

# End of Mandate Report



## 2023/24

Prepared by the Executive Team: Harley Martin, Tanou Bah, Hannah Jackson, Kareem Rahaman, Talya Diner, Alexandrah Cardona, Maria Chitoroaga, Christian Taboada

## General Overview of the CSU

The Concordia Student Union is exactly what it sounds like: a union for undergraduate students at Concordia. The CSU acts on the behalf of Concordia students, defending their interests and offering support through several avenues. The CSU is divided into four primary bodies: the Executives, the Council of Representatives, the Judicial Board, and General Meetings. The CSU also offers many important services to all undergraduate students: the Advocacy Centre, the Legal Information Clinic, the Off-Campus Housing & Job Resource Centre, the Recovery and Wellness Community Centre, EDI, the Daycare & Nursery, the Hive Free Lunch at Loyola, the Health & Dental Plan, free sanitary products, and over 100 different student-run clubs. These services are there to help you during your time at Concordia University, as well as to assist you with upholding your rights under the law and handling the challenges of living and working in Montreal. The CSU's services are available to all undergraduates, so take advantage!

## Council Of Representatives

The Council of Representatives is the CSU's legal board of directors. It is composed of a maximum of 30 students respectively representing each department (as well as independent students) and directly elected by their peers. Elections for the Council take place in March each year and in November as necessary. The Council oversees the work of the Executives and ensures that the interests of students are represented. It also has the responsibility of overseeing and directing the Union, while respecting the mandates of the Membership.

## Judicial Board

The Judicial Board is the judiciary branch of the CSU. It is responsible for ruling on conflicts that occur in the interpretation of the Union's Bylaws and Regulations and has the final word on how to interpret our rules. The members of the Judicial Board are appointed through the CSU's Appointments Committee.

## Introduction to The Executive Team

### Academic & Advocacy Coordinator

Hello everyone, I'm Alexandrah, the Academic and Advocacy Coordinator. In this role, I serve as the CSU's primary student representative on all academic governing bodies at Concordia University. Additionally, I oversee key services such as the Advocacy Centre, Legal Information

Clinic, Off-Campus Housing and Job Resource Centre, and the Recovery and Wellness Community Centre. My focus is on advocating for students through participation in Senate and University committees, as well as engaging in policy work with the goal of advocacy.

### External Affairs & Mobilization Coordinator

Hi everyone, I'm Hannah, the External Affairs & Mobilization Coordinator. In this position, I am the Union's main point of contact with other universities, associations, and provincial student organizations. My responsibilities include outreach to community organizations that align with CSU's values, and I am also tasked with mobilizing students on relevant issues. This year, I worked to reinvigorate the activist community on campus and connect students with various social justice initiatives.

### Sustainability Coordinator

Hello everyone, I'm Maria, the Sustainability Coordinator. In this role, I am responsible for ensuring the environmental, social, and political sustainability of the Union. I support student initiatives on campus and within the Concordia community, overseeing the distribution of bursaries, awards, and funding for sustainability and community-related projects. My involvement spans various committees, including the Library Service Fund Committee, PUSH Fund, SAF, and the Human Resource/Governance Committee through SAF. I've also taken on administrative tasks like participating in hiring committees. Throughout my mandate, I've worked on various Sustainability Initiatives to enhance the lives of Concordia students.

### Loyola Coordinator

Hi everyone, I'm Talya, the Loyola Coordinator. My role involves ensuring the visibility of the CSU across both campuses, fostering ties between them, and promoting a united university community. I sit on the Loyola Committee and the Hive Board. My goal is to increase CSU's presence on the Loyola campus, expand student opportunities, and facilitate community engagement. I'm also committed to promoting food sovereignty and improving access to better food on the Loyola Campus.

### Student Life Coordinator

Hello everyone, I'm Tanou, the Student Life Coordinator. In my role, I organize the CSU's major events on campus, such as Orientation, aiming to broaden students' horizons outside the

classroom. My objective is to provide diverse opportunities for learning and socializing on campus. Within my role, I aspire to increase diversity within the union's events and practices.

### General Coordinator

Hello everyone, I'm Harley, the General Coordinator. In this role, I oversee the daily administration of the Concordia Student Union, representing the 35,000+ students at the highest level. My focus includes supporting students, increasing student engagement, streamlining union processes, and creating continuity from the previous year's mandate.

### Finance Coordinator

Hi everyone, I'm Kareem, the Finance Coordinator. I oversee the Union's finances, ensuring transparency and accountability. My responsibilities include preparing the CSU's annual budget and working on Finance initiatives and projects. Additionally, I aim to improve the CSU newsletter this year.

### Internal Affairs Coordinator

Hi everyone, I'm Christian, the Internal Affairs Coordinator. I am responsible for all the CSU's internal processes and support CSU clubs in engaging the Concordia community. My tasks include improving student space on both campuses and serving as the Union's bookkeeper. This year, I plan to encourage engagement through the clubs and create an active Concordia community.

## Representation On University Bodies

### Board of Governors

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

The Board of Governors (BoG) is the senior governing body of the University and is responsible for establishing the legal and administrative framework for the University. It has superintending and reforming power over all decisions affecting activities held at the University or connected with the University. It is composed of 25 voting members and one non-voting observer. The CSU has one of the 25 voting seats, which I hold this year, and the non-voting observer is a position reserved for a CSU Councilor, currently held by Nassim Boutalbi.

BoG is an important forum for us as students to voice our opinions on large-scale decision making relating to the University and is also a place to gather information that can be communicated to students. As we are only one voting member of 25, much of the work at BoG is centered on the information gathering aspect, in addition to ensuring student's rights are protected at all levels within the University.

BoG meetings this year have centered on two topics: events in Israel and Palestine and their effect on campus life; and the Quebec government's announcement of changes to the tuition framework for out-of-province and international students. The University has tried to assure governors that despite political activity related to Israel/Palestine, they are ensuring that all students are safe on campus, can participate fully in student life, and that the University remains a place of learning, discussion, and debate.

As for the tuition changes, the University has communicated their opposition to the changes to the governors, and has detailed how they have attempted to push back against their implementation. The BoG voted for the University to take legal action against the Quebec government, as did McGill's BoG, and these cases will be heard by the courts over the next number of months.

## Senate and Academic Caucus

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

The Senate is the highest academic decision-making body at our university, and the final authority in all matters pertaining to the academic programs of the university, such as approval of the spring and fall graduation lists, approval curricula, establishment of academic standards and regulations. Senate can also make recommendations to the Board of Governors. These suggestions then become an object of discussion at the Board which has final authority over them. While the Board oftentimes approves recommendations by the Senate; Senate cannot compel the Board to do anything against its own judgment.

The Senate is made up of 53 voting and 11 non-voting members from all of Concordia's communities (staff, faculty, students, and administrators), as well as representing each faculty.

There are 12 undergraduate students on the Senate, and to be most effective on the Senate, we all come together at Academic Caucus meetings where we strategize and plan for meetings. I am the Chair of the Academic Caucus, and I am happy to share that the Caucus had the opportunity to

convene four times during the Fall 2023 semester. Caucus is meant to bring together student representatives that sit on the highest decision-making bodies of the University, Senate and the Board of Governors, representing over 37,000 undergraduates and almost another ten thousand graduate students. It is crucial that this body remains well-informed and operates in a collaborative manner to succeed in its mandate. This year, I did my best to offer student representatives from various committees, faculties and associations to attend and participate in the Caucus (as non-voting members), which I believe created richer conversations and a better flow of ideas.

## Concordia Council on Student Life

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

The Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL) is the highest body in the university dedicated to student life. Equally made up of students, staff, and faculty, CCSL meets to discuss various student life topics, disperse funding to student-led initiatives, and recognize outstanding individuals at Concordia. The student members are Alexandrah Cardona, Tanou Bah, Christian Taboada, Kiara Madison Nunes-Mancini, Charbel Hachem, Emma Girgis, and Victoria Gorman. We met once a month during the fall semester to review funding applications and discuss other relevant matters. In total, we awarded approximately \$60 000 to student projects this semester, and will be reviewing new funding applications due in early February. Members of the sub-committees will also be convening in the coming weeks to discuss student awards and review the application processes to make suggestions.

## Inter-Organisational Table for Feminist Affairs

*Written by Hannah Jackson, External Coordinator*

ITFA is an organization comprising the Concordia Student Union, the Graduate Student Union, Concordia Research & Education Workers Union, Concordia University Support Staff Union and Concordia University Library Employee's Union, united together for the purpose of boycotting the Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Violence. We are workers, unionists, and students of the Concordia Inter-Organizational Table of Feminist Affairs (ITFA) who have no confidence that the university management, nor the Quebec or Canadian governments, are capable of addressing sexualized abuses of power. We understand that addressing these abuses at their root will require worker, student, community, and survivor-led processes of justice that take power away from the management and into our hands, power they use to exploit and oppress us. The CSU initiated its formal boycott of the SMSV in October

2022, when the two CSU representatives resigned, and ITFA distributed their demands to the Concordia administration. After the demands were ignored, all ITFA members renewed their boycott in November 2023. The demands for ITFA are in the process of being edited to reflect the current conditions, but as stands are the following:

- **Student-led solutions:** Concordia must recognize a new autonomous, student- and worker-run Standing Committee on Sexualized Abuses of Power that operates as the decision-making rather than advisory body presiding over all sexual violence policies and procedures. The law, under Chapter 2.7 of Bill 151, requires the University to have a standing committee that is “made up of students, officers and personnel members” and “that [members] and their respective associations and unions are consulted during the policy development or review process”. We contend that the University management’s SMSV Committee to date has not meaningfully consulted us, and as such must be replaced. For such a committee to produce survivor-centric and stand-alone policy, it has to be run by students and workers themselves through their democratic organizations (i.e. GSA, CSU, TRAC union, and the other Concordia labor unions) and not be superseded by other interests, documents, or regulations.
- **Transparency:** Concordia must immediately commit to prospectively and retroactively applying the protections of the recently updated Bill 151, which allows survivors to know the outcome of the sexual violence arbitration cases that they have submitted. Applying this bill on a “case by case basis” is not sufficient to provide closure for survivors and increases uncertainty in an already opaque process; nor is it in accordance with what has been mandated by the provincial government.
- **Gender Equity:** Concordia must further rescind recent structural abuses of power that harm women and gender diverse people in our community. Concordia management must permanently guarantee an on-campus space for the Concordia CPE daycare center, beyond the current extension of their lease until August 2025, and commit further resources towards the expansion of affordable daycare provision on both campuses. Concordia must remove all cameras from student bathrooms, especially those in the gender-neutral bathrooms on the 6th floor of the Hall building, and commit to expanding the availability of safe, private, gender-neutral bathrooms on both campuses. Concordia must immediately stop asking employees to declare their “sex assigned at birth” during the process of signing contracts or at any other juncture.

## Cooperative Support Memberships

### Reggie’s Solidarity Cooperative

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

Reggie’s is Concordia’s student bar, and is a solidarity cooperative located on the Hall Mezzanine. From 1984 until 2016, Reggie’s was directly managed by the CSU in the form of CUSAcorp, a for-profit subsidiary of the CSU. CUSAcorp was in essence the business wing of the CSU, meaning that in addition to all their other tasks, CSU executives were in charge of

overseeing the business operations of the bar. As you might have guessed, this had its problems, and Reggie's struggled financially for years. While closed for renovations in 2013, the decision was made to transition Reggie's into a solidarity cooperative. A solidarity co-op is also referred to as a multi-stakeholder or hybrid co-op, which describes its function more effectively. Most simply, these types of co-ops have two or more types of members that have different functions, but each have a shared interest in the enterprise. In the case of Reggie's, there are worker members and community members, in addition to a category called support members which is where the CSU comes in.

Co-ops are managed by an elected board of directors, and in the case of Reggie's this consists of nine members split between the three categories of members described above (not evenly split however). The other representatives are elected at an AGM, whereas the CSU is guaranteed a seat that is taken by one of the executives. The reason for this is that the CSU has put a lot of effort and money into Reggie's, both when it directly managed the bar and since it has become a solidarity cooperative. The space Reggie's uses is managed by the CSU, and the renovations which have taken place over the years were paid for using money from the SSAELC fund (approved by council).

Reggie's does well to provide a space on campus for students to socialize, host and attend events, and is an integral part of campus life. However, it has also continued to struggle financially since reopening in 2015, and we have been working throughout this year to determine a way for it to function more effectively. Notably, profit maximization is not Reggie's main purpose: it is a coop, and therefore aims to serve its members' needs above all. Essentially, we want Reggie's to provide services students desire while also breaking even. This is entirely possible.

In August, the CSU Council approved a funding package of up to \$120 000 for Reggie's in tandem with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CSU and Reggie's Board of Directors (BoD) to govern the conditions of this funding. Reggie's ended up using \$50 000 of this money, and managed to stay open and break even (more or less) this year, which is very exciting! That being said, we cannot let up now and this project will require the CSU's involvement over the next year (and likely beyond). We need to provide support and a degree of accountability to ensure that the bar continues to meet the needs of our membership.

## Hive Solidarity Cooperative

*Written by Talya Diner, Loyola Coordinator*

The Hive is a solidarity cooperative cafe that was founded in 2014. It serves both the downtown and Loyola campuses and is a main provider of food and coffee on both campuses. The Hive has long been an important institution for students and a venue for student-led and other events. I came into the Hive Cafe during its ongoing restructuring to account for its large financial deficit. The Hive Cafe was reacting to mismanagement and decisions made by its team in the previous year that allowed for labor to account for much too large of its budget, resulting in a deficit. As a board member I have been part of discussions and decisions to modify the labor budget and the coordinator positions, and to enact wage cuts. There have also been increases in the prices of Hive products to mitigate the deficit and ensure the Hive's viability. I participated in the AGM and am on the HR committee to help manage issues that have arisen since last year, including hiring for new coordinator positions.

## Woodnote Housing Cooperative

*Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator*

In 2015, the CSU partnered with UTILE to build a major student housing project. In 2020, the building was finally ready to open its 144 doors to Concordia students. Ever since it opened, the Woodnote has been completely filled as it provides affordable housing in the Plateau for students. The Woodnote provides subsidized rent with a guaranteed 10% (at least) below market value.

With the success of the first Woodnote building, the CSU has partnered with UTILE again in 2022 to start working on a second student housing project. As of this summer, we have secured the location of the new building, which will be in Pointe-Saint-Charles. UTILE is currently working on getting all the building permits. Everything so far has been going according to the timeline. The Rivernote is set to start getting built in September 2024! This project is set out to reach rents 25% below market value. This building is projected to have more units than the first Woodnote. There is also a recognized want for apartments with more than one bedroom from current tenants so that it could accommodate roommates, so we have accounted for that as well.

## Student Centre Building

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

In May 2022, the CSU bought a three-story building located at 2045 Bishop Street with the intent to eventually transform it into a student center. Buying a building has been the dream of

many CSU teams, and the Student Space, Accessible Education, and Legal Contingency (SSAELC) Fund was initially set up to realize this ambition some 20 years ago. The 2021-2022 team managed to make the purchase after a great deal of work in reviewing similar buildings within the downtown core using the help of consultancy firm Deloitte. Members of the 2022-2023 Executive and Council, along with other relevant student and community groups, then began the work of envisioning what the building could and should contain. The goal is to create more space for students on the downtown campus, for as we are all aware, Concordia operates on a growth model in terms of student enrollment and SGW's physical infrastructure fails to keep pace. But beyond this, CSU members have long wanted to have a student space that is entirely controlled by students and free from any potential interference from the University administration. The CSU currently controls many spaces on campus, such as the CSU offices and the spaces rented by the Hive and Reggie's, but ultimately these spaces belong to the University. This means that the University's space use policies still apply and if they really wanted, they could take back those spaces. In other words, it is great (indeed necessary) that we have these spaces, but there is still a degree of university control over them that has its drawbacks. The student center will become the first space on campus that is a student space entirely owned and managed by students.

The building was purchased for approximately \$5 million, paid for using the SSAELC Fund. The CSU then decided to take out a long-amortized mortgage on a percentage of the cost and return some of the funds to the SSAELC Fund. I believe this decision was made as the interest made on the money placed back within the SSAELC Fund was greater than the amount of interest to be paid on the mortgage. The cost of renovations is projected to be between \$5 - \$5.5 million. Last year the CSU applied for two large grants that, if received, would have covered the cost of the renovations. Unfortunately, the CSU did not receive these grants, in part due to the funding agency mistakenly viewing the CSU (a not-for-profit) as directly connected to the University, an issue we have since clarified. We have since applied to other funding bodies and are awaiting their response. Additionally, we have worked with Deloitte to put together a package that their consultants are now bringing to various lending agencies. The financing we receive through these avenues will allow us to fund the renovation required on the building. As for the costs of maintaining the building once completed, we will have to wait and see. It is hard to predict the associated costs and the CSU tried for a \$0.90/credit fee-levy in the March 2024 elections for the purpose of aiding in the cost of renovations and for the long-term goal of having a fund to be used to maintain the building. The levy was rejected, and I would note that all levy applications were rejected by students in both elections this year, pointing to student precarity rather than any

opposition to our building in particular. The CSU's General Manager, Robert Henri, will be putting together a better campaign for this levy and working with the executive team to bring this to the November 2024 by-elections.

The building is directly across the street from the Bishop entrance of the Hall Building. It has two commercial spaces on the ground floor which are not in use, and the remaining two floors have six apartments apiece. Because of this, the building will require large-scale renovations to accommodate our needs. The 2022-2023 mandate determined that what was needed was an outline of what the space would look like ideally, and began working with an architecture firm to determine what could realistically be achieved. The 2022-2023 Council voted to create an ad-hoc Student Center Steering Committee which oversaw the visioning process for the building. The executive chairing this Committee hosted two town hall sessions, inviting the faculty associations and fee levy groups to give their input for the plans. This information was combined with the opinions of the members of the Steering Committee and compiled into a report that was then submitted to Aedifica, the architecture firm in charge of the renovations. In the spring of 2023, Aedifica used this information to create several draft proposals which were then sent to the CSU.

In June of 2023 we picked up where the old team left off. Maria, Kareem, and I have been the main executives immersed in this project, along with Robert, the CSU's general manager. We have met with the team from Aedifica on a bi-weekly basis to finalize the plans. As it stands, we have hired all the necessary architects and engineers to finalize the plans and oversee the project. Once financing is decided upon and approved, we will work to hire the necessary contractors and project managers to oversee their work. We anticipate this process being completed by the end of May 2024.

We have also decided to pursue the gold standard in both WELL and LEED certifications in the renovation process. As described by the US Green Building Council, "the WELL Building Standard is a performance-based system for measuring, certifying, and monitoring features of the built environment that impact human health and wellbeing, through air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, comfort, and mind." In essence the WELL checklist aims to ensure that buildings are built or renovated so that the built environment, in which we spend so much of our time, is most accommodating to our needs. The LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design)

certification, as described by the Canada Green Building Council, “is an international symbol of sustainability excellence and green building leadership...[that] helps virtually all building types lower carbon emissions, conserve resources, and reduce operating costs by prioritizing sustainable practices.” Pursuing the LEED certification will ensure that the renovations produce a building that aims to be as sustainable as possible. We hope that the end result is a building which fits the needs of students and is environmentally responsible within the limitations we are working with.

When completed the building will be a combination of mixed-use space, study space, offices, and bookable working rooms of various sizes. Le Frigo Vert will move into the former Depanneur space which takes up about 25% of the ground floor. The former restaurant space which takes up the remaining 75% of the first floor will be converted into an open student lounge and multipurpose area that can accommodate the hosting of events. The second floor will contain the offices of Mosaic and QPIRG, with additional offices to accommodate a yet to be determined third mental health service to be offered by the CSU. The mental health services will have office space and enclosed therapy rooms, and QPIRG will have office space and a larger conference/workshop space. The remainder of the second floor will host a lounge and reading area, a kitchenette, a small library, quiet study areas, and bookable group working rooms. The third floor will look similar, though a large AV-equipped multipurpose room and connecting lounge will replace the office space. We also will have access to the roof. The roof will be able to be used with or without tables and chairs, we have approved the installation of a new staircase and elevator which increases the roof’s capacity, as well as that of the building generally.

This is obviously a huge project and one that requires a lot of thought and organization. We have done well this year to ensure that this process continues to move forward, and it is exciting to finally see this long-discussed project move closer to realization.

## CSU Services

### Advocacy Centre

*Written by Brittany Alison, Advocacy Interim Manager*

### **Mandate**

The Advocacy Center (AC) is a confidential and independent service that is responsible for providing students with information on their academic rights within the framework of the University. The Centre main function is helping students navigate Concordia's bureaucracy and representing students in academic ad disciplinary meeting and hearings. The standard services offered are grouped into (6) categories: Academic Misconduct, Code of Rights and Responsibilities, Hearings, Student Requests, Re-Admission, and General Consultation/Complaints. Our student advocates are trained in Concordia's policies to help students identify their needs and the necessary course of action and students can be assured that all people will be treated with dignity and respect.

## **Student Interests**

### **Change of Policy- Cost of Replacement Degrees**

This past year, The CSU Advocacy Centre collaborated with the Student Accounts in changing the policy for Transgender students when applying for replacement degrees. As of September 28, 2023, the replacement degree fee (currently \$100) will now be waived for legal name changes due to either a change in gender or for Indigenous students who have changed from an English name to an Indigenous one.

