

FALL 2019

**TWEAKING  
MOLECULES**

Next-Gen science:  
Concordia emerging  
as a leader in  
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UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

# Concordia

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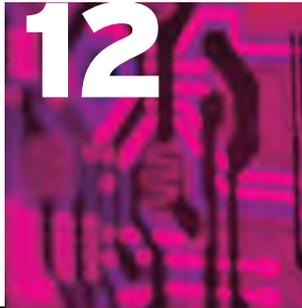
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**GINA CODY SCHOOL LOOKS FORWARD**

Fast-growing engineering school succeeds with Next-Gen approach to burgeoning field.

By Joseph Leger



**JAMES TUPPER COMES HOME**

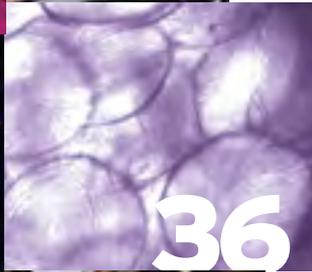
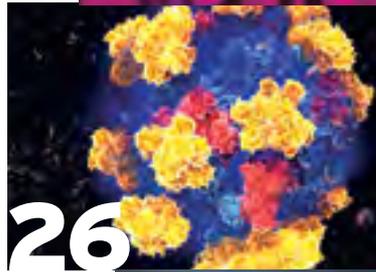
The Concordia grad who had a role in the acclaimed TV drama *Big Little Lies* spoke at Homecoming this fall and also talked about his pride in being a Canadian in Hollywood.

By Sylvain-Jacques Desjardins

**TWEAKING MOLECULES**

Concordia researchers' work in the emergent field of synthetic biology could someday change your life – from improvements in drug delivery to finding new fuels that could reduce environmental damage.

By Daniel Bartlett



**STUDYING FAT**

Researchers at Concordia's PERFORM Centre are changing the way we look at fat – and how different people have different problems with it.

By Marta Samuel

**LIVING ON THE AIR**

Concordia grads are all over the airwaves in Canada's two largest cities. Five high-profile hosts talk about their careers – and those awful early-morning wake-ups.

By Richard Burnett



**THEY SHOOT! THEY SCORE!**

The business of sports is a big one. From executives to managers and now to the NHL's first female scout, we talk to half a dozen grads who have accomplished a lot.

By Sean Farrell

**10 | WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP**

By Damon Van Der Linde

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By Maeve Haldane

**52 | FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

By Rachel Andren

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[concordia.ca/magazine](http://concordia.ca/magazine)

**COVER:**

The cover art shows a conceptual image of a DNA molecular structure. (Thinkstock)

**CORRECTION:**

On Page 55 of the Winter 2019 edition of the Concordia University Magazine, the caption for Photo #8, should have read: "The 1968 Loyola Warriors football team, including Dominic D'Ermo, BA 74, and Richard Jones, BA 65, celebrated its 50th anniversary at the Loyola Jesuit Hall and Conference Centre." The magazine regrets the error.

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# Heads-up! Concordia grads driving innovation

Aura Innovation wants to make fleet drivers' lives easier, safer

SIMONA  
RABINOVITCH

A startup by Concordia grads wants to use heads-up display (HUD) technology to improve the efficiency, safety and bottom lines of commercial vehicle fleets.

With plans to launch this winter, their startup, Aura Innovation, uses "augmented reality and the Internet of Things to create a fleet-management service," explains co-founder and chief technology officer Tristan Cool, BEng (electrical engineering) 17, who started the company with chief executive officer Gabriel Hercule, BComm (attendee). "We offer clients a dashboard-mounted, heads-up display device that projects a hologram onto the windshield displaying route information, speed, lane guidance, braking gauge and a number of features related to driving information."

While HUD technology can be found in luxury consumer vehicles, says Cool, a 26-year-old Montrealer, Aura's product is "not just an interface, but a working tool." By targeting commercial vehicles as their client base — think delivery vans, semi trucks, taxi drivers,

emergency vehicles. "We can help them reduce fuel costs, reduce insurance premiums, train drivers more quickly, track them and send information directly to the windshield."

Hercule, 26, explains that "the business premise is that we have features we integrate already and the service we offer is to create custom HUD features, anything our client desires."

The duo started developing the concept in 2016 during pizza-fueled work sessions at the Electronics

lab of Concordia's student branch of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. "The prototype was very much developed late at night," Cool says. "We both had jobs, bootstrapping the startup on the side, any time we had was devoured by this idea."

Hercule, who grew up in Markham, Ont., says he has always had an entrepreneurial bent. As for Cool, he's into cars and entered the aerospace industry with a CAE internship in 2014,

followed by an avionics engineering specialist job at TRU Simulation + Training, thanks to Concordia's Co-op program.

They met when Hercule marched into the IEEE Concordia lab looking for the right collaborators to get a startup off the ground. "There was one guy in the room, typing at the computer wearing slippers," Hercule recalls. "He was like, 'What do you want?'"

Shortly thereafter, they officially partnered up to apply for a startup program at Concordia's District 3 Innovation Center. They got into the program, where, Cool says, "they give mentorship, help you pitch, speak to investors, approach clients."

It was there they first met Sujan Soosaihas, BEng (mech.eng.) 09, MEng 18, their assigned mentor, who would later come aboard as the company's third co-founder and chief operating officer (with a focus on mechanical design, manufacturing and supply chain).

"We're using an innovative approach for a product that's really disrupting different aspects of the automotive industry," says Soosaihas. "We're thinking about what the future looks like, [about] augmented reality,



"THIS COULD NOT BE MORE OF A CONCORDIA INVENTION," SAYS TRISTAN COOL (CENTRE), AURA INNOVATION'S CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER. GABRIEL HERCULE IS AT LEFT; SUJAN SOOSAIHAS IS AT RIGHT.

human-machine interaction. We're pushing those boundaries and I find that really fulfilling."

Things really got rolling in late 2017, when they were accepted into London, England's Startupbootcamp IoT accelerator program (as HUDlog, their company's original name). Theirs was one of nine projects chosen out of 350 for 2017's IoT accelerator program. The trio went to London.

"They invested in us," Cool says. "We got really chummy with the London scene, spoke to customers, developed the product and built the team." (Which now, they say, includes two interns and several contractors, plus the co-founders.)

Then came a second round of pre-seed funding as part of Brinc's Connected Hardware accelerator program in Hong Kong, where they were accepted into its spring 2018 program. The trio spent the summer of 2018 there and visited factories.

Now, Cool says, they're in the process of "de-bugging, doing sales, developing partnerships and getting ready for launch." Hercule says that now, before seeking to raise seed funding, data is another focus. "We want more data than we know what to do with, and tweaking, tweaking, tweaking, until we get it just right."

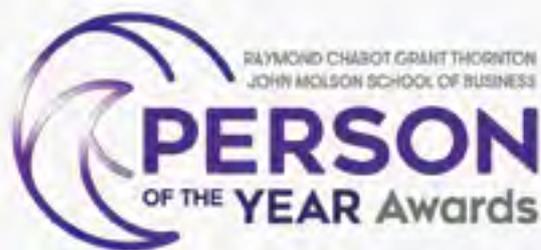
Aura Innovation's product (for which they hold three pending patents for hardware, interface and application) "could not be more of a Concordia invention," says Cool, who keeps in touch

with former professors in the Department of Computer and Electrical Engineering.

"I encourage Concordia developers, engineers and business students to take the leap while they're young; it's really not that scary," says Cool. "If you have to change cities, get international as soon as possible, build the right team and have faith in your idea. You'll get 'no' 10 times more than 'yes,' but the yes is always a big win."

Soosaitas also values his Concordia ties. "What made the difference for me was the Concordia Institute of Aerospace Design & Innovation (CIADI)," says Soosaitas, who was accepted into its internship program back when he was a student. This, he adds, helped him land a variety of internships "doing all these different things," which he feels made his CV stand out to Concordia's District 3 as a possible mentor. "The difference is seen here; that's what attracted [Hercule and Cool] to considering me as a mentor. I'm part of this project because they considered me good enough to be a mentor, which opened the door to be a co-founder."

As for Hercule, he very much connects to Concordia's entrepreneurial spirit. "For me, it was all about building a business from day one," he says. "I dedicated a lot of time at Concordia at District 3. I would just go there and write ideas. And today, most of my friends and the people I go to for business advice are Concordia-based." ■



[-----]

## BELIEVES NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

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# setting an example

## Award encourages women to dive into engineering

“ I don't have any heart-tugging stories about growing up and having to walk for miles without shoes to get to school, or dreaming about having enough money just to buy a tin of corned beef.

That was my father's story, but, years later, he and my mother traveled the world, raised their four young girls (me included) and put us all through university. My parents believe firmly in a good education. My father was a university professor, so he started us out at an early age practicing mathematical problems at the dinner table.

As an international student at Concordia, I was incredibly blessed and privileged to have all my fees paid for by my parents, while my older sisters took care of my living expenses. While I was under no obligation to pay them back, my father always reiterated the importance of helping others in return.

At Concordia I was able to challenge myself and my ambitions through the Building Engineering program. I am as interested in fashion, jewelry and dance as I am in construction, big trucks and machinery. That has never changed through my years at

Concordia, or now at work, and it has been great to be able to nurture and show my creative side even in the engineering discipline.

I decided to set up the Ahema award for a female student in the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science at Concordia, to support other girls in pursuing their goals. Female graduates in these industries are the women who will be the example and encouragement for the next generation of women interested in entering the STEM fields. The award, \$1,000 per year for three years, offered to a female student pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Engineering and Computer Science, is also an expression of my gratitude to those who played a role in my education.

Going through the BEng program at Concordia prepared me for my first job in the HVAC industry with the selection of coursework and projects I focused on. After several years in the industry, I wanted to help others and I immediately thought, what better place to start than with the university that opened the door for me to become part of the industry I wanted to be in.”

*Mercy Quarshie, Eng., BEng 2011, is aftermarket service manager at Dehumidified Air Solutions.*

Find out how you can join Mercy Quarshie, in giving to Concordia.

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#CUpride

## District 3 partnership lays foundation for cooperation between Israeli, Palestinian communities

Innovative program connects entrepreneurs with Concordia students for hands-on learning with social impact

JULIA SCANDELLA,  
BA 15

Concordia's District 3 Innovation Center is partnering with fellowship program and startup incubator Our Generation Speaks (OGS) for a novel program to promote cooperation in the Middle East.

As part of the Our Generation Speaks-Concordia Accelerator Program, four visiting Israeli and Palestinian entrepreneurs will further develop their respective startups through collaboration with District 3's innovation residency teams – three groups of multidisciplinary and multicultural Concordia students.

Entrepreneurship will be used to foster trust between participants – acting as a catalyst to approach and mitigate tensions from the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The program will allow Concordia students to gain valuable experience through startups.

“The Our Generation Speaks-Concordia Accelerator Program exemplifies how collaboration, entrepreneurship and innovation – the pillars of District 3 – drive progress and help bridge cultural divides,” says Xavier-Henri Hervé, executive director of District 3.

The program was made possible thanks to the Naim S. Mahlab Foundation's gift to the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.

The OGS Israeli and Palestinian fellows arrived

in Montreal in late July for the final two weeks of the program, where they participated in a series of workshops, coaching and expert sessions, and explored the Montreal innovation ecosystem. The Concordia student teams will formulate exercises for the emerging entrepreneurs and help them tackle some of their startup challenges.

The program ended with an innovation showcase on Aug. 8 at District 3.

The OGS-Concordia Accelerator Program instills more than entrepreneurial skills. It thoughtfully mixes Israelis and Palestinians with the aim of building economic and social partnerships.

“Common feedback I receive from our alumni and fellows is that OGS injects in them optimism, and enables them to grasp

a deeper understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the differing narratives involved,” says Lobna Agbaria, Program Director of OGS.

During their stay, OGS participants were housed together at Concordia's Grey Nuns Residence. Shared living quarters increased opportunities for participants to build trust and understanding.

Concordia students also reap benefits from the program – cultivating a broader worldview and gaining hands-on entrepreneurial experience.

“Working in the startup ethos has been such a blessing, and I've grown immensely from it. It's been such an eye-opening experience working with these startups and seeing what is possible for our future world,” says Kevin Lam, BFA 19. ■





## 20 years of philanthropy and friendship

JULIA SCANDELLA, BA 15

The Concordia University Hong Kong Foundation (CUHKF) celebrated its 20th anniversary with a gala dinner on September 5, 2019, in Hong Kong.

The gala raised \$370,000 to be shared between the CUHKF and the Campaign for Concordia.

The event featured more than 200 guests — mostly alumni from the 1960s through today — as well as harp and tai chi performances.

“The foundation’s accomplishments over the last 20 years are a testament to the great leadership we have in Hong Kong — and of the strength of its alumni community,” says Paul Chesser, vice-president of Advancement at Concordia.

By the end of 2019, the CUHKF will have awarded 135 Concordia scholarships to deserving students in mainland China and Hong Kong.

“Scholarships funded by the CUHKF offer critical financial support to many talented students, giving

them access to a high-quality, international education at Concordia,” says Graham Carr, interim president of Concordia. “The generosity of the CUHKF has been remarkable.”

Over two decades, the CUHKF and its board members have raised close to \$1 million.

The evening celebrated the foundation’s accomplishments as well as key members, including president and founder William Yip, who established the CUHKF with the support of long-time

philanthropist Che-woo Lui. The CUHKF’s mission — to make international studies accessible to students from low-income families — resonates deeply with them.

Of Concordia’s alumni community — which counts 220,000 graduates worldwide — 500 make their home in China.

“Our students have thrived thanks to donors’ support of the foundation. As Concordia moves forward, many more students will benefit as the next generation of great leaders,” says Chesser. ■



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: HARPISIT ENTERTAINS AT THE EVENT, CHINESE ART WORK, GRAHAM CARR, INTERIM PRESIDENT OF CONCORDIA, JEFF NANKIVELL, CANADA’S CONSUL GENERAL IN HONG KONG AND MACAO.

## Concordia Golf Classic aces fundraising goal

Over 150 Quebec business leaders participated in the 16th annual event

IAN HARRISON,  
BComm 00

One of the university's most anticipated fundraisers, the annual Concordia Golf Classic tournament and dinner, eclipsed past milestones with an impressive \$427,600 raised on September 9.

The record tally ensures that promising students benefit from university scholarships and bursaries. Thanks to the support of sponsors and participants, the event has raised close to \$6 million since its inception in 2004.

To date, more than 1,000 students have benefited from Concordia Golf Classic scholarships and bursaries.

"Bursaries often mean the difference between staying in school and dropping out," says interim Concordia President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr. "Some recipients are adult students, are married, have young kids or care for aging relatives. Education can be a risky investment. Financial aid makes it a sounder one."



Golf Griffon des Sources in Mirabel, Que., was once again the host site for the gathering of business leaders, alumni, donors and friends of Concordia, many of whom were repeat guests.

Prominent attendees included honorary co-chairs Luigi Liberatore, LLD 18, Louis Tanguay, BComm 75, LLD 18, and André Desmarais, BComm 78, LLD 07.

The following co-presidents of the Golf Classic were present: Tony Aksa, CFA, Associate Vice-President Commercial Banking, National Bank; Sophie Boucher, Vice-President, Business Development, Business

Services Laurentian Bank; Sylvain Corbeil, Senior Vice-President, TD Commercial Banking, Quebec and Atlantic Regions, TD Bank Group; and Charles Douville, BComm 84, Senior Vice-President, Regional Head of Commercial Banking – Quebec, HSBC Bank Canada. René Douville, Head, Corporate Finance Division – Quebec, BMO Bank of Montreal, was represented by Claude Gagnon, President, Operations, BMO Financial Group, Quebec.

Also in attendance were co-presidents Maria Mangiocavallo, BComm 86, GrDip 89, Vice-President and Head, Commercial Banking and Roynat Capital, Quebec Region, Roynat/Scotiabank; Nathalie Soucy, Head of Sales, Vice-President, Business Services, Desjardins Group; Nadine Renaud-Tinker, President, Quebec Headquarters, RBC Royal Bank; and Demo Trifonopoulos, BComm 85, Vice-President and Region Head – Quebec, Commercial Banking CIBC.

Award recipient Olivia Herron described how financial assistance from the Golf Classic helps students get out of the rough.

"While studying full time [at Concordia's Faculty of Arts and Science], I volunteer for a local crisis line, run therapeutic and educational programs for teen mothers and sit on the board of an anti-racism education organization," she says.

"I hope to pursue a career in counselling psychology and work with young families and single parents. In the past, there were times I've had to pause my studies due to financial strain, so I appreciate how privileged I am to have your support to continue my work."

Funds raised at the Golf Classic will contribute to the Campaign for Concordia. Next-Gen. Now. The university's most ambitious campaign to date aims to raise \$250 million to deliver next-generation teaching and learning to Concordia students. ■

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# Carr sees youth, diversity and ambition as Concordia's big strengths

Interim president says university well-placed to tackle future change

JAKE BRENNAN

Graham Carr began his tenure as Concordia's interim president and vice-chancellor on July 1. He had previously served as the university's provost and vice-president, Academic, since October 2016.

Carr joined Concordia's Department of History in 1983. He has held many administrative positions at the university since then, including vice-president of Research and Graduate Studies and dean of Graduate Studies.

In these excerpts from an interview published online, Carr discusses challenges universities face, what makes Concordia a Next-Gen university and how it is carving out a growing reputation as a place for innovation and partnerships.



**You're becoming Concordia's president at an interesting time for academic leaders. Higher education is responding to deep and rapid societal changes, many of them driven by the digital revolution. How do you see societal demands on universities shifting?**

**Graham Carr:** I was in administration when the university went through severe budget cuts for successive years since 2012. We were operating under very difficult circumstances. But we also realized that there were a lot of great things happening at Concordia and we were determined to continue to push forward, full throttle, to support them. And we did that.

We prioritized academic growth, faculty hiring,

research intensification, graduate education and funding for students. And we continued to improve our infrastructure.

I think those were make-or-break decisions and years for Concordia, quite frankly, because we were embarking on something that was changing the trajectory of the university. There was a risk that we could make bad choices but the biggest risk would have been not to move boldly.

Now we're coming out of that experience into a somewhat better economic situation: the Board of Governors has just approved our first balanced budget in many, many years. Although we still have structural financial challenges to address, Concordia is well placed to deal with the

seismic changes coming in higher education because we've been developing a next-generation mindset for a while.

**What new challenges do academic leaders face now that they may not have a generation ago?**

**GC:** I wouldn't say there are more or fewer challenges today; it's just a different reality. Part of that reality for university leaders is the incredible complexity of the organizations we lead, particularly places as large as Concordia.

We have an unbelievably diverse internal community and the array of external contacts who interact with us is extraordinary. And when it comes to decision-making, everything is magnified and accelerated in an era

of social media by the speed of information sharing – accurate or not.

It's also a very destabilizing time, in terms of what's happening socially and economically. There's a lot of oversight from government now – which is fair enough: we're public institutions. And I think the expectations that our alumni and donors justifiably place on us are big as well.

**Concordia is distinguishing itself as Canada's Next-Gen university. What does "Next-Gen" mean to you? What qualities position Concordia to assume that role?**

One advantage Concordia has is its youth: in some respects, it's easier for us to be forward-looking. The history of Concordia's founding institutions

to tack accordingly. All of those things are key to being a Next-Gen university.

**Does this make Concordia more nimble in a time of rapid change?**

Yes. "Nimble" and "university" don't often fit together too well in the same sentence! But on the university scale of nimbleness, I think Concordia dances as well as anyone – especially given our size.

I think the other thing we have is ambition – ambition to be recognized, to be successful, to be the destination university for students, to bring in outstanding, quality faculty, and to provide programs, activities and opportunities within the university that prepare our students for what's coming in their lives.

doing – is that people are taking notice of what's happening at Concordia.

There's a sense that this is a cool place to be, a unique place where experimentation and out-of-the-box ideas are valued.

I look at our student numbers and I have to believe that one of the reasons students have been beating down the doors to come here is that they sense that. They'll get a great foundational education, for sure, but they'll also have other opportunities, novel opportunities to explore and discover, that they might not have access to elsewhere.

A few years ago, Times Higher Education ranked us in the top 200 most international universities in the world. A diversity of students is part of it. But I think what makes you an

future by growing our international profile.

That's something the university needs in order to sustain its momentum in a globally competitive higher-education environment.

And related to that is the partnership piece, something I began to appreciate when I was in research portfolios. The cliché, which is true, is that the problems of the world are too big to be solved by any one research group or university. You need to partner. That's always been Quebec's approach to supporting research, through the Fonds de recherche du Québec and the Regroupements stratégiques, etc.

I love the fact that Concordia is now leading more and more research networks across Canada and internationally.

**"Part of our tradition has always been to offer something different from what other universities were providing. There's been an emphasis at Concordia on innovation, on experimentation, creativity, taking risks, truly valuing diversity, reading the horizon and not being afraid to tack accordingly. All of those things are key to being a Next-Gen university."**

is important and our traditions matter and need to be valued. But part of our tradition has always been to offer something different from what other universities were providing.

There's been an emphasis at Concordia on innovation, experimentation, creativity, taking risks, truly valuing diversity, reading the horizon and not being afraid

**Even with Concordia's strong momentum, you've said there's a lot more work to do. Can you tell us what you plan to prioritize?**

My sense – from meetings with other university administrators and with people outside academia, from what faculty tell me their colleagues are saying about the breakthrough work we're

international university is demonstrating that you can partner meaningfully beyond your borders.

Whether that's laying down the tracks for vibrant mobility for faculty and students, or entering into collaborative international research networks, or hosting global conferences, I think there's a prestige moment for Concordia in the

But we're also seeing more and more the benefit of expanding the focus on partnerships and collaborations beyond research activity to develop consortia of mobility opportunities for students.

Ideally, Concordia is an anchor institution in Montreal – not just because of what we do for the city, but also because of how we connect it to the world. ■

# Meet two women who have forged careers through the power of strong leadership

*The Concordia Alumni Women and Leadership program empowers women graduates to connect, share professional experiences and expertise, and learn from each other. In this new series, meet leaders from among Concordia's nearly 100,000 alumnae who fill the ranks of business, media, engineering, science, the arts, humanities and more. Each issue, we'll profile both young and seasoned alumnae who will share their insights, challenges and lessons learned.*  
([concordia.ca/alumni/women](http://concordia.ca/alumni/women))

DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

Anjali Pradhan, BComm 03, left Montreal to build an investment-management career in London, England, with nothing but her Concordia degree and a hockey bag full of belongings.

Already feeling confident working in finance thanks to her undergraduate Co-op placements, she quickly rose through the ranks at some of the biggest names in the industry, including Goldman Sachs and PIMCO. However, when she learned that women are twice as likely to be in poverty at retirement as men, that sobering statistic sparked a fundamental shift in how she envisioned using her financial expertise.

"When women feel confident investing, it changes everything. Not only their relationship with money, but also how they live their lives," says Pradhan.

In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, Pradhan returned home to Montreal a Chartered Financial Analyst with an impressive resumé. She sent out

hundreds of applications and attended dozens of interviews across the country, but could no longer find a position she felt passionate about.

"The financial industry is still very much a boys' club and it's a white boys' club at that. I'm neither of those things," says Pradhan.

"I had two choices, I could either abandon the industry altogether, or I could recycle my career and do something different. I always wanted to use my skills to help other people, so a friend suggested I teach women how to invest."

Pradhan founded Dahlia Wealth, an online platform that gives women the tools and confidence to make the best financial decisions for themselves.

"What I hear over and over again from women that I work with is that they can't find a financial advisor they connect with and they don't feel comfortable and happy with the products they are being offered," she says.

"The lack of service geared toward women's needs results in women investing half as much as men do, which is a real societal issue."

Dahlia's flagship product is an online coaching program, where students can go through the curriculum at their own pace and have a weekly video chat session with Pradhan. She says she



felt inspired by the fact that Concordia professors were usually experienced financial professionals; something she can now offer to her students.

"In business, you want to be taught by people who are 'in the trenches' and Concordia has many of those," she says.

"My transition from a corporate employee to an entrepreneur has been extremely interesting and edifying. It has been almost like a second education."

## From Concordia to Google

Knowing the value of strong leadership has taken Catherine Barry, BComm 06, to a place in her career where she oversees projects across several continents for one of the biggest tech companies in the world.

As Head of Exchange Platforms at Google for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, she combines her passion for technology, advertising and relationship-management, across an incredibly diverse range of geographies, cultures and languages.

