

Getting the most out of university life

Nick Ouellette always planned to live in his home province when he finished school – which made the University of New Brunswick an easy choice as his alma mater.

“If you’re going to live in New Brunswick,” he asks, “why not study in New Brunswick?”

On top of earning a bachelor of computer science degree from UNB, he graduated with a law degree in the spring and went on to article with the law offices of Cox & Palmer in Saint John, N.B. in June.

Ouellette kept busy during his time at UNB – he served as a student Board of Governors representative, a student senator, a Student Union councillor, a columnist for the Brunswickan student newspaper, and as a residence proctor and don. A Beaverbrook Scholarship recipient, he also received the James Downey Student Leadership Award during his first degree.

Although he grew up in Hatfield Point, N.B. and studied for both of his degrees in Fredericton, Ouellette is excited to work in his native Saint John and be part of its growing community.

“My goal is to stay here and continue the work that UNB has let me start in terms of contributing to my community,” says Ouellette. “For students graduating from UNB now, if they’re looking to have full engagement in the place around them, Saint John would be one of the better places to live.”

A campus of opportunity

Contributing to his community is important to Ouellette, who says his penchant for doing so is a function of his upbringing – both at home and in the school system.

“Why does anybody want to be involved in the community? They want to make things better for themselves and the people who come after them.”

Getting involved at UNB was easy from the start, he explains.

“If you want to be involved, there are lots of opportunities for it, but even more importantly, there are people who push you towards those things,” says Ouellette.

“If you’re a person who has a real interest in becoming involved in your community, then you can turn to any number of avenues here on campus, and have opportunities that you didn’t even know about before you were looking for them.”

Pushing in the right direction

Ouellette began his time at UNB Fredericton living in Neville House, becoming a residence proctor during his time there and assistant house don when it merged with another residence to become Neville/Jones. He spent his last year as don of the house, overseeing the well being of students of the residence.

During his eight years there, he became very involved with its Bed Push charity – an annual event where, on a crisp October evening, the residents of Neville/Jones push a bed from Saint John to Fredericton to raise funds for Fredericton’s Women in Transition House, Inc.

Bed Push has helped raise over \$200,000 for the transition house since 1993. Ouellette was the chief organizer of the fundraiser for three years, and while he stepped back from that role in recent years, he still actively helped organize the fundraiser.

“We fundraise approximately 60 to 70 per cent of our funding,” says Erica Gorman, president of the transition house. “Bed Push has brought in a significant amount of that. Nick Ouellette has worked extremely hard to organize this year in, year out. Without Nick’s efforts in raising this money, Transition House wouldn’t be where it is today.”