

Lindsey Baston

University life a welcome change

By BRUCE STAPLEY

When Lindsey Baston checked into residence at the University of Guelph last September, she was overwhelmed.

The Clarke Street resident had just completed an enjoyable high school career at Stouffville District Secondary School. A "people person," she delighted in the familiarity of roaming the same halls as many of her friends since Grade 8.

An orientation tour of her chosen university in June seemed innocent enough. Of course, the facility was relatively dormant at that time of year. However, when she arrived to stay in September, it was totally different.

"My first reaction was I was just this little person in a huge group of people. You don't know anyone. You're sitting in these huge lecture halls all by yourself."

However, those feelings of bewilderment were short-lived, thanks in part to being one of six Stouffville teens who chose this university and partly due to the university's introductory social program for freshmen.

"You quickly settle into the swing of things," she said. "There was so much to be involved in the first week, and I was constantly meeting people. There were scavenger hunts, teams in residences and I even played intramural football."

Lindsey explained that having five friends from home close by served to their advantage.

"We were all in different residences," she explains. "But we all met people and were then able to come together and meet everybody else's new friends."

Such new acquaintances included people from Prince Edward Island and Thunder Bay. She came to appreciate the social aspect as being automatic, as most were anxious to establish a well-rounded network.

The biggest difficulty of the first semester was learning self-discipline, she discovered.

"The social aspect is so important you soon find yourself having to regulate it," she says.

She found the workload enormous.

"I've never done so much homework in my life," she admits. "It's not uncommon to find yourself studying on a Saturday night."

The rigors of the semester system are such that each assignment, and mid-term exam, become crucial. Lindsey recalls her anxiety when faced with the mid-term examination.

"It was so scary. I didn't know what to expect. Many of the questions were multiple choice, and I really had to concentrate."

Choosing sciences as her field of study, she's required to take calculus, botany, chemistry and philosophy. The big plus about the semester system, she feels, is even though you are forced to cram from start to finish, when you go home for Christmas break, there's no work to be done. The new year brings a clean slate of courses, enabling students to

recharge the batteries over the holidays.

Lindsey said she's relieved to have that first semester behind her.

"I learned a lot," she says. "Discipline is so important. There's no one to say: 'Shouldn't you be doing your homework?' Instead, you have to say to yourself: 'Look, it has to be done.'"

The temptation to skip classes can be great, she admits, especially when you're behind and feel

the hour would be better spent catching up.

Lindsey says she gets a kick out of seeing how so many students regulate their breaks from the routine.

"The lounge would be packed at 4:30 for The Young and the Restless," she recalls. "Then as soon as it was over, everyone would suddenly go back to their classes or studying."

Weekends, while often used to catch up on courses needing extra

attention, were still a time for breaking out. According to Lindsey, a student doesn't have to be rich to enjoy a vibrant social life, although, she admits, the automated teller machines take a beating on Thursday and Friday nights.

What lies ahead for Lindsey Baston? "The second semester will be a fresh start," she insists. "I'll pace myself better right from the beginning."

As for her impending career

aspirations, she's still not sure, although establishing a profession, then raising a family are possibilities.