"I'm working with companies that through their advertising support a free open web. I have always been interested in making information accessible and useful, which is very much at the core of Google's values," says Barry, who is based in London, England.

"Our clients are based in different places with different needs and their own unique set of customers. At Concordia, I studied with people from all over the world. I would recommend anybody with the chance to travel for work take advantage of the opportunity. Your curiosity can be endless."

While studying at Concordia, Barry was active in the Commerce and Administration Students Association (CASA), where she was involved in projects that included fundraising for charities and case competitions with other students.



"I think I've always been a leader," says Barry. "From a young age, I was the person to raise her hand to volunteer for things."

Barry says a key ingredient to becoming such a strong leader in her career is that she has always sought out other strong leaders to work with.

"One of the most important criteria I've had when picking my next role is that my direct manager inspires me. Along the way, I've had different kinds of leaders and managers who have helped shape me into the leader I am."

Another principle that has guided Barry's career is that you don't need to work in management to be a leader.

"My first boss told me, 'You need to lead from the middle. You don't need to be in a formal position to do that.' It's more important to cultivate your network and be deliberate about who you are working for," she says.

"We can all learn from each other because there are going to be challenging moments for everyone. This is especially true for women who can face different family obligations and other challenges in maintaining a work-life balance." ■

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**GROWTH,  
LEADERSHIP  
AND INNOVATION:  
WHY THE  
GINA CODY SCHOOL  
IS TURNING HEADS**

## STUDENT POPULATION HAS NEARLY DOUBLED IN ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE IN THE LAST DECADE

JOSEPH LEGER, BA 15

In an era of smart cities, smartphones and smart cars, our world is increasingly reliant on engineers and computer scientists. Technology merges seamlessly into our environment, often invisible to the eye, yet nonetheless shaping and altering the way we live.

Most of us would be hard-pressed to find any area of our daily lives untouched by technology — which might explain why the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science (GCS) is Concordia's fastest-growing faculty.

With roughly 10,500 students — 5,780 undergraduate and 4,700 graduate students — GCS's enrolment has nearly doubled since 2009. It is now one of Canada's largest such faculties.

"It's no secret that there's a huge labour market demand for engineers and computer scientists at the moment," says Anne Whitelaw, BA 87, MA 92, PhD 96, Concordia's interim provost and vice-president of Academic Affairs. "And we are seeing that demand translate into exciting growth in the Gina Cody School. For example, our master's of engineering program saw more than 100 per cent growth in applications over the last year and a half."

While the labour demands are undeniable, GCS's growth outpaces other Quebec universities.

"Concordia's been in a situation the last few years where students have been knocking down the doors to come here," says Graham Carr, Concordia's interim president. "Our enrolments have been completely out of sync with the experience in the rest of the province. We are at a point where we can't continue to grow everywhere — we just have to think about where we want to grow."

It is a sentiment echoed by Whitelaw.

"It's critical that the education we offer is of the highest caliber — and to do that we have to be smart," she says. "The faculty has been very strategic in its growth and has focused on research at the master's and PhD level — which aligns with the university's strategic direction to double our research."

This begs the question: what is happening at Concordia, and in particular the Gina Cody School, that has so many people excited?

### FOCUSING ON NEXT-GENERATION TECHNOLOGIES

"Engineering and computer science are leading fields across the world and the demand for highly qualified personnel is great," says Amir Asif, dean of the Gina Cody School. "However, GCS is the only school of its kind in Quebec that has expanded so much in the past 10 years."

"There are a number of contributing factors to our rapid growth. I believe a big part of our success can be attributed to our efforts to introduce programs focused on next-generation concepts and technologies."

Asif points to the new aerospace engineering program, which is only the second of its kind in Quebec and the first at an English university, and the recently launched Master in Engineering with Engineering Management Option.

The latter is an interdisciplinary collaboration between the Gina Cody School and the John Molson School of Business, aimed at helping engineers who aspire to move into management-level positions acquire business skills.

Providing students with courses and programs tailored for a rapidly changing digital era is no easy feat. With technology emerging, evolving and often quickly becoming obsolete, the challenge is to prepare students for the world as it is, or as it will be when they enter the workplace, and not as it was five years ago.

The Gina Cody School not only manages to keep up, its courses and programs are often ahead of their time.

For example, the faculty recently established the Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering, positioning itself as a leader in advanced manufacturing, clean energy and sustainability.

"Our undergraduate programs are modern and we maintain them with regular changes," says Christopher Trueman, GCS associate dean, Academic Affairs. "We offer up-to-date options, such as avionics in electrical engineering, biological and biomedical programs in computer engineering and aerospace in mechanical engineering, in addition to the bachelor of engineering in aerospace."

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Beyond the exciting programs and courses, Asif says the faculty puts a lot of emphasis on experiential and hands-on learning.

“Almost all of our courses have a lab component where students can put theoretical concepts to the test,” says Asif. “Plus, we facilitate industrial placements for our students with the eventual goal that all of our undergraduate students will have one work placement upon graduating.”

One popular feature of the university’s focus on experiential learning is Concordia’s co-op programs. Students enrolled in a co-op program divide their time between the classroom and a job placement in their field.

“These programs offer students the chance to gain industry-specific work experience so that when they graduate they are ready for the workplace,” says Anjali Agarwal, associate dean and professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. “When potential students visit, they get very excited when they see our state-of-the-art labs and hear about our many experiential learning opportunities.”

GCS also provides internships and other work-placement opportunities through programs such as the Concordia Institute of Aerospace Design & Innovation.

These experiences help equip students with the tools and knowledge they need and in turn make the students more attractive to employers.

## FLEXIBILITY AND OPENNESS IS KEY

Concordia has a well-earned reputation for being a student-first university. Dating back to its two founding institutions, Sir George Williams University and Loyola College, Concordia has a history of offering night classes and access to higher education to allow students to complete their degrees while working.

This student-centric ideal remains a Concordia cornerstone.

“We give everyone a chance — it’s our mission,” says Nancy Acemian, senior lecturer in the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering. “The flexibility here is one of the things I love about Concordia. We offer evening classes and online classes and we are catering to the needs of today. We are very open and we try to do everything we can to help our students succeed.”

Christopher Trueman believes word of GCS’ openness and focus is spreading and driving growth.

“We have a reputation for helping students and for being willing to accommodate their needs,” says Trueman. “Many of our students have jobs and our programs are structured to permit students to work a considerable number of hours and also maintain their grades.”

“And we are fair to students. We are willing to offer students a second chance when they have difficulties. So the word gets around that Concordia has excellent programs and is fair.”

Mengting Zhao, a fourth-year PhD candidate, says she is thrilled with choosing the Gina Cody School. “I’m very, very proud of my choice of coming here,” she says.



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

“At Concordia, I have the freedom to do what I’m interested in and we have flexible working hours.” Being attentive to the changing needs of students has allowed GCS to develop a curriculum designed for a digital world.

According to Acemian, the goal is to move towards a blended pedagogy of online courses and programs and in-person classes. This allows students the greatest flexibility to customize their education to fit their needs.

“Online courses may seem like a small thing, but they make a big difference,” says Acemian. “And it’s not just a question of taking an in-person class, recording it and plunking it online. We are taking the time to develop them properly to make sure the technology is supporting the pedagogy and working for the professors and the students.”

## STUDENT-DRIVEN INNOVATION

Award-winning student groups and societies are an important draw for prospective students; the Gina Cody School has no shortage of those.

There’s Space Concordia, a student-run group that recently won a \$15,000 second-place prize in the first stage of the Base 11 Space Challenge — an international student competition to design, build and launch a rocket into space (the grand prize is \$1 million).

HackConcordia, a student group that organizes ConUHacks, an annual 24-hour hackathon at Concordia, is another. This year, the group’s fourth ConUHacks attracted more than 700 participants from between 40 to 50 universities — making it one of the largest such events in the world.

“We empower our student societies to receive or get trained in what I call co-curricular activities,” says Asif. “These activities are not assessed academically, but they allow students to participate in competitions and events around the world — and get international recognitions and awards.”

Joining the Concordia Society for Civil Engineering made a real difference for Giulia Tiramani, a fourth-year civil engineering student.

“This student group completely changed my experience as an undergrad. You have some classes, especially in your first year, that might have 100 students and you don’t really have the chance to get to know anyone.

“Being in a student group allowed me to make those important connections; there are competitions, opportunities to network and meet people who are actually working in the field — it just gave me such an enriching experience.”

## DOUBLING RESEARCH

Great programs and opportunities attract top students and faculty, which in turn leads to great research.

“Our emphasis on graduate-level research is really allowing us to capitalize on some big research projects,” says Whitelaw.

“GCS is doing some amazing work in the areas of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, chemical and materials engineering and of course smart cities with Ursula Eicker, our new Canada Excellence Research Chair in Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Communities and Cities.”

GCS received a historic research boost in 2018 with a \$15-million donation from the school’s namesake, Gina Cody, MA 81, PhD 89.

Part of her gift is supporting three new academic chairs: in data analytics and artificial intelligence; in the internet of things; and in Industry 4.0 and advanced manufacturing. The remaining funds are reserved for student financial support.

“About 50 per cent of Gina Cody’s donation was for scholarships,” says Asif. “Her gift will be funding a total of 40 PhD Scholarships and 100 undergraduate scholarships over seven years, with most of those for underrepresented populations or for students from underprivileged backgrounds.”

Asif says the focus on these groups is part of the Gina Cody School’s aspiration to be an inclusive faculty where equity, diversity and inclusion are a priority.

## MIND THE GAP

Engineering and computer science are fields that still have significant gender and diversity gaps. According to Engineers Canada, only 13 per cent of working engineers in Canada are women. This is a big drop-off from the roughly 20 per cent of undergraduate engineering degrees awarded to women.

The numbers are even lower for Indigenous women and women of colour.

To help bridge these gaps and help retain women in these fields, a large portion of Gina Cody’s gift was earmarked to support equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives throughout the faculty, at both the student and staff levels.

“We want to make Concordia the first choice for women in engineering,” says Agarwal. “This is a process that will take time because for change to happen it has to start in elementary or high school.”

Agarwal says the faculty does a lot of outreach to high schools and CEGEPs to encourage girls and young women to consider pursuing careers in engineering and computer science.

The faculty also created the All-Girls Summer Engineering and Technology Program, or GirlSET, a summer camp for girls in grades 8-11 and their first-year of CEGEP. The program is so popular that Agarwal says she doubled the capacity after the first year to accommodate the demand.

Where the faculty has had great success is with attracting international students; currently nearly 50 per cent of students in GCS are international students — with strong representation from countries such as India, Iran and China.

## THE GINA CODY EFFECT

One challenge to closing the gender gap in engineering and computer science is the perception of these fields as “male territory.”

Popular culture — textbooks, film, television, even science fiction — depict men in the jobs of building rocket engines, designing bridges or creating video games. To break deeply entrenched stereotypes, we need role models to inspire the next generation to follow in their footsteps. Enter Gina Cody.

On September 24, 2018, Gina Cody made a landmark gift in support of the Campaign for Concordia and the engineering and computer science faculty. Not only was it the largest personal donation ever given to the university, the faculty was renamed in her honour. The gift generated more than 400 headlines around the world.

Giulia Tiramani was there when Gina Cody made her historic announcement. “I felt an immense pride,” says Tiramani. “I’m a woman and there aren’t many women in engineering in general, particularly in civil engineering or building engineering. So knowing that she is a graduate and was the first woman PhD in building engineering makes me proud. And maybe gives me a bit of hope, too — that maybe that could be me one day.”

For the first time in Canada, a woman’s name graces an engineering and computer science school — and it matters.

“Having Gina Cody’s name on the school makes a difference,” says Acemian. “In a way it is almost giving women permission to go into engineering.” ■

“WE WANT TO MAKE CONCORDIA THE FIRST CHOICE FOR WOMEN IN ENGINEERING,” SAYS ASSOCIATE DEAN ANJALI AGARWAL.



# 'My generation of Canadian actors has done extremely well in America'

James Tupper, a graduate of Concordia's Department of Theatre, reflects on *Big Little Lies* and his journey from Dartmouth to Hollywood

SYLVAIN-JACQUES  
DESJARDINS, BA 97

James Tupper, BFA 92, has built an impressive résumé of performances since graduating from Concordia's Department of Theatre.

In recent years, Tupper has starred in TV series such as *Men in Trees*, *Mercy* and *Revenge*.

His latest high-profile role was in the HBO franchise and critically acclaimed miniseries, *Big Little Lies*. The gripping finale of the show's second season aired on July 21.

The show's debut garnered eight Emmy Awards. In both seasons, Tupper lights up the screen as the husband to actor Zoë Kravitz and ex-husband to Reese Witherspoon, an Academy-Award winning actor.

Fellow cast members include household names such as Laura Dern, Shailene Woodley, Alexander Skarsgård as well as Oscar winners Meryl Streep and Nicole Kidman. Season 1 was directed by acclaimed Quebec director Jean-Marc Vallée (*C.R.A.Z.Y.*, *Dallas Buyers Club*), and Vallée was executive producer for Season 2.

"[*Big Little Lies*] feels like the halftime in the Raptors' locker room," Tupper says. "You're part of a group that's phenomenal – and that's really fun."

Tupper has come far from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, where he grew up, to Hollywood. His fame means he's often recognized when out in public. "I've always believed it's nice to be important, but it's much more important to be nice.



MICHAEL GANNON

JAMES TUPPER, BFA 92, DISCUSSES HIS JOURNEY AS AN ACTOR AT A SEPT. 23, 2019 HOMECOMING EVENT. INSET: TUPPER WITH *BIG LITTLE LIES* CO-STAR REESE WITHERSPOON AND SEASON 1 DIRECTOR JEAN-MARC VALLEE.

So I always tip everyone very well!" he says.

"I like the fans – I love when they come up to me to ask to take pictures. I see it as gratification."

Tupper credits his father for helping him stay grounded as his career ascended. When he sent his dad a photograph with his name next to Meryl Streep's

on the *Big Little Lies* call sheet, his father replied, "Yup, she's not sending that picture to her friends."

Tupper's aunts are more effusive. "One called and said, 'I'm so proud of you, Jim!'" he recalls. "It's like a miracle to them."

His miracle has been three decades in the making. Following his Concordia studies, he obtained a master's degree in theatre from Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, he performed in some 50 plays. He was a member of Circle Repertory Company in New York and featured in several off-Broadway plays such as *An Actor Prepares* and *After the Rain*.

"My door is open to any Concordian or Canadian actor who direct-messages me on Instagram – I will help them. I'm very proud to be a Canadian and I want to help others make it, too."

Tupper retains fond memories of his student days at Concordia's theatre program. "I remember every single teacher I had," he says. "It was a very exciting, terrific program. It was like spending three years in a womb, where we were allowed to grow as artists and as people."

Given the competitive nature of show business, what allowed him to break out? "For me, it was a little bit of vulnerability, a little bit of technique, a little bit of stamina, a little bit of heart and sticking with it," he says.

Concordia's home base also nurtured his creative talent, Tupper says. "I think it's a really special environment. The pressure is not the same; we have the freedom to explore in Montreal."

## Concordia

Concordia University Magazine welcomes readers' comments. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, school(s), degree(s) and year(s) of graduation for alumni. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. No letter will be published without the full name of the correspondent.

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Tupper remains close to his Canadian roots and he keeps a Montreal home. "I try to spend as much time as I can there," he says.

His children with ex-partner Anne Heche — son Atlas Heche Tupper and stepson Homer Lafoon — are exposed to Canadian culture such as Toronto Raptors games and trips up north.

He maintains a friendship with Canadian actor Sandra Oh, a graduate of Montreal's National Theatre School of Canada, with whom he acted in *Grey's Anatomy*. "Sandra is a great actor," he says.

"My generation of Canadian actors has done extremely well in America. There's one of us on almost every single major television show."

Tupper is happy to connect with fellow thespians when they reach out. "My door is open to any Concordian or Canadian actor who direct-messages me on Instagram — I will help them," he says. "I'm very proud to be a Canadian and I want to help others make it, too."

He's especially keen to help the next generation of actors with their auditions. "The hardest bridge to cross, for me, was auditioning for film and television," he says. "You go into a tiny, empty room with nothing but your imagination. It's very tricky."

Real-life sets are less tricky. "People say that there are pranks, yet in my 150-plus TV episodes I've never

seen one," Tupper says. "The workplace is a place of quiet focus, a place where you stay within yourself."

Tupper credits L.A. acting coach Caryn West for recommending he pursue avocations between roles. "I learned Italian, I play the guitar and now I'm learning piano. I'm doing fun things, every day, to keep my spirits up. No matter what happens, I'm still grounded in something that I enjoy."

He is currently on the ABC show *A Million Little Things*, which examines the impact of a suicide on four families: "It's a show I'm really proud to be a part of. It's really

deep. It's about loss and it's about redemption."

What other opportunities might await? "I had an audition to be a villain in the next *Fast and Furious* movie," he says. "That would be really cool."

Tupper says he's happy to keep building his career and his life. A notion his grandfather, a minister, reinforced in Tupper lingers: every person plays a small role in a big world.

"I'm on a beautiful adventure," he says, noting he might one day return to live in Canada. "I feel lucky and grateful, every day, yet my heart is down home." ■



PHOTO BY CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

JAMES TUPPER WITH SHANNON HOLMES, BFA 00, IN A PERFORMANCE OF *PEER GYNT* AT CONCORDIA'S D.B. CLARKE THEATRE IN 1991.

# Homecoming brought 'memorable and meaningful connections'

16 major events draw more than 1,500 attendees

The 2019 edition of Homecoming was a great success, says Shanna Parisien, BA 04, Manager of Events in University Advancement.

"There was really strong programming and a great vibe," she says, adding that events were well attended.

More than 1,500 people attended 16 major events, including more than 320 who turned out for the Resolute Forest Products lecture with Kathy Reichs, LLD 11. The well-known mystery writer and producer of the

*Bones* television series spoke of how her experience as a forensic anthropologist helped bring her fictional works to life.

Both the Black Alumni Networking and Queer Homecoming events drew large numbers of people, as did the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Concordia's MBA at what is now the John Molson School of Business.

"I would like to thank all the volunteers and staff who helped make this year's Homecoming such a terrific

set of events," Parisien says. "Many who attended made memorable and meaningful connections."

Interim President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr attended the Homecoming Concert and Cocktail at Oscar Peterson Concert Hall at the Loyola Campus, where talented jazz artist and Concordia student David Marino entertained. The cocktail that followed allowed old friends to reconnect and raise a glass to celebrate Concordia's 45th birthday, a milestone reached in August, 2019.

Carr also delivered key updates on our improvements in various rankings, as well as the university's recent achievements.

Vice-President, Advancement, Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, who emceed a number of events, including the Concert and Cocktail, says he was delighted by the large numbers of people who attended and the enthusiasm they displayed – especially at nail-biting Stingers football win over the Université de Sherbrooke – with no time left on the clock. ■



TOP PHOTO: GINA CODY, MENG 81, PHD 89, (IN RED) JOINS PANEL DISCUSSION AT AN EVENT MARKING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF CONCORDIA'S ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE FACULTY BEING NAMED FOR HER.

MIDDLE PHOTOS: ENTHUSIASTIC CROWDS AT BLACK ALUMNI NETWORKING AND QUEER HOMECOMING EVENTS.

BOTTOM PHOTOS: DAVID MARINO ENTERTAINS AT CONCERT AND COCKTAIL, WHILE AUTHOR KATHY REICHS, LLD 11, SPEAKS AT THE RESOLUTE FOREST PRODUCTS LECTURE WITH HOST AND CTV NEWS BROADCASTER CAROLINE VAN VLAARDINGEN, BA 84.





## Santos puts boot to Sherbrooke in Homecoming game

Rookie kicker drills winning field goal with no time left on the clock

Concordia Stingers rookie kicker Bradley James Santos (in middle of photo, above) stepped up to the ball on the 36-yard line and drilled it through the middle of the uprights with no time left on the clock to deliver a 37-35 victory over the Sherbrooke Vert & Or in the Homecoming football game at Concordia Stadium on Saturday, September 21, 2019.

Although he dressed in previous games this season, this was Santos's first time going in for a field-goal attempt, with the Stingers trailing 35-34 at the time. He also connected on three converts.

The Laval native comes out of the Collège André-Grasset football program.

The win was the first for Concordia in four games this year and moved the Stingers into a three-way tie with Sherbrooke and McGill.

It was also a breakout game for quarterback Adam

Vance who completed 24 of 33 passes for 426 yards and three touchdowns. His favourite target was veteran receiver James Tyrrell, who caught 11 passes for 176 yards and two TDs.

Vance orchestrated an offence that rolled up 25 first downs and 443 yards. He also hit slotback Jacob Salvail for a 34-yard touchdown. The final major of the day was scored by running back Glody Musangu on a three-yard run.

The Stingers held a 19-point lead early in the fourth quarter, but Sherbrooke scrapped its way back into the game and took the lead 35-34 with 33 seconds left to play.

The game marked the start of an eight-game package of the most hotly contested sports events in the 2019-20 season. For more information on the series, visit [stingers.ca](http://stingers.ca) ■

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# Shuffle shatters target: pulls more than \$130,000

Perfect conditions for 30th anniversary of annual walkathon

DOUG SWEET

“Phenomenal!” That’s the way Concordia’s interim president and vice-chancellor, Graham Carr, sums up the 30th edition of the annual Shuffle walkathon, which raised more than \$130,000 for student bursaries and scholarships, shattering not only the \$115,000 target, but also last year’s \$114,000 record.

**‘It shows how much people really care.’**

**- Graham Carr**

Since 1990, the Shuffle has raised more than \$1.7 million for student aid in an event that is not only a fundraiser, but a physical link between Concordia’s two campuses – a 6.5-kilometre walk from the Sir George Williams campus downtown to Loyola in N.D.G.

The September 27, 2019, event was, Carr told the crowd at the President’s Picnic next to the Loyola athletic field, “the biggest, the best Shuffle. It’s a fantastic day.”

Weather conditions were ideal, in contrast to the previous day’s gloom and showers.

Pumped up by energetic emcee CTV Montreal News broadcaster Caroline Van Vlaardingen, BA 84, more than 700 Shufflers in nearly 50 teams raised the record-breaking total through nearly 2,000

donations. One difference this year was the creation of a special team that joined the massive climate-change march on the same day. That 70-member team raised at least \$6,100, creating a strong Concordia presence in a march that organizers said numbered half a million people.

“It’s phenomenal,” Carr says of this year’s Shuffle. “And it’s coming from inside the university, so it shows how much people really care.” He offers “huge thanks” to all those who helped organize the event.

Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president Advancement, noted in his remarks to the picnic crowd that he had participated in the first Shuffle. He announced that the “Shuffler of the Year” award was given to Virginia Gerald, receptionist in University Advancement’s downtown offices, who raised more than \$1,400 for this year’s cause.

The Shuffle Team of the Year, from Concordia’s Sexual Assault Resource Centre, raised \$12,000.

Former Stingers women’s hockey coach Les Lawton, who suffered a stroke in 2015, walked in the march again and raised \$9,535, the biggest single amount raised by an individual.

This year’s Shuffle honoured former Biology professor Dr. Bob Roy, who died in June 2019. His family raised \$11,375 for a student award named in his honour. ■



TREVOR BROWNE

ENTHUSIASTIC SHUFFLERS WERE READY TO WALK ON TWO LEGS OR FOUR (JUNEAU THE POODLE PULLED IN \$350!).

# Middle-aged? At 45, Concordia is still a youngster

University well positioned to head toward its first half-century

DOUG SWEET

If universities' ages were measured in human years, Concordia, which celebrated its 45th birthday on Aug. 24, 2019, might be considered to be settling comfortably into middle age.

But, as was underlined by a fresh set of rankings for "young" universities published June 26 in which Concordia was named by university rankings powerhouse Times Higher Education (THE) as the top Canadian university younger than 50, in "university years," Concordia is still a relative pup.

Created, after six years of planning and conversations, out of the merger of Loyola College and Sir George Williams University on Aug. 24, 1974, Concordia now ranks between 101st and 150th out of 351 so-called new universities, THE says. The Young University Rankings, like the overall THE World University Rankings, evaluate five categories, and in 2019 Concordia advanced in four: research, citations, industry income and international outlook.

"This is further confirmation of Concordia's advantages in its international reputation, but also reflects our continuing successful efforts to double our research," interim

provost and vice-president Academic Anne Whitelaw says. "The strong pull Concordia has on international students and faculty demonstrates our stellar reputation outside Canada."

