

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 23 2013-06-21

Convocation

The graduates speak

“Not Your War”

Inch’Allah

Day Off, Payoff

Time for a break

Plus:

In Conversation

Click of the Wrist

and much more!



CONTENTS

The Voice's interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

Features

Convocation: The Graduates Speak	3
In Conversation: Mo Kenney	6
Comic: "Arming the Rebels"	

Columns

From Where I Sit: The Payoff	
The Mindful Bard: <i>Inch'Allah</i>	1
AUSU Update	14

News and Events

Did You Know?	5
Click of the Wrist	
International News Desk	13

From Our Readers

Letters to the Editor	2
-----------------------------	---

***The Voice
Magazine***

www.voicemagazine.org

500 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email

voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Tamra Ross

Managing Editor

Christina M. Frey

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka
Katie D'Souza
S.D. Livingston
Wanda Waterman

The Voice is published
every Friday in HTML and
PDF format.

For weekly email
reminders as each issue is
posted, fill out the
subscription form [here](#).

The Voice does not share
its subscriber list with
anyone.

© 2013 by *The Voice*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and
comments to voice@voicemagazine.org, and please
indicate if we may publish your letter.



CONVOCATION: THE GRADUATES SPEAK

Taurian Guinand



Taurian Guinand graduated from Athabasca University this spring with his Bachelor of Science (Human Science Major) with Great Distinction. This address was given on Thursday, June 6, 2013, as part of the Athabasca University Convocation ceremonies.

Mr. Chair

Mr. President

Elected Officials

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Platform Party

Graduates

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour to be a part of Convocation this year, and to have the privilege of joining so many unique individuals to celebrate their accomplishments. Indeed,

Athabasca University represents success—not just academic, but in every area of life.

For me, success meant being able to study science from the comforts of my family's home, free from the typical social distractions present in the lives of many students at conventional universities. Having completed all of my primary education at a distance as well, it was quite simple for me to adapt to university courses by distance education. In addition, Athabasca University allowed me to dedicate time to helping my parents on our family farm and volunteering at a long-term care unit. I could complete work at my own pace, and spend extra time for understanding difficult concepts and doing assignments. Ultimately, Athabasca University has given me a strong foundation for my future career, without compromising other aspects of my life.

I think that the majority of Athabasca University's students have also enjoyed such benefits. Although the specific details in each student's story vary considerably, they all reflect the ease with which Athabasca University's programs adapt to diverse life plans. Indeed, I am sure that most students on stage today could describe how Athabasca University removed restrictions of age, prior education, affordability, or accessibility in allowing them to achieve their dreams.

Nonetheless, students have also faced many challenges unique to distance education. With the flexible schedule it provides, time management is key to completing work efficiently; however, because many

students have family or work responsibilities in addition to their studies, it is often difficult to follow a particular schedule. Several times, I myself experienced the need to revise my schedule in order to balance a weekly commute to Fort McMurray with Internet availability and exam writing. Another challenge is the lack of direct interaction with tutors and other students. In this isolated environment, academic demands can easily seem insurmountable. Students have therefore taught themselves strategies for remaining on track. In fact, we could say that Athabasca University offers a virtual course for independent work that will surely enhance our ability to survive future challenges.

Unlike many of Athabasca University's students, I was able to visit the university here in Athabasca, where I wrote exams, visited the library, registered in new courses, and completed science labs. The faculty and staff always made these experiences enjoyable, and I am certain that they have given the same impression to those students who have only interacted with them by phone or computer. For them, every student is important. Today we celebrate you as well because you generate the welcoming atmosphere that characterizes Athabasca University, and have made completing our degrees a pleasant path to take. I also commend Athabasca University's leaders for their vision in producing a university that caters to the student. It is your dedication to this ideal that has made postsecondary education, at home, an attainable reality for everyone.

Tutors and professors also deserve special recognition for the roles they have played in delivering education. Along with developing courses, they provide the intellectual support that students rely on. As students, we often take the more difficult path to enlightenment, and these individuals willingly take the time to guide each of us to solutions. Tutors must also cope with the distance separating them and their students, and they accomplish this task with skill, day after day. Thank you for choosing to be an active part of our education. You have transformed our often mediocre performance into excellence.

