

CTVAEHT

STUDENT ETUDIANT

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A letter from the “Student” editor

Dear Student,

Merry (English) Christmas! I say English because we all know in two weeks we'll be celebrating Ukrainian Christmas in absolute Ukrainian fashion: just a little late.

I'm sure it's not the first or last time you'll hear this, but this year's holiday season looks a little different this year due to the pandemic. No large family gatherings with guests from far and wide, no standing at the back of the church for three hours since you were late to Christmas liturgy, and definitely no carolling or koliada well beyond the appropriate days for carolling.

Though we may not be able to celebrate some of our old traditions, if there's one positive thing that came out of this pandemic it's that we learn to adapt. This year, we are called upon to make new traditions that adhere to public health guidelines and ensure our safety and the safety of our loved ones.

It is with this positive mindset that we'll survive what's left of COVID-19 and the quarantine — PSA: the province of Ontario goes into lockdown starting on Boxing Day, Dec. 26. Hopefully we'll be vaccinated soon and can start returning to “normal” life; I for one cannot wait until the first post-COVID 19 zabava — Corona beers will be half-off at the bar!

In this issue, we take a look at how our Ukrainian-Canadian Students' Union (SUSK) has adapted in these times, as well as the determination and perseverance of our post-secondary students and alumni. During the pandemic, they've managed to create and maintain start-ups,

side hustles and small businesses. From mere ideas to national and international sales, there are several initiatives that can use our readership's support.

Heck, even I've thought about opening a small business from the comfort of my basement, in classic WFH (Work From Home) fashion. If you're in need of a custom shot glass as a holiday, birthday, or any day gift idea, feel free to reach out — yes, this is shameless self-promotion.

Finally, on behalf of the entire SUSK executive, I wish you a very Merry Christmas (both English and Ukrainian), as well as a Happy New Year. We hope you and your loved ones are safe, healthy and sanitized this holiday season, knowing that we will all be back to normal soon as long as we continue following public health guidelines. Веселих Свят!

— Alexandra Holyk

Our “Student” Editor, Alexandra Holyk.



A special thank you to our contributors featured in this issue:

Roman Grod

Diana Kachaluba

Anastasiya Gorodnicha

Chase Gargus

Dayna Konopelny



A message from SUSK's president



Our President, Roman Grod.

and executives that continues to be successful and forward thinking even during these difficult times. In the last 67 years SUSK has accomplished a lot, and I am highly optimistic about our future and the difference that SUSK will be able to make on a local, national and hopefully even an international level.

We are only as strong as our USOs and we hope to continue to see them thrive even in this virtual environment.

I wish everyone a safe holiday season and a Happy New Year.

All the best!

Всього найкращого!

– Roman Grod



Вітаю!

Welcome to SUSK's December 2020 Issue. This year COVID-19 threw all sorts of curveballs at us. All our clubs have been forced to host events and run in this virtual

environment, and all our awareness campaigns and commemorations were forced to be virtual.

I am happy to say there was a silver lining. Our talented team took this opportunity to create

more virtual content and bring together clubs and leaders from all over the country to ensure we are working together for the prosperity of our community.

Thank you to all our members



Check us out on YouTube:
[youtube.com/user/SUSKNational](https://www.youtube.com/user/SUSKNational)

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“The Institute”: a much-needed spot

By Anastasiya Gorodnicha

One lovely summer evening, I was taking a stroll with my parents. We were talking about life: our week, our plans, just the usual. We were discussing how things were obviously changing a lot these days, and with it being my fourth and final year at the University of Ottawa, I was telling them about the ways in which I have adapted my study habits.

First of all, I transformed my sister's spare bedroom into a home office — in which I have two desks available to anyone who needs it (mostly me). Next, I researched the best note-taking platform, to really get the most out of my online learning. Finally, I bought all the right highlighters, notebooks and agenda that would help me succeed.

However, there was something missing. I realized that with campus being almost fully closed, there was nowhere for me to go on a late Tuesday night to do some last minute cramming. As nice it is to study at home, I find a certain comfort in being able to get away for a few hours in a totally different environment to let my creative mind flow.

