About this Guide

The objective of this Local Committee Best Practice Guide is to share the stories, voices, and tips from different Local Committees (LC) across our pan-Canadian network. 2014-15 was an amazing academic year for the WUSC LC network, and we hope that this guide provides some sparks of inspiration and new ideas for you and your LC.

In addition to LC stories and ideas, each section contains a glossary of WUSC resources that can provide more training, information, “how-tos”, and details. All of the resources provided in this guide are pulled from one of our main resource banks or online platforms, which you explore further below:

- WUSC.ca | Local Committee Resource Page
- WUSC.ca | Student Refugee Program (SRP) Resource Page
- YouTube | WUSC-EUMC YouTube
- Facebook | WUSC Campus Connections
- Facebook | Regional Groups: Ontario, Western Canada, Eastern Canada
- Twitter | WUSC-EUMC Campus (@WUSCcampus + @WorldUniService)
- Contact your WUSC Campus Regional Liaison Officer (RLO) for more support and ideas!
  - Ontario: campusontario@wusc.ca
  - Western Canada: campuswest@wusc.ca
  - Eastern Canada: campuseast@wusc.ca

Thanks again for a great year and to all of the amazing LC members who contributed to this guide.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1- **LC Capacity Building** .................................................................................................................................................. 4  
   a. Recruitment: Growing your LC  
   b. Continuity: Sustaining your LC  

2- **Student Refugee Program** ............................................................................................................................................. 7  
   a. Sustainability  
   b. Building a Support Network  
   c. Managing Finances  
   d. Referendum  

3- **Raising Awareness on Global Development** .............................................................................................................. 13  
   a. Shine a Light  
   b. Uniterra Symposia  
   c. SRP Awareness-Raising  

4- **Fundraising** ..................................................................................................................................................................... 18  

5- **Communications & Outreach** ........................................................................................................................................ 19  
   a. Media  
   b. Communications Strategies  

6- **Collaboration** .................................................................................................................................................................... 22  
   a. Regional LC Collaboration  
   b. Building Relationships On-Campus  
   c. Building Relationships in the Community
1-Local Committee Capacity Building

Useful LC Capacity Building Resources:

- **Trillium Video: Training Volunteers** – Tutorial and best practices from across the network
- **Campus Calendar** – Created annual, it contains key dates, deadlines, and tips for the year. Very useful for start of term planning!
- **WUSC LC Recruitment 101** — 1-pager to help you think through recruitment strategies on campus
- **WUSC 101 PPT** – PowerPoint Presentation you can use/adapt for new members meetings
- **Kiosk Tips** – for effective and engaging kiosks when tabling

a) Recruitment: Growing your Local Committee

**WUSC Ryerson’s Recruitment Strategies 2015**
By: Anna Lundkvist, Ryerson LC

- Start the recruitment process for next year as early as September by building relationships with students and student groups throughout the year, who when recruitment comes around you already have a connection with.
- Create a document that describes the different committee roles in detail, making it clear what the responsibilities and time commitment will look like.
- Have a list of students that you have connected with during the year who are interested in WUSC and send them a recruitment email inviting them to apply to the local committee.
- Make sure to include students of different graduation years and programs of study in the committee for sustainability, diversity and different skills sets within the committee.
  - Recruit new members for next year’s committee in March so that at the end of the academic year you already have next year’s committee ready to go. This makes transition and training new members easier since outgoing members can provide training and inside tips for specific positions.
  - Have an event to celebrate the outgoing and the incoming committee!

**Ouagadougou LC Recruitment Best Practices**
By: Yacouba Kabore, University of Ouagadougou LC – Burkina Faso
The University of Ouagadougou’s WUSC Local Committee, which has the benefit of 10 years of experience, has adopted a "2 out of 7" recruitment strategy, so named because its goal is to recruit and retain at least two new members every year from each of the University’s seven academic departments.

At the start of each academic year, we hang posters in strategic locations around campus to bring the Committee and its activities to the students’ attention, and to encourage them to join us. Then, there is our word-of-mouth campaign, which encourages Committee members to promote our efforts in informal settings. We also reach out to other influential organizations on campus and participate in their activities in order to introduce our Committee to a wider audience. Classroom visits to publicize the LC’s activities represent another effective recruitment tool.

b) Continuity: Sustaining your Local Committee

Increasing Visibility on Campus
By: Mithushaa Berinpalingam, Wilfrid Laurier University LC

