshop include:
 - Prevention talks and publicity will not deter serial offenders, but it will reach those who just don’t know what is ok and not ok. That is education.
 - Branding and Image choices: Applying ‘lenses’ to events we are already running regarding sexual education and violence
 - Partner with SU for larger events and speakers
 - Education/prevention event ideas included:
 - Trick or Treat – delivery of kits to residences prior to big campus or general events (Like St. Patrick’s Day & Last Class Bash, etc.)
 - Bangin’ Brunch – Morning after residence check in (free food and a fun, positive educational message)
 - International Students event – ‘how to make friends in Canada’ - open conversations about differences between geographical regions and can help to inform regarding the nuances in Canadian culture both for making friends and ‘hooking up’ (with a Canadian food like a Poutine Bar!)
 - Podcasts / Campus Radio / Facebook / Instagram – keep positive and active and provide information in a fun and informative way. Tap into experts both on and off campus. “Ask an Expert” – could allow students to submit questions anonymously and get an expert answer.
 - Monthly Q&A Sessions. Be accepting of all questions.
 - STD Testing drives (‘cup for cup’ – pee for candy) with a public health unit partnership
 - STD testing and COVID testing in same place to remove stigma
 - Safer Campus = Better Student Retention
 - Train RA’s! they will do most of the work!
 - Provide information/letter to caregivers to help them have conversations with their students
 - Swag and Educational Material – (samples were from Project Lighthouse)

- Don't use Scare tactic advertising – BE HELPFUL! Are they for shock value or are they actually helping/supporting the goal of violence prevention?
 - Consent Sandwich pamphlets and posters
 - The Consensual Sex Guide
- Normalize and get at the core of information that is central to what they and all students need in order to have good, consensual sexual relations.
- Prevention by providing positive ideas = more student engagement. Make them something students will want to pick up and read or interact with
- Pens with pull out contacts and/or information
- Phone card holders with contacts for services and security
- This workshop was delivered by Sarah Crawford (MA, Sexology), Sexual Violence Prevention and Harm Reduction Coordinator at Algonquin College. All materials from Algonquin's Project Lighthouse will be [freely shared](https://www.algonquincollege.com/projectlighthouse/) with anyone who wants to use them.
 -  <https://www.algonquincollege.com/projectlighthouse/>
- **In-house tools for event operations and promotions:** three digital tools developed by the University of Alberta Students' Union that focus on solving their operational and advertising challenges: Student Engagement and Feedback, cross campus promotions and sponsorship, and catering and venue management.
 - Ideas arising from this workshop are:
 - About the 3 Applications: Perks, SU TV, and Backstage
 - In house development (hired students on contract to develop needed software apps)
 - UofA is looking to partner with other institutions to use these applications for a reduced fee in exchange for feedback
 - Is it cheaper to develop something yourself? (cost comparison would need to be done)
 - **Perks:** (student engagement and feedback)
 - "Do Stuff, Get Shit" is the tag line. The app rewards engagement with points that can be used to get SU or sponsored swag as well as in all SU stores.
 - Store integration: app creates a 'barcode' that is usable by the store. No extra equipment is required.
 - Launched just before Covid but has still been accessed by over half the student body
 - Data Retention & Privacy – Anonymous unless you opt in with info. Your personal data is optional in this points system
 - Integrated with NSO (but run by SU) – each module completed through NSO earns points to get you 'shit'
 - Can add 'Perks' component to every level of SU contact (without making it a barrier!)
 - Can customize the audience that you send things to
 - I.e. You can send to only Residence students or international students for more focused feedback
 - I.e. You can identify lower income people in need and forward them Perks points that they can use at the SU store to buy what they need and eliminate stigma
 - Can Chain activities (like a scavenger hunt)
 - Can link to Zoom and Eventbrite
 - Do Stuff: to earn Perks points
 - Can earn points for participation and feedback of SU or Campus events.