And that's when it happened. I felt that students needed an alternative space to study — because given recent circumstances, the campus is not ideal. I usually went to a bright open space and made sure to have a lot of room to spread out my notes and laptop. Obviously, this isn't really an option anymore.

My idea is to create a study space in an office building and completely transform it into a cozy, comfortable, quiet, clean and monitored study area. We



would provide free coffee and tea (with a membership fee of course) and would have a sign-up system.

I find a certain comfort... in a totally different environment to let my creative mind flow

The goal would be to have a seat available to anyone who needed it, without the stress of going to an overly crowded or loud study spot. It would be located in Ottawa, but hopefully expand in more than one location, and maybe even more than one city.

I want to call it “The Institute,” so that it would slip right off the tongue, but also have a sophisticated name. Plus, in Ukrainian, “Instytut” is another word for university, so I would be adding a personal touch to the name.

As soon as I thought of this, I phoned my boyfriend, who is currently trying to start a busi-

ness. He told me he liked the idea, but that he had a few pointers in mind.

He mentioned that students don't like to pay for things, so I would need to figure out a way to want them to invest in this. He asked me about all of the restrictions I would need to take into account.

That night, I was reading “Girl, Stop Apologizing” by Rachel Hollis (best self-help book EVER), and right then and there she convinced me to start my business. I started brainstorming different ideas I had. Price points, equipment, budgets and staff. I decided to do some market research, so I made a survey that asked a bunch of preliminary questions. It was geared towards students specifically at uOttawa, then I posted it on Facebook and got 41 responses. Of course, a monetary draw was offered (no one does anything for free nowadays).

I never thought in a million years that I would want to become an entrepreneur. I mean, nothing against them, in fact quite the opposite. I've seen my boyfriend work tireless nights to find the perfect product to sell.

Don't get me wrong, I do have a strong work ethic, but I was steered in a completely different direction. I would say entrepreneurship would be the complete opposite of where I saw my career going, which is security intelligence.

I never thought...that I would want to become an entrepreneur

This idea is definitely not my end goal, but I'm very excited to see what will happen with it! I'm so excited to see my idea flourish, and even more excited to take on a challenge that I never thought I would undertake.

My Ukrainian-Canadian story, one stitch at a time

By Dayna Konopelny

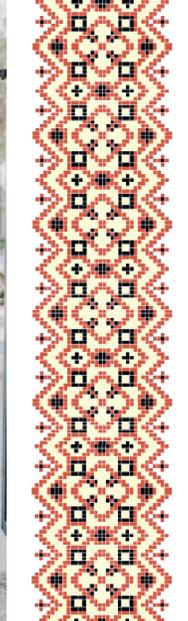
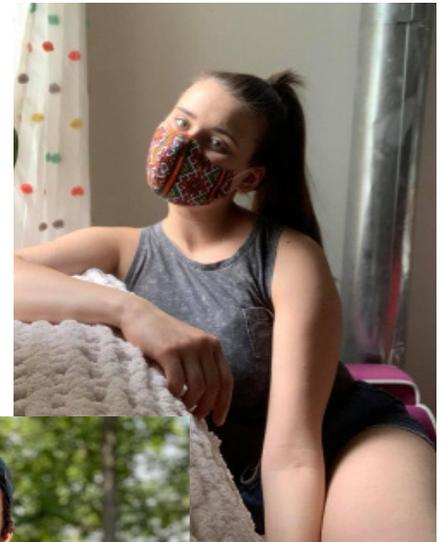
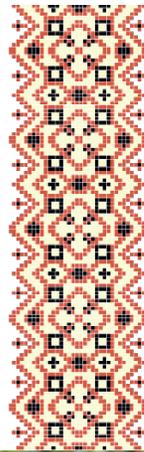
Emilka Kono began with me striving to tell the story of my life as a Canadian-Ukrainian. I grew up in a Ukrainian bubble in the north end of Winnipeg. I went to a Ukrainian elementary school and my closest friends were and still are Ukrainian. I was immersed in Ukrainian art and culture, from embroidery and iconography to music and dancing. The homes I grew up in and those of my friends were filled with Ukrainian artwork, many speaking to the experiences of Ukrainians living on the prairies. The embroidery was everywhere and I fell in love with the patterns, colours and textures.

