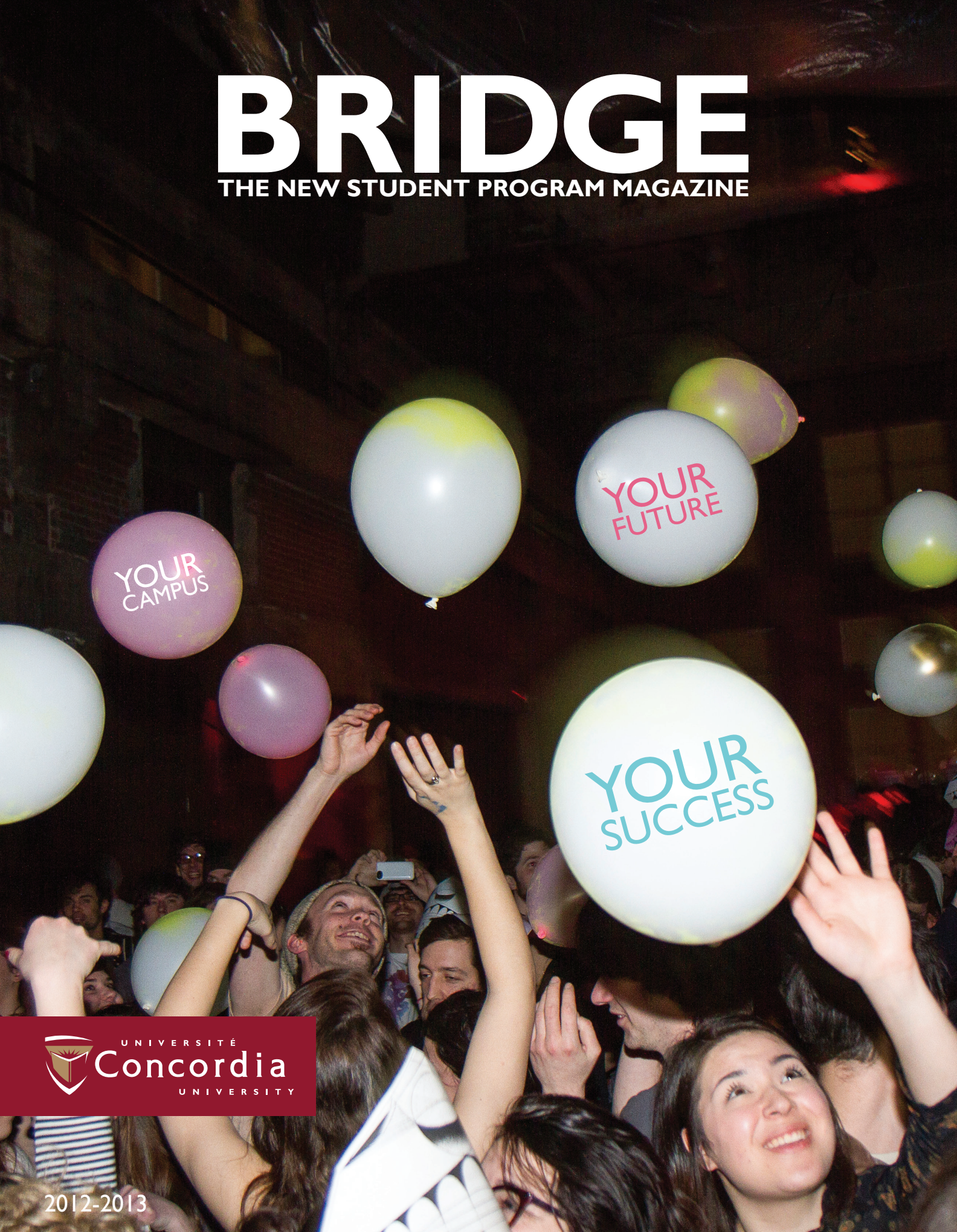


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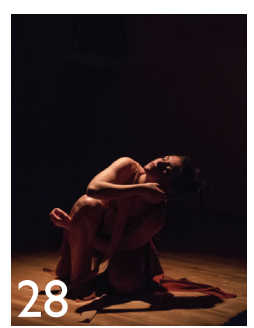
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BRIDGE THE NEW STUDENT PROGRAM MAGAZINE



Cover image:
Art Matters Opening Party
by Ginga Takeshima
www.gingatakeshima.com

Editor:
Marlene Gross

Designer:
Lynda Guy

Contributors:
David Adelman
Catherine Grace
Marlene Gross
Louise Lalonde
Andrew Lang
Judy Lashley
Owen Moran
Vanessa Nava
Rafael Sordili
Anmol Vig



On behalf of the New Student Program and the university community, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Concordia. Whether you are beginning a first university degree or returning to further your academic training, Concordia is an excellent choice.

As a new student at Concordia, you are joining a large and vibrant community made up of more than 45,000 students and over 7,000 dedicated faculty and staff. Concordia is an exciting and diverse community with over 500 programs of study at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Concordia is a community spread across two campuses, each with its own distinctive character: There is the bustling, high-energy vibe of the Sir George Williams campus in downtown Montreal and the more laid-back feel of the Loyola campus with its green and open spaces. Concordia is a community which continues to grow and modernize — new, state-of-the-art facilities have recently been added to both campuses — and it is also a community rich in history and architectural gems.

Like any new member of a community, you'll need some time to get acquainted with the people, programs, services, regulations and spaces of Concordia. That's where the New Student Program and the *Bridge* magazine come in. We're here to help you make a smooth transition into your new community and ensure that you are well-aware of all this great community has to offer you.

In this issue of the *Bridge*, we introduce you to some of the people who make Concordia so dynamic. You will learn about some of the special, extra-curricular programs that can enrich your university experience. You will discover some of the wonderful services that can provide support and guidance as you pursue your studies. We hope the stories in this magazine will inspire you and will help you connect with your campus, your learning, your future and your success.

Happy reading!

Manlene Gross

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The *Bridge*, welcomes readers' comments. Contact the editor at bridge@alcor.concordia.ca. Please include your full name.

Visit us online at newstudent.concordia.ca



THREE CHEERS FOR CONCORDIA!

by Catherine Grace, Sports Information and Website Coordinator, Recreation & Athletics

Varsity athletics is highly competitive in Canada. Student-athletes traditionally already have a lot of experience in their discipline when they begin their university careers, and many have hopes of playing their sport at the national level or joining the professional ranks after graduation. Being a varsity athlete is a huge commitment as most sports train or play five or six days a week — and that is on top of classes and course work.

Over the years, Concordia University's varsity sports programs have developed many exceptional student-athletes who have reached great heights and received recognition in their disciplines. We have selected three current Concordia Stingers to introduce to you. These amazing young people excel in their sports, bringing pride and honour to Concordia. Max Caron, who plays on the Concordia Stingers football team, and David Tremblay, a member of Concordia's wrestling team, were co-winners of Concordia's Male Athlete of the Year honours in 2012. Hughanna Gaw was named Concordia's Female Athlete of the Year in 2012. >>>



DAVID TREMBLAY: GOING FOR GOLD

David Tremblay came to Concordia from Stoney Point, Ontario and is studying leisure science. David won his fourth consecutive gold medal when the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) wrestling championship finals were held at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario on Feb. 25, 2012. Tremblay's gold medal at 61 kilos helped Concordia secure the men's championship at the national tournament. The Stingers finished first with 56 points. It was the second consecutive wrestling team title for Concordia. Over the course of the year, Tremblay won all six tournaments he competed in as a member of the Stingers. He was undefeated in all six tournaments, posting a perfect 19-0 record.

In December 2011, Tremblay won the Canadian Olympic Team Trials and in March 2012 he won the FILA Pan American Olympic Qualifying Tournament. With that victory Tremblay earned a berth at the 2012 London Summer Olympics.

HUGHANNA GAW: GAINING RECOGNITION

Hughanna Gaw, from Elgin, Ontario, is a major in leisure science. An exceptional third-year athlete, Gaw was a big contributor to the success of the Concordia women's rugby team in 2011. She helped the Stingers win the Kelly-Anne Drummond Cup, an annual clash with the McGill Martlets, and reach the Quebec championship game.

These amazing young people excel in their sports and bring pride and honour to Concordia.

The No. 8 player scored eight tries in six games during the regular season and was the leading tackler on the Stingers. She was named her team's game MVP on two occasions and was Concordia Female Athlete of the Week. She was a Quebec all-star and a CIS all-Canadian. It was the second time in her university career that

Gaw received national recognition. In 2009, she was named the CIS Rookie of the Year.

"Hughanna has established herself as one of the top players in Quebec," said Concordia head coach Graeme McGravie. "She is a dream to coach. She never quits or shies away from contact and is keen to learn and improve every facet of her game on and off the field."

MAX CARON: BREAKING RECORDS

Max Caron, Concordia Stingers middle linebacker and political science major who hails from Kelowna, B.C., is a winner in every sense of the word. He won the CIS Presidents' Trophy as the outstanding defensive player in November 2011. He received the honour at a gala hosted by the Canadian Football League (CFL) in Vancouver. As part of the festivities, Caron was a participant in the CFL's annual Grey Cup parade.

Caron set several Quebec university records and rewrote the Concordia record book. In nine university games Caron collected 67 solo tackles and 23 assists for 78.5 total tackles to lead all Canadian university football players. He also led the nation in solo tackles, average tackles per game and interceptions returned for touchdowns.

The 22-year-old stepped up as a team leader in just his second season of university football. Concordia head coach Gerry McGrath considers him an extra coach on the field. He admires Caron's knowledge of the game as well as his communication skills.

Being a varsity athlete requires hard work and dedication.

