

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 11 Issue 28

July 9, 2003

Post-Grad Job Market

Earning your degree is only the first step

White Collar Crime

Who's a target?

Education - Communism to Free Enterprise

Labour Market Inequality

More graduate profiles...

Plus: Canadian FedWatch!, Flicks & Folios, Dear Sandra, news from AU, and news, announcements and opportunities from your university and beyond.

THE VOICE

Jul 09, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 28

Welcome To The Voice PDF

The Voice has an interactive table of contents. Click on a story title or author name to jump to an article. Click the bottom-right corner of any page to return to the contents. Some ads and graphics are also links.

FEATURES

EDITORIAL PAGES

ARTICLES

FOOD BANK USE INCREASING A YEAR AFTER CUTBACKS

By Kevin Groves

EDUCATION - FROM COMMUNISM TO FREE ENTERPRISE

By Jana Thurova

OLYMPIC WIN GETS MIXED REACTION

By Stephen Thomson

WHITE COLLAR CRIME

Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

GRADUATION - WHAT COMES NEXT?

Debbie Jabbour

LABOUR MARKET AND WORK ORGANIZATION INEQUALITIES

Wayne E. Benedict

COLUMNS

AU PROFILES - Graduates Vicki Irvine and Sylvia Pedrazzini

DEAR SANDRA

FLICKS & FOLIOS - What Lie Did I Tell

Laura Seymour

CANADIAN FEDWATCH

Karl Low

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

FROM AU

BRYON PAEGE MEMORIAL AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

The Insider

NEWS FROM AU - AU takes time to pat staff on the back;

Centre of Science staff work to ease stress for lab students

The Insider

FROM THE READERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLASSIFIEDS!



We love to hear from you! Send your letters to voice@ausu.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter in the Voice.

I would just like to take this opportunity to thank the AUSU for hosting both the breakfast and the luncheon at last month's graduation ceremonies.

The efforts of all involved were very much appreciated. Also, thank you for the graduation gift. The portfolio was a nice surprise and I will be sure to put it to good use.

I wish all of you who continue to pursue your degrees my heartfelt encouragement; especially Sandra and Nicholas whom I had the pleasure of meeting at the graduation. To all other AU students, work hard, stay focused, be persistent, but also remember to take time for those who are important in your lives, especially yourselves. Too often, the task of juggling work, family and school leaves little time to simply enjoy life. There will be times when you will feel frustrated, alone and will question whether you will ever finish or if it is really worth all the hard work and sacrifice.

When these feelings arise, try to remember that "The race goes not always to the swift....but to those who keep on running" and the day you cross that stage, bursting with pride in front of your family and friends, will make all the effort truly worth while!

**Sandra MacIsaac
Rochester, Minnesota**

THE VOICE

c/o Athabasca University Students'
Union
2nd Floor, 10030-107th Street,
Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4
800.788.9041 ext. 3413

Editor In Chief Tamra Ross Low

**THE VOICE ONLINE:
WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE**

The Voice is funded by the
Athabasca University Students'
Union, for the students of
Athabasca university

The Voice is published every
Wednesday in html and pdf format

Contact *The Voice* at:
VOICE@AUSU.ORG

To subscribe for weekly email
reminders as each issue is posted,
see the 'subscribe' link on *The
Voice* front page
www.ausu.org/voice

The Voice does not share its
subscriber list with anyone

Special thanks to Athabasca
University's *The Insider* for its
frequent contributions

© 2003 by The Voice

EDITORIAL PAGES

THIS WEEK

EDUCATION - From Communism To Free Enterprise - New Voice writer, Jana Thurova, talks about how education has changed in Slovakia with the fall of communism, and how North American education compares.

GRADUATION - What Comes Next? - Debbie Jabbour learns that earning a degree is only half the battle.

BRYON PAEGE MEMORIAL AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED - Congratulations to AU student Joy Krys!

AU SHORT ON RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Research. To a new university student, it sounds intimidating - something you read, not something you do. Something engaged in by professors and grad students. Certainly not something a lowly undergrad would perform on their own.

Very little emphasis is placed on research in the undergrad years, although you will be taught about how it should be done, how the results should be tabulated, and if you are going to succeed, you will quickly learn how to locate quality, current research from the vast sea of scholarly publications filling any university library.

Once you get past the first couple of years, and start tackling the senior courses, research will become less something you learn about, and more something you do. The change happens almost imperceptibly - first you are simply quoting from a few good sources, and then - later on - you are developing theses and writing in-depth literature reviews to support your theory. You begin using the information that is available to reach new conclusions, to disprove old theories, or to find new avenues of discussion that have been previously overlooked.

This is research, in its first stages.

If you are AU student, this may be as far as you go. In a senior psychology course you may be asked to run a small experiment and analyze the data; you may interview or counsel a friend or fellow student as part of a project or practice session in career counselling, or counselling psych. But serious research, of the kind that becomes published or that is integrated into future teachings? Forget it.

This situation is unique to AU. Other universities offer significant research opportunities. Professors at those schools are not simply teachers - they are working doctors, who continually work to advance their knowledge of and participation in their fields through research projects, published papers and books, and symposium participation. Most often, professors are assisted in their research by students, who apply for the positions as part time jobs while they work on their degrees, or as extra-credit projects to speed up their learning process.

Students nearing the end of their degree may also apply for teaching assistant positions, where they can get hands-on experience with instructing a class, answering student questions, and developing confidence in their academic ability, all while working under a more experienced professor. The professor also benefits by being able to handle more students, or by being able to devote more time to precious research, thus furthering learning for everyone in the field.

AU also has many experienced and dedicated academics among its faculty, but research within AU is sparse. Certainly many AU tutors attend and present at conferences and symposiums, they publish papers and books, and many also work concurrently at other universities. Full-scale research projects, with student involvement, are rare, however.

This represents the greatest shortcoming of an AU education. People often ask DE students if they feel they are receiving a lower quality of education through distance learning. In most respects I would say no. I know that our tutors are as skilled and experienced as those at any university - some exceptionally so. We have more tutor contact, and the work-at-your-own-pace philosophy allows students who want to excel to take their education as far as they dare to dream. We have many opportunities to learn beyond the material..

Nevertheless, I sometimes do feel that my AU education is substandard to a traditional education, and this simply because of the lack of research opportunities.

At other schools, research jobs can range from massive projects that span multiple semesters, to small, finite studies that are completed over the course of a few weeks. Sometimes the job of the student is challenging and time consuming, while in other projects students simply collect data or perform some interviews. But what is true of all research opportunities is that they allow a student to go beyond their learning and begin to experience what it is like to be part of the evolution of knowledge in a field. It is part of the real world experience that is common to colleges and trade schools, but de-emphasized in traditional university course learning.

Most importantly, it is something that a student can place on his or her *Curriculum Vitae* or academic resume.

This resume might not seem very important if you simply want to become a university graduate and not take your learning any further. However, research experience may be relevant to an employer looking for an educated employee, and it might give you an edge over other applicants. More importantly, research becomes a significant factor when a student decides to apply for a graduate program.

Not all universities practice 'open' enrolment like AU, and most of us want to keep our options open so that we can go on to study anywhere in the world. But, if you want to get into a masters program at another school, you will have to go through an application process and receive approval from a professor in that program.

Many factors are taken into consideration when a student applies for masters studies. Generally a student must show aptitude in their chosen field of study, have an undergrad degree in that field, and demonstrate high academic skills. These criteria are almost always listed in vague terms, as it's up to the course professors to make individual assessments of interested students. I recall from my own reading on the subject, that the American Psychological Association - in their manual on applying for grad studies - lists previous research experience as being of medium importance in grad applications. In cases where many students apply for limited spaces in a program, a background in research can often be the deciding factor. The more challenging the program, and the more limited the space, the more important research experience becomes.

Additionally, research is very important for professors and other academic staff. It is what helps an academic professional remain in high standing among others in his or her field - and it is a significant factor when a professor wishes to apply for work at another school. If a university wants to draw the very best academic staff, it must provide an environment that nurtures academic growth.

AU, however, does not do this. I have had discussions with two AU academics in the past who have said they would very much like to launch a research project, but those projects never seem to take off. Several students have indicated an interest in being involved in research, and the further along their studies, the more urgent this need becomes. Nevertheless, the opportunities are not here.

Part of the reason is that AU simply does not have a program whereby academics can apply for research funding. We reported last week that two AU professors had received significant research funds, but this money came from the Canadian government. There is nothing so unusual about this, but in most cases universities have at least some involvement in providing research opportunities. For example, universities are responsible for hiring teaching assistants - something AU simply does not do.

I would like to hear from other AU students on this very important issue. Do you want to be involved in research at AU? Do you feel that the lack of such opportunities has had a negative impact on your learning?

Send me your comments, and I'll publish them in an upcoming Sounding Off column. Even if you don't want to be published, let me know what you think. Write me at voice@ausu.org. You may also contact the students' union at ausu@ausu.org if you feel this is an area that the union should focus on.

AUSU COMMITTEES SEEK MEMBERS



AUSU Committees are looking for student members who can volunteer just a few hours a month to answer email or attend teleconferences. Anyone who wants to become more involved with AUSU Student Council can gain great experience and insight through committee work.

The External Committee, chaired by Shirley Barg, needs representatives from Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northern Canada. Contact Shirley at sbarg@ausu.org if you would like to get involved, and help improve services to AU students in your area.

The Academic Committee was dormant for awhile, but now it's back up and running under chair Tamra Ross Low. We will be working on ways to help assess student satisfaction with AU's academic services, and need student input into how we should collect data, and what questions we should be asking. A past project of the Academic Committee was the Course and Program surveys on the AUSU website. If you want to have some input into our next project, contact Tamra at trosslow@ausu.org for more information.

Attention Artists

AUSU is seeking artwork for the cover of the 2003/04 student planner.

A prize of \$250 is being offered, and your work will be seen by thousands of students.

Entries may include sketches, photos or paintings - be creative!

Deadline – July 15, 2003

Email entries to ausu@ausu.org



GEOGRAPHY OVERSEAS FIELD SCHOOL

OPEN TO ALL ATHABASCA STUDENTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC
FOUR HALF-COURSES OR MAY BE AUDITED

Summer 2003

S.E. Europe

Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia
Italy, Croatia, Hungary, Greece

For further info, please contact:

Peter Slezak
peters@athabascau.ca
1-888-500-2922

Field Studies Group
geogfs@ucalgary.ca
210-5486

For more information on the Field Schools
www.ucalgary.ca/geog



FOOD BANK USE INCREASING A YEAR AFTER B.C. WELFARE CUTBACKS

UBC sociologist says food banks should be abolished to make government responsible

By Kevin Groves, Canadian University Press

VANCOUVER (CUP) --A little more than a year after the B.C. provincial government overhauled their welfare system, food bank workers say they are struggling to cope with thousands more people lining up to put dinner on their tables. It's a disturbing trend that reflects a lack of public awareness of what it's like to be poor, say food bank workers.