The surplus of embroidery in homes always amazed me and I found it interesting how many pieces don't leave storage due to stains or just not being the nicest piece. I aim to reflect my story in my jackets by giving new life to the embroidery I love so dearly. Furthermore, my denim jacket was an irreplaceable staple growing up and almost everyone has a denim jacket hanging around their home. I like to think of my work as a contemporary Canadian-Ukrainian tuxedo.

As the pandemic has emerged, I decided to take on a new challenge with designing masks. This was a great opportunity to use up old fabric I had sitting around that was not suitable for jackets. It also was an opportunity to give myself a purpose with school, internship, and my part-time job all ending abruptly. I decided to donate \$2 from each mask to the Ukrainian nursing home in Winnipeg. I

have been a life-long volunteer there and also worked there for a few years before moving for school. It broke my heart thinking about the residents sitting alone in their rooms everyday, making an already lonely and isolating life heightened. I will be releasing new masks in the early fall, and will continue to give \$2 from each mask.

Sustainability is at the forefront of my brand and is something that I am extremely proud to be known for. I aim to be very conscious of my environmental impact and although my process isn't perfect, I constantly strive to get better at implementing sustainable practices. Another focus for the Emilka Kono brand is creating sustainable communities and giving back to the communities most important to me. I hope with Emilka Kono I can inspire shoppers to consider the impact of shopping sustainably and to show that there's an incredible story behind each and every piece.



SUSK Execs: Adapting Christmas traditions



President
Roman Grod

Every year, my favourite thing to look forward to around Christmas time is going carolling. Since we can't go in-person this year, I hope that our virtual Koliada campaign can still bring happiness and joy to our community members.



VP National
Devon Sereda Goldie

Every year, I fly from Victoria to Edmonton to gather together with my extended family for Ukrainian Christmas dinner. Since it isn't safe for me to travel, we'll be meeting virtually via Zoom. It may not be the same, but we'll still be together — and that's what matters.



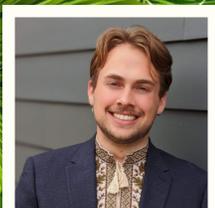
VP Finance
Irina Boyko

I love getting together with my friends for Secret Santa and a games night. This year, we'll have a virtual games night and a drop-off Secret Santa gift exchange to adhere to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.



Alumni Director
Raissa Dzulynsky

I love going skiing with my cousins every year as part of our Christmas traditions. This year, we'll be getting together over Zoom and potentially go skiing for one day, if possible.



Secretary
Chase Gargus

Every year, my family gets together on my grandparents' farm and my grandmother makes all of our favourite Ukrainian foods. Since we can't get together this year, I'm determined to learn how to make all of our favourite Ukrainian foods to keep the tradition alive.

On Jan. 6 and 7, my family from out-of-province comes to my home in Saskatoon for Christmas dinner. Since in-person gatherings are limited, we'll have to adapt to connecting over Zoom or Skype this year.



VP West
Nykola Dovgyy



VP Central
Larisa Hemon

Every year for Ukrainian Christmas, my family gets together — we all play instruments and bring out the accordions, violins and singing voices! This year, we can't get together, so it'll be a lot quieter in the house but still special nonetheless.



to COVID-19 health & safety guidelines



VP East
Marc Darmohraj

My favourite tradition is getting together with my cousins and making pyrohy from scratch. We'll have to make them separately this year, but we still get to eat in the end!

A tradition my family holds is travelling and going skiing on Christmas Day. This year, we've decided to stay home and do the next best thing aside from downhill skiing — cross-country skiing!



Internal Relations Director
Danya Pankiw



External Relations Director
Anastasiya Gorodnicha

Every year, I look forward to celebrating the New Year with a big group of friends and family, since it is a tradition we've held since immigrating from Ukraine to Canada. This year, we'll have to celebrate with a much smaller group of friends and family.

I love meeting up with my cousins every Christmas since I don't get to see them as often as I'd like. This year, because of the pandemic, we'll be meeting virtually over Zoom.



