

WATERLOO UNDERGRADUATE

WUZA
STUDENT ASSOCIATION

IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025



Table of Contents

Message to Members	3
Who We Are	4
Board of Directors	5
What We Accomplished	6
Year at a Glance	17
Challenges and Looking Ahead	26



Dillon Francis Concert

Message to Members

As we reflect on the 2024-25 governance year, we are proud to share this Impact Report that highlights the achievements, growth, and lasting contributions of our student association. This report offers a window into the many facets of WUSA's work, from advocacy and events to commercial operations and behind-the-scenes process improvements. This year has truly demonstrated the strength of student leadership, collaboration, and resilience in building a better campus experience for all undergraduates.

Over the past year, we introduced two new commercial operations, **Chaska**, our Indian street food outlet, and **Smarty Pants**, our student-run ice cream store, adding to the vibrancy of student life on campus. We brought **Dillon Francis** to headline Orientation, marking the first large-scale concert at Waterloo since 2006. On the advocacy front, we strengthened our national presence by joining the **Canadian Alliance of Student Associations** (CASA), a move that expands our influence in federal decision-making spaces.

One of the highlights of the year was the launch of the **Change Engine pitch competition**, a new initiative that supports student-led advocacy projects with funding and mentorship. This innovative program empowers students with bold ideas to act and make meaningful change at Waterloo.

None of this would have been possible without the contributions of our student members, staff, volunteers, and community partners. Thank you for your time, support, and commitment to building a better student experience. I am especially grateful to the 2024-25 Board of Directors for their dedication and service throughout the year.

As we pass the torch to the incoming 2025-26 Board, I'm filled with gratitude for all that we've accomplished and optimism for what lies ahead. I look forward to seeing how the next group of student leaders will continue to grow and shape WUSA in the years to come.

Written by Arya Razmjoo, Vice-President 2024-25, WUSA on behalf of himself and Nicholas Pfeifle, President 2024-25.



Who We Are

The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) is a student-led, not-for-profit organization that serves as the official collective voice and legal representative of undergraduate students at the University of Waterloo.

Since 1967, our student-led organization has worked to ensure that students have the services, resources, and representation they need to make the most of their university experience and to succeed academically and personally. We advocate for our members to ensure that they receive an accessible, affordable, accountable, and high-quality post-secondary experience. By bringing recommendations to the University and all levels of government, we ensure students' voices are prioritized among decision-makers.

WUSA's biggest strength is its ability to represent and amplify the diverse voices of undergraduate students. Through consistent advocacy, inclusive programming, and collaborative efforts, WUSA ensures that student concerns are heard and addressed at institutional and community levels.

- WUSA Student Staff Survey, Fall 2024

Our Mission

We serve, empower, and represent the undergraduate students of the University of Waterloo.

Our Vision

A university experience where every member has the opportunity to thrive.

About the Report

This report provides a glimpse into the work undertaken by WUSA on behalf of its membership from May 2024 to April 2025. WUSA is a large organization with many facets to its operation, including advocacy, commercial operations, governance, events, clubs, faculty societies, and many more – all of which will be highlighted in this report.



Warriors on Ice

Our 2024-25 Board of Directors

This group of elected student leaders represented undergraduates at all levels of government, committees, and advocacy alliances. They guided WUSA's policy direction, strategic planning, and oversight of financial, legal, and organizational matters.



Nicholas Pfeifle
Environment



Arya Razmjoo
Arts



Sarah Ahmed
Arts



Matthew
Athanasopoulos
Engineering



Fatima Awan
Arts



Alex Chaban
Environment



Chevin Jeon
Math



Jay Lan
Math



Emma Lee
Science



Merochini Manohar
Health



Theresa Nguyen
Engineering



Jeff Zhu
Engineering

What We Accomplished

Our accomplishments this year can be organized into five major themes: **1) wellness and safety; 2) equity and accessibility; 3) campus engagement and student spaces; 4) governance and leadership; and 5) student voices and advocacy.**



Wellness & Safety

We made student wellness and safety a priority this year by expanding our supports, improving navigation and awareness of those supports, and introducing new initiatives.

Mental Health Supports

Creating a caring, inclusive, and welcoming campus community remains at the heart of everything we do. Our new Community Care page helps students find immediate support through easy-to-navigate hotlines and warmlines.

Peer Support

Our student-run services hosted nearly **200 peer support sessions**, providing students with support from those who best understand what they're going through.



