

**Alberta Public Interest Research Group (APIRG)
Annual Report 2008**

Contributions

APIRG would like to thank the following people for their contributions to the Annual Report.

Leah Orr (content and design),
Lise Wilson (Working Group reports)
Ariel Bowering (Board report)
Jay Moore (Cover design and photos)

Thanks also to Working Group members and funding recipients who summarized their activities for this report.

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Above: Active Citizens Television (ACTV) filming footage for Transit Riders' Union of Edmonton (TRUE) documentary, 2008

Left: APIRG Board Members, APIRG Winter Board Retreat, 2008

About APIRG

Mission

The Alberta Public Interest Research Group (APIRG) is a student-run, student-funded, non-profit organization dedicated to research, education, advocacy, and action in the public interest.

APIRG exists to provide students with resources to be active citizens.

The Annual Report

Each year APIRG produces an annual report to highlight our successes, address our challenges, and share our stories with the community. It is intended to be a summary record of our activities over the course of the past year.



Organizational structure

APIRG Staff

Staff members:

Leah Orr, Outreach Coordinator
Lise Wilson, Working Group
Coordinator
Ariel Bowering, Board Coordinator
Lea Orr, Financial Coordinator

Staff members at APIRG implement decisions made by the APIRG Board of Directors, assist volunteers and respond to the many inquiries we receive each day. They bring the skills, knowledge, institutional memory and consistency that is crucial to the effective and efficient functioning of APIRG.

APIRG staff members provide resources and support to students who are working on various projects and assignments. Staff members support student-run working groups and ensure that the granting process is equitable and transparent. Staff are also responsible for monitoring the accountability of the groups to which funding is granted.

Board of Directors

Full-year members:

Brooke Leifso
Debrah Bergin
Jacqueline Cannam
Josh Fanaeian
Katherine Mazurok
Sahro Osman

The APIRG Board of Directors is composed entirely of undergraduate students from the University of Alberta. Board members are in charge of overseeing all APIRG operations. Responsibilities include developing policy, setting organizational goals and priorities, reviewing funding proposals, hiring and managing staff, and assisting with community outreach and events.

Half-year members:

Omayra Issa
Julie Alton

With the exception of the Students' Council appointed representative, board members are elected each year in a general election that coincides with the U of A Students' Union Executive elections. In March 2007, nine students ran for nine available seats on the Board of Directors.

SU Representatives:

Dave Cournoyer
Terence Fung

Non-voting members:

Pete Presant

Statement from the Board

2007–2008 Board Report

The 2007-2008 board term was kicked off by our annual transition board retreat. This event has become the foundation for the board year to come providing an opportunity for outgoing and incoming board, staff and long-term volunteers to discuss APIRG's past present and future. It also provides board members with fundamental knowledge about APIRG's operations and board member responsibilities.

Many board members were absent during portions of the summer months due to various scholastic exchanges. Those who remained in Edmonton worked diligently with staff to prepare APIRG's annual budget and plan activities and events for the upcoming school year.

APIRG continued to build and maintain positive relationships with other campus organizations such as the Students' Union, the Gateway and CJSR. APIRG was particularly appreciative of the assistance provided by our Students' Council appointed representative in keeping APIRG abreast of council initiatives that had the possibility of detrimentally impacting APIRG's operations. APIRG board members took the opportunity to conduct presentations on what APIRG does including one at Student's Council. We look forward to continuing felicitous relations with these other student-focused organizations.

This past year has been successful on many different levels. We were able to effectively advocate on behalf of APIRG while affirming and clarifying our role as a resource for our membership. As a board, we were able to step back from the day-to-day operations of APIRG and spend time assessing how APIRG could be working better and more effectively in enacting its vision. More importantly, perhaps, we spent time working on how this could actually happen. To these ends we initiated an internal organizational review by hiring a STEP employee, passed Basis of Unity and Statement of Values policies, and restructured board portfolios.

The board also looked towards improving its own long-term sustainability and institutional memory. Being students and workers in addition to volunteers is often difficult to balance and finding this balance has been a consideration for the board this past year. To address this concern we expanded our board to board mentoring initiative and engaged the incoming board right after elections and well before their terms started. We further worked on clarifying the role of the board in the organization and what our expectations were of each other and APIRG. The outgoing board is confident that the 2008-2009 board will continue to build on the work that has been done in a spirit of community and solidarity. We encourage you to become involved in APIRG with whatever skills, talents and passions you have.

Highlights from 07/08

Disorganize! 2007

Disorganize! 2007 was a four-day alternative orientation to the University of Alberta and the larger community. Students had many unique and exciting opportunities to explore what it is that APIRG, our working groups and our affiliates do.

This year, we organized a walking tour of campus, which highlighted on-campus services not generally included in official orientation tours. We also hosted an Open House in the APIRG office, which gave APIRG members the chance to meet each other and chat over snacks.

Another Disorganize! 2007 event was the “Activist Olympics.” A group of us gathered in Arts Quad and participated in “sporting” events like a “Purse Toss” and “Steal the Groundwater from the Indigenous People and Fill a Dasani Bottle.” Much fun was had.

