

Eastern bias at competition prevented rest to do better

U of A engineers some of the best

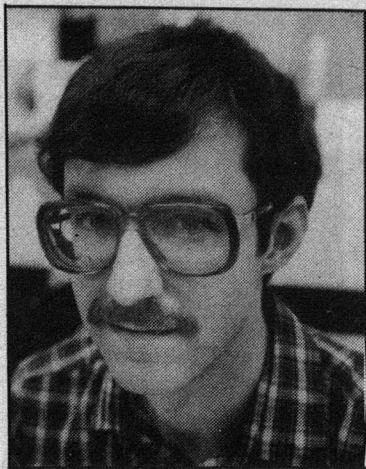
by Bill Doskoch

One U of A engineering student captured a national award and several others came close, winning a total of four of thirteen awards at the Canadian Engineering Design Competition, held this past weekend at McGill University in Montreal.

Peter Doell, a fourth-year civil engineering student, won the \$1,500 first prize in the editorial communication category for his topic entitled "responsible development of micro-hydro power" and Shauna Mercer, also in fourth-year civil, came in third in the same category for her presentation on "hazardous waste management."

"The key is they won't call us the University of Edmonton anymore," laughed Mercer. "They didn't know where we were from, they expected us to show up in cowboy hats and boots or something."

The national competition was the culmination of four regional events. The U of A hosted the western regional on Feb. 28 to March 3.



Peter Doell

Mercer's and Doell's category required them to develop a policy on a technical issue that has social significance.

"Safety and environmental impact were the two main issues I dealt with," said Doell. "This is a very new field and whenever you're pioneering in an area, those two things tend to get overlooked."

Micro-hydro projects are those of under 100 kilowatts, which is enough to light about 80 houses, he said. By comparison, the Bighorn hydro-electric dam near Nordegg is 120 megawatts, or enough to light 96,000 homes.

Mercer advanced the idea in her presentation that hazardous waste disposal plants, such as the one being established at Swan Hills, were positive things, were definitely required, and people should resist the "not-in-my-back-yard" syndrome and accept them.

One of the reasons Mercer and Doell felt they did better than the other two groups of competitors from the U of A was their presentations had nothing to do with the oil and gas industry while the others did.

As examples, Joseph Gulayets, D. Randall Pack, and David McGrath, all of chemical engineering, dealt with Syncrude as their subject in the corporate design competition. They placed first in the western competition, but only third at the

national.

Mechanical engineering students Bob Hawrelak, Steve Fedyna, Vince Lau, Ian Thacker, and Rob Sinclair came in second in the west for their design of a micro-electrical suit, but did not place at the national, although they did win the technical excellence award.

The suit was designed to keep people warm while working in extremely cold conditions on oil rigs and pipelines, Doell said. "Their idea was good, but the judges couldn't understand why people would need that kind of protec-

tion, but for anyone in the oil industry that's a serious problem.

There was an overall lack of understanding of the significance of the energy industry to Alberta's economy, the two said. Eastern engineering students were having no problems finding jobs, but only five out of one hundred civil graduates had permanent jobs this year.

Despite the misunderstandings, the two said they were treated very well and felt the U of A would have "a lot to live up to" when they host the 1987 competition.

Katimavik canned without warning

by Ken Magor
of Canadian University Press

TORONTO (CUP) — Katimavik supporters would have resented the federal government's move to close the youth program no matter when it was announced, but they say the Jan. 28 cancellation came at a particularly bad time.

According to Paul Phaneuf, Katimavik executive director, half of the recruitment for next year's program had already been completed. And \$330,000 had been spent on advertising and hiring 30 to 35 Katimavik alumni to promote the program in high schools.

Though Sen. Jacques Hebert's hunger strike has made most people aware that Katimavik is gone, Toronto subway riders are still greeted with appeals to sign up for Katimavik, advertising bought before the cancellation.

"It's a lot of waste of public money," said Phaneuf, still bitter about the federal government's cancellation of the nine-year old project. Katimavik allowed about 1600 young people a year to work on community projects in three different provinces, and promised them better comprehension of the other national language. Participants received \$1 a day and \$1000 if they completed their nine-month tenure.

Marie-Josée Lapointe, press attache for Secretary of State Benoit Bouchard, called the \$20 million Katimavik "a Cadillac program" and said the government would

funnel the money into an employment or youth program that would better serve young people.

"If we knew last fall, say, we wouldn't have hired people and had to pay their salaries and lay them off. And we wouldn't have had to buy that space," said organizer Barry Bloom of Katimavik's Toronto office.

Katimavik officials used to plan the program's activities six months in advance and by the time of the January announcement, much of the recruitment budget had already been spent.

However, Phaneuf said even if the government had advised him sooner, that wouldn't have softened the blow.

"It's not a question of timing; it's a question of preoccupation by the government. What have they got to offer young people (now that both Katimavik and the Ministry of Youth have been terminated)?" he asked.

There are still 1,000 participants working at projects across Canada. Some will finish this month and all will have finished by June 4. Katimavik's 350 staff are being phased out and all operations will cease as of June 30.



Photo Lutful Kabir Khan

Palestine Awareness Week caused a bit of a stir with a display in HUB

Films, speakers and lectures are planned later in the week.

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