

RALUT Annual General Meeting 2005

RALUT AGM, 5th May 2005

Interim University of Toronto President Frank Iacobucci opened the proceedings after lunch with a beguiling, informal and frank speech focussing first on how much he felt at home with the familiar faces in the audience. He expressed thanks to RALUT for sending him a "Care Package" after the upsetting office invasion he had experienced earlier in the academic year.

Reminding the audience of the years of underfunding endured by the University of Toronto, he said that he was cautiously optimistic that the provincial budget scheduled to be released the following week would be responsive to the universities' financial needs as advocated in the Rae report. He underlined the pre-eminence of the University of Toronto among all those in Ontario, which means that ideally our university would be funded above rather than below or at the national average. He paid tribute to the federal government for a recent history of generous science funding but warned vigilance was necessary to ensure this funding continued.

He praised the 'Stepping Up' document, and urged that it continue to be used as a framework. He stressed that the University must get and retain the very best students, and must also enhance accessibility, the latter an initiative that began 35 years ago. He advocated widening entrance criteria so that students with unconventional credentials could be recruited. The student experience on campus must also be improved and to that end, the new stadium will help with new student centres on the three campuses.

He claimed that the end of mandatory retirement at the University of Toronto is an historic landmark in Canadian history. It offers a new way of looking at a career, and also offers a comprehensive range of options. He paid tribute to RALUT's role in achieving this.

In conclusion he noted that the University's current accomplishments are all consequences of the contributions of retirees in the past. On a personal note, President Iacobucci said that the only reason that he could become a Supreme Court Justice was the mentoring he received at the University of Toronto. As he concludes his term as interim president, he expressed much hope and confidence in the new president, Dr. David Naylor. He also looks forward to a continuing association with RALUT.

The regular meeting was called to order at 1:40pm by President Ralph Garber.

1. Approval of agenda. John Munro moved, seconded by Fred Winter, to approve the minutes. The motion was carried.

2. Approval of the minutes of the 2004 AGM. Jacquie Chapman moved, seconded by Roselyn Stone, that the minutes be approved. The motion was carried.

3. President's report. Ralph Garber expressed warm appreciation to the RALUT executive, committee chairs, members and staff as well as to George Luste. He noted that the prospects for senior scholars and a retiree centre look good. He was pleased that social activities appear bound

for success. He also noted how important it was that RALUT had a presence in CURAC and AROHE. More progress is expected in the partnership being developed with York and Ryerson Universities.

4. Treasurer's report. In the absence due to sickness of RALUT treasurer Diane Henderson, the report was distributed to all those in attendance. Joan Winearls moved, seconded by Germain Warkentin, that the treasurer's report be approved. The motion was carried.

5. The retiree centre report. Vice-president Lino Grima presented a written report and spoke to its highlights. He noted that the centre will serve retired academics and librarians who do not have facilities available in their departments, colleges or centres. It is also hoped that the University administration may wish to consolidate the services it offers to retirees and locate them in a retiree centre. He expressed the hope that by 2005, the University will establish project planning committees for the retiree centres on each of the three campuses. The University of Toronto will be the first university in Canada to have retiree centres. L. Grima moved, seconded by C.J. Baines, that the report be approved. The motion was carried.

6. Senior scholars committee report. Committee chair Germaine Warkentin submitted a written report and gave highlights from it. In response to a question, she said that a senior scholar was a retiree who wished to continue academic work. She extended an invitation to all those interested to attend a brainstorming session on May 18 to develop a questionnaire for those about to retire in order to determine how they would like to continue their university activities. At a question about the role of the committee vis-a-vis stipends for retirees teaching courses, reference was made to items (d) and (e) in the agreement between the Governing Council of the University of Toronto and the U of T Faculty Association on retirement matters (14 March 2005). In particular, (d) specifies that such teaching will be remunerated to at least the overload stipend rate negotiated with UTFA. G. Warkentin moved, seconded by H. LeRiche, that the report be approved. The motion was carried.

