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# Concordia

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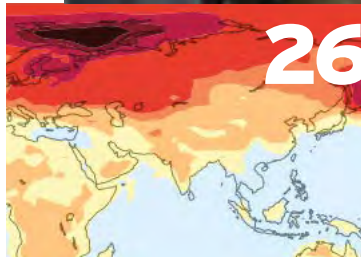
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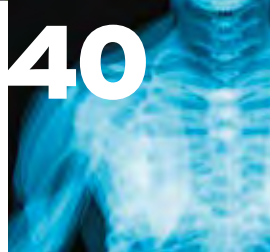
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**COVER:**  
iStock

### CORRECTION:

On page 34 of the fall 2019 edition of *Concordia University Magazine*, photos of Nina Segalowitz, BA 99, and Elana Wright, BA 93, were reversed. We regret the error.

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LAST FALL, CONCORDIA'S NEW PRESIDENT **GRAHAM CARR** PLANTED 185 TREES ON LOYOLA CAMPUS WITH THE HELP OF FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS AND **SUE MONTGOMERY**, MAYOR OF CÔTE-DES-NEIGES-NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE.

## A NEW PRESIDENT TAKES THE HELM

“Concordia is a young, forward-looking university. It’s a unique place where experimentation, innovation and creativity are truly valued. Our community of students, faculty, staff and alumni all contribute to our momentum as Canada’s next-gen university,” says **Graham Carr**, **Concordia’s new president and vice-chancellor** (see pg. 16).

## 25 STUDENTS JOIN AI HUB

25 graduate students joined the **Mitacs-Ericsson Global Artificial Intelligence Accelerator** research initiative. Over the next three years, the Concordia students will use artificial intelligence and machine-learning technologies to create data-driven, intelligent and robust systems, including a fifth-generation (5G) network in Canada.

## GRAD STUDENT WINS JURY PRIZE

**Giuseppe Di Labbio**, BEng 14, MAsc 15, PhD 19, **won a jury prize** in the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) photo contest. Di Labbio’s entry showed what the blood flow in a healthy heart looks like as it fills and how this pattern changes when one of the heart valves leaks.



# Concordia

**Concordia University Magazine** welcomes your comments.

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### Keep in touch

To update your address, email or communication preferences – including where and how you receive the magazine – please visit our new Alumni & Friends service hub at [engage.concordia.ca](http://engage.concordia.ca)

## 100% SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS BY 2025

“We believe that being socially and environmentally responsible in our investments is the surest way to be Concordia’s best possible fund management partner. **Investing in sustainability is not just the right thing to do, it’s the smart thing to do,”** says **Howard Davidson**, chair of the Concordia University Foundation, on a last push towards 100 per cent sustainable investments by the year 2025.

## CONCORDIA STUDENTS TACKLE THE OPIOID CRISIS

In response to the ongoing opioid crisis, Concordia’s iGEM (International Genetically Engineered Machines) team has **created Quantifen, which takes aim at the fentanyl scourge with a biosensor tattoo.** The team earned a **collegiate gold medal** at the iGEM 2019 Giant Jamboree held in Boston from October 31 to November 4, 2019.

## A WORLD-CLASS MBA PROGRAM

The John Molson School of Business MBA received high rankings in 2019, placing **24th in the world** in the 2019 *Corporate Knights* Better World MBA rankings, **91st in the world** according to *The Economist’s* annual survey, and **best in Quebec and fourth in Canada** according to the newly released 2019-2020 rankings from *Bloomberg Businessweek*. The program also placed **first in the country for entrepreneurship**.

## SOCIAL MEDIA’S CONNECTION TO EATING DISORDERS

**Elham Mohammadi**, MCompSc 20, and **Hessam Amini**, two Concordia graduate students, have **outlined a method of detecting signs of anorexia** in individuals by analyzing their social media activity. The research was supervised by **Leila Kosseim**, a professor in the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering and co-director of the Computational Linguistics at Concordia (CLaC) laboratory.

## NET-ZERO CITY

A research team from Concordia is **formulating a framework for North America’s first net-zero city.** “I think it’s fantastic that our university is in such a position to become a global leader in an area that’s as critical for the future of humankind as sustainability,” says Concordia’s president Graham Carr.



CONCORDIA’S JOURNAL OF ACCESSIBLE PSYCHOLOGY WAS LAUNCHED BY A GROUP OF GRAD STUDENTS, INCLUDING (FROM LEFT) HEATHER HERRIOT, MILAN VALYEAR AND ALEXA RUEL.

## MAJOR FUNDING FOR CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH

Concordia has partnered with Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, Catallaxy and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) to evaluate cryptocurrency and blockchain technologies. Valued at **\$1.38 million over five years**, the **NSERC/Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton/Catallaxy Industrial Research Chair in Blockchain Technologies** will bring together a highly skilled group of engineers, graduate students, software developers and business analysts. In addition, the university will receive **\$1.8 million over the next five years** for an **Industry Research Chair in Software-Defined Networking and Network Functions Virtualization (SDN/NFV)**. This new position will unite industry and academia at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science around a vital area of research (see pg. 18).



FORMER STINGERS  
WIDE RECEIVER  
**JAMES TYRRELL**  
SIGNED HIS FIRST  
CFL CONTRACT  
WITH THE OTTAWA  
REDBLACKS IN  
DECEMBER 2019.



## 2019 CENTRAIDE CAMPAIGN

The 2019 campaign ran from October 22 to November 29 and raised \$171,791, **well beyond the goal of \$160,000**. A big thank-you to everyone who participated in the annual charitable drive.

## SCIENCE EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Concordia instructor **Cristian Zaelzer-Perez won the Society of Neuroscience's 2019 Science Educator Award**, which recognizes neuroscientists who have made significant contributions to educating the public about the field. For the past three years, Zaelzer-Perez has been working to create a space for artistic and neuroscience communities to come together through the **Convergence Initiative**.

## SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR INSTITUTE INTRODUCES NEW PROGRAM

Housed jointly by the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Faculty of Fine Arts, the **new Major in Interdisciplinary Studies in Sexuality** will allow students to dig more deeply into the topic of human sexuality.

## TOP GRADUATE RESEARCH

**Shide Salimi and Hubert Gendron-Blais** — PhD candidates in civil engineering and the humanities, respectively — were the recipients of **Concordia's Stand-Out Graduate Research Awards** last fall.

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT LIBRARIAN PROGRAM

For the third year in a row, Concordia has teamed up with McGill University and Université de Montréal to offer a **program for Indigenous students in the field of library and information studies**. The program offers a First Nations, Métis or Inuit student from McGill or Université de Montréal a two-year paid position at the Webster or Vanier Library.

## PARTNERING WITH THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

In fall 2019, the university's **Faculty of Fine Arts** collaborated with the **Montreal Museum of Fine Arts** on two innovative projects, demonstrating the MMFA's **critical role as a classroom for Concordia students**. For the first project, the MMFA partnered with Concordia's Department of Art History to present a public symposium on December 12 entitled "Climate Futures and Contemporary Art: 6 Curatorial Propositions." The second initiative involved Concordia graduate students of art education, drama therapy and communication studies. They participated in three workshops over three days in November at the MMFA to reimagine the museum space.

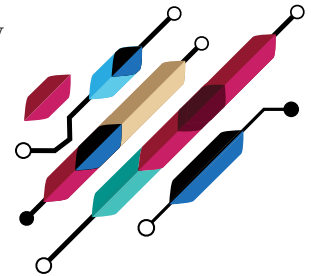


## EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN QUEBEC

**Shadi Hatami** (pictured) is a PhD candidate in **water resources management** in the **Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering** at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. She says **climate change is having significant impacts on soil freeze and thaw patterns in Quebec and beyond**. Hatami's analysis of data sets across the past four decades indicates that areas such as farming, mining, roads and railways are all affected.

## THE GENOME FOUNDRY

A pioneering facility at Concordia, the Genome Foundry is **delivering significant increases in the speed and scale of synthetic biology research**, thanks to its use of robotic instrumentation. It was the first Canadian laboratory of its kind when it opened in August 2018.



## A BUSINESS- SCHOOL FIRST

Concordia's JMSB has signed a partnership agreement with Manulife Investment Management that will **establish the first sustainable investing practicum at a Canadian university**. The three-credit practicum will enable undergraduate business students to better understand the principles of environmental, social and governance (ESG) investment.

## 250 CONCORDIANS HONOURED FOR THEIR DECADES OF SERVICE

The university celebrated 250 Concordians who have dedicated more than 20 years of service to Concordia at the **47th Long Service and Retirement Luncheon**. "Concordia is more than a place of work. For me, it represents a life of service to community, to colleagues and especially to our students. It's where long-lasting friendships are made and is a place filled with endless learning opportunities," says **Miriam Posner**, BSc 74, MBA 89, who has spent more than **45 years at Concordia** and currently works as manager of planning and academic facilities for the Faculty of Arts and Science.



# Antoni Porowski: *Queer Eye's* star shifts from TV to cookbooks

The Concordia grad recently published *Antoni in the Kitchen*

RICHARD BURNETT,  
BA 88

Antoni Porowski, BA '08 (psych.), first shot to international fame as a makeover expert on the hugely successful Netflix reboot *Queer Eye*.

Since the show's debut in February 2018, the member of the "Fab Five" has been busy. Porowski, a Montreal native, opened The Village Den, a restaurant in New York's West Village, filmed four seasons of *Queer Eye* — the most recent of which was shot in Japan — and even had a cameo in a Taylor Swift music video.

Porowski also released his very first cookbook, *Antoni in the Kitchen* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019), last fall. It won the 2019 Goodreads Choice Awards in the cookbook category.

"The book is a culinary memoir," he says. "From my Polish heritage, years in Montreal as a young kid and then university student, to my life in New York now, it's a collection of the recipes that have shaped me."

Porowski returned to his hometown in October 2019 to launch the cookbook at an event at the Rialto Theatre, presented by Librairie Drawn & Quarterly.

"My first restaurant job was actually on St. Laurent

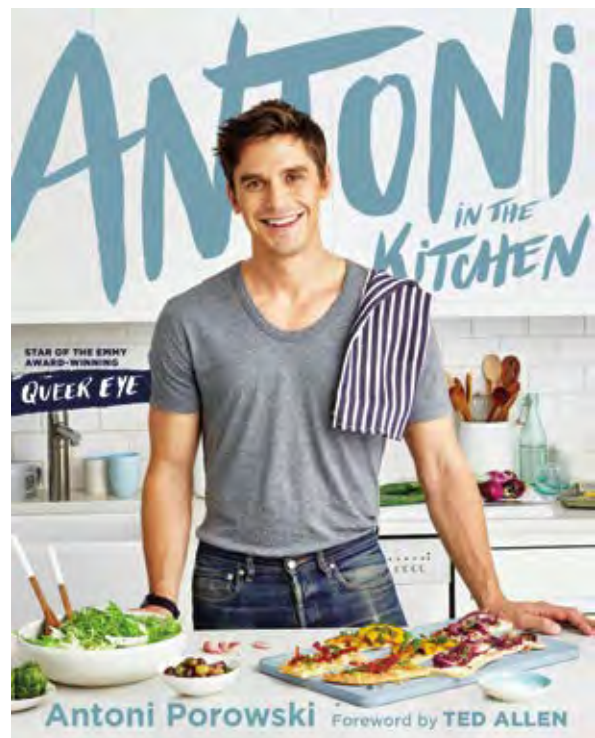


PAUL BRISMAN

Boulevard at a place called Mediterraneo, then Baila and finally Buonanotte," he says. "Working in a restaurant helped me nurture lifelong interpersonal skills. Restaurants have taught me a good work ethic, I like to think."

Porowski credits much of his success to his time as a psychology student at Concordia. "My psychology major definitely helped shape me in many ways. I've always loved being a student, but my university studies helped me build on having an empathetic approach in everything I do," he says.

Look out for Porowski and the rest of his makeover pals on the next season of *Queer Eye*, most likely to premiere on Netflix later this year. This time the Fab Five are headed to Philadelphia, Pa. ■



## Nathalie Petrowski: Quebec from a critic's-eye view

The alumna's new memoir reflects on her distinguished career as a leading arts and culture commentator



JOSEPH LÉGER,  
BA 15

For more than four decades, Nathalie Petrowski, BA 76, has been a staple of Quebec's cultural landscape. As a journalist, critic, columnist, screenwriter and novelist — and occasional lightning rod — she has represented many things to many people.

Petrowski began her career in 1975 as a journalist, and sometime critic, at *Le Journal de Montréal* while still completing her degree in Communication Studies at Concordia. She quickly moved on to *Le Devoir* where she wrote for the culture section, before finally joining *La Presse* in 1992, where she “retired” a year ago (more on that below).

Petrowski has a handful of books and screenplays to her name, including the novel *Maman Last Call*, which she helped adapt into a Genie-nominated film.

The title of her recently published memoir, *La critique n'a jamais tué personne* (“criticism never killed anyone”; Éditions La Presse, 2019), is a tongue-in-cheek reference to her reputation as a fierce critic with a sharp wit — a reputation she admits is not entirely unearned.

We sat down with the multitasking, multi-talented and multi-opinionated Concordia alumna to get to the bottom of who, exactly, is Nathalie Petrowski?

### Which of your many roles do you most identify with?

First and foremost, I'm a journalist. I've been a journalist for 40 years. It's true that when I was a journalist, I did all sorts of other projects. I wrote screenplays, I wrote books, I wrote for a newspaper. I write — that's what I do — I'm a journalist and writer.

My mother was a cultural journalist at Radio-Canada and at some point in her career she quit writing to work in television and it was a

painful experience for her. I told myself that no matter what, I would never stop writing. It is my foundation, my anchor, my *raison d'être*.

I'm still a journalist because a journalist is a way of looking at the world and asking questions, so that hasn't changed. I'm going to be a journalist until I die — even if I don't have a place to write, I'm still going to be a journalist.

### You are perhaps best known as a critic. What led you to this field?

Despite my mother's career and my father's — he worked for the NFB [National Film Board of Canada] — I fell into journalism by accident. But I fell into criticism quite naturally because it's part of my personality. My parents are two people who are very opinionated and I grew up in a household where everybody was expressing a lot of opinions. So it was a natural thing to do, to criticize, to have an opinion, even if it was a little harsh.

### You had a reputation as a fierce critic. Was it deserved?

Yes and no. It's true I had a reputation for being a harsh critic and it followed me my entire career.

I was 22 years old, a young woman and I came full of opinions — and I wrote with a certain style, so that hurts even more. I was very idealistic. I liked rock and roll and I didn't like any of that other syrupy stuff. I didn't make many friends and I made a lot of enemies.

So yes, I did write some harsh reviews, but I did so much more to defend, praise, celebrate and discover artists than I did to bring anyone down. So it's a bit unfair to only retain the image of the mean critic.

Yes, it's true that there were a few artists whose egos I offended, but what do you want me to say? As the title of my book says, criticism never killed anyone! ■





**JONATHAN AND SUSAN WENER** ADDRESS THE CROWD (ABOVE). THEY WERE JOINED BY (BELOW, FROM LEFT): RESEARCHER **URSULA EICKER**; **GRAHAM CARR**; THE EVENT'S EMCEE **ANNE WHITELAW**, INTERIM PROVOST AND VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC; **NORMAN HÉBERT JR.**, CHAIR OF CONCORDIA'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS; **RACHEL DOWNEY**, PHD CANDIDATE; **LINO SAPUTO JR.**, CO-CHAIR OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR CONCORDIA; AND **PAUL CHESSE**, VICE-PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT.

JOSEPH LÉGER, BA 15

## THE 2019 CHANCELLOR'S BUILDERS CIRCLE AND FRIENDS DINNER

**M**ore than 130 of Concordia's top donors and friends attended the fifth anniversary dinner in the Imperial Ballroom of the St-James Theatre in Old Montreal, on October 15.

Hosted by chancellor Jonathan Wener, BComm 71, and his wife Susan Wener, the annual celebration acknowledges the contributions of Concordia's dedicated philanthropic community.

Guests enjoyed speeches by the university's president, Graham Carr, and various researchers, plus a lively performance by contemporary dance students.

"I support Concordia — not only because it gave me the education that helped me succeed professionally but because I believe in this university's ethos, its vision and its outstanding leadership," Wener said. ■





## The School of Irish Studies enjoys a landmark year

Its endowment fund is now at \$7 million, thanks to a consequential new pledge

Concordia's internationally renowned School of Irish Studies is celebrating its tenth anniversary with some exciting news. The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation (CISF) has made a \$4-million pledge to support research and student scholarships, as part of the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.

The School's co-founders, Concordia professors Rhona Richman Kenneally and Michael Kenneally, have also been awarded the Irish Presidential Distinguished Service Award for Service to the Irish Abroad. The award ceremony took place last fall at the residence of President Michael D. Higgins.

In his citation he thanked the co-recipients for all they have done "to strengthen, sustain and maintain the important connection between Ireland and Canada through the foundation of the School of Irish Studies at Concordia — a centre of academic excellence that is known throughout the world."

As an academic unit within the Faculty of Arts and Science, with an enrolment of about 1,200 students, the School annually offers 25



AT A RECEPTION FOR THE CISF'S \$4-MILLION PLEDGE: **PATRICK SHEA**, VICE-CHAIR, CISF; **PAMELA MCGOVERN**, CHAIR, CISF; **JEAN CHAREST**, HONORARY PATRON, CISF; **GRAHAM CARR**; **RHONA RICHMAN KENNEALLY**; **MICHAEL KENNEALLY**.

courses in a dozen disciplines that explore modern Ireland and its diaspora.

"We are very proud of our students who — thanks as well to the calibre of our professors — have gone on to careers in diverse areas, while others are in graduate school with significant scholarships," says Michael Kenneally.

The School's strength is enhanced by its outreach to Montreal's Irish community.

"The School of Irish Studies is a glorious experiment," remarks Rhona Richman Kenneally, a fellow of the School and a professor in the Department of Design and Computation Arts.

"An experiment in how far we can stretch, how many different points of view we can accommodate and how many people — who are not necessarily Irish — can become excited by the possibility of sharing in the vibrant and thriving Irish community in Montreal,



**THE KENNEALLYS** RECEIVE THE PRESIDENTIAL DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR THE IRISH ABROAD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF IRELAND, **MICHAEL D. HIGGINS**.

using our courses and our community-outreach initiatives as conduits."

In turn, local Irish associations have been very supportive, contributing to an endowment fund that has reached \$7 million. As Kenneally points out, "the School would not exist without the three-way partnership between Concordia, various governments and the Irish community."

The value of the School actually goes beyond a focus

on Ireland itself. Kenneally notes that "because of its unique historical trajectory — whether it be colonization, famine, cultural nationalism, attempts at linguistic preservation, history of rebellion, civil war, partition, peace and reconciliation — Ireland touches on issues that resonate internationally. Ireland is, therefore, an instructive case study offering fresh perspectives on contemporary issues." ■



**ANNE-MARIE CROTEAU**, DEAN OF JMSB, WELCOMES **PETER POMPONIO** (CENTRE) AND HIS FAMILY (FROM LEFT): HIS WIFE **GIULIA**; HIS ELDEST DAUGHTER **CHRISTINA**; HIS SON **NICHOLAS**; AND HIS YOUNGEST DAUGHTER **KAYLA**.

## \$100,000 IN SUPPORT OF TOMORROW'S BUSINESS STARS

Peter Pomponio, BComm 90, made a gift of \$100,000 to create undergraduate scholarships and bursaries for students at the John Molson School of Business. Pomponio graduated from Concordia in accountancy and finance; he is the owner and president of Assante Dorval, and managing director of Assante Quebec. ■



JOURNALISM STUDENTS AND FACULTY, INCLUDING **PATTI SONNTAG** (CENTRE) AND DEAN **ANDRÉ ROY** (RIGHT), ACCEPTED THE GIFT FROM **ALEXANDRA HENDERSON** OF CORUS ENTERTAINMENT (LEFT).

