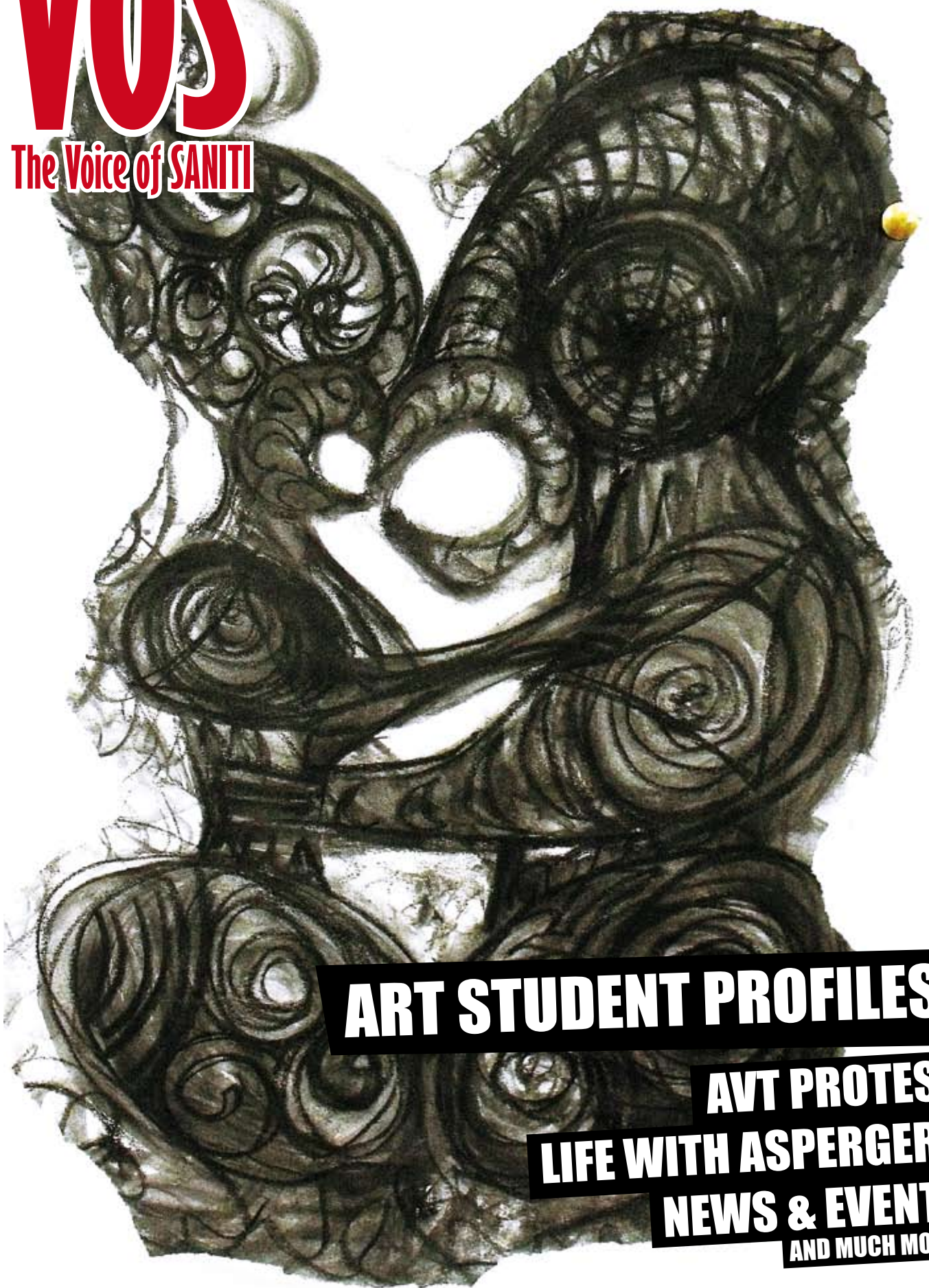


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Issue 3 • 2010
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STUDENT PRESIDENT **RACHEL BOYACK**

Spring is here! The sun is coming out (and with it the frustratingly changeable weather), lambs are being born, and daffodils are blooming. It is that unsettling time as we realise that another year has whizzed by and we still have so much to do!

We understand that right now you'll be focussing on final exams and projects, thinking about your summer plans, plans for next year, where you'll get a job, if you'll get a job, whether you'll come back to study, and whether you'll be staying in Nelson or setting off on another adventure.

