

FACULTY CIRCUIT

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of ACIFA • January 2006



Bare Shelf!

What will this federal election mean for Canada's post-secondary education system?

A federal election has been called for January 23, 2006. Read, in this issue of *Faculty Circuit*, what the main-stream and national parties are promising for post-secondary education.

New Home and Auto Insurance Provider

ACIFA has a new partner in home and auto insurance provision. After considering several insurance firms through a market review process, the ACIFA executive selected *Johnson Inc.* as the preferred home and auto insurance provider for ACIFA's individual members.

David Milner, ACIFA President, observes, "Johnson came in with the best range of services and a professional capacity that I believe will serve our members well. I feel confident about our new partnership."

ACIFA members currently registered with Morgex Insurance,

ACIFA's former provider, should note that Johnson Inc. has recently purchased Morgex. Therefore, please contact Johnson Inc. when you renew your policy.

ACIFA members can expect to receive more information about Johnson Inc.'s services in your mailboxes in the coming weeks.

Election Beat on Post-Secondary Education

The Federal Election campaign is now in its second and final leg. Political observers are largely in agreement that the remainder of the campaign will turn negative, personal, and ugly. At the time of printing, the latest round up of polls show a statistical dead

heat of support for the Liberals and Conservatives – this is true even in vote-rich, and key battleground, Ontario. The stakes are high, particularly so as a change of government can no longer be argued as improbable.

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So what are the parties saying about post-secondary education? What initiatives on post-secondary education can we expect from the NDP if it, as it desires, holds the elusive balance of power in the next Parliament?

While not among the top campaign priorities, post-secondary education has not been lost in this federal election. The issue, however, is gaining greater prominence as the campaign continues to unfold.

The Conservative Party and the Liberal Party have released a detailed post-secondary education platform. The New Democratic Party has not ignored the issue, but Canadians continue to wait for their developed post-secondary education policies. As a consequence, speeches, news releases, public statements, and political platforms, from each of the mainstream and national parties have been consulted in developing this summary of the parties' commitments on post-secondary education issues. Additionally, the Liberal government's Economic and Fiscal Update, delivered in November 2005, has been referenced.

Stephen Harper's Conservative Party has identified trades and apprenticeships as a key plank in its post-secondary education platform. The Conservative Party is proposing to create a trades/apprenticeship incentive grant of \$1,000 for all new

apprentices. The grant is designed to help with the costs of tools and equipment. The Liberal Party, headed by Prime Minister Paul Martin, agrees that trades and apprenticeships play an important role in the economy. The Liberal Party's Workplace Strategy is a \$3.5 billion plan, over five-years, that, in addition to supporting trades and apprenticeship training, seeks to improve literacy, and enhance the workforce participation of underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.

All three of the mainstream and national parties – the Conservatives, the Liberals, and the New Democratic Party – share a concern about the user costs associated with post-secondary education studies. The Liberal Party proposes

to commit \$550 million over five years to extend Canada Access Grants to 55,000 students. The Party also promises \$2.2 billion over five years to improve the Students' Finance Program.

The Liberal Party plans to examine the program before reforms are implemented; it is unclear how the money will be spent and what reforms will take place. The Liberals also propose a plan to

share the costs of tuition, a grant worth up to \$3,000, in the first and final year of an undergraduate student's degree. The plan carries an estimated cost of \$600 million per year.

The Conservative Party also seeks to invest in the Canada Student Loan Program to generate reforms. The Conservatives will commit \$20 million per year to lower expected parental contribution rates for middle-income families. The Party will also commit \$75 million per year to implement a tax deduction for textbooks. Finally, the Conservative Party proposes to exempt the first \$10,000 of student scholarships or bursary income from taxation, which carries an estimated cost of \$5

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million per year.

The Liberal Economic and Fiscal update, announced late last year, also includes new money for university research (approximately \$2 billion over five years) and new money to alleviate the indirect

costs of research (approximately \$500 million by 2007-08). Finally, the Update contained a \$1 billion proposal for creating more innovation in the classroom and in distance learning.

Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party, opened his election campaign at the University of Toronto and, in so doing, made post-secondary education a prominent issue in his speech. In it, Layton committed to restoring the \$4 billion dollars he claims was cut from post-

secondary education in the 1990s by the Liberal government of the day. He also committed to announcing a more detailed post-secondary education platform later in the campaign (the details of which remain unavailable at the time of publication).

With some party platforms still incomplete on the post-secondary education file, it seems likely that Canadians may be wooed yet on new post-secondary commitments before the election campaign is complete. In fact, statements

by some of the parties make the likelihood of more post-secondary education policy positions a strong possibility. We should all stay tuned and watch for these developments as they happen.

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On January 23, be sure to vote.

Voter Tool Kit – Election 2006

When is Election Day?

A federal election has been called for January 23, 2006.

When are the polling stations open on Election Day?

In Alberta, the hours of voting will be open from 7:30am to 7:30pm.

What if I cannot vote on Election Day?

Consult your voter card, sent to you by Elections Canada, which will detail the time and

location for advanced polling opportunities in your electoral riding. You can also obtain a special ballot if you are unable to vote on advanced polling dates and Election Day.

Contact Elections Canada to obtain a special ballot: 1-800-463-6868 or visit www.elections.ca and follow the appropriate links.

You must register for a special ballot by 6pm on January 17,

2006. Elections Canada must receive your special ballot by 7:30pm on January 23, 2006. Please note that special ballots are blank, so you must know and correctly spell the name of the candidate for whom you are voting.

