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CONCORDIA

U N I V E R S I T Y M A G A Z I N E

NOTHING BUT NET

A family of basketball stars passes on life lessons to a new generation



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As dementia cases rise, new brain research offers hope through early detection

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How Records Management and Archives has helped Concordia remember its past – and preserve a better future – for five decades



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Charting 50 years of growth across two evolving campuses

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50 Years: Forever Forward.

Our university is about to celebrate a milestone — 50 years of next-gen education.

Our community grew from the strong roots of our two founding institutions — Loyola College and Sir George Williams University — which merged to become Concordia on August 24, 1974.

Our institution's name was derived from the City of Montreal's motto, *Concordia Salus*, or well-being through harmony. This ethos remains a guiding principle on our campuses, in our classrooms, studios and labs, and on our fields of play.

Through five transformative decades, Concordia has evolved from a teaching institution into a comprehensive research university with \$84 million in annual sponsored research revenues and 118 research chairs.

Our two campuses have doubled in size, and our student population has grown from 19,000 in 1974 to 50,000 today.

Concordia's Board of Governors has unanimously voted to reappoint Graham Carr for a second mandate as president and vice-chancellor. He will officially begin his next five-year term on December 12, 2024.



Our local, national and international reputation has thrived. And Concordia's standing in every measurable index has flourished.

This progress is the result of the steadfast dedication of Concordia's students, faculty, staff, alumni and donors as well as the contributions of volunteers, including our Board of Governors.

Our 260,000 alumni serve as our greatest ambassadors. This global network has earned Pulitzer Prizes, Pasteur Institute Fellowships, Academy Awards, Tony Awards, Emmys, Grammys, Governor General's Awards, Rhodes Scholarships and Olympic medals, and has been inducted into the Orders of Montreal, Quebec and Canada.

As you read the following pages, I hope you take pride in how recent — and not so recent — graduates are building our legacy.

The spring 2024 edition of *Concordia University Magazine* is a testament to our community's resilience, innovation and unwavering commitment to making the world a better place. Look to upcoming issues to learn more about our history, and how we plan to chart a better future.

Thank you for being part of Concordia. Here's to 50 years of excellence and to many more collective milestones. ■

Graham Carr
President and Vice-Chancellor
Concordia University

Honouring our past, embracing our future

By the time this magazine arrives in your mailbox, you may have already heard some buzz about Concordia's golden anniversary.

This milestone — a celebration of the merger of our founding institutions, Loyola College and Sir George Williams University, 50 years ago — kicks off in June. As you flip through these pages, you'll discover how we've already begun to promote the 50th anniversary through some of our stories. This includes branding through a commemorative logo and tagline, both of which you'll see more of in future communications across our campuses and beyond. Our new visual identity helps capture Concordia's past and the opportunities that lie ahead — *50 Years: Forever Forward*.

Four of our designers submitted their creations for Concordia's 50th-anniversary logo. All paid homage to our past, while embracing the possibilities of the future. The designs were presented to various focus groups in the university community. The feedback, unanimous among students, volunteers, alumni and our leadership team, led to the selection of the winning design, which you can view above and in the year ahead.

Graphic designer Stephen Pan created a logo that represents both an amphitheatre — a place of gathering — and a bisected vinyl record — a retro nod to our founding decade — to form the recognizable Concordia "C". Five arcs denote the five decades since Concordia was established in 1974.

The 50th-anniversary stories in this issue, and those to come over the next year, offer a glimpse into the remarkable evolution that has made Concordia what it is today. From the role of Records Management and Archives



in documenting our past 50 years ("Guardians of Our History," p. 34) to a visual tour of Concordia's campuses ("Lens on Concordia," p. 38), we hope these features inspire you to reflect on how far we've come from and where we're going.

As we look ahead to this milestone year, we will continue, as always, to put the spotlight on our inspiring network of Concordia alumni, while showcasing the groundbreaking ideas coming out of the university. In this issue, our "Mind Matters" cover story examines interdisciplinary research at our School of Health into our aging brains (p. 28). You'll also read about an inspiring family of all-star basketball alumni who have paved the way for a new generation of players ("Nothing but Net," p. 24).

With our 50th-anniversary festivities kicking off in the weeks ahead, I invite you, as of May, to visit our dedicated website (concordia.ca/50). It will showcase many of the stories you shared with us over the past year and keep you informed of all of the great activities we have planned. Whether you're in Montreal or elsewhere, you'll be able to connect with your alma mater for this special occasion — stay tuned.

We couldn't be more thrilled to share this journey of growth and achievement with you, our alumni and friends. We look forward to celebrating with you.

Wishing you all the best,

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

All of our magazine content — and more — is available online at concordia.ca/magazine.



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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Keep in touch

To update your address, email or communication preferences, visit our Alumni and Friends service hub at engage.concordia.ca.

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

BEST EMPLOYER NODS

In a list published in January, *Forbes* ranked **Concordia as the fifth-best place to work in Canada**. Additionally, in February, Concordia earned a spot among Montreal's top places to work in a list compiled by the editors of Canada's Top 100 Employers.

KEY CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH

Concordia researchers will direct a **new research project funded by the Canadian National Cybersecurity Consortium** under the Cybersecurity Innovation Network. In partnership with Ericsson and researchers from the University of Waterloo and the University of Manitoba, the project will investigate 5G security by designing and implementing technologies that can prevent, predict, detect and mitigate cyberthreats using machine learning and artificial intelligence.



NUMBER ONE IN CANADA: THE **CONCORDIA STINGERS WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM WAS CROWNED U SPORTS NATIONAL CHAMPIONS** AFTER A 3-1 WIN OVER THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ON MARCH 17. THE TITLE CAPPED A PERFECT 25-0 REGULAR SEASON AND A RÉSEAU DU SPORT ÉTUDIANT DU QUÉBEC (RSEQ) CHAMPIONSHIP WIN, WITH **HEAD COACH JULIE CHU NAMED U SPORTS FOX40 COACH OF THE YEAR**.

SUSTAINABILITY KUDOS

In the **2024 QS Sustainability Rankings** — which annually evaluate how universities confront environmental, social and governance concerns — **Concordia placed 96th out of 1,403 institutions worldwide**, rising from the 201-220 position in 2023, even though the number of ranked institutions doubled. Concordia remains 13th in Canada, with the total number of Canadian institutions increasing from 26 to 31 this year.

SELECT COMPANY FOR BUSINESS SCHOOL

The John Molson School of Business was **ranked among the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) Champions for 2024-25**, a cohort that includes 47 schools worldwide. PRME Champions are institutions that demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability and responsible-management education, and contribute to the development and promotion of responsible-management practices. “One of our strategic plan’s overarching pursuits is to be a catalyst for positive societal impact,” noted **Frédérica Martin, MA 11**, manager of Programs, Internationalization and Sustainability at the John Molson School.



A FINE-ARTS STUDENT GROUP CREATED A MURAL TITLED "FORCE/ACCUEIL" AT A MONTREAL WOMEN'S CENTRE. INAUGURATED IN DECEMBER, THE PROJECT IS PART OF A DESIGN AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COURSE TAUGHT BY ISRAËL DUPUIS, MFA 02.

FILM FEST ON CAMPUS

The **42nd International Festival of Films on Art (FIFA)** kicked off on March 14 with Concordians on the bill. A collaboration with the Faculty of Fine Arts, the event's lineup included screenings on campus at the J.A. DeSève Cinema, as well as a film by independent curator and writer **Anne Golden**, BFA 84, MA 07. "FIFA is a dynamic force in Montreal, fostering international connections and offering unique opportunities for our students and alumni," said Fine Arts dean **Annie Gérin**.

PHILANTHROPIST **GINA CODY**, MENG 81, PHD 89, **WAS NAMED CONCORDIA CO-CHANCELLOR** – ALONGSIDE CURRENT CHANCELLOR **JONATHAN WENER**, BCOMM 71 – FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY. THE CAMPAIGN FOR CONCORDIA CO-CHAIR, AND NAMESAKE OF THE GINA CODY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE, WILL ASSUME THE SOLE CHANCELLORSHIP IN 2025.



