

Joie Lynn Hellmeister – President

Joie Hellmeister is a fourth year Business Student running for President of the UNB Student Union. She has been involved in the Student Pride Club (SPARC), AISEC, Orientation, rugby, soccer and is currently Business Representative on Student Council. She serves on the Activities and Awards Committee of Council and the CHSR-FM Board of Directors.

What do you see as the issues in this campaign and what are your priorities for the next year? The first thing that concerns me is that students in general are not pleased with the Student Union. If I had a dollar for every time someone said to me 'I don't want to pay them my \$102,' I'd be very wealthy. We have to increase student pride in the Union, and pride in the university as well. Morale seems to be going down. I want to increase student involvement with the Union. Financial issues are another priority. We have to develop a budget that is going to be very efficient and we have to keep tighter constraints. We would be very spendthrift if I'm elected. SUB Expansion is another one. A lot of students are worried about that. They are putting their money in that, and yet they don't feel as if they will be getting anything out of it. I respond that we all have to think of the students who come in after us, as those who built and paid for the SUB in the 1960's and 1970's did for us.

What do you see as the role of the President in providing leadership to Council and the Executive? If elected, I would be there for leadership and guidance, but I would have a team approach, closely linked together. I would delegate as a leader. I would be there to solve people's problems, both students and executive members. I would be there to provide guidance when it is needed.

Do you intend to renew the Union's three-year funding commitment to College Hill Day Care? It is a very important issue but as President, I could not make such an important decision on my own. It would have to be an Executive choice and also a Council choice. I couldn't just say I'm going to give this \$3,000 yearly commitment or I'm not. Council has that authority and they would have to decide. I would like to do some research to see how effectively our money is being spent and how many UNB students have children there, how many professors take children there.

What are your ideas about the internal restructuring of the Student Union? It's one of the most important things that has got to happen to the Student Union. Something has to be done. There has to be a time for change. There is so much potential. I think the SU President's job should be full time. There are 57 universities in Canada and the majority of them have full time SU Presidents. The VP's should also have a substantial workload, but twenty hours a week would be just fine. UNB is very large and five or six people can't possibly serve all 7,000 undergraduates. Perhaps we need to look at paying small honoraria to SU Councillors as we did in the past. It is something definitely to look at. Certainly Councillors at other universities get paid. It's not that they have to be paid, it is just more of an incentive. There would be rules like committee duty, good attendance, and participation in certain clubs and societies. They would also be asked to keep in close contact with their constituents. I have also heard talk of getting rid of the paid, full time General Administrator and just giving the SU President all of the responsibilities. That is crazy. There has to be more than just one person in charge of the entire Student Union. A lot of people also think the size of the Council is too large. I think it is a fair size for the 7,000 students that are represented. Everyone needs to have a say in decisions and everyone should be well represented.

There has been some discussion of compensation levels for Executive members. Where do you stand on this issue? Right now out of the 57 universities in Canada, our SU President has one of the smallest honoraria. For a school this big and a job this substantial, honoraria has to be increased. The STU SU President has a higher honoraria than the UNB SU President from what I understand, and STU has a budget one-fifth the size of ours. There has been some talk of increasing the SU President's pay to between \$15-\$18,000 yearly. That seems quite high, but if you are going to make the position full-time then obviously the honoraria has to be increased. I favour a total compensation package somewhere between the \$9,000 a year currently being paid, and the \$15,000 being talked about. But money is really secondary anyway. The whole experience of being SU President is why I'm running. I just want to work with others to make this university a better place. Vice-Presidents' honoraria has to be increased, too. Their pay is also lower than at other universities. VP's would be expected to work harder for the money, though.

