



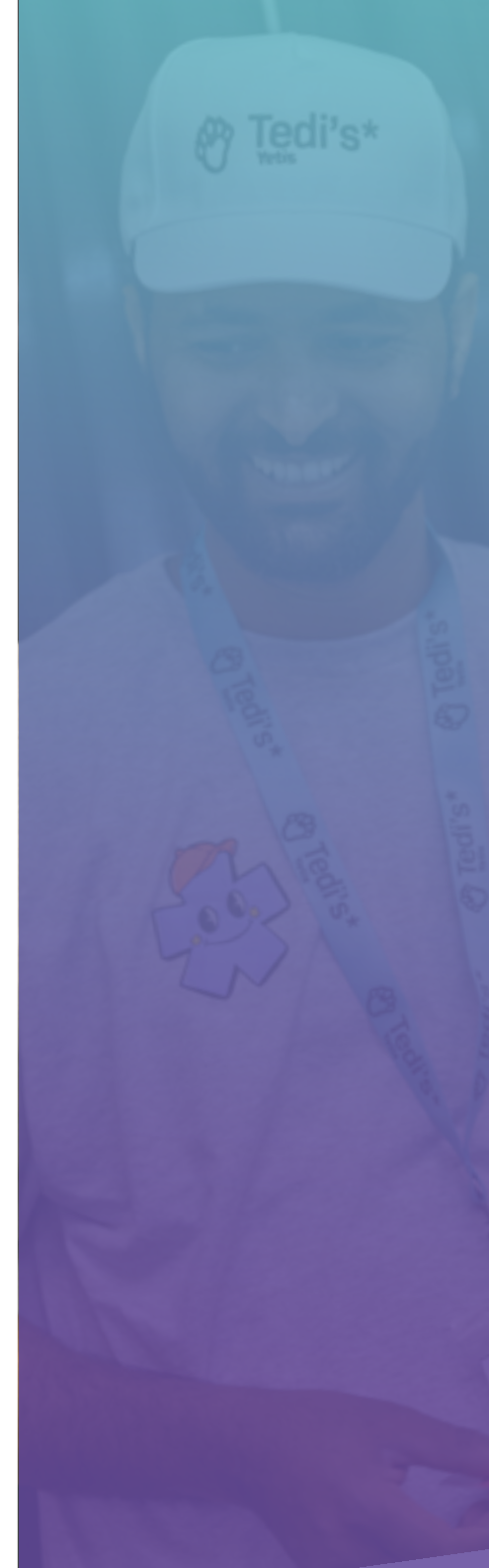
Saitsa*

2024/25
Annual Report

Saitsa.com

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Advocacy & Research

Saitsa continues to advance our advocacy initiatives and organizational Ends by conducting research and making the findings easily accessible to our members. We ensure transparency by publishing reports on our website and promoting them through our regular communications. By gathering evidence directly from students, we gain a clearer understanding of their needs and use that insight to advocate for positive, lasting changes at SAIT.



In 2023–24, Saitsa identified housing cost strain as a critical barrier to student well-being and academic success. Our research found that housing costs can be one of the largest expenses students face potentially doubling their total education costs if they are unable to live with parents or family members.

Our Focus in 2024-25:

- * The Board of Directors identified housing as its primary advocacy priority for the year.
- * We expanded on this work with a deeper investigation into student housing affordability. The findings show that most students spend more than 30% of their income on housing, placing them in a state of housing unaffordability as defined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.
- * Many students also meet statistics Canada's definition of core housing need: living in housing that is inadequate, unsuitable, or unaffordable, with no alternative options available locally.

KEY FINDINGS

From Our Student Housing Survey:



62%

Of students struggle to pay rent.



60%

Had to make a trade-off between other living expenses (food, phone bills etc.)



57%

Report housing affecting academic/social participation.



1/5

Students report landlord abuse with international students being the most vulnerable.



No.1

Top difficulty among students was finding housing close to campus.



Bottom Line?

These challenges are not isolated to housing as they amplify food insecurity, mental health concerns, financial hardship, and academic disengagement. If post-secondary education is to remain accessible in Canada, housing must be addressed as a fundamental equity issue for all students.

Looking Ahead

Saitsa will continue to push for tangible solutions to address student housing challenges, with an increased focus on advocacy and support services.



Finances



Our goal is to serve you, the students. We do this by collecting student fees, which are utilized to advocate for your rights, and to provide quality services and programs to students outside of the classroom.

Most full-time and part-time students, as well as apprentices, pay Saitsa membership fees. The actual fee assessment depends on the number of credit hours or apprentice weeks in which a student is enrolled.

Each fee is collected once per semester:

\$152

Student Association Fee

**\$16.89/
Credit**

Fees are paid per credit to a maximum of \$152 per semester.