## \$42,000 FOR THE FUTURE OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Corus Entertainment donated \$42,000 to Concordia's Institute for Investigative Journalism to support the next generation of journalists in a ceremony attended by students and faculty, including the institute's director Patti Sonntag and André Roy, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. (Read about the institute's groundbreaking "Tainted Water" project on pg. 30.) ■





## Concordia launches the Memorial Scholarship Fund for Iranian Students

IAN HARRISON,  
B COMM 01

Concordia has created the Memorial Scholarship Fund for Iranian Students to commemorate those who died in the fatal crash of Flight 752 (PS752) Tehran, Iran, on January 8.

The Ukraine International Airlines crash claimed all 176 passengers and crew, including 57 Canadians. Many of the victims were members of Canada's academic community — students, professors and university staff.

Two of the university's recent graduates — Siavash Ghafouri-Azar, MAsc 19, and Sara Mamani, MAsc 18 — had just wed in Iran and were on their way home. (Please see "In memoriam," pg. 67.)

The tragedy prompted Concordia to establish a Memorial Scholarship Fund for Iranian Students. This fund will support new students from Iran who choose to pursue their graduate education at the university as of fall 2020.

"Concordia joins Canada's academic community, and the country at large, in mourning this devastating loss of life," said Graham Carr, the university's president. "Our heartfelt condolences go to the families and friends of the victims."

Iranian students have long been vital to the fabric of Concordia's community. With this fund, the university seeks to honour the memory of those who died by helping other talented Iranian students at Concordia.

Concordia donor Gina (Parvaneh Baktash) Cody, MEng 81, PhD 89, gave \$50,000 to start the fund — and a further \$25,000 has already been raised, bringing the total to \$75,000 so far.

"Like countless other Canadians, I was heartbroken upon learning of the crash of Flight 752," said Cody, who emigrated from her native Iran in 1979 to pursue a PhD in building engineering.

"I hope Concordians join me in supporting the Memorial Scholarship Fund for Iranian Students to help the next generation of students and to honour the victims of this tragedy." ■

Find out more at  
**[concordia.ca/ps752](https://concordia.ca/ps752)**.



Rodeo FX

## Concordia grads steer visual effects firm beloved by Hollywood

Rodeo FX's credits include *Blade Runner 2049*, *Stranger Things* (Season 3) and *The Aeronauts*

DANIEL BARTLETT,  
BA 08

Ever wonder how they created those epic battles on *Game of Thrones*? Or who's responsible for bringing the terrifying clown from Stephen King's *It Chapter Two* to the big screen?

Look no further than the creative minds at Rodeo FX. Over the past five years, the Montreal-based visual effects company has been involved in more than 80 major feature film and television projects.

The studio has some notable ties to Concordia. Of the many employees who work out of its Cité du Multimédia office (the company also operates in Quebec City, Munich and Los Angeles), several are graduates, including key members of Rodeo FX's creative, production and management teams.

### THE MENTOR

Mélanie La Rue, **1** GrDip 97, has worked in film, television and commercials. She has spent many days on set and in post-production, both in Montreal and California. Now La Rue happily serves as a mentor to others in her role as a visual effects producer at Rodeo FX.

"I've been lucky to have really great mentors throughout my career," she says. "It's important to encourage

the next generation that's coming in and to be open to what they have to bring."

La Rue's professional journey started while she was a student in Communication Studies at Concordia. She

recalls doing internships with CFCF, CTV — and the Canadian Armed Forces.

"It was training for journalists in war zones," La Rue says of her military stint.

"One [exercise] focused on how to negotiate if you're going through a roadblock."



What La Rue valued most about her time at Concordia was the small group of students in her program. She still maintains relationships with some of her classmates to this day: "We all had different expectations and paths, but it was a really good mix of students with a wide range of experiences. We complemented each other well on the projects that we produced together."

### THE FINANCE GURU

Before Suzanne Bertrand, <sup>2</sup> GrDip 98, became the chief financial officer of Rodeo FX in 2017, her career took a few unexpected turns. She says two things prompted her to leave the accounting industry: a desire to help entrepreneurs



grow their businesses and a fascination with arts and entertainment. "I wanted to join a company I'm passionate about and I loved what the artists do here. I thought I could bring my expertise and help them grow," she recalls.

As CFO of Rodeo FX, part of Bertrand's job is to be sensitive to the company's innovative elements and not to stifle the creative process. "I also bring support and training to help teams understand the impact of their decisions," she explains.

Bertrand enrolled in accountancy at Concordia because she heard it was the best program to prepare for the Common Final Examination. Accounting students in Canada must complete the exam to gain a Chartered Professional Accountant designation.

"Concordia challenged us to think about solutions," Bertrand says. "It was about putting yourself in the position of the entrepreneur and finding the solution that's going to be practical to them."

### THE CONDUCTOR

Mikaël Damant-Sirois, <sup>3</sup> BFA 05, has many credits to his name, including high-profile productions like

*Game of Thrones* and *The Legend of Tarzan*. But it's his first one in a little-known Norwegian movie, *Free Jimmy*, that holds a special place in his heart.

"My mom called me to say, 'I saw your name in the credits at the end,'" Sirois recalls. "There's a limited number of people they can put at the end of a film.

Once your name is in the credits, it's really exciting."

As the head of computer graphics at Rodeo FX, Damant-Sirois manages more than 150 artists and likens his work to that of a conductor overseeing an orchestra.



"I saw *Star Wars* when I was five years old and I knew I wanted to be a part of that world."

"My everyday is finding the best ways to do our work. I'll consult with my specialists in animation and sculpture," Damant-Sirois says. "What is the best technology for them to use? How are we improving the quality?"

At Concordia, Damant-Sirois appreciated how the university helped him become an autonomous learner: "Concordia showed me that you need to find information for yourself, that you need to always be curious."

### THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

George Lucas's *Star Wars* launched one of the most successful film franchises in history in 1977. For Marjolaine Tremblay, <sup>4</sup> Attd 94, the movie had an influence on her future career.

"I saw *Star Wars* when I was five years old and I knew I wanted to be a part of that world," she recalls.

Now an executive producer at Rodeo FX, Tremblay's career got its start while she was studying film animation at Concordia. On the advice of a colleague, she registered for a 3D animation course to learn



how to use computers in lieu of stop-motion animation.

"Studying traditional animation and knowing computer graphics was a big deal in those days," Tremblay says.

Before she could finish her degree, Industrial Light & Magic, the visual effects company founded by Lucas, hired Tremblay as a junior animator. She moved to California and began work on her first film, *Jumanji*.

Today, Tremblay's business development responsibilities include breaking down scripts, pitching creative methodologies and creating budget schedules. She has fond memories of her time at Concordia, where she was an active member of Concordia University Television and founder of Animate Concordia.

"University was a very inspiring time in my life — it was fabulous." ■

**In Good Company** is a series on inspiring grads who work for corporations and non-profits that hire a large number of Concordia alumni. To be featured, please contact us at [alumni@concordia.ca](mailto:alumni@concordia.ca) or @ConcordiaAlumni on social media.



## My father, my self

### How my dad's passing inspired a bursary for the next generation

SYLVAIN-JACQUES  
DESJARDINS, BA 97



RENÉ DESJARDINS WITH SYLVAIN-JACQUES AND MONIQUE CHABOT AT SPRING CONVOCATION IN JUNE 1997.

Losing my father and stepmother, 15 months apart, brought on astonishing measures of grief. And soul-searching.

My dad, René Desjardins, died of Alzheimer's disease in October 2019. He was 79. His partner of three decades — Monique Chabot, a second mother to my four siblings and to myself — died of pancreatic cancer in July 2018. She was 70.

Knowing their end was imminent — Dad's autonomy-thieving illness was diagnosed in 2012, while our stepmother's cancer was found in 2017 — was somewhat a blessing in disguise. Advance knowledge allowed our family to prepare and to say goodbye.

During his lifetime, Dad was among the most generous people I knew. Later, as his power of attorney, I executed his wishes and his care. With his sharp mind receding in plain sight, I often questioned him. What were his final wishes? How did he want to be remembered?

Because two of his five children had earned university degrees, as well as his partner, Dad recognized the value of higher education. Dad and Monique, for example, attended my convocation as I received my degree from Concordia in journalism and English literature in 1997.

Many years later, I returned to my alma mater as director of communications in Advancement, so choosing the university to make my father's final gift made sense. He provided \$6,000 to establish the René Desjardins-Monique Chabot Bursary in support of undergrads who will advance scientific research. At his life's celebration, held at the Loyola Chapel, I encouraged loved ones to give towards his bursary. I was touched that \$3,500 was raised with 99 per cent of contributions made online at [concordia.ca/desjardins-chabot](https://concordia.ca/desjardins-chabot).

"To me, endowing an award in honour of my father and my stepmother is a nod of gratitude to the universe."

With \$9,500 earmarked for this deeply personal cause, I took a leap to endow it. I asked my leadership giving officer how much it would cost to support my parent's award in perpetuity. Trizana Parillo confirmed that I could pledge over time and this flexibility allowed me to commit over six years.

To me, endowing the next generation with an award in honour of my father and my stepmother is a nod of gratitude to the universe. Our connection continues in a spiritual and pragmatic manner. To paraphrase playwright Ntozake Shange: "I found my parents within myself and I loved them, I loved them fiercely." ■

**Find out how you can join Sylvain-Jacques Desjardins in giving to Concordia:**

514-848-2424, ext. 4856 • 1-888-777-3330, ext. 4856

[giving@concordia.ca](mailto:giving@concordia.ca) • [concordia.ca/giving](https://concordia.ca/giving)

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# 'We're anchored in the community – and transforming society'

One of the university's great strengths is the impact it has on students and beyond, says new president Graham Carr

JAKE BRENNAN

In 1983, when Graham Carr joined the Department of History at Concordia, it was a university in transition. A new university, reflecting the values of a changing society, that brought together two long-standing and highly respected schools of thought to create a contemporary and comprehensive institution.

Today, as Carr steps fully into his role as president and vice-chancellor of Concordia, he can look ahead to the university's fast-approaching 50th anniversary — and beyond — and see a sustained commitment to remain at the forefront of higher education.

"Being a next-gen university means grasping the power of positive and

meaningful change," says Carr, whose five-year term at Concordia's helm began on December 12. "It's about re-examining and re-imagining what we do on an almost daily basis so that we increase our momentum and continue to offer high-quality, meaningful learning and research opportunities to students, faculty and our entire community."

When Carr was formally appointed at the end of 2019, Norman Hébert Jr., chair of the Board of Governors, remarked that Carr had emerged as the search committee's "overwhelming top choice."

"Graham is already beloved within our community," Hébert Jr. said. "He brings that knowledge and those existing ties as well as his constant drive,

imagination and curiosity to the position."

Carr's institutional track record includes key support for the \$250-million Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now. He also played a central role in developing the nine strategic directions that guide this phase in the next-generation university's evolution and have helped Concordia rank

first in North America in the QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings Top 50 Under 50 for a second consecutive year.

Carr's five-year term will take him to an important milestone. The year 2024 marks a half-century since Concordia was founded, in 1974, with the merger of Loyola College and Sir George Williams University.



"The more we can partner with other knowledge keepers in society, the more we can amplify our impact."





## “Every Concordia grad can contribute by being an ambassador wherever they are in the world.”

“I would like to see us continue to expand interdisciplinary research in areas such as health, cities, cybersecurity, and new media arts and digital culture,” says Carr.

“We will also continue to pursue the indigenization and decolonization of our institution. And I am extremely pleased to note that our community’s shared value around sustainability is increasingly evident across the university’s activities, from physical services to curriculum and research and, of course, to the Concordia University Foundation’s commitment to holding 100 per cent sustainable investments by 2025.”

Carr also wants to double down on the university’s flair for experimental innovation. The goal is to provide further transformative opportunities to students and society — from the District 3 Innovation Centre, where half of startup

founders are women, to the Institute for Investigative Journalism, whose “Tainted Water” project prompted government action across the country.

“The more we can partner with other knowledge brokers in society, the more we can amplify our impact on individuals and on communities both locally and around the world,” he says. “This impact needs to be highlighted, recognized and celebrated.”

Carr cites the Saputo family’s recent \$10-million gift to form the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation. SHIFT will allow Concordia and community partners to power grassroots social projects in Montreal, Quebec and Canada. The centre’s broad mission includes offering support for projects focused on social and institutional changes, and providing a space where students, staff, faculty and community members can collaborate.

“SHIFT illustrates one of the many ways we can engage by playing the role of trusted relationship broker to convene and mobilize community groups and stakeholders.”

Crucially, adds Concordia’s president, the establishment of a centre like SHIFT demonstrates how the Campaign for Concordia’s fundraising efforts create “the capacity to do things we couldn’t do otherwise and to make them sustainable in the long term.”

“Many initiatives at Concordia depend on the generosity of donors because they don’t fully fit into classic government funding models,” says Carr. “And yet we know that those are also the areas where we can experiment and do precisely the things that government, industry and society are asking for.”

Alumni and other donors have a critical role to play in bolstering other priorities, such as broadening access

to the university through student awards, continuously improving student life through various support services and improving on-campus facilities.

But ultimately, Carr says, “every Concordia grad can contribute by being an ambassador wherever they are in the world.”

The value of a Concordia education continues to rise with the university’s reputation rankings and, as the president notes, that’s an achievement the entire Concordia community can celebrate.

“Tell the story about what a great place Concordia is. Tell the story about what a transformative experience the university can provide. And tell the story about the transformative effect we have in society. If we get 225,000 people spreading that message, we can have an even greater impact.” ■



# CYBER SECURITY IN NUMBERS

As the digital world becomes increasingly complex, Concordia researchers are putting your privacy and security first



DANIEL BARTLETT,  
BA 08

WITH FILES FROM  
J. LATIMER, MFA  
94, AND ERANTHI  
SWAMINATHAN

**M**ourad Debbabi doesn't mince words when he talks about the number of cyberattacks he and his Concordia colleagues monitor on a daily basis.

"It's a lot — it's thousands per day," says Debbabi, who becomes interim dean of Concordia's Gina Cody School of Engineering and

Computer Science in May. He is currently a professor at the Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering (CIISE), and holds the NSERC/Hydro-Québec Thales Senior Industrial Research Chair in Smart Grid Security.

"Most of them are not reported because people have a brand to protect, but the threats are real."

Since 2003, Concordia has been at the forefront of cybersecurity in Canada. The university is home to the Security Research Centre — which promotes research excellence in cybersecurity,

critical infrastructure security and resilience, privacy and cyber forensics — as well as three graduate programs in information systems security.

Moreover, 70-plus researchers are currently investigating different aspects of cybersecurity at Concordia, including one Canada Research Chair, one Concordia University Research Chair and three Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Industrial Research Chairs. Notably, more than 1,000 alumni qualify as cybersecurity experts; many

oversee operations for governments, high-tech companies and financial institutions.

"We have been among the first institutions in Canada to recognize cybersecurity as an area that is extremely important," Debbabi says. "It's going to be even more important with time because society is moving towards more digitalization."

Here are five recent success stories that highlight the work of cybersecurity researchers at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.

**1** LED BY CONCORDIA'S **JEREMY CLARK** (SECOND FROM LEFT), RESEARCHERS ARE WORKING ON NOVEL BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RAYMOND CHABOT GRANT THORNTON, REPRESENTED BY PRESIDENT AND CEO **EMILIO B. IMBRIGLIO** (FIFTH FROM LEFT), BCOMM 81, GRDIP 82, AND CATALAXY, REPRESENTED BY PRESIDENT **LOUIS ROY** (THIRD FROM RIGHT).



## CONCORDIA AND ITS PARTNERS CREATE A NEW INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH CHAIR

A new Industry Research Chair in Software-Defined Networking and Network Functions Virtualization (SDN/NFV) Security aims to bring together graduate students, professors, industrial researchers and subject matter experts to proactively strengthen cybersecurity for the networks of the future.

Created in partnership with Ericsson and NSERC, Concordia will receive \$1.8 million over five years to develop novel processes, techniques and technologies for compliance-driven monitoring, attack prevention, detection and mitigation solutions.

Lingyu Wang, chairholder and professor with the CIISE, notes that 5G telecommunications networks come amid increasing tension between privacy awareness, regulation and security threats.

“As the Internet-of-Things grows in tandem with emerging 5G technology, it’s crucial to assure the security and stability — peace of mind — of both physical and virtual infrastructures across our increasingly networked world,” Wang says.

“I’m honoured to partner with Ericsson for our research on SDN/NFV security. We aim to strengthen Canada’s leadership in innovation and creating high-skilled workers in such a strategically important area.”

## 25 STUDENTS JOIN ERICSSON’S GLOBAL AI ACCELERATOR

Mitacs, a non-profit national research organization, and Ericsson, the telecommunications multinational, announced that they would welcome 80 graduate-level interns to work within the Global Artificial Intelligence Accelerator, a research hub unveiled in Montreal in May 2019.

Over the next three years, the interns will use artificial intelligence and machine-learning technologies to create data-driven, intelligent and robust systems, including a fifth-generation (5G) network in Canada.

Out of the eight Canadian universities involved, Concordia’s delegation is the largest, with 25 students. Their projects attracted \$1.2 million in funding from Mitacs-Ericsson.

“We are thrilled about this collaboration because it will help train highly qualified personnel in hot topics related to the development and application of AI techniques,” says Nizar Bouguila, professor with the CIISE.

Samr Ali, a PhD student in Concordia’s Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, adds that she is looking forward to working closely with likeminded people on the initiative. “It’s so exciting for me to be able to see the impact of my work in real life and to be in a place that fosters teamwork and innovation.”

## \$1.38M TO EVALUATE CRYPTOCURRENCIES AND BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGIES

Concordia has partnered with Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, Catallaxy and NSERC to evaluate cryptocurrencies and blockchain technologies.

Valued at \$1.38 million over five years, the NSERC/Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton/Catallaxy Industrial Research Chair in Blockchain Technologies will bring together engineers, graduate students, software developers and business analysts to figure out how to manage blockchain and digital currencies under current financial regulations.

Principal chairholder Jeremy Clark’s goal is to work closely with Catallaxy members to ensure the program’s research output is useful for industry needs. Catallaxy is a Montreal-based subsidiary of Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton that develops technological products and solutions to authenticate and certify digital data.

“Our research aims to improve our understanding of how much of the financial infrastructure can be positively impacted by blockchain technology, while identifying bad interference with regulation,” says Clark, who is also a professor at the CIISE. “From there, we can think about how we can shape regulation and technology together to maintain the principles they are based on.”

## NEW STUDY EXAMINES ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND POWER-GRID SECURITY


At the IEEE Canada Electrical Power and Energy Conference in October, Amr Youssef, a professor and cryptography expert with the CIISE, presented a study he co-authored entitled, “Impact of Electric Vehicle Botnets on the Power Grid.” The findings are a cautionary tale that warn how botnets — defined as a network of private computers infected with malicious software and controlled as a group without the owners’ knowledge — could exploit vulnerabilities in transmission and distribution systems.

“When electric vehicles are widespread and fast-charging stations are plentiful, cyberattackers could create a network of infected electric vehicles and charging stations that create power outages at will,” says Youssef.

Using data obtained from the Toronto Parking Authority about electric vehicles and fast-charging direct-current stations, the researchers simulated the effect of an electric vehicle’s botnet on the power grid transmission and distribution systems.

“We showed that an attack is possible on both levels — distribution and transmission. Load-altering attacks can cause a power outage when a botnet instructs vehicles to charge at multiple fast-charging stations at the same time, resulting in a voltage limit violation,” says Youssef.