By implementing new promotional strategies and introducing new events on campus WUSC WLU has increased its visibility and outreach on campus. This year we held information booths frequently & targeted 1-2 events for each flagship campaign of WUSC (SRP Program, Shine a Light, and Bike for Aids) and held one large conference for the Uniterra Symposia Series. (N.B. the Bike for AIDS campaign wrapped up in Summer 2015)

In terms of promotion, the most effective way to reach students was to promote on the University social media pages (Accepted pages, specific program pages). We also collaborated with clubs on and off campus to raise awareness about WUSC. By planning ahead at the beginning of the year of what events we would like to host on campus, and setting goals for the amount of students we would like to target and the amount we would like to fundraise, the whole executive and general member teams were able to work towards our goals together.
Also, a revised internal structure and new positions such as Director of Social Media also helped better allocate the work and allow executives to take on tasks that matched their skills and interests.


By: Campus Engagement Team

This year, at their Regional Meeting, Manitoba committees articulated a framework for engaging and sustainable Local Committee building: working together, learning together, and having fun! They suggested that equal time be spent inside and outside of meetings on each of these objectives to create an effective, inclusive, informed, and engaging LC. Here are some of their ideas:

Working Together:
- Delegate responsibilities and titles to volunteers. Create new positions if needed (e.g., club photographer, website developer, campaigner…)
- Figure out volunteer interests and strengths before delegating
- Create subcommittees to help foster leadership

Learning Together:
- Invite professors, global development field workers, resettlement workers, SRP students, and other experts as guest speakers and facilitators to meetings
- Attend free lectures, watch a documentary or a WUSC Youtube video together and discuss afterwards

Having Fun:
- Plan regular social activities, and special end of the term celebrations
- Dedicate some time during meetings to icebreakers and team building exercises

2- Student Refugee Program Best Practices

Useful SRP resources:
✓ **2014 SRP Guide** – The most important and comprehensive SRP resource for running the SRP. Includes sponsorship, roles and responsibilities, budgeting, funding, dossier selection, intent to sponsor, arrival and resettlement information, etc.

✓ **SRP Training Trillium Video: Cultural Integration** – Tutorial and best practices from across the network

✓ **SRP Training Trillium Video: Educational Integration** – Tutorial and best practices from across the network

✓ **SRP Training Trillium Video: Accessing Employment** – Tutorial and best practices from across the network

✓ **“How the SRP Changed my Life” Video** – A powerful video about the impacts of the SRP on former SRP student and volunteer alumni. Great tool for recruitment and new members meetings.

✓ **SRP YouTube channel** – for informative videos about the SRP.

✓ **SRP Fact Sheet** – Short 2-pager with facts about the SRP. Great tool for recruitment.

✓ **Camp Profiles: Dadaab, Kakuma, Dzaleka** – fact sheets on 3 of the camps.

✓ **Pre-departure Orientation Guide** – Resource given to SRP students before resettling in Canada.

✓ **Sample Budget** – Example of a student’s budget for 1 year. Helpful for the Intent to Sponsor form.

✓ **Referendum Guide** – for groups organizing a referendum campaign

✓ **SRP Fundraising Strategies** – Examples of different fundraising models for supporting SRP sponsorship

### a) SRP Sustainability

**Resettlement Training and Learning Opportunities for LC Members**

By: Katie Morrish, University of Victoria Local Committee

In February/March 2015, WUSC UVic organized 6 week SRP training program of our own making to prepare new members for another year, which is essential when there is a large turnover of members.

- **Week 1** was “WUSC Beyond Victoria,” in which the Local Committee learned about what happens overseas, at the national office, and how students are selected for the program.
- **Week 2** was a presentation on SRP logistics, including how the program is financed, immigration information, admissions, health care, etc.
- **Week 3** was a culture shock and communications meeting with a guest speaker from UVic counselling involving team building activities and discussions.
- **During week 4,** SRP students spoke about their challenges faced overseas, countries of origin, and information on camp life, followed up with a discussion on student feedback for the LC.
- **Week 5** focused on LC coordinator positions and how the committee works at UVic in particular.
- **The 6th and final week** was a discussion with all committee members on goals and reflections where students voiced their opinions on how the year had gone, and how we can continue to build the...
program and set goals for the next year. As a result of this training, the LC has a foundation of knowledge to work off of next year, and discussions allowed for better understanding of what the LC wants out of their time in WUSC.

b) Building an SRP Support Network

On-campus Partnerships with Staff Persons
By: Katie Vanleeuwen, University of Prince Edward Island University LC

For the past few years the UPEI WUSC Local Committee has been associated with the UPEI International Relations Office. This partnership has proved to be very beneficial in many ways. Working with experienced staff members such as Erica Stanley certainly gives our SRP some extra stability. She has lots of experience working with other international students and working through some of the practicalities of adjustment to Canada, materials needed, and paperwork to fill out. She also has connections with other staff members working in related areas and with the more general international student population.

