



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

## Spark Director

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TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Kyobin Hwang (She/Her)  
SUBJECT: Spark Report 6  
DATE: November 29, 2022

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### **Year Plan Update**

This month, Spark has been focused on wrapping up programming for the fall term and preparing ahead for second semester. As a team, we reached the following milestones and goals over the past month:

1. We ran our annual crafting event in collaboration with MacCrafters: “So You Think You Can Craft.”
2. Spark successfully completed the last event for the fall semester: Hike and Hangout. Overall, we have been receiving positive feedback from attendees and this was a great way to end the semester.
3. We have officially completed fall semester sessions. As discussed in my Year Plan, we marked the completion of first semester’s session by disseminating a feedback form to all of our Sparklings (i.e., first-year students registered in Spark sessions) and the Team Leaders.

### **Events, Projects, & Activities**

#### *General Service Usage*

Given that this is a busy period for many first-year students, the number of first years attending Spark Sessions has decreased. We have around 50 first-year students that have consistently attended Spark Sessions this past month. We organized and executed two events during the month of November (i.e., So, You Think You Can Craft and Hike and Hangout). These events accumulated a total of 64 first-year student registrants. These events indeed increased service usage and was a promising opportunity to promote winter session registrations.

#### *Projects & Events: Project 1 (Completed) – So, You Think You Can Craft (Crafting Event)*

- The Events Coordinators (Anika, Daniel, and Myra) have collaborated with MacCrafters on a crafting event for first-year students.
- First-year students were provided with various crafting supplies and tutorials, so they can craft while forming relationships with their peers.
- Given the extensive number of leftover materials from last year’s event, we did not purchase any new supplies this year.

- The event occurred on November 9, 2022, in T13 building's room 125.
- We amassed a total of 36 registrants and 22 attendees.
- 10 Team Leaders volunteered at the event.

*Projects & Events: Project 2 (Completed) – Hike and Hangout Event*

- The Events Coordinators (Anika, Daniel, and Myra) organized a hiking event at Dundas Peak for November 26, 2022, between 10:30AM-2:30PM.
- Hike and Hangout was a HUGE success!
- The Events Coordinators did a fantastic job ensuring that everything was logistically in place for this event.
- Among the 42 registrants, we had approximately 15 people come out for the event!
- We took the HSR to Dundas Peak, took some photos for promotional material, and came back to campus for hot chocolate and some snacks!
- I could not have asked for a better event, and shoutout to the Events Coordinators for pulling this all together!
- Photos from the Hike and Hangout can be found in the “Miscellaneous” section of the report.

*Projects & Events: Project 3 (Ongoing) – Sessions Registration*

- The final sessions for the fall term ran on the week of November 13.
- While the number of first-year students attending sessions has decreased from the start of the year, we are hoping that promoting for winter session registrations will help increase the numbers again.
- The Session Coordinators (Deeptha, Nick, and Tuqa) have done a fantastic job creating the sessions, training Team Leaders on a weekly basis, and packing material bags ahead of sessions.
- I have been collecting feedback from Team Leaders and first-year students, such that the Session Coordinators can implement them when preparing for second semester's sessions. I have pasted an image of some of the feedback received from Team Leaders on the “Miscellaneous” section of this report.
- We are officially starting promotions for winter term session registration. We will be applying a similar promotional strategy as first semester.
- Around 60% of the winter term sessions are fully complete.
- The topics that will be covered through sessions include the following: *Expectation Setting, Teamwork and Collaboration, Introduction to House Hunting, Hidden Gems on McMaster Campus, Positive Thinking, Culinary Skills 101, Goal Setting, Discover Your City.*

*Projects & Events: Project 4 (Ongoing) – Spark Ambassadors Program*

- Spark Ambassadors is an opportunity for first-year students to work alongside Spark's Executive Team to learn more about what Spark does behind-the-scenes and further engage within the Spark community. It will

provide first-year students with more of a leadership role within Spark and an opportunity to create some of Spark's winter programming.

- The Outreach Coordinators (Vithuyan and Milica) started running this six-week program on October 17 for the 13 registered first-year students.
- To accommodate as many Ambassadors as possible, we have been providing both a virtual and in-person option to join the meetings.
- For the first two weeks of the program, the Ambassadors have been collaborating with the Session Coordinators to develop a session for the Winter term. Their session is called "Welcome (Back) to Spark," and will be the first session for the Winter semester.
  - The Ambassadors have had the opportunity to conceptualize the session activity ideas and develop the session document that will be released to the Team Leaders. They will also be extended the offer to lead training for the session they design.
- Furthermore, Spark Ambassadors collaborated with the Promotions and Publication Coordinators (Jadyn and Linda) to create session promotional graphics and reel. While they have not yet completed the final product, I look forward to seeing the end result.
- This program is scheduled to run in winter semester as well.
- Below is the logistics with second semester's Ambassador program that is scheduled to run between the week of February 6 – March 20:
  - *Outreach Coordinators:*
    - Week 1: Winter Intro to Spark Ambassadors Session
  - *Events Coordinators:*
    - Week 2: Talking about what a good event looks like, brainstorming events
    - Week 3: Planning logistics, starting to put event plan together
    - Week 4: Implementing and promoting event
    - Be at the event helping out and stuff
  - *Sessions Coordinators:*
    - Week 5: Bag packing
  - *Director and Assistant Director:*
    - Week 6: Join in on a Spark executive meeting

