



THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 18 2022-05-20

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Rolling Thunder

The Ridiculous Sequel

Skin Care and Self Care

Seeing The Connections



*Plus:
Council Connection
Dubious Marketing Tactics
and muchmore!*

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

Minds We Meet: <i>Melanie Dubitz</i>	4
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Articles

Editorial: <i>Back to the Wall</i>	3
The Ridiculousness that was Rolling Thunder	6
Why Skin Care is Related to Self Care.....	9
Council Connection: <i>April 2022 Meeting</i>	10
How to Inspire.....	14
Rise to the Top: <i>Requirements of a CMO</i>	21

Columns

Music Review: <i>Stand Alone</i>	16
Fly on the Wall: <i>Dog Ate Your Homework?</i>	17
Beyond Literary Landscapes: <i>Recent Reads 2022</i>	19
Dear Barb: <i>COVID Crashes Easter Dinner</i>	23

News and Events

Scholarship of the Week.....	8
Authentic Events.....	12
Student Sizzle	20
Vintage Voice.....	22
AUSU Update	25

Comics

Some Dubious Marketing Tactics.....	15
Poet Maeve: <i>Tolerating Intolerance</i>	24

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Views and articles
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of the contributors and do
not represent the views of
AUSU Student Council.

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

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

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Volume 30, Issue 19

© 2022 by The Voice
Magazine

ISSN 2561-3634

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

Editorial

Back to the Wall

Karl Low



Premier Kenney has said he'll be stepping down. The leader of the UCP received an approval vote of 51.4% in the recent leadership review here in Alberta, and although Premier Kenney previously said that any majority would be enough for him to continue and that all party members should fall in line if it happens, when the results were announced, he proclaimed that it was not enough support for him to continue to lead the party.

Of course, exactly when he'll be stepping down isn't known quite yet. Rather than appoint an interim leader, Premier Kenney has also announced he'll continue to lead the party until a leadership contest can be run and the UCP can select a new leader from the bouquet of candidates that will be on offer.

Currently, that includes Brian Jean, a further right social conservative, and Danielle Smith, former leader of the far-right WildRose party who abandoned it for the political opportunity to be in the Progressive Conservative government of the time—for all of six months—before it fell to the NDP government in 2015.

There is a lot of speculation about who else might decide to throw their hat into the ring, but to my mind, it doesn't really matter. Whoever wins the UCP leadership will likely win the next election, as the riding system currently gives more power per vote to those in rural ridings, and those ridings are generally locked in for the conservatives. 2015 was an exception brought on by the falling price of oil severely damaging the Alberta economy, coupled with the rural ridings feeling a sense of betrayal because of Smith's floor-crossing.

Neither of those situations is likely to apply in the next election, especially as sanctions against Russia continue to drive the price of oil skyward.

For us as AU students, this means that what we've seen over the past couple of years is likely what we're going to continue to get—further cuts to post-secondary funding and more arbitrary and populist driven changes to how post-secondary institutions have to work, regardless of evidence.

But, for Kenney, what could have caused him to change course and decide to—eventually—resign? I think, in this case, it's attempting to preserve his legacy as creating a political party that can withstand the test of time—or at least a second election. This also frees him to approach federal politics once again. And while I don't think he intends to throw his hat into the leadership run for the federal conservatives, not this year, anyway. The next election isn't so far away, and now he has connections in politics both federally and provincially in Alberta. These are connections that he would certainly suggest he could leverage to some oil company that might find an extra seat on its board of directors for him. Especially if the CPC wins at the federal level.

And all of this, of course, is with a backdrop of Putin's aggression in Eastern Europe. All in all, it stands to be interesting times.

Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl'.

MINDS WE MEET



Who are your fellow students? At times, in an online learning environment, it can feel like you are all alone, but across the nation and around the globe, students just like you are also pursuing their Athabasca University studies! Each week, *The Voice Magazine* will be bringing you some of these stories. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Melanie Dubitz (she/her), currently residing in Edmonton, Alberta. Born and raised in the city, the 28-year old AU student is “just about finished the Bachelor of Science Majoring in Human Science Post-Diploma Program.” She mentioned, “I received my Physical and Occupational Therapy Assistant diploma in 2015 and have worked as an Occupational Therapy Assistant ever since. In 2019, I made the decision to finish my degree with the goal of applying for my Masters in Occupational Therapy. AU was perfect because it offered a post-diploma program that I was actually interested in, and I was very happy to be able to use some credits from my diploma toward my degree so that I was not beginning a 4-year undergrad from scratch. I have recently submitted my application for my

Masters in Occupational Therapy for the fall of 2022.”

When she is not studying, Melanie “really enjoy[s] trying new restaurants and cocktail bars in Edmonton and hanging out with friends.” She continued, “I love going to concerts and festivals; I am very excited that the Edmonton Folk Music Festival will be back this year. I also like going to my CrossFit gym, I have a great community there and it has provided the best stress relief while I have been a student and working nearly full time. Otherwise, I of course love a good binge-worthy Netflix show.”

When asked if she is reading and/or watching anything right now, Melanie stated, “I’ll be honest I have not recreationally read a book in a very long time; I have truly been too busy with textbooks that I have no desire to continue reading after I am finished reading. This is something I look forward to getting back into when I am done school. I recently binged up to season 6 of *Peaky Blinders* and next on my list is *Euphoria*. I will probably treat myself to a *Euphoria* weekend when I am finished my last courses.”

When asked who in her life has had the greatest influence on her desire to learn, Melanie chose “the amazing Occupational Therapists that [she has] had the pleasure of working with over the last seven years,” explaining that “they inspired me to go back to school so that I too could become and OT.”

Overall, she has “had a great experience learning online.” She stated, “I like the flexibility and that I was still able to work while completing my education. I also like that you can pace it how you want; I have completed courses at what felt like mach speed when I needed to. Being able to begin semesters at any point in the year and schedule (or reschedule) exams for when it works best for you has also been great. I won’t say it has been easy by any means, it has taken a lot of discipline, time management, and self-initiation, I can see where online learning may not be for everyone.”