"People don't realize how bad it is until you fall to that level," says Susan Henry, who works at the First United Church in Vancouver, which provides emergency food every three months for families and the disabled. "Quite a number of people think it's not really bad so you can turn a blind eye to it."

Henry's comment seems to reinforce the argument of one expert who says food banks make it easier for governments to reduce taxpayer help for the poor. Graham Riches, director of the UBC school of social work, says they ought to be closed.

In April 2002, the B.C. government introduced significant changes to the welfare system that reduced benefits, made it tougher to claim welfare and imposed new limits and cost-saving restrictions for many of those on social assistance. The government hopes to cut about 80,000 people from welfare by 2004, reducing the \$1.9 billion budget to about \$1.4 billion. In March, British Columbia had 121,079 welfare cases -- down from 241,643 cases in March of 2002, according to Statistics B.C.

"They want to create as many disincentives to be on welfare as possible," says Riches.

The changes cut benefits to single parents, employable couples and recipients between 55 and 64, imposed a three-week waiting period before welfare can be collected and placed new time limits on collecting welfare.

Those changes have had a direct effect on the number of people using British Columbia's 90 food banks, says Robin Campbell, who runs the food bank in Surrey, a sprawling Vancouver suburb of more than 300,000. Campbell says B.C. food banks have experienced an increase in demand of five to 40 per cent in the last year as welfare becomes harder to live on, especially in small, one-industry towns or communities that lost their local provincial government office.

"The overall feeling is one of desperation and anger," says Campbell. "People are even saying 'you know maybe I should just commit a crime and go to jail, at least then I'll have enough to eat.' "

But Human Resources Minister Murray Coell says many of the welfare recipients his ministry has shed over the last two years have gone back to work. They're making more now than they would on income assistance, whether they use the food bank or not, he says.

The rising usage of food banks is also nationwide and not just related to his ministry's changes, says Coell. For Riches, food banks started out as a well-intentioned effort to feed hungry people in the 1980s but have become a crutch for government and society. "Essentially they've become a second-tier of the welfare system and enable governments to look the other way and neglect their obligations to make sure that people have a decent social wage," Riches says. "Food banks are in a sense telling us that Canada's welfare state has failed."

It's gotten worse in the last 10 years as shrinking government and cutbacks to social programs have become policy in most provinces, says Riches. "We've gotten used to the idea that food banks are OK," he says. "But I think if you speak to people on the receiving end they'll have a different view of what that experience is like."

Canada's first food bank opened its doors in Edmonton in 1981. By 1998, more than 17,000 people a month relied on its services. The number of users had more than doubled from 1993, when the Alberta government began an extensive campaign of social service cutbacks.

Henry says she isn't sure what would change if all food bank support were taken away. "Then we would see the starkness of poverty and you'd either have a revolution or you'd see people dying on the streets all the time," she says.

Statistics Canada defines low-income families as those who spend more than 55 per cent of their before-tax income on the basic necessities --food, shelter and clothing. For a family of four in a large city of more than half a million, \$34,572 is the cutoff. The same family in a rural area would be considered low-income at \$23,892.

The latest federal data from the 2001 census shows families in the bottom 10 per cent of the income scale -- those with incomes below \$18,990 -- experienced one of the smallest gains over the decade. Even after adjusting for inflation, the average Canadian family at the lowest end of the scale gained only \$81 in income, up just 0.8 per cent from 1991 to \$10,346.

AUSU STUDENT GIFT PACKS NOW AVAILABLE



AUSU students can now order their student gift packs, free courtesy of your students' union.

The packs are filled with AUSU logo items to help you study, relax, and learn more about AUSU.

Contact ausu@ausu.org to order your gift pack today!

C A U S
Council of Alberta University Students
Athabasca • Calgary • Alberta • Lethbridge

CAUS represents university students across Alberta. Visit the CAUS and the Tuition CAUSE websites to learn more about what CAUS is doing to keep Alberta tuitions affordable.

CAUS: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/caus/alpha/>
Tuition Cause: <http://tc.su.ualberta.ca/>

LARGEST NURSING & HEALTH CARE JOB FAIR

FEATURING HOSPITALS FROM THE U.S., CANADA & INTERNATIONAL
Many Offering Signing Bonuses & Relocation Assistance for Up to \$10,000

EDMONTON, AB

Monday, September 15th,
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

THE WESTIN EDMONTON

10135- 100 Street,
Telephone: (780) 426-3636

COME CELEBRATE
**NURSE & ALLIED
APPRECIATION DAY!**
& WATCH FOR DETAILS ON
THE VIRTUAL JOB FAIR!

CALGARY, AB

Wednesday, September 17th,
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

SHERATON SUITES CALGARY EAU CLAIRE

255 Barclay Parade S.W.,
Telephone: (403) 266-7200

FREE Unique Gift to First 100 Attendees Each Morning! **FREE** Health Careers Handbooks!

FREE Event Magazine! **FREE** Coffee! **FREE** Draw Prizes!

COME EARLY! **FREE** Information on Immigration, NCLEX and U.S. Licensure!

PRE-REGISTER NOW FOR CASH PRIZES!

www.HealthCareersCanada.com

IT'S YOUR CAREER AND YOUR FUTURE! PRE-REGISTER TODAY!

or email: Health@Marskell.com or Telephone: (416) 620-1940

Toll Free: 1-877-311-5333, Fax: (416) 620-9335

**FREE
ADMISSION!**

HEALTH CAREERS

Interaction 2003

**CALL ABOUT
BUSES FOR
SCHOOLS!**

Sponsored By The Marskell Group And The Health Care Careers & Information Handbook,

5409 Eglinton Ave., W., Suite 209, Toronto, ON M9C 5K6

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND, FORWARD YOUR RESUME BY EMAIL, FAX, OR MAIL, AND IT WILL BE PASSED TO ALL
EXHIBITORS AND YOU WILL BE SENT AN EVENT PROGRAM

CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED. NO COST. NO RISK. NO OBLIGATION.

EDUCATION - FROM COMMUNISM TO FREE ENTERPRISE

By Jana Thurova



I have claimed for many years that there's no better way to succeed in learning or teaching a foreign language, than to visit foreign countries and live abroad for a while. The best way to learn, is to live in a country where the language in question is the native one. And now, I have a reason to believe my certainty.

As a university student in Slovakia, with my major in English, I sometimes had a hard time understanding what was going on during the lectures. Therefore, I had to study even more to catch up with the rest of the class. I also envied those of my classmates who had an opportunity to study in England, the USA or Canada. They really didn't have to show any special effort in passing the exams.

After completing three years of my university degree, I got a chance to experience the school system in the United States and to finish my studies here. Now I am experiencing the great school system in Canada through my studies at AU. In making the move from Slovakia to North America, I felt like I was chosen and called to bring some innovation into my life. I didn't leave because of a lack of interest in studying in Slovakia - rather I found it interesting just being a part of something new.

Back at home the interest in education is evident, but the future of graduates is not always great. Many of them are not appreciated enough. The nation can see the reflection of this fact mainly in salaries.

Education is very important for students in Slovakia. Parents, especially, urge their children to study hard, and to go for a degree, so they'll have a better future. It's not always the greatest choice.

Despite some uncomfortable conditions and many obstacles, the number of applicants for college/university entrance constantly rises but it's several times higher than the number of openings. In Slovakia, having a degree is still a lifebuoy.

There are about 20 colleges and universities in Slovakia. It's not enough, especially when the number of high-school graduates is large and students are eager to continue in their studies. One of the reasons for such an interest in higher learning was free education, which everybody had been enjoying for years. One of the advantages of free education is that it allows everybody to study, whether they are rich or poor. Paying for education will definitely complicate the situation. It's clear that many colleges and universities will lose talented students just because they won't be able to pay.

I was born in former Czechoslovakia and growing up in its very eastern part felt many times like having a temporary residence in a different country. Many people abroad considered Czechoslovakia as one of the states in Russia, which was just misleading.

The Soviet Union had been the greatest in every way. During eight years of my elementary school attendance, we were all forced into learning a Russian language, marching with Russian flags on May 1st, learning the Soviet anthem and doing things that really seemed to me like nonsense. Despite all that, Czechoslovaks were surviving, though our drunken minds hadn't woken up in years. There was no need for that. People had steady jobs, employees and employers were both happy, and education and medical assistance were served for free for many years. The goal of the Communists was to keep it all forever. It would have been nice, but people asked for change. The main reason was to replace what was almost a dictatorship with democracy.

The Velvet revolution in November, 1989 was the first step Czechoslovaks took to explore a brighter future. Over 10 years, the existence of two separate, independent countries - Slovak and Czech Republic - has changed and improved relations with surrounding countries.

In the beginning, right after the revolution, many people, mostly older ones, were grateful to young people who had resisted communist leaders and had changed the regime in Czechoslovakia by strikes and protesting. After the communist regime was over, the style of living got a new face. Suddenly, we were free to do once forbidden things. Doctors, teachers and other prominent individuals went to church without a fear of losing their jobs and positions. On the other hand, western culture exploded too quickly and it has had a strong impact on everybody.

Morality and ethics have fled. Movies and videos contain a lot of violence and sex, and it all stares children in the face. Nobody is ashamed of anything. Every year brings something new. The year, especially, there has been the breaking old social structures and replacing them by new rules, such as paying for medical assistance and education for full time students. Those duties now evoke discontent and disagreement in people.

A few months ago, Slovaks again applied their voting rights. This time they voted to express their opinion about a membership in the European Union. The election was successful, but people still don't understand the fact, that being a part of such a group means to play according to their rules and to adapt to new circumstances.

And this is a time when not only old people, but mainly younger ones, would welcome the old communist times, when food was cheap, jobs were steady and people happy.

As a student in Europe and America I have experienced two different styles of life and study. In Europe, I became a full-time student with a combination of two majors. Many times I tired of going to school every day, traveling by bus or car 45 minutes from my home. I had to travel everyday, because I was not qualified for living on campus. The reason? The place of my residency was too close to campus. There were other students who lived tens and hundreds of miles from the place. In this case, the room availability depends on numbers. And numbers here, means miles or money.

For college/university students in Slovakia the school year is divided into Fall and Spring semester, there are no summer sessions, and many times the exams last till July and reappear in the end of August. The official duration of college attendance in Slovakia is four to five years and mostly all of the students finish their studies during that time. Students cannot choose courses for a particular semester. There is always a schedule of required courses and those are the only ones *to choose*. Credits have not been completely introduced in our school system, yet.