"Given the 'distance' in distance education, students rely on their family and friends for personal interaction. These people are the ones who, without compensation, share the weight of our work, sacrifice their schedules so that we can have time to study, and listen to our complaints of the challenging scholastic demands we have chosen."

Given the "distance" in distance education, students rely on their family and friends for personal interaction. These people are the ones who, without compensation, share the weight of our work, sacrifice their schedules so that we can have time to study, and listen to our complaints of the challenging scholastic demands we have chosen. Thank you for your encouragement and support; your love has motivated many of us to pursue further education and reach for our dreams. May we use our successes to help you as unselfishly as you have helped us.

As many of those I have already mentioned are quick to remind us students, however, we are here today because we have chosen to succeed. Upon registering in a program, we know that we will subject ourselves to several years of toil before graduating. Although students in general may doubt their ability

to succeed, those preparing to embark on a journey with distance education must possess clear goals and a strong dedication to achieving them. Indeed, studying at Athabasca University is not for the faint-of-heart; it requires discipline and persistence. Students at Athabasca University are here because they want to learn. They want to advance their education and improve their lives, and they are willing to tackle whatever challenges lie in their way with enthusiasm.

I congratulate all those students whose graduations we are celebrating at Convocation this year. Savour your accomplishment and treasure the elation you feel after so many years of hard work. May the degree you receive be only the first of many successes.

Today, let us also remember that we merely follow in the footprints of those who have gone before us, and are empowered by the dedication of those who walk beside us. So to everyone who has made Athabasca University a success: thank you. You have indeed taught us perhaps one of the most important lessons in life, which is to hold fast to our dreams, however difficult or impossible they may seem. One day they will come true.

DID YOU KNOW?

Convocation



Here at *The Voice Magazine* we'd like to extend our heartiest congratulations to all new graduates! We wish you all the best as you take the next step in your educational or professional journey.

If you were unable to attend Convocation or your graduation is still far off and you want a preview of your own big day, Athabasca University's [Convocation page](#) is a good source of information about Convocation weekend.

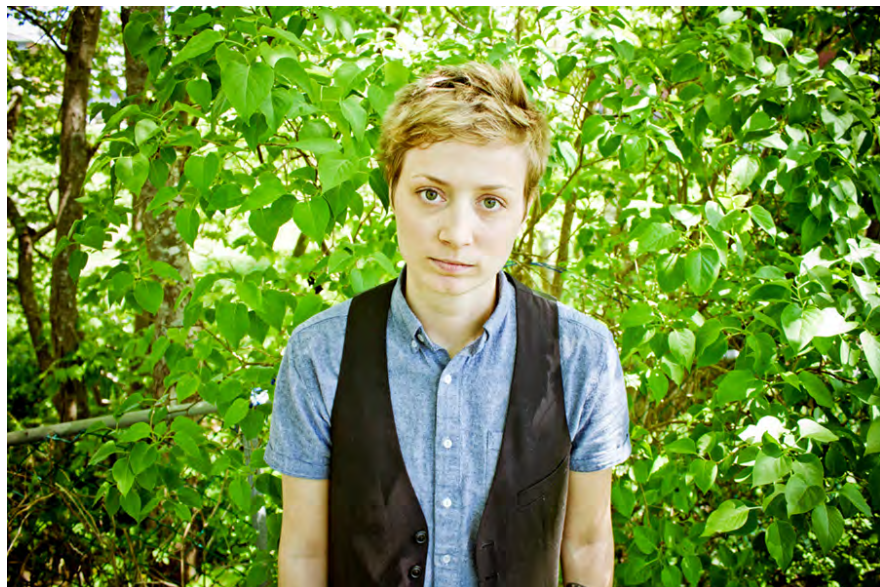
Although videos from the 2013 ceremonies are not yet available, you can access [photo galleries](#) and [video coverage](#) from past years.

If you attended Convocation this year, whether in person or virtually, we want to hear from you! Contact us at voice@voicemagazine.org for further details.

