

student affairs annual report 08-09

front cover photo: The living room at the Community Outreach Centre, 11 Aberdeen Street



09-0228 Queen's Marketing and Communications photos: Greg Black – Queen's University, Photographer, Student Affairs, Athletics & Recreation, iStockphoto



with Student Affairs, the only subject is you

*'I took the one less traveled by
And that made all the difference'*

Robert Frost

ONE TARTAN, MANY THREADS: THE FABRIC OF STUDENT LIFE

message from dean

The 2008-2009 academic year was at times a difficult one for Queen's, with significant campus construction, budget tensions, various conflicts played out in the campus media and beyond, and several interim leaders in senior administration. The image depicted on the cover of this report – a warm, safe and inviting couch – is not only a metaphor for the resources offered by Student Affairs, but also represents the quality workplace we co-construct through honest deliberation, imaginative resource stewardship, transparency, and resilience. It is thus particularly heartening for me to report that Queen's Division of Student Affairs enjoyed a year of continued stability, creativity, and accomplishments in service to our students and the community. Our departments and people are united around shared principles and goals, and we have developed strong analytical tools to institutionalize continuous improvement and invention in supporting Queen's and its diverse student body.

This year's annual report is intentionally brief, relying on the richness of several short narratives to demonstrate how seven essential themes or "qualities" underpin our work. Indeed, a key strength of the Student Affairs organization is the ability of our talented and dedicated staff to efficiently combine multiple objectives into collective actions. For instance, commitments to sustainability, health and wellness, and social identities and inclusion led to innovations and new approaches within our campus dining program. Students and other community members have access to more healthy and diverse food choices, with less waste, and enjoy more cultural events and programs in our campus dining rooms and retail outlets. This has also resulted in a 45% increase in optional meal plans over the past few years (thus increasing revenue contributions to support our academic mission), and this year we were elated to receive an international award of excellence from a key professional organization.

During the past year we also transcended departmental boundaries to collaborate on several critical support initiatives for our students. For example, we partnered with the School of Graduate Studies to establish the Graduate Student Life Working Group, resulting in several new programs and services, and a website tailored to the needs of graduate and professional students (see <http://gradlife.queensu.ca/>). A working group was struck to inventory support resources available to those struggling with gender-based harassment and abuse, and to recommend new approaches for ending it. A website is now in place (see www.queensu.ca/studentaffairs/safety/personal/abuse.html) and more work is being planned or pursued, some of which is described further in this report. As well, our commitments to accessibility were advanced significantly this year, with over 150 staff receiving training in areas of mental health support, and issues relating to the diversity of mobility and other abilities becoming further standardized in planning and policy work.

I invite you to review the stories in this report, and to join me in celebrating the excellent work and achievements of our staff. If you are inclined to learn even more about Student Affairs, its departments and people, please browse through our website: www.queensu.ca/studentaffairs. As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Jason A. Laker, Ph.D.

Associate Vice-Principal & Dean of Student Affairs

Learning takes place in all aspects of campus life – it doesn't end outside the classroom door.

That's why at Student Affairs, 17 dedicated units work together, weaving an all-embracing web that makes each student's university experience richer and more rewarding.

Programs and services, though all distinct, share the same goal: to foster seven qualities of life that truly make a Queen's education complete.

These essential qualities are:

Student Life and Independence

Health and Wellness

Living and Accommodation

Diversity and Culture

Faith and Spirituality

Leadership and Service

Student-Community Relations

This year's 2008-2009 Student Affairs Annual Report provides an update on our activities and accomplishments within the context of these seven qualities. The following anecdotes, stories and photos provide a sampling that reflects the diverse nature of Student Affairs' contributions – and the department's dynamic, eclectic nature.



Please visit the Student Affairs and unit websites for further details at:
www.queensu.ca/studentaffairs

WE ARE QUEEN'S STUDENT AFFAIRS

Athletics and Recreation ensures that fitness, wellness and the development of leadership skills are emphasized through a variety of program options for all levels of physical fitness. Activities range from fitness classes and instructional programs, to a wide assortment of recreational and competitive clubs to inter-university sport.