Finally, APIRG promoted the Day for Darfur Die-In and co-presented the film “All About Darfur” with Stand for Darfur and the Edmonton Small Press Association.



Above: Poster from *Disorganize*, September, 2007

Other Events

Once again, APIRG undertook many internal projects and events in an effort to expose U of A students to a variety of issues and causes they may not otherwise encounter. A partial list of APIRG-sponsored or supported events includes:

- June 2007 – Presentation by the Yes Men (co-presented with the Edmonton Small Press Association and On Spec Magazine)
- October 2007 – “Lessons from a 7ft Penis” performance by Norman Nawrocki (as part of the 2007 Edmonton Anarchist Bookfair)



Above: Friends of the Lubicon member addresses a rally, 2008

Below, left: Friends of the Lubicon member interviewed, 2008

- October 2007 – “Occupation 101” film screening (as part of Global Visions Film Festival)
- January 2008 - “Indigenous Perspectives on Globalization: The Lubicon Cree Nation’s Ongoing Struggle for Justice” (Co-presented with Friends of the Lubicon Alberta as part of International Week 2008)

Board Development

This past year saw the APIRG board take initiative in terms of engaging each other in the decision making process and being clear on their vision for the organization. The board was able to take the time to consider long term questions and undertake the initial steps of projects that will last beyond their terms. These were in tandem with the creation of additional institutional memory resources that subsequent boards will pass on to each other so that more emphasis is on board to board training rather than staff to board training. Again, various professional development opportunities were provided for board members both at retreats and throughout the school year. When done their term on the APIRG board, board members have gained invaluable skills that they will be able to take with them to future endeavours, voluntary or otherwise.



Project, Event and Training Fund

Funding Objectives and Overview

In 2007/2008, \$20,000 was earmarked for the Project, Event and Training Fund. This category provides one-time funding and support to help groups and individual students to:

- Organize a speaker or speakers series with specific start and end dates.
- Organize an event or series of events with specific start and end dates.
- Undertake a project with specific start and end dates (e.g. publish a research project).
- Receive training or attend a conference if part of a larger project.



Above: APIRG funding and in-kind services supported “The Edmonton Black Film and Arts Festival,” a festival presented by Arte Preta which took place during Black History Month in honour and celebration of the past, present and future members of the Black African Diaspora, 2008.

Project, Event and Training Fund Recipients - 07/08

Comments from Recipients

"In 2007/08 Inside/OUT Speakers' Series profiled lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, and queer-related research, teaching, and service work ongoing at the University of Alberta, as well as from professionals across Canada.

Overall, this year's Inside/OUT Speakers' Series was our largest and most successful to date. The combined events attracted in excess of 900 university and community members. Including a special event at City Hall to mark the 10th anniversary of the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark ruling in *Vriend v. Alberta*. Inside/OUT was pleased to bring Delwin Vriend back from Paris, France to serve as the keynote speaker for this historic event."

– Kristopher Wells, Inside/OUT

"The Aboriginal Law Speakers Series ran March 3 to March 7, 2008. Overall the week had great attendance and fascinating topics.

The topic for this year was Indigenous Legal Orders: Reconciling the Aboriginal Law and the Common Law.

The Aboriginal Law Speakers Series was a great event."

– ALSA

| Recipient | Project or event |
|--|---|
| earthvibe | "You, Me Breathe" Guide |
| University Farm Organic Growers | University Farm Organic Growers Project |
| Inside/OUT | Inside/OUT 2007/2008 Speakers Series |
| Aboriginal Law Students' Association | Aboriginal Law Speakers Series |
| U of A Chapter of the Council of Canadians | Alternative Remembrance Day |
| Albertans Demand Affordable Housing | Alternative Methods in Confronting Poverty: The OCAP Story |
| Oil Sands Truth | Everyone's Downstream: Tar Sands Realities and Resistance |
| May Week Labour Arts Festival | The Women of Brukman |
| Make Poverty History Student Group | Stand Up, Speak Out |
| IGNITE Social Justice Group | Utopia: Celebrating Diversity |
| Yo'vella Mizrahi | The Edmonton Black Film and Arts Festival |
| Medical Students for Mental Health Awareness | Mental Health Awareness Week |
| Students' International Health Association | Sexually Transmitted Infections Youth Education Program and AIDS Awareness Week |
| Italian Arts Outreach Club | Italian Film Series |
| Parkland Institute | From Crisis to Hope: Building Just and Sustainable Communities |
| Environmental and Conservation Sciences Students Association | Roundtable Discussion on Nuclear Power in Alberta |
| EonFire | Fall Forum and Movie Night |
| Aspen Centre for Integral Living | Friends of Wisdom Film and Discussion Series |
| STAND for Darfur | A Century of Genocide: How Far Have We Come? |

Financial Summary

Year end summary

2007/2008 was APIRG's sixth full year of operations on campus. We approved just under \$30,000 in direct grants to student events, activities and projects, many of which are described elsewhere in this report. APIRG funds also supported student initiatives through our publications, resource library, events and educational workshops.

