

Campus Connection

Mount Saint Vincent University

March 12, 1990



Two Mount students in the Bachelor of Science degree program were awarded the Canada Scholars Award recently. The federal government-sponsored scholarships, initiated last year, are awarded for high academic achievement to high school students wishing to pursue university programs in science, engineering or related degrees, and provide up to \$8,000 over four years.

Canada Scholars Award winners Angela Williams (far right) and Kimberley Doucet (third from right) were honored at a recent Mount Science Society event. Pictured with them are (left to right): Dr. John Sayre, mathematics and computer studies department chair; Prof. Earl Martin, chemistry department chair; Dr. Sheilagh Martin, biology department chair; and Robert Russell, executive director for Nova Scotia of Industry Science and Technology Canada.

AUCC, AAU criticize federal budget for funding cuts

Cuts in transfer payments to the provinces, announced in the new federal budget, sparked criticism from the Association of Universities and Col-

leges of Canada (AUCC) and the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU).

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Gender influences university accessibility — Dr. Gordon

Women and men experience university very differently, according to research by Dr. Jane Gordon, chair of the sociology/anthropology department. Dr. Gordon, who also teaches occasionally in the Mount's women's studies department, and Dr. Helen Breslauer of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, have examined data on students and faculty in Canadian universities. Their research concludes that universities generally offer fewer opportunities for female students and faculty.

"It comes down to accessibility," says Dr. Gordon. "Accessibility is an issue at every level at which women and universities interact."

While females have come to represent more than half of undergraduate students at Canadian universities, they account for less than half of master's students and about one-third of doctoral students. A major factor, says Dr. Gordon, is that female students don't usually have the financial resources available to male students. "Parents tend to invest more in educating their sons than their daughters. Males also tend to earn more in summer and part-time jobs."

Financial awards to students tend to be targeted at male-dominated scientific and technical research fields.

The vast majority of part-time students at undergraduate and graduate levels are females. "Part-time students often don't have access to financial assistance for their studies to the same extent as do full-time students," says Dr. Gordon. "Also, it is difficult to work towards degrees on a part-time basis in many fields." In addition, family responsibilities often prevent females from relocating for further study.

She feels that the internal climate of universities isn't supportive of women and doesn't improve for female faculty members. "While women are well represented at lower levels of academia, they are

marginally represented at higher levels," she says, pointing to the most recent Statistics Canada figures which show women making up 44.5 percent of faculty with a rank below assistant, 28.9 percent of assistants, 15.7 percent of associates, and only 6.1 percent of full professors.

As with students, females are under-represented on faculties in fields like engineering and applied sciences (just over two percent), and mathematics and physical sciences (5.6 percent).

Dr. Gordon believes that a major problem facing women in academia is the current evaluation system which is the basis for hiring, determining salary levels, promotion and tenure. Faculty, she notes, are expected to follow what universities consider an appropriate career path. "It consists of a regular and continuous progression from an undergraduate degree to graduate school and then a full-time appointment at a university."

Yet for women, the launching of an academic career often coincides chronologically with pressures to have children. Dr. Gordon notes that women who take time out to start a family must not only accomplish the same amount of work as their male colleagues in a shorter period of time, but must also account for their decision to employers and research-granting agencies. "Interruptions in their career paths are perceived as lack of commitment to an academic career."

She notes that women are also more likely to accept part-time and limited-term appointments which are often difficult to convert to tenure-track appointments. And even with a tenure-track appointment, the road for female faculty can be a difficult one, she says. For example, there are few established female faculty to act as mentors in providing advice on "the real rules of the profession" to female graduate students and new faculty.

In addition, Dr. Gordon notes that "universities

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Dr. Janina Koneczacki, history department faculty, will give an illustrated lecture on 18th Century Plantation Houses of America, Wednesday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m. The public lecture, sponsored by the Mount History Society, will take place in the Don MacNeil Room, Rosaria Centre, followed by a reception.

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In the continuing series of Mount English department colloquia, Dr. Susan Drain will speak on "Natural History as Myth: Margaret Gatty's Parables from Nature", Wednesday, March 14 at 4:20 p.m. in the Faculty Lounge, Seton 405. Dr. Drain's paper examines Margaret Gatty's attempts to pro-

claim to mid-Victorian readers a mythology of natural history to supplement Christian doctrine — and what she actually accomplished. Margaret Gatty (1809-1873) was a Victorian children's writer, moralist and amateur scientist.

