

REPORT CARD

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B

Andy Cheema
VP (Operations & Finance)

Now in his second term as the Vice-President (Operations and Finance), it's clear that Andy Cheema has been spending most of his time on the SUB renovation project. Cheema campaigned on his commitment to leading the initiative, and after the referendum for the changes was approved last year, Cheema has been devoting himself to every aspect of the project: design development, negotiating out the contract with the university, and advocating to minimize the financial burden students will have to bear. While this is important work that also helps Cheema check one of the biggest boxes from his platform, it's taking up valuable time that could be devoted to other aspects of the VP (Ops-Fi) portfolio.

This isn't to say the SUB renos have been Cheema's sole focus — he's also been able

spend time improving some of the existing aspects of SUB. SUBMart was reorganized last year, taking out the clothing section and replacing it with more food options and a wider selection of magazines. The new layout also included healthy snacks like fruit, and assessment on what students respond to most is still underway. The addition of a TD ATM in SUB was also a positive step forward.

Cheema is also hoping to make nutritional information with visual, accessible labelling available at food outlets in SUB such as Juicy by the end of his term, and he's focusing on expanding the services at SUBPrint, with more options to help break their dependence on profits from printing solely academic materials such as course packs.

However, it's disappointing to see a lack of

improvement — and in some cases, a decline — in food choice and quality in some other SU businesses. While RATT was headed in the right direction last year, it seems to have taken a turn for the worse, with overpriced, sub-par food despite a revamped menu. There doesn't seem to be much discernable change to Dewey's or L'Express either, despite promises that their menus would be reviewed — although the introduction of all-day breakfast at Dewey's is a commendable change.

Cheema has worked hard this year, but it seems the work associated with the SUB renovation project is taking up the majority of his time, to the detriment of some other aspects of his portfolio. He's managed to fulfill his campaign promises, but some have gone more smoothly than others.

B

Saadiq Sumar
VP (Student Life)

Saadiq Sumar's term as VP (Student Life) has been affected by the ongoing Lister negotiations with the university administration, but he's made progress in fighting for other issues that affect the entire campus community.

One of Sumar's biggest successes has been the U-Pass price increase negotiations in late 2012. In November, Sumar and other student group representatives came to an agreement on a price increase of \$7.50 per year over the next four years instead of the original \$30 immediate increase proposed by Edmonton Transit. Because of its broad implications for U of A students, it's commendable that Sumar stepped up to represent their voices on this issue.

The creation of a campus music festival was promised during Sumar's campaign, but so far nothing has come of it. The singer/songwriter series on SUB stage has been nice musical addition to campus, but it isn't an accomplishment of the same scope as a whole festival. For the moment, it looks like this promise may

have fallen through.

However, the campus musical is now going ahead, a campaign point that originally came from Colten Yamagishi during his run for VP (Student Life). It's good Sumar is finally making the promise a reality, but it seems like it might be too little too late — it remains to be seen whether this will be successful venture or a giant waste of time and money.

Sumar, along with other members of the SU, continue to battle the university administration over the Lister changes that were revealed last July. Sumar is hopeful the root causes of the incidents reported at Lister can be addressed and the SU and university can come to some kind of agreement that represents a broad range of student voices. Since his position mandates involvement in residence issues, it's important that Sumar has had a hand in these negotiations, but his term in office has lacked the balance he would have been able to achieve if not for the Lister fight.

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Brent Kelly
Board of Governors Representative

Brent Kelly had big ideas about how to assert the student voice on the Board of Governors and communicate with students about board decisions. Although he admits many of his initial plans were naïve, he seems to have found his way around the university's highest governing body and adjusted most of his goals accordingly.

Kelly's work as the BoG representative has manifested itself more in behind-the-scenes initiatives than formal motions and actions. He points to his efforts to establish a so-called "coalition" between the student

representatives on the board and a variety of other groups who raise their voices against cuts the administration mandates. It's hard to tell whether there's any evidence of this making any concrete changes, but it fits within the scope of what is realistically feasible for the BoG rep.

After abandoning his initial plans for communicating with students about the board, Kelly now has plans to set up a "meet your representative" table in SUB in hopes of engaging and educating students who aren't already involved in campus politics. This is

encouraging, but it's disappointing more effort hasn't been made to engage the student body earlier in his term — plans to write blog posts about happenings on the Board of Governors also fell through. His emphasis on social justice causes also sometimes distracts him from important debates and issues on a board level.

While tangible evidence of Kelly's contributions is lacking, his level of engagement and dedication to his position is commendable. If he keeps his focus on board issues and his strong philosophy about advocacy, he'll leave his successor in a good position.

