



ASPER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
COMMERCE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
CREATE YOUR LEGACY

Commerce Students' Association

Impact Report

2024-2025



A Message from the CSA President

This year marks the Commerce Students' Association's 80th year of operation. What a fantastic milestone to have reached! Over these past 80 years, a lot of things have changed. The world is a different place with technology and culture rapidly evolving and changing. A new building was built to give Commerce students' a home base. The CSA has grown to a council of over sixty people with over eighty events. Events have been retired. New events have been added. Events have changed and evolved with students. Despite all the change, some things will never change.

The CSA remains committed as ever to its mission of enriching the undergraduate experience of students at the I.H. Asper School of Business. Every person who takes part in this organization commits themselves to this mission. We are here for the students and that was true eighty years ago. It is true today and it will remain true for as long as the Commerce Students' Association exists.

Over this past year, my team highlighted themes we wanted to focus on including accessibility, sustainability and collaboration. Our primary focus for accessibility was a free ticket program to allow more students to attend our professional development and academic events. We also explored options to make it easier for students to find transportation to our events. Another theme of this year was collaboration. We held multiple events in partnership with the University of Manitoba Engineering Society and hope to continue this relationship in the future. We were also invited to participate in a university wide conference for student leaders as well as several other events including a year end celebration and a dinner with the Vice Provost (Students). Our finance team sought to digitize our back end, putting countless hours in to make our operations paperless and more sustainable.

In addition to new initiatives, our flagship events continue to grow in size and value. We attracted new partners to our professional development and academic events and innovated new ways to raise funds and awareness for our charity campaigns. We expanded the ways we connected with students, increasing our in-person presence through in-person marketing and a waffle breakfast in the CSA office.

I am grateful for the team that I had the privilege of working with this year. Each and every member of the 2024-2025 CSA Council put in countless hours and poured their heart into this organization. It is bittersweet to pass the torch on to our next team but I know they will carry the torch well. To the 2025- 2026 CSA Council, take care of her for us, won't you?

Sincerely,

Melani Fernando

CSA President 2024-2025



CSA Mission

We strive to enrich the undergraduate student experience at the I.H. Asper School of Business through unique events and professional development opportunities that foster meaningful relationships with the greater business community.

CSA Vision

FOR 2024-2025

The CSA is a welcoming and collaborative student-led organization, serving as a support system for students to foster their personal and professional development.

Fast Facts for 2025



28

NEW EVENTS &
INITIATIVES



9000+

TICKETS ISSUED
FOR OUR EVENTS



19.5%

Increase in engagement
from students new to the
CSA

100% Sell Out Rate for Commerce Socials

\$22k+ Raised Collectively for our Charities

215 Student Attendees at Business Banquet

60 Returning & **11** New Corporate Partners

54 General Council Members

\$20k+ Disbursed in Student
Aid

80+ CSA Events

New Initiatives

The CSA achieved a record-breaking 28 new events and initiatives in the 2024-2025 year. These events and initiatives were created to promote accessibility, sustainability, and enhance programs that foster the personal and professional development of Asper students.

**Student Action Group
Information Session**

Blanket Exercise x UMICS

Study Resource Guide

Internal Workshops:
Leadership

Internal Workshops:
Communication

First Year Dodgeball x UMES

Free Ticket Program

**Commerce Students'
Scholarship**

**Monthly General Council
Newsletter**

Asper Wrapped

Merch Pre-Orders

Networking 101: BB x CDC

Black History Month Panel

FYC x UMES Trivia

Commerce Cares Bookclub

**Digitized Financial
Operations**

**International Students'
Gingerbread House Night**

80th Anniversary

**Commerce Students
Conference**

CSA Waffle Day

AI Panel

5 Days: Dodgeball

5 Days: Krispy Kreme Donut
Sale

5 Days: Lunch Sale

Shinerama: "Inhale the
Goodness" and "Life with CF"

Shinerama: Shine Market

Shinerama: Drop in Dance

Shinerama: Pickleball

STAG Impact Report



Engagement

The CSA's social media and merch focused on being casual and relatable to students, seeing growth as a result.

