

# What's behind Mercredi's master plan

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## Student Centre sacks staff to cut costs

by Elaine Bellio

The Student Centre laid off five staff members last week because the Underground is losing money.

"The financial returns from the Underground do not come close to our expectations at all," said Gary McNealy, chair of the board for the Student Centre Corporation. He confirmed that revenues from the pub and restaurant are more than \$300,000 behind projections.

Rob Castle, manager of the student centre, said several of the operating costs have to be reduced.

Five staff positions involving the Underground have been eliminated, including program director M.J. Kelly and one of the restaurant managers. Castle said two office positions have been cut, as well as three positions in the

restaurant and pub. "It wasn't a happy option," Castle said, "but one has to deal with the reality one is faced with."

McNealy said the Centre has no choice but to cut costs because the must maintain payments on their \$23 million construction debt. If payments are not maintained, the university administration could technically take control of the Centre from students.

"If we (students) want to keep the building, then it means we have to suffer the losses," McNealy said.

The reduction in staff positions also means there will be less live music events. Castle said the pub will shift its focus away from live music and toward money-generating events.

"We had to look at areas which were considered essential," Castle said. "The first level of priority has to be revenue-generating areas."

Elissa Horscroft, vice president of equality and social programs for the York Federation of Students and a member of the Centre's programming committee, said that there will be a "serious reduction in the number of events in the Underground, but DJ nights will continue on Thursdays and Fridays." Campus venues generally have their highest turnouts on these nights.

Former programmer M.J. Kelly said she believes the recession has a lot to do with the poor turnouts at the Underground.

Horscroft said the restaurant has failed to attract customers because of its expensive and exclusive image.

"People don't realize how cheap it is," said Horscroft. "This may be one of the problems. Also, people want to be in a more casual atmosphere and the Underground has to work towards this."

Castle said the Underground needs to adjust its operations to meet the spending habits of students.

"Students have a strict entertainment budget," Castle said. "The students are saving their entertainment dollars for pub night, and other nights they spend studying."

Most students agreed that the problem is not the pub itself, but that they don't have the money to spend. Steve Caricini, a first-year Arts student said he appreciates the low cost of the drinks but can only visit the venue infrequently.

McNealy said the Student Centre is currently reviewing its policies for the Underground.

"We're not making money. That's the fact. We'll have to retrench and work like mad people to do that."

## Residence safety plan flounders

by Nicola Woolff

A proposal to make York residences safer may be falling by the wayside due to budget restraints.

Plans by York's Sexual Harassment Education and Complaint Centre (SHEACC) to place sexual harassment liaison officers in residences look like they may not materialize.

The proposal calls for the installation of two counsellors in each residence with extensive training to deal with all facets of sexual harassment. The counsellors would act as a liaison between the residences and SHEACC to help students deal with sexual harassment complaints.

According to Sharon Chimming, an advisor for SHEACC, "the purpose of the liaison is to take a closer look at acquaintance rape, to have peers educating peers, and to set a tone of behaviour in the residences."

Elissa Horscroft, vice president of equality and social affairs for the York Federation of Students, said the program is badly needed.

"The current situation with sexual harassment in the residences is already awful and horrific. The program should be seriously considered."

But with major campus-wide funding cuts being implemented this year, the program may face financial challenges.

The cost for the proposal is estimated at \$14,400 per college.

According to Horscroft, "SHEACC does not have the re-

sources to fund the program and is looking to other sources such as the Council of Masters to assist with the funding."

Peggy Keall, master of Calumet College and chair of the Council of Masters, said she highly supports the idea, but that it has not met unanimous acceptance from the Masters.

"There is a difficulty with how it will be received within the residences, and there is also a concern with funding."

Talks are continuing between SHEACC and the Council of Masters, and Chimming said she is optimistic about the outcome.

Currently residence dons receive five hours of seminars and workshops on addressing sexual harassment at the beginning of the school year.

"It's a sufficient overview, but not good enough for specifics," said Missy Campeau, a residence don for Winters College.

"I haven't had to deal with any sexual assault complaints yet, but if I have to in April, a lot of what I've learned, I might forget," added Campeau.

"With approximately 160 complaints filed last year, five hours of training is not enough for the victims of sexual harassment," said Chimming.

Further talks will be held by the YFS, Women's Centre and SHEACC later this month to discuss the financial obstacles the proposal faces.

## Reminds students of slavery, violence

### Student in chains protests Remembrance Day event

by Heather Green

On Monday, Remembrance Day, York students were challenged to remember a less acknowledged aspect of their history. In a symbolic protest, Osgoode student Jome Nkombe drew attention to the violent history of racism and slavery.

Nkombe walked in chains from the Student Centre to Osgoode Hall law school. From York the protest moved downtown to Queen's Park for the Royal Canadian Artillery's 21-Gun Salute.

According to Nkombe, "The chains are to transcend the stigma of slavery, to educate and empower the [African] people."

"When you look at facts around the globe and in Toronto, the Black communi-

ties are the victims of violence, and not the victimisers."

Nkombe and a group of four supporters quietly displayed a banner reading "Afrikans Remember the Inhumanity of Slavery and Neo-slavery," and handed out flyers explaining the significance of the protest and the need to stop glorifying violence and war.

Nkombe said the 21-gun salute was an example of how "we are socialised into thinking that violence against others is a sign of maturity."

"The State itself sanctions violence by manufacturing weapons, and industry sanctions violence through movies, T.V. and toy weapons for children," he added.

According to Nkombe, "once we stop associating violence with strength, we'll be on our way to a better freedom."

The protest arrived at Old

City Hall, where it was welcomed with turned backs and a dwindling crowd.

Robert, a Ryerson student at the Remembrance Day gathering, said that while he agreed with Nkombe's comments on continuing injustices, he believed that "war veterans had not fought for freedom, they had fought for peace."

Nkombe disagreed, arguing that peace without freedom is an illusion which allows domination and subjugation to occur.

"Once Africans start celebrating Remembrance Day as we have, once we remove the mental chains, we will realise that we are rich people, and the others will start to tremble," said Nkombe.

Nkombe and his supporters vowed to return next year.

## Grads, undergrads to lose health plans next year

by Sara Singer

The graduate student referendum on health insurance did not pass because a required 30 per cent quorum was not reached.

The referendum, held two weeks ago by the Graduate Students Association, asked if students wanted to

continue paying a tuition levy for a Blue Cross health insurance plan.

The levy would have increased to \$155 from \$70.79 and the plan's coverage would have dropped to 80 percent, excluding prescription drugs.

Of those who voted, the majority said no to the new plan.

Allan Jones, president of the GSA said he chose the 30% quorum because "we wanted to ensure a clear mandate from the students on whether they wanted the plan or not."

The issue of quorum has also affected the future of undergraduate health care.

In October, the York Federation

of Students cancelled a similar health insurance referendum shortly after the Board of Referendum Committee — a subcommittee of York's Board of Governors — requested a 20 per cent quorum.

As a result, the undergraduate Blue Cross plan will be eliminated next year.

David Taylor, health care administrator for the YFS, said the lack of a student health care plan next year could act as a deterrent to students.

"Several students have come up to me this year who have medical costs of hundreds of dollars worth of pre-

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