- Can earn points for completion of surveys and quizzes
 - General campus stuff but can also use random 'filler' content
- Can geo-fence an area so points are attributed for just attending or showing up someplace (game day?)
- Perks can also include off campus things (mental health strategies)
- Perks Economy
 - Does not run over summer and resets every semester
 - No actual \$\$ value to a point (can't trade them in for cash only stuff)
 - Can donate Perks points to on campus food bank
 - Need to constantly watch Perks economy for balance and sustainability
 - Have standard prizes available to redeem Perks points year-round with special (bigger ticket/more expensive) items from time to time to encourage point flow.
- Perks Sponsorship: Finding sponsors to provide larger ticket items always helps
- **SU TV:** (promotions and sponsorship)
 - Have been using for 12 years and is their 3rd largest source of revenue
 - Is the simplest to implement being screens both on and off campus
 - (ie. a TV from Best buy and a 'raspberry pie' in a box to run it)
 - Would require someone on staff responsible for ad sales.
 - Content:
 - 50% University Department promotions (free)
 - 50% Student Union promotions
 - Revenue:
 - 100% of paid ad revenue is Student Union's
 - 80% from internal sources
 - 20% from external sources
 - Generates appx. \$1500 revenue/year/screen
 - System is available to us to use and we can choose to link (some ads) across the network with other universities using the system or not.
 - **Backstage:** (catering and venue management) Only for use by Operations – manages the SU rooms, conference center and their theatre at UofA providing everyone up to the minute progress on tasks
 - Not the system the University uses for its own room booking
 - Priority in development was to allow multiple people to have system access
 - Manages: Venue, Catering, Resources (both human and physical), as well as Client Relationships
 - Sold the idea to partner organizations and it revolutionized the system
 - Runs Catering service from SU to rest of university (in addition to the on-campus catering company)
 - Clubs have access to book 6 hours per week of space for free (not University run rooms only SU run spaces)
 - Handles customizable reports and billing



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- Automatically updates on screens outside venues to list what is coming up at that location
- **Partnership Marketing & Sponsorship Development**: discussions about the importance of building business relationships and navigating sponsorship solutions for student unions.
 - Ideas arising from this workshop are:
 - Goals of a sponsor will be to have both an on campus and an online presence
 - Responsibility for this is ideal for hiring a student to accomplish
 - Types:
 - Long term contracts
 - In-Kind
 - Think small: free stuff in exchange for space or advertising (also great for prizing)
 - Affiliate Marketing
 - Partnership packages – for event space or advertising
 - Create a rate card (does not need to have everything – customizable is more effective but a rate card should give a ballpark of value)
 - Calculate average cost per impression
 - Check values/costs in previous years and chat with other campuses to help you get your ballpark figure.
 - Sponsors also love:
 - Named sponsorship events (whether single day or week long)
 - Vendor Hall events
 - Societies (clubs) & Partners (sponsors) Expo – at the same time in the same place
 - Local Markets (Farmer’s, Craft etc)
 - Consider partnerships with your university departments (mutually beneficial)
 - Brainstorm with your organization to identify what types of sponsorships or partnerships your campus wants/needs and always keep in mind the needs and values of your students not just the \$\$\$ a sponsor can bring
 - You can chat with other SUs to discuss block sponsorships (covering more than one institution)
 - Always curate your messaging, tailoring it to each company you approach.
 - Start with companies who are student centered
 - Available CRM tools include HubSpot (free) and Pro Tip (not free) but has a chat bot
 - Support Clubs’ search for sponsorship and independence. Hold workshops to do this!
 - SWAG – getting sponsorships to support event swag is always a good idea!
 - Use swag to encourage engagement in campus and community
 - Ie. A bank can come on campus and offer financial literacy workshops and link their promotion to education making it useful to students
 - Welcome Week Kits – includes lots of stuff (our swag, sponsor swag, tickets to events, in a bag) for a small fee – sell after welcome week for a lower cost
 - A lot of universities do not allow sponsors on campus during the first weeks festivities so as to not overwhelm students so this is the only way they can represent at that time
 - Big Prizes for events – Ie. Halloween trick or treat collecting food for the food bank and the winning team gets the big sponsored prize.
 - Stagger Sponsorship events throughout the school year to keep up momentum
 - Make sure prizing makes sense to the event/situation in which it is applied