Social Media



3809 followers
161,000+ monthly impressions



1,423 followers

Merchandise

24% increase in
gross sales

Council Recruitment

100+

General Council
Interviews

60%

BIPOC

31%

International

13%

2SLGBTQIA+

85%

New

260+

Committee
Interviews

67%

BIPOC

35%

International

8%

2SLGBTQIA+

74%

New

The CSA saw an 11% increase in applications with an average 19.5% increase in the number of applicants new to the organization in the 2024-2025 year.

Partnerships

The CSA Corporate Relations Portfolio is responsible for maintaining partner relations and securing sponsorship for events within the CSA Corporate Partners Program. Some achievements this year include:



- **60** Corporate Partners contributed to the CSA in the 2024-2025 annual program, with **11 Partners being new to the CSA.**
- **Sponsorship contributions** totalled **\$ 180,475.**
- **590+ Corporate Representatives interacted with students** at our various events throughout the year. The CSA and STAGs are proud to have collectively created this many engagement opportunities for students!

Financials

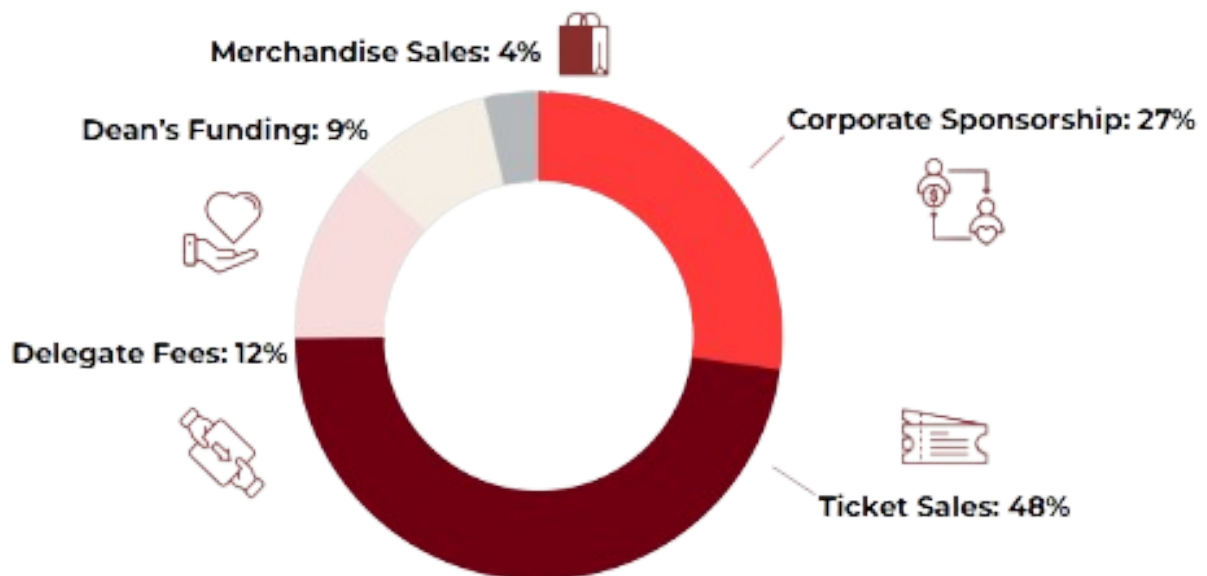
The CSA Finance Portfolio is responsible for maintaining the organization's financial health, tracking revenues and supporting event planners in budgeting. Over the past fifteen years, the CSA has seen a **9.5% compounded annual growth rate**.

Over this past year, the Finance portfolio shifted the CSA's operations to online platforms, **fully digitizing the CSA's internal financial operations**. This includes moving to an online payment system and digitizing audit files.

The CSA also made a significant investment in the form of a GIC. The investment revenue has been allocated to a new scholarship. The Commerce Students' Scholarship offers two students scholarships of \$2000 each and is awarded on the basis of community involvement and academic merit.