Mail Special Ballots to:
Elections Canada
PO Box 9830
Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 5W7
Or fax, 1-800-363-4796

Keep Up To Date on the Federal Election

Elections Canada – www.elections.ca

Canada Votes 2006 – www.cbc.ca/canadavotes

Decision 2006 – www.globeandmail.com/decision2006

Decision Canada – www.canada.com/national/features/decisioncanada/index.html

Conservative Party of Canada – www.conservative.ca

Liberal Party of Canada – www.liberal.ca

New Democratic Party of Canada – www.ndp.ca



Call for Submissions

Call for Submissions



Alberta Colleges & Institutes Faculties Association 2006 Spring Conference

Your Session proposal must address one of the following strands:

- Insights into ACIFA
- Inspirations in Teaching
- Innovation in Technology
- Imagining the Future

Submission deadline is Monday February 6, 2006

Session presenters will be provided with one night of accommodation at Mountain Park Lodge in Jasper, Alberta.

Please complete a session proposal form, available from your local faculty association or at www.acifa.ca.

Return to: Lynn Devlin, Executive Officer, ACIFA,
#412, 10357 - 109 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 1N3
E-mail devlinl@acifa.ca

Teaching & Learning Action Research Awards

ACIFA, through the Alberta Post-Secondary Education Trust Fund, awards up to three \$500 grants annually for action research projects related to improving teaching and learning conducted by our members. The award is intended to assist with materials and other costs absorbed with the research project.

These awards are open to all members of ACIFA. All applicants must include appropriate institutional consent to conduct the research.

Award winners are notified by June 1, 2006.

For more information on the selection process and criteria, recipient obligations, and guidelines, please consult the ACIFA web page, www.acifa.ca, or visit your local faculty association.

Post-Secondary Education At the Crossroads

Public Interest Alberta, a broad-based advocacy organization, of which ACIFA is a member, is hosting a conference on Post-Secondary Education, February 24 – 26 in Edmonton. The keynote speaker will present at 7:30 pm in Calgary on February 23 and in Edmonton on February 24. This conference will bring together leading post-secondary education advocates and interested members of the public, provincial and local unions, members of the media, academics, and experts.

The purpose of the conference is to provide a forum where people can strategize on making post-secondary education a system that is affordable, accessible, and top quality. The conference will be action-oriented so that all participants can have a key role in keeping Alberta's post-secondary education system moving forward.

The registration fee for the conference is \$125 or \$75 for students and under-employed persons. Tickets for the keynote presentation in Calgary will be available at the door for \$10. Register by mailing in the advance registration form or through Public Interest Alberta's secure online registration process at www.pialberta.org.

Public Interest Alberta is holding a block of rooms at the Crowne Plaza (10111 Bellamy Hill) at a conference rate of \$89.00 per night until January 26, 2006. Please call the Crowne Plaza at (780) 428-6611 or 1-800-661-8801 to book your room. Please mention the group name to ensure you receive the appropriate rate.

A full conference itinerary will be available shortly. Consult the Public Interest Alberta website, www.pialberta.org, to get complete details on the ongoing post-secondary education advocacy campaign. Contact Public Interest Alberta at (780) 428-0471 for further information.

February 24 – 26, 2006 Crowne Plaza, Edmonton

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS ADVANCE REGISTRATION

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Code: _____

Ph: _____

email: _____

***Registration fee:**

- \$125.00 - regular
 \$75.00 - student/under-employed

*The registration fee includes the cost of all hand-out materials and two lunches.

Please reserve space for:

_____ participant(s) @ \$75.00 = _____

_____ participant(s) @ \$125.00 = _____

We will sponsor:

_____ student(s)/under-employed
person(s) @ \$75.00 = _____

Total fee: _____

Please make cheque payable to:

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Public Interest Alberta

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Public Interest Alberta Presents
**Post-Secondary Education
At the Crossroads**
choosing the path to high quality, affordable and accessible post-secondary education



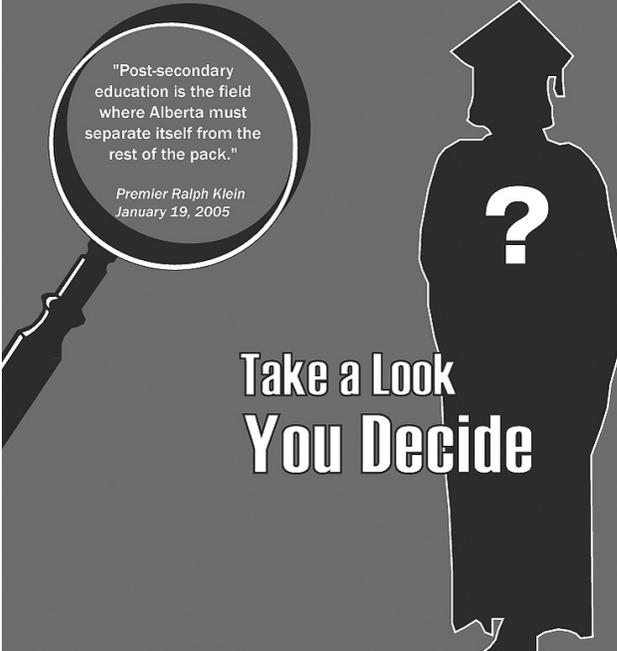
February 24 - 26, 2006
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Edmonton

Thanks to our media sponsors



Post-Secondary Education Reality Check

"Post-secondary education is the field where Alberta must separate itself from the rest of the pack."
Premier Ralph Klein
January 19, 2005



Take a Look You Decide

Editorial Content

The views expressed in Faculty Circuit are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect ACIFA's policies and positions.

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