### **Advocacy Presence on Re-evaluation of Grade – Revaluation Committee**

This year the Grade Re-Evaluation policy at Concordia that grants students the right to have their work graded again when they believe it to be graded unfairly was being reviewed and updated. The revision committee consists of various members of the University, including a department Chair, the secretary of Tribunal, Vice-Provost, and staff members from OMBUDS and Registrar. The purpose of having a student advocate present for this revision is to bring in the Advocacy Centre's experience and knowledge of such cases. Thus, The CSU Advocacy Centre had one of their Lead Student Advocates on the committee give suggestions and recommendations to proposed amendments as a student representative to represent students' rights.

### **Advocacy Presence on Senate**

The Senate is the senior academic governing body at Concordia, and it establishes procedures for the governance of its own affairs. Any academic decision pertaining to university governance

including changing a policy, adding a new program, and granting degrees must be approved by the Senate. As an advocate, we work with university policies daily. Thus, the CSU Advocacy Centre always tries to appoint a member at the Senate to act as a liaison between university staff and students who are impacted by the university policies. This year, one of our Lead Student Advocate was a faculty-elected and advocacy-appointed senator for 2023-2024 academic year.

## **Outreach**

### **Article in The Concordian Newspaper**

On April 2, 2024, The Link posted an article about our services and how we can help students navigate Concordia's bureaucracy. The article featured the Interim Manager, the Lead Student Advocate and the CSU's finance coordinator. The article encouraged students to reach out to the Centre as a first resort, dispelled notions of having an advocate means that you are guilty, self-advocating and the importance of having services that help students speak up for themselves. The link to the article is posted below:

<https://thelinknewspaper.ca/article/the-importance-of-the-student-advocacy-centre>

### **Classroom Presentations**

The Advocacy Centre attended 72 classroom presentations of first year classes that were held by over 100 students to promote and discuss the use of our services. At each presentation, advocates explained the services offered, our locations and handed out pamphlets and brochures. The AC also tabled on both University campus SGW and Loyola in which advocates handed out gifts to students (which included 5–10-dollar Tim Hortons cards and candy).

### **Presentation for Spotlight and Homeroom**

This year the Advocacy Centre presented at the Spotlight Series and Homeroom. The Spotlight Series is these online info sessions designed to help academic advisors get acquainted with their fellow front-line student services staff at Concordia. The CSU's Student Advocacy Centre presented on our efforts to give undergraduate and graduate students access to representation

independent of the university and how front-line staff and the Centre can work together to assure that students get the best results for their cases.

The Centre also presented Homeroom facilitators. Homeroom is an initiative developed for new undergraduate students that provides a space for them to connect with others. Through peer-to-peer facilitated virtual and in-person experiences you will meet and bond with other new Concordia students and learn how to navigate the university experience together. The Advocacy Centre staff presented to the facilitators to inform them of the various situations that students use our services for and when it would be best to direct them to our Centre.

### **Student Service Station**

The Advocacy Centre remains an active participant of the Student Service Station. The Student Service Station connects students with academic advisors and other departments within the University for students to get the answers you need quickly. They meet weekly on Wednesday at which students can find an advocate present.

### **Fee-Levy**

In the Winter 2024 elections, The CSU Advocacy Centre requested a 0.10 percent increase that did not pass. However, we have attributed this to students' sentiments of the increasing cost of living and tuition in Quebec.

### **Case Load and Stats Information**

This year The CSU Advocacy Centre has seen an influx of cases primarily due to the November 8, 2023, incident, and the decline of the Student Advocacy Centre. The total number of cases from January 2023 until December 2023 not including cases that become inquiry, walk-ins with questions or general inquires was 452 cases. Below is the break down in the Centre's six categories;

- Academic Misconduct= 116 cases
- Complaints= 22 cases
- Code of Rights and Responsibilities= 27 cases

- Complex Consultation = 5 Cases
- General Consultation= 136 Cases
- Hearings = 4 Cases
- Student Request= 142 Cases

### **Events that impacted the CSU Advocacy Center**

#### **November 8, 2023: Incident on the Mezzanine with SPHR and Startup Nation**

On November 8, 2023, the Montreal police (SPVM) were called to the Hall Building at Concordia University for a protest that spiraled out of control between members of the Jewish and Palestinian communities. This event led to an influx of cases at the Advocacy Centre as many students received and filed complaints with the Code of Rights and Responsibilities. This ongoing conflict and tension between the Iseral and Palestinian communities continues to create complaints and require advocate to mediate conversations between the University and these student groups.

### **Student Advocacy Office**

The Student Advocacy Office (SAO) is the University run Advocacy Office that handles a similar mandate to the CSU Advocacy Centre. This year their office was significantly understaffed as the coordinator resigned. This forced the office to stop taking complainants and respondents in Code of Rights and Responsibilities Cases. As a result, The CSU Advocacy Centre was representing both respondent and complaints in SARC and Code of Rights and Responsibilities cases. Also, at one point was the only operating office as cases were being transferred from SAO to the CSU.

### **Current and Future Projects and Initiatives**

This year, The CSU Advocacy Centre has begun discussion with the University to be the only Advocacy Centre operating at the University, which would mean the closure of the Student Advocacy Office. This project will provide a considerable number of benefits for students at the University. These of which are listed below:

- A community-based service expanded to serve students independently from the University while maintaining good relations with the University to ensure that students receive the optimum results on their cases.
- The Centre will be able to offer support in other capacities such as offering Academic Misconduct workshops, workshops on self-advocating, external consultations for the university that have yet to develop a service on their university campuses and much more.
- The Centre will increase the employment opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students on campus.
- The Centre can develop initiatives to help support students with disabilities.

More so, The Advocacy Centre has identified the continuous need to improve outreach. The AC plans to increase social media activity on Instagram and Facebook in which important deadlines relating to the services will be posted for students. As well as promotional videos that explain and refer students to our services with the various requests, we help process. The AC will also revamp its website to provide more accurate and accessible information to students by including modules that will provide a step-by-step process on how advocates help in our six main categories.

The CSU Advocacy Centre is committed to enhancing and providing sustained and quality support and fostering growth in its vital role within the university community.

## The Legal Information Clinic (LIC)

*Written by Walter Chi-Yan Tom, LIC Manager*

### **Mandate**

The CSU Legal Information Clinic is a free service that provides legal information, referrals, and accompaniment in both French and English to undergraduate and since Fall 2021, graduate Concordia students. The LIC offers information related to issues on immigration, discrimination and consumer protection law and any other areas of law.

On average, most clients require multiple consultations, appointments and follow-ups for legal information and assistance with complex and sensitive issues such as immigration, discrimination and racial profiling, fines, sexual violence, contracts, civil disputes cases and much more.

The LIC's mandate of access to justice also includes community outreach or collaborative projects with community organizations or other CSU departments to address issues of systemic racism and discrimination.

### **Empowerment and Wellness Model**

The Clinic uses an empowerment model to check the wellness of the student clientele and to take the necessary time and care to listen to them, their questions, their frustrations, their confusion and to help them arrange their thoughts.

With the assistance of supervising lawyers and law students, we initially meet and help clients to organize their documents and the facts pertaining to their situation, to understand their needs and issues, both legal and non-legal, such as stress, trauma, academics, mental health, immigration or other difficulties affecting them in their immediate lives.

The Clinic carefully explains and educates students through legal information, research and examples on all their possible options so that they can come to a fully informed decision themselves on which choices are best for them, especially since they are the ones who will assume the consequences of their decisions.

Through this empowerment and wellness method, supported by supervising lawyers and law students, over 90% of students seeking help are satisfied with the legal information and support provided by the Clinic, and do not require the additional services and costs of a lawyer.

### **Survivor-centered, trauma-informed approach**

The Clinic spends at least 2-8 hours for simpler cases and many more hours for more complex cases, applying a survivor-centered, trauma-informed approach, especially for those cases involving sexual violence, discrimination and trauma.

The Clinic is an integral part of the ecosystem of CSU services for students, Concordia and the community at large along with our in-depth grassroots knowledge and collaboration with the resources available to students at the CSU, Concordia University and Concordia community, (eg: HOJO, CSU Advocacy, International Student Office, Sexual Assault Resource Center, Counselling and Psychological Services, Centre for Gender Advocacy, Access Centre for Students with Disabilities, Multi-faith and Spirituality Centre, Center for Research Action and Race Relations, Solidarity Across Borders, etc. etc);

Through these means, the Clinic provides timely, holistic, multifaceted, and intersectional services to persons in need.

### **Increased Clinic Accessibility through Hybrid System:**

Following structural changes to increase student accessibility to the LIC during the recent pandemic, the LIC now operates in a hybrid system, with the Administrative Assistant and Assistant Manager ensuring a physical presence at the LIC during its open office hours to allow for walk-in bookings, while the rest of the LIC works virtually throughout the week. Usually, appointments and meetings are done via Microsoft Teams Monday to Friday, while allowing the student clientele the possibility of arranging in-person consultations, if necessary. This transition to a hybrid system allowed students to access the LIC services from the comfort and safety of their homes, facilitated access for mobility-challenged clientele, and students overseas or outside Montreal.

### **Legal Network, Legal Fee Fund and Legal Representation**

Due to our empowerment Although the Clinic and its law student volunteers cannot act as lawyers for the clients, the Clinic does provide legal representation and advice to students through our Legal Network list where we refer them to qualified and experienced lawyers and advocates, who are community- minded and engaged;

The Clinic had an annual budget line of about 18000\$ for Legal Fee Funding which the Clinic provides to students who, in addition to our legal information services, truly need a lawyer for legal representation and advice, especially if they do not qualify for government legal aid which pays for their lawyer's legal fees and costs;

Of the cases who benefitted from the LIC Legal Fee Fund May 2023- April 2024, legal representation and fees were provided for 8 clients on the following subject matters:

- resolving precarious temporary immigration status and obtaining permanent residency for an Asian survivor of conjugal violence
- same-sex sexual harassment at work
- review of Concordia policies on Sexual violence following lawsuit by survivor of sexual violence on campus
- civil lawsuit against City of Montreal for police brutality and racism towards Black student despite Quebec Human Rights Commission refusal to proceed
- lawsuit against Concordia and City of Montreal police for gross negligence by survivor of sexual violence on campus
- resolving precarious temporary immigration status and obtaining permanent residency following refusal of Postgrad work permit due to study break during Covid 19 pandemic

- defense of Black student criminally charged and assaulted by racist Concordia security guard during sports activity on campus
- assisting a Palestinian refugee with Immigration Canada's overly restrictive Special Measures for Gaza, to reunite with his wife who was at risk in Gaza and succeeded in joining him in Montreal.

All these complex cases involved clients who were traumatized and at risk, and whom the Clinic has continuously supported, in addition to providing them with legal representation.

### **Statistics:**

#### Number of Cases

From May 2023 to April 2024, the LIC has handled a total of 138 cases, (92 Undergraduates and 46 Graduates) not including the multiple appointments and follow-ups necessary for each file.

#### Number of Hourly Appointments

Due to the complexity of their cases, many students require more than one appointment to deal with their issue. From May 2023 to April 2024, the LIC has handled a total of 227 appointments (lasting on average 1 hour each) for an average of 1.6 appointments per student.

60 appointments in Summer 2023

69 appointments in Fall 2023

98 appointments in Winter 2024

Total appointments for 2023-2024= 227

#### Research, Case Management and Communications with students.

Furthermore, for each case, apart from the time spent on a case during appointments, at least additional 2-4 hours is spent by the volunteer law students and supervising lawyers on legal information research, case management and communications with the students.

#### Fields of Law for Undergraduate & Graduate Student Combined (138 cases)

About 47% of the files dealt with immigration, 28% criminal /civil penal infractions and fines, and the rest of the files dealt with harassment, discrimination, sexual violence, family law, business, contracts, intellectual property, civil disputes among other fields of law.

This does not include community outreach or collaborative projects with community organizations or other CSU departments

65 Immigration= 47.1014493%

39 Criminal/Civil Penal= 28.2608696%

8 Family= 5.79710145%

7 Employment= 5.07246377%

4 Business= 2.89855072%

3 Housing= 2.17391304%

2 Consumer= 1.44927536%

2 IP law= 1.44927536%

1 Human Rights= 0.72463768%

1 Harassment= 0.72463768%

6 Other= 4.34782609%

#### Fields of Law for Undergraduates (92 cases)

31 Immigration= 33.6956522%

30 Criminal/Civil Penal = 32.608699%

7 Employment= 7.60869565%

6 Family law= 6.52173913%

4 Business= 4.34782609%

3 Multifaceted Housing law= 3.26086957%

2 Consumer law= 2.17391304%

2 IP law= 2.17391304%

1 Human Rights= 1.08695652%

6 Other= 6.52173913%

#### Fields of Law for Graduate Students (46 cases)

34 Immigration= 52.173913%

9 Criminal/Civil Penal= 13.0434783%

1 Harassment= 2.17391304%

2 Family= 4.34782609%

### **Summary of Activities May 2023 -April 2024**

#### **LIC Outreach Activities**

The LIC successfully relaunched with new community partners such as the Petit Velo Rouge, its Bike Rights Campaign during Fall Orientation 2023 for CSU Services to sensitize and encourage Concordia students and community about updated bike laws, bikers' rights, and the function of the Legal Information Clinic.

During Summer and Fall 2023, LIC continued to partner with other community groups to pressure the City of Montreal to address issues of systemic racism and discrimination within the City, particularly during the Chinatown Reimagined Forum held from September 28 to 30, 2023 which brought together community stakeholders, urban planners, social housing professionals, policymakers, government officials, and change-makers from across North America to share innovation, best practices, and current knowledge.

As usual, the LIC provided ongoing support and information to international students on the many confusing, arbitrary and unfair applications of federal and Quebec immigration policies and procedures to their immigration files.

### **LIC advocacy against new Quebec provincial Immigration Reforms**

However, the focus of the LIC from May 2023- Dec 2023 was dealing with the new provincial immigration reforms proposed in June 2023 and how the new rules unfairly discriminated against non-francophone international students studying in English educational institutions and excluded them from immigrating to Quebec.

Over Summer and Fall 2023, the LIC submitted a brief and led a CSU delegation in September 2023 to present its recommendations in Québec City to the the Quebec government's Commission des relations avec les citoyens as part of the Consultation générale et auditions publiques sur La planification de l'immigration au Québec pour la période 2024-2027.

As the only English student organization at the Consultation, representing Concordia's 37,000 undergraduate students of diverse racial, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, including more than 11,000 international students from non-francophone countries such as in Asia and South America, we spoke on the devastating effect of the Quebec government's proposed immigration policy on students and Quebec's international reputation by excluding qualified non-francophones immigrants who have otherwise acquired the necessary French language skills to integrate into the Quebec labour market.

Although the discriminatory reforms were eventually implemented by the Quebec government in November 2023, our efforts did result in obtaining certain transitional measures exempting international students who were already enrolled in study programs in English at the time of the reform's implementation.

### **Special Measures for Gaza**

One of the community initiatives this year was the Clinic's collaboration with the Canadian Bar association to provide legal assistance to people affected by the dire and urgent situation in Gaza. In one of these cases, the Clinic assisted a Palestinian refugee with Immigration Canada's overly restrictive Special Measures for Gaza, to reunite with his wife who was at risk in Gaza, and who succeeded in joining him in Montreal. This success story was one of the highlights for the Clinic staff and volunteers this year.

### **GSA Referendum and Exclusion of Graduate students from LIC Services**

Over the last period of May 2023- April 2024, there was an increase in graduate student clientele, who are usually older students with more complex professional and personal issues, and who have consistently expressed their appreciation for the quality and accessibility to the LIC's services.

However, the LIC may soon **no longer be able to assist any graduate students** because of the Graduate Student Association's (GSA) recent referendum proposal to eliminate the *fee levy of \$2.75 per term paid by GSA members for the CSU Legal Information Clinic (LIC), which would cut-off and exclude all graduate students from the services of the LIC.*

This is particularly frustrating because of the CSU's recent stated intentions to keep the Clinic open pending a review of its services in accordance with the resolution adopted by CSU Student Council on February 14, 2024.

The GSA's referendum proposal was made without any previous consultations or communications with the LIC. It will have an immediate and severe impact on all graduate students we are presently assisting and those who are seeking help with immigration, discrimination, contracts, business, criminal or any other fields of law.

## **The Off-Campus Housing and Jobs Resources Centre (HOJO)**

*Written by Leanne Ashworth, HOJO Manager*

## Mission

The CSU Off-Campus Housing & Job Resource Centre (HOJO) works to empower, educate and support the Concordia community by providing reliable housing and employment information, resources and referrals. HOJO is a service that is centered on students' needs. We strive to support students in learning about and exercising their rights as tenants and employees.

## Mandate

HOJO is responsible for providing students with legal information on their tenants' and workers' rights as they are regulated at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. We offer 1-on-1 support for students requiring legal information and support based on the protocols, procedures, and regulations governing rental housing and labor standards. These services encompass questions of financial matters, administrative procedures, health and safety concerns, preparation for hearings, privacy issues, and cases involving fraud.

Additionally, we provide proactive information service via workshops, presentations and outreach activities all with the aim of educating students about their rights and recourses. HOJO further supports students transitioning into the housing and employment sectors through our own moderated classifieds website. This web application facilitates access to part-time or student employment opportunities, as well as options for apartments and roommates.

The CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Resource Centre works to address the specific needs of our student population. We do this by creating seasonal programming, outreach, and workshops as well as responding to a high volume of student requests for legal information

## **Service Overview:**

The Off-Campus Housing and Part-Time Job Service offers a multifaceted approach to meet the diverse needs of students:

1. **Part-Time Job search & legal information on employment concerns:** students can find flexible employment options that complement their academic schedules with the assistance of the HOJO team. We offer our classifieds website as well as additional part-time student job resources. We also offered semesterly *How to find a part-time job* workshops. While studying, many students are receiving their first job contract and would like to sit down and go over the document to better understand what it means and what their rights are as an employee.

2. **Personalized Legal Information on tenants' rights:** The HOJO team is available to assist students throughout their housing and job search journey. Whether students need guidance on responding to an attempt to repossess their apartment, addressing roommate conflict, preparing for a hearing at the Administrative Housing Tribunal, or contacting the City Health inspectors to address a health and safety concern, our staff offer personalized assistance and resources to address their specific needs.
3. **Housing Search Assistance:** Through our workshops, and classifieds website HOJO provides students access to off-campus housing options, including apartments, houses, and shared accommodations. Once their account has been created and approved, students can filter listings based on their preferences, such as location, rental price, amenities, and lease duration. Additionally, HOJO offers resources and guidance on a drop-in basis while students seek housing often before the beginning of each semester, on everything related to navigating the rental process, from avoiding rental scams, protecting your private information on lease applications, understanding lease agreements, and resolving common housing-related issues.
4. **Annual Project:** This year, HOJO presented a film series supported by the Concordia Council on Student Life. *Displaced Realities: The Fight for Home* because we wanted to look at the affordable housing crisis on a larger scale. We screened the following films on campus: *Dear Jackie*, *Evicted City* and *Push* Some specific communities that were highlighted in our films were Black and Indigenous people, seniors, immigrants, and low-income communities. In highlighting their struggles, we wanted to especially highlight the efforts of community activists to fight back to preserve their communities.
5. **Empowerment:** The service empowers students to make informed decisions about their housing and employment options, equipping them with the knowledge and resources needed to succeed both academically and professionally.

### Service Statistics:

We are now well into the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the 2023-24 Academic year, HOJO has demonstrated significant engagement and impact, as evidenced by the following statistics:

- **Email responses:** Our team responded to a total of **5690 emails** from students seeking assistance with off-campus housing and part-time job inquiries. That is **28 emails on an average business day**. These responses ranged from providing information on available housing listings and job opportunities to offering personalized guidance and support tailored to individual student needs.

- **Phone calls:** The service fielded **649 phone calls & voicemails** from students seeking immediate assistance or clarification on housing and employment-related matters. Our dedicated staff members were readily available to address inquiries over the phone, ensuring timely and effective communication.
- **1-on-1 scheduled meetings: 737 in-person meetings** were conducted with students seeking comprehensive support and guidance in navigating their off-campus housing and part-time questions and concerns. **On average each workday we held 4 scheduled consultations.** These meetings allowed our team to provide personalized assistance, address specific concerns, and offer tailored information on specific rights and recourses based on individual student circumstances.
- **Drop-in consultations: 1136 students** dropped in to the HOJO office for unscheduled consults on a variety of issues from seeking housing and employments while studying to learning about their rights in responding to a rental increase from the landlord. **On average each work-day we see 6 unscheduled consultations.**
- **Classifieds website moderation:** User approval and ads approval through this year to date we have reviewed **1468 new user accounts and ads** for *HOJO Classifieds* (classifieds.csu.qc.ca). The busiest time for our website is the spring, summer and beginning of the fall semester as students seek to get established for the coming academic year, until February students would place their lease transfers on the Hojo classifieds when they were graduating to be released from their contract at the end of their studies and to pass on their lease to another student. With the passing of Bill 31- lease transfers are more restricted, and we are interested to see how this affects the coming housing search for affordable apartments in the upcoming school year.
- **Workshops and Presentations:** So far this year, we have presented **25 workshops** with **757 people attending.** The topics covered in our workshops range from Getting Started with Off-campus Housing, *All About Rental Applications and Leases*, *Job Hunting for Students*, *Moving out of Residence* and *Refusing your Rental Increase*. We presented our 1-hour class presentation on Tenants Rights and a more interactive version of our presentation to the Dean of Student's Homeroom program on Tenants Rights.
- **On-campus Outreach: Throughout the fall and winter semester**

These statistics underscore the level of engagement and responsiveness demonstrated by HOJO. By offering personalized interactions, we aim to ensure that students receive the guidance and resources they need to succeed in their off campus living and work endeavors.