“The threat isn’t at our doorstep, but it’s imminent.”



"Concordia was among the first institutions in Canada to recognize cybersecurity as an area of extreme importance."

#### CONCORDIANS EXPOSE THE SECURITY RISKS OF PUBLIC WI-FI

In September, Suzan Ali, a master's student at the CIISE, presented her findings on the privacy risks of using public Wi-Fi at the Data Privacy Management International Workshop in Luxembourg. Funded by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, the study saw Ali and her supervisors, Mohammad Mannan and Amr Youssef, look at 67 open-access Wi-Fi hotspots around Montreal to shed light on web tracking and data collection behaviours.

The results revealed that 40 per cent of the hotspots performed unnecessary collection of sensitive data via social media, registration or surveys, then shared it with several third parties. All but three of the hotspots employed varying levels of user-tracking technologies on their captive portals and more than half created persistent third-party tracking cookies designed to stay active for up to 20 years.

"If you value privacy and security, you need to stay as anonymous as possible," Ali says. She strongly cautions against using public Wi-Fi, in general, but specifically when dealing with anything sensitive, like financial information. ■

## JMSB'S MISSION

To be one of the most relevant, responsible and respected business schools in the world.

## JMSB'S VISION

To provide an engaging learning and research environment that empowers us to achieve our greatest potential for the betterment of business and society.



CHRISTIAN FLEURY

5 years +  
4 goals +  
3 core values =  
next-gen JMSB

Dean Anne-Marie Croteau unpacks the new strategic vision of Concordia's John Molson School of Business

YURI MYTKO

How do you help students, researchers and alumni shape the future of business? How do you create a university environment that fosters their full potential?

These questions — and more — are being addressed in a new five-year strategic plan launched by the John Molson School of Business (JMSB) in May 2019.

We sat down with JMSB's dean Anne-Marie Croteau, BSc 86, to find out more.

### What was the strategic plan's starting point? How did you determine JMSB's top priorities?

It all begins with the school's business goals.

JMSB's primary societal responsibilities are teaching and research, so our focus is always on providing students with the best possible learning experience, hiring well-rounded academics and maximizing our research potential.

There are also a few overarching pursuits across all our activities. These include celebrating and sharing our successes, fostering a sense of belonging, and achieving triple-crown business school accreditation.

About accreditation — there are more than 13,000 institutions offering business degree programs worldwide and only 90 are accredited by the three most influential institutions that assess business schools.

JMSB has been accredited by one of them [AACSB — the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business] since 1997, and we are on the path to being accredited by the other two [EQUIS - The EFMD Quality Improvement System, and AMBA - Association of MBAs].

We're a great school, and we know it. But now it's time the rest of the world knows it, too.

### What do you mean by "fostering a sense of belonging"?

We often describe ourselves as welcoming, accessible and inclusive. And we are, but it can't end there.

We want to ensure that all members of our community feel that they belong here and that their contributions matter. This extends to everyone: students, researchers, teachers, staff members — and alumni.

### What are the plan's main goals?

First, we want to enrich learning at JMSB by offering a continuously relevant curriculum and adopting new and innovative teaching methods.

We also wish to more actively promote our research by developing a culture of research communities that support rigorous and meaningful intellectual contributions.

And we need to harness that force better by providing more opportunities for our alumni to engage with the school after graduation.

Over the course of the next few years, we hope to establish ourselves as a lifelong learning resource for our graduates. One's education is never complete and I believe that there is a lot we can offer our alumni after they've entered the workforce.

## "Our focus is always on providing students with the best possible learning experience."

### How did JMSB go about defining its strategic vision for the next five years?

When we began working on our plan, we did it knowing that it had to support Concordia's nine strategic directions [[concordia.ca/directions](https://concordia.ca/directions)], which lay out the actions required for a future-ready, next-generation university.

Then we went through the exercise of looking at who we are as a business school. What do we know about ourselves? What are we good at and what drives our decisions?

It was pretty clear that there are a few fundamental principles JMSB has always been committed to upholding: responsibility, inclusiveness and engagement.

For students, staff and faculty, we will focus on enhancing the JMSB experience by expanding our experiential learning opportunities and reinforcing support for our stakeholders.

And, finally, we want to expand our reach nationally and globally by continuing to cultivate strong and sustainable partnerships with our alumni and the business community.

### How do you aim to enhance the school's relationship with alumni?

Because we're one of the largest business schools in the world, our alumni base is growing rapidly.

Alumni are a powerful force, from both a reputation-building and a recruitment perspective.

### What's next?

Initiatives that stem from the plan will be unfolding over the next five years, but some have already begun — and a few action items have been completed!

We've begun the curriculum review process for a number of our academic programs; we've successfully launched a knowledge-sharing initiative for business cases written by JMSB faculty; and we've finalized several strong partnerships with key players in the Quebec business landscape.

And this is all in the first few months since the plan was approved. There is much work to be done...

*Find out more about the John Molson School of Business 2019-2024 Strategic Plan at [concordia.ca/jmsbplan](https://concordia.ca/jmsbplan). ■*



# Watching *The Detectives*

Concordia grads propel docudrama to awards success



MAEVE HALDANE,  
BFA 91

A production company packed with Concordia grads won big at the 2019 Canadian Screen Awards last March. WAM's true-crime show *The Detectives*, which had its season three premiere on CBC Television on January 9, took home two prizes: Best Factual Series and Best Picture Editing, Factual, an award that went to alumnus Glenn Berman, BFA 78.

The awards bolstered Concordia's cachet as an incubator of creative talent, from James Tupper, BFA

92, of *Big Little Lies* fame, to director Stephen Surjik, BFA 82, whose credits include the Netflix hit *The Umbrella Academy*.

Tupper himself was cast in two episodes of season three of *The Detectives*. The actor plays Hank Idsinga, the Toronto homicide detective whose work led to the arrest of serial killer Bruce McArthur.

The Montreal-based WAM specialized in lifestyle and documentary content before it branched out. Formerly Whalley Abbey Media, the company was started in 1993 by home designer Debbie Travis and Hans Rosenstein

and became WAM Media Group in 2016 with the addition of two more partners and executive producers: Concordia grads Petro Duszara, BA 98, and Scott Bailey, BA 01. Another alum, Jennifer Gatien, BA 97, is also an executive producer.

Four other grads are key contributors to the show: director Gabriel Pelletier, BFA 83, supervising producer, writer and researcher Eric Sabbag, BA 99, writer Al Kratina, BA 05, and picture car coordinator Andrei Vasile, BFA 13.

*The Detectives* consists of interviews with actual police detectives, interspersed


with faithful re-enactments of key events related to difficult cases. Each one-hour episode is shot with a different cast in and around Montreal and Laval.

When it first considered the genre of true crime, WAM knew it wanted to take a sensitive, and not sensationalist, approach.

"That was really important," says Gatien. "There had to be a way where we felt we were somehow helping the families of the victims, or the detectives."

WAM tailored the show for CBC by making *The Detectives* particularly relevant to the Canadian






ERIC SABBAG, PETRO DUSZARA, PIERRE ROY AND GABRIEL PELLETIER ON THE SET OF *THE DETECTIVES*.

"Concordia offered an environment that allowed you to think."

"We want to be a production company where people want to work."



MEMBERS OF WAM'S CAST AND CREW PREPARE FOR A SCENE.

public. They sought out landmark Canadian cases that somehow changed legislation or how a police department operated.

"We thought that interesting element made the show better and smarter," says Duszara, who also serves as showrunner.

The heavy subject matter can exact a toll on writers who conduct the interviews, researchers who see crime-scene photos and anyone else on the team, Gatien says. "You check in on each other. Sometimes the costume designer will come and say, 'I've just read the script, that was a really tough one' and she'll give me a hug. There's a sense of solidarity."

The culture at WAM is particularly tight-knit. "I don't know other industries, but ours is so strange and so challenging that having people you know and [trust] is really important," says Bailey.

"We want to be a production company where people want to work," explains Gatien. "Where they feel there's collaboration."

The fact that WAM pays above industry standards helps. Staff also relish the opportunity to work in Montreal, a city known for talented and experienced crews.

So why are so many Concordia grads associated with WAM?

"People have to be very talented, hard-working and [capable to work here]," says Bailey. "But also the softer, human skills resonate with us: emotional intelligence, being thorough, being respectful. Maybe that comes out of an education that isn't just training."

Gatien fondly recollects lessons she learned from the late and esteemed Communication Studies professor Dennis Murphy: "[He] said the industry in Montreal, especially the English TV and film industry, is so tiny. He said, 'Look to your left, look to your right, because you'll be working with these people again.' He really instilled in us the idea that if you're going to work in media,

you have a responsibility."

Concordia offered "an environment that allowed you to think," says Duszara. "It was really focused on who you are, what your voice is, what you want to share with the world."

For Duszara and the rest of WAM, working on *The Detectives* has been an eye-opening experience.

"You wake up, read a headline, hear someone's been shot, it's just awful. And it's someone's dad or mom who goes out to solve it. These are some exceptional human beings." ■

Catch season three of *The Detectives* on CBC or at [cbc.ca/thedetectors](http://cbc.ca/thedetectors) and [gem.cbc.ca](http://gem.cbc.ca).



How Concordia  
researchers  
are taking action  
to tackle the  
most urgent  
challenge of  
our time

**DAMON MATTHEWS** (RIGHT) AT THE CLIMATE CLOCK UPDATE WITH MUSICIAN **DAVID USHER**; **PASCALE BIRON**, CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT; AND ASSISTANT JOURNALISM PROFESSOR **AMÉLIE DAOUST-BOISVERT**.





# CLIMATE OF HOPE

MAEVE HALDANE, BFA 91

When Damon Matthews, a professor in Concordia's Department of Geography, Planning and Environment, reset his climate clock last December, it put a global crisis in stark relief.

Created in 2015 by Matthews and musician/activist David Usher, the climate clock visually tracks and displays the planet's rise in temperature in real time.

It uses the latest rate of carbon dioxide emissions and level of human-produced temperature rise to track how

long we have until the Paris Agreement's limits expire.

The agreement's long-term objective is to restrict the global average temperature to below 2C above pre-industrial levels and, in order to reduce the perils of climate change, to limit the rise to 1.5C. The current level already sits at 1.13C and is projected to reach 1.5C by November 2032.

"With this latest update, we lost two years on the timeline," says Matthews. "This is actually the biggest change since we started."

## 'WE NEED A MAJOR MIND SHIFT'

Researchers in Concordia's Department of Geography, Planning and Environment are more aware than most of the risks of climate change.

Matthews is the Concordia University Research Chair for Climate Science and Sustainability; he studies climate change and carbon emissions, and uses computer modelling to track and foresee global warming patterns.

"Climate change is real, it's happening and it's mostly our fault," he says. "It's time that we do something about it."

His departmental colleague Jochen Jaeger agrees. Jaeger is co-director of the Loyola Sustainability Research Centre; he studies a range of subjects including landscape ecology, road ecology and urban sprawl.

“Ultimately, to change our lifestyle and consume less, we must reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by so much — beyond 50 per cent, down to 5 or 10 per cent,” he says. “That needs a major mind shift.”

So Jaeger and his fellow researchers have banded together to take action.

Last year, faculty and students formed a Climate Emergency Committee, spearheaded by Jaeger. The committee’s first act was to officially declare a climate emergency. (Concordia also joined other universities and colleges

in signing a global climate emergency letter in advance of the United Nations COP25 climate conference in Madrid last December.)

The Concordia committee’s objectives are to increase awareness in Quebec of the climate crisis, help people reduce their environmental impact and develop constructive departmental policies.

One of those policies, unanimously adopted by the department, is a pledge to cut back on a significant producer of greenhouse gas emissions — air travel. Jaeger hopes to see other academics follow suit in choosing more environmentally responsible modes of transport, or in forgoing travel altogether by remotely delivering conference presentations.

## ONE SOLUTION? EDUCATION

The Climate Emergency Committee also wants to support high schools in teaching the basic facts of climate science.

Compared with medical science, climate science is underfunded and inaccessible to the general public, Jaeger says. “Everybody is sick in their lives at some point and they know medical doctors are important. I think there are a lot of parallels between taking care of the planet and taking care of your own health.”

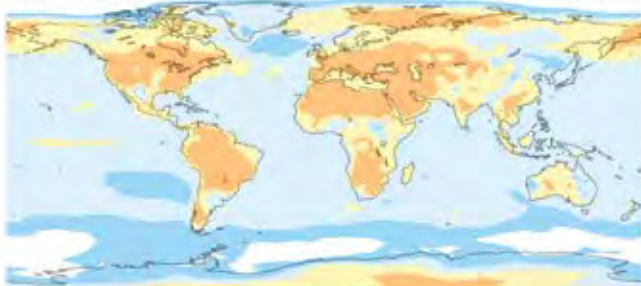
His conclusion? “Education will be the major, if not the most important, force for future generations. There are certain facts people should be aware of. Otherwise you just don’t understand the severity of this whole thing.”

With that in mind, the Climate Emergency Committee reached out to high schools, CEGEPs and school boards across Quebec to help integrate climate science into curricula.

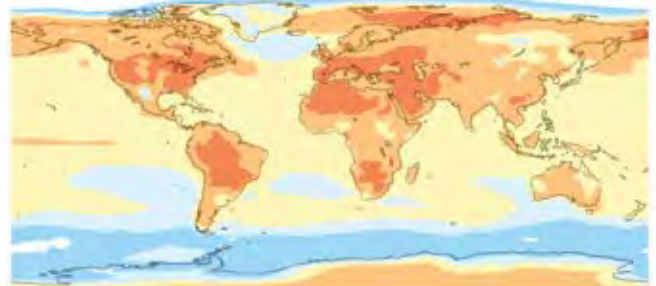
Two leaders of the educational outreach are grad students Alexandre Pace and Claire O’Neill Sanger (pictured).

“Climate change is real, it’s happening, and it’s mostly our fault. It’s time that we do something about it.”

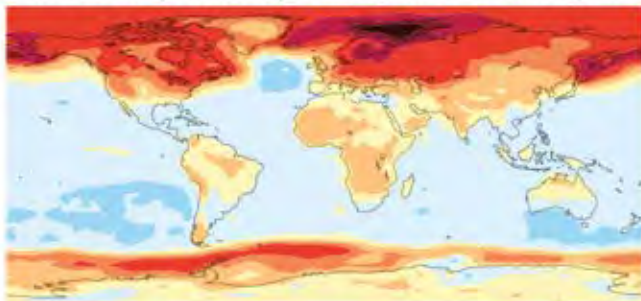
**+ 1.5°C: Change in average temperature of hottest days**



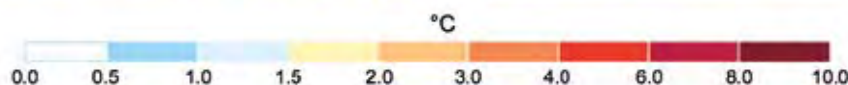
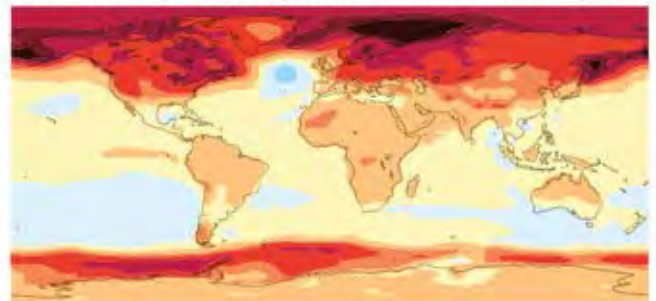
**+ 2.0°C: Change in average temperature of hottest days**



**+ 1.5°C: Change in average temperature of coldest nights**



**+ 2.0°C: Change in average temperature of coldest nights**



PROJECTED TEMPERATURE CHANGES WITH 1.5C AND 2C OF GLOBAL WARMING, COMPARED TO PRE-INDUSTRIAL LEVELS.





Pace is a master's candidate who uses tree-ring analysis to research the climate of the Gaspé Peninsula. He spent dozens of hours with other students developing "Climate Jeopardy" — a game loosely based on *Jeopardy* that was proposed by the committee as a fun way to absorb serious material.

"So far every teacher has loved it," says Pace. "They tell me they've never seen students so engaged." Last fall, he visited a total of 19 classrooms in high schools, CEGEPs and at Concordia.

Once "Climate Jeopardy" has been further refined, the committee wants to translate it into French, and produce an online and booklet version. As outreach coordinator, O'Neill Sanger is working on a funding strategy.

O'Neill Sanger is also a master's student; she uses pollen records to investigate the effects of European colonization and anthropogenic climate change on sugar maple forests in Southern Quebec.

The impact of climate change became vividly clear to her a few summers ago, while she was planting trees in British Columbia. Hot, dry weather led to raging fires that devastated land just recently replanted and surrounding towns had to be evacuated. When she left her camp for the season, the sight of flames on either side of the road stayed with her.

O'Neill Sanger finds her collaborative work on the committee empowering. She also draws inspiration from her

grandmother, who spoke out against local radiation contamination in Port Hope, Ont.

"I learned from her that you can't wait for others to lead the change you want to see."

In a similar vein, Pace wraps up his class visits with an optimistic and practical focus on solutions. Because Montreal may not be as badly affected by climate change as other parts of the world, he observes, it presents an opportunity: "We're in a good position to help."

Pace encourages the young people in his outreach classes to attend community gatherings and apply pressure on government representatives — and also reminds them that individual actions matter.

"About a quarter of a person's overall contribution to emissions comes from the things we buy, mostly clothing and electronics. So one of the best decisions we can make is to consume less and buy durable, quality goods."

### THE IMPORTANCE OF HOPE

Damon Matthews says he sometimes wonders how we can solve the climate crisis when it seems like an insurmountable challenge just to get his three youngest children out the door in the morning.

But he notes that climate change was a significant issue in the last Canadian federal election and is high on the

agenda of the United Nations, which released an influential report in 2018 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Plus, the crisis has become difficult to ignore, given recent developments — from the bushfires in Australia and record highs in ocean temperature to the prominent activism of Greta Thunberg and student protesters around the world.

And despite the absence of a concerted global effort, there is evidence of progress, Matthews says. If renewable resources and institutional capacity are properly harnessed, changes could rapidly occur.

"The point," says Matthews, "is to find some way of taking action and contributing to the solutions."

His colleague Jaeger is quick to stress the benefit of this approach. He quotes a line from *The Song of the Dodo*, the influential 1996 book by American science writer David Quammen:

"The unsatisfactory thing about despair, in my view, is that besides being fruitless, it's far less exciting than hope." ■

*If you're interested in joining Concordia's Climate Emergency Committee or simply want to get in touch, send an email to [climate.emergency@concordia.ca](mailto:climate.emergency@concordia.ca). See the climate clock at [concordia.ca/climateclock](http://concordia.ca/climateclock).*



Quebec to review how it tests drinking water following investigative report

LEDEVOIR

Le Québec sous-évalue le plomb dans l'eau



High lead levels found in drinking water of major Canadian cities

The Seattle Times

Lead in some Canadian water worse than Flint

The Guardian

Canadians exposed to high levels of lead in drinking water, investigation finds



High levels of lead found in water at Canadian daycares, schools



Lead levels in Canadian water 'exceed safe limit' in a third of cases



CBCnews  
NETWORK

Homeowners grapple with lead-tainted water

# Tainted Water

Concordia's Institute for Investigative Journalism facilitated the largest collaborative investigation in Canadian history

TAYLOR TOWER

Over the past year and a half, an extensive investigation into Canada's water supply has been under way.

Dubbed "Tainted Water," the project is an unprecedented collaboration between nine universities, six partner media companies and more than 120 reporters, editors, students and faculty.

"Journalism students and reporters pooled their research in order to delve more deeply into the national scope of this issue," says Patti Sonntag, BA 00, director of Concordia's Institute for Investigative Journalism, which facilitated the project.

