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Student Union Election Results

Brunswickan staff

James van Raalte is the President elect of the Student Union, defeating his only opponent, Nick Oliver, by 113 votes in the elections held this week. Van Raalte garnered 558 votes to 445 for Oliver. Just over fifteen per cent of eligible voters turned out.

Van Raalte was naturally pleased by the results, and says he believes he has "the needed experience at this point in time." Van Raalte has been elected Vice-President Finance and Administration two previous times.

"Students are facing difficult problems in the months ahead," said van Raalte, "The lack of government funding for universities may force UNB to raise tuition significantly."

"In addition, the provincial government has announced plans to change the student aid program, the details of which have not been made public," van Raalte comments, "So I plan to be heard."

Van Raalte plans to deal with several other issues during his term in office: "SUB expansion is a very high priority for me and students are saying that. It's also time to settle the question of a media fee, and we're at the crossroads on this issue." Van Raalte says "council will have to deal with the matter, it's inevitable."

A media fee was a key plank in the platform of the Candidates for Change.

One of the Candidates for Change was elected to the key post of Vice-President University Affairs. Liz Lautard defeated her only opponent, Jason Morton, by just 27 votes in the closest contest of the election. Lautard received 515 votes, and Morton received 488. A significant number of votes, 91 in all, were spoiled.

Meantime, Conrad Coughlan will serve as Vice-President Finance and Administration after defeating Richard DiGiacinto, 518 votes to 474. Ninety one ballots in all were spoiled, more than the margin of victory.

Hugh MacNeil won a three-way contest for Vice-President External. MacNeil received 424 votes to 363 for Candidate for Change Eugene Tan. Doug Saunders trailed with 268 votes.

Chantal Albert is the new Vice-President Activities and Promotions after winning a four-way contest, receiving 385 votes. Michael O'Pray followed closely with 309 votes. Tanya McGinity, a Candidate for Change, got 245 votes while Derek Ferlatte trailed behind with 74 votes.

In a four-way contest for the two student seats on the Board of Governors, it proved to be a close contest. Andrew VanWart and President-elect James van Raalte won the election, receiving 495 and 491 votes respectively. Brett

Doleman finished a respectable third with 446 votes, with Jamie Marquez-Velandia finishing with 343 votes. A significant 72 votes were spoiled.

Jason Saunders will be the Valedictorian of this year's spring graduation class, winning a close contest with Anna MacDonald, the Student Union's current V-P University Affairs.

Saunders won by just seven ballots, receiving 85 votes to MacDonald's 78. Angela Green received 52 votes, and 26 ballots were spoiled.

Other election winners for three Business seats on the Student Union Council included Jeff McConaghy, Jennifer Lawson and Mike Wallace.

Nickey MacDonald won the Computer Science seat in a close, two way competition with Paul Mason. The Engineering students will be represented on Council by Andrew Van Wart and Lachlan McQuarie, who each received 139 votes, Larry Fitzgerald, who lead all candidates, receiving 161 votes, and Chris Gladstone, who received 124 votes.



Only fifteen percent of eligible voters turned out for this week's Student Union elections. Kevin G. Porter photo.

Sympathetic Senator also a professor at St. Thomas

STU, CFS fight Bill C-76 change

by Jonathan Stone

Attempts to reform the Canada Student Loans Program via Bill C-76 have sparked the interest of student groups nationwide.

The Bill, now being debated in the Senate, forces students to pay interest on loans immediately after graduation, eliminating an existing six month interest-free period.

Consequently, the Canadian Federation of Students and numerous student unions across the country have responded in opposition.

And railroading it through the Senate will not be easy as New Brunswick Senators Jean-Maurice Simard and Noel Kinsella, a philosophy professor at STU, are speaking against it.

"They're opposing it in the Senate, and now it looks like they might actually be successful," said Roxane McCarthy, VP External for STU.

The STU Student Union launched an 'SOS²-Save our students; Save our schools' campaign and distributed form-letters which were sent to the Bill C-76 committee chair, MP Don Blenkarn.

"This is the first time St. Thomas has been really enthusiastic about fighting something,"

McCarthy said.

And Blenkarn has responded, with what she considers 'nasty' letters to those students who left their addresses.

"Our form letter was a bit tactless as well, I will admit that," she said.

The STU letter contained such phrases as, "We would like to thank you for not caring about us", and was signed, 'Disrespectfully Yours'.

Blenkarn, a proponent of C-76, said the federal government has had to make budget cutbacks in all areas due to lower tax income.

In his response he said students are doing no service to the country by "merely crying about the fact that programs are being cut back," and suggests they devise some constructive solutions.

He pointed out that the government could have opted to cut down the amount of the loan to maintain the interest-free period.

McCarthy thinks this is a ridiculous idea since a one-year loan is only \$3300.

"A student who's on a student loan doesn't get enough money now to cover their whole tuition," she said.

Now she plans to send copies of Blenkarn's letter to his constituents in Mississauga South.

Blenkarn said he has received no helpful solutions from any student group whatsoever.

But CFS National Executive Representative Tammy Yates, said the National Executive of CFS were not permitted to present a proposal to the committee, who apparently voted to prohibit public hearings.

The CFS calls this undemocratic.

Blenkarn said he has seen the document, 'Strategy for Change', and doesn't consider it to be useful at all, as it did not suggest realistic solutions.

Yates said the reason the Conservatives do not like the proposal is because CFS wants the government to levy a minimum amount of corporation tax for higher education.

She feels that corporations should pay something for the educated workforce they get, and warned that under Bill C-76, loans will be given by the bank that wins the federal contract under the new system.

"It's the first dramatic leap towards privatization," she said.

She predicts that some students could be refused a loan because they would be considered a credit risk.

The debate on Bill C-76 continues.

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Weekend Weather

Nice spring weather expected over this weekend, with sunny temperatures ranging from 3 to 9 on Friday. It's a good bet that Saturday will be sunny also, with a range of temperatures from 1 to 11. On Sunday it will start getting a little chilly again, with expected temperatures ranging from 3 to 6. Have a Great Spring!

Brunsbites

Some really great reasons to join The Brunswickan next year:

•What better way to keep up on campus news?

•You acquire all sorts of valuable experience!

•You can learn about photography, journalism, lay out, offset, computers and much, much more!

•You will meet a lot of new people who will either become good friends or arch enemies. Either way, you'll enjoy many exciting late night conversations.

•There's going to be a really cool new editorial board!

See you next year!