RESEARCHERS TACKLE ONLINE TOXICITY

In a Concordia-led paper published in *IEEE Technology and Society Magazine*, **researchers argued that stronger supports for workers charged with online content moderation are essential.** The authors examined social, policy and technical approaches to automatic toxicity detection and proposed potential solutions. "We want to know how well current moderating techniques, which involve both machine learning and human annotators of toxic language, are working," said co-author **Ketra Schmitt**, associate professor at the Centre for Engineering in Society at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.



HASHEM ALMOUSA, PHD 23, WAS SELECTED FOR A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL PRIZE, A **LADY MIREILLE AND SIR DENNIS GILLINGS GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH FELLOWSHIP**. THE TWO-YEAR PROGRAM GRANTS SCIENTISTS THE RESOURCES TO UNDERTAKE CRITICAL PUBLIC-HEALTH RESEARCH AT THE INSTITUT PASTEUR IN PARIS.

INDIGENOUS LIBRARY PROGRAM

The tri-university Indigenous Student Librarian Program recently invited **Rudi Aker**, BFA 22, a Master of Information Studies student at McGill University, to work at the Concordia Library. Aker is Wolastoqiyik from Sitansisk (St. Mary's First Nation), a Wolastoqey community in Fredericton, New Brunswick. "The program's importance continues to grow as the Library actively looks at ensuring our staff is representative of the broader community," says University Librarian **Amy Buckland**, BA 06. "Having different stories and voices on staff helps us be more welcoming to students. It also brings new experiences and expertise to Concordia."



FOUR DECADES AFTER SHE ESTABLISHED THE FIRST UNIVERSITY-ACCREDITED COURSE ON BLACK WOMEN IN CANADA, **ESMERALDA THORNHILL**, LLD 97, (CENTRE), WAS HONORED BY CONCORDIA'S **SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR INSTITUTE** AND CHOSEN AS INAUGURAL LECTURER FOR ITS NEW DR. **ESMERALDA THORNHILL** BLACK FEMINIST SPEAKER SERIES.

Noire Mouloum

ENGCOMM 2024

Hosted by students from the Gina Cody and John Molson schools, **ENGCOMM, the world's only student-led multidisciplinary case competition**, took place from February 20 to 24. The 11th edition featured a dozen teams comprised of engineering and business students who addressed hands-on challenges proposed by industry sponsors. The competition included two six-hour cases and one 12-hour case. "It's important that students learn to bridge the gap [between different disciplines] early on," said **Divyena Thakkar**, current Department of Finance student and president of the ENGCOMM committee.



STUDENT **NICOLAS BERGERON** HELPED ORGANIZE **PRIDE-THEMED HOCKEY GAMES** IN FEBRUARY BETWEEN THE CONCORDIA STINGERS AND THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA GEE-GEES: "[ON-ICE REPRESENTATION] HOLDS A LOT OF MEANING FOR THE 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY FOR YOUTH WISHING TO PURSUE THEIR BELOVED SPORT," SAYS BERGERON.



CELEBRATED ARTISTS
ARIANE MOFFATT
(FAR LEFT) AND **ADA**
LEA HAVE **TEAMED**
UP TO TEACH A
SONGWRITING
COURSE THIS TERM
AT CONCORDIA'S
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC.

CONFERENCE ON ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

The Kapwa Centre, a Montreal non-profit led by **France Stohner**, BA 13, that supports the Filipinx community, addressed the surge in hate crimes against East and Southeast Asians at a **three-day conference held last fall at Concordia's SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation**. Focused on mental health from an intersectional and decolonial perspective, the event aimed to counteract anti-Asian racism, foster dialogue and provide tools for collective healing.

DECARBONIZATION GRANTS AWARDED

Grants totalling \$7.2 million were awarded by Concordia's Volt-Age research program to large-scale initiatives focused on sustainable built environments, resilient transportation systems and citizen engagement. Established with \$123 million in Canada First Research Excellence Funds in 2023, Volt-Age is dedicated to integrating cutting-edge technologies for carbon-neutral buildings, advanced energy storage, smart grids and the electrification of transportation. Researchers at Concordia and partner institutions, including the University of Calgary, Toronto Metropolitan University and Dalhousie University, were selected for the grants. ■



BOGDAN LYTVYENKO, BA 23, BECAME THE **12TH RHODES SCHOLAR IN CONCORDIA'S HISTORY** LAST DECEMBER. THE NATIVE OF UKRAINE AND DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM GRADUATE WILL JOIN A COHORT OF MORE THAN 100 INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD LATER THIS YEAR, WHERE HE ASPIRES TO COMPLETE A MASTER'S DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS.

Adler Aristilde, Canadian Ambassador to Zimbabwe, credits Concordia for success

'There are not many countries where my story is possible'

JULIE BARLOW, MA 94

Adler Aristilde, BA 03, MA 05, was an established radio host in his native Haiti in the 1990s and then in Montreal before he enrolled at Concordia.

After degrees in political science and public policy and public administration, and two decades as a policy analyst, Aristilde was appointed Ambassador of Canada to Zimbabwe, High Commissioner to Malawi and High Commissioner-Designate to Botswana. He assumed his post in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 2023.

How did it feel to be named ambassador?

Adler Aristilde: It is unquestionably the highest honour and privilege of my life, not just of my career. As hard as I have worked in service of Canada over two decades to get to this position, I recognize that nobody is entitled to such a distinction.

The position carries the immense responsibility of representing Canada's interests, values and citizenry abroad and safeguarding our most prized assets — people, strategic relations and investments.

As an adult immigrant to Canada, it would have been preposterous — if not delusional — of me to start my new life in Montreal dreaming of representing Canada as head of a diplomatic mission anywhere.

It slowly became a career goal in the last decade after I began travelling to visit Canadian projects and represent our government overseas. My diplomatic posting to Senegal in 2021 got me a little closer to imagining the possibility. When this assignment to fascinating Zimbabwe came last July, it



felt timely and a perfect fit. In any case, there are not many countries in the world where this particular immigrant story is possible.

What are your goals as you work on behalf of Canada in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Botswana?

AA: Building on the work of predecessors, I seek to advance our feminist foreign policy, which here prioritizes poverty reduction, health, education, governance, democracy and human rights, with a strong emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. My host countries also want more private investments from Canada, improved visa numbers and processing time — especially for students — and closer ties between our governments and peoples.

How has your journalism background contributed to what you do now?

AA: My experience as a journalist helps me understand the peculiar political dynamics of a new country, assess core interests and motivations

of interlocutors, and engage and communicate across differences — all key skills for diplomacy. In the current misinformation/disinformation climate, the ability to recognize legitimate news versus sensationalized opinions and rumours is also particularly useful.

How did Concordia contribute to your success?

AA: Brooke Jeffrey, professor in the Department of Political Science, made me fall in love with Canadian history and politics. Former department chair Reeta Tremblay was the first person in Canada to tell me I was a 'star' and to embrace my 'strange' foreign accent when I seemed unwilling to apply for a teaching assistant position.

On my last day on campus, Professor James Kelly told me he was proud to be sending me as a new public servant to Ottawa. It is hard to overstate what such encouragements can do for the psyche of a recent immigrant, who speaks English as a second language and who had to start life over. ■

Oscar winner and recent graduate Patrice Vermette basks in the success of *Dune 2*

'It's a tremendous feeling,' says the production designer and long-time Denis Villeneuve collaborator

IAN HARRISON, B COMM 01

Now that *Dune: Part Two* is a proven hit with critics and audiences worldwide, production designer Patrice Vermette, BA 23, can breathe a sigh of relief.

"It's a tremendous feeling," admits the three-time Academy Award nominee, who shared the Oscar for Best Production Design for his work on the first *Dune* film in 2022.

"To see how well it has been received, and how the visual style we created has had an impact, is very gratifying. And it's all a credit to Denis Villeneuve's vision."

From *Dune* to *Sicario* and *Arrival*, the Montreal-born Vermette has enjoyed a long partnership with director and fellow Quebec native Villeneuve.

"We think similarly, have a lot in common and have developed a kind of shorthand that helps us work very well together," says Vermette, whose production design on big-budget films like *Dune* typically begins years before actors like Timothée Chalamet and Zendaya arrive on set.

VILLENEUVE AND VALLÉE

Vermette's career has also been marked by his work with another Québécois filmmaker, the late Jean-Marc Vallée, whose death on Christmas Day 2021 was closely preceded by a talk with Concordia cinema students and alumni.

