

# SLS: free information and legal help

by John Watson

Edmontonians who cannot afford a lawyer and who have been turned away by Legal Aid (the provincial government's legal help organization) do have a group to turn to.

That group is Student Legal Services (SLS) based on the U of A campus. SLS operates four offices in Edmonton and through them provides information and help to about 10,000 people each year.

Jo-Ann Kolmes is chairperson of SLS this year. She is entering her third year of Law, and has been working at SLS since her first year in the faculty.

Enthusiasm is one of her more evident traits. "Helping an individual who has a problem and is floored by a legal system," she said, "reminded me of why I want to be in law to begin with."

But there is more to it than just helping other: "We also have a lot of fun — yes, I should mention fun," Kolmes said.

For Kolmes, the work is rewarding as well, and the rewards come in the form of appreciation. SLS accepts no fee in return for its services.

"We have a policy that we will accept absolutely nothing," said Kolmes. Letters are the only exception, and Kolmes has a drawer full of them. Most are from people who are grateful for the help received from SLS.

Most of that help is in the form of information. "Our principal mandate is to provide information — and we do a lot of that," said Kolmes.

But, if necessary, SLS volunteers can represent people in small claims court and other areas where defendants do not have to have a lawyer. The students' inexperience might be expected to show in court, but this is not the case.

"We have a good record of wins in our trials," said Kolmes. "Our performance is not unlike the legal community."

That same legal community is not wholly in favour of Student Legal Services existing.

According to Kolmes, some lawyers feel SLS will go to trial on just about anything. Kolmes' retort is simply that SLS won 47 per cent of the cases it went to court with in 1985.

"Some lawyers are really, really supportive," said Kolmes. "They say: 'If you (SLS) weren't around, the people who you are helping... wouldn't have anyone.'"

"We are not lawyers, and we are the first to say it, but my feelings are that we do really useful work," Kolmes said.

Some of the work SLS is doing now is very useful as well as very interesting.

SLS is actively monitoring health by-law infractions in the slums of Edmonton. They are trying to force the landlords to improve living conditions for the people of those areas.

The west-10 office is involved with prisoners in correctional institutions. Currently, Kolmes said, west-10 is helping the lifers at the Edmonton maximum security penitentiary (the Max) incorporate as a society.

The Legal Research and Reform division works to bring about changes in problematic laws. One project concerns itself with corporations that are taking advantage of the legal system and, through it, taking advantage of individuals.

Kolmes gave the example of magazine subscribers who decide they are not interested in the magazine and stop paying.

If the magazine takes the sub-

scriber to Court of Queen's Bench (instead of to small claims court), the subscriber must obtain a lawyer. That makes it more expensive to fight the court case than it would be to simply pay the subscription.

The research and reform project is collecting background research

to go to the government with, in hopes of changing this scenario.

SLS also runs administrative and family law offices as well as legal education projects.

All of these offices are run by student volunteers from the faculty of Law on campus. During the

school year, about 150 to 200 students donate their time, which comprises between one-third and one-half of the entire faculty.

Over the summer, about 35 students are hired by SLS. "As soon as school starts, we are on a volunteer basis," said Kolmes.

## ANOTHER PIZZA 73 QUIZ

### QUESTION:

The pathogorium (sp?) theorum is:

- a) a theorum developed by pathogorium?
- b) a patheorium developed by theorum?
- c) not worth remembering?
- d) the theorum that explains how Pizza 73 can afford to sell one pizza at the regular price, and the second for only 73 cents.

The answer is c). Nobody knows how Pizza 73 sells the best pizza in Edmonton at such terrific prices.

### ANSWER:



BUY ANY PIZZA AT REGULAR PRICE AND RECEIVE THE SECOND PIZZA OF EQUAL VALUE FOR..... 73¢!