"Max knows what's going to happen before it happens," says coach McGrath. "He's so good at anticipating what is going to happen, sometimes you'd swear he was in the offensive huddle."

A top student, Caron also works on Stingers' webcasts as a colour analyst at Concordia sports events.

SUPPORT YOUR STINGERS!

Caron, Tremblay and Gaw are just three of many elite athletes who proudly wear Concordia colours. To learn more about the others, visit the Stingers' website, become a fan on Facebook (key words Concordia Stingers) and follow the Stingers on Twitter (the_stingers).

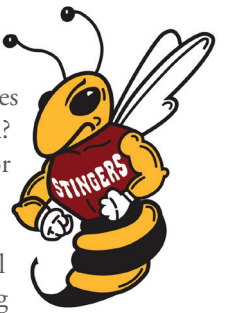
Game tickets for Concordia students are just \$3 for all regular season hockey and basketball games and \$4 for football. There's no charge to cheer on your classmates who represent Concordia on the soccer and rugby circuits. ■

Recreation & Athletics
athletics.concordia.ca

Concordia Stingers
stingers.ca

THE SWARM

Are you looking for people who enjoy painting their faces maroon and gold? Are you looking for friends who gather to cheer at the top of their lungs, all the while bursting with school pride? Are you looking for a group that likes to celebrate and have a good time? Then you need to join THE SWARM.



THE SWARM is a lively student association that fosters student spirit and encourages Stinger pride. The group chooses several Stinger games every year, rallying large numbers of students who take FANastism to a whole new level. All students are welcome to join in the fun.

Twitter: @ConcordiaSwarm
Facebook.com/concordiaswarm

Tremblay earned a berth at the 2012 London Summer Olympics



ALL PHOTOS: RECREATION AND ATHLETICS



Gaw was named Concordia Female Athlete of the Year in 2012

Caron rewrote the Concordia record book



DISCOVERING CONCORDIA ONE BLOG AT A TIME

by David Adelman, BA (Journalism) and Concordia University Student Blogger

Growing up I never paid much attention to my mother's favourite "chicken soup" adage: "When one door closes another door opens." However, at the end of my second year as a journalism student at Concordia University, I experienced the power behind those seven simple words. My name is David Adelman and I began my undergraduate studies in 2009. This is my story.

THE POWER OF YES

There was less than a month before the semester ended and already my professors were promoting their upcoming courses. One of my professors, Dr. Matthew Anderson, was offering a 3-week intensive course. The chance to knock off three more credits definitely caught my attention. But what he said next almost threw me off my seat — the class was a trip to Spain. Sure, it was a theology course and the trip involved hours and hours of walking on a pilgrimage around ancient Spanish holy sites — but in SPAIN!

Coming from a background of journalism and having a natural-born love for filmmaking, I began to concoct a plan that could potentially take this class a step further: I wanted to make a promotional documentary about the students and my professor on this journey. I hoped that this idea could help showcase an interesting opportunity offered at Concordia. My professor loved the idea and granted his support, but I wasn't sure what my next step would be. After a bit of research, I discovered that Concordia had a media department which handled the university's communications and marketing efforts, aptly called University Communications Services (UCS).

Two weeks later, Sami Antaki, the director at UCS, agreed to meet with me. I was thrilled to pitch my idea to him. Here I was, having just completed my second year of journalism, proposing to put together a thirty-minute film about the course and hoping that the plane ticket and trip expenses would be covered.



After pouring my heart out, Sami broke the news to me. My idea was great, but way over the budget of the department. The door to my Spanish trip and first big filmmaking experience slammed shut, but before I had the time to feel my disappointment, Sami threw me a curveball: an internship with UCS for the summer. I jumped at the opportunity to gain experience in my field. I shook Sami's hand "Yes, when can I start?"

GOOD THINGS TAKE TIME

The size of Concordia's media department took me by surprise. I assumed it was going to be a tiny office, but instead my jaw dropped when I learnt that the department wrapped around in a U-shape on the GM building's sixth floor.

At first, it was intimidating sitting in my little makeshift intern cubicle. Working for UCS meant I had to meet deadlines, interview faculty and students and most importantly plan ideas for stories that would be of interest to Concordia students and faculty. Everything around me was challenging, especially interacting with office staff and working directly with the department internal director, Karen McCarthy. My stories were edited and proofed and I had to quickly make changes to meet printing deadlines.

June 20th was a game changer for me. It was the 2011 convocation ceremony and it was my job to put together a video report for the event. I remember feeling overwhelmed as I walked through the convocation hall at Place des Arts and saw rows upon rows of graduating students in their caps and gowns. This experience forced me to overcome my natural shyness and

approach complete strangers to interview. It also gave me the opportunity to capture some nice moments such as interviewing Concordia's registrar, Linda Healey, who was retiring that year and Kirk Johnstone, the bagpiper for the ceremony.

As the summer wound down and the fall semester was right around the corner. Karen McCarthy, who had helped me throughout my internship, had an interesting proposition for me. Would I be interested in continuing my internship as the university's official student blogger? This meant that I would explore Concordia's life on and off campus. It was a great way to combine my two passions: people and journalism. Now I had an excuse to talk to strangers and I knew I was soon to become a "professional icebreaker."

THINK LESS, DO MORE

Before I had any time to think, I was thrown into my role as a student blogger. My first assignment was to undergo a stress test at Concordia's new research centre, PERFORM. Then I found out I would be photographed shirtless with wires taped to my chest. I was uncomfortable at first, but eager to fulfill my role, so I lost the shirt and some chest hair in the process.

While my blogging was evolving, my classroom experience during that time was changing too. Everything around me seemed new and exciting because I was approaching my university and education from a different angle. Instead of being a student whose goal was to graduate, I wanted to participate more in student life and just be more engaged with life on a daily basis.

When I first started blogging, individuals would approach me to talk about my blogs and I would always joke that I was probably the only one actually reading them. But towards the end of my winter semester, I began to realize that I had a following and that my words and my spirit had helped students ease into the Concordia atmosphere and unwind from the seriousness of education. I allowed myself to take pride in my work and take pride that in my own way I acted as an ambassador of an institution I believe in.

My third semester came and went, but the one thought that has continued to remain with me is simple: opportunities will always emerge in front of you. All you have to do is be open to them. The rest is easy.



David Adelman
Concordia University student reporter



Kirk Johnstone
Piper



"Representing Concordia as a student blogger allowed me to access parts of the university I normally would never have explored or even knew existed."

But looking back, this too became a minor concern. The most complicated aspect of my new role was getting the hang of writing blog style — and not just for me, but for my editors as well.

The opportunities I had representing Concordia as a student blogger were enormous. The experience allowed me to access parts of the university I normally would never have explored or even knew existed. I attended men's and women's Stinger matches such as the Corey Cup, where by chance I interviewed retired Montreal Canadiens Pierre Bouchard. I took part in an English conversation group and learned idioms and expressions completely foreign to me, despite the fact that English is my mother tongue.

My assignment as a blogger fattened me up at a multicultural holiday food tabling event put together by Concordia's Multi-faith Chaplaincy and cultured me in modern art as I received a personal tour from artists in the 2012 Faculty of Fine Arts (FOFA) gallery. I even had to blog about my ongoing efforts to get in shape at Concordia's state of the art PERFORM facility.

Concordia University is a dynamic "metropolis" of services and activities. There's always something interesting happening on campus. There are a multitude of resources that can ease our paths or add a dash of spice to our journey. As students at Concordia, we have the option to really take advantage and make our experience very interactive. My advice to every student is to get actively involved especially in those areas where your passions jumpstart your heart, because the secret to success isn't really a secret. It's all out there, just waiting for you to grab on. ■

MONEY MATTERS\$

By Judy Lashley, Financial Aid Advisor, Financial Aid & Awards Office

For Shalane Armstrong, a recent Concordia grad (BA, Child Studies, June 2012) and a self-confessed nomad who has moved 35 times, finding a place to call home has never been an easy task. That's why, when she reflects back on her experience with the Financial Aid & Awards Office (FAAO) at Concordia, she is surprised how "at home" the office made her feel. Armstrong admits that there was something special about the FAAO that made her comfortable about coming back.

The FAAO website also provides a lot of useful information, including tips on preparing a budget and money management.

Smiling impishly as she ticks off numbers on her fingers, Armstrong starts counting the times she dropped into the FAAO during her four years at Concordia. "Oh my, ahhhh, let's see. There's at least two per year over four years, plus emergencies — I would say at least 15 maybe 16 times, maybe, probably. There were those times that I actually came to check if my loan was in because I was in a panic. Even though I knew it wouldn't be there, I just needed to hear [someone else say] "It's coming, don't worry."

Located on the second floor of the GM building in room 230, the FAAO helps students negotiate their government student aid funding, undergraduate scholarships and awards, university

bursaries and the Work Study program. What Armstrong says she liked most about the FAAO was the personalized service she always received, and as a student with a disability, she admits to sometimes getting a little overwhelmed. Says Armstrong, "I could just come in and say look, I have a problem; I need to talk to someone." And there was always a patient and supportive staff member there to help.

Armstrong recalls her first visit to the FAAO in September 2008. Her move to Montreal had drained all of her finances and her Ontario student aid funding was very late. She was at a loss about how to manage her financial situation. "I knew I could not have afforded to even stay here [in Montreal], let alone buy my textbooks if I didn't have basic financial aid help. My dad died right as I was accepted, so there was a lot of extra expense there, a lot of extra stress," she explains.

