

Annual General Meeting 2023 – Union President Report – Winston Alla

2022

June/July

- **Students' Union Chief Executive Recruitment** – involved in the interview panel for the recruitment of SU CEO – the trustee board successfully recruited *Andy Squire* as the new Chief Executive of SSU.
- **Started as the Union President role** – involved in the two-week induction which involved various trainings, introductions, and handover from predecessor.
- **National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) campus visit** – represented the student voice at the NCCPE visit campus visit. Discussed how the university's strategy affects the student experience – the University achieved Silver Award later on in 2022.
- **Weekly 1-1 meetings with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (PVC)** – our regular meetings involved informing the university of immediate issues of the students and received updates from the university.
- **First-ever Trustee Board** – as the Union President, it is part of the role to chair the board meeting. The board meeting involved discussions of the future direction of the Union – Annual strategy approval, account management update, Sabbatical officer team report etc.
- **First-ever Board of Governors (BoG)** – Welcomed by the board and updated them of the sabbatical officer team manifesto for the academic year. Made the announcement of the Union's new and unnamed Mascot (later announced as *Sparkie*)
- **Community Pop-up** – joined by the sabbatical officer team as we represented the Union at *Ropewalk Community Garden* as part of the University's *Widening Participation* where we interacted with the local community about university experience.

August

- **Academic Calendar Planning** – internal meeting with the Union team to discuss the planning of events, the sabbatical officer campaigns, and other activities for the academic year 2022-23.
- **Student Officer Election** – the sabbatical officer team finalises the new title role for the student officers as well as planning the election.
- **Introduction Meeting** – positive introductory meetings with senior leaders of the University focused on the ambition for the students' union and opportunities for collaboration. The senior leaders involved were the *Vice-Chancellor, Chair of Board of Governors, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Chief Marketing Officer, and Chair of Resources Committee*.
- **Southern Students' Union Conference** – held in Brighton and joined by the sabbatical officer team. Shared practices and networked with other unions for regular updates and support each other.
- **The new SU Chief Executive Joined** – the whole Union team welcomed the new Chief Executive and introduced the sabbatical officer team's campaigns and plans.
- **Vice-Chancellor Recruitment** – the sabbatical officer team were involved in the recruitment for a new *Vice-Chancellor*. With the help of *Anderson Quigley* recruitment agency, the first part of the recruitment involved asking the stakeholders what we're looking for a new Vice-Chancellor.

September

- **National Student Survey (NSS)/Graduate Outcome Roadshow** – results from the annual survey of final-year students were showcased to the faculty members including the student representatives. The results showed the lack of student voice amongst students which the sabbatical officer team made a priority for this year.
- **Student Governor Training** – attended the *Student Governor Training* provided by *AdvanceHE* in London to provide new governors the opportunity to understand their roles and responsibilities as members of the governing body.
- **Welcome Week 2022** – the Union organised a two-week series of student events to meet new and returning students, represent the SU which allowed the sabbatical officer team to increase the

student engagement – including in the two-day *freshers' fayre* which were attended by over 3000 students.

- **PROVOST Recruitment** – as part of the University's academic leadership restructuring, Provost is the new senior academic role created to ensure continuity of line management for the academic community, key strategies and projects during a time of transition to a new *Vice-Chancellor*. I was part of the interview panel of the recruitment – the board of governors successfully recruited *Professor Bhattacharya*.
- **Monthly 1-1 meetings with the Vice-Chancellor (VC)** – to update each other with any news/concerns – updates affecting the University's operations for the Union and the University to collaborate more effectively.

October

- **Vice-Chancellor's Group (VCG)** – the group is consisting of the senior leaders of the University to provide progress updates on the University's strategy. The VCG also holds monthly briefing sessions for a university-wide update which I regularly attend.
- **SU Events** - I have been attending SU events to engage with the students and promote the SU and our services. Informed students how the SU can provide support their student academic and experience. We have also organised a number of successful events such as Open Mic Nights, Vintage Fair, and Pub Quiz.
- **Societies Events** – I have been attending society events/socials as another way to engage with the students.
- **Student Board** – consisting of academic representatives along with the sabbatical officer team collaborate with the *Chief Student Officer* and *Head of Student Success* to evaluate and assess the student success infrastructure. In this meeting, the current academic provisions were discussed and update on the new student services.
- **Student Partnership Framework (SPF)** – it is a staff and student collaboration that aims to improve creativity and innovative opportunities for the students. SPF ensures that feedback from course and faculty representatives are taken into careful consideration and improve the overall student experience. I'm currently working closely with the *Head of Student Success* to plan the project which will be launched soon.
- **Weekly 1-1 meetings with the Chief Student Officer (CSO)** – as a replacement to the regular 1-1 meetings with the PVC, the weekly 1-1 meetings with the CSO are how I inform the university of immediate issues of the students and received updates from the university.
- **Longlisting Vice-Chancellor Recruitment** – joined by the recruitment agency and the other governors, we selected the candidates for shortlisting including follow up questions regarding their CVs.
- **Board of Trustees** – termly board meeting to discuss the progress of the Union's plans and strategies. As well as to provide report on the sabbatical officer team activities.

