

York \$1 mil richer

by Susan Vanstone

York University was granted \$1 million on Tuesday from Japanese businessman Ryoichi Sasakawa.

York was the only Canadian university to receive a fellowship from the Japanese Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, which donated 50 such awards to universities around the world.

Dean of graduate studies, Sandra Pyke, said the money will go toward five annual \$4,000 fellowships awarded to master's students and five annual \$8,000 fellowships to doctoral students in the social sciences who show "potential for international leadership," and are interested in working in the areas of political economy, environmental protection and Canada as a Pacific nation.

Pyke added that these will be the university's most prestigious awards to graduate students.

She also said York was chosen in part because of its great strength in the social sciences and international areas.

Spokesperson Cathy Sproule added York was selected due to its high calibre of graduate students, its participation in the Joint Centre for Asian-Pacific Studies and its graduate environmental studies programme.

Students confront VP Farr about underfunding, AIDS policy at Central Square open forum

by Mark Wright

Tempers ran high last Wednesday as students were given a chance to voice their concerns about the university to the administration.

About 100 students attended the open forum at the east bear pit in Central Square where Vice-president (finance and administration) Bill Farr responded to questions from the students.

Farr had agreed to the forum two weeks ago after 50 student protesters confronted him demanding the administration give students a greater voice and increased consultation over student concerns.

Protests began about three weeks ago when the North York fire department banned the use of tables along the corridors in Central Square because they posed a potential fire hazard.

The forum began with questions about the problem of overcrowding and increasing class sizes and what affect this is having on the quality of education at York. Farr said class sizes could be reduced by doubling the number of teachers, but that this would create a cost problem which could only be solved by

more funding.

"We [York] have the worst grants of any university in the country," Farr maintained.

CYSF internal commissioner Tina Deluca argued that students seemed to be involved in much of the decision making processes on campus but that it was a facade and that students had little influence on actual decisions.

Farr said there is student representation on most committees and although students may have a smaller voice, there are ways they are heard.

However when Farr was later asked why money was being spent on a new entry pavilion instead of solving the problem of overcrowding he contradicted himself.

"There are all kinds of priorities, but when it comes down to choosing A or B it's who can influence the decision. Students don't have a lot of influence over decisions. Should they have? I don't know?" he said.

Phil Jackson, a student and a member of the International Socialist, called on the administration to lead the fight against chronic underfunding. "The administration should be more bold and vocal and make education a more public issue," Jackson said.

Farr agreed, however he said that the government would be moved more by students making trouble. "If students started a demonstration I certainly would join in and I think the university would support a demonstration," he said.

Bethune student council president Chia-Yi Chua demanded the resignation of Director of housing and food services Norman Crandles citing last year's poor handling of the alleged food poisoning/flu outbreak at Bethune and Stong Colleges and the recent controversy over the removal of club tables.

"People who are incompetent should be dealt with appropriately — he [Crandles] should resign," Chua said angrily.

"I don't agree," Farr responded. CYSF president Peter Donato continued to press the issue of tables and asked for a decision by the administration. However, Farr maintained that there was no way they could go back to having tables in Central Square while being fully aware of the fact that it was a violation of the law.

"That's a cop-out. Why is it that Central Square is the first place of attack, while there are classes being held so overcrowded that students are sitting in the aisles?" Donato asked.

"The fire department has decided that classes are safe," Farr answered. To which Donato quickly responded by asking if anyone was in them at the time they were evaluated.

At one point the dialogue became quite heated when Ron Kelly, founder of the York Council on the Prevention of AIDS, attacked the administration's draft AIDS policy which says the disease is contagious and should be reportable. (See article p.6).

"That's discrimination and I'll take it to the Supreme Court. What you are doing is creating a sense of fear and discrimination against those who have the disease," Kelly yelled.

"Can you catch multiple sclerosis from someone who has it?" Farr replied.

When the forum ended students seemed disappointed by Farr's answers.

"This was not a debate between equals. He's a professional negotiator and gets around everything. It was outrageous," Jackson said.

"I think Bill is giving the standard bureaucratic side-step. If this continues students at York will continue to suffer," Chua said.

Farr did not say whether or not the forum was successful, but felt that he had been honest and did not "side-step" the questions.



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