

# THE GATEWAY

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## Quad camp-out addresses student housing issues



RYAN HEISE  
Deputy News Editor

As affordable accommodations continue to be a prominent issue for many students at the University of Alberta, the Students' Union set out to raise awareness of the problem and advocate to both the municipal and provincial governments by holding Student Housing Week from 24–28 September.

The demonstration was comprised of town hall meetings where students were able to speak about their concerns regarding the current Edmonton housing market, a student housing quiz show, and was capped off with around 150 students camping out in tents in Quad last Thursday night.

The camp-out was followed by a pancake breakfast on Friday morning that was attended by Minister of Advanced Education and Technology Doug Horner and Alberta NDP Education critic Dave Eggen. The event also raised \$625 for the United Way.

SU President Michael Janz explained that affordable housing, while always an issue for postsecondary students, has sprung up as a particularly prominent one this year.

MIKE OTTO

**HERE THERE BE HOMELESSNESS** 150 students braved near-freezing temperatures to send a message to the government about the need for affordable housing.

PLEASE SEE **HOUSING** ♦ PAGE 2

## YWCA Edmonton urges women to pursue a life in the political sphere

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA  
Senior News Editor

It's been almost 90 years since Canadian women first got the right to vote, but according to University of Alberta professor and chair of the department of Political Science Linda Trimble, there's still a long way to go before equitable democratic representation is achieved.

Trimble discussed the female candidates running in the 15 October municipal election at the third YWCA All Women Candidates Breakfast held on 27 September in Lister residence.

"One of the challenges that was presented to us today was that not a lot of women are running for politics," explained Ward 2 incumbent Kim Krushell.

Trimble said one of the problems is that women often need a lot of encouragement before they will even consider pursuing a post in public office.

"There are all sort of myths and assumptions that lead women to say 'no' to political life, and some of them are absolutely true at the provincial and federal level, but not true at the municipal level," Trimble said, adding that a

common assumption by women is that they don't have the qualifications needed to run—even when they do.

"They see politics as a man's job. They don't see women like themselves in political life. And so they make the assumption that you have to be somehow [an] extraordinary, exceptional superwoman to do it. Which is absolutely not true," Trimble explained.

Janet Buckmaster, coordinator of the One Woman One Vote program, noted that municipal politics often is a more viable option for female politicians, as they aren't removed from their home communities, whereas female MPs from Alberta have to travel to Ottawa regularly.

"So they are physically removed from their own province, from the constituents as well as their families, for great periods of time. And for many women, that's not workable," Buckmaster said.

She also noted that, at the municipal level, there are no parties acting as "gatekeepers," and therefore, women don't have to worry about first making it through the ranks before they can be considered a possible candidate for nomination.

However, Ward 4 councillor candidate Mia Belcourt noted that equitable representation isn't just limited to issues concerning gender. She explained that people in the downtown area asked her to run because of her community involvement as the executive director of the Edmonton Multicultural Society. Belcourt criticized Edmonton's political sphere for not adequately reflecting the multicultural reality of the city.

"I am hoping to project a positive image of diversity," Belcourt explained.

Krushell also said that during her time in municipal office, she found gender to be a "non-issue."

"I think that it doesn't matter if you're male or female as long as you do your homework," Krushell said, admitting that she doesn't know what it would be like at the provincial and federal levels.

"The party politics I do think [add] a different factor into the equation," Krushell said. "But in terms of civic politics, it's about knowing [...] that you've got the right information, and I think that has more sway. I've had no problem working with my male colleagues or female colleagues."

Trimble further stressed the importance mentorship plays in motivating



STUTREBELCO

**SCRUTINIZING THE STATS** U of A poli sci chair discusses women in politics.

women to get involved in political life. "Women have to be asked, and they have to be told, 'this is why you're great; this is why you should do it; I'm going to help you,' because otherwise, they don't believe it."

Krushell also noted that mentorship is important not only in recruiting female politicians, but also in engaging youth.

"I've been just really focused on getting young people involved in politics, maybe not right away because you want some life experience, but to certainly consider it in their future and actually put it in their minds," Krushell said.

YWCA Edmonton communications manager Amber Niemeier explained that the One Woman One Vote pro-

gram began in 2001, and that it's since shown great success. She said YWCA chapters across the country have now begun to implement similar programs.

"[Our] goal is to actually get more women involved in all levels of politics," Niemeier said, adding that municipal politics also tend to have higher proportions of female representation than those seen at provincial and federal levels. Between 2004 and 2007, five of the twelve city councillor position were held by females.

"We make up half the population so we would like to see half of the positions in politics held by qualified women," Niemeier said. "And that's the word—qualified women. This is not an affirmative action."

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### Holler at the scholars ...

The Alumni Awards offered recognition to some of the most distinguished alumni at the U of A recently.

NEWS FEATURE, PAGES 4–5



### ... and the Farrelly bros

The Farrelly Brothers are back with *The Heartbreak Kid*. This time, there's something about Ben Stiller, not Mary.

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