

Martha Scandal hits Manitoba

Photo to remain in Asper School of Business for now, dean says

by Robert Kotyk

WINNIPEG (CUP) — Even the staff at the University of Manitoba can't escape the media circus surrounding Martha Stewart's recent conviction and arrest, thanks to an award given to the design maven by the Asper School of Business two years ago.

In June 2002, Stewart visited the city and was named International Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year by the university, an award that is commemorated by a plaque and photo that hang near the main staircase in the Asper School of Business.

Stewart was indicted in June 2003, when she was accused of selling shares of ImClone Systems Inc. only after she learned through insider information that the company's new cancer drug had not been approved by the U.S. Food and

Drug Administration. On March 5, Stewart was convicted of obstruction of justice and lying to investigators, and could face up to 20 years of jail time. She is appealing the conviction.

The controversy has raised suggestions that Stewart's picture should be taken down from the wall in the Asper school.

Jerry Gray, dean of commerce, said that while a decision has not been made on the picture's fate, the matter will have to be settled.

"We have no precedent, but someone, sometime will have to discuss it if, in fact, there is a final guilty verdict," he said.

Gray added that in his opinion, Stewart is facing a rather harsh punishment.

"I still admire her as an entrepreneur and what she's achieved. One can't help but do that," he said. "My personal view is that she had a lapse in judgment, and that is human."

Mike McNabb, a fourth-year commerce student, said that Stewart's connection to the school could eventually become a liability.

"I think they should take the picture down," he said. "She created an amazing product out of nothing, but once you break the law, you break the law."

Another student said that leaving the picture up might help to generate discussion among students.

"If you take it down, then it's kind of like ignoring the issue altogether and people forget about it," he said. "If it's there, maybe there will be some debate."

The Stewart case has reinvigorated interest in business ethics, a topic that has been the focus of much attention in recent years, after the Enron scandal saturated headlines in 2002.

For Asper students, Gray said he would like to see part of each class devoted to the subject.

"I'd like to eventually have something about ethics as a natural component of every course," he said. "It's like profit. We don't have a course in profit. Profit is just part of the courses, and ethics should be the same thing."

Students advise Paul Martin

UBC students say Prime Minister will listen

by Megan Thomas

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Bright young Western Canadian minds with a penchant for discussing global human security issues met at UBC last week to create foreign policy recommendations that will be presented to Prime Minister Paul Martin and his government at the end of the month.

The Human Security Conference brought together over 100 high school, undergraduate and graduate university students for four days to come up with a report commissioned by the government.

"This is the first group of youth that will be giving foreign policy advice to the Prime Minister," said Michelle Hassen, conference coordinator.

And she says Martin will listen. Because of recent commitments to listen to the voice of the West, "he will definitely be paying attention," said Hassen.

The students came up with policy recommendations for human security issues like peace building, disarmament and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These will be compiled in a report that will be circulated to universities, the government, non-governmental organizations and lobby groups.

After discussions about the three branches of human security, diplomacy, defense and development, delegates were treated to a talk by one of those branches.

"We are prepared to die to protect the innocent. We are prepared to kill to defend the weak," said Canadian Forces Major-General Andrew Leslie to the delegates. Leslie just returned from a tour leading the Task Force



Peter Klesken/Cup

Canadian Major-General Andrew Leslie told delegates defense, combined with diplomacy and development, is key in helping shattered nations like Afghanistan.

in Afghanistan.

He spoke about the vital partnership between military, humanitarian aid and diplomacy in trying to repair fractured nations like Afghanistan. He also complimented the Canadian government for its concerted effort in Afghanistan, saying Canada is second only to the U.S. in military presence, diplomacy and aid to the country.

"It has been a long time since Canada has been in such a role," said Leslie. "Instead of approaching the Afghanistan issue in a penny-packing and relatively unproductive fashion, as we did in Croatia, as we did in Bosnia, as we did in East Timor, as we did in Rwanda, this time we have got it certainly better."

Leslie was optimistic about the

progress that the allied forces have made in Afghanistan, saying the situation is much better than it was seven months ago and that troops have been welcomed by the majority of the population. But he also warned of imminent danger still lurking in and around Kabul.

"There is a very small minority who actively want to kill you because you are doing good work," he said. He spoke of factionists who want to kill schoolteachers for trying to educate young women, and warlords who assassinate those who attempt to drill wells for the people.

But not all delegates agreed that progress has been made in Afghanistan.

"I don't agree with a lot of things said today," said Gabriel Giauque, a King George Secondary student.

"I am quite disappointed with the actual outcome of this conference," said Giauque. He said he thought many of the policy recommendations were similar to those already put forth by the Canadian government.

He called for more drastic changes to government systems. "Real change comes from the people," he said.

But another secondary student said he felt great ideas were exchanged at the conference and that being an election year, Martin will listen to the recommendations.

"There is a lot of room for what the public wants," said Alexei Bylinskii, a University Hill Secondary student.

Leslie finished by urging all delegates to consider careers that will help put their policy recommendations to good use and help ailing nations around the world.

"My hope is that some of you, once you finish here, will not in the first instance go off and find that job that is going to get you that BMW. What I hope some of you do is go to Afghanistan," he said.

CASA pushes for grants, debt relief

Group to present tuition petition after budget

by Helen Reddy

ANTIGONISH, N.S. (CUP) — One of Canada's largest student groups is set to petition the federal government to reduce student debt and control "skyrocketing tuition fees."

The "National Student Petition" is an important part of the Canadian Alliance of Student Association's push to get the government to commit to a dedicated transfer to post-secondary education, said James

Kushie, the group's executive director.

"It's a good way to get the public involved in our initiative," he said. "It shows the federal government that there's public support."

The petition calls for changes to debt relief, and argues for the creation of grants for low-income students.

"This is crucial for me," said Susan Dalton, a third-year student at St. Francis Xavier University. "I've been going all year with hardly enough money to sustain myself."

Alison Fyles, a second-year student at St. FX, said her tuition is higher than it would be in B.C., her home province.

While the average tuition fee for

Nova Scotia in 2003-2004 was \$5,557, average tuition in B.C. was \$4,140.

"It's terrible," said Fyles.

Kusie said their goal is to get at least 30,000 signatures across the country. This would translate to roughly 10 per cent of the students represented by CASA's 20 schools.

St. FX has already surpassed the 1,000-signature mark.

The group plans to present the stack of petitions to a member of Parliament on March 23rd, right after the presentation of the federal budget.

"Our hope is that it will create a bit of a media buzz," said Nick Smerek, St. FX's student council president. "And the parties might

use it in the platform for the next election."

Peter MacKay, Conservative MP for Pictou-Antigonish-Guysborough, praised CASA for their work.

"The CASA initiative is great," said MacKay. "We get a very informed view with them."

MacKay said it is important for MPs to be sensitive to these issues.

"Petitions and direct interaction with MPs is a very effective form of communication," he said.

Kusie said he is eager to see the impact of the petitions.

"We've been bashing this issue for a number of years," he said. "It's time for the federal government to act on this."

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