

# UPEI's Rainbow Alliance society is no drag

By **Sebastian Baglole**  
*Panther Post*

The Rainbow Alliance society is just burgeoning now here at UPEI. If you don't know what I'm talking about don't be alarmed, it's only now just beginning to gain some ground.

In the works from the RA is a drag pageant which will be scheduled in the next few weeks.

The Panther Post tracked down Hollye Mackinnon, a member of the board committee for the Alliance, and she gladly caught us up.

HM: [about the idea of a Rainbow society at UPEI] "I didn't even know there was one on campus. It's really kinda sad because I think it reflects P.E.I. in general. I thought that we should have a big event to get our name out there. They put on a coffee house which is really cool and that always brings in a lot of people, but we wanted to do something really different and work with ARC [the Abegweit Rainbow Coalition], because I know they put on drag shows before. If we did something like that then I know we'd get more publicity."

PP: "So why do you think that the RA hasn't gotten much exposure? Because I hadn't heard about it until I saw the flyer."

HM: "Heather Hunter, the chairperson of it, brought it up again, but something like this shouldn't be underground at all. I mean, we are a society, just as much as any

other society, like the Psychology society or Business society..."

PP: "How long has it [the RA] been around?"

HM: "I'm not sure, I've been at UPEI for 3 years and it's only this year I've walked by a movie poster and said, 'The Rainbow Alliance, what is this, what the hell?' I didn't even know we had such a thing... We had to reschedule .. I think we're going to get in contact with the Royal Court over in Halifax. It's a group of drag queens and a pretty successful group. Dal had them for their society [The Queer Society] and it was a big hit, they donated to a bunch of different charities."

PP: "And right now you're trying to host it at Mavor's?"

HM: "This is from Michael Walsh on the Arts committee; if we work closer with them we might be able to get a spot on a Friday or Saturday night because we might pull more people."

PP: "What is the benefit of this pageant? What would you like to see come out of it?"

HM: "Overall, the fundraising aspect for AIDS PEI. I think it's really important to have an open event like that to represent the gay culture on the Island, any alternative culture. And I think a lot of people would really like to see it... It's unbelievable, the amount of people who called me asking when it's going to be, but so many saying they couldn't make it because of work .. It's crazy."

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PP: "So you mentioned the Royal Court, a successful troupe, but you also mentioned getting a sports team involved?"

HM: "That's something we want, we tried to get in contact with a bunch of different teams. It would be kinda cool you know, if we got some big names around campus, that people really knew, and put them in the show.."

PP: "For school spirit!"

There's certain people that everyone knows that they'd love to see in drag."

HM: "Exactly! You can picture the huge jocks going up there and dressing up..."

PP: "Or Shawn Younis..."

HM: "Oh my God, he's all for the show. He's been a lot of help, he's been giving us contact names, and every time we've wanted to meet with him he's went out of his

way to meet us."

PP: "Considering this is successful, would you want this to lead to more shows in the future?"

HM: "If it's a success, I'd like to see it stem from that. You don't have to be anything, gay or straight or whatever to go perform in it, it's all for the cause, it's for fun."

It doesn't really matter, and that's the whole point of it, right?"

Dates are undisclosed at this point, but look for flyers coming up round campus for more info. You can also contact the RA at hmackinnon@upei.ca. And participation is encouraged – take a walk on the wild side.

## MA in Island Studies accepting applications

By **Laura Lee Howard**  
*Post Contributor*

The Master of Arts in Island Studies (MAIS) program, is now accepting applications for fall 2009.

All those who apply by March 1 will automatically be considered for an entrance scholarship.

This interdisciplinary graduate program is international and comparative, and allows students to explore international islands from the angles that most intrigue them. The program's small class sizes and opportunities for one-on-one interaction with supervisors permit students to design their studies to match their interests and goals.

The program is also uniquely designed to build on partnerships with universities and researchers on other islands, far and near, and students can expect facilitated collaboration with students and experts on islands as far flung as Malta, Tasmania, and Kagoshima.

Master of Arts in Island Studies student Faiz Ahmed defended his Island Studies thesis last August, and has been studying on the island of Kagoshima, Japan, since. In exchange, International University of Kagoshima student Shinobu Uchi came to UPEI in August and spent the last four months with the MAIS program, learning about literature on small islands, as well as snowshoe-

ing and meeting new friends. Both of these students benefitted from the depth of experience and wealth of knowledge that this program offers.

"P.E.I. is taking a leading role in something that it can claim experience in and knowledge of that other institutions, lacking an island environment, could not legitimately claim," Grant McCall, President of International Small Island Studies Association said.

For more information on the MAIS program, check out the MAIS website [www.upei.ca/mais](http://www.upei.ca/mais) or drop into the Offices for the MAIS program, which are now centrally located in the first floor of Main building.