### **Legal Information Statistics by case type June 1 – April 19/2024**

HOJO provides invaluable support to students by offering legal guidance and resources on housing and employment rights. The following statistics highlight the clinic's activities and impact from June 1, 2023, to April 19, 2024:

- **Total Consults:** Throughout this period, HOJO conducted **2,225 consultations** with students seeking legal assistance and information about their housing and employment rights and their search for housing and employment.
- **General Inquiries:** Among the consultations, **1,635 were general inquiries** where students sought information and guidance on their housing and employment search, as well as finding housing, inquiries about the classifieds website and finding part-time jobs

### **Total New, Reopened or Ongoing Legal Information cases: HOJO June 1, 2023-April 19, 2024**

**This year we worked on 1,041 students' legal information cases.** Below is the breakdown of these cases by case type of the legal information requests.

#### **Housing-Specific Cases:**

- Administrative Cases: **425 cases**
- Health and Safety: **216 cases**

#### **Employment-Specific Cases:**

- Administrative Cases: **45 cases**
- Health and Safety: **8 cases**

#### **Both Employment and Housing Cases:**

- All Financial Issues: **287 cases**
- Hearing Preparation: **46 cases**

- Fraud: **4 cases**
- Privacy Concerns: **10 cases**

### **Statistics on HOJO New Legal Information Cases: June 1-April 19, 2024**

- **Total Legal Information Cases: 590 New legal information cases** were handled by the Centre this year. These types of cases involve intake procedures and follow-up meetings with our staff to address legal concerns and issues faced by students.

### **Classification of Legal Information Cases:**

#### **Housing-Specific Cases:**

- Administrative Cases: **241 new cases** involved administrative issues related to housing, including Abandonment, eviction, major work, and necessary repairs processes
- Health and Safety: **131 new cases** pertained to health and safety concerns in student housing, such as building code violations, pest infestations, and unsafe living conditions.

#### **Employment-Specific Cases:**

- Administrative Cases: **28 new cases** focused on administrative matters related to employment, such as contract disputes, wage disputes, and workplace policies.
- Health and Safety: **5 new cases** addressed health and safety issues in the workplace, including occupational hazards and workplace safety violations.

#### **Both Employment and Housing Cases:**

- All Financial Issues: **160 new cases** involved financial matters affecting both housing and employment, such as unpaid wages, rental increases, rental deposits and all other financial disputes with landlords or employers.
- Hearing Preparation: **23 cases** required preparation for legal hearings or proceedings related to housing or employment disputes.
- Other: includes Fraud and Privacy Concerns: This year we had **2 cases** specifically involving online rental application fraud- where students were defrauded online and sent money to a fake apartment listing, and a privacy

concern where a student was concerned, they had given too much of their confidential information to a potential landlord via a rental application.

## Ongoing Cases

There were many cases that HOJO continued to work on or cases that had to be reopened with students when they returned to Concordia in the fall. These cases began before June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and include cases that were reopened due to updates in the case after June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. We are continuing to investigate these numbers and will have additional information in time for our final report on the year after May 31<sup>st</sup> when our year ends.

Ongoing and Re-opened cases June 1<sup>st</sup> - April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## Housing-Specific Cases:

- Administrative Cases: **184 cases** +241
- Health and Safety: **85 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.

## Employment-Specific Cases:

- Administrative Cases: **17 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.
- Health and Safety: **3 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.

## Both Employment and Housing Cases:

- All Financial Issues: **127 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.
- Hearing Preparation: **23 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.
- Fraud: **3 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.
- Privacy Concerns: **9 cases** from previous years remained or became active cases again.

## Daycare

*Written by Angela Meo, Daycare Manager*

The CSU Daycare and Nursery is located on Bishop next to the LB Building, between St-Catherine and De Maisonneuve. A high-quality, inclusive daycare service is offered to student parents' children as well as families in the community.

The daycare suffered lower numbers than usual in 2023 and 2024. Many families, especially those from Concordia, have moved out of the neighbourhood because of rent increases and lack of available apartments to fit their needs. Opening the daycare to the community was one of the ways we were able to keep the daycare operating.

Investing in our high-quality program remains a huge priority to us. This investment is necessary at the level of the educators' salaries and insurance plan as there is a lack of qualified educators in the field since the pandemic. After educator evaluations in March 2024, a few educators were entitled to a pay raise in their scale because of hours accumulated. The daycare has also adopted a voluntary retirement plan beginning in May 2024.

Some educator contracts are ending soon and in summer to accommodate for educators who took their maternity leave in 2023. These educators will have to be put up to date with the schedule changes and group definition changes since they left. A rotating schedule for start times and end times has been recently implemented to help serve the changing needs of the daycare and to be fair to each employee.

The Victorian style building that the daycare calls home had many small renos done in the past year. In 2024 we are looking to fix the roof and the back building façade to ensure it is safe and secure. Lastly, the daycare is working on implementing a website with the help of the CSU to help promote its services and program.

### **CSU DROP-IN DAYCARE**

The drop-in daycare is in full operation and has been since fall 2024. The pilot project that was supposed to end May 31, 2024, has been extended for an undetermined period. This will help in

promoting the drop-in center to more Concordia student families who don't know about our service. The amount of the subsidy is yet to be determined by the Family Ministry.

There is possibility that we open to non-Concordia families and that we organize a summer camp to help the operations continue during the season where there are less students on campus. This will help keep our staff as well who are Concordia students or graduates.

This year, students from the child-studies department were able to come to the center to do observations of children playing for one of their classes. We hope to continue this collaboration since it was a positive one for all. The CSU Daycare and Nursery alongside the CSU Drop-In center hope to continue to complement each other and help parents find the support they need to study all while managing a family.

## CSU Mental Health Services

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

The CSU is in the process of expanding the mental health services currently on offer to students. In the 2020 by-elections, a question asked students if they would support the creation of a CSU mental health service office (96% in favor), and another question asked to create a fee-levy to support this endeavor (74% in favor). The task since then, which has not been easy, has been to determine how best to structure these services so that they provide the most to our students.

The CSU's mental health services, which are meant to compliment the lacking services provided by the University, can be thought of as having an internal and external component. The internal component is the CSU's Recovery and Wellness Community Centre (RAWCC), opened in 2019, which is a peer-led service that aims to provide support to students who are in recovery and/or have a lived experience of addiction. The RAWCC's philosophy is to foster autonomy and empowerment through peer-driven support made by those in recovery for those in recovery. The mode of delivery is through meetings, workshops, and social events. The RAWCC also provides access to harm reduction supplies and facilitates access to other resources/services.

The external components are the services that the CSU negotiates with external service providers. In May 2023, Council approved a contract with Mosaic, a mental health service provider that grew out of The Refugee Centre. Mosaic has worked throughout the summer and fall of 2023 to develop their programming to fit the needs of the Concordia student population. Mosaic has recently begun to roll out their programming in January 2024, and these services will

be expanded throughout the year (and in years to come as Mosaic and CSU signed a five-year contract). The ad-hoc Mental Health Committee is tasked with overseeing Mosaic's rollout and in finding another service provider, or providers, to further offer services to our students. We hope to have another contract signed by the end of this mandate, and for more services to be offered by Fall 2024.

## HR/EDI Services

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

During the 2020-2021 mandate, students approved the creation of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Office at the CSU and associated fee-levy. The EDI Office was created as an inward-facing service to provide leadership in planning and implementing strategies that embed diversity in the culture of the CSU and create an inclusive environment for students and CSU staff. The overarching goal of the EDI Office is therefore to create a student union in which all can participate, and the development of a workplace environment that is supportive, healthy, and conducive to cooperation. The manager hired to staff this Office did amazing work, but was tasked with too large of a workload, as they were expected to set up and manage the EDI Office and to provide HR for the Union. This untenable workload led them to resign in August 2022.

Since then, the Union has been trying to determine how best to structure the EDI Office and some form of HR Department at the CSU in a way that does not lead to the same issues being recreated. In 2022 the CSU began working with an external HR consultant who worked to resolve employee disputes, clarify contractual obligations, and create a strategic plan for the Union. We continued to work with this external consultant on HR issues on an as needed basis during this mandate until their retirement in March of this year. When considering suitable replacements, we determined that what would be the most sensible was to find an HR firm that could provide both EDI advisory and HR support for the Union. Members of the Executive team and the CSU's General Manager have been working to find a suitable replacement along these lines and will likely have a contract in place by the end of this mandate.

The CSU is very much in need of both these services and at this point we are in the nascent stages of figuring out what works best for our specific organization. With that in mind I would strongly suggest that the Executive team continues to work with the General Manager and CUPE to evaluate our efforts and to be proactive in working to improve services available.

## Reception

### CSU Space Usage

The CSU provides event, meeting and tabling spaces for the Concordia community at-large.

### *Conference Room*

The **Modular Conference Room** (H711.4) is located within the main CSU office space, to the left of the reception area when walking in.

This private space is used for meetings held by CSU staff, executives, council and committees. It is also open to any registered student groups and fee-levy groups at Concordia. Apart from meetings, it can also be used to host workshops, presentations, trainings, interviews, and operates as a screening center for health service pop-ups.

In the current year, there have been **359 reservations** made for the Modular Conference Room. Predominantly, it has been utilized for meetings, accounting for 85% of its usage.

MODULAR CONFERENCE ROOM	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>47%</b>
TYPE OF EVENTS			
Event	3	43	1333%
Meeting	183	307	68%
Lecture or Workshop	59	9	-85%

### *Information Tables*

The **Mezzanine Information Tables** are a set of four tables located on the second floor (mezzanine) of the Hall Building. Each table is separated by a corkboard display cases, so that multiple groups can make use of the space at once.

The tables can be booked by student groups, University departments or offices, and students conducting class projects or surveys. During the CSU elections, these tables are particularly useful for candidates to disseminate their electoral platforms to students in a casual and friendly setting.

Throughout the year, we've recorded a total of **571 bookings** for the Mezzanine Information Tables. The most prevalent activities hosted were club activities, constituting 87% of the total usage.

CSU MEZZANINE INFORMATION TABLES	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>71%</b>
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Bake Sale	27	28	4%
Club Activity / Event			
Promotion	223	498	123%
Class Project / Research Study	34	2	-94%
Elections	46	31	-33%
Other Fundraising	3	12	300%

The **Kiosk** is located on the second floor of the Hall building. It is the large, V-shaped table made of wood and rooted firmly in place, in between the freight elevator and the Mezzanine tables, to the left of the Hive Café. It is used for small local businesses to market their wares, non-profit organizations to fundraise, or as an information booth for members of the Concordia community. Internal reservations are made at no cost, whereas external ones are reservable at a rate tailored to the type of business wishing to book the Kiosk.

Throughout the year, we've recorded a total of **63 bookings** for the Kiosk, marking a substantial increase of nearly 5 times compared to the previous year. The most prevalent activities hosted were club activities, constituting 79% of the total usage.

CSU KIOSK	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>473%</b>
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Club Activity / Event			
Promotion	7	50	614%
Sales	4	13	225%

### *Event Spaces*

The **Large Lounge** (H701) is located on the seventh floor of the Hall building, to the left of the entrance to the main CSU office space. It is a large, open space that can be delegated into sections by movable cork boards, but still remains public and not private. The Lounge is open to registered student groups, and any recognized body at Concordia. Groups can book the space for rehearsals, events, meetings, talks, workshops, etc.

This year saw a notable increase in activities within the Lounge, with **179 bookings**. We are nearing the average booking numbers from pre-pandemic periods. Among these bookings, social events, make up a significant portion, accounting 43% of the bookings. These consist of a wide array of social gatherings, including religious gatherings, lunches, dinners, parties, and promotional events for clubs.

CSU LOUNGE		NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>34%</b>	
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES				
Dance	14	10	<b>-29%</b>	
Fair or Exhibit	7	3	<b>-57%</b>	
Meeting		5		
Practice	16	60	<b>275%</b>	
Social	75	77	<b>3%</b>	
Speaker Event	22	24	<b>9%</b>	

The **Cafeteria (H718)** is located on the seventh floor of the Hall building, across from the CSU Comms Room (H725). It is a medium-sized, open space that provides more privacy than the Large Lounge, but remains public. The Cafeteria is open to registered student groups, and any recognized body at Concordia for rehearsals, events, meetings, talks, workshops, etc.

This year saw a notable increase in activities within the Cafeteria, with **17 bookings**. The Cafeteria's low popularity is attributed to its small size and location in a low-traffic area; it does not attract as many bookings as the Lounge, which is larger and located in a high-traffic area. However, the Cafeteria has a lot of potential for growth and expansion.

CSU CAFETERIA		NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>240%</b>	
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES				
Information Session		3		
Meeting		1		
Practice	1	10	<b>900%</b>	
Social		3		

Speaker Event	4		
---------------	---	--	--

The **Art Nook** is located on the seventh floor of the Hall building, outside room number H725. It is the small, open space directly in front of the Comms Room, situated between the CSU main office and the Legal Information Clinic. What makes the Art Nook unique is the open access to art materials, making this space art-friendly, and a good resource for preparing signage for events, art installations, protests, demonstrations, etc. The Art Nook can be reserved by registered student groups, or members of the Concordia community at-large to hold meetings and workshops. Please note, however, that priority is given to student groups.

This year, we had **33 bookings** in the Art Nook, with meetings and social events dominating the schedule. The Art Nook is an essential space for small-scale events. Despite its relatively lower frequency of bookings, it stands out as an excellent last-minute option due to its lenient booking requirements compared to those of the Lounge and Cafeteria.

	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6%</b>
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Exhibit		1	
Meeting	3	17	467%
Social	25	15	-40%
Speaker Event	3		

## CSU Emergency Food Fund

The CSU Emergency Food Fund program was launched in January 2012, initially offering food vouchers in the form of gift cards valued at \$25 for each individual's case. Students had the opportunity to apply for up to two vouchers per semester. Our process changed due to the pandemic and inflation. The funds are now distributed by means of an interac e-transfer in the amount of 75 dollars. Students may apply once per semester.

The food vouchers we provide are for currently enrolled students facing emergency circumstances, requiring proof of ID and class schedule upon application. Among those who access this service are young student parents, people with precarious living arrangements or lacking permanent address, and members of other marginalized communities.

We emphasize that students are not obligated to disclose their personal financial situation to CSU staff. Our goal is to establish a non-judgmental, safe environment for all students in need. However, we ask that when students access this service, they fairly evaluate their own needs and the needs of others, given the limited resources of the fund and the increasing demand for this service.

EMERGENCY FOOD FUND	NUMBER OF REQUESTS		
	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	% Change
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-20%</b>
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Arts and Science	15	14	-7%
Fines Arts	7	3	-57%
Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science	8	8	-
Independent	1		-100%
John Molson School of Business	4	3	-25%

### Pick Up Location for HIV Self-Testing Kits

The CSU office is proud to be a pickup location for the *I'm Ready* research program, a program we believe could be a game-changer in putting an end to the HIV epidemic in Canada.

**I'm Ready** is a national HIV self-testing research program that is distributing 50,000 free HIV self-testing kits and offering support to Canadians. The self-test kits can be ordered via the *I'm Ready* app, which aims to collect anonymous data to improve HIV testing and care. As for resources and peer support, they can be accessed on the sister app, *I'm Ready Talk*. All Concordia students are invited to register through the app and get access to up to 3 HIV self-testing kits.

### Student Health and Dental Insurance

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

The CSU has provided students with a health and dental plan (the Plan) since the mid 1990s through the use of external service providers. The CSU negotiates the Plan, but the University provides administrative assistance so that the Plan can be carried out between the Union, the student body, and the necessary external service providers. The Memorandum of Agreement

between Concordia and the CSU governs this arrangement and was signed by the relevant representatives from both parties on January 14th, 2010. It details how following an undergraduate student referendum held in March 1996, Concordia's Board of Governors (BoG) approved, at its meeting of June 19, 1996, the collection of an annual health insurance fee on behalf of the CSU. In April 1997, the BoG did the same for a dental insurance fee following a second successful student referendum.

To administer the Plan, the CSU has worked with Studentcare, a company that was created to assist student associations in providing health and dental insurance for their members.

Studentcare provides two main functions: they are a broker/contract negotiator; and they are an administrator. As a broker, they bring a package to various insurance providers and seek to get the most coverage at the lowest price (or whatever is most valued by the client - student associations). They then bring this to the student association and the association weighs the pros and cons of each insurance coverage offer. Within this process, Studentcare incorporates a fee for their services, both in acting as the broker, but also in administering the service itself. In the end, once a contract is signed, they handle claims submitted and any related issues, including tech support and data security (though our reception team handles inquire as well). What the student association does is engage Studentcare to seek out an underwriter to cover the services they wish to provide to their members, and to negotiate a cost and determine the length of the contract. The Plan operates on an opt-out structure. That is, eligible students are automatically entered into the Plan, and the fee is added to their tuition upon registration. Students can choose to opt-out of the Plan, and the fees will be subtracted from their tuition (or reimbursed if they have already paid them). For the last two years, when the existing contract has been in place, the cost of the Plan has been the following:

	Fal 1	Wi nte r	Full Year
Health	\$26.5 0	\$5 3.0 0	\$79.50
Dental	\$35.1 7	\$7 0.3 3	\$105.50
TOTAL	\$61.6 7	\$12 3.33	\$185.00

This year, we decided to include medical services relating to gender affirming care within the existing contract, something which Studentcare has increasingly negotiated with the various insurance providers they work with. The cost of \$9/student was covered using the Health and Dental Reserve Fund, and therefore has been offered this year with no additional cost to students.

Our current contract with Studentcare expires on August 31st, 2024. We have begun the process of negotiating a new contract through Studentcare, and will have a new agreement signed by the end of the 2023-2024 mandate. In addition, Studentcare will be placing an RFP for us (likely in May) for us to negotiate a plan with an insurance provider. We currently work with Desjardins but may switch as there have been issues with their platform.

### Data Transfer Issues and Class Action

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

As mentioned, while the CSU negotiates the Plan, the University provides administrative assistance and has done so since the 1990s when the original agreements were made, and the CSU began providing students with health and dental insurance. Crucially, the University is entrusted to transfer student information necessary to carry out the plan to the provider of the plan as determined by the CSU. In August 2023 the University suddenly changed course and informed us that they would no longer be transferring this data to the insurance provider as the result of new privacy legislation contained within Law 25, the second portion of which came into effect on September 22nd, 2023.

We attempted to negotiate a solution to this with the University, and time was of the essence, as without the transfer of this data students would be paying into the Plan but would not be able to use their insurance because they would not have been registered. The University was not particularly cooperative, but Yu-Hui, Robert, and representatives from Studentcare worked diligently to create a solution that, while not perfect, allows us to continue to provide the Plan to our members. The University made this sudden and drastic change as a result of a Class Action lawsuit, in which Concordia University is a defendant, relating to the administration of student Health and Dental Plans. On July 27th we were informed by the senior legal counsel of Concordia University that a Concordia student has launched a class action lawsuit against Desjardins, Alliance pour la Santé Étudiante au Québec (ASEQ also known as Studentcare), and Concordia University, which alleges that the student health and dental plan does not comply with applicable law. Notably, similar class action lawsuits have been launched recently against other Universities in Quebec and there will likely be more to come. While the Concordia Student

Union is not named as a defendant in the lawsuit the CSU was informed of the class action lawsuit by the University as a result of clause 5.1 of the Memorandum of Agreement (“Agreement”) between Concordia University and the CSU. Clause 5.1 states that “the CSU acknowledges that the administration of the Student Health and Dental Insurance Plan is the sole and exclusive responsibility of the CSU, and that the University is merely performing administrative functions on its behalf.” After seeking advice from the CSU’s legal counsel, the CSU acknowledged receipt of this claim and we have tasked the CSU’s legal team with investigating this further. The key to understanding this class action lawsuit is that student health and dental insurance plans in Quebec are administered on an opt-in rather than opt-out basis. That is, students are automatically enrolled (so long as they qualify) but are permitted to opt-out (and have the cost refunded) even if they do not have another insurance plan. The applicant of the class action lawsuit believes that the opt-in system is an infringement on their rights. The “class” in the class action lawsuit are all students enrolled in a CEGEP or university who are automatically subscribed to a health, medical, or dental insurance plan. Specifically, the applicant states that the defendants act illegally by:

1. Subscribing the Class members to a group insurance plan without their consent, either before or after these members were subscribed;
2. Invoicing the Class members without their consent and without informing them that they had no obligation to pay the amounts indicated on the invoice with respect to the insurance (i.e. that the insurance is optional);
3. Imposing an arbitrary deadline to opt-out that is based neither on legislation nor regulations, nor on the consent of the Class members; and
4. Failing to send the insurance policy to Class members.

For greater clarity, the CSU negotiates the Health and Dental Insurance Plan, but it is ASEQ that administers the plan on behalf of the CSU. When students enroll at Concordia the University collects a fee from applicable students for the Insurance Plan and sends this to the CSU. Additionally, the University transfers to ASEQ the necessary student data needed to administer the plan. Students can opt-out of the plan and will have the cost refunded to their student account. All this information is provided to students on the CSU website in the section detailing the Insurance Plan. Students can also contact Studentcare directly to ask additional questions they may have.