The **Ban Righ Centre** serves to support both the challenges and achievements of mature female students. The Centre offers assistance in finding the resources, services and opportunities on and off campus to aid women of all ages in pursuing formal or informal education.

Career Services offers support, assistance and programs to all students in their planning for current and future employment, or advanced studies. It is never too early for students to visit Career Services and it is never too late.

The **University Chaplain** is ordained through the United Church of Canada but serves and supports religious diversity and spiritual development for the entire university community. The Chaplain serves as a confidante and an advisor who encourages students, staff and faculty.

The **Office of Community Housing**, provides information to students about housing and manages the University owned student rental properties. They ensure that University tenants have well-maintained, safe and affordable homes and provide education regarding leases, utilities, maintenance and bill payments.

The **Queen's Community Outreach Centre** supports and involves students who live off-campus. The Centre is a unique space with programming and resources that offer increased opportunities for engagement, broader awareness of Queen's services and greater connections between the Queen's community and the local Kingston communities.



The **Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre** welcomes Aboriginal students and greets them as community members of Four Directions. The centre encourages not only Aboriginal students, but all Queen's students, to develop knowledge and appreciation of the numerous contributions, cultures, customs and practices among the Aboriginal people in Canada.

The **Health Service** promotes wellness, prevents illness, and provides treatment that is sensitive to student needs. They can accommodate both routine and urgent care.

The **Counselling Service** has several professional counsellors who can address a wide variety of personal issues and offers other programs that serve to support students in developing their academic and learning skills.

The **Disability Services** office develops recommendations for accommodations for students with physical, medical, psychiatric and learning disabilities, deafness or hearing impairment, blindness or visual impairment and chronic medical conditions. Services include recommendations for exam accommodations, access to material in alternate format, assistive technologies, learning strategies and library research workshops, volunteer note taking and peer mentor programs.

The **John Deutsch University Centre** is home to student governments, faculty societies, student clubs and organizations; as well as various campus offices and services. Its governance is shared between the AMS, SGPS, Student Affairs and the John Deutsch University Centre Council. It serves as a formal and informal, student-centered meeting place to foster communication among and between students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The **Queen's Day Care Centre** provides full and part-time care to infants, toddlers, preschoolers and part-time kindergarten students. The Centre is a non-profit organization in partnership with Queen's and supported through the Office of the Associate Vice-Principal and Dean of Student Affairs.



Queen's Event Services offers venue bookings, accommodation, meeting, event and hospitality services on Queen's campus. They also offer catering and event service to local, national and international events – from global conferences to local receptions and weddings. Revenue from Queen's Event Services is used to support student life on campus including Residence and Student Affairs initiatives.

The **Queen's University International Centre** (QUIC) is a support service for all members of the Queen's community. Their mission is to promote “an internationally informed and cross-culturally sensitive university community” while providing extended services for international students, staff and their families to aid their cultural and social transitions to Queen's and the Kingston Community.

Residences house about 95 percent of first-year students and a number of upper-year, graduate and professional, exchange and transfer students. A strong sense of community and a number of student-led initiatives come together in residence, all facilitated by strong student leadership. Residences support personal growth and learning outside the classroom.

Town-Gown Relations acts as a liaison between the City of Kingston and the University. The office offers a wide range of advice, including information about finding upper-year housing, choosing housemates wisely and communicating with landlords. It explains important information about leases, insurance, moving in, moving out and neighbour issues.

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the community mural project

In fall of 2008, the pioneering Community Service Learning Engagement Grant Program was launched and the first funds provided to Queen’s educators who wanted to take their students out of the classroom and into the community to learn.

The community outreach mural project is just one example of how the CSL program is bearing fruit. “The idea was to create a visual pictorial of ‘community’ – of what community means to individual people who attended,” explains Matthew Ascah, Coordinator, Community Service Learning. “It was great to see different forms of collaboration and engagement among people who otherwise might not have interacted, let alone created an incredible piece of art.”