"I love the fact Concordia is a very personal university."
Shalane Armstrong

To get some extra help, Armstrong applied for and received an in-course bursary through the FAAO scholarships and awards area. "I didn't know about it; an advisor actually suggested it," she admits. Armstrong ended up getting a \$1,500 bursary in January. "I then found out about the student emergency food fund. I know that's run by the Multi-faith Chaplaincy office, but I would not have known about it if I had not gone to the FAAO."

When asked what she would like to change about her financial aid experience, Armstrong laughingly replied, "I would love not to have to pay anything back!" Then, more seriously, she adds that her only real regret is that she will no longer be able to drop by the FAAO and visit the advisors she feels really made a difference in her years at Concordia. "I like the fact that we have that available to us here at Concordia because I didn't have it at my last school. And I found that, when I was dealing with applying to other universities and stuff, it was all very impersonal, so I love the fact Concordia is a very personal university."

Being a student presents plenty of challenges and ignoring financial problems won't make them disappear. Fortunately, the advisors in the FAAO are approachable and can provide students with assistance and information on financial matters related to their education. Students can drop by the FAAO to learn more about government loans and bursaries, scholarships and awards, the Work Study program and much more. For those who can't get down to the office, the FAAO website also provides a lot of useful information, including tips on preparing a budget and money management. ■

Financial Aid & Awards Office
fao.concordia.ca

BUDGETING TIPS: Making a budget doesn't have to be complicated; it can be as simple as adding up your income and then subtracting your expenses. If the balance is positive, you've got a budget you can live within! If your expenses are greater than your income, you'll have to find a way to increase your income or cut back on your spending. Fortunately, there are many ways to cut corners and save a few dollars. Here are just a few:

1. Avoid living on credit

If you don't have the cash to pay for something, before you take out the credit card ask yourself if you really need that item and if you really need it now. Interest charges on credit cards are high and your unpaid balance will grow quickly if you can't pay your bill at the end of the month. Try to keep credit cards for emergencies only.

2. Use ATMs carefully

Private ATMs charge for each transaction, sometimes as much as \$3 and that can really add up if you use them regularly. Open an account at a bank with ATMs near school or home for convenient and inexpensive access to cash. Ask about special programs for students to reduce extra bank fees, as well.

3. BMW to get around

Bike, bus, metro, walk — there are many ways to get around that are cost effective and sustainable. With the high cost of gas

and parking, driving a car is not one of them. If you must drive, consider carpooling. You'll save money and leave a smaller footprint on the environment, too.

4. Don't eat your budget

Dining out, buying coffees and using vending machines can really put a strain on your budget. Be aware of how much you spend on those grab and go eats and drinks. Take advantage of grocery store specials. Join a food co-op or set one up with friends. Buying in quantity can be much cheaper. And remember, don't shop when you're hungry because you may give in to impulse and buy items you don't need!

5. Entertainment can be economical

Plan a games night or dinner party with friends. Share expenses by shopping and cooking together. Share recipes to discover new dishes that are inexpensive, tasty and healthy. Make enough for leftovers to take for lunch.

6. Textbooks — you need 'em and they don't have to break the bank

Textbooks can be expensive but most are available second-hand. Check out the used books at the university or student-run co-op bookstore. The Concordia bookstore even has a "rent your textbook" option. Consider selling your old textbooks unless you really need them for future reference.



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ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK: DIFFERENT AND BETTER!

By Vanessa Nava, BA (Political Science / Anthropology) and ASB Student Coordinator 2012, and Marlene Gross

At Concordia, the Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program offers an innovative opportunity for students to make their February break an enriching, humanitarian experience either internationally or locally. The ASB program was first introduced at Concordia University by Rich SwamiNathan in 2010. In that first year, 23 students enthusiastically prepared to make their university experience extend well beyond classroom learning to include the fun and networking opportunities of a cultural exchange. One group headed off to the Dominican Republic while the other stayed in Montreal, but students in both groups ended their week-long experience forever changed — and in a very good way.

The ASB program was born from the idea of providing a possible life-changing experience for Concordia students.

In the three years since its beginnings, the ASB program has grown. In February 2012, five groups of students participated. The increasing popularity of the program has been the result of the combined effort of all involved — from its creator, team coordinators, community partners, and university staff to its most important element — the student themselves.

AN INNOVATIVE WAY OF LEARNING

The ASB program was born from the idea of providing a possible life-changing experience for Concordia students. Instead of spending the February break relaxing on a tropical beach at an all-inclusive resort, students were offered an alternative — a week that would require a lot of hard work and effort but would give back as much satisfaction and reward as each individual put in to make this great project happen. And for those who took the challenge, that is exactly what happened, making each of the projects over the past three years a tremendous success.

The ASB Concordia project provides each one of its participants the opportunity to acquire hands-on experience and make a contribution to the lives of the inhabitants of the communities that the program supports. Students have participated in service learning projects in locations as far away as Peru, the Dominican Republic and New Orleans, to places a little closer to home like the Laurentians and even right here in beautiful Montreal.

UNDERSTANDING OTHERS — UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES

During ASB week, every day is a different experience; whether a student is digging a foundation in New Orleans, fixing a local school in Peru, teaching children English

in the Dominican Republic, painting dining hall walls at Camp Kinkora in the Laurentians, working with children in an after school program in a Montreal neighbourhood or helping the elderly at a local community centre in this city, the days are filled with purposeful work.

At the end of the day, participants deconstruct the day as a team in reflection. This reflection consists of challenging questions designed to help each participant draw meaning from the day's work, as well as talk about larger questions of privilege, inequity, culture and our role in the world. Then, at the end of the experience, all the different groups gather together their conclusions, memoirs and the “ah-ha” moments and build a sort of blueprint which will serve for the improvement of future projects.

A REFLECTION OF WHO WE ARE

ASB is of course open to all Concordia students, new and returning. However, ASB is open to faculty and staff as well, and this makes the program reflect one of the most special features of Concordia: the accessibility of its faculty and staff and that sense of belonging which students at this university enjoy. This wonderful approachability is not easy to find at other universities and adds a great deal to the educational



Yassine gets a hand from a friend

Photo: ASB



Enjoying a good read

BENEFITS FOR ALL

Every year since that first ASB in 2010, the ASB family has added a few new bricks to its foundation, increasing the partner relationships that are fundamental to the success of the program. One new partner in 2012 was Cummings Centre, a Montreal organization that offers a wide range of programs for seniors. Lynn Gordon, the coordinator of volunteer services, praised the Concordia students for the warmth and caring they showed in their interactions with the seniors at Cummings and looks forward to partnering with ASB again next year. Long-standing partners like Catholic Community Services (CCS) Montreal are equally enthusiastic. "We truly cannot express how grateful we are for their [the students'] outstanding generosity, wonderful spirit and the quality of their work. Their contribution is very significant and sincerely appreciated," says a representative of CCS.

"I thought I would just go and provide a service to the community but I gained more than I can express."

Emily Rill, (Dominican Republic)

experience at Concordia. Having staff and faculty as willing to help students off campus as on, even to the extent of participating in a volunteer activity with the kind of commitment that ASB requires, is truly remarkable. It enriches all who participate, not only educationally but on a personal level well as.

A FUTURE WITHOUT LIMITS

Although it is hard to predict the future, one thing is certain, everyone who has experienced the ASB program sees only its potential and looks forward to its continued existence. "ASB is a wonderful, fun, educational, and enlightening spring break that everyone should try and be a part of. I am very grateful for the experience and would re-live the week in a heartbeat," exclaims Maria, an Arts and Science student who went to New Orleans in 2012. Joshua Faier, a student in the John Molson School of Business who also went to New Orleans agrees. "EVERYONE should do this, and it shouldn't just be a one-time thing. I will be back next year, paintbrush and all, giving another hand up," he says.

Rich SwamiNathan, the ASB creator, would like to see an even larger number and wider diversity of students participate in the program. However, to achieve this kind of growth he believes "better promotion, higher and more diverse staff/faculty involvement and most important, bigger financial support is vital for the program to become more accessible to all types of students." And with such increases, not only will more students benefit from this rich learning experience, there will be more communities that benefit, as well.



Building a better world

The dedicated team of Concordia students and staff who make the ASB program possible is always striving to incorporate new projects to complement existing ones, ensuring that the experience is more enriching each time around. This means that both first-time and recurring participants will always find something innovative and invigorating for their own personal learning experience, and that each year, teams of Concordia students will spend their spring break engaged in projects that contribute to a better world.

Rhea Massoud, a student in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science who spent her spring break in Peru, beautifully sums up the ASB experience from the student perspective: "The ASB program was hands down the best experience of my life. It made me realize how much beauty this world has. The people of the community were the happiest people I've ever seen, despite how little they have. It made me realize how much we take for granted. It was definitely an eye opening experience and it has changed me for the better. It made me realize that I do want to make a difference in this world." So can you! Think about how you might spend your next spring break! ▣

Alternative Spring Break Program
asb.concordia.ca

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IT'S ALL In the Name

Or is it?

By Marlene Gross, Manager, Services for New Students
and Student Success Centre, Counselling & Development

Sometimes, the name of a place makes it easy to identify what goes on there. For example, you can be pretty sure what goes on in a hospital, a bookstore or a café — and it would be pretty easy to decide if such a place provides a service you want or need. But sometimes, the name of a place may not be as transparent. Sometimes, it isn't all in the name.

Counselling and Development, one of the Student Services departments at Concordia is that kind of place. What exactly can Counselling and Development offer you? You will be pleasantly surprised to discover just how much.

Your university years should be a time of personal growth and yes, development, too.

The Counselling part may seem self-evident. After all, the definition of “to counsel” is fairly straight forward. Counselling involves getting advice to manage a problem, and seeking advice from trained professionals is definitely one reason you would head to Counselling and Development. However, the term counselling is pretty broad; there are a lot of different types of problems one might encounter and need help with, at university or elsewhere.