- [Student Life Network](#) can work with our campus to connect us with sponsors as well as provide links to students to discounts and coupons offered through their network
- [Riddle and Bloom](#) is like a broker for sponsorships (and various forms of entertainment) and also hire students to be brand ambassadors on campuses
- **Round Table Topic Sessions #1 & #2:** In this incredibly noisy room were several round tables set with chairs. There were over 25 topics set individually on each table and we moved from table to table joining as many discussions as we could. The topics I was able to be a part of included “Steal this Clubs Idea,” “Mature student programming,” “Rebuilding Campus Culture,” and “Working with Diverse Population of Students.” These discussions were very useful as I was able to both give my observations and ideas to others and receive their observations and Ideas in return. My understandings broadened.

Meetings Attended:

- **New Delegate Meet and Greet:** I met with others who were new to the COCA Student Life Summit to discover new ideas and passions and what brought each of us together here. I was quite jetlagged and hadn’t slept in 2 days but I was able to meet a few people and was able to share some initial ideas.
- **Welcome Reception:** We were introduced to the main organizers of the event and provided time to connect with them over refreshments.
- **Special Meeting with the COCA Board of Directors:** I attended this meeting as a voting delegate to have the opportunity to read about and discuss some changes to the COCA policies and bylaws to be raised at the AGM.
 - Proposed changes included:
 - the modernization of some wording (that did not effectively change the meaning or intent of the policy)
 - the removal of a clause stating that, if no members of the Board of Directors for COCA is a student, then a separate position is created which a student would then sit on the Board. This is a clause that has never been enacted so was deemed redundant and they wished to simply remove it.
 - Changing a position title and intent of “past conference chair” to “future conference chair” for the purposes of succession planning. This change would ensure smoother transitioning than maintaining a past chair in an advisory capacity.
 - Changes in the listing of yearly events to include the second mid-year conference they now hold.
 - Changes to increase the number of representatives for the Central region due to the greater volume of member institutions in that area.
 - Discussion also included a discussion of the responsibilities of the Board Members and various committees and an introduction and invitation to participate in the governance of COCA. As a result, I will be representing the University of Lethbridge on one of the Western Regional planning committees for the coming year.
 - COCA Membership is for ALL of the Student Union – therefore we all have access to the wealth of resources and speaker/event discounts given to COCA member schools.
- **Regional Meeting #1:** This meeting was mainly to recognize the member institutions in our area and to provide an opportunity to begin discussions and collaborations in our area such as:
 - Block booking of speakers and entertainers
 - Regional Meetups in the fall to continue networking, sharing and maintain the support and connections begun at COCA
 - Discussion of the policy changes being brought to the AGM from the perspective of the Western Region.
- **Regional Meeting #2:** Discussion of the role of the Western Director on the Board of COCA followed by nominations and elections.

- **COCA Annual General Meeting:** Voting Delegates from all Member institutions gathered to review, reflect and plan for the next year. All new regional Board members were confirmed, and the location of next year's conference was announced (Vancouver, BC).
 - There were 210 delegates that attended the conference plus associates (speakers and entertainers) and staff.
 - Recommendations to the new board were discussed (continue process of updates to policies and the communication plan) as well as "Recharge" the mid-year event which will be held in a hybrid format allowing for schools to avoid the high costs of travel and join in virtually.
 - Voting on the policies presented in the Special Meeting were voted on and, with minor suggestions, all passed.

Speakers and Performers:

Each of the speakers and performers at the COCA Student Life Summit had paid to be there to impress us and win the opportunity to come onto our campuses and have been curated by the COCA SLS team. Many of them have a long history of campus touring and a strong student-centered message. At the closing ceremonies of the conference, COCA awards outstanding performers or speakers who have made a positive impact on our campuses in the past year.