Helps fund advocacy, student support, and engagement opportunities throughout the year. It ensures students have access to helpful resources, vibrant events, and meaningful ways to get involved. The fee also supports spaces and initiatives that enhance life outside the classroom.

\$94

Dental Fee

Gives students access to a dental benefits plan designed to make routine and unexpected dental care more affordable. It helps cover costs like check-ups, cleanings, and other eligible dental services.

\$96

Health Fee

Provides students with access to a comprehensive health benefits plan. It helps cover the cost of medical services not included in provincial healthcare.

Services Highlights

Student Experience

This year, Student Services continued to build on its commitment to supporting SAIT students in every aspect of their journey. Through expanded programs, personalized resources, and innovative service delivery, the team worked to ensure students felt supported, empowered, and equipped for success both on and off campus. These efforts highlight our ongoing dedication to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and accessible student community.



This year, Student Services redefined student support with innovative resources, stronger connections, and a renewed focus on student well-being.



CLUBS

2024-2025 was a year of growth, impact and community, celebrating student organizations' collective achievements and student leaders' dedication.

66

Active Clubs

132

Professional Development Events

123

Socials, Volunteering or Fundraising Events

- * **Leadership & Recognition** | Construction Project Management Students' Association (CPMSA) received SAIT's 2025 President's Student Leadership Award for expanding from 1 to nearly 20 initiatives. SAIT Lifeline partnered with Canadian Blood Services to promote blood, plasma, and stem cell donation.
- * **Professional Development** | Delivered 130+ career workshops, networking and industry engagement events serving 1000+ students
- * **Cultural Events** | Organized 120+ social gatherings, including multicultural festivals, engaging hundreds of students through music, dance, and cross-campus collaborations.
- * **Wellness & Recreation** | Hosted tournaments, outdoor adventures, and social events that promoted student wellness and balanced lifestyles.
- * **Faith & Inclusion** | Built supportive spaces through regular gatherings, worship nights, and outreach programs to international students.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAM

Saitsa's Experiential Learning Program (ELP) provides students with opportunities for both personal and professional growth. Through the program, students can strengthen important skills, build confidence, and make a positive impact in their communities. It also supports them in navigating their post-secondary journey while offering access to financial resources for essential training.

8

Sessions Offered

303

Students Served



ADOPT-A-FAMILY

Through the ongoing generosity of the SAIT community, Saitsa was able to “adopt” 92 SAIT student families, with 25 sponsors generously supporting the initiative.

Adopt-a-Family supports students and their families with funds to ensure that the cheer is spread far and wide among students and their families. They received wish list items along with a grocery store gift card, ensuring a holiday meal and allowing them to spread joy during the holiday season.

25

Sponsors

92

Families Adopted

TEDI MARKET

Saitsa’s Tedi Market emerged as a pivotal resource for students navigating challenging economic circumstances, specifically targeting barriers to food access. Through its pay-what-you-can approach, the initiative ensures all students have access to groceries and personal care items.

1201

Students Served



FREE BREAKFAST

Saitsa's FREE Breakfast events play a crucial role in supporting SAIT students. To further tackle food insecurity, these events provide nutritious breakfasts at no cost. There's a variety of offerings from fruit and granola bars to toast, bagel, parfait and cereal bars.

9637

Students Served



GOOD FOOD BOX

The Good Food Box program provides fresh, affordable produce to SAIT students. An initiative by the Community Kitchen Program of Calgary, helps fill student kitchens with healthy fruits and vegetables without emptying their bank accounts.

237

Boxes Sold



EMERGENCY FOOD FUND

To support students experiencing financial hardships, the Emergency Food Fund provided student with grocery store gift cards to help ensure that securing a meal was not an additional stressor.

328

Students Served



WELLNESS BANK

The Wellness Bank helps provide access to household items and hygiene items to SAIT students. Saitsa believes hygiene is a right, and not a luxury. Through this initiative, students have one less factor to consider during their student life journey.

210

Students Served



TAX PROGRAM

Saitsa's Tax Program provides practical experience for students to have training through Canada Revenue Agency's Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP). This is a completely free service and allows for volunteers to gain valuable experience while serving their community and peers.

55

**Volunteers
Participated**

1127

**Tax Returns
Submitted**

750

**Number of
Volunteer Hours**

FRESH ROUTES MARKET

Fresh Routes is a mobile grocery service making healthy food accessible and affordable. Operating from the Saitsa Peer Support Centre, they offer a variety of fresh produce to students and staff. Customers are encouraged to bring reusable bags. This on-campus service helps community members save money while accessing essential groceries conveniently.

942

Students Served



VOLUNTEERS

This year, Saitsa volunteers continued to be the heart of our campus community—driving engagement, connection, and positive change across every initiative. Through their time, energy, and enthusiasm, volunteers supported events, programs, and services that enriched the student experience and strengthened the sense of belonging at SAIT.

