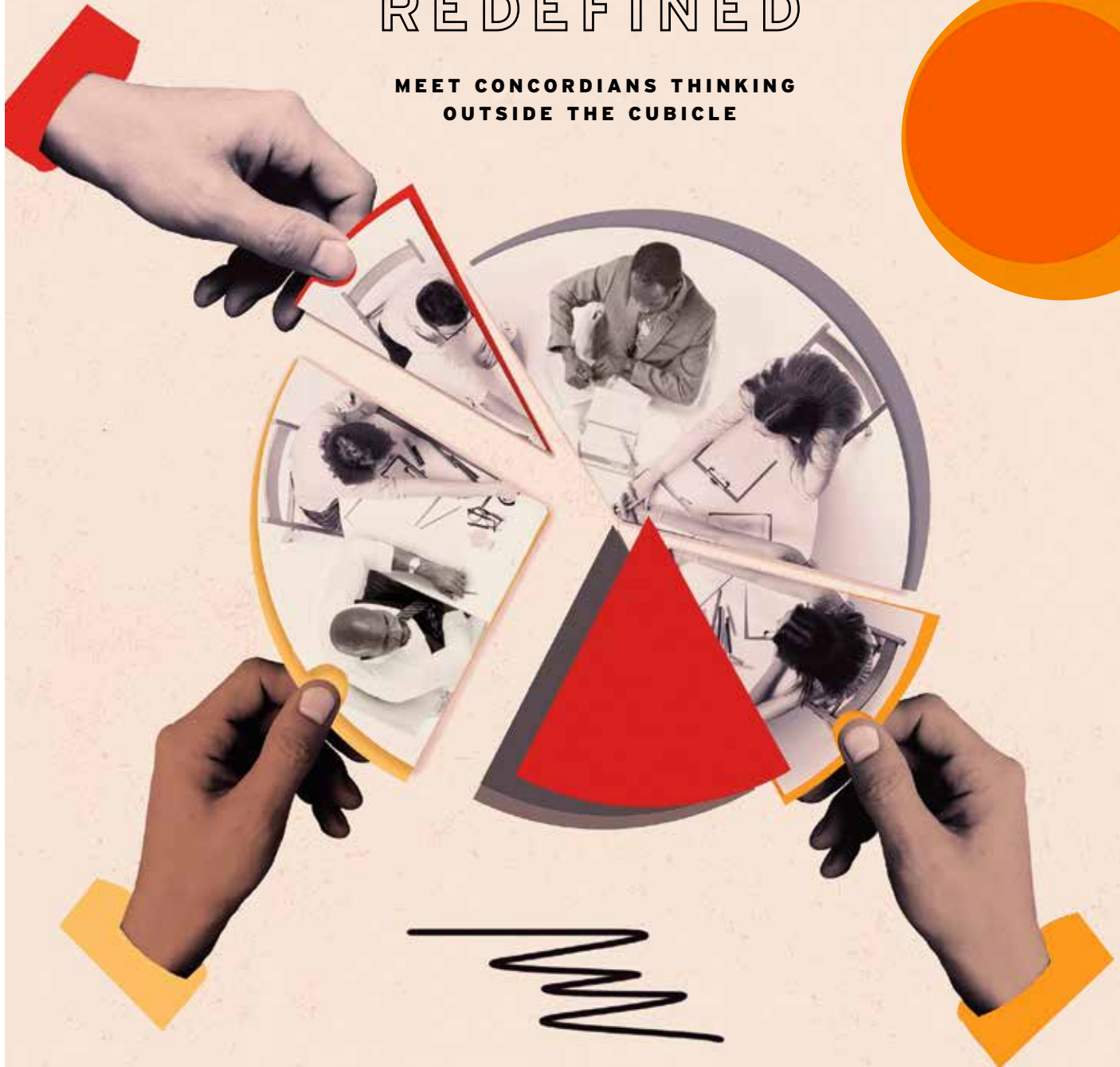


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OUTSIDE THE CUBICLE





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BRINGING THE CITY TO LIFE
Concordians are elevating Montreal's streets, one mural at a time



POSITIVE INFLUENCE
Harnessing social media to promote mental-health awareness

THE WORLD OF WORK REDEFINED
Meet Concordians thinking outside the cubicle

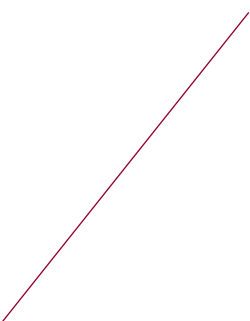


WHO IS WELCOME HERE?
On the front lines of immigration and refugee work

spring 2023 volume 47 number 1
concordia.ca/magazine

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Success tomorrow requires flexibility today

The way we work, and what the office of the future might look like, is something I often think about. I imagine it's on the minds of many of you, as well.

COVID-19 pandemic aside, various factors including technological advances, the rising cost of living and demographic shifts have accelerated the need to reconsider the 9 to 5 — how we produce, how we collaborate and from where.

The pandemic has upended the ways so many people work and, three years later, has drastically shifted how work is perceived and experienced. It has allowed for more flexibility, reduced commutes and better overall work-life balance for some, but it has not been without its challenges. Remote work has also blurred the boundaries between personal and work life, has transformed the way we communicate and has introduced new stresses to mental health.

Not everyone has had the option to work remotely, either. Some industries and front-line jobs that will always require a physical presence haven't had a break in routine. Yet the workplace for these employees will likely change in the years ahead, too, with companies increasingly investing in new technologies, from AI-powered automation and chatbots to virtual-reality tools that can help with training for complex tasks.

Considering these and other developments, there's widespread consensus that the need exists — and will remain — for a more human-centric

approach. This means creating spaces that prioritize employees' health and well-being, and requiring leaders to be more flexible and empathetic. Three years on, companies large and small are still figuring out what works best in terms of producing optimal output while ensuring that workers have what they need to thrive in an ever-evolving economy.

Following reviews of research, as well as through consultations with industry leaders, Deloitte concluded that by 2030 "Canada will be home to a leading hybrid work environment that promotes inclusive growth and benefits all working individuals." But how do we get there? We don't know what offices will look like in three, five or 10 years from now. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, but future success will highly depend on the ability to accept different working styles and accommodation needs.

It's a big topic, one likely to remain front of mind for years ahead. Our cover story delves deeper into the conversation, looking at both the benefits and disadvantages of these changes to the world of work (p. 36).

In this issue, you will additionally read about how social media can serve as a valuable tool to promote mental-health awareness and build community



(p. 32). Concordia researchers and alumni also share insight into some of the challenges and opportunities involved in the process of welcoming refugees and asylum seekers (p. 42). Finally, if you've seen any of the colourful murals adorning Montreal's buildings, it's likely there's a Concordian behind it.

I invite you to learn more about some of the grads helping to bring the city to life with the non-profit mural organization MU (p. 26).

From pioneering research and award-winning work to record-breaking support for initiatives related to equity, diversity and inclusion, our alumni and friends are making their mark here at Concordia and around the world.

I hope you enjoy reading these stories — and perhaps even have your own to share. Planning around Concordia's 50th-anniversary year is ramping up. If you have a standout story we should know about ahead of our 2024-25 celebrations, we want to hear it. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome.

Until the next issue, I wish you all the best.

Marta Samuel, GrDip 10
Editor, *Concordia University Magazine*
magazine@concordia.ca

BUILDING BRIDGES

With the launch of the **Kaié:ri Nikawerà:ke Indigenous Bridging Program** — designed to help Indigenous community members gain the necessary prerequisites to study at Concordia — the university has forged a **new admissions pathway for First Nations, Inuit and Métis students**. The program, made possible in part thanks to support from Richard Paterson, BComm 64, is one of the steps outlined in Concordia’s Indigenous Directions Action Plan, which provides concrete actions to decolonize and indigenize the university.

INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

“Renewable revolution,” the cover story of the fall 2022 edition of this magazine, garnered the interest of the Embassy of Iceland in Ottawa, which subsequently organized a **meet-up between five ambassadors from Nordic Europe and researchers at Concordia**. “This is an opportunity to explore how we can work co-operatively to address the challenge of climate change,” says **Marek Majewski**, assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. “Our best hope for responding to the global crisis is to support international policymaking and using the multidisciplinary science at our disposal.”



PROPOSALS PUT FORTH BY THE PRESIDENT’S TASK FORCE ON ANTI-BLACK RACISM WERE REAFFIRMED ON FEBRUARY 6 WHEN A PLAQUE WAS UNVEILED AT THE HENRY F. HALL BUILDING TO MARK THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1969 SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY STUDENT PROTEST. PICTURED FROM LEFT: PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR **GRAHAM CARR**; **ANGÉLIQUE WILLKIE**, SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE PROVOST ON BLACK INTEGRATION AND KNOWLEDGES; AND **ANNE WHITELAW**, BFA 87, GRDIP 92, PHD 96, PROVOST AND VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC.

TACKLING PLASTIC WASTE

The **Concordia Precious Plastic Project (CP₃)** — a multidisciplinary, student-led group that innovates solutions to confront the problem of plastic waste on campus — was recently named a co-winner of the **first ENLIGHT Global Citizenship Award** and invited to attend a ceremony in France this fall. Created five years ago with a focus on excess generated by 3D printers, CP₃’s work has since evolved to include a variety of household plastic waste, most notably from the Grey Nuns student residence on Sir George Williams Campus.

AI ALLIANCE

Concordia’s **Applied AI Institute** and **AI Sweden**, the Nordic country’s national centre for applied AI, have forged a new partnership focused on health-care innovation, cybersecurity, sustainability and more. Says **Alex Megelas**, MA 14, the institute’s manager of research innovation and business development: “[It’s] an **incredible opportunity for us to position our students**, programs, faculty and research in service of international commitments. We are coming up with funding strategies to attract students and researchers to Montreal, and for our students and researchers to go to Sweden.”



CONCORDIA'S BLACK PERSPECTIVES OFFICE (BPO) ANNOUNCED **THREE RESEARCH FELLOWS** FOR 2023. FROM LEFT ARE GRADUATE STUDENTS **DALIA ELSAYED**, **ANTHONY MCLACHLAN**, BA 18, AND **ANICK JASMIN**, BENG 21. THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM WAS "CREATED AS A TANGIBLE MEANS OF PROMOTING THE RICHNESS AND BREADTH OF BLACK KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES," SAYS BPO'S NEW MANAGER, MAURICE RILEY CASE.

TOP HONOURS FOR ENGINEERING RESEARCHERS

Groundbreaking work on direct-sound printing technology by engineering researchers **Muthukumaran Packirisamy**, PhD 00, **Mohsen Habibi**, PhD 16, and **Shervin Foroughi**, MAsc 18, has been recognized by *Québec Science* magazine as **one of the top scientific breakthroughs of 2022**. The technology leverages ultrasound waves to create precise, complex 3D objects in areas not easily reached by conventional methods.

TRIUMPH AT COMMERCE GAMES

Undergraduate students from the John Molson School of Business excelled at the **2023 Jeux du Commerce**, with 10 podium finishes across seven academic disciplines. Concordia placed third overall at the event, held in January at HEC Montréal.

A MONTH AFTER CONCORDIA TOOK PART IN A DELEGATION TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE OFFICE OF THE CANADA-ASEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (CABC) OPENED AT THE JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS. A SPECIAL INAUGURATION CEREMONY, ATTENDED BY PRESIDENT **GRAHAM CARR** AND JOHN MOLSON DEAN **ANNE-MARIE CROTEAU**, INCLUDED SPECIAL GUESTS **LOUIS VACHON**, LLD 19, FORMER CEO OF NATIONAL BANK AND CABC CO-CHAIR; THE HONOURABLE **JEAN CHAREST**, FORMER PREMIER OF QUEBEC AND HONORARY CABC CHAIR; AND **THI BE NGUYEN**, BCOMM 98, CABC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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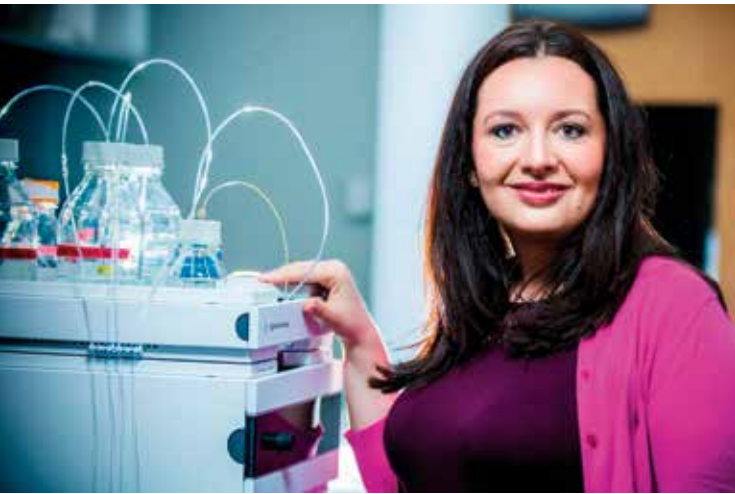
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Join the conversation using **#CUmagazine** and by following **@ConcordiaAlumni** on social media.



DAJANA VUCKOVIC BECAME THE FIRST CONCORDIA PROFESSOR TO WIN THE PRESTIGIOUS **FRED BEAMISH AWARD**, PRESENTED BY THE CHEMICAL INSTITUTE OF CANADA. A MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY AND BIOCHEMISTRY AND DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR BIOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS OF MASS SPECTROMETRY, VUCKOVIC WAS RECOGNIZED FOR HER **IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD OF ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY**.

\$1.5M AWARDED FOR 9 RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Canada Foundation for Innovation's **John R. Evans Leaders Fund** awarded more than **\$1.5 million** to bolster nine research projects at Concordia. The support from the federal program — which helps institutions recruit and retain researchers as well as acquire the tools that enable innovative research — will, among other work, help Concordia researchers study the link between poor sleep and memory decline in older adults, design a new system to test electric vehicles, and map the neural network of the cerebellum.

A PROJECT CO-LED BY **KAYLEIGH HUTT-TAYLOR**, MSc 22, AND **CARLY ZITER**, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY, **CATALOGUED TREE DIVERSITY** IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AROUND CONCORDIA'S LOYOLA CAMPUS, WITH ANALYSIS AND RESULTS PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL *URBAN FORESTRY & URBAN GREENING*.



FINE-ARTS STUDENT **JASON SIKOAK**, A MEMBER OF THE INUIT COMMUNITY OF RIGOLET, NUNATSIAVUT, IN LABRADOR, **HONOURED RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS** WITH HIS WINNING TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION KEEPSAKE COIN DESIGN. NET PROCEEDS FROM THE COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION, WHICH CAN BE PURCHASED THROUGH THE ROYAL CANADIAN MINT, WILL GO TO THE NA-MI-QUAI-NI-MAK COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND.

ANTI-RACISM ADVISOR APPOINTED

Concordia's **Equity Office** welcomed **Dona Nham** as **senior advisor on anti-racism** on November 7. Nham arrives with more than seven years of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) facilitation experience, most recently as an equity education advisor at McGill University. "We are so fortunate to be able to add Dona to our team. She is extremely well qualified and brings a true passion and vision to her role," says **Lisa White**, BA 12, the Equity Office's executive director.



PHD CANDIDATES NAMED VANIER SCHOLARS

Molecular biology student **Mackenzie Thornbury** and psychology student **Sara Matovic**, MA 22, are the latest Concordia doctoral researchers to be awarded **Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships**. Thornbury was recognized for her work on yeast engineering and organic acids. Matovic was honoured for her research on the impact of childhood trauma on emotional well-being. Launched in 2008 by the Government of Canada, the Vanier scholarship program aims to position the country as a global centre of excellence in graduate research.



CONCORDIA'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVED **EFFROSYNI (FAYE) DIAMANTOUDI** FOR A **FIVE-YEAR TERM AS DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES**. DIAMANTOUDI HAD SERVED AS INTERIM DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES SINCE FEBRUARY 2020. THIS FOLLOWED NINE YEARS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE AS ASSOCIATE DEAN OF RECRUITMENT AND AWARDS AT THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND AS GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS.

NEW THINK TANK TACKLES SUSTAINABILITY

A new Concordia-based think tank, **Sustainability in the Digital Age (SDA)**, hopes to bridge sustainability science and digital innovation to accomplish the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Says **Damon Matthews**, Concordia University Research Chair in Climate Science and Sustainability and SDA scientific co-director: "If we could harness the innovative power of the digital world toward meeting the world's climate and other sustainability goals, we might be able to start making real and rapid progress."



UNDER THE DIRECTION OF **APHRODITE SALAS**, MA 99, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND GRADUATE DIPLOMA PROGRAM DIRECTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM, **TWO JOURNALISM STUDENTS PRESENTED A DOCUMENTARY AT COP15**, THE UN CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY HELD IN MONTREAL LAST DECEMBER. THE FILM, **INNAVIK: LEADING THE WAY TO A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE**, CHRONICLES THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FIRST HYDROELECTRIC FACILITY IN ARCTIC QUEBEC.

'Catalysts of remembrance'

Author and oral historian Aanchal Malhotra grapples with the wrenching history of Partition

DAVID SILVERBERG

In 2013, while on sabbatical from her graduate program in studio arts, Aanchal Malhotra, MFA 15, returned to her hometown of New Delhi, India. It was a trip that would change the trajectory of her artistic career.

In a rare moment of candour, Malhotra's maternal grand-uncle opened up to her about the partition of British India in August 1947. Partition — the arbitrary imposition of new borders by the departing British Raj — forced Hindus and Sikhs to migrate eastward to India, and Muslims westward to Pakistan, displacing some 15 million people. It is estimated that a further one million died during the violent period.

"There was usually silence about Partition, my family didn't talk about it," recalls Malhotra, who eventually moved back to New Delhi in 2016. But through keepsakes her grand-uncle preserved, he revealed how he spent his childhood in Lahore, Pakistan, where he would fly kites and ride his bicycle.

Inspired by that conversation, Malhotra embarked on a decade-long journey to interview generations of families impacted by Partition, compiling an emotional oral history through photographs and interviews. These formed the foundation of two published books: *Remnants of a Partition* (Hurst, 2019), and *In the Language of Remembering* (HarperCollins, 2022).

"There's something about looking at objects as catalysts of remembrance," Malhotra says. These resurfaced memories can do more than offer catharsis, she adds. There's something special about "excavating

a story, witnessing it being uttered and, sometimes for the first time, allowing it to fill the room and hope that its retelling can lead to a learning and prevent such acts from happening again."

She has now shifted away from non-fiction to write her first novel, which focuses on the impact of Partition and the First World War on two families. In *The Book of Everlasting Things* (Flatiron Books, 2022), Malhotra brings readers into late-1930s Lahore, where a perfumer's apprentice and a calligrapher's apprentice fall in love but are soon separated.

"It's a slow-moving book, quiet and tender, that I want readers to really sink into — to really live within — just as I did while writing it," says Malhotra, who will return to Montreal this spring for several book-launch events.

'A UNIQUE JOB, NOT WITHOUT ITS OWN CHALLENGES'

Before fiction crossed her artistic radar, Malhotra studied traditional printmaking and art history at Toronto's Ontario College of Art and Design University. Later, as a graduate student at Concordia, she was struck by how wide-ranging her practice could be.

"It was Eric Simon, a professor I had, who helped me realize how writing can be visual, too, and that idea of multidisciplinary thinking let me explore whatever medium would best express the ideas I had."

In the case of another major project she co-founded, that medium was a website. The Museum of Material Memory acts as a crowdsourced digital hub for anyone to submit stories around the objects that connect them to the history of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other countries of the subcontinent.

Being an oral historian and a writer who mines the past is fulfilling, says Malhotra, but also taxing. "It is a unique job, not without its own challenges, whose most important tenet is to be able to listen without asserting opinion or being coloured by bias, and then to realize that in some way, you will always continue to hold on to this sadness of others." ■



AANCHAL MALHOTRA

INSPIRED BY A CONVERSATION WITH HER GRAND-UNCLE, **AANCHAL MALHOTRA**, MFA 15, INTERVIEWED GENERATIONS OF FAMILIES IMPACTED BY PARTITION, RESULTING IN TWO PUBLISHED BOOKS.

