

Working Groups

Working Groups are often referred to as the heart of a PIRG. They are semi-autonomous groups of students and community members who organize for long-term action around specific issues of environmental and social justice. RPIRG offers support, funding, and office and networking resources to working groups.

The *Regina Student Parent Association* focuses on supporting students with dependent children. It provides the opportunity to initiate new research and foster communication and collaboration among advocates, policymakers, and practitioners invested in the success of student parents in postsecondary education.



Fruit For Thought's mission is to create awareness of environmentally sustainable behaviours and reduce food waste while contributing to the community. Fruit For Thought harvests and processes unwanted urban fruit, and shares the products in a three way split between the food bank and shelters, owners of the trees, and volunteers.

UR Pride Leadership Programming provides leadership skills and opportunities to LGBTQ youth aged 14-24 and allies to help alleviate helplessness, hopelessness and discrimination. They provide workshops and lectures about leadership skills and LGBTQ history. They also facilitate monthly chemical-free social events that provide a fun positive space for these youth, to allow them the space to grow into self-confident leaders.

Regina Green Ride Transit Network exists to facilitate the increased usage of sustainable transportation in Regina. It addresses the issue of pollution through single-occupancy vehicles by promoting the practice of multi-occupancy transport. They educate the U of R community on its merits and launching new initiatives such as the U-Pass campaign.

UR Sustainability explains sustainability as “ensuring the actions of our generation do not infringe on future generations. It is a prerequisite for supporting sustainable livelihoods locally and abroad, which is fundamental for social justice.” Their main goal is to develop a hub for the U of R community to work on sustainable initiatives together. They address local, organic food systems; waste management and water conservation; transportation; infrastructure and green technology; international development; and more.

SEARCH

Student Energy in Action for Regina Community Health

SEARCH is a student-run, interdisciplinary clinic in North Central Regina that addresses both the health under-service of inner-city communities and the disconnection between professional and academic training programs and community needs. Every Saturday, students working under the direct supervision of health professional mentors operate a walk-in clinic. *SEARCH* also organizes social programming, makes healthy meals, and provides childcare for the clientele.

Of Land and Living Skies is a community journal that provides a space to discuss practice and theory in Outdoor and Environmental education as well as inspiring action. They aim to create a community of practice of outdoor, environmental educators and bridge the gap between research and practice.



ABOUT US

The Regina Public Interest Research Group (RPIRG) is a student-run, student-funded non-profit organization dedicated to community-based research, education, action and awareness in the public interest. RPIRG exists to provide its members with the resources to be active citizens on the University of Regina campus and in the greater community.

RPIRG is committed to the following values in all of its work:

- consensus decision making
- autonomy/independence
- plurality and diversity
- social equality and anti-oppression
- participatory democracy and engaged citizenship
- non-partisanship
- environmental sustainability
- accountability and transparency
- public interest over private interest

2013-14 was a year of connection and collaboration. We hosted the first National PIRG Conference, helped plan the first campus-wide Sustainability Action and Awareness month at the U of R, and presented a workshop on Activism at the first-year Orientation. We developed a new strategic plan with a focus on increasing skill-building and volunteer opportunities for students, and finding creative ways to reach out and expand our community of social and environmental justice advocates. You'll see great things from us in the next year!

Drop in and say hi, browse our library, check out our coming events, or vent about an issue you feel strongly about! Our office hours are Monday-Friday, 9:00-4:00. We're located at:

Room 222, Dr. William Riddell Centre
University of Regina
Regina, SK, Treaty 4 Territory, S4S 0A2

Board of Directors

The RPIRG Board of Directors is composed of eight Student Members of RPIRG. It is the decision-making body of RPIRG, which makes all major decisions regarding finances, long-term goals, long-term viability of the organization, staffing, and funding applications. The Board is elected in March every year, and Board appointments are for up to two years.