PERSONAL, EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER NEEDS

At Counselling and Development you can meet with professional counsellors and psychologists to discuss a wide range of personal issues including relationships, stress, sexuality, self-esteem, substance abuse and motivation. However, you might be surprised to learn that these counsellors are also trained to provide educational and career counselling.

Consider the following possibilities: You don't like your major, but you also don't know what you'd like better. You love what you're studying, but you aren't sure what you can do with a degree in that field. You know what you enjoy or what

you are good at, but not what you want to do with those interests and skills. Or, you know where you want to go in life, but you aren't sure how to get there. If you haven't got a clear idea of your goals or the path to achieve them, a counsellor can help.

Whether you choose to meet with a counsellor to discuss personal, educational or career-related matters, you can be assured that everything you

discuss with your counsellor is treated with strict confidentiality. Counsellors are great listeners and they have access to a number of tools and resources to help you find solutions that work best for you. Sometimes, a little professional support and guidance is just what you need to get you moving in the right direction.

THE BEST YOU

So, now that you've got a handle on the counselling side of things, how about the development part? Who or what is being developed, and why? Well, the answer is YOU, of course! Your time at university should certainly be spent exploring new ideas and acquiring knowledge, but your university years should also be a time of personal growth and yes, development, too.



Researching career options

CHRISTINA STIMPSON

SKILLS FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Whether you are studying at the undergraduate or graduate level, you will want to be sure that the skills you have are appropriate for the kinds of learning you have to do. Through one-on-one appointments and a variety of group workshops, the learning specialists in Counselling and Development can help you develop strategies to improve your memory and concentration, learn in your second language, manage your time, write academic papers, prepare for exams and much more. The learning team also includes peer support programs such as facilitated study groups and Strategic Learning groups for specific courses, writing assistance and tutoring for basic math and certain introductory science courses.

SKILLS FOR LIFE AND WORK

University is also the perfect environment to develop and practice what are commonly referred to as soft skills. These are skills which make relationships with family, colleagues and employers run smoothly. They are skills which help you cope with unexpected bumps along the road and which make you the kind of person others can count on and would like to have on their team. Soft skills relate to your organizational, interpersonal, communication, networking and leadership skills. You can develop and improve your soft skills by attending some of the excellent free workshops offered at Counselling and Development.

If you haven't got a clear idea of your goals or the path to achieve them, a counsellor can help.

Good soft skills are important because they can help you in your personal and professional life, but when it comes to finding the perfect job, you may need more than just the right set of skills. You might need assistance with the job search process. It is therefore good to know that there are career specialists at Counselling and Development who can guide you through this process and help you find a position which is a good match for your knowledge and skills.

Career advisors can help you present yourself to future employers in the best possible light through a well-designed resumé and cover letter; they can help you prepare for an interview so you land the job you want. The department also has an excellent Career Resource Centre where you can learn more about different careers, research potential employers, find samples of effective resúmes and cover letters, and discover strategies for job hunting, interviewing and more.



The team of professionals at Counselling and Development can help you develop the skills you need to cope with the demands of university and be better prepared to deal with the demands of the workplace and life. Take the time to get to know the department and take advantage of the services available. There are offices on both Concordia campuses. Counselling and Development can help you achieve your personal, educational and career goals, and isn't that why you came to university, after all? ■

Counselling & Development
cdev.concordia.ca

Concordia University Alumni Association

Thanks for generously donating
these wonderful tote bags
for Discover Concordia
Orientation

Concordia University
Alumni Association

 alumni.concordia.ca

SET TO SUCCEED

by Marlene Gross, Manager, Services for New Students and Student Success Centre, Counselling & Development

All students begin university with the intention of being successful; that is, they hope to achieve good grades and become well-prepared for their futures, and also enjoy their university experience. However, some students find success more easily attained than others. What makes students successful?

Many new students believe that their success is completely dependent on how hard and how long they study. These students don't realize that how successful you are at university is not directly proportionate to the number of hours you spend "hitting the books." While attending class, spending time in the library and applying yourself to your studies are certainly important components of success, they are not the only things that matter.

WHAT MAKES STUDENTS SUCCESSFUL?

If you survey successful students, they will tell you that they attribute their success as much to their extra-curricular activities as they do to the time they spend in class or at the library.

Check out the requirements for university scholarships and prizes and you will see that good marks alone are not sufficient to win many of these awards. Recipients are also expected to be actively involved in student life, to have made a positive contribution to their communities or to have demonstrated leadership among their peers.

Success at university is measured by both academic success and successful involvement in a variety of extra-curricular activities.

Ask employers what they are looking for in new hires and they will tell you that they seek candidates who can demonstrate soft skills such as organizational, people and leadership skills. These are skills that university students can best develop through involvement in clubs and team competitions, participation in workshops and discussion groups outside of class, and volunteer work.

Success at university is, in fact, measured by both academic success and successful involvement in a variety of extra-curricular activities. Many students recognize this but may still feel they have little time to "do it all." However, it is possible to do it all and the benefits make it very worthwhile.

The Student Success Mentors should be part of your proactive plan for success.

If thinking about managing your studies and also finding time to engage in extra-curricular activities makes you feel overwhelmed, begin by taking small steps. Consider attending a workshop on time management, or speak to someone who can help you examine your priorities and determine how best to include some out-of-class activities that can help you develop soft skills and contribute to your success.

NETWORK FOR SUCCESS

Another thing that successful students readily admit is that they don't do it all alone. They are not afraid to ask for help. They establish a good support network and make use of it regularly. There are many ways to develop a support network at Concordia, but one of the best places to start is with the Student Success Mentors.

The Student Success Mentors are upper-year students who know Concordia well. They include undergraduate and graduate students from all four faculties. They reflect the diversity of the student body at Concordia. They study science, engineering, business, social sciences, humanities and fine arts. They speak English, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Hindi, Chinese, Vietnamese and a few other languages, as well. They are from Montreal, from other Canadian provinces and from countries across the globe.

The Student Success Mentors understand your concerns and feelings. Because they are students, too, at one time they have probably had questions and concerns similar to yours. You can trust them to provide you with the care and guidance you need to find the right information, the right solutions and the most effective strategies to deal with whatever issues arise.

The Student Success Mentors should be part of your proactive plan for success. They can tell you firsthand about some of the great services and programs they use themselves and that have contributed to their own success at Concordia. The mentors can share strategies, both academic and personal, which have worked well for them and will probably work well for you, too. They can help you connect with other students and extra-curricular activities which will enrich your university experience and help you develop skills to complement the knowledge you gain from your courses.

MEET THE STUDENT SUCCESS MENTORS

The Student Success Mentors work in the Student Success Centre (SSC) in H 481 on the SGW campus and AD 101 on the Loyola campus. The atmosphere in the SSC is friendly, relaxed and supportive. You can drop in without an appointment, ask questions, get advice and meet other students. You can learn about services like writing assistance, tutoring and second language enrichment, or find out about clubs, competitions and other student activities.

The Mentors would like to introduce themselves to you now, on these pages of the *Bridge*, but they have so much knowledge and experience to share, they can only touch the surface here. So be sure to visit them at the SSC.

AAISHA MALIK (BComm, Accountancy)

I am an international student from Pakistan. I speak English, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and am working on my French. Like most international students, it was hard for me to come to a completely different world (Canada) and adopt new ways, but when I started getting involved by volunteering at university, it became easy! Apart from a great education, Concordia has many resources to help students brush up on their personal as well as professional skills. You just need to find right place for yourself and get involved. If you need assistance or ideas, I'd be so happy to help.



Aaisha



Anmol



Bassam



Breanna

ANMOL VIG (MEng, Quality Systems Engineering)

I am an international student from India. My academic interests are project management, supply chain and quality engineering. Outside of school, I am a part-time freelance photographer. What I love about Concordia are all the opportunities available. I started my studies in the summer, so I only attended orientations in August and September, at the end of my first term. However, I'm glad I did because these orientations unlocked doors for various opportunities and helped me strategize grad school studies. Last year, I also worked for the GradProSkills program and had the chance to attend many workshops to enhance my soft skills. It would be a pleasure to share my experience and learning with you.

BASSAM GEAGEA (BEng, Civil Engineering)

I was born in Lebanon. I speak English, French and Arabic. I like all kinds of sports, especially basketball. I worked for the department of Recreation and Athletics helping with events and I've also done some tutoring in math and physics. I love the diversity of Concordia, its great location in Montreal, and all the university activities like sporting events, career fairs and cultural nights. Find out what's going on around campus and go for it. Don't ever miss an opportunity, even if you feel you're not qualified or there is someone better than you, just go and show up and give it a try. You'll really enjoy your Concordia experience and gain so much more from it!

BREANNA HARVEY (BFA, Contemporary Dance; Minors in English Lit and Education)

My hometown is Brampton, a city near Toronto. When I first arrived in Montreal, I was completely out of my element, living away from home for the first time. I soon realized organization is the most important thing for student success. Having a plan for the day, week, or even month allows me to keep up with my courses, participate actively in the dance department, hit the gym and still have a social life. Organization is really the key. Once the routine is established, it becomes second nature and achieving a balanced life is easy — and healthy, too! I love dancing, Zumba (I was just certified to teach!), working out and living a healthy and active lifestyle.