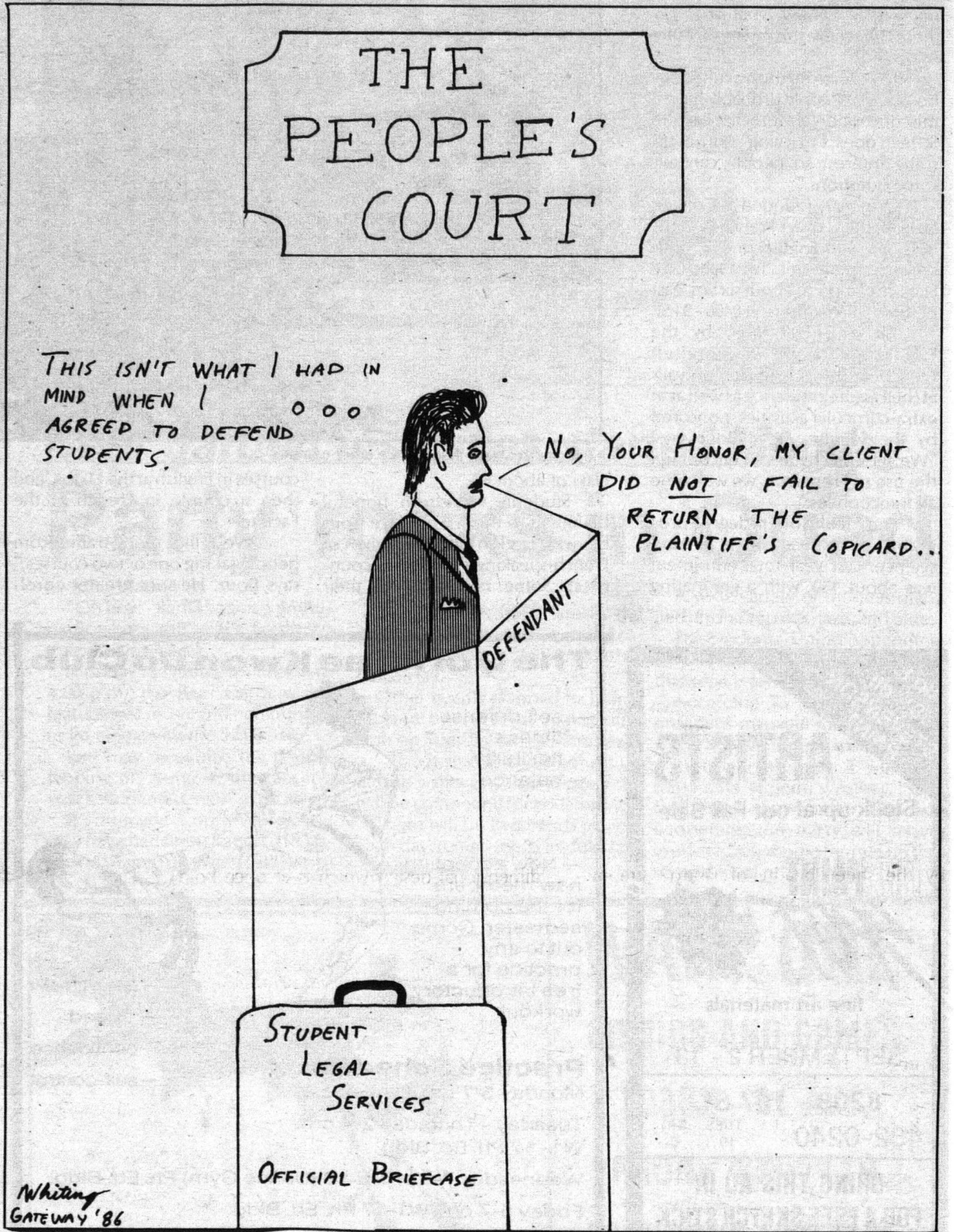
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## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Chief Returning Officer

#### Responsibilities:

- Performs the duties normally required by a Chief Returning Officer (Staff recruitment and hiring, organization of polls, oversees counting procedures, etc.)
- Conducts elections in accordance with Bylaw 300 and 350 for such election or referenda as designated by Students' Council.
- Act as arbitrator in any dispute arising during the course of an election/referendum.

#### Qualifications:

- Must possess excellent organizational and administrative skills.
- Familiarity with previous Students' Union elections a definite asset.

**Remuneration:** As per Schedule Established October 1984.

**Term of Office:** Immediately to 30 April 1987

**Deadline for Applications:** Monday, 15 September 1986, 4 p.m.

For applications and/or information, please contact the Students' Union Executive Offices, 259 Students' Union Building (SUB) — 8:00 a.m. to 12 Noon, 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## ? INFORMATION ? SERVICES ?

If you're wondering who, what, where, or when — we can help.

**Information Services** provides a variety of information concerning the university and the city, including: transit schedules, phone numbers and locations of University departments and services, entertainment dates, parking and housing info, the SU Discount Directory, and the list goes on.

**Information Services** also dispenses the SU Handbook and Directory.

Look for info centers in both HUB and SUB and remember we're here to serve you!