"Working with Jean-Marc on his short film *Les mots magiques* [1998] was pivotal for me," he says.

"It led to being his production designer on *C.R.A.Z.Y.*, which was so well received internationally, and then to *The Young Victoria*. Jean-Marc had to persuade me to do that one, because I didn't think I had the chops to do an English period piece!"

Vermette went on to earn an Academy Award nomination for *The Young Victoria*, and to work with Vallée on subsequent films.

"When we did *Café de Flore*, which had a relatively low budget, that was when he really honed his signature style as a director," observes Vermette.

"His loss was huge for Quebec cinema, obviously, and cinema in general. For me personally though, I lost a good friend."

FATHER AND DAUGHTER ON CAMPUS

Vermette's own Concordia journey started as a Department of Communication Studies undergraduate in the late 1980s. A couple courses shy of graduation, he began to work on music videos and never looked back.

"But I'm someone who likes to finish what he started," he notes.

So, as his work on *Dune 2* was about to wind down, Vermette returned to campus as a mature student alongside his daughter, Lili Bertrand-Vermette, BA 23.

Father and daughter attended

convocation as Department of Communication Studies graduates in 2023.

"We weren't able to sit together because Lili also shares my wife's name, Bertrand," Vermette remarks. "But it was still a very special moment. I was thinking a lot about my dad, who passed away in 2015. He would've been proud to see us together that day."

While he takes some much-deserved time to bask in the success of *Dune 2*, the production designer has other projects on the horizon. Could one of them be *Dune 3*?

"It hasn't officially been announced yet, but I think so," says Vermette. "But Denis and I share the opinion that it could be interesting to work on another project first. And besides, in Frank Herbert's novels, 12 years elapse between the events of *Dune 2* and what would be the third film.

"So, I think it's a good idea to let the characters develop and breathe a little before we dive back into that world." ■



PATRICE VERMETTE, BA 23, SHARED THE 2022 OSCAR FOR BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN WITH ZSUZSANNA SIPOS FOR THEIR WORK ON THE FIRST *DUNE* FILM.

New president of Concordia's alumni association wants graduates to get engaged

'There are plenty of people who want to stay involved with Concordia and see it succeed,' says volunteer Nura Jabagi

SAMANTHA RIDEOUT, GRDIP 10

When Nura Jabagi, MBA 14, PhD 21, was finishing her PhD in Business Technology Management in 2020, she found herself feeling a bit anxious.

"I didn't want to be separated from Concordia," she explains. "I thought: 'This can't be the end!'"

Jabagi volunteered to join the board of directors of the Concordia University Alumni Association (CUAA), which aims to serve and engage alumni of Concordia and its two founding institutions — Sir George Williams University and Loyola College — a network that is now close to 260,000 strong.

In partnership with University Advancement, the CUAA orchestrates opportunities for alumni to build relationships with each other, support current students and bring about positive changes in the community. Those opportunities can include anything from organizing an alumni event or funding student scholarships and bursaries to supporting on-campus projects.

After leading the CUAA's philanthropy committee, Jabagi recently became its president. Other roles have been filled by new faces as well, as senior members move on and newer ones step into leadership.

"That's exciting to see, and it's also quite a diverse board in terms of origins, ages and backgrounds," Jabagi says.



A DEDICATED VOLUNTEER

There will be plenty for the CUAA to do in 2024, Jabagi adds.

"It's a difficult time for universities right now. We really want to focus on delivering more impact within the community."

For instance, the CUAA is currently looking into ways to support the Canada Scholars Award, which will be helping to compensate for the rate hike that Quebec's government recently imposed on new out-of-province students.

"It's a natural thing for us to be involved in," she says, pointing out that the association also rose to the occasion to help students facing financial hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The year ahead also marks Concordia's 50th anniversary, and the CUAA will undoubtedly find ways to observe it, Jabagi says.

The alumna's day jobs include teaching at Université Laval in Quebec City and consulting about the future of

work on behalf of Deloitte. Despite a busy schedule, she says that the CUAA is one of the things in her life that brings her joy and energy.

"I want to make sure everyone on the CUAA's team feels similarly: like they're doing something meaningful and having fun doing it," she says. "Because that's a big part of volunteering."

Regarding Concordia and its grads, Jabagi couldn't be more complimentary — and sincere.

"We have an amazing network of alumni," she says. "The energy at Concordia is just different from that of other universities."

"Concordia helped me to build a lot of skills, not just in the classroom but also on a personal level. For one thing, it helped me grow a lot of confidence! I think there are plenty of people who genuinely want to stay involved with Concordia and see it succeed. Our goal is to get them engaged." ■



PICTURED (BACK ROW FROM LEFT) ARE ERIC REITER, DIRECTOR, MINOR IN LAW AND SOCIETY, AND JUDGE MORTON S. MINC, CONCORDIA'S JURIST-IN-RESIDENCE, WITH STUDENTS (MENTORED BY JUDGES) IN FRONT OF THE COURT OF QUEBEC.

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connects students across faculties and degrees — bachelor's, master's and PhD — with judges, lawyers and industry leaders.

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CONCORDIA

Groundbreaking Drama Therapy graduate program celebrates 25 years

Alumni are 'bringing drama therapy practice to countries all over the world'

HOWARD BOKSER, MBA 85,
STEPHEN SNOW AND BONNIE
HARNDEN, MFA 95

In the mid-1970s, Stephen Snow was a struggling young actor living in New York City.

"I probably was as much a cab driver as an actor at that point," he remembers.

Snow decided to change directions and pursue a PhD in performance studies at New York University (NYU). While taking a psychodrama course a few years later, he met Barbara MacKay, a professor of theatre education at Concordia who had come to NYU for her master's in drama therapy.

That encounter would prove fateful. MacKay lured Snow to Concordia's Department of Theatre in 1992, and five years later he co-founded the university's Drama Therapy graduate program.

Snow later met Bonnie Harnden, MFA 95, when she served as a teaching assistant in one of his courses in 1995.

After working at the Montreal Children's Hospital for 12 years, Harnden returned to Concordia in 2007 and is now associate professor and practicum co-ordinator for drama therapy in the Department of Creative Arts Therapies.

As the Drama Therapy graduate program celebrates 25-plus years, Snow, now professor emeritus, and Harnden sat down to consider its past, present and future.

Bonnie Harnden: What does [this anniversary] mean for you?

Stephen Snow: I feel very proud that in some ways I brought drama therapy to Concordia and Canada, and that the program has been able to sustain itself and flourish.

BH: What inspired you to start the program?

SS: Robert Landy was the founder of the drama therapy program at NYU. In 1992, Robert told me Barbara MacKay wanted to start a drama therapy program at Concordia in the theatre department, so I applied for the job. I came to Concordia in August 1992 and was at the theatre department for the next five years. I taught completely from a drama-therapy perspective.

Barbara was associate vice-rector for curriculum. Together we devised the

curriculum for an MA in Drama Therapy. We started the program [in the 1997 fall term].

Bonnie, what drew you to drama therapy?

BH: I grew up in a small town in Ontario. I really wanted to train as a therapist, but I was also interested in art, drawing and theatre. I came to Montreal and trained as an art therapist, then trained as a drama therapist, and couples and family therapist and, more recently, as a psychoanalyst and play therapist.

During my additional training, I was hired at the Montreal Children's Hospital to work with kids and adolescents in crisis. We started an art therapy and drama therapy program, where students would come and train, and the hospital became alive with the power of the creative arts therapies.

THE CENTRE FOR THE ARTS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT'S THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS ARE PART OF ITS EDUCATIONAL, CLINICAL AND RESEARCH EFFORTS FOR ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES.



SS: We were lucky to attract very talented faculty to the program, right from the start. Because I had no background with children, we hired Christine Novy from England as the second full-time professor. She brought the British style of working with drama therapy, especially with children.

We had Joanabbey Sack, a dance therapist and drama therapist, as part-time faculty, and she brought that wonderful Effort/Shape method, so our students could learn to assess clients in terms of movement.

Yehudit Silverman, also both a dance therapist and a drama therapist, became a full-time professor in the program and did that amazing research developing her method of Myth and Fairy Tale in Therapy. The students loved the course she taught in that. Like myself, Yehudit is now professor emeritus.