Leveraging creativity at one of Canada's top marketing firms

Sabaa Quao steps into the role of chief creative officer at Cossette

DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

When it comes to the professional world, Sabaa Quao, BComm 89, believes that creativity is one of the most valuable skills you can develop — and even credits it for his own success.

“People are afraid of creativity because it involves taking risks, even though it reliably generates net value,” Quao says. “No matter what industry you enter, if you can be creative, that’s an advantage you can count on.”

An entrepreneur and business strategist, Quao stepped into perhaps the most prestigious role of his career in September 2022. As chief creative officer at Cossette, he is now the national creative leader at the award-winning marketing communications company with roughly 1,000 employees across Canada and a client roster that includes McDonald’s Canada, the Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) and TD.

‘YOU CAN WRITE YOUR OWN TICKET’

Quao’s entrepreneurial journey began when he was designing logos and T-shirts in Montreal as a youth. Now based in Toronto, he says he only realized the full potential of creating successful businesses while studying at Concordia, where he majored in marketing with a minor in entrepreneurship and small-business management.

“In the 1980s, everyone wanted to be an investment banker, but I’ve been interested in the hustle and grind of entrepreneurship since before it was cool,” he says.



SABAA QUAO, BCOMM 89, JOINED COSSETTE AS CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER IN SEPTEMBER 2022.

Harold Simpkins, BA 67, MBA 78, a senior marketing lecturer at the John Molson School of Business, gave Quao his first glimpse into advertising by introducing him to industry professionals at marketing agencies. There, Quao discovered endless possibilities for both artistic exploration and financial success.

“[Simpkins] said, ‘If you can be a creative person and a business person simultaneously, you can write your own ticket.’ That phrase stuck with me,” says Quao.

CREATING CULTURAL ASSETS

Following his studies at Concordia, Quao attended design school in Toronto and founded XCORPORATION. As part of a team of three, he helped launch new brands, often introducing digital concepts to consumer audiences during the technology boom of the 1990s.

The company’s small size belies the immense impact it achieved. One notable mandate was the development of the inaugural launch campaign for the Toronto Raptors NBA team, which included branding an Air Canada plane, designing tickets and creating radio ads, billboards and public-transit ads.

“A point of pride for us was that teens were stealing our posters from city buses,” he says. “We created these little cultural assets that people wanted to keep.”

Quao’s last post at a traditional creative agency was with The Hive, where, among other things, he managed a new decentralized, open-source digital ad agency from within the company.

He then co-founded Newsrooms, which helped brands stay connected to consumers in the social-media age. For the past three years, he’s been working with co-founders and investors on the launch of Wealthie Works Daily, which Quao calls “a financial service and a media company rolled into one.” He is also the co-founder of Filminute, an international one-minute film festival launched in 2006.

EYE ON THE FUTURE

Throughout his career, Quao has strived to guide others towards success. In 2022, he formalized this commitment by becoming a mentor at the Black Wealth Club, where he helps emerging leaders navigate the professional world and achieve their goals.

“I help these individuals recognize the combination of skills and experiences that sets them apart,” he says. “I call it their unique advantage.”

Quao balances building a fintech startup with his leadership role at Cossette as the Quebec City-headquartered firm nears its 50th anniversary. His experience in financial services and continuous-content marketing — which applies to every client using new technology to grow their business — is part of his own unique advantage.

“It’s an exciting time to be able to come on board with the executive team to help define the next 50 years,” he says. ■

Attorney Zoe Salzman makes the case for #MeToo survivors, victims of police violence and more

'I made a very deliberate choice to follow a less conventional path'

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

For many legal professionals, law runs in the family. For Zoe Salzman, BA 03, however, that was decidedly not the case.

"I was the first lawyer in my family, ever," she says. "My parents are film and television producers. When I told them I wanted to be a lawyer, I think they sort of thought, 'What have we done wrong?' I think they came around, but I was definitely the odd one out."

As a partner at Emery Celli Brinckerhoff Abady Ward & Maazel LLP in Manhattan, Salzman has won settlements for victims of law-enforcement and correctional-institution violence, and successfully litigated prominent #MeToo civil cases. In one such recent case, a jury ordered Canadian filmmaker Paul Haggis to pay her client \$10 million USD in damages.

In 2016, Salzman obtained a \$6-million settlement from the City of Cleveland for the family of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old African-American boy who was shot to death by a police officer. A *Washington Post* op-ed she later co-authored about the case — "Tamir Rice deserves justice. The Biden administration could finally deliver it." — was widely disseminated.

The Concordia alumna and graduate of NYU Law recently sat down to talk about her career.



ZACHARY MAXWELL STERTZ

ZOE SALZMAN, BA 03, IS A PARTNER AT A LITIGATION BOUTIQUE BASED IN MANHATTAN.

Law school doesn't necessarily prepare you for the kind of media attention that many of your cases have garnered.

How do you handle that?

Zoe Salzman: I'm lucky to be practising at a firm that does really interesting and important work, and media attention flows from that. We're not out there pounding the pavement asking journalists to write about our cases. They're writing about them because we're trying to litigate issues of social importance. I'm still learning how to deal with it, but it's not that different from the skill set you need to argue a case in front of a judge or a jury.

You helped win a settlement for the family of Tamir Rice, but the Department of Justice ultimately declined to reopen the investigation. How did you react?

ZS: I felt incredibly disappointed. I'm the mother of two boys, 11 and 9 [Salzman met her husband, Zachary Stertz, BA 02, at Concordia]. They're so young, they're still such children at that age. So to see a 12-year-old like Tamir gunned down in less than two seconds by the police, it's heartbreaking.

In many of these cases the officers say things like the situation was moving fast, it was dark, it was confusing, they were in danger or others were in danger. But in Tamir's case none of those complicating factors existed.

I do think it's a case that the Justice Department should have prosecuted. We strongly felt that it met the legal standard. And as we know, the Tamir Rice case doesn't stand alone. It's part of a deep social problem that has so far been unaddressed in any systematic way.

What have some of your sexual-assault cases shown you about the misuse of power?

ZS: There's no question that power dynamics are at the root of all sexual-harassment and sexual-assault cases. It's a constant thread.

More and more of my work involves representing survivors of sexual violence. I think the #MeToo movement was a real reckoning against that institutional power, pushing back against it in a way that was long overdue.

I care very deeply about that work, especially as a woman practising in a field that has been dominated by men for eternity. To this day, I am very frequently the only female attorney in the courtroom, in the mediation, in the conference room, on the conference call. And that's a shocking thing. I mean, it's 2023 in New York City. So many women are going into law school, but it remains, like so many professions, very male-dominated.

What advice do you have for Concordia students who want to follow in your footsteps?

ZS: A career in law — especially if you want to focus on civil rights, human rights and social justice — is really personal and idiosyncratic. You have to beat your own path.

After clerking for a federal judge, I went back to NYU to help run the human-rights clinic there. It was a six-month contract during the 2008 financial crisis. While I was there, the job at my current firm opened up and I was able to move from NYU quite seamlessly. But at the time, I think a lot of people thought I was crazy not to take a job at a big corporate law firm.

I made a very deliberate choice to follow a less conventional path. I'm a big believer in taking those risks. Take the plunge, try things out and trust that one thing will lead to another. That may sound sort of cliché but it's really true. In a way it's frustrating because there isn't a set path, but it's also really empowering, too, because you don't have to recreate what someone did before. ■

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LYNNE MURRAY, BA 68, GRAHAM CARR, ANGÉLIQUE WILLKIE, RODNEY JOHN, BSC 71, MA 77, PHD 80, AND ANNE WHITELAW, BFA 87, GRDIP 92, PHD 96

President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism issues final report

'We are just at the beginning of a process that requires continuous engagement'

Two years after President Graham Carr formally launched Concordia's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism, the recommendations of the group were publicly shared last October.

"Our journey drafting the final report was steeped in sadness, joy, moments of frustration and hope that this time will be different, that the profoundly collective and collaborative work of our Black community members will not be in vain," said task force chair Angélique Willkie, assistant professor in the Department of Contemporary Dance, and special advisor to the provost on Black integration and knowledges.

The preparation of the report — modelled on the principles of the 2021 Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education, to which Concordia is a signatory — involved exhaustive research, the efforts of six

subcommittees and a number of unprecedented, institution-wide discussions.

Anne Whitelaw, BFA 87, GrDip 92, PhD 96, provost and vice-president, Academic, expressed her gratitude to Willkie and her task force colleagues.

"Without the countless hours, tough conversations and willingness to lend their expertise, share their experiences and bear the weight of the emotional labour involved, we would not have a final report and clear path for the university," she said.

"These are complex issues, and we are just at the beginning of a process that requires continuous engagement from all members of the university community. The report places our commitment on record, making us accountable and rendering our effectiveness measurable by mapping out areas that require commitment to action."

HISTORIC APOLOGY

One of the actions suggested by the task force was for the university to publicly acknowledge and apologize for the role that racism played in the run-up to and aftermath of the 1969 student protest at Sir George Williams University, one of Concordia's two founding institutions.

That apology was issued by President Carr last October and echoed at a ceremony held in the atrium of the Henry F. Hall Building on February 6, the anniversary of the protest.

Alongside Whitelaw and Carr, and in the presence of students, faculty and staff, Willkie unveiled a plaque (see page 4) that will henceforth commemorate the site as the location of Canada's largest student protest against anti-Black racism.

The mishandling of the protest — a "stark manifestation of institutional racism," in the words of Carr — had dire consequences for Black and Caribbean students.

LYNNE MURRAY
SPOKE ABOUT
THE EFFECT OF
HER ARREST
IN THE WAKE
OF THE 1969
STUDENT
PROTEST.

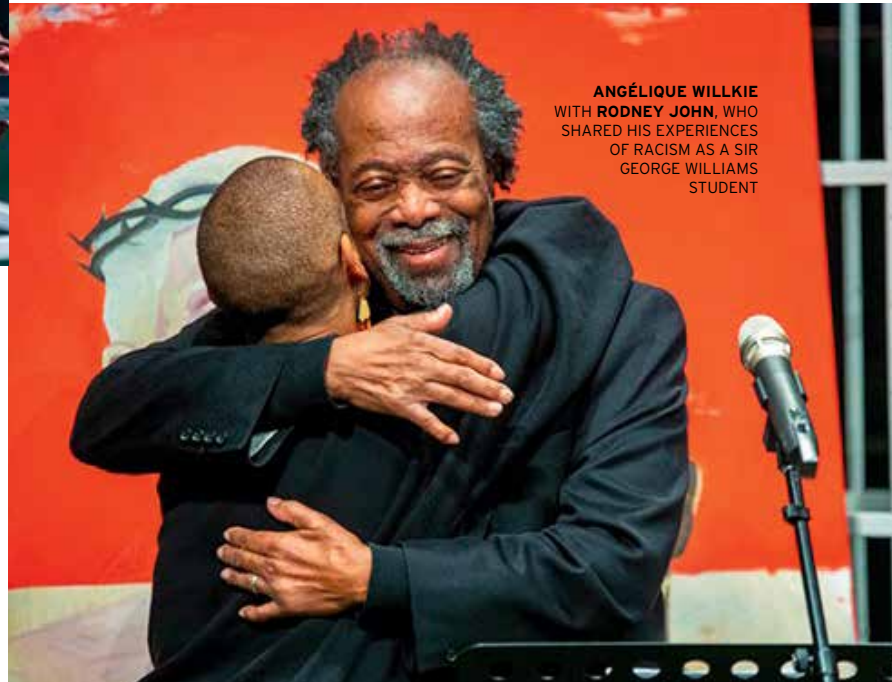


“Reckoning with [the past] is a long-overdue, necessary step. But it is not an end in itself.”

- President Graham Carr

“The courage, emotional labour, time and research invested by Black Concordians in this work is a debt that is forever owed.”

- Angélique Willkie



ANGÉLIQUE WILLKIE
WITH RODNEY JOHN, WHO
SHARED HIS EXPERIENCES
OF RACISM AS A SIR
GEORGE WILLIAMS
STUDENT

Two of those students, Rodney John, BSc 71, MA 77, PhD 80, and Lynne Murray, BA 68, were present at the task force’s announcement.

Murray, who was arrested for her participation in the protest, told the assembled audience that “the stain of a criminal record was tattooed on [our] lives forever, for standing up for [our] basic human rights.”

John, one of six original complainants who stepped forward to report a professor’s racist behaviour, remarked that “arbitrary judgment on people of colour still occurs to this day. And it is up to people of colour and all people who are disadvantaged to say, ‘Enough.’”

WHAT’S NEXT

The task force has noted, rightfully, that the ongoing work of addressing anti-Black racism and implementing its recommendations is the collective responsibility of the university.

Willkie, however, will continue to provide counsel and guidance on the adoption of the report’s final action items.

These include some major initiatives, such as the hiring of a new tenure-track position to develop an interdisciplinary program in Black and African Diaspora Studies in the Canadian Context, and concrete efforts to include more Black perspectives in research and teaching across the university.

The task force has also called for the creation of a new resource centre where Black students can connect with peers and mentors, and benefit from targeted support.

Other action items include further investment in specific library collections, outreach to Black civic organizations and the launch of a university-wide project to rename major spaces with historical links to Black and Indigenous groups in mind.

“Reckoning with [the past] is a long-overdue, necessary step. But it is not an end in itself,” affirmed President Carr at last October’s announcement. “Now we begin the hard work of delivering on these recommendations and strengthening our relationships with Black communities, on campus and in Montreal.”

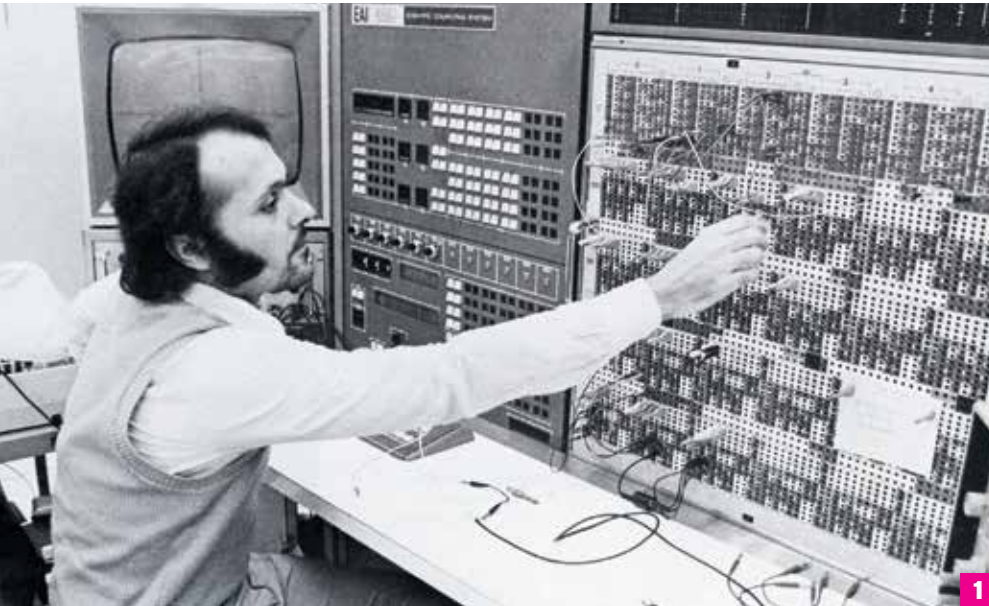
Ultimately, it was left to Willkie to articulate the magnitude of what the task force has accomplished.

“The courage, emotional labour, time and research invested by Black Concordians in this work is a debt that is forever owed to these individuals. Their contributions have been invaluable to Concordia in charting a new way forward and [marking] a turning point in its history and relations with Black communities.” ■

To read the full text of Concordia’s apology, visit concordia.ca/apology1969.

Major milestones commemorated on campus

From the Webster Library to the Gina Cody School, 2022 was a banner year for anniversary celebrations



1
2



In the run-up to what promises to be a pivotal celebration in 2024-25 — the year that will mark Concordia’s 50th anniversary — several milestones have contributed to the festive atmosphere on the university’s two campuses.

1 The Gina Cody School’s Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering celebrated 50 years of excellence in 2022, a semicentennial that predates Concordia’s. Sir George Williams University first established a Department of Computer Science within the Faculty of Engineering in 1972. After the merger of Loyola College and Sir George created Concordia two years later, two departments consolidated to become the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science. This name was later changed after a historic \$15-million gift from alumna **Gina Parvaneh Cody**, MEng 81, PhD 89, in 2018.

Of a distinguished lecture series launched to celebrate the anniversary, **Lata Narayanan**, professor and chair of the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, remarks: “This is our way of expressing our gratitude to all those who helped make our department what it is today.”

2 A half-century of innovation was also celebrated when the Department of Education’s Early Childhood and Elementary Education (ECEE) program commemorated five decades of success. The Faculty of Arts and Science program started in 1971 at Sir George with an initial focus on pre-kindergarten, later expanded to include children between the ages of two and 12.

“There’s a lot that makes the program special, but the students and how supportive they are of one another is something that always impresses me,” says program director **Nathalie Rothschild**.



3 4



3 The R. Howard Webster Library marked 30 years in December. The facility has experienced tremendous growth over the decades: Open for study 24/7 throughout the academic terms, the library now houses more than one million items and welcomes more than two million visitors on an annual basis.

“The library is like home to me,” says **Faye Corbin**, BA 83, an interlibrary loans supervisor with more than 35 years of service at Concordia. “Any

time I enter the library, I always feel very welcome and happy to see my colleagues and our students.”

4 The Loyola College for Diversity and Sustainability celebrated two decades of growth and success in 2022. Started by a group of professors drawn from sectors of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the college was designed to provide a coherent program of education related to multiple branches of knowledge.

“Small classes, engaging and engaged professors and students, and an interdisciplinary and diverse curriculum,” says **Rosemarie Schade**, principal from 2002 to 2015, of the college’s ethos. “Student experience was always part of the mandate.” ■



José Garrido



Linda Dyer



Henry P. Habib



Linda Kay, MA 01



Father Marc Gervais, BA 50

Share your story!

Is there a Concordia professor or staff member who left a lasting impression on your academic or professional career?

Tell us at magazine@concordia.ca.

CONCORDIA
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS: 1974-2024

All campaign news stories written or adapted by Ian Harrison, BComm 01.

\$1.2M to expand experiential education for finance students

Concordia graduate J. Sebastian van Berkomp, BComm 69, LLD 17, has made another major gift to the Campaign for Concordia.

With his new \$1.2-million donation, the founder, partner, chairman and chief executive officer of Montreal’s Van Berkomp Global Asset Management has now given close to \$4 million to his alma mater.

His latest gift will allow the Van Berkomp Investment Management Program (VBIMP) and Van Berkomp John Molson Small-Cap Case Competition to develop the next generation of investment managers and strengthen



experiential-learning opportunities for students.

“The son of Dutch immigrants who came to Canada amid difficult circumstances, Sebastian van Berkomp has shown tremendous gratitude for the head start his Concordia education gave him in business,” says President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr.

Van Berkomp and his firm first partnered with Concordia to launch the Van Berkomp John Molson Small-Cap Case Competition in 2011. A second, \$1-million gift established the VBIMP in 2016. The program gives an annual cohort of

undergraduate students the opportunity to manage a portfolio of small-cap stocks — firms whose market capitalization is worth \$4 billion or less — before they embark on investment-management careers.

Van Berkomp has also endowed a Department of Finance chair in small-cap equities, and supported student bursaries and research fellowships.

“It has been my honour to give back, and I hope this latest gift helps expose even more students to the challenges and rewards of a focused investment strategy like small-cap portfolio management,” he says. ■

\$725,000 from Canadian Irish Studies Foundation enables professorship in Irish literature



KEELAN HARKIN IS THE NEWLY APPOINTED PROFESSOR IN IRISH LITERATURE AT CONCORDIA'S SCHOOL OF IRISH STUDIES.

The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation (CISF) is funding a new position in Irish literature at Concordia’s School of Irish Studies, thanks to a gift of \$725,000.

“[A position in Irish literature was] a need we were keenly aware of for some time,” says CISF chair Pamela McGovern. “After the presentation was made to the foundation, we started a fundraising campaign — and I’m delighted to say that we met our goal within two years.”

The new position will be taken up by Keelan Harkin, a lecturer at the School of Irish Studies since 2019.