Project Director
Kira Dzulynsky



Media Director
Danya Pankiw

My favourite Christmas tradition is going to the Toronto Christmas Market and seeing the festive lights. However, the market is closed this year, so instead I've visited various parts of the neighbourhood to see Christmas lights.

My favourite tradition is going carolling with my friends—it's the perfect excuse to enter strangers' homes and sing with our mediocre voices; receiving drinks and snacks in return. Instead, this year we'll be carolling virtually through SUSK's Koliada campaign!



Student Editor
Alexandra Holyk



Past President
Stephanie Nedoshytko

Usually, my family celebrates Christmas on Dec. 24 and 25, and on Jan. 6 and 7. This year, let us share our traditions with those outside of the Ukrainian community through online platforms!



Check out our Christmas greetings and what we've been up to on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/user/SUSKNational

What it means to give back

How Ukrainians in Canada can help back home



By Roman Grod

No matter what part of the country you were raised in, and regardless of church or organizational affiliation, a common question is posed to all Ukrainian-Canadians, “How can we give back to Ukraine?”

Part of the Ukrainian Canadian Students’ Union’s (SUSK) mandate is not only to continue to support and foster cultural identity for students in Canada, but educate them on what it means to be Ukrainian and the opportunities we have to make Ukraine a better and stronger country.

There are many ways to define what it means to support Ukraine, and many ways in which you can support Ukraine. To fully understanding giving back and giving back to Ukraine, it is important to break it down into three questions; 1. What does it mean to give back? 2. How can you, as a student, support Ukraine?

3. How does supporting Ukraine and the community benefit you?

It is difficult to define supporting Ukraine, as people’s relationships with Ukraine vary vastly even within SUSK itself. Within our membership alone, we have individuals who are fourth generation Ukrainian-Canadians all the way to new immigrants.

To everyone, giving back has a different meaning

To everyone, giving back has a different meaning. To me, the simplest definition is using the skills, knowledge, expertise and anything else you have to offer for the benefit of another group or individual.

Let me explain; over the last four years in SUSK, I have held three different positions—all of which allowed me to give back to SUSK and support the broader Ukrainian student community using my distinct skills,

knowledge and expertise.

As alumni director in 2017-18, I alongside a few others successfully launched the Endowment Campaign that would help financially secure SUSK’s future. Here, I was able to use my connections and skills such as my ability to present and educate for the benefit of the SUSK endowment.

Vice-president finance presented its own opportunities as I was able to use my knowledge of government filings and reporting as well as accounting methods to put SUSK in a good position going forward; considering we were officially registered as a not-for-profit organization.

The position of president is one that truly is a test of all your skills and really allows you to give everything you have to offer for the benefit of SUSK.

“How can we, as students, support Ukraine?” This is a question that I receive quite often. There is no right or wrong

answer; It’s whatever you are passionate about.

Here are some of my suggestions: Get involved with various organizations. Whether it’s through the Ukrainian Youth Association with their English language camps in Ukraine, Help Us Help the Children with their camps for orphans in Ukraine, or Dzhirelo with their rehabilitation and education programs in Ukraine.

Anyone and everyone can give back to Ukraine no matter their skill set. There are so many organizations within our community that can and will benefit from your interest and support.

Giving back will broaden your network on a global level.

In my position as SUSK president, I have been able to meet Ukrainians around the world in various organizations that SUSK can now leverage to help educate the next generation. For this year’s planned congress, we had the Ambassadors of Ukraine to Canada and of Canada to Ukraine lined up as guest speakers to educate us on Canada-Ukraine relations.

An experience like no other.

I have taken on roles and responsibilities that in a normal corporate environment would take me years to achieve. The experience and often the responsibilities you are given in volunteer organizations exceed any responsibilities you are given in the corporate world, especially as a student with little experience going into the role.

A sense of satisfaction.

A lot of people can make a difference, some do it on a global level and others on a regional. Nelson Mandela said it best, “We can change the world and make it a better place, it is in your hands to make a difference.”