Cecilia



Duy Bach



Elyse



Hawa



Jennifer



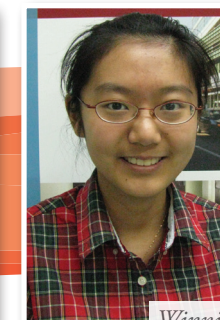
Madalina



Rafael



Sarah



Winnie



Lin Xu

CECILIA AYUK (BSc, Biochemistry)

Born and raised in Cameroon, I am fluent in English and French. I came to Montreal in 2009 and started at Concordia right away. I found it tough to integrate and adapt, but hurdles that were once daunting can now be jumped easily, thanks to the excellent services offered by Counselling and Development. My recommendation? Take advantage of the support services available. Build a good rapport with course mates and professors — it can go a long way to enhance your learning process and make it fun as well. But remember, your ultimate success depends a lot more on you than on others.

DUY BACH NGUYEN (BComm, Accountancy)

I am an international student from Vietnam in my third year at Concordia. When I began at Concordia, I attended the Start Right orientation and connected with a Student Success Mentor who really helped me in those first months. Since then, I've helped other students by volunteering for the International Students Office and the Dean of Students Office. I also work as a math tutor. Now, as part of the Student Success Mentor team, I look forward to assisting and supporting my fellow students. I recommend new students get their ID early, take a tour of the university and drop by the Student Success Centre where you will find a lot of interesting and useful tips.

ELYSE McFADDEN-MURPHY (BSc, Biochemistry)

I've lived in Montreal my entire life, speak English and French, and like any Montrealer, I am passionate about hockey. I've enjoyed my studies in biochemistry at Concordia because the facilities and professors are great. During my studies, I volunteered at an orphanage in the Dominican Republic, worked with Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans and worked in a rural farming community in Peru — all through the Alternative Spring Break program. I also studied in Ireland on an international student exchange. I love the unique opportunities Concordia has offered me and encourage other students to take advantage as well. I'd be happy to share my experience and advice with you.

HAWA DIA (MA, Economics)

I was born in Zambia and raised in Senegal which allowed me to be fluent in both English and French. I moved to Montreal seven years ago to complete my bachelor's degree in economics at Concordia. Then, after working for two and a half years, I returned to school to hone my analytical skills and better understand the world. I love the diversity at Concordia. You meet people from all over the world and learn and share experiences with them. As an undergraduate, I worked for Counselling and Development as a study group leader for economics courses and now I am in my second year on the Student Success Mentor team. I've got a lot of Concordia experience at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and can't wait to help you in your Concordia journey.

JENNIFER QIN YI YAO (MA, Educational Technology)

I immigrated to Montreal from China with my husband and child. Soon after arriving, I began an MA in Educational Studies. My transition to a new country and new field of study wasn't so smooth at first. I puzzled over my studies, my career plans and my personal life. I turned to Counselling and Development where I found the caring nature of the counsellors as well as their professionalism very reassuring. They helped me find my way and about a year into my program, I started a second MA in Ed. Tech. I'm now looking forward to a career designing and implementing training programs for corporate and educational settings. My advice to new students is ask questions, lots of them. Don't be shy or worry about losing face; instead, you will find it is the best way to survive in a new environment.

MADALINA RADU (BA, Human Relations)

My professional path started in the information technology field, but two years ago I decided to change careers to work more closely with people. As a mature student and a parent of a three-year-old, I had many questions about returning to school. Meeting with a counsellor, taking a few workshops and using the writing assistance service were crucial to my

integration into student life. The diversity at Concordia has also made it easier for me to connect with my peers. I am passionate about healthy living, nutrition, the outdoors, psychology, travelling and languages. I speak English, French, Spanish and Romanian. Being a student keeps you really busy, but I recommend setting time aside for socializing to cultivate what may become the most precious and important relationships in your life.

RAFAEL SORDILI (BA, Western Society & Culture and Political Science)

I came to Canada two years ago and I am loving my experience here. I love the academic environment at Concordia with the exchange of ideas, the freedom to speak our minds and especially the diversity. I've made friends from places I knew little about and they've taught me things and made me question some of the preconceived ideas I had about the world. I'm working on my second BA, the first was in social sciences from the University of São Paulo in Brazil. As you might have guessed I'm Brazilian. My advice for you is to get connected and informed. You could start by getting a mentor. We're here to answer questions and help in any way we can — and we really enjoy getting to know you!

SARAH EL-NABULSI (BA, Psychology)

I have a degree in interior design, worked as fashion designer and a TV producer, lived in South Africa, became a meditation teacher and spent six years teaching meditation for a non-profit in Syria. Last year I got my MA in eastern religion and now I'm a year away from a BA in psychology. What I find motivating about Concordia's culture is that it is one of tolerance and celebration of differences, care for the environment and high standards of performance. My advice for new students? Nourish your body with the right food, your mind with good regular sleep and your heart with positive uplifting relationships. Establish a support system ASAP — friends (for enjoyment), a counsellor (for the heavy stuff) and interest groups (to expand your mind).

WINNIE YUAN HAO WANG (BComm, Accountancy and Human Resource Management)

Coming from China as an international student, I was faced with some difficulties, but thanks to so many amazing resources at Concordia, I've adapted pretty well. Not only have I achieved an excellent academic record, I've also enjoyed quite a few extra-curricular activities. I have done some volunteer work both on and off campus, and I am the VP Internship at the Junior Hong Kong Canada Business Association. I am also a co-op student about to begin my first work term. Something I've come to realize and live by is that your GPA matters, but to enrich your university experience, you should also get involved in volunteer and association activities. I'd like to help you discover the world of Concordia and all it has to offer, just as I have been doing.

LIN XU (M.Applied Computer Science)

I am an international student from China. Before coming to Concordia, I worked for an IT company in China. My program requires that I spend a lot of time in the lab. However, I am indeed a sports enthusiast. I play soccer, basketball and table tennis, and I like swimming. Now I am planning to learn tennis. Concordia has great sports facilities with lots of options so there's no reason not to stay active and have fun. Music is another favorite. I like hard rock, blues and country. I enjoy playing guitar and singing, which is a fantastic way for me to cope with stress. At the beginning of each academic year, there are a lot of orientations to help new students make friends and learn about Concordia and Montreal. I took advantage of these and suggest every new student do the same. ■

Student Success Centre
studentsuccess.concordia.ca

facebook.com/studentsuccesscentre

Counselling & Development
cdev.concordia.ca

Going Global

by Andrew Lang, Manager, Student Mobility,
Concordia International

Each year, hundreds of Concordia students pack their bags and take to the skies to spend a semester or an academic year at one of Concordia's many student exchange partners around the world. And while their reasons for going on exchange may vary, most agree that they return to Concordia as better people and better prepared for meeting the challenges of an increasingly global, inter-dependent world.

For third year psychology student Chris Brown, who studied at the University of Maastricht in The Netherlands during the entire academic year of his second year at Concordia, the decision to study abroad was all about challenging himself and experiencing a new environment. "I don't think there are too many opportunities in life where you get to throw yourself into such a novel experience that is bound to take you out of your comfort zone. I wanted to see how I would respond to such an experience," Chris replied when asked why he chose to study abroad on exchange.

A student exchange provides a unique opportunity to learn how to adapt to new places and learn firsthand about different peoples, economies and political systems.

And what was the result of his experience? "I feel that I have gained a large amount of self-confidence. After having done it once, I feel like I could just pick up and move to another country without that much difficulty. Going to Maastricht allowed me to add to my CV considerably. Furthermore, I think the experience as a whole allowed me to develop skills that will translate well to graduate school."

Derick Abrigu, an undergraduate student in Sociology and Anthropology, spent a term at the University of Guanajuato in Mexico. When asked if he had any advice for Concordia students considering going on a student exchange, he enthusiastically replied: "Go for it. Whatever you think is holding you back, consider that the impact that this experience can have on your life, on your future, is irreplaceable. People you meet, obstacles you encounter, flavours you taste and cultures you engage in all form an incredible adventure that cannot be replicated by staying in your home university."

REWARDING FROM ANY PERSPECTIVE

Studying abroad on exchange is one of the most rewarding experiences you can have while a student at Concordia. Not only does it provide you with a chance to experience the rewards of travel right now, it also provides many opportunities for professional development that can have a significant impact on the rest of your life.

From an academic perspective, a student exchange also enriches your Concordia program. By studying abroad, you gain access to new courses, expert faculty and specialized facilities that are different from those available at Concordia. From a professional perspective, it provides you with a unique opportunity to learn how to adapt to new places and learn firsthand about different peoples, economies and political systems.

EVERY EXCHANGE STARTS WITH GETTING INFORMED

The office at Concordia that oversees the student exchange programs is Concordia International, located in Annex X on Mackay Street on the Sir George William campus. Concordia International provides an expert service in a friendly, fun and engaging environment. Students can meet with the staff on a walk-in basis or attend one of several info sessions held throughout the school year. In addition, Concordia International organizes a variety of activities such as study abroad fairs, information sessions on specific destinations and opportunities to meet current and past exchange students.

Students who study abroad on exchange agree — they are better prepared for meeting the challenges of an increasingly global, inter-dependent world.

The five staff members dedicated to student mobility, who themselves represent six different nationalities and speak seven languages, firmly believe in the benefits of international education from both the student and institutional

perspectives. With their own international experience, they know and have lived the questions and excitement students (and their parents) have as they plan to study abroad.

Concordia International assists hundreds of Concordia students preparing to study abroad each year, as well as hundreds of students from abroad who are preparing to come to Concordia on exchange. For students thinking of making a student exchange part of their university experience, Concordia International will be the first destination on what will be a long, enriching journey! ■



Derick Abrigu: Adventure and learning in Mexico



GET HEALTHY AT CONCORDIA

By Owen Moran, Health Promotion Specialist, Health Services

Your health is your greatest resource. It is an essential factor that helps you achieve your life goals, including academic goals. Studies of college students that examine the link between overall health and academic success have found that those who report greater health and well-being have a higher grade point average and are less likely to discontinue their studies. Furthermore, maintaining good health offers many benefits beyond academic success such as a reduced risk of illness and disability as well as a better quality of life. With so many good reasons for students to get and stay healthy, it is fortunate that there are many things you can do to enhance your health and Concordia offers many resources to help you with this goal.