Back in the late 1960s and early '70s, the idea of merging a quiet Jesuit college in Montreal's west end with a gritty downtown university that offered a lot of courses at night was considered a big challenge. The two institutions had different philosophies and ways of doing things, said John O'Brien, Concordia's first rector and chancellor, back on Aug. 16, 1974. "We look forward now to a period of creative friction."

As Concordia's Records Management and Archives Department (RMA) explains on its "Merger of Loyola College and Sir George Williams University" page, the earliest formal proposal came in the late 1960s from Donald Savage, a Loyola history professor, and Michel Despland, the assistant dean of Arts at Sir George Williams. They proposed a "Federal University" which would allow students to take courses at both campuses without paying additional fees, and they introduced the idea of a bus service between Loyola and Sir George Williams. The first such vehicle was a 13-seat van.

In 2014, RMA published a special 40th anniversary feature that details 40 memorable historical events from the past four decades at Concordia, while what was then called Advancement and Alumni Relations also pro- filed 40 Great Concordians.

Dramatic changes at Concordia in the last decade, including a sharp rise in the number of graduate students as well as undergrads, mean the university now has to "try and develop a pattern and a pace of growth that we can fully support and that is best aligned with the areas we want to prioritize," interim president Graham Carr has said in recent interviews. "We've gone through a period, particularly under Alan Shepard's leadership, where we've spent a lot of time trying to forecast and position ourselves for what's coming.

"For example, what will be the impact of the changing economy on lifelong learning? This should be a good fit for who we are at Concordia, given our history. So how do we prepare to address that need in creative, new ways?"

That first half-century is just around the corner. ■



THE FIRST CONCORDIA SHUTTLE WAS A 13-SEAT VAN.

## Cities can lead the way toward global sustainability

New Concordia expert in next-generation cities factors social justice into the equation

TREVOR BROWNE



MAEVE HALDANE,  
BFA 91

Ursula Eicker moved to Montreal from her native Stuttgart, Germany, to lead Concordia's Cities Hub as the new Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Communities and Cities. She joined the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science in June, in the Department of

Environmental Engineering. Eicker is building up a broad and interdisciplinary research team – from Engineering to Finance to Arts – that has access to \$10 million in funding over seven years, thanks to a federal grant. Most recently, Eicker was the scientific director of the Research Centre for Sustainable Energy Technologies at the Stuttgart University of Applied Sciences.

**Q:** Tell us about how your work led to sustainable development in cities?

**Ursula Eicker:** I studied solid-state physics [in the 1980s] and had an interest in solar energy from the beginning. The Green Party was starting in Germany, so everyone was looking more seriously at environmental issues. My first job, in France, was for a company that developed solar modules. Then I looked at solar modules in buildings and building efficiency and how you would match energy consumption and production: You don't have enough sun in winter when you need the most energy for an individual building, so you need storage if you really want to look at a zero-carbon society.

**Q:** What are the important considerations for a city's sustainability?

**UE:** Clean energy is crucial to prevent climate change, but if you look at city design, a change in our transport system is the most important thing. For city design to change, cars need to go away or to be drastically reduced. It will be very hard to meet CO<sub>2</sub> targets if we continue with individual cars, and the change to electric vehicles will stress our infrastructure. In addition, cars make cities ugly and noisy and polluted.

You need to move in small steps, very gradually. If you drastically reduce individual transport, in the beginning, people and commerce complain. But where there's a lot of pedestrian traffic, shops start to appear. Then you ask yourself how do you get goods to your place? But that last kilometre of transport can be well organized, with cargo bikes or small electric transport vehicles. We need more forms of micro mobility, more scooters, more bicycles.

"That last kilometre of transport can be well organized, with cargo bikes or small electric transport vehicles. We need more forms of micro mobility, more scooters, more bicycles."

**Q: What are Concordia's strengths for work on cities?**

My department covers everything in the built environment – energy efficiency, bringing renewables to infrastructure, occupancy behaviour, modeling the city from building scale to city scale. Then there are people in computer science who work on city scale models and data management. In urban studies people are working on the urban form and how that affects energy and transport needs. There's powerful data-visualization expertise in design and computational arts so you can really show how a city looks today in 3D and animate this and how it can develop in the future.

We can bring every department in, from the arts, sociology, finance, to name just a few, and that will make [our program] unique. We can bring in performance arts to engage people and create some appetite for change.

**Q: Why do you prefer the term Next-Generation Cities instead of Smart Cities?**

There are already Smart City research institutes, worldwide, which are mostly technology-driven. But here, the approach is much broader – building a vision of where we want to go and then using the technology to make it possible. It's what you ask: How do we want to

live in the future? We can come up with a concept of how we want to live and communicate, and then see which role technology plays in the transition.

**Q: And what does the ideal city look like?**

Better use of public space and a good social mix would be the ideal city for me. For me, density is not a problem. Quite the contrary! I think it can be a very creative environment. I find many heterogeneous sets of people together in an urban environment much more interesting than an urban sprawl type of setting.

**Q: Which cities do you admire and for what traits?**

European cities, like Copenhagen, have reduced individual transport very well and they're not in a benign climate, either. My favourite city in the world is Barcelona. They've got a progressive government and do a lot for social inclusion. They started change at the city edges where the more disfavoured population lives because the mayor of Barcelona comes from a social justice background.

They are slowly trying to create spaces without individual cars, by connecting several big housing blocks to a superblock with no cars inside. Inside everything is pedestrian and a community can develop.

**Q: How does changing cities have a global impact?**

Many more people live in cities, so cities need to provide the housing and infrastructure for a growing population. Now, in addition, they need to do it in a sustainable way.

Many cities have made pledges to go carbon-neutral. These are ambitious goals and we know what needs to be done to translate these goals into a real action plan. It costs a lot of money, which is why it's so slow, but it will pay back eventually. The challenge is to raise funds for the initial investment in the renewal of infrastructure.

Cities are the right actors because they know what the local problems are and can think much more carefully about the social justice topic. If you just tax CO<sub>2</sub> and everything becomes more expensive, we have a social justice problem. You need to reimburse people who can't afford eating any more. You need to have a mechanism of paying back.

**Q: How hopeful are you about our ability to confront the world's sustainability issues?**

I'm reading Jorgen Randers's *2052: A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years*. He predicts we will go in the right direction because it's the only one, because oil and gas *will* be exploited – whether that's in 50, 100 or 200 years. It's a question of time. We probably won't go fast enough and that means a lot of unnecessary suffering for a lot of people – wars and resource struggles, flooding.

The more we work to do it faster than slower, the better. On a local or state scale you can do really ambitious things and I think that would be great to be part of it. If a few progressive cities show how it can be done, then that could be a catalyst for others to follow. The beauty of my job is that I can think about this change and help to get it going. ■

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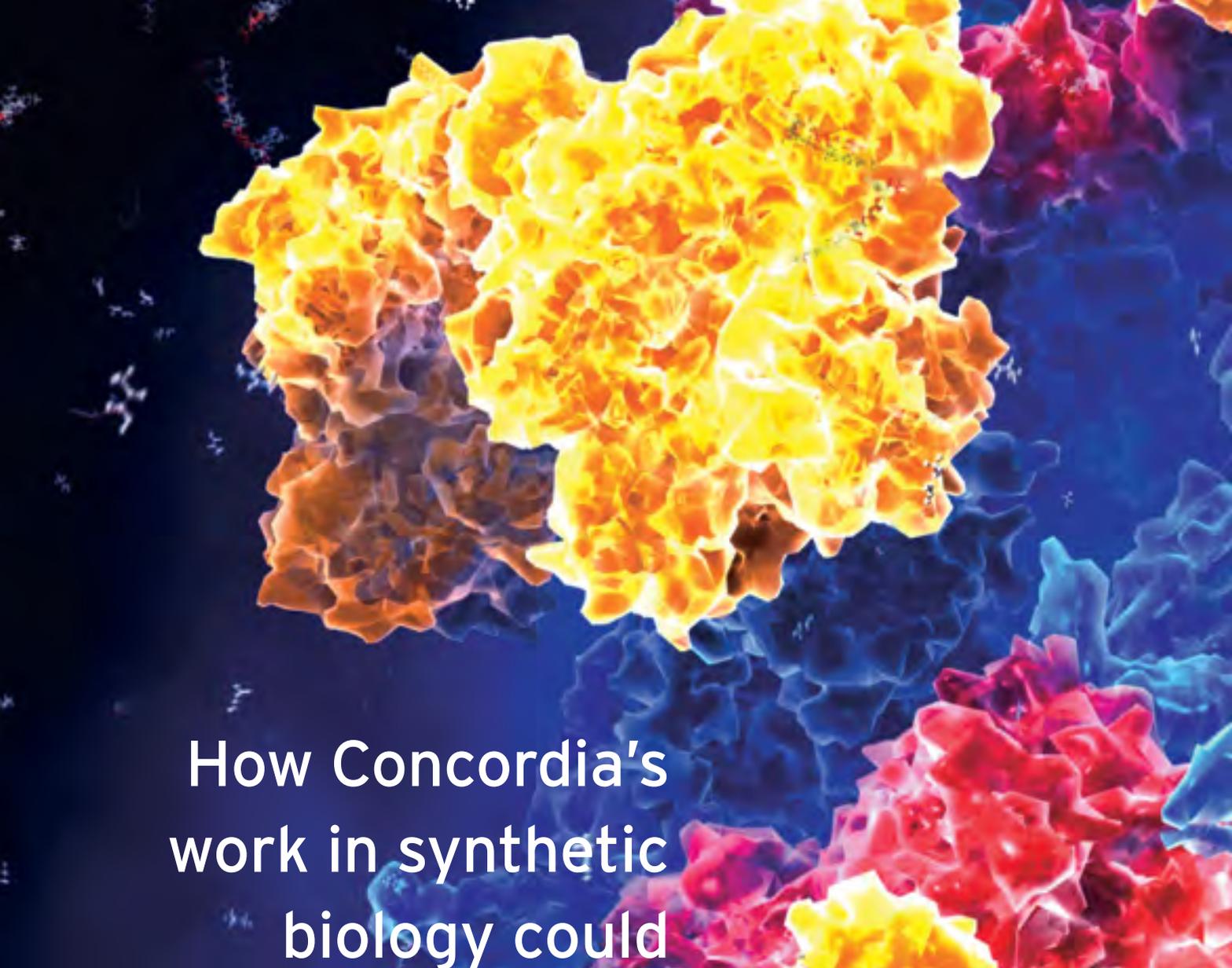
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| The main building of Concordia's Loyola Campus. PHOTOGRAPHER: PIERRE OBENDRAUF

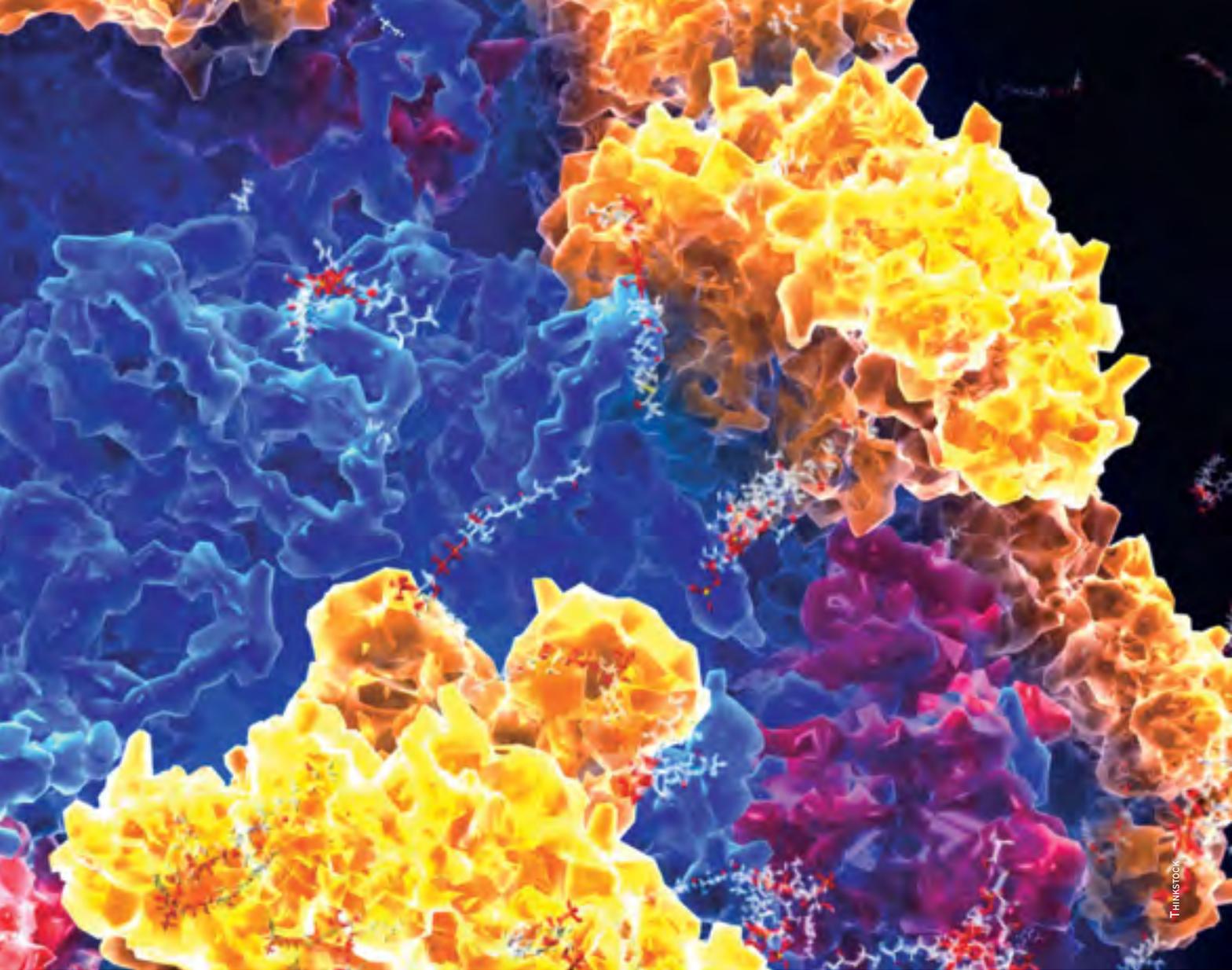
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# How Concordia's work in synthetic biology could change your life

The university has a unique combination of resources to be a world leader in an emerging field



DANIEL BARTLETT, BA 08

When Brandiff Caron received a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to work with graduate students at Concordia's Centre for Applied Synthetic Biology (CASB), he noticed an interesting pattern during his interviews.

Looking at how the social, ethical and legal implications of the students' work entered into their lab experiences, the assistant professor at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science and associate chair of the Centre for Engineering in Society asked each of the researchers to define synthetic biology.

"You'll get as many answers to that question as individuals you ask, even from those who identify as people working in synthetic biology," Caron says.

While a general definition may remain elusive for the emerging field, the consensus among Concordia researchers is that synthetic biology is the process of engineering novel biological systems to achieve specific functions that do not exist in nature. It's a nascent, interdisciplinary field that brings together experts in biology, chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics.

It's also a research area where Concordia has emerged as a leader. The university is home to the Synthetic Biology Applications program (SynBioApps), Canada's first Collaborative Research and Training

Experience program, as well as Canada Research Chairs in Synthetic Biology, Bioinformatics Algorithms and Microbial Genomics. Investigators at the CASB also include Concordia University Research Chairs in Microbial Engineering and Synthetic Biology, and Optical Bio Microsystems.

A powerful combination of human and physical resources support Concordia's significant role in the field.

"All of this has built momentum where you hire a lot of new scientists, build new infrastructure and have a training program that attracts good students," says Laurent Potvin-Trottier, assistant professor in the Department of Biology.

"If you have good students, good scientists and good infrastructure, then you get good science."



STEVE SHIH AND HIS TEAM CREATED A SYSTEM TO BETTER FIND GENES RELATED TO CANCER AND DESTROY THEM.

### 'IMMEDIATE AND OBVIOUS HEALTH BENEFITS'

By turning biology into instruments and tools researchers can harness to achieve particular aims, the field has the potential to replicate systems that are of value to individuals around the world.

Caron notes that one of the most obvious areas where synthetic biology research provides major benefits is medicine.

"Once we can figure out how to replicate what happens naturally, we're no longer reliant on often unsustainable and scarce naturally occurring resources," he says. "The specific source for things like insulin and medications that have been around for a while are more precarious than people often realize."

At Concordia, researchers are already demonstrating how their work can have extensive effects.

Steve Shih, assistant professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and his team at the Shih Microfluidics Laboratory created a system that integrates the automation of complex biology experiments to find genes related to cancer and kill them before they develop into the disease.

Meanwhile, David Kwan, assistant professor in the Department of Biology, focuses on using techniques in synthetic

biology as a means of exploiting enzymes and developing them as tools that can help to produce therapeutics, bioplastics and biofuels.

Furthermore – where specific enzymes are related to diseases – Kwan and his team have devised new methods to identify drugs that target them within pathogenic microbes or tumour cells. This research could play an important role in fighting infectious diseases and cancers.

Kwan recently received a Petro-Canada Young Innovator Award for his exceptional research achievements at Concordia.

"Our ability to be able to synthesize these things has immediate and obvious health benefits to everyone," Caron explains.

Beyond medicine, Caron says synthetic biologists can also significantly alter how we manufacture and synthesize materials like plastic so they can degrade more easily yet fulfill the same functions.

"Plastics come from naturally occurring and scarce resources as well – like oil and fossil fuel products," he says. "There again, we can easily replicate what happens naturally, but change it to avoid some of the negative effects that we've become aware of and to replicate many of the positive effects."

### FOUNDATIONS BEFORE APPLICATIONS

One place where Concordia is developing innovative research in synthetic biology is at the Potvin Lab. Led by Potvin-Trottier, who joined Concordia in August 2018 after completing a postdoctoral fellowship at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, the lab's team builds circuits from biological components to better understand how they function.

"One of the things I'm doing is trying to engineer robust biological clocks," he says. "We use technologies like microfluidics, which allow us to monitor precisely how these clocks work. This has been pretty successful as we made really good clocks. We engineered them in bacteria and they were so robust that we could have these bacteria colonize the gut of mice and the clocks would still oscillate."

Through their research, members of the lab aim to learn more about the structural elements of biological oscillators so they can develop new systems that may be applicable in the future.

The focus remains on the fundamental side of synthetic biology, though Potvin-Trottier identifies areas where the project's findings could have lasting effects.

"One of the long-term applications, for example, would be periodic drug delivery," he says. "Instead of having to take a drug every six hours, you would get a microbe in the gut that produces the drug at six-hour intervals."

For first-year PhD student Giselle McCallum, the idea of trying to build models of existing biological systems is what drew her to the Potvin Lab. She recalls taking a year off after her master's degree to look for a Canadian university that aligned with her research interests.

Her search proved difficult at times.

"I found many schools focused on biomedical research or applications in synthetic biology, which is great but wasn't what I was looking for," McCallum explains.

"Then I came across the website for the Centre for Applied Synthetic Biology and I found Steve Shih's lab, David Kwan's lab and Laurent's lab, and I thought this is exactly what I want. I talked with Laurent and it seemed like a good fit."

Today, McCallum is working on the biological oscillator project. The aim of her portion of the research initiative is to have a system that will oscillate with the period she wants no matter what condition she grows the cells in.

Like Potvin-Trottier, McCallum also recognizes ways in which her work could affect people's lives. She uses artemisinic acid – a precursor to an anti-malarial drug – to illustrate her point. Synthetic biologists engineer yeast to produce the compound to avoid extraction from its natural plant source.

"Future goals would be to actually apply this to something like periodic drug delivery by using engineered probiotics, for example. Or utilizing these clocks to control microbial metabolism and improving the production of useful compounds in synthetic biology, such as artemisinic acid," she says.

"There are quite a few potential applications, but for now I'm focused on the more fundamental aspects of the project."

## SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY VS. GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

One of the most common objections synthetic biologists confront in their work is that they are essentially dealing with technology that suffers from all the same problems as genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Caron says researchers in the field often believe this is an unfair comparison, with many of them arguing that it is the public who has an irrational fear of the unknown around GMOs. This claim, the Concordia professor contends, simply highlights how experts misunderstand the complaints individuals have with genetic engineering.

"The numbers show pretty clearly that people don't necessarily believe that genetically modified organisms are directly dangerous to a person's health," Caron explains. "Most people are aware that the cross-breeding of plants and species have been happening for centuries – they're not necessarily new. What is new is the consolidation of the power to use these kinds of technologies into the hands of a very few huge conglomerates."

Rather than having false impressions about what is happening from a technical perspective, Caron thinks the concerns detractors have around GMOs often have more to do with the business and corporate practices that frame the field.

"I think those are perfectly justified and legitimate considerations," he says. "Right now, a lot of those legitimate complaints about genetically modified organisms simply don't apply to synthetic biology".

Within the area of synthetic biology, Caron sees a lot of open questions in which researchers are hoping to learn from past mistakes and improve how the production of science takes place. He notes that synthetic biologists still have time to define the relationship between the users and producers of new technologies, and identify ways to diffuse their work to the rest of society.

"It's a really exciting field to work in – that's why I'm here."

### 'WE'RE WELL PLACED TO BE LEADERS IN THE AREA'

Caron examines the public policy, social and ethical factors that shape people's relationship to technology at Concordia's Centre for Engineering in Society. He says the centre has an exceptional design that differs from many other institutions across the country.

"All scientists and engineers need ethics and communication training. What happens is that in just about every other Canadian university, institutions outsource these subjects to other areas, such as the philosophy department," Caron explains. "So, they go take a generic ethics course – as well as a writing course – that's meant for everybody."

Through the CASB, Concordia not only has professors and researchers in ethics and communication, but also in the ethics and communication of science and technology.

"We're really well placed to be leaders in the area of looking at this work in progress that is synthetic biology."

– Daniel Bartlett

## GENES AND CRITICAL BIOLOGICAL PROCESSES

Located on the same floor as the Potvin Lab in the Genomics Building (GE) on the Loyola Campus is the Kachroo Laboratory ([kachroolab.org](http://kachroolab.org)). Led by Aashiq Kachroo, assistant professor in the Department of Biology and Canada Research Chair in Systems and Synthetic Biology, the group is interested in repurposing model organisms by replacing human genes in yeast and other simplified cells.

Currently, the team is investigating whether all essential yeast genes are replaceable by their human counterparts.

"All organisms on Earth share a common ancestor, which means we share many genes despite billions of years of separate evolution. Our work focuses on understanding a fundamental question in biology: Are shared genes functionally equivalent?" Kachroo explains.

"We have finished the humanization of all essential genes and have shown that approximately 40 per cent of shared human genes are still swappable in yeast."

Kachroo's interest in synthetic biology started during his PhD studies at the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru, India. There, he worked on a system in bacteria that, when mutated, utilizes one of the most abundant carbon sources in the world, cellulose.

"I figured that if we engineered the bacterial strain to degrade this carbon source, we would help solve the energy crisis that our planet is facing," Kachroo says.

Since then, Kachroo has shifted his focus toward critical human genes and how they are involved in essential biological processes. His research could have far-reaching effects since any mutations that alter the function of proteins encoded by these genes often lead to human diseases.

"We engineer these shared biological processes in simplified cells like budding yeast," Kachroo says. "Thus, using evolution to guide synthetic biology, we make surrogate strains that resemble humans at the molecular level. This allows us to study these processes



GISELLE MCCALLUM

in isolation, asking questions like how the disease is manifested at the cellular level and what needs to change to revert the disease phenotype."

For Kachroo, joining Concordia in August 2017 had a lot to do with the university's clear mission and focus on synthetic biology. He appreciates the faculty's new members and the university's aim to recruit the best of the best.

"We also house the only Genome Foundry in Canada, with access to state-of-art robotics to scale up the synthetic biology projects," he says. "Concordia has the best resources available to train young enthusiastic students in synthetic biology."

## ETHICAL, EQUITABLE AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

Despite some of its more obvious benefits, synthetic biology is not without its critics.

At the Centre for Engineering in Society, Caron works as the in-house ethicist for the Gina Cody School, as well as for the CASB. He is not an apologist for synthetic biology and approaches the field from an extremely critical perspective.

"There are tons of highly problematic practices taking place under the synthetic-biology umbrella that are unethical by any practical standard," Caron says. "Take things like designer babies. It's no longer a consideration to think about them as a future possibility – it's very much possible now."