“I am very excited and grateful to be able to return to Concordia in a

full-time capacity,” says Harkin. “I know I will be amongst an excellent and welcoming group of colleagues in the School of Irish Studies, and the students at Concordia are such a joy to teach.”

Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, a professor and principal at the school, takes great pride in the quality of literary talent that Ireland has developed.

“We’ve been extremely fortunate to produce such extraordinary writers, both in Irish — the oldest written language in Europe — and in English,” he says. “This new position is significant for the school because of the profile of Irish literature globally. ■

\$1.4 million from Scotiabank supports Indigenous and international students

A new community investment of \$1.4 million from Scotiabank in the Campaign for Concordia will help Indigenous and international students succeed through the Kaié:ri Nikawerà:ke Indigenous Bridging Program and the Career Roadmap for International Student Excellence (C-RISE).

Kaié:ri Nikawerà:ke — a Kanien'kéha term which translates to “the four winds” or “the four directions” — is open to First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples who do not meet the standard admissions requirements to enter post-secondary education.

C-RISE, which offers a suite of resources through Career Management Services at the John Molson School of Business, was established as a platform for international

students to forge successful careers in Canada after graduation.

“The diversity of our student population and our commitment to accessible, inclusive education are pivotal to making Concordia an innovative, next-gen university,” says President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr. “This generous gift from Scotiabank speaks to those values by allowing us to create two exciting new pathways to success for our students.”

Adds Maria Mangiocavallo, a Concordia graduate and Scotiabank's Regional Vice-President, Commercial Banking, Quebec: “Aligned with our ScotiaRISE initiative, we are proud to partner with Concordia University to help overcome barriers to graduation and provide critical support for students to access career opportunities and plan for their futures.”

The Indigenous Bridging Program will, as of the 2023 fall term, admit students who wish to complete a Bachelor of Engineering degree. New bridges to other STEM programs will soon follow.

The creation of the program was one of the steps outlined in Concordia's Indigenous Directions Action Plan, which offers concrete guidelines on how to decolonize and indigenize the university.

Manon Tremblay, BA 03, senior director of Indigenous Directions at Concordia, says that a key objective of the plan was to remove barriers to post-secondary education.

“This is one of the needs that we identified as most pressing. Many potential students in our Indigenous communities just don't have access to the prerequisites they need to get into STEM. This is where we want the bridging program to change things.”

The director of John Molson's Career Management Services, Louise Anne Côté, says that C-RISE was also devised to meet a critical need.

“International students are such an important part of our community. They often require special supports to help them acclimate to a new city and country, and to lay the groundwork for life after graduation. That's where a program like C-RISE comes in. Through seminars, workshops and mentorships, we want to give international students the tools to thrive professionally here in Canada.”

Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of University Advancement, notes that more than 500 Concordia alumni are employed by Scotiabank: “We are extremely grateful for this major investment in the Campaign for Concordia by Scotiabank to support two programs that promise to make a lasting difference in the lives of our Indigenous and international students.” ■

PRESIDENT **GRAHAM CARR**, SCOTIABANK EXECUTIVE **MARIA MANGIOCAVALLO** AND **PAUL CHESSE**, BA 94, GRDIP 97, VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT, AT A MARCH 27 EVENT TO ANNOUNCE SCOTIABANK'S GIFT



THE REMOVAL OF BARRIERS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION “IS ONE OF THE NEEDS THAT WE IDENTIFIED AS MOST PRESSING,” SAYS **MANON TREMBLAY**, BA 03, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INDIGENOUS DIRECTIONS AT CONCORDIA.

'Collaboration leads to success': Lallemand Inc. gives \$812,000 to Bioprocessing Centre

A donation from Lallemand Inc., a privately owned company that researches, develops, produces and markets yeasts, bacteria and related products, will bolster Concordia's Bioprocessing Centre.

"Lallemand and Concordia already share a strong history of collaboration," notes Concordia President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr. "We have had many work-study students in their operations over the years, and they have also recruited our science graduates."

The Montreal company's gift of \$812,000 will benefit graduate students through scholarships and fellowships. The funding will also help recruit the next generation of bioprocessing experts and provide operational support.

"We firmly believe that collaboration leads to success," says Antoine Chagnon, Lallemand's president and chief executive officer. "With our gift, Concordia students can benefit from privileged links with industry and producers."



THE CONCORDIA COMMUNITY CELEBRATED LALLEMAND'S GIFT AT A SPECIAL EVENT LAST SEPTEMBER. FROM LEFT: PASCAL SICOTTE, DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE; ANTOINE CHAGNON, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, LALLEMAND; CONCORDIA PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR GRAHAM CARR; DOMINIQUE BÉRUBÉ, VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES; AND PAUL CHESSER, BA 94, GRDIP 97, VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT.

Located on Loyola Campus in the Applied Science Hub, the Bioprocessing Centre offers students the opportunity to develop expertise with large-scale genomics analysis and the optimization of production strains in large bioreactors.

"Our international research outreach is growing thanks to our graduate

students, postdoctoral fellows and faculty who are addressing the great challenges and complex issues of our time," says Dominique Bérubé, vice-president of Research and Graduate Studies. "This gift will allow us to take another step forward in developing knowledge and research." ■

'Ken's generosity is making a significant difference in the lives of our students'

More than two decades after he helped shape finance education at the John Molson School of Business, Kenneth Woods, MBA 75, LLD 17, has strengthened his alma mater with a new gift of \$1 million to the Campaign for Concordia.

Thanks to the new round of support, the portfolio managed by finance students in the two-year Kenneth Woods Portfolio Management Program (KWMPM) now stands at more than \$5 million.

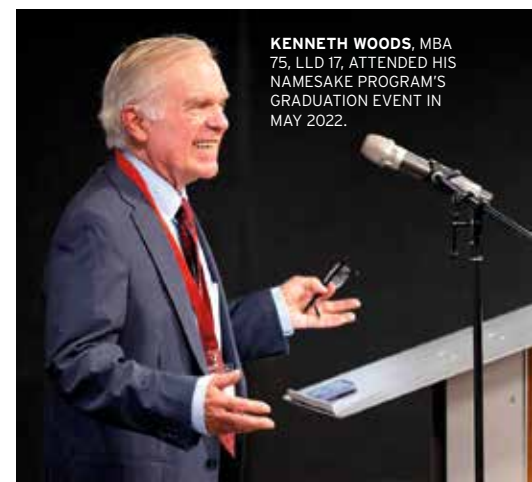
"The Woods program is a tremendously effective and innovative example of experiential learning in action," says John Molson dean Anne-Marie Croteau.

KWMPM director Sukyong Yang, MBA 90, is grateful for Woods's continued

involvement. "This new gift will enable us to enhance the portfolio-management learning experience through enrichment and special initiatives. In addition, each research associate and fund manager will now receive \$6,000 in financial support over their tenure in the program."

Woods helped establish the KWMPM in 2000 with an endowment of \$1 million. A first in the province of Quebec, the program gave a handful of students the opportunity to manage a real-world portfolio and gain valuable internship experience.

"Ken Woods is an exemplary alumnus and donor," says Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement. "Over the course of



KENNETH WOODS, MBA 75, LLD 17, ATTENDED HIS NAMESAKE PROGRAM'S GRADUATION EVENT IN MAY 2022.

more than two decades, he and his wife Anne have encouraged our finance students with generous financial support. Ken has also given hundreds of hours of his time to mentor students and help guide the program that bears his name." ■

Power Corporation of Canada champions women's varsity sports

A new \$1.3-million gift from Power Corporation of Canada to Concordia Stingers athletics will transform women's varsity sports at the university.

The generous support from the Montreal-based corporation will fund a suite of annual financial awards open to women's basketball, hockey, rugby and soccer players.

In addition to athletic awards, Power Corporation's gift will energize the efforts of Concordia's women's varsity programs to develop the complete student athlete through support for leadership, health and well-being initiatives, community outreach efforts, and programs designed to boost national competitiveness.

"Power Corporation of Canada has made one of the largest philanthropic gifts in Stingers history, which is a game changer," says President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr. "This will have a remarkable impact on women's sports at Concordia and allow our players to become the leaders of tomorrow."

Power Corporation's Peter Kruyt, BComm 78, former chair of Concordia's Board of Governors, says the company takes great pride in supporting women's sports at the university.

"Concordia fosters tremendous athletic talent, as demonstrated by its [2022] U Sports national championship in women's hockey," says Kruyt, who performed the ceremonial puck drop before a November 18 game between the Stingers and Université de Montréal Carabins. "Power Corporation is honoured to help build on this legacy of success."

'AMAZING TO HAVE DONORS WHO RECOGNIZE OUR EFFORTS'

Serena Tchida, a second-year basketball forward who made the RSEQ conference's 2021-22 all-rookie team, appreciates the respect for her team of elite student athletes.

"I want to say thank you," says Tchida. "It feels good to know that people think highly of us and offer their support. It takes a lot off our shoulders, and it will bring a lot of visibility to our women's programs. It will also help us recruit — women choosing a university will look hard at a program and how its athletes are supported."

It's all about empowerment, says Olivia Hale, who recently captained the Stingers to a provincial title and national silver medal in women's hockey.

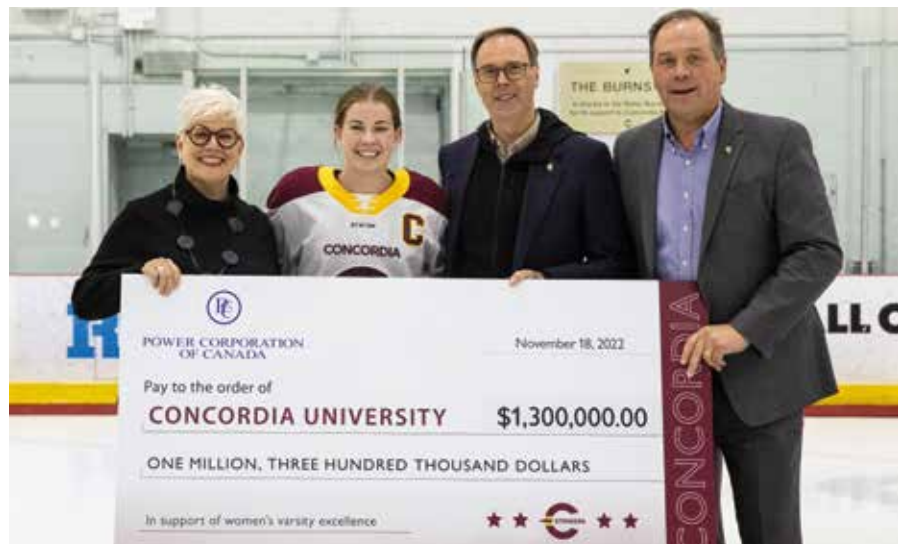
"This gift is meaningful in helping us amplify our voice," says Hale. "I think it will help us improve as athletes and give us the confidence to be leaders and make a difference beyond our sports. It's amazing to have donors who recognize our efforts and invest in our ability to go further."

Four-time Olympian and Stingers women's hockey coach Julie Chu says Power Corporation has given her program a significant boost.

"Team success is about so much more than game-day performance," says the 2022 RSEQ Coach of the Year. "This kind of donor support empowers our work as coaches and gives us access to more critical resources to develop our players on and off the ice."

The gift from Power Corporation will have a considerable impact, agrees D'Arcy Ryan, BA 98, MA 01, EMBA 09, director of Recreation and Athletics at Concordia.

"Our student athletes balance an academic schedule with the demands of competitive sports, which takes a lot of discipline and resilience," he says. "Our pledge is to facilitate their journey with the tools they need to thrive. Power Corporation's generosity will help us make good on that pledge for the next generation of women's varsity talent at Concordia." ■



A PUCK-DROP CEREMONY COMMEMORATED POWER CORPORATION'S GIFT TO THE CAMPAIGN FOR CONCORDIA. FROM LEFT: ANNE WHITELAW, BFA 87, GRDIP 92, PHD 96, PROVOST AND VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC; CONCORDIA STINGERS HOCKEY CAPTAIN OLIVIA HALE; POWER CORPORATION'S PETER KRUYT, BCOMM 78; AND PAUL CHESSER, BA 96, GRDIP 97, VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT.

\$1M gift establishes novel sustainability pilot projects at Concordia and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

A major Campaign for Concordia donor has supported a new partnership between Concordia and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, in Be'er Sheva, Israel.

A \$1-million gift from Miriam Roland, LLD 18, will fund sustainability pilot projects led jointly by Concordia's Next-Generation Cities Institute and Ben-Gurion University's Goldman-Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change.

The support will improve Concordia's ability to make good on a pledge outlined in the university's Sustainability Action Plan, observes President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr.

"Concordia's sustainability objectives include more support for research that targets the effects of climate change,"

says Carr. "We are eager to pursue this new collaboration with Ben-Gurion University, thanks to a gift that is focused on how to make urban spaces more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."

The partnership that Roland has funded will bridge a range of experience on urban sustainability, zero-carbon buildings, the water-energy-food nexus and more.

"I am deeply concerned about the kind of world future generations will inherit," says Roland, 92, who served on Concordia's Board of Governors from 1991 to 2004. "I think we live on a beautiful planet, and I would like to contribute to solutions that help us live comfortably without imperilling the lives of others." ■



A \$1-MILLION GIFT FROM **MIRIAM ROLAND**, LLD 18, WILL SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY PILOT PROJECTS IN CANADA AND ISRAEL.

Business students help inspire legacy of support for the next generation

A recent combined donation of \$80,000 from the Commerce and Administration Students' Association (CASA) promises to provide critical support to students at the John Molson School of Business.

The funds will be used for a general bursary endowment, an awards endowment and to aid students from underrepresented backgrounds. CASA's historic support for students now totals more than \$340,000.

This kind of student-led initiative has become a hallmark of the faculty, says Dean Anne-Marie Croteau.

"The vibrant student life that exists here is a powerful recruitment tool. Students want to come to John Molson because of it and, thanks to CASA's generosity, many will get the support they need."



CASA PRESIDENT **DEMETRE CHRISTOPOULOS** SAYS THAT BEING ABLE TO HELP HIS FELLOW STUDENTS IS "INCREDIBLY FULFILLING."

CASA's legacy of support dates back to when Thomas Dowd, BComm 92, served as president.

Now a Roman Catholic bishop, Dowd says that his time at Concordia was "life-changing," thanks in no small part to his involvement with CASA.

"We wanted to encourage the faculty to recruit and retain a more diverse

population of students," says Dowd of the bursary fund's genesis. "It was a show of solidarity."

That solidarity has continued with current CASA president Demetre Christopoulos.

When COVID-19 compelled the university to pivot online, CASA stepped in to help.

"Enhancing our peer-tutoring program was a personal goal, and it really took off during the pandemic," Christopoulos says. "With all of the difficulties of online learning, we were able to offer more resources for students."

That's ultimately what this latest gift of \$80,000 is all about, he adds. "Knowing that people are enjoying their undergraduate experience with the help of CASA gives me a lot of joy." ■

Montreal's John Dobson Foundation empowers research-driven startups

The John Dobson Foundation, a major donor to the Campaign for Concordia, has given \$500,000 to support researchers as they bridge the gap between academia and the marketplace.

The gift from the Montreal-based foundation will establish two new initiatives: The Researchers in Entrepreneurship Network, which will annually provide 30 Quebec-based researchers with \$1,000 to access skill-development opportunities and events organized by Canada's scientific startup community; and The Dobson Scientific Venture Award, which will provide up to \$40,000 in annual financial assistance to help startup-minded researchers commercialize their ideas.

The latter will be open to startup postdocs participating in Concordia's Scientific Venture Program (SVP). A first in Canada, the SVP helps research-based innovators transform their ideas into scalable business models.

"The John Dobson Foundation has made a number of exceptional commitments to encourage entrepreneurship throughout Quebec and Canada," says Concordia President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr. "This support has contributed to a culture of innovation that has had significant economic impact.

"Concordia is grateful to have such a visionary partner as we cultivate meaningful experiential learning programs for our students and facilitate rewarding opportunities for our researchers to generate new discoveries for the benefit of society."



"WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS HUGE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL WITHIN OUR RESEARCH COMMUNITY," SAYS V1 STUDIO'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **DIANA HORQQUE RATTO**, BFA 14, MBA 21.

Says Randall W. Kelly, BComm 78, chairman of the John Dobson Foundation and chief executive officer and chief investment officer of Formula Growth Limited: "John Dobson's [LLD 02] faith in the power of innovation to help address society's most urgent challenges drives much of our foundation's work. This gift is an investment in the business pioneers of tomorrow, and in Concordia's efforts to develop an unprecedented research-to-marketplace model.

"We're particularly proud of the fact that more than 50 per cent of the Researchers in Entrepreneurship Network funding will be offered to women in research, which will embolden more diversity and leading-edge breakthroughs in scientific entrepreneurship."

The SVP was created in 2021 by two members of Concordia's startup community: District 3 Innovation Hub and non-profit venture builder V1 Studio. The total value of the two-year SVP is estimated at \$142,000 per participant. Startup founders in the program retain ownership and all intellectual-property

rights connected to their business developed during the program.

"We believe that there is huge untapped potential within our research community," says V1 Studio's executive director, Diana Horqque Ratto, BFA 14, MBA 21. "Our members have a strong desire to apply years of work to benefit society at large, and [we believe] a cultural shift is taking place to produce the next generation of scientific entrepreneurs." ■

View videos and read about recent gifts to the Campaign for Concordia at concordia.ca/campaign.



RANDALL W. KELLY, BCOMM 78, IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOHN DOBSON FOUNDATION AND CEO AND CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER OF FORMULA GROWTH LIMITED.

VIA RAIL

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

MEET FOUR ALUMNI BRINGING VIA RAIL INTO A NEW ERA OF TRAVEL

SAMANTHA RIDEOUT, GRDIP 10

Headquartered a short walk from Concordia's Sir George Williams Campus, VIA Rail operates the national passenger rail service for the Government of Canada. The company welcomed 1.5 million passengers in 2021, a number likely to rise as the impact of COVID-19 wanes and the demand for environmentally sustainable travel grows.

Greener, more accessible and more comfortable trains will help accommodate that demand in the Quebec City–Windsor corridor. So might a new rail corridor free of freight cars, which would facilitate more frequent departures, fewer delays and shorter trip times.

Dozens of Concordia alumni employed by VIA Rail are on board with its mission to connect Canadians. Here are the stories of four who occupy senior roles with the company.



MAYA SHEIKH ALSOUK, MA 16 Senior diversity and inclusion advisor

When Maya Sheikh Alsouk, a native of Syria who lived in Qatar, started to explore the Canadian job market in 2011, she had a bachelor's degree in business administration and more than a decade of work experience. But because her education and employment history were limited to Doha, she struggled to find work.

"Employers wanted to see Canadian experience," she says. "And I was like, 'Well, if you don't hire me, I'll never get any!'"

Today, Sheikh Alsouk's role at VIA Rail is to remove barriers that exclude people who can make valuable contributions to the organization.

"At VIA, we don't look at experience from abroad as a weakness. Rather, it's a strength," she says. "Because people are bringing different mindsets and experiences to their work, and there's a creativity that comes with that."

Sheikh Alsouk is implementing a three-year strategy to increase employees' understanding of diversity and inclusion (DI) principles — through both formal training and day-to-day conversations — and embed them into the company's practices and culture.

This includes recruiting a network of ambassadors — 45 employees across the company who volunteered to advocate for DI. "It's humbling that they're doing this on their own time because they believe in it," says Sheikh Alsouk. "They know the value it brings to their workplace is priceless."

As just one example of a DI-informed practice, the talent acquisition team doesn't question applicants about gaps in their resumé. "There are a lot of good reasons for taking time off," Sheikh Alsouk remarks. "Someone might have had a child, or maybe they needed to prioritize their physical or mental health."

When it comes to the latter in particular, companies need to walk the walk, she adds. "We keep talking about mental health, but we need to normalize it when it comes to recruitment, and not punish people for taking care of it."

VIA Rail's diversity efforts also focus on increasing representation among four designated groups, namely women, people with disabilities, visible minorities and members of Indigenous communities.



“When it comes to inclusion, you have to make sure they feel valued for their skills and competencies and any differences they might bring,” Sheikh Alsouk adds.