Supporting yourself during the pandemic

By Diana Kachaluba

It is no secret that the pandemic known as COVID-19 has greatly impacted and changed life as we know it. As a young student, these are supposed to be the best years of my life—enjoying university, making memories with my friends and trying new things; At least that's what I thought it would be like.

Whether it be starting a new job, or travelling to Europe, the pandemic essentially pressed pause on everyone's 2020 plans. Like the rest of the world, I am confined to the four walls I call home.

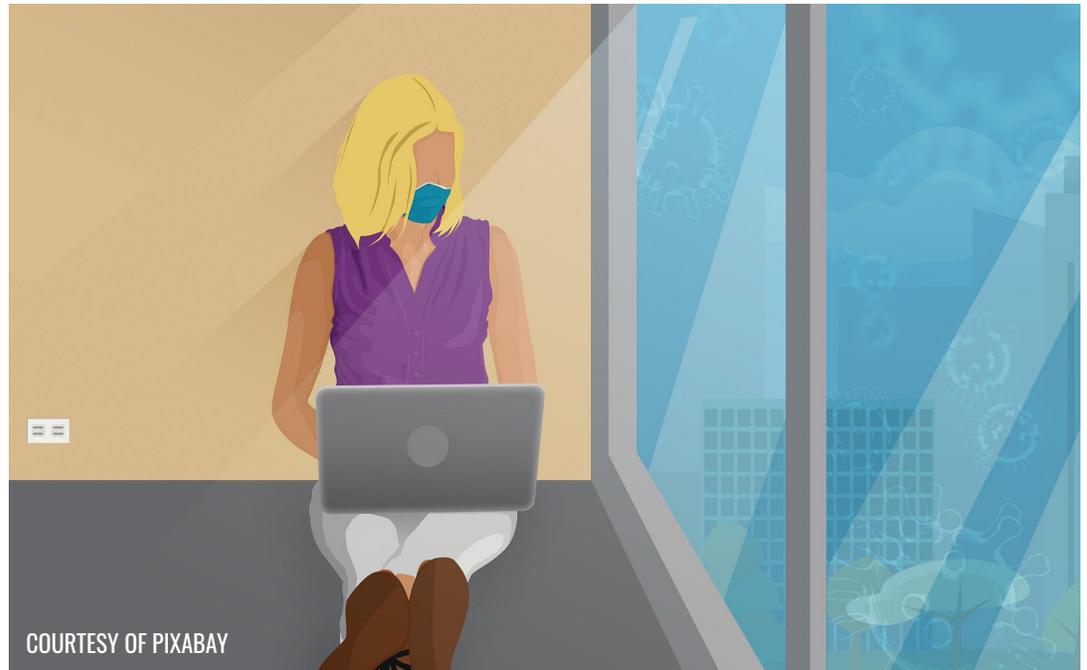
I consider myself an extrovert; I love being around people and I always need to be doing something. That being said, you could see how being forced to sit at home would make me go somewhat crazy.

After about a week of enjoying being able to sleep in and not having to commute to Ryerson University's downtown Toronto campus, I found myself bored. I had to find a new hobby, and I had to find one quickly.

In the months of March to August, I basically tried everything in the books.

I started out with a deep clean of my room—and when I say deep, I mean even those drawers that you pretend don't exist but have been filling up with random things for years.

As much as I found a clean room satisfying, that kept me occupied for about two days, so I decided it was time to try something I've always said I was going to do but never had the "time" for: exercise. My friends and I would Zoom every day for two weeks and complete a



workout challenge together, which was super fun, but by far the most challenging two weeks of my life. Once it got warmer, I would go on bike rides with my friends, which was definitely the highlight of the pandemic.

The pandemic essentially pressed pause on everyone's 2020 plans

As much as I enjoyed finding new things to keep me busy, I was missing one thing; a source of income. Due to everything being shut down, my summer job plans fell through and I was stuck unemployed like many other students.

Luckily, the government helped with the Canadian Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), but come September, I was back at square one. After talking to my parents and exploring many options, I finally found the perfect

opportunity: tutoring. With the new non-traditional method of schooling—where there is a mix of online and in-person learning.