The SRP students have been able to rely on her as a familiar and caring presence on campus and they know where to find her when it might be more difficult to track down some of the committee members. Most of these benefits are possible because of the experience, dedication and time investment put forward by UPEI staff members who are willing to support our committee and be invested in the success of the program and of the students.

Thanking your Supporters: Donor Appreciation Reception
By: Chelsey Weir & Angie Currie, Brandon University LC

The Brandon University WUSC Committee celebrated 35 years of the Student Refugee Program by holding a Donor Appreciation Reception on November 28, 2014. This event was used to thank both our supporters and donors, which includes BU staff, faculty and students. Once a date was chosen for this event we booked a venue on campus. Next we made invites and posters to hang around campus and to email to all of our donors.
During the reception the committee each brought an appetizer and helped the SRP students prepare one of their favorite dishes to share with guests. There was also presentation by the SRP students to talk about how WUSC has changed their lives and invited the BU president to speak as well. The final touch to the evening was decorations in the room with a 35 year SRP timeline, WUSC info such as brochures, pamphlets and pictures of past SRP students and events. It was a great evening to create awareness about WUSC and the SRP and thank our guests for their support!

c) Managing SRP Finances

WUSC UofC Staff-Supervised SRP Finances
Updated by: Joann Weston, University of Calgary LC staff advisor

The Local Committee and the SRP at the University of Calgary are supported by Joann Weston, a staff advisor to the committee who is also the chair of the Student Refugee Board on campus. Below is the step-by-step process that the committee follows:

1. In June, Joann creates a budget for all of the SRP students. This includes the projected expenses, donations, waivers and actual costs.
2. Also in June, Joann creates a program-projected budget, which examines the viability of the SRP on campus over four years. This environmental scan allows the Local Committee at the University of Calgary to the plan for shortfalls, and, if needed, a referendum to increase the student levy.
3. Joann presents the budget to the Student Union Operations & Finance Committee for approval, then to the Student Refugee Board to ensure full disclosure and transparency.
4. In September, Joann sits down with each of the SRP students to review their budget. In this detailed overview, she explains all costs covered by the program: residence and food, tuition related expenses, books, summer accommodation, miscellaneous expenses, emergency funding and student-managed monthly spending allowance.
5. Together, Joann and the student discuss what and how the monthly spending allowance should be used. A WUSC Local Committee member then takes the SRP student to the bank to set up an account. In addition, she gives them a tutorial on:
   - The Canadian banking system
   - Bill payment procedure
   - Bank account set-up, automatic deposit of monthly allowance and banking tutorial (deposits, withdrawals, interest, ATM’s, bank charges)
   - Finances and budgeting - the economy of dining versus cooking, sale versus full price, etc.

Other Tips

- Keep your committee funds and your SRP funds separate - in a separate account!
- Develop a budget based on last year’s expenses.
- Seek out financial partners and in-kind donations.
- Have two or more signatory on your bank accounts – this ensures transparency and allows for cheques to be written even if one of the signatories isn’t present.
- Have your treasurer actively monitor the activity of your bank accounts.
6. The emergency funding and miscellaneous funding outlined in the budget are used to cover unexpected expenses. The emergency funding is accessed through Joann, who deals with it as follows:
   - The SRP student discusses with Joann when emergency/additional funding is required
   - Joann brings the additional funding request to the Students’ Union Operations and Finance Committee for approval
   - The funding is processed if approved
   - Joann informs the board of any financial decisions made.
7. In March-April, Joann meets with the SRP student to discuss the coming year’s budget. She once again develops a budget overview for each SRP student and the process begins again.

SRP Fundraising on a Small Campus
By: Sarah Burns, University of King’s College LC

At the beginning of this academic year we were unsure whether we would be able to bring in another SRP student for September 2015. Given how small our institution is, our levy was just enough to help us sponsor a student every other year. However, due to severe financial cuts at the university, some waivers we had received previously were no longer available. At that moment, looking at our budget and the support we had throughout the university, it was doubtful that we would be able to put in our intent to sponsor form.

