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SU campaign protests funding freeze

by Karen Burgess

In response to the provincial government's recent funding freeze to New Brunswick universities, which could mean a tuition increase estimated at \$400 for UNB, the UNB Student Union has begun a campaign expressing students' concern about the freeze to Vaughn Blaney, minister of Advanced Education and Labour.

Tammy Yates, VP External of the Student Union, has composed a form letter for students to sign, which she hopes to present to local MLA, Russ King at a meeting on Tuesday.

She says that response so far has been very positive as the issue is one which involves all students. Unlike marches and demonstrations which can take too much time from students' schedules, this campaign "lets students get involved and it

doesn't require a huge time commitment from anyone."

Initially 500 copies of the form letter were printed and the majority of these have been signed. Yates plans to begin a more structured campaign shortly to ensure everyone gets a chance to make their protest about the six million dollar funding freeze.

The VP is presently awaiting the completion of a second printing of the protest letter, which will make it accessible to more students, and hopes to collect signatures on several wall murals to be presented to local MLA's and politicians. Yates says that these measures will help to raise awareness at the university and in the outside community of how the funding freeze, and its accompanying program cutbacks and fee increase, will compromise the quality of education given to this

generation of students. After all, as Yates points out, "if we (the students) don't complain about it, no one will do it for us."

Yates took her protest, on behalf of UNB's students, to the Minister of Finance when she, and CFS National representative Mark Lockwood, attended the public hearing on the Budget Process which was held on Tuesday evening.

While this meeting was not held specifically to deal with education issues, Yates felt it was productive because the Minister, Allan Maher, agreed to meet with the Student Union at a later date.

Despite the progress made thus far Yates stresses the importance of continued student response to the government's crippling budgetary freeze. She explains that every signature collected on a form letter sends a message to the government about students' opin-

ions, but that government legislation requires that ministers respond to individually written letters.

When asked if people feel helpless to change matters such as this Yates replied "There's a lot of cynicism but then you tell people that at least it's something, at least it's an effort. If you just sit by and idle, it's never going to change. If its six million this

"If we (the students) don't complain about it, no one will do it for us."

- Yates

year then it will be eight million next year."

The letter, which has been reprinted on page 3, can be signed, addressed, and then returned to the student Union office in the SUB.

Arts faculty plans direction for next 5 years

by Brent Dickson

Departments and Faculties at UNB are going through some planning exercises which could affect the university for the next five to ten years. The Dean of Arts, Peter Kent, has stated that there are three reasons as to why the Departments are going through these planning exercises.

The first, as Kent noted, is "with tighter financial times we should have some longer range sense of where we are going". Dean Kent has asked each of the twelve Departments in the Arts Faculty to prepare a five year plan that will cover such things as cuts in expenditures and whether the vacant positions left by retiring professors will be filled. Kent

said, "I have asked each of the Departments to consider what they want to do over the next five years - to consider why they exist or what their mission is at the university, whether they have resources to do what they are supposed to be doing now and what changes they wish to make in the next five years."

Prof. Cameron, Head of the Psychology Department, said that she sees that this is a wonderful opportunity to discuss the plans of the Psychology Department in more detail. Cameron noted that there are a number of concerns to be met in her Department such as raising funds for projects and creating better opportunities for students to get community experience in the field of psychology. Cameron was also

concerned that "Although enrollment into Psychology has practically doubled the amount of professors in the department has increased only by about a quarter of what it was ten years ago. All of us are working much harder and many of us are deeply engaged in research which stretches our existing work load," says Cameron.

The Head of the Classics and Ancient History Department, Prof. James Murray, has also stated that "All of this is a valuable exercise", but feels that the original plans they will submit from his department will eventually be tamed down. Murray said "In the long run I would like to see the Department known for having courses that are interesting, yet at the same time difficult".



Shown is Allan Maher, Minister of Finance, who participated in an open forum on the Budget Process which was held on Tuesday evening.

Kent J. Rainville photo

According to Dean Kent, the second reason for the five year planning committee is that the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Committee has recently asked New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island Universities to indicate what their future plans are. In the past, the MPHEC then advised

the NS government on the funding needs of the universities in the province. Dean Kent said that the same process will be followed in New Brunswick and that a plan for UNB should be submitted to the MPHEC by next May. *Continued on page 7*

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