June 17, 2017

A champion of change

Edmonton – Jason Garcia remembers sitting in his first-year sociology class and hearing his professor say that the things we would be learning were essential life skills – things that would make us better human beings.

A month into the course, Jason was already mapping out his major and it was a path that dovetailed with the experiences he was having outside of the classroom. “I think the moment I went to my first InQueeries club meeting was the same moment when I started getting the most of my MacEwan experience,” said Garcia. “It was a place where I could be myself, where I felt a sense of community, and had the opportunity to learn about why safer spaces matter.”

Over the next year, Garcia became an executive member of InQueeries, then a peer supporter, and eventually, in his fourth year, SAMU’s vice-president of student life. In each role, he has been a champion for equality, LGBTQ issues, ending sexual violence, and creating safe spaces.

Having conversations about tough subjects clearly isn’t something he shies away from – whether he was invited to contribute to discussions that would lead to an awareness campaign to end sexual violence, MacEwan hosting the first PRIDE Week, or introducing gender neutral washrooms and the ability for MacEwan students to designate a preferred name in university records.

“I think any institution struggles to have these difficult conversations, but I knew that at MacEwan we could trust that they could happen in a meaningful way,” says Garcia. “It makes me so happy to feel like the things other students and I have said, written or done here have actually turned into something meaningful.”

Garcia plans to return to MacEwan to serve his second mandate a SAMU VP and after that he plans on going to law school or pursing a master’s degree in sociology. But whatever path he chooses, he knows it will involve advocating for marginalized groups and human rights.

Garcia will receive his Bachelor of Arts during the spring convocation ceremonies.

When: Thursday, June 22
Time: During the 3:00 p.m. convocation ceremony.

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 65 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.

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