In order of appearance:

- **[Adam Grabowski](#):** Adam was the MC for the first nights' Variety Showcase and, in my opinion, was the best all-around entertainer, speaker, participant of the entire conference. He went to everything, spoke with everyone, was always engaged and intentional in making connections and left you always feeling like he really wanted to be there and you had been heard. The video has a sample of his comedy but also a brief intro to his #sayitanyway campaign and his message to men about consent.
- **[Nicholas Wallace](#):** Mentalist and a bit of a comedian with a dark side. Unassuming with his ever-present serene smile in contrast with the bloody apron he is holding. He was very good but ended up being less memorable in his presentation than others, perhaps because I was exhausted from being up for 2 days travelling there or perhaps because he did not stay to speak with us delegates after the performance was over. Still, a worthy talent to look into!
- **[The Incredible Boris \(Hypnotist\)](#):** Boris... excuse me... The Incredible Boris is a frequent entertainer at the COCA Student Life Summit and has performed and spoke at campuses and venues around the world. His passion is encouraging people to understand the power that their own mind has and provide ways to help people change their lives by changing and controlling the way they think. I have never met a more earnest and gregarious human being. Boris LOVES helping people and spent a lot of time just talking with everyone at the conference. His show was a boat load of fun and, when speaking with one of his hypnotized volunteers later in the conference, I was impressed with the level of care and sensitivity with which he treats those entrusted to him. Whether as a speaker or a performer or both, he would definitely be a positive force on campus.
- **[Savio Joseph](#):** Slick and Cool! Yes, this is the Savio who is currently/recently on Canada's Got Talent. Savio's magic and illusions were phenomenal, and he was extremely approachable throughout the rest of the conference. He has a dream and a message, and his magic is top notch. This is someone I know we could bring to campus who will make an impact.
- **[Wayne Hoffman](#):** Recognized as one of the top mentalists in the world, Wayne's show was both intriguing and mind blowing, and he managed to engage and involve the entire audience (which is not easy!). The clip linked to his name is a good representation of how being at the conference with him was. He got *me*, too. You really end up believing that he can read minds. I had to apologize to him one day because he was in the elevator with me and Adam Grabowski and I said 'Hi' to Adam and didn't realize until an hour later that I had not said it out loud to Wayne because I assumed he could hear me think it. Friendly, gregarious and incredibly talented, Wayne's show and presence on campus would make for a superb event.

- **[Sarain Fox](#)**: Incredibly memorable speaker. I was lucky to find a video (see the link in her name) of a talk very similar to the one that she gave to us on identity and getting at the roots of how we identify ourselves. Such an intentional and earnest speaker, she connected right away with both our minds and with us as human beings. She is a very thought provoking and engaging speaker that I would LOVE to bring to our campus.
- **[Amie Archibald-Varley](#)**: Her background and message were very interesting (RN, MN, Public speaker on mental health, Race Activist, etc.) and informative and she had a lot of good insights eloquently delivered. However, I was distracted by the fact that she read her talk and stayed behind the podium on a huge stage. I found myself taking notes like I was in a lecture, not impressed and moved by the insights of a brilliant speaker like I wanted to be.
- **[Bryde McLean of Turn Me On podcast](#)**: She had quotes and talked about the types of things that they discussed with other speakers or professionals that she and her husband brought onto their podcast. She had a lot of good and positive things to say, but it felt like a long commercial to go check out the podcast for more information than being a stand-alone product to bring on campus for a speaker.
- **[Samantha Bitty](#)**: How to describe this... she held a spelling bee/condom demo/relay. As a Sexual Health Educator, she definitely approaches the topic from a fun and healthy perspective! She gave us a sample of the type of Sexual Trivia Night she could bring and talked about the types of messages she tries to convey like "You are your OWN sex expert! YOU are the one who decides!" She was really fun and engaging and got the audience involved both by call and response and by drawing them up on stage to participate. This very dynamic speaker and presentation style would certainly augment any sexual health and consent programming event we wanted to do.
- **[Wes Barker](#)**: I was held up at the previous activity and missed part of his set, but what I saw was really good. I think it would have been amazing, but there were issues with the sound system on that night and I could not understand a word of what he was saying. Finding a sample of him on YouTube helped me to figure out what I missed and I am very sad I did. He could be a great addition to potential events on campus.
- **[Aux Cord Wars Live](#)**: Name that tune on steroids. This was a boat load of fun and there was a lot of audience participation.
- **[Headphone Disco](#)**: The weirdest, yet one of the most fun things we did at the Student Life Summit. Everyone got their own headset... there were multiple DJs spinning discs simultaneously and the audience... all with their headsets on... could switch from one to the other. As they did, the lights on the headsets changed based on the DJ being listened to. It was just bizarre and fun and something I think would be really, really well received on campus. They bring all the equipment and DJs but also have a setup that allows you to add one of your own DJs into the mix. Too much fun.
- **[Mattie Leon](#)**: Lovely human being! Very talented and approachable and willing to come for performance as well as hosting a singer/songwriter workshop while he is here. (Not available in September due to baby arriving)
- **[Chris Grey](#)**: Freakishly talented young man. The venue sound setup was awful that night and painfully loud even outside the venue with the door closed. Even so, he had audience crowding the stage braving hearing loss just to dance and party along with his music.
- **[Zach Zoya](#)**: I was really upset by the bad sound for this artist. He was brilliant and engaging and, looking into the lyrics of the songs I could not hear that night because of the setup, someone who would be a real asset to any music event we might plan on campus.
- **[Five Roses](#)**: While the problems with the sound mix were not fixed at all for this band, they managed to make it work a little better than others. Their chemistry both with the audience and with each other was easy and their sound/harmonies really did remind me of Lady Antebellum. I could see a stage for them on our campus.
- **[YAO](#)**: This artist blew me away and I have no idea what he was saying half the time. Regardless of the sound issue that night, his voice was like melted chocolate for the ears as he code-switched between English and

