

CROSSCANADA

Health care privacy

MONTREAL (CUP) — Canadian undergraduates at McGill are automatically entitled to coverage under the student council's health-care plan, and are automatically charged for the privilege.

What is less well known is that Seaboard Life Insurance Company, which provides the plan, will only reimburse students who waive their right to privacy. None of the brochures published by the student council explicitly warn students that they will have to sign a consent form releasing all personal information in order to benefit from the health plan.

It must now tell its clients exactly where it gets its information, and exactly what it can do with it. Upon filling out the reimbursement claim form available at the student council counter and sending it to the insurance company, students will receive another consent form in the mail. It is called the "Claim Authorization" form, and it is much more explicit.

A staff member of the McGill Legal Information Clinic agreed that students have some cause to be alarmed. Any students who still feel uncomfortable about placing their right to privacy in the hands of Seaboard Life may choose to opt out of the portion of the student health plan relating to prescription drug coverage. However, in terms of privacy rights, the real question may be: are students obtaining any protection at all?

Gender gap shrinks

OTTAWA (CUP) — The gap between the earnings of men and women who have graduated from university or college has closed in recent years, according to a Statistics Canada survey released Oct. 5.

The survey shows discrimination is not "widespread" or "systemic," but may still exist among recent university and college graduates. Two years after graduating in 1990, female university graduates earned slightly more (0.4 per cent) than male graduates in hourly wages. But from the same class, women earned nine per cent less than men in yearly earnings in 1992.

The survey shows signs of less discrimination towards women in terms of earnings. As well, more females graduated from post-secondary institutions, says Ted Wannell, an official at Statistics Canada.

Women received 56 per cent of all undergraduate degrees, less than half of all master's degrees and more than one-third of all doctorates in Canada. Also, the hourly wage gap between male and female college graduates is 3.5 per cent.

According to the press release, the different characteristics of men and women, such as field of study, accounted for nearly all of the gender-earnings gap among university graduates.

Small bills protest

VICTORIA (CUP) — This semester, Tathra Street showed University of Victoria administration just how much recent tuition fee increases have cost her.

In an act of protest against tuition fee increases of 20 per cent in the last two years and 213 per cent since 1980, Street and two other UVic students paid their fees in as many \$2 bills as possible.

"We're mad and we want them to know it," Street said, her arms loaded with 584 \$2 bills to pay more than \$1,100 in tuition for this semester alone.

"We want to show them [UVic administration] how frustrated we are," she said.

Jo Lui, a fourth-year environmental studies major, paid some of her \$1,050 tuition tab in 378 \$2 bills, and the rest in fives.

"I would have paid the whole thing in twos but this was all the bank could spare," Lui said.

For international students, the price of education is even higher. Singe Sonvisen, an international student from Norway, paid more than \$2,500 for four courses for one semester — that's more than \$5,000 in tuition for one year of university.

The reasoning is that international students haven't contributed to the tax base, which is used to subsidize post-secondary education.

"What they're forgetting is that by living here as students we are contributing to the economy of Canada," Sonvisen said.

The purpose of the action was to make the administration aware of students' frustration and to draw attention to unfair fee increases.

Don Rowlett, UVic's vice-president of finance, wouldn't say whether the protest was justified.

"It's a tough call," Rowlett said. "It's not as simple as that."

Rowlett said universities are faced with reduced funding from government and that student tuition only accounts for 20 per cent of the overall cost of their education.

Rowlett also said that by paying their fees with so many small bills, students are "inconveniencing other students trying to pay their fees."

Employees at accounting were overwhelmed with the task of counting the massive stacks of bills. It took nearly 15 minutes to process each student's payment.

Canadian University Press (CUP) is a national organization made up of over 40 student papers from St. John's to Victoria. CUP enables student papers to exchange stories and ideas through the wire service, regional and national conferences. As a founding member of CUP, the Dalhousie Gazette makes sure that our university news becomes national news.

news

A theft a day at Dal

by Sean Sweet

Once per day, every day. That's how often a theft is committed on the Dalhousie campus.

Chief of security Sandy MacDonald reports that there are in excess of 32 thefts or break-ins each month. In September alone, he said theft amounted to over \$13,000 in losses. Of that total, more than half represented personal loss as opposed to university loss.

Though the thefts are fairly spread out across campus, MacDonald claims the target areas are parking lots, Dalplex, and residences.

Stolen goods — which according to MacDonald have totaled over \$1,000,000 from 1984 to 1993 — come in all shapes and sizes. Popular items for crooks in recent months include bicycles, clothes, car stereos, wallets, textbooks, sneakers, money and walkmans.

"We've lost parking meters, projection devices, traffic signs, paint-

ings and drapes from Howe Hall, and even a fish from the life science centre," said MacDonald.

Not only does it appear that anything is liable to be stolen, but that thefts can occur anytime of the day or night.

"We've come across a stolen laptop in somebody's backpack at 8:00 am," MacDonald said.

Dal security recommends students use common sense to protect themselves. Students should park in well-lit areas and not leave things out of sight for too long while studying.

When walking home or to your car, avoid paths through yards and walk with confidence. Officers caution motorists to look in the back seat of their car before getting inside.