2013-2014 Term:

Eman Bare
David Vanderberg
Devon Peters
Kent Peterson
Matthew Lensen
Patience Umereweneza
Sonia Stanger
Taneal Brucks

2014-15 Term:

Nadia Akbar-Kamal
Eric Armit
Nicole Denbow
Kandra Forbes
Ashlyn Higgs
Asha Kerr-Wilson
Devon Peters
David Vanderberg

Funded Events, Projects, and Training

Projects

"From the Belly of the Boom: (\$1500) – photography tour of Saskatchewan communities impacted by the oil and gas industry, and exhibition

Briarpatch's 3rd Annual Creative Writing Contest (\$798.50) – a competition encouraging new writing from a grassroots, radical perspective

Pihtatihwan (\$750) – a website showcasing Aboriginal students' work on human rights

Training

Social Work Students' Society ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) (\$1000)

The Carillon student journalists attending
CUP National Conference (\$1000)

Student presenting research at IEEE Vehicular Electronics Conference/International Electric Vehicle Conference (\$375)

Student attending the American Anthropological Association's 112th Annual Meeting (\$250)

World University Services of Canada Members Attending National Forum (\$503)

Engineers Without Borders members attending National Conference (\$2500)

Events

"SPEAK: Eliminating the Silence about Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada" panel (\$333)

"What's in a Face" photo exhibition (\$200) – photojournalism that starts a dialogue about beauty ideals in our society

"Paint the Town Red" (\$200) – AIDS Program South Saskatchewan education event

Queen City Hub (\$1450) – launch publicizing and showcasing co-working and event space

CAMPAIGNS

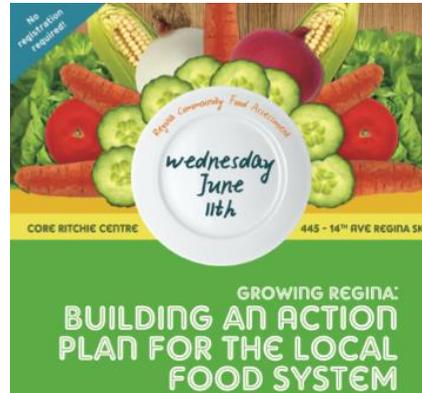
This past fiscal year, RPIRG has been involved in several campaigns on campus and in the community, as a key member or as a founder.

Sustainability Awareness and Action Month – RPIRG sat on the organizing committee of this first-ever university-wide month of action, promotion and community-building activities to encourage the vision of social, environmental and economic sustainability. Over 1600 students, faculty, staff, and community members attended or volunteered at over 30 events. RPIRG hosted three events: a winter biking workshop, an organization showcase, and a focus group on community food systems issues. On behalf of the SAAM committee, we received a Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development recognition award.

The Community Food Assessment (CFA) is a process that brings everyone together to answer key questions:

- What are the strengths of Regina's food system?
- Where are the gaps in our food system?
- As a community, what priorities are most important to focus on?

The CFA has conducted an environmental scan that assessed and analyzed the Regina food system, consulted with stakeholders and the public on the key questions, and in June, launched a draft action plan that will improve community food security in the City of Regina. RPIRG has been represented on the CFA from its beginning and helped fund the environmental scan.



Win! Victoria and Favour returned to the University of Regina on June 9 after more than a year spent in sanctuary and two years of community efforts raising awareness, advocacy, and fundraising.. RPIRG was part of the **Saskatchewan Immigration Justice Network**, a grassroots group that was part of a coalition advocating for the women's return to Canada and reinstatement as students.

