

# Foreign student discovers similarities between American Midwest, Canada

By Teri Sperry

"Different" is a common response from international students describing their host countries and universities. But one of UNL's new foreign students said she already feels at home in Nebraska.

Jodi Louth of St. Catherine's, Ontario, said she has found many more similarities than differences between Canada and the American Midwest. "It's so homelike," she said.

Since arriving in the United States a few months ago as an International Student Exchange Program participant, she has been involved in the same types of activities as at home.

A senior international politics major at Brock University in St. Catherine's, Louth has been involved in politics at the university, province and national level.

"Politics is one of the big interests in my life," she said. "I'm happy to be able to pursue it here."

She received an internship in state Sen. Don Wesely's office through the UNL political science department. She said she is learning a great deal about non-partisan government by working there.

Ontario's parliament is similar to Nebraska's in that it is unicameral, she said, but Canadian legislatures are party-controlled. Louth said she understands the important difference between partisan and non-partisan politics because of her work with David R. Peterson, leader of the opposition in the Ontario parliament.

She said one of the highlights working with Wesely was a visit to the governor's mansion.

"I had heard so much about Bob Kerrey before coming here... and I made a goal to meet him," she said. "I was surprised that I got the opportunity only a month after I arrived in Lincoln."

Sports and physical fitness are also important to Louth. She enjoyed teaching evening exercise classes for friends at Brock University last year, she said, and now directs fitness classes for the members of her residence hall floor.

"The health and fitness craze has spread everywhere," she said.

Louth is a member of the UNL crew team. She said she is surprised that the team receives no university funding, while football is well supported.

"I like the 'Big Red' craze," she said. "Canada's colors, you know, ... but why football?"

Brock University is small, "perhaps 2,500 students," Louth said. "There's real one-on-one relationship between students and professors. We even go out for a drink with them sometimes to discuss classes and current issues."

She said she expected to feel more intimidated by the size of UNL.

"It's a big university," she said, "but I get the sense of a small one."

Louth said her instructors here have been very helpful, and she has met many people already. She has become friends with a number of students by being a little sister to a campus fraternity.

"It has some faults," she said, "but I think the Greek system is a good idea, especially for a kid in his or her first year away from home."

She said she has not become active in international student groups such as International House because she is too busy with other activities and because she doesn't feel she needs what they have to offer.

"I don't think of myself as an international student," she said. "Canada and the U.S. are so alike... and what differences I do find are easy to adjust to because the people are so nice. Nebraskans are really friendly."

Homesickness has not been a problem, Louth said, because she has spent long periods away from home before.

After secondary school, she studied nursing for a year and a half in Toronto before deciding that she didn't like the field. She was a bartender for six months, then she flew to Europe to study and work for a year. She said the biggest challenge of her life so far was "stepping off that plane in Paris, not knowing the language, with nobody there to meet me."

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Staff photo by Craig Anderson

## Senior senator

William A. Ceppia, a silver-haired senator from Kearney, ponders the fate of a bill in hearing. Despite severe budget cutbacks this year, the Silver-Haired Unicameral received contributions that allowed it to go into session Monday to Wednesday.

## Lectures on handicapped

Ellen McGinnis, consultant for programs for behavior disordered students at the Grantwood Area Education Agency in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, will present a lecture Thursday on "Teaching Social Skills to Mildly Handicapped Students."

The lecture, sponsored by the Barkley Center as part of the Barkley Lecture Series, will be in two parts Thursday in Room 313 of the Barkley Center on the UNL East Campus.

The first lecture, at 4:30 p.m., will deal with "What Does It Take To Be Good?" and the second, "If I Knew How To Be Good, I Wouldn't Be Bad," will be at 7:30 p.m.

McGinnis is currently writing a new book with Arnold Goldstein for younger children based on the book "Skillstreaming the Adolescent." She is a doctoral candidate at the University of Iowa and has taught behavior disordered students. She has been a consultant in the area of behavior disorders for more than ten years in Arizona and Iowa.

The presentation is sponsored by the Barkley Center in cooperation with the Lincoln Public Schools.

Interested professionals are invited to attend either or both parts of the lecture.

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