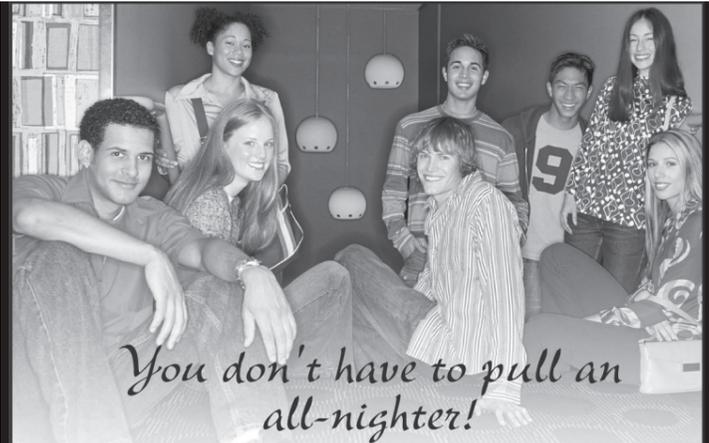


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## U of A on the Rhodes again

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI  
News Staff

Being at home on stage as well as in the lab, Travis Murdoch, the latest Rhodes Scholar to come out of the University of Alberta, doesn't fit the stereotype associated with recipients of one of Canada's most prestigious academic awards.

"I was very involved in music during my undergrad, not as much now," says Murdoch, who was the producer and bassist for local hard-core/metal band Snic until December 2006. "Since then, I've been working with a guy named Mike Chase who just released a solo project. So I helped produce his CD and I played bass on that album."

It wasn't only his music pursuits that made Murdoch the choice for the 24th Rhodes Scholar in U of A history, and the third in four years. The 22-year-old third-year medical student—who's putting his final year of studies on hold to go to Oxford—has already logged a lot of lab time. Murdoch got his start at 16, as a participant of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research's summer mentorship program, and later worked with the group that developed the Edmonton Protocol diabetes treatment while on his way to receiving a degree in kinesiology.

However, despite his lengthy and impressive resumé, Murdoch admits that he was a little shocked when was informed he had been awarded a Rhodes Scholarship.

"I didn't expect it and I don't think that anyone that goes to the interviews expects it because the candidates are just so ephemeral, they're really impressive," says Murdoch.

When he begins his studies in



KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

**HOPEFULLY HE LIKES TEA** Rhodes Scholar Travis Murdoch's Oxford bound.

October, Murdoch will be perusing a Masters of Science in Integrated Immunology, a program that takes basic science and applies it to the clinical environment. Given his hope of becoming a clinician-scientist so he can get involved clinical practice after of his studies are completed, Murdoch believes his time in England will be a "very formative experience."

"Going to another centre is a very useful experience in and of itself because it gives you a different sense of learning, a different perspective on learning and on the problems that you're facing in your studies," says Murdoch. "Going to

Oxford in particular, given the rich academic environment there, will be a useful experience because there are so many cultural and academic experiences."

And while he doesn't expect his own musical background to follow him across the pond, Murdoch doesn't think it will have an influence on how his fellow scholars see him.

"Supposedly Oxford has quite a good music scene. Radiohead's from Oxford," laughs Murdoch. "But I think that playing in the band is kind of my secret, but it's not that big of a secret. Hopefully that doesn't scare people, [Snic] is pretty good music."

## Conference focuses on ways to reintegrate former child soldiers

BILL LUTHI  
News Writer

There are an estimated 300 000 child soldiers worldwide, according to a 2001 report from the United Nations' Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. This issue was one of the many topics discussed by an international group looking at rebuilding societies suffering from conflict.

The workshop on Demilitarization, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), which took place from 2-3 March at the Telus Centre, included presentations by the authors from different regions around the world, including Europe, Africa, Canada and the United States. Their research will be compiled into a book edited by Dr Andy Knight, a University of Alberta political science professor, and Dr Marshall Conley, a consultant in the field of post-conflict peace-building.

Conley indicated there are a number of DDR programs in existence, which are sponsored by various organizations, including the United Nations, the African Union and, in some cases, the countries themselves after a conflict.

"You need to have a way of disarming, demobilizing the combatants—the irregular soldiers if you will, the guerrillas—and the reintegration of these fighters back into civil society," Conley said.

Knight explained that the primary recommendation that came out of last weekend's workshop was the need to spend time talking about improving DDR processes, because it may save countries from falling back into conflict.

**"The whole idea of education for peace is very essential to what we are trying to do."**

**DR ANDY KNIGHT,  
U OF A POLI SCI PROF**

"At the end of every conflict, there is what is called a 'post-conflict phase,' and some countries can turn on a dime back to conflict, so the DDR program is suppose to help countries to move towards sustainable peace," Knight said.

According to Knight, a second recommendation that resulted from this weekend's workshop was the need to spend more time on the "R" in DDR. He explained that there are a lot of "Rs" such as rehabilitation, reintegration, reinsertion and reconciliation.

"How do you reconcile a community that's actually been at loggerheads, and [where] there is a civil war going on or a civil war that went on? How do you reconcile

those opposing factions? How do you rehabilitate kids who not only fought in the war but were also on drugs?" Knight asked.

Conley said that the primary audience of the book on DDR practices will be senior undergraduate and graduate students, but that it was written with others in mind.

"[T]he secondary audience will be those who are involved in the DDR process and that would be international organizations, international civil servants, foreign affairs people and various governments, not just our own, [but] those working in [non-government organizations] in post-conflict societies," Conley said. "Those people will think about the book and see elements that will be a practical benefit to them in the field."

Knight said the book would be the culmination of three years of research. He concluded by saying he wanted to move from research to action by implementing some of the things that have been learned.

"This might involve setting up a foundation to address the issue of war—affected children, finding ways to bring war—affected children from their countries to Canada to be re-educated," Knight said. "The whole idea of education for peace is very essential to what we are trying to do."