HEALTHY EATING

If you ever find yourself on the seventh floor of the Hall building around lunchtime on weekdays during the fall or winter semester, you will inevitably spot a curious queue of students,

many of whom are patiently waiting with empty food containers in hand. These students have come to the People's Potato to lunch on a tasty vegan meal—one that contains lots of healthy plant-based foods and no animal products whatsoever.

Begun by a group of students in 1999 to address student poverty, the People's Potato provides vegan meals for a donation of what you can afford. The staff is composed predominantly of volunteers, so the "Potato" doesn't just provide opportunities for healthy eating but also a way for you to get involved with the Concordia community and make new friends along the way. You can find out more about the People's Potato through their new website, where you can also download vegan cookbooks so you can prepare delicious meals at home, too.

Another place on campus where you can obtain nutritious food is the Frigo Vert, which is both a store and a cooperative. The store — located at 2130 Mackay Street — sells



The dedicated and well-travelled staff of Concordia International

STUDENT EXCHANGE - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where can I study?

Concordia has more than 100 student exchange partners in 35 countries. You can find a complete list of partners on the Concordia International website.

Who is eligible?

Anyone in a Concordia degree program can study abroad with the proper planning! The preliminary qualifications for studying abroad on exchange vary from one faculty to the next, but in general you must have a minimum 3.0 GPA and have completed 24 credits toward your undergraduate degree or nine credits towards your graduate degree by the time you leave on exchange.

When can I go?

You cannot go on exchange your first year at Concordia. And, while it is possible to study abroad on exchange during your last semester, students are advised against it due to a variety of logistical reasons. Most students begin planning for exchange in their first year at Concordia and study abroad during the following year.

How can I prepare?

It is important to start planning well in advance of when you want to go because the process takes time. Speak with an international liaisons officer at Concordia International and also discuss your plans for studying abroad with your academic advisor as soon as possible.

What about finances?

When you study on exchange, you pay your normal Concordia tuition fees and not the partner institution's. You will also need to pay for your accommodations abroad, transportation, necessary travel documents and insurance. It is also important to budget for spending money. Luckily, most students qualify for a mobility bursary from the Québec Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sports, which provides students with up to \$1,000 per month, for a maximum of eight months. Concordia International also maintains a list of outside funding sources on its website for which you can also apply. ■

Concordia International
international.concordia.ca

Bon Voyage! ———▶



Serving it up at the People's Potato

organic bulk and pre-packaged foods, alternative health products, environmentally thoughtful cleaning supplies, sandwiches, snacks, cheap coffee and much more. Because it is also a cooperative, it sells memberships to individuals who can purchase items in the store at a lower price than non-members. All undergraduate students pay a fee levy to the Frigo Vert and, as such, automatically become members, so don't forget to drop into the Frigo Vert to pick up your membership card.

There is no excuse for inactivity — just find your passion and get up and move!

Chartwell's, the food provider on campus, operates eateries on both Concordia campuses and has a program called Balanced Choices® which helps you identify healthful options. These are indicated by symbols including the balanced symbol, the vegetarian symbol and the vegan symbol. You can take advantage of these tools to make healthy choices at the various Chartwell's cafeterias and food kiosks on campus.

If you wish to learn more about healthy eating, consult the booklet "Healthy Eating: A Practical Guide," which is published by Concordia University Health Services. You can pick up a copy at the Health Services office on either campus or download it from the Health Services website at <http://www-health.concordia.ca/pdf/healthinfo/nutrition-final.pdf>.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Engaging in regular physical activity is associated with a tremendous number of benefits. Research shows that getting 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity each week is associated with a decreased risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, some cancers, overweight and obesity, some mental health problems (e.g. depression and anxiety) and much more.

Fortunately, members of the Concordia community have numerous options to be active on campus. Many of these are found through the department of Recreation and Athletics. At the heart of what they offer is Le Gym, which is an innovative fitness centre on the SGW campus offering the latest and best in exercise equipment as well as access to personal trainers for very reasonable rates. On the Loyola campus, Le Centre is a conditioning centre that is part of the new, state-of-the-art PERFORM Centre. The focus here is on helping individuals improve their health through prevention.

But the opportunities to exercise don't stop with the gym. Recreation and Athletics also offers a multitude of classes and activities including zumba, boxercise, hip hop, ballet workouts, yoga, Pilates, Capoeira and more. If you are

interested in team sports, you can get involved in a variety of sports leagues such as basketball, soccer, lacrosse, ice hockey or ultimate frisbee. And don't forget the little things you can do every day, like taking the stairs instead of the escalators or elevators, going out dancing with friends or taking a brisk walk between classes — which will not only increase your heart-rate but also clear your mind. With so many great options, there is no excuse for inactivity — just find your passion and get up and move!

MENTAL HEALTH

Good physical health is important for success at university, but so is good mental health. Studies have found that students with poorer mental health are less successful in their studies and are more likely to drop out. If mental health issues are affecting your ability to perform, Concordia has several resources to help. Students who are experiencing anxiety, depression, an eating disorder, stress or other mental health issues can make an appointment with a psychiatrist or psychotherapist at Health Services, or with a psychologist or counsellor at Counselling and Development. These professionals are available at no cost to Concordia students. Counselling, therapy and assessment at affordable rates are also available on the Loyola campus at the Applied Psychology Centre.

Two factors that contribute to enhanced mental health are connecting with others and volunteering. A great way

to connect with others at Concordia is to join one of the many student clubs. There are clubs for every interest from cultural and religious associations, to political groups, to clubs for outdoor enthusiasts and gamers. Many of these are organized through the Concordia Student Union, the Graduate Students Association, or one of the many other student associations on campus. You can find more information and links on the Dean of Students website. If you are interested in volunteering, Concordia's LIVE Centre links potential volunteers with dozens of volunteering opportunities at Concordia, in the Montreal community and even abroad.

HEALTH PROMOTION COUNSELLING

Concordia students are fortunate to have free health promotion counselling services available to them. Students can meet with a health promotion specialist to help them set, achieve and maintain health goals such as quitting smoking, gaining or losing weight, eating healthfully, engaging in regular physical activity, sleeping better or any other goal that contributes to better health.

As a student at Concordia you can benefit from a wide variety of services and resources that can help you enhance your health. Do your body, mind and grades a favour by taking advantage of some of these fantastic opportunities. ■



HEALTHY AT CONCORDIA: QUICK REFERENCES

People's Potato
peoplespotato.com

Health Services
health.concordia.ca

Counselling & Development
cdev.concordia.ca

Recreation & Athletics
athletics.concordia.ca

Applied Psychology Centre
psychology.concordia.ca/appliedpsychologycentre.php

Dean of Students
deanofstudents.concordia.ca

LIVE Centre
volunteer.concordia.ca



ART MATTERS

AT CONCORDIA

by Rafael Sordili, BA (Western Society & Culture / Political Science) and Student Success Mentor

Let us talk a bit about art. But before that, I would like to propose a mental exercise. Imagine yourself stranded in a desolate place — a burning desert, a frozen tundra, a damp rainforest — it doesn't really matter where, as long as it's a place in which you need to fend for yourself. If you had the option of bringing three objects to assist in your survival, what would they be?

I'll bet a thousand dollars that nobody thought for a moment about bringing along the Mona Lisa, not to mention an edition of Shakespeare, or even a recording of Beethoven's 9th. The reason for that is because art is not essential for our immediate survival; we don't eat it or drink it, nor do we use it to protect ourselves from the elements (foodies, oenophiles and fashionistas please bear with me for a sec). Art, in fact, does not really matter — or does it?



Well, according to some pretty important people in history, art does matter — it matters a lot. Aristotle, for example, considered that art reveals the true inner significance of the world. Hegel agreed; for him the purpose of art is to encourage a sense of amazement towards the universe. Both philosophers believed that the world would be an overly crude and unbearable place without the work of artists. No wonder Nietzsche considered art the proper task of existence; and Oscar Wilde found in art the very secret of life.

The relevance of the Art Matters festival lies in the fact that it is completely produced and curated by students.

At Concordia as well, art most certainly does matter. The university is renowned throughout Canada for fostering the arts and promoting the artistic production of its student body. The Faculty of Fine Arts is one of the largest and most respected art schools in the country. It attracts students hailing from all over the world who wish to develop or give their artistic skills a boost under the guidance of a very talented and generous faculty.

Moreover, there are many “official” venues spread over the two campuses where Concordia's virtuosi can showcase their art. From galleries and theatres to a very hip concert hall, these places hold events frequently throughout the year and are open to artists from — and beyond — the Concordia community.

This is not to mention the various “unofficial” venues, those nooks and crannies of the university where guerrilla-type artists go to either make or display their work. From people practicing their instruments, sketching, taking photos or making movies, to the usual washroom graffiti (which have been the subject of serious academic study, mind you), Concordia lives and breathes art. A large portion of the university's educational experience revolves around it.

The Concordia community is extremely fortunate for having a vibrant and engaged

student body. The students are a most important asset of the university. They organize and promote all sorts of clubs, associations and events that contribute to making life at Concordia such a unique and positive experience.

Among the trendiest happenings organized by Concordia students is Art Matters, the annual art festival. The whole idea for the festival came in 2000 when a group of five Fine Arts students identified the need for Concordia student artists to have an outlet for their work and acted upon it, thus creating a festival that is nowadays the biggest one of its kind in North America.