As with many non-profit organizations, APIRG's biggest annual expense is staffing costs (\$80,877), which includes both salaries and benefits. These costs enable us to provide a high level of services to students and to maintain a fair, competitive, and unionized work environment.

The majority of APIRG's revenue comes from a dedicated fee collected on our behalf by the University of Alberta Students' Union. The fee was supported by a majority of students in a 2001 referendum, and amounted to \$5.88 from full-time students and \$2.92 from part-time students in 2007/2008. Any students who don't wish to pay the fee for financial or ideological reasons had the opportunity to opt out and receive a full refund. Last year less than 15 students took advantage of the opt out program despite campus-wide advertising.

In terms of other revenue, community and events revenue decreased because of a shift in focus from larger events with admission fees to smaller, free events. Office and retail revenue doubled, in large part due to a dramatic increase in the number of people using the button-making machine.

APIRG began the year projecting a balanced budget. Through careful financial management, regular monitoring and prudent decision-making, we finished the fiscal year with an excess of revenue over expenditures of \$10,678, which will flow into our cumulative unrestricted balance.

As required by our agreement with the Students' Union to have our financial statements audited annually, APIRG had the financial statements audited by Doyle & Company chartered accounting firm. The 2007/2008 audit verified that our financial statements (presented in this report in their entirety) are in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

If you have any questions about APIRG's finances that go beyond the scope of this report, you are welcome to make an appointment with APIRG's financial coordinator. Our books are open to the public and we welcome your feedback about our spending priorities. We are accountable to you!

For more information, please see the complete audited financial statements found in the appendix section of the annual report.

– Leah Orr, Financial Coordinator



Working groups

What are working groups?

Working Groups (WGs) are collectives of student and community members who work together on an issue. WGs may focus on research, events, actions, publications, and other diverse activities. They tend to have long-term goals with activities and membership that continue beyond the current academic year. WGs are required to hold regular meetings and must maintain a membership that includes U of A undergrads.

Working Group Coordinator Report

The 2007-2008 year was dynamic and diverse. APIRG's Working Groups are a passionate, driven, resourceful crew of folks who excel in collaborating. We welcomed several new Working Groups and many of our long-standing groups continued to be active.

APIRG is a community partner with CSL, a U of A program that facilitates students who want to work with community organizations as a part of their credited coursework. Several of our Working Groups worked with U of A student placements through this program. These groups include FOLA and ACTV.

It is exciting to witness the hard work of dedicated volunteers (and in some cases, hard work spanning many years) paying off with successful events, collaborations, projects and campaigns as well as increased group solidarity, better internal organization and greater ability to overcome challenges.

It truly is an honour to work with all of you. Thank you for a fantastic and rewarding year!

Challenges

Challenges for this past year were minimal, but varied. APIRG challenges included balancing a reduced budget this year with an increased demand for grants, yet ensuring that groups were receiving enough funds to fulfill their mandate.

Working Groups faced a variety of challenges within their groups, including recruitment and retention (particularly when key members graduate or move on), board organization, event attendance, effective outreach and promotions and positive group dynamics.



Above: APIRG Working Group TRUE compiled experience reports from ETS riders, 2008.

Comments from Working Groups

"APIRG has supported JHR since the beginning of the 2005 school year. Since then, APIRG funding and support has been integral to many initiatives, including our 2006 weeklong conference "Informed Ignorance," our radio program "Speak Radio," and our ongoing and continuing publication, "Speak News." On top of the financial support, APIRG has provided us with a community and network that are truly the reason for our success."

– Journalists for Human Rights, U of A

"Without the support of APIRG, TRUE may not have gained any wind, per se. APIRG's support allowed TRUE to create our Faux-Pass, Experience Reports and a media package for the TRUE Transit Challenge to city council, as well as a Documentary Film Project with ACTV (another APIRG group that was referred to us by none other than the fabulous staff at the office)."

– Transit Riders Union of Edmonton

Goals for 2008/2009

- Address challenges by fine tuning our access to support and services processes
- Offer more training and workshops for groups, especially in response to requests
- Provide Working Groups with more support to access CSL as community partners and support with writing grant proposals and applications for this program
- Support Working Groups in their quest for other sources of funding
- Continue to support working groups with promotion, recruiting and retention, finding creative ways to outreach online, on campus and in related communities
- Promote Working Group members as ambassadors for APIRG
- Raise general student awareness on campus about our Working Groups through campus tour, Week of Welcome, CJSR spots, classroom talks, etc.
- Continue to assist networking and collaborations between Working Groups and other like-minded campus and community organizations
- Continue to provide the funding, support and services that keep our Working Groups functioning at optimal levels

Active Working Groups – 2007–2008

Active Citizens Television (ACTV)

www.intractv.ca

The goal of ACTV is to produce and distribute a television program that provides citizens with the skills and capacity to live sustainable, low-impact lifestyles within environmentally healthy and ecologically conscious communities.

With funding from the EcoTrust YES grant, ACTV's producer completed a four-month program on documentary production delivered by Film and Video Arts.