However, we were very committed and decided that our first course of action should be to gain more student support. We did numerous announcements during lectures, gave out some free coffee at lecture breaks, and spoke to everyone we could about the Student Refugee Program. Once we gained a number of new passionate members, we began quickly putting together a full semester of fundraising events. Working together, we were able to hold a large ‘club night’ in downtown Halifax where all proceeds from cover came to WUSC. We then planned a large scale ‘bar-night’ at the university pub with a local band, where we received proceeds from cover, a specialty drink, and samosas. Although there is still more fundraising to do, we are very pleased with the money we have raised thus far, and have been able to secure a spot for a new sponsor student to join us in September!

d) SRP Referendum

General Referendum Tips
By: Campus Engagement Team

- **Know your campus** – what are the best ways to get the word out?
- Use the WUSC Referendum posters or create your own!
- **Use every event you have prior to the referendum to let people know about the SRP** in its current state (e.g. "Hey! Thanks for buying chocolates in support of the SRP. Have
you heard about it before?”)

- **Get your student union on board.** Let it know about your plans and address any concerns it might have as soon as possible.
- **Set up info booths EVERYWHERE.**
- **NEVER just sit at tables,** people are not likely to come to you for information. Be interactive. If you’re campaigning by a table, stop people in the hallways: “Hi, have you heard of the SRP?” and have handouts and flyers with basic info so that if people are in a rush, they will be able to take something away to read.
- **Hold Thank You events on your campus** to let others know how much their contribution is appreciated and the life changes made through this.
- **Wear your WUSC blue gear!**

**Top Tips from University of Carleton Local Committee**
By: Vicky Tran, Carleton University LC

1. Every campus has different rules and regulations about their referendum process. The best thing your LC can do is **get in touch with your student association as soon as possible** to get clear directions and details about passing a referendum.

2. If you are not allowed to collect signatures until a certain date, make sure to **raise awareness about WUSC and the SRP on campus beforehand** so that students have some knowledge about your student group when you ask them for signatures and support later on in the year.

3. When collecting signatures, always keep track of how many you have at the end of each day or week. It’s best to **collect a surplus of signatures** because some can be deemed invalid to illegibility.

**Raising Referendum Visibility**
By: Eilish Elliot, Mount Allison University

WUSC MtA last brought the SRP to referendum three years ago when our levy was increased from $4 to $8. This year we were back up on the ballot to ensure that students still supported paying this levy. The campaign period was only a week (Tuesday to a Monday evening), so we decided on a simple strategy that would allow us to tell as many people as possible about the SRP. We find many people on campus aren’t aware of the program, but once they learn about it they think it’s awesome! We set up a table in the campus Student Centre Tuesday-Thursday for at least two hours each day, where we had WUSC buttons and information and a big banner that said "Vote Yes for the Student Refugee Program". We
talked to everyone that walked by about the program and had people trace their hand on the banner in a
coloured marker as a way to indicate their support. Once the banner was full on Thursday, we hung it up
so it was visible whenever you walked into the building. We had another banner (minus the hand prints)
hanging up in the dining hall.

We also spent Friday at lunchtime in the dining hall to get to speak more to students living in residence
who likely hadn't yet heard of the program. We visited groups of people at their tables, gave them a quick
spiel about the SRP, and handed out buttons. We were also able to use the microphone/speaker system
in the building to address all of the students in meal hall at the time (over 200) to talk to them about the
SRP and ask for their support. Beyond the face-to-face interactions and the banners, we had a Facebook
event that gave details of the program, what the referendum was for, and an opportunity for people to
ask questions. All of our committee members shared the event with friends, so we had a large number of
people checking out the page and learning about the SRP. In the end, our strategy was successful. Our
referendum question asking students to continue to support the SRP at our $8 levy passed with 88.4% of
student support!
3- Raising Awareness Best Practices

Useful Campaigns and Awareness Raising Resources:
- **Trillium Video: Raising Awareness** – Tutorial and best practices from across the network
- **Campaigns Webpage** – Contains links to our campaign pages and resource links
- **Shine a Light Fact Sheet** – Info on the campaign and event ideas
- **Shine a Light Youtube videos** – Check out these videos for more information on Shine a Light.
- **In this Together: Letters of Encouragement for Refugee Girls** – Letters of support to girls studying in refugee camps from women sponsored through the SRP. Great for Shine a Light events.
- **Uniterra Symposia Factsheet** – Info on the campaign and event ideas
- **From Camp to Campus** – An image exhibit celebrating the 35th anniversary of the SRP. Great for events, especially SRP Awareness events.
- **Reporting Tutorial** – don’t forget to report on MyCommittee! Check out this video to learn how.

a) Shine a Light

Shine a Light Gala
By: Jessica Brown, University of Saskatchewan LC

U of S WUSC LC is delighted to report that we held a highly successful Gala this year, with 100 community members supporting our fundraising efforts of $2,500. In order to hold our event we pulled together the following elements:

- A location who supported us with free rent and a discounted menu
- Donations from community businesses for a silent auction
- Advertising done by word of mouth and social media in order to cut down on advertising costs
- Amazing guest speakers (most importantly, SRP students!)
- Mini-documentaries on the SRP and Shine a Light that we had created throughout the year

If you would like to hold your own event the best way to get started is to sit down and brainstorm a list of what you need like partnerships and items, and don’t forget the mundane things like pens for the auction.
The most important thing is to be flexible and remember that it’s never going to be perfect, but it is going to be amazing!