French throughout his set. I could listen to him for hours and wonder if there is desire on our campus that would enable events and entertainment in multiple languages. I would love to find out.

- **Birds of Bellwoods**: This band was last in the set and so very hyped up I was expecting great things and was not disappointed. Their sound and feel were modern, but they still took me back to my days going to see 54-40 or Spirit of the West in Vancouver before they were huge. I will be surprised if this group does not become very well known in the Canadian Music scene and if we could have them here while we can still afford them, I would love to make that happen.
- **Jeremiah Brown (4-Year Olympian)**: Keynote Speaker – spoke on Building World-Class Teams through the experiences of his journey from the couch in his parents’ basement to the podium winning an Olympic medal for rowing in the span of 4 years. His presentation was engaging and informative and a testament to the potential in us all if we dare to persevere.
- **Family Man**: I really wanted to love this band but had a hard time doing so. The sound mix this evening was perfect, but they kept belting out songs even when they were off key or timing. It was too unpolished for me to consider bringing it as a possible entertainment for our campus. (I could not even find them on any streaming service to create a link)
- **Honest Heart Collective**: I loved these guys both on and off stage. I met them before I saw them so I was really hoping they were good and I was not disappointed. Their set was a mix of some of their own music (which was excellent) as well as a few covers to close out their set. Their sound was so engaging it forced me to get up and dance – which I had not done at all through the entire conference. (**context* I broke my ankle and tore my meniscus 8 months ago and am still unable to do much beyond walk*)
- **Carlyn**: ‘Nightmare Pop’ she calls it... I could see that. She was clearly very talented and I got the performance and the ‘I don’t care’ attitude but it slowed down the energy created by the previous band and her lyrics were quite dark (hence the nightmare). When looked through the lens of mental health, I was left concerned about bringing this performer on campus.
- **Tynomi Banks**: Last performance of the night and last performance of the conference, she was highly anticipated and her performance was phenomenal. As a fan of Drag Race, I wanted more glamour, but the performance, attitude, and connection to the crowd was all I could have hoped for. I would truly love to bring this performer on campus.

Other Contacts:

Swag

- **Big Tree Promotions**: Major supporters of the event and in attendance to almost everything, these people were very active in letting us know they would work with us to make our swag dreams come true. Like many of the supporters of this event, they also offer a discount to COCA members to sweeten the deal.
- **Riddle and Bloom**: Connect campuses to events, campus media, brand influencers and campus partnerships. Based in the US, R&B is working on making its name in Canada.