Citing popular Hollywood films like *Jurassic Park* and *Gattaca*, he notes that

synthetic biologists can create life out of non-life, which carries both positive and negative implications. Still, Caron describes the field as a work in progress.

"Given synthetic biology is in a nascent stage, we have a rare opportunity to organize a field of study consciously and reflectively," he says. "What the field itself is trying to do is think about how to best self-regulate."

Caron explains that one of the over-arching aims of creating a self-regulatory body is to get experts to work across all kinds of differences, including national frameworks. He uses the profession of engineering in Canada as an example that synthetic biologists might consider as they attempt to move toward self-regulation.

"The professional system set up in Canada in the mid-'70s requires that professional engineering be structured in a specific way, but that the actual regulation of it is done by engineers themselves," Caron says. "The government isn't coming in and saying here's what engineers need to do. They're saying engineers need to decide what engineers need to do."

At Concordia, Caron has developed a technology-assessment method that encourages undergraduate students to recognize the ethical, equitable and social effects of their capstone projects. He has since used it with Concordia's International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) team and is happy with its results.



Despite this, Caron admits that it is still sometimes challenging to get engineers and scientists to think seriously about the ethical implications of their work. He describes how many experts think they are immune to the social problems that could arise from their research because they are only making the technology, not carrying it out.

"It's difficult to get students' intuitions flowing around this stuff, but synthetic biology can be a good way to do it because it's easier to see the potential problems," he says.

"The unique structure of how issues of technology and society are dealt with in the Gina Cody School has afforded us great opportunities to promote some really awesome, cutting-edge research and the best ways to incorporate ethical, legal and social implications of science and technology into the actual classroom."

#### CLOSING THE GENDER GAP

Even though there are more female scientists entering synthetic biology than other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, Caron is quick to note that they are still in the minority.

Nevertheless, he sees hope for the future.

"In a bunch of parts of the world with different cultures and gender norms, there are actually more women in STEM fields than there are men," Caron says.

"There's a lot of hope because there's a possibility that makes considerations around gender more easily put into practice than they would in these other fields with more entrenched traditions."

For McCallum, choosing to work in synthetic biology has a lot to do with her experiences interviewing for positions in labs. Because the field is still new, she notes that many principal investigators are young and thrilled to share their passion with students.

"I don't know if I just picked good labs to work in, but all my supervisors were super enthusiastic to have me there," McCallum says. "They're very excited about their field and really want to teach the upcoming generation of students about their research. I think that's what pulled me into this field. Why wouldn't I work where somebody is eager to teach me about the things that they love?"

What advice does McCallum have for future scientists who want to pursue research in synthetic biology?

"It's useful to explore different fields early on because of the interdisciplinary component. You can always learn new areas while you're working in synthetic biology, but it's helpful to have fundamental skills and understanding in biology, chemistry, engineering and mathematics," she says.

Caron agrees and says Concordia is an ideal place to pursue such research, given the existence of the CASB and its close relationship with the Centre for Engineering in Society.

He also sees students benefit from access to Canada's only Genome Foundry, as well as Concordia's involvement in co-founding a new Global Biofoundry Alliance with 14 other institutions.

"It's probably the best place in Canada to engage in this kind of research seeing as the Centre for Applied Synthetic Biology is the first and still only research institute of its kind, and the Centre for Engineering in Society is a unique model that houses social scientists within the Gina Cody School." ■



CONCORDIA'S GENOME FOUNDRY IS THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN CANADA.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

# YOU CAN DO SOME VERY INTERESTING THINGS WITH A BACHELOR OF ARTS

'It can help you be disruptive, and if you're disruptive, you can move things forward'

MEAGAN BOISSE, BA 17

A documentary filmmaker, a throat singer, an international development advocate and a casting lead. This incredibly diverse quartet share something in common: they are all Concordia grads who have gone on to fulfill some amazing and dynamic careers since completing their Bachelor of Arts.

The BA has sometimes been maligned in the popular press in an age when advances in science and technology are driving rapid progress in so many aspects of everyday life. Try telling that to people who have one, or academic leaders who know a thing or two about what a BA does and where it can take you.

"A BA gives you all the skills," says Anne Whitelaw, BFA 87, GrDip 92, PhD 96, Concordia's interim provost and vice-provost of planning and positioning. "It gives you transferrable skills. It gives you the ability to write and to make arguments coherently. You have the ability to analyze data, interpret data.

"There's just something about doing a BA that makes you think to always question, and if you're always questioning, that means you have a tool kit to be disruptive. If you're disruptive, that means you can move things forward in the world."

Whitelaw knows several people who have been in senior positions in marketing and other types of departments who consistently hire students with arts degrees because they find that BA or MA graduates are often able to do more than students with business degrees. Because they're creative and risk-taking and they do things business books say are needed in a 21st-century enterprise.

"It comes out of disruption," Whitelaw says. "And I think that's the thing about art is that it teaches you, it's constantly questioning if it's done right. I think Concordia does that. I think so many of our programs, our transdisciplinary programs, have community engagement components. So it means you're not in an ivory tower thinking all the time. You're actually out there putting things in practice."

"The humanities touch on every facet of the human experience," says André Roy, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. "A BA is a dynamic and agile degree that equips students with the intellectual, social and emotional skills necessary to succeed in any path they choose."

We spoke with four successful grads to learn more about how their undergraduate experiences shaped their career trajectories.

## AARON HANCOX, BA (COMMUNICATION STUDIES) 07

Aaron Hancox is the vice-president of Markham Street Films in Toronto. He gained notoriety earlier this year when *Catwalk: Tales from the Cat Show Circuit*, a documentary he produced and co-directed, was sold to Netflix and subsequently went viral.

"I love what I do, we produce all kinds of content that celebrates people and communities on the fringes of the mainstream," says Hancox, noting he wouldn't be where he is today if it weren't for the time he spent at Concordia.

"The courses I did required me to work quickly and efficiently, and forced me to speak and think critically about my work and defend my creative choices," Hancox says.

"All of this prepared me for what I do now: working for a private production company and being an entrepreneur. I rely on my experience from Concordia."

Today, Hancox looks fondly back on his time at the university. "I was fortunate to have mentors and be in an environment where it was acceptable to make mistakes. Montreal, and Concordia, specifically, is where you want to do your BA! There's a vibrancy to the city and university that's hard to beat. I met many great friends and future collaborators during my time in Communication Studies."



## LAURA FRATICELLI, BA (WESTERN SOCIETY AND CULTURE) 14

Laura Fraticelli is the Team Lead of the Casting Department at Ubisoft Montreal, a video game company known for franchises like *Assassin's Creed*, *Rainbow 6*, and *Far Cry*.

While Fraticelli says she loved her time at Concordia's Liberal Arts College, she also spent a lot of needless energy stressed about what she'd do after her studies.

"All of that was a waste of time, however, I never could have guessed where my education would take me," she says, noting that while being an expert in Western Society and Culture might not seem like it would lead to a career in the gaming industry, it was actually a natural progression.

"During my studies, my favourite lectures were the ones spent dissecting the characters that populate both history and works of art," she says. "Nothing has changed. My favourite days are still the ones I get to spend reading scripts while analyzing every character."

Fraticelli recalls how her first mandate at Ubisoft was *Assassin's Creed Origins*, set in Ancient Egypt at the end of the Ptolemaic period.

"I was overjoyed! As soon as I got home that night, I went digging through old lecture notes, and the next morning I bounced out of bed and arrived at work early with the same energy I had walking into the favourite courses of my undergrad."

## NINA SEGALOWITZ, BA (APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES) 99

Nina Segalowitz is a professional throat singer, as well as a case worker at the Centre des Femmes de Montréal. While her interest in throat singing began before she came to Concordia, it was while attending university that she first learned her craft.

"Being a Sixties Scoop survivor I was constantly searching for ways to reconnect with my community. From a young age I yearned to sing," she recalls.

"In 1998, I met Taqralik Partridge, who was also attending Concordia and looking to learn throat singing. Together we reached out to Evie Mark, a local expert in the craft, and she guided us in learning throat singing."

Since then Segalowitz has performed across Canada, the United States and Europe.

Looking back, she says the education she received at Concordia was far from textbook. "There was such a lively student centred services approach to learning and a community of peer support," says Segalowitz, noting an integral aspect of her success as an Indigenous student was the Centre for Native Education, then headed by Manon Tremblay.

"She provided a space on Mackay that would become a second home to me for the four years that I attended Concordia," she says. "It was a space where Indigenous students congregated to share meals, cheer each other on, share the trials and tribulations of being away from their families and communities, all while laughing along the way."

Segalowitz says through Concordia's support system she felt empowered and that



this feeling of accomplishment continues to serve her in her career as a front-line worker, artist, board member and mother.

"I pushed myself to learn more and to share that knowledge to encourage others to follow their academic dreams," she says. "I am still in touch with Manon Tremblay and the majority of the students that I hung out with in the CNE. My Concordia friendships have spanned 25 years and sustain me to this day."



## ELANA WRIGHT, BA (WOMEN'S STUDIES) 93

Elana Wright is a research and advocacy officer at Development and Peace-Caritas Canada, a Catholic international development and humanitarian agency that works to address poverty and injustice in more than 30 countries.

Wright, who also received a graduate diploma from Concordia in 1997, says her passion for advocacy was fostered during her time at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, where she studied feminist history, literature and theory.

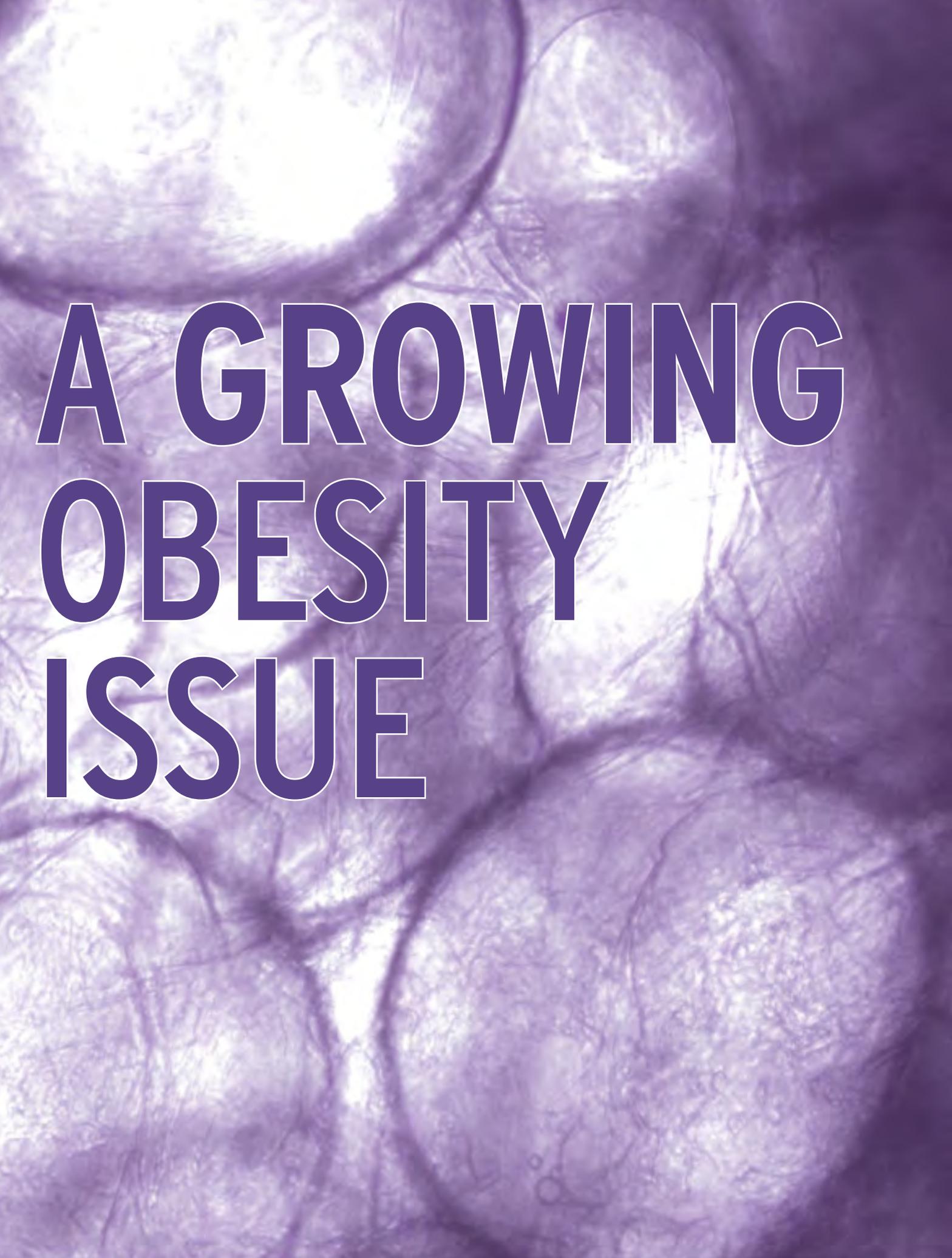
"I learned to analyze our world through a gendered lens in the early 90s, which was a dynamic time to learn strategies to address inequality based on gender and race—back then we were just beginning to talk about

decolonization," she recalls.

From passionate debates about feminism and anti-racism in the classroom to student-activist meetings and late nights at the Link student newspaper, where she was the Fringe Arts Editor, Wright says her Concordia experience taught her to have a critical eye towards the unjust social structures that serve to marginalize some people and elevate others.

"My BA experience offered me a broad education in and out of the classroom, and this foundation propelled me to a career where my focus has always been fulfilling the human rights of the most marginalized and vulnerable people; here in Canada and also around the world." ■



A microscopic view of adipose tissue, showing large, clear, circular adipocytes with thin, dark borders. The cells are arranged in a somewhat regular pattern, with some smaller cells and connective tissue visible between them. The overall appearance is that of a dense, cellular structure.

# A GROWING OBESITY ISSUE

## How researchers at Concordia's PERFORM Centre are transforming the way we approach fat

MARTA SAMUEL, GRDIP 10

Obesity in Canada, and many other countries, is on the rise. The reasons why vary, from increased fat and sugar in the junk foods we eat, to higher levels of alcohol consumption and more sedentary lifestyles, where screen time is prioritized over physical activity.

Another reason lies in the paragraph you just read. The language we use can also have a negative effect, reinforcing stereotypes and further stigmatizing people living with obesity. Some Concordia researchers are looking closely into that problem.

More than half the Canadian population over the age of 18 — 64 per cent — is overweight or obese, according to a 2017 report from Public Health Canada. It's an alarming statistic given its steady increase from 49 per cent since 1978.

The numbers for children living with obesity in Canada are equally concerning: currently triple the amount they were in the late 1970s, with almost one in three children being overweight or living with obesity in 2017, according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

As the statistics continue to rise, so does the risk of people developing such metabolic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular problems. These numbers, in Canada and around the world, are expected to continue to increase without better support across the spectrum, including from medical, political and educational fields.

Which brings us to the F-word: fat. The dictionary describes fat as a natural oily or greasy substance occurring in animals and plants, deposited as a layer under the skin or around certain organs. While we all need a certain level of fat in our bodies, too much of it, and in the wrong places, can lead to the serious health problems Canadians are increasingly at risk of.

At Concordia University's state-of-the-art PERFORM Centre at Loyola Campus, faculty and students from the Department of Health, Kinesiology and Applied Physiology are conducting next-generation research to better inform how individuals and society approach fat. The PERFORM Centre promotes healthy living through preventative-based programs, allowing researchers to lead innovative studies using the latest equipment and facilities.

From analyzing how health-promotion campaigns can stigmatize people living with obesity to understanding why some people with obesity develop certain diseases, such as Type 2 diabetes, while others do not, PERFORM Centre researchers are leading the way in advancing obesity prevention and treatments.



SYLVIA SANTOSA

### WHO IS AT RISK?

Sylvia Santosa, Canada Research Chair in Clinical Nutrition, and associate professor in the Department of Health, Kinesiology and Applied Physiology, leads a team of researchers at the centre's Metabolism, Obesity, and Nutrition (MON) lab and is taking a cell-to-body approach to understand what makes someone with obesity more or less susceptible to metabolic disease and weight gain.

"We really want to know what it is about where fat tissue is stored in the body that might promote a greater risk of disease, as well as what affects those characteristics," says Santosa.

The timing or duration of obesity may have something to do with the cells. "Understanding how our inter-individual differences might affect our metabolism or fat tissue can potentially help promote more individualized treatment and treatment targets for the prevention of disease."

Santosa's team also conducts clinical research. One of her studies aims to determine how to set up better nutrition requirements for bariatric surgery patients — people who have parts of their stomach, and in some cases their intestines, removed to restrict the amount of food or calories they can ingest. The evidence on which post-surgery nutrition recommendations are based, Santosa explains, is minimal. "If we are able to understand the nutritional needs of individuals, then maybe it can help them in terms of recovery and weight maintenance post-surgery."

Some of Santosa's team's findings to date support existing evidence that people living with obesity since childhood differ greatly from those who have developed it as adults. By understanding how tissue can promote or increase the risk of metabolic diseases, Santosa's research will help develop better treatment for obesity, from disease prevention to nutrition management.

## AS POPULATION GROWS, SO DOES METABOLIC DISEASE

Under Santosa's supervision at the MON lab, Kerri Delaney is a PhD student who examines various regions of fat tissue on the body and compares them between different groups of people to see if there are disparities between or within each group.

"Type 2 diabetes is one of the fastest-growing diseases in Canada," says Delaney. "Obesity is a direct risk factor for Type 2 diabetes and the rate of obesity has been on the rise for the past 50, 70 years. We're a growing population and as we become more obese, we develop more metabolic diseases."

What makes Delaney's research unique is that she examines cells in



KERRI DELANEY

three different parts of the body via fat tissue biopsies: from under the skin — known as subcutaneous fat tissue — from the stomach and from the thigh. By comparing the fat cells in more than one area — between individuals going for bariatric surgery who may or may not have Type 2 diabetes — Delaney can see which area is worse. For example,



JESSICA MURPHY

people who have more stomach obesity tend to be more metabolically ill than people who have more leg obesity. Yet, at a cellular level, research has shown that there are additional differences at play. Delaney's objective is to determine the independent effects of Type 2 diabetes and obesity on fat cells from different places in the body.

## Q&A WITH CHRISTA SMITH-KINGSTON

Jessica Murphy's research patient at the Metabolism, Obesity and Nutrition Lab at the PERFORM Centre

### Q. Describe some of the issues you've had with weight.

A. I grew up in the era of body shaming. Girls and women were first defined by how they looked. Through that lens, I was always on the heavier side, though I have never actually been obese. The greatest struggle I have had, that as a 33-year-old woman I can now identify, is one of the mind: I have spent the better part of my life being crushed by the weight of my mind, wrestling with the voices of what size is good enough, what size is too much.

### Q. What has worked/not worked for you?

A. My greatest success has come from listening to those around me who have spoken only words of encouragement, affirmation, and have asked questions about the internal struggle. Paired with portion control, understanding what types of food are best suited for my body, and fun and motivating exercise, weight loss has ensued. What has not worked has been the strict regime that cares only for the numbers related to calories and scales.

### Q. Have you ever felt body shamed?

A. I have experienced a lot of body shaming. Its greatest affect has been that I internalized that shame and it turned into a skewed perspective of myself — in the mirror and in my worth.

### Q. What would help (whether on a societal level, through education, medicine, etc.)?

A. I am grateful that we are seeing a cultural shift in how we talk about bodies. There is more and more awareness about body shaming, and body positivity is on the rise. More representation of all bodies in the media is necessary, with celebration in tow. Practically, we need better education on body types without shaming language and on food origins and impact.

### Q. Have you ever felt stigmatized because of your weight? What caused it?

A. I have the benefit of having a confident personality, and so my internal world did not become my external world: I did not experience stigmatization because what I project when it comes to body can be quite different from my personal feelings.



COURTESY OF CHRISTA SMITH-KINGSTON

## PERFORM CENTRE CALL OUT

Whether you're a community member looking to participate in a study or a graduate student who wants to engage in next-gen research, our PERFORM Centre wants to hear from you. Visit [concordia.ca/research/perform](https://concordia.ca/research/perform) for more information.

## ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

As with disease, when it comes to losing weight, some people have a harder time than others. Jessica Murphy, another PhD student under Santosa's supervision at the MON lab, believes the answer might lie in the age at which obesity develops. Through her research, Murphy is trying to learn how that timing affects disease risk, by analyzing fat cells from people who have had obesity since childhood and comparing them with the cells of people who developed it later in life.

After identifying abnormalities between the two groups, Murphy wants to learn how each group responds to weight loss. In terms of fat-cell characteristics, she compares the differences between adult onset and childhood onset obesity and then puts individuals from each group on a weight-loss protocol of both diet and exercise.

"We guide them in terms of how to improve their nutrition and reduce their caloric intake by 20 per cent," she says. The individuals in her study are also put on a cardio exercise program at the PERFORM Centre. Once they complete the full weight-loss protocol, Murphy conducts the fat biopsies and assessments once again to observe any differences. The goal is to get them to approximately 10-per-cent weight loss.

Murphy is intrigued by the results. "It's exciting to see how these two groups of individuals do change after the program, as well as to see if there are improvements following their weight loss."

Murphy hopes her research will improve comprehension of obesity and how it is treated. To date, she's had more than 20 individuals complete her program. In order to yield more robust research results, her goal is to have 30 to 40 people complete both pre- and post-measures.

THÉA DEMMERS IN THE NUTRITION LABORATORY AT THE PERFORM CENTRE ON THE LOYOLA CAMPUS.

## THE NEXT-GENERATION OF HEALTHY LIVING

Health Canada's overhaul of Canada's Food Guide in early 2019 is a positive development, say staff and researchers at the PERFORM Centre's Nutrition Suite.

The suite's supervisor, Théa Demmers, a registered dietitian-nutritionist, says the new guide is an affirmation of what she and fellow colleagues have already endorsed: we should consider meals as a well-balanced plate of colourful and dark green vegetables, fruits, whole grains and protein.

The latest version of Canada's Food Guide supports a balanced plate of food, rather than suggesting a daily number of servings from four specific food groups, a recommendation that, until this year, had not been updated since 2007.

The idea of the balanced plate, according to Demmers, has existed in diabetes education since the 1990s.

"I think the new food guide really supports what is useful for people who are trying to plan their daily meals and meet their goals for both health and weight management, if necessary," she says.

Through nutrition counselling and cooking workshops, Demmers helps advance research in the prevention of chronic diseases and helps promote healthy habits.

"I think the plate is visual, and seeing the proportions on it can be very positive and helpful for planning meals."

While overweight and obesity statistics in Canada and around the world are worse than ever, Concordia's PERFORM Centre researchers have high hopes for an improved understanding of how fat works.

Through their research collaborations within the Concordia community and beyond, the intention is to develop knowledge in the field that will lead to more personalized treatments, and better prevention, education and weight-loss programs. ■



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY



## Annual \$500 Irving Layton Award for Creative Writing: **Poetry**

### PROXY

BY ALIA BHIMJI  
(STUDENT CURRENTLY STUDYING FOR A BA)

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I used to be a babysitter.  
I made nipples out of mineral things, I spoke in tongues too wide for me  
I spent the gold and I spent the silver.

I made tap water turn to TV dinners.  
I worked for lead from bunk beds, I bathed them in Epsom sweat and seaweed  
I used to be a babysitter.

I used to bring them army stickers.  
I made civvies out of buckeye roots, in high altitudes with coca leaves  
I spent the gold and the camouflage silver.

I went and shopped for coffee filters.  
I would drink like mothers ought to drink, I snuffed the grounds through rolled receipts  
I used to be a peoplesitter.

I'd tuck in their gloves when we had our winters.  
I'd make them shovel snow for daddy's praises, he was paying my salary  
I spent the gold and the family silver.

I used to be a counterfeiter  
I used to be a quick relief  
I used to be a babysitter  
I took the gold and I took the silver. ■

# LIVING ON THE AIR

Concordia is all over the airwaves in Canada's two largest cities. Sabrina Marandola recently launched a new afternoon-drive show on CBC Montreal. John Moore is a top-rated AM radio host in Toronto, while Andrew Carter and Elias Makos have AM morning shows in Montreal. Radio and TV personality Anne-Marie Withenshaw is familiar to French-language listeners and viewers in Montreal. How did Concordia help prepare them for what can be a gruelling career? And why is it much tougher than most people think? Freelance writer **Richard Burnett, BA 88**, found out.