Incorporating games and competitions to raise awareness!
By: Reeda Tariq, York University – Glendon Campus LC

1. Bake/Card Sale: Selling a variety of baked goods like cookies and biscuits and handmade cards
2. Heart Stack: First of the Minute to Win it (MtWI) events: One minute to stack ten conversation hearts as high as you can. You have to restart again if they fall over.
3. The Cotton Ball Game: Stack cotton balls from the container in front of you to the container on top of your head. Winner is the person who manages to put all of the cotton balls into the container.
4. Cup Knock Down: Knock down a stack of plastic cups (we used a small tower of 6) using a rubber band. The winner is whoever knocks them down the quickest!
5. Stack Attack: Using however plastic cups you want (we had 36) stack them up as quick as you can in a tower formation and then quickly stack them into each other again in one minute or less.
6. Card Ninja: In one minute or less, try and make a card hit and stick the inside of a watermelon.

b) Uniterra Symposia Series “Youth Voices in Development”

Youth Voices in Development
By: Elvira Bigirimana, Université de Montréal LC

The new WUSC Local Committee at the Université de Montréal organized a UNITERRA Symposium on February 12. This proved to be an exciting challenge for all involved, as none of us had previously organized every facet of such an event. The symposium was an opportunity for the Committee to provide an overview of WUSC, to talk about the different programs and to lead a discussion on the topic, “How can international leadership be exported?” Between 20 and 30 guests came to listen to our speakers, who not only shared their experience and knowledge, but also inspired the audience. Following the event, we held a team meeting to review our performance in managing every aspect of the symposium — it was a new experience for us, and we are eager to organize similar events.
Carleton and UOttawa Symposia Collaboration
By: Vicky Tran, Carleton LC

The “Uniterra Symposium: Youth Voices in Development” was a speaker’s panel held on Saturday, March 7th, 2015 by both the Carleton University and University of Ottawa WUSC Local Committees. The afternoon was divided into two separate panels by a 45-minute break to network with the speakers and other attendees. The first panel discussion focused on refugee and diaspora issues while the second emphasized the role of youth in the development process on a local, national and international scale. Our goal was to equip young people with the knowledge to approach the topic of development as well as the inspiration to take action. Uniterra is a major Canadian voluntary cooperation that enables youth to get involved with development projects both domestically and internationally. The symposium was a fantastic success in engaging, educating and inspiring students on the topic of development.

c) SRP Awareness-Raising

General Tips:
By: WUSC Campus Engagement Team

Some students are comfortable talking about their experiences and others are not. When you invite SRP students to participate or share their stories, make it clear that they have the option not to.

It is important to become informed as a group about the complexities of refugee issues, resettlement, and responsible awareness-raising. You can do this by:

- **Connecting with professors & staff** on campus whose background or research may be connected with refugees, immigration and get them involved in your SRP awareness campaigns;
- **Hosting a documentary night** about refugees;
- **Attending events** and lectures together;
- **Inviting new and former SRP students to make a presentation** in a meeting about education programs in the camps, barriers to education and working, camp contexts, etc

**SRP Thank-You Blitz**
By: Clarissa Smith, Mount St. Vincent University LC
On February 5, 2015, the MSVU WUSC committee set up a booth in a high traffic area of the university, and continued to hand out thank you cards and chocolates to students passing by. Many students were puzzled by this gesture but were very excited to hear more about the SRP and their contribution. They were told that a portion of their fees each semester goes toward the Student Refugee Program and the students were thrilled to hear that they are part of such a great program and are making such a difference in many people’s lives. This helped to increase the awareness of WUSC on campus, as well as engage the students. The simple act of thanking the students shows them the appreciation that WUSC MSVU has for them and will definitely be continued in future years!