GRADUATES PUSH THE DISCIPLINE FORWARD

BH: We have incredible full- and part-time faculty now. Jessica Bleuer [MA 09] is our newest full-time member. Her research focuses on the intersections between individual wellness and larger systemic change. She facilitates cultural-equity work, using drama therapy, theatre of the oppressed and playback theatre, and her current research focuses on racialized microaggressions in higher education.

We also have a new program, a graduate certificate in play therapy. Our students and allied professionals can do a summer intensive five-week training. Susan Ward [BFA 77, GrDip 86, MA 99], a long-time part-time faculty member, assists me



THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE ARTS THERAPIES RECENTLY BEGAN OFFERING A GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PLAY THERAPY.

with this new program. In play therapy, toys are words and play is the language that children express themselves in. Our MA graduate students do research in play therapy as well.

SS: Almost all my own research was done at the Centre for the Arts in Human Development, especially the research in therapeutic theatre. I co-founded the centre, in 1996, to be a research centre for the creative arts therapies.

Over the 25 years, we have had several Social Science Humanities Research Council grants, and we did research on the effectiveness of the creative arts therapies with our population, which is adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

We also did a long project on assessment in the creative arts therapies. For me, research was one of the most important contributions the centre has made, and I hope it goes on producing solid research about the effectiveness of the tools that we use in the creative arts therapies.

The main thing is that the centre has always provided great internships for the students, so they could learn by doing creative arts therapies clinical work under supervision. When the centre had its 25th anniversary in 2021, many students from all over the world gave testimonials on how much it meant to them.

BH: I know that has been true for our drama-therapy students. They are now bringing drama-therapy practice to many countries all over the world.

SS: At this point, there are more than 250 drama-therapy graduates out there! Two of our grads are now the president and vice-president of the North American Drama Therapy Association. Another helped found the French National Drama Therapy Association. And one of our graduates is now the director of the Drama Therapy Graduate Program at NYU.

BH: It's the program's 26th year now, so we just keep building from here. ■

CIBC champions equity, diversity and inclusion with major gift of \$500,000

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

Students from marginalized backgrounds are at the heart of a major gift from CIBC to the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen Now.

The North American financial institution has donated \$500,000 to establish a suite of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) scholarships at the John Molson School of Business and the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.

The initiative will seek to empower women students, students of colour, Indigenous students, students with disabilities and students from 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. Select recipients may also have the opportunity to complete a paid internship at CIBC through the university's Office of Experiential Learning and Institute for Co-operative Education.

"EDI is much more than an acronym at Concordia," says President Graham Carr. "Equity, diversity and inclusion underpins our approach to teaching, learning and research. Broadening access to key areas of study and welcoming a wider range of perspectives at our John Molson and Gina Cody schools will drive knowledge and progress in a good direction. We thank CIBC for its generosity that will change the lives of our students and have a beneficial impact beyond our campuses."



ADOBE STOCK

CIBC's gift will annually support:

- Eight to nine undergraduate scholarships for business technology management students
- Eight to nine undergraduate scholarships for finance students
- Five undergraduate scholarships for computer science students
- Four undergraduate scholarships for software engineering students
- Four undergraduate scholarships for computer engineering students
- Four graduate scholarships for cybersecurity students

Each undergraduate scholarship will be worth \$5,000; the amount for the graduate scholarship is \$7,500.

"CIBC is proud to team up with Concordia to help create a better tomorrow for the university's students and for society as a whole," says Rosa Trunzo, senior vice-president and region head, Eastern Canada Region, Personal Banking, CIBC. "Inclusion is the cornerstone of our bank's culture and diversity our greatest strength. We are pleased to have this opportunity to help remove barriers to education and career ambitions for so many students, especially at a next-generation university long committed to EDI."

The first wave of CIBC scholarship recipients have already felt the impact of the bank's generosity.

"The scholarship has significantly alleviated the financial burden associated with my education," says Mary Acquah, a current graduate student at the Gina Cody School. "The impact of CIBC's generosity has instilled a profound sense of gratitude and a desire to give back. I'm determined to make the most of this invaluable opportunity."

CIBC has an established track record of support at Concordia, notes Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement.

"Our institution has been fortunate to have such a dedicated partner," says Chesser. "CIBC supports our annual Concordia Golf Classic, whose co-presidents include alumnus Demo Trifonopoulos, BComm 85, a vice-president at CIBC Quebec. The CIBC Distinguished Professorship in Entrepreneurship and Family Business that the bank has funded continues to further the field of management. This latest gift underlines how tremendously grateful we are to have the support of an organization like CIBC." ■

John Molson Dean Anne-Marie Croteau supports female business students

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

In a move that further underscores her commitment to gender equity, Anne-Marie Croteau has donated \$55,000 to support women students at the John Molson School of Business.

The gift from the first woman dean to lead the school will fund scholarships for women in the undergraduate Business Technology Management (BTM) program and the Master of Science (MSc) in Business Analytics and Technology Management.

A Concordia alumna in actuarial mathematics, Croteau has been a fixture at the John Molson School as a professor and administrator since 1997.

With more than 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students, the John Molson School is one of the largest business faculties in Canada and has made enormous strides, she notes.

“As Executive MBA director, I was part of the first cohort that took up office and classroom space in the newly opened John Molson Building [MB] in 2009,” says Croteau.

“The faculty members at the time had many discussions about naming plaques and study rooms. This sparked an idea about how I could contribute one day.”

This vision became clearer after a fellow Campaign for Concordia donor, Mark Goodman, BComm 81, supported one such initiative at his alma mater.

A plaque outside a study room in the MB now commemorates Croteau and her achievement as the school’s first woman dean. The Anne-Marie Croteau Scholarships for women in BTM will be awarded as of the fall 2024 term.

‘A SIGNIFICANT RISE IN FEMALE ENROLMENT’

The field of BTM is one where women are still underrepresented. Croteau herself was the first woman to obtain a PhD specialized in management information systems from Université Laval in Quebec City.

“I’m proud of the fact that under my tenure as dean, the BTM undergraduate program, which now comprises 600 students, has seen a significant rise in female enrolment from 30 per cent to 40 per cent.

“There’s still room for improvement, which is why I was eager to support scholarships for women in the program. Professionally, too, the field could benefit from stronger women representation, across the board, and more importantly in top roles like chief information officer.”

By some estimates, there are more than three times as many men as women in BTM-related jobs across North America. In executive positions, the disparity is even starker.

At a time when demand for programs like the Master of Science (MSc) in Business Analytics and Technology Management — which is designed for students who wish to become strategic, data-driven industry specialists — has risen at top-tier business schools, it is imperative to encourage a wider pool of talent, adds Croteau.

‘IT’S ABOUT CREATING A CULTURE’

“A big part of my mandate has been to broaden access to more students, particularly women,” she says. “This is why it was such an important milestone when we became the first-ever business school in Canada to earn a gender-parity certification from Women in Governance.

“The Barry F. Lorenzetti Centre for Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership, established with donor support and another first in Canada, was paramount as well.”

With her donation to strengthen women students at the faculty she has served for close to three decades, Croteau has definitely taken up the mantle to support the next generation.

“It’s about creating a culture and environment where women, and everyone, frankly, have the opportunity to thrive and contribute,” she says. “This is what Concordia and the John Molson School have excelled at, and I’m proud of the initiatives we continue to put into place to meet this goal.” ■



ANNE-MARIE CROTEAU HAS SERVED AS DEAN OF THE JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS SINCE 2017.

Power Corporation of Canada fuels green-tech innovation with gift of \$4 million

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

Announced at a special Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen Now event on January 31, a major gift of \$4 million from Power Corporation of Canada will provide significant support to Volt-Age, a Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) program jointly led by Concordia.

Designed to innovate novel energy sources, secure new infrastructure and deliver affordable, green energy under diverse conditions across Canada, the program was first announced in April 2023 when the Government of Canada awarded Concordia the largest research grant in the university’s 50-year history.

In partnership with the University of Calgary, Toronto Metropolitan University and Dalhousie University, Volt-Age was officially launched last October.

“In a world faced with urgent energy challenges, this partnership enables us to propel society towards a more resilient future,” says President Graham Carr. “We are profoundly grateful to Power Corporation for its visionary investment in green-energy research. This support recognizes our leadership in sustainability, but it will also help us innovate even more in the renewable-technology space.