This partly backward aspect of our school system is not what concerns me the most. What I really don't like is the atmosphere in classes and some teachers' attitudes. Students are required to show complete respect. It's almost inadmissible to talk to a teacher without using proper words and of course, his or her title. Teachers are showing their power in many ways. They repeatedly fail students after five years of studying.

Obviously, some students lose their interest as well as their patience. And they end up, for example, in America where in this matter, just being in school teaches them.

I believe a student's soul goes through the same stages wherever it is. It just depends on conditions offered to an individual, how fast they perceive, and how experienced the school system is.

Hopefully, The Slovak republic is on its way to succeed and can find a teacher in greater nations.

OLYMPIC WIN GETS MIXED REACTION

By Stephen Thomson, The Peak

Games decision meets celebration, protest on the streets of Vancouver

VANCOUVER -- There was celebration in the streets after the International Olympic Committee announced the site of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. After two rounds of voting last Wednesday, Vancouver narrowly edged out Pyeongchang, South Korea 56 to 53.

As soon as IOC president Jacques Rogge revealed the result, the crowd gathered at General Motors Place burst into a frenzy of cheering and towel waving. Pyrotechnics were lit off and confetti filled the air all the way up to the Olympic banners hanging from the rafters. The Vancouver bid backers had been anxiously waiting in the stadium since 6:30 a.m. for members of the IOC to finish voting in Prague, in the Czech Republic. There were many Canadian Olympic champions in the crowd, including Daniel Igali, Ross Rebagliati, and Silken Laumann. Simon Fraser University student and national swim team member Ryan Laurin was also on hand to show his support.



Members of the media circle as anti-Olympics activists set up a tent city in Victory Square last Wednesday. Vancouver was awarded the 2010 Winter Olympic Games that morning. — Josh Devins / The Peak

Although many people were confident Vancouver had the 2010 Games in the bag, Laurin remained skeptical until the end. "The bidding process is kind of like a box of chocolates — you never know what you're going to get," Laurin said. "Everyone thought Austria and Vancouver were the two to go for and Austria was gone after the first round."

The crowd was flooded with many feelings when the announcement was broadcast on the stadium's big screens. "I was excited, relieved, happy — a thousand different emotions, I guess," said Laurin. He hopes the 2010 Games will increase funding for a variety of sports. \$68.2 million will go to Simon Fraser University to build a speed skating oval on the Burnaby Mountain campus.

The Olympics will bring in a lot of money according to Desirie Fraser-Laslow. As the store manager of Roots on Robson Street, she knows how the Games can benefit business. "We already are so well known," Fraser-Laslow said. "Being in Salt Lake and doing the Olympic outfits for the British team and U.S. team and the Canadian team last year certainly broadened our horizons." The Robson Street store was full of people after the early morning announcement, many buying shirts that read "2010 Vancouver." "We've been selling the t-shirts for a couple of months now and every shipment that we've got we've sold out," Fraser-Laslow said. Outside the store, people were loudly celebrating the result of the vote. Horns were blaring, people were shouting and Canadian and Olympic symbols could be seen everywhere.

Support for the 2010 Games was not unanimous, however. Angered by a lack of social housing and cutbacks to welfare, protesters congregated in Victory Square later Wednesday evening. After several people addressed the crowd of about 100 with a megaphone, the group set up a tent city on the grass. The Anti-Poverty Committee and the Housing Action Committee organized the event and supplied tents.

"We're protesting the Olympic bid process and the effect it's going to have on the community," said Ingrid van der Kloet, a member of the APC and an SFU women's studies graduate student. "Also, we see the Olympics as tied into a broader strategy of the B.C. Liberals to basically attack poor, innocent people."

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Graduation - what comes next?

By Debbie Jabbour



For most of us who are working on a degree at AU, our motivations combine several elements. Personal development and challenge are important, of course, and many of us are trying to set good examples for our children by placing a high value on university education. But practical reasons are generally primary. We want a degree so that we can get a better job, one that more closely matches our interests and our career aspirations, one that finally lets us escape from the grind of a low-paying, go-nowhere, at-the-mercy-of-the-boss type employment. Those of us who've succeeded in graduating this month now find ourselves a bit closer to that goal.

Not that much closer, however. A year ago I moved into new job, and at that time I was excited and hopeful that this would be a helpful career stepping-stone. It has not turned out as expected, unfortunately. While I've gathered a great deal of valuable experience, and generally enjoy the work itself, there problems with the job definition and how management views the work my co-workers and I do. There is no room for personal development or advancement and the atmosphere has become extremely negative, to the point that almost half of the original group hired have now quit. I've been looking for new employment for some time now, but had decided to wait until graduation before really putting the job search into high gear.

One thing I've noticed in my job search thus far is that most jobs that fit my interests and qualifications seem to be full-time. This is an important consideration for me, since I have applied for the Masters of Counselling in January and am currently still enrolled full-time at AU in the Career Counselling Certificate. I've weighed whether it would be to my benefit to remain in my current job for a while despite the negatives, since I have part time evening shifts that generally suit my study schedule and work with AUSU.

In the interim, however, I'm actively looking...and applying for any jobs that seem like they might be a closer fit for my new status as a degree-holder. During the past few weeks I've been spending countless hours perusing job advertisements and career websites. I've prepared a list of organizations I think I'd like to work for and have started contacting them, and I have spread the word amongst friends, family and co-workers, asking them to let me know if they hear of anything. I've prepared a detailed resume and curriculum vitae, and have written dozens of cover letters for job applications.

I'm also curious whether my degree will actually give me any more clout in the workplace. Several days ago I was watching a late night television program that followed six recent graduates on their job search progress, and it was quite discouraging. I only saw the latter half of the program so I missed where they were from and what all the degrees were. At least two were commerce or business related, and one was a lawyer. By the end of the program, of the six, only one had found a job she loved that was highly fulfilling and suited her degree. Two had found jobs related to their degree that they were 'relatively' happy with, two found employment in completely different areas, and one (the lawyer), was still unemployed!

So what, really, will our Athabasca University degree achieve for us? In Athabasca University's most recent graduate survey, the "Athabasca University Class of 2000 Two Years after Graduation," 363 graduates responded that they were very satisfied with the relevance of the courses they took, with 89% stating that the program was worth the cost (in terms of increased earning power). Of these, about 25% were MBA graduates, and its interesting to note that in the individual breakdown of the 89%, Master of Business Administration,

Advance Graduate Diploma in Management, Commerce & Administration Certificates, and Distance Education degree graduates reported satisfaction rates ranging from 92%-96%. Arts & Science, Bachelor of Nursing, and Bachelor of Business Administration degrees, on the other hand, had rates of 84%, 79% and 72% respectively.

I'd hazard a guess that these results indicate high satisfaction with Master's studies, since a masters degree brings the highest salary increase. Diplomas and certificates are short term courses that are also good value for money – not a lot of investment in time or tuition and immediately improved job prospects. But why would most of the bachelor degrees not report the same high level of satisfaction with improved wage prospects?

A 2001 Statistics Canada census report indicated that university degree holders make an average of more than \$61,000, college graduates about \$42,000, while high school graduates only earn about \$36,000. Canadian average for the period was \$32,000, with about 1.5 million Canadians earning less than \$20,000 a year. Both bachelor and masters levels are apparently combined in the \$61,000 figure. Its also noteworthy that one out of every five graduates chose either business/commerce or engineering. Men still were disproportionately higher than women in high earnings, with 302,645 men earning more than \$100,000 yearly, compared to only 54,000 women at that earning level.

Among the highest wage male earners were those working in sales, marketing & advertising, management and computer & information systems. High earning females, in contrast, worked as lawyers, physicians, sales & marketing, and senior management. More than 60% of the high wage earners had a university degree, in contrast with 60% of the lowest wage earners, who did not complete high school. Obviously a university degree is an important criteria in earning higher wages, and this is particularly true for women. Significantly, the census report states that for women - the only wage earners in the past two decades to earn more than \$40,000 a year on average are university graduates.

Another interesting element of the census report was a chart that showed which of the top ten most common occupations paid the most for those holding university degrees. For both men and women, engineering was tops, followed closely by computer and information systems, then sales & marketing and financial management. Women also had high earnings for nursing. Unfortunately, these statistical indicators don't make a clear distinction between Masters and Bachelor's degrees, but I would hazard a guess that MBA's rather than Bachelor of Administration degrees account for a good portion of the high earnings reported in the financial and marketing fields. While statistics certainly don't tell the whole story and are open to wide interpretation, I did find it somewhat discouraging to note that none of the high-earning occupations were in Arts, since this is the degree I now possess!

Remuneration is particularly low in the mental health field. In one Alberta health organization where I was looking for jobs, chartered psychologists holding PhD's are paid only \$25 an hour - less than a newly graduated registered nurse (some of whom only hold 2-year diplomas). At the Alberta Mental Health Board, jobs are offered in mental health therapy that place psychologists with a master's degree (6-8 years) on an equal footing with applicants with a degree in nursing (4 years) - a disproportionate balance I can't quite understand.

I read somewhere that today's graduates will be working in fields ten years from now that currently do not exist. This makes it extremely challenging for a student to choose which area of study they should pursue if their main interest is job security and high earnings. For many of us, career satisfaction is more important. We are willing to forego the big money as long as our education allows us to do something we truly enjoy. Most of the time I think along those lines, although I must confess that on occasion, while searching the want ads, I wonder whether maybe I should be going for an MBA, or nursing. But I would not be happy working in either of those fields, in spite of the high wages.

Hopefully all of us who have just graduated will be successful in finding employment in a field where we can use our hard-earned degrees and find personal satisfaction at the same time. Unfortunately, the job search part of it seems so much harder than the four years of university!

References:

Athabasca University Class of 2000 Two Years After Graduation. Prepared for Alberta Learning by Marianne Sorensen, November 2002.

Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, *Education in Canada: Raising the standard*

Statistics Canada, 2001 Census. Analysis Series. <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/Index.cfm>

Nursing diploma in 14 months: <http://nurses.ab.ca/issues/Fasttrack.html>

Requirements to become an RN in Alberta: <http://nurses.ab.ca/about/membership.html>

Alberta Mental Health Board: <http://www.amhb.ab.ca>

Debbie is a native Edmontonian, and a single parent with four daughters. She has worked as a professional musician for most of her life, and has enjoyed a rich variety of life experiences - with many more to come! Debbie is working towards an eventual doctorate in psychology, and currently serves as the president of the Athabasca University Students Union.

REBATES ARE COOL

**TAKING THE TRAIN
JUST GOT COOLER**

Get **\$16*** off the purchase of your next VIA Rail Canada ticket when you buy your ISIC — International Student Identity Card.

Show your ISIC card when you buy a VIA Rail ticket and get **35% off** in Economy class, **anytime**.

Show your card to buy VIA 6 PAK — get 3 round-trips for **50% off**!