And look for our continuing *Voice* coverage of Convocation this month. We'll have photos, addresses from graduates, and more!

IN CONVERSATION

Wanda Waterman



Mo Kenney

***Mo Kenney** is a young Nova Scotian singer-songwriter who produced her debut album last September and has since been touring with Joel Plaskett and The Emergency and Ron Sexsmith. The recipient and nominee of numerous prestigious awards as well as raves from critics, Mo is known for clever, insightful lyrics—often on the subject of triumphing over heartache—and a sincere, well-crafted delivery.*

On July 7 she'll be performing at the Savoy du Métropolis as part of the Montreal International Jazz Festival. Recently she took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about how she grew into music and what inspires her now.

Bounce it Like a Bad Cheque

What is it about Nova Scotia that renders it such a fertile breeding ground for musicians in spite of having a limited music infrastructure, a chronically depressed economy, and a small population?

"I'm not sure being a Nova Scotian has made me a better musician," says Mo, "but there's certainly lots of talented musicians coming out of Nova Scotia. I feel lucky to be part of such a giant music community. I'm proud to come from a place that's known for producing talented artists."

When her talent and hard work met a series of lucky breaks, including a meeting with famous producer and musician Joel Plaskett while she was still in high school, Mo didn't hesitate to commit herself to a full-time music career.

"I've always liked writing," she admits, "but I never really considered being a singer-songwriter as a kid. It wasn't until I picked up my first guitar at the age of 11 that I decided I was going to be a musician. At that point I wasn't sure what I was going to do; I thought maybe I'd play guitar in someone else's band. I started actually writing my own songs at the age of 15, and that was when the idea started to form."

Although Mo is now only 22 years old, she's already producing veteran-calibre recordings and performances. Nonetheless, she exhibits a disarming humility and a drive to keep doing better.

"I don't think I've been able to develop more quickly than other musicians. It's taken me a long time to figure out how to write songs and be able to express myself through that medium. I've been working at it for a long time and am still learning and still striving to be better at what I do."

Discovering a New World of Music

Mo is influenced less by the folk and singer-songwriter tradition than by recent alternative bands.

"When I was 15 I began listening to all kinds of new artists like Elliott Smith, The Shins, Sigur Ros, The Strokes, TV on the Radio, etc. It totally changed my life. I became even more obsessed with music and wanted to create something different like these artists seemed to be doing. I'd always listened to music, but discovering these artists made something click for me. It was like discovering a new world."

When she and Joel Plaskett (the only two musicians on her album) were putting her debut recording together, Joel thought it might be a good idea to include one cover tune. Mo immediately thought of putting a new twist on David Bowie's "Five Years."

"'Five Years' is by far my favourite Bowie tune. I heard it for the first time on vinyl in my first apartment. It's kind of the theme song for an era for me. When Joel and I . . . talked about putting a cover tune on there . . . it was the first song I thought of. I went home and learned it and it felt really good to sing and play. It just felt right."

What does Mo feed that fertile brain of hers? "I watch a ton of movies. When I was a teenager I watched my first Wes Anderson film and was immediately hooked. He puts together such great soundtracks in all his movies, and I've been introduced to a lot of music through him."

"*The Royal Tannenbaums* gave me my first taste of Elliott Smith. Elliott has had a huge influence on me as an artist; his music is the reason I taught myself to fingerpick."

"I've been listening to a lot of Sharon Van Etten lately. Her album *Tramp* is amazing. I've also completely fallen in love with Rachel Sermanni's music, so that's been on my playlist a lot lately as well. These past few days I've been listening to the song 'Dr. Baker' by The Beta Band and 'Matter of Time' by The Low Anthem."

"gonna take my bad luck

turn it into good luck

gonna take your heart

and turn it into something nice

gonna take a train wreck

bounce it like a bad cheque

send you on your way

and I won't think about it twice"

from "Déjà vu" by Mo Kenney

Coming Up

What's on the horizon for this rising star? "This summer I'll be doing a lot of playing, which is great. I'm doing a *lot* of festivals! I'm writing as much as I can these days, so that when the time comes to record a new album, I'll have lots to pull from. I can't wait to get back into the studio! Also, I just bought a fiddle and will be spending lots of time trying to master it."