November

- **Introduction with 2 new governors** – 2 new governors recently joined the board, and I presented them an overview plan and goals of the Union for the academic year.
- **Winter Ball Planning** – the sabbatical officer team started planning one of our biggest themed student event called *Winter Ball* which involved planning the logistics, operation, and interior designing.
- **Extenuating Circumstances Panel (EC Panel)** – involved in the EC panel as the student representative to ensure students are treated fairly.
- **University Challenge** – assisted in the operation of the University Challenge within the campus.
- **Shortlisting VC Recruitment** – the board of governors decided on 5 candidates to be interviewed for the VC role at the later date.

- **Warsash Pub Meetup** – the sabbatical office team organised a social event aimed at the Warsash cadets to improve our engagement and get to know their immediate concerns.
- **Resources Committee** – the board of governor sub-committee which discusses the University's resources and finances progress.
- **Society Expo** – I assisted in the operation of the event aimed at our societies and an opportunity to engage with more students.
- **Warsash Course Committee** – Provided SU updates to the academic representatives in Warsash St. Mary's campus and informed us of ongoing concerns in St. Mary's campus.
- **World AIDS Awareness Campaign** – as part of my sexual health awareness campaign, I organised an event to tackle the stigma amongst students seeking sexual health support by providing them free condoms and QR code to obtain their free STI kit with the help of the Adult Nursing students.
- **Opening of the SU Exchange** - The sabbatical officers decided to support the students with the rising prices of essential products that help the students on their basic daily needs through opening a community pantry called *SU Exchange*.
 - **Obtained Food Hygiene Level 2 Certificate** – in order to operate in the *SU Exchange*, everyone handling food need to obtain at least a level 2 certificate of Food Hygiene.

December

- **Vice-Chancellor Interview** – heavily involved in the whole process of the VC recruitment. The governors interviewed the 5 shortlisted candidates. We successfully recruited *Professor James Knowles* from Royal Holloway University.
- **Board of Governors** – attended the board meeting to raise important issues for students and represented student voice on the University's strategy plan progress.
- **EC Panel** - involved in the EC panel as the student representative to ensure students are treated fairly.
- **SU Exchange Operation** – since opening the SU Exchange, I have been involved in its operation which has proven to be a great way to engage with students.
- **VC Seasonal Celebration** – it is an end of term celebration across the whole university colleagues. I took part handing out awards to staff.
- **Winter Ball** – the Union held one of our biggest student event. The sabbatical officer team engaged with students. The event was attended by 200 students.

2023

January

- **EC Panel** – involved in the EC panel as the student representative to ensure students are treated fairly.
- **Dry January Campaign** – it is a campaign to abstain from consuming alcohol for a whole month. As part of my healthy living campaign, I successfully took part in the campaign and went a whole month without consuming alcohol – I recommended it to the students as it was very beneficial.
- **Access, Participation Plan** – Solent Futures is currently working on a project that aims to support students from BAME background. I'm heavily collaborating with Solent Futures to the deliver the best outcome to the students. The *Steps to Success* has launched which involves Asian professionals as guest speakers talking about employability topics.
- **Unity 101 Awards** – the University and the Union have been working with Unity 101 radio. *VP Wellbeing* and I attended their annual award celebration to represent the Union.
- **Union President Campus Walkaround** – I have started walking around the main campus to engage with students and receive direct feedback.
- **Union Presidents Meeting** – the Union President of University of Southampton and I have started meeting occasionally to work together tackling issues around Southampton City.
- **DfE HE campus visit** – the department of education for higher education visited the main campus and we were invited to give a wide overview of the student experience at Solent.

- **The British Inspiration Trust (BRIT) Challenge** – it is a fund-raising event to support young adult mental health and fitness in the UK. *VP Wellbeing* and I took part in the BRIT challenge to represent the Union's support.
- **Board of Trustees** - termly board meeting to discuss the progress of the Union's plans and strategies. As well as to provide report on the sabbatical officer team activities.
- **Student Council** – it is a meeting made up of the four sabbatical officers, elected student officers, and academic representatives where sabbatical officer team reports, and any motions are submitted and voted on.
- **Mocktail Masterclass** – as part of my *Dry January* healthy living campaign, I have worked with *Sodexo* (the University catering provider) to provide the students a free mocktail session as a substitute alcoholic beverages.
- **Union Awards/Summer Ball Planning** – the sabbatical officer team and the Union staff members have started planning 2 of our biggest student events. We have decided to mash both events up together. We have finalised the logistics, operation, and event itinerary.

February

- **Communications Coordinator Interview** – the Union's new structure and strategy required a new member of staff for the *Communications Coordinator* role. I was part of the interview panel and was successfully hired *Amber Lench* for the role.
- **GRIT Workshop** - a two-day workshop opportunity to explore and celebrate identity, leadership and empowerment from black, Asian and other ethnically diverse communities within the university. I attended the workshop to engage with the participating students.
- **SU Elections** – the Union held its annual student election. I nominated myself to be re-elected as the Union President. I am delighted to announce that I was re-elected and will still be the Union President for 2023-24.
- **Union President Campus Walkaround** – I have started walking around the main campus to engage with students and receive direct feedback.
- **Give It A Go** – it is a programme of events ran by the Union aimed for the students to try new skills, learn new things, and engage with other students. I have part in the operation in various events.

March

- **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Student Submission** – Office for Students encourages universities and colleges to improve and deliver excellence of the student experience. I interviewed 18 students along with the pre-existing survey to put together a student submission which fully represents the student experience at Solent University.
- **NUS Conference** – the sabbatical officer team headed to Harrogate for the annual conference to discuss various ideas and practice approaches which we can apply to our Union operation.