## SABRINA MARANDOLA LIGHTS UP THE MONTREAL AIRWAVES

Born and raised in Montreal, Sabrina Marandola, BA (Specialization in Communications and Journalism) '03, was the perfect choice to host CBC Montreal's new afternoon radio show *Let's Go with Sabrina Marandola*, which launched on Sept. 3, 2019.

Marandola sat down for this Q&A on her second day on the job. After many years in the journalism trenches – beginning as a news reporter for *The Suburban* newspaper to various TV, radio and digital news jobs for the CBC – Marandola is uniquely qualified to host a daily show about Montrealers and their hometown.

### What's the hardest part of the job?

**Sabrina Marandola:** Well, I just started the job, so maybe my answer will change in a few months! I've been a substitute host before, but now it's about mentally embracing my new role. I'm not keeping the seat warm for someone else. Now I get to put my stamp on it.

### What's the biggest misconception from the public about radio personalities?

**SM:** I think people think, 'Oh, you're on the air from 3 to 6? That's it!' But that's not the case at all. There is a lot of prep time, a lot of research, pre-interviewing guests, writing scripts and editing, cutting tapes, cutting sound. There's a lot that goes into a show.



### Let's Go with Sabrina Marandola replaces Homerun. How did your show come about?

When Homerun host Sue Smith retired, the search was on for a new afternoon host. A lot of people reached out to me and said, 'Sabrina, I hope you're going to apply because you've paid your dues, it's your time.' Then when I got the job, I was in complete shock. I was silent which is so unlike me! I was hoping for the job, but I was for sure not expecting it.

### You cherish your Italian roots and have a passion for pizza.

I am a pizza addict, specifically Neapolitan-style pizza. I travel to Italy really often and have tried many, many pizzerias. I love the pizza scene in Montreal, there are a lot of Neapolitan-style pizzas now available. I tell you, when I go shopping and see something I like, I go, "Hmmm, do I need this pair of shoes or would I rather have six pizzas?" Pizza is on my mind all the time!

### How did Concordia prepare you for your current role?

I loved my time at Concordia, I thought it was a great program. It was a small program, they accepted about 18 people a year, so you had a lot of the same people in your classes for the whole three years. It felt like a family. I also loved that your teachers were working journalists. So you knew that people in the industry were looking at your work. And the mandatory internships were fabulous.

### What professor or mentor was most influential in your career?

An influential teacher at Concordia was Bob Babinski, who was my radio teacher. His way of teaching really resonated with me. He was so calm and so patient. I totally fell in love with radio in Bob's class and I still see him from time to time, we still keep in touch.

## CJAD MORNING MAN ANDREW CARTER COMES OUT ON TOP

Energetic radio personality Andrew Carter, BA 84, has been the morning man at CJAD – Montreal’s top-rated English-language AM radio station – since 2003. But in 2017, Carter revealed on-air that he had been battling depression. Carter’s honest approach helped listeners get a handle on mental illness. Through it all, Carter never lost his good humour and remains one of Montreal’s favourite broadcasters.

### What’s the hardest part of the job?

**Andrew Carter:** Definitely getting up at 4 a.m. day after day after day. That’s the hardest physical part. The hardest mental part is what I call land mines: you can say something you think is fairly innocuous, but someone may not hear it as you intended and it can become an issue. You’re always one stupid phrase away from disaster. That can be kind of stressful.

### What’s the biggest misconception from the public about radio personalities?

**AC:** The one I hear a lot is from people who have good voices, who come up to me and say, ‘My friends tell me I should be a radio announcer because I have such a great voice.’ And I say, ‘That’s like my friends telling me I should be lawyer because I look good in a suit.’ It’s not a talent, it’s an acquired skill. That’s what people don’t understand.

### What was it like coming out publicly about your battle with depression?

It was quite easy because in the context of how it happened – with the Bell Let’s Talk mental health initiative – we had guests like cyclist and speedskater Clara Hughes and I felt kind of disingenuous sitting there asking them questions about depression when I knew how it felt to be depressed.

I felt like we were not giving full service by talking to the same athletes and celebrities. It’s regular folks who are still scared because of stigma. They are scared they will lose their jobs. It was even that way in my business too. I think going back just a few years it would have been very uncool to talk about depression. I’m not saying that about Bell Media, but I’m sure some past bosses would have said that is not good for the Andrew Carter brand. It’s not good for the happy morning man to talk about



PHOTO COURTESY CJAD

CARTER’S HONEST APPROACH ABOUT BATTLING DEPRESSION HAS ALSO BUOYED HIS LISTENERS

depression. You’re not supposed to have any problems.

So coming out was one of those things I did because it was right. I didn’t feel brave or special. But I was touched when people came forward and said, ‘This is what I’ve been living.’ You get some hope knowing that you’re not the only one.

### How did Concordia prepare you for your current role?

Volunteering at Concordia radio station CIRL [now CJLO] was great because it allowed me to play radio and understand and cultivate my desire to do radio. I was in communication studies and journalism – it was called a joint specialization at the time, a precursor to broadcast journalism – and I had great teachers like Lindsay Chrysler and the late Dennis Murphy. Being a journalism student allowed me to intern at CJAD, and that’s how I got my foot in the door and my first job.

### What professor or mentor was most influential in your career?

CJAD evening newscaster Stu McIsaac in 1982, when I had a weeklong internship at the station. News director Gordon Sinclair said I could come back, but would have to make a deal with one of the newscasters. Stu McIsaac let me come in for as long as I wanted. He had tasks for me to do and he was very patient because I was a moron. I was the guy least likely to excel, least likely to get a radio job ever!

There are many other people who have influenced my career – Rob Braide gave me a chance as a morning man – but Stu McIsaac allowing me to stick around at the very beginning, that changed my life. ■

## CJAD RADIO HOST ELIAS MAKOS HITS A GRAND SLAM

The dynamic Elias Makos, BA 04, ended 2018 with a bang when he launched *The Elias Makos Show* on top-rated CJAD radio on Dec. 31. The former Montreal Canadiens and Montreal Expos PR man, who became a popular personality with long-running on-air stints with CTV and Citytv, has found his stride as host of his own CJAD talk show which airs daily in the coveted 9 a.m. to noon slot.

### What's the hardest part of the job?

**Elias Makos:** There is no hardest part of my job. I got really lucky. I think I've worked reasonably hard over my career, I've learned a lot of things. I studied at Concordia, worked in the journalism department for seven years, all my work at CTV and Citytv and all the other places, it prepared me for this job at CJAD. I don't think there is anything 'hard' in my job. It's a thrill, to be honest. The job is high-energy, it's a newsy show and something that I thrive on.

### You must be happy you don't have to wake up at 4 a.m. anymore.

**EM:** Oh my God! The schedule I had as a host and producer on Citytv's *Breakfast Television* Montreal was the worst! I was constantly worried about getting enough sleep. But I have a great schedule today, and that also changes everything. Now I have a social life.

### What's the biggest misconception from the public about radio personalities?

When I meet people, many of them say, 'It must be so tough to keep track of everything, to be on top of all the stories.' It isn't easy, but that is who we are. Radio hosts are already of that mindset, they love the news. I'm a voracious consumer of news as well. I relish that stuff.

### You worked for the Montreal Expos before they left for Washington, D.C., in 2004. Do you think Montreal will get another Major League Baseball team?

Yes, it is only a matter of when, not if. And I say that without any hesitation. It's happening. The process we are seeing is them figuring out how it happens, and when it happens. We're getting a team back, you can take that to the bank.

### Will they be called the Expos?

If it's a full-time team in Montreal, or a team that plays the majority of their schedule in Montreal, then they'll be called the Expos.

### How did Concordia prepare you for your current role?

It did everything. I was speaking to some journalism diploma students recently and told them I was so happy to be there during their orientation because, I said, "I'd like to give you some advice that all journalism students should get when they start: Look around the room and see all the people you have just met and I guarantee you that in three, five and 10 years these are the same people who will be hiring you, and you will be hiring the people around you. So be nice to



PHOTO COURTESY CJAD

"WHEN I LOOK AT MY CAREER, EVERYTHING CAME OUT OF CONCORDIA, AND ALL THE CONNECTIONS I MADE THERE."

all these people because the connections you make here will pay dividends." When I look at my career, everything came out of Concordia, and all the connections I made there. Journalism professor Peter Downie called me up in September 2004 – the same week the Expos announced they were leaving for Washington – and invited me to apply for a technical instructor position, because today every journalist has to be a technical wizard. That is how my career took off.

### What professor or mentor was most influential in your career?

Peter Downie at Concordia was pivotal, but I also owe a lot to former Concordia professor Bob Babinski, who saw something in me when he put together the team Citytv had when they launched their new station in Montreal. I know that if I hadn't ended up at Citytv, there is no way I'd be sitting in this chair today at CJAD.

## MOORE! MOORE! MOORE! HOW MORNING MAN JOHN MOORE BECAME THE TOAST OF TORONTO

Montreal native John Moore, BA 88, became the toast of Toronto hosting the Queen City's hugely popular morning show *Moore in the Morning*.

Moore spent years paying his dues, launching his career as a reporter with CHOM in Montreal. There would be plenty of other gigs, including work as an in-demand voice artist and columnist for the *National Post*.

Like many Montrealers, Moore has made Toronto his home. The bustling metropolis tunes in *Moore in the Morning* on NewsTalk 1010 weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.



PHOTO COURTESY: CJAD

MORNING MAN JOHN MOORE SAYS, "IT'LL BE 11 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING AND I'LL FEEL LIKE I'M PLAYING HOOKY BECAUSE ALL OF MY OTHER FRIENDS HAVE REAL JOBS."

### What's the hardest part of the job?

**John Moore:** The hours. The hours are insane. I get up at 2:30 in the morning and go on-air at 5:30. I always say it still feels like I'm getting into a moving car. It ends at 9, but then there's meetings and interviews to do, and you spend the whole day wondering, 'What are we going to do tomorrow? What are the big stories?' You are pretty much working all the time.

The other funny thing is, because of these crazy hours, it'll be 11 o'clock in the morning and I'll feel like I'm playing hooky because all of my other friends have real jobs.

### What's the biggest misconception from the public about radio personalities?

**JM:** It's the same thing as when I used to do improv. People ask, 'How hard is it to go onstage and make things up?' But good storytelling isn't easy. I had a friend who said all I do on radio is talk, then when I had him on my show, he clammed up.

### What was it like coming out publicly in 2019 about your battle with anxiety?

It's a mixed bag. I want to be careful what I say because every interview I do, every encounter I have, centres on that. All I can say is there was no question whether I would talk about it because radio is about authenticity and connection with the listeners. If I was going to tell my friends about this, then I was going to tell the listeners about this.

So after a month off work, I came back and prepared a statement because I wanted people to know exactly where I'd been. I don't want to be a poster boy for anxiety, I don't know if I'm even a good poster boy because it was relatively easy for me. Others deal with this their whole lives.

But people reached out to me, like parents whose kids and teens have anxiety, other people in my industry, police officers, single moms, you name it. They said, 'That's me!' Now they know they can do something about it, and that's healthy.

### Has being an out gay man affected your career?

Not really. I don't make a big deal about it anyway. I've never believed you inform a debate by saying, 'I've been at a mass shooting, so I know about gun control.' I talk about my partner on the radio but it's never that major a component.

### You were a founding member of Montreal's On The Spot players. Do you miss performing improvisational comedy?

I miss it terribly, but you get to the age where you look like somebody's dad and you shouldn't be onstage anymore! I decided to dedicate myself fully to my radio show in Toronto in 2003.

### How did Concordia prepare you for your current role?

There is a lot in my life that prepared me for this. I am a huge Concordia booster and Communications is still everything to me. I loved doing the degree. I also went to the School of Community and Public Affairs, and that was my foundation in politics, history and economics.

### What professor or mentor was most influential in your career?

I wrote a column a few years ago about all the teachers who influenced me. I can take it back to Grade 3. But at Concordia I learned much from professors Donat Taddeo, Harold Thwaites, Margie Mendell and Dennis Murphy and that's a double connection because my Dad taught him, and Dennis taught me.

## COURTING CELEBRITY WITH MEDIA PERSONALITY ANNE-MARIE WITHENSHAW

Canadian television and radio personality Anne-Marie Withenshaw, BA (Comm.) '02, became a household name in Quebec as a hugely popular VJ on MusiquePlus – the French-language sister station of MuchMusic – from 1998 to 2002.

She quickly became a much-loved media personality in both French and English, with gigs on the TQS daily entertainment show *Flash* and Montreal radio stations CKOI and 92.5 The Beat. Currently part of the *Échangistes* team at Radio-Canada and *C'est juste de la TV* on ARTV, Withenshaw also hosts *Les samedis d'Anne-Marie* each weekend on Ici Musique radio.

### What was it like to work as a VJ at MusiquePlus?

**Anne-Marie Withenshaw:** My last year at Concordia was really weird because I was also working in TV. I remember turning in my final paper (electronically) while I was in a Toronto hotel room interviewing Our Lady Peace!

But working at MusiquePlus as a VJ was not like working at Montreal's HMV superstore where I started selling records and then became their store DJ. Lots of people at HMV were migrating to MusiquePlus which is how I found out they were looking for a new VJ. When I showed up there, I had literally never done anything in TV. I did seven interviews and screen tests, and did one trial day.

Working at MusiquePlus was brutal: you had to be your own researcher, writer, producer, editor, make-up artist, stylist and hairdresser. You had to do everything. We still used clippings back in those days. I remember we had just one computer on wheels, and we wheeled it around the office to do research on the internet! Meanwhile, other students at Concordia thought I had sold out.

Working at MusiquePlus was really hard work but it was magical. Suddenly all the artists I admired as a fan – like David Bowie – I got to meet and interview in person.

**As a reporter for *Flash* on TQS, you reported from the Oscars, the Grammys and the Cannes Film Festival. What did you learn about celebrity and fame?**

**AMW:** I am still a fan, I still geek out when I see Miley Cyrus or Diana Ross in concert. I turn into a 14-year-old. But I learnt I like talking to musicians and don't really like talking to actors. The stakes in the movie business are so much higher and actors try not to go off-script. But rock stars are eccentric and not very sheltered. When I had a bizarre interview with Mariah Carey two weeks before she had her nervous breakdown, her handlers were like, 'Oh, that's Mariah! She's just being funny!'

At MusiquePlus I also learnt that fame comes in phases. For their first album, artists are willing to do anything. Before Britney Spears's first album came out, we had access to her for three days. She did everything for us!

Then no more access with the release of an artist's second album and peak worldwide fame. They're tapped out. Then there is redemption with their fourth or fifth album, and they're super willing to talk to you again. It's very rare that an artist doesn't have that cycle.

### Do you prefer TV or radio?

I'm lucky I've done both my entire career. TV allows for access to so many extraordinary worlds whereas radio allows for proximity to the listener – talking to them is so intimate. I love listening to radio and podcasts.

### What's the biggest misconception about radio and TV personalities?

People think the job of a host is really easy. I still approach my work with the rigour I learnt in journalism school.

### How did Concordia help shape you and prepare you for your career?

Concordia gave me a good group of peers I still work with today, really shaped my way of storytelling and I have stayed in touch with many amazing teachers.



CBC

WITHENSHAW ALSO HOSTS *LES SAMEDIS D'ANNE-MARIE* EACH WEEKEND ON ICI MUSIQUE RADIO

### Was it tougher for you as a woman to break into the business, get respect and equal pay?

It wasn't. I was lucky. My core of female friends at Concordia, there are five of us, we all ended up following each other. We have always had each other's backs. We let a lot of things slide that today would be considered sexual harassment, though at MusiquePlus I never felt like I was treated unequally. I came in at the tail end of the nineties, after the grunge era and riot grrrl movement when people were aware of feminism and the female struggle.

Now I think we've taken a step back. I remember once I went to interview Quentin Tarantino when he released his 2007 film *Grindhouse* and I was standing in front of the elevator with a plate of food – because at movie junkets they also feed you, and you know me, I love to eat – and the elevator doors open and out steps Tarantino. Harvey Weinstein was also in the elevator. When Tarantino spotted me with my plate of food, he said something like, 'My God, a blonde girl coming into an elevator with a plate of food in front of Harvey Weinstein – that's a lawsuit waiting to happen!' And everybody laughed. So when people say they didn't know it was happening – no, everybody knew. People just thought it was funny. It was a different culture. ■



THEY SHOOT!

THE

## Concordians make their marks in the world of sport

THESE BRISSON WON A GOLD MEDAL IN WOMEN'S HOCKEY IN 2002 AND NOW SERVES ON THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE.

SEAN FARRELL

Concordia alumni have scaled a variety of summits on the fields and in the arenas of the sporting world, but they have also played significant roles in the business side of sports. Their careers have taken them to the Olympics, the World Series and the Super Bowl, and they have made their marks on the Stanley Cup, the Grey Cup and the Clarkson Cup.

And the business of sports can be quite different than other business ventures, but very close to other forms of entertainment.

Concordia lecturer Moshe Lander touches on one of the key reasons why, when he references the central point of a 1956 article by economist Simon Rottenberg that essentially launched the study of the economics of sports: "He (Rottenberg) basically said that anybody who's buying sports is buying the uncertainty of outcome," Lander says. "So it's not totally different from other forms of entertainment, movies, television, that if you know how the episode or how the movie is going to end it takes out some of the enjoyment."

This feature looks at a number of former Concordia students who continue to make their marks in this unique business arena.

# Y SCORE!

**GREG KWIZAK**, BA 06, is a major player at “The World’s Most Famous Arena,” which is the actual registered trademark of New York’s Madison Square Garden.

As a senior vice-president at the Madison Square Garden Company, Kwizak is responsible for Event Production and Back of House Operations for all sporting events and concerts at the company’s venues, including MSG Arena, Radio City Music Hall, the Beacon Theatre and the Hulu Theater at MSG.

Prior to taking on this new role over the summer, Kwizak had served as senior vice-president of Event Presentation for the New York Rangers of the NHL and the New York Knicks of the NBA.

Regarding his previous role he says, “We work in sports, but we work in entertainment and it is the fan experience.

“I work with an incredibly talented team that oversees Rangers and Knicks event presentation, and all areas of programming and day-to-day operations for in-arena activity. It all ties back to fan engagement and the experience that fans should get, when they come to a game. It’s this complex, dynamic experience that’s really set against the sport of the night. You can’t control how the team is doing, but we program every iota in and around what’s happening on the ice or on the court.”

In addition to running the scoreboard, public address system, videos and music, ads, promotions and animation, the MSG team is responsible for everything that goes into the production of special ceremonies, such as jersey-retirement nights. Kwizak is particularly proud of the work the team did prior to a game in February 2019 when he directed the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Rangers’ 1994 Stanley Cup.

“Concordia just gave me a good foundation and supplied me the tools so that I can create,” Kwizak says. “I remember in my last year, there was a TV-production class and our teacher was Liz Miller, and we were really charged with putting together a short television show, and everybody had a role and I was a co-executive producer. “And I just got real-life experience in a good, solid studio setting and the resources were well supplied at the time.”



**MARK WEIGHTMAN**, BComm 96, is the vice-president of development and operations for the Laval Rocket and Place Bell at Groupe CH, the company that owns the Montreal Canadiens.

Weightman, who was previously president of the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League, oversees all commercial and business operations for the Rocket, an American Hockey League franchise that is the Canadiens' top farm team, and manages the Laval arena complex that includes a 10,000-seat rink.

"It's not true that minor-league sports have minor-league venues anymore, because it's still the same person spending the same Canadian currency to come see a show," Weightman says.

"And so you're seeing more and more AHL venues, minor league baseball venues, that are sometimes every bit as modern with the creature comforts of a Bell Centre that you will find here even at Place Bell."

Weightman praises Concordia's "real education for the real world" ethos.



"That says everything you need to know about Concordia," Weightman says. "I was very fortunate to have one professor in particular, a marketing teacher, Bryan Barbieri, who was a big sports fan. He would often use sports as a parallel to everything that we would talk about in our marketing classes. I was very lucky just to happen to fall into having him as a teacher. That helped

join my two passions of marketing and sports.

"I like learning and experiencing things that are real, not just examples from a textbook. And I felt that in my time at Concordia, they did a great job of that. We had a lot of professors who also worked in the industry who would come back and teach. To me, it made it relevant."



DAVE SANDFORD/HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

## GRANATO IS FIRST FEMALE NHL SCOUT

Concordia Stingers star Cammi Granato has a long history of staking a place for women in the hockey world. This fall, she broke new ground as the first woman named as a professional scout in the history of the National Hockey League, having been hired on September 24, 2019, by the Seattle expansion team that will begin playing in the 2021-22 season.

"What a time in sports right now, seeing all sorts of ceilings shattered by women," Granato says on the as-yet unnamed team's official website. "If I can inspire someone to become a scout or work in an NHL front office, that's amazing."

In 2010, she and Angela James became the first women players in the Hockey Hall of Fame. She is also a member of the International Ice Hockey Federation Hall of Fame (2008), the United States Hockey

Hall of Fame (2008) and the Concordia Sports Hall of Fame (2009), both as an individual and as a member of the 1995-96 Stingers women's hockey team.

Named Concordia Female Athlete of the Year in 1995, Granato had 179 goals and 330 points in 125 games during her three seasons with the Stingers from 1994-97.

"Cammi's not just there to fiddle with the dials," says TV hockey analyst Craig Button, who also has experience as an NHL scout and executive. "The thing about great players, the thing about Hall of Fame players, they're interested in being great. They want to be the best at everything they do and Cammi fits that to a T."

The greatest scorer in American women's hockey history, Granato was captain of the U.S. team that captured the gold medal in the first Olympic women's hockey tournament in 1998 and carried the U.S. flag at the closing ceremonies in Nagano, Japan.

Seattle general manager Ron Francis is a fellow Hall of Fame player who played with Granato's husband, Ray Ferraro, for the Hartford Whalers.

"I want to stress that Cammi's résumé is why she got the job," Francis says on the team website. "She knows the pro game and its players. When we talked about the role and how it is going to work, I mentioned the organization's overall commitment to diversity."

## TRAINER TO THE ELITE: SPRACKLIN'S BUSINESS GROWS AND GROWS

Kenny Spracklin, BSc 08, has carved out a distinctive niche in the business of sports. His Montreal-based company, Spracklin Performance Inc., provides personalized fitness training services to elite athletes, including a number of NHL players.

The good news for Spracklin's clients is that he won't ask them to do anything he hasn't done himself. Good luck keeping up with someone who swims with whales and sharks, and was planning to swim across each of the five Great Lakes within two weeks in September.

"I love that feeling when I'm working with people who are getting millions of dollars to actually compete, when there's a lot on line, or an Olympic athlete who works for years towards one goal, like one game to win gold," Spracklin says.

"They're sacrificing so much, and their entire livelihoods, their entire lives, are all around basically how you can help them. I don't like to take credit for them being able to win a cup or win a gold medal, because at the end of the day they are the athletes, they're the ones doing everything.

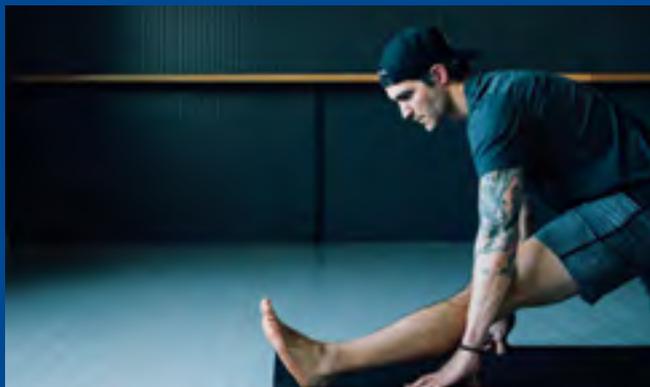
"But if I can be sharp, then my tools can actually really help them."

Spracklin is grateful that his general interest in business led him to take some finance classes while studying at Concordia.

"I never actually thought I would run my own business the way I do and that it would expand the way it has so much," Spracklin says. "I would consider myself more of a skilled practitioner in where I would work specifically with athletes, and that was my craft and that's where I put all my time and energy. The sidebar was the business side, but then they kind of switched when we got bigger and bigger.

"And now we have 10 to 12 staff, so that's a lot more. It's a different side to manage than the actual athletes. Instead of the one-on-ones or the group trainings, now there's staff I have to manage, which is a very different environment. But it's great. It's a totally different system. So I didn't think we would get to this part originally, when I first started everything, but I'm very happy with the way things have evolved."