Visit to a Primary School in Québec: An Enriching Experience
By: Audrey Lord & Stany N, Universite de Laval LC

On February 25, we visited Les Prés-Verts primary school in Québec City and received a warm welcome from the principal. Following a guided tour, we gave a presentation on the general topic of “Africa: A Continent.” We asked students about their knowledge of Africa, and were not surprised when they responded with their own questions along the lines of “In what types of houses do people live in Africa?” or “Where did you learn to speak French?”

We fully expected such questions since we were forewarned that the geography and history of Africa have largely disappeared from the school curriculum. After engaging with the students for about two hours, we came away with the impression that our visit was an enriching and educational experience for both sides.

4-Fundraising Best Practices

Useful Fundraising Resources:
✓ Fundraising FAQs – Tackles common questions about WUSC’s registered charity number, tax receipt eligibility, how to send cheques to WUSC, etc.
Catalyst Fund Info – Learn how to apply for WUSC’s $250 catalyst fund for LCs.

UNBC’s Fundraising Formula
By: Joshua Mann & Lindsay Stone, University of Northern British Columbia LC

Accountability, transparency, visibility, creative and simple ideas, strong visions and objectives, and fun are all part of our fundraising formula. Here are 3 of our best practices:

1) Fundraise responsibly: Our events go beyond just raising money. Through inventive event planning, we ensure that all members of the club are trained and the public are informed; This year, our Bike for AIDS event focused on busting myths about HIV and AIDS and emphasizing that the project is in Malawi, to avoid generalizing about the continent of Africa. Additionally, at each meeting, volunteers prepare a 5 minute presentation for each meeting for the group to learn about different refugee issues and contexts. (N.B. the Bike for AIDS campaign wrapped up in Summer 2015)

2) Sell Camino Fair Trade Chocolates: At all of our recruitment, campaign, and public engagement events, we sell Camino and promote Fair Trade. This attracts people, and we also raise significant funds through our sales, which we put towards our club budget with surplus going towards WUSC campaigns.

3) Forum Fundraising: In January 2015, we sent 8 members to the International Forum in Montreal! The key is to start early and identify many sources of funding, which for us includes: department funding, undergraduate society, travel pools, etc. We also use Camino chocolate sales to help subsidize costs.

The Djirai Challenge
By : Axel Alliez & El Hdji Ahmadou Yaba Dime, Collège d’Alfred LC

The Djirai Challenge is an athletic event first organized by members of the Collège d’Alfred WUSC Local Committee in September 2005. This annual fundraiser honours the memory of a remarkable individual, Djiraimadji Tombalbaye Ngarbaye, a former Collège d’Alfred student from Chad who travelled so far only to leave us so soon. He was diagnosed with a terminal illness during his time at the Collège d'Alfred. Even as death lay in wait, he continued to live and to complete his studies without giving a thought to his own mortality, motivated as he was by the contribution he would be able to make, thanks to his education, to agricultural development in his home country.

The Challenge is a way for us to remember and share Djirai’s courage and his joy of living. Participants
seek out sponsorship for the event in order to raise funds that help bring a refugee student to the Collège d’Alfred. Every year since its inception, the Djiraï Challenge has inspired students and staff members alike to complete the route on the college grounds in Djiraï’s memory and for a humanitarian cause. Although Djiraï’s own journey was cut short, his legacy endures. The Djiraï Challenge raised $1,500 this year.

5-Communications Best Practices

Other resources:
- Trillium video: Media Engagement – Media best practices from WUSC staff and across the network
- Media Training – contains tips for press releases, following-up, social media, building rapport with journalists, etc.
- Document Design 101 – For information and tips for promoting WUSC through different mediums.

a) Engaging Media

Developing Rapport with Journalists
By: WUSC Campus Engagement Team

The committee at Vancouver Island University works to build relationships with journalists in its community.

- The committee marks arrival of SRP students and any big event held throughout the year with a press release that it sends out to the Nanaimo media.
- Over time, particular journalists have covered its stories on a regular basis and the committee members can now count on them to give them media exposure.

Engaging Communications Officers
By: WUSC Campus Engagement Team

The committee has established a strong relationship with the Nipissing Communications Officer. The University Communications Officer is always informed about what the committee is doing and writes media releases for them.
- He/she puts the news on the university website and reaches out to the media on behalf of the Local Committee.
• If asked for an interview, the communications officer asks the Local Committee to send someone to talk with the media.
• The Local Committee has its own communication officer who is responsible for maintaining its relationship with the university’s communications officer.
• The committee’s events, including SRP student presentations, have been featured not only in the local media, but also on CBC thanks to this partnership.

b) Communications Strategies

Communication Strategy at U Laval
By: Alexandra Champagne, Université Laval LC

This year, despite what we considered to be a fairly modest communications strategy, our LC still managed to reach the public in numerous ways. Our simple approach is noteworthy in that it consisted primarily of making ourselves available for opportunities as they presented themselves (e.g. radio interviews and newspaper articles), while showing our appreciation and demonstrating a willingness to collaborate. What’s more, we were able to take advantage of a SRP student’s talent for producing posters and videos that illustrate our activities in tangible terms. This has proven to be a very successful initiative, as it is the videos that most effectively engage people’s attention. We also find ourselves communicating more and more via social media, which is helping us greatly expand our reach. For example, after LC members shared a newspaper article about one of our former SRP students, the story’s reach grew exponentially until more than 3,500 people viewed it online.