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A national conference entitled "Educating for the Kingdom? Church-related Colleges in English-speaking Canada" will be held May 1 and 2 in Waterloo, Ontario. Jointly sponsored by the University of St. Jerome's College and Conrad Grebel College, it is the third conference in recent years to

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Astronomer to lecture

A tour of the solar system and extra-terrestrial life are topics to be covered by a world-renowned astronomer when he visits the Mount later this month. Dr. Arthur Upgren, with the Van Vleck Observatory of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, will be on campus as part of the Harlow Shapley Lecture Series, sponsored by the American Astronomical Society.

On Wednesday, March 21, at 8 p.m., Dr. Upgren will give an illustrated lecture, Tour of the Solar System, describing unique features of each planet, as well as the impact of the Voyager and other space explorations on our changing understanding of the planets. His lecture is open to the public and will take place in Auditorium C, Seton Academic Centre.

On Friday, March 23, Dr. Upgren will give a talk on Extra-Terrestrial Life to students in Prof. Tina Harriot's physics class, 1-1:50 p.m., in Auditorium A, Seton Academic Centre. Dr. Upgren will be available to answer questions until 3 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN BULLETIN



Bill Smith, Atlantic Canada vice-president, Northern Telecom, recently presented a \$25,000 cheque to the Mount's Learning and Leading capital campaign. Accepting the gift are Mount president Dr. Naomi Hersom (left) and board of governors chair Dale Godsoe.

PROFILE: DR. RITA SCHNEIDER

"The Mount is unique in its approach to home economics. We are giving students a broader understanding of what home economics is all about, no matter what their particular concentration," says Dr. Rita Schneider.

A faculty member with the Mount's home economics department since January 1988, Dr. Schneider applauds her department's holistic approach to a discipline which she believes, by its very nature, consists of many inter-related components. "We look at family as the basic unit of society, as the integrating factor of all the concentrations, all of which relate to one another."

A holistic, or systems, approach to home economics is one with which Dr. Schneider became familiar through her doctoral program in home economics at Michigan State University. After receiving her PhD with a family studies concentration and teaching at Central Michigan University, she was invited by the University of Windsor to develop a systems approach to its home economics program. From there she came to the Mount.

Dr. Schneider is a member of the Religious Sisters of Mercy, an international order based in Michigan. Dressed in the veil and robes of her religious habit, she cuts a distinctive figure. "It is a decision of the Order and of individual members to continue wearing the habit. We believe in the sign value of the religious habit. It marks who we are very strongly."

She explains that her membership in the Order influenced her decision to specialize in family studies. "Comprehensive health care is the focus of the Order. We define health in very broad terms — physical, emotional and spiritual — and the health of the individual is rooted in the family."

Dr. Schneider teaches undergraduate courses in management decision-making and interpersonal communications, and graduate courses in family issues and family life education. The latter is broadcast on the Mount's Distance University Education



Dr. Rita Schneider

via Television (DUET). "Many of my students in the DUET course are teachers, particularly in high school. They want to know how to teach important issues — for example, role changes, women's issues, parenting issues, sexuality — in ways that are relevant to high school students. They want to know what tools they can use to teach these issues."

Teachers aren't her only audience in the DUET course. "Frequently strangers come up to me on the bus and tell me how much they enjoy the course," she comments with satisfaction. "It's so important to know we're reaching the community. DUET is a tremendous community service vehicle for this university."

While Dr. Schneider appreciates the benefits of broadcasting, her love of teaching really becomes evident when she talks about face-to-face encounters with her students. "I learn as much from my

students as I teach. I like to think of my teaching not as simply 'giving content', but as a relationship. I love it when my students ask questions, add examples, share of themselves. Personal interaction is where the real learning happens."

She believes in grounding theory firmly in reality, by using "practical, relevant examples" and insisting that her students have exposure to issues they deal with in the classroom. Her interpersonal communications course includes a component that takes students out into the community. "Last year we worked with seniors," says Dr. Schneider. "This year students are exploring various community service organizations to see why and how they operate. I felt they needed to have their horizons expanded, because most of them don't have an understanding of what's out there. Also, it's an eye-opener for students to realize how much greater an impact a group has than an individual."

Understanding and personal involvement in community service is essential, Dr. Schneider insists. "It's important to realize the role each of us plays in the community, and the satisfaction of giving ourselves freely in some type of community service. It's especially important for those in the field of home economics, a profession committed to being of service to others."

While teaching makes up the majority of Dr. Schneider's time at the Mount, she is also busy with a research project funded by an internal Mount grant. She and one of her graduate students are investigating the benefits and drawbacks of part-time jobs to high school students. "We're looking at why they work, where they work, how many hours they work, and the connections between the work they do, their education and what they hope to do in the future."

She explains that the research originated out of a paradox that concerns teachers and administrators. "On the one hand, parents and adults in general have always believed that a part-time job is a positive thing for high school students, that it exposes them to the real world and teaches them the value of money. On the other hand, there is a grave concern now among teachers and administrators that students who work aren't able to handle the demands of basic homework. It's a particularly serious concern in this day and age when jobs are demanding more and more education."