Her own competencies include an understanding of adult learning that she gained by studying educational technology at Concordia.

“It’s one thing for me to understand the theory of diversity and inclusion, but if it weren’t for my master’s degree, I wouldn’t necessarily be equipped to relay it to the employees and leaders,” says Sheikh Alsouk.

“Embedding a culture into an organization means teaching people how to adopt a new mindset. You have to teach what equity means, how to tackle it and so on. I regularly tap into what I learned at Concordia.”

Sheikh Alsouk also credits her MA with finally helping her gain Canadian work experience. Her program included an internship at Bombardier, which turned into a permanent job as an operational performance improvement analyst.

“Concordia opened the door to everything I’ve been able to do since,” she remarks. “The university has a very special place in my heart.”

ANDRE MICHAUD, BComm 94 **Director, Training and Skills Development**

Andre Michaud describes himself as an enthusiastic lifelong learner. In fact, he chose to study at Concordia back in 1988 because it offered the flexibility to continue working full-time while gaining important new skills and knowledge.

“It took a while to complete my degree — two night courses at a time — but it was perfect,” says the native of Chibougamau, Quebec, who accepted a tax analyst role for a large construction-supplies distributor before earning his accountancy degree.

Michaud likes working with people just as much as numbers. He went on to obtain a certified human resources professional designation, then combined both of his affinities by specializing in training.

“My accounting background helps me to understand a business, and then there’s my HR side,” he says. “I can understand both perspectives and come up with learning solutions that align with the business.”

At VIA Rail, Michaud is responsible for governing training initiatives. “That means anything that has to do with

developing our leaders, the people who work with passengers on the trains, the people in the maintenance centres, the locomotive engineers who drive the trains — everyone,” he explains.

These days, a large chunk of VIA Rail’s several thousand employees need new training, because of both the new fleet and a new reservation system.

“I like being part of a change,” Michaud says. “That’s why most of the companies I’ve chosen to work with have momentum.”

His field of work itself has changed a lot over the years, as well.

“When I first started my training career in the late 1990s, we were dictating how people should learn,” he says. “Now, we’re trying to be much more adaptive to the needs of the learner. Some people like to follow a highly structured program, but that’s just one learning style.”

The expansion of e-learning has opened additional possibilities: For instance, it makes it easier for companies to break training down into short capsules that employees can take as needed, without feeling overloaded by a lot of information at once.

“Right now at VIA, we’re trying to find a good balance between virtual and in-person learning,” Michaud says. “Because we don’t want to entirely lose all of the relationship-building that happens in a real-world classroom.”

For Michaud, helping others grow involves doing so himself. “That’s why I enjoy my work,” he says. “It’s satisfying to be constantly getting better.”



SOLIMAN ABUSAMRA, PhD 19
Senior project manager,
Maintenance Facilities Upgrades

Soliman Abusamra is one of the many experts working behind the scenes at VIA Rail to make passenger journeys safe and comfortable. A civil engineer by training, he oversees infrastructure projects such as upgrades to maintenance centres where trains are inspected, cleaned and repaired between trips. VIA Rail's new trains differ from the older ones in ways that call for changes to the design of and procedures inherent to these facilities.

Even though he isn't involved, Abusamra is also enthusiastic about plans for a high-frequency passenger line between Quebec City and Toronto, a project managed by a subsidiary called VIA HFR – VIA TGF Inc.

"The future of railways in North America is bright," he says. "Let's be honest: Planes are not environmentally friendly. It's better to have rail infrastructure that can move people fast."

Abusamra emphasizes that getting the best value out of assets such as railways requires thoughtful planning and management. As part of his doctoral thesis at Concordia, he proposed ways for cities to reduce tax-dollar spending — and disruptions such as Montreal's infamous construction zones — with coordinated repairs of water pipes, sewers and roads.

Raised in Egypt, Abusamra first visited Montreal for a conference in 2013. "I met a lot of Concordians there and was impressed by their work and how it aligned with my interest in asset management," he says.

Later, when he decided to continue his studies at Concordia, he worked with Luis Amador, a former faculty member and pavement-engineering pioneer who has since become Costa Rica's minister of public works and transport.

"Concordia has high-quality professors in the Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering," Abusamra remarks. "And I can't imagine a better way of integrating into a new country than by doing a PhD. It gives you some flexibility with your time, so you can have the pleasure of getting to know the city and its people."

"You also get the opportunity to interface with different organizations through research projects. That gives you exposure to the professional world without necessarily having to make a commitment."

Ultimately, Abusamra decided to stay. "I love Montreal — I even met my wife here," he says.

When VIA Rail recruited him in 2020, it was the fulfillment of a goal that had been on his mind ever since his arrival. "Transportation is my passion. And VIA has infrastructure to manage all over the place. It was a no-brainer."

Alongside his professional interests, Abusamra is a marathoner. He enjoys putting on his running shoes to explore the streets of Montreal and racked up over 9,000 kilometres in 2021.

"The work-life balance and flexibility that VIA Rail offers is great," he says. "It allows me to run almost daily, and spend quality time with my family and friends."



JAMIE ORCHARD, BA 91
Senior advisor, Public Affairs

Jamie Orchard is a familiar face to many Montrealers: She served as an anchor at Global News Montreal for nearly two decades. Nowadays, as a senior public relations and media advisor for VIA Rail, she's just as busy as ever.

"When you work in journalism, you think the media relations people you're dealing with have an easier job," she says. "But it's a lot of work. And it has many similar elements to what you do daily as a journalist."

From planning events to writing speeches and answering media inquiries, each day brings something different, she adds.

Orchard studied journalism at Concordia and found work in the field immediately after graduating, thanks in part to instructors who put a strong focus on practical, hands-on experiences. She fondly remembers the late Bob McDevitt, who mentored and recommended her for one of her first reporting jobs.

The broadcast veteran never thought she would switch to another line of work. But in 2020, 10 per cent of Global Montreal's permanent positions were cut and Orchard lost her job.

"At first, I panicked," she says. "That job had been my whole professional life."

She soon put her journalism skills to personal use and launched a blog called the Second Act Project, which featured interviews with people in the midst of dramatic life changes.

"It was a passion project to help me deal with my own experience, and I learned that people often come out the other side of these transitions feeling happier," she says.

When she felt ready to return to the job market, Orchard realized that her journalism background gave her lots of options. What made VIA Rail a good fit?

"I know myself," she says. "If a job is too repetitive, I'll get bored. And with so many forward-looking projects on the go, VIA Rail seemed like a great place to be constantly learning."

One fun learning opportunity, but initial challenge, was train jargon.

"At the first operations call I was on, I didn't understand anything that was happening," she laughs. "We have a document for that: It's got five pages of railway acronyms."

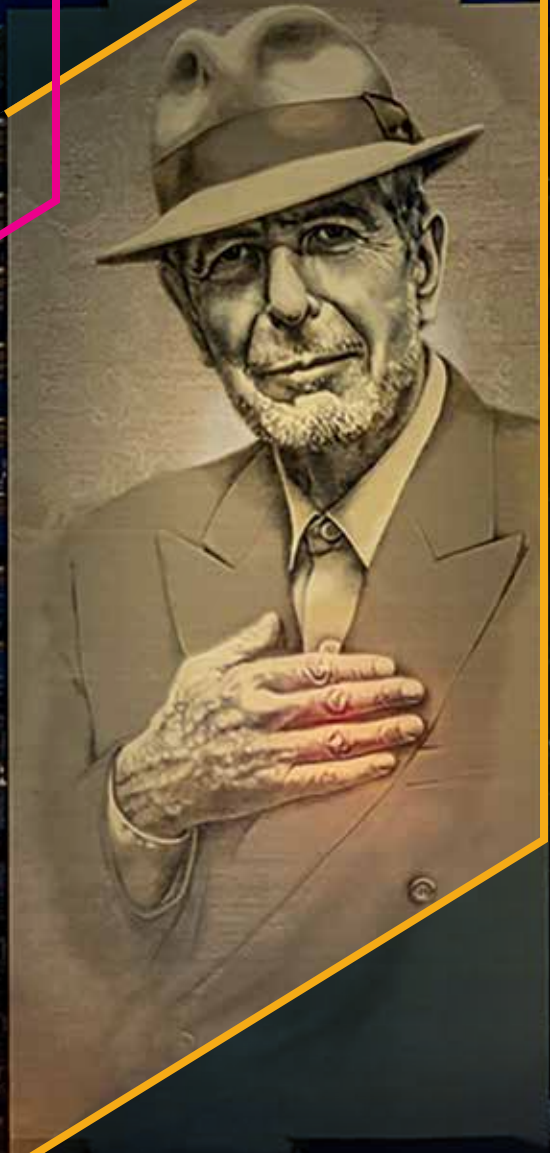
Aside from supporting the team in its modernization goals, Orchard's favourite aspect of working at VIA Rail is its supportive environment and the people who work there.

"The people at VIA are so welcoming," she says. "Train people are just good people. They work really hard, and they take really good care of each other, which makes VIA an amazing place to work." ■

In Good Company is a series on inspiring grads who work for corporations, non-profits or industries that employ a large number of Concordia alumni.

BRINGING THE CITY TO LIFE

How Concordians at MU are
elevating Montreal's streets,
one mural at a time



DANIEL BARTLETT, BA 08

A walk through the streets of Montreal reveals a number of large-scale public artworks that vibrantly transform the city. Hundreds of murals now adorn what were once blind walls across the island, outer surfaces that contain no openings, windows or doors.

From a 21-storey portrait of Leonard Cohen on downtown's Crescent Street to a tribute to Oliver Jones in the city's Little Burgundy neighbourhood, these impressive works of art — led by Concordia alumni in collaboration with MU, a Montreal-based non-profit organization — have become an indelible part of the urban landscape.

Since its founding in 2006, MU has created 200 permanent murals in 18 of the city's boroughs and has designed 400 collective murals in schools.

The group's mission is to enhance the city through murals that are anchored in local communities. And at the heart of MU's approach is a desire to see and experience art on a daily basis, trigger a social transformation and turn Montreal into an open-air museum.

"MU is a love letter to Montreal — that's why we exist. We love our city, and we love our artists," says Elizabeth-Ann Doyle, MU's co-founder, executive director and artistic director.

The network of artists and art educators who collaborate with MU includes many Concordians. Every summer, the organization recruits interns from the Faculty of Fine Arts and hires students to work as artist assistants, or as educators for youth community projects. MU also hires documentary-film students to capture the artworks in the making.

"It's a great opportunity for students to be paid, have an amazing job outdoors and learn a set of technical skills that they can't get in the classroom, as well as gain hands-on experience in community arts," Doyle adds. "Working with different professionals, they're getting advice on career and exhibition paths, how to craft a resumé, how to apply for a grant and more."

Those internships and summer jobs regularly translate into permanent positions or ongoing collaborations for students post-graduation.

Meet some of the innovative Concordia alumni making their mark on the city.

CORINNE LACHANCE, BFA 18, ASSISTED ON "TOWER OF SONGS" (LEFT), A PIECE DEVELOPED BY ARTISTS **EL MAC** AND **GENE PENDON**, BFA 94, AS A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE LEONARD COHEN IN 2017.

CORINNE LACHANCE PRODUCTION MANAGER



VINCENY CASTONGUAY

From a young age, Corinne Lachance, BFA 18, was set on pursuing a career in visual arts. The only trouble was that she didn't know what jobs were available in the cultural and artistic sectors.

"It's a problem for kids. They just think they have to be a studio artist," Lachance says.

Instead, she forged a career in which she handles much of the behind-the-scenes work that enables MU's artists to do what they do best — paint murals. As the production manager at MU, Lachance brings artists together to create and democratize art in the public space.

Her journey with the organization began in 2009, when she was a student at CEGEP de Saint-Laurent. Lachance worked as a muralist assistant and gave painting and mosaic workshops to youth and older adults at Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Canada's oldest postwar public-housing project, located in Montreal's Ville-Marie borough.

"I realized that art has this possibility to create connections with people," she recalls.

After studying psychology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Lachance pursued an undergraduate degree in studio arts at Concordia. While majoring in sculpture, she collaborated on the iconic Leonard Cohen mural on Crescent Street.

"The experience was less creative and more mathematical than I was used to," Lachance explains. "For example, when we painted Leonard Cohen's nose, it was a few stories high. We had to be really methodical."

While her career was already blossoming prior to her time at Concordia, Lachance felt that pursuing education was a necessary step in her development.

"Going to Concordia helped define me as an artist and adult," she says. "I explored different mediums and techniques, interacted with artists I would not have collaborated with otherwise and had direct contact with professors who are renowned artists."



STÉPHANIE HAREL
EDUCATION MANAGER

Much like Lachance, Stéphanie Harel, BFA 10, MA 15, was on a career path that took some unexpected turns before she landed at MU. After majoring in painting and drawing at Concordia, she enrolled in a master's program in France, only to discover it wasn't what she expected.

When she returned to Montreal, Harel felt lonely painting in her studio by herself.

"What I love about art is painting bigger-scale and working with others to build projects from start to finish," she says. "I love sharing and communicating with people, and that led me to art education."

While taking a graduate summer course with Kathleen Vaughan, professor in the Department of Art Education and Concordia University Research Chair in Art + Education for Sustainable and Just Futures, Harel signed up for a project to paint a mural in a school. The organization behind the initiative was MU.

"We painted the mural with the kids, and I started working for MU a year after I graduated," she recalls.

Now the education manager at MU, Harel also works as an art educator to develop and paint murals with elementary, high-school and adult-education students. The process involves leading a brainstorm to generate ideas, proposing a design and painting the mural with the students.

"Painting is a process where you look at the wall. You're not looking into the eyes of the person next to you, so it's more natural to speak," she says. "The students paint, they listen, but they also share information, which leads to wonderful discussions."

What Harel appreciates most about her time at Concordia is the different points of view her peers brought to the classroom, many of whom she remains in contact with today.

"Concordia was a big part of my life. I'll stay connected in one way or another for a long time."

"I love sharing and communicating with people, and that led me to art education."

- Stéphanie Harel



A COMMUNITY MURAL THAT STÉPHANIE HAREL, BFA 10, MA 15, HELPED FACILITATE AT THE CENTRE D'ÉDUCATION DES ADULTES CHAMPLAIN IN THE CITY'S VERDUN BOROUGH



Alessa McGovern is shown in a portrait with a white background and colorful abstract shapes. She has short brown hair and is wearing a white top. To the left of her portrait is a large, stylized orange outline of the letter 'A'.

**ALESSA MC
ARTIST**

VINCENT CASTONGUAY

Alessandra McGovern, BA 13 — who goes by Alessa MC — has enjoyed drawing and art for as long as she can remember. Yet when the time came to enrol in a university program, she opted for communications and cultural studies at Concordia.

“The program taught me to read texts and understand underlying meanings between them,” McGovern says. “We looked at a lot of journalistic texts to understand how media works and how certain forces shape the ways we consume information.”

Upon graduation, she worked in marketing and communications for a financial-services company. While she enjoyed her time there, the job pushed McGovern to follow another path and apply to UQAM’s graphic design program.

After spending the first summer of her degree painting murals for restaurant-owner friends, she applied to MU’s mentorship program and was brought on as an assistant muralist. McGovern now works as a freelance illustrator and graphic designer, as well as an artist for the organization’s education projects during the winter and as a lead artist in the summer months.

In 2021, she painted her favourite mural project on a daycare in Montreal’s Hochelaga-Maisonneuve neighbourhood.

“The mandate was to honour the area’s past as a place where they produced candies and sweets,” McGovern explains. “I decided to approach it in a more abstract way and created images that evoke candies, sweets and fruits. I was really happy with that project.”

McGovern credits her time at Concordia for teaching her to think critically and imbue her art with that rigour.

“I’m able to understand what it means if I put a certain symbol in an image,” she says. “It’s important to know that when you create an image — when you create anything — it’s never objective. It’s always subjective.”



OLIVIER BOUSSQUET

“THE MANDATE WAS TO HONOUR THE AREA’S PAST AS A PLACE WHERE THEY PRODUCED CANDIES AND SWEETS,” SAYS **ALESSANDRA MCGOVERN**, BA 13, OF HER “LES BONBONS” (2021) MURAL IN MONTREAL’S HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE NEIGHBOURHOOD.



DIANE ROE
ARTIST AND ART EDUCATOR

As an art education student at Concordia, Diane Roe, BFA 17, followed the Leonard Cohen mural's development closely.

"I needed to know what that was and how to be a part of it — that was always in the back of my mind," Roe says.

Upon completion of her degree, she worked as an art educator at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. After running into a friend who worked at MU, she learned about the organization's work on the Cohen mural. Roe told her friend she needed to work there.

"A couple of months later, I had an interview to become an art educator at MU and that's where it started," she recalls.

Roe also works as an artist at MU. Last year, she completed her first permanent solo mural, one that portrays an abstract landscape of the Bas-Saint-Laurent region.

"I grew up going there every summer. It's where I developed an understanding of nature," Roe says.

She also recently worked alongside renowned artist Marc Séguin, BFA 95, on a mural tribute to the late Jean Paul Riopelle. The work is the latest entry in MU's "Les bâtisseurs culturels montréalais.es" collection, which highlights the contributions of Montreal's artistic creators.

"To be able to talk with a very celebrated artist like Marc, to hear his words of wisdom and see how he works was an amazing experience," she says.

Roe is grateful for all the support she's received through Concordia, particularly the Art Volt Collection. The donor-supported not-for-profit initiative showcases artworks by recent Faculty of Fine Arts graduates to help them launch their careers.

"In the short amount of time I've been a part of the collection, I've been able to sell my work," Roe says. "Concordia is bringing us into this world together, and it's working really well."

"Concordia is bringing us into this world together, and it's working really well."

- Diane Roe



CÉCILE GARIÉPY
ARTIST



OLIVIER BOUSQUET

“When I paint murals, it’s nice to get a team and work hard on something together.”

– Cécile Gariépy

“Given my background as a filmmaker, I enjoy working with a big team to push my ideas further. I miss that as an illustrator,” Gariépy says. “But when I paint murals, it’s nice to get a team and work hard on something together.”

Among the MU projects Gariépy takes the most pride in is “Chez Nous,” a mural to celebrate the Office municipal d’habitation de Montréal’s 50th anniversary in 2019.

“It was a very big wall, it was very hot, and it was very high,” she recalls. “I am proud of that one because it was not easy.”

Looking back on her experience at Concordia, Gariépy is thankful for how it continues to influence her work on a daily basis.

“The degree gives you perspective on your own work, and a big dose of humility,” she says.

“Concordia helped me in many ways — it’s a great community. I’ve kept in contact with many friends I made there, and it’s amazing to see what they’re up to now.” ■

Watch video interviews with the grads in this story at concordia.ca/alumni/videos.

Cécile Gariépy, BFA 13, still isn’t quite sure how she carved out a career as an illustrator and visual artist. After graduating in film production from Concordia’s Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, she intended to work as a director.

When people called with contract offers, however, they were more interested in the illustrations she drew for fun. Gariépy embraced the change, one that has led to collaborations with MU, Montreal’s Place des Arts, Apple and *The New York Times*, among others.

“I’ve always been really grateful for whatever happened to me — I was very lucky,” she says.

Gariépy caught MU’s attention after she painted the walls in her garage and shared the photos on social media. The organization called soon after to ask if she would pitch a mural idea for the Town of Mount Royal Curling Club. She did, the idea won, and the rest is history.



“CHEZ NOUS” (2019)
BY CÉCILE GARIÉPY, BFA 13,
ON MONTREAL’S DÉCARIE BOULEVARD

OLIVIER BOUSQUET

Positive influence

HOW DIGITAL PLATFORMS ARE BEING HARNESSED TO PROMOTE MENTAL-HEALTH AWARENESS

JULIE BARLOW, MA 94



Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit in early 2020, Hannah Gold-Apel, BA 21, had no idea that she suffered from attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). To help pass the time when lockdowns were imposed, she downloaded TikTok and started to explore videos that touched on topics of interest.

“Within a few weeks, I started seeing content about why women with ADHD often go undiagnosed,” says Gold-Apel, who is pursuing an MA in media studies at Concordia. The tips she subsequently learned from fellow TikTok users encouraged her to seek a formal diagnosis.