Like many AU students, Melanie mentioned that there was a moment that she wavered about continuing her schooling. “When I had to teach myself calculus and statistics after not taking a math course since high school. A tear or two was shed, I’ll admit. I have just never been a math wiz and having to teach it to myself through a textbook was no joke. I am sure there are others that found it a breeze but not me, many YouTube videos were watched at that time. The classes were mandatory for my degree so if I didn’t complete them at the time, I would have just had to do them later anyways. I guess my drive to finish my degree surpassed my fiery hatred for calculus and stats.”

When asked about her most memorable AU courses so far, Melanie admitted, “I am not sure that I have a memorable one in particular, but I am pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed the nutrition courses I took. It is nice to take courses that you are not only thoroughly interested in learning but that have direct applicability to your life. I definitely feel as though I found a mini passion for nutrition after taking 3 nutrition courses at AU.”

As for communications with her tutors? “Overall, I had good experiences with most of the tutors I had. I was able to receive responses within a business day or two, sometimes even on weekends and I never had any concerns with responses or getting marks back on time, although I have heard that others may not have been as lucky. I used other resources fairly often, such as Google and YouTube, so I rarely found myself reaching out for questions or concerns or course material explanations. Not to say tutors were not available for that, I just seemed to figure things out and learn on my own, that’s what worked well for me.”

If she were the new president of AU, Melanie would focus on tuition, explaining, “Unfortunately, the increase in tuition has been a burden that students are consistently having to carry and worry about. Even comparing course prices from 2019 when I started to now, there has been a drastic increase. This would definitely be an area I would want to focus on if I were president of AU.”

When asked which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, Melanie chose “Gordon Ramsay or some other famous chef.” “Maybe they can convince me that cooking is in fact enjoyable,” she stated. And the lunch? “Anything that I did not have to cook would be good. A really good burger, one that is up to Gordon Ramsay’s standards, would probably be great.”

Melanie’s most valuable lesson learned in life has been: “That if you want something bad enough and are willing to put in the work for it that you can achieve a lot more than you may think. I am less than two months away from completing 26 classes over 8 consecutive semesters while working 31-40 hours per week. I do believe that if I can do it others can too. We are much stronger and more resilient than we often give ourselves credit for.”

The one thing that distinguishes her from other is that she has “had the pleasure of working on Edmonton’s Firefighter Burn Treatment Unit for almost six years.”

And her proudest moment? “I cannot think of a proudest moment so far. I feel as though when I am finally finished my degree and if/when I am accepted into OT that will probably feel amazing. I will be very proud of myself and the hard work I have put in at that point.” Best of luck Melanie!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.

The Ridiculousness that was Rolling Thunder

Alek Golijanin



A sequel is defined as an event that happens after and is the result of an earlier event. In the world of media, it tends to be a published, broadcast, or recorded piece of work that continues the story or develops the theme of an earlier one. A sequel is also the best way to explain what transpired with Rolling Thunder Ottawa, following after the Ottawa Trucker Occupation.

I compared the ridiculousness that was the Ottawa Trucker Occupation to a Netflix comedy special. So, when I heard that there was a convoy of motorcycle enthusiasts who were organizing a trip to Ottawa under the name “Rolling Thunder Ottawa”, I expected weather warnings as the first week of May came around. Despite the fact that sequels rarely live up to their original pieces, Rolling Thunder Ottawa did not disappoint.

The Forecast Is In

As an avid weather channel enthusiast, I have come to understand that lightning precedes thunder because the speed of light is much faster than the speed of sound. The scary thing about thunder is the noise it creates, but lightning strikes can generate heat five times hotter than the sun’s surface. The only thing scary about Rolling Thunder Ottawa was the bikers that had a stocky build with long beards and black vests.

From the start, the organizers of Rolling Thunder Ottawa wanted a variety of causes to come under their umbrella. Their recruitment strategy was textbook Rihanna. “When the sun shine, we shine together. Told you I’ll always be your friend. Took an oath, I’m a stick it out to the end. Now that it’s raining more than ever, know that we’ll still have each other. You can stand under my umbrella. You can stand under my umbrella. Ella, ella, eh, eh, eh.”

Once the weather-themed movement was successful in bringing a variety of causes under their umbrella, they decided to top it off by having a guest speaker whose name was Sky. What a magnificent way of paying tribute to the earth.

Who cares if all those motorcycles that would converge upon Ottawa from across all of Canada would contribute unnecessary pollution? What matters is that their intentions were pure. I am convinced that they cared about the environment otherwise they would have never named

themselves after a weather event. This was them telling us that they supported the fight against climate change even though they were contributing with unnecessary pollution.

The recruitment strategy at Rolling Thunder Ottawa should be featured in a case study because of the key personalities they were able to bring together. It contributed to the excitement that was seen amongst members. During the main march, while members were marching shoulder-to-shoulder, “USA! USA!” chants erupted. For the sake of health and safety, I hope that nobody was COVID-19 positive. But are people who do not believe in COVID-19 susceptible to catching it?

Employee of the Year

There were a few key personalities who are in the running for employee of the year. They include the “Mr. Bubbles”, “Miss Thunder Twerker”, and “Mr. Thong”.

Mr. Bubbles is a devout believer of the Church of Bubbles and he was anointed and appointed by the heavenly winds that carry bubbles across the land. For all we know, there may have been other disciples, but their bubbles have burst and Mr. Bubbles is all that remains. If Rolling Thunder Ottawa does not award Mr. Bubbles with the employee of the year award, it really may burst his bubble given that his bus was ticketed and towed by Ottawa Police Service.

Miss Thunder Twerker is known for violating the personal space of police officers while supporting causes that are important to her. At the Rolling Thunder Ottawa event, Miss Thunder Twerker reversed herself into a police officer, who may have been a married man, and when he rejected her sultry advances, she pounced on him in the heat of the moment.

Nobody really knows why Miss Thunder Twerker acted the way she did, but some witnesses have reported hearing Missy Elliot’s *Work It* song being played at the moment the incident transpired. The only question I have for Miss Thunder Twerker is whether it was worth it, the way she worked and put her thing down, flipped it and reversed it into the police officer?

