

Are you in financial dire straits ?????!!



by Bobby Morrison

You're still waiting for your student loan to come through, and the bill collectors are beating down a path to your door, right?

This is an all-too-familiar story; many students find themselves in just such a position at this time of year. But they need look no further than the Awards Office to relieve their temporary financial burden.

The Awards Office, using its temporary loan fund, makes

available short term, interest free, financial aid to students throughout the academic year. Students waiting for a student loan or bursary to arrive are eligible for short term loans ranging in value from \$200 to \$700.

Gordon Steedman, Director of the Awards Office, cautioned that "there is a real need component" in the granting of such loans. During the last academic term, the Awards Office processed 142 such loans. Steedman

added he expects the numbers of applications to increase as more students become aware of the service.

According to Steedman, the Awards Office has "no fixed policy" in approving applications for financial aid, "as each student's situation is so different".

Loans in the \$300 range are usually approved without the student being interviewed, provided there is a good indicated reason for applying and the can-

didate's loan and bursary application forms have all been properly completed.

"If it's a \$600 or \$700 loan we usually ask to see the student and ask them such questions as why their parents cannot help them out or how they have spent their student loan," said Steedman.

"After an application is approved the applicant will receive a cheque, usually within three or four days - if it is a legitimate rush, they could receive it in two days," he added.

According to the Director, the length of time a successful applicant has to repay such a loan varies, but "ideally it's due a month after it's issued." He said the due date is agreed upon by the applicant and the Awards Office, taking into account the situation in each individual case.

However, once the agreed upon date is set it must be adhered to, with interest charges commencing after the due date.

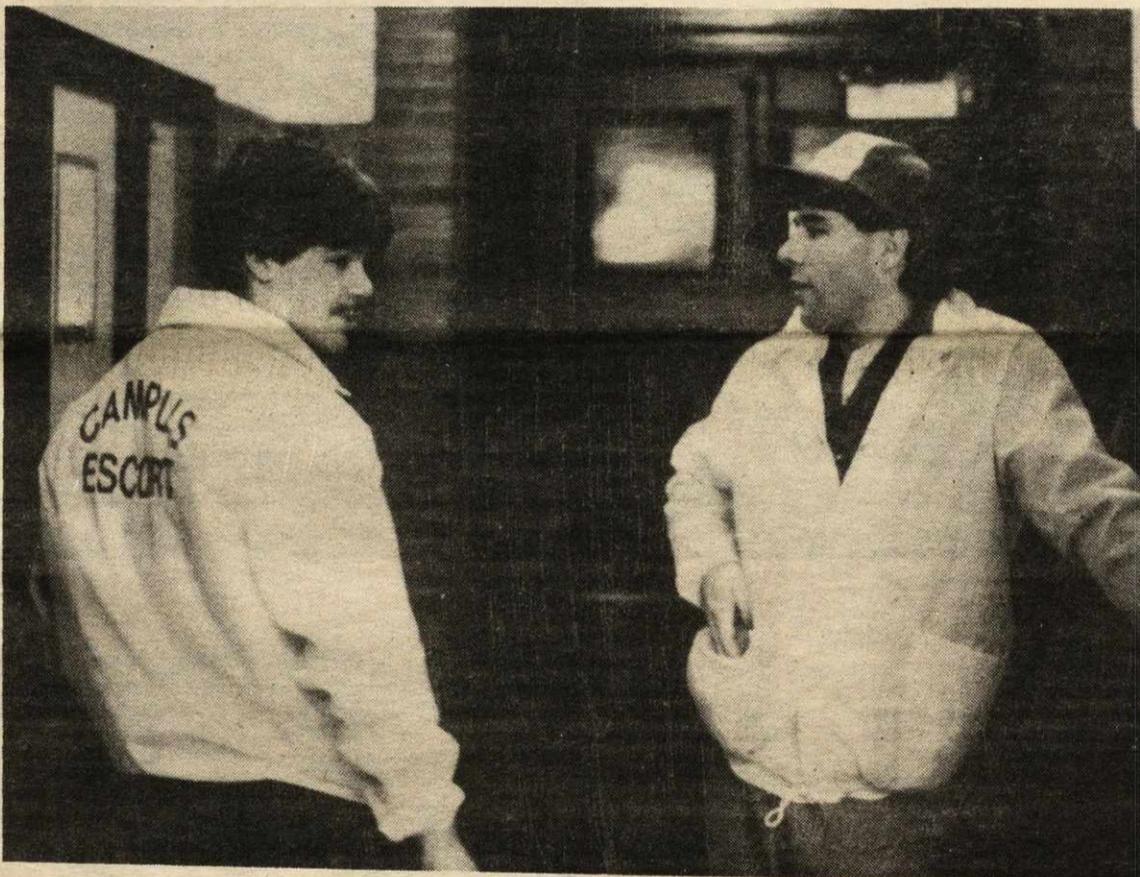
Failure to repay the loan may result in financial de-registration, the withholding of marks/transcript and/or the withholding of a degree.