The 2012 edition of Art Matters had works by 150 emerging artists. Fifteen curators organized a total of 13 exhibitions, which were coupled with an open house weekend, a speaker series and an art crawl. The participants were Concordia's crème de la crème in the fields of painting, sculpture, ceramics, performance arts, theatre, contemporary dance, photography, music, electro acoustics, installation, design, video works, computation arts and many other forms of artistic craziness.

Just to give an example of such craziness, one of the events took place at the Blue Cat Boxing Club. It was a night of live music, dance, theatrical and visual elements, paired up with the occasional boxing rounds! Seriously, who would want to miss that?

The relevance of the Art Matters festival lies in the fact that it is completely produced and curated by students. Yes, you read correctly! The aspiring artists of Concordia University get to have a festival of their own which they run completely from top to bottom. Not only do they have the opportunity to make their work known to the general public and critics, but, most importantly, they also get a chance to experience hands-on what it is like to be an entrepreneur in the arts. This makes them better equipped to actually make money while pursuing an artistic career in the scary world of post-university life.

Art Matters also gives art an interesting twist. The festival tears down the boundaries between art and the viewing public. It takes

art out of the usual artsy venues (museums and halls) and sets it free upon the city streets and other public spaces that lack pre-determined codes of interaction with the artworks.

Art Matters tears down the boundaries between art and the viewing public.

By turning regular Montrealers into art spectators, many of whom might never even have had any contact with art, Art Matters provides a chance to appreciate and relate to art and to do so in whatever spontaneous manner they wish to. The result is a unique participatory atmosphere that makes all the difference in generating an art that is very much dynamic and alive.

To facilitate this process, in 2012 Art Matters went bilingual. For the first time since its inception, the festival was able to assume its proper place within the cultural diversity of the French metropolis that is Montreal.

The best thing about Art Matters, however, is that it is open to any student from the Concordia community. Whether you are an artist looking for a big break or just an art-lover wanting to get involved, Art Matters has a place for you. All you need is to believe that art always has, and always will, matter. After all, as Cicero once said: "Life is short, but art lives forever." The 2013 edition is just around the corner, don't miss out on it! ■

CONCORDIA FINE ARTS SPACES

Galleries

Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery
FOFA Gallery
VAV Gallery
MFA Gallery
Mobile Media Gallery

Cinemas

J.A. de Sève Cinema

Performance Venues

Oscar Peterson Concert Hall
D.B. Clarke Theatre
F.C. Smith Auditorium
Cazalet Theatre

CONNECT TO ART MATTERS

artmattersfestival.org

www.facebook.com/artmattersfestival

twitter.com/#!/artmattersfest



GINGA TARISHIMA

SUPPORT YOU CAN COUNT ON

Submitted by staff members in Advocacy & Support Services

Welcome to Concordia University, an "active, innovative and inspiring" community! We hope that you will have an exciting time here working towards your academic goals. We also hope that you broaden your university experience by getting involved in some of the many extra-curricular activities that are offered to our over 45,000 students.

One of the things that makes Concordia particularly special is its vast array of extra-curricular and support services. One office that many students get to know and appreciate is Advocacy and Support Services, which is dedicated to assisting three special groups of students: students with disabilities, Aboriginal students and international students. In addition, the Student Advocate Program run through Advocacy and Support Services provides all Concordia students with information about the university's Academic Code of Conduct and the Code of Rights and Responsibilities and assists those facing charges or needing help with student request forms and procedures.

GATHERING 'ROUND TO SOLVE PROBLEMS TOGETHER

What's the most effective technology to solve problems with essays, time management, reading effectiveness and coping with other school demands? It could be as simple as a coffee table.

Students with disabilities sometimes face unique challenges that call for unusual solutions. Once a week, students with disabilities gather over coffee and cookies to swap ideas about overcoming obstacles. The Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) hosts these innovative "Circle" meetings, where students encourage and inform each other about effective technologies and strategies to make academic life easier and more successful.

Students offer each other concrete support to deal with their most immediate challenges. For example, visually impaired and dyslexic students often find it hard to access reading

materials. Circles serve as a forum to get advice and offer ideas about the latest (and least expensive) text-to-speech technologies and electronic text conversion tools. Students may find it hard to concentrate while reading or preparing for tests. At Circles, students discuss concentration strategies and use everyday tools such as egg-timers and cell phones to practice self-discipline techniques and reduce fatigue.

Many students with disabilities have extensive experience to offer about adaptive technologies, and have stories to share about how they overcame writing and study challenges. It is reassuring for students with difficulties to know that for almost every problem, another student has faced the same issue and can offer support for a solution. And even when Circles attendees facing formidable problems know very well what they need to do, they find it empowering to talk with other students before taking the next step.

Charles Altman, technology consultant for Advocacy and Support Services, facilitates Circles, instigating discussion and collaborative problem solving. After every meeting, Charles sends emails to all ACSD students with notes and tips discussed, as well as links to useful online resources and articles, allowing the participants to build on their learning and further develop their skills. "Students are at the centre of problem solving," says Altman. "We always focus on the next step. When students take it and succeed, their experience becomes an asset to everyone. That's the kind of learning community we want."



Through Circles, all students with disabilities can take part in a supportive and collaborative community.

BUILDING FUTURES — MAINTAINING ROOTS

The Aboriginal Student Resource Centre (ASRC), formerly known as the Centre for Native Education, serves as a “home away from home” for all First Nations, Inuit and Metis students entering Concordia University. The ASRC offers a workspace, computer lab, printer/copier, documentation centre/library and comfortable lounge area. The centre also has an Elder, Morning Star, whose role is to share and teach cultural and spiritual knowledge, while Suzan Searle, the resident writing assistant, helps students polish their writing skills.

Seasonal feasts are held to help students connect, network and celebrate their traditions and culture. Occasionally an Elder or special guest may be invited to the ASRC and a feast will be held in his or her honour. These feasts are a key component in gathering the students together and support “nation building” within the institution.

Nadine Montour, a Mohawk from Kahnawake who has worked in education for 20 years, joined the ASRC in January 2012. Nadine points out some of the ASRC’s highlights: “The most important aspects of our centre are the students. We have many high achieving, talented students who are studying to be journalists, administrators, teachers, engineers and artists. These students are future leaders and the centre’s aim is to be proactive in helping them achieve their highest academic potential while maintaining their culture.”



At the ASRC students connect, network and celebrate their traditions and culture.

The ISO hosts a number of events that help international students get a taste of life in Quebec and Canada.



ALL PHOTOS: ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

NEW EXPERIENCES AND NEW FRIENDS

International students face many challenges adjusting to a new culture and a different way of doing things. But there are also many rewards as they make new friends and discover new traditions. The International Students Office (ISO) helps international students at Concordia negotiate the paperwork and adapt to Concordia. In addition, the ISO hosts a number of events that help international students get a taste of life in Quebec and Canada.

Sara Afshari-Nejad, a graduate student in engineering, describes an ISO trip as one of her best Canadian experiences. Here’s her story in her own words:

“As an international student in Canada, I like to take full advantage of every opportunity I get that will allow me to experience many of the traditional events that Canadians enjoy. When I heard the ISO was organizing an apple-picking trip, I immediately decided to join along. On a sunny day in October, prime apple-picking time, we left from Concordia’s Sir George Williams campus and excitedly started our journey. While on the bus, it was so much fun meeting other international students who were also looking forward to experiencing a traditional Canadian activity. It was nice to be able to socialize with the ISO advisors, too. After a pleasant bus ride getting to know each other, we arrived at Quinn Farms.

“Before getting down to picking apples, we got to sample some of the tasty treats made from the fruit such as muffins and fresh apple juice. Everything was delicious! Next, we got on a farm tractor filled with straw and as we toured the farm en route to the orchards, we were entertained with information and fun facts. When we reached the orchard, we were given plastic bags to fill with freshly picked apples but quite a few never made it to the bags — we ate tons of apples while picking.

“After filling our bags we continued discovering the farm. In addition to apple trees, there were Christmas trees, pumpkin patches and strawberry plants. An artificial lake was used for irrigation, which I found to be an interesting and innovative way to supply water to the farm. There were animals including horses, pigs, sheep, rabbits and calves. There was a store that sold many natural farm products such as fruit, meats, fresh apple juice, jams, muffins and honey. It was my first time tasting that many different kinds of honey! There were also crates of apples that we could choose from to make our own pies, muffins and apple juice.

“On that trip, I had a chance to meet new people and make new friends in addition to being able to see one of Canada’s many farms. I thank the ISO for this great experience and I encourage all international students to make the most of their time at university by getting involved in the different activities available to them at Concordia.”

SUPPORTING STUDENTS — SUPPORTING INTEGRITY

One department in Advocacy and Support Services which has been delivering top-notch services to all Concordia students for over 20 years is the Student Advocate Program (SAP). The SAP has come a long way since its inception in 1991. It has recently undergone innovative changes, customizing its services through tailored outreach initiatives catering to the needs of students and other stakeholders individually and collectively.

The Student Advocate Program plays an essential role helping students understand university rules.

The SAP helps students get information about Concordia’s Academic Code of Conduct and the Code of Rights and Responsibilities, which all students must understand and abide by. If students do come into conflict with these codes during their studies at Concordia, the SAP can also provide assistance.

To accomplish its objective to teach students about academic integrity, the SAP does a lot of outreach, beginning with new students through presentations at various orientation sessions. The SAP also produces a number of pamphlets on electronic referencing, plagiarism and paraphrasing because understanding all three with absolute clarity is fundamental for every student at Concordia.

The SAP has taken its active involvement to a new height by providing specific help to international students, Aboriginal students and students with disabilities. It has focused on reaching out to administrators, invigilators, teaching assistants, staff and faculties in an effort to better help the student population.