ACTV also enlisted two CSL students from the University of Alberta. Their duties were to research ACTV content and future funding opportunities and participate in meetings and workshops. They wrote treatments for three film segments including water conservation, energy conservation, and waste reduction. For these segments, we interviewed both experts on the issues, and local youth who are taking initiative on Environmental issues with a focus on:

- Public transportation (in support of TRUE, a local, youth-based, public transit advocacy group – and fellow APIRG working group);
- Water conservation (including interviews with Jamie Benidickson, author of “The Culture of Flushing”);
- Sustainable building materials (in support of Green Alberta, a database of environmentally sustainable building materials);
- Waste reduction (in support of Alberta Environment's and Recycling Council of Alberta's “Waste Awareness Week”, we filmed a waste audit of Calgary businesses in effort to encourage small businesses to reduce waste).

Throughout this year the board developed the mission and values, strategic planning, board development, and committee work. Special efforts were made in board recruitment and team-building following the resignation of three founding members. In late October, ACTV presented at the meeting of the Young Environmental Professionals. We were also invited to present to media-savvy youth at Global Vision's Youth Media Arts Day. ACTV also received funding from Alberta Environment Outreach and Education branch in support of the design and construction of the ACTV website- the medium from which we will broadcast ACTV productions, as well as encourage dialogue and networking.

Through various outreach activities, we developed relationships with local experts to advise in Research and Production, explored opportunities for synergy between ACTV and other environmental and arts initiatives and explored sponsorship opportunities with local audio-visual companies and visual arts organizations.

Biofreedom

<http://biofreedom.ca/>

Biofreedom is committed to consumer advocacy and education concerning Genetically Engineered (GE) foods. They plan to conduct a public awareness campaign about the issues concerning genetic engineering and mandatory labeling of GE food products.

Biofreedom members were actively involved with several events and activities this year. Aside from holding regular meetings, we also:

- Tabled at the Parkland Conference
- Organized farmer Ken Larsen and student member Aaron Chubb to present anti-GMO arguments to a 4th year “Ethics in Genetics”
- Hosted Pat Mooney, chair of ETC Group to talk about “What Next: Extreme Genetic Engineering- from GMO to Synthetic Life-forms” during International Week
- Attended the Alberta Social Forum in Red Deer

Campus Community Garden

www.su.ualberta.ca/ECOS (follow the links through “Projects” to the community Garden)

This season was a wonderful opportunity for the garden to make large advances in the community. Although there were issues with volunteer participation near the end of the season, a core group remained very active and involved in the garden. A challenge to the coordinator could be to maintain interest right to the end to ensure the sharing of the harvest. The season proved to be a summer full of learning and new experiences. In addition to continuing the overall mission and purpose of the garden, several new projects and ventures were undertaken this season.

Some of these include putting a new coat of “ecologic” paint on the greenhouse obtained for free from the Eco- Station, construction of a new trellis attached to the greenhouse, expanding our community presence by appearing on CJSR and by hosting an Open House, installing a new compost system and spending some time at compost workshops at the John Janzen Nature Centre. The garden was entered, as with previous years, in the Edmonton Horticultural Society's annual garden competition and this year the garden placed first. In addition, a market stand was held on some Saturdays and several trips were made to the Campus Food Bank with surplus produce. The money that came from the market stand was donated by way of ECOS to the Campus Food Bank.

Campus Sustainability Coalition

www.csc.ualberta.ca

The Campus Sustainability Coalition was initiated by students, APIRG, the UARHA and Residence Services in early 2007 in response to a perceived need to unite the varied members of the U of A community around improving our sustainable performance on campus. Faculty, staff, students and important University organizations quickly joined. In seven short months the CSC has taken a leading role in defining the University's sustainable development, playing a major role in three of five campuses.

For the University of Alberta to achieve its goal of entering the ranks of the world's top 20 universities we must lead as much in the field of sustainable development as any other. Leadership must include contributions to operations and student life as much as original research and teaching. CSC student, faculty and staff members are leading the University of Alberta as the first and strongest group within the U of A to "sustainablize" the campus. Our exciting projects will launch in September, as hopefully will the U of A sustainable development policy creation process.

Campus Saint Jean is an official sponsor member, supplying expertise and a server plus technical support for our website. We have been asked to participate in the sustainable development of South Campus and are working on building a partnership between Climate Change Central and the Alberta chapter of the Canadian Green Building Chapter. During Residence Services development of its 'Residence Master Plan' the CSC will be a conduit for campus experts (students, staff and faculty) to ensure sustainable, resource efficient and healthy living spaces for students are a priority. Both the Students' Union and the Graduate Student's Association have requested that we provide them with motions so they too can join the cause.

Our first exciting projects are:

- 'Kyoto House' : Dr. Leach of the School of Business, together with Residence Services (Eco House and Residence Saint Jean) and students are working to test what it takes to reduce a households emissions to levels 6% below 1990 levels, and to do so on a student budget. The tentative plan right now is to follow the progress on a blog throughout the year - to illustrate the thought processes and tradeoffs involved.
- FSC project: This project is a collaboration between the GSA, CSJ, Residence Services, Campus Vert, the ERSC and many others. Students are needed to help educate the campus, work with us in the trenches auditing the U of A's paper flows and participate in a system that ensures all parts of the paper production

process are sustainable, looking to the Forest Stewardship Council of Canada and its third party certification of paper products.