Launched in June 2018, the institute is the first of its kind in Canada, connecting major media outlets with journalism departments to carry out investigations in the public interest. This is especially key for communities that lack resources for large-scale reporting, says Sonntag.

A former managing editor with *The New York Times*' News Services division, Sonntag is also Concordia's first journalist-in-residence.

"[People] across the country volunteered to carry out tests of their drinking water for lead," she says. "What we found is that Montreal, Gatineau, Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Rupert had lead levels comparable to or higher than those of Flint, Michigan during its 2015 lead crisis."

## THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT

*Le Devoir* and Global News first published reports in mid-October that had an immediate impact on policy. Drawing on the work of 16 students and input from across the country, the media outlets showed that Quebec's method of flushing taps for up to five minutes before measuring lead underestimated exposure levels. Premier François Legault subsequently announced that going forward the province would follow Health Canada's recommendations.

Ian Down, an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism, participated in the "Tainted Water" reports published by *Le Devoir*.

"I split my time between interviewing sources and helping our partner reporters navigate the massive database of information we had gathered over the previous year," says Down. "It's definitely encouraging to see your work have such a large and immediate impact."

Following additional articles published by *Le Devoir* and Global News, Montreal mayor Valérie Plante announced a \$557-million action plan to eliminate lead in the city's drinking water.

"The investigation has found that regulations across Canada fail to confront lead as aggressively as federal regulations in the United States," says Sonntag.

"The series has prompted immediate reaction from officials in all levels of government, from British Columbia to Nova Scotia. The investigation into Canadian water continues as reporters deepen their reporting through 2020."

## AN UNBREAKABLE BOND

Brigitte Tousignant, a graduate student in journalism at Concordia, says collaborating on the "Tainted Water" project was unlike any class she's had before.

"The fact that we all worked so hard on this project feels like we now share an unbreakable bond. [My colleagues] will continue to be a valuable resource as I develop my professional journalism career."

The "Tainted Water" initiative was first proposed by Robert Cribb, an investigative reporter at the *Toronto Star*. Aside from Concordia, the university partners on the project are Carleton University, Humber College, MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, Ryerson University, the University of British Columbia, the University of King's College and the University of Regina.

Collaborating news organizations include the *Toronto Star*, *Le Devoir*, Global News, the *National Observer*, the *Regina Leader-Post* and the Associated Press.

This is the second collaborative project from the Institute for Investigative Journalism since it was established in June 2018. The first, "The Price of Oil," examined the oil industry in Saskatchewan and Ontario and earned a number of journalism awards, including an honourable mention from the 2018 Canadian Hillman Prize. ■

# SHIFT!

\$10 million  
for social  
innovation



THE SAPUTO  
FAMILY: **LINO**  
AND **MIRELLA**;  
CONCORDIA  
ALUMNI **AMELIA**  
AND **LINO JR.**



Two proud grads and their family joined forces on a visionary gift to create the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation at Concordia

Lino A. Saputo Jr., BA 89, and his wife, Amelia Saputo, BA 90, are proud Concordia grads. As CEGEP students, they chose to attend the university together.

“A lot of our classes were together and we spent a lot of time on campus together,” says Lino. Adds Amelia: “We have fond memories and a special attachment to Concordia.”

That attachment grew on November 1, 2019, when the couple announced that the Amelia & Lino Saputo Jr. Foundation would join forces with the Mirella & Lino Saputo Foundation, operated by Lino’s parents, to make a visionary gift of \$10 million to create a first-of-its-kind, multi-stakeholder collaboration centre at Concordia.

The new SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will allow Concordia and its partners to drive and support community-based social transformation projects in Montreal, Quebec and Canada.

Among the largest in the university’s history, the gift supports the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now, which Lino A. Saputo co-chairs with Andrew Molson.



“SHIFT means so much to us,” says Saputo. “This project allows us to give back, long-term, so that Concordia students, researchers and external partners can work together to find answers to major problems.”

The SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will unite academic knowledge, community-held expertise and entrepreneurial students. This community will come together to develop sustainable and transformative solutions to complex societal challenges such as environmental degradation, political polarization, wealth inequality and a rapidly changing labour market.

The centre will enable individuals to take bold, creative and effective steps to build a stronger, healthier society. What makes SHIFT different is how it will address the symptoms and the root causes of inequity, injustice and unsustainability.

“Our family takes great pride in supporting this transformative project, since advancing social innovation is a family priority,” says Mirella Saputo, president of the Mirella & Lino Saputo Foundation. “Partnering with Concordia for the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will give the next generation of students, academics and community groups the support required to solve some of our society’s biggest challenges.”

As chair of the board and chief executive officer of Montreal-based Saputo Inc. (TSE:SAP), Lino A. Saputo says the gift is a pragmatic investment for his family.

“The SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will support tomorrow’s social entrepreneurs to solve critical issues — from the ground up. Marrying academia and entrepreneurship with grassroots social innovation at Concordia will go a long way to improving society.”



“Our foundation supports several causes, including hospitals and health, yet a big part of our philanthropic focus is on education,” adds Amelia Saputo, who is president of the Amelia & Lino Saputo Jr. Foundation. “We are proud that our gift will advance the next generation of Concordia students to develop, explore, achieve and contribute to the betterment of society.”

The SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will grant resources and accompaniment to projects that link Concordians with community members and groups. Project teams will benefit from hands-on support for grant-writing, project-management, evaluation and strategic guidance.

**“SHIFT means so much to us. This project allows us to give back, long-term, so that Concordia students, researchers and external partners can work together find answers to major problems.”**







**MEMBERS OF  
SHIFT** ON THE DAY  
OF THE \$10-MILLION  
ANNOUNCEMENT.



“The SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will allow Concordia to build on its long-standing reputation as a trusted, community-engaged and socially progressive university,” says Graham Carr, Concordia’s president. “The centre, its staff and our students will support under-represented and overstretched front-line organizations and communities.”

Thanks to this donation, the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will soon operate from a welcoming, physical space. Its community of students, faculty, staff and external members or groups will train, network, skill-share and collaborate on existing and emerging social transformation initiatives. The SHIFT team hit the ground running by hosting a weeklong, public event — Weaving Our Worldviews: Social Transformation and Indigenous Practices — at Concordia’s 4th SPACE in November 2019.



THE SAPUTOS WITH **NADIA BHUIYAN**, VICE-PROVOST OF PARTNERSHIPS AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING; **CATHY WONG**, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE MONTREAL MUNICIPAL COUNCIL; AND **GRAHAM CARR**, CONCORDIA’S PRESIDENT.





“SHIFT will allow Concordia to build on its long-standing reputation as a trusted, community-engaged and socially progressive university. The centre, its staff and our students will support under-represented and overstretched front-line organizations and communities.”



The gathering featured SHIFT’s first innovator-in-residence, Jodi Calahoo-Stonehouse, from the Michel First Nation, who uses film, radio and other media to tell stories and break down social barriers between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

SHIFT staff and partners plan to offer such next-gen learning-by-doing experiences. This engagement will connect Concordia students, researchers and staff with community partners so they can have multiple perspectives when tackling social issues and offer solutions that are more likely to succeed.

Creation of the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will also advance Concordia’s nine strategic directions.

“The Saputo family’s gift will allow our students to engage in real world, community-based projects that address major societal challenges,” says Nadia Bhuiyan, vice-provost of Partnerships and Experiential Learning. “The SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will enable students to develop valuable skills and knowledge that will serve them in their lives beyond university — and help them make meaningful contributions to society.”

Ultimately — as Paul Chesser, vice-president of Advancement, points out — the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation will amplify Concordia’s knowledge, expertise and resources among the broader Montreal community.



ANDREA CLARKE OF THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION HEAD & HANDS

“The Saputo family is supporting a forward-looking initiative that is unique. SHIFT will constantly evolve as community partners and academics rethink approaches to solve some of the biggest problems of our time.” ■

Contact SHIFT at 514-848-2424, ext. 8532, [shift@concordia.ca](mailto:shift@concordia.ca) or [concordia.ca/shift](http://concordia.ca/shift)

Watch video:

[bit.ly/ConcordiaSHIFT](https://bit.ly/ConcordiaSHIFT)

[bit.ly/ConcordiaSAPUTO](https://bit.ly/ConcordiaSAPUTO)





## #THANKYOUSAPUTOFAMILY: 'SHIFT IS A RESPONSE TO PROFOUND SOCIETAL CHALLENGES'

Concordia leaders and partners  
reflect on the transformational impact  
of the Saputo family's \$10-million gift

JOSEPH LÉGER, BA 15

"We understand that often the most effective solutions to major societal challenges begin at the local level. SHIFT will further strengthen Concordia's role as a trusted, neutral power and relationship broker that collaborates *with* communities rather than mandating *to* them."

**Graham Carr**, *president and vice-chancellor*

"SHIFT is a response to the profound societal challenges we are facing, such as accelerating environmental degradation, political polarization, wealth inequality and the rapid changes to the labour market due to technology. As a trusted Canadian institution with significant resources, we saw an opportunity to mobilize thinking and action around community-driven social transformation."

**Nadia Bhuiyan**, *BEng 95, vice-provost of Partnerships and Experiential Learning*

"We are grateful to our community's business leaders for stepping up in support of higher education. This \$10-million gift to the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation brings us more than two-thirds of the way towards our **Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now** goal. This major donation is a testimony to the trust we have with the community and with key institutions."

**Paul Chesser**, *BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement*

"Community work, like research, requires curiosity, commitment and the capital to deliver on its full potential. It is clear to me that the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation presents a unique opportunity for Concordia and the community sector to share their expertise, to co-develop approaches to partnership and to experiment boldly."

**Andrea Clarke**, *BSc 09, MSc 12, MBA 17, executive director of Head & Hands*

"SHIFT can help us address issues that are of concern to the Indigenous community, both locally and nationally, by making it possible to actually put the resources that Concordia has to direct use in working with those communities. SHIFT is an opportunity to do it right."

**Jason Lewis**, *research chair in Computational Media and the Indigenous Future Imaginary*

"Concordia was founded on the idea of access; access for all kinds of people to be able to receive and complete higher education. Thanks to the gift from the Saputo family, we're now going to be able to take that vision to a much deeper level. SHIFT, at its heart, is a project of equity and inclusion."

**Kimberley Manning**, *associate professor and principal, Simone de Beauvoir Institute*

"The SHIFT Centre will be a place for organizing collective action with other key stakeholders, with government, with non-profits, with community organizations, with citizens, with companies – with people who really care about making a difference."

**Jason Ens**, *executive director of Academic Policy, Planning and Strategic Initiatives*

"SHIFT will offer community groups, NGOs and individuals the resources to ensure that their projects and initiatives are effective and they're maintained. It will also allow students to get outside of the classroom to take what they're learning through their studies and put it into action so that their learning is more enriched through experience."

**Mark Underwood**, *BA 18, former CEO of Sustainability Action Fund*

"SHIFT is on a continuum of Concordia's history of always being willing to embark on innovation, to stay close to society and to stay close to community. To ask the questions that matter to the people around us and to find ways to answer those questions. That is the Concordia tradition."

**Marguerite Mendell**, *BA 72, director of the Karl Polyani Institute of Political Economy*

"Concordia is a great home for SHIFT because it brings together people and organizations. It allows groups that wouldn't normally talk to each other to come together and to work collectively towards having a positive impact on society. This is an opportunity to do good things for the right reasons."

**Sara Baptiste-Brown**, *BComm 08, member of SHIFT and program coordinator at the Institute for Co-operative Education*



**“The Science Hub will be a next-generation space to foster next-generation education.”**

“Concordia University has long been committed to the environment and in recent years has made significant contributions to responsible investment and social responsibility,” says Anik Shooner, architect and co-founder of Menkès Shooner Dagenais LeTourneux Architectes. “Our architectural approach was fully aligned with these values.”

The hub’s purpose also enabled Concordia to offer sustainable bonds to institutional investors, which will be used to reimburse the university’s capital investment. This required Concordia to align any work and research with three United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, namely: affordable and clean energy; industry, innovation and infrastructure; and climate action.

As Chief Financial Officer Denis Cossette told the *Montreal Gazette* a year ago: “The question of sustainability is a high priority for us, so it’s a good message to present to our stakeholders, our students and our community.”

The bottom line on Concordia’s newest building? As Kirsten Sutherland, senior director of project management, says:

“The Science Hub will be a next-generation space to foster next-generation education.” ■

*With files from Shannon Baker and Karen McCarthy.*

## Introducing Concordia’s new Science Hub

**It’s green, it’s interdisciplinary – and it’s opening this spring**

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

**W**hen the expansion of the Richard J. Renaud Science Complex at Loyola Campus was announced in 2017, there was a palpable sense of anticipation.

After all — the proposed new Science Hub was a decisive step for scientific research at Concordia. Its state-of-the-art facilities will create rare and interesting opportunities for collaboration.

There was also the fact that the \$62-million facility looked striking in its architectural renderings by Menkès Shooner Dagenais LeTourneux Architectes and NFOE; two award-winning Montreal-based firms with institutional experience and a focus on sustainable development.

“We want to deliver on innovation,” said Graham Carr, Concordia’s provost at the time, and now its president.

Now, in 2020, the Science Hub is ready to launch.

Built according to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, the facility is expected to become the fourth high-performance green building at Concordia, with the objective of a LEED Gold certification.

Onsite research will include aquatic biology, microscopy, cellular imaging, nanoscience, bioprocessing, and chemical and materials engineering.

The hub will also host science and engineering teams, including work with Concordia’s District 3 Innovation Centre, which requires wet-lab space.

It all amounts to a rich environment for learning and research — and not just because of the advanced equipment and collaborative, interdisciplinary spirit.

The area surrounding the hub will be landscaped to improve the campus’s biomass. Some 40 trees will be planted to provide shade and corridors for pedestrians and vehicles; at maturity, their ecological benefits will be six times greater than grass.





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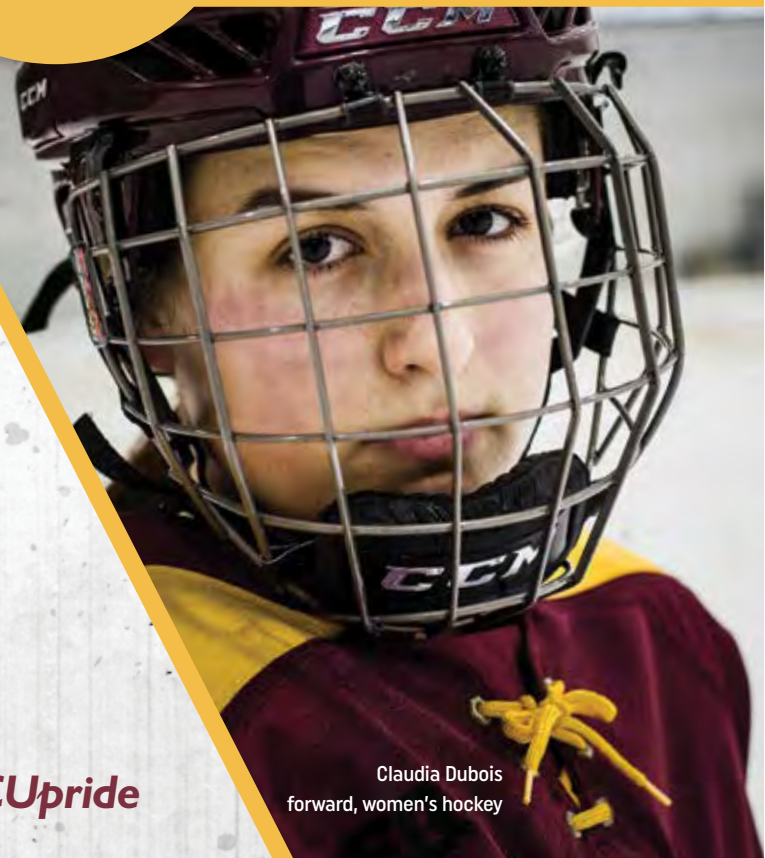
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forward, women's hockey





CONCORDIA

MD

## From Harvard research to top-ranked pediatric hospitals, meet 5 distinguished Concordia alumni in medical fields

DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

**P**resent-day medical schools want more than good math and science scores from applicants. They want students with a range of skills, experiences and attributes that will help them become standouts in medical-related professions — which is where a university like Concordia comes in.

Concordia takes a proactive approach to health research, from comprehensive prevention to the medicinal potential of synthetic biology. This cutting-edge work, paired with the university's emphasis on experiential learning and hands-on education, provides a hospitable environment for students keen to prepare for careers as physicians and medical researchers.

Look no further than these five stellar grads.

### JAMES MCCULLY

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SURGERY,  
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL AND  
DEPARTMENT OF CARDIAC SURGERY,  
BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

**C**uriosity, a collaborative spirit and a dedication to helping people has led **James McCully**, BA 75, BSc 78, to medical research that saves lives.

McCully, who also has a PhD from the University of Toronto's Banting and Best Department of Medical Research, has been instrumental in a new procedure for transplanting mitochondria — the energy factories found in every cell of the body — from patients' healthy muscles into injured hearts and other vital organs that would otherwise be damaged beyond repair.

"The transplanted mitochondria immediately activate and bring the tissue back," he says.

### Did someone at Concordia have a formative impact on your career?

Just as I was completing my BA in Political Science and Philosophy at Sir George Williams [a co-founding institution of Concordia, with Loyola College] I met with Dr. Ed Enos. He was launching a program at Loyola College in biophysical education and thought I would fit in there perfectly.

Dr. Enos played a huge role in jump-starting my career. He provided a lot of guidance and he was a very hands-on, very active person.

### What is your advice for Concordia students who are contemplating a career in medical research?

Medicine requires people from almost every area. You'll still need to take the science courses, but a good background in writing is important because the number of grants and reports you have to write is astonishing.

More and more — at least here in the United States — financial training helps and in fact some hospitals are paying for physicians to get an MBA degree.

### What aspect of medicine do you most enjoy?

I really enjoy the research and luckily, our research on mitochondria transplantation has gone on to be applied. Actually treating patients with something you've developed is not only a thrill, but something very few people get to do.

### What was the most moving experience of your career?

The first baby we treated with a mitochondrial transplant was really something.

Soon after Avery was born, she was brought to us with complications from multiple heart surgeries and we didn't think she would have a chance of surviving. I remember standing there, watching the heart come back. The child is now four years old and we still see her. I've seen a couple of the babies that have gone through the transplant and it's always very moving.



## HABIB SHAIKH

ONCOLOGIST, NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE  
DELNOR HOSPITAL, GENEVA, ILL.

While his path to medicine was arduous, the rewards have been worth it for Dr. **Habib Shaikh**, BSc 98. He currently works at Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital with a focus on lymphoma and gastrointestinal malignancies. Shaikh says that what drives him every day is the opportunity to help people through a difficult disease, such as cancer.

### How did Concordia contribute to your career?

My experience at Concordia not only laid the foundation for my current career, but was also formative to the person I am today.



HABIB SHAIKH

I was looking for an education that would give me the opportunity to apply what was I learning in a meaningful way. The biochemistry Co-op program offered that and more. From knowledgeable and caring faculty, to well-designed lab experiments and the great work rotations, I was able to learn not only didactically but also experientially, allowing for a deeper understanding of the material and allowing for more advanced training in the future.

### What is your advice for Concordia students who are contemplating a career in medicine?

Get experience by volunteering at hospitals or clinics because unless you want to work in a lab, the doctor-patient relationship should

be something you are passionate about.

Basic research is also important as a way to differentiate yourself. I was able to work in the labs at Concordia, which helped build my résumé when applying to medical school.

### What was the most moving experience of your career?

In 2017, I was able to go on a medical mission to Bangladesh to work with Rohingya refugees.

