

# Jobs-a-plenty in TO

## Employment looks good on the western horizon

BY ASHLEIGH CLARKE

TORONTO (CUP) — As the school draws to a close students are busy seeking summer employment.

"I just don't want to work at McDonald's again," said first-year student Liz Donkervoort, whose had enough of the burger and fry empire.

"I'd love to work at a country club, and I've put in a few resumes to the ones around my area, but I'm not too optimistic."

Fortunately, there's hope for students like Donkervoort, according to Statistics Canada.

The youth unemployment rate is 12.5 percent, the lowest it has been in 10 years.

The Student Employment Network (SEN) released these findings as a positive indicator for students looking for work this summer.

"For once we are not the bearer of bad news," said Kevin Makra, president of SEN.

The group puts out an annual guide for students looking for summer jobs based on feedback from employers.

"In the past, we [at SEN] have had to tell students that companies are not looking for seasonal help or

that they are planning on hiring internally, meaning people like their employees' kids," said Makra.

"But this year, the low unemployment rate means they are going to be hiring externally and will be more proactive in that search."

Colleen Phillips-Dabis, acting coordinator of the summer, part-time and temporary employment at the University of Toronto (U of T) career centre, is equally optimistic.

"The market for students is definitely better than it was five years ago," said Phillips-Dabis.

She says the career centre is being used more and more as a liai-

son between employers and students.

But in order to take advantage of these employment trends, Makra recommends starting early.

"In response to the limited amount of students out there, employers will be scrambling to fill their positions and are going to start looking earlier than usual," she said.

Students are also encouraged to pay attention to emerging trends.

"The increase in e-commerce and web-based companies has led to a more entrepreneurial and non-traditional approach to business,

and the bulk of positions that we advertise are from small or medium-sized businesses," said Phillips-Dabis.

With such small companies, a person might be employed to handle a number of duties that would otherwise be given to several people in a larger corporation.

As a result, the companies want a well-rounded individual.

"They are looking for tech-savvy [students], but also expect a degree of skill in other areas, like marketing and communication," Phillips-Dabis advised.

# The thorny, moral debate over patenting life

BY PIERRE-OLIVIER SAVOIE

MONTREAL (CUP) — By allowing companies to patent DNA, society is encouraging a system of social domination that fits neatly into a capitalist structure, says a United States anthropologist.

In a recent debate held at McGill University, Chaia Heller, who teaches at the Institute for Social Ecology in Plainfield, said society must question the ethics of biological patenting.

"At what point do we find it repugnant and odious to own something?" she said. "Nothing is sacred anymore."

That is why, she argued, society sees no problem with a company receiving royalties for developing new cells to cure diseases.

"At what point do we draw that cultural line and decide that the elaboration of capitalism is too much?" she asked.

Christian Cawthorn, a

patenting professional who participated in the McGill debate, counter-argued that without patents, companies could not survive.

Patents, said Cawthorn, allow companies to protect themselves against others who would like to steal information that is to their advantage.

"If companies can't patent an invention, they just let the information die because they can't make any profit off it," he said.

Private companies have progress reports, argued Cawthorn, so if after two or three months the research is going nowhere they just drop the project.

"It's sad, but research has always been driven by the economy," he added.

Cawthorn also said a major breakthrough would be to patent taxol, a mega-molecule very difficult to synthesize, which could help cure cancer.

Taxol sticks to cells and stops

their proliferation by refraining cancer's endless cell division.

If companies could patent taxol's synthesis, said Cawthorn, there would be much more research in trying to find new ways of recreating this living molecule.

But Heller said this argument simply justified the commodification and appropriation of information by promising to "cure all diseases." She believes this leads to deceit because — according to her — 97 percent of all diseases are stress, economics or environment-related.

Cawthorn replied that when an idea is patented, the information is still available to everyone and thus helps the scientific community move forward.

"Coca-Cola was never patented, and Pepsi tried to reproduce the same taste for so many years," he said. "Now they've given up and are saying that different [than Coke] is better."

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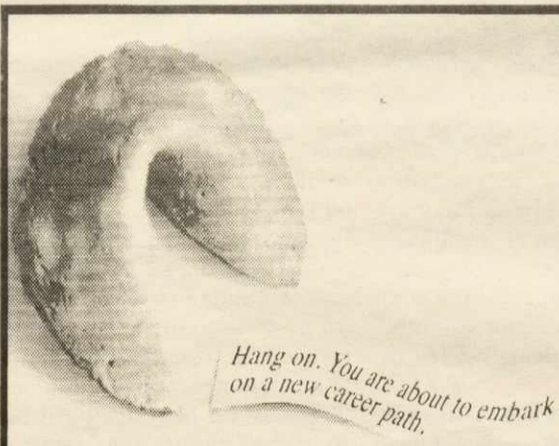
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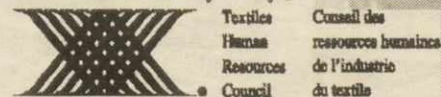
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