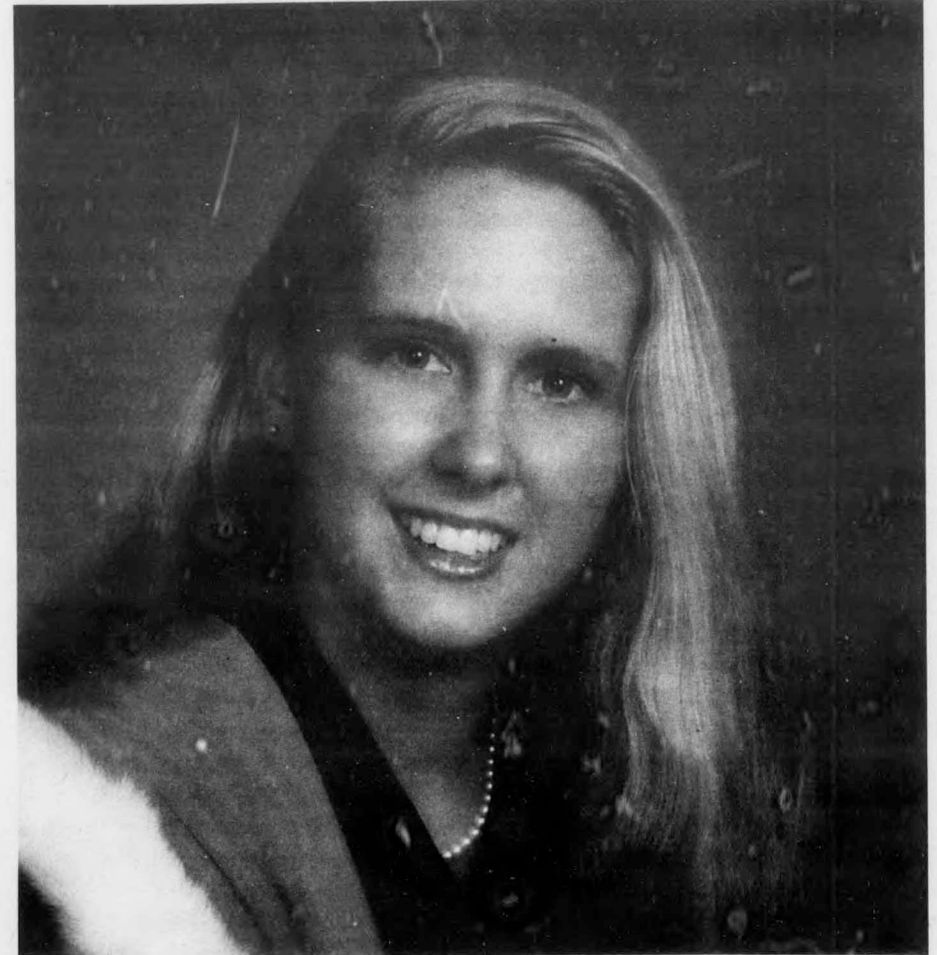
Given the fact that tuition rates will be increasing this year and that the Student Union fee has kept pace with tuition, do you feel that the student fee should increase this year? I don't feel student fees should increase this year, especially since students don't feel they are getting enough from the Union. It just would not be fair to increase it. Those that are active in the student affairs feel they are getting a lot out of their student fees. But there are many who don't. Of course, I would have to discuss this with other members of the executive, especially the VP Finance. But we should look at every way not to increase student fees. In the future, we need to find ways to keep the student fee as it is or perhaps even lowering it.

What will your priorities be for the summer months? First of all, I would have to spend time learning more about the Student Union and my position, and that of all Executive members. I would like to get out there and get involved. I would spend a considerable amount of time with the administration getting to know one another and discussing issues. I would help develop with other SU executives a strategy for the upcoming year. We will have goals for the year and an action plan so that everyone will have a focus. It will be a list we can check off as the year goes by. Each member of the team will have a list of things to accomplish. Overall, the summer will be a time for each member of the executive to learn more about their position.

What immediate concrete steps will you take, as President, to reassure the students of UNB that the SUB Expansion project is proceeding forthwith? As I said before, the students have to take into account the fact that they have been using the SUB for free since the building was paid for in the 1980's. It's time that another building comes up. This building is depreciating very readily. There are many students who do not know why we need a SUB. Many say we have one and it's fine. But there are problems in this building and we need more space. There are a lot of groups out there who have a lot of good ideas, but there is no office space for them to organize and get going. They often have to go off-campus to have their meetings. Once students become more aware of why we need a new building then they would be more ready to pay a \$25 annual fee.

Is it your intention to get agreements in writing with CAMPUS and the GSA on SUB Expansion? I cannot say for sure if we are going to get it in writing. As SU President I certainly could not make that decision solely on my own. But it would be great. It would be perfect if we could get the mature and part-time students and the graduate students to help pay for SUB Expansion. In return for funding, these groups would be guaranteed space in the building.