6 PAK VIA

www.viacampus.ca
Your new student travel community

STUDENT
International Student Identity Card
University of Prince George
MICHAEL A.
145061073
ISIC

VIA
VIA Rail Canada
1 888 VIA-RAIL
*Valid until December 31, 2003.
**Trademark owned by VIA Rail Canada Inc.

TRAVEL CUTS

AU Profiles:

Sandra Moore spoke with Vicki Irvine and Sylvia Pedrazzini at Convocation:

Authors Note: One thing I noticed as I conducted these interviews at AU's 2003 convocation was everyone's reluctance to admit to the amount of time it took to complete their degree at AU. Out of all the interviews I conducted, I only spoke to one person who had completed their degree in less than 4 years! So for those of you out there, who feel like you are the only one taking a long time to finish your courses, keep in mind the average time to finish seems to be 6-10 years.

AU GRADUATE PROFILE OF VICKI IRVINE

AGE: 47

LIVES IN: Calgary, AB

TRAVEL TIME TO ATHABASCA: 6 hours

PROGRAM COMPLETED: Bachelor Of Arts

YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE: 10 years

FAVORITE COURSE: Career Counselling 300

LEAST FAVORITE COURSE: N/A

FAVORITE TUTOR: Kate O'Brodovich

HIGHEST FINAL GRADE: 92

LOWEST FINAL GRADE: 78



Obtaining a University degree for Vicki has fulfilled a promise she wrote in her grade 9 yearbook to achieve the goal of attending university. It took 26 years, but she has finally achieved that goal 10 years after her first in-class course at AU's Calgary Learning Center. Vicki worked a majority of the time as she worked towards her degree and now plans to pursue a job in the psychology field. Convocation was an interesting experience for her and she encourages other AU students to set a schedule and follow it.

Congratulations Vicki Irvine, BA

AU GRADUATE PROFILE OF SYLVIA PEDRAZZINI

LIVES IN: Rocky Mountain House, AB

TRAVEL TIME TO ATHABASCA: 4.5 hours

PROGRAM COMPLETED: B. Arts - Psychology

YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE: 12 years

FAVORITE COURSE: Anthropology

Sylvia traveled to Athabasca's convocation ceremony with her husband Italo and her six-year old granddaughter Jude-Anna. Through out the 12 years it took Sylvia to complete her degree at AU she worked part-time and now having this degree finally brings a sense of completion to her. She encourages other graduates to stick with their studies!



Congratulations Sylvia Pedrazzini, BA.

Look for more grad profiles in upcoming Voice issues. If you are an AU grad and you were not interviewed on convocation day, contact voice@ausu.org to be a part of AU profiles. As always, we are seeking undergrads, tutors and staff for profiles as well.

WHITE-COLLAR CRIME

From Enron to Martha

By Zil-E-Huma Lodhi



"The ceo's of Enron and Worldcom are Al Capones, while Martha is Oliver Twist," according to Cynthia Tucker, editorial page editor of The Atlanta journal-Constitution (Thottam, 2003). These words are little comfort to already battered and betrayed share holders of big names like Enron, Worldcom and now Imclone.

White collar crime is a crime committed by a person of great respect or high status in his or her field. This term was first used by Edwin Sutherland in 1939 during his address to American Sociological Society. In general, it accommodates a variety of nonviolent crimes committed in commercial settings for financial gain. What makes white-collar crime so difficult to bring to justice is the sophistication criminals use to hide their crimes. Keep in mind, these perpetrators are not every day street thugs who try to seize the opportunity. In contrast, their actions are carefully mastered webs which are usually based upon mutual benefits and golden handshakes.

White collar crime charges, like those for other crimes, can be filed against a single person or against a whole corporation. If found guilty, these offenders can be fined and imprisoned, and they may be responsible for the costs of prosecution, or other restitution may apply. The most common white-collar crimes these days range from simple mail fraud to sophisticated financial frauds, insurance fraud, government fraud, tax evasion, securities fraud, insider trading and money laundering (Legal Information Institute).

Another common form of white collar crime involves computer or internet fraud. In this case hackers simply entered into our computer systems and use private information like our social insurance number, credit card information, and date of birth as their own to apply for credit or make future purchases. To avoid this, make sure you do business with credible merchants only. Ask merchants about their online or privacy policies regarding giving your information to others. Choose PIN numbers and passwords carefully and do not give them out to other people. After accessing your financial institution's website or other important websites don't forget to log out. We are living in they cyber age and it's making us more vulnerable to thefts. According to the FBI, white collar crime is costing the U.S.A more than \$300 billion annually (RCMP Computer Crime Prevention).

Following is an overview of some of the biggest white collar crimes and scandals of our times:

Securities Fraud

Enron started out as an interstate pipeline owner, and branched out into sales of natural-gas commodities and electricity. In fifteen years it shot up to No.7 on the fortune 500 list of companies with \$US 100 billion of business in 2000. It was a greatly admired company and considered one of the best places to work. Recently, however, it went bankrupt and became the biggest corporate bankruptcy in American history. What went wrong with this company whose shares were valued at \$US 60 billion?

Stockholders and lenders lost billions of dollars - among them over 20,000 employees who lost their jobs. But there were also people like Ken Lay who had \$US 205 million in their pockets. How he and others like him were able to secure a future for themselves when others were left at the mercy of bankruptcy court is unknown. It was later found out, however, that Enron had hidden massive debts under a matrix of partnerships, mostly offshore, so in case of crisis the blame would shift to those who were virtually non-existent except on paper. In the meantime, they gave a face lift to company's balance sheet with false claims of prosperity to lure stockholders and lenders to keep pumping money into company.

Insider Trading and the Martha Stewart scandal

Insider Trading is said to take place when those who have privileged information about special events use that information to take advantage of surges in stock prices or to avoid losses on the stock market, while common stock holders are left in dark at the mercy of stock market's fluctuation. This is what happened in the now famous case of domestic diva Martha Stewart. She was charged with insider trading when she sold stocks in a pharmaceutical company called ImClone the day before ImClone was denied a patent for its cancer drug, Erbitux. In this case the link was Sam Waksal, CEO of ImClone, as his family sold ImClone shares same day through the same broker as Martha Stewart. Sam Waksal has been found guilty and sent to prison for seven years on insider trading. Martha Stewart has so far denied all allegations. Everyone now has to wait and see where the case will go from here (http://www.srimedia.com/artman/publish/article_245.shtml).

Canada's white collar crime scene

The picture is not so rosy for us Canadians either. Let us see what kind of white collar crime is hip in today's Canada:

Money Laundering is a process through which illegal income is concealed or made to appear as though it has legal origins. This allows criminals to spend dirty money without getting caught and without paying any tax.

In the summer of 2000, **KPMG**, a network of Canadian professional services firms, did a survey of financial institutions and other industries at risk. Most reported that the risk to their industry is perceived to be medium, while they rated the risk to their own company as low. Chartered banks reported the highest level of risk while insurance companies are at the lowest level of risk.

Corporate crime: Corporations that commit crimes are finding ways to make their crimes pay. Recently "a chemical corporation [was] fined \$100,000 for dumping toxic effluent into a lake, a brokerage firm [was] fined \$500,000 for insider trading, and a manufacturer [was] fined \$75,000 for exposing employees to unsafe working conditions." But, each of them has found a way to write off all of their fines and penalties as tax-deductible business expenses by using a loop-hole in Canadian tax law. The law is the result of a supreme court decision that fines and penalties qualify as a 'cost of doing business' and are therefore legitimate expenses. Law professor David Duff of the University of Toronto describes the court's decision as a "radical" rewriting of Canadian tax law.

This loophole is continuously costing Canadians hundreds of millions of dollars in lost tax revenues every year. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that the Federal government have plans to address this issue in the near future. In the United States, income tax laws forbid the deduction of any fines arising from violations. (<http://www.workopolis.com/servlet/Content/fasttrack/20030328/CODEDUCT?section=Legal>)

Conclusion

We have established a law and order system to make sure those who commit crimes are made responsible for their actions, but how we are going to treat these white-collar criminals who steal our trust and money as well. Should these people be barred from future transactions? Or are fines, penalties and imprisonment enough. How can we know if other fortune 500 companies are not doing the same thing as Enron did? What will be the future measures taken by the common person before investing retirement money in publicly admired companies? These are the questions which need to be answered soon.

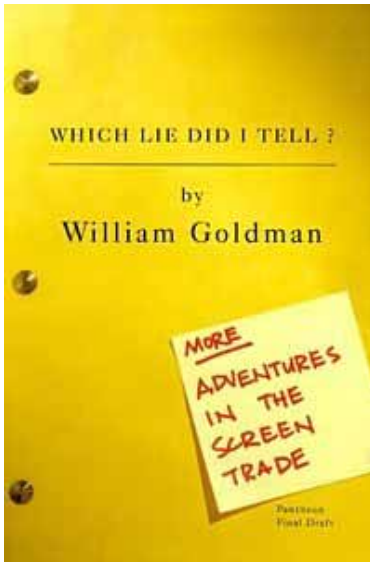
Reference

Thottam, Jyoti (Jun. 16, 2003). Why They're Picking on Martha: Prosecutors charge Martha Stewart with fraud and conspiracy — and say they're sending a message to other CEOs. *Time Magazine*.



WHICH LIE DID I TELL Book Review

By Laura Seymour



This William Goldman book starts with a bang and doesn't let up. The two-time Oscar winning screenwriter has scripted such memorable films as: *The Princess Bride*, *Marathon Man*, *Magnum Force*, *The Great Waldo Pepper*, *The Stepford Wives*, *All the President's Men*, and *A Bridge Too Far*.

Those films were written during his "hot streak" between 1973 and 1978.

William Goldman is incredibly candid about, well, everything. He is honest enough to mention his tears as a child and adult, at movies and plays, his embarrassment and his joy of red wine. He owns up to the performance arts insecurity of being discovered as "a fake" (I wish I could fake my way to two Oscars!) as well as revealing some interesting insights into Hollywood actors and producers.

For instance, when it comes to William's time on a film set he can't get out of the way. Not the way you'd think. As the writer of *Princess Bride* he tells the hilarious story of being on set during the shooting of a scene when the star's dress is supposed to catch on fire as she's going through a scene. He tells about being astonished at the process and getting caught up in the dress being on fire. He blurts this out while the cameras are running and of course the scene is shot! He also has a habit of being right where he shouldn't for a camera shot! This revelation leads to hilarious stories about another *Princess Bride* star, André the Giant. André was a French born wrestler with a medical condition that made him grow to a gigantic size. He had a gigantic heart as well and a gentle disposition. William relays a story he was told by Arnold Schwarzenegger. It seems Arnold had enjoyed several meals with André and André *always* picked up the cheque. One day at lunch Arnold decided to pay so he quietly snuck into the kitchen to give the waiter his credit card. Except, before he could get away with the sneaky idea André marched up behind him. He picked Arnold up, turned him around, held Arnold nose to nose and said in his deep voice, "I pay." He not only had Arnold in a compromising position, but he held him that way until he took him to the table and stuck him in the chair! I roared with laughter as William said, "If Arnold told me it happened, I'm inclined to believe it!"