- Paper Cut: The Campus Sustainability Coalition, the Environmental Research and Studies Center (ERSC) and the University of Alberta have developed a research program to investigate sustainable paper purchasing and use options. With the mainstreaming of Forestry Stewardship Council paper products, a great many paper products now exist compared even to 2007. For more information see: <http://www.ualberta.ca/ERSC/papercut.htm>

With all this growth and community inclusion the CSC is working hard to maintain its vision: to provide students with the opportunity to collaborate with experienced and knowledgeable staff and faculty to join the sustainable development revolution.

Friends of the Lubicon Alberta (FOLA)

www.fola.ecope.ca

In the 2007-2008 year Friends of the Lubicon Alberta continued to educate a wider public and support the Lubicon in actions to defend their right to self-determination. This year's highlights include a three-part education workshop in August, which was intended to raise awareness of the Lubicon struggle against the Canadian and Albertan governments' infringement on their traditional territory and the negative effects of resource exploitation; and a presentation on the detrimental impact that proposed tar sands projects will have on the Lubicon Cree's economy, culture, health and community at "Everyone's Downstream: Tar Sands Realities and Resistance" conference in November.

On December 10 Amnesty International hosted a write-a-thon, which involved students and individuals around the globe in writing letters about various social injustices. One of the letters emphasized the need for the Canadian and Alberta government to discontinue their ill treatment of the Lubicon Cree and enter into negotiations over land rights. These letters were sent to Chuck Strall, the Canadian Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, urging him to take action.

In December and February FOLA sent out a call to action among our membership urging individuals to write a letter asking TransCanada to obtain an agreement from the Lubicon Cree before approaching the Alberta Utilities Commission. These letters were directed towards TransCanada, the Premier of Alberta, and the Alberta Utilities Commission.

In January FOLA hosted a presentation for International Week at the University of Alberta. Speakers included Reine

Jobin, a member of the Lubicon Elders Council, Ed Bianci, the director of "A Fight against Time," Fred Lennarson, advisor of the Lubicon Council, and Sister Mary Jeanne Davidson of Peace River who has spent some time in Little Buffalo. About 100 people attended and we have gained a few members as a result of the presentation. "A Fight Against Time," Ed Bianci's film about the Lubicon's fight for self determination, was screened in February at a community social justice movie night, followed by facilitated discussion.

A member of the United Church presbytery council invited FOLA to speak at their February meeting.

FOLA was pleased to work with seven CSL students in the winter 2008 semester. These students avidly worked on modules that could be implemented into the grade 7-9 curriculum, providing background information on the Lubicon Lake Nation, an update on the current situation of the Cree with TransCanada, as well as actions that the students can take on outside of their school hours.

On April 14th FOLA and other Lubicon supporters joined about 25 Lubicon people to make a statement to the Alberta Utilities Commission about the proposed North Central Corridor Pipeline, and on April 25, 2008 we joined members of the Lubicon Nation to picket TransCanada's Annual General Meeting in Calgary in order to raise awareness about the lack of agreement TransCanada has with the Lubicon Lake Nation in their proposal to lay a pipeline across Lubicon territory. We received good media coverage and there were many questions from concerned shareholders on how TransCanada has proceeded regarding land rights. Several shareholders later reported that they had sold their shares out of concern and protest.

Journalists For Human Rights (JHR)

www.jhr.ca

JHR- U of A is a non-profit, volunteer run organization dedicated to increasing media's capacity to report on global human rights abuses and promoting awareness on media's impact on our everyday perceptions of the world around us. Since 2005, JHR- U of A has supported and initiated the further development of grassroots media within our community as well as encouraging our youth to be critically mindful of our media sources through workshops, conferences and presentations. Through effective media coverage which empowers victims, we believe pressure can be applied to stop to current and prevent future human rights abuses.

This year, we have aimed to emphasize regular meetings and internal group participation among our volunteers rather than hosting larger events, as we have done in the past. This year's

events included a table and written information at Stand Up Shout Out in October and our 3rd annual Speak Silence event on November 2nd, hosting a vow of 6hrs of silence at Remedy Café with movies, good food and the musical talents of Martin Kerr.

For International Week this year we chose to show the Michael Franti film I Know I'm Not Alone, which explored the multiple sides of conflict in the Middle East through music. We also participated in the two day NGO fair held in the Tory Atrium.

Our biggest focus this year has been further developing our newsletter Speak News, opting for an easier, more environmentally friendly digital format that is distributed online. The newsletter will continue to publish quarterly during the summer months.

Legal Activist Collective

www.apirg.org/wg/lac.php

In February we hosted the event: "Towards a Green Economy: Alternative Visions for Alberta's Economy" with Dr Kevin Danaher, and on March 1st LAC held a one-day conference at the U of A: "Are We Mad? Critical Perspectives on the Canadian Mental Health System."

This unique one-day conference brought together individuals from diverse backgrounds including former psychiatric service users, patient activists, students, science journalists and traditional academics for an interdisciplinary discussion on subjects which are taboo or at least unpopular; namely criticisms of the Canadian mental health apparatus in its legal, medico-scientific, ethical, historical and pharmacological aspects. We would like to thank all of those that came out and made the day such a success.