The research will be concluded and findings presented this spring. "We're hoping that we can help concerned parents and the education system to take hold of the situation and do something positive with it."

The Mathematics Placement Test

The mathematics and computer studies department is offering Mathematics Placement Tests on the following dates:

Friday, March 23
Wednesday, April 25
Wednesday, May 9
Monday, May 14

Tests take place at 3 p.m., in Evaristus Room 108. No pre-registration fee is required, and results are given at the time of writing. Maximum time for writing is two hours. No calculators are permitted. Please bring a pencil. Sample questions are displayed on the bulletin board, Evaristus Room 158.

The Mathematics Placement Test is required for entrance into 100-level courses and mathematics 203, except for students with the proper university prerequisites. Students must write the placement test before registering for their mathematics courses, but not necessarily in the same semester. For more details consult the 1989-90 calendar, page 105.

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operate on the assumption of 'excellence', which is defined by concepts of research — what it should be about and where it should be published." She notes that many publications don't consider research on women's issues as scientific, and publications which focus on women's issues are often not given credibility by academic promotion and tenure committees.

"The standards of assessment at universities are subjective, and derive from a male perspective of what constitutes appropriate academic work," she says.

Still, she notes, there are hopeful signs. "When I first started my academic career 15 years ago child care was not only not available; it wasn't even an issue. Today it is. Also, there's been an explosion of women's studies programs and feminist analysis. Now, there is a tremendous amount of textbook material on women's lives and women's experiences — and the women who have done this research have established their credentials as scholars.

"Also, look at the demographics for the academic profession. From the mid-90s on, there will be openings in universities for more women with the appropriate qualifications."

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address the question of the identity, place and role of the church-related college in Canadian post-secondary education.

Topics to be addressed include New Expectations of Catholic Education: The Role of Catholic Colleges; The Mission of the Protestant College; The United Church and Post-Secondary Education; The Church and the University: Church Colleges in the Public System; and The Hierarchy and Roman Catholic Colleges. Panel discussions will examine models of church in post-secondary education and denominational identity of church-related colleges, while a series of workshops will address the topics

Commenting on the Mount, she notes, "Our women's studies program is strong and legitimate. But even more positive is the whole range of other departments which are sensitive to women's issues and are including them in their curriculum."

Dr. Gordon is forthcoming about ways to improve the academic climate for female students and faculty.

"My biggest wish is for the acceptance of flexibility in a career, in terms of both how we assess people's prior activities and the amount of time we see as being put into professional development."

She calls for "an expansion of what constitutes 'excellence'. The sociology of knowledge looks at how certain trends include or exclude certain research topics. I would like us to recognize the validity of alternative paths and forms of knowledge.

"We must take an objective look at the structural impediments to education," says Dr. Gordon, offering as examples the provision of more part-time undergraduate and graduate programs, curriculum that better reflects research on women, and adopting policies that make universities non-sexist.

"It's time we looked at ways in which universities, as institutions, are welcoming or inhospitable to women. We have to put our house in order."

of research in a church-related college, spiritual formation, and global education through a church-related college.

Speakers include Dr. Rosalie Bertell, a Catholic nun, scientist, president of the International Institute of Concern for Public Health in Toronto, and Mount honorary degree recipient (1985).

Registration fee is \$100, including meals and accommodation at St. Jerome's and Conrad Grebel Colleges. For more information call conference organizers Robert Donelson or Dr. Gerry Stortz, University of St. Jerome's College, (519) 884-8110, ext. 81 or 33; or Dr. Rod Sawatsky, Conrad Grebel College, (519) 885-0220.

Co-op education offers experience and adventure

Three students in the Mount's Tourism and Hospitality Management degree program are spending their co-operative education work terms with the Canadian Pavilion at Walt Disney's Epcot Centre in Florida. Last year a work term took a public relations student to England. And another student has been transported back in time, through work terms focusing on historic costume.

As many Mount students have discovered, co-op education can be an adventure as well as a learning opportunity. When Tourism and Hospitality Management degree students Kerry Ann Atwater, Shelly Hipson and Nicole Langille were accepted by Epcot Centre for work terms, they were "pretty excited," says department co-operative education co-ordinator Ernie Whynott. "This is a first for Mount students. It's a unique opportunity for them to experience the epitome of what a tourism and hospitality establishment should be."