Mr. Thong is the dark horse to win the employee of the year. He decided to show up in a skinny speedo. His explanation was that inflation made everything much more expensive, but I am starting to think that his true reason for showing up to Rolling Thunder Ottawa was to court Miss Thunder Twerker with a peacock-esque dance to the Black Eyed Peas’ *My Humps* song.

If it was up to me, I would award Mr. Bubbles with the employee of the year award. He had his bubble bus towed away and if we combine that with his U-shaped hairline, he has lost enough – just give him the award.

I also have a happy ending for Miss Thunder Twerker and Mr. Thong – an arranged marriage. The divorce rate in Canada is about 40%, but I have experience with marrying people and if I organized a wedding singalong to *Daisy Bell (A Bicycle for Two)*, there is no way that marriage falls apart.

Supporting Social Causes

The Rolling Thunder Ottawa movement has been described by some as a disguise for far-right ideology. However, the Ottawa Police Services’ twitter account has labelled these individuals as “freedom supporters”. There must have been some compellingly positive intelligence that policing agencies were able to gather on Rolling Thunder Ottawa that the deputy police chief needed to remind officers not to participate at this event. Why else would police officers want to align themselves with the movement?

It can also be argued that this particular group of “freedom supporters” wanted to advocate better relations between Canada and the USA. There were American flags alongside Canadian flags, Trump hats, that added to the chants of “USA! USA!”. Somebody needs to remind the US Embassy in Ottawa about how pro-USA Canada is. We also need to make sure that all those who participated in the Rolling Thunder Ottawa event are legally permitted to be in Canada.

The Storm Has Passed

Unlike the Ottawa Trucker Occupation whose members overstayed their welcome, the Rolling Thunder Ottawa movement only stayed for the weekend. They may have arrived in Ottawa, but I would not know seeing how quiet Ottawa was on Monday. It may have had something to do with Thor, son of Odin, not showing up after some supporters were blowing into horns while facing the heavens. Although there may have been a lot of thunder over the weekend, at the end of the day it was just a bunch of empty noise. Let us hope that we have better weather over the summer.

On a more serious note...

The more I learn about the science of people, the more I realize how important it is to understand a person's origin story before slapping labels onto them. Some labels might come about naturally as a result of a person's negative actions towards others, but even in those occasions we are often left wondering why they acted the way they did.

My belief is that we are all born inherently good but somewhere along the way some people deviate away from that goodness. That shift can almost always be attributed to a troubled childhood and a hard life. That does not justify a person's actions when they are out of line, but it does help us understand why they are the way they are.

Alek Golijanin is an AU alum who considers himself a gentleman first, a scholar second, and a combat sports fanatic third. In that order.

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: For the Love of Curling Scholarship Program

Sponsored by: Curling Canada Foundation

Deadline: June 30, 2022, 11:59 pm EDT

Potential payout: \$2500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens, 22 years old or younger by December 31, 2022, enrolled full-time in a Canadian university or college, have a minimum grade average of 70% (or equivalent GPA), and be involved with the sport of curling.

What's required: A completed application form, recent academic transcripts, two letters of recommendation, a profile photo, and a 2-page essay on a given topic related to curling.

Tips: Read the "Required Attachments" section of the application for details on the essay and letters of recommendation.

Where to get info: www.curling.ca/foundation/youth-scholarships/



Why Skin Care is Related to Self Care



I Recently I've been very absorbed in skin care in my practice. I see a lot of patients with different skin problems and love being able to provide my medical suggestions for their conditions.

One thing I've noticed of late is how much skin care is connected to self-care. Many people have acne flare ups when they're stressed, eat poorly, and don't take good care of themselves. When I observe someone's skin, I know that it tells me a story. Sometimes, it's the story of a busy mother of two without time for themselves. It's also the story of older women who have never been told that sunlight can severely damage their skin's integrity. It's also the story of men and women who have taken the steps to notice the condition of their skin and come to me with questions for solutions.

As a dermatology pharmacist, a lot of my focus has been shifted to skin treatment for various issues such as acne vulgaris, rosacea, hyperpigmentation, and eczema. One of my passions is counseling on different skin medications and

prescribing different dermatology medications.

Skin Care is Therapeutic

For some, skincare routines each evening can take anywhere between 5-20 minutes. For those who spend longer on their skin, usually they are in their bathroom, in a quiet setting where they are in front of the mirror observing their skin. The process of simply being alone can be meditative. You're not distracted by your cellphone or other housemates. Even just taking a few minutes out of the day to look at ourselves in the mirror can help relieve anxiety and stress. It's a calming routine before bed.



Having lived in Alberta for most of my life, using a good moisturizer is key to protecting my skin against eczema flare-ups.

Good Skin Care Protects You Against Skin Problems

Having overcome my bad habit of popping pimples as a teenager, I can safely say that there are several skin infections and problems that can result from improper skin care. For example, not wearing adequate sunscreen can cause skin cancers and premature aging. For both men and women, premature aging such as crepe skin can make us look older than our actual age. Moreover, not being aware of how to address problems such as eczema can cause open wounds and breaks in the skin creating infection and inflammation.



My bedtime routine includes some light reading and a facial mask.

Skin Care Routines Offer Stability and Structure

In our current chaotic schedules, there's a lot of moving parts. Especially for busy AU students juggling different responsibilities. Similar to brushing your teeth before bed, skin care can offer predictability to the day. For myself, in the morning taking a few minutes to pat some serum into my face, then applying a generous amount of sunscreen helps set the tone for the rest of the day. Rather than show up to work rushed and stressed, I feel calmer following my daily skin routine.

Xine Wang is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot-breeder and tea-connoisseur.