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.

CLICK OF THE WRIST

Communicate

We're approaching the end of an era: on July 14, the last telegram will be sent, and the once-groundbreaking form of communication will officially be obsolete. If you've ever wanted to send a telegram, start composing one now before it's too late—or just honour the historical moment by reading this trivia about communication, human and animal, ancient and modern:

Animal Talk

Sure, *Finding Nemo's* Dory didn't really know how to "speak whale," but whales do have their own fascinating language, with many layers and levels of communication. So do these other animals, from elephants to chickens to prairie dogs.

These Degenerate Times

If the telegraph's been rendered obsolete by the lightning speed of modern electronic communication, what will fall next? Naysayers insist that all this progress spells disaster for interpersonal communication—but ironically, people were decrying the breakdown of communication way back when the telegraph was first invented. XKCD gets it right.

Whistle While You Work

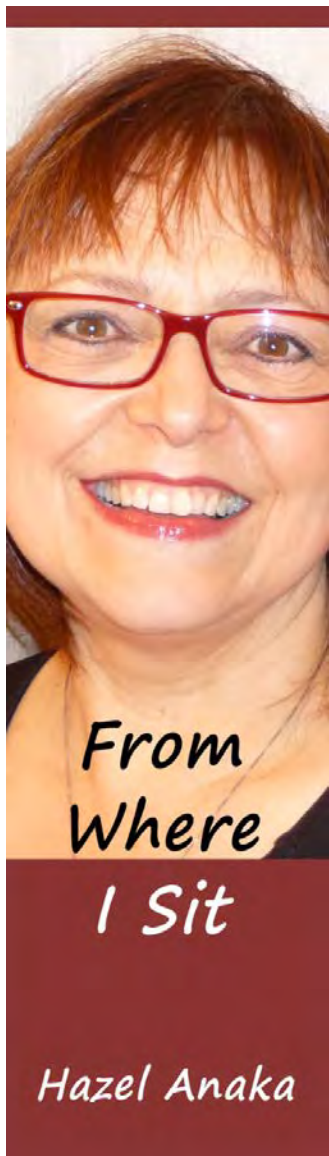
A wolf whistle conveys a certain message on the city streets, but there are whole, complex languages based on whistling—and they're found all over the world. Whistling carries much better than shouted language and historically has been found in communities that are spread widely over rough terrain. This BBC piece (and video) talks about the whistling language of La Gomera, the smallest of the Canary Islands; the language has recently experienced a revival.



COMIC

Wanda Waterman





The Payoff

My body is getting weary and my mind is turning to mush as my work as festival coordinator shifts into high gear.

Each day I start with an intended to-do list with about 25 items on it: the most time-sensitive, critical items. If I were using Steven Covey's matrix, these items would fall in the Urgent and Important category. Their resolution affects other important factors which affect other important details which affect other important minutiae.

And as much as it feels gratifying to stroke those items off the list, a new list (or two) appears every day. When I'm in danger of feeling confident, all I have to do is look at the countdown clock I insisted be part of our [website](#). Yikes.

Some days, working my way through that list goes like clockwork. People answer their phones and emails. They say things like, "Yes, of course I'd love to. Is there anything else I can do for you?" It seems the universe conspires to make things fall into place, and we are blessed. Those are the good days.

On other days, phone messages and emails go unanswered. People who committed their involvement need to withdraw. Roadblocks and delays manifest. Shit happens.

Those are the reality check days.