- Sean Farrell



KYLE SMITH

**TAMARA MEDWIDSKY**, GrDip 00, MBA 03, acquired a wealth of real-world experience at Concordia that is relevant to her position as executive director of Wrestling Canada Lutte.

Medwidsky participated in a variety of sports growing up, yet she only discovered the one she truly excelled at during her senior year at the University of Toronto, where she completed her bachelor of science degree.

"I don't really know what would have happened if I hadn't started wrestling," Medwidsky says. "Would I have ended up at Concordia? Who knows?"

Medwidsky became an elite wrestler while continuing her studies at Concordia, all the while shifting her field of concentration to business.

"It's been an amazing experience," Medwidsky says. "I don't think many individuals have that opportunity. Working in the sport that I had my athletic career in has been tremendous, but not without its challenges."

One of the biggest challenges her sport has faced occurred in 2013, when the International Olympic Committee voted to drop wrestling from their program less than 10 years after women began competing in Olympic wrestling in Athens. A campaign to reinstate wrestling was successful and more women's events were added for the

2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. "Over the last, you know, five, six years since that we've definitely raised the profile of the sport from a marketing and communication standpoint," Medwidsky says. "It's actually been really great. So I think that whole situation actually strengthened wrestling and really brought us back together."



TAMARA MEDWIDSKY (MIDDLE) IS INDUCTED INTO CONCORDIA'S SPORTS HALL OF FAME.



LISA-MARIE BRETON-LEBREUX HOPES WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY RETURNS TO CANADA.

In 2016, Medwidsky was inducted into the Concordia Sports Hall of Fame, which also counts **THERESE BRISSON** (inducted in 1997) and **LISA-MARIE BRETON-LEBREUX** (inducted in 2018) among its members. Both Stingers hockey greats are still involved in sports in their respective professional lives.

Brisson, BSc 89, a six-time International Ice Hockey Federation world champion and Olympic silver (1998) and gold medal (2002) winner, is a member of the board of directors of the Canadian Olympic Committee.

"What we do with the Canadian Olympic team is a nation-building project," Brisson says. "A nation that is inspired by the performance and the passion of the Canadian Olympic team. I don't know of anything that inspires excellence not just in sport, but through sport – and unites our country in the same way. We don't see Canadians come together as much as we do when we're cheering on our national team at the highest levels. People don't paint the maple leaf on their faces to go the opera, they just don't – right? But they do for Team Canada at the Olympics."

Brisson has been a marketing executive for the past 15 years, first with P&G Canada and now with Kimberly-Clark.

"As an athlete, I had a lot of interest and passion for people's health and fitness," Brisson says. "I learned a lot about that while I was at Concordia, and while working toward that B.Sc. in Exercise Science, I played varsity hockey. I think that everything I do today leading teams, people and businesses,

I learned in playing hockey where it's all about building high-performance teams to achieve high-performance goals.

"There were many lessons learned on the journey from Concordia to the Canadian Olympic team, where I had the opportunity to perform on the highest stage, where one in five Canadians are watching. Everything I do today is about real passion for building high-performance teams and championing people development. Evidence-based decision making is also important. We did all of that as athletes. For me, that started at Concordia, where I played hockey, and did my first formal training as a scientist."

**"It's that you want to be on the edge of your seat, and this is exciting, and it's going to a second overtime." - Moshe Lander**

Breton-Lebreux, BA 04, the Stingers' strength and conditioning coordinator, finds her position as assistant coach of Les Canadiennes women's hockey team in limbo. Professional women's hockey is at a crucial crossroads with the spring 2019 demise of the Canadian Women's Hockey League, which Breton-Lebreux had co-founded in 2007.

"This came as a shock, where the sports and the league and our team in Montreal is at the highest point of everything," Breton-Lebreux says. "I'm really proud of how we started and where we took it, and no one will take that away from me, ever. And I hope that it will continue. But it's really sad. I'm really sad."

The way forward is unclear in the wake of the CWHL's failed attempt to pursue a not-for-profit business plan, in contrast to the U.S.-based National Women's Hockey League.

"That is the basic tenet of business, that it has to be for profit," business lecturer Moshe Lander says. "What you do with the profits is up to you. But you have to be in it to win it. The guiding principle is that if you have investors and stakeholders and you're telling them that the objective here is a return on investment, or that there's a return on assets – whatever the return is, there's got to be a return for it.

"So even Hockey Canada and USA Hockey, if they want to get behind this product, they have to be in it for the purpose of making a profit. Otherwise, you're not going to be around long – you can't function in a scenario where you're not trying to maximize earnings."

Fingers are crossed that women's professional hockey will find the right business model in order to prosper in the sports world, which offers a unique product to its consumers, the fans.

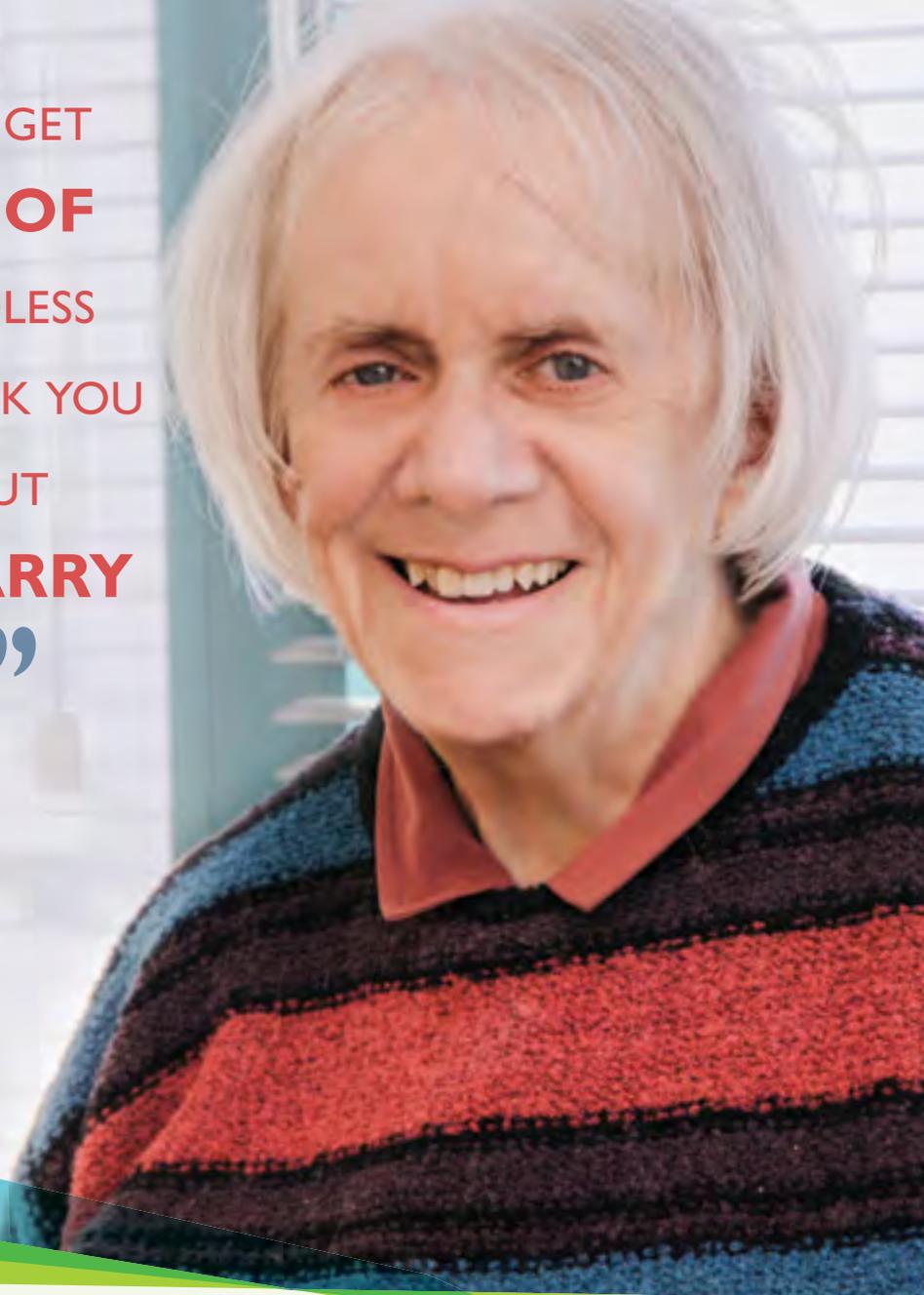
"It's unscripted entertainment and so leagues will fall over themselves to try and ensure that the outcome is not predictable," Lander says. "So whenever you see competition committees

reviewing rules, or changing free agency or salary caps, the entire aim is, at least publicly, to try and assure the public that what you're watching is not professional wrestling. It's not pre-determined and that's how you get fans to pay.

"It's that you want to be on the edge of your seat, and this is exciting, and it's going to a second overtime. You get invested in it because you want your team to win. But even there, the euphoria of the win, and the catastrophe of the loss is what you're signing up for. It's not fun to sign up for something where you know you're going to win. And vice-versa. It's not fun to sign up for something where you know you're going to lose." ■

“IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET INTO THE **HABIT OF GIVING**. REGARDLESS OF WHAT YOU THINK YOU CAN OFFER, FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN **CARRY IT FORWARD.**”

– Lorraine Gosselin, BA 97



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# Looking forward

## Concordia's grad school takes aim at future needs

RACHEL ANDREN, BA 02

Traditionally, graduate schools have functioned as gatekeepers for the upper echelons of academia, overseeing access to funding, facilities and research. Led by Dean Paula Wood-Adams, Concordia's School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has moved away from this traditional approach to embrace the evolving needs of the academic community as knowledge brokers and thought leaders, breaking new ground for research development and adopting a broader approach to academic success.

### STUDENT-FOCUSED SERVICES

In recent years, SGS has enhanced existing programs and developed new ways to further propel the careers of graduate students. GradProSkills, now led by Academic Programs and Development Manager Kristy Clarke, was developed to ensure graduate students have access to skills required for successful careers within and beyond academia. Guided by two main principles, skill training and employability, GradProSkills currently offers more than 350 free workshops exclusively to graduate students, on topics ranging from thesis planning and intercultural communication to MS Office Suite.

The flagship of GradProSkills is Graduate School Base Camp. Held at the beginning of the fall and winter terms, Base Camp is a condensed version of key workshops and is considered essential for newly-admitted and international students.

GradProSkills also provides coaching and support for the popular international 3-Minute Thesis (3MT™) competition, which challenges students to share their research in everyday language to a public audience within three minutes. Concordia MSc (Chemistry) student Newsha Arezi won the national competition this year, impressing the audience with her research in developing smart delivery systems for anti-cancer drugs, and her public speaking skills.

### PUBLIC SCHOLARS: BEYOND LABS AND LIBRARIES

There has long been the stereotypical idea of universities (and graduate schools in particular) as ivory towers, cut off from the "real world." To combat this perception, Wood-Adams was inspired to create the Public Scholars Program, with the goal of sharing Concordia's research with the larger community. Launched in 2017, under the guidance of Administrative Director Joanne Beaudoin and in partnership with the *Montreal Gazette*, the Public Scholars Program assists PhD candidates transition from labs and libraries into real-world conversations, with the goals of engaging with the broader community and shaping public policy.

As part of their training, Public Scholars participate in professional development workshops not usually offered through academic channels, including social media, business etiquette, public policy and professional



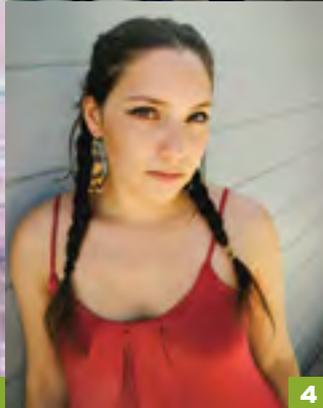
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

1

- 1 DEAN PAULA WOOD-ADAMS
- 2 THE PUBLIC SCHOLAR COHORT
- 3 NEWSHA AREZI
- 4 SUZANNE KITE

networking. Each skill is taught by experts in the fields including Edie Austin, Editorial Page Editor of the *Montreal Gazette* and Graham Fox, President and CEO of the Institute for Research on Public Policy, a national think tank.

The Scholars are selected from all faculties based on strict academic criteria, and they represent Concordia's diversity. Notable alumni and current Public Scholars include Nura Jabagi (Business Technology Management) winner of the provincial Prix Relève étoile Paul-Gérin-Lajoie award; Vanier Scholars Maya Hey (Communications Studies), Amir Hooshier (Mechanical Engineering) and Sherif Goubran (INDI: Design, Finance and Engineering); and 2019 Banting recipient Alex McClelland (Humanities). The Public Scholars actively engage with the public as representatives of Concordia. They participated in Concordia's Homecoming event on September 20 and teamed up with the university's 4th Space on October 3 for "Health Matters", an open event to discuss and share new insights and progress within the field of health care.



### BESPOKE DEGREES INSPIRE NEW AVENUES OF DISCOVERY

Concordia's School of Graduate Studies was the first in Canada to create a full-fledged graduate program that encouraged multidisciplinary research. Launched in the late 1970s, the individualized program (INDI) has grown to function as an incubator for developing new, and newly combined, areas of research. The results have been remarkable.

Under the guidance of current Graduate Program Director Rachel Berger, the program attracts intrepid, creative minds who are willing to cross boundaries and ask new questions. Scholars like Wahéshon Shiann Whitebean (INDI: First Nations Studies) work with the INDI team to map out new terrain and establish the parameters of evolving research areas. Likewise, Concordia's growing profile in Health Research was forged within INDI and evolved into the Health and Exercise Science PhD program this year.

Other students combine existing disciplines in new and exciting ways. Suzanne Kite (INDI: Art and Technology) earned exceptional national recognition in April 2019 as a Trudeau Scholar. Kite's research is at the fulcrum of art and technology, investigating artificial intelligence (AI) through the lens of art and Lakota philosophy. From that perspective, the materials that are used to develop, build and host an AI will contribute fundamentally to the character and structure of the AI.

Currently, more than 130 INDI PhD and master's students are pushing the boundaries of existing thought, with new facilities and research spaces being secured in partnership with other faculties and generous donors. The SGS' deep commitment to INDI is evidenced by the creation of a staff scholarship, entirely funded by the department's administrative personnel and awarded annually to select students.

### FORGING THE FUTURE

The SGS continues to explore and create new ways to support graduate research and graduate students. The INDI and Public Scholars programs attract and promote the brightest minds and most dedicated scholars. These are but two of many initiatives. The SGS has long looked beyond borders as well, developing co-curricular programs with universities around the world that offer graduate students the opportunity to earn a joint PhD degree with two different institutions, contributing to shared research and greater combined resources. In addition, new top-up scholarships have been created to recognize, recruit and enrol talented Indigenous graduate students.

At its heart, the SGS is an incubator, a bridge-builder and a knowledge broker, blazing new paths for graduate research and propelling future careers of students: truly, a next-generation school of graduate studies. ■

# High School Sucks

2019 winner of the annual \$300  
English Department Drama Award

ABIGAIL CANDELORA

*The following is excerpted from the one-act play High School Sucks.*

A high school bathroom. There are two stalls upstage right. One is unusable — maybe the door is hanging off it's hinges, or has an Out of Order sign taped up... it's one of those high school bathrooms. There's a mirror and a sink downstage left, perpendicular to the audience. The mirror can and probably should be a hanging frame, and the sink doesn't need to be anything elaborate because it doesn't work anyway, and it should have an almost used up paper towel roll on it, and not the good kind of paper towel, but the papery one that doesn't absorb anything. Lights up on MAX, 14, distressed, her white t-shirt covered in tomato soup.

**Max:** This can't be happening, this can't be happening, this cannot be happening. Okay. Max. Chill. It's chill. You're chill. It's fine. Everything is cool and chill. It's not that much soup. It's chill. It's fine. It'll come out. (She rips off the remaining paper towel and tries to dab the stain out, but it doesn't really do anything. She checks out her progress in the mirror. She's more distressed and trying to keep her cool) Okay. Okay. It's fine. It's cool. It's definitely coming out. Right? Yeah. It's totally coming out. (It's not coming out) Okay it's not coming out. Maybe I need to rub it. (She rubs it and makes it worse) Okay! Don't rub it. Okay. It's cool. It's chill. Water! I just need to rinse it with water and it'll come right out. Yes. (She turns on the tap. No water comes out. She switches the tap on and off, more furiously as she goes until she's fed up) Well screw you sink! Screw you high school! Just screw off! (A pause, then...)

**Yasmin:** (in the closed stall, unseen by Max)... Max?

**Max:** Who's there?

**Yasmin:** Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you.

**Max:** (drawn out) Oh my God...

**Yasmin:** I didn't mean to like, listen to all that —

**Max:** This is so cliché.

**Yasmin:** What?

**Max:** I can't believe I'm hearing God. This is so dumb. Judy Blume is soooo grade six.

**Yasmin:** Oh, no, I'm not —



**Max:** Well, I mean, if you're there, God, like, it's me, Max, and I'm having a terrible first day so could you maybe talk some sense into Katy and I don't know, do you have a spare t-shirt? A cardigan? A Tide-to-go?

**Yasmin:** Max, I, uh, think you've got this wrong —

**Max:** Okay, I knooooow it's kinda bold for me to ask you for something since I haven't gone to church since like, well, since before mom and dad got all crazy. But I promise I've been really good! Or is being good a Santa thing? That's a Santa thing isn't it. I'm sorry, God. You saw this summer, though. I had to spend the summer in Bolton. Bolton. God, I don't know if you've ever been to Bolton but it's as boring as it sounds. I couldn't have pool parties or hang at the park with my friends or anything all summer. And now my friends just, what, cut me out of the group? 'Cause I'm just not cool enough for them anymore? It's all because of Mom and Dad and their stupid divorce and making me stay with Grandma Lynn all summer while Mom moved out with her stupid new boyfriend and now I'm covered in this stupid tomato soup that Jill was eating and Katy spilled all over me when I tried to sit with them all and it's just all so stupid and unfair so like, God, can you fix this? Please? Um. Amen. (Silence as Max waits for "God's" answer)

**Yasmin:** Um, Max?

**Max:** Yeah?

**Yasmin:** It's Yasmin, actually.

**Max:** What?

**Yasmin:** It's Yasmin. Not, uh, God.

**Max:** Who?

**Yasmin:** We were in Ms. Cook's class together last year.

(Pause)

**Yasmin:** I transferred in January.

(Pause)

Jasmine? Ms. Cook called me Jasmine on my first day and everyone called me by the wrong name for the rest of the year.

**Max:** Ohhhhhh. You're named Yasmin?

**Yasmin:** ... Yeah.

**Max:** Oh. Uh. Oops.

**Yasmin:** Yeah. So, uh. Not God.

**Max:** Ohmygodthisissoembarassing

**Yasmin:** I'm really sorry, I tried to tell you, but I didn't want to interrupt you.

**Max:** Oh my god today is so stupid I am so. stupid.

**Yasmin:** No, no, it's okay, really.

**Max:** Wait. Where are you?

**Yasmin:** Um. The stall.

**Max:** And you've been there this whole time?

**Yasmin:** Yes.

**Max:** Oh.

**Yasmin:** Oh. No. I'm not –

**Max:** Are you okay?

**Yasmin:** Yeah, no, I'm fine. I'm not like. You know.

**Max:** Oh. Okay. Cool.

**Yasmin:** I actually just, um, got my period.

**Max:** Oh.

**Yasmin:** For the first time.

**Max:** Oh. Do you have. Stuff?

**Yasmin:** No. Do you have. Stuff?

**Max:** Yeah, um, do you want a pad?

**Yasmin:** Please.

**Max:** (Max shuffles through her backpack and pulls out a pad in a pink wrapper, that she slides under Yasmin's stall) Here.

**Yasmin:** Thanks.

**Max:** You should keep a bag of supplies on you at all times. My mom got me a little gold makeup bag when I first got my period to put pads and hair ties and stuff in. You should ask your mom for one.

**Yasmin:** Oh. My mom's um –

**Max:** Oh my God, is your Mom dead? I'm so sorry.

**Yasmin:** Oh, no, no she's not. Her and my dad are divorced. She lives in Syracuse now.

**Max:** Where's Syracuse?

**Yasmin:** New York.

**Max:** That's far.

**Yasmin:** Yeah. That's why I moved here last year. My uncle and his family live in town.

**Max:** Oh. Cool.

(Pause)

Is it. Going okay in there?

**Yasmin:** I think so. I just. Place it down?

**Max:** Yeah. Take off all the packaging and put it in the little box on the wall.

**Yasmin:** There's no little box... It looks like it was torn off or something. There's an outline on the wall.

**Max:** High school sucks.

**Yasmin:** Yeah no kidding. ■

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To listen to podcasts or watch videos of University Advancement events, please visit [concordia.ca/alumni/podcasts](http://concordia.ca/alumni/podcasts) and [concordia.ca/alumni/videos](http://concordia.ca/alumni/videos).



## CONCORDIA ALUMNI WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

Concordia Alumni Women and Leadership hosted workshops in Ottawa and Montreal on “The art of negotiation” and “Personal branding for executive presence,” respectively, which drew in more than 100 alumnae. In Ottawa, workshop facilitator **Niem Huynh**, professional and personal life coach, helped guests understand the key elements of a win-win negotiation approach. In Montreal, **Karen O’Mahony**, founder and CEO of Brandlucent Branding Agency, shared tools and insight with guests to help them create their own personal brands. **1**

## STUDENTS AND YOUNG ALUMNI

In May, Alumni Relations’ Student and Young Alumni programming included annual banquets for Concordia’s Garnet Keys **2** and Stingers men’s football team. **3**

We also hosted two Almost Alumni brunches in early June to celebrate the success of and promote connections among students graduating in Concordia’s June convocations. **4**

## ENTREPRENEURIAL EVENING

Our “Entrepreneurial Evening” gave six young alumni entrepreneurs the opportunity to pitch their business or startup ideas to an audience of like-minded alumni. A panel discussion with leading professionals in the field of innovation followed. From left: **Kim Fuller**, BFA 96, president, Concordia University Alumni Association, with panelists **Katherine Macnaughton**, BA 07, chief operating officer and co-founder, Mentorly; **Xavier-Henri Hervé**, BEng 87, DSc 11, co-founder and executive director, District 3 Innovation Center; **Cyrus Gorjipour**, BComm 11, CEO and co-founder, Goalcast; and **Ana Marinescu**, BComm 06, MBA 09, founder, Urbana Marketing, and part-time faculty member, Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship, Concordia. **5**

## ANNIVERSARIES

2019 marked a milestone year for Concordia programs celebrating anniversaries: 10 years for graduate programs in music therapy **6**; 40 years for Concordia’s Science College **7**; and 50 years for the educational technology program. **8**

## HERITAGE SOCIETY COCKTAIL

Members of **Concordia’s Heritage Society** gathered in May for the annual cocktail celebration of planned giving donors, which to date include 215 members of our community. From left: Former Concordia President **Alan Shepard**, **Amanda Kline**, BA 11, reporter, CTV News Montreal; **Silvia Ugolini**, principal director, Planned Giving; **Chelsea Okankwu**, JMSB student in Accountancy; **Guylaine Beaudry**, vice-provost, Digital Strategy, and University Librarian; **Gérard Boismenu**, professor, Department of Political Science, Université de Montréal; **Paul Chesser**, BA 94, GrDip 97. **9**

## ASIAN ALUMNI NETWORK

In collaboration with the Canada China International Film Festival (CCIFF), Concordia alumni gathered for a screening of the 2010 film production *Confucius* to launch Concordia's Asian Alumni Network. **Miao Song**, BCompSc 04, MCompSc 07, PhD 13, and **Serguei Mokhov**, BCompSc 02, MCompSc 05, MEng 07, PhD 13, co-organized the 4th edition of the festival. Guests mingled with director **Mei Hu**, actor **Jinghan Ma**, director and actor **Caiping Du**, and 2008 visiting Concordia professor and actor **Suosen Lyu**, among others. <sup>10</sup>

## PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The Concordia Parents Association greeted more than 130 families from around the world at its annual welcome event. Families of new students learned about university services and registered for campus tours. The day wrapped up with a reception at Grey Nuns garden for

more than 800 guests to meet members of Concordia's administration and enjoy refreshments. Pictured are Faculty of Fine Arts student **Lauren Mendes**, with parents **Lesley** and **Jessel Mendes**. <sup>11</sup>

## DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER LECTURE SERIES

As part of the Henri P. Habib Distinguished Speaker Lecture Series, Concordia hosted a talk with **David Lametti**, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, which was moderated by **Aphrodite Salas**, MA 99, assistant professor in the Department of Journalism. The Henri P. Habib speaker series features major political figures and was created in honour of professor Habib, who founded the Department of Political Science at Loyola College — one of Concordia's founding institutions — in 1961. <sup>12</sup>

## NEWS DISRUPTERS

We hosted a "News disrupters" professional industry network event in Toronto, where a panel of experts talked about what's to come in the quickly-evolving field of journalism. Pictured from left: **Patti Sonntag**, BA 00, director, Concordia Institute for Investigative Journalism; **Jennifer Hollett**, BA 97, host, reporter and producer; **Mark Kelley**, BA 85, co-host of CBC's *The Fifth Estate*; **Aalia Adam**, BA 12, national on-line video journalist, Global News. <sup>13</sup>

## NEW YORK CITY

Alumni in New York City had a private tour of "Leonard Cohen: A Crack in Everything" — the hit contemporary art exhibition inspired by Leonard Cohen's life and work. **John Zepetelli**, BFA 84, head of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (MAC), where the show debuted in 2018, spoke at the event. <sup>14</sup>





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**MBA 50TH ANNIVERSARY**

As part of the John Molson School of Business's MBA 50th anniversary celebrations, Concordia hosted an alumni panel discussion called "Authentic leadership: the importance of leading by example". Leaders in their fields talked about successful engagement and performance in organizations as a result of authentic leaders. Pictured from left: **Anne-Marie Croteau**, BSc 86, dean, John Molson School of Business; **Farah Ahmad**, MBA 07, chief commercial officer, Strategikon Pharma; **Josée Perreault**, senior vice-president, Bombardier Recreational Products; **Ingrid Chadwick**, associate professor, Department of Management; **Simon Foucher**, MBA 16, president, JMSB alumni chapter. **15**

**CANADIAN INVASION?**

Department of Journalism graduate **Michel Boyer**, BA 12, (left, in photo) Ottawa correspondent for CTV News, met with fellow alumnus **Thomas Daigle**, BA 10, London correspondent for CBC News, over the summer in the U.K. **16**

**CODE-E**

CODE-E, a theatrical robot created by PwC to interact with students and spark interest in technology, made its first Canadian appearance at Concordia University. CODE-E moderated a discussion between **Gina Cody**, MEng 81, PhD 89, namesake donor of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, and **Lori-Ann Beausoleil**, a partner and national leader of Forensic Services practice at PwC. Pictured from left to right: **Amir Asif**, dean, Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science; **Anne-Marie Croteau**, dean, John Molson School of Business; CODE-E; **Lori-Ann Beausoleil** and **Gina Cody**. **17**



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## Concordia honours 10 outstanding individuals with honorary degrees



From June 10 to 12, 6,000 Concordians made the transition from student to graduate, joining our network of more than 220,000 alumni around the world. During our spring convocations at Place des Arts' Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, we welcomed 10 distinguished individuals who have made their mark in a range of fields in Canada and the world.