In addition, the Tiger Patrol (494-6400) is available to escort people to their cars or home. For emergencies, callers can simply punch 4109 on any pay phone on campus, no prefix or quarter required.

Based on arrests made by secu-

city, we know that most of the criminals are from outside the Dalhousie community. If anyone spots suspicious behavior, they are urged to call security at 494-6400.

A good idea for residence students to prevent theft, or at least to stand a chance of recovering stolen property, is to take advantage of Operation Identification. This service, provided by Dal security, involves marking and registering personal goods. Students and faculty can register serial numbers (or engrave their S.I.N. on items) of expensive goods, which can aid in tracking down their merchandise after a theft. Copies of these lists are kept in the safe at the security office.

To take part in Operation Identification, simply call up security. They will either send an engraver in person to mark and register your possessions, or allow you to sign out an electric pencil to do it yourself.

SUNS to vacate SUB

by Heather Gibson

At the October 16th Dalhousie Student Union Council meeting, the DSU Officers reported that the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) will be vacating their space in Room 310 on November 1, 1994.

Over the past two months, the DSU executive and the SUNS representatives have been negotiating the terms of a recommendation brought to council in August by the SUB Operations Committee. The recommendation was to charge SUNS rent on their office space in Room 310 of the Student Union Building. The SUB Operations Committee believe SUNS to be an external organization to the DSU, and hence are subject to rental fees.

Dalhousie students, as members of SUNS, pay a levy of \$2.60 per year per full-time student, which was passed by a referendum. Most degree-granting institutions in Nova Scotia are members of SUNS and are subject to the same levy.

Originally, the SUB Operations Committee placed the value of the space at \$16.00 per square foot, or approximately \$7,750 per year, based on other student-owned SUBs across the country.

This amount, representing nine percent of SUNS' budget, was not considered feasible by SUNS executive. The Dalhousie Students' Council amended this recommendation, directing the DSU executive to enter negotiations with SUNS representatives on an agreeable rental fee.

The SUB Operations Committee questioned why students are potentially paying more for utilities and the space itself than other universities. Lisa Lachance, former DSU Vice-President External, disagreed with this view.

"Because SUNS has been here, student reps have had more direct access to SUNS information, Dal students have been consistently hired by SUNS... this may not be fair to other schools but the advantage was ours," said Lachance. "There is still no coherent plan as to what to do with the vacated space."

In addition to the space issue, SUNS has had a month of other moves. Over the past three weeks, the Student Union of Nova Scotia received resignations from all three of its executive members.

Allison Young, the chair, resigned effective October 9, 1994. A Ph.D. student in political science, Young cited academics as her main reason

for resignation. She had been the chair of SUNS since October 1993. Her position will remain open until the Semi-Annual General Meeting (SAGM) November 17 to 20 at Université Ste. Anne.

Peter Edwards, SUNS treasurer, resigned effective October 1, 1994 but agreed to continue with all duties of the treasurer until the SAGM in November. Edwards is a Ph.D. student in French at Dalhousie.

Laura Penny, SUNS deputy chair, has also forwarded her resignation effective November 17, at the SAGM. Penny is currently the Vice-President External at the University of King's College. She is also a representative on the Nova Scotia Council for Higher Education. Edwards and Penny were not available for comment.

Once moved out of their present office, SUNS will occupy Room 448 until early 1995.

Sue Drapeau, executive officer of SUNS, is concerned with the urgency placed on the immediate movement of the SUNS office. "With no clear plan in place for Room 310, or the rest of the SUB for that matter, why are we being rushed out of the building?"

DSU on the record

by Jen Horsey

Notes of interest from the last meeting of the Dalhousie Student Union:

- SUNS (Students' Union of Nova Scotia) will be leaving the SUB. The officers of SUNS (Student's Union of Nova Scotia) and the DSU have finally come to an agreement. SUNS is moving as of November 1 from their present location in room 310, to a temporary space in room 448. They will stay there until January 16, rent-free, while they seek suitable space outside of the SUB.
- The Canadian Federation of Students referendum is underway at Dalhousie. There have been several debates involving people on both the 'yes' and 'no' sides. Many complex issues are involved ranging from: on the 'no' side, the perilous financial state of CFS and the fee increase to six dollars per student; to concern from the 'yes' side that without CFS, we won't be able to effectively lobby student issues at a federal level.

This Sunday's council meeting was the shortest one of the year. It ended after only two hours when quorum was called and there was not the required 2/3 of councillors remaining at the meeting. The majority in attendance seemed pleased that they had the opportunity to leave earlier than usual; however, there was much unfinished business at the close of the meeting, and several students were frustrated that their issues weren't addressed. Those seeking financial grants, for example, were not allocated any funding because they could not be approved before the meeting's close.

• If you've ever attended a council meeting and wondered aloud whose rules of order were being followed, a chorus of "Oh, those are Wayne's rules" would have been the response. Well, Wayne Mason, the man who wrote the rules and who has contributed to the DSU in many other ways during his Dalhousie career, has resigned as Chair. Due to his overloaded schedule, he has been able to find little time for school and is no longer a Dalhousie student.