While engagement with social media has its benefits, it can also have adverse effects on mental health. According to the Canadian Internet Use Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2018, one in eight respondents aged 15 to 64 reported negative emotional experiences on social media, including feelings of anxiety or depression. One fifth of them additionally reported losing sleep, getting less exercise or having trouble concentrating on tasks or activities as a result of their social-media use.

While Concordia researchers like Gold-Apel acknowledge that fears around social-media use are legitimate, they are also exploring how these platforms can be used to build mental-health awareness and support networks.

Gold-Apel’s own experience on TikTok served as the catalyst for her master’s dissertation on how the platform fosters a sense of community among people with ADHD. Her research focuses on a new technique called the “persona method,” whereby an avatar is generated to represent a typical user on the platform. While navigating TikTok as a fictional character modelled on herself, Gold-Apel observed how the algorithm steered her towards specific groups and resources.

“Within about 10 days, I was reliably seeing content about how ADHD presents in women,” she says. “I also saw personal experiences from women who had gone undiagnosed.”

Gold-Apel adds that TikTok’s prompts to mental-health resources can create positive outcomes.

“Thanks to social media, many young women came to understand some aspect of their identity that was previously unknown to them. Social media helped them navigate life differently, with more insight into themselves and a better ability to seek resources that were actually helpful to them.”



'THE BENEFITS TRUMP THE RISKS'

Like Gold-Apel, Fanny Gravel-Patry, a PhD candidate in communication studies and a 2021 Concordia Public Scholar, was inspired to dig into mental-health and social-media research based on first-hand experiences. Having lived with anxiety and depression, social-media use became part of her recovery process.

After noticing an uptick in Instagram pages on mental health, including from therapists using it to disseminate information, Gravel-Patry began researching how different communities were navigating the platform with positive results.

"Social media can function as a tool for care when people use it to access or share information and resources related to mental health that they wouldn't have access to otherwise."

In one of her studies, Gravel-Patry interviewed 22 women to see how they were using Instagram to cope with mental-health issues.

"Instagram didn't completely change their lives from one day to the next, but when it became a habit — combined with other practices like therapy and medication — it helped women get better," she says.

One of Instagram's advantages is that the platform's strong visual presence is comforting to users — text-based visuals can help break down concepts more easily.

"It also has what I call a message of hope," adds Gravel-Patry. "You can use it to see people who are already a couple of steps ahead in their healing journey, and it kind of helps you see that there is hope in getting better."

Najmeh Khalili-Mahani, BEng 98, MA 08, an affiliate assistant professor in the Department of Design and Computation Arts and Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, echoes Gravel-Patry's findings. "The benefits trump the risks," she says.

During the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020, Khalili-Mahani carried out the study "What Media Helps, What Media Hurts: Coping with COVID-19 with Screens," which weighed the pros and cons of social media in users' lives. Among the responses, her findings revealed that women and nonbinary individuals were twice as likely as men to turn to social media as a means of coping with mental health issues.

"No matter how I twist and turn the data, it seems that people of all ages who are using social media are using it to their advantage. When it becomes a source of stress, they turn away from it," says Khalili-Mahani, who has continued to collect data since the lockdown ended.



In her research, Khalili-Mahani has observed people increasingly using social media in ways that are beneficial to their mental health.

“People seem to create their own communities. It’s becoming easier to create these silos where people of common interest come together — that allows us to avoid what’s stressful.”

She has also been researching digital citizen laboratories and recognizes the power of social media as a coping strategy. With funding from the Fonds de recherche du Québec, she developed Play the Pain, an app that facilitates community-based research about chronic pain, allowing patients to share their experiences with each other and with researchers in the network.

As far as health communications go, she says that people still tend to be drawn to “canonical sources” for information, such as traditional media and websites like WebMD or Medline. However, a patient’s social media can be an important resource for sharing individual experiences of successful or failing health care.



“People of all ages who are using social media are using it to their advantage.”

- NAJMEH KHALILI-MAHANI

“Harassment is a societal problem. Social media didn’t invent it.”

- STEFANIE DUGUAY

FOSTERING ‘WELL-BEING, CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNITY’

For Stefanie Duguay — assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies, Concordia University Research Chair (New Scholar) and director of the Digital Intimacy, Gender and Sexuality (DIGS) Lab — social media contributes to improved mental health simply by helping users find otherwise inaccessible information.

Duguay’s research focuses on the influence of digital-media technologies in everyday life, with particular attention to sexual and gender identity and social media. In her conversations with members of the LGBTQ+ community, she’s seen how commonplace dating apps — and social media, more generally — have become places to build friend groups, find community and meet potential partners.

“Thanks to these technologies, they can get a bit of background information on people. That gives them more agency over the pace of the conversation,” she says. “These advantages are often less talked about.”

With widespread harassment increasingly routine on platforms like Twitter, Duguay says that many people are taking action by moving to the likes of WhatsApp or Discord, or by involving moderators who understand the needs of a particular community.



“Social media can function as a tool for care when people use it to access or share information and resources related to mental health that they wouldn’t have access to otherwise.”

- FANNY GRAVEL-PATRY

“We see people using social media in ways that work for them and help their well-being, connections and community. People are very innovative in this way.”

Despite the good that social media can do to help individuals with their mental health, Duguay says that there’s a long way to go to ensure that platforms actually promote and protect it. She also warns that society should be careful about blaming social media for mental-health problems.

“Harassment is a societal problem. Social media didn’t invent it. Yes, we need the platforms to do better at protecting users with better policies, but we also need things to continue to change in our society when it comes to sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia.”

FROM SCREEN TIME TO REAL LIFE

Without denying the dangers that social media potentially poses to mental health, Giuliana Cucinelli, BA 03, associate professor in the Educational Technology program offered by the Department of Education, believes that young people know how to “find balance” when they engage with technology.

“Students today are extremely open about their mental health,” she says. “In the past, it was very taboo to see a therapist or talk about mental health. Now, some of my students share that they are seeing therapists.”

Along with a team of students, Cucinelli — whose research-creation program focuses on the social, cultural and educational impacts of technology — developed an educational game, called Look @ Me, that teachers and students can use in the classroom to learn how to deal with difficult situations encountered on social media. One example asks students how they might respond to photos posted of an intoxicated person without their consent.

“One responsible reaction would be, ‘Flag and report a situation so it will disappear.’ You get more points for the more responsible reaction that will spare people anguish,” Cucinelli explains.

“We want students to leave the game having had the experience of exploring the sort of mistakes they might make in the real world on social media. The game becomes a safe space for them to really explore what their reactions could be.”

‘ONE PIECE OF A LARGER PUZZLE’

In one of her research projects on social-media privacy, Cucinelli heard from youth who said that platforms like Twitter or TikTok could be helpful mental-health resources.

“They may be too shy to discuss these topics with an adult, friend or even someone at school,” she says. “Social media became a tool for getting information they don’t ask for elsewhere.”

But when it comes to solving mental-health problems in the long term, social media isn’t necessarily a silver bullet, she adds. “It can potentially improve someone’s state of mind or prompt them to reach out to a family member or friend to ask for help — but it’s only one piece of a larger puzzle.”

Gravel-Patry agrees that social media should only be part of the equation.

“In your toolbox, you might have a therapist, yoga, a pet, friends, your social life — Instagram content can be one of these tools,” she says.

But, she maintains, “Social media is here to stay. If we continue to see it through a panicked lens, we’re not really moving forward in trying to see how we can use it in beneficial ways.” ■

“In the past, it was very taboo to see a therapist or talk about mental health.”

- GIULIANA CUCINELLI



THE
**WORLD
OF WORK**
REDEFINED



MEET CONCORDIANS THINKING OUTSIDE THE CUBICLE

DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

Eliza Baynes, BA 08, left her office job hoping to never be a full-time employee again.

Dissatisfied with seemingly endless administrative tasks, emails and meetings, she yearned to be a professional writer working on her own terms.

“I wondered if I was the only person who felt the way I did,” she says. “Then the pandemic hit and everybody started thinking about work differently.”

COVID-19 changed everything, of course, relocating office workers from cubicles to kitchen tables. Those who couldn't stay home — from critical-response workers to manufacturing labourers — shouldered an immense burden. Others found themselves laid off and forced to find new ways to make a living.

Working remotely saved Baynes an hour of commuting time, but it also meant an additional hour of work from her home office. Unhappy and unable to find a sustainable balance, she quit her job in March 2022.

Much of what led Baynes to imagine a life beyond the traditional nine-to-five started long before COVID-19 — and she's far from alone in that regard. In response to supply and demand, technological advancements, demographic changes and shifting societal values, the world of work is rapidly evolving.

'COVID'S SILVER LINING'

Like Baynes, many workers have — by choice or by necessity — stepped away from the security of full-time employment and become part of the gig economy.

“COVID's silver lining is that it opened people's minds about the definition of 'work' and led to a better understanding of gig labour,” says Steve Granger, assistant professor in the Department of Management, whose research at the John Molson School of Business takes a holistic look at how adversity is experienced on the job.

Although food-delivery apps often come to mind, the gig economy is primarily made up of knowledge workers, such as editors and software programmers. Granger notes that these remote jobs come with many positive attributes — a sense of autonomy chief among them, which is a key predictor of job satisfaction.

The constant need to hunt for the next assignment can be stressful, however.

“It's a subtle anxiety that doesn't afflict traditional workers,” says Granger, who is part of an international project called The Gig Work Life.

“The project is essentially a space to further the science and evidence around the experiences of gig workers and help them work in more sustainable and effective ways,” he adds.



“I wondered if I was the only person who felt the way I did. Then the pandemic hit and everybody started thinking about work differently.”

- ELIZA BAYNES, BA 08

Enabled by technology and driven by the fading promises of late-stage capitalism, the shift towards more autonomous remote work was accelerated by the pandemic.

For some, this was a welcome change, eliminating stressful commutes and allowing for more independence. For others, however, the change blurred personal and professional boundaries and increased feelings of isolation.

Pre-pandemic, working from home was typically a reward offered to high performers, notes Tracy Hecht, associate professor in the Department of Management, whose research explores the work-life interface.

“Those few people benefited from a lot of control over what they were doing,” she says. “If they were fully working at home, they learned how to create and maintain boundaries.”

That adjustment didn’t come as easily for many forced home during the pandemic. School closures put employees with young children in a tough spot, while workers without families at home faced long stretches with little to no human contact.

“Remote work has definitely not come with the same benefits and difficulties for everyone,” says Hecht.

As with mental health, physical health was also affected by the pandemic. Risks of catching the virus aside, daily fitness routines were upended, whether they consisted of cycling to the office or squeezing in a workout at lunchtime.

“Thriving work environments come from healthy and happy employees, and movement is an important part of that,” says Christina Della Rocca, BA 97, a workplace wellness specialist and founder of Peak Santé.

To help cope with increasingly sedentary lifestyles, Della Rocca creates holistic programs customized for the unique needs and wants of organizations and their employees.

“Workplace wellness is more than talking about nutrition for an hour or offering a boot-camp class,” she says. “It goes beyond perks for employees and must be embraced as part of the culture.”

DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Workplace wellness also includes meaningful efforts to address shortcomings around diversity, equity and inclusion. After decades of inaction, many institutions and organizations are implementing policies that grapple with these issues.

As CEO of a workplace education company called Blue Level, Karine Bah Tahé, BComm 11, develops training strategies to increase diversity, eliminate discrimination and counter non-inclusive practices.

During the pandemic, Bah Tahé notes, only three per cent of workers who identified as Black in the United States expressed an interest in returning to the office on a full-time basis. The number for their white colleagues was 21 per cent.

“That discrepancy could imply that working from home is more appealing for many because it mitigates microaggressions and feelings of exclusion,” she observes.

Bah Tahé’s own experiences with racism and misogyny — prejudice directed towards Black women — prompted her to start Blue Level in 2018 after a career in business and journalism. Beyond generalized training designed to target discrimination, her company develops accessible and ultra-specific e-learning platforms, sometimes for organizations with hundreds of thousands of employees.

Blue Level is also increasingly looking at ways to address more insidious biases that occur across a range of workplaces, from hospitals to accounting firms.

“Discrimination can greatly impact the quality of patient care,” says Bah Tahé. “It can also stunt career advancement due to a lack of access to promotions and mentorship opportunities.”



“Flextime is a tried-and-true way to help people achieve work-life balance.”

- TRACY HECHT



“Discrimination can stunt career advancement due to the lack of access to promotions and mentorship opportunities.”

- KARINE BAH TAHÉ, BCOMM 11

BACK TO THE OFFICE?

Post COVID-19, employers and employees are still figuring out what a “return to normal” means.

For many who enjoyed the autonomy of working from home, spending 40 hours a week in an office is now unimaginable. A hybrid model has been adopted by many organizations as a compromise.

Meanwhile, low unemployment has left HR departments scrambling to find locally based talent, prompting searches farther afield. Hires that result from those searches can struggle to find their footing.

“If they’re not on-site, they might worry, rightly or wrongly, that they’ll be passed over for promotions,” says Hecht. “They can risk being ‘out of sight, out of mind.’”

Hecht says questions are also being raised about whether on-site staff should be better compensated. Assembly-line workers can’t luxuriate in the digital-nomad lifestyle, after all.

“People care about fairness, so how do organizations navigate this?” she asks. “I think there are a lot of challenges that organizations will face before they find an equilibrium.”

Hecht also notes the difficulty in predicting where organizations will land in the balance between on-site work and remote work. Are Elon Musk’s “return to the office or quit” directives at Tesla and Twitter a fringe outlier, or a harbinger of what’s to come?

“If the pendulum swings the other way and a recession pushes unemployment back up, organizations may tell employees to come back to the office, or find employees who will,” she remarks.

Organizations should be nimble, Hecht argues.

“Flextime is a tried-and-true way to help people achieve work-life balance,” she observes. “We know that giving people control over their schedules is a net positive.”

“The key to achieving optimal results is to show care and compassion for your employees, rather than ensuring they punch their cards on time.”

- KATHLEEN BOIES

The jury is out on whether remote work is truly a recipe for long-term success. Some research suggests productive employees perform well no matter where they work. The opposite is likely true as well.

There is some irony, too, in the fact that remote work has, in many cases, led to more collaboration than ever before.

“Work has become a lot more relational, and people are indeed interacting more,” agrees Gary Johns, distinguished professor emeritus and Honorary Research Chair of Management at John Molson.

“Many creative endeavours now depend on teams, either for ideas or because of the sheer scope of the work. There is less focus on individual employees and their performance and a lot more interest in the collective.”

‘SHOW CARE AND COMPASSION’

Unprecedented changes, from the pandemic to rapid technological progress, have destabilized employees across the organizational chart. But middle and senior managers in this current era of remote work — deprived of the ability to make the rounds from cubicle to cubicle — have been uniquely challenged.

How do you assess morale and productivity when everyone is at home?

“If you’re a leader who’s only comfortable with micromanagement, you’ll be very uncomfortable in a remote-work situation,” says Kathleen Boies, professor in the Department of Management and Concordia University Research Chair in Leadership Development. “Remote work is here to stay.”

Measures deployed by organizations to keep tabs on employees at home can range from the innocuous — regular Zoom check-ins — to the draconian — software that measures keystrokes and monitors internet browsing. The effect on morale can sometimes hasten the very result management is tasked to avoid.



Ultimately, Boies says, the focus should be on outcomes and deliverables.

“The key to achieving optimal results is to show care and compassion for your employees, rather than ensuring they punch their cards on time,” she says. “A relationship-based approach to leadership works — supervising time spent on tasks doesn’t. One effect of the pandemic has been to accelerate awareness of this fact.”

Managers should make an effort to have frequent one-on-one contact with employees, adds Boies, and be responsive to individual needs.

“There is nothing like direct contact with somebody to get a pulse of a situation,” she says. “A leader can’t be on autopilot.”

Boies says the elements of effective leadership have always been the same. It comes down to empathy.

“Skilled leaders read their environment and their people and adjust their behaviour accordingly,” she says. “When you’re the pivot point in times of upheaval, leadership fatigue can of course set in. That makes it more difficult to exercise compassion and manage the emotions of others, not to mention your own.”

This is especially prevalent in health care. Boies is co-investigator of a program helping nurse managers in hospitals across Quebec and Ontario cope with the stresses of their demanding jobs.

Launched after the onset of the pandemic, the Strengths-Based Nursing and Healthcare Leadership program incorporates training and mentorship as potential mechanisms to mitigate burnout. Results suggest that this guidance helped participants contend with challenges and improved workplace satisfaction.

“We have found that activities geared towards self-improvement provided social supports that can act as a buffer to maintaining stress levels,” says Boies. “For leaders in nursing and health care, self-care and continuing to think about ways to improve and invest in leadership behaviours can be helpful in difficult times.”

Leaders across all types of organizations are increasingly looking for support in navigating complex situations, managing stress and achieving their goals. One avenue for this is working with a coach, who can either be a trained employee or an external consultant.

“Coaching is not therapy nor telling a person what to do,” says Madeleine McBrearty, BA 84, MA 89, MA 03, PhD 10, professional certified coach and co-founder of Concordia’s Professional Goal-Centric Certified Coach (PGCC) program. “It’s about going on a journey to find solutions. If a leader enhances their approach, it will impact workplace wellness for everyone.”



AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

The world of work changed rapidly in March of 2020. What will it look like in 2025 and beyond?

From a research standpoint, the fallout of the pandemic is still too recent to provide any conclusive forecasts.

“There are definitely more questions than answers at this point,” says Hecht.

Eliza Baynes is now a freelance writer. She chooses assignments at her leisure, sets her own schedule and has more time for passion projects and loved ones.

There are sacrifices, she acknowledges, from less financial stability to the lack of benefits and security that come with a traditional, full-time job.

“I would not recommend this lifestyle to just anyone,” says Baynes. “What I would recommend is that we all rethink how we work.” ■



MEET YOUR NEW AI BOSS

There may be a time in the not-too-distant future when your promotion depends as much on a software program as the whims of your human manager.

Robert Hunt, MA 18, a PhD candidate in the Department of Communication Studies, is investigating the evolving relationship between artificial intelligence and office work.

From hiring to firing, he says HR departments are increasingly using analytical software to manage their workforces.

"We could all be subjected to these algorithmic forms of management at some point," Hunt warns.

Collecting data to monitor employees is already commonplace in some fields. The retail and transportation sectors have long used algorithms to track performance. The practice is particularly acute in high-stakes fields like health care and investment management.

"Accurately or not, office work is traditionally seen as more autonomous and creative," says Hunt. "But we're seeing these lines increasingly blurred."

He admits that automation is helpful for some mundane tasks, yet is wary of its spread into employee well-being and other subjective areas where the threat of misuse is higher.

"Scanning messages to detect burnout might start from a well-intentioned place, but could also be wielded to flag words like 'union,'" he explains.

Hunt is most concerned about how software could be used to determine whether an employee deserves a raise or a promotion, or whether they intend to quit.

"It's pretty much impossible to make these determinations with absolute accuracy," he says. "They're trying to forecast people's career trajectories using software that analyzes how you use a computer. But a computer can't read your mind."

Although the companies behind these technologies like to cite research demonstrating the efficacy of their software, Hunt says the data is often inconclusive or cherry-picked.

"These offices are being managed like laboratories, experimenting on workers with technologies and theories that are constantly updated," he says.

As HR work becomes more automated, Hunt has one piece of advice for workers: "Think carefully about the freedoms you're potentially giving up."



WHO IS WELCOME HERE?

CONCORDIA RESEARCHERS AND ALUMNI ON THE FRONT LINES OF IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE WORK

ALEXANDER HULS

Roxham Road runs eight kilometres from Champlain, New York, to the municipality of Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Quebec.

Some 5,000 people entered Canada through the rural, unofficial border last December. Eight times that many sought asylum at such crossings in 2022 alone.

Many experts, Concordia faculty and alumni among them, have claimed that this influx — triggered by a cascading sequence of global events, from climate change to political violence — was exacerbated by a loophole in the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) with the United States. Signed in 2004, the treaty allowed for migrants who entered Canada between designated ports of entry to have their asylum claims heard and processed.

Since a renegotiated STCA came into effect on March 25, however — a deal that gives Canada and the U.S. the authority to turn people away at unofficial crossing points on their shared border — refugee advocates have warned that the movement of asylum seekers will be further constrained and their safety endangered.

