

## NEW UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE

This is the inaugural issue of the New University Cooperative Member Newsletter! Included in this newsletter is an update about activities of the Board of Directors, announcements, and volunteer opportunities.



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### Call For Papers Issued

The Board of the New University Cooperative recently issued a Call For Papers for the upcoming *Reclaiming Higher Education Symposium*, which is being held from January 30 - February 1 at the Tatamagouche Center in Nova Scotia. The symposium brings together academics in the fields of transformative and sustainable education, students, activist and the general public, to discuss alternative/progressive models of higher education, inclusion/accessibility, the cooperative model of organization, and ecological sustainability in the context of (higher) education, to both further the critique of higher education and continue to lay the foundations for the New University Cooperative.

*The call for papers, as well as the agenda, registration and more information is available at [www.newuniversity.ca/symposium-2009](http://www.newuniversity.ca/symposium-2009).*

### GENERAL UPDATES

#### 2009 New University Cooperative Summer Short Course Programme

The board of the New University Cooperative is pleased to announce that we have confirmed the *New University Cooperative 2009 Summer Short Course Programme*, which will be the first course offering of the New University Cooperative. The course has received the in-kind support of two resident professors from the University of British Columbia and Okanagan College respectively, who will both teach their own courses and act as supervisors for the duration of the programme. Joined by visiting professors and instructors, the programme will include community service learning, a focus on both the practical and theoretical, an emphasis on furthering the organisational development of the cooperative, self-directed learning, rigorous academics, and partnerships with local academic institutions and educational centres in the region.

**Would you like to help to develop the curricula for the summer course? Join us at the Reclaiming Higher Education Symposium this January 2009 in Nova Scotia, where the vision for the curricula of the summer course will be the focus of several of the sessions.**

#### Newuniversity.ca Website Revamped

You will notice that our web guru has been working hard to improve the layout and content of the new university website. New features include online registration for the symposium, online membership, links to models, and expanded content. Please visit [www.newuniversity.ca](http://www.newuniversity.ca) to see the new website!

**ARE YOU A NEW MEMBER?** Please sign up for an account on the website! Signing up entitles members to online access to special information and features such as article & document posting ability, forum participation, online viewing of our bylaws, board member contact information, and more!

#### Fall Discussions 2009

Join supporters of the New University Cooperative for three discussion events to discuss the nature of higher education and further the critique for a reclaiming of the institutions of higher learning in this country. Led by local organisations and academics in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal respectively, the exact location and times of these events will be posted soon on [www.newuniversity.ca](http://www.newuniversity.ca).



### Report on the New U Needs Based Assessment Workshop (Sierra Youth Coalition (SYC) National Sustainable Campuses Conference)

*"The conference went very well. We met with Sustainable Campuses students and other speakers on Thursday night at the University of Sherbrooke in Sherbrooke, Québec. There were about 100 people in total, including speakers and organizers from across the country. Our two presentations received good turn-out, having about 8-10 people in each one. The people who did attend were excited about the prospect of the New University Cooperative. We received very good questions and some neat ideas were offered. Here is some feedback we got when asking why students felt there was a need for new universities in Canada. These post-secondary criticisms were offered at the beginning of our presentation after our introduction with the simple prompt: Why do we need new universities?"*

- so many professors are apathetic about teaching and thus do not stimulate student attention, let alone excitement
- tuition and debt: students are often required to work for companies they conscientiously oppose because their debt load upon graduation affords few other options
- students graduate with insufficient or no practical skills
- corporatization of education

*After our first presentation, participants excited to continue the discussion asked if we could get together and continue over lunch. We gathered over fresh vegetables and there was much excitement in the air. Among other things, we talked about reaching out to high school students by setting up alternative learning experiences and unconventional topic exploration to spark young leaders to join the New U. We received a spurt of membership applications immediately after the conference."*

*~ Riki Bowden and Natalie Boustead*

### New University Coop Fundraising Update

Over the past several months, several board members have been completing and submitting several applications for grants from foundations. Funds were being sought to be put towards the costs of the Reclaiming Higher Education for All Symposium, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, Tatamagouche, NS, and the 2009 Summer Program, as well as general operating expenses. Funds were also sought to hire our first staff person for coordination and administrative duties, to assist the board in their work.

To date the foundations we have sent in applications are:

- Carrot Cache [www.carrotcommon.com/carrotcache/html/funding-index.htm](http://www.carrotcommon.com/carrotcache/html/funding-index.htm);
- J.W. McConnell Family Foundation [www.mcconnellfoundation.ca](http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca); and,
- Catherine Donnelly Foundation <http://www.catherinedonnellyfoundation.org>.

We were successful in obtaining \$1000 from Carrot Cache out of a maximum possible donation of \$5000. As for the McConnell foundation, the 2008 funds had already been distributed, but we learned of a possible discretionary fund. A letter was sent but unfortunately we were declined. However, we were told that they are very interested in what we are doing and that once funds are determined for 2009 that we should apply at this time. Unfortunately, with the current stock market situation, the McConnell funds have been impacted and thus 2009 funds are not known at this time. This could be a similar situation for other foundations. We are still waiting to hear about the Donnelly foundation but we should know by December.

Several other foundations were explored, one being the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, [www.atkinsonfoundation.ca](http://www.atkinsonfoundation.ca), and the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, [www.gordonfn.org](http://www.gordonfn.org). Unfortunately the former only funds organizations in Ontario and since we are not legally allowed to operate in that province at this time, we can only apply for funds once an affiliated cooperative is set up in Ontario.

Additionally we submitted a proposal to the Co-operative Development Initiative Innovation and Research managed by the Canadian Co-operative Association and the Conseil Canadien de la Coopération. There were two submission deadlines in May and June. We finally found out in September, a delay of almost three months, that our proposal was rejected for the first deadline. At the time of writing it is unclear to us whether our proposal is being considered for the 2nd deadline (also delayed by almost 3 months) as was indicated to us initially.

All board members continue to cover basic expenses out of their own pockets primarily. It must be noted that several board members are providing substantial donations for the Symposium at this time. Thanks to all the board members and other New U Coop members for all their work in this area.

*~ Dr. E. Wilma van der Veen, College Professor, Sociology, Okanagan College, Kelowna BC V1Y 4X8*