The Awards Office will not approve any loan if it is for the purpose of paying tuition, as that would just be transferring a debt from one university department to another, explained Steedman.

When an applicant's student loan or bursary finally arrives at the Awards Office, the amount of the temporary loan will automatically be deducted from it.

In a case where a student may receive a bursary directly, and not through the university, it is their own responsibility to see their temporary loan is repaid.

To apply for such financial aid a student must complete and pass into the Awards Office an application form for financial aid and a short term loan contract. Both forms are available at the Awards Office.



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Howe Hall escort service a success

by David Lutes

The Campus Escort Service is off to a fine start, says Campus Security Chair Philip Barnstead.

The service, established in November to aid on-campus women returning to residence after studying at campus libraries, involves two nightly tours by escorts wearing bright yellow jackets. These escorts stop at key locations on campus with a final stop at Sheriff Hall. Anyone wishing to use the service simply joins the two escorts enroute.

Barnstead says response has been favourable.

Chris Woods, Dal Student Union (DSU) Sheriff Hall rep, said the service is receiving strong support from Sheriff residents.

Woods said early skepticism, due to the failure of a similar system

last year, changed rapidly to acceptance of the service.

"The girls got used to the necessity of structuring their study habits around the two escort tours," said Woods, adding that the service "has definitely made them feel safer."

Barnstead hopes this positive attitude will encourage improvement and expansion of the system. In a DSU report compiled over the Christmas break, Barnstead made several suggestions for changes to the current set-up.

These changes include the rescheduling of the 8:00 p.m. tour to 9:00 p.m. to increase the number of women using the service. Barnstead also plans an advertising campaign, with posters marking escorts stops.

Woods agrees with Barnstead's proposal to move the early run, saying "more women would use the new time slot."

Howe Hall president Gary Zed and Dean of Man Pat Donahue, handled much of the organization from within Howe Hall. Zed says he is "quite pleased with the effectiveness of and reaction to the service. I am also pleased with the time and effort escorts have put into their jobs and encouraged by the cross-section of residents that volunteered."

Zed agrees with Barnstead that there is a need for more effective advertising. "Now that the idea of the escorts have caught on, I think women are more willing to use it. As long as we make one person feel safe and happy then the service is an unqualified success," said Zed.

New SUNS executive

by Samantha Brennan

The Student Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) announced the appointment of Judith Guthrie as their new executive officer on January 9.

SUNS is the provincial student lobby group composed of ten Nova Scotia universities including Dalhousie.

Guthrie has worked in news and public affairs at radio stations across Canada and has an administrative background.

One of Guthrie's first projects as SUNS executive officer will be to research the problems of students who must move from rural Nova Scotia to attend university.

"These students must face higher tuition and they must also

find a place to live," said Guthrie.

Student summer employment will also be a priority for SUNS, said Guthrie. Last summer SUNS was successful in increasing the number of student jobs in the province.

"I don't think it would be a surprise to anybody if there was a cut instead of an increase [in number of jobs] this year," said Guthrie.

Other priorities for SUNS are student aid, accessibility and the quality of education.

Guthrie also plans to increase communications with SUNS member institutions.

The SUNS office is located on the fourth floor of the SUB.

Tuition increase in sight

by Samantha Brennan and Bob Morrison

Tim Hill, Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) President and Andy Mackay, Administrative President, met January 10 to open discussions about tuition increases.

Hill wants to see tuition increases set before students leave the campus in April.

"I just pointed out to Mackay that it's not good for the students or the administration to put off the beginning of tuition talks much longer," said Hill.

Mackay agreed with Hill's rea-

soning. "We agreed we have to get the process going early, beginning with a series of meetings," he said.

Hill says the tuition debate will go to the Student Relations/Residence Committee of the Senate later this month. Meetings are also planned with the DSU Arts and Science Financial Planning Committee.

Mackay is optimistic that the process will be successful. "I, too, hope it will be possible for students to know well in advance what tuition increases will be," he said.