“We couldn’t just shut down Roxham Road,” said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at a joint press conference with President Joe Biden. “People would’ve looked for other places to cross. That’s why we chose to modernize the [agreement].”

‘THE POLITICIZATION OF IMMIGRATION’

The conundrum on the border has stoked broad social and political debate as Canada and Quebec decide how to proceed on immigration more broadly.

One of the country’s leading thinkers on the issue is Mireille Paquet, associate professor in the Department of Political Science and Concordia Research Chair on the New Politics of Immigration.

During a 2019 interview to discuss her book, *La fédéralisation de l’immigration au Canada* (Les Presses de l’Université de Montréal), Paquet remarked that after the Second World War, Canada started to enact policies that sorted immigrants as “desirable” or “less desirable” and designed services, often clumsily, to promote integration.

A rupture in that decades-long paradigm has emerged, however, as more and more stakeholders begin to question the state’s responsibility vis-à-vis immigrants.

“This has really contributed to the politicization of immigration,” concluded Paquet.

The political scientist further expounded on her research last October when she delivered a guest lecture at McGill University’s Institute for the Study of Canada.

“My argument today is that Quebec has definitely entered a new phase of its immigration politics,” Paquet told the audience.

“At its core, the province is part of a settler state that has historically demanded and used immigration to replace the Indigenous population with ‘chosen’ citizens from abroad.”

But important changes are under way that now demand thoughtful analysis, she suggested.

“These changes signal the transformation of Quebec’s relationship to immigration. We need to invest time and energy to understand them because they will affect the experiences of newcomers. These changes, in the long term, will change Quebec’s identity and the politics of thinking about immigration in the province.”

“Unplanned” arrivals — though relatively few compared to other parts of the world — in the form of irregular crossings at Roxham Road signal a crucial shift for Quebec, explained Paquet.

“All of a sudden, Quebec realizes that it’s not an isolated island in the face of global migration patterns.”

A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

Quebec is far from alone in this realization. Data from the United Nations Refugee Agency puts the worldwide total of forcibly displaced people — compelled to seek asylum because of war, famine, political persecution and more — at 103 million.

While a majority settle in neighbouring countries, nearly a third of the displaced end up in other places. Places like Canada.

The federal government has plans to admit roughly 50,000 in 2023, the most since 1979.

“We’re seeing the largest displacement of refugees in recent history,” says Abdulla Daoud, BA 13, director of Montreal’s Refugee Centre. “It’s never been this big.”

Given all the evidence now linking dramatic rises in temperatures to more frequent and severe armed conflicts, civil strife and natural disasters, the trend is likely to endure.

Against this backdrop, Concordians have been advancing research, analyzing policies and working with new arrivals to Canada to better understand whether the nation is prepared for what’s ahead.

The common consensus is that there’s much work to be done.

“In general, our system works,” says Lawrence Butkowsky, BA 87, a Toronto-based immigration and refugee attorney. “But there are challenges with the way we operate as well.”

When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, resulting in the biggest refugee crisis in Europe since the Second World War, the response from Canada was swift.

The country lent support by creating resettlement programs and initiatives — like the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) — that were less prone to the kind of bureaucratic snafus that typically hamper asylum seekers.



SASHA ONYSCHENKO

“We need to realize that this is not episodic, this is systemic. This is here to stay.”

- MIREILLE PAQUET

Olena Zamkova, BFA 22, saw this first-hand after she spent several weeks along the Hungary-Ukraine border assisting refugees with transportation, paperwork, accommodations and fundraising.

“When they came here, they immediately received a work permit and all the privileges of Canadian permanent residents,” she says. “It was very fast and efficient.”

Admirable as such responsiveness is, it’s not necessarily representative.

“Canada absolutely did the right thing for Ukraine by setting up priority access channels of bureaucracy, running emergency rescue programs and issuing an uncapped number of visitor

visas,” acknowledges Deniz Duruiz, an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology whose research focuses on migrants and refugees.

“However, this showed refugees of all races — who have not benefited from the same practices — just what Canada is capable of when the will is there,” she adds. “It’s such a shame that the Canadian state only seems to mobilize in this way for white people from a land that was included in Europe only after its invasion by Russia.”

Bias is reflected not just in government policy, but in public perception, too.



“Band-Aid solutions and short-term fixes won’t cut it – we need to be much more forward-looking.”

- ABDULLA DAOD, BA 13

A study published by Ipsos to mark World Refugee Day 2022 indicated that while 64 per cent of Canadians support accepting more refugees from Ukraine, that number drops to 37 per cent for Afghanistan, 36 per cent for Venezuela and 35 per cent for Syria.

Experts like Paquet have noted that there used to be much more political agreement around immigration. In this age of polarization, that’s no longer the case.

“Immigration was featured heavily in the last two provincial elections [in Quebec],” Paquet remarked at McGill. “That’s pretty new. It’s also worth noting that position-taking by Quebec parties on immigration has become more differentiated.”

‘BUREAUCRATIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAG’

All of this must be better understood to ensure that immigrants and refugees are treated fairly and equitably.

The procedural nuts and bolts of our system have to be improved to meet the current moment, too. Canada’s speedy response to the Ukraine crisis, many have noted, was exceptional.

“We have an infrastructure in place, but it’s very slow in terms of dealing with people who are applying for refugee status,” says Butkowsky.

This is echoed by Daoud, who has seen asylum seekers and refugee claimants wait for agonizingly long stretches of time.

“There’s a significant bureaucratic and administrative lag in the government’s paperwork processing for these individuals,” he says.

The result, Daoud adds, is that Canada risks losing its credibility on an issue that it frequently likes to stake its international reputation on.

“Integration is always a two-way street. There’s the refugee or the newcomer willing to integrate into society, and then there’s the society that has to be welcoming and accommodating and ensure that the pathway exists for them to integrate. The longer we delay, the harder the integration process becomes.”

This is a major reason why the Refugee Centre has appeared before Parliament, Daoud points out, drawing attention to inefficiencies and pushing for improvements that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada can — and should — make.

For a long time, resettlement was thought to be the sole responsibility of the federal government. That, however, has shifted.

In the wake of his research, Belkhodja also discovered on the periphery the emergence of a new figure — the active citizen who wants to offer their own support to refugees.

Along many borders, including Roxham Road, individuals and groups are practicing solidarity and hospitality.

“Beyond the private sponsorship model, we have to recognize the implication of citizens taking simple actions with newcomers, such as going for a walk or eating together.”

Belkhodja came to know many volunteers who, as impassioned advocates of justice for refugees, were eager to challenge the status quo.



DAVID WARD

“Oftentimes, people who do not have the means or the legal support to craft their story into one of a ‘deserving refugee’ are also the ones who need that protection the most.”

- DENIZ DURUIZ

“For a long time some provinces were saying, ‘Let the federal government do its job,’” says Chedly Belkhodja, professor at Concordia’s School of Community and Public Affairs and director of the university’s Centre for the Study of Politics and Immigration (CSPI). “Slowly, for better or for worse, they have become more and more involved in immigration.”

Part of the reason for that was economically and demographically driven, as employment sectors outside of Canada’s largest metropolitan areas faced labour shortages. The Atlantic provinces, for example, have actively campaigned for and recruited more immigrants and refugees.

This has presented certain challenges. Belkhodja points to research he has done in Eastern Canada that showed what can happen when provincial policies and initiatives — such as the Provincial Nominee Program — by various stakeholders are put into place.

In his research on the establishment and integration of Syrian refugees in New Brunswick in 2015-16, Belkhodja indicated that the settlement sector was overwhelmed. “The model just wasn’t sustainable,” he says. “It meant finding new forms of collaboration and going beyond the traditional settlement model.”

“These people were asking questions like, ‘Why is the system not working the way it should work? Why are we not doing more?’” he recalls.

Organizations like Montreal’s Refugee Centre are also providing a range of services, from academic and legal aid to mental-health and employment support.

Assistance from government agencies, non-profits and private citizens, however, doesn’t make adjusting to a new country and culture any less difficult. The needs of refugees aren’t magically satisfied when they arrive in Canada. In fact, resettlement often amplifies those needs.

Daoud observes that society has a critical responsibility to provide the requisite resources and supports to help ensure that resettlement is successful in the long term. This is especially vital as the number of refugees continues to soar worldwide.

“If we’re accepting the numbers that we want to accept, we have to be able to anticipate and meet the needs of these individuals,” says Daoud. “Band-Aid solutions and short-term fixes won’t cut it — we need to be much more forward-looking.”





“We have to recognize the implication of citizens in taking simple actions with newcomers, such as going for a walk or eating together.”

- CHEDLY BELKHODJA

A NEW PHASE OF IMMIGRATION POLITICS

That’s partly what led the CSPI to launch a speaker series in 2020 that invited experts to deliberate on immigration issues from multiple viewpoints.

“It’s crucial that we stimulate new research to develop a better understanding of this subject,” said Paquet when the initiative was announced.

In turn, those new data-driven findings need to be communicated to policymakers at all levels of government.

Whether officials heed advice from people like Paquet — who has been vocal about the pernicious use of misinformation and xenophobic scare tactics to foment anti-immigrant sentiment — is another matter.

“Officials tend to dwell on questions of logistics, infrastructure and financing,” says Daoud. “But a good refugee policy needs to look at the intangibles as well.”

Butkowsky, for example, says that he “can’t just be a lawyer” when he sits down with his clients.

“I need to be understanding, empathetic and compassionate. If you want to be good at this kind of work, that has to be part of your persona.”

Duruiz would like Canadians to be more outspoken about how those looking to resettle in Canada are treated on their way here.

“Canada is as responsible as the U.S. for what happens to people trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border,” she says.

Duruiz also describes many of our distinctions between refugees and migrants as outdated.

“Refugees are often labelled as forced, while migrants are labelled as voluntary. But that’s not always the case. A sustainable system of migration would acknowledge that global

political, economic and social inequalities make life unliveable in some places and relatively easier in others,” she says.

“Oftentimes, people who do not have the means or the legal support to craft their story into one of a ‘deserving refugee’ are also the ones who need that protection the most.”

Whether we even consider migrants and refugees at all will largely depend on our ability to overcome fractious, and often histrionic, media commentary and bad-faith political actors.

Paquet has cautioned that the politicization of immigration can profoundly hinder constructive policy developments and “is likely to have serious consequences on our capacity to actually think about how we can ‘fix’ the problem or engage in reform.”

This phenomenon is not just confined to Quebec or to Canada, either. There’s scarcely a part of the world not currently impacted by some version of the Roxham Road controversy.

“We need to engage seriously, both as citizens and as scholars, with [all of this],” says Paquet. “We need to realize that this is not episodic, this is systemic. This is here to stay.”

Ultimately, the conclusion of Paquet and many other observers in the space is that Canadian society needs to arrive at a new consensus and bargain.

A bargain, Paquet asserts, “that will include new policy interventions that address new types of vulnerabilities as well as new types of misinformation, new types of politicization and all the rest that can be associated with this [current] phase of immigration politics.” ■

“We have an infrastructure in place, but it’s very slow in terms of dealing with people who are applying for refugee status.”

- LAWRENCE BUTKOWSKY, BA 87



A lens on identity, immigration and representation

Ayodele Mzilikazi is the 2022 recipient of the \$10,000 Roloff Beny Foundation Fellowship in Photography

Following an undergraduate degree in photography from Concordia, Ayodele Mzilikazi, BFA 21, is now pursuing his master's in the same field. An aspiring fine-arts photographer, Mzilikazi's studio-research practice focuses on portrait photography, with recent explorations in video portraiture. His work often centres on representation of the Black diaspora, identity, immigration and cultural autobiography. Mzilikazi was also the recipient of the Lande Award in Photography in 2021. Learn more at ayodelemzilikazi.com. ■



- 1 "GRANDPA"
- 2 "FAMILY PORTRAIT"
- 3 "GRANDMA HANDS"
- 4 "HEIGHTS - INTERSECTION"



2

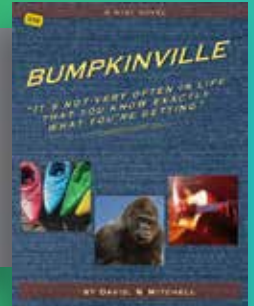
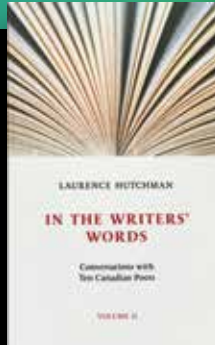
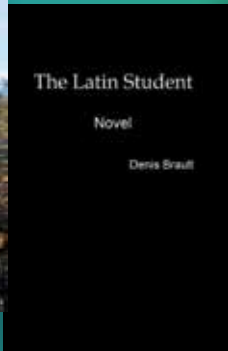
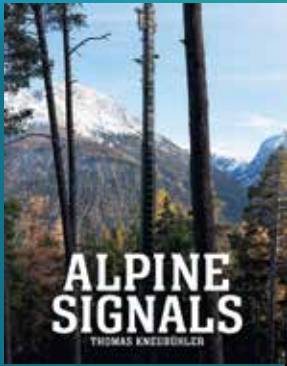


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4

Fantasy, poetry, satire and other new works by Concordians



DANIEL BARTLETT,
BA 08

In ***Alpine Signals: Twentysix Cell Towers in the Engadin*** (Verlag für moderne Kunst, 2022, \$47), **Thomas Kneubühler**, MFA 03, offers a series of unusual portraits of the Alps that challenge the romantic image of the mountain range. The book also includes an essay by Rebecca Duclos, professor in Concordia's Department of Art History and former dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts.

The Latin Student (Flowerpublish, 2022, \$30) by **Denis Brault**, BA 71, tells the story of Holden Hainsworth, an outstanding Latin student in high

school and university who has just been hired as a classics professor. Through flashback, the novel reveals the full fascinating story of Holden's life, both inside and beyond the walls of academia.

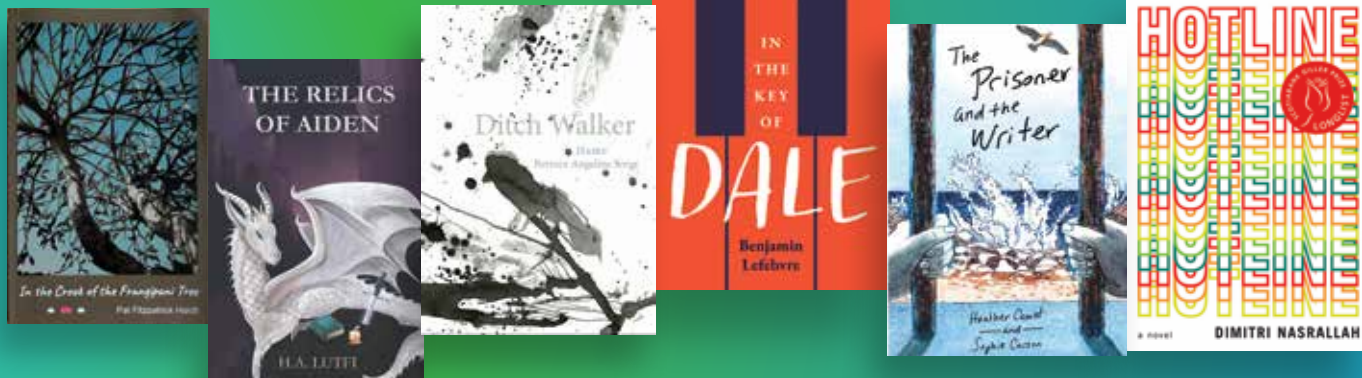
Laurence Hutchman, MA 79, recently published ***In the Writers' Words: Conversations with Ten Canadian Poets, Volume II*** (Guernica Editions, 2022, \$25), a book of interviews that gives a larger sense of the nature and the development of contemporary Canadian poetry. The collection includes in-depth conversations with Brian Bartlett, Roo Borson,

George Elliott Clarke, Travis Lane, John B. Lee, Daniel Lockhart, Bruce Meyer, A.F. Moritz, Sue Sinclair and Colleen Thibaudeau.

Joshua Neves, associate professor in the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema and Canada Research Chair in Global Emergent Media, has co-written an exploration of the close ties between media technologies and pharmaceuticals. In ***Technopharmacology*** (Meson Press, 2022, \$18), Neves examines how technopharmacological projects intensify vulnerability and inequality in the name of human enrichment.

Positive Women of the World (ACT, 2022, \$45 – \$60) provides a snapshot of some of the lived experiences of women diagnosed with HIV. **Savannah Nast**, BA 14, uses 30 interviews to shed light on the many intersectionalities for HIV-positive women, a number of whom are often overlooked, underfunded and neglected by societal and medical systems. All sales proceeds will support a woman living with HIV who is accessing support services at the AIDS Committee of Toronto.

In ***Bumpkinville*** (self-published, 2022, free download), **David S. Mitchell**, BA 89, offers a lively satirical romp of



corporate life and pop culture in the 1990s. The brief novel tells the rags-to-riches story of Dorman Brouxall, who transforms from an ex-convict to a country-music superstar. The book also contains graphics designed by Robert Paul, webmaster and digital content advisor at Concordia.

As a child in Saint Thomas, Barbados, **Pat Fitzpatrick Hardt**, BA 77, watched planes fly back and forth from a frangipani tree in front of her home. She often wondered if she would get the chance to travel someday. *In the Crook of the Frangipani Tree* (self-published, 2021, \$20) documents her journey from

Barbados to Montreal in 1958, where she would build a life as a wife and working mother far from her roots and aging parents.

The Relics of Aiden (Flowerpublish, 2022, \$30), a fantasy novel by **H. A. Lutfi**, MA 13, tells the story of Justin, a young magician entrusted with a life-threatening task by his late mother. To face his unclear destiny, Justin must search for clues and embark on a mysterious quest with his three best friends.

In her first collection of poems, *Ditch Walker* (Yarrow Press, 2022, \$12), **Bernice Angeline Sorge**, BFA 85, MA 98, uses haiku to chronicle

her observations while walking along the ditches of a gravel road and discovering the interdependence of humans, animals and plants.

In the Key of Dale (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2022, \$18.95), the first novel from **Benjamin Lefebvre**, BA 99, is a coming-of-age tale about Dale Cardigan, a 16-year-old queer musical prodigy. Dale tells his own story through a series of letters he writes to his late father, who passed eight years earlier.

Heather Camlot, BA 94, has written a middle-grade story about the 1895 Dreyfus affair and Emile Zola's famous open letter, *J'Accuse...!* In *The Prisoner and the Writer*

(Groundwood Books, 2022, \$14.99), Camlot and artist Sophie Casson use verse and full-page illustrations to bring to life two men whose commitment to truth, justice and equality helped change the world.

Longlisted for the 2022 Scotiabank Giller Prize and Canada Reads 2023, *Hotline* (Esplanade Books, 2022, \$21.95) is the fourth novel from **Dimitri Nasrallah**, MA 03. The story follows Muna Heddad who, after moving from Lebanon to Montreal with her son in 1986, finds work as a hotline operator at a weight-loss centre. Muna soon discovers that she is privy to many of her clients' deepest secrets. ■



The holiday season was celebrated in December by alumni based in **1 Toronto**, **2 New York City** and **3 Montreal**.

4 The sixth edition of the Black Students Career Development series — hosted by the Black Alumni Network and Black Students Career Development Team — connected students and alumni to share industry knowledge and explore pathways to successful careers on January 28.

5 John Molson School Day inspired students, faculty and alumni alike on November 22. As part of the special celebration, four visionary John Molson standouts discussed how they hope to harness the power of business to tackle

some of society's most urgent challenges. **Luc Bisailon**, MBA 93, and **Karna Gupta**, BComm 77, MBA 79, were also recognized with MBA of the Year awards.

6 The 2023 edition of Wild Talks — a lecture series launched in 2017 and supported by donor **Erin Hogg** — was held on January 16 with **multidisciplinary artist Shary Boyle**. The sold-out event attracted close to 400 students, alumni, faculty and staff to Concordia's D.B. Clarke Theatre.

7 At a public lecture held at Concordia on September 28, **entrepreneur and inventor Ed Rosenthal**, BA 74, discussed how NASA uses his patented fertilizer to grow vegetables on the International Space Station.