Academic integrity is everyone’s concern and Concordia’s SAP is so good at what it does that last year, it received requests from other North American universities to use its model of service and web presentation materials. Concordia students are indeed fortunate to have such an excellent service available to them. ■

Advocacy & Support Services supportservices.concordia.ca



The LIVE Centre can connect you with volunteer opportunities that will get you closer to your career goals!

Get involved at Concordia, in Montreal, or abroad

Join other Concordia students volunteering for special events



SGW - H 608
VOLUNTEER.CONCORDIA.CA



STREET-VIEW OF YOUR FUTURE

by Louise Lalonde, Communications and Marketing Officer, Institute for Co-operative Education

Some have switched universities in order to participate in it. Many have changed academic programs so they can be part of it. For thousands of students at Concordia, it's the spark of success for their academic and professional careers. Could co-op be the opportunity you're looking for?

Matthew Battah, recent graduate with a BComm in Accountancy, thinks it should be. In addition to everything he learned while in class, Matthew graduated with a year's worth of work experience because he did his degree in the co-op work-study format. "The reason I came into co-op was because I was tired of the 'regular' student job. I wanted to get my hands dirty with more relevant jobs," he explains.



Matthew Battah

This allowed him to work closely and be mentored with the firm's founder, who had a previous career as an operations executive. The work term was such a success that the employer continued to hire co-op students after Matthew returned to class and then moved on to work with different companies during his remaining work terms.

Matthew's second work term was a bit of a surprise. "I wanted to have as many options open as possible, so I interviewed at what I thought was a call centre job only to realize it was a position as an internal auditor at Canada Revenue Agency. I took the opportunity and in the process zeroed in on specific areas that I enjoyed, namely public accountancy and tax."

Matthew has become a firm believer in the co-op experience and he encourages other students to seize the opportunities that co-op offers.

Co-op is a different way to do your degree. More than 1,400 students in Concordia alternate their regular study terms with paid work terms of 12-16 weeks each September, January and May. Currently there are over 30 programs at Concordia that are offered in the co-op format. Students in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science can also participate in a summer-only industrial experience program.

CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING Co-op provides a great alternative but it has its challenges, too. Finding a first work term isn't always easy. Even though Matthew had completed more than the first year of his BComm and his work term was scheduled for September, there was such competition and added stress that he thought about giving up before he found his first work

term. "My family encouraged me to stay in co-op," he admits. "Although some classmates decided to drop it," he goes on to explain, "I decided to tough it out." And it proved well worthwhile.

Matthew found an ingenious solution to his problem. He sold his part-time employer at Casansa Design on the idea of modifying his job and upgrading his tasks so his work at the company could become a co-op approved work term. In addition to his bookkeeping tasks, Matthew's duties changed to reflect his accounting education and career goals, including his interest in marketing,

UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

In addition to improving his French on the job, Matthew developed many of his soft skills through his work term experiences. "Co-op gives you exposure to a variety of work environments," he says. "You learn to recognize the importance of workplace etiquette, networking, making introductions, interacting with different people and what's appropriate in each office setting. But most importantly, co-op gives you confidence through experience as well as giving you a story to tell. You know what you like and dislike, and you know how to be yourself."

These skills came to the forefront when Matthew attended a job fair for accounting students. After meeting with many recruiters, he found himself chatting casually with one who asked where he saw himself within the firm. Matthew replied, "Honestly, I don't know if I want to be partner, it's just too

Co-op gives you a street-view of your career. It really is more than just experience in your field — it's real-world experience.

early to tell." That simple phrase was evidence of his knowledge of himself and the reality of his future career. Soon after, Matthew was offered a work term with PricewaterhouseCoopers with the understanding there was full-time employment for him on graduation. But he didn't stop there.

It was through co-op that Matthew discovered a strong passion for business startups and entrepreneurship, so after graduating, Matthew began an internet startup called Gradesurge. While building his business, he recognized how most of the tools he used — all the "street smarts" as he himself calls them — he had learned through his co-op work terms. He believes co-op allowed him to better understand his own strengths and weaknesses and to recognize the importance of attention to detail. "It really is valuable experience. I took those lessons and I applied them in starting a business," he says.

As a result of his own positive experience, Matthew has become a firm believer in the co-op experience and he encourages other students to seize the opportunities that co-op offers, to benefit fully from the valued added through combining study and work. "If there's one piece of advice I would like to convey to students," he says, "it is to not just cruise through their part-time jobs and work terms. Everyone can actively seek the skills and lessons that can only be learned in the workplace. And each workplace is different. In essence, you're being paid to learn." Now, how great is that? ■

Institute for Co-operative Education
co-op.concordia.ca



INSTITUTE FOR CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION

Networking at a co-op event

Do I qualify for co-op?

Usually students are selected based on their academic record before they start at Concordia, or in some cases during their first or second term. Not all programs are offered in the co-op format. Not all students qualify for co-op.

How are students and employers matched?

Both groups access an easy-to-use, online, automated system to post jobs, arrange interviews and view CVs, cover letters and marks. Students are also trained and encouraged to look for jobs independently.

Where do students work?

Usually in companies and organizations located in and around Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. Some students choose to work in other parts of Canada or overseas.

When do students do their work terms?

Depending on their academic program, students usually start their first work term after three academic terms. The 12 to 16 week work terms correspond to the school terms, starting September, January or May.

Does it take longer to graduate with co-op?

Usually by one or two semesters in three-year programs, and not at all in four-year engineering programs, as summers are spent either working or studying.

Does being in co-op cost extra?

The administrative fee of \$185 per term (subject to change) is charged for eight consecutive terms. Students requiring fewer terms to complete their programs in the co-op format are subject to the same total fee.



Concordia's got a great urban vibe.



I like the real life experiences professors bring into the classroom.



I love the fact that Concordia strives to be so sustainable.

OUR CONCORDIA

A photo essay by Anmol Vig, MEng (Quality Systems Engineering) and Student Success Mentor



Clockwise from top left: Nelson Hernandez, Leila Ayad, Drew Burnet, Misbah Mohammad, Harleen Girn, Wasseem El Khabb, Anouk Holca-Lamarre, Mounya Nassar, Armin Dalal

▶▶▶ END NOTES FOR A GREAT BEGINNING ▶▶▶

A big part of student success is being organized and proactive. **Here is a list of things to do at the beginning of the term.** Many of them can be done a week or so before classes begin (and should be, if possible). If you can't do them before classes begin, then do them as soon as possible. **Just get yourself in gear!**

1 ▶ **Attend all of the orientation and advising programs you can** – those offered by the New Student Program, by your faculty or department, and by the student associations. They all offer different things and they are all a great way to get to know your university and feel a part of this great community.

2 ▶ **Familiarize yourself with your schedule.** Know which courses/sections you are registered for and where each classroom is located. Take a tour of the locations before classes begin so you arrive at each class relaxed and on time the first day.

3 ▶ **Familiarize yourself with all the important deadlines.** Not knowing a deadline is not an acceptable excuse for missing one, and missing a deadline for things like course changes and fee payments can have serious consequences.

4 ▶ **Visit your MyConcordia Portal and do the following:**

- a. Make sure your personal information (phone, address, etc.) is correct and up-to-date.
- b. Check your account balance. Make sure you can pay it on time or expect a late fee! If you anticipate problems, seek help.
- c. Get a locker. The good locations go early!
- d. Get a university email account and use it for university-related business. It will facilitate communication with profs and staff.

5 ▶ **Get your booklist from the Concordia Bookstore website and buy your books early.**

The line-ups may be long, but they get longer as the first week of class progresses. Also, used books get snatched up quickly. Check out the Bookstore website to learn about the book rental program and book return policy, too!

6 ▶ **Visit the library.** Sure you can access most library services from home, but knowing your university library is still important. Locate the area for your field of study as well as study/reading areas. Find the Reference desk, learn who the Subject Librarian is for your program, and familiarize yourself with CLUES (the online library catalogue). Learn about library workshops and plan to attend one so you know how to use library resources properly!

7 ▶ **Get a shuttle bus schedule and keep it handy.** Visit both campuses, even if all your courses are located on only one. Each campus has its own flavour and provides a different Concordia experience.

8 ▶ **Check out Counselling and Development Workshops and Special Events.** Visit the department's website at <http://cdev.concordia.ca>. Sign up for at least one workshop and preferably more. They are free, cover a wide range of useful topics, provide excellent information and are a great way to meet other students. Once you've signed up, don't forget to attend!

9 ▶ **Connect with the Student Success Mentors.** Drop by one of the Student Success Centres (SGW-H 481 and LOY-AD 101). Meet with a mentor from your faculty and don't be shy to ask questions about anything university-related, whether academic or social.

10 ▶ **Go to each of your first classes!! Many students think nothing important happens on the first day.** Not true! Important course information is provided — information which can help you decide if the course is right for you and what you'll need to do to succeed. Also, important connections with the professor and other students (potential partners for study groups or team projects) happen during that first class. Get contact information for at least two other students in each course.

CONCERNS? COMPLAINTS? DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN?

We can help.

The Ombuds Office

Promoting fairness at Concordia

concordia.ca/ombuds



EXPERIENCING A BEHAVIOUR-BASED CONFLICT WITH A STUDENT, FACULTY OR STAFF MEMBER?

We can help.

**The Office of Rights
and Responsibilities**

Promoting a respectful campus
rights.concordia.ca





CAMPUS TOURS

Take this opportunity to learn more about Concordia University!

Student-guided tours on both the Sir George Williams and Loyola campuses are offered year-round.

For more information, contact:

Welcome Centre

Tel: (514) 848-2424 ext. 4779

 connect2.concordia.ca

