



NEW ZEALAND UNION OF STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS (INC.)

TE RŌPŪ ĀKONGA O NGĀ WHARE WĀNANGA O AOTEAROA

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Press Release

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Attention: Education and Political reporters

Students reject appalling TVNZ generalisations

Student leaders reject the appalling generalisations cast on students by an unbalanced story on the student loan scheme, aired on TVNZ's 'Close Up' programme Tuesday evening.

Three tertiary students were profiled in the report discussing their borrowing from the loans scheme, and investing this money rather than using it for living costs, as intended by the scheme.

"Most students don't borrow to invest, they borrow to live. The appalling behaviour of the very small minority portrayed does not represent the lives of most working and studying students," says NZUSA co-President David Do.

"The vast majority of students are ineligible for a student allowance and do not receive support from their parents. Students borrow living costs from their loan because they have no other choice to support themselves during their education. Students do take their studies seriously and are grateful for the support they do receive," says Do.

Many students also work part-time on top of full-time study. According to the 2007 NZUSA Income and Expenditure survey, 90% of fulltime students undertook some form of paid work during the academic year. Full time students worked an average of 14 hours per week.

"Lots of students have had difficulty finding work during the summer period, so are starting the year with less savings than usual. Many students would usually use summer jobs to help save money to offset some of their living and academic costs during the year. In the absence of such jobs, this will increase financial pressure on students, and increase student poverty and student debt," says Do.

NZUSA welcomes Minister Joyce's recognition that "for the most part people are actually being very fair in the way they are using [loans and allowances]"¹

"However, TVNZ has effectively encouraged irresponsible behaviour by deliberately seeking out a very small minority of students who wish to publicise and revel in their behaviour and own lack of responsibility. TVNZ is funded in part by taxpayer's money. It is a waste of taxpayer's money to encourage other people to waste taxpayer's money," concludes Do.

NZUSA is the national representative body for tertiary students and has been advocating on student issues since 1929.

ENDS

For more information contact NZUSA co-President David Do, 027 486 8677.

¹ Approximately 9 minutes 50 seconds into the video clip, online at www.tvnz.co.nz/closeup