“Together, with the active engagement of partners and collaborators from the private and public sectors, we can chart a transformative course for Canada and the world.”

Adds Paul C. Genest, senior vice-president at Power Corporation of Canada: “As a company committed to sustainability, we are proud to support green-energy research at Concordia. This strategic partnership aligns with our corporate values and will help strengthen advances in clean energy.

“Concordia has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership in environmental technologies, and we are confident that our contribution will further catalyze groundbreaking solutions for the betterment of society.”

Led by a consortium of academic researchers, the multi-year Volt-Age program will derive a number of benefits from Power Corporation’s generous investment.

Among other initiatives, the company’s donation will help to enhance:

- Business-development efforts, including the hiring of an advisor with experience in the energy and electrification sector;
- “Living Labs” pilot projects that address key challenges related to clean tech;
- An innovation fund designed to support the development and maturation of transformative technologies;
- The various operations of the CFREF project as it unfolds.

“This project is an ambitious, multi-disciplinary endeavour with anticipated outcomes that promise to have a broad impact,” says Dominique Bérubé, vice-president of Research and Graduate Studies at Concordia.

“It is especially relevant, then, to have the support of a strategic partner like Power Corporation. This donation provides targeted resources to build bridges between our researchers and industrial partners, and between communities and policymakers, accelerating and increasing the impact of research to help us respond to the urgent challenges of climate change.”

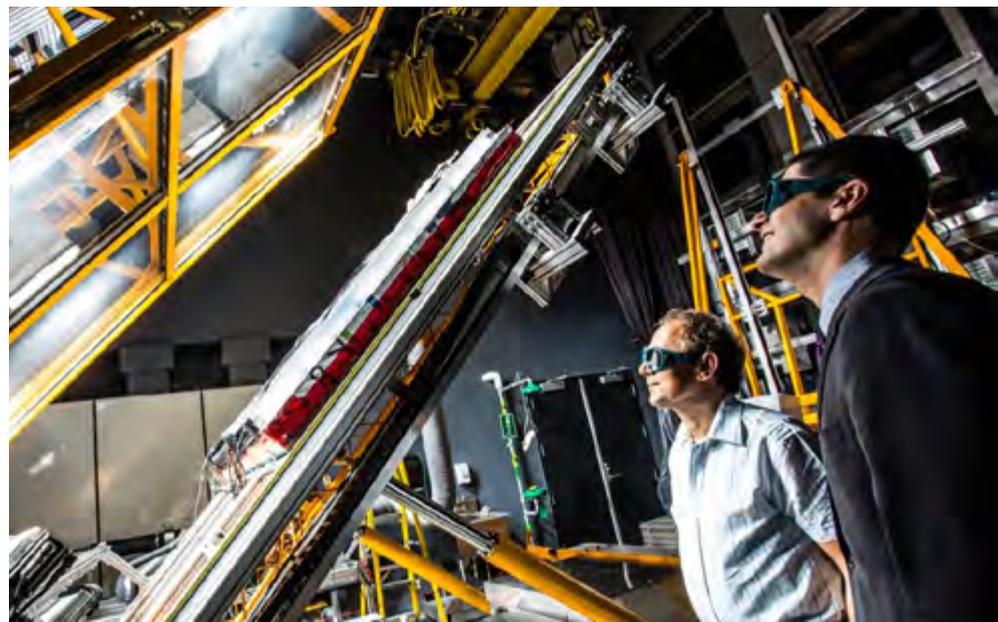
Power Corporation’s gift has come at an opportune time, says Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement.

“This substantial gift from a major donor to Concordia is directed towards a cause of utmost importance — clean-energy research and decarbonization — which underscores our shared objective for a more sustainable future.”

MAYORS AND CONCORDIA RESEARCHERS UNITE

The capacity of Concordia researchers to work with community stakeholders across the province of Quebec on green-energy solutions was showcased at the January 31 event held on campus at the Next-Generation Cities Institute (NGCI).

This, thanks to presentations by Ursula Eicker, Canada Excellence





FROM LEFT: **MARTIN DAMPHOUSSE**, MAYOR OF VARENNES; **MAJA VODANOVIC**, BFA 94, MAYOR OF LACHINE; **PRESIDENT GRAHAM CARR**; **DOMINIQUE BÉRUBÉ**, VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES; **OLIVIER DESMARAIS**, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, POWER CORPORATION; **KARIM ZAGHIB**, CEO, VOLT-AGE; **PAUL CHESSER**, BA 94, GRDIP 97, VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT; **PAUL GENEST**, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, POWER CORPORATION; **URSULA EICKER**, DIRECTOR, NEXT-GENERATION CITIES INSTITUTE; **MICHEL ANGERS**, MAYOR OF SHAWINIGAN

Research Chair (CERC) in Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Communities and Cities, and mayors Michel Angers (Shawinigan), Martin Damphousse (Varennnes) and Maja Vodanovic, BFA 94 (Montreal borough of Lachine).

Eicker, the founder and director of the NGCI, described how the institute employs the living-lab approach to investigate how neighbourhoods can operate more sustainably, and how this research connects to Volt-Age.

“What ultimately determines what this type of project looks like is the set of challenges communicated by our community partners, as well as good financial support, which we have been fortunate enough to secure thanks to the Canada First Research Excellence Fund and donors like Power Corporation,” noted Eicker.

Mayor Vodanovic, a close collaborator of Eicker’s at Concordia, spoke about her borough’s Lachine-Est eco-neighbourhood project and her hope that it can become a proof of concept for urban renewal.

The redevelopment of the former industrial area of close to 64 hectares will result in a mixed-use district with strong public transportation access, integrated green infrastructure and a possible new energy source — geothermal.

The success of such ambitious projects, remarked Vodanovic, largely

depends on networks of partnerships “that reach across civil society and include key stakeholders, such as research universities.”

‘TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE THE EXTRAORDINARY’

The city of Shawinigan, once a cradle of industry in Quebec and Canada, has undergone a radical shift since the departure of manufacturing plants and the secure union jobs that left with them. Concordia has been a valuable partner in this transition, noted Mayor Angers, in reference to a recently unveiled thematic campus centred on energy transition.

“When I announced this collaboration to a group of students and teachers at

the only English-language high school we have left in Shawinigan, they were visibly excited to know that Concordia was actively involved with their city,” said Angers. “I want to especially thank Graham Carr for his sincerity and vision, and Power Corporation, for its involvement with the Volt-Age project.”

Damphousse, the Mayor of Varennes, spoke about the off-island Montreal suburb’s aggressive green-energy plans, which include a \$1-billion biofuel plant. He also alluded to the work of Volt-Age CEO Karim Zaghbi, whose research at Concordia has helped make Quebec a pioneer of lithium-ion battery innovation.

As president of the Union des municipalités du Québec (UMQ), Damphousse also outlined the goals of Plan Énergie, which empowers municipal stakeholders to help the Government of Quebec on a range of energy and energy-consumption reforms.

“Historically, we have been spoiled by the overabundance and relative affordability of hydroelectric power in Quebec, but it is urgent that we innovate, diversify and change our behaviours,” said Damphousse.

“This effort has to involve partners like Concordia, all levels of government, community groups and ordinary citizens, and private partners like Power Corporation. Together, we can achieve the extraordinary.” ■



MAYORS VODANOVIC, DAMPHOUSSE AND ANGERS HELD AN AUDIENCE Q&A ABOUT MUNICIPAL GREEN-ENERGY EFFORTS AS PART OF THE POWER CORPORATION CAMPAIGN FOR CONCORDIA ANNOUNCEMENT.

Father's legacy honoured with scholarship for mechanical engineering students

JORDAN WHITEHOUSE

Kathryn Xistris, BEng 85, has spent her career thanking her father, George, for encouraging her to pursue a vocation in tech. But sometimes, words are not enough.

Last year the computer science grad established the Dr. George D. Xistris Scholarship Endowment in Mechanical Engineering, honouring her father, a professor in mechanical engineering at Concordia.

Xistris's career has included executive roles at Microsoft and now Amazon, where she is a managing director. She also sits on the board of directors for Amazon Payments Europe, based in Luxembourg.

"Who would have known back in the 1980s that tech would become what it has?" Xistris says. "Somehow my dad had the vision, and I'm so fortunate to have been able to get in early, be well educated and be successful."