No way is this a Hollywood tell all book, however. Dirt is just not the main focus and frankly it's hard to find. William's book (his second—see his first *Adventures in Screenwriting*) is more concerned with giving you insight and serious tips about being in the Hollywood writing game. It is William's forte even though he says he's a novelist who happens to write screenplays. So why is he convinced he "knows nothing" about this stuff? A book full of this much engrossing nothing I'll read any day!

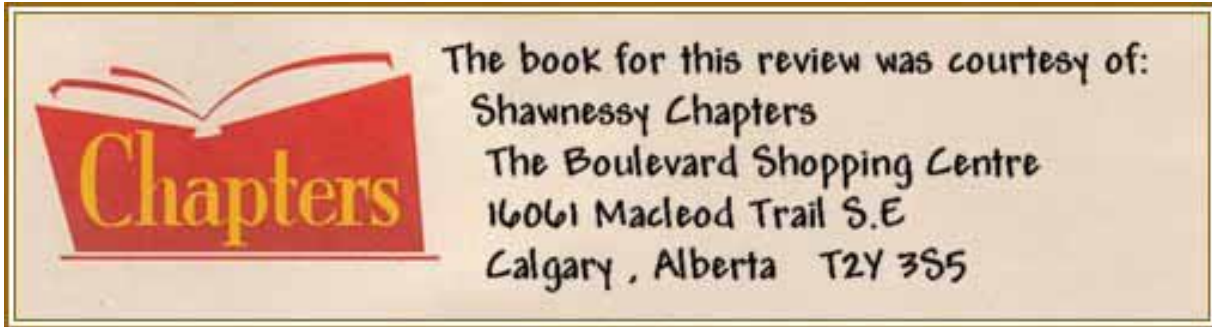
William does give lovely touches of information about the work he's done with certain writers, producers and actors. A few of them he's not wild about but most of the time he is phenomenally respectful of their work.

He can't say enough about, oh, say for instance, Michael Douglas. Apparently Michael is *THERE* for his team. He is always aware of the work that is involved. Michael is one of the few people in Hollywood who you can tell their idea isn't going to work – so long as you can explain it and support your reason. So many people can't

take that! Funny, I heard the same about Michael from a major "rewriting" man in Hollywood who wanted me to be in his life years ago. He had worked with Michael on a major film and told me the same story. The similarity made me give credence to William's writing and his honesty.

William's writing capability shows as the book unfolds. The writing makes you fall over, cry, or get so angry you could spit blood! But it's all the man behind it—William Goldman. His talent is amazing. His films are amazing. His book is amazing. The discount price to purchase this book from *Chapters* is amazing.

I recommend this insightful book to anyone interested in the screenwriting or novel world. Or maybe just to anyone who wants to really enjoy a good book.



Laura Seymour first published herself, at age 8. She has since gone on to publish a cookbook for the medical condition Candida. She is working toward her B.A. (Psyc).



ISFiR | 2003 International Student Festival in Rome

ISFiR- the International Student Festival in Rome takes place from July 16 to July 25, 2003.

"With about 450 participants aged 18 to 50 from 90-100 different countries, ISFiR is the largest thematic student festival in the world. This year's theme is 'Challenging Attitudes,' and to make this festival a success, we need skilled participants from all over the world.

At ISFiR, a diversity of young people get the opportunity to meet. The festival is an arena for overcoming cultural, political and religious borderlines, in order to promote tolerance and understanding. "Furthermore, the ISFiR brings together students from some 90 nations. Living at close quarters with people from different parts of the world, exchanging ideas and experiences, offers unique opportunities to gain insight into other cultures, and adds an extra dimension to this summer program. "

For more information see: <http://www.sweb.cz/isfir2003/index.html>



Post-Secondary Delays

Statistics Canada has recently released a report on a study done of 20 year-olds and their attendance (or not) of post-secondary education. The study shows that there are a number of factors that can be used to predict if people graduating from high-school will not go on immediately to post-secondary education. The most significant factor, apparently, is the family of the student. Students whose parents do not have post-secondary degrees or who feel that a post-secondary education isn't important are three times more likely to not go on to post-secondary education immediately.

Another significant factor is the amount of hours the student spent in paid employment during the last year of high-school. Students who worked 30 hours a week or more were significantly less likely to attend university after graduation.

More expected factors, perhaps, were such things as the average grades of the student, whether their friends were planning to attend post-secondary, and whether the student was able to receive grants, scholarships or bursaries. Lower grades, fewer friends planning to attend and a lack of access to money all had correlations with not attending university.

Perhaps less expected was simply that the province of the student also had a significant effect. Specifically, those students living in Newfoundland, Manitoba, or Alberta were less likely to attend post-secondary right after high-school than their counterparts across the country, and students in Quebec were more likely. This should be especially concerning for a province, like Alberta, that supposedly prides itself on a strategy of life-long learning.

Yet in some ways this delay, especially in Alberta, is hardly surprising. Since we know that having parents who do not value post-secondary increases the chances of not attending right away it should be no surprise that a government that does not value post-secondary, as shown by its continued choices in both funding and legislation, does not fare any better.

Manitoba Praises Violence

The Culture, Heritage and Tourism Minister of Manitoba, Eric Robinson, recently honoured boxing champions Donny "Golden Boy" Lalonde and Virgil "Quicksilver" Hill for their contributions to brain damage throughout Canada.

Winnipeg native Lalonde has a record of 41 wins, 4 losses, and 1 draw. A record that includes 32 knockouts. Of course, in real terms, this means Lalonde has basically beaten people to the point where they could not stand up – in other words where they suffered some form of concussion – some 32 times. The minister says that Lalonde and Hill are positive role models and give young people "living, breathing examples of what can be achieved through hard work and perseverance," not to mention being willing to pummel someone into submission for money and fame. Strangely, the same thing occurs outside of the ring, often by people with similar middle nick-names, yet in those cases we call it organized crime and assault – certainly not a positive role model.

I have a hard time understanding people who enjoy boxing, and even more difficulty understanding those who would pay to see it. It's not simply the violence that disturbs me, as I'm quite happy to watch and laugh at

professional wrestling, it's the idea that in this ring are not two people trying to put on a good show for an audience, but rather the idea that in this ring are two people genuinely trying to hurt each other for money. Promoting this type of sport as a good example of a career path for people strikes me as foolish, especially in Canada where the taxpayers will wind up paying for it if any permanent damage is ever done.

But then again I've never boxed. Maybe once you've been hit in the head enough it makes more sense.

B.C. Brains

British Columbia high-school and post-secondary students have returned home with over three-quarters of them winning medals in the Canadian Skills Competition. This is the highest proportion of any team and included 9 gold, 15 silver, and 3 bronze medals.

Unfortunately, this is one of the challenges that it would be difficult for Athabasca University students or students from any distance education program to compete in. Since the teams are organized on a geographical basis, for students where geography is not a factor such recognition becomes difficult to attain.

We can hope that as distance education becomes more accepted, the idea of students from certain provinces will be replaced by that of students from certain institutions. If it is, it will give us another means by which to tell how much a degree from any specific place is worth.

A native Calgarian, Karl is perpetually nearing the completion of his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Information Studies. He also works for the Computer Sciences Virtual Helpdesk for Athabasca University and plans to eventually go on to tutor and obtain his Master's Degree.



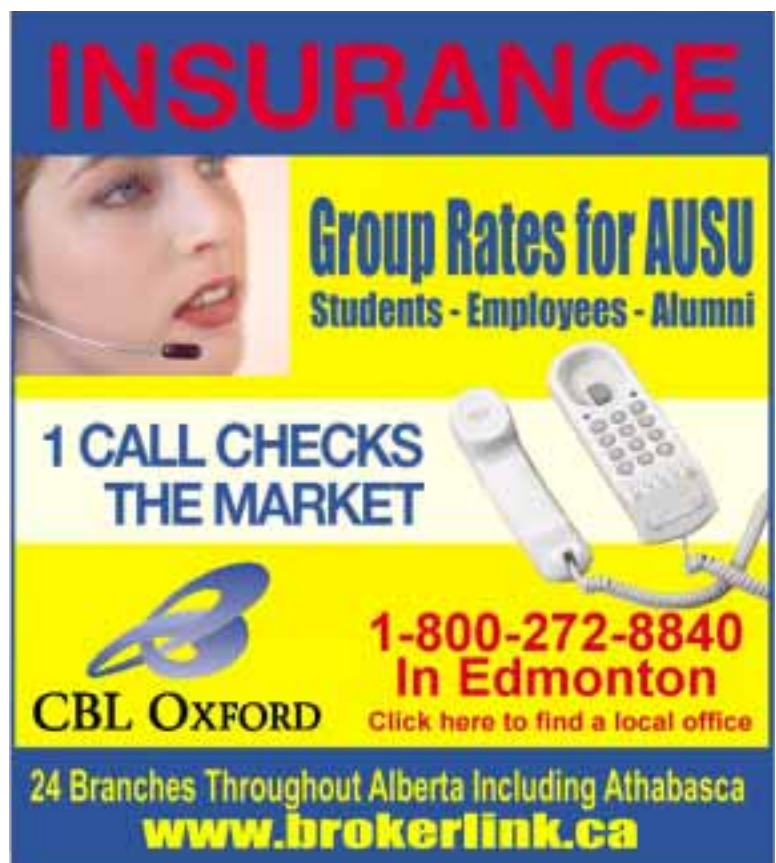
Want to **STOP** smoking?

It's easier with **HELP.**

Smoker's Help Line **1-866-33AADAC**

www.aadac.com

AADAC Alberta HEALTH SERVICES



INSURANCE

Group Rates for AUSU
Students - Employees - Alumni

1 CALL CHECKS THE MARKET

1-800-272-8840
In Edmonton
Click here to find a local office

CBL OXFORD

24 Branches Throughout Alberta Including Athabasca
www.brokerlink.ca



Dear Sandra,

On the heels of the success of J.K. Rowling's popular children's book series "Harry Potter" I have become determined to write a children's book. How do you get started in this field?

P.M in Windsor, Ontario

Dear P.M,

First and foremost when it comes to writing children's books you need a vivid imagination, a passion and talent for writing and a pretty good ego to sustain all the "no's" you are likely to receive before your first "yes".

Harry Potter is a wonderfully written novel for youth and adults alike, Ms. Rowling herself said "The idea that we could have a child who escapes from the confines of the adult world and goes somewhere where he has power, both literally and metaphorically, really appealed to me" (<http://www.scholastic.com/harrypotter/author/>).