SANITI is here to help and provide support if you've got a lot on your mind and you need a listening ear or a point in the right direction - pop into the office or call us on 03 546 2425.

We've been working on the Strategic Plan for next year, which has been based on your feedback, through the surveys we do, and the things that you tell us. Look out for a copy in October and have a read! We really value your feedback, so please keep telling us how you'd like us to improve our services and make them even better than they are now!

So, good luck for the rest of your studies this year, and for whatever the future may bring. I'm looking forward to seeing a lot of you walk across that graduation stage very soon (followed by a great big PARTY!).

Cheers,

Rach your Prez

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ADVENTURE TOURISM LIVES ON!

During NMIT's latest restructuring round, which involved a full review of all programmes offered, it was suggested by NMIT that the Adventure Tourism Diploma be dropped. Following a huge outcry from the public, students, and local adventure tourism industry leaders, NMIT made a decision at the August meeting of NMIT Council to give the programme a 'stay of execution' for one further year.

Second year student Magnus Horberg was delighted with the decision and proclaimed on the group's Facebook page: "I am personally overwhelmed by all this and need to escape back to the snow after yesterday's action". He encouraged people to keep signing supporters up to the Facebook group.

See page 5 for Adventure Tourism student Jessica Enland's view of the protest and photos of the action.

CREATIVE WRITING TAKES A CUT

While celebrations were in order after the saving of the Adventure Tourism Programme, not all programmes at NMIT were able to be saved. The Creative Writing courses will be gradually phased out over the next two years, with no further intakes being brought on board. SANITI will be very sad to see the course go :-)

STUDENTS HELPING STUDENTS

Amidst the devastation of the Christchurch earthquake, hope, fun, and creative ideas were flowing in the form of students helping students – with a Gen Y flavour.

It began when Harriet Geoghegan, Student President at the Otago University Students Association (OUSA), thought out loud on her Facebook page about how they could do something practical to help out struggling students. The result was a flurry of ideas of how Dunedin students could help out their Christchurch comrades.

The idea developed into a 'reverse Undie 500', involving three Otago students cramming themselves and as many supplies as they could muster into a van, for an unusual take on a road trip.

It didn't take much for donations to flood in, ranging from loads of canned food gifted from Otago students, overalls, spades, wheelbarrows, petrol vouchers, and water donations from, wait for it... the Speights Factory!

As well as delivering the supplies, the students helped out on the ground, and visited friends and family to check they were all ok. A great example of students getting stuck in to help fellow students in need!

NEW LEARNING HUBS AT NMIT

NMIT has an exciting project underway, which will see the introduction of large, spacious group learning spaces being developed on both Nelson and Marlborough campuses. The hubs will include funky and functional spaces for group work, wireless internet, and 'cafe / lounge' type spaces where you can study and sip a latte (dahling) at the same time. Keep an eye out for the NMIT Roadshow sessions, where you can learn more, and give feedback.

STUDENT LOAN CHANGES

StudyLink are working hard to communicate with all students about changes to Student Loan criteria from 2011. From the beginning of next year Student Loan eligibility will consider student study performance from 2010 and 2009.

Minister for Tertiary Education, Hon. Steven Joyce, told the Education and Science Select Committee the easing of the recession and the reviews in place would have a dampening effect on demand for places next year.

"So you'll have the combined effects of more places, probably less demand for places... and you will see a decline in demand, relative to supply, in 2011," Steven Joyce said.

Opposition spokesperson for Tertiary Education, Grant Robertson, believes the decision to apply the policy retrospectively will hurt students and institutions.

"In 2009 students were operating under a different set of rules and expectations and had no idea the government was planning this approach. It's not as if they can do anything to change the grades they received in 2009," Grant Robertson said.

"The classic situation here will be a student who enrolled in a university in 2009, found that they could not cope and failed their courses. They may well be at a Polytechnic this year, and doing much better, but if they fail just one paper they will lose their eligibility for student loans".

New Zealand Unions of Students' Associations co-president David Do labelled the changes "another nail in the coffin for open entry".

"Open access to tertiary education has been a cornerstone of our tertiary system. We believe it is something we should be proud of because tertiary education can act as a great leveller and a greater enabler of social mobility," David Do said.

Student leaders across the country are working hard to convince the government to apply a fairer approach to this new rule.

For tips on how the new rules apply to you, and where you can seek further information, see our story on page 10 of this issue of VOS.