Essentially what the student who has brought this class action lawsuit is arguing for is an opt-in system of student health and dental insurance.<sup>1</sup> To put it bluntly, this would most likely undermine the ability for student associations to provide health and/or dental insurance to their members. Student insurance plans are affordable because most students pay into them, thereby dispersing the risk for the insurer and decreasing the cost per student. I believe if the opt-out system was replaced with an opt-in system most students would fail to opt in which would eventually drive costs far higher per student. I hold this position for three reasons. Firstly, many students do not have an excess of funds in their accounts, and if they are not in need of health or dental care when asked if they would like to opt-in to the plan at a fee, they are likely to decline and save themselves some cash. Secondly, even if some students would like to opt-in, there is a lot for students to keep track of, especially at the start of the semester when the opt-in period would be, likely leading many to forget to opt-in. Lastly, those students most in need of health and dental insurance because of existing or anticipated issues are likely to subscribe, but they are also the highest users of the plan which drives up the risk for the insurance provider, leading them to increase the cost for insurance coverage. Together I suspect this would result in enrollment falling to very low levels and a huge increase in the cost of the plan. For this reason, we are in opposition to any argument that would replace the opt-out system with an opt-in one.

Providing health and dental insurance is one of the benefits that students are provided with during post-secondary education. As we are all aware, the cost to attend university is increasing, as is the cost of living. While costs increase for students it is of crucial importance that students can at least know that they can access health and dental care at reasonable prices. Indeed, as any international student knows, the Insurance Plan that domestic students currently have is priced very reasonably, and there is movement to try to enable the CSU (and other student associations)

---

<sup>1</sup> A note on class action lawsuits. Most class actions are carried out by a party that has a particular interest in a certain issue and wishes to have it overturned. Most frequently, this is an organization who then finds an individual who fits the characteristics of the class at hand. So, in this instance it is almost certain that there is a group of people who, for whatever reason, want opt-out student health plans declared illegal and have therefore gone about finding members of this “class” to act as the plaintiff in the lawsuit. The plaintiff is a Concordia student, but the point is that they did not take particular issue with their health plan, find a lawyer, develop a lawsuit, and bring it against ASEQ and Concordia. A note on class action lawsuits. Most class actions are carried out by a party that has a particular interest in a certain issue and wishes to have it overturned. Most frequently, this is an organization who then finds an individual who fits the characteristics of the class at hand. So, in this instance it is almost certain that there is a group of people who, for whatever reason, want opt-out student health plans declared illegal and have therefore gone about finding members of this “class” to act as the plaintiff in the lawsuit. The plaintiff is a Concordia student, but the point is that they did not take particular issue with their health plan, find a lawyer, develop a lawsuit, and bring it against ASEQ and Concordia.

to negotiate and provide health and dental insurance plans at a lower rate for international students (currently the University provides the plan and refuses to try to negotiate a lower cost. Additionally international students cannot opt-out of University provided plans, and therefore must pay the high cost without any alternative). We have worked all year to investigate this issue and work with others who share our position. As mentioned, the CSU is not named as a defendant, but we have a major stake in this lawsuit.

## **Applied Human Science Internships: Councillor and Executive Training**

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

In July I was contacted by the director of the internship program of the Applied Human Sciences Department (AHSC) who wanted to know if the CSU would be interested in partnering with them to provide internship opportunities for their fourth-year students. The AHSC department offers their students in the program the opportunity to apply their skills within community organizations for projects that may take one or two semesters. After discussing the partnership with the rest of the executive team we agreed to go ahead with this.

After consultation with the program director and reviewing past projects which students have carried out, I submitted three proposals to AHSC: the development of a Council onboarding package and training schedule; the development of an executive onboarding package and training schedule; and the development and implementation of a HR department at CSU. The Council and Executive centered proposals were accepted, and two groups consisting of four students each took on these projects.

The impetus behind these projects comes from personal experience, seeing what is lacking at the CSU, and while I am glad two out of three proposals were accepted, I wish all three had been. Nonetheless, over the last 1.5 years I have spent at the CSU, I have seen how insufficient training for both councillors and executives limits the effectiveness of the Union, undermines accountability, and leaves many either apathetic or burnt out. I met with these groups once each week during the fall semester to work with them on developing these projects and to provide them with suggestions and necessary background information. Both groups' final projects far exceeded my expectations, and I am very pleased to have worked on this collaboration.

The Council group suggested workshops throughout the year to improve team building and skill development and help ensure that councillors feel as though they work as a team and can come to know each other outside of the formal meeting settings in which they currently meet. The

team also suggested that we begin training of new councillors following their election in mid-March, rather than in late-May and early June as we do so now. The team also developed a survey sent to current and past councillors that they used to inform their project design. The survey will be used again and updated if necessary, and the input will further inform the training process and the data will be used to measure the effectiveness of this evolving intervention. All are very important, and I believe will help us build a more responsible, skilled, and engaged council.

Kareem and I will be facilitating the team building sessions and providing the general training for the Executives and hopefully the Councilors (though this may have to wait until after May, in which case I will be gone) Additionally, I have been developing a councillor handbook/manual that contains general information, a brief CSU/Concordia history, and simplified guides to such things as drafting a motion and participating in the work of a sub-committee. Currently, no such guide exists, and councillors are at best told where to find information but are not provided with a comprehensive explanation in one place. I have also worked to further develop the councillor training presentation and make it into something that can be re-used by those who come after me. As it now stands, councillors are provided with eight mandatory training sessions that, while important, do not teach them how to be Councilors, and this is evidently an issue. A presentation with accompanying notes and documentation would allow subsequent executive teams the means to train their incoming council even if they themselves are not entirely clear on all aspects of the Union.

Together I believe that implementing the work of the AHSC students (and adjustments as necessary), developing a councillor manual, and creating a training presentation and notes will provide a good foundation for outgoing and incoming executives to train councillors to ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their roles. This will empower the councillors, who are there as representatives of the students, and will ease the work of the executives, which together will hopefully enable the CSU to function more effectively, thereby bringing benefit to the student population as a whole.

The Executive group suggested beginning training early on following the annual elections in mid-March, with a focus on incoming executives shadowing outgoing ones. They have developed a checklist that will help incoming and outgoing executives cover the material and skills needed to carry out their role. This group also created a survey (filled out by current and past executives) and this will be sent to outgoing and incoming executives to continually gather

information regarding the training process. This data will then be able to serve as a means to evaluate improvements and shortcomings of the training process as it is continuously evolving.

Kareem and I will be overseeing the implementation of these aspects in May, including ensuring incoming and outgoing executives are working with their checklist (and monitoring that results are achieved), updating the checklist based on feedback, and reporting on the results of the survey and improving the questions asked if necessary. We have also worked to update all of the manuals provided to executive. Each executive receives a manual with details of their position and general knowledge about the union, and the outgoing executive is meant to update these before passing them onto their successors. This year each executive updated their manual and we then reviewed them as a group to check for inaccuracies and redundancies. At this point I know each position well enough to be able to complete this task, and would also work with current and past executives to ensure the editing is comprehensive.

In May I will be working with the outgoing Executives to finalize supplementary “How to Chair Your Committees” handbooks as each executive chairs at least one committee and their functioning is an essential component of the Union’s activities, yet it is not given the attention it deserves. Committee work is time consuming, often difficult, and very important to the Union’s overall work and proposal. Our committees give out a minimum of \$100 000 a year, and most of the discussion on this funding is had within the committees. Additionally, appointments to other important university and CSU bodies are done by a CSU committee, and these committees in turn make decisions that have the potential to impact many students. Executives are given no training as to how to chair their committees, nor how to train the councilors and students at large who staff these committees (the voting members). As a result, committee members are often uncertain of their role, leading to poor decisions or apathy, and decisions that require more diligent review are made hastily or without due consideration.

Implementing the existing AHSC project developed along with these two additional aspects should aid executives in carrying out their roles as a whole, and in their committee specific work which is a large component of their work. In doing so executives will be able to carry out their work more competently as will their committees, which in both cases aids in enabling the CSU to better represent its members and provide services and assistance accordingly. I am very thankful that the AHSC department approached us and that the students engaged on these projects worked hard to ensure useful outcomes.

## Appointments Committee

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

The Appointments Committee is responsible for making recommendations to Council for appointments to all University bodies and/or committees as outlined in the CSU standing regulations. Each CSU Committee has at least one seat for a student at large, and it is the responsibility of the Appointments Committee to receive and review applications for these positions. The Committee then makes recommendations to Council, and if approved, the students recommended are appointed to their respective committees. A similar process is followed for the appointment of students to the University Senate, Concordia Council on Student Life, Student Tribunal, and numerous other Committees which have one or more seats reserved for undergraduate students. This year the Appointments Committee has worked diligently to staff all of the CSU's open committee positions and most of the University committee seats. The table below shows the committee/position and student representative appointed:

<b>Committee/Position</b>	<b>Student Appointed</b>
Appointments Committee	Juliette Leon
BIPOC Committee	Kanika Codrington
BIPOC Committee	Ahana Busime Murumbi
Clubs and Spaces Committee	Abigail Koff (resigned - taking new applications)

External and Mobilization Committee	Kanika Codrington
Fee-Levy Review Committee	Ryan Mohtajolfazl
Finance Committee	Juliette Leon
Loyola Committee	Caleb Woolcott

Mental Health Committee	Olivia Mallette
Mental Health Committee	Scott Guy
Policy Committee	Aaron Rosenbaum
Student Life Committee	Chelsea Wan Chun Wah
Sustainability Committee	Jules Morin
Judicial Board	Maia Fukuyama
Judicial Board	Kenny Gourdet
Judicial Board	Sara Sisaber
Judicial Board	An Ngo
Judicial Board	Brianna MacNeil
Judicial Board	Sofia Leiva
Judicial Board	Juliette Weil
Judicial Board	Rebecca Kaninda
Judicial Board	Ruth Sivagnanam
Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL)	Kiara Madison Nunes-Mancini
CCSL	Charbel Hachem
CCSL	Emma Girgis

CCSL	Victoria Gorman
University Senate	Mahshid Rahbari
Senate	Deep Patel
Senate	Angelica Antonokopoulos
Senate	Marina Ghali
Senate	Niraj Dayanandan
Senate	Melissa Spiridigliozzi
Student Tribunal	Valerie Baker
Student Tribunal	Yordanos Mengesha
Student Tribunal	Aniket Galhotra
Student Tribunal	Dylan Rawlings-Caron
Student Tribunal	Kiara Madison Nunes-Mancini
Student Tribunal	16 open seats remain. Callout made.

## Judicial Board

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

The duty of the Judicial Board is to settle disputes that may arise between Union members, officials and/or constituted bodies through the interpretation and application of the relevant Union bylaws, regulations, and policies and provincial/federal law. More specifically, the Judicial Board shall, upon the written request of any member, or member association, convene to: Interpret the CSU's bylaws and the validity of regulations and resolutions enacted by the

Council; declare invalid any act of any member who through his or her action derogates from these bylaws or from the constitution of any member association of the Student Union; settle disputes on matters concerning the Student Union between its members, officials and/or constituted bodies. Additionally, it is the duty of the Judicial Board to act upon any violation to bylaws and constitutions of member associations that comes to light stemming from an ongoing investigation, even if such violations are not directly related to the original complaint.

The Judicial Board is composed of a minimum of three, and a maximum of nine, undergraduate students who are members of the Union. Members are appointed for a term of two years or until their resignation/graduation or removal from office. A Chair is elected from the Judicial Board members, by the Judicial Board, as is a Secretary. Additionally, the Judicial Board has a Legal Adviser, appointed for a five-year mandate, who is responsible for overseeing the procedures detailed in the Judicial Board Code of Procedures and the CSU bylaws and standing regulations. The legal adviser must be a member of the Quebec Bar and is responsible for providing training to members of the Judicial Board on an annual basis related to procedure and pertinent legal doctrines including the rules of natural justice. The legal adviser also serves as a non-voting chair to hear appeals to the Judicial Board related to Annual General Elections and direct the procedure for such appeals.

## Installation of tech equipment on Hall Building's 7th Floor

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

We have been working on two long-discussed projects to do with installing tech equipment on the 7th floor. Both projects have been discussed for years at the CSU but have never come to fruition. The CSU's Administrative Coordinator has been working to collect quotes for equipment, installation, and maintenance, and hopefully the construction phase can take place over the summer so that these are completed for when students return.

### *AV Equipment for the CSU Lounge*

The CSU Lounge, the large open space directly outside of the CSU SGW Office, is a very well used multipurpose space. People use it to study, host events, dance, and socialize: it is one of the best used spaces on campus and we love the freedom it allows students to do all the activities that students do. The one drawback of the Lounge is that it lacks a built in AV system. This means that when the CSU or other groups who book the space host events there that require microphones and/or projectors, IITS must be contracted to provide these services. IITS charges a

fee, and it is often a rocky process with many tech issues. Therefore, for years the CSU has thought of installing AV equipment in the Lounge, but it has yet to happen due to cost and logistical issues. Yu-Hui, the CSU's Administrative Coordinator, has been pushing this project along, and contacted the University's facilities department earlier this year to conduct a feasibility study and provide us a quote. This was completed, and we brought the proposal to Council, where it was approved. Yu-Hui is negotiating with the University on this, but once a contractor is decided upon, work will begin to install a built in AV system in the Lounge. This will not curtail any of the activities that currently exist in the Lounge but will make it so that events can be more easily hosted by providing this built in system. The CSU will still offer the Lounge as a free bookable space, but one that now has more capabilities.

### *TV's for 7th Floor*

When the University carried out the renovations of the 7th floor some years ago, part of the bargain in implementing a design that limited physical poster space was to include areas pre-wired to accommodate TV screens at three places on the 7th floor. The CSU was given ownership of these spaces, and it is up to the Union to decide how to go about installing the TVs and putting content on them. We have purchased the TVs and have finalized an agreement with CUTV who will be in charge of carrying out the programming on these screens. The current agreement is for one year and we will renegotiate after we have this year to evaluate what is, and is not, working.

## Student Life Coordinator

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

### Winter Orientation

Every year, CSU hosts a series of exciting events aimed at welcoming new students and introducing them to the wide array of opportunities and experiences that await them at our university. This year, we organized a total of nine dynamic events that were designed to be both engaging and informative. These events were centered around three key themes: activity, creativity, and community.

At CSUs orientation, we believe in making the first steps of our new students memorable and enjoyable. Our active events encourage participation and help students connect with their peers.

Creative events allow students to express themselves and discover their artistic talents. Meanwhile, community-based events foster a sense of belonging and help students build meaningful connections within the CSU family.

Our orientation is more than just an introduction; it's a lively celebration of the diverse opportunities and the vibrant community that students are now a part of. We're excited to welcome and support our new students as they embark on their CSU journey. For winter orientation this year we decided to do it in the month of February. Winter Orientation always is a smaller affair than the one in the fall. Thus, this year we kept it simple with only doing coffee kiosks, Clubs and Service fair. This felt like the best way to introduce students to what the university and student union had to offer.

## Why “We Outside”?

The theme "We Outside" was chosen for this year's orientation to capture the essence of a fully in-person experience, with no online events. It aimed to highlight the idea that as a united student body, we are actively “outside”, engaging, and interacting with one another. The goal was to promote inclusivity and diversity among the students participating in our events. The “We” is meant to represent all the students engaging, signifying the broad spectrum of backgrounds and perspectives within our community. "We Outside" emphasized that there's more than one way to enjoy orientation that fits every student's needs, offering a multitude of options that catered to a diverse range of students. We hosted events such as a paint and sip night, a CSU bouldering day, and a BUYPOC market, encouraging small businesses and diverse groups to showcase their talents. In essence, "We Outside" signifies that as a student body, we come together, in the sun, having fun, forging new connections, and embracing the spirit of togetherness.

For more on Orientation, please reference my detailed Orientation Report.

## Student Handbook

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

This year we printed 7500 agendas, and the majority of them have already been taken by students. A huge shout out to the design team who did an amazing job on these, putting in some last-minute hours due to unforeseen demands from the printer! I think we did an excellent job in starting on these in June so that they were ready by late August in time for orientation.

Ads: We had seven paid ads this year, and several unpaid ads. The paid ads together accounted for approximately 30% of the total cost. We try to limit the amount of ads in the agenda, but it is beneficial to have a few to offset the total cost which is becoming increasingly expensive. We offered a 50% discount for Concordia groups, and additionally, we always include unpaid ads for the CSU services, and other CSU affiliated projects and groups.

We made a callout for art and poetry submissions in late June for the agenda, offering prizes for the pieces chosen. This really makes the agenda in my opinion. This year we had 12 art submissions in total.

The agendas have been well received, and for about two weeks we had a near constant stream of people at the CSU office picking them up! We have put aside some for Winter Orientation as well. 7500 seems like the perfect amount (at least for this year).

## Communications Department

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

As the Student Life Coordinator, I manage the CSU's communications department. The Comms department has two Social Media Directors and two graphic designers. One of the Social Media Directors focusses on running the CSU Instagram account and the other manages the CSU's Facebook page and works with the CSU Services. Both Social Media Directors also create content and document events hosted by the CSU. The graphic design team creates all the graphics for the CSU and ensures that our brand guidelines are maintained.

As manager, it is my role to ensure all requests are processed in a timely and efficient manner, and to schedule and organize the whole process of design and content requests, social media posts, and branding. This is a large role, and one that is very important for the Union. The Union has five services, many departments, and hosts a great number of events and workshops, all of which require graphics to be made and promotion via our social media channels.

We have done well this year to make the process clearer and more efficient, and have implemented the use of a software to better organize and keep track of requests. This software allows me as the manager, and all other team members, to be able to see the progress of a request, which allows the team to know what their responsibilities are for a given week and to

schedule accordingly. That being said, I still believe that our Communications Department is not structured in such a way that allows for the level of outreach that is needed for an organization of our size.

I have discussed this with the service managers, long-time office staff, and previous Social Media Coordinators. We have all come around to the opinion that we need a Communications and Marketing Manager. This person would be responsible for crafting and executing comprehensive marketing strategies to promote CSU events, communication initiatives, meetings, services, elections, and various other activities as directed by the executive leadership. I have made a job description and begun discussing the creation of this position with the CUPE Union President and the CSU's General Manager.

The letter of agreement for this position has been created and is just waiting for approval from the union. I have also discussed with the GM and the finance coordinator to discuss the pay for this position and if there is space in our budget, and they have approved it as well. Once the letter of agreement is finalized by the union the job posting will go out.

I have also been working with the design department as both are graduating and so the lack of continuity will be an issue for the department. Thus, they have been working on creating a training manual for the incoming designers. We have been working on this for the majority of the semester, and it is now finalized.

## Events

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

For Halloween, I collaborated with ASFA, ECA, PSSA, and MyCity Events (a promotion company) to throw a Halloween party at Palazzo. The event was a big hit with students, and was attended by approximately 500 students! I was grateful to be able to work in collaboration with other student leaders on this event. Working with other student leaders on shared projects, such as this one, is a wonderful opportunity to bring all students together, but it can be very tough to organize! As event organizers it is all too easy to become disconnected from others in different associations who are doing the same thing, simply because we are all busy. I am very impressed that all of us from these various associations were able to work together on this event, and to make it a success and something enjoyed by our students, especially during this busy time of year!

In Partnership with NouLa the Black Student Centre we hosted an open Mic night at Reggie's. This was a huge success. Students loved this event as it was a super intimate chill event where they were able to listen to poetry and music and just build connections. It was nice to also collaborate with NouLa as this helped in reaching our Black students a demographic that is usually hard to reach for student engagement and events. We were luckily able to sell out this event and it was packed in Reggie's. I think this event was also good because it was able to bring Reggie's some money that didn't solely come from a party which showed how the space could be used in different ways.

## Student Life Committee

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

The Student Life Committee is responsible for reviewing applications and allocating funding to projects that promote student life on and off campus. Additionally, members of the committee may be asked to aid and help facilitate in the planning, preparation and execution phases of events organized by the CSU. Unfortunately, this Committee did not have quorum until late in the fall semester, and so we have not met yet. However, once quorum was reached, we opened applications for students to apply to the CSU's Special Project Funding. I have now trained all my Committee members on their role and responsibilities and have provided them with a guide that they can use in conducting their Committee work. Special Project Funding applications are due on January 26th, and the Committee will be convening to review the applications the week of January 29th.

All the funding was voted on and given out. The guide and grading document I made helped to make the process super simple and honestly within one meeting we were able to decide on who got funding. Now I'm in the process of submitting the RFs/HFs to the portal so that the recipients can receive their reimbursements.

## BIPOC Committee

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

The BIPOC Committee is composed exclusively of BIPOC students, and is responsible for helping and facilitating the planning, preparation, execution, and financing of BIPOC events and initiatives supported and/or organized by the CSU. Members of this committee review funding proposals for relevant events and decide on the appropriate allocation of funding. This Committee did not have quorum earlier in the year, but late in the fall we had new Councilors

join and can now convene the Committee. I have opened the funding applications for the BIPOC Committee, and have scheduled training for the Committee members. I have also made them a guide, outlining their roles and responsibilities, and we will meet in February both for training and then to review applications and distribute funding. The Committee members and I will also provide support for projects that receive funding as necessary.

All the funding was voted on and given out. The guide and grading document I made helped to make the process super simple and honestly within one meeting we were able to decide on who got funding. Now I'm in the process of submitting the RFs/HFs to the portal so that the recipients can receive their reimbursements. In addition, we are meeting this week to give out the rest of the funds to bursaries. We decided this year to give the funds half to projects and the other half to bursaries. So that it would benefit BIPOC students in more than one way.

## President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism

*Written by Tanou Bah, Student Life Coordinator*

During my mandate, I have served on the implementation committee for the President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism at Concordia. I hold the student undergraduate seat and have regularly attended meetings, providing suggestions. The task force's mandate involves working transversely across Concordia and with external partners to address a broad spectrum of university policies, hiring and promotion, and teaching and learning practices to improve the experiences of the university's Black faculty, staff, and students. We aim to implement the report's 88 recommendations to address anti-Black racism as part of the university's commitment to confront the historic and continued impact of colonialism and white supremacy on Indigenous peoples of Canada, people of African descent, and racialized peoples.