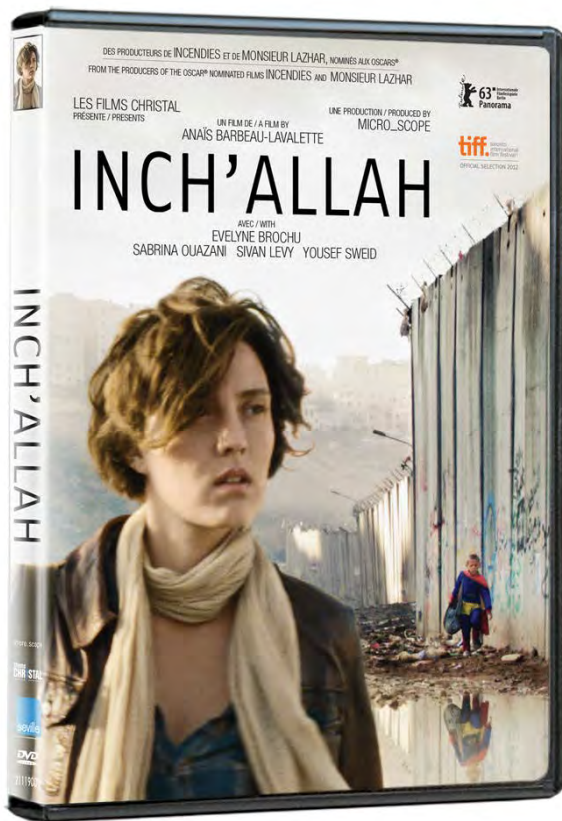
Because of the way I'm hardwired, I get just a wee bit intense. The project takes over my waking life—and affects my sleep. It creates rock-hard knots in my neck and upper back. I imagine the cortisol coursing through my body. Stress? Who, me? My forearms ache from the pain of a repetitive stress injury that flares up with all the hours spent at the computer. The daily activities of life suffer. Exercise, hah! Cooking healthy meals, who's got time? Just goofing off becomes a foreign concept. Family and friends take a back seat to the work at hand. I even forget to revel in all that has been accomplished because all I can see is the mountain ahead.

So when a friend invited us to attend a minor hockey fundraiser, my first reaction was to say (and believe) that I couldn't afford the time. I'm so glad better judgment prevailed. The three comedians made me laugh to the point of tears. Their routines were laced with cursing and not at all politically correct, but oh so much fun. The endorphins released through belly laughs dulled the pain for several hours. The vodka highballs helped me forget the deadlines. And winning an authentic Coach purse in the raffle didn't hurt one little bit, either. Let the record show that I would never pay \$300 for a logo-covered plastic purse, but winning it is quite different. This tasteful black and grey one is tangible proof that taking a break for the night can pay off, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



Courtesy eOne Films.

Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

Film: *Inch'Allah*

Writer/Director: Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette

Cast: Évelyne Brochu, Sabrina Ouazani, Sivan Levy, Hammoudi Elkarmi

Genre: Drama

The Slow, Inexorable Path to a Doomed Radicalization

Palestinian urchins sift through the refuse of an abandoned Israeli settlement, searching for anything they can use or sell. They find a naughty magazine with English and Hebrew lettering and quickly huddle around it, chortling happily. Nearby, their pretty young aunt carefully adjusts her hijab so no hairs show. The call to prayer begins.

The mysterious blond Safi haunts this scene and nearly every other (what's a towheaded boy doing among these swarthy Arabs?). Looking like a small parody of Nietzsche's Superman, or a member of Hitler's hypothesized master race, he picks up a cardboard drawing of a blue sky with fluffy clouds and contemplates it. Later we see this picture posted in his family's dining area.

His grown sister, Rand, now pregnant and awaiting her husband's sentencing in the Israeli courts, is friends with Chloe (played by Évelyne Borchu), her Canadian obstetrician, who lives on the Israeli side but works at a clinic on the Palestinian side. Deliberately neutral and just a little ignorant of what the world already knows about the conflict, Chloe is nonetheless slowly drawn into the struggle.

Chloe is not entirely likeable; she puts the viewer ill at ease by being somewhat promiscuous in her affections and showing an absence of any firm political stance, a lack that leaves her prey to the contingencies of the situation. Chloe is needy, uncertain, and culturally ignorant, and we see what happens when such people are traumatized after witnessing terrible suffering. If we are to experience Chloe's world vicariously, it's our shadow selves that must experience it.

Chloe is also close friends with Ava, an Israeli soldier deeply troubled by what her job as a checkpoint guard demands of her and emotionally battered by the relentless hatred of the Palestinian Arabs. But she identifies with her people and defends them against Chloe's slowly mounting criticisms.