As a divorced mother with a young child on social assistance, J.K Rowling wrote the first book in the series, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's (or Philosopher's) Stone, at a café while her young daughter napped. This former teacher turned thoughts in her imagination into a multi-award winning novel that captures the hearts and minds of children and adults all over the world.

So, how do you become an award-winning novelist whose books are turned into multi-million dollar movies? Well first you have to write, and write GOOD!

There are many websites to help you to break into the children's literary market after that:

Canadian Authors Association - <http://www.canauthors.org/>;

Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers (famed children's novelist Robert Munsch is a member) - <http://www.canscaip.org/>;

Places for Writers offers an extensive list of funding opportunities as well as information on writing - <http://www.placesforwriters.com/funding.html>;

Page By Page: Creating a Children's Book - <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/3/2/index-e.html>

There are also numerous books on writing and publishing children's literature to buy on- line or at your local bookstore or to borrow at your local library. For a little background information, Athabasca University offers an informative look at Children's Literature through the years in *ENGL 305, Literature For Children*.

If you are motivated to write, write – right now! Don't wait and put it aside, saying you'll do it when the kids are gone, or when you retire, if you really have the itch, scratch it!

Sandra

I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! TELL ME YOUR TROUBLES. YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.

This column is for entertainment only. Sandra is not a professional counsellor, but is an AU student who would like to give personal advice about school and life to her peers. Please forward your questions to Sandra care of smoore@ausu.org

LABOUR MARKET AND WORK ORGANIZATION INEQUALITIES: PART 2

By Wayne E. Benedict



This article is the conclusion of a discussion begun in last week's *Voice* identifying the major inequalities in Canadian work and industry and the social groups most affected. This week the identification and comparison of major theoretical perspectives on labour markets and work organizations, and an assessment on the adequacy of explanations for work-related inequalities that they provide, will be undertaken. Government and employer policies that appear to be most (or least) effective in reducing work-related inequalities will be examined and conclusions drawn.

Major theoretical perspectives on labour markets and work organizations

Human Resources/Labour Relations practitioners and academics view labour market and work organization inequalities from differing perspectives in their attempts to understand work-related inequities and their causes. Major sociological theoretical perspectives on labour markets and work organizations include the *human capital* theory, the *labour market segmentation* theory, and the *dual economy* theory. Each of these theories has strengths and weaknesses which can be compared in order to assess the adequacy of explanations the particular theory provides.

The collection of knowledge and skills that employees possess at a given time are referred to as their *human capital*. The human capital theory suggests that "...jobs requiring more effort, training, and skill typically receive greater rewards. The theory assumes that labour market participants compete openly for the best jobs, and that the most qualified people end up in the jobs requiring their particular skills" (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, p. 95). The human capital theory assumes that if one invests time and money in increased education and training (thus incurring greater human capital), he or she will be rewarded with a better (higher-paying, more secure, more intrinsically rewarding) job.

The theory is closely tied to, and somewhat dependant upon, supply-side economic theories and theories that the social relations of production are meritocracy-based. There is much empirical evidence to suggest flaws in both supply-side economics (the failure of both Reaganomics and Thatcherism to deliver the promised trickle-down effect to the working classes; not enough good jobs available for qualified applicants) and capitalist societies as meritocracies (a social system cannot be based on personal ability when it is rife with contradictory features such as: nepotism; segmented labour markets; division of labour based upon discriminatory practices; cultural capital; intergenerational transfer of educational and monetary advantage; regional disadvantage; etc.). Status-attainment research—research focusing on intra-generational mobility and on the role of education-level attainment in determining occupational outcomes—provides evidence both for and against a human capital model of the labour market.

"Taken alone, [the findings of this research] lend support to the human capital model—greater investments in education allow one to enter the labour market at a higher level, and, consequently, to move up to even higher status positions. However, the intergenerational component of the status attainment model also yields clear evidence of status inheritance by way of education. Canadians with more education (and, hence, who have entered the labour market at higher levels and have advanced further) tend to come from families with well-educated fathers in high-status occupations" (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, pp. 119-120). Further, the fact that many thousands of unemployed, underemployed, and mismatched labour force participants are in possession of

postsecondary education tends to weigh heavily against the human capital theory, which relies on one vast labour market in which individual advancement is based solely upon merit and skill/education level.

The labour market segmentation theory rejects the core assumptions of human capital theory, relying instead upon the concept of multiple labour markets (subordinate primary, independent primary, and secondary markets) in which conditions are diverse and inter-market mobility is restricted by various systematically entrenched barriers:

Partitioning within the workforce has been recognized in the analysis of labour markets, where divisions based on sex, race, class, age, union status and ethnic origin ensure differentiation in experiences between the groups. Early studies of partitioning are reflected in Kerr's (1977) analysis of labour markets structured through institutional rules. Later studies differentiated between primary and secondary labour markets (Doeringer and Piore, 1971), in terms of stability, working conditions, compensation, skill levels, access to training, chances of advancement and due process. This dualism was later qualified in analyses of segmented labour markets to include greater partitioning, identifying secondary, subordinate primary, and independent primary labour markets (Edwards, 1979; Gordon et al, 1984). Further partitions are identified in labour market shelters as niches or areas of interest (Freedman, 1976). (Townley, 1994, pp. 27-28).

The various ways professionals create and maintain sheltered labour markets for their members include: restricting access to membership in the profession; restricting certain types of work to members of the profession; ensuring that members must acquire high levels of specialized knowledge giving them high levels of work autonomy and allowing them to virtually set their own working conditions; shaping the labour market to their advantage through professional associations.

In comparison to human capital theory, the strengths of labour market segmentation theory are that "[w]hile the human capital model highlights the central role of education in determining occupational outcomes, it fails to adequately account for the many examples of qualified and highly motivated individuals working in unrewarding jobs, and ignores intergenerational transfers of advantage" (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, p. 142). In contrast, the labour market segmentation approach recognizes inequalities in labour market *outcomes* and provides a better account of how such power differences are created and maintained. Relatively recent trends in Canadian labour market segmentation include: labour market polarization—where the vast majority of new job creation has been seen in the secondary labour market (greater numbers of bad jobs) and the primary labour market has markedly shrunk (fewer numbers of good jobs); and rising income inequality—where the large and growing segment of the labour force in the secondary labour market have seen their real incomes decline, while a relatively small cohort in the primary labour market/upper-tier service sector have seen their real incomes increase (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, pp. 136-139). Donald Wells (1993, p. 81) points out that one of the many results of so-called "new" Human Resource Management techniques is "The division of workers into core and peripheral workforces (as in Japan) where the job security and multiple skills of the core workforce depends on the job insecurity, low pay and lack of skills of part-time and temporary [peripheral] workers."

While the labour market segmentation theory provides a more convincing model to explain labour market and work organization inequalities than does the simplistic human capital thesis, the former is not without its critics. "...critics [of the labour market segmentation theory] point out that many women are...employed in job ghettos as typists, cleaners, or food servers within the primary sector. ...an overly general segmentation perspective does not adequately account for gender differences in employment within the same industry or establishment, or inequalities among women. Moreover, the model cannot explain how gender segregation developed in the first place" (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, p. 184). The theory also fails to explain *why* disadvantaged groups—women, the disabled, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, the young, the old, etc.—are disadvantaged. "For this question to be addressed, one must examine the patriarchal nature of society (when explaining women) and look for

causal reasons for their secondary status" (M. Sorensen, personal communication, April 22, 2003). In short, the labour market segmentation theory fails to address the how and why of inter-market barriers and inequities; and it particularly fails to explain the minority of workers' disadvantaged status within the primary labour market.

Complimenting the labour segmentation theory is the dual economy model which proposes that Canada's economy is divided into two economic sectors—the core and the peripheral. Dual economy proponents claim that core-sector industries provide jobs for the primary labour market of the labour segmentation theory, while periphery-sector industries provide the jobs for the secondary labour market. Krahn & Lowe (1998, p. 124) show that, according to the dual-economy model, core-sector industries offer comparatively good employment and high wages because: the collective strength of labour unions and professional organizations are better able to secure them; it is too costly for core-sector employers not to pay well (shutdowns due to labour disputes; high labour turnover; expense of training new employees, etc.); higher profit margins mean that these employers can afford to pay well.

While it is true that in a very general sense more education and training will increase the odds of a labour force participant acquiring a better job, it will certainly not guarantee that he or she will. For that and many other reasons, the human capital theory fails dismally to explain labour market and work organization inequalities in Canada. The labour segmentation theory and dual economy model, while by no means perfect, do a much better job of showing the *results* of labour market and work organization inequalities, while lacking on explanations of how and why they came into existence in the first place and continue today. Clearly, no single model or theory will fully explain all aspects of labour market and work organization inequalities in Canada, but some are markedly better than others.

Policies most effective in reducing work-related inequalities

Many policies have been developed or proposed to deal with labour market inequalities. Some include: greater and more equal access to higher education; greater investments in education and training on the part of the state and capital; legislated employment equity programs; legislated pay equity programs; improved school-work transition programs; increased role of worker organizations in order to reduce some of the inequity within the labour market(s). Problems with many of these (educationally-based, human capital) solutions are that there are not enough "good jobs" to go around and supply-side economics fails to recognize this fact. Also, capital neo-conservative ideology (increasingly supported by Canadian states that are moving away from orthodox pluralist ideals) does not recognize the role of unions in society, so a voluntarily increased role for workers' organizations is unlikely to reach fruition any time soon.

Policies have been developed or proposed specifically to reduce inequalities based on discrimination and harassment. Discrimination-based pay and employment equity policies are examined *infra*, as are variations in health and safety provisions. The only legal prohibitions against other forms of employment-related discrimination are found in the various federal and provincial Human Rights Codes and Acts. Prohibited grounds vary by jurisdiction; British Columbia prohibits employment-related discrimination "...because of the race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation or age of that person or because that person has been convicted of a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment or to the intended employment of that person" (Human Rights Code, 1996). While providing some protections, all of these legislations are complaints-based as opposed to affirmative action-based. "A complaints based system, as the phrase implies, relies on an individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against to make a complaint to the appropriate board or tribunal in order to initiate a response under the applicable legislation. The onus, in other words, is placed on the worker to come forward and publicly accuse his or her employer of acting discriminatorily; an inherent flaw that anyone should readily see" (Benedict 2002a). Affirmative action-based legislation, on the other hand, "...imposes actual measurable goals which employers must meet in order to actively deal with employment-based systematic discrimination, periodic obligatory reporting of progress toward those goals, and

measures for prosecutorial enforcement against recalcitrant employers (Benedict, 2002a). Complaints-based legislation is far less effective than affirmative action-based legislation.