THE LATEST ON VSM

On Friday 24 September the Education and Science Select Committee reported back on the Act Party's Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Bill, after months and months of submissions from students, student associations, institutions and educational organisations.

The committee has recommended the Bill proceed with only slight adjustments, taking effect from January 2012. The change will see student associations run voluntary membership systems only, with a strong likelihood that some associations will not survive.

SANITI President Rachel Boyack was disappointed by the move and has promised to continue lobbying Government against the bill proceeding further. See page 11 for an in-depth story on the history of VSM and what it could mean for SANITI.

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ON AIR

STUDENTS SPEAK OUT AGAINST CUTS

Student Jessica Enlund recounts the movement to save Adventure Tourism at NMIT

Earlier this year the decision to cut the Adventure Tourism programme at NMIT became public, and was greeted by outrage rarely experienced by man. A resistance movement began on Facebook started by some adventure tourism students who were a bit more in the know.

The students knew urgent action was needed and that they wouldn't be able to make enough impact on their own. Measures to reach as many people as possible were taken, including meetings with those closest to the issue.

The students enrolled in the Adventure Tourism programme, who in turn gratefully watched a large part of the travel and tourism class, joined in their cause, as well as the now renowned Facebook page "Save Adventure Tourism".

"SAVE ADVENTURE TOURISM" spread with the wind and quickly gained momentum, acquiring on average 20 new supporters a day both locally and internationally. Supporters included teachers, tourists, prominent people from the tourism and outdoor industries and students, both past and present. The list went on and on.

On the 17th of August NMIT Council met to decide the fate of the programme, the Adventure Tourism students showed their true colours and were out in full force. They were supported by travel and tourism, SANITI Executive and many other students and staff. By now the facebook page had amassed 760 members (six weeks on that number is still increasing).

The demonstration brought attention to how much the programme means to its students and staff both past, present. The Council were left with no doubt how people felt.

Today we look back on those three weeks of intense, nerve wracking frustration and remember there was also hope and that we are grateful to part of a single cause, so many of us were unknown to each other but we shared a passion.

No more words are needed AVT lives on. We did it!

SANITI would like to thank to everyone involved in the efforts to save both Creative Writing and Adventure Tourism programmes at NMIT.



SUMMER JOB NEWS

Student Job Search will not be opening an office in Nelson this summer but will still be active in sourcing jobs for students in the region.

After a 'critical review' the organization has decided to not open the temporary offices that 'have not produced the results to justify the investment'. Student Job Search is focusing on providing assistance to students through its free phone and emails, the preferred means of contact by students. Student can also find information about CV's, registration and general inquiries on their SJS website.

Lorna McConnon, SJS Marketing and Communications Manager, states that the alterations are not because of cuts to funding but are a modernisation of communication methods and a focus on approaching nationwide employers such as The Warehouse.

SANITI encourages students looking for summer work to take matters in their own hands and be proactive in approaching employers before they finish studying and before the influx of transient and backpackers hit the region. Traditionally jobs are available in the horticulture and fishery industries.

www.sjs.co.nz • 0800 757 562

www.seek.co.nz

www.trademe.co.nz

www.search4jobs.co.nz

www.worksite.govt.nz

www.jobs.govt.nz

www.ag-jobs.co.nz

www.seasonalwork.co.nz

www.sjs.co.nz

Events

HEALTH CHECKS 2010

The month of August saw the annual student health checks by Nelson Campus Alison Horn. The checks are co-funded by SANITI and NMIT. Dozens of students took the opportunity to get their cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure checked. The check-ups also enabled Alison to ask students about their sleeping habits, dental health and diet, plus offer additional information about the smoking cessation packs. So much had to be covered that Alison is wanting to extend the duration of the check-ups for next year.

Alison is available for enquiries through the NMIT Student Services desk in the Student Centre or 546 9175 ext 804.



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MARLBOROUGH CAMPUS OPEN DAY

A windy August day didn't stop potential NMIT students from visiting the Marlborough Campus to learn more about the Institute and how they can further their tertiary studies. Students were treated to sausages, makeovers and a competition to determine who had the best stamina.



KIWI KAI DAY

Marlborough Campus celebrated Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori (Māori Language Week) with a hangi meal and a Kapa Haka performance. The food was delicious, and included fried bread, chowder, and roast wild pork... mmm mmm. Thanks to Shelly from Student Services organising the event.