Council Connection April 21, 2022 Meeting

Kent Provost



The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm MST. Executive Director Jodi Campbell was announced as the accessibility officer. President Karen Fletcher read the land acknowledgement: "Athabasca University Students' Union respectfully acknowledges that we are on and work on the traditional lands of the Indigenous Peoples (Inuit, First Nations, Métis) of Canada. We also recognize that our student members span across the lands we now know as Canada and abroad, and we acknowledge and celebrate these Indigenous histories, languages, and cultures. As an organization, AUSU is committed to decolonization, reconciliation, and conciliation efforts, acknowledging that there is much to unlearn. AUSU will continuously strive to build equitable relationships with Indigenous learners at AU, as well as Indigenous members and staff within AUSU, advocate with and for Indigenous

learners through consultation, and create spaces that are inclusive, respectful, and equitable." President Fletcher mentioned <https://www.native-land.ca/> and <https://www.whose.land/> as resources for discovering which people a given physical location belonged to. The previous meeting's minutes and the current agenda were accepted unanimously. Councillors Cassandra MacKay, Meredith Charlton, and Indigenous Circle Representative Jo-Mary Crowchild-Fletcher were not present for this meeting.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

A new plan for the SU's EDI committee was submitted and unanimously approved (available here: <https://www.ausu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2022-04-AUSU-EDI-Plan.pdf>). Of note, here are the committee's six goals for the coming year:

- 1) AUSU will advocate for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action, within the organization, the university, the provincial and federal governments, and all external advocacy efforts.
- 2) AUSU will create more equitable, diverse, and inclusive spaces within the organization.

- 3) AUSU will celebrate the voices and experiences of equity-seeking groups within the organization.
- 4) AUSU will create accessible spaces within the organization, and advocate to the university and all external advocacy efforts.
- 5) AUSU will advocate for EDI principles at AU.
- 6) AUSU will advocate for EDI principles at the provincial and federal levels.

Vice-President Community and Wellness (VPCW) Natalia Iwanek said, “This document reflects what we’ve done as an organization, particularly during this term. However, it also covers AUSU in previous terms, underscores advocacy for equity seeking students, policy work, and different events we’ve put on, all of which is based on work done in consultation with various AUSU committees.”

New Executive Committee

Executive Director Campbell formally announced the results of the recent executive election for the Council. “It was a pleasure to be able to host the initial exec meeting,” he said. “Everyone attended and it was a great meeting with some great questions for the candidates. I’m really proud to announce that Karen Fletcher is coming back as President. Trishtina Godoy-Controis was chosen for VP External and Indigenous Circle Representative, Dur-E-Najaf Syed for VP Finance and Administration, and Natalia Iwanek for VP Community and Wellness. On behalf of AUSU I want to congratulate the four of you. Thank you for putting your names forward for essential positions within AUSU. Congratulations to all, and I just want to say our recent meeting was a cool opportunity to get to know each other, and of course elect the new executive committee.”

Reports

Regarding her report, President Fletcher commented that the major thing to happen recently was that there wasn’t a strike at AU. “I’m sure we’re all thrilled about that,” she said. “We spent a lot of time planning for a strike and advocating that there not be one, and for the things students needed. We’re really pleased we didn’t have to go through with any of our contingency plans and that students will be able to continue on their own.”

Vice-President Finance and Administration (VPFA) Leah Campbell’s report contained information on learner support services (including discussion of a data breach of Homewood Health), a Frontline Learner Support Transformation Workshop, a meeting with the Athabasca University Faculty Association President Dave Powell, and a presentation on Recognizing and Avoiding Investment Scams. VPFA Campbell commented, “It’s been an honour to serve with you all. I’m kind of sad right now that I’m leaving.”

Executive Director Campbell had this to say about his report: “Historically speaking this is a real milestone meeting for us. Whenever we have a changeover it’s a real signal of passing the baton, if you will, from one set of councillors to the next. All of the work, discussions, conversations, debate, and laughs we have along the way mean a great deal to the organization. I very much want to formally thank everybody for the contribution of those who are leaving. We wish you nothing but the best. Some of you are graduating and moving on to amazing careers. You’ve left things better than you found them. We couldn’t ask for more and we appreciate your dedication to AU students. At the end of the day, our job is to serve them. I can’t say enough about what you’ve done. Now you get to pass the baton on to the next group. I’ll just end by mentioning a podcast I hosted with Richard McCloud on the ongoing Integrated Learning Environment project. If you’re interested in what’s going on in terms of the computer ‘backend’ of how AU course materials are distributed, go ahead and listen.”

Communications and Member Service Coordinator Ashley Janes reported that AUSU's LinkedIn Learning and VMock pages had seen steady increases with both registration and engagement. She said, "The VMock data shows that we have gone from the low hundreds of students who signed up for it to now approximately 1200 in the past 10 or 11 months. I think that's good, and we should celebrate this trend of growth in service utilization. The better news is that we have more strategies put in place to continue these increases. I think all around this is fairly fantastic news."

Council Dissolution and Formation

The then-extant Council was dissolved with unanimous approval. Ms. Fletcher commented on how she couldn't believe how sad she was at the moment, and she couldn't believe that it had already been so long. "[Councillors] Katy [Lowe] and Regan [Johnson] have been so helpful to figure out what we're doing, as I came in the byelection after them. I didn't expect to be on the border of tears, but here we are. We have a lovely group coming in that we're super excited about."

The tradition of all incoming Councillors swearing their oath simultaneously was cacophonously upheld: "I do solemnly swear that I will support, uphold, and defend the mission of the Athabasca University Students' Union at Athabasca University. I take this obligation freely and will adhere to and respect the bylaws, policies, and all other facets of the Union while doing the work to decolonize Athabasca University. I will always strive to enhance the quality of the learning experience of AU students and all distance learners; while advocating for the unique needs of the AUSU membership and fulfilling my council duties with honesty and integrity."

10 voices rang out with this oath, and, to their credit, it was nearly intelligible.

The new committees were formed as follows:

Finance: Eva Notter, Blake Collett, Amber McDuffe, Rebecca Wuebbolt, Cilhane Ahmed, with Dur-E-Najaf Syed chairing.

Awards: Cilhane Ahmed, Blake Collett, Eva Notter, and Amber McDuffe.

Membership Engagement and Communications: Amber McDuffe, Rebecca Wuebbolt, Trishtina Godoy-Controis, and Allie Wojtaszek.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Natalia Iwanek, Eva Notter, Allie Wojtaszek, Anli He, and Amber McDuffe.