Many parents are looking for additional help for their kids, and I was confident that I could meet this need, so I put out an ad in the popular 'Ukrainian Moms of Toronto' Facebook page.

Multiple parents reached out to me, and now I work with five kids on a weekly basis to help them with homework, prepare for tests and just provide some extra support for those trickier concepts. This gives me a chance to help out some struggling students, as well as keep myself busy with the perfect balance of work and school.

Like most other things, the process is a little different than usual, seeing that we have to keep COVID-19 health and safety protocols in mind. Some families feel more comfortable with online lessons, so I work with them via Zoom. Other students

I work with in-person. Upon arrival, I wash my hands and make sure to sanitize. While working with a student, I keep a distance that is safe for both of us, yet still allows me to monitor their work. Finally, should I or the students feel any symptoms, the lesson is cancelled until further notice.

The only way to get through it is to keep a positive outlook

Although life is a little unconventional right now, I've learned that the only way to get through it is to keep a positive outlook and to make the most of it. Use this time to work on yourself and do that one thing you've always wanted to try; learn a new recipe, take on a new hobby, start that business you've always wanted to. Believe in yourself and keep an open mind and you'll be amazed with what you can achieve.

Start your own at-home boulangerie



By Chase Gargus

As I'm writing this, we're coming into the fourth month of quarantine and boy has this put a lot of things into perspective for me. Over these past couple of weeks, I've really been struggling to adapt to this new way of life. With school cancelled and my job prospects looking pretty bleak I've been left with a lot of time on my hands. I remember when I would've been stoked for something like this to happen, back when exams and deadlines were the norm, but now that I'm living it, all this free time has quickly lost its appeal.

I for one have been struggling to stay productive. My daily trek from my bedroom to the couch got old quick and there's only so many TikToks and Netflix comedy specials a guy can watch. I realized that if the world was going to lose its structure, it was up to me to provide myself with a routine. This in amongst itself can be pretty tough but after months of trial and error, I'm happy to report that it is getting easier. If you're like me and you too have fallen into a never-ending loop of TikTok and Netflix, here are my steps on how I got out of my funk.

STEP 1: Re-discover your hobbies

I have always loved cooking, but it was one of those things that got put on the backburner over the school year. For me, this quarantine stretching on longer and longer has given me a great opportunity to flex my culinary muscles a bit. If you've been spending anytime on social media lately, I'm sure you've seen the sourdough trend making its rounds. If TikTok user @lapetitebette can make baking sourdough look easy, I was confident that I could do it too.

STEP 2: Gather your supplies

It turned out that becoming a home baker wouldn't be as easy as I had originally thought. Apparently I wasn't the only one inspired to bake over quarantine and everyone and their dog is trying their hand at being a pâtissier. Flour has become a hot commodity and finding some can be pretty tricky. With this in mind I can only offer a little advice: beg, borrow, or steal what you can. If your local supermarket is out of the powdered goods, maybe you'll get lucky like me and have some friends that are willing to lend you some.

STEP 3: Execution

At the beginning of my journey I had never made sourdough before. Turns out there are a couple more steps involved than with your traditional yeasted bread. Sourdough starts off with something called a "starter," an equal parts mixture of flour and water. If kept warm, fed, and given lots of positive affirmations, it will become the leavener for your bread. I named mine Fleur and she is my baby. Honestly folks,

caring for a starter is probably the best part of making sourdough. If you're like me and your landlord doesn't allow you to have pets, a sourdough starter is a good second choice. I feed my starter every morning and it's a great way to get me out of bed.

Once your starter is matured, it can finally be used for baking. There are lots of different sourdough recipes out there, believe me—I've tried a good chunk of them. The trick is finding one that works for you. You'll hear people talk about things like ratios and hydration levels and blah blah blah. In my opinion, baking comes from the heart.

It may be my Ukrainian roots talking but I prefer to eyeball my recipes. Perhaps not the best strategy for baking, if my success with sourdough is anything to go by, but it definitely keeps the process fun. Overall, making sourdough is a long process, with the vast majority of your time being spent letting your dough rest, but believe me — once you get a taste of what is probably the most delicious homemade bread, it will all be

worth it.