SOUP DAYS

The Soup Days on Nelson Campus are quickly becoming a favourite. Lynette, James and the Cheffing Students do a fantastic job preparing the nutritious, full-flavoured, zestful, delectable, and not to mention saporous soups and rolls.



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NELSON CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES ON CAMPUS

Seventeen Mayoral and Council candidates were threatened with a water pistol if they dared to speak over their allocated time limit at the Election Forum, held in the NMIT Cafeteria on Thursday 16th September. Topics of discussion included public transport, skate parks and lowering the voting age.



WOODBOURNE BBQ

At the end of July SANITI welcomed the new and old Woodbourne students onto campus with a deluxe BBQ. What now seems to be a tradition, the rain fell, but this didn't dampen the Students' voracious appetites. Thanks to NMIT for co-funding the event.



INTERNATIONAL END OF SEMESTER BBQ

Sausages were the centre of attention at a International Student shared lunch on Nelson campus in July. Getting a photo on the SANITI BBQ was popular for the homebound students who then proceeded to eat the saussies with chop sticks... awesome!



Graduating? Let's Celebrate!

2010 Graduation Dates

TTM 10th Dec

Marlborough 15th Dec

Nelson 17th Dec

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PIP'S TIPS

**In this issue SANITI's Advocate Pip Bowler asks
'Are You Eligible For A Student Loan NOW?!'**

IMPORTANT CHANGES AT STUDYLINK

It's always good to keep your brain active and I'd say StudyLink had this in mind when they made OH YES even more complicated to calculate changes. Sorry I know sarcasm is the lowest form of wit but I am trying to be kind ;o)

These changes are particularly important for you to understand if you have run things a bit close to the wire on your previous study or if you are not a NZ citizen. It is important as in the past the Student Loan system meant that pretty much anyone could access tertiary study because if you didn't qualify for a Student Allowance or couldn't self fund there was always the Student Loan. So this has now changed. Important stuff as you may NOT be eligible to receive a Student Loan.

In a nutshell you need to read on if...

- you have failed significant amounts of your course work
- pulled off courses without completing the withdrawal process
- are not a NZ citizen

EFTS is an Equivalent Full Time Student. In an average full time year a student would be around 0.8 of an EFTS.

So the key changes that affect students here at NMIT are...

1. The New Performance Criteria

This is only a problem if you have studied in previous years and have not passed at least half of your course load. It also only applies if you have studied 1.6 EFTS (which is usually around 2 years of full time study...eeeeekkkk!). Only courses that ended in 2009 or later apply. If you think this may apply to you or you are completely confused come in to SANITI. NMIT will be communicating with students later in the year so watch for further information from them. If however you can prove to StudyLink that due to reasons beyond your control you didn't pass more than half of your programme load you

may still qualify. NMIT will be endeavouring to get your 2010 results entered into their systems asap to enable students and StudyLink to calculate eligibility.

2. Residency Status

If you are an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident of New Zealand you will now be subject to a two year stand down before you can access the Student Loan (bringing it in line with Student Allowance regulations). If you have lived in New Zealand for more than two years and live here ordinarily you should be eligible for a Student Loan. If you are currently studying but do not meet these two year requirements, you should still apply for a Student Loan as you may be eligible as StudyLink don't want to disrupt or disadvantage people part way through their qualification. It must be a continuation of the same qualification not a new one.

3. 7 EFTS Lifetime Limit

That's a whole lot of study but if you plan to study for a lot of years this will be relevant at some point. Study that you have done prior to the start of 2010 is NOT included in this EFTS count.

Contact us if you have any worries

SANITI
(03) 546 2425

OR advocacy.saniti@xtra.co.nz
OR come in and see Pip Bowler or Rachel Boyack at the SANITI office.



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Student Centre in 'N' Block

03 546 9175 ext 655

studentsupporthelp@nmit.ac.nz

MARLBOROUGH CAMPUS

Student Support 'J' Block

03 578 0215 ext 588

shelly.mccormick@nmit.ac.nz

VILIAMI LANGI PACIFIC ISLAND LIAISON

Kia Orana, Ni Sa Bula, Talofa lava, Malo e Lelei and Pacific Greetings to you all. I am Viliami Langi, a Tongan New Zealander. I work with Pacific Island Students and Pacific Island Communities on issues that concern their tertiary education needs and opportunities at NMIT. I am based on the Nelson Campus in N Block on Monday & Friday mornings and available at other times by arrangement. I look forward to meeting you.



