Meetings with Key Stakeholders

July 18, 2019: Meeting with AE Minister

- ab-GPAC outlined top priorities for 2019/2020 including barriers for Indigenous Students to enter graduate studies
- Directors provided high level overview of our 2019-2020 priority areas
  - Scholarships & Funding Packages
  - Permanent Residency Alignment
  - Professional Development (PD) Funding
- Our Post Graduate Employment Policy outlines the importance of supports such as PD, internships and workshops; and ensuring graduate students are seen as key stakeholders with Alberta Innovates (AI) initiatives and Alberta employers
- Minister talked about the: Alberta Advantage Immigration Strategy that looks to increase both international students and foreign entrepreneurs
  - Indicated his support for increases permanent residency applications from graduate level students
- Minister indicated he would follow up on the PD extension to Faculty of Graduate Students at member GSA’s
- Minister indicated that changes to the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) and criteria would be reviewed to ensure higher number of graduate students are selected

August 15: Meeting with Alberta Innovates CEO

- Laura Kilcrease (CEO), Lori Sheremeta (Funding) and Sarah Lee (Grad student programs/entrepreneurial) meet with ED, Chair and five ab-GPAC directors
- Our primary focus was on our Post Employment Policy

Research and Employment Opportunities

- Laura CEO discussed the future labour market analysis that was conducted by the Minister of Labour that shows low numbers and decreased grown of quality and quantity of suitable hires
- Graduate students are looking to showcase their research and to make industry aware
- Inventures$ is an annual conference where 30 chosen entrepreneurs get to pitch their businesses, it will be held in Calgary June 2-5, 2020. There is a $99 student rate.

Investment in Students
Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council
Summer 2019

- AI invests in Mitacs, Scholarships and Research projects/programs and centres; however they get limited feedback as funds go to PSI and are dispersed
AI Research Internships
- Are available each summer as well as 10 week internships during other seasons

External Policy Development Working Group Volunteers
We thank those of you that ran the call for volunteers to participate in our External Policy working groups in your newsletters or on your websites. We are pleased to advise that we have had some responses from interested graduate students. These volunteers will be participating in working groups to develop advocacy policy on (i) Scholarships (ii) Streamlining Immigration & PR (iii) Professional Development and (iv) Indigenous student graduate access.

2019 2020 Advocacy Priorities Postcard
Advocacy Priorities selected by our current Board of Directors for 2019 2020 can be shared in your GSA newsletters, electronic news boards, social media, etc. Here is an electronic copy of the 2019-08-29 Postcard

ab-GPAC Strategic Plan
ab-GPAC 2019- ab-GPAC Strategic Plan has been developed and approved and is available via your ab-GPAC directors.

ab-GPAC Presentation to GSA Executive and/or General Council
We were invited to join the AU GSA Council on August 13th to provide information on ab-GPAC their provincial advocacy group.

If you wish to have ab-GPAC present to your GSA Executive and/or General Council we would be happy to accommodate your request. Our Chair and/or ED can make themselves available to share information on the focus of our advocacy work and our 2019 2020 Priorities and external policy working groups.

ED Search & Transition
As some of you may know we are moving our ED Services from a contract to a staff position. We have a search for a new ED in progress and look forward to an announcement shortly. We would like to thank Nicole van Kuppeveld our current ED contractor for her support in building this organization over the last three years, for her assistance during the
transition and for agreeing to provide onboarding for the new ED. Having Nicole with us was an essential step to build ab-GPAC’s internal governance and external reputation. We wish Nicole all the best in her future endeavours.

**ab-GPAC Upcoming Information, Activities and Events**

- New ED Announcement
- ab-GPAC Vision Statement
- External Advocacy Policy Development Working Groups
- Stakeholder Survey (Graduate Students), Interviews & Focus Groups
- Government Relations & Advocacy Week
- AGM - February 8th, Venue: Concordia University of Edmonton

If you require any points of clarification or additional information please contact: Nicole van Kuppeveld ED at ed@abgpac.ca or Marcela Lopes Chair at chair@abgpac.ca