Angela Murray, a fourth year public relations student, describes her work term with the Cranfield School of Management in Cranfield, England, as "quite a cultural experience. I discovered there are major differences in how public relations is practiced in England and Canada. It made me appreciate, even more, how we do things here." Another placement, with Newfoundland Telephone in St. John's, offered Murray an opportunity to help set up a telephone newswire linking the company's more than 1,000 employees province-wide. "It was a wonderful experience," she says.

Fourth year clothing and textiles student Anne Pedde comments on her work term with Parks Canada in Fortress Louisbourg, "It was fabulous! It was the first time I ever worked with historic costume. It introduced me to a field which I'd never considered." Subsequent work terms designing 18th century costumes for the Friends of the Citadel in Halifax have established Pedde firmly on the road to a career in historic costume and textile conservation.

Pedde's experience is typical of many students for whom co-op has opened new possibilities, says Prof. Deborah Norris, home economics faculty co-op co-ordinator. "We've had a lot of students doing

work which counteracts the conventional image of what home economics is." Placements for home economics students range from pattern drafting with garment and fashion design companies, to family budget counselling with government departments, to working as relief dietitians in hospitals.

Similarly, Prof. Don Craig, tourism and hospitality management department chair, comments, "We try to see that each student's work terms are as varied as possible. We like them to get a broad-based experience."

Just as the nature of placements vary, so do their locations, taking students to every Canadian province, the United States, and Europe. Marg Muise, co-operative education co-ordinator for public relations and business administration, notes that all work terms, however, must offer "a real link to what students are studying." She says that exposing students to different work environments and responsibilities helps them to develop into well-rounded professionals.

Work placements can also lead directly to job offers, she adds, naming several senior students who have this year been offered permanent positions by their work term employers. "It really isn't unusual, because organizations get to know the students and their capabilities through work terms."

Co-op placements, no matter how glamorous-sounding, are hard work. Ernie Whynott is quick to point out that even working for Epcot Centre is no 'micky-mouse' affair. "Our students are working in line positions in the cafeteria, where they'll put in long hours. They'll also attend regular business seminars."

For Anne Pedde, the experience gained through co-op is well worth the effort. "Co-op helps to build your professional confidence. It opens your eyes to what it's like to be in the work force."

"Co-op is also a real advantage in getting a job after graduation," Pedde says. "The work terms look good on your resume. I think it's really unfortunate that more students don't take advantage of co-operative education. Those who do are so much further ahead when they finish their degrees."

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In a statement issued close on the heels of the budget announcement, the AUCC denounced the federal cuts as attacking the foundation of Canada's university system. "Seventy percent of all program spending reductions over the next five years...are borne by transfers for post-secondary education and health...Transfers for post-secondary education alone will be cut by \$3 billion over that period."

AUCC president Dr. Claude Lajeunesse noted, "In 1991, the very year in which inflation will jump as a result of the new Goods and Services Tax, the freeze in per capita transfers will compound the reduction in federal support for post-secondary education.

"If the federal government wants to play a leading role in developing Canada's human resources, it cannot go on slashing its financial commitments in support of post-secondary education, as it has already done three times in the past seven years."

AAU president Dr. William Eliot expressed similar sentiments. "While we understand the need

to combat the national debt, we feel it is counter-productive to do so by cutting back in the area of higher education. The Prime Minister has commented frequently on the need for a system of education that makes us the equal of our competitors. This funding freeze has the potential to hamper seriously our ability to continue to deliver that level of education."

Dr. Eliot warned that student fees should not be expected to replace lost revenues without assurance of adequate available student aid. He noted his concern that the federal government understand how increased tuition rates will impact upon university accessibility, particularly to disadvantaged persons.

The AAU also voiced its concern to the Minister of Employment and Immigration about proposed reductions in post-secondary awards through the Challenge Program for 1990. The Association argued that the unilateral cuts are particularly unfair to students in Atlantic Canada, who have limited summer employment opportunities.

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Dr. Josette Déléas-Matthews, Francois-Xavier Eygun, Dr. Armand Morel and Rannveig Yeatman, modern languages department, recently attended the Southeast Conference on Foreign Languages and Literatures 1990 at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida.

The following Mount faculty presented papers: Dr. Déléas-Matthews, "A Question of Silence de Marleen Gorris ou le paradoxe d'une camera féministe"; Prof. Eygun, "Le manichéisme dans Les Fleurs du mal de Baudelaire et Les Diaboliques de barbey d'Aureville"; and Rannveig Yeatman, "Nature hostile, nature complice dans Pluie et vent sur Téliumée Miracle de Simone Schwarz-Bart".

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Lucian Bianchini, Mount librarian, is co-host of Italian Panorama, broadcast every Sunday at 8:30 p.m. on Community Cable, Channel 10. The program features news from the Italian community in metro, Italian-speaking guests from other regions of Canada, and newsclips from the national Italian television network.

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