Revenue Breakdown



Student Services

The CSA is dedicated to providing students access to resources that empower them to excel both personally and professionally. The VP Internal is in charge of overseeing many services offered to students through the CSA. This year, some achievements include:

- **Connected students to 17 potential employers** for individual meeting opportunities with the “Take a Student to Eat” (TASTE) program.
- **Introduced a brand new scholarship valued at \$2000** to support undergraduate students in continuing their education and reward student involvement.
- **Launched the CSA Free Ticket program** and provided over 20 students with free access to CSA’s professional development and academic events.
- **Continued the conversation through the CSA’s EDI in Action panel series.** Topics included: Black History Month and Business; Allyship and Advocacy; Diversity in Recruitment; and Intersectionality of Identity.
- The **First Year Committee raised over \$2000** for their 2 chosen charities, the Main Street Project and Dream Factory.
- Hosted 14 Student Action Groups at the **3rd Annual STAG Start Up Conference** for a day of learning and collaboration.
- **Support the re-activation of 3 new Student Action Groups (STAGs)** - A Network of Empowered Women (ANEW), The Entrepreneurial Mindset (TEM), University of Manitoba Human Resources Association (UMHRA)
- **Launched the CSA Study Resource Guide** which compiled study tricks and tips for incoming students to help them adjust to life as a university student
- **Loaned 17 laptops to students** through the CSA Laptop Loaner Program.



Events

The CSA offers a variety of events and programming centered around four main areas of interest: professional development, academics, community, and student life. Our four VP Events are responsible for overseeing all of the events the association hosts throughout the year. Some achievements within our events include:



Professional Development

- **Hosted the 58th Annual Commerce Business Banquet.** In total, 215 students attended the banquet, with 311 total attendees. The event theme was “Illuminate” and the keynote speaker was CEO of Prolex Media Alex Streltsov.
- **Welcomed 156 delegates** from 17 schools across the country at the National Business School Conference (NBSC). This annual conference is specifically designed for professional development of Business Student Association executives and is held in November.
- **Executed the Corporate Golf Tournament**, which saw over 60 attendees and 9 corporate partners (including 3 new partners) at Bridges Golf Course.
- **Hosted the 1st Annual Commerce Students’ Conference (CSC)** at the University of Manitoba. This year’s theme was Navigating the New Era. Speakers included Geeta Tucker, Sarah Giesbrecht, Adam Hanson, Vanessa Mancini, and Doug Darling.
- **Conducted the Networking 101 Panel**, inviting students, alumni, and Asper staff to discuss networking, share tips, and help younger students attend their first networking feeling confident and comfortable.



Events

Academics

- **Continued our introductory case competitions** expanding our engagement particularly among first year students. Over 75 students participated with 60 of those students being new to case. Over 25 industry judges volunteered their time to our competitions.
- **Partnered with local organizations** in the development of real-world business cases to be used in internal competitions across 4 different industries.
- **Hosted two “Case Competition 101” sessions** in partnership with Asper Case Experience by Students (ACES) and the Experiential Learning Office to support students looking to improve their case skills.
- **Hosted the 2024 Fall Graduation Dinner**, welcoming over 90 students, family, friends, and faculty to The Radisson.
- **Hosted the 7th annual CSA Tour de Commerce.** The event saw 130 student attendees and 12 corporate companies involved across four streams. The event was filled with a day of networking and closed with a Wine & Cheese.
- **Organized tutoring sessions for fall and winter finals season.** Tutoring sessions were held for Corporate Finance, Financial Accounting, & Managerial Accounting. An average of 29 students attended each of the six tutoring sessions. The sessions were extended in length.
- **Expanded the Online Tutoring Directory** which engaged 45 students in 10 different courses.
- **Hosted the 2025 Winter Graduation Dinner**, welcoming over 230 students, family, friends, and faculty to The MET.
- **Issued funding for 17 students to attend external competitions.**