Mates at the Campus Life Fair

WUSA puts students first and ensures that all students are able to have a meaningful and fulfilling undergrad experience.

- WUSA Student Staff Survey, Fall 2024

Global Kitchens Cookbook

In 2024, we compiled student-submitted recipes for our Global Kitchen cookbook. During the 2024-25 year, we updated the cookbook with more easy recipes and affordable ingredients to help students cook on a budget while staying connected to the tastes of home.

Free Legal Advice

We partnered with the Waterloo Region Community Legal Services (WRCLS) to continue our series of educational sessions that inform students about their rights as tenants and to offer one-on-one free legal consultations. We also continued to promote WRCLS' Housing Drop-In Sessions, which are available free of charge to all University of Waterloo students.



Equity & Accessibility

Indigenization Action Plan

This year, we continued to challenge systems and build frameworks to create a more inclusive and responsive campus community. We made noteworthy progress on our [Indigenization Action Plan](#), which is now live on our site.

The plan reflects our dedication to honouring Indigenous knowledge and perspectives, outlines how we plan to embed them into our operations, enhance representation, and build partnerships to foster reconciliation, equity, and inclusion within WUSA and the University community.

Cross-Cultural and Inclusive Events

WUSA's Events team piloted community-building events to foster cross-cultural connections, like a December holiday dinner and a Ramadan dinner, with 2000+ members attending across both events. This year, our annual Cultural Caravan event, a showcase of diverse talents and cultures from students, moved to the Humanities Theatre where we look forward to growing and elevating the experience in its new location.

We also launched our [Inclusive Events Guide for Student Leaders](#), providing practical tools and checklists to ensure that campus events, whether they're run by WUSA, a society, or club, have accessibility embedded into the planning process. This ensures our events are welcoming and meaningful for all our members.

Gender-Affirming Care

As part of a motion from our 2023 Annual Members' Meeting, we continued work on rolling out **gender-affirming health care coverage** with Alumo (formerly known as Studentcare). This coverage is in place starting in September 2025, ensuring all students have access to the services they need.

Red Zone and Consent Programming

We continued to work closely with the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO) to better inform students about the Red Zone, which refers to the first 6-8 weeks of the academic year where students are at a heightened risk of experiencing sexual assault or other forms of gender-based violence. Our pledge wall and boothing gave students an opportunity to reflect on their role in fostering a culture of consent and accountability on campus.



Holiday Dinner Event

Campus Engagement and Student Spaces

Events

WUSA's events strengthen community on campus by giving students opportunities to spend time with their friends or make new connections. This year, we saw a **15% increase** in the number of unique students who attended our events and a **40% increase in overall event participation**.

Some of our event highlights were the Dillon Francis concert as part of Orientation, which was the first concert at Waterloo since 2006; the bus trip to Halloween Haunt at Canada's Wonderland which sold out seven busses, and our new Fall BBQ Smash where we served 1300+ students. Over the year, we had **13,000+ students attend at least one WUSA-run event**.

We strengthened our collaboration with internal groups, like our student-run services and advocacy team, and with on-campus partners like Athletics and the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO). These partnerships resulted in better event planning, resource sharing, and broader student engagement. We also travelled to the satellite campuses to better connect and share advocacy resources with our members in Kitchener, Cambridge, and Stratford.

New Student Transition

This year we hosted our first Orientation concert since 2006 with artists Dillon Francis, TwentyFiveRoses, and Tys Loyens. We also collaborated with the University on a survey to assess New Student Transition activities. With over 4000 responses, we are currently reviewing the findings and recommendations from students to make improvements for future Orientation programming.

I enjoy that I can take time and to destress and appreciate that my fees go towards [events]! I also like trying new things through these events!

- WUSA RSP on Athletics and Events, Fall 2024



Dillon Francis Concert

Clubs

Our new cheque request system, launched in 2024, allows students to file their requests for reimbursements online and track the status of their cheque request in real-time. We also added a live chat feature to give students another avenue to connect with our Clubs team.

Recognizing that our clubs are expanding their event offerings, we added more payment terminals for clubs to facilitate transactions more easily at their events. These newly expanded supports create a more streamlined and efficient experience for our clubs, allowing them to do more for students.

Societies

We continued to strengthen our relationship with faculty societies, building on the progress we made last year with the introduction of the Societies Relations Coordinator role. This year, we supported **48 society elections**, approved **1200+ society events**, and assisted with various tuck shop and coffee and donut shop operations.