McKay (1993, pp. 167-171) suggests that the most effective ways of integrating disabled employees into the workplace are: affirmative action-based employment equity government legislation with legally binding goals and timetables and potent enforcement measures; education of business regarding the changing demographics of the labour market (the impending shortage of workers and the untapped and valuable resource that is people with disabilities); militant activism from within the disabled community; education of managers and workers about the disabled—use education to change the attitudes and values of the "old guard" in the organization, grapple with prejudicial attitudes, acknowledge that they exist and then attempt to change them; review systems and cultures and impose changes that reduce or eliminate disability based discrimination; invest in workplace accessibility and accommodation; promote training and education of the disabled so as to provide suitable employee candidates; reward managers who practice outreach and punish those who don't—make employment equity part of the job performance criteria of each and every senior manager.

The polarization of income between core sector/primary labour market participants and periphery sector/secondary labour market participants is a large and growing problem. However, there are really no effective governmental policies designed to reduce the growing wage-gap in this regard. In fact some governments are enacting policies which contribute to the problem; i.e. the BC Liberal government recently reduced the minimum wage for young workers from \$8/hr. to \$6/hr. Capital is not likely to voluntarily act to minimize the growing wage-gap, as the use of contingent workers is a mainstay of the new HRM paradigm and a staple of management's contemporary strategies.

The one area where governments have enacted legislation to reduce wage inequities is that of the gendered wage gap. Pay Equity legislation is a system which requires the payment of equal wages to men and women for jobs of equal or comparable value to an employer. Jobs must be evaluated on the basis of skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions. All must be considered for pay equity and the system must be gender neutral. Comparable worth or *equal pay for work of equal value* legislation is usually complaints-based. Pay equity based systems, on the other hand, are the most potent equal pay legislation and they place the onus with the employer to show that it is complying with the applicable legislation and furthering the principles upon which that legislation is based. Both systems are "...similar in that they involve payment of equal wages to men and women for jobs of equal or comparable value to an employer. They differ primarily in that pay equity puts more legal pressure on the employer to achieve an equitable situation" (Falkenberg, Stone, & Meltz, 1999, p. 341). Criticisms of pay equity legislation are that: loopholes, exclusions and cumbersome procedures have muted its impact; it is not widely imposed throughout Canada's jurisdictions; job evaluations to determine skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions are inherently subjective and thus open to variations inter- and intra-organizationally. For a more complete discussion on the differences between *equal pay for equal work*-, *equal pay for work of equal value*-, and *pay equity*-based legislations, see Benedict 2002a.

Krahn & Lowe (1998, p. 190-194) explain that the rationale for *employment equity* legislation is that systematic discrimination creates employment barriers that can only be dismantled through strong, affirmative-action based legislation. Employment equity attempts to achieve the goal of ensuring that ability is the only criteria used in employment decisions by: requiring that employers identify and remove employment practices that act as artificial employment barriers to the four designated groups (women, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and the disabled); establishing targets and timetables for achieving a more representative workforce that will reflect the proportion of qualified and eligible individuals from designated groups in the appropriate labour pool; setting the ultimate goal "to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability. Main criticisms of employment equity legislation in Canada are that there is a need for: stricter monitoring and enforcement; broadening the Acts to include more workplaces; greater employer commitment to the equity goals, timetables, and plans; and the establishment of a comprehensive national employment equity strategy. While employment equity legislation is not perfect, it is

affirmative action-based unlike the various Human Rights legislations, which are the only other legal protections against employment-related discrimination.

Differences in the levels of occupational health and safety experienced by workers across sectors, markets, industries, and occupations are extreme. This topic is vast and it is far beyond the scope of this article. For further examination into some of the underlying causes of these variations see Benedict 2002b. For the instant discussion, the reader should be aware that there are inherent conflicting interests between the priorities of capital and labour in setting the levels of occupational health and safety: "...workers demand the safest possible workplace (safety over the costs associated with providing it), while capital desires to balance the costs associated with providing a particular level of health/safety against the benefits derived from providing that level (cost-benefit analysis or economy over worker health/safety)"(Benedict, 2002b). Further, governmental legislation enacted to protect workers is inadequate for various reasons: improperly assigned threshold limit values (TLV); lack of prosecutorial enforcement of existing regulations; self-regulation of industries due to deregulation; legislation based on untenable internal responsibility systems (IRS), etc. With globalization of trade and concomitant increased competition, health and safety concerns of workers and unions are rising as employers downsize and cut costs in all areas—including health and safety. It is likely that variations (inequalities) in the levels of occupational health and safety conditions provided to workers will increase and neoconservative governments are in the process of *reducing* regulation, which will only exacerbate the problem.

Conclusion

There are many areas of inequality across Canadian labour market(s) and organizations of work. They include: numerous forms of direct, indirect and systematic discrimination against various disadvantaged individuals and groups; pay inequity; employment inequity; variations in levels of occupational health and safety conditions of work. Different social groups are affected to various degrees by these inequities. In an effort to understand work-related inequalities, sociologists and other academics have used various theories and models including: the human capital theory, the labour market segmentation theory, and the dual economy model. Each of these theoretical perspectives has their strengths and weakness, but none alone can explain the extent and longevity of work-related inequalities or the mechanisms of how and why they first came about and continue. Governments and employers have enacted policies and legislations in attempts to reduce labour market(s) and work organization inequalities—some have been more effective than others, while some have been virtually useless, if not incurring an opposite effect of that desired. Two things are clear: Canadian labour market(s) and work organization inequalities exist in abundance and are arguably growing in certain areas; and existing government and employer policies and legislations are inadequate to reduce, never mind eliminate, them. Clearly, much more needs to be done on the part of all interested parties—government, capital, labour, and academia—in order to reduce work-related inequalities.

References

- Benedict, W. (2002a). Equality in the workplace: Problems faced by women. Retrieved June 25, 2003, from http://www.caw110.org/equality_in_the_workplace.htm
- Benedict, W. (2002b). *OH&S priorities of labour & capital: Which should be superordinate in setting occupational health & safety standards?* Retrieved June 25, 2003, from http://www.caw110.org/OHS_Priorities.htm
- Falkenberg, L., Stone, T. & Meltz, N. (1999). *Human resource management in Canada* (4th ed.). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Human Rights Code (1996) R.S.B.C., c. 210
- Krahn, H. & Lowe, G. (1998). *Work, industry, and Canadian society* (3rd ed.). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: International Thompson Publishing Company.
- McKay, S. (1993). Willing and Able. In G. Lowe & H. Krahn (Eds.) *Work in Canada: Readings in the sociology of work and industry* (pp. 166-171). Scarborough, Ontario, Canada: Nelson Canada.
- Townley, B. (1994). *Reframing human resource management: Power, ethics and the subject at work*. Thousand Oaks, California, U.S.A.: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Wells, D. (1993). Are strong unions compatible with the new model of human resource management? *Relations Industrielles*, Vol. 48, No. 1, pp. 56-84

BYRON PAEGE MEMORIAL AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED

CUPE Press Release



CUPE 3911 is very pleased to announce that the recipient of the 2003 Bryon Paege Memorial Award is Joy Yi Zhou-Krys. Joy's self-nomination is very strongly supported by references from her tutor, Louise Fournet, and from Tamra Ross Low, Editor in Chief of the AUSU "The Voice".

Joy is originally from China, where she had a satisfying job and many friends. However, as she says, she "suddenly became nobody since I stepped onto this new land - Canada." "I told myself" says Joy, that "I had to start over because I am going to spend the rest of my life in this country..." She determined to put her efforts into eliminating the gap between herself and those who were born here: "That is [she determined] to study."

But how to accomplish this?

Joy is married, with a 2-year old son and a new baby on the way. In May she and her family found a "cheap basement apartment", but for 8 months before that they lived in an abandoned farmhouse outside of Edmonton.

Loaned free of charge by an in-law, the house had no running water or heat, but did have cracked floors and mice. These were, says Joy, "the darkest days yet proudest experience in my life."

Even with a strong will, Joy says she found herself feeling "so helpless" to make her dreams of studying come true. Time and money - the lack of these - appeared to present insurmountable obstacles. Then, one day, another young mother she met in the playground while their children played together told her about Athabasca University.

"The good thing is" says Joy, "my studies went very well." Tutor Louise Fournet confirms that Joy "is, without a doubt, an excellent student...[in] this demanding course. Her quizzes and assignment results are outstanding and she knows the subject matter inside out."

As would be expected, Joy states that she puts a lot of time and effort into her academic work. Even so, just 9 days after she enrolled with AU, Joy formed the on-line Student Moms' Club of the Athabasca University Students' Union.

Tamra Ross Low worked with Joy to create the Club website. She says, "The Student Moms' Club was entirely Joy's idea... her intention was to provide an online community where young student mothers could gather for support, inspiration, and advice... At this time there are 17 young mothers registered as members of the SMC, but many more women visit the site and its popular discussion forums. The club members have embraced Joy's vision, and there is much sharing of support and advice on how to succeed as both a student, and a mother..."

As well, Ms. Ross Low writes that Joy has been very innovative in finding other new ways to foster a community spirit as a distance education student. "Joy was the first student to come up with the idea of meeting a Study Buddy... in the [AUSU] chat-room so that they could study online in real time together. Her idea is an excellent one, and it is something that AUSU is now actively promoting."

Ms. Ross Low goes on:

"While many people in this situation might have given up...Joy instead decided to make the very best of her new life and to help out other young mothers along the way...I'm very impressed that Joy took such a proactive approach to her problems, and I admire her determination to help others in the process of helping herself. I think that she is an excellent example of how to best overcome adversity through self-motivation, generosity, and empathy for others."

NEWS FROM AU

Contributed by *The Insider*



AU takes time to pat staff on the back

It was a Friday afternoon last fall, when Athabasca University senior accountant Herb Hetze received a panicked phone call from a rather destitute AU student, asking whether her expected refund could be expedited.

A sympathetic Hetze arranged for a bank transfer to be made, only to find the bank branch identified had recently closed. Undeterred, he determined where the closest branch was located, arranged for the transfer and convinced the bank's staff to remain open past closing time so that the student could collect her funds that very same afternoon.

At AU's Staff Recognition Event held June 16, president Dominique Abrioux noted that it is for acts of service such as this that Hetze was named one of two winners of this year's Sue and Derrick Rowlandson Memorial Award for Service Excellence.

"In attitude, commitment and overall effectiveness," Abrioux noted, "Herb definitely goes beyond expectations in order to provide service to students, staff, and external agencies."

Senior Building Systems Operator Denis Mathieu was also honoured for his exceptional service to Athabasca University over his 19-year career here. "While he often has some major challenge to address, large projects to manage, and may well have been working extensive overtime given that he is always on call," Abrioux pointed out, "Denis still makes the time to respond to individual requests for assistance, and this in a friendly, cheerful and courteous demeanour." He added that Mathieu has earned the nickname 'MacGyver,' "For when there is no ready-made solution, Denis excels at inventing one."