### SPECIAL CEREMONY, JUNE 9

**Kent Nagano**, LLD 19, has been the music director of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM) since 2006 and is in his last season with the orchestra. Under his leadership, the OSM has conceived, built and opened the new Maison symphonique de Montréal, built and inaugurated the Pierre Béique organ, and seen a revival of critically acclaimed recordings and touring activities. Among Maestro Nagano's many honours is the Governor General of Canada's Meritorious Service Medal (Civil Division), which he received in 2018.

### FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE, JUNE 10

**Aimee Mullins**, LLD 19, is the first double amputee in history to compete in Division 1 NCAA track and field, and went on to compete for Team USA in the 1996 Paralympic Games. She has set world records in the 100 metres, 200 metres and long jump events. In 2012, Mullins was named Chef de Mission for the United States at the Paralympic Games in London, and appointed by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to the Council to Empower Women and Girls Through Sports. In 2018, she became one of the youngest inductees into the U.S. National Women's Hall of Fame.

**Caroline Ouellette**, LLD 19, one of the most accomplished women's hockey players, won four consecutive Olympic gold medals, 12 International Ice Hockey Federation Women's World Championship medals and

12 Four Nations Cup medals for Team Canada. She was team captain at the 2014 Sochi Olympic Winter Games. Ouellette is the founder of Girls Hockey Celebration, a tournament that brings young women together to play and meet role models from Canada's Olympic team. She has also been an athlete ambassador with Right To Play since 2004, and an ambassador and active fundraiser for the Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation. She joined the coaching staff of the Concordia Stingers women's hockey team in 2012.

**Sylvia Schmelkes**, LLD 19, is a pioneering researcher and advocate for reform in Mexico's education system and one of Latin America's leading proponents of intercultural education. She is currently Academic Vice-President of the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. Her leadership has contributed to the founding of nine intercultural universities that aim to support the

linguistic and cultural autonomy of Mexico's diverse Indigenous populations. Among other honours, in 2008 Schmelkes received the Comenius Medal from UNESCO for her career as a researcher.

**Kamaljit Bawa**, DSc 19, is a global leader in biodiversity conservation, climate change and sustainability sciences. Currently Distinguished Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts Boston, Bawa has been a Bullard Fellow at Harvard University and a Guggenheim Fellow. Beyond his groundbreaking research, Bawa has promoted the engagement of civil society in conservation efforts by founding the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, consistently ranked among the top 20 think tanks in the world. Among his many honours, his most recent include the Linnean Medal in Botany and the Jose Cuatrecasas Medal for Excellence in Tropical Botany.



**JOHN MOLSON  
SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS, JUNE 11**

**Peter Simons**, LLD 19, is President and CEO of La Maison Simons. Founded in 1840, the Quebec-based retailer is Canada's oldest privately owned family business. His leadership helped the chain expand from Quebec City to 15 stores across Canada. Simons is a vocal advocate for fair fiscal and social practices. He is regularly called upon to share his expertise on the Canadian retail landscape and how local merchants can compete in today's global market. In 2008, Simons became a Chevalier of the National Order of Quebec, and in 2018 was named a Member of the Order of Canada.

**Louis Vachon**, LLD 19, has three decades of experience in the banking sector, largely spent rising through the ranks at the National Bank of Canada. As President and CEO since 2007, he has

helped make it Canada's sixth-largest commercial bank. Vachon has served on many corporate boards, including Molson Coors and Groupe CH Inc. For his professional and community work, Vachon received the 2016 Global Citizens Award from the United Nations Association in Canada. He was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada that same year.

**GINA CODY SCHOOL  
OF ENGINEERING  
AND COMPUTER  
SCIENCE, JUNE 12**

**Éric Martel**, DSc 19, has been President and CEO of Hydro-Québec since 2015. He ensures the company continues to meet the expectations of its customers and shareholders while maximizing its contribution to the global energy transition. Martel chairs the World Economic Forum's Electricity Industry community and is among the stewards leading the organization's initiative to shape the future of energy.

He also sits on the board of the Global Sustainable Energy Partnership. He was appointed honorary president of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec's Soirée de l'excellence en génie 2019. After 20 years of involvement with Centraide of Greater Montreal, Martel will co-chair its 2019 campaign.

**Natalie Panek**, DSc 19, is a senior engineer in Mission Systems at MDA, a Maxar company. She works on Canadian space robotics and space exploration programs, including the ESA's ExoMars 2020 rover. Panek completed an internship at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and attended a Space Studies Program at NASA's Ames Research Center. Panek works to change the ratio of women in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. Among her many awards and accolades, Panek was named to the 2015 *Forbes* 30 under 30 list.

**FACULTY OF  
FINE ARTS, JUNE 12**

**Gilles Mihalcean**, DFA 19, is a major figure in Quebec contemporary art. A self-taught sculptor, he has exhibited his work internationally since the mid-1970s while raising the reputation of Quebec artists abroad. Mihalcean has been an active figure in the Montreal art scene through colloquia, public speaking and mentoring the next generation of artists, including students in Concordia's Studio Art Program. Among his honours are the Prix Paul-Émile Borduas in 2011 and the CALQ Bourse de carrière Jean-Paul Riopelle. ■

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

**69 Michael Harris, BA,** MA 78, was awarded a Doctor of Letters, honoris causa, by McGill University for his lifetime commitment to Canada's literary scene.

**72 Terrance S. Carter,** ATTD, the Managing Partner of Carters, an Ontario law firm, was named to the Government of Canada's Advisory Committee on the Charitable Sector.

**76 Maureen Berry,** BA (theol. stud.), was named VP, Corporate Human Resources at Aphria, Inc., a cannabis company headquartered in Leamington, ON.

**Leslie Weir, BA (hist.),** will oversee the world's fourth-biggest library as the new Librarian and Archivist of Canada.

**80 Mohamed Ally, MA** (ed. tech.), was appointed Chair by the Commonwealth of Learning, an intergovernmental organization created in 1987 by Commonwealth Heads of Government, with the purpose of sharing open learning and distance-education knowledge, resources, and technologies.

**81 Michael McAllister,** BEng, was named President of Encana, a Calgary-based oil and natural gas company.

**82 Paul Costanzo, BComm** (acct.), GrDipl (acct.) 83, was appointed CEO at Sonaca Montreal, a subsidiary of the Belgian group Sonaca, a world leader in the manufacture of large aluminum wing aero structures for commercial and business aviation.



LESLIE WEIR

**83 Michael Borys,** BComm (acct.), is the new Chief Financial Officer at AutoCanada Inc.

**Andrea C. Martin,** BComm (quant. meth.), was appointed CEO of PRS for Music, a U.K. company that represents the rights of songwriters, composers and music publishers.

**Peter Pamel, BComm (fn.),** was appointed to serve as Judge of the Federal Court and Judge ex officio of the Federal Court of Appeal by the Department of Justice of the Government of Canada.

**84 Francis Bradley,** BA (poli. sci.), is the new President and CEO of the Canadian Electricity Association.

**85 Eric Schumacher,** BComm, MBA 89, was appointed Group Treasurer at Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO), an investment holding company in the Middle East and North Africa region.

**86 Elisabeth Laett,** BComm (mktg.), VP, Business Development at

Exagens, was named one of Canada's Top 50 Women in financial technology for 2019 by Toronto's Digital Finance Institute.

**Tamás Zsolnay, BA (econ.)** is the new President and CEO of the University Hospitals Kingston Foundation, the fundraising arm for Kingston Health Sciences Centre and Providence Care, a teaching hospital affiliated with Queen's University.

**87 Manon Bernard, BA** (urb. stud.), was named Director General for the city of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield.

**88 Dino Rambidis, BComm** (acct.), joined the senior management of Stornoway Diamond Corporation, a diamond exploration and production company based in Longueuil, QC., as Chief Financial Officer.

**Jean-Charles Rocha,** BA (comm. studies), was hired by CBC/Radio-Canada as Sponsorship and Media Creativity Specialist/Advisor for the broadcaster's 2020 Olympics coverage.

**89 Deirdre Chisholm,** MFA, is the new executive director at the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba in Brandon.

**Demetra Kafantaris,** BComm, MBA 02, assumed the role of Executive Director, Administration and Operations, at McGill University's Faculty of Medicine.

**92 Claude Guertin,** PhD (pure sci.), was named Director of the Armand-Frappier Santé Biotechnologie Research Centre. The Laval-based Centre contributes to Quebec research efforts, graduate and postgraduate training, and technology transfer in

the fields of human, animal, and environmental health.

**93 Rina Carlini, BSc** (chem.), was named VP, Research & Innovation, at Rapid Dose Therapeutics Corp., a Burlington, ON., life sciences company.

**Per Nyberg, BCompSc** (info. sys.), was named Chief Commercial Officer at Stradigi AI, a Montreal company engaged in artificial-intelligence solutions.

**94 Stéphane Poirier,** BComm (intl. bus.), will oversee Quebec City's Jean Lesage International Airport as President and CEO.

**95 Nancy Tavares,** BA (poli. sci.), was appointed Sales Manager at Toronto's Brompton Funds.

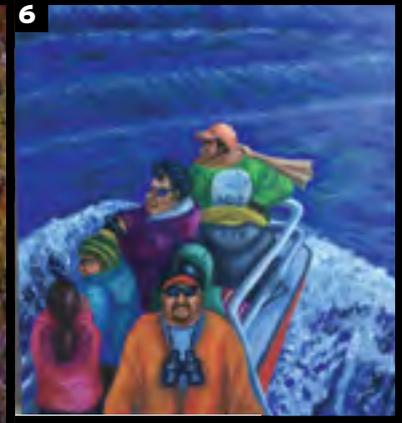
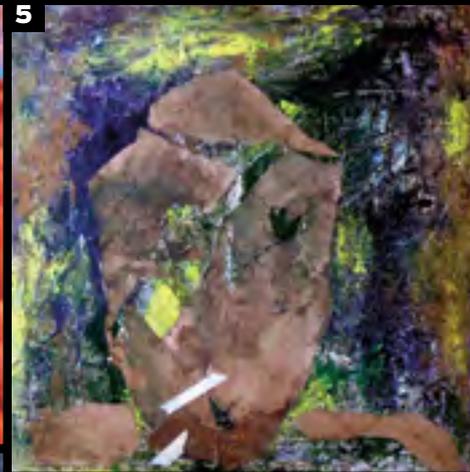
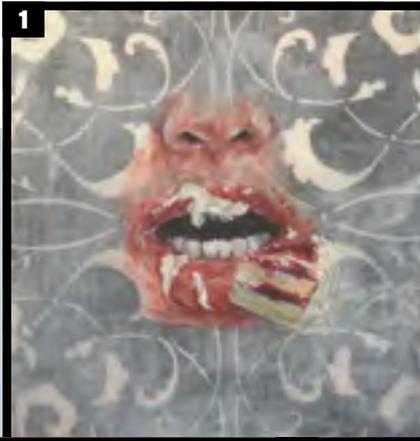
**Bill Voyatzis, BA (anthro.),** joined Montreal law firm Dunton Rainville.

**96 James Harbilas,** BComm (acct.), GrDipl (acct.) 98, assumed the dual role of Executive Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer at AltaGas Ltd., an energy infrastructure company based in Calgary.

**Mario Rigante, BComm** (fn.), is the new Regional President (Quebec), Private Banking, at BMO.

**Jeroen van de Ven, BSc** (chem.), is the new Chief Operating Officer at Antelliq, an operating unit within MSD Animal Health, a division of New Jersey's Merck & Co, Inc.

**97 Pamela Edmonds,** BFA (art hist. and stud. art), MA (art hist.) 07, was appointed senior curator of the McMaster Museum of Art.



**1 Marie-Ange Hoda Ackad**, BComm 81, BFA 01, placed third at the International Symposium for Experimental Art 2019 Members Only Online Exhibition. 1) *Eating Cake*

**2 Suzanne Hatt**, BFA 00, participated in La Virée des ateliers, an open-studio event at three locations on Montreal's Parthenais St., from May 2 to 5, 2019. 2) *Starting to Start Again*

**3 G. Scott MacLeod**, BFA 03, MA 13, presented "Resilience," a talk and exhibition of works made by and for people who have been touched by cancer. The January 24, 2019 event took place at the Cedars Cancer Centre in Montreal. [macleod9.com](http://macleod9.com) 3) *Jennifer*

**4 Patricia Belmar**, BA 14, participated in the 125th Annual Juried Art Show of the Women's Art Society of Montreal. Themed "Invigoration," it was held at Montreal's Le Livart Gallery from April 24 to 28, 2019. 4) *Emerging from the Dunes*

**5 Rochelle Mayer**, BComm 83, BFA (studio art) 10, exhibited in the Salon du Printemps de l'Association des Artistes de LaSalle, at Galerie Les Trois C in LaSalle, Quebec, from April 25 to May 11, 2019. 5) *Dans les bois*

**6 Josette Wecsu**, BA 03, BFA 18, presented an exhibition of paintings at the Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library in Montreal from March 21 to April 20, 2019. 6) *Whale watching in Newfoundland*

**7 Judith Klugerman**, BFA 69, MFA 71, was selected by the Stewart Hall Art Gallery in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, to present her solo exhibition, *Gates*, from September 1 to October 13, 2019. 7) *Gates*

**8 Robin Field**, MA (art ed.) 72, will exhibit a survey of explorations made over four decades as an artist and visual arts professor in *Informed*, at the View Gallery at Vancouver Island University's Nanaimo campus from September 13 to November 1, 2019. 8) *Socialization*

**9 Hélène Béland Robert**, BFA 78, GrDip 79, exhibited works this past summer at both the Arbor Gallery in Vankleek Hill, Ontario and the gallery of the Moulin La Lorraine at Lac Etchemin, Quebec. 9) *Friendship in Shape and Colour*

Concordia's Advancement Communications received gold and silver awards at the 2019 CCAE Prix D'Excellence Awards. The Gold Prix D'Excellence for Best Printed Brochure, Newsletter or Flyer was won in recognition of the 2018 issue of Momentum, Concordia's annual donor and student newsletter. The Silver Prix d'Excellence in the category of Best Community Outreach Initiative was recognized for campus volunteerism, student-giving and sustainability at the 2018 Concordia EPIC Used Book Fair.

**ORDER OF CANADA**

Companion: **Alanis Obomsawin**, 1 LLD 93, singer, filmmaker and activist

Officers: **Graham Fraser**, LLD 12, former Commissioner of Official Languages, journalist, writer; **James A. O'Reilly**, BA 60, jurist for indigenous rights

Member: **Brenda Singer**, BA 67, mental health advocate and founder, Progress Place.

**María José Giménez**, BA 08, was appointed as Poet Laureate for Easthampton, Mass. After studying French at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and Spanish studies at Concordia, Giménez started a career in translation which led to publishing poetry and winning a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship.

**Greg Sutton**, 2 head coach for Stingers men's soccer, was inducted into the Montreal Impact's Wall of Fame during half time at a home game against Minnesota United FC on July 6. Sutton enjoyed a



14-year professional career and played with the Impact between 2001-2006 in the North American second division and later in 2011-12.

**Kathryn Walter**, MFA 93, artist and designer, Concordia University news editor, and founder of FELT Studio, is to receive the 2019 Allied Arts Medal from the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada (RAIC) in October 2019 for her wall installation work in Canada and the United States.

**Gina Cody**, MEng 81, PhD 89, and **Meyya Meyyappan**, DSc 18, were inducted into the Canadian Academy of Engineering. Cody was honoured for her professional accomplishments as an engineer and business leader, as well as her work supporting gender equality, diversity and inclusion, and commitment to philanthropy. Meyyappan was honoured as a pioneer in nanotechnology research. He is the chief scientist for Exploration Technology at NASA's Ames Research Center.

**Felix Lajeunesse**, BFA 03, Felix & Paul Studios, received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Original Interactive Program for their virtual reality



experience, *Traveling While Black*, making this the studio's fifth Emmy nomination.

**Tony Loffreda**, BComm 85, was appointed to the Senate of Canada representing the province of Quebec. A member of Concordia's Board of Governors, Loffreda is a retired certified public accountant, having worked the last 15 years at Royal Bank of Canada.

**Josh Schwebel**, BFA 06, and **Larissa Fassler**, BFA 99, are both shortlisted for the Berlin Art Prize 2019. Selected artists, nine out of 750 applicants, produce a solo exhibition and are then evaluated by a jury, which will choose three final prize winners.

**Rene Paredes**, BA 12, former Stinger, kicked 5 field goals – including the game-winner – for the Calgary Stampeders on July 26, with his grandmother from Peru watching him for the first time.

**Maria Xenos**, BComm 14, was named a 2019 fellow of Ford's Thirty Under 30, a philanthropic leadership course for Ford Motor Company employees working to address challenging social issues.

**Anne-Marie Giroux**, BFA 99, is a 2019-20 Salt Spring National Art Prize Finalist. Giroux has exhibited her work both publically and privately in Canada and the US.

**Carol McQueen**, BA 95, was named Ambassador to Burkina Faso on Aug. 28, 2019.

**L'ORDRE NATIONAL DU QUÉBEC**

Grand Officer: **Pierre Lassonde**, LLD 16.  
 Officer: **Morton Minc**, BA 67, jurist-in-residence at Concordia and former chief justice of the Municipal Court of Montreal.  
 Chevalière: **Mair Verthuy**, distinguished professor emerita, co-founder of Concordia's Simone de Beauvoir Institute and its first principal.

**Nadia Myre**, MFA 02, indigenous artist, and assistant professor in the Faculty of Fine Arts, was named Compagne de l'Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec..

**Sofia Misenheimer**, GrDip 15, received the Emerging Excellence Award from the National Media Awards Foundation for her work on *Art/iculation*, a bi-annual and bilingual arts and culture magazine she founded.

**Mark Galardo**, MBA 17, vice-president, Network Planning at Air Canada, was named one of Canada's Top 40 Under for 2019.

**Nicolas Grenier**, BFA 04, is one of five shortlist finalists of the 2019 Sobey Art Award. An exhibition of the finalists' works by will be presented at the Art Gallery of Alberta from Oct. 5, 2019 to Jan. 5, 2020.

**Johanna Mercier**, MBA, joined Gilead Sciences, Inc., a research-based biopharmaceutical company headquartered in California, as Chief Commercial Officer.

**Stephan Morency**, BComm (fin.), is the new Chief Investment Officer at Montreal's Fondation CSN.

**Deborah Radcliffe-Branch**, BA (psych.), was appointed Manager of Child and Family Services at Collective Community Services Montreal.

**98 Isa Maseeh**, BComm (fin.), is the new Chief Risk Officer at the National Bank of Bahrain.

**Mahesh Shah**, BComm (m.i.s.), was named EVP, Chief Product and Technology Officer at CDK Global, Inc., a retail automotive technology company.

**99 Sam Abdelmalek**, MBA, was named Vice President and Group President – Performance Engineered Products at Carpenter Technology Corporation, a Philadelphia producer and distributor of high-performance specialty alloy-based materials.

**Martin Landry**, BComm (acct.), became Chief of Corporate Development & Strategy at Neptune Wellness Solutions, Inc., a cannabis company located in Laval.

**00 Jean-François Dasylya-Larue**, BA (comm. studies), was made Creative Director at ad agency FCB Montréal.

**Ben Vendittelli**, BComm (fin.), MBA (inv. mgt.), assumed the role of Executive Vice President, Chief Investment Officer, at Groupe Mach, Inc., a Montreal real estate development and management company.

**01 Frederick Corey**, BA (poli. sci.), was appointed Vice-President, Sales, Canada, at global supply-chain management and logistics firm Delmar International, Inc.

**Leah Moss**, MA (edu. studies), was named Senior Advisor to the Vice-Principal (Health and Medical Affairs) and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at McGill University.

**02 Philip Côté**, BComm (fin.), was named Director, Client Consulting at bfinance Canada.

**03 Amin Mohammed Alhassan**, PhD (comm.), is the new Director-General for the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation.

**Michael Gentile**, BComm (fin.), was named CFA Strategic Advisor at Radisson Mining Resources Inc.

**Gerard Gomez**, BA (hum. rel.), was named Head Coach of the Lac St. Louis Lions of the Quebec Midget AAA Hockey League.

**04 David Charland**, BSc (act. math.), was promoted to the position of Director, Institutional Business Development and Client Relationships at Sun Life Global Investments.

**Jon Goyens**, BA (leis. sci.), was named Head Coach of the Baie-Comeau Drakkar of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

**Carlos Sanchez**, BFA (photog.), and **Jason Sanchez**, (ATTD), have taken their talents as filmmakers and photographers to Montreal's Cinélande creative agency.

**05 Éric Adechi**, BA (soc.), was named VP and Group Account Director at the Cundari

Group, an advertising agency based in Montreal and Toronto.

**Harold Fortin**, BComm (mktg.), is now on board as Strategist, Corporate Communications and Public Relations, at Montreal's Public Stratégies et Conseils.

**Lucas Koury**, BSc (act. math., fin.), was named Chief Actuary at Zurich Canada.

**Devon MacDougall**, BEng (soft. eng.), MBA 17, was appointed Director of Technology at Posera, Ltd., a Montreal provider of hospitality software and payment solutions.

**Maggy Pitre Oplinger**, GrDipl (admin.), is the new General Director and CEO of the Florentine Opera Company in Milwaukee, WI.