The Olive

Website: www.apirg.org/wg/olive.php

The Olive Reading Series hosted eight readings in the 2007-2008 year. All readings were held at Hulbert's, 7601 115 Street, Edmonton, Alberta. Below is a list of reading dates and featured poets. A small chapbook was produced and distributed for each reading, and each featured poet (with the exception of the WRITE 392 class) was presented with an honorarium.

- September 11, 2007 - Bert Almon
- October 9, 2007 - Stephen Brockwell
- November 20, 2007 - George Bowering
- December 11, 2007 - Christine Stewart
- January 22, 2008 - Jill Hartman and Brea Burton
- February 12, 2008 - Jenna Butler
- March 11, 2008 - WRITE 392, University of Alberta
- April 8, 2008 - E. D. Blodgett

A varying numbers of persons from the university and community at large attended each reading. For most readings, the venue was at full or near-full capacity.

In the 2008-2009 academic year, we plan to host eight readings, one per month, September through April.

SWAG

www.swag.apirg.org

Much of our organizing focuses on students as workers - either students who work jobs while going to school, or students as workers in training. This includes teaching students how to organize unions, working with unions on campus, and struggling to improve the conditions of student labour.

After more than a year of relative inactivity, this year saw SWAG back on its feet, with some new and some returning members. We had ambitious goals, we accomplished a lot and learned even more. This year's events included "Know Your Rights" campaign and workshops, held on three consecutive Tuesday evenings from late February through mid-March. The first two workshops focused on labour rights, based primarily in the Alberta Employment Standards Code, which applies to almost all non-unionized employees in Alberta. The third workshop was on tenants' rights, and we were grateful to receive the cooperation of Sarah Dargatz of Student Legal Services for the preparation and delivery of information at this event. At each event we provided snacks and refreshments, including fair trade coffee. The most tangible outcome of all the hard work that went into researching labour rights in Alberta is our Know Your Rights at Work booklet. We hope that, once edited and reformatted, it can be widely distributed and made available so that it can be put to use empowering workers, especially young people, to stand up for themselves and their coworkers and prevent the erosion of working peoples' rights in this province.

This year SWAG worked in cooperation with the Edmonton IWW to present various events, and individual IWW members supported SWAG with promotion of our workshops. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), an alternative, radical, international union, is an organization with which SWAG shares many core principles. In particular, SWAG's cooperation with the Edmonton General Membership Branch of the IWW has ensured the continuation of a student organization that would otherwise likely suffer from the inevitable ebb and flow of student activity. In cooperation with the Women's Committee of the Edmonton IWW as well as the Women's Centre, we held a screening of the film *Live Nude Girls Unite* to commemorate International Women's Day. On March 19, SWAG cooperated to present an

"Introduction to the IWW" event that introduced attendees to many of the principles and structures that SWAG and the IWW hold in common.

Perhaps most significantly, SWAG and the Organizing Committee of the Edmonton IWW collaborated to present a weekend long, intensive Organizer Training workshop on March 29th and 30th. We applied for and received funds from APIRG to pay for the airfare of Jeff Pilacinski from Minneapolis, an experienced organizer. Over the course of the weekend, participants learned about the principles and practices of what has come to be known as "solidarity unionism," a type of workplace organizing that focuses on building strong networks of solidarity and resilient democratic practices among rank and file workers. Jeff has had many years of experience, not only practicing but also developing and delivering training in this type of unionism.

During the spring and summer, our primary activity will be improving the Know Your Rights at Work information booklet. We plan to print the booklets. Another project for this summer is updating SWAG's website. The primary focus of next year's SWAG activities will be recruitment. We are considering holding regular movie nights where we can screen films that have to do with SWAG's mandate.

Transit Riders' Union of Edmonton

www.true.apirg.org

The Transit Riders' Union of Edmonton (TRUE) is a new committee established in April 2007. Our goal is for Edmonton citizens, especially those dependent on public transportation, to get involved by sharing their ideas and concerns so that we can all develop a serviceable transit system for everyone. TRUE is currently formed of ETS riders who are researching and developing strategies to improve the quality of public transit in Edmonton, Alberta. TRUE wishes to champion an effective movement and wants to provide a unified voice towards efficient affordable public transit.

Current Projects

- Documentary Project (May / June 2008)
- Late Night Transit Campaign (June 10, 2008 – Presentation to TPW Committee)
- GETS 2040 (Accelerated and coordinated LRT expansion)
- Transit Experience Reports

Successes

- TRUE Transit Challenge & Media Launch (Nov 19, 2007)
- Late Night Transit Campaign (Jan 22, 2008 – Presentation to TPW Committee)
- 220 registered members

Future

- Recruitment!!!
- Collaborative Route Redesign (This project will be initiated at the April 21, 2008 Workshop)
- TRUE Transit Challenge 2009

U of A Council of Canadians

www.uofacoc.ca

The Council of Canadians University of Alberta Chapter is about taking a stand on important political, social, economic, environmental and yes even cultural issues.