I think WUSA's one biggest strength is ... the positive change they are able to create for students on campus

- WUSA Student Staff Survey, Spring 2025



Fashion for Change Showcase

Commercial Operations

We launched our Indian quick-service restaurant, Chaska, which offers authentic and unique dishes at budget-friendly prices. Found in the SLC, Chaska is one of the ways we ensure our members have a variety of food options to choose from, all at an affordable price. We also launched SmashBites, found in what is now The Bomber. SmashBites provides students with a quick, delicious burger at an affordable price, and caters to various dietary restrictions.

Our not-for-profit model allows us to keep prices 10-15% lower on average than market rates and other on-campus options, while still providing high-quality food. Any profit that is made goes directly back into student services, infrastructure, events, advocacy, and more.

We continued to offer exclusive discounts to our members through partnerships with SPC, the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), Princess Cinemas, and more.



SmashBites (The Bomber)



Chaska Grand Opening

Governance and Leadership

Student Leadership

We continued strengthening student governance by finalizing our Long-Range Plan which will guide WUSA through 2025-30. The Plan sets out priorities for the organization around advocacy, student life, and more. It is the result of extensive consultation with students and reflects the voices and needs of our diverse community.

We continued our voter turnout momentum from last year, with over **20% of students voting** in the 2025-26 Board of Directors. We had an increased interest compared to 2023-

24, from students in running for WUSA's President and Vice President positions this year, with three students running for President, and two running for Vice President. There were 19 Director candidates on the ballot this year, compared to 23 in the 2023-24 election.

Our Student Leadership email and LinkedIn Governance page continued to be a source of information for students interested in learning more about governance, student leadership, and WUSA's Board of Directors.



Delegates at the OUSA Conference

Responsible Partnerships and Investments Referendum

In May 2024, WUSA's Board of Directors received a member-submitted petition requesting a referendum. The approved referendum questions asked students:

1. Should the University of Waterloo sever its partnership with Technion-Israel Institute of Technology due to its role in the research and development of technology used by the Israel Defense Forces?
2. Should the University of Waterloo review its partnerships and investment portfolios to ensure alignment with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles and Amnesty International, to prioritize institutions that demonstrate a commitment to human rights, peace, and international law in a manner that is timely and transparent to the undergraduate students?

The referendum was held in October 2024, and each question had approximately **19% of eligible voters cast a vote for each question. 83.9% of students voted "Yes" to question 1 and 88.6% of students voted "Yes" to question 2.** WUSA's Advocacy team and Board of Directors have been working with the University to communicate the referendum results and share student expectations about next steps. We are continuing to follow up with the University to ensure action is taken now that they have heard clearly what undergraduate students want them to do. Internally, we have reviewed our investment portfolios and practices and have implemented ESG guidelines for our future investments.



Annual Members Meeting

Our 2025 Annual Members Meeting in March saw several member-submitted motions pass, allowing us to deliver on what our members want to see most. This included a proposal for WUSA to advocate to the University for a Queer Living Learning Community, the implementation of a \$1 fee allowing us to join CASA, alignment of WUSA's investments with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) values, and the establishment of an accessibility fund for WUSA elections to better support students with accessibility needs as they run in elections.

Student Voices and Advocacy

Advocacy takes many forms; while we lead awareness campaigns and develop resources, quiet advocacy continues behind the scenes on prominent issues like counselling hours, co-op fees, housing, and transit. This year, we shared information through workshops, presentations, and booths on a wide range of topics including financial literacy, mental health, University policies, gender-based and sexual violence, tenants' rights, and more.

Self-Advocacy and The Change Engine

WUSA's inaugural [Change Engine](#) event, designed to help students turn their advocacy ideas into real impact on campus through funding and mentorship opportunities, saw 3 winners receive \$9000 collectively to support their advocacy ideas. The winning submissions addressed student loneliness and lack of campus connection, sustainability, and on-campus safety.

We launched our [Advocate's Toolkit](#) this year, which provides students with practical strategies to speak up for themselves in everyday situations and take the first steps in grassroots advocacy on issues that matter most to them.



Competitors at Change Engine

Government Partnerships

Our partnership with the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) continued this year and we were able to host OUSA's General Assembly. 65 student leaders from across Ontario attended and collaborated on advancing two key policy papers on Comprehensive Access and on Tech-Enabled Learning.

