

The Montreal College Student Voice W H E T S T O N E

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Cabinet Redistributes Alumni-focused Scholarship

by Kortney Blythe and Brittany Anderson

The Change

On February 15 the Montreal College Cabinet announced their plans to restructure the Elizabeth Wilson Scholarship in order to allocate the funds more evenly.

Started in 1972, the Wilson Scholarship was created to honor Miss Wilson, a former Bible professor and Dean of Students at Montreal in the 1950s, by strengthening alumni involvement with the college.

In past years, the director of alumni affairs chose the scholarship recipients. He/she then distributed the funds to the student workers based on their roles and responsibilities in particular areas. For example, the student assigned to office manager would receive more money than an office assistant; and the editor of *The Whetstone* would be compensated more than the business manager.

Now, Financial Aid will control the Wilson Scholarship monies and, rather than apportion different amounts, every student recipient will receive the same amount of \$2,212, regardless of their position.

In addition, the changes, set to take effect in the fall, will shift the majority of the scholarships to positions outside the Alumni/Advancement Department. This year all the Wilson Scholars, totaling 17, worked in either the alumni office, advancement positions, or for *The Whetstone*.

Next year the number of workers assigned to the Alumni/Advancement Office will decrease

to seven. The remaining scholarships will be spread throughout other departments such as Student Services, Admissions, Academic Affairs, President's office, and Chaplain's assistants, all formerly work-study or non-existent positions.

President Dan Struble spoke about the alterations this way: "We believe that the changes to the Wilson Scholar program will allow us to benefit more students and engage them in activities across the college while continuing to place emphasis on Alumni Affairs... Alumni will [still] get more Wilson Scholar energy than any other area on campus."

Lisa Lankford, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid explained the reason for the changes. "We needed to strategically place the money better," she said.

This change has many alumni wondering what it means for them.

Ann Broom, class of 1954, Alumni Board member and one of the founders of the scholarship, fears that the recent revamping of the Wilson Scholarship means a reprioritizing of alumni affairs to a lower status.

Broom says she was not contacted about the changes, but they were explained to her after the fact. She adds: "I can't tell the college what to do with their money and neither can any other alumni. But I do think that when



a scholarship is set up with a particular purpose, that they should honor the request of the donor.

"Any college that puts their alumni on the back burner and does not pay attention to their alumni, pretty soon won't have any support," said Broom.

Bob Graham, former Alumni Director, Vice President of Alumni Association, and *Whetstone* advisor mimics these sentiments: "The fact that the college doesn't have an Alumni Director [position] anymore says it all."

However, Struble stressed, "We'll be investing more in Alumni and Advancement in other ways. We are making some inroads through the Strategic Planning Process where literally hundreds of alumni have given their input on furthering the school."

The Scholars

Current Wilson Scholars received a letter in their mailboxes informing them that changes have been made and requesting that they reapply for the scholarship. "Wilson scholars are the cream of

the crop," it read. "You are the best at Montreal College. You exhibit all the qualities that the Admission's Office seeks when looking for a 'match' during recruiting. Therefore we need more of you!"

When asked about this letter, sophomore Wilson Scholar Jennifer Ramsey replied: "I think the letter wasn't the best way of handling the situation. They should have held a meeting and told us before rumors started circling. It wasn't handled very lovingly. It was approached with the administrations' agenda, instead of the students' interest, in mind."

However, sophomore Wilson Scholar Steve Carter remembered, "President Struble was very accommodating when concerns were expressed to him. He handled himself in a professional and cooperative manner."

Anita Sayles, Director of Church Relations and Advancement Events and former advisor for *The Whetstone*, worries that this change will affect students with financial need. "The Wilson Scholarship [before the change] was a scholarship with a work component. Because it was not a work-study, we could help those in need by raising the amount of aid they received. Now that it's a standardized amount that will no longer happen."

Another Wilson Scholar, sophomore Luke Snyder, commented, "I can see [the change] as a good thing from the college's perspective."

The Legacy of Elizabeth Wilson

The Alumni Board established the scholarship to honor and show gratitude to Miss Wilson while she was still living.

Becky Glenn, a senior at the time of Miss Wilson's arrival in 1952 remembers, "We thought she

had dropped right out of heaven. She was certainly the angel that we needed and had been looking for."

Miss Wilson's love for students and giving spirit made quite an impact on students, both financially and spiritually, according to Ann Broom. "There's no way we could ever know how many students she helped financially, whether it was buying them clothes, giving them money for books, paying their scholarship, paying for music lessons. It was constant, it was genuine and it was with lots of love, but no one ever knew," said Broom.

Graham believes that because of the changes, "Miss Wilson's legacy will get lost in the shuffle."

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Sting-Pong

VERSE
of the
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"...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

- Hebrews 12:1 NIV