Our group was started in response to frustration felt about the state of our government and in hope that change is possible. The UofA chapter of the Council has been involved in several activities in the 2007/2008 University year. In October of 2007, we aided in organizing a Make Poverty History event called “Stand Up” with many other groups on campus that are a part of a newly formed Coalition: SUSJ. In November, APIRG sponsored our “Alternative Remembrance Day” Event in which we set out to redefine the way in which we remember violence in our world by constructing a world map of “conflict density,” a path with footsteps, each imprinted with iconic images or quotes on war and violence, and an engaging and insightful powerpoint presentation. The event was held within Dinwoodie Lounge, and had great affect upon the attending. UofACoc has changed their mandate for 08-09 from a focus on the Tar Sands to cover Trade issues after polling their members.

In solidarity we can effect change!

The University Of Alberta Women’s Centre

www.ualberta.ca/~uawcc/

Location: SUB 4-16

On October 19th the Women’s Centre Collective held their first “Meet n Greet” in SUB. This event welcomed men and women to come chat about their feminist views, make buttons, enjoy good food and meet people with similar interests. Two more were held on November 23rd and January 25th at the APIRG office.

The WCC funded a screening of Daphne S. Valerius’s documentary film “Souls of Black Girls” for Black History Month on Feb 4th. This documentary critically analyzed media images of black women, how these images are

produced, established and controlled, and what their effects are on black women.

The WCC supported an International Women’s Day event that was put on by the Industrial Workers of the World: the film, “Live Nude Girls Unite,” and a discussion on the exotic dancers union.

When the “Unborn Victims of Crime Act”- Bill C-484 - passed its second reading in the House of Commons we worked together to create a letter-writing campaign that urged students, professors, women’s organizations and the like to send a letter to their Member of Parliament. This letter was intended to express concern about the implications of Bill C-484. It was hoped that with enough involvement, federal politicians who supported the bill would think twice about their decision.

In March 2008, a volunteer of the WCC formed a pro-choice group to educate the public about the meaning behind the pro-choice movement, and to counteract the misconceptions about abortion and women’s reproduction rights.

The WCC maintained their presence within the community by tabling at the “Vagina Monologues” on March 25th and Take Back the Night on March 28th. The WCC received a lot of enthusiastic questions about the WCC’s resources, the various events the WCC has been involved in, as well as interest in purchasing patches and zines.

In addition to tabling at the “Vagina Monologues” (VM), the WCC board members participated in the behind the scene production of the play and in the VM quilting party. The quilts that each participant made were sold in the VM art auction.

In the future the WCC plans to

- Continue to support the pro-choice working group throughout the spring/summer and into the fall 2008 semester. It will be important that this group has the space and resources that the WCC and APIRG can provide.
- Start up a zine that will be published on a quarterly- basis.
- Continue a forum similar to the Meet n Greets, so that men and women can get together in a social setting and talk about feminism and women’s issues.
- Organize open-mic nights that allow artists to creatively express their views and opinions about women, feminism and women-related topics. This will ideally be a venue for our zines, pro-choice actions and any other relevant happenings that the WCC will be involved in at the time.

Appendix

Complete Financial Statements

Footnotes

Alberta Public Interest Research Group
Financial Statements
April 30, 2008

Alberta Public Interest Research Group

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AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of the
Alberta Public Interest Research Group

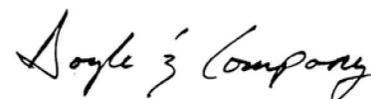
We have audited the statement of financial position of Alberta Public Interest Research Group as at April 30, 2008, and the statements of change in net assets, operations and cash flow for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In common with many not-for-profit organizations, Alberta Public Interest Research Group derives revenue from other sources, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Alberta Public Interest Research Group and we were not able to determine whether adjustments might be necessary to current assets, net assets, revenues and excess of revenue over expenditures.

In our opinion, the statements of change in net assets and operations present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the society as at April 30, 2008 and the results of operations of the company for the year then ended, in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

August 20, 2008
Edmonton, Alberta



Chartered Accountants

Alberta Public Interest Research Group

Statement of Financial Position

As at April 30, 2008

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Financial Assets | | |
| Cash | 102,328 | 91,623 |
| Investments (Note 3) | 52,276 | 51,147 |
| Accounts receivable | 3,516 | 1,801 |
| Prepaid expenses | 1,865 | 1,874 |
| | 159,985 | 146,445 |
| Liabilities | | |
| Accounts payable | 7,901 | 5,039 |
| Net Assets | | |
| Unrestricted net assets | 143,265 | 138,168 |
| Internally restricted net assets | 8,819 | 3,238 |
| | 152,084 | 141,406 |
| | 159,985 | 146,445 |

Approved by the Board of Directors:

