

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

This is my first message to the membership-at-large since I took office at the April 27, 2004 Annual General Meeting.

First, I wish to thank our members for having placed their confidence in me. In return, I promise them I will work hard on their behalf.

My predecessor, Prof. Claude Dionne, reported in

the April issue of the **Bulletin** that the Executive Director, Desmond Morley, and I had heard the New Brunswick Finance Minister, M. Volpé, confirm that the planned 3.25% increases in university funding in each of the next four years would still be given, despite planned budget cuts elsewhere.

It appears that we misinterpreted what the Minister said, because the funding increase for universities in fiscal 2004-2005 turned out to be only 2% in the last provincial Budget. An editorial on this topic, entitled “**Budget Does Little To Promote Accessibility**”, written by the Executive Director, appeared in the April 10, 2004 edition of the Telegraph Journal. It is reproduced elsewhere in this issue for your information. [See page 3 - Ed.]

We have been reassured by senior staff members in the Department of Education, however, that it is still the firm commitment of the Lord government to allocate approximately 13% to university funding over the next four years, but financial constraints at this time mean that this cannot be delivered in regular 3.25% increases.

Time will tell.

At the Annual Meeting, the Board approved the striking of an

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Notice
Board Meeting
All FNBFA Board meetings are open to individual faculty members, and an invitation to attend is extended to anyone wishing to do so.

For more information concerning dates of upcoming board meetings, log on to: www.fnbfa.ca

ad-hoc committee of three persons, including the undersigned, to review the appropriateness of the mandate of the Federation in light of its evolving circumstances. We hope to name the other members of the ad-hoc committee at the next Board meeting, and that a preliminary report will be forthcoming by the end of the year.

I am delighted to report that, at our last Annual Meeting, in addition to the awarding of the Prix Nicole Raymond Award to Prof. Gary Long [See page **5** - **Ed.**], the selfless contributions to the Federation of long-time Board member Prof. Daniel Bélanger, who also has been the Federation's Secretary/Treasurer since 1992, were recognized. With the unanimous approval of our member-associations, the FNBFA Achievement Medal was re-named the **Bélanger Achievement Medal**. The medal is given every year to one outstanding student at each high school in New Brunswick, and seems to enjoy similar prestige, generally, to that accorded to the Governor General's Medal and the Birks Medal.

On June 15 last, the Executive Director participated in the media launch of a Private Member's Bill, to amend the **Youth Assistance Act**, introduced that day by Kelly Lamrock, MLA into the legislature. The Bill seeks to remove the "parental contribution" criteria from the eligibility provisions for student loans.

I hope that, so far, our readers and their loved ones have enjoyed a happy and healthy summer – such as it has been! – and that they will continue to do so.

Sincerely,
Rick Hudson, President

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

On behalf of the Committee, which presently does not have a Chair, I am pleased to report that the name of the Federation was mentioned in l'Acadie Nouvelle on June 16, 2004 in an article entitled "**Les libéraux veulent alléger le fardeau des parents d'étudiants**".

The story concerned the initiative of Kelly Lamrock, MLA - which was supported by the Federation - in introducing a Private Member's Bill to remove the "parental contribution" factor from student loan eligibility criteria.

Any mention in l'Acadie Nouvelle of the Federation is rare, and we are grateful that our members were able, at least on that occasion, to read about the Federation's activities in the francophone media.

Since the beginning of the year, we have had four editorials published: “**Proposed Solutions Do Little to Ease Financial Pain of Students**”, in the Telegraph Journal on February 11, 2004; “**Budget Does Little To Promote Accessibility**”, in the Telegraph Journal on April 10, 2004; “**Partisanship Should Play Second Fiddle to Needs of NBers**”, in the Telegraph Journal on May 28, 2004 and “**Protecting What ‘University’ Means**”, in the Times-Transcript on June 10, 2004.

Desmond Morley,
Executive Director

BUDGET DOES LITTLE TO PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY

BY

DESMOND MORLEY

[Editorial Published in the Telegraph Journal, April 10, 2004.]

According to figures recently published by Human Resources Development Canada, the unemployment rate for university graduates who were available for work in the New Brunswick labour force rose last year, but by less than one-third of one per cent, to only 3.6 per cent. On the other hand, the average unemployment rate for workforce participants from all other educational backgrounds stubbornly remained at more than 10.5 per cent.

For decades the majority of economists, demographers, and social policy analysts, taking into account that a certain portion of the available labour force will always be temporarily sidelined (owing, for example, to illnesses, layoffs, or resignations) have agreed that a three per cent level of unemployment can be considered, for all intents and purposes, to be “full employment”.

In fact, with the rapid growth of technology, the vast reduction in recent years in the length of working relationships between employers and employees, and the resulting transitory nature of much of the workforce, some of the experts now even postulate an unemployment rate of as much as four per cent as the true measure of full employment.

In this setting, university graduates in New Brunswick are doing extremely well, relatively speaking, when it comes to finding gainful employment. As a result, the vast majority of them quickly become the young taxpayers upon whom the aging population of this fair province is becoming increasingly dependent.

The “National Occupational Classification” for Canada has four different skill categories. Category “A” includes “occupations requiring a university diploma (bachelor’s, master’s or doctorate)”.

Again according to recently-published HRDC figures, in 2003 the members of this category - perhaps not surprisingly - commanded, on average, the highest earnings.

What may come as a surprise, though, is the magnitude of the disparity between their earnings and those of their counterparts in the next-highest earning bracket. This category (“B”) encompasses “occupations requiring two or three years of post-secondary studies in a community college or institute of technology; or a two-to-four-year apprenticeship; or two to four years of secondary studies and more than two years of on-the-job training, outside training courses or specific work experience”.