Participants, who painted murals on the walls inside the Queen’s Community Outreach Centre on Aberdeen St., ranged from first-year students and their dons, to local Kingston artists, to Queen’s staff and local residents and their children.



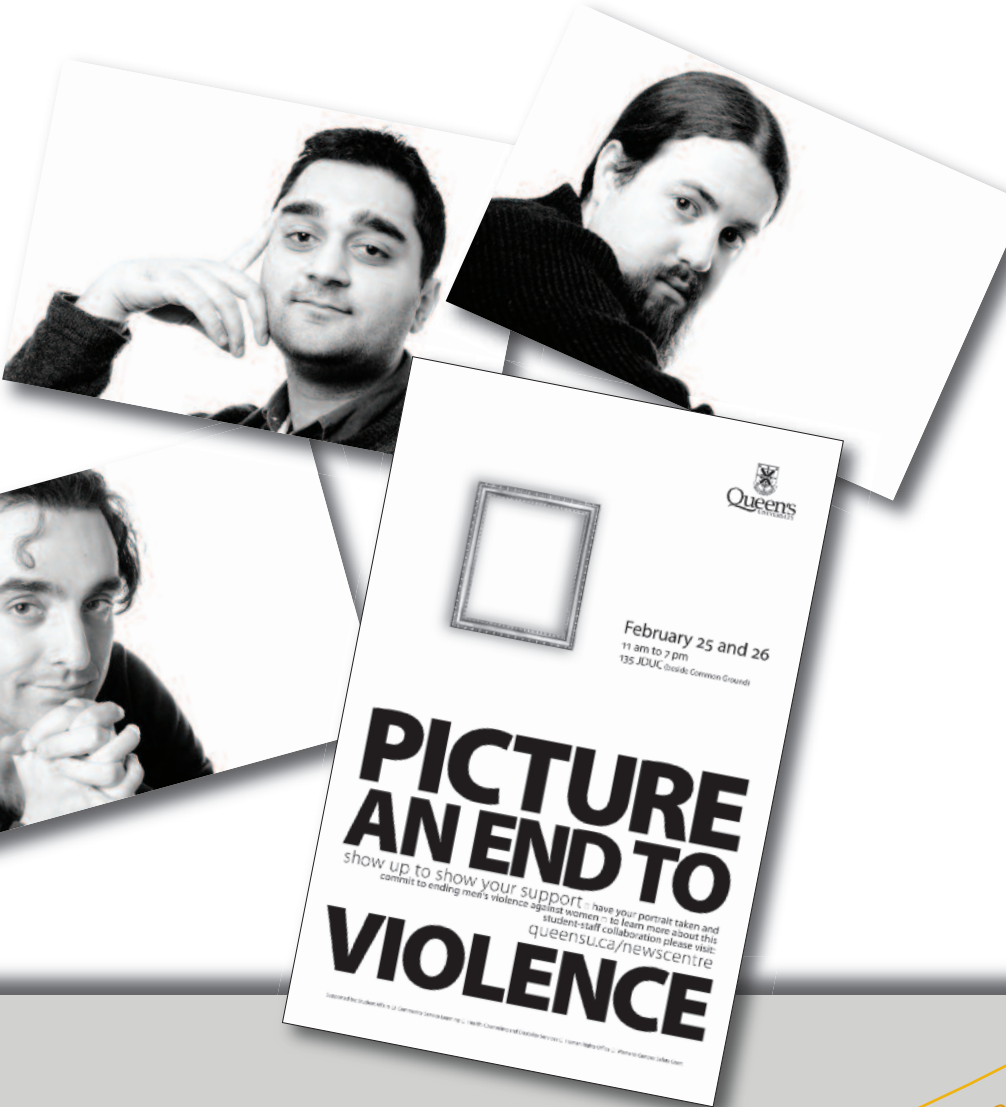
picture an end to violence

The Picture and End to Violence project is a model for how students, staff, faculty and the community can work collectively to address the issue of men’s violence against women.