Recognition and Acknowledgment

Ms. Katy Lowe wished to express her gratitude for the organization. "I'm so thankful for having had the opportunity to work alongside some truly amazing people," she said. "I feel like I've grown great professional relationships. I've learned so much from you all, gaining really true

AU-thentic Events **Upcoming AU Related Events**

CHAT with AU Library

Tues, May 24, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/page/ann

No pre-registration necessary; access through CHAT link on home page

CHAT with AU Library

Thur, May 26, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/page/ann

No pre-registration necessary; access through CHAT link on home page

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

friendships that I cherish and hold close to me. This has been a genuinely life-changing, empowering, and exciting experience. I look forward to spending time with you all. When I had crazy ideas, you made them happen. I don't want to say goodbye. I want to stay with you all. Please continue to talk to me. I'll be lonely and sad if you don't. I want to celebrate amazing things AUSU does. It has been the biggest highlight of my academic life."

Ms. Leah Campbell said, "Ditto. I'm having a hard time speaking right now. I'm sorry. I want to give a shoutout to Natalia for the EDI report and accessibility plan. That's her labour right there. I'm just so proud of you and I'm glad I got to serve with you. With Karen unexpectedly stepping into the role of President, I just want to say I will follow you anywhere."

Councillor McDuffe wanted to give shoutouts to Ms. Lowe and Ms. Regan Johnson for taking her under their wings. "When I first joined I found myself very intimidated. I was new, I didn't know anyone or what to expect, and these two were there for me to help me navigate my way through it. In the first Council meeting I attended, the three of us had a group chat in which I asked, 'Will it be dumb to ask this?' and they said, 'No, no, just go ahead and ask!' I'm excited to see where you'll both go in your futures."

VPCW Iwanek commented on how fantastic it was to work with Ms. Lowe and Ms. Johnson. "I don't know where the time went. I'm so glad to have met you both. Leah, I don't know how 4 months have gone by. I love the team. I think we accomplished so much and what you two added was absolutely incredible."

Q & A

One participant was interested in why the meetings are run according to Robert's Rules of Order (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert%27s_Rules_of_Order). For example, they were interested to know why any motion needs two people to promote any topic of discussion. President Fletcher explained the necessity for the formalism by explaining that one of the functions of the Rules is to prevent any one participant from repeatedly, or at all, discussing issues that wouldn't be supported by other persons.

It was also asked if it's a regular practice to allow non-executives to sit for executive meetings, or if it was just a one-time thing for everyone to get a feel for it. Mr. Campbell said, "Yes, it's typically just one time. We open them up once in a while for job shadowing and other opportunities. But if you want to bring things forward, do so to an executive and they will raise it in their meeting; Councillors typically don't attend."

Managing Editor of The Voice Magazine Karl Low was interested in whether Ms. Godoy-Controis, in her capacity as Indigenous Circle Representative, had any obligations or privileges that an ordinary Council member would have. Ms. Fletcher answered, "She actually is a member of the Council. We've changed things a bit. We now have 12 regular Council members who are elected in the normal fashion. With the introduction of the Indigenous Circle, the process is once they've formed they nominate one of their members to have a special seat on the Council reserved for them. That person is a Councillor. It's a special spot on the Council, but that person is a Councillor like any other."

The meeting ended at 7:40 pm. The next meeting will be at 6:30 pm on May 19, 2022. Please email governance@ausu.org if you would like more information on the Council or how to attend the next meeting.

Kent has been pursuing his English Degree at AU when not writing up Council Reports

How to Inspire

Marie Well



Once, there was the belief that exceeding a four-minute mile sprint was impossible. But one man broke it. And then many others followed. The view was that the belief was what made it possible. But could it be something else—like widespread changing fitness or diet regimes? Or maybe it was both belief and something else.

Whatever it was, it implies that anything is possible, if not today, perhaps tomorrow.

So, how do we take this view that anything is possible and use it to inspire?

Here are several grounds for inspiring:

Don't focus on problems; focus on opportunities. In other words, don't dwell on the past unless it's to see how you can improve. And don't dwell on anyone else's past unless it's to praise their positives. Focus instead on opportunities in the present or future.

If you're on fire, they're on fire. Be enthusiastic. If people are revved up, they are in a good state of mind. If they get positive feedback, they get revved up. One positive statement can make a person burn with passion in pursuing a goal.

Listen and ask questions. When people talk, they are revealing a piece of their heart. Listen closely to hear what matters to them. Ask them "how" and "what" questions to learn more of what inspires them. Try to understand the individual, what they are lacking, and what will fill that gap. When they reveal a dream or goal, encourage it with all you've got.

Inquire and care about their dreams. What makes people tick? Is it the love of learning, or adventure, or the musings over a beautiful sunrise? Whatever it is, help set their passion on fire. Get so excited about the other person's goal that it feels like your own. And if the dreams you inspire in others are worthy of a novel or blockbuster film, you've got the makings of a mentor.

Shine at whatever you do. But don't just shine, go for mastery. When you master a task, however big or small, you become an instant role model. Earned an academic degree? Instant role model! You've raised a family? Instant role model! Written a book? Instant role model! Hard work can take you anywhere. But don't just work hard; seek out the fastest way to do something exceptionally well. Try telling yourself constantly, "100% effort is easier than 99." And give it all you've got!

See only the positives in others. By not judging others, we help them realize their higher selves—their true essence of pure love. When people feel good about themselves, they are able to accomplish the skies. There is never a need for a person to feel bad. But there is always a need for people to dream.

Believe that others can achieve the impossible. With practice, grit, and determination, anything is possible. If it's not possible today, widespread cultural changes may make it possible tomorrow. The secret is to prepare!

You have nothing but upside if you first, set a goal; second, develop and execute daily habits to work toward the goal; and three, measure yourself daily and ask, "Am I getting closer to the goal?"

You can be anything if you're willing to work hard and develop yourself!