Within the committee, I have contributed to the completion of several tasks, including:

- Developing a website and teaching materials commemorating the Sir George Williams University student protest.
- Participating in the archiving of historic Task Force materials from 2020-2023.
- Working on the Black Knowledge Hub

# Finance Coordinator

## Financial Update

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

The CSU is a huge organization which operates almost entirely from the fees provided by levies on student tuition. In return, the CSU provides students, its members, with a wide variety of services, student life initiatives, and representation.

The CSU has eight main budgets: Operations, Clubs, Student Space, Accessible Education, and Legal Contingency Fund (SSAELC), Advocacy, HOJO, LIC, EDI, and the Mental Health Office. All together, these various levies managed by the CSU account for approximately \$7.6 million.

Our accounting practices and dedication to student control and oversight of matters which affect them, means that each levy is assigned to a specific service that is provided by the Union. The exception to this is the Operations budget which covers the Union's day-to-day expenses such as executive salaries and expenses related to the Council.

I worked to create a sound budget this summer, basing my projections on review of previous year's actuals and on recommendations of the CSU's general manager, account, and department managers. This budget was presented to Council and ratified, and we have maintained a very healthy financial position during this mandate.

### Key Financial Highlights:

- Over the last couple of months our expenses have been significantly lower than predicted. I.e. we've spent almost \$400,000 less than we expected to at this point in time.
- Notably we did receive around \$100,000 less in revenue than we anticipated however due to strategic budgeting we were able to work around it.

SUMMARY				
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	3,290,017	3,461,818	- 171,800	3,890,881
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	- 2,555,705	- 3,147,107	591,402	- 3,819,951
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>734,312</b>	<b>314,711</b>	<b>419,601</b>	<b>69,930</b>

The picture above depicts that actual Surplus (Revenue less expenses) vs the budgeted Surplus

- Simply put this means that we expected to have a surplus of \$314,711 at this point in time however, we are currently at a \$734,312 surplus

This huge gap can be explained by:

- Certain staff going on leave
- External funding coming in
- Delays in hiring
- Initial overbudgeting of expenses

## Finance Committee

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

The Finance committee is responsible for overseeing the financial operations of the CSU. It also works as the committee which overviews the expenditures and the revenues of the union. For a while the committee has not had to meet however it will convene within the next week for the approval of 4 incoming projects aimed at helping students.

## Fee-Levy Review Committee

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

The Fee Levy Review committee is responsible for reviewing and approving fee levy applications. Fee levy groups are groups on campus that receive funding through fees levied on student tuition. Applications for new fee levy groups, as well as changes to levies applied by existing groups, are reviewed by the Fee Levy committee.

The Committee is fully staffed this year, and we received a total of five fee-levy applications that were successfully submitted for the fall by-election. All of these were increase requests for existing fee-levies, and all were rejected by students on the ballot.

Regarding the general election, we've also seen and approved several requests for fee levy increases as well as the creation of a new CSU Building Fee Levy.

Once again, the goal of this committee is to simply ensure that all procedures were followed for the filing of applications of fee levies. This committee does not vote or pick a side as to whether a certain request should be approved or not.

## NAVI AI Chatbot

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

NAVI is an AI Chatbot that I am working with an external developer to create for the CSU. NAVI will provide students with a 24/7 tool to answer questions regarding student services and related problems. The motivation to build a chatbot for students came from my own personal experience. I was frustrated by long wait times and bureaucratic complications when I tried to have simple questions answered for how I should access student services or navigate other aspects of being a student at Concordia. I decided to conduct a survey to gain input from other students and found that other students had similar issues. The responses indicated that students struggle to find appropriate services to answer questions they have, and/or have difficulty accessing these services once they have found them.

Other surveys have indicated that 80% of international student have experienced difficulty with services, such as late replies, challenges in booking appointments, long waits for walk-in services, and being provided with unhelpful or inaccurate advice. Specific to the CSU, our services, such as HOJO and Advocacy, have very high usage which results in delays.

NAVI thus presents a solution. It will be available 24/7, and trained on Concordia's data allowing it to answer almost any question a student may have and direct it to relevant resources. Eventually, I believe this will also alleviate the burden on current in person services as simple or small questions can be answered by NAVI and free up service staff time to deal with more complex issues.

The costs to develop NAVI were approved by Council in the fall semester, and the Chatbot is currently being developed. I am overseeing the development process, and making recommendations on what data the chatbot should be fed to provide relevant information to students. We hope to have this launched in the spring, and from there we will work to iron out any issues once it is employed.

The project is set to be handed off to the CSU on May 1<sup>st</sup> as it has passed all our initial tests. Our next steps will be: loading up the backend of the site with more files as more student requests come in, release slowly in test batches with students to gauge what the main problems are and

ensure that we have answers to them. We plan to fully release this to all students during the Fall orientation.

## Newsletter

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

The CSU Newsletter is one of the most powerful tools we have at our disposal to reach students. It is our best means to reach all the the student body as it is sent directly to the inboxes of all undergraduate students. The Newsletter contains information about on-campus jobs, events, services available to students, and all other information useful to students.

Previously, the Newsletter was written by the Student Life Coordinator, but eventually this duty was incorporated into the role of the Social Media Director when the CSU's Communications Department was restructured during the 2021-2022 mandate. However, there have been issues with this as the Social Media Director is not as immersed in the life of the University and/or the Union as an executive, leaving much information to be neglected and not included in the Newsletter. For this reason, I opted to take over the management of the Newsletter in the fall of this year. I have worked to have it redesigned to increase engagement, and have worked to incorporate more aspects into each week's publication that I think students ought to know about. I have also begun negotiations with various potential advertisers as the Newsletter offers a reliable income stream through advertising. This money will be put directly into augmenting the CSU's bursaries which are managed by the Sustainability Coordinator. We have already seen an uptick in engagement with the Newsletter, and I believe that this will increase as students see that the information contained is useful and beneficial to them.

We've also been receiving numerous advertising offers however, we are also trying to aggregate appropriate content so that the newsletter does not seem like a product but rather a source of information to students that adds value to them.

## Standing Committee on Student Financial Insecurity

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

The Standing Committee on Student Financial Insecurity is a 15-member Committee and I hold the one undergraduate seat. This committee is new as of this year and is tasked with developing guidelines and protocols to address student financial insecurity with a holistic approach focused on student academic success and well-being. This Committee has yet to convene, but some

additional aims of the Committee are to promote education of student leaders about financial insecurity and share funding opportunities and to consider how systemic barriers complicate issues of student financial insecurity and where appropriate. I hope that participation on this Committee proves fruitful as student financial insecurity is an issue faced by a growing number of our students.

## STRIVE Committee

*Written by Kareem Rahaman, Finance Coordinator*

Recently, the University has announced their committee on anti-hate for all groups. The format of this committee is that it will be comprised of many sub-committees dedicated to specific problems on campus which then answer to a steering committee. I currently hold the seat on the steering committee and my role will be to review all the reports of the sub committees and ensure that actions are taken. Additionally, I will also have to staff these subcommittees with students over the next couple of weeks.

## Sustainability Coordinator

### Sustainability Portfolio

*Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator*

One of the Sustainability Coordinator's main responsibilities is to oversee the distribution of bursaries, awards and funding for sustainability and community related projects. The coordinator and their committee, at their core, exist to ensure that every endeavor that the CSU enterprises is as neutral for the environment and as beneficial for its immediate community as possible. At the beginning of my mandate, I have decided to sit on various committees. These committees are: The Library Service Fund Committee (LSFC), the Undergraduate Student Awards Committee (USAC) the PUSH Fund and SAF. Through SAF, I am also involved in the Human Resource/Governance Committee. When time permits, I have also gotten involved in various CSU-related administrative tasks, such as hiring committees. It's important to delineate the fact that the Sustainability Coordinators' mandate can be interpreted quite liberally. Our portfolios give us the opportunity to be a support member when other coordinators have their plates full, and as Sustainability Coordinator I have tried my best to act on that whenever time permits.

Lastly, throughout my mandate I have been working on various Sustainability Initiatives to better the life of Concordia Students.

## Sustainability Committee

*Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator*

### Funding

With the help of the Sustainability Committee, we have been able to approve over 13 000\$ to go to projects that applied for sustainability funding. Here are the projects that got approved: “-and it’s just because i love you”, QTBIPOC Artist Residency, fibers mindfulness circle, Media Environment Project (MEP), Annual Graduate Interdisciplinary Conference (AGIC), Ramadan Iftar Meals 2024, Cultiv-Action Free Microgreens Distribution & Workshops, Fashion SHOWPAO: The Gala Fundraiser, Eco-Anxiety Climate Grief Support Session, GOING TO BATs!, Sustain’Alive event series, Kaddish (the film and production case study).

Note: this list hasn’t been ratified by all the members of the committee yet.

### Bursaries

Each year the CSU out 40 bursaries valued at 650\$ each. Standing Bursaries: Arts & Science, Gina Cody, Fine Arts, Independent student, JMSB, Student athlete, Outstanding contribution to Concordia Student Life, Outstanding Academic Achievement, Outstanding contribution to an external community, Student-Parent Bursary. In addition, we are distributing all 10 of Ben’s Sustainability Scholarships valued at 300\$ each to students who applied for bursaries and were enrolled in a Sustainability class or Geography class.

Lastly, from all the student bursary applications, we will choose 2 recipients to give out the Indigenous Student-Parent Bursaries worth 1000\$ each. In total, by the end of May, the Sustainability committee will give out 31 000\$ worth of bursaries and scholarships.

Although the Sustainability Committee has already started the vetting process, we have had to delay and cancel meetings due to conflicting schedules and lack of quorum. To move along the vetting process, I’ve created a master excel spreadsheet with the best candidates. This spreadsheet will be sent to the committee, and they will be able to review (and rate from 1-5) the candidates in their own time. I will then average everyone’s scores and that’s how we will determine the bursary recipients.

## Sustainability Initiatives Budget Breakdown

At the beginning of the mandate, I've created a budget for the Sustainability 2023-24 mandate. I've created this budget to the best of my ability and with the help of my predecessor. Here's the breakdown of the budget and everything I've used or plan to use for it:

### Food for meetings (2000\$)

- This was money that I've allocated for food for committee meetings. Committee meetings can run quite long, so I've allocated enough for food for 6 people for 13 meetings. We did not end up having 13 in-person meetings. So, most of this money is unused. My recommendation for the next mandate is to cut this fund in half.

### Events (4000\$)

- This money was planned in case I would host events. And although, I did end up having events they were all mostly planned and paid for by my fellow executives. So, again, most of this money is unused. Some of this fund might be used for expenses incurred during a weekend CRUES conference in Quebec for 4 executive members. My recommendation for this fund is to allocate money but maybe cut the expected expenses in half.

### Divestment (2000\$)

- This was planned for a collaboration with the External Coordinator. However, this mandate ended up not focusing on divestment at Concordia due to other, more pressing issues coming about. I would recommend on keeping this initiative on the table but really planning for its usage (whether for events or initiatives) early in the mandate.

### Housing Search Director (12 000\$)

- The Sustainability Coordinator that preceded me created a new, part-time temporary position at the CSU. The Housing Search Director's responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Transitional Housing Projects. This 12 000\$ covered the entirety of the Housing Search Director from beginning May to end October 2023. The project and the position were officially extended on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, until at least September 2024, and a motion to pay the Housing Search Director's salary through the SSAELC fund

passed unanimously at Council. So, this is where the funds for this position's salary are coming from now.

#### Transitional Housing (5000\$)

- I've planned the expenses related to starting up the Transitional Housing Project to be around 5000\$ from June to end October. This number turned out to be quite accurate as we've spent, most if not all, of this fund. Any additional expenses incurred for the smooth running of the Transitional Housing will be incurred by the remaining funds from the other categories in the Sustainability Initiatives Budget Line (such as Events and Food for meetings).

#### Sustainability Initiatives Project Fund (13 000\$)

- This money was planned for all the Sustainability Committee project applications. All this money will be allocated to projects that had applied for funding.

#### Merch (6500\$)

- At the beginning of the mandate, the External Coordinator had mentioned that it would be a good idea if the CSU offered reusable containers for students that eat at the People's Potato. Thus, the idea of CSU Bento boxes was born. I really got attached to this idea and wanted to offer some bento boxes to students. It costs exactly 6500\$ to produce 500 bento boxes. So, this is how this money was used. And the students really did like this merch idea. All the boxes have been given out during Orientation and other events.

## Committees and Portfolios

*Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator*

### **Undergraduate Student Awards Committee (USAC)**

I sat on this committee as a student representative. Our responsibility was to read all the Undergraduate Student Awards applications. The vetting process was easy and completely asynchronous. It was all done through Teams. Every award had its own separate folder where all the applications were stored. When reading through the applications we could grade it on an excel sheet. Everyone's grades were then averaged and the students with the highest score overall received the awards!

## **The Library Service Fund Committee (LSFC)**

The Library Service Fund Committee was established between the Concordia Student Union and Concordia University in 2010 for the purpose of providing additional or improved library resources at the Webster and Vanier libraries. This year the executives that were involved with this committee were the Academic & Advocacy Coordinator as well as the Sustainability Coordinator. The two other students were 2 members of the CSU council. This year the committee has been working on adding original artworks in the Vanier Library. This initiative was called the ArtVolt project. Three art pieces were selected, and a vernissage was held on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

Another initiative that the committee has introduced in both libraries is a “leisure” space. This space is there to encourage students to take a break and rest in-between study sessions. This space has various books, magazines, music, and board games available for students. The committee has also decided to offer anatomically accurate models of organs (full size unisex torso, brain model, heart model, etc.). This initiative comes from an increased demand from professors and students alike who felt a clear need for these anatomical models. Students will now be able to reserve these models and use them for their various assignments. Another project that has been approved is to put benches at the top of the Webster Library stairs. These stairs would not only provide a resting space for students, but it would also offer more space for students to eat before entering the library.

A project that is still in the works and will be picked up at the next meeting is individual study pods. These pods will offer students soundproof individual study spaces in both libraries. The committee is currently still negotiating with Facilities to allow these pods to be installed. This committee meets quarterly, and the CSU (both councillors and executives) representatives remained committed to keep pushing ideas to make the students’ library experience better!

## **Sustainable Action Fund (SAF)**

SAF is a student-run fee-levy group. Its mission is to help fund projects that support sustainable infrastructure, urban agriculture, community-building, and education surrounding environmental and community issues. Their long-term goal is to inspire and develop a culture of sustainability at Concordia. A seat on the Board of Directors is reserved for a CSU executive each year

(usually occupied by the Sustainability Coordinator). BoD members usually meet every month and vote on which projects are to receive funding. Every BoD member must be a part of a SAF committee. This year, I sat on the HR/Governance committee. This committee has revised requirements for BoD members, it reviewed some employment contracts and salary increase requests, it also hired a new Communications Coordinator. SAF has had to stop funding projects until June 2024 due to various arising issues. However, BoD met at the end of March to approve funding for a project application that was done in November. Through funding this project, SAF has used up the remaining funds until the end of their fiscal year (end May). This was a good decision because we made sure to allocate all available funds to projects even though we had to stop project applications early.

## **PUSH Fund BoD**

The PUSH Fund was founded in 2015 to transform how student housing is financed, developed, and managed in Quebec. The Fund was cofounded by the CSU, UTILE and the Chantier de l'économie sociale. The CSU has a permanent seat on the BOD of the PUSH Fund. They meet quarterly and discuss how to help student associations across Quebec create their own student housing projects. They also discuss updates of ongoing projects, policy, and governance improvements. And, recently, changes regarding PUSH Fund BOD membership which is set out to grant yearly seats to student associations that have invested into student housing with UTILE.

## **Sustainability Initiatives**

### **Menstrual Equity Project**

*Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator*

As of 2021, the CSU advocates for accessible and sustainable menstrual products on campus. The aim of this project is to pressure Concordia University to participate in the menstrual equity movement and to encourage them to provide free menstrual care products in every women's and gender-neutral bathroom on both campuses. While this goal hasn't been entirely achieved yet (only about 10% of bathrooms have free menstrual product dispensers), the CSU has provided students with menstrual products. Since its inception, the CSU has made available: pads, tampons, diva cups, reusable pads, and period underwear for students. To make the CSU more inclusive on matters regarding menstrual and reproductive health, I have added pregnancy tests to the long array of free products that are available to students.

As part of the Menstrual Equity Project, I have also partnered with the Campaigns Department during their Gender Health Hub Launch Week. I have partly sponsored and helped organize the “Gender Health Hub Launch Party” that was held in October 2023. The event took place at the Concordia Greenhouse. We invited a massage therapist specializing in menstrual and gender care there to conduct a workshop centered around menstrual health. The students were able to come in, get comfortable, mingle, eat, grab a goodie bag and ask the facilitator any and all questions regarding their menstrual cycle. The intimate event had a good turn out with more than 25 students attending.

### *Menstrual Equity Symposium*

At the beginning of my mandate, I have been approached by the Concordia Zen Dens and Health Services to be part of a Menstrual Equity Symposium. The event is set to take place on May 17<sup>th</sup>. The CSU will be sponsoring 1500\$ towards this event from the Menstrual Equity Budget Line. Currently, we are working on final touches and making sure that everything is well prepared and organized for a successful event. The event will start at 9am and it will end at 4h30. The morning will be comprised of two rounds of presentations. Then, there will be a lunch/networking hour followed by an afternoon of panels. We are all very excited about this event!

### *Stocking Products*

Moreover, as our menstrual stock is dwindling down, I will take inventory of what we have and place orders a couple orders by the end of May to make sure that we can continue providing students an array of free and sustainable menstrual care products.

### *Transitional Housing*

*Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator*

In late 2022, an unofficial survey was conducted by HOJO that revealed that at least 8% of Concordia students are or have previously experienced some form of houselessness. Taking this information with the current housing crisis in Montreal, it was clear that something needed to be done to help Concordia students. Last year’s Sustainability Coordinator has been working to initiate a Transitional Housing Pilot Project. The idea was to use the current vacant apartments in the CSU Student Building and open them up for students or Concordia community members that are experiencing houselessness. This project would be in partnership with the Concordia Refugee Centre and Bartimaeus (an organization that would offer mental health support to the tenants that need it.) When I started my mandate, this project had just finished its conception stage, it had

just completed the creation of the Housing Search Director position and had completed hiring for it. The Housing Search Director position was created to aid the Sustainability Coordinator to intake tenants and help them throughout their stay in the apartments.

In my mandate, the first thing I did was increase the Sustainability Initiatives Budget Line to account for Transitional Housing expenses and the Housing Search Director salary (June through November). Though the project was of a temporary nature that was supposed to end in November 2023, due to its success it was possible to extend it until at least September 2024. Here's a detailed report written by the Housing Search Director of everything that has happened in the Transitional Housing Project from June up until now:

The CSU Transitional Housing Project is a unique university service in Canada for people experiencing homelessness. The CSU owns a building at 2045 Bishop whose empty units are being used to temporarily house Concordia students and community members. A Housing Search Director assists users of the service with finding permanent housing and with other financial, psychosocial, or employment needs.

Within its first ten months of activity the program has housed **fourteen (14) people** including children and students' partners, filling up the entirety of the CSU's three units allotted to the program. **Eleven (11) people have already successfully graduated** from the program into permanent housing with another **two (2) expected to graduate in the next month**. The Housing Search Director not only assists new residents on a weekly basis, but coordinates with other people ineligible for the program but who still require assistance.

### **Key Findings and Successes**

Number of People Using Housing Director Services: The Housing Search Director meets with people who have contacted the Housing and Job Resource Centre (HOJO). These people are students or community members who live in housing precarity. Either they are likely to soon lose their homes, but more commonly, have already lost their homes and are sleeping outside, in the library, or staying temporarily with friends. **The Housing Search Director has handled cases with twenty (20) different people**. Fourteen (14) people have been housed in the units of the Concordia Student Union. Three (3) other people were prepared to be housed in a unit but successfully found an apartment beforehand. Finally, three (3) people have used the Housing Search Director's services without being accepted into a unit.

Nature of the Experience with Being Unhoused: Of the twenty people who have used the Housing Director service, 55% were in situations where they could sleep momentarily or for a few weeks at a friend's apartment, **nine (9) people or 45% were sleeping in more precarious spaces and lacked social networks: sleeping in their car, the library, unsafe apartments, shelters, or outside.**

Demographics: **Almost 100% of the people who have used the services of the Housing Search Director are people of colour.** Only two (2) of the twenty people are not a person of colour. The majority of people were born in a country found in the Middle East. This is a dramatic variance from Concordia's student demographics and contributes to an already robust body of data suggesting systemic racism and disadvantage of racialized people in Montreal and at Concordia.

Student ratio: Excluding children and people's partners, of the people who we housed in the service, **seven (7) or 70% were students at Concordia.** The other three (3) people or 30% non-students have been ready and willing to have roommates.

International students: Of students, **five people or roughly 70% have been international students.** In four of these five cases, it was the experience of recently arriving to the city that was directly linked to their inability to have stability in their housing: whether from the lack of a lined-up apartment, or the renting of unsuitable housing which develops into an experience of abuse or fraud.