Our participation in Waterloo's Town and Gown committee continued, allowing us to build stronger connections with the Region. Our ongoing partnership with Grand River Transit (GRT) ensured that the UPass transit pass remained a cost-effective, sustainable option for our students.



Competitors at Change Engine

Research and Consultation

Our Representative Survey Platform (RSP) continues to be our go-to for student opinions and feedback. We had 1500+ students sign up to the platform in fall 2024 and 1600+ in winter 2025. The platform allows us to efficiently obtain timely representative data and have data ready to make evidence-informed decisions. We ran four RSP surveys this year on environmental sustainability (900+ responses), athletics and events (900+ responses), WUSA's yearly planning (1100+ responses), and on the co-op experience (1600+).

While we collect information through our RSP program, we also conduct other surveys; this year, we did intercepts on campus wellness and housing and transit, a survey of student groups on student space in the SLC, and two at-large student surveys on the New Student Transition program and our Health and Dental Plan through Studentcare/Alumo.

I think one of WUSA's biggest strengths is how much input and feedback from students is analyzed and used for future campaigns, events and other priorities.

- WUSA Student Staff Survey, Fall 2024

While surveys are one way we collect student feedback, we also collect feedback through focus groups and roundtables, giving us the opportunity to hear from students face-to-face. This year, our focus groups were on environmental sustainability and student financial aid. Our roundtables were run through the Ownership Consultation Committee and gathered student perspectives on their experiences with the co-op program and safety on campus.



Filming a documentary following the Women's Hockey Team.

Student Publications

Imprint, Waterloo's on-campus newspaper, placed second in the Ontario Community Newspaper Association's Award for General Excellence in the College and University category and Student News Writing. Imprint also began work on two documentary-style videos which are expected to launch in 2025, one highlights the Waterloo women's hockey team, and the other explores accessibility on campus. Overall, Imprint's pick-up rate improved slightly in the 2024-25 year, from 81% to 84%.

Imprint also soft-launched their Ring Road Round Up newsletter where subscribers receive a recap of the week in campus news and upcoming events.

Behind the Scenes

So much of the work we do for students is made possible by a dedicated team of support staff who work in the background to improve our processes.

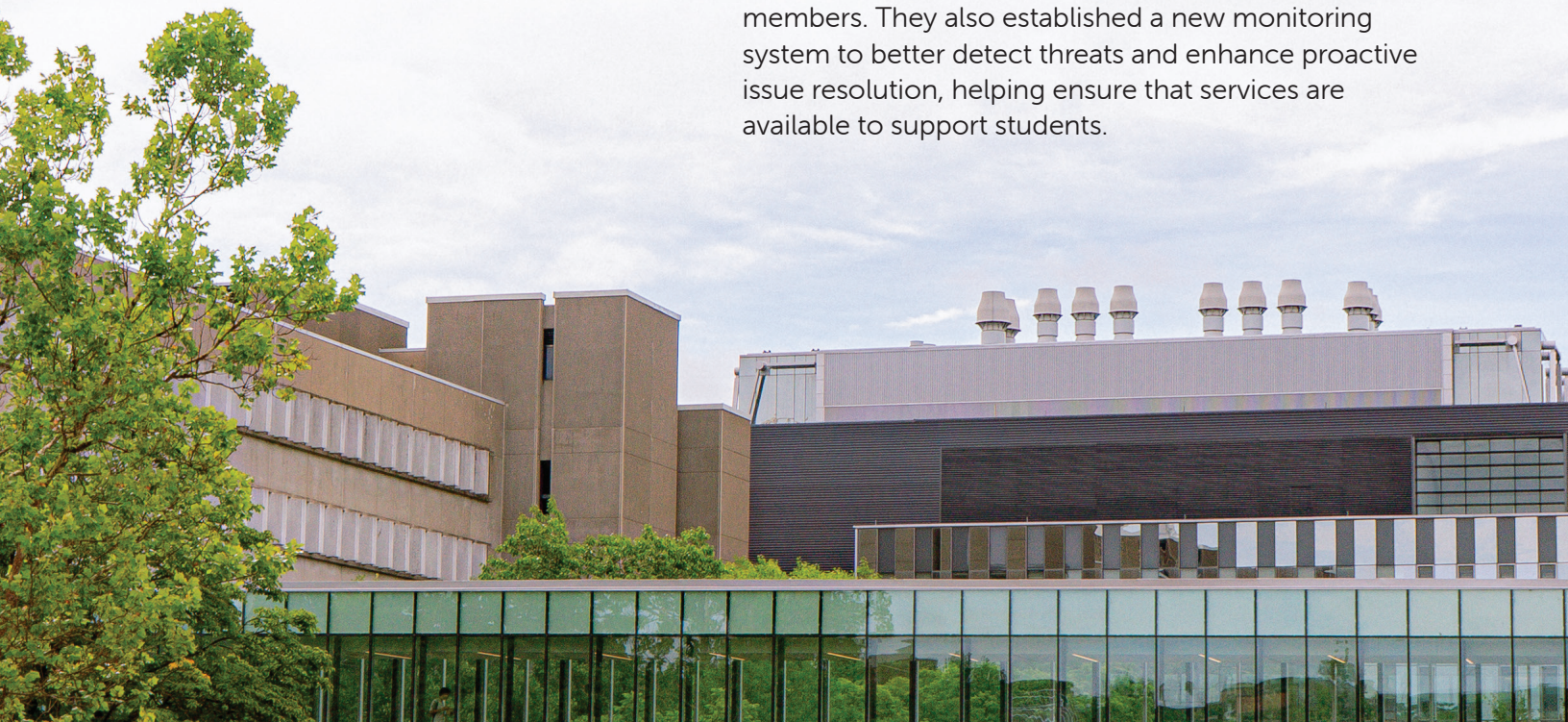
WUSA's strength is their workforce. Everyone is very open minded, collaborative, and interested in doing their job well, and going above and beyond the call of duty.