Some Dubious Marketing Tactics

Savannah Ugo



Music Review

Stand Alone

Jessica Young



Artist: Brand New Lungs

Single: "Stand Alone"

Montreal, Quebec's Brand New Lungs, have released their new single "Stand Alone". The song is their first new music since their debut album, *Like Wildfire*, and is available anywhere you get your music.

Brand New Lungs describes themselves as "four dudes from Montreal, Canada having fun doing some catchy punk rock. Strong from a lot of past experiences, they joined forces to drink beer and make noise!" Sounds pretty cool to me.

The band describes "Stand Alone" as "an aggressive but heartfelt 90's-influenced punk rock song, with infectious hooks and an uplifting message. You don't stand alone!"

Clicking on [the lyric video](#) for "Stand Alone," I was immediately transported back to my high school "emo kid" days. The art for the video includes white chaotic block letters against a black background, and a cartoon drawing of a long-haired man on his phone, with a black cloud replacing his head. It reminds me of the graphics on every 90s – early 2000's emo album. I love it!

Unfortunately, I wasn't as impressed with the actual song. "Stand Alone" is certainly 90's-influenced punk—reminiscent of bands like Skillet, Breaking Benjamin, or Three Days Grace, all bands who have mastered the "aggressive emo" vibe. While I see what Brand New Lungs was going for, it missed the mark for me. The lead singer's vocals resembled shouting more than singing, which is common for 90s punk, but I was hoping for a catchy hook or melodic chorus. We did get a guitar solo about three quarters of the way through the 3 minute, 41 second song, but that was the extent of the excitement.

Lyrically, "Stand Alone" seems to be a song about depression, or at least going through a difficult time, and deciding to save yourself. The lyrics to the chorus are: "I gotta learn from my problems/I'm just a kid, just a fraud, just gone/all out of luck, out of line, but not yet done/I won't stand alone/I got these arms wrapped around me/I won't stand alone/And when all hope is gone, when all the cards are drawn/And the whole world around has become mad/I won't stand alone." The chorus is repeated three times throughout the song; the second time the lyrics become "you won't stand alone" and the third time they become "we won't stand alone," symbolizing community and that we are all in this together.

I love that Brand New Lungs wanted to put a positive message out into the world. I love music with meaning. However, the lyrics feel surface-level, and I'm not sure if I love the final verse, "I'm gonna save myself/you're gonna save yourself/we're gonna save ourselves." The trope that depression and other mental illnesses are something that a person can just get over if they try hard enough and the "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" mentality are simply dangerous.

Overall, "Stand Alone" was mediocre for me, but I'm excited to hear what else Brand New Lungs has to offer.

Check out Brand New Lungs on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

Fly on the Wall Dog Ate Your Homework?

Jason Sullivan



Pet's Eye Contact Changed Your Life?

Have you ever dreamed you saw your reflection in a mirror? What would our imagined other self say that we cannot say for ourselves? The closest moment to contact with the universal nature of being alive might be a momentary gaze into a beloved pet's eyes. Interactions with animals special to us can teach us much that our ordinary scholastic inquiries fail to glean. Cats, dogs, goldfish, godfinches, even snakes—they all can provide comfort and solace for a weary student's study break. And maybe, just maybe, pets can provide scholastic spice to our essay ruminations and awaken us from pesky brain doldrums.

Jim Morrison of the Doors once sang “I found an island in your arms, a country in your eyes” and, normal human love aside, moments shared with companion animals fills this non-symbolic bill. Meanwhile, anthropologist Eduardo Kohn notes that, for one Amazonian tribe, a person who encounters a puma can become more than a human and engage their being into a new identity as a creative predator. “Runa who survive encounters with such predators are by definition, then, runa puma, or were-jaguars. One survives, then, by not being noticed as prey by a puma. But in the process one also becomes another kind of being, a puma. And this newfound status translates to other contexts and creates new possibilities.” (Kohn, 93). We transcend our identities by book learning and by life experiences; yet, to report back on what we've gained is often tricky—even when we know we've shared a special moment with another being.

To become effective students in the wilderness of education is to gaze back with all our being, not just our sequestered study selves. Perhaps somewhere beyond the realm of words or even images lies the truth of our existence as earthly beings. Thinkers throughout history have pondered meanings that evade expression in the ordinary manner. Intuition's mystery is the stuff of legends and might provide new ways of thinking about our course material.

Passages to New Purpose

The environmental activist John Zerzan pondered animal eyes as “direct windows, in that openness and immediacy... if we could somehow see with those eyes, would it possibly allow us to really see ourselves?” (Zerzan, 103). Timeless truths might seem suspiciously (or pleasurably) to be more in the nature of math than poetry and yet isn't there something special in making eye contact with an animal, wild or domesticated?

The classic novel *A Cricket in Times Square* describes literal harmonious possibilities when we allow nature to enter our realm; the headline cricket even seemed to sing along with human accompaniment. “When he heard Mama singing, he slowed his tempo so she could keep up without straining. When she was loud, he was too—and then softer when she got choked up with

emotion and her voice dwindled. But always his chirping carried her along, keeping her on the right beat and the right tune. He was the perfect accompanist” (Selden, 104). Animals can communicate too, it seems, just not with such extensive phonetics as bipeds utilize.

Meanwhile, considering the mechanistic approach to human and animal life alike, one might note that the mystery of consciousness and language is at times one and the same. Where do our thoughts come from, anyway? Epiphanies and randomness can seem as inexplicable as the internal homeostasis of our bodily organs.

Sigmund Freud, part pariah and part philosopher, stated that all of life is a movement towards greater inertia and less liveliness. “If we are to take it as a truth that knows no exception that everything living dies for internal reason-becomes inorganic once again-then we shall be compelled to say that ‘the aim of all life is death’ and, looking backwards, that ‘inanimate things existed before living ones’” (Freud, 70-71). In the mysteries of evolution “the first instinct came into being: the instinct to return to the inanimate state.”

Our cells, as much as they constantly regenerate themselves, do so after all because they are also always fading and dying. Expiring, if you will. And yet it’s the flicker of life that we see in a pet’s eyes that bonds us to them even though we know that our brains are different from theirs. Something deeper than we can comprehend in words takes place in those exchanged moments of caring. It’s as though our priorities realign to match the simplest of realities, like returning to a primordial interactive realm.