Events

Student Life



- **Executed “The Commerce Week” (TCW).** The week consisted of an Orientation Day, a STAG & Career Fair, a Textbook Sale, a new Local Business Fair, and a Food Truck Fair. Significant changes were made to the programming of this event due to the closure of the Duckworth Quad. The social was moved to the Pyramid Cabaret, demonstrating the team’s adaptability.
- **Hosted the CSA’s 7th annual Student Appreciation Week (SAW).** This week consisted of giveaways, coffee days, free breakfasts, lunches, dog therapy, and a photo booth.
- **Executed the CSA’s second Small Business Fair.** This placed a highlight on Asper student-run ventures.
- **Achieved a 100% sell-out rate for the 2024-25 Commerce Socials** - 550 attendees for Commerce on the Pyramid, 1400 at Halloween Shocker, and 3500 at Commerce Carol, and ended the year with a Socials rebrand to get next year started right!
- **Introduced a new wellness initiative, Commerce Cares Book Club** with over 30 participants.
- **Facilitated the Asper Peer Mentorship Program.** This program engaged over 50 students. Pairings were determined based on academic interests, hobbies, and extra curriculars.
- **Hosted the annual Commerce Cares Coffeehouse,** which sparked conversation surrounding mental health topics and featured six local UofM performers. This year, a panel of mental health experts was convened to share coping strategies with attendees.

Community Impact

The CSA recognizes the importance of giving back to the community. Each year, the CSA actively engages in a variety of initiatives to support international student engagement and hosts charity campaigns such as Shinerama and 5 Days.

Shinerama

- **Executed two full Shine Days** - Shine Day External collecting donations across the city, including 201 Portage and the Brodie Centre. Shine Day Internal hosted on campus. Local businesses and food trucks joined the Shine committee to help bring students to the Quad.
- **Hosted additional fundraiser events** such as a drop in dance class, a trivia night, a pickleball tournament, and more!
- **Launched two new awareness campaigns** to share the lived experiences of those living with Cystic Fibrosis.



9,601.65

RAISED FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS CANADA



5 Days

- **Hosted 5 Acts** - Set the stage for five local performers including Mourning Glory, Treestop Bluesband, Apple Fire, Paradise on Fire, and Orvis to raise funds and awareness for youth experiencing homelessness.
- **Hosted additional fundraiser events** such as a Dodgeball tournament, Bake Sale, Krispy Kreme Donut sale, and a Lunch Sale with Belltower Cafe.
- **Organized a tour of RaY** to increase awareness of the support they offer to Winnipeg youth.

\$10,144.47

RAISED FOR RESOURCE
ASSISTANT FOR YOUTH (RaY)



Community Impact



International Student Engagement

- **Introduced the CSA Cultural Ambassador Program** - Six students from various backgrounds were recruited to serve as ambassadors of their respective cultures and increase cross-cultural understanding within the CSA.
- **Hosted the annual Cultural Day** - a vibrant celebration of Asper's diverse student body featuring cultural booths, food tastings, and a variety of performances.
- **\$10,000 in scholarships** given to ten exceptional international students who displayed good academic performance and participation in extracurricular activities.

General Council Outreach

- **54 General Council members** volunteered 10 hours of their time to community organizations.
- **Most volunteer hours** were completed by John Lodge with 124 hours logged.
- **40 internal events volunteered at**, including our various charity campaigns and professional development events.
- **35+ local charities volunteered at**, including Folk Fest, Harvest Manitoba, Seven Oaks General Hospital, Misericordia Health Center, The Associates, Clan Mothers Healing Village and Knowledge Centre, and more!



1000+
HOURS VOLUNTEERED

Awards

Canadian Association of Business Schools (CABS)

These awards are issued by the Canadian Association of Business Schools (CABS) at the annual Roundtable Conference. They are awarded through a nomination and voting process that includes member school executives from across the country.



Melani Fernando - President of the Year

Awarded to the Business Student Association President who gave their heart and soul to their BSA this year. Through supporting their team and their student community, they exemplifies passion and dedication to their students and will leave a lasting legacy on their BSA.

