

FEATURED STUDENT GROUP FOR JANUARY

FRONTIER COLLEGE
STUDENTS' for
LITERACY



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Year Established: 10/09/1996
Membership: 80

Purpose of the Group:

Frontier College Students for Literacy implements our motto, "Literacy. Learning for Life." in our Reading Circles. Our tutors assist children that struggle in school, either because English is their second language or because of learning disabilities to improve their skills in and love for literacy.

Our group runs five Reading Circles in three different locations throughout the city. At each program, we provide free, one-to-one tutoring for 10-20 children, who struggle in school. Some of the many things tutors and learners do at each program include, reading aloud, playing literacy games and completing fun, literary activities. In the New Year, Edmonton's first Homework Club will offer free homework assistance to Junior High School students living in a less affluent demographic.

**FOR INFORMATION ON THE
OVER 350 STUDENT GROUPS
ON CAMPUS CHECK OUT:**

WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/STUDENTGROUPS



MIKE OTTO

PLACING AN EX ON THE BALLOT Matt Trodden (left) and Beverly Eastham speak at the Lister forum on Monday night.

VPX shoots for governmental advocacy

THE ROLE OF THE VP (EXTERNAL) IS to communicate and establish relationships with external governing bodies in order to further student issues.

Compiled by Caroline Lee

1 What main issue will you set as your first priority if you were to be elected into this position, and why?

Beverly Eastham: My first priority is getting students involved in what's going on in the province and starting to have a provincial dialogue on postsecondary issues. If the Province knows that students have concerns and students are being involved in actively talking about their concerns, we'll get further on our issues.

Matt Trodden: The first thing that obviously has to be addressed is tuition. It seems to be the biggest concern on everyone's mind all the time. However, it needs to be addressed in a kind of different way. Obviously, the Board of Governors always knows that we don't want tuition to go up, so us saying over and over again to them, "tuition can't go up" isn't quite working. What we need to see happen is for us to show them a benefit or basically showing them advocating to the provincial government that we need more funding. Because they are trying to run a successful university, obviously, and with the decrease in funding coming from the provincial government and offset in maintenance costs that have come, we need to basically find the money from somewhere. The money always seems to come from undergrads. So we need to team up with them and move together in this direction of trying to find a successful way to lobby the provincial government into giving us more money.

2 How will you ensure that the student voice is heard at the provincial and national level?

Beverly Eastham: Presenting students as being professional and well-informed, not just a group of people that are trying to change what the government is doing but working with the government, is very important. So presenting ourselves as being professional, just talking to the government, getting out into the rural community, and engaging the province is very important.

Matt Trodden: It's imperative that we deal with the provincial government in a respectful way. We can't just come at them, guns blazing. But we need to team up, like I said, with the University. We've already established a pretty good relationship between the SU and the U of A administration, especially with President Samarasekera. We need to continue to foster that relationship and go towards the provincial government with a combined force that isn't just 25 000 undergrads, but staff and the alumni. We've got

a huge alumni base, and we need to make sure that they're on board with us too. Because when you start getting into the hundreds of thousands of people advocating for one thing, all of a sudden it becomes a lot easier to get the provincial government's attention. It's the same with the federal government. I don't think we should regress back to joining the federal university lobbying groups because of the high costs involved that they put on us by being members. But I think that we can definitely move in a positive direction in teaming up with other institutions throughout Alberta. We're not the only ones that want to lower tuition in Canada. So we just need to find a better alternative than joining these existing groups.

3 Student involvement is important in addressing the concerns surrounding the University. How do you plan on effectively communicating with students?

Beverly Eastham: I'm really hoping to try and use CPAC, the Campus Planning and Action Committee, this year to involve students, to get out and talk to students, to actually consult with students and ask them what their issues are, and to let them know that they have a voice in what we're telling the federal and provincial government and the municipal government as well.

Matt Trodden: Largely, we deal with a pretty apathetic population. One big thing I want to focus on for getting people involved in is the upcoming provincial election. This is our chance to send the provincial government a message that we want a change and we are a cohesive and bonded unit that is willing to stand up together and say something. The only way this can be done is obviously [...] through communication.

But how do we do that? I think the "Roll it Back, Ralph" campaign is a great example of how to get people involved. It was constantly up there in banners and posters, emails were sent out, and different events were organized. This trend needs to continue. There's no reason we shouldn't have a "Rock the Vote," "Vote or Die," or some sort of campaign to get people really fired up about the provincial election and get them informed on what benefits are out there for them with the different parties.

I just don't see that happening right now. I mean, there's one poster downstairs that I've seen that outlines that there's going to be a forum and that we don't want tuition to go up. But what are the parties offering? Who's giving what? I know some are a little more willing to cooperate with us on these things, and they've already got intense plans involved. We also need to ensure that the student body is involved. [...] Obviously, they are willing to give it to us, but where is this money coming from? Is it coming from our parents?

Basically, just where is it coming from?

4 What do you think will be the biggest challenges you will face?

Beverly Eastham: There are a lot of challenges in this job—mostly being taken seriously. Presenting yourself with a professional outlook and trying to work with a number of different groups—student groups and the different government levels—is very important.

Matt Trodden: The greatest challenge will definitely be trying to deal with textbook costs. Tuition, obviously, is ongoing, and I will continue to fight if elected. But textbooks are something that's slightly removed from the University. University bookstores are starting to get on board with student groups, and we need to continue this fight and keep pushing towards lowering textbook costs. I'd like to see a movement started where all institutions of higher learning are able to join together and approach some of these large corporations that are manufacturing our textbooks. Some have monopolies, such as the Thomson Corporation, who happen to be the wealthiest family in Canada.

We need to approach these corporations and say 'Listen, we have all these people and institutions backing us in the fight to lower textbook costs. Obviously, your profit margins are too high, and it's starting to scare or push people away from wanting to buy textbooks.' I know I have a friend of mine who's almost paranoid to buy textbooks just because of their costs. He believes he does worse for it. He always spends the hour or two hours in the library that you can take out a textbook for, reads it as fast as he can, has to give it back, and can't do it at night when he's free. He has to do it while at school before he has to go home. That shouldn't be that way. It's going to be the most difficult because you have to deal with a corporation that isn't exactly accountable.

5 How will you survive the zombie apocalypse?

Beverly Eastham: Well, I think we could hide out in Lister because that thing will survive anything. And maybe we should bring back Soundwave to help us battle the zombies.

Matt Trodden: It seems that the zombies obviously respond to our brain. They want to eat them. So, we want to kill them. The best way to do it is chainsaw. I think you can see in *Army of Darkness 1* and *2* that the best way to deal with a zombie is chainsaw. Whether or not it's a chainsaw that you may have lost an arm to a zombie and you need to now use a chainsaw arm. Whatever you need to get done, just everyone needs a chainsaw. That's the secret.