- WUSA Student Staff Survey, Winter 2025

WUSA's Accounting team supports our student-focused mission by ensuring financial accountability and transparency. While often unseen, their work enables the delivery of all the work WUSA does, including the events, services, and advocacy that students rely on. This year, our Accounting team finished their 2024 fiscal year audit earlier than in any of the last five years. They also onboarded three new team members to increase the team's capacity and better process requests from staff and students

We expanded our support for WUSA's Vice President by introducing a Co-op Stakeholder Relations Assistant to allow the Vice President to focus more time on strategic priorities and stakeholder engagement.

Our IT team has been hard at work redesigning and rebuilding the clubs system with a focus on improved user experience and streamlined processes, so clubs can spend less time on administrative tasks and more time focused on offering social opportunities to club members. They also established a new monitoring system to better detect threats and enhance proactive issue resolution, helping ensure that services are available to support students.



Year at a Glance



Student Involvement

59 student elections throughout the year

Working with WUSA enhanced my professional and personal growth towards my lifelong career goals and felt thoroughly supported by the welcoming team environment around me to continue to prosper.

- WUSA Student Staff Survey, Spring 2024



5000+

students casting their vote

1 in 5

students voted in WUSA's General Election

7500+

students casted their ballot

30+ co-ops

90+ part-time staff

1,400+ volunteers



Building Community

Orientation

800+

volunteers involved in 2024
Orientation programming

5,600+

students attended 150
Orientation events

Societies

1,200+

society events
supported
(+ 20% from 2023-24)

Clubs

Active clubs per term:

174

Spring 2024
(+19% from 2023)

210

Fall 2024
(+8% from 2023)

208

Winter 2025
(+12% from 2023)

4,200+

club events
approved
(+5% from 2023-24)

3,000+

on-campus
bookings facilitated

Events

52

events hosted this year

13,000+

students attending at least one WUSA event

25,000+

interactions with students through WUSA events

Introduced new events and brought back old favourites like Blue Jays games, trips to Canada’s Wonderland, Sex Toy Bingo, and more to continue to adapt our programming to fit what students are interested in.