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GOING THE DISTANCE

One of the greatest parts of my job, apart from working with such a diversely good looking bunch of people at SANITI, is having the opportunity to travel the four rounded corners of the country meeting new and existing NMIT Aviation students. Twice a year I pack my bag and head as far south as Dunedin and right up to Auckland, stopping off at most airports in the major cities along the way (for the purposes of this article Fielding shall be considered a major city :). At the end of August through to the beginning of September I visited students in Christchurch, Dunedin, Auckland, Tauranga and the 'Tron'. Another great part of my visits is being able to 'participate' in the consumption of the food that we put on for the students! Thank you to all of the students I met on my travels and remember that SANITI is your student Pilot Association, so if you need any assistance please contact us!



STAFF MEMBER IN ACCIDENT

On August 24, Louis Lefrebe NMIT's Programme Leader for the aircraft engineering programme at Base Woodbourne, was paralysed from his chest down as a result of a skiing accident at Mt Hutt ski field. On behalf of all NMIT students we would like to extend our best wishes and support for Louis and his family. We look forward to seeing Louis back at Base Woodbourne next year.



JESSICA NEESON

On July 26 Flight Training Manawatu Chief Flying Instructor Jessica Neeson and her student Patricia Smallman died tragically in a mid air collision close to the Fielding Aerodrome. Jessica was a much loved and respected instructor who was the heart and soul of FTM. The SANITI team wish to express their sadness at her passing and to acknowledge the profound effect Jessica had on people's lives as a family member, friend and flying instructor.

WOODBOURNE MORNING TEA

Question: How long does it take 65 Aviation Engineering students to eat 20 dozen savories and sausage rolls?

Answer: 2 minutes and 12 seconds!



PIZZA LUNCH!

In keeping with the subject of food, in September SANITI staff members Hayden and Fraser looked like the Mario Brothers as they entered the Marlborough campus juggling a whole load of fresh pizzas in their hands. The event was SANITI's way of sending the Marlborough students off on their holidays with nice full tummies! Thanks to all the students who shared their company and humour over the lunch hour and we look forward to bring you more hot food very soon!



Contact Hayden at
hayden.saniti@xtra.co.nz
or 03 546 2425

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STUDENT PILOT FACEBOOK GROUP



Do a search for NMIT Student Pilots and you're sorted!

RACHELS TERRITARY RANT

VSM: THE HISTORY AND THE MISERY

VSM, Voluntary Student Membership, is a hot topic amongst students right now. Those in favour of VSM argue that current arrangements breach the Human Right of Freedom of Association. While those against it claim the real reason behind the move is to silence students and reduce their representation. SANITI Student Prez Rachel Boyack covers the skinny.



Current state of play

Currently students may withdraw their membership by conscientiously objecting (with the fee being passed on to a charity), or be exempt from paying the fee due to financial hardship. Students can also determine whether they have a Universal or Voluntary association, through referenda. The current law belongs to the National Party, and is seen by many as a good compromise.

In 2009, a bill seeking to make Students Associations membership voluntary in the name of Roger Douglas of the ACT Party passed its first reading and has now progressed through a Select Committee. Over 4400 submissions were received, with 98% being against the bill.

However, the Select Committee recently recommended the bill proceed with only minor amendments. The bill could become law at the end of the year, impacting associations at the start of 2012.

Freedom of Association

The ideology behind VSM stems from a principle known as 'Freedom of Association.' Proponents of VSM claim that universal membership breaches this human right. Yet a quick check of Wikipedia states that 'Freedom of association is the individual

right to come together with other individuals and collectively express, promote, pursue and defend common interests.'

Those arguing against VSM point out that this freedom is a positive freedom, which allows people to freely gather together. Unfortunately, legal opinions differ, as does advice from the Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Education. Hmm...

We could get lost in the ideology. The reality is, that without levies, SANITI couldn't continue in its current form. A report by consulting firm PriceWaterhouseCoopers predicted up to half of all associations could collapse under VSM.

SANITI's View

When SANITI was established in 2002, a referendum was held to determine the membership structure. The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of Universal Membership. At the AGM in April a unanimous motion was passed that SANITI oppose VSM.

Conversations I've had with students have reaffirmed to me that students at NMIT value SANITI and prefer a membership system where all pay, and all have the benefits – a bit like an

insurance policy. Students also acknowledge the wins SANITI have made for ALL students, such as a Centralised Complaints System, lobbying for Student Loans for Aviation students, and helping save the Supported Training and Adventure Tourism programmes.