The average earnings of a member of category “A” in 2003 were a whopping 45 per cent higher than those of a member of category “B”. Consequently, there was a corresponding increase in the contributions of university graduates to the tax rolls as well.

Surely, then, we should be doing everything we can to ensure that our universities continue to be accessible to all who wish, and are qualified, to attend them.

However, to be accessible, they must first, of course, be affordable.

The Lord government’s recent provincial Budget, therefore, leaves much to be desired in its potential for the attainment of this goal.

Yes, Finance Minister Volpé promised that, ultimately, the full “13 per cent over four years” in operating funding promised by Premier Lord in May, 2003 would still be forthcoming. Nevertheless, M. Volpé gave only a two per cent increase for fiscal 2004-2005, instead of the increase of the order of more than three per cent – similar to that given in 2003-2004, the first year - which the universities not only had expected, but upon which they had predicated their own short-term budgetary projections.

Undoubtedly, the result of this will be even larger tuition fee increases than may otherwise have been imposed; and this will certainly hinder, rather than promote, university accessibility.

Despite the assurances of government that all the promised funding eventually will be forthcoming, unfortunately most of today's bills have to be paid with hard cash and not with promises, no matter how reliable the latter may be.



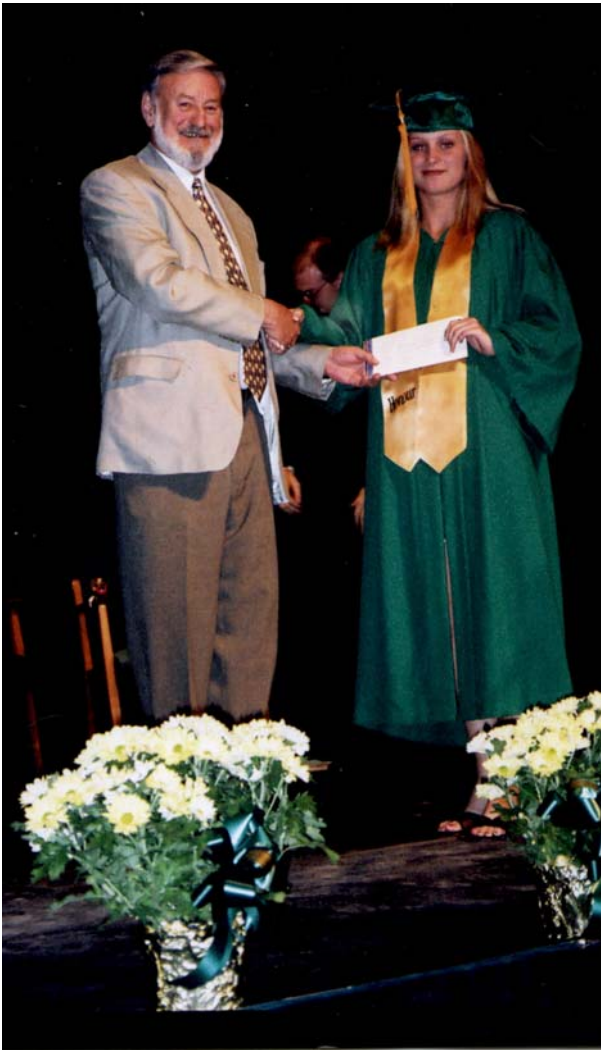
Prof. Gary Long (right) receives the 2004 Prix Nicole Raymond Award from Dr. Paul Albert, Vice-rector of l'Université de Moncton - campus d'Edmundston.



[L-R] Profs. Claude Dionne, Jack Vanderlinde, Rick Hudson and Ian Fraser enjoy a moment of relaxation at the reception honouring the 2004 winner of the Prix Nicole Raymond Award, Prof. Gary Long.



Delegates gather for dinner after the Annual General Meeting.



Federation Executive Director Desmond Morley presents the 2004 FNBFA Semeluk Scholarship to Aiesia Corbett [See story this page – **Ed.**]

Accompanied by the Treasurer, Prof. Daniel Bélanger, the Executive Director attended the Dalhousie Regional High School graduation ceremonies on June 16 last to present the 2004 Semeluk Scholarship to Aiesia Corbett. Aiesia plans to commence studies in Education at St. Thomas University in the Fall of this year.

At the same ceremony, Shanda Noel received the Bélanger Achievement Medal.

This year, there were some unusual developments in the scholarship selection process. Two of the four individuals interviewed - from a pool of several thousand potential candidates - were from the Dalhousie Regional High School, which is to be warmly congratulated on such an impressive achievement.

Also, because of the high quality of the candidates interviewed, a second, two-year scholarship was awarded to Cynthia Poussard to help her to study for a diploma in Health Sciences at l'Université de Moncton - campus d'Edmundston.

MPHEC FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Federation has been asked to promote the participation of faculty members in the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission's Fourth Annual Conference, *Student Centered Assessment – Strategies for Improving Learning and Student Outcomes*.

The conference will be held on November 25 and 26, 2004 at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Early registration (before August 1, 2004) is \$295.00 plus HST, or \$360.00 plus HST thereafter. Group rates can be obtained from the MPHEC Conference Secretariat at (506) 453-2844. Registration forms containing the conference agenda may be obtained either from the MPHEC or from the Federation office, and we encourage faculty members to attend.

CALL FOR CANDIDATES

Membership on the ad-hoc review committee [see President's Message, page 1 – **Ed.**] is open to all faculty members. Individuals wishing to be considered for membership should submit their names to the Federation office on or before August 16, 2004.

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Your Opinions are Welcomed

A special invitation is extended to those members of local associations who are interested in commenting upon university life in general. Readers are invited to send their opinions and/or comments, in writing, to the address above.

Opinions expressed in the Bulletin are not necessarily those of the Executive and/or Board of FNBA/FAPPUNB