Boundaries to Housing and Employment: Of the people using the service, **40% face serious boundaries to employment through the lack of a work permit or disabilities, while the rest are limited by their inability to speak French.** As an example, one person who stayed four months in their unit was on welfare, is unable to speak French and speaks English at a second language beginner's level. They were also undergoing severe distress due to their family's situation in Gaza. Thus, they face considerable barriers to both housing and a job.

Graduation from Transitional Housing: **The average length of stay in the transitional housing units is less than the projected three (3) months.** Eleven of the fourteen people who have used the transitional housing service have successfully moved out to permanent housing! Of the other three, two (2) are just starting their residency and are expected to move out in less than a month of total stay, and one (1) person has several physical disabilities and mental health challenges that have necessitated a slightly longer stay.

Timeframe for Receiving Housing: The average time for the housing search director to arrange for housing in urgent or semi-urgent situations is less than 2 days.

A Rapid Start: The program got off its feet quickly. The building has already received fourteen (14) individuals since July 2023 and each unit is quickly filled upon furnishing.

## An Overview of how the Program Works

The CSU's building at 2045 Bishop has three units available for the transitional housing program.

Eligibility for the program is assessed according to an evaluation sheet. In broad strokes, the rubric assesses whether a participant is:

- In a situation of urgency due to a lack of stable housing
- Lacking in support systems or housing alternatives
- Likely to no longer need transitional housing within 3 months of the program
- Tied to the Concordia community or student body
- Likely to have good relations with CSU staff

### Entering the program involves:

- Disclosing a need to HOJO
- Filling out an initial intake form with a HOJO Assistant
- Filling out a second intake form at an appointment with the Housing Search Director
- Being invited into the program because of eligibility as defined by the evaluation sheet
- Signing the Transitional Housing Service Legal Agreement with the CSU & accepting the Social Code and Building Regulations
- Being introduced to the furnished unit, provided with keys, and assistance with shopping and groceries if necessary
- Weekly check-ins with program participants

Students learn about the program through using HOJO services. If a HOJO Assistant sees a student is potentially eligible for the program, they describe the program and ask the student a series of questions in the HOJO Assistant Transitional Housing Intake Form. The HOJO

Assistant then connects the person to the Housing Search Director. The Housing Search Director meets with the person as soon as possible to fill out the Housing Search Director Intake Form. Both intake forms include questions designed to situate the student's needs on the evaluation sheet.

The program is not advertised publicly. Although, social workers at Concordia's Bartimaeus service and the university's library staff are aware of the program. **Without advertisement, the program has been consistently full, with the vacancy of any single unit never reaching above a month's time.**

Students or community members who are determined to be eligible by the Housing Search Director based on the evaluation sheet are accepted following the Housing Search Director's consultation with the Sustainability Coordinator and the HOJO manager.

Participants accepted into the program are invited to visit their future apartment, are read the building code, and sign a legal agreement with the Concordia Student Union under which they recognize the temporary nature of the housing and their obligations to engage in the process of transitioning out of the unit and abiding by the building's social code.

Weekly check-ins have allowed the Housing Search Director to continually assist students with finding employment and housing.

### **The Development of the Program**

Starting the Transitional Housing Project included:

- Studying existing academic literature on successful transitional housing projects
- Interviewing existing organisations in and outside of Montreal
- Connecting with service providers on campus
- Development of the intake process and related forms
- Furnishing units so that they could be ready to receive students and community members

Academic Literature Review: In building a transitional housing program from scratch, it was important to study the best practices suggested by studies of transitional housing services.

**Here are services that transitional housing services typically provide:**

- Budgeting skills

- Job training
- Leadership skills
- Networking
- Housing referrals
- Counselling
- Needs assessment upon entry
- Periodic reassessment and progress monitoring
- Group meetings
- Resident enrollment in community-based service programs
- Housing location services
- Training in household management
- Prevocational training
- Prenatal care
- Medication monitoring
- Detoxification
- English as a second language
- Physical therapy
- Sheltered workshops
- Parents Anonymous

**Criteria for acquiring housing in a situation of domestic abuse typically include:**

- Being able to work toward economic self-sufficiency
- Being motivated
- And having a desire to terminate the relationship

**In many programs, participants are required to:**

- Open a savings account and initiate a savings plan
- Request a copy of their credit report as soon as they enter the program
- Participate in education, job training, or employment services
- For clients with mental health disabilities, receive mental health services as recommended by a mental health professional
- For clients in recovery, participate in drug and alcohol programs

**The ability for people to permanently leave transitional housing and chronic homelessness often rely on internal motivation, and the services provided by the transitional housing service:**

- Staying focused on progress, feeling positive, and avoiding temptations or bad presences in their lives
- Alumni events and counselling
- Conceiving of the transitional housing as a stepping-stone

**Other successful services, noted in a broad literature review include:**

- Community events between tenants that decrease isolation
- Discussion of problems
- Transitional housing services should be withdrawn over time
- A good sleeping schedule (sign of improvement)
- Involvement in the development of rules (sign of improvement)
- Improved relationships with staff and others (sign of improvement)

Substance abuse and a criminal record have traditionally been reasons for denying services to applicants.

## External Coordinator

*Written by Hannah Jackson, External Coordinator*

## Campaigns

### Dissolution of the Annual Campaign Structure

In May 2023, CSU Council voted to dissolve the Annual Campaign structure that the department has previously adhered to. The reasons outlined in the motion were:

- It is ineffective to develop sustainable mass mobilization from a top-down approach
- Campaign demands are rarely reached within one academic year, and they require ongoing support
- It has been proven that grassroots mobilization builds meaningful relationships in community that engages members in significant action
- For a campaign to be effective, it must be led by those most affected by the issue. For these reasons, the Annual Campaign dissolution motion determined that:

- that the CSU no longer focuses their mobilization efforts on an annual campaign
- that the CSU prioritizes supporting grassroots campaigns that are in alignment with the positions book. Decisions on which campaigns to support shall be governed in conversation between the campaigns department, external committee, and external and mobilization coordinator.
- that the Campaigns department budget includes lines for relevant past campaigns in order to provide continued support.

Since the dissolution passed at the very end of the 2022-2023 Annual Campaign, this is the first year the Campaigns Department has been operating without the Annual Campaigns structure. This is fortunate because it has allowed us to be flexible and adaptive to urgent campaigns that emerge in response to new developments such as the proposed tuition hikes.

## List of Ongoing Campaigns

### Stop Tuition Hikes (Positions 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.4.1)

The campaign stands in opposition to the Québec government's plan to mandate increases of out-of-province tuition to a minimum of \$12 000/year and to impose a \$20 000 fee on universities for each international student. These changes were first announced October 13, 2023, and the CSU campaigns department mobilized rapidly to oppose these changes. We have been active in Anti-Tuition Hikes Mobilization efforts, meeting weekly with associations such as SSMU, ASFA and other student activists and associations. We helped share a petition that garnered over 30 000 signatures opposing the hikes, and held multiple teach-ins, town halls and demonstrations related to this campaign. Additionally, we provided mobilization support to departmental associations looking to participate in student strikes against the tuition hikes.

### Housing & Labour (Positions 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.6.1)

This campaign is a carrying-forward of last year's Annual Campaign, and aims to raise awareness about students' rights as tenants and employees, shedding light on the housing and labor issues faced by Concordians and Montrealers as well as providing support to unionization and tenant rights efforts in the Concordia community. So far this year we have collaborated with HOJO to respond to Loi 31, which stripped tenants of their rights to lease transfers. We also provided support to Concordia Teaching and Research Assistants in their campaign to re-affiliate themselves with CSN as CREW Union.

### Climate Justice & Divestment (Positions 7.1, 7.2)

This campaign is a continuation of the 2017-18 Divestment annual campaign, and the 2019-2020 Climate Justice campaign. In November, the administration held its first JSIAC (Joint Sustainable Investment Action Committee) meeting of the 2023-24 academic year. During this meeting updates were provided on the divestment process which were then communicated to the divestment coalition. Moving forward there will be another meeting to redefine the membership of the committee in hopes to ensure more student participation. Furthermore, this meeting will explore the definitions of the terms being used by the JSIAC committee to incorporate broader issues of sustainability, such as social sustainability particularly in the link between weapons manufacturing and the environment.

### Feminism & LGBTQ+ Rights (Positions 1.4.1, 6.1, 11.1, 1.1.2)

This campaign reflects the strong commitments to feminist and LGBTQ+ values and activism, and works to advocate for creating a safe, just and supportive environment on campus for women, queer people, and all Concordia students who are oppressed for issues relating to their gender and sexual orientation. This year, the CSU introduced Gender Affirming Healthcare Benefits to the Student Health Plan, meaning that trans students can now receive coverage for surgeries related to their transition. Working as a go-between with Concordia Health Services, our Studentcare representative local community partners like the Trans Patient Union and in coalition with university associations across the country, we are committed to ensuring this coverage is as accessible and comprehensive as possible. A large part of the work done on this campaign this year has been to launch the Gender Health Hub, a CSU Campaigns initiative that brings together organizations from the Concordia and greater Montreal Community to offer accessible and inclusive holistic wellness services for women and trans people. In October we hosted a launch week, offering six separate events to promote the Hub's various services and share resources on how women and trans people can take control of their own wellbeing while facing systemic discrimination in the healthcare system. In November and December, we hosted the Trans Scar Work and Uterine Care Clinics, and have been setting up the launch of a Student Parent Support Group and Trans Medical Bureaucracy Support Clinics for the Winter Semester

### Campaign Against Sexual Violence (Positions 3.1, 6.1, 11.1, 11.2)

This campaign is a carrying-forward of the 2018-2019 annual campaign, and reflects the role of the CSU as a leader in the boycott of Concordia's Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Violence, as well as the creation of the Inter-Organisational Table on Feminist Affairs. The

boycott, which began in Fall 2022 and was renewed in Fall 2023, consists of the CSU, GSA, CREW, and CUSSU associations not providing seating representatives on the SMSV until the ITFA demands to improve the university's policies on sexual violence are met. This year, the CSU has contributed to the effort to expand ITFA to include other staff unions, such as CULEU and CUSS-TS, to support an alternative sexual violence training for Concordia staff, as well as to closely monitor programming Concordia intends to facilitate related to gender-based violence. ITFA delivered an updated version of its demands to the SMSV chair in early March, but have yet to see the administration make efforts to put any of the demands into action

### Anti-Racism & Anti-Colonialism (Positions 1.6.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7, 9.8)

This campaign is both a carrying-forward of the 2020-2021 Black Lives Matter Annual Campaign, and a continuous commitment to act in ways that align with the wide diversity of racial justice and anticolonial issues reflected in the Positions Book. This year, we have prioritised racial justice and anticolonial initiatives and organisations in our CAF grant funding, as well as in our Speakers Series collaborations, namely the Ain't I A Woman Coalition, Immigrant Workers Centre, Butterfly, Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, Ellen Gabriel and the Mohawk Mothers. Our commitment to solidarity with struggles against white supremacy and colonialism are reflected in the CSU team's collective statements: Solidarity with Indigenous Communities on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, Open letter of Canadian solidarity against the 24-hour workday for home care attendants in New York City, and Statement on Concordia's Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza. In addition, the campaigns team worked on an initiative gathering student feedback after Concordia Security invited the SPVM to promote themselves on campus, in violation of the findings of the Concordia Taskforce on Anti-Black Racism. We presented this feedback to the head of security, in order for it to be incorporated into further decisions about police presence on campus. In April and May we dedicated our Spring Speakers series to the theme of Decolonial Solidarity, hosting events with Ellen Gabriel and the Mohawk Mothers.

### Abolition & Migrant Labour Justice (Positions 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 10.1)

This campaign, which the 2023 November Speakers Series is centred on, was selected for the way that its core issues connect directly across the breadth of ongoing campaigns being conducted by the CSU. The focus on Abolition reflects the heavy emphasis the CSU Positions book places on opposing police brutality and other manifestations of the carceral state, as well as

our support for migrant justice groups and Status for All. We collaborated with and showcased amazing groups and individuals such as: Robyn Maynard, Sheena Hoszko, Butterfly, Stella, the Ain't I A Woman Coalition, the Immigrant Workers Centre, Migrant Worker Alliance for Change and authors Jordan House and Asaf Rashid.

### Mental Health & Disability Justice (Positions 1.1.1, 1.3.1, 12.1)

This campaign integrates past campaign Wellbeing Through Solidarity from 2021-2022 with a campaign introduced in 2022-2023 to investigate the Concordia Access Centre for Students with Disabilities. This summer we produced a full report on our survey of both ACSD employees and service users, which we will present to Concordia Health and Wellness with suggestions for improvement.

### Food Justice (Positions 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5)

This campaign seeks to address the ongoing food insecurity experienced by university students. At the end of the Summer, we added a fridge to the existing community pantry in the Art Nook. Thanks to funding we received from the university's Sustainable Action Plan, we have been stocking the fridge on regular intervals. We have also established partnerships with Co-op Cultiv-action and Innovation Assistance to maintain a regular stock of fresh produce in the fridge.

## Significant Work Undertaken by Campaigns Department

### Summer 2023

- **Partnership with Divestment Course** - Campaigns team attended Kevin Gould's class on history of climate divestment campaigns at Concordia, offered input, surveyed student research projects and built bridges between students and the Divest Coalition.
- **Hiring of new Campaigns Coordinator** - Former External & Mobilization Executive Julianna Smith was hired to take on role
- **Gender Health Hub Partnership Gathering** - we hosted an event bringing together community groups Healing Resistance Bodywork, the Tiger Lotus Coop, the Family Care Collective, the Centre for Gender Advocacy, Sex and Self Concordia and Women on the Web to discuss the form and content of our Gender Health Hub initiative.
- **Orientation to Gender Affirming Student Care Benefits** - we collaborated with Studentcare and trans community advocates to create comprehensive and clear

documents explaining the Studentcare health plan's new coverage for trans students, and hosted multiple orientation sessions for Concordia administrators and groups.

- **Statement condemning Loi 31** - we collaborated with HOJO to educate students on new legislation that threatens tenant rights to lease transfers.

- 
- **Statement in support of Trans March** - acknowledged growing legal and interpersonal violence against the transgender community.
- **Access Centre Report** - Campaigns researcher created a report synthesizing results of ACSD survey in previous year
- Food Pantry Operational - cabinet and fridge stocked with perishable and non-perishable foods
  
- **September 2023**
- **Tabling begins** - regular campaigns tabling sessions on campus.
- **Consultation with security on SPVM presence** - we gathered and shared student perspectives on Concordia security inviting SPVM on campus for promotional events.
- **Statement on Truth and Reconciliation Day** - highlighted interconnected struggles against colonial violence across Turtle Island including Search the Landfill and Mohawk Mothers campaigns.

### October 2023

- **CCSL Application for Gender Health Hub** - wrote grant
- **GHH Launch Week: Meet the Gender Health Hub + “My Hormones and Me”** Workshop - event planning and promotion with Tiger Lotus Co-op and the Menstrual Equity Project
- **GHH Launch Week: Understanding the Montreal Healthcare System as a Trans Patient** Workshop - event planning and promotion in with the Trans Patient Union and the Centre for Gender Advocacy
- **GHH Launch Week: Gender Health Hub Services Fair** - event planning
- **GHH Launch Week: Art as Therapy Workshop** - event planning
- **GHH Launch Week: Mental Health Through Peer Mentorship Workshop** - event planning with the Family Care Collective
- **GHH Launch Week: Celebrate GHH! Closing Party** - event planning with Studio 404 and the Family Care Collective
- **Statement on Concordia’s Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza** - collective statement by exec team in collaboration with campaigns staff members, followed by clarification statement
- **Statement Condemning Discriminatory Tuition Hikes** - released in collaboration with SSMU

- 
- **Mobilization and Response to Proposed Tuition Hikes** - we attended weekly mobilization meetings, helped circulate a parliamentary petition and
- **CREW Affiliation Campaign** - support, resources, promotion

### November 2023

- **November Speaker Series: Uncovered - A Critical and Timely Discussion on the Anti-Trafficking Industry** - co-sponsored panel with Robyn Maynard, Butterfly, Stella and CASWLR
- **November Speaker Series: No More 24 Hour Workday! Resisting Worker Exploitation and Reclaiming our Time and Health** - event organizing, promotion and travel accommodation for 12 members of the Ain't I A Woman coalition, in partnership with the Immigrant Workers Centre and Migrant Workers Alliance for Change
- **November Speaker Series: Solidarity Across Bars - Unionising Prison Labour** - event organization and travel logistics for authors Jordan House and Asaf Rashid, in partnership with RECON.
- **Open letter of Canadian solidarity against the 24-hour workday for home care attendants in New York City** - wrote and distributed Canada-wide open letter in support of the No More 24 movement
- **Teach-in on History of Student Movement** - event planning, promotion and facilitation
- **FASA X CSU Town Hall on Tuition Hikes** - event planning in partnership with FASA
- **Workshop: Obtaining Our Demands** - workshop planning, promotion and facilitation with Students Against Tuition Hikes
- **Anti-Tuition Hike Demonstration Nov 30** - in collaboration with several Montreal student associations
- **Trans Scar Work and Uterine Care clinics** - event organizing in partnership with Healing Resistance and Tiger Lotus Coop
- **Barriers to Bridges Consultation** - met with committee overseeing Concordia Equity Office's conference on gender-based violence
- **Xtra Magazine Interview** - interviewed on details of CSU's Gender-Affirming Care for national magazine

### December 2023

- **Film Screening: 2012 Dans Le Coeur** - co-sponsored film screening with QPIRG McGill and Concordia

- **Vigil for École Polytechnique Massacre** - invited as speaker by SACOMSS Sexual Assault Centre
- **Get Radical Planning** - developed and organized Get Radical programming for the Winter Semester
- **Trans Scar Work and Uterine Care clinics** - event organizing in partnership with Healing Resistance and Tiger Lotus Coop
- **Barriers to Bridges Consultation** - met with a committee overseeing Concordia Equity Office's conference on gender-based violence.
- **Growing ITFA** - we met with the Concordia University Library Employees Union and mobilized them to join ITFA

### January 2024

- **Hiring + Training Campaigns Staff** - hired and began training for new Campaigns Researcher Penelope Higgins and two new Campaigns Assistants Amina Vance and Dinu Mahapatuna
- **Student Parent Support Group** - launched Millie Tresierra's six week-long weekly support group for student parents as part of our Gender Health Hub programming
- **Welcoming CULEU to ITFA** - onboarded the Concordia University Library Employees Union during our biweekly meetings FLAC Outreach - met with the Fee-Levvy Action Committee to coordinate fee-levvy support action against Tuition Hikes
- **Student Strike Press** - was press liaison representing the CSU in interviews with Global News, CBC, CTV, CityTV and CKUT Student Strike Support Liaison - supported FASA and the centralised Hall building dispatch coordinating strike pickets

### February 2024

- **Student Strike Support Liaison** - supported FASA and the centralised Hall building dispatch coordinating strike pickets
- **Trans Scar Work and Uterine Care clinics** - event organising in partnership with Healing Resistance and Tiger Lotus Coop
- **CCSL Application for Gender Health Hub** - resubmitted and received grant funding from CCSL
- **Student Abortion Access** - met with Concordia Health Services and Erin Hassard from women on the web to discuss improvements to international student access to reproductive healthcare

- 
- **Strike Preparation** - coordinated with department and faculty associations in organisation of General Assemblies for a Strike Motion for March

### March 2024

- **ITFA Updated Demands** - helped ITFA revise its official demands to university administration and delivered them to SMSV chair Nadia Hardy
- **International Women's Day Rally** - organised a demonstration outside the Hall Building on March 8th announcing ITFA's renewed boycott of the SMSV
- **CUSS-TS joins ITFA** - the Concordia University Support Staff - Technical Sector voted to join us at ITFA
- **Trans Scar Work and Uterine Care clinics** - event organising in partnership with Healing Resistance and Tiger Lotus Coop
- **Student Strike Press** - was press liaison representing the CSU in interviews with CTV, CityTV & the McGill Tribune
- **Student Strike Picketing Dispatch** - bottom-lined picketing coordination for the EV Dispatch unit during Strike March 11-15
- **Strike Debrief Coordination** - Campaigns department organised a collective debrief session one-week post-strike
- **Anti-Unpaid Internships Solidarity Contingent** - Concordia student solidarity contingent attending demonstration against

### April 2024

- **We Need to Talk About Budget Cuts** - event logistics for open discussion on upcoming austerity measures
- **Creative Action Against Austerity** - support and event logistics for demonstration outside of Quebec Minister of Higher Education Pascale Déry protesting tuition hikes
- **Anti-Austerity Mixer** - social event to encourage students to get involved in the campaign against tuition hikes
- **Solidarity with CUSS-TS Strike** - support, resources, promotion
- **External & Mobilisation Coordinator Training** - initiated training of incoming executive & revised training manual

## Annual Speaker Series

*Written by Hannah Jackson, External Coordinator*

### **Impact of the Dissolution of the Annual Campaigns Structure on the Speakers Series**

Because the intended purpose of the Annual Speakers Series in the past was to bring in high-profile guest speakers to engage students on the subject of the Annual Campaign, this year we worked hard to adapt the structure of the Speakers Series to better support the more flexible and adaptive structure of multiple ongoing campaigns. We selected two core themes for Speakers Series events in the fall and spring semesters: Abolition & Migrant Labour Justice and Decolonial Solidarity. Many of our events were collaborations between many grassroots and campus-based organisations, and several of our events were sold-out due to high levels of interest. We also carried out our annual Get Radical workshop series, but this year chose to make each event open to the public and centre around providing practical skills students can utilise in the fight against tuition hikes.

### Summer 2023

- Annual Speakers Series Visioning - met with Campaigns department staff and conducted a review of all ongoing campaigns to decide on overall direction of this year's Speaker Series programming.