A compromise?

The current law allows students to apply for membership exemption, but many argue that it's too difficult. There are also concerns that students who stop being members don't get their money back. I am hopeful a compromise will be found that eases the rules around conscientious objection, so that those students who really don't want to be part of an association can withdraw.

Where to now

SANITI is committed to providing services to students regardless of VSM. We have worked hard to secure alternative forms of revenue and develop reserves to cover operating costs. If VSM does come in, then our commitment to you is that we will continue to work hard for you, the students, to make your tertiary experience the best it can possibly be.

¹ Constitution of South Africa Chapter 2: Bill of Rights



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Artist Profile: Deone Greer



Deone Greer is quick to name her upbringing as her main influence. Deone's Māori heritage was kept secret from her until the age of 25. Her art is a way for her to reclaim the culture she was born into but denied.

From talking to Deone you get a real sense of her ambition and 'give-it-ago' attitude. Her current body of work is a mixture of photography, ink works, charcoal, and pastel. She also mixes the abstract with recognizable images, evoking both



the senses and the intellect. The mixing of natural elements and post-colonial symbols graphically manifest themselves in her collection of carvings - Christian imagery carved in natural pumice.

Deone also likes to use objects she has found in her art. At the time of writing, a pile of hundred year old totara fence palings are piled in her studio. The posts she found in Christchurch are the basis for her next work where she is looking at where she will draw a correlation between



Maroi Pā sites and European picket fences.

Deone has already tasted success with her work; most recently she received a merit award from the Marlborough Art Society Select Members Exhibition 2010 for having a top three placing in a recent exhibition. If things keep going the way they are for Deone, then this won't be her last success.

Artist Profile: Hannah de Castro



Growing up as Hannah de Castro she knew that she had a slightly unusual name, but it wasn't until Hannah started studying at NMIT that she really started to question what role it played in her identity. "Your surname defines you, but to what extent? Traditionally women have relinquished their names when married: does this mean you can have two identities?" Hannah's own name is Portuguese in origin, traced through the English side of her family.

To add to her situation, she is having a slight confidence crisis; questioning her career path, questioning her mode of expression and trying to appease enquiring tutors and VOS reporters alike.

The twenty three year old confesses to not being



a deep thinker. "I'm not sentimental and I don't like to get caught up too much in the symbolism of art. For example, I was fooling around with some sawdust and PVA glue and came up with something people liked. They asked me what it represented and I said that it was just some sawdust."

While stating that she isn't a deep thinker Hannah obviously has an analytical brain. "At school I really enjoyed mathematics and chemistry." It is her desire for certain knowledge that is causing her identity crisis: "I like to understand things before I try to express them". Not many twenty somethings can truly say that they are certain of their own identity - let alone express themselves artistically.



While Hannah may still be piecing together her heritage, she has managed to create two art works encapsulating some aspects of her identity. The self-portrait acrylic painting pictured uses her colouring and shows off her curly hair. The other is a screen printing of a piece of furniture that has been in her family for generations, the curl motif is also present. "The sideboard print is like a comfort blanket, a link to my childhood".

While Hannah maybe questioning her identity she is excited about helping others express themselves and market their art. "I really want to own my own printery. I think helping others create art would be very rewarding".

Artist Profile: Johanna Williams



Rotorua born Johanna Williams seems like a pretty relaxed woman. Happy to cruise through high school she found it easy to do what had to be done to pass. It wasn't until she was told by her NMIT tutor she was failing that she 'got off her butt' and did something about it.

Jo's relaxed attitude comes across in her approach to her end of term project. Originally starting with a fairytale inspired 'beauty and the beast', it quickly developed into 'beauty is the beast'. She describes it as the personal cost of fitting into society's body image norms.

One of Jo's first works is a reversible bodice

punctured with over 1000 drawing pins. The idea being that when the pin points face inwards it is the personal cost of fitting to society's image of the perfect image. When the pins face out it represents the social stigma of not fitting into society's norms.

For her main piece she took the perceived perfect image of a mannequin and dismembered it. She covered the mannequin in tape and removed certain sections. The hanging bodies can sway with people walking past adding to their disturbing qualities. Some pieces were hung high, placing the body on a pedestal while others were kept low so that

people had to literally look down on some bodies.

Jo calls herself the 'Two Minute Artist', relying on bursts of inspiration as her creative process. Sometimes such a burst can supply her with two weeks work.