170
events hosted this year

8,000+
visits to student-run service centers

Student Services

190+
peer-support sessions

720+
peer support hours offered



40

OCC Dons

170

Orientation
Week events

170

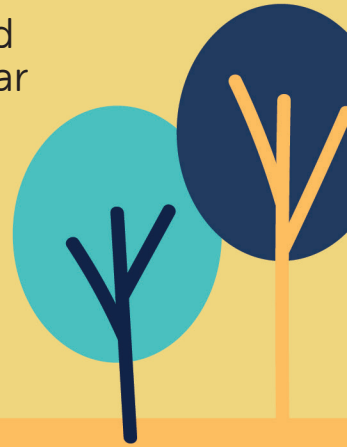
students supported
throughout the year

1,100+

students attended off-
campus orientation

900+

students on the
OCC mailing list



9,000+ lbs.

of donations
collected from Stock
the Bank, plus

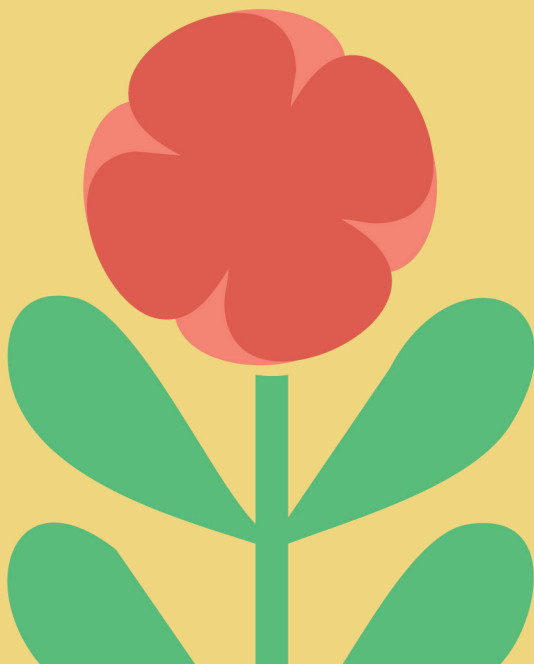
2,500 lbs.

of food from Campus
Ministries

500+

visitors in the winter
2025 term alone

Hosted a new Cereal Bar pop-
up which brought students out
and raised awareness around
food insecurity on campus.



Overall increase in students accessing the centre
compared to previous years.

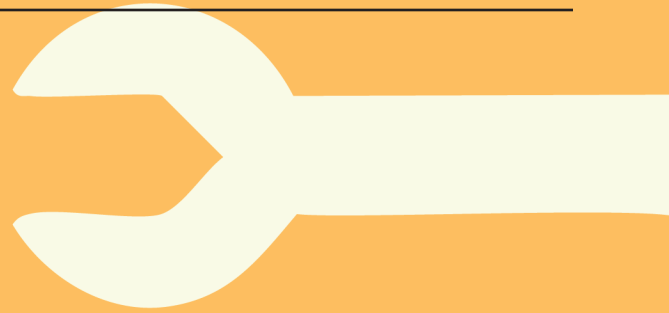
Launched their Word of the Week campaign on
social media where they aimed to increase the
understanding and awareness of various race-
related concepts.

Hosted their annual XChanges conference in
October 2024, with this year's theme being
Dissecting Barriers: Mental Wellness from a
Racialized Lens.



Created a new inventory management system.

Open during the winter term for the first time and adapted services to meet winter-specific bike needs .



70+

attendees at their International Women's Day event

400+

students per month accessing the centre



\$1,300

in sales at the fall 2024 Campus Life Fair



3

sold out Mental Health First Aid trainings

9

safeTalk sessions hosted

Cleared out most of inventory to store and prepare for next term.

Student Spaces



3.5 million+

visits to the Student Life Centre (SLC)

36,000+

SLC study room bookings

Commercial

Operations

Opening of Chaska, Smarty Pants, and SmashBites to continue to bring affordable food options to our members.

430,000+ transactions at Flock Stop- that's

700,000+ items sold

19,000+

transactions at the Dispensary on Waterloo's Kitchener campus

5,500+

transactions at Chaska and Smarty Pants

18,000+

transactions at SmashBites

250,000+

meals prepared in WUSA's Hospitality Kitchen for our commercial operations

\$300k+

of total savings for students across WUSA's food and beverage operations

120,000

FedBus tickets sold (equivalent to 271 buses!)