### September 2023

- Finalise November Speakers Series events - liaised with our co-organisers Ain't I A Woman Campaign, Sheena Hoszko, QPIRG Concordia and McGill and Stella to divide logistics for all events

### October 2023

- Design Creation for November Speakers Series - worked with Design team to create posters and social media designs for each event in the November Speakers Series
- Event Planning - arranged travel logistics and French translation for upcoming Speakers Series events

-

### November 2023

- November Speaker Series: Uncovered - A Critical and Timely Discussion on the Anti-Trafficking Industry - co-sponsored panel with Robyn Maynard, Butterfly, Stella and CASWLR
- November Speaker Series: No More 24-Hour Workday! Resisting Worker Exploitation and Reclaiming our Time and Health - event organising, promotion and travel accommodation for 12 members of the Ain't I A Woman coalition, in partnership with the Immigrant Workers Centre and Migrant Workers Alliance for Change
- November Speaker Series: Solidarity Across Bars - Unionising Prison Labour - event organisation and travel logistics for authors Jordan House and Asaf Rashid, in partnership with RECON.

### December 2023

- Film Screening: 2012 Dans Le Coeur - co-sponsored film screening with QPIRG McGill and Concordia
- Get Radical Planning - developed and organised Get Radical programming for the Winter Semester

### January 2024

- Get Radical Workshop: Revolutionary Solidarity - facilitated by Pink Bloc on January 30th

### February 2024

- Get Radical Workshop: Organising Demands - facilitated by Hannah Jackson & Archita Kausal from CSU on February 6th.
- Get Radical Workshop: How to Strike - facilitated by Lily Charette from ASFA on February 13th.
- Get Radical Workshop: How to Organise a Demo - facilitated by Mims from UQAM student organising on February 20th.

### March 2024

- Get Radical Workshop: Mar 5: One-on-One: Building Power Through Conversation facilitated by the General Union on March 5th

- 
- Get Radical Workshop: Anti-Racist Organising on March 12<sup>th</sup>
- Get Radical Workshop: Diversity of Tactics: Revolutionary Art on March 19<sup>th</sup>
- Get Radical Workshop: First Aid for Demonstrations on March 26<sup>th</sup> Spring Speakers Series: Solidarity with the Mohawk Mothers Community Town Hall - event logistics for co-sponsored panel with the Mohawk Mothers and their Cultural Observers, in partnership with Students in Support of Anti-Colonial Initiatives

## April 2024

- Get Radical Workshop: Media Relations Strategies - facilitated by CSU Campaigns staff on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Get Radical Workshop: Burnout Prevention - facilitated by Florencia Vallejo on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

## May 2024

- Spring Speaker Series: Kanàtens: When the Pine Needles Fall - event logistics and promotion for film screening and panel discussion with Ellen Gabriel, Wanda Gabriel & Clifton Nicolas, in partnership with the Concordia Social Justice Centre

## Community Action Fund

### Membership Updates

At present, all participating organizations have submitted their representative for the CAF. The members at present are: Caleb Woolcott (Concordia Food Coalition), Shyam Ragi (QPIRG), Adam Jivraj (Centre for Gender Advocacy), Paige Keheler (Sustainable Concordia) and CSU councilor Salma Bennani. The only member not yet selected for CAF is a student at large selected by the BIPOC Committee.

### Organizations Granted Funding

Month Approved	Organizations Funding Granted to	Amount
----------------	----------------------------------	--------

December	When the Village Meditates (WTVM) - non-profit focused on healing, meditation and yoga spaces for racialised folks	\$3000
December	SUKO Magazine - BIPOC artists collective and publication, produce an annual magazine with range of art forms featured	\$3000
December	Seek Easy - Abortion support text line for international students will offer support and information through decentralized and anonymised	\$3000
December 2023	Press Start - non-profit running out Batiment 7, arcade and socially engaged education program run by-and-for youth in Pointe Saint Charles	\$3000
December 2023	Ghost Art Revival - indigenous art collective dedicated to promoting indigenous education	\$3000
December 2023	General Union - grassroots labour union dedicated to union growth in Montreal	\$3000

January 2024	SCPASA Strike Fund Jan 31- Feb 2	\$1000
January 2024	GUSS Strike Fund Jan 31- Feb 2	\$1000
January 2024	MSA Iftar - food for Muslim students to break their fast during the month of Ramadan	\$3000
January 2024	De Lege Fernanda - tenants rights advocacy	\$2500
January 2024	FANTOM - Queer/ trans nightlife safety organisation	\$1500
April 2024	Syndicat des locataires autonomes de Montréal - tenant rights and advocacy organisation	\$3000
April 2024	Solidarity Ekoni Aci - Indigenous land defense organisation in Northern Quebec	\$3000

April 2024	Hochelaga for Palestine - grassroots neighbourhood association	\$3000
April 2024	FASA Strike Fund March 11 - 15th	\$1000
April 2024	Convergence des luttes anticapitaliste - May 1st rally	\$500
April 2024	QPIRG Concordia - Annual Kiki Ball	\$1000
April 2024	FOCUS Concordia - SHOWPAO festival	\$1000
April 2024	Blush - queer community events	\$1000

## Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

### Academic Affairs

During the 2023-2024 mandate, I have restructured the office of Academic Affairs to provide more stability and ability to produce prominent work for the Concordia Student Union. This included the expansion of staff, specifically hiring two Academic Researchers after many years of understaffing within the department. Moreover, our team developed procedures for organizational methods, archiving research and resources, and expanding support for student representatives across the university.

Significant research initiatives that have been undertaken this semester include the Programs and Curriculum Database alongside the research on Concordia's schools, centres, institutes or new curriculums. This ongoing project allows for the CSU to archive information regarding the structure and curriculums of various programs and keep up to date on upcoming program changes or appraisals.

In a typical year, the Academic and Advocacy Coordinator sits on the Academic Programs Committee, a subcommittee of Senate. This committee, along with the Steering Committee and larger Senate body, have direct voting power over upcoming changes to Concordia's programs of study. Specifically, APC members vote on the details of minor or major changes to programs after they have been approved by Faculty Councils and once department Chairs and/or other members of the department with expertise have submitted their final proposal to the adopted by the Senate, the highest voting academic body at the University.

Notably, the members of APC are tasked with reviewing thousands of pages of documentation and they retain the power to reject proposals and ask departments to return to the drawing board to rework their proposition for any justifiable reason. In other words, the APC is the last significant opportunity for student representatives to oppose or amend changes to any program. Once the proposals are presented to the Steering Committee and

later, Senate, the task to advocate for students' best interests facing those program changes becomes much harder.

For this reason, developing a database that tracks the current structures and requirements of Concordia's programs along with upcoming scheduled program appraisals or reviews prepared by each department will greatly facilitate the work of future student representatives at the department-level, Faculty Council-level and Senate/subcommittee-level. The overarching goal is to provide a better framework for the Academic Affairs office to consult with Faculty Associations and/or their Member Associations for matters of academic representation.

## Archival Project

Within the office of Academic Affairs, we have begun an archival project which has created a foundation to aid in maintaining and preserving institutional memory for all documents, reports or research pertaining to academic topics or university bodies.

The CSU has had ongoing issues with organization of information and lack of systems in place to preserve institutional memory and ensure that information is easily accessible in both a digitized and physical format.

## Academic Researchers

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

The Academic Researchers assist the CSU in its mandate to conduct research, develop argumentation, and produce education materials for its members on issues relevant to students and academic affairs. Under the supervision of the Academic & Advocacy Coordinator, the Academic Researcher is responsible for researching issues, writing reports and developing argumentation. These are utilized in the production of argumentation, reports, and popular education documents relevant to representation on academic bodies within the University and

other academic issues.

Some of the projects undertaken by the researchers during the 2023-2024 academic year can be seen in the following table:

<u>Academic Affairs Research</u>	<u>Semester</u>
Government of Canada Student Housing Funding	Winter 2024
Independent Studies Students Transfer Credit Permittance per Faculty	Winter 2024
Concordia University Programs & Curriculum Database (course requirements and programs' review timelines)	Fall 2023

Concordia Academic Centres and Institutes	Fall 2023/Winter 2024
CSU Representation at Provincial Government and Lobbying Best Practices	Fall 2023
Indigenization and Decolonization Curriculum	Fall 2023
Concordia School of Health	Fall 2023
CSU The Link/The Concordian Press Review	Summer 2023/Fall 2023/Winter 2024

CSU, University and Student Associations Services Research (Advocacy Centre, HOJO, LIC, ACSD and more)	Summer 2023/Fall 2023
CSU Templates for Documents, Presentations and other files (developed alongside archiving best practices)	Summer 2023/Fall 2023
Protest Tactics Resources ( <i>Updated from prior decades</i> )	Fall 2023/Winter 2024
Tuition Hikes Press Review	Fall 2023/Winter 2024
Tuition Hikes Statement	Fall 2023
Moodle User Interface Improvement for Concordia Students	Summer 2023
Academic Freedom Policy	Summer 2023
EDI Services in Higher Education and Student Associations	Summer 2023
Mental Health Services in Higher Education and Student Associations	Summer 2023
Transitional Housing Projects	Summer 2023
Sustainability Curriculum Implementation at Concordia	Summer 2023
Senate/Board of Governors Bylaws Crosscomparison across Universities	Summer 2023

## Academic Caucus

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

This year, I did my best to offer student representatives from various committees, faculties and associations to attend and participate in the Caucus (as non-voting members), which I believe created richer conversations and better flow of ideas. Keeping in mind that the Caucus is meant to bring together student representatives that sit on the highest decision-making bodies of the University, Senate and the Board of Governors, representing over 37,000 undergraduates and almost another ten thousand graduate students. It is crucial that this body remains well-informed and operates in a collaborative manner to succeed in its mandate.

## Academic Leadership Meetings

The Dean of Students and Provost Office organize meetings for “academic leaders” (student representatives) that hold various seats across the different faculties and associations. These meetings often have guest such as the Vice-President of Teaching and Learning to discuss ongoing projects which seek to innovate pedagogy and learning at the university level. This is also an opportunity for academic leaders to discuss issues specific to their faculties or membership as it pertains to programs, courses or policies.

## Policy Committee

The Policy Committee is responsible for maintaining the CSU’s by-laws and standing regulations. It may make reports and recommendations to Council regarding any proposed

amendments to the by-laws or standing regulations. The current by-laws and regulations need constant improvement, a great deal of work goes into revising and correcting them as needed.

## Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (university body)

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee is chaired by the Vice-President Academic and Provost Anne Whitelaw. The membership is primarily senior administration along with three student representatives, two undergraduates and one graduate. In this committee, the Provost outlines academic priorities for the years ahead and discusses these plans with the members. During the current academic year, the main topic was tuition hikes and the resulting decrease in enrollment.

## Academic Programs Committee (university body)

The Academic Programs Committee is the body that oversees and reviews all proposed changes to programs including large proposals such as the creation of new programs or minor changes such as course sequences or pre-requisites for existing programs. The APC met on six occasions during the current academic year.

## Campus Security Advisory Committee (university body)

The Campus Safety Advisory Group serves as a resource and liaison between campus safety and prevention services (CSPS) and representatives of the community it serves. The Group comprises faculty, staff and community members representing student organizations, cultural centers, and members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Through this body, CSPS seeks to share information and receive input from the University community on matters of public safety. Additionally, this body serves as a community resource to enhance public safety at the University. The Group will serve as a bridge of understanding by cultivating awareness and communicating concerns and needs to CSPS.

Objectives: The Campus Security Advisory Group has four objectives: awareness, communications, monitoring and reporting.

- The Advisory Group will be informed of the state of public safety at the University and is expected to maintain awareness and discuss events that raise public safety concerns.
- The Advisory Group considers concerns voiced by students, faculty, staff and community members, and responds appropriately, including developing possible guidelines and avenues for resolution.
- The Advisory Group provides input on programs and projects aimed at improving campus safety and enhancing community relations.

The security advisory group convened only twice during the 2023-2024 academic year. As outlined in the November 2023 council report, the CSU presented concerns about SPVM presence on campus.

## CRUES

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

CRUES is a coalition of student associations across all corners of Quebec. While CSU attended the founding congresses and numerous meetings since the coalition's founding in Winter 2023, the CSU officially remains unaffiliated and does not hold a voting seat among the coalition.

During the 2023-2024 mandate, I've attended two CRUES congresses, in Sherbrooke during April 2023 and Quebec City during May 2024 respectively. I have also attended numerous coordination committee meetings held locally and several actions or initiatives partially organized by CRUES.

For further context, we are in regular conversation with voting member associations both from within Concordia and other institutions. These connections were reinforced particularly due to the tuition hikes cross-collaborations as a result of Concordia student groups bringing the issue of tuition hikes to the forefront of CRUES.

## Government and Media Liaison

The CSU's involvement in the public consultations regarding the Program Experience Quebecois (PEQ) took place in September 2023. We advocated against the proposed changes to defend and protect our international students and ensure that a pathway to permanent residency and immigration was maintained. The lobbying efforts included submission of a Memoir prepared by the Senior Supervising Lawyer of the CSU LIC and a presentation to the government commission at the National Assembly of Quebec. We also met with a few MNAs and their staff to discuss the threat to international students.

As for tuition hikes, the CSU also discussed possibilities for advocacy or collaboration with Members of the National Assembly and their offices. We also received inquiries and interest from federal Members of Parliament but in most cases, we asked elected politicians to not interfere directly in student actions and initiatives. While we launched an official National Assembly petition that garnered over thirty thousand signatures in collaboration with McGill and Bishop's University students, we opted to not travel to Québec City to present at the official petition press conference to ensure independence from partisan bodies.

Over the 2023-2024 mandate, I spoke with dozens of reporters from a wide variety of outlets, both from within Concordia and external publications, to promote our advocacy causes and elaborate on our demands vis-a-vis the Quebec government and Concordia administration.

## Inter-association Meetings and Liaison

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

In summer 2023, CRUES acted as the main point of contact between CSU and relevant student associations.

Starting in Fall 2023, the announcement by the provincial government regarding tuition hikes prompted the CSU to organize further with a variety of associations and coalitions across Quebec. Between October and November 2023, I attended and helped to organize five (5) meetings with large university and college student associations, in addition to meeting with l'Union Etudiante du Quebec (UEQ) and continuing to collaborate with CRUES.

Starting in late November and December 2023, numerous student groups at Concordia and McGill had developed a coordinating committee for tuition hikes, which subsequently created several sub-committees for students of various groups to participate.

## Management (Human Resources)

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

In my role as Academic and Advocacy Coordinator, I directly oversee four services of the CSU: the Advocacy Centre, HOJO, LIC and RAWCC (see below for acronyms). In practice, this means that I oversee the managers and/or assistant managers that operate the services on a day-to-day basis. I am responsible for ensuring that the hours worked by the management team are accurate and appropriate and I approve change of hours or temporary position transfers for all service staff.

Depending on the needs of the services, I also assist the management teams with hands-on onboarding, coaching, support or intervention for the staff members.

I have spent many hours throughout the year for the CSU staff members alongside the General Manager, CSU's external Human Resources Consultant and other CSU executives. Most staff matters are confidential but there are routine procedures to discuss or update as it pertains to temporary leaves for staff to study abroad or focus on their studies, which in turn, has created some vacancies in certain positions.

I've spent much of the year developing staff positions and organizing hirings in conjunction with service managers. See the table below for exact positions and timeframes outlining the thirteen (13) hiring committees that took place.

<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Hires</u></b>	<b><u>Month</u></b>
Academic Researcher	Two (2)	August 2023

Advocacy Centre Administrative Assistant	One (1)	August 2023
Advocacy Centre Student Advocate	Two (2)	October 2023
Advocacy Centre Interim Advocacy Manager	One (1)	November 2023
HOJO Assistant	Three (3)	January 2024
HOJO Assistant Manager	One (1)	February 2024
Legal Information Clinic Administrative Assistant	Three (3)	April 2024
Advocacy Centre Lead Advocate	Two (2)	April 2024
Academic Researcher	One (1)	April 2024
Advocacy Centre Administrative Assistant	Two (2)	May 2024
RAWCC Coordinator	One (1)	May 2024
HOJO Lead Case Worker*	One (1)	May 2024
<i>*New Position</i>		
Advocacy Centre Student Advocate	Two-Three (2-3)	May 2024

## President-Provost Meetings

Each month, the President and Provost meet with the General Coordinator and Academic and Advocacy Coordinator of the CSU to discuss large scope issues affecting student

groups or the university at large. Nine regular meetings were convened during the 2023-2024 academic year.

## Town Hall

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

In October 2023, I organized a Town Hall for the student body regarding the announcement of the tuition hikes by the Quebec government during the Concordia Fall Reading Week.

The town hall featured student leaders that provided information and took questions from the attendees. It was an opportunity to discuss strategy with students-at-large and members from other unions alike. It was well-attended and livestreamed on the CUTV YouTube channel and was featured in traditional media (CTV, etc.).

## Travel for CSU

*Written by Alexandrah Cardona, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator*

During the 2023-2024 mandate, a few events required short travel to participate and represent the CSU. These events included:

- CRUES Congress – Sherbrooke, QC – April 26-28, 2023
- Student Care Conference – Montreal, QC – May 27-28, 2023
- CSU Executives Retreat (July 27-29, 2023)
- National Assembly for Citizens’ Commission on Public Consultation (September 19, 2023)
- Forces Avenir Ceremony (September 26, 2023)
- CRUES Congress (May 3-5, 2023)

## Loyola Coordinator

### Loyola Committee

*Written by Talya Diner, Loyola Coordinator*

The Loyola committee is responsible for advising the CSU on how best to serve students at Loyola. The Committee makes reports and recommendations to Council regarding all CSU events, activities, and projects at Loyola. In addition, the Committee is responsible for ensuring improved food options at Loyola, and advocates for the general interest of Loyola students.

Due to a very limited number of councillors for the first six months of this mandate, the Loyola committee was unable to be formed. However, after the by-election we were able to maintain a full committee and have funded several important grassroots initiatives based out of Loyola campus. These have included Le Petit Velo Rouge summer picnic, Hive Free Lunch Solidarity Holiday baskets, a volunteer fair, Sankofa coop, and SLAM tenant's union. We've also coordinated multiple events and worked together towards creating concrete goals for the Loyola campus.

### Loyola Initiatives

*Written by Talya Diner, Loyola Coordinator*

This year we had six key events at Loyola, many of which were food sovereignty based due to the food insecurity that this campus faces. I hosted two bread baking workshops and one fermentation workshop, a wellness journal making workshop, and a seedling sale with Cultivation, as well as an orientation movie night/pizza party with the GSA. These events were all really well attended, pointing to a dire need for more student life initiatives at this campus. Many people who attended reported that they would love to see more events at Loyola and felt the campus lacked community. The workshops tangibly changed the campus life and now that students are back full throttle in person, I believe it is imperative that future Loyola coordinators work on having even more consistent events. Unfortunately, the Winter market didn't work out due to time constraints and although we collaborated with Improve for weekly produce pick up

baskets, there was not enough enrollment at the Loyola campus. I think collaborating more with the CFC is essential for this position and that Improve food baskets are a wonderful initiative as well, they just need to be promoted more in advance. I would recommend the CSU looks into this food basket delivery service because it is totally free and an amazing way to improve food security on campus.

This year I focused a lot on boosting the Union's presence at the campus. This included ensuring the CSU services were operating out of the Loyola office again after years of not working at Loyola due to the pandemic. I had made it my goal to provide better signage at least to direct people to the union, and I postered all around the campus with information about the CSU office and the services schedule for the Winter semester.

CSU Tabling: I also have had a few meetings to discuss having a CSU owned tabling space at Loyola to make booking spaces easier for clubs and services. There have been frustrating delays on this because of leaves of absences of people in the Dean of Students office, but I have set the groundwork to hopefully get a tabling space by next Fall semester. This is in my opinion an essential thing to have at Loyola campus to improve student life and the CSU's visibility and I will be training the incoming Loyola coordinator to specifically target this as an issue in their upcoming mandate.

I also worked on a Honeys business plan, a projected grocery store project that would work out of the old hive space. Unfortunately, I am not sure if this remains financially viable anymore now that there are projected tuition hikes, as Honeys likely couldn't become a fee levy, which it would need to become financially viable. I still think it's an interesting and important project but I also don't think there is enough energy or momentum behind it right now for it to survive. The main people spearheading it are extremely occupied with all the other amazing work they do with the Hive Free Lunch and Enuf.

One of the major accomplishments of the Fall Semester was completing a mural in the G-Lounge. This has long been a project that has been worked on by two previous mandates but due to difficulties in the G-Lounge, the project was consistently delayed. I coordinated the final aspects of the mural implementation with the DOS and hired mural assistants and set up the scaffolding. The mural was completed in mid-December, one of the first steps in the revitalization of the G-Lounge as a student space.

I did four tabling sessions at Loyola over my mandate to promote the union on campus and give out free coffee. These are generally difficult because of low foot traffic at Loyola, however, were generally well received. I think having a CSU run tabling space will be helpful in promoting Loyola and will make it easier for future executives to easily book coffee kiosks there.

For the last month of my mandate, I will be working on a survey to be distributed over the summer and into the Fall semester so that the incoming Loyola coordinator has an updated understanding of students' sentiments at the campus. The last survey was done in 2020 which was right off the pandemic, so it is well due for a revised survey.