Social Media Tips and Strategies
By: Reeda Tariq, York University – Glendon Campus LC

1. Have a strong social media presence! But remember to not spread yourself too thin by having an account for every single social media available.

2. Limit # of social media accounts to maximum 5 accounts and to websites that are more frequented by people between the ages of 18-24, the most largest age group people who attend university.

3. Strike a balance between how often you post: don’t
retweet something once a month nor should you constantly be reposting at least ten times a day, basically clogging up people’s newsfeeds.

4. The only time I do find it most beneficial to **constantly be posting updates is during an event** and even that is mostly concentrated with twitter and instagram.

5. At the end of events, which is also when you will usually have a lot of online traffic, **post a thank you message to your student body for attending the event.**

6. **Post a link to the event campaign page.** Was it for Bike for Aids? Or Shine A Light? This helps make people more aware of WUSC and what exactly they are going to be doing with the money they have raised.

7. I find it best to **keep lighter posts towards twitter** and update that more in the morning and early afternoon, whereas for Facebook, **I stick to more a small paragraph** describing whatever event or cause we are supporting and to also post more in the late afternoon/evening.

8. If you see a fellow WUSC committee has just held an event, **congratulate them!** This builds WUSC spirit and camaraderie, since we are all in this together!

9. Remember to **constantly update your banners and also to post your pictures up after an event.** Don’t let your accounts just sit there, all stagnant. Give them some life.

10. And finally, **don’t forget to link all your accounts together!** This will not only make it easier for you but also for your audience to discover your committee’s online presence and help build an awareness of your campus’s WUSC, which will greatly benefit you in the long run.

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**6- Collaboration Best Practices**

Other resources:
- [Trillium Video: Community Engagement](#) – Tutorial and best practices from across the network
a. Local Committee Regional Collaboration

Western Canada Regional Meetings, Trainings, and Socials
By: 2014-15 Regional Meeting Participants

Each province in Western Canada organized a Regional Meeting or training in 2014-15. The following are testimonials from participants speaking to the importance of regional collaboration:

“Being that Saskatchewan only has two Local Committees, it was important for us to show that we support each other. It was inspiring to see that there are other students and volunteers on different campuses who have the same passions and to reaffirm that we are changing the world through education together.”
-Anna Tsui, UofS LC

“It was crucial for all of our campuses to come together to share our visions, hopes, and frustrations. Being in a group surrounding, and able to speak about these points, helped us all feel enthusiastic for the rest of this year and the upcoming years!”
-Sarah Lavimizadeh, UofA LC

“The most successful part of organizing our Regional Meeting, and coincidentally the reason why it’s so important to organize one, is that it brought together a group of highly passionate people who, for one day, worked together to make one large Local Committee that remains to this day an incredibly valuable network full of great ideas and unwavering support.”
-Hannah Tamblyn, UofM LC

"Attending the Regional Meeting was a great opportunity to know more about WUSC’s programs, and to connect with Local Committees from other campuses. It was an educational day; I got to know the characteristics of a successful Local Committee, and challenges that hinder its prosperity".
-Adit Abit, UBC LC

Maritimes LC Planning Meeting
By: Marissa Ley, Dalhousie University LC
Chapters present: MSVU, Saint FX, Dalhousie (12-13 participants from the three universities)

The main purpose of this meeting was to develop a plan to improve communication and coordination of WUSC chapters in the Atlantic region. Participants agreed on a game plan for the 2015-2016 academic year with three main events:

- Having social events specifically geared for all newly arriving students within the region in early September (picnic/BBQ in one of the Halifax parks, with a Canadian theme) and in early January (Ideas: Skating, cosmic bowling, hockey game);
- A symposium scheduled for the week following reading week in early March (LCs to start planning/meeting regularly in September);
- Coordinated efforts to promote ‘Bike for AIDS’ across campuses (December 1- World AIDS day-stationary bikes) (*N.B. The Bike for AIDS campaign wrapped up in Summer 2015)*;
- A follow up meeting similar to this one will be held in mid to late August before the new academic year begins.