The nature of our beliefs about ourselves and our education is stilted in ideas about what matters most. Most of our academic life involves silent pondering and immersion in realms of the written word. Yet we all know how much can be written, so to speak, upon the face of a person or a pet. To really set our imaginations free, hopefully to write better assignment responses, implies that we bear in mind what George Orwell said about being too harnessed by our preconceptions. “Literature is doomed if liberty of thought perishes...no pious platitudes to the effect that ‘true individuality is only attained through identification with the community’, can get over the fact that a bought mind is a spoiled mind” (Orwell, 174). To really write meaning into our lives involves not only words but feelings, not only coursework but those breaks in the action that remind us to pay attention to what matters most. Be they furry pets or even a pet interest, it behooves our development to seek learning in as many interactions as possible.

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Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.

Beyond Literary Landscapes

Recent Reads 2022—Literary Memoir

Natalia Iwanek



From my early beginnings as a young introvert, the public library has always been a bit of a refuge. Years later, not much has changed, albeit with an additional affinity for endless hours spent scouring second-hand bookstores to add to my ever-growing “to-read” pile.

From one bookworm to another, this column will be underscoring and outlining various literary genres, authors, and recent reads and can serve as an introduction for those unfamiliar with these works, as a refresher for long-time aficionados, and maybe as an inspiration for readers to share their own suggested topics. Do you have a topic that you would like covered in this column? Feel free to [contact me](#) for an interview and a feature in an upcoming column.

Who

Typically, this column serves as an introduction to the works of novelists, educators, and scholars, certain countries, or certain literary themes. This week, I continue

with Part 2 of a previous week’s [personal reads from Canada Reads 2002](#), and cover some reads (and re-reads) of several selections, including Esi Edugyan, Catherine Hernandez, and Omar El Akkad.

Award-winning author [Esi Edugyan](#) is a “graduate of Johns Hopkins University and the University of Victoria.” [Edugyan](#) was the 2015-16 Writer-in-Residence at Athabasca University. The author is has published several novels and literary essays, and is best-known for her 2011 award-winning novel, *Half-Blood Blues*.

[Catherine Hernandez](#) “is an award-winning author and critically acclaimed screenwriter.” Her novel *Scarborough* was made into a feature film, which was seen at the [Toronto International Film Festival](#). Some of the author’s notable works also include *Crosshairs*.

Award-winning author and journalist [Omar El Akkad](#) “was born in Egypt, grew up in Qatar, moved to Canada as a teenager and now lives in the United States.” His fiction and non-fiction work has appeared in a variety of publications; and his debut novel *American War* won various awards and was nominated for numerous ones as well.

What

Some reads from Canada Read 2022 include *Washington Black* by Esi Edugyan, *Scarborough* by Catherine Hernandez, and *What Strange Paradise* by Omar El Akkad.

Where

Many of these works are set throughout Canada, Barbados, Syria, and Greece.

When

These works often take place during the 20 and 21-centuries.

Why

These works may be of interest to readers who would like to know more about family, resilience, immigration, lives of refugees, and migration.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to these current reads are available in a variety of disciplines, including one's that may fit into your Degree Works. (Always check with an AU counsellor to see if these particular courses fulfill your personal graduation requirements!)

AU students interested in learning more about this topic may consider ENGL 302: Introduction to Canadian Literature, a senior-level, six-credit course, which "presents an overview of Canadian literature from its beginnings to the present." (Note that this course requires ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays as prerequisites.)

Students may also consider ENGL 351: Comparative Canadian Literature I, a senior-level, three-credit course, which "is an introduction to the study of ethnic minority writing in Canada in the context of the country's two majority traditions—the English and the French." (Note that this course also requires ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays as prerequisites.) Happy reading!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.

AthaU Facebook Group

Course switch. A required course has disappeared from AU's course list, a student reports; in this case the course had been renamed, but in general responders advise that students can always inquire about alternate courses when one is no longer offered.

Discord

Tech shopping tip. A student asking whether AU provides student discounts for Apple products produces a response pointing out that Apple has a dedicated link for student shoppers.

reddit

Ask in order to receive. A student wonders what accommodations are available for those with ADHD; responders share their experiences and recommend making a call to accessibility services to explore the full range of what's available.

Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "AUSU will be doubling the number of \$100 gift cards awarded through the Virtual Food Assistance Program in June from five to ten. For more info, visit our website <https://ausu.org/services/food/>."



Rise to the Top The Requirements of a CMO

Marie Well



Do you want to rise to the top? Perhaps you will one day become CEO, CMO, or some other executive of a company. Even though I believe your potential is limitless, there are statistical realities that need to be considered today for success tomorrow.

For instance, I researched on LinkedIn career trajectories for Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) for large, medium, and small-sized companies. Here's what I found:

Companies with 500+ Employees

A CMO of a company with over 500 employees, will typically need the following educational credentials and experience:

They need to start their career off in a managerial role as soon as possible. They don't seem to need much education, though—typically just a degree in marketing.

But to get away with this limited education, about fifteen-years-or-more experience in the industry is needed.

Otherwise, they may need a master's degree. As well, they'll likely want to stay within the same industry. For instance, to apply this, if you gain a managerial role in restaurant marketing, aim to acquire more and more senior managerial roles in restaurant marketing.

Some examples? Let's look at CMO's with fifteen plus years of experience.

A person can get a VP and Marketing Director role with just a Bachelor of Commerce (BComm) and 25 years of experience in director or manager roles. Public speaking and book and article publications also help.

A person can become a CMO with a two-year Bachelor of Arts in advertising and marketing and 17 years in senior marketing roles.

A person can become CMO with a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree and 15 years of experience exclusively in the restaurant industry.

As for fifteen-or-less years' experience? You may need a master's degree. I found a person can become a CMO with a BA in Economics, an MBA, and a digital marketing certificate along with 12 years experience in senior roles in sales or marketing.

A person can become CMO with a master's in marketing, a master's in PR, and a BComm along with 10 years of experience in senior roles.