Apps and Services

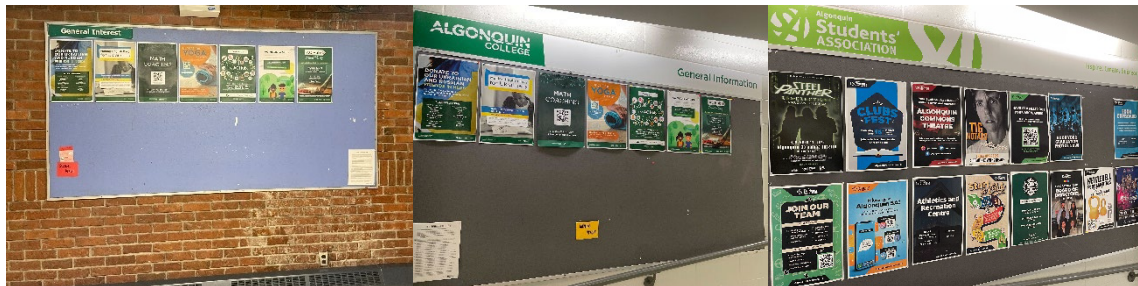
- **MSL – Membership Solutions Ltd.**: digital transformation of student engagement. This company is based in the UK but has offices in Canada and continues to be run from the Warwick UK Student’s Union that created it.
- **Student Life Network**: Were strong partners with this conference and had an event that ran through the entire conference like a scavenger hunt. There were riddles to solve and words to find in various locations that you submitted into the app. At the end of the conference, the winner was given a cash prize of over \$500. I would very much like to see if this type of thing can be adapted to our situation for something like Fresh Fest or even year’ round.
- **StudentCare**: Leading provider of student benefits in Canada

Humans

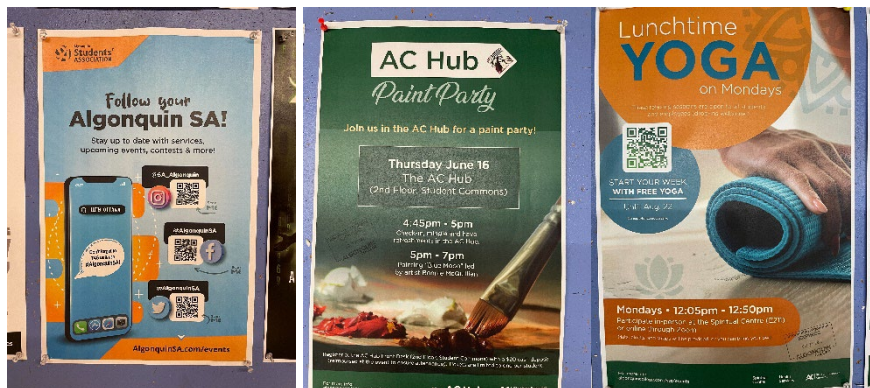
- **Dave Kelly:** Phenomenal speaker, author and human being. I was unable to make his teaching session, so he made time to talk with me about his topic and gave me books and handouts to help me support my own teams through leadership. I could easily see this person being a great speaker to bring in for a club conference/training kind of engagement and offers both in person and virtual events options.

Campus Observations and Useful Ideas:

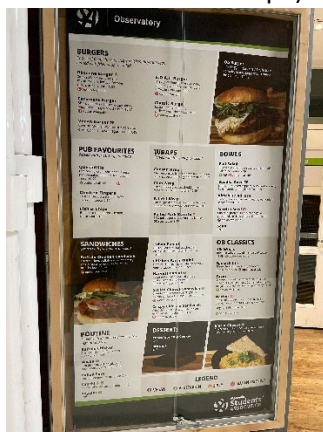
- **Bulletin Boards:** I was trying to put my finger on why some of the Student Union buildings I was visiting felt appealing and, when I looked around, I noticed that something as simple as giving the bulletin boards a facelift and/or increasing the number of them could make a huge impact. And is something I would like to look into for the SUB.



I also noticed that making a clear separation between what was for Community use and what was for SU use was also helpful to keep things clean and organized. The use of a unified branding (size, headers and footers etc.) also reduced the visual noise and kept the focus on the content of the posters as well as delineating which were SU posters and which were General Information.



Having a window box for the menu outside the SU restaurant might be something to look at for the Zoo, too! It is simple enough to maintain and might help garner more interest if well placed (perhaps be the entrance closest to the Bus Loop?)