As an oncologist, I see the resilience of the human spirit on a daily basis working with cancer patients. I saw that same resilience on another level working with refugee patients who have been subjected to horrific circumstances and conditions. I also learned that things we take for granted — such as physical safety, a full stomach and a bed to sleep in — truly are blessings that we should be thankful for.

“The privilege of being able to help people in need is really unparalleled.”

## NATALIE COUSINEAU

STAFF EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN, ROYAL  
VICTORIA REGIONAL HEALTH CENTRE,  
BARRIE, ONT.

As an emergency physician, Dr. **Natalie Cousineau**, BSc 96, is used to seeing people at their worst.

“In spite of the challenges, I knew I wanted to do emergency medicine from the moment I worked my first shift,” says Cousineau. “I love the pace, the variety, the procedures — and I always wanted to be the person who knew exactly what to do in an emergency situation.

“We cope with the demands of the job by pulling together as a team in a way that no one on the outside could understand.”

### How did Concordia contribute to your career?

My Concordia experience gave me a real passion for learning. It was the first time that I felt that I was the master of my educational experience, so to speak. I was in the exercise science program and the coursework wasn't easy, but it was the most engaged I'd ever been with learning. Concordia made me realize that given the right subject matter, I could be a passionate learner with the ability to excel.

### What advice do you have for students who want to pursue medicine?

Make sure you want to do it for the right reasons. Medicine can often feel thankless but the privilege of being able to help people in need is really unparalleled. Get a good idea of what medicine actually entails by spending time volunteering in a health-care setting. Nothing compares to being in the middle of it.

### What was the most moving experience of your career?

I remember a baby who died after an hour of our team doing everything we could. As doctors, we are expected to return to work as if nothing happened. Other emergency physicians on shift came to find me to see if I was OK. Colleagues in other areas of the hospital also texted or stopped by to see how I was doing.

It was incredibly reassuring to know that my work family had my back. As much as the loss of a child always hits everyone hard, I feel supported by my team and that is what gives me the strength to face the next day.

## MAYA HAASZ

PEDIATRIC EMERGENCY MEDICINE  
PHYSICIAN, CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
COLORADO, AURORA, COLO.

For Dr. **Maya Haasz**, BSc 02 (chem. and biochem.), a commitment to service has been a constant, even before she chose a career in medicine.

As an undergraduate, she served on the Concordia Student Union Council of Representatives, as an executive at Hillel and as an active volunteer. At convocation Haasz was presented with the O'Brien Medal, awarded to an undergraduate student whose efforts and dedication best exemplify the values of Concordia within the larger external community.



MAYA HAASZ

"All those experiences led me to enjoy connecting with people and helping people, and now I get to do that every single day in a very meaningful way," she says.

### How did Concordia contribute to your career?

Any school is able to teach basic sciences, but the real advantage of Concordia was being involved in the Co-op program. That really allowed me to combine my classroom learning with real work experience. I was able to see the knowledge base I was developing in the classroom applied practically, which made learning more fun and gave me the opportunity to explore a variety of careers before choosing

a direction. That was very helpful and solidified my decision to go into medicine.

### What was the most exciting experience of your career?

I would say the most exciting moment was actually in my first month of being an attending physician. A toddler was rushed in because he had choked on a grape and when he got to us, he couldn't breathe at all. We tried to do the Heimlich manoeuvre very aggressively but we couldn't get the grape out — finally, I was able to pull it out of his airway.

That's probably the most exciting, but moving experiences happen on a daily basis. Medicine is an exciting career, and it's very gratifying. I personally couldn't imagine doing anything else — I love walking into work every day at the beginning of a shift — but it's also a humbling and challenging career.

## KRISTINA ARION

OBGYN RESIDENT DOCTOR, DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY, HALIFAX, N.S.

As an obstetrician-gynecologist, Dr. **Kristina Arion**, BSc 12, might help deliver a baby and counsel another patient about the physical and emotional challenges of a life-threatening illness, all in the same day.

"I have to tell patients they have cancer — which can be really difficult — but then you also spend the journey with them through surgery and helping them with chemotherapy. You become an integral part of their lives," says Arion.

### How did your experience at Concordia contribute to your career?

I absolutely loved my Concordia experience and I wouldn't have changed it in any way.

I did a major in biology, as well as a minor in diversity and the contemporary world, which was part of the Loyola College for Diversity and

Sustainability. It was a small community of students and we shared a lot of the same classes. We became very close with the professors, who gave us a lot of mentorship.

### Was there anyone at Concordia who had a formative impact on your career?

Anna-Liisa Ainio at the Loyola College for Diversity and Sustainability always told us to express ourselves and be creative, which I didn't always have while studying biology.

### What advice do you have for Concordia students who are interested in medicine?

Have a diverse background. Of course it's important to perform academically, but that isn't the only thing that counts.



KRISTINA ARION

The medical degree is a lot of work and residency is even more, so it's important, if you can, to make the most of every opportunity that you have in your undergraduate degree to travel and discover the world.

In the medical school interviews, they will ask you questions about your life. Having been on a

different path or having a passion are always things that make you stand out.

### What was your most moving experience as a physician?

I think every day in medicine is moving. It's hard to narrow it to one moment because I deliver babies every day and so partake in the happiest days of people's lives. I see families come celebrate joy every day and that's a heart-warming, contagious happiness. ■

## 'A rich foundation for lifelong learning'

Concordia's Liberal Arts College is one of the most respected in Canada. It just turned 40

ARIELA FREEDMAN



A DAY OF PANEL DISCUSSIONS HELPED CELEBRATE THE COLLEGE'S MILESTONE.

MOLLY HAMILTON

"The Liberal Arts College broadens the mind and nourishes the soul," says Beth Blum, BA 05, an assistant professor of English at Harvard University. "The books you study there will form your personal reference library — your toolkit for living — for your entire life."

When it was established in 1978, the Bachelor of Arts in Western Civilization and Culture offered by Concordia's Liberal Arts College (LAC) was the first degree of its kind in Canada. Still one of the most respected in the country, the name of the program will officially change to Liberal Arts for the 2020-2021 academic year.

"The fact that we've been able to last this long is recognition that this program, this type of education, is still important and current — even at a time when humanities programs are under attack," says Mark Russell, LAC principal and professor.

He adds that the anniversary is an opportunity for the

LAC to evolve further. "We're looking at ways of adapting and modernizing the program for a diverse student body that is socially engaged."

Professor Ariela Freedman, BA 94, says that because a liberal arts degree explores the full spectrum of the humanities, it provides an education that is interdisciplinary and multidimensional. "This is a profound educational experience applicable to a wide variety of professions, and a rich foundation for lifelong learning."

**"The college was this emotional, intellectual, creative and artistic home."**

Indeed, since 1978, many alumni have gone on to build remarkable careers in technology, law, education, politics, music and much more.

As part of its anniversary celebration, the LAC held a panel discussion last September with successful alumni from assorted disciplines.

Blum, who teaches modern and contemporary literature

at Harvard, will publish *The Self-Help Compulsion: Searching for Advice in Modern Literature* (Columbia University Press) this year. Inspired in part by her education at Concordia, the book explores the profound entanglement of modern literature and commercial advice from the late nineteenth century to the present day.

"My liberal arts experience contributed to my interest in the tradition of 'wisdom literature' — in how authors throughout the ages have hashed out the problem of how to live," says Blum.

Fiona Duncan, BA 10, is a Canadian-American artist, writer and organizer. In 2016, she founded a literary series called "Hard to Read" in Los Angeles and, later, a spinoff series called "PillowTalk" that invites artists to share works that touch on gender, love and sex. Duncan published her debut novel, *Exquisite Mariposa* (Soft Skull Press), last year.

"The college has helped me develop discipline, adaptability, active listening and curiosity," she says.

Jean-Michel Blais, BA 15, rekindled his passion for music while at Concordia. His debut album *II* has since reached number one on *Billboard's* classical chart in Canada. He has released five albums, one of which, *Dans ma main* (2018), was shortlisted for the Polaris Music Prize. He recently completed a five-week European tour that brought him to the United Kingdom, Portugal, Spain, Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands and Russia.

Blais describes his experience at the LAC as a particularly fertile period of self-discovery — a sentiment echoed by countless graduates.

"The college, for me, was this emotional, intellectual, creative and artistic home where I was able to discover myself through my professors, my colleagues and the great books we studied." ■



**“I BELIEVE IT IS  
IMPORTANT TO  
SUPPORT EDUCATION  
BECAUSE IT’S THE  
ONE MEANS OF  
HELPING PEOPLE  
EVOLVE AND DEVELOP”**

*— Eileen Curran, BA 70*



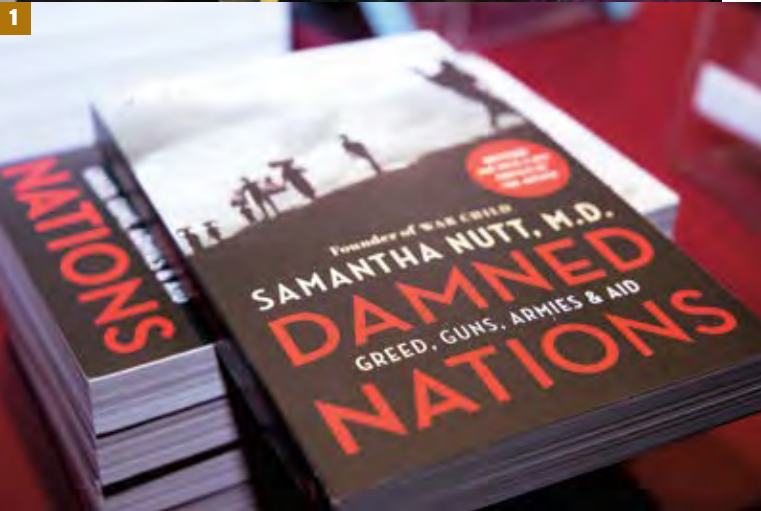
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**SAMANTHA NUTT** CELEBRATED WITH (FROM LEFT): **PAUL CHESSE**, VICE-PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT; **JOHN LIMBURNER**, BCOMM 68, PRESIDENT OF THE LOYOLA ALUMNI FOUNDING CHAPTER; AND **SUE MONTGOMERY**.

JOSEPH LÉGER, BA 15

### THE 2019 LOYOLA MEDAL

One of Canada's great humanitarians, **Samantha Nutt**, was honoured with the Loyola Medal, Concordia's highest non-academic award, in November. The founder of War Child Canada and War Child USA, Nutt has dedicated her career to helping children who live in conflict zones. Previous Loyola Medal recipients include Olympic athlete Clara Hughes, astronaut Roberta Bondar and Lt. Gen. Roméo A. Dallaire (ret.).

"Justice not charity; solidarity not pity; opportunity not handouts," said Nutt. <sup>1</sup>

### 10 YEARS OF MASTER OF ENVIRONMENT GRADS

The assessment of environmental impacts and risks is an academic field of increasing relevance — as Concordia's MEnv alumni have no doubt discovered. **The program marked its first 10 years** this fall with an alumni panel discussion, followed by a cocktail reception. <sup>2</sup>







3



### THE NEW BLUMER COLLECTION OF MANUSCRIPTS AND RARE BOOKS

Concordia's literary community — including university librarian Guylaine Beaudry and Rebecca Duclos, dean of Fine Arts — gathered in September to celebrate a new gift-in-kind from **Joseph Blumer**, BA 58. The Blumer Collection of Manuscripts and Rare Books at Concordia University Library contains rare books, manuscripts and ephemera, some of which date back to the 15th century. **3**

### A GLOBETROTTING AUTUMN

With 220,000 grads around the world, our alumni team often hits the road to catch up with our community outside of Montreal. This fall, we visited London, Paris, Los Angeles **4**, New York, Toronto and Ottawa **5**. Alumni were treated to our popular Walrus Talks in Toronto and New York, a leadership panel in London, and an alumni meet-and-greet in Paris.



4 Los Angeles



5 Ottawa

OUT AND ABOUT: **ANGELO MINGARELLI**, BSC 74 (RIGHT); AND ABOVE, FROM LEFT: **GRAHAM CARR**; **FAY ARJOMANDI**, BENG 98; **BARBARA DAVIDSON**, BFA 90, LLD 19; **JEAN-CLAUDE BUSTROS**, BFA 01; **ZAIB SHAIKH**, CONSUL GENERAL OF CANADA IN LOS ANGELES; **PAUL CRESSER**.





## MANY MORE MORDECAIS: A TALK BY ADAM GOPNIK

The **Richler Library Project** at Concordia hosted *Mordecai Richler Against the World*, a conference with several engaging events including a sold-out talk by *The New Yorker's* **Adam Gopnik**. (Concordia donor **Florence Richler** sadly passed away in January 2020. To read her obituary, see pg. 69.) “The simple business of getting it down right is a foundation of literature,” Adam Gopnik said. “We enjoy Mordecai Richler with pleasure because he gets it right.” **6**



## THE BOOKSTRAVAGANZA BREAKS ITS OWN RECORD

Thanks to the dedication of dozens of staff, faculty and student volunteers, the 2019 edition of Concordia's EPIC Used Book Fair netted a record \$32,643. In its 22 years, the book fair has raised more than \$240,000 for students, while providing a new life for countless books.

“All funds collected go towards student scholarship and the Student and Emergency Food Fund,” said lead volunteer and University Advancement writer Luke Quin, BA 07. “Every book purchase is a gift to students.” **7**

HAPPY BOOK-BUYERS  
PERUSE THE STACKS  
ALONGSIDE LEAD  
ORGANIZER **LUKE QUIN**  
(ABOVE) AND STUDENT  
VOLUNTEER **JULIANA  
RUEDA** (RIGHT).





8

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## Old acquaintances, not forgotten

A professor and his student reunite after 30 years. The twist? The former student is Rebecca Duclos, now dean of Concordia's Faculty of Fine Arts.

When Duclos was honoured with a UC Alumni of Influence Award at her alma mater, the University of Toronto, she asked Ron Leprohon, BA 71, to be her guest. <sup>8</sup>

Leprohon, a professor of Egyptology, taught Duclos in the 1990s; he also happens to be an alumnus of Loyola College, one of Concordia's two founding institutions.

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CONCORDIA'S TEAM  
LIMBERED UP FOR THE DÉFI  
CANDEREL CHALLENGE.

## CONCORDIA'S CHANCELLOR RAISES \$2.4 MILLION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

When **Jonathan Wener**'s wife, **Susan Wener**, was diagnosed with cancer in 1989, he wanted to make a difference. As chairman and chief executive officer of the real-estate development company Canderel, Wener, BComm 71, created the **Défi Canderel Challenge**.

Every year, hundreds of participants flood downtown Montreal for a fun run in support of cancer research. In 2019, the event raised \$2.4 million for the Goodman Cancer Centre and the Institut du cancer de Montréal — more than \$18 million has been raised since 1989. **9**



10 New York

## HO-HO-HOLIDAY ALUMNI CELEBRATIONS

From New York and Boston to Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto, Concordia grads mingled and rang in the holiday season with great company, laughs and tasty refreshments in December. The merry crowd included:

**Gerard J. Walsh**, BA 71, co-president of the New York City chapter (above); **Adrian Margarint**, MBA 07, and **Marina Arias**, BA 89 (top right); **Michel Tremblay**, BA 76, **Catherine St-Hilaire**, BA 11, **Josephine Mensah**, BA 11, and **Ahmad Khan**, BComm 12 (middle); and Montreal-based alumni including **Emma Alquire**, BComm 18. **10**

For info on future Concordia University Advancement events in Montreal, across Canada and around the world, visit [concordia.ca/alumni](http://concordia.ca/alumni).

For multimedia coverage, explore [concordia.ca/alumni/podcasts](http://concordia.ca/alumni/podcasts) and [concordia.ca/alumni/videos](http://concordia.ca/alumni/videos).





10 Vancouver

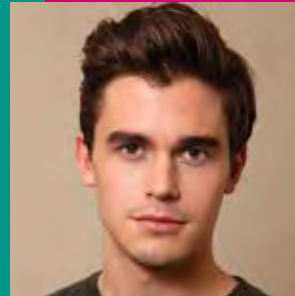


10 Ottawa



10 Montreal

# TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR ALMA MATER!



Antoni Porowski, BA 08



Sonia Benezra, BFA 82



Gina Cody, MEng 81, PhD 89



Jean-Philippe Wauthier, BA 03



Nathalie Petrowski, BA 76



Maya Johnson, BA 06

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**#CUpride #CUalumni**

*The Concordia Alumni Women and Leadership program empowers women graduates to connect, share professional experiences and expertise, and learn from each other. In this series, meet leaders from among Concordia's nearly 100,000 alumnae who fill the ranks of business, media, engineering, science, the arts, humanities and more.*  
[concordia.ca/alumni/women](http://concordia.ca/alumni/women)

## How a Concordia grad went from superfan to creative director

MOLLY HAMILTON AND  
 IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

In 2005, when **Barbara Dunkelman** was 16 years old, she attended a fan event in Toronto for a web series and comic sci-fi phenomenon called *Red vs. Blue*.

Created by Rooster Teeth, a media and entertainment upstart from Austin, Texas, *Red vs. Blue* had rapidly gained an impassioned following for its absurdist spin on the blockbuster video game franchise *Halo*.

"The experience was life-changing," recalls Dunkelman, BComm 11. "That was my first time meeting anyone from Rooster Teeth, or anyone from the community."

She went on to volunteer at other *Red vs. Blue* events over the years. After she graduated from the John Molson School of Business with a marketing degree in 2011, Rooster Teeth offered her a job as its first community manager.

The skills Dunkelman acquired at Concordia helped soften the transition to life in Texas.

"The most valuable thing I learned at Concordia was how to work in a group — how to be a leader and how to step back and collaborate," she says.

Dunkelman's rise at Rooster Teeth was quick. She was promoted to creative director last September and has been at the heart of Rooster Teeth's growth and diversification, from animated shows to video game development and the company's popular annual conventions, known as RTX (think SXSW meets Comic-Con).

Dunkelman also provides the voice of Yang Xiao Long on Rooster Teeth's anime-inspired web series *RWBY* and hosts *Always Open*, a weekly video podcast. The lively panels she moderates cover "life, love, sex, and everything in between."

Rooster Teeth has a global footprint of more than 45 million subscribers on YouTube, 5 million unique monthly visitors on **RoosterTeeth.com** and 3 million registered community members. As a prominent company ambassador, Dunkelman wields influence and regularly advocates for a more diverse video game industry — an industry analysts expect to eclipse US\$180 billion in annual sales by 2021 but one occasionally resistant to change.

"I think in general it's becoming more inclusive," says Dunkelman. "But you still see people who judge women's looks and are more harshly critical of women in the gaming industry."



BARBARA DUNKELMAN

With over 350 thousand followers on Instagram and 470 thousand on Twitter, Dunkelman has a considerable platform. Tending to that kind of audience is "definitely hard work."

"I try to interact as much as possible and try to involve followers in the conversation," she says.

"It's all about balance. In order to develop a relationship with the fan community, you have to be open. But it's up to the individual person to determine how open they want to be."

## 2 Concordians are among Canada's most powerful women

Organized by the Women's Executive Network (WXN) every year, the Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Awards is the country's most recognizable event for women in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

At the 2019 gala in Toronto, **Christiane Germain**, LLD 13, was inducted into WXN's Hall of Fame. Germain is the co-founder and co-president of Groupe Germain Hotels, a family-run business. Together with her brother, Jean-Yves Germain, she has successfully grown the business to include three hotel banners: Le Germain, Alt and Alt+, with hotels from Calgary to St. John's.