**08 Andrea Judge**, BEng, was made Project Manager at Fuss & O'Neill, a civil and environmental engineering consulting firm based in New England.

**Majid Razmara**, MCompSc, CTO and Co-Founder at MetaOptima Technology, Inc., was a British Columbia Chief Technology Officer award winner, thanks to his efforts to develop software to help medical professionals track and detect skin cancer.

**Erika Rosenbaum**, BA, Montreal actress, was featured in *Untouchable*, a documentary about the alleged crimes of disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein.

**09 Marya Repac**, MA (Engl.), joined Montreal law firm Cain Lamarre.

**12 Eunice Bélidor**, BFA, is the new director of Concordia's FOFA Gallery, which showcases the current artistic and research practices of the university's Faculty of Fine Arts.

**13 Ian Gartner**, BA (soc.), MA (soc.) 15, joined Ad Hoc, a Montreal-based marketing research firm, as a researcher.

**15 Vassif Aliev**, BA (poli. sci.), ran as the candidate for the New Democratic Party in the federal electoral district of Vimy, QC.

**17 Fares Alkassmy**, BComm (fin.), was made an associate at Russell Investments (Montreal).

**Sébastien Bernier**, BComm (fin.) was named Regional Consultant at Russell Investments (Montreal).

**Camille Georgeson-Usher**, MA (art hist.), was made interim Transitional Executive Director at the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective.

**Charles-Alexandre Vennat**, MBA, was named Chief Corporate Officer at 48North Cannabis Corp., a vertically integrated cannabis company based in Ontario.

**Astrid Rutten**, BComm (mktg.), joined Bloom Search Marketing's Montreal office as an analyst.

**Justin Sonea**, BSc (exer. sci.), was hired as the athletic therapist for the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

**18 Gary Berdowski**, MBA, a CFA candidate, was appointed to the position of analyst at Cycle Capital Management.

**19 Fanny Chouteau-Lapierre**, BComm (mgmt.), was named Coordinator, Communications and Marketing, at Exponentiel Conseil, a Montreal communications and public relations agency.



Claudia Dubois, forward,  
women's hockey

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James Tyrrell  
receiver, football



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## 'Teaching was for him a kind of ministry'

Concordia remembers professor's kindness, generosity and 'wicked sense of humour'

TAYLOR TOWER

Earlier this year, the Concordia mourned the loss of Donald L. Boisvert (BA 75, MA 79), retired affiliate associate professor in the Department of Religions and Cultures, who died June 19.

Boisvert also served in numerous administrative positions, including as speaker of the Senate from 2008 to 2012, and dean of students from 1996 to 2003, during which time he endowed the Donald L. Boisvert Scholarship for Gay and Lesbian Studies.

Outside the university, he was co-chair of the Gay Men's Issues in Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion and served as a guide and board member of the Montreal Holocaust Museum.

Boisvert's community and student involvement began as an undergraduate at Loyola College, one of Concordia's founding institutions. Jane Hackett, a friend and colleague, met Boisvert during this time. "Donald was an activist and very involved in student life," she says. "He wanted the best for our students."

Hackett saw this devotion continue when she worked as his assistant during his time as dean of students. "He was so clever, and had a wicked sense of humour. He taught me so much by allowing me to be part of the process and feel part



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

of a team. He had respect for people and their opinions."

In his research, Boisvert examined the intersection of religion, gender and sexuality.

"Donald made a huge impact through his pioneering and courageous scholarship on sexuality, masculinity, gender and religion," says Leslie Orr, professor of religions and cultures.

Daniel-Hughes met Boisvert when she joined the faculty in 2007, and says he taught her how to have critical conversations around sexuality and religion with her students.

"He never reduced Christianity or other religious traditions to homophobic discourse or repressive sexuality," she says. "Instead, he invited students and readers to question the problematic ways in which religious communities have and continue to treat sexuality and gender with real implications for queer people and vulnerable others."

Boisvert earned his PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Ottawa.

He joined the Department of Religions and Cultures in 2003 as a senior lecturer, teaching a variety of courses and supervising and mentoring students. In 2011, he received tenure and served as chair of the department from 2014 to 2015.

Cimminnee Holt (BA 08, MA 12), a student under Boisvert's supervision during her undergraduate honours, master's and PhD programs, says his encouragement to take risks and trust one's ideas had a positive effect that's hard to quantify.

"He is an ordained queer theologian who looked at me and my unconventional research and said, 'You think differently and academia needs you,'" Holt says. "Never underestimate a teacher who sees a misfit like me and says, 'Your work has value. You belong here.'"

Daniel-Hughes says this respect for students made Boisvert one of the most beloved faculty in the department.

"Here he was, a Christianity professor who left behind his earlier vocation of studying for the Catholic priesthood, who managed to hold office hours with the air of a confessional," she says.

"As an openly gay man, Donald created a queer-friendly and feminist space that allowed students, particularly queer students, to share their stories and feel seen, heard and valued."

Boisvert retired from Concordia in 2016 to pursue his lifelong dream of taking up the priesthood in the Anglican Communion. ■

**If you want to honour Donald Boisvert's memory by making a contribution to the Donald L. Boisvert Scholarship for Gay and Lesbian Studies, you can do so:**

Online at [engage.concordia.ca/donate](https://engage.concordia.ca/donate)

By telephone at 514-848-2424, ext. 3884

By sending a cheque payable to Concordia University to:

Concordia University  
1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W.,  
FB-520, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8

When making your contributions, please specify that you would like to direct your gift to the Donald L. Boisvert Scholarship for Gay and Lesbian Studies. Online, you can do so by choosing "Other" from the drop-down list of designation options or by indicating that it's a tribute gift in honour of Donald Boisvert.

**Jean Vanier**, recipient of the 1993 Loyola Medal, Concordia's highest honour, dedicated his life to improving conditions for people on the margins. He founded L'Arche, a physical and spiritual haven for the disabled. There are now 154 L'Arche communities in 38 countries, helping 1,750 people. He was 90 when he died on May 7, 2019.



**Douglas Barclay Gibson**, BComm 73, July 4, 2019. He was 67.

**Dorothy (Gottheil) Riback**, BA 53, July 7, 2019, Montreal. She was 91.

**Robert E. ("Ted") Alexander**, BSc 78, April 2, 2017, Orangeville, Ont. He was 63.

**Tamara Valeri Dixon**, BA 83, May 27, 2019. She was 61.

**Nora Bernier**, BA 73, November 24, 2018, Pointe-Claire, Que. She was 96.

**Rachel (Brodeur) Ross**, Cert 74, May 13, 2019. She was 83.

**Richard G. MacDonald**, BSc 53, BA 54, August 31, 2015. He was 85.

**Alex J. Zaichuk**, BSc 86, BA 90, November 2018. He was 57.

**Ray Smith**, MA 85, June 20, 2019, Mabou, N.S. He was 77.

**Bohdan ("Bo," "Bobby") Harmazy**, BA 77, May 7, 2019. He was 66.

**Gordon V. Kelly**, BComm 65, BA 77, May 19, 2019, Langley, B.C. He was 77.

**Robert Stephen ("Steve") Petitpas**, BA 89, June 9, 2019, Montreal. He was 56.

**Constantine ("Dino") Athanasoulis**, BEng 81, MEng 84, June 23, 2019. He was 61.

**Savithri (Shanker) De Tourreil**, PhD 96, June 18, 2019, Montreal. She was 84.

**Scott J. Harper**, BA 93, July 15, 2019. He was 51.

**Paul D. Kepron**, BA 81, GrDip 84, MA 93, May 17, 2019, Montreal. He was 62.

**Joyce (Herman) Nadler**, BFA 78, June 21, 2019. She was 79.

**Heather J. Riddell**, BA 74, June 7, 2019. She was 72.

**David L. McCallum**, BA 76, July 11, 2017, Ottawa, Ont.

**G rard P. Desbois**, MEng 70, December 6, 2018, Sherbrooke, Que.

**Terrence T. Conway**, BSc 62, MSc 63, May 9, 2019, Bloomington, Minn. He was 77.

**Lois Mary Read**, BA 76, May 7, 2019. She was 90.

**Maureen Foran**, Cert 01, BA 04, April 11, 2019, Montreal. She was 57.

**Mitchell Shell**, BComm 82, May 9, 2019.

**Bert J. Rabinovitch**, BSc 65, May 19, 2019.

**Barry I. Shernofsky**, BComm 75, May 19, 2019.

**Anthony Boyce**, Cert 95, May 12, 2019. He was 53.

**Simon Alph e Pothier**, BFA 97, May 17, 2019, Ch teauaguay, Que. He was 86.

**Christine H. (Schmidt) Crosbie**, BA 90, May 19, 2019. She was 53.

**Alexander Wakarchuk**, MA 73, May 25, 2019, Delta, B.C. He was 93.

**Jacqueline L. (Stanton) Marriott**, BA 84, MA 87, May 5, 2019, Ottawa, Ont. She was 85.

**Gary F. Gagnon**, BComm 55, May 24, 2019.

**Maxine (Strean) Sigman**, MA 79, PhD 82, May 25, 2019. She was 80.

**Anne (Gurevitch) Bellman**, BA 76, May 22, 2019. She was 84.

**Thomas D. Reubens**, MA 13, May 25, 2019, Seneca Falls, N.Y. He was 29.

**Margaret ("Peg") Wooley**, BA 53, May 21, 2019, Kirkland, Que. She was 91.

**Anne C. Bichay**, BA 84, MA 92, May 31, 2019. She was 92.

**Raphael (Ray) Fleming**, BComm 56, June 1, 2019.

**Irene (Brott) Landau**, BA 92, June 2, 2019, Montreal. She was 76.

**Th r se (Guerriero) Angeloro**, BA 87, Cert 89, May 28, 2019, Montreal. She was 98.



**Vic Vogel**, LLD 10, premiere musician, held a pivotal role in establishing Montreal as a world jazz capital. Loyal to the Montreal and Quebec music scenes, he performed at 35 editions of the Montreal Jazz Festival. Vogel also helped musicians in developing countries gain access to instruments to play their best. He died on September 16, 2019, at age 84.

**Thomas Edmond ("Ed") Maloney**, BA 68, June 4, 2019, Kingston, Ont. He was 74.

**Andre Gerolymatos**, BA 78, May 30, 2019. He was 67.

**Lawrence L. Sofonio**, BSc 61, May 26, 2019, Garden Grove, Calif. He was 84.

**Lorne B. Baker**, BA 54, February 1, 2009. He was 88.

**Thomas H. Steele**, BA 69, June 4, 2019, Montreal. He was 79.

**James S.R. Matheson**, BEng 72, June 2, 2019. He was 72.

**Mortimer Finkelstein**, BComm 47, July 17, 2019, Montreal.

**Baila Yehudis Lazarus**, GrDip 90, May 31, 2019. She was 57.

**Jack E. Vineberg**, BComm 51, July 20, 2019. He was 93.

**Wayne G. Statham**, BComm 92, July 3, 2019. He was 62.

**Pieter Christian de Jager**, BEng 79, December 2018. He was 89.

**Sean S. Ryan**, MA 13, July 19, 2019. He was 34.

**Jacqueline (Hayami) Stevens**, BA 60, July 19, 2019, Montreal.

**Stanton W. L. Blennerhassett**, BA 56, July 26, 2019. He was 84.

**R. Michael Warren**, BComm 58, April 29, 2019, Owen Sound, Ont. He was 82.

**Carol Lesley Hoffmann**, BA 76, August 2, 2019. She was 84.

**Chandra Dabholkar Gowrisankaran**, MCompSc 89, August 2, 2019. She was 80.

**Anne Maria Fahey**, BA 76, July 26, 2019, Pointe-Claire, Que.

**Gerald Daoussis**, Attd 45, July 23, 2019. He was 93.

**Richard Donovan**, GrDip 96, August 3, 2019. He was 54.

**Allan Lennox**, BA 61, May 3, 2019. He was 83.

**Carmel M. Kilkenny**, BA 86, GrDip 88, August 13, 2019, Montreal. She was 62.

**Loretta (Rabinovitch) Anisef**, BA 84, August 19, 2019. She was 86.

**Emil Zizek**, BA 92, August 16, 2019. He was 52.

**Dalibor ("Dale") Kosacky**, BComm 57, August 26, 2019. He was 96.

**Willard (Millard) E. Beane**, BA 65, August 29, 2019.

**Cornelis (Kees) Klerks**, BComm 69, August 26, 2019, Montreal. He was 80.

**Richard W. Pink**, BA 70, August 21, 2019, Montreal.

**Vaughan E. McVey**, Attd 54, August 24, 2019.

**Michael J. Ferrie**, BComm 61, August 20, 2019, B.C. He was 79.

**Linda Kotovich**, BA 71, MTM 76, GrDip 80, August 27, 2019, Verdun, Que. She was 87.

**Denise M. Washington**, BA 92, August 18, 2019. She was 56.

**Ira Goldstein**, BEng 86, September 13, 2019. He was 56.

**Miroslav Menard**, BFA 92, February 9, 2019, at age 57, in Montreal

**Meeme L. Sultson**, BSc 72, July 7, 2019, in Montreal. He was 77.

**Joan F. Power**, BSc 82, PhD 87, September 16, 2019, in Kirkland, Que. She was 61.

**William J. McQuillan**, Cert 98, September 19, 2019, in Laval. He was 67.

**Peter A. Crooks**, BSc 70, August 19, 2019, at the age of 83, in Longueuil, Que.

**Mark Handelman**, BComm 68, September 25, 2019, in Montreal.

**Gerhart Von Kap-herr**, PhD 91, on August 3, 2019, in Cowansville, Que. He was 93.

**Serge Ivanov**, BA 90, July 9, 2019, Pointe-Claire, Que. He was 54. ■

## Redefining home, resilience and spirit

JULIA SCANDELLA, BA 15

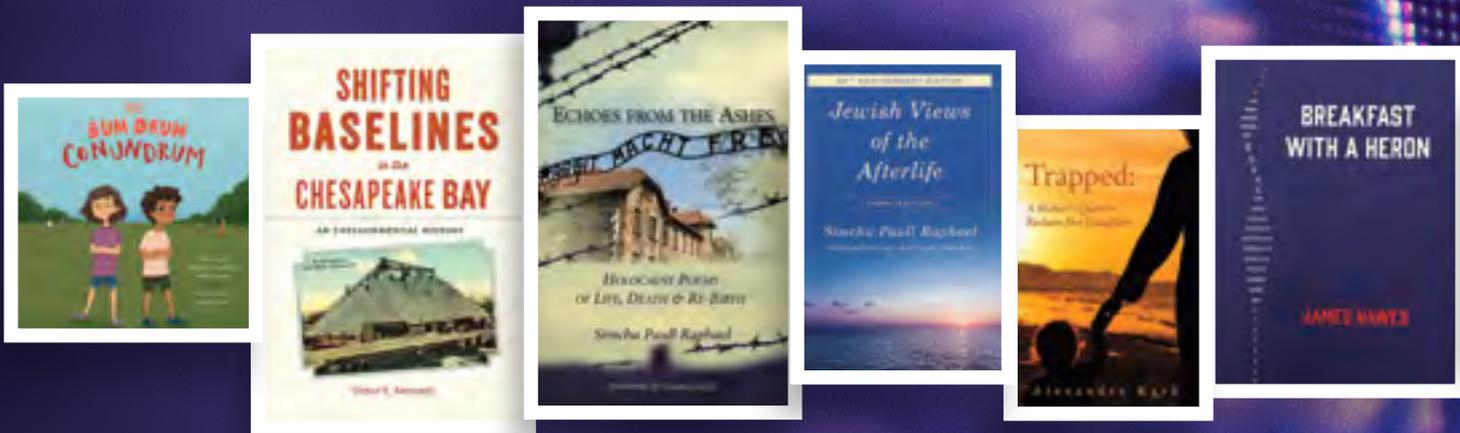
Recent alumna **Melanie Proulx**, BA 16, MA 19, and current graduate student **Ashley Lanni** have collectively published a children’s picture book about consent. ***The Bum Drum Conundrum*** (Tiny Tree, \$11.50) tells the story of Malina, a young girl who

***Baselines in the Chesapeake Bay*** (Johns Hopkins University Press, \$59.95), **Victor S. Kennedy**, BSc 62, examines the problem of shifting baselines for one of the most productive aquatic resources in the world: the Chesapeake Bay.

Beginning with the colonial period and continuing through the 20th century,

vision of the renewal of the Jewish spirit. The book is a collection of poetry and photographs from the March of the Living, an annual educational program that brings high-school students from around the world to Poland, to learn about Holocaust history by exploring concentration camps, ghettos and the killing fields of the Holocaust.

**Alexandra Karb**, BSc 71, MSc 80, shares her 20-year struggle to protect her children from the tyranny in their family. In her memoir, ***Trapped: A Mother’s Quest to Reclaim Her Daughters*** (Guernica Editions, \$25), Karb brings the reader into her traumatic past, recalling the kidnapping of her children by her husband.



is pressured into playing a game involving touch that makes her uncomfortable. From this experience, Malina learns to speak up and say No, while her friends learn the importance of always asking before touching someone — even if it’s just for play.

The concept of “shifting baselines” — changes in historical reference points used in environmental assessments — illuminates a foundational challenge when evaluating the health of ecosystems and seeking to restore degraded wildlife populations. In ***Shifting***

Kennedy gathers an unparalleled collection of scientific resources and eyewitness reports by colonists, fishers, managers, scientists and newspaper reporters to create a comprehensive examination of the Chesapeake’s environmental history — so that we can begin to understand what has changed since, and why.

**Simcha Paul Raphael**, MA 75, has published two new books. ***Echoes from the Ashes: Holocaust Poems of Life, Death and Re-Birth*** (Albion-Andalus Books, \$18) depicts not only the ravages of the Holocaust, but a profound

The 25th-anniversary third edition of ***Jewish Views of the Afterlife*** (Rowman and Littlefield, \$45 paperback; \$105 hardcover) presents new material on little-known Jewish mystical teachings on reincarnation, and more. Originally published in 1994, the book is a classic study of ideas of afterlife and post-mortem survival in Jewish tradition and mysticism. Both historical and contemporary, it makes an important Jewish contribution to the growing contemporary psychology of death and dying. [www.daatinstitute.net](http://www.daatinstitute.net)

He leaves them in his Middle Eastern village, where she moves to live so that she can — at great risk — smuggle her children out of the country. Her memoir spans Canada, Germany, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, while recording the peculiar, often disturbing and always fascinating cultures she encounters.

**James Hawes**, BA 94, recently published his first full-length book of poetry. ***Breakfast with a Heron*** (Mansfield Press, \$17) explores themes as diverse as nature, travel, love, coleslaw and Steven Seagal, placing

his subjects on equal ground, searching for empathy in even the most mundane of events. It is a book of memories from the everyday to the extraordinary and the sensations they arouse; finding humour where it can be found, but always taking time to ponder the mystery and miracle of it all.

[innovationhubcanada.com/innovate-montreal](http://innovationhubcanada.com/innovate-montreal).

**Laurence Hutchman**, MA 79, has published his 11th book of poetry. *In The House of Shifting Time* (Black Moss Press, \$17.95), Hutchman asks us to consider how we connect with time and preserve our stories. This collection explores

Writing. He also published books 25 and 26 this year.

*Colours to the Chameleon: Canadian Actors on Shakespeare* (Guernica Editions, \$25) is the first work of its kind in Canada. The book explores 11 first-rate actors' perceptions and comments in relation to performing Shakespeare in order to offer a sense of

effects of trauma and what it means to rebuild a home.

**Monique Elizabeth Savoie**, BA 06, has published her debut novel, *The Hitchhiker's Patchwork of Photons* (FriesenPress, \$18.99)—a contemporary metaphorical voyage on Earth. A vivid and poignant "parkour" of colourful wondering about day-to-day



*Innovate Montreal* (free online; \$85 hardcover) is many things at once: a high-quality coffee-table book, online platform and augmented reality video series that celebrates the innovation ecosystem of Montreal. Created in part by associate publisher **Brahm Glickman**, BA 79, the book covers the city's most visionary innovators, start-ups, organizations and companies, with the likes of IVADO, CEIM, Technoparc Montréal, Le Quartier de l'Innovation — and Concordia's District 3 Innovation Center. Browse the book's inaugural Montreal edition at

both public history and personal history — on one page we contemplate the life of Anne Frank, then on the next we may learn of Hutchman's own great-grandmother, Annie O'Brien. Just as time moves from past to present, we all participate in an intertwining story — knit together by shared places. Hutchman taught at Concordia in the 1980s and was recently named poet laureate of Emery Village, near Toronto.

**Keith Garebian**, MA 71, won a record-setting fourth Mississauga Arts Council Award for Established

what these actors mean by the work. Colourful, lively, with strong considerations of technique and interpretation, this book gives Canadian actors a rare and generous opportunity to explore the highest reaches of their art with regard to Shakespearean performance.

Garebian's eighth poetry collection, *Against Forgetting* (Frontenac House, \$19.95) delves into the personal history of a man affected by the Armenian genocide and the ways he makes Canada home. The poetic lines and strong emotional tug of the book outline the long-lasting

events, the novel is a family saga full of chaos and order. Is it possible to survive a misstep?

The latest book by Quebec theatre historian **Muriel Gold**, PhD 94, has been lauded by the media for both introducing anglophone readers to the legendary Yvonne Duckett, a.k.a. Madame Audet, and, in its French translation, offering francophone readers a more detailed sense of the beloved and eccentric teacher who trained generations of actors. *Speak Up! The Story of Mme Jean-Louis Audet* (BouquinBec, \$19.95) is Gold's seventh book. ■

## A thank-you note for dreams come true

LÉANDRE LAROUCHE, BA 19

Dear Concordia,

Over the past three years, I've written to many people who have had a positive impact on my life to say thank you. I've written to friends, parents, professors, employers, mentors. The reason I made this a habit is that I have much to feel grateful for — and think it's the right thing to do. As I finished my last semester at Concordia and crossed the stage on June 10, 2019, at Place des Arts, it became clear that you were the next one on the list. Almost everything I feel grateful for directly or indirectly has to do with the past three years spent with you.

I grew up in rural Québec, in a town where the language of Shakespeare isn't commonly spoken. Had it not been for an elementary-school English teacher, Steven Jansma, I never would have found a passion for the language. However, after Steven taught me, I somehow knew that learning English — and learning it well — would be the key to my success. I began dreaming of being fluent, of living and writing in English. The culture made it attractive and the challenge compelling: mastering English to the point where I could be a writer seemed like a pretty good investment of my time.

A few good decisions later, I moved to Montreal to study English literature and brought only one certainty with me: that we humans need but one thing to devote ourselves to and that this thing, for me, was the English language. I began my undergraduate degree in January 2016 and hadn't applied to any other university. I can't recall the exact reasons you were my



JUSTIN DESFORCES

only choice; perhaps I just knew I needed to live in Montreal and study in English — but not at McGill — ideally creative writing. Toronto was too expensive, and the United States was but an unattainable dream. I didn't know why you specifically, but I picked you — and I had no idea how much you would come to mean to me.

Three and a half years later, after graduating with distinction in English Literature and Professional Writing, I realize how much I've learned and developed. I went from writing cringe-worthy English prose to getting paid to write by American companies and getting articles published. I can also see the hardships, the failures, and the doubts — the moments when I wondered if I'd made the right decision to study in my second language. Amid all this confusion, though, there's one thing I always knew for sure: you welcomed me with open arms, making me feel like I belonged and would succeed. This kept me going. I never once thought of giving up.

As I look back to my undergraduate work at Concordia, what I see is a quest for self-realization made possible by a great university, a university that cares. The people I encountered here encouraged me and made the challenge fun. I still have much work to do, but the dreams

I had did become true with you: I became fluent in English, I can be published — and paid — in my second language and, most astonishingly, the United States no longer feels like an unattainable dream. In the fall, I moved to Pennsylvania on a Fulbright fellowship.

Many other good things happened during my undergraduate degree, but these three things alone made every second with you worth it. There's too much for me to say thank you for. This note is, in fact, an edited version of a letter I published on *Medium*. Even then, I feel like my words cannot possibly express how important you've been to me. I can say that I'll always be one of your most grateful and proudest alumni, but this will always be an understatement.

With best wishes. ■

*Léandre Larouche served as President of the Concordia Student Exchange Association and a research assistant in the Computational Linguistics at Concordia (CLaC) lab, as well as a writing assistant in the Student Success Centre. He studied abroad at the University of Nottingham in England and is now a Fulbright foreign language teaching assistant at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.*



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