#### *Projects & Events: Project 5 (Ongoing) – Sessions and Events Committee*

- The Session and Events Coordinators have been working with their subcommittees to prepare winter semester's programming.
- Both committees are comprised of Team Leaders that were interested in undertaking additional responsibilities by helping with either event or session planning.
- Sessions Committee has been planning Session 5 and 7, which are focused on positive thinking and goal setting respectively.
- Events Committee has been organizing a Valentines event for winter term, which will include activities such as speed friending, cookie decorating, and a candy gram.

- Both committees seem enthusiastic about their roles and have already brought insightful ideas. I look forward to seeing all they will achieve!

*Projects & Events: Project 6 (Upcoming) – Spark Fall Publication*

- The Promotions and Publication Coordinators (Jadyn and Linda) have been working diligently on Spark’s first publication of the year.
- The publication is scheduled to launch on the week of November 28, 2022.
- The topic is McMaster Apps, and the goal is to inform McMaster students of essential phone apps for university life (e.g., MacEats, MacQuest, McMaster Safety App, and McMaster Recreation App).

*Projects & Events: Project 7 (Upcoming) – Spark Wellness Bags*

- Spark is running the Wellness Bag initiative again this year.
- This initiative provides first-year students with free wellness bags filled with snacks and self-care items.
- To run this initiative, we have been reaching out to campus and community sponsors.
- In all, we have amassed \$1450 in sponsor funds.
- In the coming week, I will be submitting POs for wellness bag items and will start ordering once everything is approved.
- We are planning to hand out approximately 200 Wellness Bags to first-year students.
- The pickup location will be the Clubspace in MUSC.

## **Outreach & Promotions**

### *Summary*

The main promotional focus over the past two weeks has been promoting for our two November events: So You Think You Can Craft and Hike and Hangout. The primary promotional strategy we employed was via social media. Prospective outreach and promotional efforts will focus on winter semester session registration, our fall publication, and the Spark Wellness Bags.

Promotional Materials  
"So, You Think You Can Craft"



Likes: 158  
Sends: 74  
Saves: 21  
Reach: 3757

Hike and Hangout



Likes: 202  
Sends: 120  
Saves: 39  
Reach: 4704

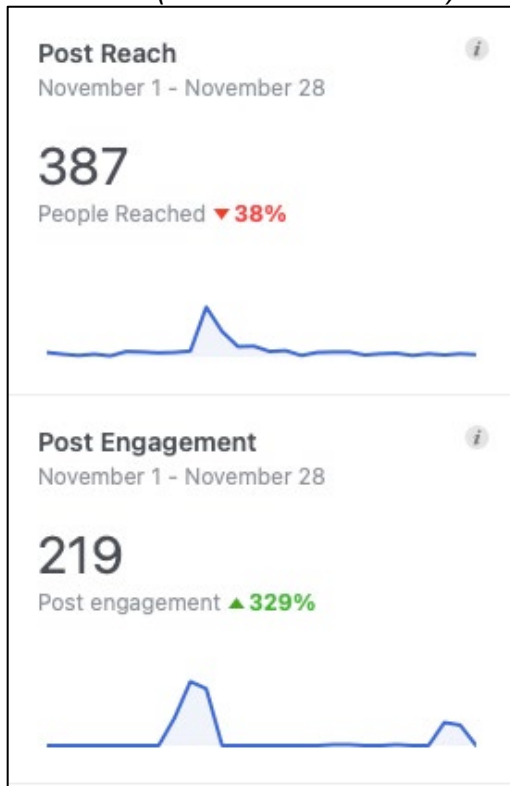
Social Media Engagement since the Previous Report  
Instagram (Month of November)

## Overview

Visit Insights regularly to check on your content's performance.

Accounts reached	5,571 -34%	>
Accounts engaged	323 -73.4%	>
Total followers	6,282 -0.7%	>

### Facebook (Month of November)



### Twitter (currently not in use)



## Finances

### *Budget Summary*

This past month, Spark's expenses have been sourced from the Annual Campaign (#6103-0125) and Advertising and Promotions (6501-0125) budget lines. Specifically, we had to pull from the Annual Campaign line to purchase snacks for the Hike and Hangout event, while the Advertising and Promotions budget line was used to generate graphics for our fall publication. We did not have to spend any money when running the Macrafters event given our leftover materials from last. Similarly, we did not have to pay any money for the crafting and Hike and Hangout event graphics as we reused posts from the previous year. The next large expense would be from the Annual Campaigns budget line (#6103-0125) to purchase winter session materials.