122

Volunteers

20

**Hours Per Volunteer
(Average)**

3200

**Volunteer Services
Program Total Hours**



Governance

Within Alberta, all student associations and unions are regulated by the Post-Secondary Learning Act. The act prescribes that Saitsa is managed by a board that is elected by and from the members of the association.

This board is made up of 9 directors that are elected in the winter semester, and known as the Saitsa Board of Directors. Their term officially starts in May and finishes in April of the following year.

The Saitsa Board of Directors remain focused on advancing the organization's End goals, ensuring they reflect the evolving needs of SAIT students.

The Board's End Goals:

- ✳ Students maintain a sense of overall wellbeing throughout their academic career.
- ✳ Students are able to successfully navigate their post-secondary educational experience.



2024-25 Board of Directors

Ahmad Baker
President

Lance Santiago
Vice President

Varshit Barot

Nina Fabian

Ryan Ng

Lesi Nwielaghi

Sangram Singh

Shehbaj Singh

Rey Tacder

ELECTIONS

Voting opened for the 2025 Saitsa General Election on March 3, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. and closed on March 6, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. Voting was conducted by way of Single Transferable Voting using the Droop Formula calculated by an independent third-party system.

There were 21 eligible candidates in the election, with a voter turnout of 16.3%. The first count consisted of 21 rounds before one candidate was disqualified, followed by a second count of 20 rounds after the disqualification.

Chief Returning Officer

Ilene Burns

2025 Elections Oversight Panel

David McIntyre – Chair

Michael Watterston – Panel Member

Sandra Penner – Panel Member

2025 Elections Highlights:

21

Eligible Candidates

16.3%

Voter Turn Out

21

Rounds of counting

Operations

As your students' association, we've continuously adapted our campus operations to deliver affordable, accessible services that align with your changing needs. By maintaining flexibility and strategically adjusting our delivery methods, we've successfully expanded our reach both on and off campus while keeping the enhanced student experience at the forefront of our mission.

ODYSSEY MARKET



During the 2024–2025 academic year, Odyssey Market underwent renovations to enhance the student experience and create a more vibrant campus atmosphere. We refined our product selection to ensure greater consistency, introduced more in-house items, and continued to offer unique seasonal beverages. To encourage sustainable habits, we provided discounts to students who brought their own cups. This year also marked an exciting milestone with the launch of our first line of custom-designed greeting cards.

STATION EXPRESS



The Station Express continued to serve as SAIT students' one-stop convenience shop throughout the 2024–2025 academic year. During this time, the team focused on evaluating the evolving needs of students and identifying opportunities to enhance convenience and quality. After careful consideration, we began preparing for an exciting rebrand to Odyssey Express, envisioned as a complementary extension of Odyssey Market. This rebrand aims to align the two outlets under a shared identity while maintaining the quick, student-focused service that Station Express is known for. The transition and introduction of new offerings are set to roll out in the coming year.





GATEWAY FOOD TRUCK



During the 2024–2025 academic year, we continued to expand our food truck operations through our partnership with YYC Food Trucks, proudly serving as a featured vendor at Friendly Fest and Wicked Woods. We also ventured into catering, successfully completing our first full-service wedding package. Beyond business growth, our team gave back to the campus community by serving complimentary poutine and chili to more than 700 students at various Saitsa events throughout the year.



GATEWAY EVENTS



Gateway Events maintained its renewed focus on delivering larger-scale, off-campus experiences throughout the 2024–2025 academic year. We collaborated with top-tier talent in entertainment and music, bringing a diverse lineup of performances to audiences across the Alberta community and beyond. Our audio and visual services continued to play a key role within the events sector, while our extensive rental catalogue remained a valuable resource for Saitsa, SAIT students, campus guests, and the broader Alberta community.

Student Experience Awards



Annually, Saitsa acknowledges students in the community who demonstrate excellence and support for others. We honour those who embody the spirit of the SAIT and Saitsa communities, through a diverse array of 7 awards.

For 2024–2025, we proudly recognized the following students for their outstanding contributions to the SAIT student experience

We believe outstanding students, and apprentices should be rewarded for their dedication and hard work at SAIT.

- ★ **Club of the Year Award**
Construction Project Management Students' Association
- ★ **DC Fleming Award**
Lance Lauren Santiago
- ★ **Disruptor Award**
Andry Castro

- ★ **JM Parker Award**
Ahmad Baker
- ★ **Marcel Carpenter Award**
Steven Brierly



- ★ **Supporter Award**
Armaandip Singh
- ★ **Therese Murray Award**
Smita Biswas

Get Connected!



Saitsa

   | @SaitsaLife

The Odyssey Market

 | @OdysseyCoffee
 | @TheOdysseyCafe

Gateway Events

 | @Events.Gateway
 | @Events.Gateway.YYC