What will you do to improve the media relations of the Student Union? Media relations is something that hasn't been great lately. Take the Brunswickan for example. I feel the paper had every right to print the credit card scandals, everything. You can't control the media whatsoever, and it is not right to try to control it. If I worked for *The Brunswickan* and if I was on Council and I saw what was happening, I still would have printed this story. Students are paying the money and the students have to know what is going on. Anyone who fights that is just crazy! Definitely as a student union we have to increase the students' trust. We can do that through the media. Those routes have not been taken in the past. Our current SU President Kelly Lamrock goes on CHSR-FM and he talks about the Student Union. It is an excellent idea, but also a lot of students don't listen to CHSR-FM. So we have to increase CHSR-FM's listenership to increase our media listenership. Regarding



The Brunswickan, if I were to make a mistake, of course, I would expect the paper to publish it. You cannot take the upwards, downwards approach. It's just not the way things should be done. Without doubt, just be open. You can't try to cover-up, you can't try to hide, you can't try to pretend. You can't go down to *The Brunswickan* and say you have to do it this way, because they are going to revolt, they are not going to take the proper approach. So, in order to get good media publicity you have to do good things.

How do you intend to prevent an 'Ivory Tower' situation developing between Council and the student body? I intend to see that we put more demands on Councillors. We are going to request that may be once a month we'll request written documentation of what they have done to help bridge the gap. There are numerous things we could do. Look into getting columns in *The Brunswickan*. Letting them write what's going on. We would demand that Councillors get out there and speak to their constituents. A lot of people do not even know who their faculty reps on Council are. Overall, we have to try to make the gap between Council and students smaller. I am sure Councillors would have some views on this as well.

What about the credit card situation, given your position on Council? No, right off the bat, we will not have credit cards. We won't have credit cards because they are so poorly looked upon by the students. It was an excellent idea and if they had been used properly, it still would have been a great idea. Unfortunately, they were not used properly and a lot of students have a really negative view towards those credit cards so we will not be having them. The whole situation was a surprise earlier this year. Being a Councillor, I did not even know about the credit cards until later on in the year. I did not know that the Executives had credit cards. So, I'm not sure if it was discussed at the last Council meeting last school year whether or not to give the Executive credit cards. It definitely should have come to Council. If it was just decided upon by themselves in the middle of summer, that is preposterous. Council should have had a say in that because it is the students' money and the students should have a definite say in what goes on. There should have been more constraints on just what the credit cards were to be used for. We should have been keeping close track on every single expenditure.

What about the Fulton situation, given your position on Council? I think Fulton got himself into too much, because he is a very busy individual. It sort of caught me off guard when the Executive had said Fulton is going to be taking over as VP-Finance and Council just voted on it. That caught me off guard because Fulton at that point was a very busy individual, and still to this day is. It should have been looked upon more carefully by the Executive in choosing a VP Finance, and saying, look Fulton may have been good for the job and he went through the budget, he did his thing and, from what I understand, he did it right. But they really should have looked more carefully at the other responsibilities of that individual. People like Fulton do enjoy being involved, being active and having a lot on their plate. Maybe, it is something that just wasn't right for the Union.

Some have considered open government a problem this year. How do you feel? Without doubt, I am looking at office hours not only Monday to Friday from 9 to 5 but also evenings or Saturdays. Sometimes people are just not available to come and see us during the day. I will keep a close watch on office hours. The exception will be meetings that must be attended out of the office. Without doubt, there have to be strict office hours. A lot of students feel there is no one to talk to when they have a problem. If they can't find a person on the Executive, it just makes their problems go on longer. So Executives will have to readily use E-mail, so students can contact us with problems and know we will be available. Being available is a must. People have to come in and be able to take a look at the budget. I also want to see a line by line account of everything that comes out of student fees. Out of our \$102 annual student fee, I want to establish a list of where the \$102 is going. That's the main reason, I originally ran for Business Rep because I wanted to know where my \$102 was going. It might mean an extra week finalizing the budget but it's definitely something that has to be done.

If you had been the SU President this year, how would you have dealt with the Orientation budget problems? Let me tell you a little bit about why Orientation went over budget. It had a lot to do with external funding which we received in previous years. We also had a decreased amount of first year students this year. We normally get a larger amount of Frosh. I also was told that different faculties on campus had started classes the week of Orientation, therefore we lost a considerable amount of Frosh that way. Some students decided not to come to school until after Orientation week to earn more money from the summer. Orientation had anticipated more revenues and it wasn't there. We will in the future have to take every precaution to find out how many students are coming, and more research has to be done. We have to cut the budget even smaller. We need to control our expenditures, and if we need to spend more on an event due to numbers, we need to go out at the last minute and buy extra. This is instead of buying everything beforehand. It is going to require

continued on next page