- **SU Dedicated TV Screens:** I was also struck by the notion of SU focused TV advertising screens for use in the SU building. I saw them used in a variety of ways and places and couldn't help but wonder if this could be something we could look into.

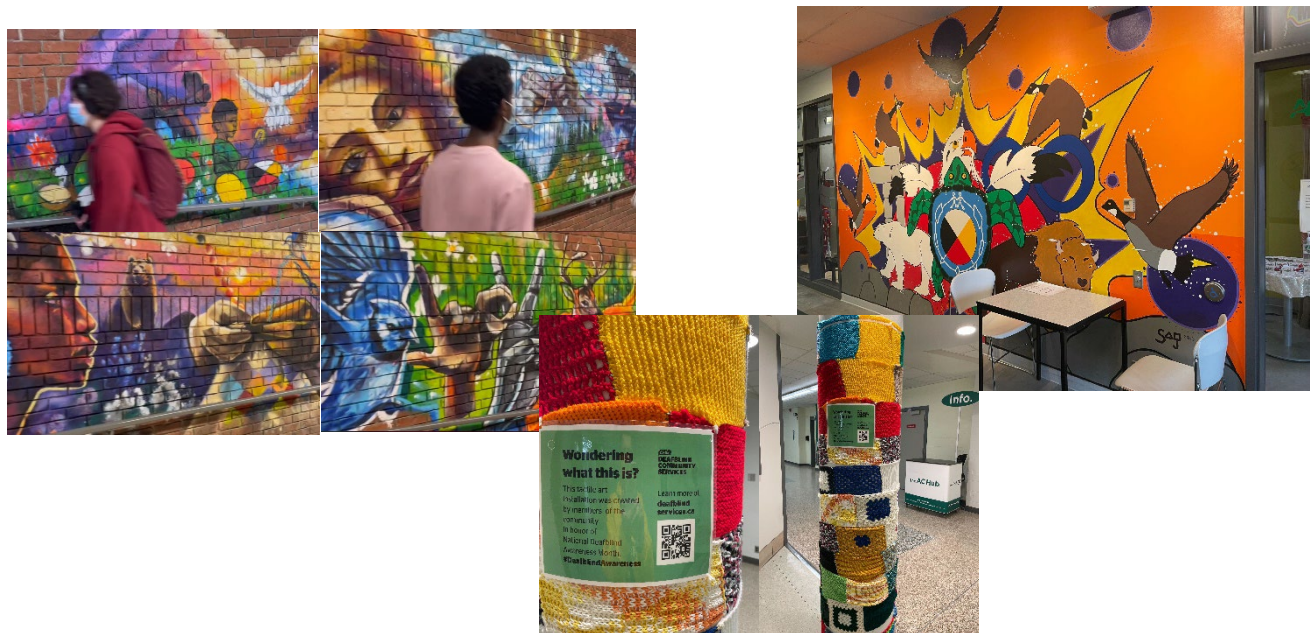


- **Another Branch of Communication:** I found this table (on wheels) set up in a hallway in the SU building. Perhaps this type of simple idea could strengthen the connections between we, as an SU Executive, and our student body?