8 In honour of **Black History Month** in February, special video messages were recorded with six alumni: **Nicole Antoine**, BA 10; **Gary Chateram**, BSc 00, BComm 02, MSc 05; **Hawa Keita**, BComm 17; **Fatoumata Camara**, BA 12; **Adedotun Sali**, MAsc 13; and **Opeyemi Sali**, MEng 13. Another video featured a poem from queer Haitian performance artist and MA student **Kathleen Charles**.

9 A cocktail reception at Montreal's Atwater Club on November 28 **celebrated the Concordia 50 Under 50** — an annual list of alumni trailblazers. **10** Alumni — with 50 Under 50 honourees among them — were joined

by President **Graham Carr** to reconnect and network at an event in Toronto.

11 Gina Cody School Day returned on March 15 with a program of events for students, alumni, faculty and staff. This included a keynote lecture on the impact and ethical implications of ChatGPT — the artificial intelligence chatbot developed by OpenAI — and a showcase of student-led research and projects.

12 President **Graham Carr** and **Paul Chesser**, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement, hosted a reception in Singapore in February for a cohort of alumni based in Southeast Asia.



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CONCORDIA





13 Loyola College basketball coach **Jackson Winters** was **posthumously inducted into the Concordia Sports Hall of Fame** as part of the annual George Lengvari Cup played between Concordia and McGill University. Winters was represented by daughter **Lauren Winters**, pictured with players from both schools, and **George Lengvari**, BA 63, the Concordia Stingers basketball benefactor who played for Jackson Winters at Loyola in the 1960s.

14 President **Graham Carr** and **Anne-Marie Croteau**, dean of the John Molson School of Business, welcomed **Guy Cormier**, LLD 22, president and CEO of Desjardins Group, to campus for a special address to some 130 students on February 13. Cormier shared anecdotes about his career path and what it means to be an authentic leader.







15

15 The impact of **Concordia's generous community of donors was championed at a special event** last November 29 — Giving Tuesday. The breakfast reception, hosted by **Graham Carr** in the atrium of the Engineering, Computer Science and Visual Arts Integrated Complex, was attended by more than **120 annual giving donors** who give through monthly credit card payments or employee payroll pledges to support various designations across the university.

16 The celebration additionally featured a booth where students had the opportunity to share words of gratitude to donors through video messages and handwritten thank-you notes.

“Your generosity helps us reach important milestones,” said President Carr. “You are also part of a growing network of faculty, staff, retirees, alumni and friends that give.” ■

View our event schedule at concordia.ca/alumnievents.



16



16



DID YOU KNOW?

From **Oscar Peterson** and **Margaret Atwood** to **Al Gore** and **Kim Thúy**, more than 500 outstanding individuals make up Concordia's global network of honorary degree recipients.

Learn more about our extraordinary community at concordia.ca/alumni-friends/applause.

CONCORDIA

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS: 1974-2024

ALUMNI UPDATES

Alumni with more than one degree from Concordia, Sir George Williams University and/or Loyola College are listed under their earliest graduation year.

76 James W. Beckerleg, MBA, was named vice-chair of the board and co-founder of PROREIT.

79 Diane Brisebois, Attd, was named to the Government of Canada's inaugural Disability Inclusion Business Council.

80 Pierre Montanaro, BComm, has taken on the role of president and CEO of Devonian Health Group Inc. and its subsidiary Altius Healthcare Inc.

81 Anthony Martin, BComm, GrDip 82, was named chief operating officer of AppHarvest Inc.

Marie-Geneviève Mounier, BFA, was appointed Canada's ambassador to the Republic of Senegal.

82 Frank Rana, BComm, was named to the advisory board at Dentalis Animal Health.

83 Richard Brow, BA, was selected as vice-president of Institutional Advancement and Alumni Affairs at the American University in Cairo.

84 Paul Fischlin, BComm, was named executive vice-president at Savills North America.

85 Sona Lakhoyan Olivier, BA, GrDip 86, member of the Quebec Liberal Party, was elected to the National Assembly of Quebec representing Chomedey.

Linda McKenzie, BA, was appointed a judge of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

86 Mustafa Emir, BEng, PhD 91, was named executive vice-president, Wisconsin regional director and director of business development at Clark Dietz, Inc.

87 Rock Lefrançois, BSc, was named manager of special projects at Azimut Exploration Inc.

89 Tony Mougios, BSc, was appointed vice-president of Strategic Affairs and Growth at Groupe Touchette, Inc.

Sabaa Quao, BComm, was named chief creative officer at Cossette (more on p. 9).

Gaëtane Verna, BComm, was appointed executive director of the Wexler Center for the Arts at Ohio State University.

90 Mark Baldry, MBA, was appointed chief commercial officer at X4 Pharmaceuticals Inc.

91 Lisa Giannone, BComm, was named president and chief operating officer at BFL Canada.

Rob Lovi, BA, was promoted to vice-president of sales at Toyo Tires.

Anne-Marie Trudeau, BA, was named to the Circle of Ambassadors of the Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec.

92 Krista Devine, BA, was appointed university counsel and chief legal officer at the University of Windsor.

Claude Guertin, PhD, was named to the board of directors of the National Institute for Scientific Research.

Marco Lopez, BEng, was named vice-president of engineering at Clear-Com.

Paul Sislian, BComm, joined Bombardier as executive vice-president of Aftermarket Services and Strategy.

Aurelio Useche, BA, was named to the board of directors of CryptoStar Corp.

93 Naveed Irshad, BSc, was appointed to the Government of Canada's inaugural Disability Inclusion Business Council.

Désirée McGraw, BA, member of the Quebec Liberal Party, was elected to the National Assembly of Quebec representing Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

Per Nyberg, BCompSc, was hired as chief commercial officer at ORCA Computing.

Jonathan Ram, BComm, was appointed chief executive officer of Clarks Americas.

95 Bram Abramson, BA, was appointed regional commissioner for Ontario at the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission.

96 Nneka Chiazor, BCompSc, was named market vice-president at Cox Communications for the Hampton Roads region.

97 Shaun Finn, BA, GrDip 98, was appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Quebec for the district of Montreal.

Mario Garippo, BEng, was appointed president of construction at Broccolini.

James Kwan, BFA, was hired as chief executive officer of Barramundi Group.

Lucas Pontillo, BComm, was appointed executive director and global chief financial officer at Fiera Capital Corporation.

Deborah Radcliffe-Branch, BA, was announced as a new member of the MUHC Central Users' Committee.

98 David Connor, EMBA 98, was named to the Circle of Ambassadors of the Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec.

99 Jose de la Cortina, BComm, was appointed chief commercial officer at Occulutech Holding AG.

Gordon Hepner, BA, was elected as a city councillor for Surrey, British Columbia.

01 George Manousos, BComm, was announced as vice-president and agency executive officer at Savills North America.

02 Thi-Ky (Kitty) Luu, BComm, was named director of marketing at Porsche Cars Canada.

03 Dan Éric Gabay, BA, was appointed president and chief executive officer of the Integrated University Health and Social Services Centre (CIUSSS) of the West Island of Montreal.

04 Gregory De Luca, BA, was named director of Continuing Education and Community Services at Vanier College.

Alvira Macanovic, PhD, was announced as president and chief executive officer of Ventripoint Diagnostics.

05 Samantha Cleyn, BComm, MBA 10, was named head of institutional sales and service at BMO Global Asset Management.

Savvy Papayiannis, BA, was named director of student recruitment at Concordia University.

TAKE PRIDE in your alma mater!



Kathleen Zellner, BA 74
Wrongful conviction attorney



Duc Huy Tran, MBA 04
Chief commercial strategy, EV Mobility, VinFast



Jahangir Mohammed, MSc 93, DSc 17
Founder and CEO, Twin Health



Annie Proulx, MA 73, LLD 99
Pulitzer Prize-winning author



Mariloup Wolfe, BFA 03
Actor and director



René Paredes, BA 12
Placekicker, Calgary Stampeders

You are part of Concordia's accomplished 245,000-member alumni family.

- Tell us where you're at:
concordia.ca/keepintouch
- Share your successes:
alumni@concordia.ca
- Join us on social media:
[@ConcordiaAlumni](https://twitter.com/ConcordiaAlumni)



#CUpride #CUalumni

Elisabeth Prass, BA, member of the Quebec Liberal Party, was elected to the National Assembly of Quebec representing D'Arcy-McGee.

Nicholas Simmons, BCompSc, MEng 08, was appointed head of engineering at Nuvocargo.

06 Maria Abi-Habib, BA, was appointed investigative correspondent for *The New York Times*, covering Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

Gabriel Babineau, BA, was appointed an assessor at the Human Rights Tribunal.

09 Sébastien Boire-Lavigne, MBA, was appointed vice-president, Technology, at D-BOX Technologies Inc.

Syrine Tlili, PhD, was named general manager of Inetum in Tunisia.

10 Joëlle Boutin, MA, member of the Coalition Avenir Québec, was elected to the National Assembly of Quebec representing Jean-Talon.

Christopher Skeete, BA, member of the Coalition Avenir Québec, was elected to the National Assembly of Quebec representing Sainte-Rose. He was additionally appointed Minister for the Economy, Minister Responsible for the Fight Against Racism and Minister Responsible for the Laval Region.

11 Michael Broccolini, BComm, was appointed chief investment officer and president of real estate at Broccolini.

12 Aalia Adam, BA, was named multi-market news anchor for Global News in Montreal, Halifax and New Brunswick.

15 Bianca Arrelle-Petit, BA, was appointed a commercial lawyer at Fasken.

16 Layla Belmahi, BA, was named president of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal.

Roihtate Horn, BA, was appointed director of sports and recreation at the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake.

18 Nathalie Pilon, LLD, was named to the board of directors of Lassonde Industries Inc.

19 Louis Vachon, LLD 19, was appointed Canada co-chair of the Canada-ASEAN Business Council.

21 Nathan (Nate) Taylor, BA, was named running backs coach of the CFL's Ottawa Redblacks.

22 Virginie-Anne Proulx Leboeuf, BA, has joined CBC North as a reporter/editor.

Émile Séguin, BFA, was named lead designer and developer at Dreww. ■



1

James Temerty Attd 64, received a National Hero Honour from Canada's Walk of Fame.

Mutsumi Takahashi, BA 79, MBA 95, LLD 13, was named one of the *View the Vibe's* Power 60: Inspiring Asian-Canadians of Influence.

Jacqueline (Jackie) Patterson, BEng 82, MEng 83, was named one of the 2022 Women in Rail honourees by *Railway Age*.

Nelson Gentiletti, BComm 83, was the recipient of the 2023 Tribute Award from Financial Executives International Canada.

Darren Entwistle, BA 86, LLD 12, was among six winners of an International Horatio Alger Award for exceptional business leadership.

John Sicard, BCompSc 88, was among six chief executives who ranked first in their sector in *Institutional Investor's* 2023 All-Canada Executive Team.

Serban Ghenea, BFA 92, was nominated for six Grammy Awards as an audio engineer and mixer.

Serge Yanic Nana, MSc 94, was named Personality of the Year by *EcoMatin*.

Patricia Chica, BFA 95, won Best Feature Film (Festival Director's Award) for her directorial debut, *Montreal Girls*, at the Los Angeles International Film Festival.

Matthew Bacchiochi, BComm 96, was ranked 77th on the *Report on Business's* list of Canada's Top Wealth Advisors 2022.

1 Tawhida Tanya Evanson, BA 97, was the winner of the 2022 Blue Metropolis/Conseil des arts de Montréal New Contribution Literary Prize for the novel *Book of Wings*.

Fay Arjomandi, BEng 98, was recognized by Weavesphere as one of the top 20 technology leaders in Canada.

Darren Carmosino, BComm 98, was ranked second on the *Report on Business's* list of Canada's Top Wealth Advisors 2022.

Kim Rapagna, BA 99, was named a Clean16 honouree for her work as a general manager, Corporate Sustainability and ESG, at Canada Post.

Katherine Jerkovic, BFA 02, MFA 07, won the Borsos Award for Best Canadian Feature at the Whistler Film Festival as the director of *Coyote*.

Mélanie Demers, BFA 09, won the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ) prize for the best choreography in the province for her work *Confession publique*.

Michelle Bui, BFA 10, won the Pierre-Ayot Award from the City of Montreal in collaboration with the Contemporary Art Galleries Association.

Michelle Lonergan, BA 11, received an Alice Wilson Award from the Royal Society of Canada for her academic qualifications in the arts and humanities.

Yves-Alexandre Comeau, BA 12, was named Personality of the Week by *Grenier aux nouvelles* for his work as the director of external communications at the Fonds de solidarité FTQ.

David Even, BComm 14, won a 2023 Responsible Business Education Award at the World Economic Forum in Davos as the founder of Primal Soles.

2 Barbara Steinman, LLD 15, was the winner of the Paul-Émile-Borduas Prize for Visual Arts, Fine Arts and Digital Arts.

Pierre Lassonde, LLD 16, received the Arts Patronage Award at the Council for Canadian American Relations' 50th Anniversary Gala.

Calin Rovinescu, LLD 16, was one of six to win an International Horatio Alger Award for exceptional business leadership.

3 Lucie MacAulay, BFA 18, became a 2022 world champion in savate assault, which combines kickboxing, taekwondo and muay-thai.

Sage Szkabarnicki-Stuart, BFA 19, was the winner of the \$100,000 Panel's Choice Award at the inaugural 100 Kellogg Lane Art Comp.

2



Brianna Ste-Marie, BA 20, finished second in her class at the World Grappling Championship.

Carol Nguyen, BFA 20, won the 2022 IMDbPro Short Cuts Share Her Journey Award at TIFF for her film *Nanitic*.

Aditya Malik, PhD 21, won the Best Dissertation Award from INFORMS Society of Logistics.

Sara Ordonselli, BEng 21, was among a team that received the ENLIGHT Global Citizenship Award for its sustainability work with the Concordia Precious Plastic Project (CP3).

Joyce Joumaa, BFA 22, was selected for the 2021-22 Emerging Curator Residency Program at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA). Her exhibition, *To Remain in the No Longer*, runs at the CCA until May 28.

Avery Mikolic-O'Rourke, BFA 22, was the Quebec regional winner of the 2022 BMO 1st Art! Competition.

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE HALL OF DISTINCTION

Several alumni were recognized by John Abbott College as former graduates who have made significant contributions to their community:

Darren Entwistle, BA 86

Annie Caron, BFA 92

Shahir Guindi, Attd



3



4

4 CANADA'S VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Five Concordians are among the recipients of Canada's Volunteer Awards, presented by the Government of Canada for service to community and country:

Marco Ottoni, BComm 93, Community Leader: Quebec

Vanessa Manroop, undergraduate student in human resource management, Emerging Leader: Quebec

Kim Fuller, BFA 96, Business Leader: Quebec

Sudhir Kumar Jha, MEng 05, Community Leader: British Columbia and the North

Aurelia Talvela, GrDip 17, MA 19, Business Leader: Quebec

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S LITERARY AWARDS

Each year, the Canada Council for the Arts recognizes top talent in Canadian literature with its Governor General's Literary Awards. Concordians among the 2022 winners and finalists are:

Qin Leng, BFA 06 (French: Young People's Literature – Illustrated Books), winner

Judith W. Woodsworth, recently retired translation studies professor and former Concordia president (Translation), winner

Edeet Ravel, MA 85 (Young People's Literature – Text)

Matthew Forsythe, GrDip 06 (Young People's Literature – Illustrated Books)

Aaron Kreuter, BA 08 (Poetry)

David Bradford, BA 09 (Poetry)

Paul Tom, BFA 10 (French: Young People's Literature – Illustrated Books)

Aleshia Jensen, BA 13 (Translation)

Britt Wray, GrDip 10 (Non-fiction)

Lillian Jackson, BComm 77, BA 82, MA 88

Kathy Roach, BA 88, GrCert 90, MA 03

Nicole Antoine, BA 10

Moses Gashirabake, BA 13

Lisa Ndejuru, PhD 21

Tenicha Gittens, head coach, Stingers women's basketball program

Vanessa Manroop, undergraduate student

ORDER OF CANADA

Three Concordia alumni were appointed to the Order of Canada, one of the country's highest civilian honours, for their outstanding achievements, dedication to the community and service to the nation:

Gerald Lozinski, S BComm 66

Donat Taddeo, BA 67

Pierre Lassonde, LLD 16

2023 BLACK CHANGEMAKERS

With its annual CBC Black Changemakers, Canada's public broadcaster pays tribute to inspiring Black Quebecers giving back and creating positive change in their communities. For its 2023 edition, seven of these 31 pioneering changemakers are Concordians.

CONCORDIANS AT THE ACADEMY AWARDS

Three Concordians are behind films that were nominated for Oscars at the 95th Academy Awards on March 12. Among them were:

David Christensen, BFA 89, producer, *The Flying Sailor*

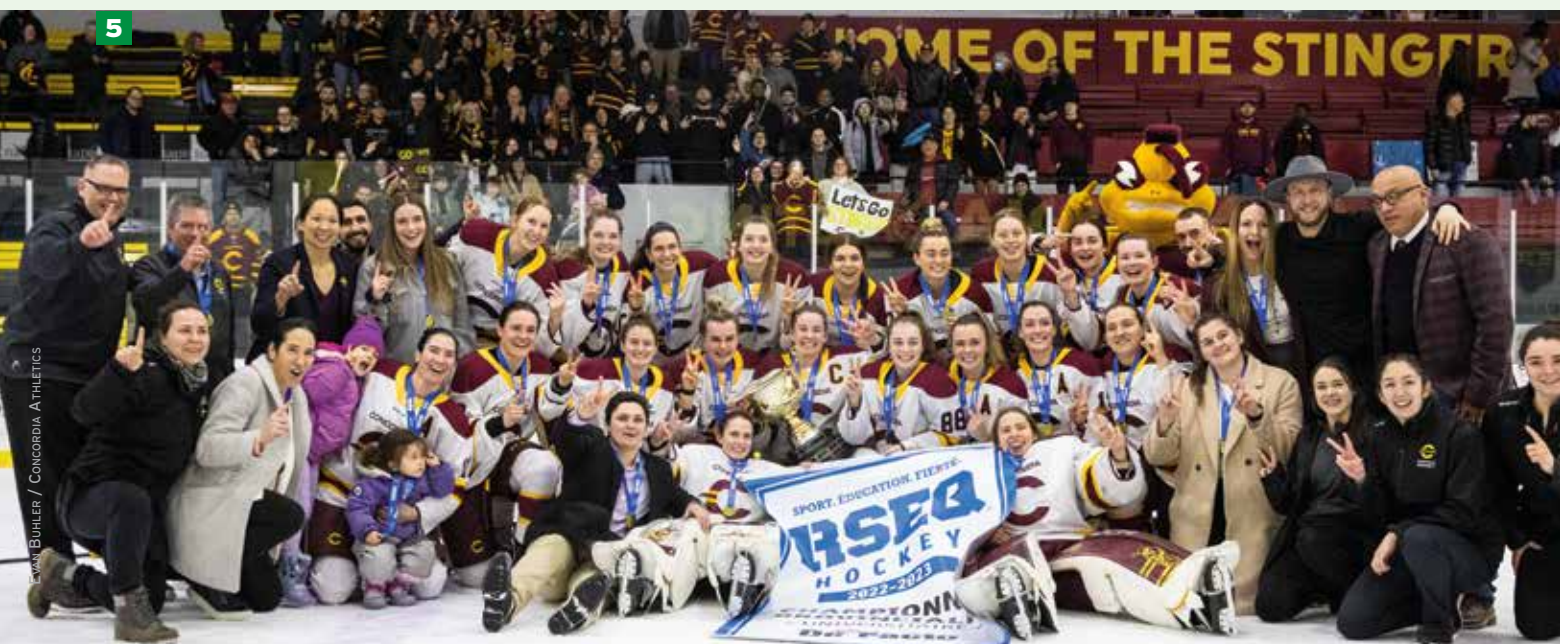
Luigi Allemano, associate professor, film animation; original film score and sound design, *The Flying Sailor*

Peggy Arel, Attd, stop-motion animator, *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio*

STINGERS WIN RSEQ CHAMPIONSHIP

Concordia's women's hockey team won the Réseau sport étudiant du Québec (RSEQ) conference championship. The Stingers then advanced to the U Sports national championship finals on March 19, narrowly missing the gold medal in a 4-3 overtime loss to the Mount Royal Cougars.

