

# ON CAMPUS

## NSO 2005 Was Awesome: Coordinator

Kimberley Johnston  
Reporter

This year's New Student Orientation was a rootin' tootin' success, according to NSO coordinator Ryan McDermott.

Sheriff "Ry-Dog" McDermott and his 46 yellow-shirted deputies managed to wrangle just under 400 sure-footed first-years into raising \$17,195 for Shinerama without ending up in the hoosegow. The NSO leaders even managed to make the first-years feel more at home on the range here at UPEI.

McDermott said one of the attractions of a western-themed event is the fact that it is organized by students for students and whatever changes are made to next year's event will be in the hopes of making it better. But this year was pretty kick-ass, he said.

"We took it up a notch. It is now at another level," explained McDermott.

Events did not change greatly from last year; NSOers enjoyed the Aliant Wacky Olympics, the Subway Beach Blast at Brackley, and took part in the crazy Icebreakers that Playfair, with Carol Ann, include. Many other sections of UPEI were also involved in NSO, such as Student Services, who organized a first-year banquet, where NSOers received Future UPEI graduate pins from various faculty. Residence Life organized a Kitchen Party/ Casino Night and The Sports Centre gave each first-year a water bottle and hand towel, as well.

One of the main differences this year was a decreased number of NSO leaders (or deputies). McDermott explained a week before NSO began that he chose the "quality over quantity" approach to choosing

leaders... and he hasn't regretted it.

"Traditionally, there are 80 NSO leaders, but I have always believed quality is much better than quantity. With 80 leaders, there would always be several (up to even 25 or so) who would miss events, or drop out all together, and could always justify it by saying that there were many more leaders. This year, our group of leaders will be about 50, and I am confident that this group, being as spirited and dedicated as they are, will do a great job," he explained about a week before NSO took place.

This was McDermott's second year as NSO coordinator. He has been involved with NSO at every level; as a first-year, a leader, and as the man who puts it all together. But why?

"To be honest I absolutely love NSO! Hands down: it's the best time of the year. I just keep having more and more fun, and that's why I keep coming back."

So did this year's first-years share the same sentiment?

Kate Johnston, a science student, said she had a great time at NSO, and the \$50 registration fee was money well spent.

"It was good; it was exhausting, but good," she said. "It was definitely worth the \$50. I'm really glad I went. I wasn't going to, but I met a lot of people so I'm happy."

Charity Visser, the music/voice student who won an acoustic guitar at the karaoke party, had a more enthusiastic response.

"It was awesome! The leaders were great; they just kept everybody full of energy and made us

do crazy things."

There weren't even any complaints about the totally chem-free aspect of the event. Last year, tickets to the wet/dry event at the Wave were included in the cost. This year, NSOers received memory sticks instead.

"The reason that we didn't go with the concert ticket for the packages is simply consistency," explained McDermott. "It was ridiculous to have a chem-free week and then have a big blowout included in our NSO activities that was wet/dry. There's also no big secret that the wet/dry works to a certain extent, but it sends the wrong message to our first years who, for the majority, are 17 or 18 years old. Plus, we also had the chance to give away memory sticks to all the participants, which was not an opportunity to give up."

Speaking of opportunities, McDermott encouraged anyone wishing to apply for the NSO coordinator next summer to do so...or become involved as a leader next fall.

"Being involved with NSO has made all the difference in my UPEI life. I have learned so much, and more importantly, I have made so many great friends. I'm very glad that I got involved with NSO."

Getting involved in campus life is the best advice McDermott could give to a first-year student, he said.

"UPEI is a great spot and there's plenty to get involved in. NSO is a great way to start your participation, just make sure to keep it up over the next 4 years...or 5 years...or 6 years....however long you're here."

## NSO Tidbits from the Net

Man-Sum Yau  
Production Manager

When you think of NSO, what words come to your mind? Fun? Fundraising? Friendship? Leadership? Creativity? These are five words that come to my mind when I think back to my NSO days. I went to yahoo.ca and amazon.ca and did a search on each word—you would be amazed to see how many hits you can get in so little time:

### Yahoo! Canada Search Results

5. 2,510,000 for **fundraising**. Search took 0.32 seconds.
4. 2,770,000 for **creativity**. Search took 0.40 seconds.
3. 3,470,000 for **friendship**. Search took 0.19 seconds.
2. 11,100,000 for **leadership**. Search took 0.31 seconds.
1. 28,100,000 for **fun**. Search took 0.22 seconds.

### Amazon.ca Books Search Results

5. 1,128 for **fundraising**
4. 2,572 for **creativity**
3. 11,364 for **fun**
2. 18,093 for **friendship**
1. 19,512 for **leadership**

These results, to a certain extent, reflect the value of each "word" in Canadian society. They reflect how much people are willing to write, buy, sell, post information, learn, and/or dedicate themselves to each "word." Congratulations and many thanks to all the dedicated NSO leaders, participants, and contributors!