b. Building Relationships On-Campus

Dialogue and Solidarity with First Nations Associations
By: Brenna Farren, Trent University LC

On March 4, 2015 WUSC at Trent took part in a campus wide vigil to raise awareness about women’s issues globally. The Shining a Light on Our Global Sisters Vigil was a team effort between WUSC, the Gzowski College Office and the Trent University Native Association (TUNA). The vigil was created by two students working in the Gzowski College Office who were co-chair of WUSC and vice-president of TUNA respectively. WUSC took this opportunity to create a link with a group on campus they would not usually have connected with. By using this connection we were able to get funding we would normally not have access to, we were also able to reach a demographic of students who would not usually have a connection with WUSC and would not usually be aware of the issues and campaigns that WUSC works with.

Both groups were able to reach out through their respective networks in order to get speakers who were well versed in the two movements (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Shine a Light) and
through that we were able to have a speaker from the First People’s House of Learning to speak about those Indigenous women who are missing and those who are lost but not forgotten as well as a former WUSC SRP student who told about her experiences as a young girl in refugee camps. This incredible collaboration was an amazing success, with many more students than expected turning out and being made aware of one, or both, of these movements. Students who didn’t know about WUSC beforehand were made aware and were interested in learning more and getting involved. The use of networking and taking advantage of the resources and connections available to us made for a great success of an event.

Reaching out to Other Clubs on Campus
By: Francesca Ghossein, University of Alberta – Campus St. Jean

Expanding your network and connecting with other clubs is a great opportunity to raise awareness and to gather support for your events and campaigns. Our LC finds it very useful to solicit members of other executive from other clubs on campus by asking them to volunteer with us. For example, we create volunteer opportunities – such as taking tickets, helping with food preparation, or participating in our talent and fashion shows—at our events. We have noticed that, in getting them involved in a more personalized way, they learn more about what we do, and they help us raise awareness about WUSC. Some other club members even considered running for our executive positions after having volunteered at one of our events.

Also, we found that collaborating with other WUSC Local Committees, especially the UofA main campus LC helped us organize events more effectively, as the roles were divided more equally. Additionally, we hold international buffets to promote Bike for AIDS and the SRP, and all the food was provided to us by volunteers from ‘international clubs’, which helped us stay under budget.

c. Building Relationships in the Community

Off-Campus Community Organizations and Resettlement Agencies
By: WUSC Campus Engagement Team

The WUSC UVic LC has made strong connections with local resettlement and community organizations focused on social justice and resettlement-related work. Giving new SRP students orientations with these organizations and staff is a part of WUSC UVic’s resettlement process. These organizations are also invited to some of the events that WUSC UVic holds and have also been panelists for Uniterra Symposia events focused on refugee issues. Building connections with these organizations has become more natural as Local Committee members have
built relationships with the amazing staff at these organizations.

In 2013, the LC was invited to sit on the first steering committee with a coalition of community organizations planning the first ever World Refugee Day (WRD) celebrations in Victoria! For 2014 WRD planning, the LC took a strong leadership role in the committee and facilitated an arts-based community project that worked with over 30 community members around the question of “What does home mean to you?”. Although it takes a little bit of effort and ice-breaking, creating strong partnerships is a great way for volunteers to learn more about refugee issues and resettlement, to expand their support network, and to become involved in exciting and meaningful community initiatives!

**Reaching out to a Small Community**

By: WUSC Campus Engagement Team

In 2012-2013, one of Acadia’s SRP students took part in the **Human Library Event** put on by the Wolfville Memorial Library and Acadia’s Vaughan Memorial Library. Participants could check out a ‘human book’ and hear an individual’s story one on one for up to 30 minutes at a time.

- Acadia’s Majur Bior, titled his book *More than Ten Years of One Meal a Day: Living in a refugee camp*, and shared some information about his background, his story and why that was the story he chose to share.
- Majur met with his readers at specified days and times to talk about his life in a camp in Kenya. He focused particularly on challenges of pursuing education within a refugee camp and comparing it to the life of youth in Canada.

The Acadia committee has recruited a member of the Wolfville community to be its **Community Liaison**. As Community Liaison, the individual:

- Attends meetings and events
- Helps with fundraising
- Supports SRP students in the community when needed

This community connection is important in a small university town like Wolfville where the Christmas and summer holidays are marked by a considerable drop in the student population. This community connection helps to root the sponsored students in Wolfville and broadens their social circle beyond campus.