Hetze and Mathieu were among a long list of AU staff members recognized for their accomplishments that day, including 28 people who were recognized for working at AU for five years or more: Mushtaq Ahmad, Mohamed Ally, Bryan Austin, Nicole Belland, Ruth Blakely, Wayne Brehaut, Cindy Brost, Priscilla Campeau, Peter Carr, Kim Clark, Angela Doroshenko, Nazrat Durand, Paulette Fleese, A.J. Fraser, Sandra Gibson, Jennifer Gross, Corinna Lewis, Dawn Lewis, Carole Mason, Jody McGarry, Vaune McKee, Brenda Moore, Pam Patten, Donna Patz, David Poshtar, Brian Powell, Mike Sosteric and Mary Weatherby.

Eight people received accolades for having worked at AU for ten years or more: Dianne Balaski, Linda Doroshenko, Blanche Emes, Beverly Guy, Pat Johnson, Doug Kariel, Dietmar Kennepohl and Rita Newberry. Among those who have worked at AU for 15 years, or more, are Rita Fertig, Mike Gismondi, Wendy Jewell, Connie Johnson, Janice Kenney and Kathy Lux.

Four people were identified as having worked at Athabasca University for at least 20 years. Human Resources Director Greta Martin pointed out that this is the last group that will be recognized for 20 years of service, and who began their AU careers while the University was based in Edmonton.

Bonnie Nahornick, a junior advisor at Calgary Learning Centre, has worked for AU for 25 years. "She's very young at heart," Martin said, introducing Nahornick. "She must have started with us at childhood. She was recognized in Calgary, and we felt it was important she be recognized in front of a broader group of us."

AU also recognized a number of staff members who have achieved significant academic success in the past year. Four people, Dave Hrenewich, Ann Humphries, Helen Salzl and Linda Soluk, have earned Essential Skills for Supervisors Certificates through Northern Lakes College. Martin noted that the effort put into earning such accreditation goes a long way to improving the workplace.

"Becoming a good supervisor is a lifelong journey, a process," she said. "You work at it every day."

The list of AU staff academic achievers recognized also includes: Linda Bonneville, who earned a Labour Relations Certificate from Athabasca University; Gloria Bury for earning an Office Administration Certificate from Northern Lakes College; Rob Koons for his effort earning a Prairie Horticulture Certificate from Olds College; and Alan Lee, who now holds a Construction Administration Certificate from U of A.

Tracy Hillier graduated from Athabasca University's MBA program this year, and Jody McGarry completed her Bachelor of Administration degree at AU. Jingfen Zhang now holds a Master of Arts degree from Syracuse University.

Vice President Academic Alan Davis noted it has taken years for Profs. Terry Anderson, Jane Arscott, Alvin Finkel, Kam Jugdev, Bruce Morito, Simon Sigue and Janice Thomas to see the fruits of their literary efforts. Each has been involved in the editing or writing of a book published in the last year.

Davis expressed surprise when Fulton presented him with a special parting gift. Davis has accepted the VP-Academic position with Niagara College in Ontario.

"Niagara College's gain is our loss," Fulton said. "When they refer to people working hard and working smart, Alan Davis exemplifies that. He's contributed so much to the University and the community."

"Don't stop. Don't stop," Davis responded. "I wasn't forewarned of this, and I have nothing prepared. So, I'll quote that great man of words and great philosopher, Herb Hetze. 'This is the best place I've ever worked.'" Executive encouraged all AU staff to pat themselves on the back.

"This (event) is very, very important because we take a lot of time here to recognize our customer, our student," Martin said. "Sometimes it's very important to take time for ourselves and say we're doing a good job. We've done an excellent job. Sometimes we just survive, but that's important, too." "You are part of a phenomenal success story," Fulton added, noting the University has grown from about 10,000 learners from the time of its first graduation ceremony in 1977, to about 30,000 learners today.

"Most private sector organizations faced with that kind of growth would come apart at the seams," he added, quoting a Syncrude executive. "Athabasca University is now indisputably recognized as Canada's National Open University. Please pat yourselves on the back."



Centre of Science staff work to ease stress for lab students

It's July, and the lazy, hazy days of summer are still a long way off for staff at the Science Lab at Athabasca University's main campus.

As is the summer routine, about 45 students will descend on the lab during the course of July to complete intensive lab courses in biology, microbiology, chemistry and ecology. That means back-to-back, eight-day workweeks for lab staff will be the norm for the next while.

"Our summer science sessions create a very busy and hectic period for our science lab staff," noted lab coordinator Robert Carmichael. "It does put pressure on us to present the best face of the university."

However, he added, that pressure is nothing compared to the stress

experienced by the students themselves.

"They're very, very apprehensive," he said. "It's quite intimidating. They see this quite thick (work) book. We say it can be done in three days and they can't quite see it."

Carmichael recalls one student who was overwhelmed by it all, and spent the better part of one precious course day in the infirmary. "She looked soooo pale, very, very ill. I'm sure it was the stress."

In another instance, a student asked how the course she had just completed would be reflected on her transcript. After a brief investigation, it was discovered the student hadn't yet enrolled in the course.

"We get a lot of people here who have never been in a town smaller than 20,000," added science technician Elaine Goth-Birkigt, noting many students don't quite know what to expect. "And often those are people from (Canada)."

One student brought with his family with him. They rode a taxi to Athabasca from Edmonton International Airport, and were surprised to find Athabasca doesn't have a shopping mall.

Birkigt reflects that the intensity of courses at AU mirrors the intensity students will encounter afterward, and a number of individuals who studied science at AU have gone on to become doctors, nurses, chiropractors.

According to Carmichael, students burn off stress in different ways. Some whoop it up at local establishments. Others leave the lab every day, completely spent mentally, emotionally and physically.

"(So far) students are much more serious this year," he said. "They went back to their hotels and worked hard, and studied and slept."

AU staff members do what they can to help alleviate student tension. Making accommodation recommendations, providing transportation to and from motels, and offering social opportunities for students to relax and unwind is just part of the process.

"(Summer session) does provide new opportunities to meet interesting people from all over the world," Carmichael said. "We appreciate that so these few things we do don't seem too difficult."

And, he added, "There's a sense of satisfaction from seeing students come in scared and see the smiles of satisfaction as they leave having completed courses."



Students from a recent chemistry class

Let's make cancer history.



Canadian Cancer Society Société canadienne du cancer

cancer.ca | 1.888.939.3333

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

For scholarships available through the Athabasca University Student's Union, see the AUSU website at www.ausu.org



SHOPPERS DRUG MART SCHOLARSHIP, THE

Value: n/s

DEADLINE: n/s

Administrator: National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

Notes: Awarded to aboriginal post-secondary students who require assistance in order to complete their education in any field and level of study.

Contact Information:

National Aboriginal Achievement Awards Secretariat
70 Yorkville Avenue, Suite 33A
Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B9

Phone: (416) 926-0775

Fax: (416) 926-7554

Toll Free: (800) 329-9780

Web Site: <http://www.naaf.ca>

E-mail: naaa@naaf.ca

ESSAY CONTEST ON AYN RAND'S NOVEL

Value: \$5000; \$1000; \$400

DEADLINE: September 16, 2003

Administrator: Ayn Rand Institute

Notes: Open to Canadian and American students of all schools and in any year of study. Essay should be written on Ayn Rand's novel "Atlas Shrugged." There are three second prizes worth \$1000 each and five third prizes worth \$400 each. For contest information, visit <http://www.aynrand.org/contests/atlas.html>

Contact Information:

Anthem Essay Contest, Dept. W
The Ayn Rand Institute
P.O. Box 6099
Inglewood, California 90312

Web Site: <http://www.aynrand.org/contests/atlas.html>

E-mail: essay@aynrand.org

Missing out on all the deals?

www.ausu.org/services

Get an AU ID card, today!

A small image of an Athabasca University ID card. It shows a student's name, 'Jane Q. Student', and a photo of a person.

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*



- **Distance Teaching & Learning Conference:** - 19th annual - "Working Smarter - Building on Success" - Aug. 13-15, 2003 - Madison, Wisconsin. Details: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference>
- **AU Learning Services Conference** - October 3 & 4, 2003 - Edmonton, Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe. Details to follow.

OTHER CONFERENCES

- **CAPDHHE [Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education]** - To be held in Calgary, October 29 - November 1, 2003. <http://www.capdhhe.org/conference2/index.htm>
- **Teaching In A Digital Age** - the impact of new communication technologies on teaching and pedagogy. l'Université de Montréal. <http://profetic.org:16080/coll2003/> [French only]
- **China Conference 2003** - Edinburgh July 2003. China Conference Info welcomes people from the commercial and educational sector involved in E-Learning, Distance Learning, Training, HR, IT Training, Localisation, ICT or Knowledge Management, to this world first international event. China represents the biggest target market for these sectors ever and is still largely untapped.

Entering the Chinese market place is a complex move. This conference provides a forum on exchange of market information not only on product and service requirements, but on specialist market entrance requirements. If you are working in any of these sectors you should seriously consider entering this event in your diary. The conference will be patronised by professionals from, China, the USA, Europe and Australia and represents the largest collective gathering of these specialists centred around the Chinese market ever!

For more information:

<http://www.chinaconferenceinfo.com>

Summer Symposium on Health Ethics

Wednesday 6 August 2003

The John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre (JDHEC) invites you to attend a one-day symposium on health ethics. This course will offer a series of presentations by JDHEC Faculty that will challenge you to examine and explore the essential place of ethics in health care practice.

For more information:

Website www.ualberta.ca/bioethics

Email Dossetor.Centre@ualberta.ca

Phone 780-492-6676

Know of an educational conference that is not on this list? Contact voice@ausu.org with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.



CLASSIFIEDS:

Students of AU may print classifieds in The Voice free of charge (maximum three per issue) as long as they are not representing a company or product.

Classified ads should be submitted to the editor at voice@ausu.org with 'CLASSIFIED AD' listed in the subject title.

The Editor reserves the right to refuse any classified advertisement at her discretion. Thank-you.

THE VOICE

c/o Athabasca University Students' Union
2nd Floor, 10030-107th Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4
800.788.9041 ext. 3413

Editor In Chief Tamra Ross Low

THE VOICE ONLINE: WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE

The Voice is funded by the Athabasca University Students' Union, for the students of Athabasca university

The Voice is published every Wednesday in html and pdf format

Contact *The Voice* at: **VOICE@AUSU.ORG**

To subscribe for weekly email reminders as each issue is posted, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page
www.ausu.org/voice

The Voice does not share its subscriber list with anyone

Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its frequent contributions
© 2003 by The Voice