Nick Ridley - Executive All-Star

Awarded to the Business Student Association executive who best exemplifies passion, dedication, and going above and beyond their typical role or job description for the betterment of their respective business school student communities.

Finalists:

- Cora Hildebrant, Alumni All-Star
- the Blanket Exercise with UMICS, Best New Initiative
- University of Manitoba Sports Business Association, Subsidiary Club of the Year
- Commerce Cares, Best Wellness Initiative

CSA Student Leadership Gala

This year, the CSA hosted the Second Annual Student Leadership Gala to recognize the work of student leaders at Asper. Awards were given out to STAGs, CSA General Council, and Committee to recognize the leaders who went above and beyond their roles.

2025 Award Winners

Ethan Lee

Rising Leader Award

Fernanda Recabarren

STAG All-Star

Mylea Hildebrand

STAG All-Star

UMQAS Business

Pride Fair

Initiative of the Year

**University of Manitoba Supply
Chain Organization**

Perserverance Award

**Asper School of Business
Accounting Organization**

Student Group of the Year

John Lodge

Outstanding Leadership Award

Alena Villarin

General Council All-Star

Daniel Eng

General Council All-Star

Alishba Afzal

Committee All-Star

Cassandra Eaterson

Committee All-Star

The CSA Council

The CSA is comprised of 9 Executives and 54 General Council positions. Below are the hard-working individuals who are behind the exceptional performance this year.

President

Melani Fernando

Executive Assistant

Anisha Anderson

Advocacy Representative

Cameron Provost

Marketing

Gabrielle Baetiong, VPM

Content Creators

Joaquin Narvaez, Charmaine Li, Therese Ronatay, and Carol Girgis

Merchandise Coordinator

Briana Socha

Social Media Coordinator

Kayla Normandeau

Academics

Angelinne Seguinte, VPA

Case Competition Co-Chairs

Ethan Lee and Elliot Thordarson

Graduation & Alumni

Coordinators

Karen Jenson and Abi Desserre

Student Development

Coordinators

Jenna Buchwald and Yvette Madarang

Internal

Christabel Agyei Gyamfi, VPI

Human Resource Coordinators

Syeda Tanha Rishta and Nicole Franco

EDI Officer

Sammi Oni

Internal Relations Coordinator

Lily Sousa

2SLGBTQIA+ Representative

Winnie Carey

Indigenous Representative

John Lodge

First Year Representative

Simreen Shahi and Xavier Lavergne

Corporate Relations

Reis Best, VPCR

Manager of Corporate Relations

Ben Penner, Jack Murray, Matthew Carriere, Avery Bollegraf, Aleana Villarin, Nati Tadesse, and Maximus Preston

Manager of Corporate Outreach

Victoria Ranville

Community

Francine Alcedo, VPC

Shinerama Co-Chairs

Cynthia Tran and Phoebe De Silva

5 Days Co-Chairs

Juliana Dabalos and Matthew Fullerton

International Engagement Coordinators

Que Minh Do and Elizabeth Ashaju

Finance

Nick Ridley, VPF

Accounts Payable

Ridhima Batla

Accounts Receivable

Jillian Piwniuk

Internal Auditor

Romina Mazhari Ravesh

Ticketing & Analytics Coordinator

Fernanda Recabarren

Data Coordinator

John Ladroma

Professional Development

Shaelynn Su, VPP

Business Banquet Co-Chairs

Daniel Eng and Sam Iwabuchi

National Business School

Conference Co-Chairs

Mickael Gier and Leticia Cunha

External Events Coordinators

Yumna Imran and Matthew Esguerra

Student Life

Saad Hayat, VPSL

The Commerce Week Co-Chairs

Kathy Nguyen and Emily Townsend

Commerce Cares Co-Chairs

Kennidi Stubbs and Alys Param

Commerce Socials Co-Chairs

Anna Josebachvili and Katelyn Ko



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