Yet the Arabs accuse Chloe of being too comfortable on the Israeli side, too free, and too licentious with her Israeli drinking buddies. They resent her attempts to help them and her failure to grasp the immensity of the conflict from their perspective.

"The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers."

Leviticus 25:23

She's faced with the brutal possibility that even though her friends are on both sides, neither side is willing to accept her help or compassion or to help her heal from the horrible things she's witnessed. "It's not your war," Ava tells her.

Like the Irish, the Palestinians have long held a reputation among other Arab nations for being pugnacious. In this film the boys and even women great with child mouth off mercilessly, challenging the Israeli authorities at every turn, their bravado an entrenched reaction to daily humiliations and a history of pain.

And so it's heartbreaking to see Rand's proud brother Faisal at the checkpoint, obsequiously begging the cold Israeli soldier to let his sister, now in the final stages of labour, to cross and enter the hospital. The Arab desperately swallows his pride and starts talking football, trying to find some common ground with which to thaw out the soldier's apathy.

The title of the film means "If God wills," a phrase Muslims are supposed to say before statements of future occurrence. It's the third film from micro_scope, an independent production company which also brought us *Incendies* and *Monsieur Lazhar* (also recommended by the Bard). *Inch'Allah* they'll be making more.

Inch'Allah manifests seven of the Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence; 3) it harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda; 4) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 5) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 6) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; and 7) it makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomenon, making living a unique opportunity.



**(L-R) Sabrina Ouazani and Evelyn Brochu star in *Inch'Allah*.
Courtesy of eOne Films.**

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: End of an Era

Wendy's burgers are found around the globe, but there was only one place you could order the T-Rex Burger: the Wendy's in Brandon, Manitoba. Now the nine-patty T-Rex, which retailed for \$21.99 and totalled 3,000 calories, is going the way of its namesake dinosaur.

As the *Winnipeg Sun* [reports](#), the burger was originally created "after a fictional ad appeared in an edition of *Sports Illustrated* magazine nine years ago." Although it was never listed on the Brandon Wendy's menu, "management had obliged almost daily" when customers requested the novelty. The original ad was on display in the restaurant.

However, recent publicity brought the T-Rex burger to the attention of corporate headquarters, and it wasn't happy. This past week execs told the Brandon restaurant to stop serving the burger, noting in a statement that "Wendy's neither promotes nor condones the eating of a nine-patty burger in one sitting."

The ad has been since removed and the burger is officially no longer available. But don't be too sad; after all, as one witness told reporters, "It's just a triple-triple burger."

Around the World: Under the Sea

After the tugboat he was working on capsized, a man spent two and a half days 30 meters underwater, with no equipment, food, or water—and lived to tell the tale.

As the *Huffington Post* [reports](#), ship's cook Harrison Okene was on board when the tugboat he was working on sank off the coast of Nigeria.

While the other crew members drowned around him (10 bodies have been found, while one is still missing), Okene survived the "freezing cold water" for 60 hours thanks to a "four foot high bubble of air" which allowed him to breathe.

He sat alone in the dark, hungry and thirsty, while the salt water caused "parts of his skin [to begin] peeling away." Although he was surrounded by blackness, he could hear the fish feeding on the remains of his fellow crew members. "It was horror," he told reporters.

He added, "I was there in the water . . . just thinking it's the end. I kept thinking the water was going to fill up the room but it did not." Okene told reporters that it was a "miracle."

After being found by divers searching the wreckage for bodies, Okene spent several days in a decompression chamber to allow him to safely re-enter the surface.

AUSU UPDATE



Dear Members,

You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.

We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.

We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.

At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.

We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.

Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.

AUSU.

This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. *The Voice* does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to ausu@ausu.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

THE VOICE

500 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
- Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

Publisher Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief Tamra Ross
Managing Editor Christina M. Frey

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, Katie D'Souza, S.D. Livingston, Wanda Waterman

www.voicemagazine.org

The Voice is published every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org.

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, subscribe [here](#). *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.