

Poster Abstracts

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Partnerships in Advocacy: Student Help and Advocacy Centre, Legal Clinic of Guelph/Wellington

In May 2010, U of G's Central Student Association created the Student Help and Advocacy Centre (SHAC) which was an amalgamated of the former Legal Resource Room, Financial Resource Room, and Human Rights Office. SHAC was created because the three former services acting as separate entities were not serving the needs of the student body i.e. legitimacy, consistent office hours, larger client base. The mandate of SHAC is to provide resources, advocacy, and support for students in the area of legal, financial, academic, and human rights. A key component of SHAC is our partnership with the Legal Clinic of Guelph/ Wellington. An area that students need a significant amount of help is in the area of tenancy. Many students are not aware of their rights as a tenant and the responsibilities of their landlord. As a result, students are often overwhelmed when landlord and tenant issues arise. These students come to SHAC to seek advice. In situations where SHAC staff are unable to appropriately assist because we lack legal education and credentials, students are referred to the Lawyer's satellite hours. This is a healthy partnership because SHAC is able to provide quick, reliable information for students dealing with minor tenant issues & the Legal Clinic of Guelph/ Wellington Lawyer is able to handle more serious cases that students can't resolve.