6,000+

GO Transit tickets sold



Student Publication

100,000+

page views on
uwimprint.ca

84%

magazine pick
up rate

Communication

Instagram @yourwusa

675,000+

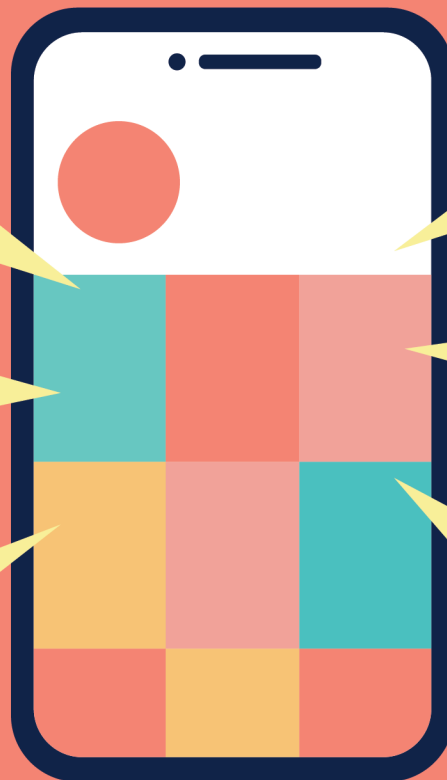
accounts reached

180,000+

content interactions

19,000

total followers



2,000+

new followers

33,000+

link clicks

Launched Events broadcast channel so students can get notifications about WUSA events directly in their Instagram DMs

wusa.ca

985,000+

visits to wusa.ca

Top Pages:

Events
Jobs & Opportunities
Health & Dental Plan

\$500,000+

in sales on wusa.ca -
event tickets, charitable
donations through clubs, swag,
and more

LinkedIn

Launched in September 2024 as a way for WUSA to share job opportunities, engage with students on a more professional platform, and share our major advocacy and governance updates.

29,000+

post impressions

2,000+

page views

2,800+

new followers

Follow

Email Newsletter

Our monthly email to all students provides updates and key information on events, advocacy, governance, deals, and more.

10,000+

students opening our email newsletter on average each month

which stayed consistent with our email analytics for 2023-24.

Challenges and Looking Ahead



As we look towards 2025-26 with our next Annual Plan and beyond with our Long-Range Plan, WUSA continues to navigate the shifting post-secondary sector while focusing on our mandate of supporting and representing students. The challenges facing students – affordability, wellness, academics, an uncertain post-secondary funding landscape are complex, but we remain committed to adapting to the evolving needs of our members and championing student voices.

Campus Life

Building on the successes we've seen in the past few years, we're continuing to bring back well-received and popular events while still incorporating new elements to keep our event offerings fresh and engaging.

With our New Student Transition review being complete, we are working towards implementing the findings of the survey to improve the Orientation experience for incoming students, volunteers, and staff.

We're also continuing to expand the support we offer to our student groups. For clubs, this includes updates to the clubs site, a new process to improve the experience for students looking to start a new club, and more clubs lockers. For our student-run services, we're continuing to look at ways we can improve how our services connect with students at our satellite campuses.



Boat Cruise

Advocacy and Governance

The introduction of legislation like Bill 33 highlights the potential challenges ahead for student advocacy and student-led services. We will continue working with OUSA and CASA to ensure students' voices are strongly represented at both the provincial and federal levels.

On campus, we're looking forward to hosting our second Change Engine pitch competition to continue to support students who have their own ideas on how to address challenges facing Waterloo students.

WUSA's past two general elections have seen a marked improvement in voter turnout and we're excited to build on that momentum for the year to come. Our focus is on deepening student engagement, strengthening our organizational transparency, and supporting good governance practices across the organization. With a continued commitment to empowering student leaders, we are working to refine training and onboarding for incoming Board members and other student leaders. This will better equip them to make informed decisions and contribute meaningfully to the organization's strategic direction.



Campus Leader Forum



Staff preparing orders at Chaska

Commercial Operations

The 2024-25 year was big for WUSA's commercial operations, with the opening of Chaska, Smarty Pants, and SmashBites. Looking ahead, we're exploring ways we can bring deals and affordable food options to students, including the opening of another food outlet, Wok Stop, and partnerships with CIBC and FlightHub. A major project we're looking forward to is the interim reopening of The Bomber as we work towards our Student Lounge Plan. The Bomber will be a place for students to hang out and relax but will also be a bookable space for WUSA clubs, services, and societies in the evenings.

Student Publications

The Meta news ban continues to impact Imprint's social media presence, which is one of the best ways they can connect with students. To address this, Imprint is continuing with its Ring Road Round Up newsletter and looking to work with more student groups both on- and off-campus to expand their reach.

To learn more about what we have planned for the 2025-26 year, check out our Annual Plan and the 2025-2030 Long Range Plan.



WATERLOO UNDERGRADUATE

WUSA

STUDENT ASSOCIATION