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**MARITIME STUDENT CONGRESS JUNE 28TH - 30TH**

**CONFERENCE REPORT:**

The Maritime Student Congress (MSC) is a leadership development conference aimed at student association executives. It provides a platform for networking, training, and information sessions to enhance their performance as student leaders. This report summarizes the executives personal experience at the MSC, including the presence of Daniel Mills, the Deputy Minister (Post-Secondary Education), during the Gala night.

**Personal Experience:**

During the MSC, Sahil, Harmanjot and I had the privilege of attending various sessions and interacting with student executives from different maritime regions. The congress facilitated discussions on student issues, shared challenges, and provided valuable insights into effective leadership. One highlight of the event was the Gala night, where Daniel Mills, the Deputy Minister of Post-Secondary Education was present. We had the opportunity to speak with him one-on-one, further enhancing our involvement with the MSC.

**Benefits of Maritime Student Congress:**

**Networking Opportunities:** The MSC brings together student executives from across the Maritimes, enabling us to meet and connect with like-minded individuals. This networking fosters collaboration and facilitates the sharing of best practices.

**Training and Development:** The congress offered a wide range of training sessions conducted by knowledgeable speakers such as Jeffrey Carleton from STU and David Emerson from UNB. These sessions focused on working with administration, creating a plan, building relationships with team members, understanding strengths and weaknesses, and maintaining credibility as student leaders.

**Leadership Enhancement:** The MSC provided valuable insights into effective advocacy through the session conducted by Lydia Houck, an Advocacy Coach. We learned about planning strategically, identifying issues, conducting research and consultations, and developing SMART goals. This knowledge equipped us with essential skills to bring value to the table and advocate for all students effectively.

**Things Learned:**

**Strategic Thinking:** The MSC emphasized the importance of having a plan and setting priorities. Understanding the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) of our team and ourselves is crucial for effective leadership. By maintaining credibility and setting clear priorities, we can navigate challenges successfully.

**Advocacy and Relationship Building:** Advocacy was highlighted as a team effort that requires building relationships and bringing value to the table. Developing policies and solutions that benefit the entire student community requires collaboration and strong bonds within the community.

**Personal Growth and Resilience:** The MSC emphasized the significance of self-forgiveness, acknowledging small wins, and embracing new perspectives. Overcoming challenges and solving problems often require a shift in thinking and a collective effort. The congress encouraged us to strive for personal growth and develop resilience in our leadership roles.

**Conclusion:**

Attending the Maritime Student Congress was a rewarding experience. It provided an excellent platform for personal and professional development, offering networking opportunities, training sessions, and valuable insights into effective leadership and advocacy. Overall, the MSC was a valuable conference that contributed to our growth as student leaders in the maritime region.