

Shortage of scientists worrisome for LTS

KSENIA PRINTS
CUP Central Bureau Chief

WINNIPEG (CUP)—Bonnie Schmidt, President of Let's Talk Science (LTS), a national science literacy program, thinks that the federal government isn't doing enough to promote young people's involvement in the sciences.

"Our economy is moving into a knowledge-based economy that is going to require more people who are comfortable with science and engineering ... and [the government is] going to be very hard-pressed to attract that workforce."

According to the latest Labour Force Survey, employment in the professional, scientific, and technical services was the third-fastest growing in the country, surpassed only by educational services and public administration.

LTS is one of several organizations across Canada hoping to increase the number of students and skilled professionals in the sciences and mathematics. It offers programs and resources for children and adults.

The LTS partnership program has volunteer university students visit schools to share their experience in the field and engage the students with science- and math-related activities. The program currently exists on 21 campuses, with over 14 000 volunteers.

"If we want to shift the culture, the drive for science and technology must permeate all walks of life," Schmidt said.

She believes the importance of science is becoming clear at the upper

echelons of Canadian politics. Grants for outreach programs have increased along with concerns about preparing a workforce for the future.

"There's been a growing interest over the last 10 years within the scientist community to engage the public in scientific pursuit," Schmidt said.

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ROBERT CAMPBELL
MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY

But some educators believe the perceived difficulty of the programs is also a drawback on recruitment efforts.

"I think we discourage people from sciences by requirements that might not be that important at an early stage," said Robert Campbell, President of Mount Allison University in New Brunswick.

Schmidt agreed, noting that getting students in the door is the first step.

"Science and technology often gets grouped into this great big area," she said, noting that while a growing number of jobs require a scientific background, students still believe being a scientist is the only option.

"Kids just don't know where the jobs are."

Ontario students encounter lengthy waits at campus polls

Last-minute regulation changes caused confusion during 10 October election

JENNIFER PAGLIARO
The Charlatan

OTTAWA (CUP)—Long lines and impromptu regulations created confusion at on-campus polling stations at Carleton University during Ontario's provincial elections last week.

Due to voting regulations, only students living in residence were allowed to vote on campus at polling stations.

Originally, students had to show proof of identification and proof of residence to vote at the on-campus polls. However, long lines, as well as uncertainty about what constituted proof of residence, eventually led poll officials to allow a verbal confirmation of a student's residence to fulfill half of the voting requirements.

"We've gotten clearance from our supervisor to accept student cards as photo identification and verbal confirmation as proof of residence," said poll official Nardia Tonge.

Earlier in the day, students had been asked to provide mail with their residence address or documents from the department of housing as proof of residence.

"A lot of people have letters from housing services, but the housing office closes at 4:30pm," said poll official Jason Hammer, explaining the change. Polls remained open until 9pm.

"Most students have been very up

front about it, asking if they're allowed to vote here. If they're suspected of being untruthful, they're asked to take an oath," Tonge said.

Lines of students waiting to vote stretched out the doors of the building and created the need for a second polling station to be set up.

Many off-campus students expressed their dissatisfaction with the poll restrictions.

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NARDIA TONGE
CARLETON POLL CLERK

Katie Lloyd, a second-year psychology student, left her place in line when she realized off-campus students were not allowed to vote at the University.

"I was not informed of this [residence-only restriction]. I find it very inconvenient," she said.

Chris Schruder, a second-year biomedical engineering student, said he

felt the same way.

"I live an hour and a half away. It would be more convenient if we could vote [on-campus]."

Tonge and Hammer opened their polling station at 9am with 1000 blank ballots.

"That's three times the number of a normal polling station," Hammer said.

Shelley Melanson, President of the Carleton University Students' Association, said she wasn't sure how on-campus voting restrictions would affect turnout.

"It's definitely hampered our ability to pull up the vote on campus," she said.

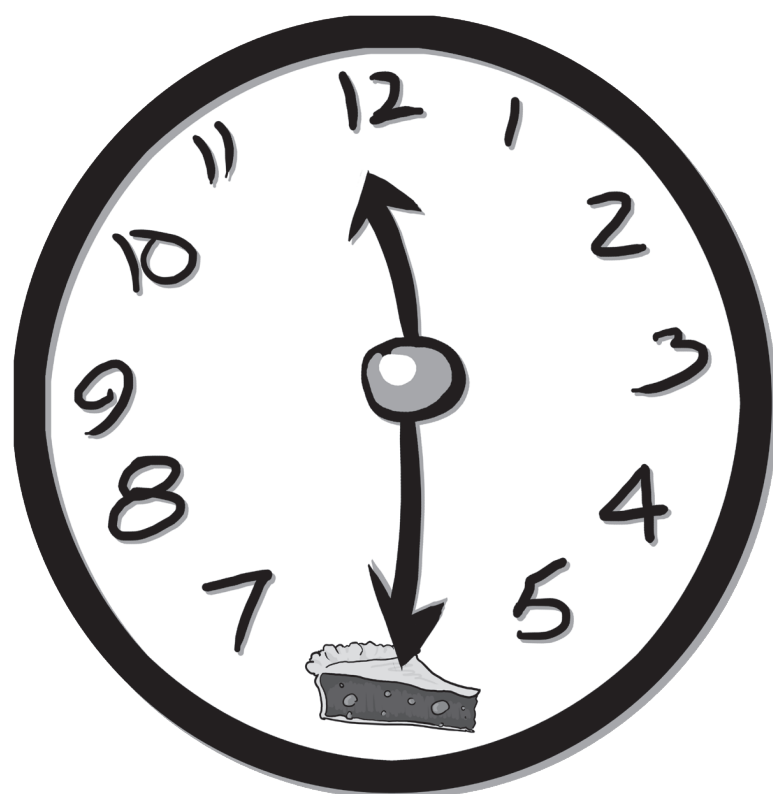
Melanson said she found the timing of the election unfortunate.

"We only had a month to get the voting campaign out, and the [strike at Carleton involving the 700 members of Local 2424 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)] impeded the focus on the election," she said.

Elections expert Jonathon Malloy, associate chair of Carleton's department of political science, said student voter apathy is a general issue across Canada. He added that one of the ways to fight political apathy among university-aged voters is by making voting on campus an easy process.

"Making voting more accessible on campus is useful," Malloy said. "That might help."

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