<b>ACCOUNT CODE</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>BUDGET / COST</b>
<b>5003-0125</b>	<b>SPARK – OFFICE SUPPLIES</b>	<b>100</b>
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$50.00
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$50.00
<b>6103-0125</b>	<b>SPARK – ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS</b>	<b>3,700</b>
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$2163.84
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$1536.16
<b>6494-0125</b>	<b>SPARK – VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION</b>	<b>750</b>
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$280.00
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$470.00
<b>6501-0125</b>	<b>SPARK – ADV. &amp; PROMOTION</b>	<b>3,500</b>
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	\$2477.50
	REMAINING IN LINE	\$1022.49
<b>TOTALS</b>		
<b>TOTAL BUDGETED DISCRETIONARY SPENDING</b>		<b>\$8250.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ACTUAL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING</b>		<b>\$4971.34</b>
<b>REMAINING DISCRETIONARY SPENDING</b>		<b>\$2578.66</b>

## Executives & Volunteers

- Morale of the Team Leaders has been fantastic! We had many TLs volunteering to help out at So You Think You Can Craft and Hike and Hangout events. They are so willing to help and have been a HUGE support system for myself and the Executives. Sessions are finished at this point, which gives them a break coming into exams. We will be having a brief revival training in the Winter term.
- The Assistant Director (Abithiny) and I completed one-on-one meetings with each Team Leader and Executive. While this was a lengthy process,

it was invaluable to check-in on how they have transitioned into their roles and learn how we can better support them moving forward. We also used this opportunity to collect feedback on the Service, such that we can improve for winter semester programming.

- This week was the last Executive Team meeting for the semester, meaning members can have more time to take care of themselves ahead of exam period.
- To celebrate all their hard work from the semester and the Service's achieved milestones, we will be holding an Executive Team dinner next week. We will also be meeting to decorate our gingerbread house, which we are all looking forward to!

## Successes

The Spark Team has the following successes that I am proud to share:

- **Hike and Hangout:** The Spark Hike and Hangout event was phenomenal. We had a fantastic turnout, and all the waiver collection, bussing, hike itself, and hot chocolate/snacks worked out! The Team Leaders and Executives were extremely professional, empathetic, and engaging. In my role, I seldom have the opportunity to work with the Team Leaders directly and watch them in their role. Thus, it was such a heart-warming moment to be able to hear the conversations they were having with first years.
- **Spark Wellness Bags:** Given that this is our second year running this initiative, the planning process was relatively seamless. Based on our takeaways from last year, the Outreach and Engagement Coordinators (Milica and Vithuyan) sought sponsor funds early. We are grateful for all our campus sponsors, including McMaster Alumni Association, McMaster Social Sciences Society, President's Office, the Department of English and Cultural Studies, and the Campus Store. We raised a cumulative \$1450 in sponsor funds. With the money acquired from our kind sponsors, we will be purchasing the necessary products. We are excited to be able to give back to the first-year community!
- **Committee Room Access:** As mentioned in a previous EB Report, the Session Coordinators require regular access to the MSU Committee role to fulfill their duties (e.g., organizing session materials in cabinets and packing/unpacking bags for sessions). Thus, I want to thank VP Admin (Mitchell German) and the Administrative Services Coordinator (Victoria Scott) for securing Committee Room keys for the Session Coordinators. This has been incredibly helpful for them.

## Current Challenges

Fortunately, Spark has been facing the following challenges:

- **MUSC Room Booking for Winter Sessions:** As we prepare for winter sessions, we have started to book rooms in MUSC for weekly sessions. This has been an incredibly time-consuming and taxing process. Given



that Spark is only allocated three hours of MUSC booking time per week, it is not possible for us to accommodate 18 session groups, which would warrant a total of 18 hours of booking time each week. Thus, we will have to reach out to other MSU Services once again to borrow their booking hours for next semester. Based on my experience with booking rooms for first semester, relying on other Services' hours is challenging due to the many back-and-forth email coordination that is required, which often further delays the process. If possible, we are hoping that Spark can acquire more MUSC booking hours to further facilitate the process of sessions room booking.

### **Miscellaneous**

Below are a couple photos from Spark's Hike and Hangout event:



Below is a screenshot of some of the feedback received from Team Leaders regarding the fall semester sessions:

- "I look forward to session training each week. I don't have any negative feedback for it at all. It's always a vibe."
  - "One of my favourite parts of Spark so far is the in-person session trainings!"
  - "Sessions coordinators are very engaging and I love the interactive format of training"
  - "I really enjoy session training because I enjoy doing the activities myself; it's very helpful."
  - "Sessions training is going amazing — super engaging"
  - "Vibes of in-person training are immaculate."
  - "Training is really well-organized"
  - "In-person training is really fun; and great seeing everyone in-person"
- "In person trainings are a lot of fun. Sessions themes are great and activities are well timed. Deeptha, Tuqa and Nick make engaging sessions and sessions trainings"
- "During virtual trainings, I appreciate that sessions waits patiently for engagement with TLs"
- Sessions Coordinators are doing a really good job
- Sessions are great and training is engaging; keep up the great work!
- Sessions and sessions trainings are great - nice chance to interact with the team weekly; the Session Coordinators consistently keep sessions interactive
- "I love when the Session Coordinators runs the activity with us."
- "All three Session Coordinators are really articulate. They all explain things really well. I don't think I could ever do what they do."
- Sparklings have said many positive comments about the activities