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Festive fun at annual Carol Sing

CFS National Day of Action kicks off



Minister Joan Burke and Premier Kathy Dunderdale look on as Jessica McCormick, N.L. chairperson for the CFS, speaks during the National Day of Action.

By Emilie Bourque Whittle

Feb. 1, 2012, marked the National Day of Action for post-secondary students, organized by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). Across Canada, students are delivering a message to the government by calling for more funding and lower tuition.

The event kicked off at The Landing in the University Centre on the St. John's campus. Speakers included Premier Kathy Dunderdale; Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Joan Burke; Jessica McCormick, N.L. Chairperson for the CFS; and Michael Walsh, MUNSU executive director of external affairs.

Ms. McCormick began by explaining the sentiments behind the national day of action and reminding those gathered that student action in the past has led to tuition fee reduction, amongst other victories.

"When students come together and unite, we create positive change," she told the crowd of approximately 100 people.

The idea behind the day of action, according to Ms. McCormick, is to send a clear message that post-secondary education is an economic imperative. Part of the goal locally, says Ms. McCormick, is to hold the provincial government accountable to the promises it made to students in the provincial election.

Premier Dunderdale spoke about her own university experience at Memorial. "I wouldn't have been able to come to university without the support of student loans," she said.

Ms. Dunderdale spoke of the vast opportunities young people in our province have today, but agreed the right tools are needed, including access to education.

"I agree with Jessica's statement," she said, "Education is a right, not a privilege."

Minister Burke echoed the premier's sentiments and reminded the crowd that tuition in N.L. is among the lowest in the country and that we have the best student aid program in Canada, being the only province so far to implement zero per cent interest on provincial student loans.

Minister Burke said accessible education is only a matter of priority.

Michael Walsh wrapped things up by discussing the skyrocketing student debt of more than \$15 billion in Canada. He said the crisis is worsening and that today is all about sending a message to the federal government that it's time for change.

At the event, students were able send faxes and even valentines to federal Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Diane Finley.

The valentines read on one side, "I choo-choo-choose you...to reduce student debt," and on the other "To: Hon. Diane Finley, Reduce Fees, Drop Debt, Increase Federal Funding. From: _____".

The faxes called for the government to address the student debt crisis by investing more upfront, needs-based grants and implementing a federal Post-Secondary Education Act in co-operation with the provinces.

February 1, 2012



Calendar of Events

<< January, 2013 >>

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4 5 W
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 W
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 W
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 W
27	28	29	30	31		W

[\[Submit your event\]](#)

Today's Events

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