

NEWS

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Special to the Port Hope Independent

Port Hope student now a university "don"

Most people think of the word "don" as a name but for Nancy Novinka, of Port Hope, it means responsibilities. She became a residence supervisor, dubbed don, at Clara Conrad Hall for women at Wilfrid Laurier University last spring.

Novinka, a graduate of Port Hope Secondary School, wanted to fulfill an old dream of having this kind of responsibility in university. She also wanted to help fellow students in residence. "I had a friend who was a don so I wanted to do it."

The don system at Wilfrid Laurier University helps break the ice for the freshmen, many of whom haven't been away from home in their lives. It tries to lessen the fright of university most frosh experience. "This appealed to me."

Nancy is responsible for 18 students who share a living unit on her floor. She tries to counsel the students both academically as well as socially. "We are not merely social co-ordinators," she added.

She hopes to maintain a good and long-lasting friendship with all the girls on her floor.

"The process of becoming a don is long and difficult," Miss Novinka said.

After applying to become a don, Nancy was interviewed and had to explain why she would succeed in the post.

Then Nancy had to compete with 17 other applicants who were granted a second interview. This time, they were interviewed by a panel of 6 interviewers.

The candidates were asked further questions and the panel decided on 7 final candidates who would become dons in the girl's residence.

Nancy's life has changed since becoming a don. She finds it difficult to allot her time between her responsibilities in the residence and as a second-year honors business administration student.

The university compensates her for this, however, by offering free residence and a reduction on her meal plan.

After graduating, Novinka hopes to attain a management position. She has already begun to work towards this goal: she is enrolled in the Royal Bank management trainee program during her summer breaks.

Novinka has learned a great deal being a don. She has better insight to the problems of students as well as learning how to help others.