Companies with 50 to 500 employees

To become a CMO of a company with 50 to 500 employees the education requirements can be less demanding, such as a certificate or diploma, but the years of experience still seem to be above 7 years in primarily senior roles, particularly for the bigger companies.

Examples of this include a CMO with a Marketing Certificate and a Diploma in Advertising and Marketing with 18 years experience in a variety of positions, some non-senior but most senior level, ranging from business development to marketing roles.

Alternatively, you can become a CMO with a BComm and brand and digital strategy certification and 20 years experience in senior marketing roles or entrepreneurial roles, starting off in a non-senior marketing research role.

Still, a person can also become a CMO with a BComm and a minor in computer science and a one-year term at a college of art and design. The experience need only be seven years with only two years in managerial roles.

Companies with 0 to 50 employees

What about a small company? Then you will benefit from having a degree, but may only need two years experience on the job, and not necessarily in senior roles.

Here are examples of the above:

ACMO for a company with 50 or less employees, needed only a BA and a Graduate Diploma in Education. But that also needed 13 years experience in one or two senior leadership roles as well as non-managerial roles.

You may alternatively need a BComm and a post-graduate course in marketing plus 12 years experience in either leadership or marketing roles.

Still, you may be able to get a CMO role with a BBA with 2 years experience, each trivial job lasting six months, almost all of which have nothing to do with marketing.

Conclusion

So to become a CMO, I found that bigger companies seem to consistently require you have a degree and over ten years experience, almost exclusively in marketing-related managerial roles. Mid-sized companies don't seem to require as much education, although experience is essential. Small-sized companies may not require much relevant experience.

But no matter what you see above, there is always a phenomenon called "outliers." Outliers are cases that don't fit the mould. And as outliers exist in most any population, you may still have the ability to become CMO of one of these companies without all the requisites.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine

The United Nations recognizes May 21 as International Tea Day. After water, tea is the world's most-consumed beverage, and our writers past had much to say about it.

The art of down-home tea. Wanda Waterman hunts for a brew equal to that she remembers from Nova Scotia. "When poured out the colour is a rich, deep amber, to which you add canned evaporated milk and lots of sugar if you want it.

Drinking it black would be insupportable, and even whole milk is sometimes too weak to buffer the tea's kick." In Search of Fisherman's Tea, September 30, 2016.

The other water of life. Janice Behrens extols the health benefits of tea-drinking. "One of my very favourite ways of sliding into a slower rhythm of life during these grey days is by spending some serious quality time curled up in a nice warm spot with a cup of steaming tea." The Good Life – Just My Cup of Tea, January 13, 2006.

COVID Crashes Easter Dinner

Dear Barb:

I hosted Easter dinner this year and what a fiasco! The COVID divisiveness is still with us. Some of my family members are vaccinated and some are not. No one came in with a mask or did any social distancing. I personally didn't social distance or wear a mask either.

Everything seemed to be fine at first, everyone was just glad to be together, but after a few drinks the conversation began to focus on COVID. The people who were not vaccinated were commenting that they did not get vaccinated, and they are fine, whereas the vaccinated said they were just lucky they didn't end up in the hospital. The voices began to escalate, and each side was attempting to point out that they did the right thing. I tried to calm things down and change the subject, but no luck. They continued until most of the unvaccinated got up and left. Needless to say, our Easter was spoiled. I wonder how long this is going to go on, are we ever going to be a united family, who just enjoys being together or has COVID changed our lives forever?

Pat

Hey Pat:

I believe COVID has changed our lives and will be with us for a long time to come. There is no cut and dry answer to the vaccine question since people who are vaccinated still get COVID and can still spread it. Many individuals gather their

information from news media, therefore depending on which side you listen to, you will tend to gravitate to that side of the equation. People who have chosen to be vaccinated have been called "sheep who are just following the herd." The unvaccinated have held protests and blocked hospitals and business, and we all remember the infamous "truck convoy." As a society we are extremely polarized and the reasons why this issue exploded to this extent are unclear.

Some family members have chosen to cut off loved ones because they don't share their view. Perhaps some understanding and compassionate will help to resolve some of the tensions with friends and family members. People hold different views on many issues, such as religion, homelessness, or whether there should be a supervised drug injection centers in their neighborhood. Your belief system will depend on many variables, your background, your place in society, what you choose to put in your body, and simply your faith in the health care system. Although COVID will be with us for a long time, I believe we must learn to live with it before we can completely resolve these issues. My advice is to as the song says, "try a little tenderness." Thanks for writing and best of luck Pat.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



*Dear
Barb*

Barbara Godin

Poet Maeve
Tolerating Intolerance

Wanda Waterman





Virtual Food Assistance Program Doubling Support in June

AUSU will be doubling the number of \$100 gift cards awarded through the [Virtual Food Assistance Program](#) in June from 5 to 10.

Food insecurity is a problem faced by many post-secondary students for reasons such as rising tuition costs, living expenses, and insufficient financial aid systems. Students often endure hardship while furthering themselves personally, academically, and professionally. This is especially true around the holidays.

The gift cards will be for a major grocery chain in Canada convenient to those selected through the draw. In the case of rural or international students who do not have access to one of the major Canadian grocery chains available, AUSU will offer alternate options.

A Hobby-Filled Learner Pathway!

Check out [this custom Learner Pathway](#) curated by AUSU where you can browse a variety of the more creative (and unique) skills showcased on LinkedIn Learning. Need a break from studying? Take your mind off things with a fun, new hobby!



Annual General Meeting **MAY 26**



5 PM MT on Zoom
Students Welcome

AUSU will host a formal Annual General Meeting on May 26, 2022.

AUSU executives and staff will meet over Zoom at 5 pm MST to present the [2022 Annual Report](#), which includes the AUSU audited financial statements and highlights from the 2021 fiscal year.

Students are welcome! If you have any questions about the event, please contact Governance and Advocacy Coordinator Duncan Wojtaszek at governance@ausu.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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Publisher	Athabasca University Students' Union
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Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

www.voicemagazine.org

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

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

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ISSN 2561-3634