

STRIKING TIMES

(Daily strike update of Sault College Faculty's newsletter, *LOCAL MONITOR*)



Day 4

March 10, 2006

SPLASHER APOLOGIZES

Thanks to the good observation skills of Ed Sowka and John McGauley, in terms of recording car make and license plate number, the motorist who drenched three picketers yesterday morning was tracked down by police. He has asked that an apology be passed on to the wet women. We urge you to be vigilant and report any such incidents, as the police do follow up.

STUDENTS JOIN IN

While many student councils are choosing to take a neutral position, at St. Lawrence College in Kingston, students are being encouraged to join in and send a message to the government. Craig Smith, a third year Graphic Design student, has sent emails of support to all OPSEU regional offices and was on the noon CBC radio news, yesterday, supporting the faculty position. His message to faculty and to the students that he strongly believes should take a role:

“Keep up the fight. Activism is not only a right but a necessity and obligation”

LOCAL 613 NEWS RELEASE

Yesterday, a news release was issued to all local media. Within an hour, it was posted by SooToday . We should check today what other media have decided to use it. It is available in the trailer and on the OPSEU613 website.

QUIET IN THE COLLEGE

According to sources inside Sault College, it is very quiet. The student V.P. from George Brown College had a good point when he said that he was encouraging students to stay away from the College, not so much to avoid picket lines, but to reinforce to College management that there is really nothing that the College can provide in terms of services and he doesn't want them to pretend that there is.

LET'S NOT FORGET COUNSELLORS!

In the whole spin, the college counsellors get caught in the student teacher ratio numbers, which provide misleading data. More importantly, the focus of attention does not address the plight of our College counsellors in this world of stretched resources that we are struggling to improve.

Special Needs

Over the past years, the Special Needs department at Sault College has been reduced from 2.5 FTE to 1 full time staff, and one part time position. During this time, the numbers of students with special needs and the complexity of their needs have increased. Laurie Barbeau estimates that there would likely be approximately 270 students identified with special needs who are legally entitled to accommodations (over 10% of the student population). These services involve assessment, accommodation planning, monitoring of student progress, adapting the plan as necessary, advocacy, and support.

After an unsuccessful attempt to manage the workload by instituting a wait list, the Special Needs department currently has an open referral process, where students book appointments as necessary. Laurie agreed it was a type of 'triage' system, with the support staff person using her skills and knowledge of the students to determine who requires an urgent response. Needless to say, 1.5 persons cannot respond to the needs on a regular basis. To continue the medical analogy: the band-aid approach is clearly not meeting student needs.

Laurie states that all of the history is documented: the trends, the student numbers, types of needs, degree of cutbacks in funding, etc. **If the College is serious about quality of service to students, and meeting student needs and legal obligations, the current situation is not reflecting this.**

When President Meyer says, "I don't understand" about this strike, it is an admission of failure to be in touch with the realities that he gets well paid to supervise. If the college presidents want to play a real role in furthering the quality of education, they should stop behaving like "political poodles" (apologies to poodles!) or obfuscating ostriches (apologies to ostriches), stop blaming faculty and become educational leaders.



The limerick contest is on! Go for it!! A challenge: find a rhyme for Uchmanovicz

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