The PAETV project was held in winter 2009, and will repeat in winter 2010. Students, faculty, staff, alumni and their families came to the John Deutsch University Centre to have their portraits taken by University Photographer Greg Black. Participants were given an opportunity to articulate their support for the project and their feelings about violence in a brief questionnaire.

This resulted in a gallery event in March, where prints of selected portraits were displayed along with a digital projected slideshow of all portraits from the sessions, interspersed with moving quotes from participants about men’s violence against women.

“It was a group of people saying, ‘No, this is not right, and we’re actively doing something about it,” says Matthew Ascah, Coordinator, Community Service Learning.



student safety and community living info online

Resources to help keep students safe on campus, at home and online have been placed prominently on the Student Affairs website for easy reference.

An A-Z resource list helps with information on everything from abuse through yard care. Students will find a comprehensive directory with contact info for Queen's and other organizations that deal with everything from emergencies to Campus Security, Holiday Housecheck services, and health and wellness. Also featured are safety tips on sexual assault prevention, bike theft, storms and blackouts, living in residence, and much more.

mental health first aid training

Queen's Student Affairs seeks to improve mental health literacy in all its units. More than 150 Student Affairs staff took Mental Health First Aid training in 2008-2009. All staff are being asked to participate in the training course, which teaches how to best assist someone showing signs of a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The goal is ultimately to train all 300 staff, including student employees, within Student Affairs.

For details please see:
www.queensu.ca/studentaffairs/events/mentalhealthfirstaid.html



queen's day care

Celebrating its 40th year of operation this year, Queen's Day Care continued in 2008-2009 to support student parents with high-quality, affordable child care.

when life's big questions move our students

Student Affairs provides various opportunities for learners to explore issues of human connection, meaning, purpose, faith and spirituality: through the Chaplain's Office, programs at the Ban Righ Centre, and at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre, among others.

In fall 2008, Four Directions held its second annual educational Powwow. This popular event, which celebrates the richness of Aboriginal culture and traditions, was repeated in fall 2009. Also, for the second year, the Chaplain's Office has welcomed a Muslim Imam to work with Queen's students.



the supported learning groups project

The Supported Learning Groups project—a collaboration between Student Affairs and the Faculty of Arts & Sciences – was launched in fall 2008 to provide support to students enrolled in historically challenging first-year courses at Queen's.

Studies from various Canadian universities have shown that students who attend SLGs achieve higher overall mean grades and feel more confident in their academic abilities than their peers who study alone.

Last year, students from two biology classes benefitted from this learner-centered education. They attended SLG study and review sessions that were voluntary, anonymous, and held weekly in campus residences.

Students engaged with each other and with course material in a collaborative and welcoming environment. Upper-year peers, who had successfully completed the course and received training, modeled personal learning strategies and activities to help students understand course material – and also to develop their own learning strategies.

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario awarded Student Affairs a sizeable grant to run this pioneering project, which continues in 2009-2010.

For details please see:
www.queensu.ca/studentaffairs/assessment/current/slg.html

the kingston creative economy project

Student Affairs continued to build bridges between Queen's students and the Kingston community through this innovative joint-research project.

First, a study on how to recruit and retain Queen's graduates in Kingston was released in 2008. About 3,000 alumni and 900 students were surveyed, and the study was completed in partnership with the Monieson Centre (Queen's School of Business) and the Kingston Economic Development Corporation.

Findings on how Queen's students view Kingston as a place to live and work post-graduation then helped the City to identify challenges, and employers to begin to close skill gaps.

Activities sparked by the study relate to its two key conclusions: that employment prospects are critical to retaining students locally; and that students are more likely to stay in Kingston if they feel they are part of the community.

New initiatives include Career Services partnerships with the community, such as information sessions for employers, Careers in Kingston Day, and an employer symposium. Other results include new efforts to improve housing standards, to strengthen Queen's-City relations, and to adopt an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan.