About to complete her degree at the age of only twenty, she states that she'll probably travel next year and look for a city with some excitement and stimulation. Johanna's long term plan is to own a restaurant/art gallery by the age of forty.

Artist Profile: Lisa Grennell



Lisa Grennell's main work this semester draws upon her personal experiences of childbirth. Having three premature children she wanted to show the anxiety and trauma of the ordeal.

Ironically Lisa's original concept was a piece on the vulnerability of the aged, specifically her grandmother. As she progressed the concept did a 180 degree turn and developed into the 'visual sound' of a wall of crying babies.

Lisa initially wanted an image of the perfect baby. This was as much a comment on the act of motherhood as it was an artistic expression. The dripping paint and masking tape represented the fact that 'no matter how hard you try, you never end up with something perfect'.

With an obvious link between the splattered paint and body fluids, there is also symbolism in the colours used. Yellow represents the liver problems causing Lisa's premature births, blue for oxygen deprivation and red of blood and trauma.

Lisa has been invigorated by her time studying at NMIT. 'It is amazing how much I have grown. I left school at 14, doing this course has given me confidence. I've got a strong work ethic and I want to keep pushing and keep thinking'.



Student Life

Graduating NMIT student David Greer isn't letting his Asperger's get in the way of his dreams.

Born in Nelson, David Greer has worked in various horticultural and mechanical based industries. He has a CV full of skills, certificates and licenses ranging from forestry to floristry, from chainsaws to crayfish. His hobbies include climbing, tramping, and microlight flying. His main passion is motorbike riding. David's CV accurately represents him as being an energetic and keen kiwi bloke; he even describes himself as a 'pretty average kind of guy.' But there is a reason his CV is packed with experiences, qualifications and hobbies, he needs constant stimulation as David has Asperger's syndrome.

Asperger's syndrome is a type of autism. While doctors are still defining the illness, there has been an attitudinal shift towards Asperger's being a 'difference, rather than an disability.' While people with the syndrome have social difficulties such as delayed speech development and social awkwardness, they tend to have very active minds and high IQ's. David expresses his mental state as a 'hyper-awareness... mental ADHD on steroids' and that he sees the world in a 'higher reality.'

He is quick to dismiss the significance of his outrageously high IQ of 184.

While describing all this to me his cat wanders through the living room. I recall a TV documentary I saw on feline sensory perception, how they can be so bombarded by their senses that sometimes they need to reset themselves like a computer. As if on cue, David draws the same analogy.

When thinking of autism most people think of the movie 'Rain Man' where the Dustin Hoffman character has the condition. While the movie dials up the character in the autistic spectrum, David does have an IQ that stretches well into the genius category, but he can no more predict the weather or count hundreds of matchsticks than you or I. He is quick to dismiss the significance of his outrageously high IQ of 184. His laser-like concentration can be focused but can easily miss its mark when distracted. A symptom of Aspergers is a tendency to take instruction literally and to carry out actions to the extreme. David only mentions in passing that he likes to do things in threes, specifically while studying.

Archetypal symptom of the disorder are delayed motor and speech skills (David didn't start walking and talking until the age of seven) and impeded non-verbal communication skills. David singles out eye contact as something he has worked on. 'It feels like people are looking right through me,' he states. People can easily misinterpret the symptoms, compounding the social awkwardness that can be prevalent.

David has been proactive in getting his disorder rightfully classified by Work and Income as well as having an input into the way his condition is medicated. Autism has been handled as a mood disorder, linked with depressive disorders and medicated accordingly. David has coined the phrase 'up-syndrome,' what appears to be manic is actually just his mind is on the 'mental steroids.'



David convinced Work and Income New Zealand to reclassify his condition from 'affected psychosis' to 'autism' and is active on internet sites around the world investigating medical opinion and articulating his experience.

Two things that give David an outlet for his active mind are learning and motorbike racing. Soon to graduate with an NMIT Skills Update certificate in Business and Computer Technology, he plies his new skills into racing. His bikes are kitted out with sensors that enable him to monitor such things as fuel consumption and octane rating. He analyses the information using the skills he has learnt. He also uses his new skills in budgeting and planning. He has glowing praise of his time at NMIT; 'They're so good. Small class sizes, direct contact with the tutor and the best environment. It has opened a great big thing for me.'

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David has racing in the blood with an uncle achieving racing success. The New Zealand Post Classic Racing Association want David to carry on the family tradition and want him to adopt his uncle's racing number of 153. He points out the expense of racing bikes and singles out the economic downturn as impeding possible sponsorship. He has also had misfortune along the way with theft and accidents hampering his progress.