As of the fall term, her gift will support one student in their final year of a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering.

'A BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY'

Xistris and her father, now 87, spent about a year developing the idea for the scholarship.

"It was a beautiful journey," she says. "He is very touched by this."

In the process, Xistris got to learn

more about her father's career at Concordia, which began in the mid-1960s. Dr. X, as he was known, served as an associate professor and researcher from 1968 to 1995 and as assistant dean from 1973 to 1993.

He was instrumental in establishing the Faculty of Engineering — now the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science — by leading the first accreditation of the Mechanical, Electrical and Civil Engineering program at what was then Sir George Williams University in 1969.

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

Xistris can still remember the day when her father brought home one of the first Commodore computers from Concordia.

"It was fascinating to see that up close. It was all new."

That kind of early exposure was what led her to Concordia in the 1980s when the University of Waterloo was the only other post-secondary institution in Canada with an accredited computer science program.

"We had state-of-the-art equipment and I learned so much," recalls Xistris. "I was really fortunate to be there at that time."

Concordia was also where she met her future husband, Jonathan Trent, BEng 84, on an engineering ski trip. The two have been married for 35 years.



KATHRYN XISTRIS, BENG 85

By the end of her final year at Concordia, Xistris had interviewed with 11 companies and had 10 job offers. She picked the best one — a position with Digital Equipment Corporation — and went on to an "amazing career," she says.

"There's no doubt: Concordia set me up for success."

Now Xistris hopes to propel other engineering students on similar paths.

"It's a small effort, but I want it to give them that extra push to get through their final year. And I think it's a vote of confidence for them to believe that they are at the top and to go for those big career opportunities." ■

\$250,000 from Embark Student Foundation ignites innovation at Gina Cody School

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

A \$250,000 gift from the Embark Student Foundation will lead to breakthroughs at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.

The support for the school's Innovation Fund will enable student-led projects with significant potential for commercialization.

"We are immensely grateful for this donation from Embark," says Concordia President Graham Carr. "It will encourage our students to contribute to advancements that will shape our future, and is a testament to the shared commitment of both Concordia and Embark to foster knowledge for the benefit of Canadian society."

Embark focuses on making education planning and saving more accessible for Canadians. Its foundation, the Embark Student Foundation, supports students and families throughout their post-secondary journeys and has awarded almost \$57 million to Canadians to help with education savings.

"We are proud to collaborate with Concordia to support the next generation of innovators," says Andrew Lo, president and CEO of Embark. "Our team was impressed by the experiential approach to teaching and learning at Concordia and the Gina Cody School, and we look forward to seeing how students leverage this donation to make groundbreaking discoveries."



Adds Mourad Debbabi, dean of the Gina Cody School: "This donation reinforces our mission of promoting creative thinking and problem-solving. Our students are well-positioned to harness this support to drive forward projects that will shape the future of technological progress. The Innovation Fund serves as a catalyst for transferring ideas from classrooms and labs to market. With a focus on student-driven innovation, it aims to increase commercialization potential and bridge the gap between academia and industry."

"We extend our sincere thanks to the Embark Student Foundation for its generous gift," says Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement at Concordia. "This support will help our students address real-world challenges and drive technological innovation that positively impacts our communities." ■

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

MAKING MAGIC HAPPEN

MEET 4 ALUMNI BEHIND MOMENT FACTORY'S INNOVATIVE MULTIMEDIA EXPERIENCES

LOUISE MORGAN, GRDIP 99

In a world of deepening divisions, increasing anxiety and social isolation, fostering connections between people is more important than ever — and Moment Factory makes it its mission to create those connections.

The multimedia entertainment studio employs immersive technology — including video, lighting, architecture, sound and special effects — to create magical experiences that evoke wonder.

Since its inception in 2001, the Montreal-based company behind the interactive illumination of the city's iconic Jacques Cartier Bridge has created more than 550 unique projects worldwide, ranging from the *Lumina Night Walk* series to Super Bowl halftime shows and stadium world tours for artists like Madonna and Ed Sheeran. In 2023, Moment Factory was named one of the most innovative live-event companies by *Fast Company* magazine.

At its headquarters in the city's Mile End neighbourhood, employees bring their dogs to work regularly and hop on company skateboards to zip to meetings. With locations in Paris, Tokyo, New York City and Singapore, Moment Factory counts 450 employees working in more than 80 professions, including architects, technical designers and creative directors.

Close to 30 Concordia alumni are among the company's workforce. Learn about four who are helping to set the stage for success.

PAMELA SCHNEIDER, BFA 03
Creative and multimedia director



After meeting Moment Factory's founders at a dress rehearsal for a dance show in 2001, Pamela Schneider began veejaying, jamming, brainstorming and building special events with them. What started off as a casual and full-time hobby soon turned into being hired as Moment Factory's first employee.

At the time, Schneider was a dancer and a student at Concordia's Faculty of Fine Arts. "My purpose in choosing interdisciplinary studies was to find ways to merge movement, video and sound to create one new medium of art," says the alumna, who is now one of Moment Factory's creative and multimedia directors.

"Before any of us even knew what we were as a company, the partners and I were always talking about this idea of sparking human connection by harnessing technology to create these magical destinations," she says, "yet hiding the technology so people would

get lost in the magic and the illusion. Those communal experiences would create the bridge to have people interact in the real world — inspiring our slogan "We do it in public."

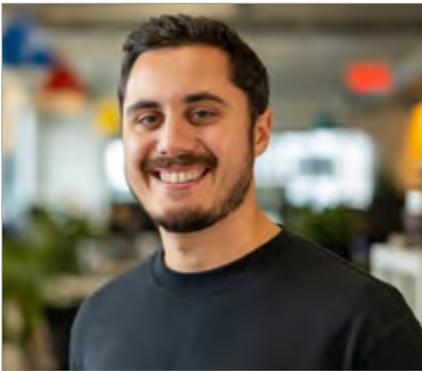
Over the years that followed, Schneider pushed the creative boundaries on more than 300 projects, including Madonna's 2012 Super Bowl halftime show and Arcade Fire's 2011 performance at Coachella. She also created the interactive video and technology for Nine Inch Nails' 2008 World Tour, recognized as one of the most innovative performances of all time and credited for pushing the industry forward.

Schneider additionally wrote and directed the projection-mapping show *Mosaika*, which ran on Canada's Parliament Buildings in Ottawa from 2010 to 2015 and drew an estimated 1.25 million viewers.

"We told the story of our land, achievements and values by travelling across the country interviewing Canadians of all ethnicities and ages, including a few elders from different nations across the country — and they were the voices who narrated our story," she says.

"On opening night, the 90-year-old Algonquin elder came to me after the show with tears in his eyes and said, 'I never imagined in my lifetime seeing such a beautiful portrayal of our story here on Algonquin land,'" she says. "It was an amazing experience."

JONATHAN CHAMMAS, BA 16
Lead, senior video
director and editor



As part of the communications department, Chammas and his team oversee the production of all video documentation for Moment Factory's portfolio, with an aim to authentically convey each project through visual storytelling. This includes on-site videography, editing and overall direction of the video productions. Chammas also leads the creation of marketing videos for ticketed experiences such as *AURA* at Montreal's Notre-Dame Basilica and at Les Invalides in Paris, and the *Lumina Night Walk Series*, which now counts more than 20 locations around the globe.

"It's a blessing to work here because of the creative freedom and especially our community of creatives, who are

hardworking, wild and passionate about what they do."

Chammas also travels to film experiences on location, which has taken him to Paris, Singapore, Los Angeles and Whistler, B.C., among other destinations. Next on the itinerary: Brazil.

