

letter to the editor

CFS: more than a name

I know that most of you think that CFS is just a name, just something that we pay for every year. That is a dangerous misconception. Last year in the weeks leading up to the referendum, I learned what the Canadian Federation of Students is all about. It is about fighting for the rights of all students, present and future. More than that it is a group of people, not just names but faces. Faces of people who care, people who have struggled in the past and are struggling now to get by, to build a future for themselves.

I myself joined the fight knowing very little about what I was getting into, I learned about what CFS has done and plans to do. But it wasn't until this year that I really saw the true CFS.

During the week of action, we had the march on the Shaw Building in protest of cuts to education, people shared their views and I saw just how many people in different situations are connected with CFS in one way or another. But the person who made me see just how much this fight means to CFS was the local field worker.

Going back to last year's referendum, we had very little time to fight I, but because Joe Byrne felt so strongly about UPEI staying in the Federation and having that voice that CFS provides, he gave his all

and so did I and the other members of the team. In the end we remained members. Once again we face a referendum. Once again, the choice is CFS or no. I want to give you one more reason to say.

For many reasons, I lost last semester, I had to leave. The biggest reason was money. Like many other people, money has been a big dark cloud over my head my entire life. I've never lived on easy street. Because of major troubles of that sort, I was forced to leave school last semester and get a job. It certainly wasn't my dream job, by the end of December, I was in a better state of mind and I decided that the place I wanted and needed to be was in school, I couldn't handle the idea of losing out on my dreams.

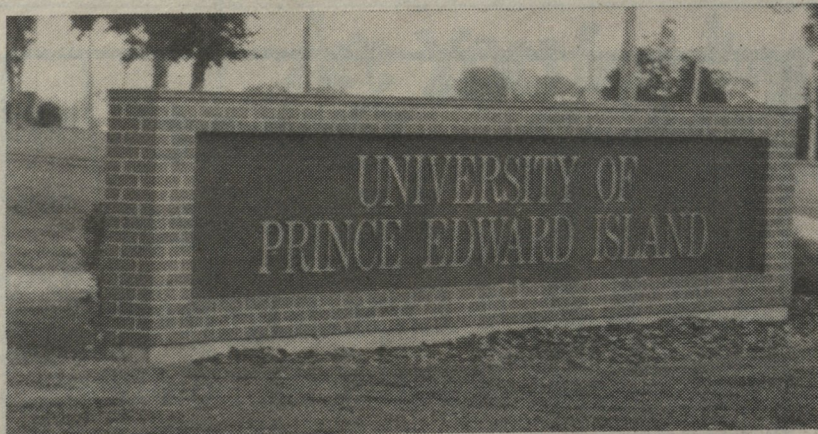
That is something that I know I am not alone in, and like others, I didn't know what to do. I knew where I wanted to be, but how to get there? Who would help me? The one thing I thought of that many people don't is to ask for help from someone who cares and understands your situation. I turned to the one person I knew that was that type, Joe Byrne, the local CFS field worker. He helped me come up with a plan of action to make sure I went through the right channels and got the help I needed. He knows how much education means to me.

I realize that this is a side of CFS that we don't always see, it is the side that goes unrecognized, the silent side. Joe didn't help me to get a better name for CFS, he helped me because he cares and he wanted to see one more person realize a dream.

Every day CFS fights to keep tuition fees down, hoping to eliminated it. We are fighting for our right, not the privilege, to an education. I realize that it seems impossible, but nothing is impossible when you have hope.

Like countless others, I had the hope of going to University. And like those same people, I had to struggle, I had to keep those grades up, hope for a scholarship, and when that didn't work, I had to turn to student aid. Now I am here and millions of others are too. Now our main worry is getting by and staying in University. CFS is also worrying about us getting by, the members want to lower tuition fees and bring student grants back. We want to voice our concerns and fight for our rights. CFS can't help us if we aren't members. Join the fight, help keep the dreams of countless students present and future alive. Vote yes to CFS and get involved. I know I am glad that I did.

Melody Gilbert



This Week

At The Panther Lounge

Wednesday

Trivia

Thursday

Hippie Night

With Paper

Soul

\$4.00

WET