## Internal Coordinator

### Internal

*Written by Christian Taboada, Internal Coordinator*

The Internal Affairs Coordinator position, unlike the rest of my team, had a lot of turnovers in the last year before me. The last academic year saw three Internal Affairs Coordinators take on the role, this resulted in different sources of information to take over the position. The Internal Affairs Coordinator is mainly responsible for being the support for the CSU Clubs in their mission to better the Concordia Community. I manage the club spaces on both campuses, and acting Secretary of the Union. Alice Anderson and Daniela Beltran Jimenez were the two club administrators during my mandate. Daniela started in March 2023, and Alice since the Summer of 2022.

My predecessor, Haya Bitar, had her transitional period be chaotic due to the turnover. Given the turmoil, my transition was not smooth as many issues were left unresolved given the lack of communication between all three former Internal Affairs Coordinator. This was especially noticeable though the finances and budget allocations being all over the place upon my arrival. The Clubs Department suffered a lot from the absence of a Coordinator to guide them, and so we ensured within our department that we would communicate more efficiently. Our solution was establishing week-long office hours, where the Club Executives would come in and ask anything on outstanding issues. I am proud of my department for avoiding any form of conflict and having bettered the relationship that the Clubs have with the CSU given the complicated past.

## Executive Retreat

*Written by Christian Taboada, Internal Coordinator*

The Executive Retreat was planned for a week get-away on July 24<sup>th</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup>. We rented a cabin at Grenville-sur-la-Rouge. The group did some bonding activities and played games. The retreat being a month and a half into our roles helped understand the positions a bit more and form the relationships necessary for the upcoming year.

## Council Retreat

*Written by Christian Taboada, Internal Coordinator*

Following a lack of Councillors coming into the Fall Semester, we opted for a Council Retreat to happen after the By-elections to gather more people and make the Retreat a better experience for all of the Councillors. The date set was December 9<sup>th</sup> at the Milton Brasserie in Montreal. Despite a reservation being made, the Councillors were not able to show interest in the Retreat mostly due to the exam period. Therefore, we tabled the Council Retreat to a future date. Council Retreat was a dinner at Hall 6<sup>th</sup> floor catered by Sean Chef.

## Council Training

*Written by Christian Taboada, Internal Coordinator*

The Council Training followed a similar logic as the Retreat, and so it was tabled for after the By-Elections. So far, Anti-Semitism and Anti-Islamophobia Training has been completed on December 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. It was delegated to the General Coordinator and the Student Life Coordinator to host the subsequent trainings.

## Clubs

*Written by Christian Taboada, Internal Coordinator*

## Clubs Department Budget

Despite my predecessor's projections of a surplus, the Clubs Department had a deficit of around 40 000\$. This is mostly because not everyone (Club Executives or Members at Large) were not paid out of the last financial year, and so we had to fix those issues. The issue also arose from the fact that all three Coordinator's approved budgets for Clubs year long without leaving a paper-trail, meaning that no one was keeping a tally of how much we were allocating. Thus, for the 2022-2023, the allocated amount was of \$315,830.03, while the Clubs Department only had \$255,352.00. The error in finances put us in a complicated situation but resulted in developing a more detailed sheet for keeping track of everyone's finances throughout the semester.

As of the writing of this Report (April 23, 2024), the allocated budget for all the Clubs has been of \$282,713.46 for 74 Clubs under the CSU umbrella. The actuals now are of \$169,677.12, which is 60% of the budget for the Clubs. The Clubs all have until April 30<sup>th</sup> to submit their reimbursements, and my estimate is that we will be hitting for 85-90% of the total Clubs Budget when everyone is reimbursed.

Update, as of April 29<sup>th</sup>, the total expenditure is of \$218,279.72, which is 77% of the total budget allocated for Club Funding.

Description and comments	BUDGET 2023-2024
ACSiON NETWORK-CONCORDIA	\$ 1,000.00
AFRICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION (ASAC)	\$ 18,000.00
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SOCIETY (AISC)	\$ 750.00
AUTODIDACTS CONCORDIA THEATRE CLUB (A.C.T.)	\$ 3,500.00
BEST BUDDIES CLUB	\$ 3,000.00
BRASA	\$ 3,000.00
CONCORDIA BUSINESS REVIEW	\$ 1,850.00
CONCORDIA CANADIAN ASIAN SOCIETY (CCAS)	\$ 4,500.00
CHEERLEADING CLUB	\$ 3,000.00
CHESS CLUB	\$ 1,500.00
DRAGON BOAT CLUB (CDBC)	\$ 6,000.00

E-SPORTS STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$	4,000.00
FASHION BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (CFBA)	\$	5,000.00
GAME DEVELOPMENT CLUB	\$	2,000.00
GAMES CLUB	\$	1,800.00
MOOT LAW SOCIETY (CMLS)	\$	9,000.00
MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY	\$	9,200.00
OUTDOORS CLUB	\$	7,000.00
SKI AND SNOWBOARD CLUB	\$	16,000.00
STUDENT EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION	\$	1,750.00
CONCORDIA STUDENTS FOR PARKINSON'S	\$	1,500.00
CUTAM-TAMIL	\$	10,000.00
TENNIS CLUB	\$	720.00
TENNIS TEAM	\$	750.00
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (CUCSA)	\$	7,500.00
CONCORDIART CLUB	\$	1,750.00
FOCUS	\$	18,000.00
FRONTIER COLLEGE (STUDENTS FOR LITERACY)	\$	2,500.00
HAITIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF CONCORDIA (HSAC)	\$	7,500.00
HILLEL	\$	7,000.00
INTERVARSITY AT CONCORDIA	\$	6,500.00
JEUX DE LA COMMUNICATION (JDLC)	\$	12,150.00
LEBANESE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	\$	750.00
MEDSPECS CONCORDIA	\$	2,500.00
MOTIONBALL	\$	690.00
MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	\$	18,000.00
NANOSTRIDE	\$	6,000.00
NIGERIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	\$	4,000.00
OTAKU	\$	750.00
POWER TO CHANGE	\$	1,000.00
SCRIBBLES	\$	1,000.00
SEX AND SELF	\$	1,500.00

SHIDOKAN KENDO	\$	5,500.00
SOCIALIST FIGHTBACK STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$	2,000.00
SOLIDARITY FOR PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS (SPHR)	\$	8,500.00
STRONGER THAN STIGMA	\$	6,000.00
SYRIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$	2,000.00
TURKISH STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$	4,500.00
ULTIMATE FRISBEE	\$	1,771.00
VIETNAMESE STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$	6,500.00
K-POP	\$	1,247.00
NAGINATA	\$	1,921.50
RECREATIONAL SPORTS CLUB	\$	2,000.00
C. U. TEA ENTHUSIAST ASSOCIATION	\$	8,500.00
THAQALYN MUSLIM ASSOC (prev SAMA)	\$	1,700.00
SCORE ASSOCIATION	\$	1,500.00
CONCORDIA MARKTING AID CLINIC	\$	3,045.88
CONCORDIA RELAY FOR LIFE	\$	1,770.00
BUSINESS LAW COMMITEE	\$	750.00
ASCEND UNIVERSITY CHAPTER	\$	750.00
BLACK STUDENTS CAREER DEVELOPMENT	\$	1,500.00
HEART FOR AFRICA	\$	750.00
HANVOICE	\$	750.00
NYANTENDE FOUNDATION	\$	843.27
TEDX	\$	750.00
STARTUP NATION	\$	700.00
EGYPTIAN ASSOCIATION	\$	454.81
SQUASH CLUB	\$	750.00
GOOGLE DEVELOPER STUDENT CLUB	\$	100.00
IMPROV CLUB	\$	750.00
PAKISTANI STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$	750.00
INDEPENDENT JEWISH VOICES	\$	750.00

The Clubs and Spaces Committee approved 16 new Clubs this year.

NEW CLUBS 2023-2024
TEDX
STARTUP NATION
EGYPTIAN ASSOCIATION
SQUASH CLUB
GOOGLE DEVELOPER STUDENT CLUB
MUSIC CLUB
IMPROV CLUB
VELOCITY VIBE RUNNERS
PAKISTANI STUDENT ASSOCIATION
INDEPENDENT JEWISH VOICES
STUDY GROUPS
ISLAMIC RELIEF CHAPTER
WELFARE AVENUE
ELECTROCON
ARAB STUDENT NETWORK
CIAO CONU

The variety of the new approved Clubs allows for another year of different experiences for new students to come in. While some new Clubs may be approved by May under the new Internal Affairs Coordinator, we are happy to have seen many great events by the new clubs thus year, as hope for many more.

I have devoted my time to communicate and ensure that the Clubs feel like the CSU is present, as the role of the Internal Affairs Coordinator should be to demonstrate a commitment to these groups. The harder aspect of the position is on the Secretary of the Union side, as the position is so broad that Executives understand it as the role that will do the tasks, they do not feel like taking on. I would suggest that the position is cleared up, rather than remain ambiguous, because it can be overwhelming alongside all the tasks that are required by the Clubs side already.

In response to this, I am, as of right now, working creating a permanent position that would ease the process on the Clubs side to make it more manageable for the Internal Affairs Coordinator. This would make it easier for the incoming Internal to stress less on the learning curve of the club's processes and maintaining a clear picture of the state of the Clubs.

### 1. *Events*

#### **Fall Clubs Orientation**

Clubs Orientation was held on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It was followed by an Orientation Cocktail Event on MB9. The event itself had a solid turnout, it was more informative and so it was not necessarily the most exciting event. The venue of MB9 was far too big for the size of the turnout, and so we sought for something smaller for the Clubs Gala.

The Club Administrators had more experience for planning the event, but the costs accrued were only for the food caterer and venue.

The trainings were the following (Timeslot, Name of Workshop, Targeted Audience):

11:00 - 12:00 Planning a Successful Event Office Online Frame	Booking Officers
11:30 - 12:30 Budgets, Reimbursements Forms, and External Banking	Treasurers
12:30 - 12:45 CSU Booking, Meeting Spaces, Getting Posters Approved	Booking Officers
12:30 - 13:00 Starting the Year! Registration, DOS Forms, Office Space Requests, Elections etc.	Presidents and Internals
1:00 - 2:30 Risk Reduction: Creating Safe and Inclusive Events and Spaces	Any Executive
1:15 - 1:45 CSU Marketing and Promotion with Comms Department: Abby Cesar-Rose	Marketing Coordinators
2:00 - 3:00 Reggies Workshop: Eduardo/Sen/Claire	Event Coordinators

### **Clubs Fair**

The Fall Clubs Fair was hosted with great success under Keza Petit and Tanou Bah. The Clubs were very satisfied, and they were able to get great exposure. The Winter Clubs Fair was a bit more rushed, and many Clubs mentioned not having heard about it. The event is a collaboration between the Clubs Department and the Student Life Coordinator, but unfortunately, we were not given an opportunity to help for the Winter Club Fair.

### **Clubs Department x Queer Concordia: Drag Night**

In response, the Clubs Department hosted an event for the Winter in Collaboration with Queer Concordia. On January 26<sup>th</sup>, the Internal Affairs Coordinator offered an event for Club Executives at a discounted rate and opened to the public for a fee. The event was a massive success and had 150 Concordia members present.



### Clubs Gala

The Club's Gala was planned and hosted on April 12<sup>th</sup> at Maison Simon. The venue was smaller and would hold for around 80 people. Our turnout of around 100+ resulted in a very successful event. Last year's Gala was a bit underwhelming, and a lot of the Clubs did not attend, which we did not want to happen again. The Clubs received awards, food, and drinks. Despite it being finals, everyone seemed to appreciate the event and looked forward to it. The budget allocated for it was of 6000\$.



## 2. Finances

My first task as Internal Affairs Coordinator was to figure out the shambles of the finances that were left to me. The Department had such different way of spending and no method of tracking it, thus I created a master document with all the budgets for all the Clubs, this included the following:

Account	Description And Comments	Budget 2022-2023	Actuals May 2022	Percentage Spent	Proposal 2023-2024	Percentage Increase/Decrease	Percentage Increase 10% On Actuals	Tentative	Variance From Budget 2022-2023	Budget 2023-2024	Actuals December (May Include Last Year Payments)	Portal Actuals
---------	--------------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	--------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	------------------	---	----------------

The Master Document also included all the missing payments from last year, as to be able to better track the outgoing expenses. The Portal Actuals include the Hospitality Payments and their reimbursed expenses. All the Executives in my team had no previous in the Clubs and so they were no help to better understand the processes. This document should serve as a guide that will avoid the future Internal Affairs Coordinators from seeking information from all sorts of documents. The Actuals that are given by General Manager Robert and

Accountant Viken are not the most updated, as sometimes they may be a month behind and not a clear representation of the current expenses of the Clubs.

### Clubs Special Projects Fund

Last year, Haya Bitar, decided to close this Fund, as result of the irresponsible allocation of funds. I allocated \$20 000 into this Fund. The purpose of it was to allocate direct funding to a project and better judge the way that large projects are done on campus – this also proves a dedication from the Clubs to seek out sponsorships rather than blowing their budget on one event.

BUDGET 2023-2024		ACTUALS	
\$	20,000.00	\$	8,200.00

The two projects we funded this year was the Uzuri Gala (ASAC) and the Fashion Showcase (CFBA). These two projects were presented to us and approved by the Clubs and Spaces Committee. The reason why these two clubs received the fund as well was because they had already spent the entirety of their budget on other events and had applied for other sources of funds. While I was unsatisfied about not giving out more, I hope my successors will be able to advertise this more and have more Clubs apply to it.

Unlike my predecessor, we had an easier time paying out the Clubs this year, as the process was facilitated and made easier through the new Clubs Portal. Finance Coordinator did a great job to check on the reimbursements and process them through, but given the number of signatures, we often had to check where it was on the pipeline as it was not showing appropriately. Some issues arose where some clubs wanted to get reimbursed from the year prior, which was often a challenge but if the reasoning is right, then we would do our best to give the money back to the student.

The reputation that the CSU has, is currently of not reimbursing students on time. I am happy that we were able to do much better this year with my team. Granted, not a perfect system, it is empirical that both Finance and Internal keep a system of checks and balances to ensure the process is not skewed. Therefore, ensuring a proper communication with the Finance Coordinator is essential because students do not usually reach the proper person.

### 3. Insurance

This has been overly complicated. The process is not fully clear, except all events must be filled out in an excel sheet with their events' details that will then be sent to our Broker for our insurance company's approval. For clubs, this now means that there will be an additional approval step that they must go through before proceeding with their events.

The insurer assumed that we would know all the Clubs' events by June or even the summer which is unrealistic. The way around this is collecting the events that the Clubs propose in their Budget Proposals and send them to the Insurer.

It was my predecessor's idea to eliminate all Sports teams under the CSU, however this would have been a horrible idea. The way that Sports have gotten around it as of now, is by informing their members of their own liability. The New Clubs Policy would ensure that all participants waive away any responsibility held by the CSU.

#### 5. *Clubs & Space Committee*

Since the RCM of September 13<sup>th</sup>, the Clubs and Spaces Committee had 2 consistent Councillors: Moad Ahjoj and Kareem Abdeen. Councillor Adam Mills was part of the Clubs and Spaces Committee until the By-Elections and has since been replaced by Salma Abuaysheh and Zina Chouabi. We currently do not have a student at large on our committee, as Abigail Koff rescinded her position in the month of November. Appointments Committee never got us a new Member At Large so we were one member one the entire year.

The Committee has met for a total of 8 times. The Committee has voted on the following Club Budgets. It is encouraging to hear about the various projects that clubs have planned, and I hope to see them materialized.

#### 6. *BIPOC Committee*

While co-Chair of the BIPOC Committee, the main responsibility was done by the Student Life Coordinator, as I had more meetings to convene in my given position already. The funds were not given to any CSU Club as decided by the Student Life Coordinator. The funds were distributed for projects and for bursaries. The Committee convened once.

#### 7. *CCSL*

As the student representative, I sat on CCSL Special Projects Group, and we voted on all the groups who would receive funding from CCSL. I am glad to have advertised this fund to the Clubs as an alternative route. I abstained from any CSU projects, such as the Gener Health Hub. We will convene for the last time on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The goal would be to always have the Internal Coordinator there as they can provide huge insight into the operations of the student groups.

#### 8. *Clubs Fee Levy Increases*

The Clubs Fee Levy did not pass at either By-Election or the General Elections despite the Department's attempt to raise awareness for them. It was an pre-emptive attempt as the Tuition Hikes will inevitably result in less students coming in, which will reduce the amount of funds allocated to the Clubs.

CSU Clubs Department Fee Levy

Option Votes

No 2305 (61.2%)

Yes

VOTER SUMMARY

1460 (38.8%)

#### 9. *Clubs Complaints Form*

As the Internal Affairs Coordinator, I am responsible for resolving disputes between clubs. Our centralized form where clubs can fill out a JotForm with their complaint has thankfully not been filled out by any clubs.

We received three formal complaints towards the Chess Club, Solidarity of Palestinian Human Rights, and Start Up Nation.

#### 7. *Clubs Logo*

We created a new logo for our department, as we saw that the CSU's Club Department is not properly taken care of and represented. There is an assumption that the funds come from the larger CSU pool of funds, but we hope that by bringing awareness and distinguish both bodies.



## 8. *Trainings*

The Executive Team is currently organizing the necessary trainings that will take place in May for incoming executives.

## 9. *Clubs Policy*

The Club's Department has worked on reworking the Clubs Policy. The addition of the Sports Policy and the Alcohol Policy are additions that will help clearing the processes that are not in place. The purpose of the change is due to multiple complaints regarding the limited scope of the Clubs Policy. The new policy includes more rules on the role of the Department, and a proper way to ensure everyone is reimbursed properly. This Policy change needs to be approved by the Policy Committee, as of the writing of this report, it has yet to be ratified.

### *Alcohol Policy*

This policy document should serve to provide information on procedure for the Concordia Student Union Clubs regarding the use and purchase of Alcohol. The Alcoholic Beverages Policy on Clubs focuses on responsible and safe use of alcohol on campus, as well as the expected practices for reimbursement of alcohol. This policy places full responsibility on both the student organizers and for respecting University Policies to encourage safe consumption.

### *Sport Policy*

This policy document should serve to provide information on procedures for the Concordia Student Union, specifically with regards to the sports clubs that operate under it, as well as their rights and responsibilities and other proceedings thereof. This policy should ensure the fair allocation of resources to the sports clubs and services operated under the CSU. The purpose of these amendments are to provide a clear pathway for CSU Sports Clubs to be eventually be undertaken by the Concordia Recreation and Athletics Department.

### **Conclusion**

Clubs remain the vital backbone of campus student life and are representative of our association. This is why managing clubs is not for the faint-hearted and demands patience, tenacity, and a strong sense of fair yet subjective judgement when necessary.

## **Elections**

*Written by Harley Martin, General Coordinator*

### **Elections and Recruitment**

The CSU has two elections each year. The Annual General Election is held in March, and the by-elections are held in November. Elections consist of electing students to fill the various open positions in addition to referendum questions that go to ballot to be voted on by the student body. The mandate for elected positions lasts from June 1st until May 31st of the following year. During the Annual General Elections all eight executive positions, thirty Council of Representative seats, and four University Senate seats are up for election. If any Council seats remain open in the lead up to the November by-election, students in the appropriate faculties can

run to fill these seats (Council seats are divided proportionally by faculty, corresponding to the percentage that faculty’s members make up of the overall undergraduate population).

Referendum questions concerning fee-levies, either new or existing, go through the CSU’s Fee-Levy Review Committee and then are ratified or rejected by Council. If approved, they appear on the ballot and the final decision is made by the students. Other questions may also appear on the ballot and follow different channels depending on their substance. The main point is that all goes through the Council and only if passed do questions go to the ballot for students to vote on. It is then the Executive team’s job to implement the decisions made. Elections are organized and overseen by the Elections Commission, consisting of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and two Deputy Electoral Officer’s (DEO). The CEO also hires and manages a team of polling clerks employed during the polling period. The current CEO has been creating a guide for this position, as none existed before, which we believe will greatly assist in periods of transition and ensure that elections are carried out competently, fairly, and smoothly. The CEO has also been working with members of the Executive team and other CSU staff to better publicize elections and increase voter turnout. We saw an increase in voter turnout this year as compared to the March 2023 Annual General Elections, but numbers are still far too low. However, we did see a significant increase in the number of students vying for Council positions during the 2023 by-elections, which was heartening. We will continue to try to increase engagement through better publicity and information sharing, but this is an ongoing process.

Below are the November 2023 CSU by-election results. Green indicates an elected Councilor. Yellow indicates the outcome of a referendum question. Note that all fee-levy questions were rejected.

### CSU Clubs Department

Option	Votes
No	1658 (56.1%)
Yes	1299 (43.9%)

### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	836 (22.0%)

### CSU Off-Campus Housing & Job Bank (HOJO)

Option	Votes
No	1599 (54.8%)
Yes	1319 (45.2%)

#### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	875 (23.1%)

### CSU Advocacy Center

Option	Votes
No	1523 (52.2%)
Yes	1392 (47.8%)

#### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	878 (23.1%)

### The Concordian

Option	Votes
No	1751 (60.8%)
Yes	1131 (39.2%)

#### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	911 (24.0%)

## The Link

Option	Votes
No	1691 (58.1%)
Yes	1217 (41.9%)

### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	885 (23.3%)

## The Concordia Global Affairs Association (CGAA)

Option	Votes
No	2194 (60.2%)
Yes	1449 (39.8%)

### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	150 (4.0%)

## CSU Student Building

Option	Votes
No	1649 (58.3%)
Yes	1180 (41.7%)

### VOTER SUMMARY

Total	3793
Abstain	964 (25.4%)