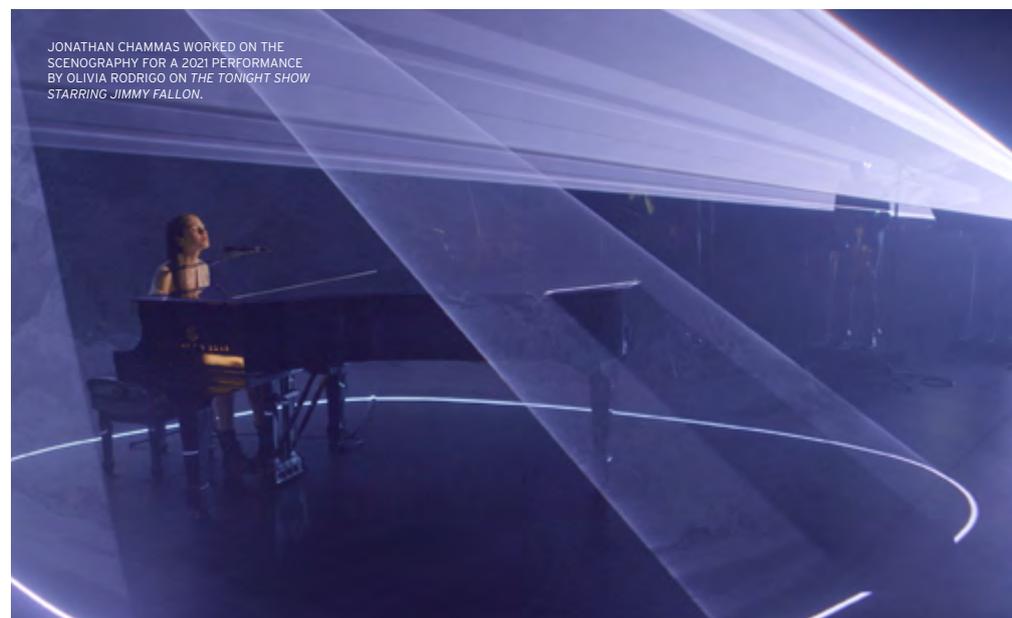
While a student in Concordia's Communication Studies program, Chammas played rugby for the Stingers, and was part of the 2014 championship team. "That taught me to push boundaries both on and off the field and helped me develop a mindset of positivity and working hard to reach a common goal," he says of the skills that have served him well.

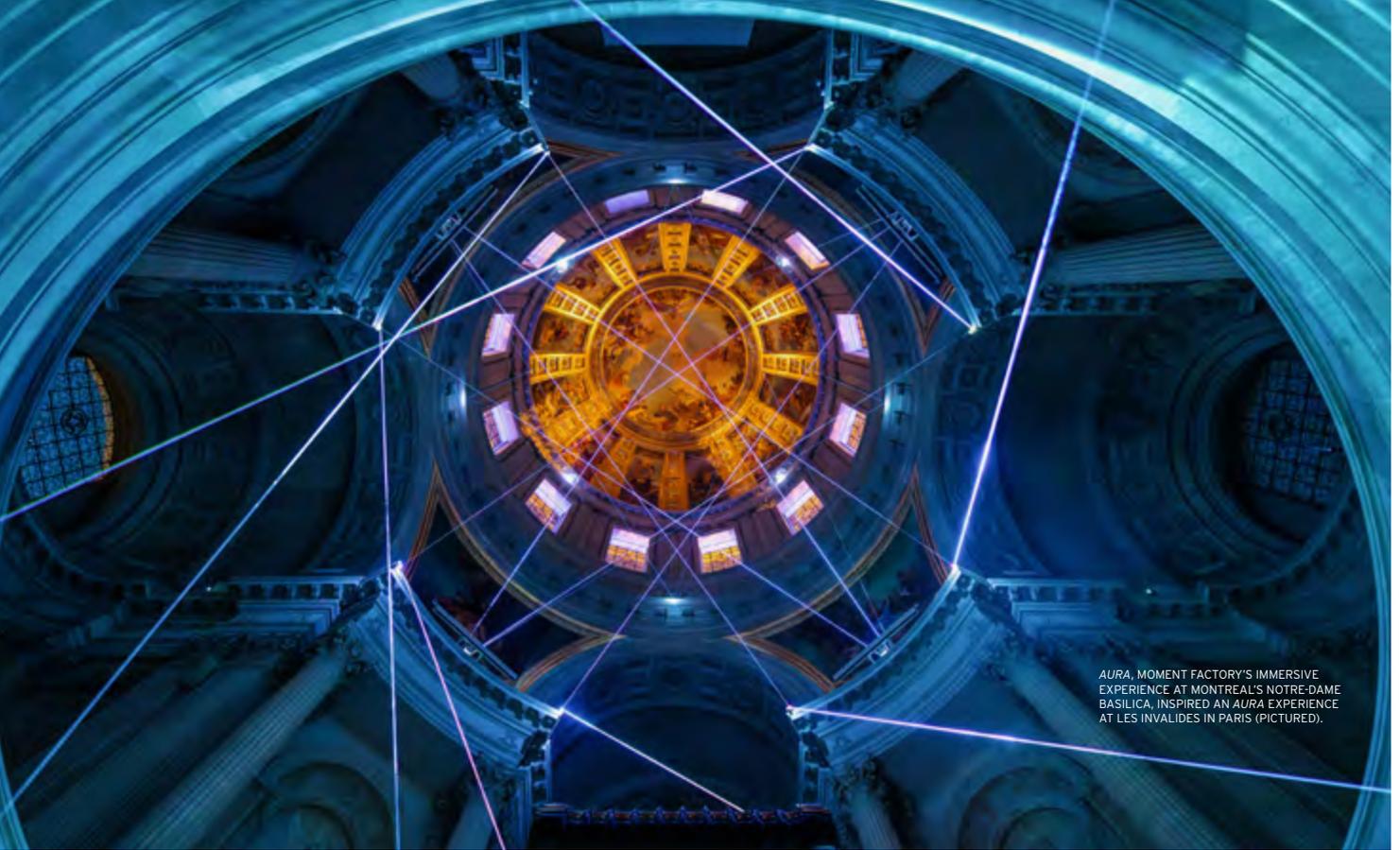
"It was very surreal to hear Jimmy Fallon announcing something I worked on," says Jonathan Chammas, lead, senior video director and editor at Moment Factory.

"During the COVID-19 lockdown, I was cast on an editing project for a musical artist — although I didn't know who it was initially," he adds. It turned out to be the 2021 premiere television performance of Olivia Rodrigo's debut single — and number-one hit — "Drivers License" on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*.

Chammas completed the editing from his condo in Montreal, with the project's creative director guiding his vision of the scenography and set design to create the dramatic colour-changing lasers that surrounded Rodrigo playing the piano.

"It was stressful knowing it would be on television, but I was very excited and motivated to deliver the best product possible," he says.





AURA, MOMENT FACTORY'S IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE AT MONTREAL'S NOTRE-DAME BASILICA, INSPIRED AN AURA EXPERIENCE AT LES INVALIDES IN PARIS (PICTURED).

BIANKA MONETTE,
BComm 92, GrDip 95
Chief financial officer



When it comes to what keeps Bianka Monette motivated on the job, the answer is easy, says Moment Factory's CFO. "Every day is different — the employees are passionate and the projects we deliver are inspiring," she notes. "The company is growing rapidly and we are expanding worldwide and creating new types of projects. My job is always exposing me to new things!"

Fresh out of school, Monette joined an audit firm, working with clients across diverse industries. Since then, she held leadership and executive roles in high-tech, television, mining and renewable energy before joining Moment Factory.

"When I came for an interview and met the people and felt the culture, I knew I wanted to work here. As an added touch, I saw the dogs and the skateboards," says Monette, an animal lover who also volunteers as treasurer for the Montreal SPCA.

"I am always proud of the work we accomplish, but it's the people that make all the difference. They are just so exceptionally talented, creative and passionate."

Reflecting on her career, Monette says the biggest obstacle has been the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Most of us at Moment Factory come to the office every day. We value our collaboration and the time we spend together — and when COVID hit, everybody went home. The pandemic

forced us to adapt and review our processes. Even though we turned over every rock, cut every possible expense and reduced management salaries, we still had to let go of 10 per cent of our workforce," she says. "We had never done that before and it was very difficult, both personally and professionally."

Many projects stopped overnight. Yet thanks to diversification, says Monette, long-term projects such as installations in airports and train stations enabled the company to keep going.

Monette credits Concordia for kicking off her career success. "The Faculty of Commerce [now John Molson School of Business] was reputed to be the best school for accounting — more advanced and higher quality," she says. "Even now, I maintain strong friendships with good friends I met at Concordia, and my time there remains a source of cherished memories."

LUIS ARETUO, BFA 16
Motion designer



Luis Aretuo developed an interest in motion design as a teenager, “yet there were no formal education programs around,” he says.