CHRISTIANE GERMAIN

Germain's efforts on behalf of her industry have been recognized by many. She is a member of the Order of Canada and l'Ordre national du Québec. Germain also dedicates a lot of her time to various social and charitable causes, and is the chair of the board of directors of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

**Wendy Cukier**, LLD 97, a professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management, was also a WXN 2019 Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Awards winner. The entrepreneurship and strategy professor was selected in the Public Sector Leaders category, which honours women who hold senior positions at public sector organizations across Canada.

In 1999, Cukier founded Ryerson's Diversity Institute, which seeks to advance women and under-represented groups in the workplace. She has helped firms become more inclusive through programs such as DiversityLeads — her work helped inform Canada's Bill C-25, which introduced amendments to the Canada Business Corporations Act with regard to the disclosure of the diversity of boards and senior management of federally incorporated public companies.



WENDY CUKIER

Cukier also created the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge in 2015, which went on to raise \$5 million and sponsor more than 400 refugees. A staunch gun control advocate, Cukier co-founded the Coalition for Gun Control with activist Heidi Rathjen, a survivor of the École Polytechnique massacre. Cukier has also mentored countless entrepreneurs, social activists, students and young professionals.

Germain and Cukier join a network of 1,214 women who have been honoured since the Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Awards was inaugurated in 2002. ■



Meet Clothilda (Claire) Clifton-Newton, BA 77, a retired community organizer who credits Concordia for her family's success



## 'You plant a seed and you never know what it will lead to'

IAN HARRISON,  
B COMM 01

Clothilda (Claire) Clifton was a week from her twenty-first birthday when she landed in Montreal from Trinidad and Tobago. It was late November 1968.

Her new life began in Côte-des-Neiges, a neighbourhood popular with West Indian immigrants, and at Montreal High, where she went to complete her secondary schooling.

When a neighbour encouraged Clifton to apply to university as a mature student, her life took a decisive turn.

"If not for Concordia, I would have stayed at the same level of education and employment," she says.

Clifton soon met an ambitious young man, Kelvin Newton, who had been a teacher in Trinidad and Tobago. Marriage followed and she became Claire Clifton-Newton. The newlyweds enrolled as full-time students at Concordia; Clifton-Newton received her BA (applied social sciences) in 1977 and Newton his BComm (accountancy) the same year.

The couple was a fixture at the offices of the Caribbean Students Union.

"The CSU was very strong at that time," says Clifton-Newton. "Lasting friendships were created. We held a reunion at our house not too long ago and former members came from all over — even overseas."

Notable guests at the reunion included Concordia luminaries Roland Wills, former associate dean, Commerce and Administration, and Dorothy Wills, MA 78, LLD 89.

By the time Clifton-Newton entered McGill's social work program, her first child, Aisha, was six months old. The subsequent news that Clifton-Newton was pregnant with twins and needed bedrest did not deter her — she graduated with her second bachelor's in 1980. She then stayed home to raise Aisha and twins Akilah and Omari while Kelvin worked in accounting.

Clifton-Newton eventually returned to the workforce at what became Batshaw Youth and Family Centres, the government-funded child and family welfare agency. While the work could be stressful and difficult, the job came with rewards, too.

Clifton-Newton organized an annual show at Batshaw that showcased the talents of black youth, many of whom affectionately called her "Auntie Claire."

"Claire's a fearless and staunch advocate for equity, recognition and celebration of black professionals," says Varda Mann-Feder, professor of applied human sciences at Concordia.

"She worked for many years as a child protection worker and became a trainer of other workers. I always admired her tirelessness, forthrightness and ability to take on difficult issues."

Omari Newton, BA 06 (comm. studies), a Vancouver-based actor, thoughtful op-ed writer and playwright (his musical *Black and Blue Matters* will premiere at Montreal's Black Theatre Workshop in 2020), co-hosted the annual talent



**CLAIRE AND KELVIN**  
(BELOW) WERE ACTIVE  
WITH THE CARIBBEAN  
STUDENTS UNION IN  
THE LATE 1970s.

“Claire’s a fearless advocate for equity, recognition and celebration of black professionals.”

extravanzas at Batshaw with his mother.

Her work ethic, whether at Batshaw or McGill University, where she completed her Master of Social Work in 1997, had an impact on him as a boy.

“My mom’s an incredible role model,” he says. “I just remember her constantly working. She encouraged us to dream big.”

Omari says his parents made education paramount and supported his passion for activism and the arts.

“Our family library was basically a historical [survey] of black civil rights books. I grew up with Eldridge Cleaver’s *Soul on Ice*, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.”

Akilah Newton graduated from the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts. As the founder and executive director of the non-profit Overture with the Arts, she

helps ensure access to arts education for children.

She also co-authored *Big Dreamers: The Canadian Black History Activity Book for Kids* and, with Omari, talks to schoolchildren for Black History Month about topics such as systemic racism and the accomplishments of remarkable Black Canadians.

Clifton-Newton, who hopes to complete and publish a memoir entitled *A House Divided: Social Work in Black and White*, is resolute when she reflects on her own family’s accomplishments.

“Had it not been for Concordia, I would not have achieved as much as I did. It cemented my family’s legacy.

“You plant a seed and you never know what it will lead to.” ■

*Find out more about Clifton-Newton’s story by watching the video at [concordia.ca/clothildaclifton](https://concordia.ca/clothildaclifton)*



# Morton Minc, Concordia's jurist-in-residence, makes legal concepts come alive

Students from a range of disciplines benefit from the veteran judge's expertise

## TAYLOR TOWER

In 2017, Morton S. Minc, BA 67, joined Concordia as jurist-in-residence for the Faculty of Arts and Science. It was the first such appointment for any English university in Quebec.

This past November, Minc and the Faculty of Arts and Science introduced a three-year partnership with the Court of Quebec on the theme of access to justice. Students on the Minor in Law and Society track who are accepted into the program will meet with judges, observe court proceedings and present their experiences to peers.

"It's empowering for students to see the complexity of the justice system first-hand," says Minc.

Since his mandate began, the former chief justice of the Municipal Court of Montreal has built an event series with prominent jurists from across the country; spearheaded a court observation program for students in the Department of History's Minor in Law and Society program; and established a mentorship program that pairs students with Montreal-based lawyers.

Helen Poubouras was among the first cohort of students to participate in the mentorship program during the 2018-19 school year.

Mentors provide expertise and guidance on

the day-to-day realities of the legal profession as well as general support for navigating life after Concordia.

A recent Concordia graduate who earned a sociology degree with a minor in Law and Society, Poubouras is currently enrolled at Université de Montréal's Faculty of Law.

She was paired with lawyer Penelope Karavelas, whose work with Legal Aid of Montreal focuses on providing access to justice for marginalized populations like the homeless.

"I believe that providing legal aid to those who might otherwise slip through the cracks of the legal system is the most rewarding work a lawyer can do," says Poubouras.

"Learning more about [Karavelas's work] sparked my interest in law."

## LAW FOR ALL

"Judge Minc's dedication to our students and our community is boundless," says André Roy, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science.

"He has demonstrated the ways in which an understanding and appreciation of the law can shape and inspire students."

In September 2019, Judge Minc introduced the "Law Meets Engineering" lecture series at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science with the aim of



demystifying legal concepts relevant to the field.

"To effectively serve the public and contribute to society, engineers need to understand legal regulations within their jurisdictions and principles governing their work," says Amir Asif, dean of the Gina Cody School.

"I am extremely thankful to Morton Minc for inviting some of the best legal minds in Quebec to train the next generation of engineering and computer science leaders. The importance of the 'Law Meets Engineering' lecture series is evident from its popularity among the students."

The collaborations continued with an event co-hosted with the John Molson School of Business featuring former premier Pierre-Marc Johnson.

"Providing an engaging learning environment is a key part of JMSB's mission,

and this collaboration with Judge Minc is a perfect example of how we do that," says Anne-Marie Croteau, dean of the John Molson School of Business.

"Through the jurist-in-residence program, the JMSB community was given unprecedented access to a major figure in international trade. Mr. Johnson's insights into globalization and trade provided for a tremendously enriching and inspiring experience for all attendees."

Ultimately, Minc says, he not only wants to open the world to the innovative work being done at Concordia but "give students the encouragement and support they need to become the great change-makers of our province and country." ■

*Learn more about Morton Minc and the jurist-in-residence program at [concordia.ca/jurist](http://concordia.ca/jurist).*



## MEET 8 MORE EXPERTS-IN-RESIDENCE

**Charles Bierbrier**, MBA 03, founder and president of Bierbrier Brewing, Inc. As the National Bank entrepreneur-in-residence, he coaches students at the John Molson School of Business on subjects related to entrepreneurship.

**Lynne Bowker**, a professor at the University of Ottawa, is researcher-in-residence at Concordia University Library, where she conducts research with non-anglophone students and faculty on the use of machine translation for scholarly purposes.

The library also recently welcomed **Amber Berson** as Concordia's first Wikipedian-in-residence. Berson is a writer, curator and PhD candidate who conducts research on artist-run culture and feminist, utopian thinking.

**Jodi Calahoo-Stonehouse** was welcomed as the SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation's first innovator-in-residence last November. Her work centres on positive narratives of Indigenous peoples and ways to improve the lives of marginalized Indigenous youth.

**David Heurtel**, the former Quebec minister for Immigration, Diversity and Inclusiveness, is the most recent scholar-in-residence and guest lecturer in Public Administration with the Faculty of Arts and Science's Department of Political Science.

**Nathan McDonnell** and **Jessica Quijano**, community activists and organizers, are the current futurists-in-residence at the Institute for Urban Futures in the Faculty of Fine Arts. The residency program offers the Institute the opportunity to be stimulated by deep work in the community through sustained relationships with vital urban actors and organizations.

**Jesse Tungilik**, an interdisciplinary artist based in Iqaluit, Nunavut, was artist-in-residence for the Faculty of Fine Arts for part of 2019. His works will be included in the inaugural exhibition of the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit Art Centre in 2020.

# LOYOLA WARRIORS FOOTBALL Alumni Reunion

SEPT. 11 + 12  
**2020**

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Join Concordia committee members Pete Regimbald, Brian Marcil and Richard Brayley. Contact [alumnievents@concordia.ca](mailto:alumnievents@concordia.ca) for details on how to become a volunteer.

#CUhomecoming #CUalumni

# Concordia's 4 new honorands

A Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer, a Canadian business icon and a pair of STEM education pioneers

JAKE BRENNAN

During the fall convocation ceremony on November 19, 1,000 new graduates joined Concordia's network of more than 220,000 alumni around the world.

Four highly distinguished and outstanding individuals were also awarded honorary degrees. They shared important words of wisdom with the Class of 2019.



1

## 'I DID IT WITH MY INTEGRITY'

Canadian business icon **Annette Verschuren**, 2 LLD 19, began her career working as a development officer with the Cape Breton Development Corporation. From there, Verschuren was named president of Michael's of Canada Inc. As president, she was responsible for opening 17 of the chain's arts and crafts stores in just 26 months.

Subsequently, she became president of The Home Depot Canada. During her 15 years at

the company, Verschuren was responsible for overseeing the expansion of the hardware store from 19 to 179 stores, and also led Home Depot's entry into China from 2005 to 2008. In 2012, Verschuren founded her own company, NRStor Inc., a leader in the commercialization of energy storage technologies.

In 2016, she authored *Bet On Me: Leading and Succeeding in Business and in Life*, which was a finalist for the National Business Book Award. She was named an officer of the Order of

## 'EDUCATION EQUALS FREEDOM'

Three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning press photographer, **Barbara Davidson**, 1 BFA 90, LLD 19, began her career as a photographer and photo editor for Concordia's student newspaper *The Link* while earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography and Film Studies. After graduation, Davidson went on to work as a staff photographer at *The Record* in Waterloo, Ontario, then *The Washington Times*, *The Dallas Morning News* and finally, the *Los Angeles Times*.

She recently left her position at the *Los Angeles Times* to pursue a career as a freelance photojournalist. Davidson is working on a Guggenheim Fellowship making 8x10-inch portraits of gunshot survivors

from around the United States. Her successful career spans more than 20 years and has brought her to conflict zones and humanitarian crises in more than 55 countries.

"I've traveled around the world and seen first-hand how the basic human right to an education has been denied to so many people, especially girls and women. That awareness has left a lasting imprint on me — education equals freedom. I was the first person in my family to get a university degree and I am keenly aware that education lifted me out of poverty and gave me the freedom to achieve so many of my dreams."

*Barbara Davidson addressed the joint ceremony of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Faculty of Fine Arts.*

Canada in 2011 and joined the Canadian Business Hall of Fame in 2019.

"I'm an average kid, an average farmer's daughter coming from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. And I did it. And I did it without having to be abusive. I did it without having to be authoritarian. I did it with my integrity, with the respect I have for people, and honesty. And these are things that the business community needs from every one of you."

*Annette Verschuren addressed the John Molson School of Business.*



2



### 'PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT'

**Rebecca Brent**, LLD 19, and her husband and colleague **Richard Felder**, LLD 19, **3** have been helping a generation of STEM educators teach more effectively. Together, they co-authored *Teaching and Learning STEM: A Practical Guide*, in which they emphasize student-centred instructional methods such as active and cooperative learning. They have also presented over 600 faculty development workshops and seminars.

Brent began her career as a primary school teacher but eventually realized her passion for teacher education. Now, Brent is the president of Education Designs Inc., a consulting firm in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She has more than 35 years of experience in education. Brent specializes in STEM staff development,

teacher preparation, and evaluation of educational programs at both pre-college and college levels.

"In preparing for this short address, I was thinking back to my own journey and sitting at several of my own graduation ceremonies, getting ready to take that next step and start something new. Each time, I was pretty sure I was about to reveal myself as a fraud who really did not belong in graduate school or getting a doctorate or teaching in a university. I had imposter syndrome and I had it bad. So, if this old impostor has any advice for you, it's to recognize that voice for what it is – a scammer – and forge ahead to whatever your next step is and remember you are ready."

Felder began his career researching various topics related to chemical process engineering but eventually discovered his passion for teaching. In 1978, he

co-authored the textbook *Elementary Principles of Chemical Processes*, which has been adopted by more than 90 per cent of chemical engineering departments in the United States. Currently, he is the Hoechst Celanese Professor Emeritus of Chemical Engineering at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

"Pay attention to what you're good at, what you really love to do and look for opportunities that come along that give you a chance to do that. And if you do, eventually, sooner or later, and I hope sooner, you'll find a position that allows you to do what you're good at, what you enjoy doing, what you love doing. And you will be a success at it."

*Rebecca Brent and Richard Felder addressed the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. ■ Watch videos of the full speeches at [concordia.ca/convocation-speeches](https://concordia.ca/convocation-speeches).*



## CONCORDIANS IN PARLIAMENT: 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION

**84 Fayçal El-Khoury**, BEng, re-elected Liberal MP, Laval–Les Îles

**Francis Scarpaleggia**, MBA, re-elected Liberal MP, Lac-Saint-Louis

**88 Brenda Shanahan**, MBA, re-elected Liberal MP, Châteauguay–Lacolle

**02 Anju Dhillon**, BA (poli. sci.), re-elected Liberal MP, Dorval–Lachine–LaSalle

**Anthony Housefather**, MBA, re-elected Liberal MP, Mount Royal

**04 Marc Garneau**, LLD, re-elected Liberal MP, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce–Westmount

**Sameer Zuberi**, BA (pure and applied math.), elected Liberal MP, Pierrefonds–Dollard

**05 Tomasz "Tom" Kmiec**, BA (poli. sci.), re-elected Conservative MP, Calgary Shepard

**07 Peter Schiefke**, BA (poli. sci.), re-elected Liberal MP, Vaudreuil–Soulanges

**11 Sherry Romanado**, MBA, re-elected Liberal MP, Longueuil–Charles-LeMoyne



## ALUMNI UPDATES

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

**78 James Babanikos**, BEng, GrDip 83 (comm. studies), was named associate dean for undergraduate affairs at the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications.

**81 Joseph "Joey" Vaccaro**, BComm, GrDip 83 (acct.), was named senior vice-president of the Applications Division at Computer Generated Solutions (CGS) Quebec.

**85 Madeleine Chenette**, BA (rec. & leis. studies), was appointed ambassador and permanent representative of Canada at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France.

**86 Christine Zalzal**, BComm (mktg.), was appointed as the senior vice-president and head of online brokerage and digital wealth at Aviso Wealth in Toronto, Ont.

**87 Eric Allard**, BA (econ.), was named director of sales in Ontario at Delmar International, a leading global supply chain solutions provider.

**90 Kathleen "Kitty" Scott**, BFA (art hist.), was named deputy director and chief curator at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, Ont. Her term started on January 6.

**91 Marlene Jennings**, ATTD, was appointed as the administrator of the English Montreal School Board.

**96 Katia Coric**, BFA (art hist.), is the new philanthropic development advisor at the Pointe-à-Callière Foundation.



AFTER BEING DIAGNOSED WITH A RARE FORM OF BREAST CANCER CALLED TRIPLE-NEGATIVE IN AUGUST 2017, **TRACEY MCKEE**, GRDIP 93 (COMM. STUDIES), MA 00 (COMM. STUDIES & MEDIA STUDIES), BEGAN DETAILING HER BATTLE WITH THE DISEASE ON HER BLOG, *IN THE PINK*. ALMOST TWO YEARS LATER, MCKEE IS IN REMISSION. SHE TOLD HER STORY IN A ONE-WOMAN PLAY CALLED *I'VE GOT THIS*, WHICH PREMIERED IN NOVEMBER AT JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE'S CASGRAIN THEATRE.

**Dominique McCaughey**, BA, MA 02, was appointed CEO of Ometz, a charitable organization that supports individuals and families through employment, immigration, school and social services.

**97 Cammi Granato Ferraro**, ATTD (sports admin.), was hired as the NHL's first female pro scout for the new Seattle franchise. Ferraro previously captained Team USA to a gold medal in the 1998 Winter Olympics, and she has been inducted into the International Hockey Hall of Fame (2008), the US Hockey Hall of Fame (2009) and the Hockey Hall of Fame (2010).

**Manon Gauthier**, BA (anthro.), was named the inaugural executive director at the Jean-Paul Riopelle Foundation, which was established by philanthropist Michael Audain as a tribute to the Canadian artist.

**Jean-Carlo Rouzier**, BA (transl.), was appointed as director of ETF Distribution at BMO Global Asset Management.

**98 Nathalie Meunier**, BComm (hum. res. mgmt.), was appointed vice-president of human resources at Mediagrip Interactive Technologies Inc., a Canadian leader in information technology.

**01 David Azerrad**, BA (poli. sci. & journ.), was recently named assistant professor of government and research fellow at Hillsdale College in Washington, D.C.

**Christina Lalli**, BA (human rels.), GrDip 12, Cert. Student (JMSB) 13, was appointed as director of investor relations at Nouveau Monde Graphite Inc.

**02 Anna Dell'Api**, BA (poli. sci.), was named assistant vice-president of legal affairs and corporate secretary at Laurentian Bank of Canada.

**03 John McKirdy**, EMBA, was appointed as chief commercial officer at Wencor Group, a solutions provider to the aerospace aftermarket.

**04 Karim Guirguis**, BFA (design art), was recently hired as general manager of Quebec operations at Cosentino, which produces surface materials such as quartz for designers and architects.

**06 Musa Nuhu**, AMBA, was named director general of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority in Lagos, Nigeria.

**07 Geneviève Gosselin**, BComm (mktg.), was hired as project director at Ad Hoc, a Montreal-based marketing research firm.

**08 Lisa Qiluqqi Koperqualuk**, BA (poli. sci.), was hired as the

new curator and mediator of Inuit Art at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

**09 Michaela Di Cesare**, BA (Eng. & cr. wrt.), was named playwright-in-residence at the Centaur Theatre for the 2019-2020 season.

