

Speaker of the
Legislative Assembly



SASKATCHEWAN

129 Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0B3
Tel (306) 787-2282
Fax (306) 787-2283
Speaker@legassembly.sk.ca

For Immediate Release
December 21, 2007

LEGISLATIVE INTERNS SELECTED FOR 2008

The Hon. Don Toth, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, today announced the names of the four Saskatchewan university students who will serve as interns to members of the Assembly during 2008. They will participate as part of the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program (SLIP).

The four Saskatchewan Legislative Interns are:

- **Patrick Button** from Regina, a fourth-year student at the University of Regina who is working towards a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree with a major in economics and a minor in political science
- **Avery Kelly** from Regina, a fourth-year Bachelor of Arts student at the University of Regina, who is completing the requirements for a major in political science and minor in philosophy and in leadership and dialogue
- **Dwayne Meisner**, originally from Eston and currently from Regina, who is a fourth-year Bachelor of Arts (Honours) student at the University of Regina, with a major in history and a minor in religious studies and classics
- **Justin Redekop** from Herbert, who has a diploma in architectural technology from the South Alberta Institute of Technology and who is completing a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Saskatchewan, with a major in political studies.

They will commence their internship in January 2008.

SLIP is a seven-month academic program, which provides students with an opportunity to observe and participate in the day-to-day work of Saskatchewan MLAs.

“This is a unique educational experience for senior university students and recent graduates to expand their understanding of political processes and parliamentary governance in our province”, said Speaker Toth, who also serves a patron of the Program. “I had the pleasure of mentoring an intern in 2007 and enjoyed the opportunity to provide that intern with direct experience in, and with an operational perspective of, our democratic structures and systems.”

Through SLIP, students are assigned to MLAs on both sides of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. This consists of approximately three months with a member of the Government caucus and then three months with a member of the Opposition caucus. The MLAs who will mentor the 2008 interns will be announced in January.

The interns are required to be politically neutral and to keep information in confidence as they assist their assigned member with research, speech-writing, committee duties, and some constituency work. They will not do partisan tasks, such as campaigning or fundraising for political parties.

The interns are selected from applications submitted from Saskatchewan university students. The selection committee – consisting of two former speakers of the Legislative Assembly, representatives from the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, a former intern, and the program's Director – reviewed the applications and interviewed candidates.

“2008 will mark the Program's seventh year of operation”, said Ken Pontikes, Director for the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program. “Since its inception and including the 2008 interns, twenty-nine students have participated in the Program. Many of our alumni are now employed in significant positions within the Saskatchewan government and in other organizations.”

The Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program has been a joint project of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, and Rawlco Radio. The core program, involving the interns' assignment to MLAs, is funded by the Legislative Assembly. A separate intern development component, where interns travel to other jurisdictions (e.g. capital cities in Canada and in other countries) to observe and compare legislative processes, is funded by the two universities, Rawlco Radio, three corporate sponsors (The Co-operators Group, First Canadian Title, and SGI), and several donors. The interns have received funding support from the University of Regina's Students' Union and the University of Saskatchewan's Arts and Science Students' Union.

- 30 -

Biographies on each of the interns have been attached.

For further information, please contact:

Ken Pontikes
Director
Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program
c/o Department of Political Studies, University of Saskatchewan

Telephone: (306) 374-3873
E-mail: kpontikes@sasktel.net