

SPECIAL ISSUE

James Downey is new UNB president

By JOEY KILFOIL
News Editor

Dr. James Downey, vice president (academic) of Carleton University in Ottawa, is the new president of the University of New Brunswick. His appointment for a six-year term is effective August 1. At a press conference Monday following the approval of Dr. Downey's nomination by the board of governors and senate, R.E. Tweeddale, chairman of the presidential search committee said Dr. Downey was one of 110 nominations received by the search committee. Sixty-five of those nominated, included Acting UNB President Thomas Condon, declined the nominations.

Dr. Downey was nominated separately by "two or three" members of the committee, Tweeddale said. Most members of the committee were impressed with his academic skills and administrative experience, and the committee was unanimous in its support of Downey's nomination, he said.

The board of governors will make provisions to extend Dr. Condon's one-year term as acting president, which would have expired July 1, by one month, Tweeddale said. UNB has been without a president since Dr. John Anderson's term expired June 30, 1979.

A previous search committee had come up with Dr. Paul V. Cassano of the University of Windsor for president, but Dr. Cassano was defeated by the board of governors and senate, as was the nomination from the floor of Dr. Condon. Tweeddale said he did not know why this committee's work went so smoothly.

"I think it works," he said, "and anything that works, we better leave it alone."

Dr. Downey is a 40-year-old native of Winterton, Nfld. His appointment becomes official following the recommendation to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

Dr. Downey is the author of numerous books and articles with focus on the writings of 18th-century English clerics.



JUDY KAVANAGH Photo

Dr. James Downey



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Future prez interviewed

By SUSAN REED
Staff Writer

Dr. James Downey, president-elect of UNB, says the first thing he plans to do on taking office is to carry on what he has been doing, learning as much about UNB as quickly as possible. He said he feels it is important for him to take the time to do so.

Downey said in a telephone interview he believes a university president's first responsibility is to the faculty, students and staff

to ensure that their environment is congenial to its purpose. An effective president is one who is instrumental in creating such a condition without intruding, he said.

"The less conspicuous a president is, the more successful he is," said Downey.

The president also has a responsibility to the larger community, Downey believes, to interpret the university to the community and vice versa.

Downey said a president has a duty to try to provide leadership, if he or she can, in the Canadian academic community.

Downey said he wants UNB to be as outstanding as possible in its programs and research, because that is what universities are about. They should help provide an evaluation of society, he said.

"Clearly, UNB has a wide and interesting range of programs that include a good mix of both traditional and career programs," said Downey.

UNB is fortunate to have the St. John campus, he said, where "more adventurous" programs can be instituted, that will prove complementary to the Fredericton campus.

Downey said he expects to be on campus within three weeks, for a day or two. He will be on campus on a regular basis at least once a month before taking office August 1.

Downey has two children, Sarah, 12, and Geoffrey, 9.