Visit us virtually and learn more: www.rpirg.org

Staff:

Anna Dipple – Executive Director (June 2014 – present)
 Naomi Beingessner – Executive Director (until June 2014)
 Alicia Miller – Outreach and Events Coordinator (August-October 2013)
 Nikolina Vracar – Outreach and Events Coordinator (November 2013-April 2014)
 Tressa Nielsen – Outreach and Events Coordinator (May 2014 – present)
 Serena La Posta – Garden Project Coordinator (2013)
 Lucas Fagundes – Garden Project Coordinator (2014)
 Ashleigh Delanghe – Student Action Researcher, Parents as Students Success Study (June 2013-14)
 Larissa Flister – Student Action Researcher, U-Pass Research Project (June 2014-)

RPIRG Financial Statements

(For Year Ending June 30, 2014)

INCOME:

Student Fees	\$125,982
Other Income (event sponsorship, grants, etc)	\$37,256

Subtotal:

\$163,238

EXPENSES:

Board	\$1,414
Employee	\$67,314
Operations	\$9,603
Public Relations	\$8,509
Student Services	
Events	\$36,172
Funding grants (Projects/Events/Training and Working Groups)	\$21,225
Library	\$1,177

Subtotal:

\$145,414.00

NET INCOME:

\$17,824.00

Programming

Green Patch Garden Project



In 2012, RPIRG launched the Green Patch, one of three campus gardens that make up the Edible Campus Project. This 5400 square foot organic vegetable garden aims to foster student and staff engagement, and act as a model for sustainable development. The produce is shared between the garden's volunteers and a local non-profit organization, Carmichael Outreach, that works in the core neighbourhoods of Regina.



"Clients and staff are always excited at the opportunity to procure fresh food, since it is often expensive, and something that isn't always included much in Food Bank orders. Being partnered with RPIRG Green Patch was a huge bonus for our Food Recovery Program. You guys do great work!" - Nicholas Olson, Food Recovery Coordinator, Carmichael Outreach

The second year was extremely successful; we harvested over 1700 lbs of fresh organic produce to donate to Carmichael Outreach. We held a student art competition on the theme of "Cultivating Community" with a \$1500 prize courtesy of Dr. Roberta McKay and Elmer Brenner. The winner, Frans Lotz's *Furnished (3 Bedroom)*, pictured above, was installed in the garden and unveiled at our Harvest Celebration.

Apathy into Action

In January 2014, we held our 7th annual Apathy into Action conference. This three-day social justice conference aimed to bring together students and community members to learn about and discuss key social issues. The conference began with two days of interactive sessions, led by professors, community members, and students, on topics such as housing and renters' rights, social justice and religious allies, citizen science, food sovereignty, and investigative techniques for citizens. The conference also included a full day of skills training in either anti-oppression or creative fundraising. Over 200 students and community members attended the conference this year.

Generating Momentum

In August 2013, RPIRG and the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation (SCIC) teamed up to offer the 4th annual Generating Momentum: Activist Leadership Training Camp. This four-day, camp-style retreat provides young leaders with the skills and experiences they need to better organize in their communities. In an inclusive, challenging, self-reflective, and creative space participants can gain an understanding of ways to fight all forms of oppression. At the end of the four days, an inspired crew of passionate, young Saskatchewanians leave to go out and make their world a better place.

Last year saw 47 young people from across the province come together to learn new skills, build relationships, and form coalitions to better organize for social justice. Sessions this year included anti-oppression training, indigenous food sovereignty, alternative media, direct action, homonationalism, workers' cooperatives, Idle No More, and organizing to win. On the final day, participants brainstormed issue-based tactics and strategies to get momentum going on pressing social issues in their communities.



"The discussing of ideas, strategies, policies/politics, and sharing of resources was important and necessary."

"Such a valuable, transformative, community-building event!"

"Really engaging and meaningful conversation with a group of really inspirational people"

National PIRG Conference

In February, RPIRG put on the first ever National PIRG Conference. We had 50 participants representing 14 PIRGs from Vancouver Island to Nova Scotia as well as three prairie university campuses hoping to start PIRGs. Participants overwhelmingly spoke of leaving the conference energized and motivated by their experiences learning, sharing, and connecting with others. We hosted sessions on organizing against poverty, the student movement and democratic engagement, indigenous solidarity, volunteer engagement, anti-water privatization, and more. At the end of the conference, we came together to discuss our next steps and made progress towards uniting on common issues and campaigns.