STEP 4: Enjoy the fruits of your labour

I've made a lot of sourdough along this journey, all with varying degrees of success, but I'm finally satisfied with the way this one turned out. Sourdough can be pretty tricky and its easy for your dough to be too wet or too dry. Let me assure you though that even if your sourdough doesn't look the best, I can almost guarantee that it will taste great.

Maybe making sourdough isn't for everyone, but it helped give some kind of structure to my day. Whether the final project works out or not, it gives me something to work towards. My motto with sourdough has really become "keep trying—they'll get better" and honestly, it's been as true for my baking as it has been for my life. Every loaf has been a little bit better just like every day in quarantine is a little bit better than the last.

With this in mind, whether you end up making sourdough yourself or not, I hope you too can find a way to let your passion shine.

Chase's completed sourdough bread.



SUSK to launch virtual Koliada campaign

By Alexandra Holyk

The Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union (SUSK) will be launching a virtual Koliada campaign during the month of January.

The campaign is open to all Ukrainian post-secondary student organizations part of SUSK's membership, which includes more than 25 university and college clubs across the country.

"Many of our Ukrainian student organizations annually organize Koliada as a fundraiser... and are very dependent on that income in order to pay for their activities," SUSK vice-president Devon Sereda Goldie said. "This year because of COVID-19...having groups of students going from home to home is just not feasible."

Sereda Goldie mentioned that SUSK president Roman Grod came up with the idea to hold a virtual Christmas carolling campaign after watching a virtual performance of Edmonton's Viter Ukrainian Dancers and Folk Choir singing the Canadian national anthem.

"It looked very much like a Zoom call—all the singers singing from their own individual homes," Sereda Goldie said.

The SUSK board of directors will also be taking part in the campaign, singing "Тиха Ніч" or "Silent Night." However, SUSK alumni director Raissa Dzulynsky pointed out that the funds collected from donors to the campaign will strictly go toward the students' clubs.

"Through this campaign, we want our student organizations to know that SUSK is here to help in times of need," she said.

"The money that's raised during the Koliada campaign will be split evenly amongst the

Ukrainian student organizations that participate," Sereda Goldie added. "Every single club that participates will benefit."

The initiative comes after SUSK held its Giving Tuesday campaign on Dec. 1. The organization raised \$700—all of which going toward SUSK's endowment fund.

SUSK's Endowment Fund

"The money for the endowment fund will be going toward providing sustainability for SUSK long-term, helping to pay for our national coordinator who is our one staff person and for providing resources for our Ukrainian student organizations," Sereda Goldie said.

SUSK's endowment fund was started in 2017 in an effort to uphold the organization using more than just its short-term financial resources. Due to its frequent turnover rate—student members are graduating annual-

ly — SUSK wanted sustainability to prevent it from falling apart.

With its \$1 million endowment goal, SUSK hopes to allocate \$12,000 per year toward its student clubs for funding and support; \$6,000 per year toward events, including its annual congress; and \$6,000 per year toward its continuity by developing and maintaining its student membership.

The Shevchenko Foundation manages the fund on SUSK's behalf and provides donors with charitable tax receipts.

"By creating this Designated Fund, SUSK has shown a high degree of commitment to the future of its organization and our community," stated Lesia Szwaluk, executive director of the Shevchenko Foundation, on SUSK's website.

SUSK also has a Christmas card campaign taking place throughout the month of December.

Dzulynsky said the cards will be mailed out to all of SUSK's contacts either thanking them for their donations and support or with information about the endowment fund.

In order to take part in the Koliada campaign, Ukrainian students' clubs are asked to get in contact with their regional SUSK vice-presidents.

Eight Ukrainian students' clubs have signed up so far—students from McGill University, L'Université de Montréal, the University of Victoria, the University of Saskatchewan, McMaster University, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto and Carleton University.

Those who donate to the campaign will receive a link to a YouTube playlist to view the carolling videos from the student clubs. Donations can be made through SUSK's website.





WANTED

SUSK is looking for contributors for its
Student issues! Whether you want to
write, share photos or design/illustrate,
reach out to our Student Editor

Alexandra Holyk by email:

student@susk.ca