**10 Joëlle Boutin**, MA (public policy and public admin.), was elected as a CAQ MNA in the December 2019 provincial byelection in the riding of Jean-Talon.

**12 Eunice Bélidor**, BFA (art hist.), was named director of Concordia's FOFA Gallery.

**13 Valérie Lavoie**, BComm (mktg.), was named a consultant at Massy Forget Langlois Public Relations.

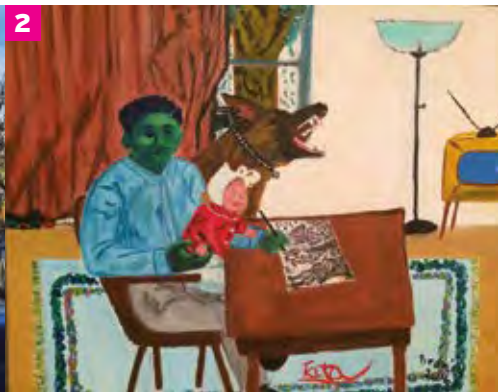
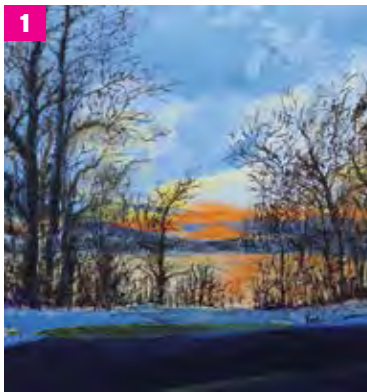
**14 M'Baye Diagne**, BEng (mech. eng.), was appointed as board member at Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal, where he will serve a three-year term.

**Michael Sabia**, LLD, was named the director of the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. Sabia began his five-year term February 1, 2020.

**16 Patrick Aouad**, BA (urban planning), was hired as a senior consultant on public engagement and public participation at Hill+Knowlton Strategies, an international public relations company.

**Elise Favis**, BA (journ. multiplatform), was hired as a reporter for *The Washington Post's* new section, *Launcher*, covering video games and e-sports.

**19 Isabella Byrne**, BA (anthro. & rel.), has joined Ad Hoc, a Montreal-based marketing research firm, as an analyst.



**1** **Teri Covin**, BFA 83, participated in the 2019 Square Foot Exhibition & Fundraiser for the Montreal Old Brewery Mission in November. 1) *On my way home!*

**2** **Bronia Zak**, BA 84, GrDip 96, has a digital photo of a painting on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. 2) *Tribute to my Tata*

**3** **Joanne Kielo**, MA 88, GrDip 88 (art therapy), exhibited her series entitled *When Paper Becomes Poetry* in the group show *Inspiré par Leonard Cohen* at the Musée Régional de Vaudreuil-Soulanges from November 9, 2019 to January 22, 2020. 3) *Vire, vire...*

**4** **Barbara Sweeney**, BFA 96, presented an exhibition of 49 paintings at the Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library in fall 2019. 4) *Musical Interlude*

**5** **Nathalie Bandulet**, BFA 97, exhibited her latest *in situ* installation at the Maison de la culture du Plateau-Mont-Royal last fall. 5) *Papaver*

**6** **Chrissy Cheung**, BFA 00, completed a mural in the heart of Vancouver's Chinatown for acclaimed chef Angus An's Freebird Chicken Shack. Cheung also participated in both the Market Art + Design fair in Bridgehampton, New York and, through ModArt Gallery in Miami, the REVEAL International Contemporary Art Fair in Saratoga Springs, New York. 6) *Picture of her mural for Freebird Chicken Shack*

**7** **Elisabeth Hewlett**, BFA 00 (stud. arts), participated in the juried *Artotheque 2020* group collection at Stewart Hall Art Gallery. 7) *Bouquet*

**8** **Julianne "Julie" Gladstone**, BFA 07 (painting & drawing), held an exhibition, *Return to the Fortress*, at the Museum of Jewish Montreal from October 24, 2019 to February 9, 2020. 8) *Prayer Shall with Moss, Poppies, Butterflies and Amulets*.

**9** **Chloé Beaulac**, BFA 10, was selected for a special photography mission to capture the landscapes of the Laurentians between late June and late October 2019. The results will be presented at the Centre d'exposition in Val-David and the Rencontres de la photographie in Gaspésie in the summer of 2020. 9) *PALAIS DU SAVOIR*



**Martin Murphy**, BComm 58, won the Community Leadership Award from the Quebec Community Groups Network. Murphy was recognized for his advancement of core community causes including better conditions for teachers and greater access to English health and social services.

**Marc Lachapelle**, BA 77, was named the 2019 Canadian Automotive Journalist of the Year by the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada. This was his fourth time winning the award. Lachapelle was also named the runner-up of the 2019 Award for Environmental Journalism for his story “J’ai signé le Pacte malgré mon métier énergivore,” published in *Le Journal de Montreal/Le Guide de l’auto*.

With 1,500 NHL games and a Stanley Cup to his name, **Ken Lowe**, BSc 78, was inducted into the Professional Hockey Athletic Trainer’s Society (PHATS) and the Society of Professional Hockey Equipment Managers (SPHEM) Hall of Fame last June. He will also be included on the PHATS/SPHEM Wall of Honour at the Hockey Hall of Fame. Lowe was a longtime athletic trainer for the Edmonton Oilers and Team Canada.



**Margaret Atwood**, LLD 79, was named a member of the Order of the Companions of Honour by Queen Elizabeth for her services to literature. Atwood also co-won the 2019 Booker Prize for *The Testaments* (Penguin Random House, 2019).

**François Plourde**, BEng 84, was the recipient of the Beaubien Award. The award recognizes individuals for their lifetime contribution to the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies and to the advancement of the consulting engineering profession and industry.

Professor **Michael Tai**, PhD 84 (rel.), was the recipient of the 2019 Fritz Jahr International Award for Research and Promotion of European Bioethics.

**Claire Holden Rothman**, MA 88 (Eng.), was named the winner of the 2019 Vine Award for Canadian Jewish Literature in the Fiction category for *Lear’s Shadow*.

**Lino Saputo Jr.**, BA 89 (poli. sci.) was named Canada’s Outstanding CEO of the Year 2019 by the *Financial Post*.

**Roland Charneux**, MEng 90, was the recipient of the Green Building Pioneer Award from the Canada Green Building Council in recognition for his innovative approach to advancing the green building industry.

**Suzan Denoncourt**, MBA 92, was recognized by Women in Payments with the Distinguished Payments Professional Award. The award recognizes a woman who is an acknowledged trendsetter, role model and a strong contributor to the overall positive image of the industry.

Co-founder and CEO of Kids Code Jeunesse, **Katherine “Kate” Arthur**, BA 98 (Eng. lit.), was named the winner of the VISA Entrepreneur/Innovation Leader of the Year Award at the Canadian FinTech and AI Awards in Toronto, Ont.

Montreal writer **Rawi Hage**, BFA 98, was named 2019 winner of the Writers’ Trust Engel Findley Award, which is annually given to an accomplished mid-career fiction writer.

**Lizabeth Valdez**, BFA 04 (theatre), was named the winner of the Montreal English Theatre Award for Outstanding Direction for *Encore*.

**Logan MacDonald**, BFA 05 (stud. arts), was selected as one of three Canadians who will take part in the Sobey Art Award Residencies Program, courtesy of the Sobey Art Foundation and the National Gallery of Canada. MacDonald will be at Berlin’s Künstlerhaus Bethanien for six months.





AP Photo/ANVAR ILVASOV

*The Hollywood Reporter* named **Preeya Khanna**, BA 10 (comm. studies & cultural studies), global head of public figure partnerships at YouTube/Google, one of “Hollywood’s 35 Rising Executives: 35 and Under.”

**Jin Young Kim**, MFA 14 (studio arts), was named the winner of the Prix Lynne-Cohen from the Estate of Lynne Cohen, in collaboration with the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

Air Canada president and chief executive **Calin Rovinescu**, LLD 16, was recognized as the 2019 CEO Strategist of the Year by *The Globe and Mail’s Report on Business*.

**Linda Morais**, 2 BSc 17 (exer. sci.), won the women’s gold medal in the 59-kg weight category at the 2019 Wrestling World Championships in Kazakhstan.

Illustrator **Daniela Ortiz Sanchez**, MFA 17 (stud. arts), was named co-winner of the tenth edition of the International Illustrated Album Contest.

**Maize Longboat**, MA 19 (comm. and media studies), won the award for Best Emerging Digital or Interactive Work at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival for his video game *Terra Nova*. Set in a distant future, it invites players to experience first contact between settlers and Indigenous peoples.

## ORDER OF CANADA

Officer: **Caroline Ouellette**, LLD 19, former captain of Team Canada and assistant coach of the Concordia Stingers women’s hockey team.

Members: **Lynn Zimmer**, BA 69, women’s rights advocate and co-founder of Interval House, Canada’s first shelter for abused women; **Hana Gartner**, BA 70, investigative journalist.

## ASSOCIATION OF FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS 2019 EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The late **L. Jacques Ménard**, BComm 67 (econ.), LLD 06, Chancellor Emeritus, was recognized with the 2019 Award for Outstanding Philanthropic Commitment.

The Molson family — which includes **Eric Molson**, LLD 06, and **Andrew Molson**, Campaign for Concordia co-chair — received the Award for Outstanding Philanthropist.

## 2019 ERNST & YOUNG (EY) ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

**Ayal Twik**, BComm 99 (fin.) was the co-winner of the EY Quebec Entrepreneur of the Year. Twik was also the co-recipient of the award in the Business to Consumer category.

**Philip Fayer**, ATTD 00, was the recipient of the award in the FinTech category.

**Orlane Panet-Gigon**, ATTD 13 (mgmt. acct.), was the recipient of the award in the Young Entrepreneur category.

## 2019 QUEBEC WRITERS’ FEDERATION LITERARY AWARDS

**Susan Doherty**, BSc 80 (bio. phys. ed.), BComm 95, Mavis Gallant Prize for Non-Fiction, *The Ghost Garden*.

**Lindsay Nixon**, BA 16 (women’s studies), MA 18 (art hist.), Concordia University First Book Prize, *nītisānak*.

**Oana Avasilichioaei**, MA 02 (Eng.), GrDipl 16 (traduc.), Cole Foundation Prize for Translation, *The Faerie Devouring*.

## CANADA’S TOP 40 UNDER 40 BY BNN BLOOMBERG

**Daniel Schlaepfer**, MBA 08, president and CEO of Select Vantage Inc.

# Sunfish

Fiction from the latest winner of the \$2,000 Gabriel Safdie Undergraduate Creative Writing Award

BRIDGET MOUNTFORD  
BA (ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING)

*The following is excerpted from a longer work.*

Ellen shrugged the waterlogged life jacket off her shoulders; it fell with a splat and leaked into a rust coloured puddle at her feet. She shivered, standing over the Megans as they laid themselves out to sun.

“D – Do you guys remember when we tried to build that raft?”

“Oh yeah,” Megan K. said.

“God we were so retarded,” Megan P. laughed.

“Nah,” Ellen said. “We were just kids.”

Megan P. squinted up at Ellen, using her hand as a sun visor.

“You know I don’t mean retarded-retarded, right? Just like, stupid.”

“Yeah – no, of course. I didn’t think –”

“Kid-stupid,” Megan K. murmured, rolling over onto her stomach.

“But you’re probably right Ellen,” Megan P. sighed. She closed her eyes and settled into her tan. “My mom doesn’t like that word either.”

Ellen stood and stared down at the Megans. Some familiar brine welled inside her. She tried to swallow it back down to the base of her throat but the waters still rose. Ellen wanted to wrap her arms around them, to make some confession to span the distance that had sprung up between them. She tried to

think of something she could purge herself of, to find a grievance or a fear that would cause them to embrace her, to inspire their pity and closeness. She wanted a euphemism for all the need that foamed inside her. The Megans lay still, beads of lake water and sweat running off their skin. Megan K.’s hair dried into thick dark curls that clung to her cheeks and collarbone. Megan P.’s hair was thin, bleached flaxen by the sun. Their cheeks were powdered with freckles and flush. Ellen loved the Megans. She loved them pathetically and achingly. Her love was acidic and bubbling. It flooded her skull and stung at her eyes.

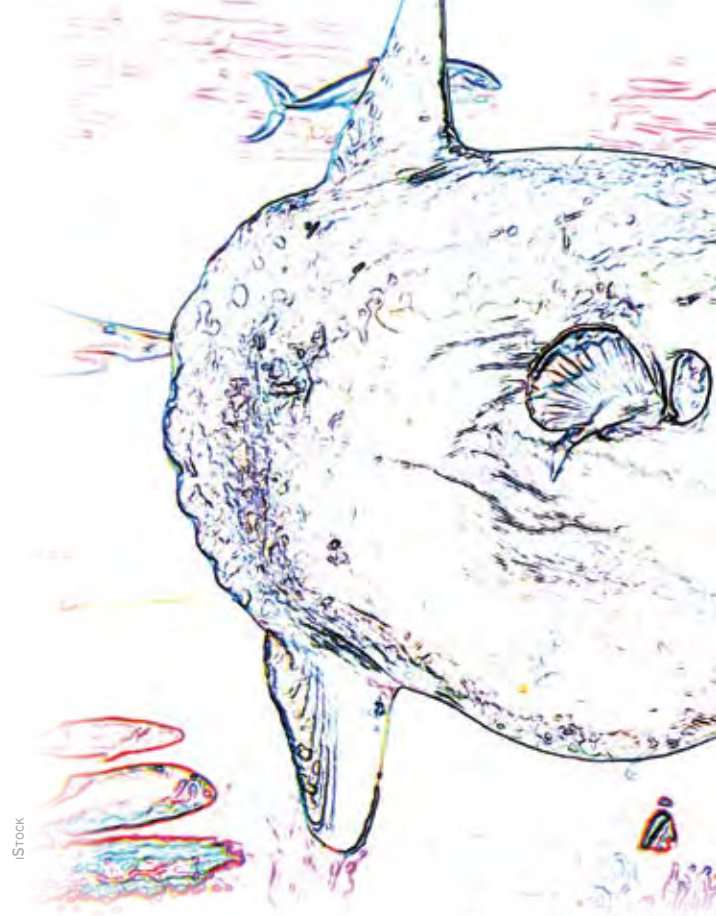
“Ellen, you’re dripping the lake on us,” Megan K. said gently.

“Right, sorry.”

Ellen hurried away from the shore towards the little grove of balsam and pine trees at the center of the island.

“Aren’t you going to lay out with us?” Megan P. asked.

“No, thanks,” she sniffed. Then turned back to smile. “I haven’t got any sunscreen on.”



BRIDGET MOUNTFORD



The beachrock gave way to a soft bed of needles and sap. The ground lifted with the soles of her feet. Their ghosts strode beside her, weaving between trees and waving from all the unreachable spots in her periphery. This Ellen was smaller, quicker. She only ever wanted to play. Ellen wondered about all the versions of herself she'd misplaced. There'd be one of her here and one at the house that used to belong to her grandma; there was a ghost at the intersection where she broke her leg and one buried in the backyard with the family dog. It seemed she would carry on this way forever, shedding herself.

Suddenly there was a sharp stinging in her heel. The ghosts scattered. Ellen peeled the crushed beer can from her foot. The aluminum had puckered into sharp ridges that streamed with her blood. Ellen wouldn't cry. She wiped at her snot and continued, limping, through the grove, turning over the can over in her palm.

The beachrock at the other side of the island was steeper, the drop-off more abrupt and treacherous. This was the nicer side of the lake. Water trampolines bobbed in front of beige cottages with enormous bay windows. Megan P.'s cottage was more like a cabin. The walls were a curved shiplap, worn with white lead paint. The window glass was bloated and rippled by all the weather straining to get in. Things built to last were generally more expensive.

Ellen sat on the shore and watched the cabin cruisers and jet-skis send waves rushing up the island. They lapped at her toes and washed her blood down the rock. She stretched out her arms to steady herself. Something gold floated towards her: a dead sunfish. It floated on its side, scales glittering in the late afternoon sun. Its eyes were clouded white, like two pearls lodged in its flesh. Ellen grabbed the fish by its tail and dangled it before her. Its weight surprised her. It must have collected water. Somehow, she wasn't squeamish. She laid it in her other palm. It was just the size of her hand and it was beautiful. Its fins were a prickly blue film that razed and rose with her touch. Its stomach was red, some tender florid underbelly, soft beneath flaking shells. Ellen scooted up the rock and placed the sunfish in front of her. The beer can was a surgical saw that she plunged into its side. She carved carefully at the fish, trying to split it perfectly down the middle. Now she was getting to the heart of things.

Ellen had done a science project on the ocean sunfish. They were a different beast altogether: a great grey mass that could grow to over 2,000 pounds, 14 feet wide. Ocean sunfish had flattened bodies and pursed pink lips. Their flesh wrinkled and scabbed like a person's, spread out into something grotesque but benign. Ellen had a hard time imagining anything that big. She couldn't wrap her mind around scale, how a thing could be larger than a person, larger than her father even, or so small that they'd invented special optic lenses to perceive it. She only trusted medium-sized things.

Its guts were pinkish and blue, arranged in sacs of varying sizes along its vertebrae. She poked and prodded at the heart, at the mechanism of the gills that appeared as a ribbon of magenta ruffles, a clear pouch eclipsing the intestines. She pressed each organ between her fingertips, measuring its resistance. Was this all a body was? She didn't resist her curiosity. A latent impulse to destroy had been satiated and now, maybe, she could return to the world. ■



## 'Jacques was a wonderful man'

MATTHEW SCRIBNER

**B**usinessman and Concordia chancellor emeritus L. Jacques Ménard, BComm 67, LL.D. 06, passed away on February 4, in Montreal. He was 74.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of a dedicated champion of our university and an accomplished member of Quebec's business and philanthropic communities," said Concordia's president Graham Carr.

"He was a visionary leader who embraced our city and advocated for the betterment of society. Jacques was an extraordinary graduate of Concordia and a great supporter of the university. I will miss his *joie de vivre* and his company. He was a wonderful man."

Ménard was president of BMO Financial Group, Quebec, from 2001 to 2018, and was named president emeritus in April 2018. A banker for over 40 years, he also served as chairman of the board of Hydro-Quebec, the Montreal Exchange, Trans-Canada Options Corporation and the Investment Dealers Association.

### A MAN FOR OTHERS

Born in Chicoutimi, Quebec, Ménard's lifelong attachment was to Montreal, where he lived since childhood. As chairman of Montreal International in 2014, he helped gather hundreds of local partners to attract foreign investment to the city — and by 2016, Montreal had attracted a record \$1.35 billion in investment, a 35-per-cent increase over the year before.

In an interview with *Le Devoir* in 2015, Ménard said, "As citizens, we are used to hearing that we have rights. I also like to think that we have duties that come with those rights."

He embodied the Jesuit motto, "a man for others," of his alma mater, Loyola College, and his passion for charitable work and philanthropy have been recognized by several private organizations and all three levels of government.

Ménard was awarded the highest level of the Order of Canada, Companion, and received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. He was a Commander of the Ordre de Montréal and in June 2017, he was promoted to the rank of Grand Officer,



the highest honour of the National Order of Quebec, for his exceptional contribution to Quebec's prosperity and wealth of expertise.

### A TIRELESS ADVOCATE FOR EDUCATION

Concordia was an important beneficiary of Ménard's longtime advocacy on behalf of education.

He joined the Board of Governors in 1994 and played a crucial role in the university's Campaign for a New Millennium, 1996-99. He was appointed deputy chancellor in 2009 and served as chancellor from 2011 to 2014. Ménard also sat on advisory boards and task forces at other universities, including HEC Montréal and York

University's Glendon College.

Concordia recognized his commitment with an Award of Distinction from the John Molson School of Business in 1993, the Loyola Medal in 1999 and an honorary doctorate in 2006.