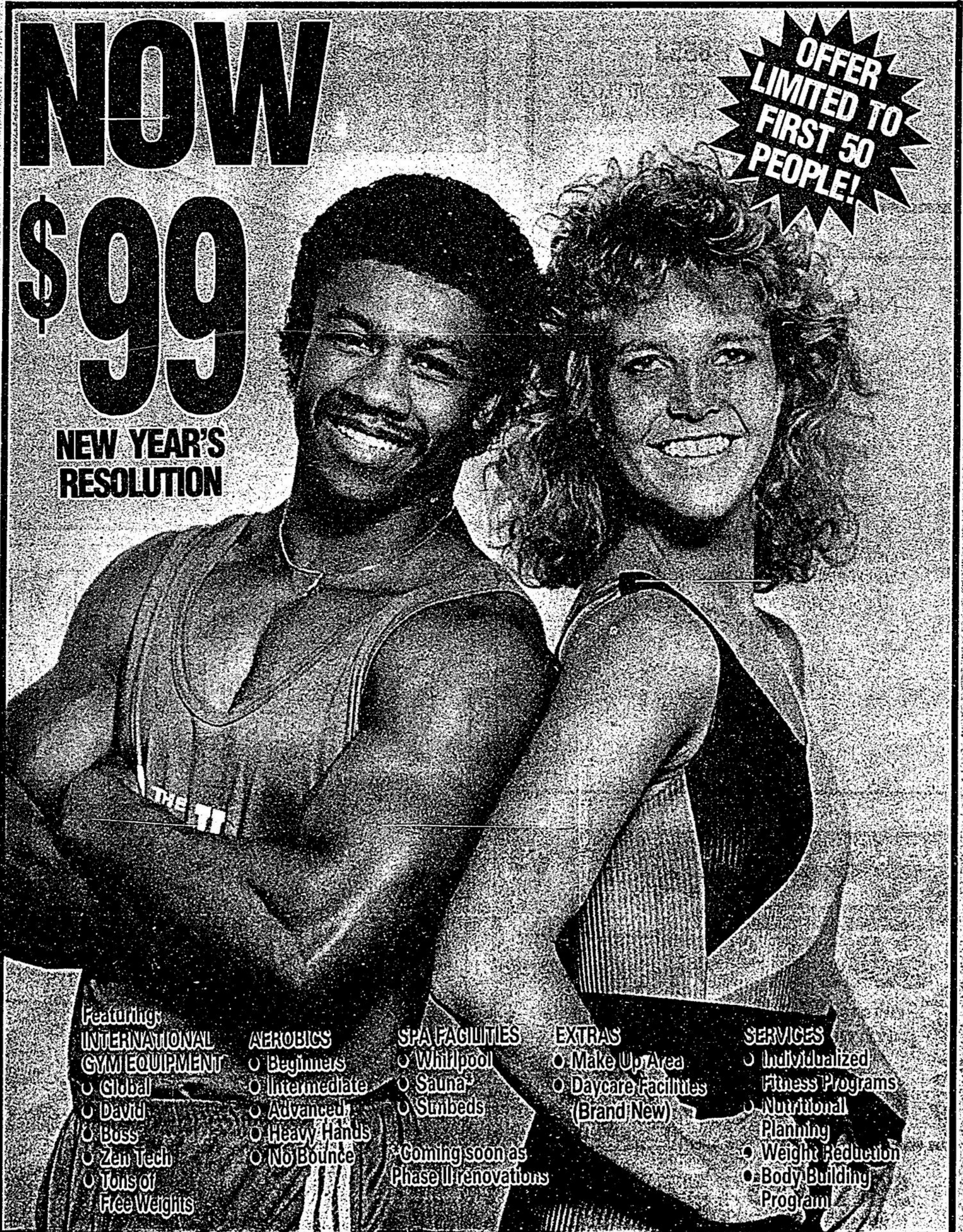
With a successful, fulfilled housewife for a mother, Lindsey sees the value of both career and family. Most of the students on campus, she says, are career-oriented.

Will she ever come to feel the same way about university life as she did about high school?

"I love it already," she smiles.

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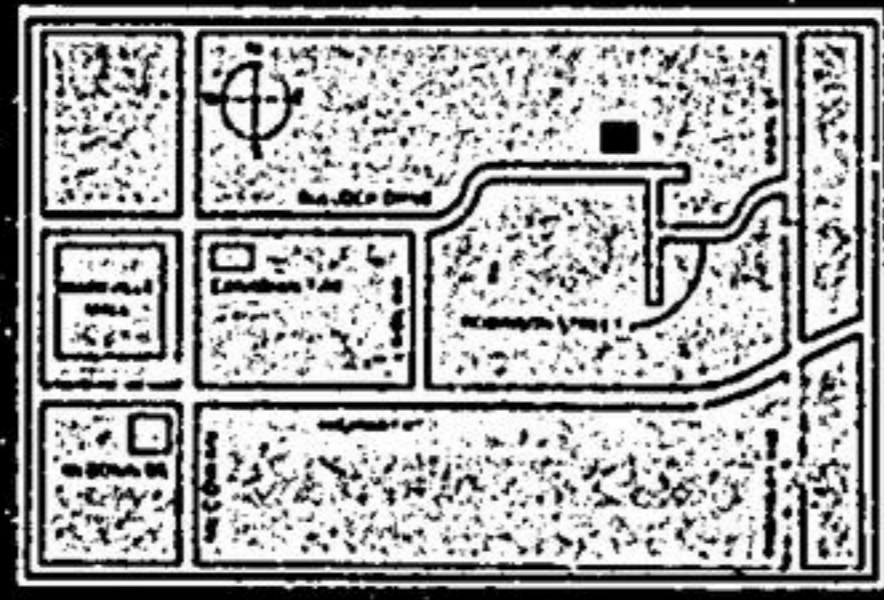
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