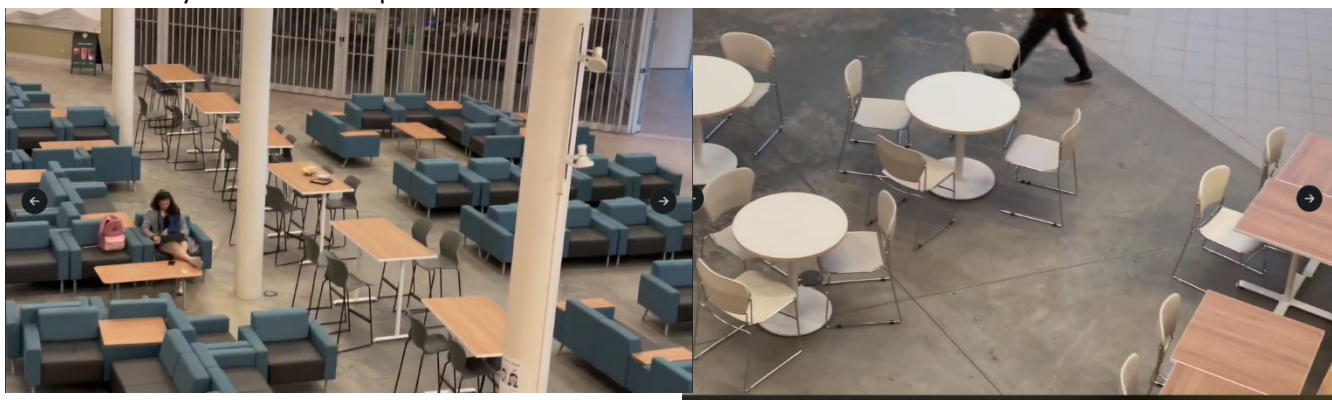


- **Creating Atmosphere with Art:** stuff

I found walls and halls painted with incredible murals and pillars wrapped in fabric art that made me wonder if there might be places in the SUB or on campus where we could make this happen, especially if the tunnel murals become no longer be accessible to us.

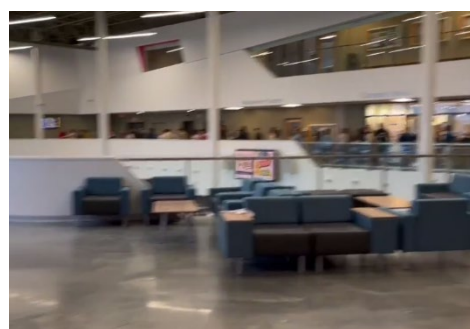
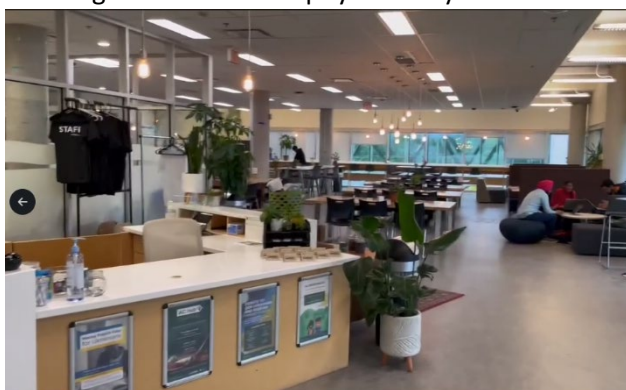


Food Court Seating: Could we possibly look at changing the food court seating to make it more inviting and provide flexibility of use for the space?



• **Dreams:**

- **SU = student space** – in this school, the student union office (known as the HUB) is the desk and area to the left and there is more student use space all around it, bringing students closer to their SU and lowering that barrier in a physical way. I wish we had enough space to be able to do something like this!



- More student use spaces can be created where ever there is some unused space with a few well-chosen and well-placed furnishings. While this may be difficult to achieve in darker spaces, perhaps it might be something we can look at with the renovations and changes coming to the space that is/was Galileos? (sorry for the blurry image)

• **Zoo Ideas:** I am excited to see the results of the upcoming Zoo renovations!

- The impact and liveliness of this space had a completely different feel just because of the coloring. That the menu has a simple legend for main things like dietary restrictions or spice level was also really useful and something I would love to see at the Zoo.



Budget:

The University of Lethbridge Students' Union sent 2 representatives to attend this conference. In retrospect, this was very wise because the experience would have been too great for one person. The ULSU invested a little over \$5000 (for conference fees, hotels, car rental, mileage, parking, and food etc.) to send us and, for the wealth of knowledge, contacts, and experiences received, it was a bargain.

Conclusion:

Attending the COCA Student Life Summit was an incredible experience and of significant value to my position as VPSA. Because of attending, I have been exposed to new ideas and made connections across Canada that I can directly apply to supporting the students of the University of Lethbridge.

Next year's COCA Student Life Summit will be held in Vancouver, BC. I HIGHLY recommend that at least 2 representatives are sent again, especially if next years' VPSA is new to office. This experience and the contacts made are well worth the investment.