David is an awesome role model for those who feel downtrodden or hampered in any way. He has passion and determination and doesn't let misfortune and misunderstanding stand in his way... he zips past it at 287 kilometers per hour on the straight.

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HOUSE OF TRAVEL

The Ticket Slappa

Carrying on with last article's themes of music, interesting people and the ever reoccurring of doing as I please, I decided to interview a group of students who regularly loiter at my place of gainful employment.



Strangely I wasn't under any particular influence when I met them, hmm go figure. Well, on a bright sunny day I sat at a picnic table and got to quiz this eclectic group comprising of Liala Gianstefani (Drummer, pictured with rabbit), Ben Roper (Guitar) and Jareth Hazlitt-Black (Guitar). All three are studying on the Nelson campus at NMIT doing the music course. Let the grilling begin!

Why did you decide to do the music course?

JH-B I had nothing better to do.

BR I didn't want to stay in Greymouth.

LG I wanted to follow my dream.

What's your favourite song?

LG "Devil Went Down to Georgia" Charles Daniels' band, it is good it's funky, it answers the big questions, soul and passion and you can sing it.

JH-B "Welcome to the Jungle" by Guns & Roses, it's my favorite good moments.

BR "Mississippi Queen" by Mountain, the greatest guitar song ever!

What surprised you the most about being a musician? Were there any things you weren't expecting?

JH-B I thought it would be a lot easier and there would be more chicks, of which there is a distinct lack of.

LG The challenge of co-ordinating four separate limbs.

BR I thought we'd be getting out more, meeting more people and making more contacts.

Whats the easiest instrument to play?

JH-B The guitar or the mandolin. It's easy to sound good.

BR The triangle! Oh and I briefly played the tuba.

LG Shaker eggs. I was gonna say triangle, hang drums always sound fantastic but there's a six year wait on getting one. (Which is actually true believe it or not, those wishing to purchase a hang must attend an interview in Bern)

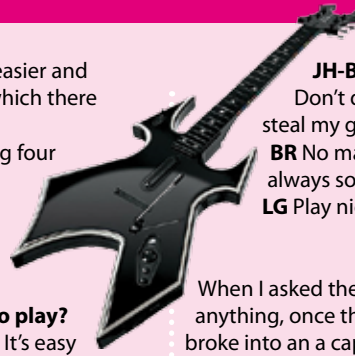
What will you do after this?

BR I'm headed to Wellington to extend my knowledge of live sound and jam.

JH-B I'm going to burp.

LG Play lots of music and be in lots of bands.

What would you say to aspiring artists?



JH-B Stop! Don't do it! You'll steal my glory!

BR No matter how good you are there's always someone who's better.

LG Play nice.

When I asked them if anyone could sing anything, once the laughter died down, they broke into an a cappella version of their various instruments. Saying I was impressed is like saying I like free drinks, shiny things and voicing my opinion on things that don't concern me. What I noticed the most about these guys is how very different they are. What is immediately apparent is how a passion for music and the making of music has given them common ground. Watching them talk about music almost makes me wish I'd stuck with the torturous piano lessons my mother inflicted on me. Almost... but not quite.

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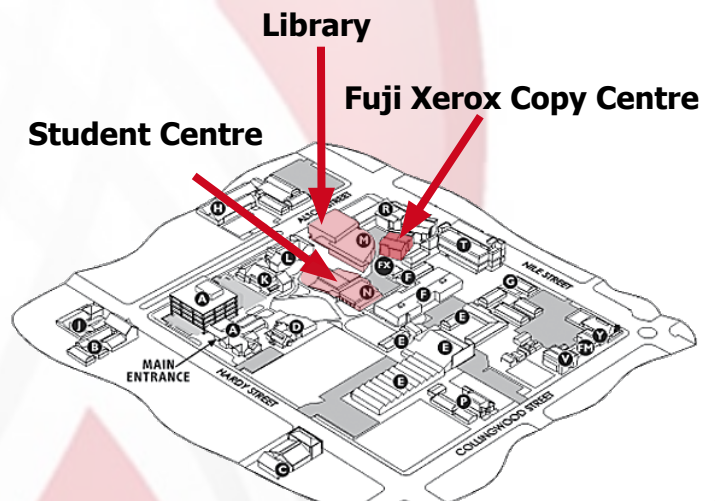
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