_____ Director

_____ Director

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Alberta Public Interest Research Group
Statement of Change in Net Assets
For the year ended April 30, 2008

| | Internally Restricted \$ | Unrestricted \$ | 2008 \$ | 2007 \$ |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Balance, beginning of year | 3,238 | 138,168 | 141,406 | 134,178 |
| Excess of revenue over expenditures | - | 10,678 | 10,678 | 7,228 |
| Funds committed during the year | 29,055 | (29,055) | - | - |
| Funds paid out during the year | (20,827) | 20,827 | - | - |
| Inter fund transfer | (2,647) | 2,647 | - | - |
| Balance, end of year | 8,819 | 143,265 | 152,084 | 141,406 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Alberta Public Interest Research Group

Statement of Operations

For the year ended April 30, 2008

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|--|---------|---------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Revenue | | |
| Student fees | 156,594 | 151,248 |
| Community and events revenue | 283 | 1,527 |
| Interest revenue | 1,281 | 1,248 |
| Office and retail revenue | 1,367 | 672 |
| Other revenue | 2,042 | 2,017 |
| | 161,567 | 156,712 |
| Expenditures | | |
| Board expenses | 1,717 | 2,852 |
| Contract work and honoraria | 1,459 | 600 |
| Direct grants | 27,406 | 28,895 |
| Elections | 2,072 | 2,011 |
| Insurance | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Library | 555 | 1,362 |
| Office | 13,514 | 3,852 |
| Professional fees | 5,414 | 8,160 |
| Programming | 2,198 | 6,969 |
| Promotion and outreach | 4,654 | 1,835 |
| Rent | 7,618 | 11,151 |
| Telecommunications | 2,405 | 2,513 |
| Wages and employee benefits | 80,877 | 78,284 |
| | 150,889 | 149,484 |
| Excess of Revenue over Expenditures | 10,678 | 7,228 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Alberta Public Interest Research Group

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended April 30, 2008

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Operating Activities | | |
| Cash received from funding agencies and other income | 159,852 | 161,371 |
| Cash paid to suppliers and employees | (148,018) | (146,757) |
| | 11,834 | 14,614 |
| Investing Activities | | |
| Increase in investments | (1,129) | (51,147) |
| Increase (Decrease) in Cash During the Year | 10,705 | (36,533) |
| CASH - Beginning of year | 91,623 | 128,156 |
| CASH - End of year | 102,328 | 91,623 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Alberta Public Interest Research Group

Notes to the Financial Statements

April 30, 2008

1. Purpose of the Organization

Alberta Public Interest Research Group (Group) is a not-for-profit organization incorporated under the Alberta Societies Act. The Alberta Public Research Interest Group supports work on public interest issues through research, education, and action initiatives of the students of the University of Alberta as well as those of the greater University and the Alberta communities.

2. Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Fund Accounting

The board has approved an Inter-Disbursement Fund Policy to maintain a sustainable organization. This fund is used to pay the operating expenses of the organization from the start of the fiscal year (May 1) until the funding from the University of Alberta Students' Union is received in October.

The board also internally restricts funds for conferences and training, projects and events, and a working group fund.

- (i) The conference and training fund provides one-time funding and support to help students attend conferences or training sessions. The funds may cover registration or transportation costs.
- (ii) The project and event fund provides one-time funding and support to help groups and individual students to organize events or undertake a project.
- (iii) The working group fund provides funding and resources to a wide variety of working groups that are focusing on local and global issues.

(b) Capital Assets

Capital assets are recorded as expenditures in the period they are acquired. Capital assets are reported at cost except for donated assets, which are reported at estimated fair value when acquired. No amortization is recorded because the capital assets are expensed in the period acquired.

(c) Revenue Recognition

Alberta Public Interest Research Group follows the deferral method of accounting for revenue. Restricted revenues are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted revenues are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

(d) Financial Instruments

The financial instruments of Alberta Public Interest Research Group consist of cash, investments, accounts receivable, prepaid expenses and accounts payable. Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the Group is not exposed to significant interest or foreign currency risks arising from these financial instruments. The fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values, unless otherwise noted.

Alberta Public Interest Research Group

Notes to the Financial Statements

April 30, 2008

2. Significant Accounting Policies - continued

(e) Measurement Uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

(f) Donated Services

The Alberta Public Interest Research Group benefits greatly from donated services in the form of volunteer work for various activities. The value of donated services is not recognized in these financial statements because of the difficulty of measurement.

3. Investments

Investments represent Canadian Term Deposits purchased at cost from Servus Credit Union with a maturity date of October 13, 2008 and annual interest rate of 2.75%.

4. Library

The Group operates an in-house library that has, books, periodicals, cassette tapes, VHS tapes, DVDs, and CD's available for members. These items may be borrowed from the library for a certain period of time.

Library materials have been expensed in the year purchased over the years which is consistent with their policy.

Notes

Notes

Volunteer at APIRG!

We at APIRG would like to thank all our volunteers for their dedication and hard work during the 2007–2008 year.

APIRG and its working groups are always looking for new volunteers and participants. Many positions are available for people of all backgrounds and experiences. Whether you have hours or a few minutes a week, APIRG has opportunities for you. We're always looking for help with:

- Board participation
- University and community outreach
- Staffing the APIRG resource centre
- APIRG office support
- Media and technical support
- Arts and graphics support
- Skill sharing

Let us know what drives your passions!
Phone 780.492.0614 or email apirg@ualberta.ca.