7. Policy committee report: Campus-area housing for university retirees. Committee chair Don Bellamy submitted a written report. He noted that housing projects of this nature have been established in the US. In order to develop a similar facility here, a conference is planned in the next academic year that will bring together a variety of experts. A needs assessment will be required and a survey of the financial status of potential residents. Financing such a project will be a major issue. Don Bellamy moved, seconded by L. Grima, that the report be received. The motion was carried.

8. UTFA Council Members Report. Ed Barbeau presented a brief report noting that mandatory retirement has been the major issue addressed. This subject has been treated in the Reporter.

9. Membership Committee Report. Having submitted a report, Beate Lowenberg touched on highlights such as the partnership with Prime Mentors of Canada, the establishment of lunch meetings at the Faculty Club open to all retired faculty, and the importance of RALUT members actively recruiting new members. B. Lowenberg moved that the report be received. The motion was carried.

10. Benefit Committee report: Grievances. Having submitted a report, Doug Creelman listed important issues still to be addressed such as an effective grievance system for retirees when problems are encountered with Green Shield. He drew attention to the contributions and the deaths of three RALUT members, John Hastings, Jim Giffen and Harvey Kerpneck. A question arose to which there appeared to be no firm answer, namely whether benefits for retirees were the same as for active faculty. D. Creelman requested information be sent to him respecting one retiree who appears not to have received equivalent benefits. D. Creelman moved that his report be received. The motion was carried.

11. Pensions Committee Report. George Milbrandt noted that the last three issues of the Reporter have included reports on this committee's activities. In particular, he noted the submission of the Committee's statement of Policies and Principles in the handout. One important issue is the development of a pensions negotiating position for RALUT regarding the current UTFA salary, benefits and pensions negotiations with the University Administration. He also noted the benefits of having joint working groups at UTFA which permitted a proactive rather than reactive stance. G. Milbrandt moved that the report be received. The motion was carried.

12. Newsletter and Communications Report. Fred Wilson thanked all those who had contributed to the issues. John Munro asked if the Reporter was going to go online. In fact, the reporter went online on May 5 and can be accessed at www.ralut.utoronto.ca.

13. Nominating committee report. Cornelia Baines submitted a written report.

C.J. Baines moved, seconded by G. Milbrandt, that the slate as listed be approved for membership on the RALUT Executive Committee. The motion was carried.

C.J. Baines moved, seconded by Joan Winearls, that Peter Russell be appointed Honorary President in recognition of his contributions as founding president and his continuing exemplary contributions to RALUT; that as Honorary President he has a standing invitation to attend all RALUT committee meetings; and that he be extended a life membership in RALUT. The motion was carried.

C.J. Baines moved, seconded by G. Milbrandt, that RALUT extend its appreciation to Ann Schabas for her enormous contribution to its current success, in particular recognizing the major role she played in establishing the RALUT database and wishing her much happiness and success in the future. The motion was carried.

14. CURAC Annual Conference report: Winnipeg, 2004; Invitation to Vancouver, 2005. Peter Russell urged members to attend CURAC in Vancouver in May, 2005. Retirement needs to be rethought and CURAC has a major role to play. It will be incorporated federally as a not-for-profit entity. He offered a tribute to John Dirks for his role in starting CURAC.

15. Other business. Doug Creelman paid a warm tribute to outgoing president Ralph Garber. He reminded everyone that RALUT wanted a role in Governing Council and that Ralph has pursued this aim for 6 months with 'jovial hectoring'. His other attributes include being a superb punster

and an excellent organizer. D. Creelman moved to extend a vote of thanks to Ralph Garber for his contribution to RALUT and continuing activity. The motion was carried.

16. Adjournment. Outgoing president Ralph Garber expressed his thanks to all and, at 3:30 pm, moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was carried.