5



ALUMNI ART

1 From May 6 to 21, 2022, **Patricia Belmar**, BFA 14, participated in the Women's Art Society of Montreal's 127th annual juried art exhibition. A number of artists' works related to a "Chrysalis" theme were featured at Gallery Gora in Montreal. 1) "Spring Renaissance," acrylic on stretched gallery canvas (2022).

2 **Apostolos Kouroumalis** (Toly A.K.), BFA 99, presented four paintings at *Invasion*, a group exhibition at Montreal's Usine 106U throughout the month of March. 2) "Kern 1," acrylic on canvas (2022).

3 Two recent artworks by **Raymonde Jodoin**, BFA 83, were selected as part of the 2023 Art Rental Collection at Stewart Hall in Pointe-Claire. The exhibition took place from November 5, 2022, to January 8, 2023, and the works are now available to rent over the next year. 3) "Jacinthe #7," digital print (from a computer-generated photograph) on Hahnemühle rag paper 308 gr.

4 **Rochelle Mayer**, BComm 83, BFA 10, received an honourable mention for her "Les papoteuses" monotype at the 2022 annual exhibition of the Women's Art Studio of Montreal. The exhibition took place from October 27 to 31, 2022, at Centre d'Art E.K. Voland at Complexe du Canal Lachine. 4) "Les papoteuses," monotype on paper.



Jeff Barnaby (1976 - 2022)

Visionary of modern Indigenous cinema

Jeff Barnaby — a Mi'kmaq filmmaker who grew up on the Listuguj Reserve in Quebec — passed away on October 13, 2022, after a year-long battle with cancer. He was 46.

The former Mel Hoppenheim School

of Cinema student was considered a visionary of modern Indigenous cinema.

Barnaby's debut feature, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (2013), earned widespread acclaim for its gritty and unsparring critique of Canada's residential school system.

Blood Quantum, Barnaby's sophomore effort, premiered at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival and was named second runner-up for the festival's Grolsch People's Choice Midnight Madness Award. The groundbreaking horror

film went on to win seven Canadian Screen Awards in 2021, including Best Editing honours for its director and writer.

Barnaby leaves behind his wife, Navajo filmmaker Sarah Del Seronde, and son, Miles. ■

Alvin Segal (1933 - 2022)

A peerless philanthropist

Alvin Segal, a Montreal-based businessman and one of Canada's pre-eminent corporate philanthropists, died on November 4, 2022. He was 89.

Segal's lifelong support for education, health care and the arts made him a pillar of his community.

The former chairman and CEO of Peerless Clothing, Inc., Segal started as a worker on the factory floor in 1951. Under his leadership, Peerless grew to be the largest supplier of men's fine-tailored clothing in North America.

A benefactor to a number of organizations in Montreal, Segal

was instrumental in establishing the Segal Cancer Centre at the Sir Mortimer B. Davis Jewish General Hospital in 2005. He was also a major patron of the Segal Centre for Performing Arts.

Concordia benefited from Segal's generosity in 2013, when he played a key role in facilitating the creation of the

Mordecai Richler Reading Room — home to the late author's private papers, books and other personal effects — on the sixth floor of the J. W. McConnell Library Building.

Segal is survived by his wife, Emmelle, children Joel, Barbara and Renee, and a large extended family. ■

Michael M. Gutwillig, S BA 48, BFA 97, January 2, 2023. He was 97.

Charles W. Houston, S BA 52, January 25, 2023, Toronto. He was 92.

Henry F. Mizgala, L BA 53, December 11, 2022. He was 90.

Merrill Bélanger, S BComm 54, February 23, 2022, Conception Bay South, N.L. He was 91.

Daniel G. Mack, S BComm 54, October 5, 2022, Montreal. He was 90.

Arnold Leonard Varah, S BComm 55, December 25, 2022, Toronto. He was 89.

Myer Horowitz, S BA 56, LLD 82, October 24, 2022, Victoria, B.C. He was 89.

Stanley R. Smith, S BComm 56, December 21, 2022, Halifax. He was 92.

Saul L. Ross, S BA 56, December 30, 2022. He was 88.

Gordon Rumson, S BComm 56, S BA 66, April 15, 2021, Victoria, B.C. He was 96.

William E. Bradford, S BComm 60, December 25, 2022, Mississauga, Ont. He was 89.

Irving M. Kirsch, S BA 62, December 18, 2022, Vancouver.

Sylvia J. Tierney, S BA 63, September 14, 2022. She was 80.

Gerald Plewa, L BComm 64, September 25, 2022.

Nathan L. Bernstein, S BA 65, November 30, 2022.

Gerry Gummersell, L BA 65, November 29, 2022.

Robert H. Tadgell, S BSc 66, October 28, 2022, Beaconsfield, Que. He was 80.

John Withenshaw, S BA 68, January 6, 2023. He was 77.

William T. Miller, L BSc 69, December 7, 2022. He was 75.

Allan M. Satov, S BSc 69, December 29, 2022, Toronto.

William Canniff, L BA 70, November 28, 2022. He was 75.

Patrick M. Doyle, S BA 70, Ottawa. He was 79.

Paul Monty, L BA 70, January 28, 2022, Longueuil, Que. He was 73.

Ian D. Macleod, S BA 70, January 10, 2023, Vaudreuil-Dorion, Que. He was president of the Sir George Williams University alumni founding chapter and former member of the Concordia University Alumni Association's board of directors.

Mike Gasher (1954-2022)

Journalist, author and scholar

Mike Gasher, PhD 99 — a professor emeritus with the Department of Journalism, founder of the Department of Communication Studies' PhD program and former director of Concordia's Centre for Broadcasting and Journalism Studies — passed away on September 27, 2022. He was 67.

Former Concordia colleague Enn Raudsepp remembered Gasher as someone whose career began “as a foot soldier in the trenches of daily newspaper journalism.” Early stints included a job as a Vancouver Canucks beat reporter for *The Province* newspaper.

Gasher also co-authored a book — *Towels, Triumph*

and *Tears: The Vancouver Canucks and Their Amazing Drive to the 1982 Stanley Cup Final* — that chronicled the team's thrilling, but ultimately failed, bid for a National Hockey League championship.

'A DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH SCHOLAR'

Mike Gasher joined Concordia's Department of Journalism as a part-time lecturer in the late 1990s.

The Ontario native went on to earn his PhD from the university with a thesis on the emergence of cinema in British Columbia, later published as *Hollywood North: The Feature Film Industry in British Columbia* (University of British Columbia Press).



DAVID WARD

Gasher was soon hired as a tenure-track professor and, in the words of Raudsepp, “became a distinguished research scholar and graduate program director.”

He eventually succeeded Raudsepp as chair of the Department of Journalism. In the role, which he held for four years, Gasher helped establish what has become a widely respected MA program.

By the time of his retirement from Concordia in 2016, Gasher had published six books and numerous articles, many of which have been cited by scholars engaged in community and cultural policy, media criticism and a host of other disciplines.

Now in its eighth edition, *Mass Communication in Canada*, a book Gasher co-authored, is a widely used and influential textbook.

One of the hallmarks of Gasher's career was his passion for local print media and its survival in the digital era.

Gasher leaves behind his wife, Dianne, and children, Adam and Danielle, BA 18. ■

Joey Basmaji (1952-2022)

Entrepreneur, donor and volunteer

Joey Basmaji, a Montreal-based businessman and a Concordia donor and volunteer, died on December 21, 2022. He was 70.

The founder of Boutique Jacob, a major retailer which once had more than 200 stores

and 1,000 employees across Canada, Basmaji's impact as a philanthropist was widely felt throughout Montreal.

With charitable interests in health, social services and the arts, the Joey and Odette Basmaji Foundation

has supported the likes of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal Heart Institute and One Drop Foundation.

From 2001 to 2007, Basmaji served on the advisory board of the John Molson School of Business. In 2006, he and his

wife, Odette Basmaji, made a significant gift to and co-chaired the school's Best of the Best gala fundraiser.

Joey Basmaji is survived by his wife, daughter Cristelle, BComm 03, and grandchildren Chloë and Raphaël. ■

Robert D. Lipscombe, S BA 72, October 10, 2022. He was 80.

Keith H. Conklin, S BComm 73, December 6, 2022. He was 83.

Alan Dever, S BA 74, October 18, 2022.

Thomas C. Dozois, L BComm 74, December 28, 2022. He was 72.

Peter Gilson, S BA 74, January 20, 2023, Pointe-Claire, Que. He was 72.

Sheila Kunst, S BFA 74, November 5, 2022, Montreal. She was 75.

Helen Blanchette, Cert 75, Cert 81, October 5, 2022, Boucherville, Que. She was 80.

Antoinette Carson, BA 75, November 26, 2022. She was 75.

Gerald Dushkin, BSc 75, January 25, 2021.

Francis James, BA 75, January 4, 2023. He was 82.

Joan A. McKee, BA 75, November 3, 2022, Ottawa. She was 88.

Robert Miller, BSc 75. He was 76.

Graeme Decarie (1933 - 2022)

'A great human being'

Malcolm Graeme Decarie, BA 60, professor emeritus of history and a well-known public commentator, was fondly remembered by his Concordia colleagues after his death on November 27, 2022. He was 89.

"Graeme was a much beloved colleague, very down-to-earth and fun to be around," said Concordia President Graham Carr, who taught alongside Decarie in the Department of History.

"Graeme revelled in teaching and was adored by generations of students. He also had countless fans in the wider public who enjoyed his regular media commentary, often laced with a sardonic wit. He was passionate about education and about Concordia and will be missed by all of us who had the pleasure to know him."



Frederick Bode, professor emeritus of history, "appreciated Graeme's vast knowledge of all things Montreal and his wonderful sense of humour."

"I always looked forward to our regular conversations which could be about almost anything, from our respective historical interests to the latest news of the day. I missed him following his retirement. He was a great human being."

'A NATURAL STORYTELLER'

Born into poverty in Montreal's Villeray neighbourhood, Decarie didn't follow the traditional route to academia, dropping out of high school in grade 10.

He later enrolled as a mature student at Sir George Williams University, one of Concordia's founding institutions, taking advantage of its focus on continuing education to earn his BA in 1960.

Decarie went on to complete his MA at Acadia University in Nova Scotia, and a PhD in history at Queen's University in Ontario. Following three years at Prince Edward Island University in Charlottetown, Decarie returned to Concordia, where he spent the remainder of his career. He taught for

more than three decades until his retirement in 2006, serving as department chair from 1986 to 1994.

Decarie frequently provided commentary for a range of media outlets.

Rosemarie Schade, professor emeritus of history, described Decarie as a progressive educator who supported her career in academia.

"He is always fondly remembered for telling me that the increased number of women in the department had greatly changed the culture and behaviour for the better. Although he eschewed labels, Graeme was most definitely a feminist, and ahead of his time."

Decarie had five children and four grandchildren. ■

Norah Roberts, BA 75, November 27, 2022. She was 95.

Barbara Rumson, BA 75, November 22, 2022, Victoria, B.C. She was 91.

Shirley L. Pettifer, BA 76, MA 83, Cert 91, September 27, 2022, Montreal. She was 75.

Marcia Segal, MA 76, January 24, 2023, Montreal.

Bruno Villata, BA 76, August 17, 2022.

Elizabeth E. Grace, BA 78, November 9, 2022. She was 95.

Rose Goldberg, Cert 81, BA 87, MA 99, November 14, 2022. She was 86.

Susan M. Bisanti, BEng 83, December 2, 2022. She was 61.

Sheila R. Bonney, BA 84, December 26, 2022. She was 73.

Costa "Gus" Christopoulos, BSc 84, December 30, 2022. He was 61.

Judith A. Johnston, GrDip 86, October 2, 2022, Montreal. She was 85.

Eileen Sinnamon, BA 86, December 21, 2022, Greenock, Scotland.

Margaret Spencer, BA 86, October 14, 2022, Vancouver. She was 90.

Scott R. Bergen, BComm 87, November 8, 2022. He was 58.

Mary E. Shaver, BA 87, January 10, 2023. She was 90.

Frances Smith, Cert 87, January 4, 2023.

Marilyn Goldfarb, BA 89, December 11, 2022. She was 95.

Michael Dorland, PhD 92, December 3, 2022, Ottawa. He was 74.

Vera Greenwood, MFA 93, August 23, 2022, Wakefield, Que. She was 68.

Randi Tollefsrud, BA 94, December 22, 2022, Aldergrove, B.C. She was 91.

Marielle Gascon-Barre, EMBA 97, December 26, 2022, Montreal. She was 80.

Kimberley Leboff, Cert 00, October 4, 2022. She was 47.

Lisa A. Dias, BA 01, December 24, 2022. She was 53.

Carmen Dubé, BA 01, February 8, 2022. She was 62.

Marisa Kane, BFA 01, December 16, 2022, Long Beach, Calif. She was 60.

Mary Sweeney, GrDip 01, May 12, 2022. She was 55.

Elaine Carsley, MA 04, January 24, 2023.

Dana Lynn Feingold, MEnv 16, October 4, 2022, Montreal. She was 38. ■

'Many doors were to open beyond the clouds'

Looking back 60 years: Member of sixth Garnet Key reflects on transformative experience

VIVIANNE M.
SCHINASI-SILVER, BA 64

I recently came across a treasured memento of my university days. My Garnet Key Society blazer — which I wore 60 years ago — brings back a flood of happy memories and a recognition of how instrumental the Key has been in my life's journey.

It all began with Sir George Williams University, one of Concordia's founding institutions, giving me a chance in life, the opportunity to better myself and realize my potential.

In 1960, I was a recent immigrant to Canada, having arrived in 1957 with my family as exiles from Egypt after the Suez Crisis. My parents could not afford to send me to university, but I learned that employees of Sir George Williams could benefit from free tuition as evening students.

I soon got a job at the university library, in the original Norris building on Drummond Street, where I would meet my future husband, Brahms [BA 63, MA 96]. I am happy to say that we will soon be celebrating 60 years of marriage.

By fall 1962, I had saved enough to leave my job to become a day student. I was then able to apply to the Garnet Key Society. Members of the honour society acted as university ambassadors at various events.

I still remember how jubilant and proud I felt when I put on my uniform for the first time. At my first formal function, I believe we hosted the prime minister of Barbados, who was in Montreal on an official visit.

Brahms and I were married in 1963 and I graduated the following year. Just two weeks later, I became the proud mother of our firstborn son, Jeffrey. I had written my last exam sitting



MEMBERS OF THE 1962-63 GARNET KEY SOCIETY, FRONT ROW FROM LEFT: VIVIANNE SCHINASI-SILVER, VERNON CHANG, HELEN BAHR, JOEL SILCOFF, BARBARA CLARKE. BACK ROW FROM LEFT: TOM RAUDORF, PHIL MACDONALD, JUDITH DAVIES, PAT WHYTE, LINDA GORDON, JOANNE FYFE, JIM FRASER, THE LATE FRED LACKSTONE (MISSING FROM PHOTO IS RON MACCARTHY)

sideways at my desk, while my son's kicks cheered me on.

That autumn, I worked as a part-time receptionist in the guidance office at my alma mater, where I tutored students with their French or English literature courses. I discovered my love of teaching — and it became my profession. I taught for the next 43 years at Montreal's Dawson College and John Abbott College, retiring in 2012.

Brahms and I went on to have two more sons, Jonathan and Joshua. The latter graduated from Concordia in 1996, alongside his father who received a master's degree in Judaic Studies. I deviated somewhat, earning a master's degree at McGill University in 1985, yet I always treasured my connection to Concordia.

Fifty years after my arrival in Montreal, I published a memoir, *42 Keys to the Second Exodus*, in 2007. In it, I discuss being part of the last generation of Jews to have lived in Egypt, my family's immigration to Canada, as well as my experience at Sir George Williams

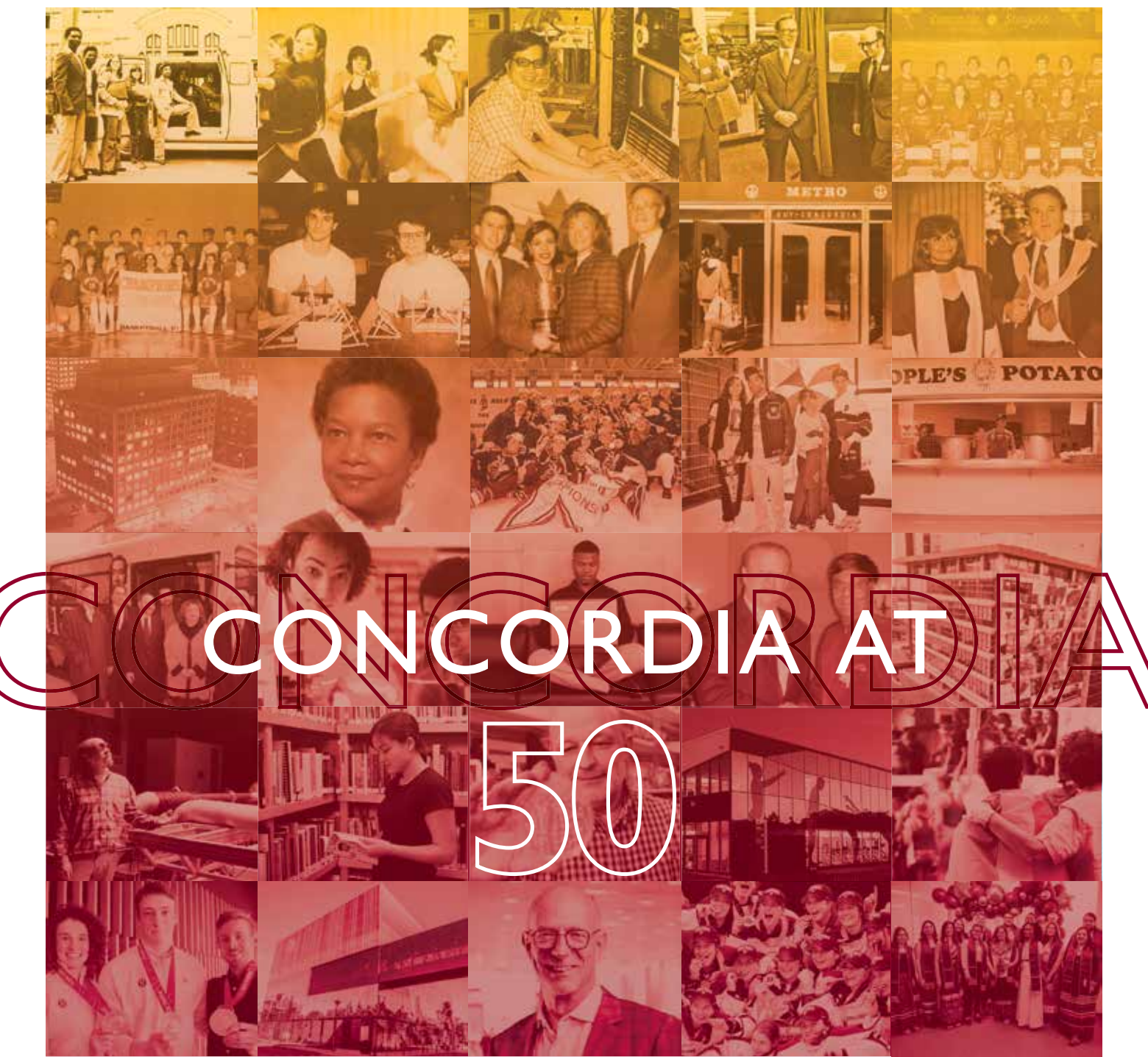
University and profound gratitude to the Garnet Key Society.

Being a Garnet Key gave me a sense of confidence and self-esteem — and the courage to aspire to the possibility of higher achievement. It helped me to be in touch with an inner sense of commitment and integrity, which I carried throughout my life.

Many years ago, Brahms and I attended a lecture given by famous author and poet Maya Angelou, who shared reflections of her own life's journey. She spoke of the rainbows in the clouds — the ones that come along and give you hope.

The Garnet Key was one such rainbow for me. Many doors were to open beyond the clouds. It was indeed a transformational experience. ■

Vivianne M. Schinasi-Silver, BA 64, is a writer, educator and community leader, and volunteer docent at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. She was a member of the sixth Garnet Key (1962-63).



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