The study has also generated two forthcoming Student Affairs publications: "The role of Career Services in facilitating local economic growth: opening doors to students' understanding of local opportunities"; and in collaboration with the Queen's School of Business, "Factors that might help to attract and retain the creative class to mid-size regional cities."

For details please see:
www.queensu.ca/studentaffairs/assessment/current/creativeeconomy.html

career services: making connections



Career Services, supported by significant research grants, increased its ability to serve students and alumni substantially in 2008-2009.

A new Careers website launched in January 2009 reinforces efforts to help students make the transition away from university and into the wider community. It offers comprehensive career tools, and provides better access to job postings, appointment scheduling, and event management.

The website is a central part of a wider, integrated online and in-person career counselling system for students. Career Services was awarded a \$200,000 grant over three years by the Counselling Foundation of Canada for this state-of-the-art initiative.

As well, in a new approach to recruitment, Career Services held smaller boutique events on campus over the year to link students in particular disciplines with the organizations most in need of their talent and knowledge.

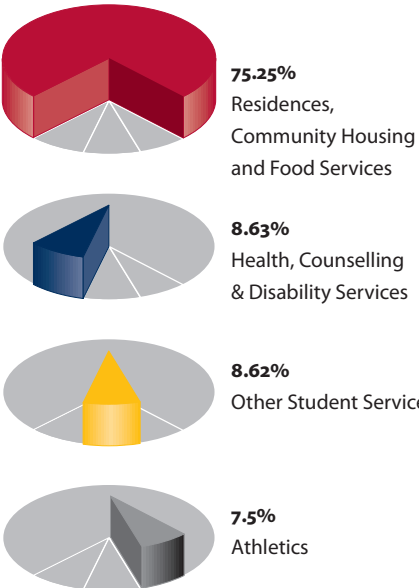
Between September 2008 and April 2009, 789 students attended 69 in-house career education workshops; 6,958 students participated in 42 career information sessions and fairs; 2,642 students from 84 target groups took part in outreach workshops; and 2,158 counselling and resume review appointments were completed. As well, 2,444 jobs were posted for Queen's students, and 1,171 for Queen's alumni.

Further, two research grants from the Higher Education Council of Ontario enabled Career Services to adapt its curriculum and launch workshops for Aboriginal students and students with disabilities in fall 2008, as well as to conduct studies to assess the impact of the workshops. Findings, which will inform best practices for promoting access and success in university and in students' later careers, will be released in 2009.

For details please see:
careers.queensu.ca

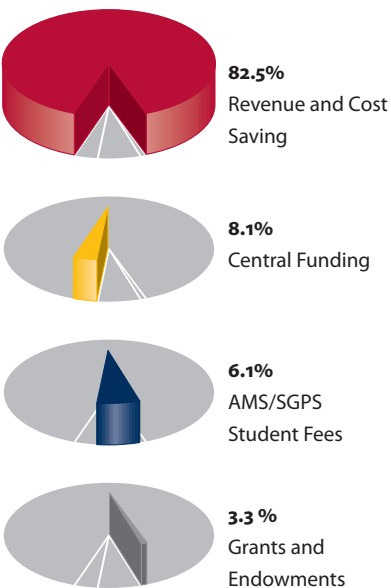
how funding is used in student affairs

Total \$58,484,000



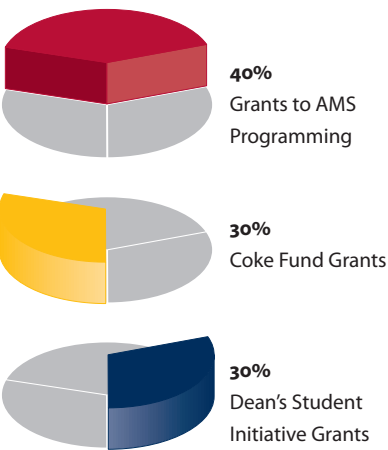
sources of funding in student affairs

Total \$58,484,000



direct funding for student leadership

Total Funding \$336,884



'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

Maya Angelou