Despite his remarkable accomplishments, Ménard remained modest. In 2013, he told *Les Affaires*, "I embraced a career that married well with what I loved to do as a citizen, on a human level."

Ménard is survived by his wife, Marie-José Ratelle, their two children, Louis-Simon and Anne-Valérie, and two grandchildren. ■

Watch a video about L. Jacques Ménard at [Concordia.ca/ljacquesmenard](https://Concordia.ca/ljacquesmenard).



## 'I take peace in knowing Sara and Siavash were so happy together'

MARTA SAMUEL,  
GRDIP 10

As news of the tragedy of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 made its way around the world, the Concordia community learned that two young alumni — Siavash Ghafouri-Azar, MASc 19, and Sara Mamani, MASc 18 — were among the 176 who died on January 8.

The couple were married during their recent trip to Iran and were returning to Canada to celebrate with their friends.

Ghafouri-Azar, 35, and Mamani, 36, were among 57 Canadians who lost their

lives. A total of 138 passengers were headed to Canada, including many members of the higher-education community.

Both Mamani and Ghafouri-Azar had completed master's degrees within the last two years in Concordia's Department of Mechanical, Industrial and Aerospace Engineering at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.

"The way they touched all of us is the way we will continue to remember them in our hearts," says Ali Dolatabadi, one of Ghafouri-Azar's graduate degree supervisors. "I can't recall

ever seeing Siavash without a huge smile on his face."

Suong Van Hoa, Sara's master's supervisor, recalled: "Sara was a wonderful person with a bright future in front of her. I feel fortunate that I had the opportunity to work with her for three years."

A private memorial service was held on January 10 at Concordia. More than 150 people — friends, colleagues, students, alumni and members of Montreal's Iranian community — filled the room to grieve together and share memories of Ghafouri-Azar and Mamani.

Many spoke of the couple's dedication to their studies

and loyalty to those around them, as well as their dream of starting a new life together in Canada.

The couple had both found jobs as engineers in Montreal while they pursued their studies at Concordia — Mamani at Bombardier, and Ghafouri-Azar at Pratt and Whitney Canada.

It's important, said one of their close friends, to remember the couple's love for each other.

"We are here not just to mourn them — we are here to celebrate their marriage. I take peace in knowing they were so happy together and that they will remain together forever." ■

**Olusola Adekoya**, BComm 79, July 11, 2019.

**Jacinta A. Anthony**, BA 77, September 6, 2019. She was 82.

**Michel Aoun**, MEng 84, June 30, 2019, Montreal. He was 65.

**Marino G. Argentin**, BA 74, 2019. He was 72.

**Robert Blanch**, BA 72, October 6, 1999.

**James Borcoman**, LLD 96, October 29, 2019, Ottawa, Ont. He was 93.

**Garth A. Bracewell**, BA 63, BSc 65, February 11, 2019, Ottawa, Ont. He was 76.

**Mark Busgang**, BComm 77, October 24, 2019. Beaconsfield, Que.

**Helen E. (Robertson) Butler**, BA 85, October 12, 2019. She was 90.

**D. Scott Campbell**, BA 71, September 29, 2017, Toronto, Ont. He was 70.

**Colin A. Carson**, BComm 70, August 16, 2019, Ottawa, Ont.

**Patrick J. Cuskley**, BA 77, November 3, 2019, Cape Coral, Fla. He was 65.

**France Delisle**, BComm 84, September 25, 2018, Montreal. She was 63.

**George H. Dempsey**, BSc 63, September 28, 2019. He was 84.

**Linda M. Donohue**, BAdmin 97, September 25,

2019, Montreal. She was 70.

**Norma A. (Harries) Farkas**, BFA 83, October 14, 2019, Montreal.

**Daniel Ferraro**, BAdmin 15, September 26, 2019. He was 27.

**Lindsay William Finney**, BA 61, November 22, 2019, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Que. He was 92.

**Thomas P. Fisher**, MFA 82, October 19, 2019. He was 67.

**Karen Rose Galler**, BA 85, September, 2019, Toronto, Ont. She was 58.

**R. Gibson**, BComm 58, October 27, 2019.

**Bruce Goldstein**, BComm 71, December 4, 2019. He was 70.

**Lianne Gray**, BFA 11, October 31, 2019. She was 38.

**Peter M. Hachey**, BComm 72, February 5, 2011.

**Habib Hawawini**, Cert 76, BComm 82, November 14, 2019. He was 69.

**James M. Hayes**, BComm 63, September 30, 2019. He was 81.

**Colin M. Hine**, EMBA 90, May 25, 2019, Ottawa, Ont. He was 82.

**Felicia Ianaro**, BA 87, October 21, 2019, Montreal. She was 54.

**Serge Ivanov**, BA 90, July 9, 2019. He was 54.

**Murray T. Johnston**, BA 58, November 23, 2019, Scarborough, Ont. He was 86.

**Kevin E. Kemball**, BSc 78, September 27, 2019. He was 66.

**E. Leo Kolber O.C.**, LLD 96, January 9, 2020, Montreal. He was 91.

**Ruth (Zilversmit) Kovac**, BA 71, October 1, 2019. She was 69.

**Terrence ("Terry") J. Kurtz**, BComm 70, October 21, 2019. He was 70.

**Valérie Lamontagne**, BFA 93, MFA 01, PhD 17, October 4, 2019. She was 51.

**Charleen (Goudreau) Leduc**, BA 79, January 13, 2020, Pointe-Claire, Que. She was 86.

**Saretta (Rill) Levitan**, Attd, November 27, 2019, Toronto, Ont. She was 96.

**Robert Li**, BFA 79, November 10, 2019, Montreal. He was 92.

**J. Michael Lyon**, BA 85, August 2, 2019. He was 72.

**Dorothy McGain**, BFA 82, October 21, 2019. She was 98.

**Miroslav Ménard**, BFA 92, February 9, 2019. He was 56.

**Helen E. (Ritchie) Montin**, BA 76, October 22, 2019. She was 94.

**Mary A. Mullally**, BA 58, June 28, 2019. She was 101.

**Brenda J. Parkinson**, BFA 76, June 28, 2019.

**Eigil D. Pedersen**, BA 56, LLD 92, November 24, 2019, Ottawa, Ont. He was 90.

**Linda S. (Blend) Petruolo**, GrCert 93, BA 97, November 18, 2019. She was 65.

**Diana Ruth Ellen Pierce**, BA 78, September 23, 2019. She was 80.

**Robert Prévost**, MTM 71, June 23, 2019, Saint-Hyacinthe, Que. He was 81.

**Linda (Waserman) Salem**, BA 88, November 18, 2019, Montreal. She was 75.

**Lawrence M. Scanlan**, BA 68, November 18, 2019. He was 73.

**Leon ("Tom") Selby**, BComm 77, November 18, 2019. He was 67.

**Jerry J. Slaba**, BSc 79, October 30, 2019. He was 77.

**George P. Springate**, BA 65, LLD 12, November 20, 2019. He was 81.

**James Stasiuk**, BEng 60, November 22, 2019, Thunder Bay, Ont. He was 81.

**Linda Strohl**, BA 82, January 31, 2019.

**Robert K. Winslow**, BA 59, November 2, 2019.

**Wayne Kenneth Woodrow**, BA 70, March 8, 2018, Italy.

**Norman Wray**, BA 67, January 10, 2020, Hawkesbury, Ont. He was 82.

**Dionysia Zerbisias**, BA 59, October 1, 2019, Montreal. She was 80. ■





## 'It was my wish that Concordia be custodian of Mordecai's writerly possessions'

HOWARD BOKSER,  
MBA 85

**F**lorence Richler, a great supporter of Concordia, passed away on January 10, 2020, in Toronto. She was 90.

Richler was a member of the university's Chancellor's Builders Circle, which honours philanthropists who support the next generation of students, faculty and researchers through gifts of \$100,000 and more. She was also the widow of the noteworthy Canadian writer and Concordia attendee Mordecai Richler, who passed away in 2001.

Mordecai Richler's literary estate donated the author's

personal effects, including his desk, typewriter and collection of 6,000 books, to Concordia in 2013.

"We are extremely fortunate that Florence saw Concordia — where Mordecai spent significant time in the 1940s and 1960s — as the natural home for so many of his personal items, to help his memory live on," says Graham Carr, Concordia's president.

This gift inspired the creation of the Mordecai Richler Reading Room on the sixth floor of the J. W. McConnell Building (LB).

It also established a three-year Mordecai Richler Writer

in Residence program, whose participants were three award-winning Canadians — playwright, novelist and broadcaster Ann-Marie MacDonald; graphic artist, author and illustrator Matthew Forsythe; and novelist, screenwriter and short-story writer Peter Behrens.

Florence Richler was born on October 19, 1929, in Montreal. She was registered as Gwendolyn Crowe, then adopted by Albert and Ethel Wood.

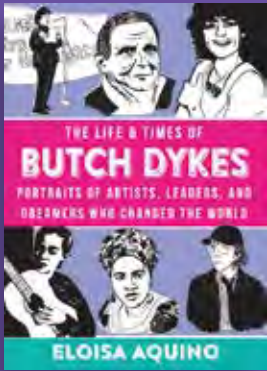
She built a globetrotting modelling and acting career; it took her to Paris and London, where she met

Mordecai in the mid-1950s. They married in 1960, and together had four children. Florence Richler had a son, Daniel, from a previous marriage.

"It was my wish that Concordia be custodian of my late husband's writerly possessions," Florence Richler said at the opening of the reading room in 2013.

"Mordecai worked incredibly hard to leave behind a body of work that would endure. That legacy will be immeasurably strengthened with the addition of the Mordecai Richler Reading Room at Concordia." ■

## Human wonder, declassified documents and dystopian nightmares



The  
Passionate  
Artist's  
Palate  
Cookbook

25 visual artists discuss their work and share their recipes

Catherine Marshall



JULIA SCANDELLA,  
BA 15

### MUSIC



**My Spanish Heart**  
An Iberian journey  
with pianist **Katarzyna  
Musial**, GrDip 09.



**Now**  
A rock-oriented project by  
award-winning guitarist  
**Michel Héroux**, BFA 91.

### BOOKS

**The Life & Times of Butch Dykes: Portraits of Artists, Leaders, and Dreamers Who Changed the World** (Microcosm Publishing, \$26) by **Eloisa Aquino**, MA 06, uses evocative vignettes and illustrations to tell the impactful stories of women who have defied society's expectations of feminine behaviour and appearance in order to live a more authentic life.

**Catherine Marshall**, BED 92, MA 97, pairs visual art with culinary art in **The Passionate Artist's Palate Cookbook: 25 Visual Artists Discuss Their Work and Share Their Recipes** (Rail Line Books, \$28.95).

Licensed attorney **Matthew Silver**, BComm 13, explains complex immigration issues in **Navigating US Immigration in Modern Times: A Review and Analysis of Work Visas** (Tellwell Talent, hardcover \$33.19, paperback \$26.54).

**Diana Bruno**, GrDip 98, created the first French-English lexicon written specifically for the North American hospitality and food services sector. With 350 pages and over 14,000 terms in each language, **Lexique français-anglais de la cuisine et de la restauration** (CCDMD, \$34.99) is a must-have resource for students and professionals in the industry.

**Stephen Henighan**, MA 86, brings the reader around the world with him in his fourth short-story collection, **Blue River and Red Earth** (Cormorant Books, \$22). From Canada to Russia and southeastern Africa, Henighan's 11 stories explore how we become part of the places to which we do not belong and how we can be changed by long-distance emotional ties.

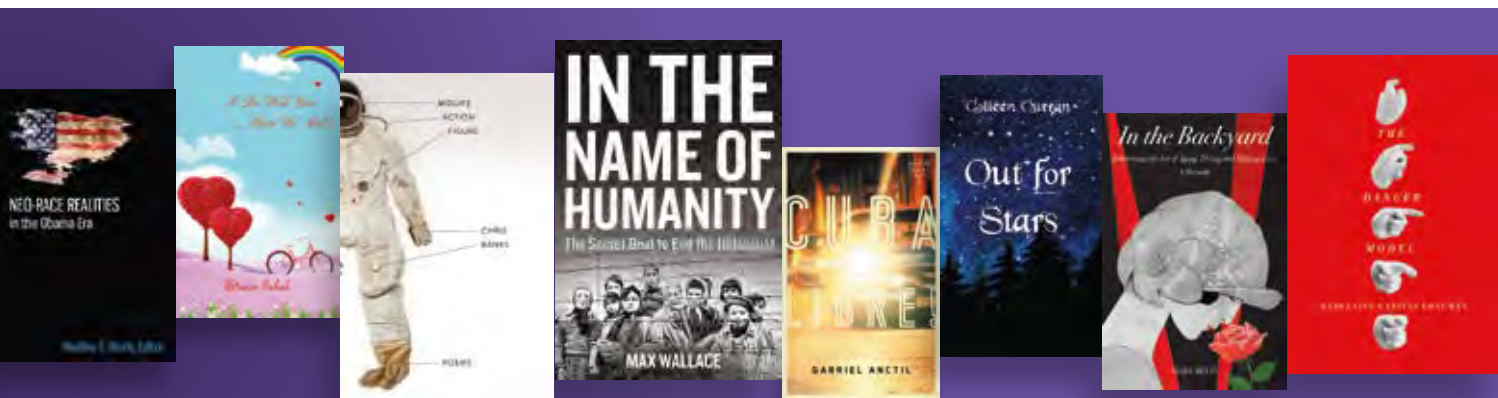
**E. John B. Allen**, BA 65, known worldwide for his work on ski history, played a key role in the translation of **Skis in the Art of War** (Cornell University Press,

\$37.95). In the 246-page volume, Allen summarizes the state of military skiing in the years prior to the First World War and provides extensive notations with William D. Frank throughout.

**Eric Fillion**, MA 12, PhD 19, explores the social and symbolic importance of music in **JAZZ LIBRE et la révolution québécoise** (M Éditeur, \$19.95). Fillion's book is both a history of protest music and of Quebec's national liberation movements.

**Alyssa Milani**, BA 14, published her third book, **A Truth Be Told** (\$15), in which protagonists Briana and Charlie escape from a strange room only to find themselves in a world where everything — water, air, even time — has changed.

**Heather E. Harris**, BA 88, considers the impact of neo-racism during the Obama presidency in her second book, **Neo-Race Realities in the Obama Era** (SUNY Press, \$110).



In his short-story collection, *I Do Wed You... How We Met* (Austin Macauley Publishers, \$13.27), **Bruno Sahut**, BAdmin 84, a marriage commissioner with the Saskatchewan government, shares stories from couples whose weddings he has officiated.

In his fifth collection of poetry, *Midlife Action Figure* (ECW Press, \$18.95), poet **Chris Banks**, MA 98, knits together wit with wildly inventive imagery as he follows his poems outside convention. Capable of both deep introspection and quick turns of phrase, Banks places his tongue firmly in his cheek as he looks for a measure of human wonder in this intermission between TED Talks and the apocalypse.

Historian **Max Wallace**, BA 90, won the 2018 Canadian Jewish Literature Award in the category of Holocaust Literature for his latest book, *In the Name of Humanity: The Secret Deal to End*

*the Holocaust* (Penguin Canada, \$23). Wallace draws on a cache of recently declassified documents and an account from the only living eyewitness to reveal an incredible story involving an unlikely trio's secret negotiations to end the Holocaust.

Travel journalist, children's author and novelist **Gabriel Anctil**, BA 03, published his fourth novel, *Cuba libre!* (Éditions XYZ, \$22.95). Written in free verse, Anctil hypnotically guides the reader into the world of Havana two months after the death of Fidel Castro — a pivotal moment in the history of Cuba. Between the magic of the streets that lead to the sea, the areas of poverty that exist alongside unbridled tourism and the local youth whose dreams are struggling to take flight, the novel is a story of both internal and external transformation.

*Out for Stars* (Bandstand Island Books, \$19.95), a novel by playwright and

author **Colleen Curran**, BA 76, tells the story of lawyer Diana Kellogg's fall from grace — which gets her banished to a ramshackle cottage in a Vermont summer town, forbidden to use social media of any kind. Curran's comedic storytelling makes lighthearted what would otherwise be a true dystopian nightmare, especially for millennials and Generation Z.

In her powerful memoir, *In the Backyard: Relearning the Art of Aging, Dying and Making Love* (Guernica Editions, \$20), **Mary Melfi**, BA 73, focuses on the complications and challenges associated with aging, the loss of a partner and the subsequent search for new love. In her attempts to make sense of her life and change her sad disposition to a happy one, she turns to her husband and in-house therapist, Dr. George Nemeth — who taught at Concordia for over 30 years, and passed away in 2009.

The accredited psychologist's answers to the big questions provide a compassionate and humorous backdrop on to how to seize the day and not give up hope when faced with the nasty realities of poor health and unrealized aspirations.

**Madelaine Caritas Longman**, MA 17, calls into question what it means to be a "self" in her debut book of poetry, *The Danger Model* (McGill-Queen's University Press, \$17.95). Searching for answers in internet forums, the work of Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa and the films and installations of Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, Longman brings attention to the lived experience of mental and physical illness and attempts to make meaning out of it. Provocatively realistic but also hopeful, *The Danger Model* is an investigation of how we come to recognize — or not recognize — ourselves and each other. ■



## Financial literacy is not a buzzword – it's a life skill

BEVERLY WILKS, BCOMM 94

Ever since childhood, I have been fascinated by the way money works.

My earliest financial memory dates back to the time my mom and I were in the checkout line at Zellers department store and a customer ahead of us used cash to pay for her purchases.

"We don't use cash — we use credit cards," I exclaimed (I must have been 7 or 8 years old).

I recall my mom cringing and telling me that we needed to have a conversation about where money came from. That evening, my mom, dad, sister and I discussed how money was made, how credit cards were to be used and the joys of compound interest.

As I grew older, I started to hear more about investing, building wealth, budgeting, saving and effective money management. Over time, we continued to have financial conversations over dinner and the topics matured. We discussed RRSPs, wealth-building, stocks and

**"Canadians owe \$1.77 in debt for every dollar they have."**

securing more than one stream of income. My parents were adamant that I understood that money was a tool to be respected, protected and that savings needed to work for you, i.e. compound interest.

Fast-forward a decade, and I became a student in International Business and Marketing at Concordia's John Molson School of Business. In my third year, I took a personal-finance class with Professor Larry Boyle.



After class, I reviewed the syllabus and decided to dig deeper into each topic. I realized that financial literacy is not a buzzword — it's a life skill. Financial intelligence is as critical to our well-being as critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making.

When you hear the words "annuities, TFSAs, RRSPs", how does that make you feel? According to a 2018 report by the Financial Planning Standards Council, such financial terms evoke stress and frustration among 48 per cent of Canadians.

News from Statistics Canada is just as grim. According to the government agency, household debt as a proportion of disposable income is 177.1 per cent across the country.

In other words, Canadians owe \$1.77 in debt — think consumer credit, mortgage and non-mortgage loans — for every dollar they have.

How can we get out from under the debt thumb? Financial literacy is the key.

So where should financial literacy be taught? If the goal is to help students to better understand finances, then financial literacy classes should be considered a mandatory part of high school and university curriculums.

By learning more about this topic early in life, Canadians can better understand how to save, pay for a house and create a budget, and why paying the minimum on a credit card is not a good approach. We need to understand how to save and invest for the future.

A financial education is key to building confidence and preparing students to make good financial choices throughout their lives so that they can attain their goals.

We all need to build wealth and actively participate in the economy — that's something to bank on. ■

*Beverly Wilks is the head of Americas marketing at Genetec in Montreal. She shares insights about personal finance on Twitter @Bacon\_and\_Heels and on her blog [baconheels.com](http://baconheels.com).*



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