He studied print-based graphic design at the Alberta University of the Arts in Calgary, while teaching himself motion graphics on the side — figuring out the software, looking at what studios were doing and how the craft was evolving. He eventually moved to

Montreal to switch into Concordia’s Design and Computation Arts program and hasn’t looked back.

“My classes at Concordia provided a whole different lens on the practice of what I thought was so narrow and straightforward. My professors brought a new layer of theory and ethical questions into my conception of design.”

After graduating, Aretuo worked as a video editor, then landed a job as a junior motion designer at I/O Studio, a Montreal production agency. Four years ago, he joined Moment Factory, where he now creates 2D and 3D animations.

“As an artist, most of my day is spent in production, but with so many creative people, we also have a lot of laughs and good times.”

Aretuo’s credits include *Alta Lumina*, an immersive night walk in the Alps, *Nightrise* in Banff and the multimedia corridor at Tokyo’s Shinjuku train station. Among his most memorable projects is *Anisipi*. Located around the town of Amos in northwestern Quebec, it uses

immersive experiences to tell stories of the Anicinape communities, their history and how they relate to water.

One of those experiences was set on a lake, where a sculpture evoking waves was illuminated in “a ballet of lights.” Aretuo recalls the night they completed the last revision before presenting to the client a few hours later.

“It was 5 a.m. and we were all exhausted. There was mist rising from the water, creating a kind of natural smoke throughout the extraordinary 10-minute experience. The combination of everything — music, lighting, lasers pointing at the sculpture — was magical.

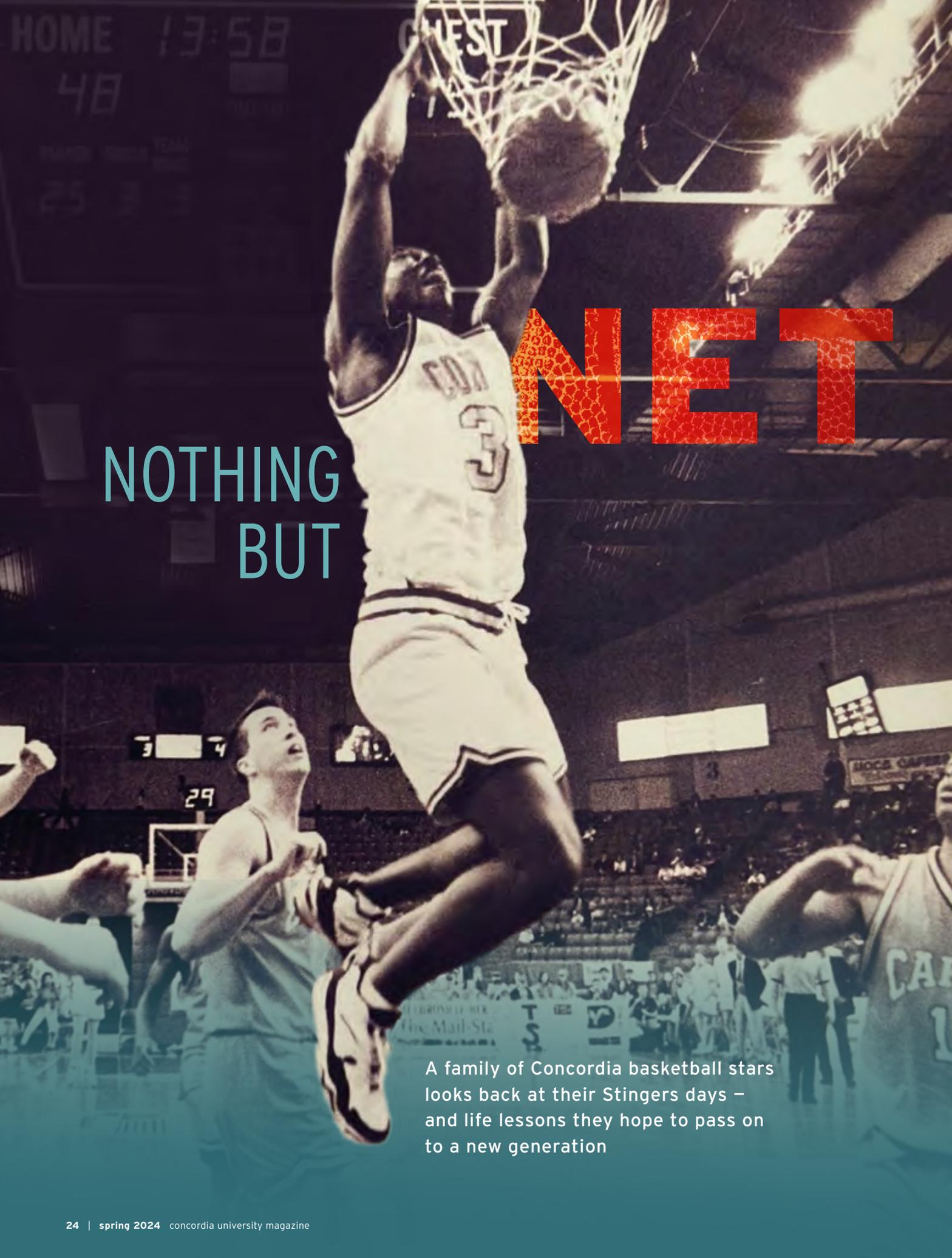
“Everything just worked out — which I would say is a very Moment Factory thing.” ■

All photos courtesy of Moment Factory.

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

MOMENT FACTORY PRODUCED
THE DATA-RESPONSIVE LIGHT
INSTALLATION FOR MONTREAL'S
JACQUES CARTIER BRIDGE IN 2017.





NOTHING
BUT

NET

A family of Concordia basketball stars looks back at their Stingers days – and life lessons they hope to pass on to a new generation

They all remember it like it was yesterday. June 22, 2023. The Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York. The NBA draft.

Guylaine Blanchette, BA 00, and Gaetan Prosper, BA 96, were there with their son, Olivier-Maxence Prosper, a highly touted, six-foot-seven forward out of Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis. Olivier-Maxence's uncle, Jay Prosper, BA 99, was there, too.

Olivier-Maxence was expected to be one of the first 30 picked by an NBA team, but that didn't make the wait any easier, remembers Jay, now an assistant coach with the Concordia Stingers men's basketball team.

"There are commercial breaks and interviews between every pick, so it felt like three days of waiting," he says with a laugh. "Just very painful."

Then, after 23 players had been selected, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver took to the mic and said it: "With the 24th pick in the 2023 NBA Draft, the Sacramento Kings select Olivier-Maxence Prosper from Montreal, Canada."

Olivier-Maxence smiled wide and pointed to the sky.

His dad let out a big exhale. "I was just so, so proud of him and filled with joy because I know how much he worked to put himself in that position."

Olivier-Maxence's first hug went to his mom.

Blanchette's smile was the picture of pride. "We have some basketball knowledge and had always been honest with him about what he had to do to get there," she says. "And he did it. His path was not easy. But he persevered. And when you see somebody else notice what you've seen, you're like, 'Ah, finally.'"

"Some" basketball knowledge is a slight understatement. Olivier-Maxence may be the first in the family to make it to the NBA, but his mom, dad and uncle were all Concordia Stingers basketball stars. His sister, Cassandre, among the top five under-17 players in the world, was the Ontario Scholastic Basketball Association's League Most Valuable Player for the 2021-22 season, as well as Finals MVP in 2022. She currently plays guard for the University of Notre Dame women's basketball team.

But it's not just basketball know-how that Olivier-Maxence and Cassandre's parents and uncle have tried to pass down to them. The three have also tried to be models for the types of life lessons that can come out of playing a sport you love.

"There's a saying that goes, 'Make sure you use the game and don't let the game use you,'" says Jay. "I would say that our family has definitely made sure we take full advantage of the game, and now every opportunity we have, we try to give back to it."

LEFT: GAETAN PROSPER, BA 96, IN HIS DAYS AS A CONCORDIA STINGERS STUDENT ATHLETE



DALLAS MAVERICKS PR

"I WAS JUST SO, SO PROUD OF HIM AND FILLED WITH JOY BECAUSE I KNOW HOW MUCH HE WORKED TO PUT HIMSELF IN THAT POSITION," SAYS GAETAN PROSPER OF HIS SON OLIVIER-MAXENCE, WHO NOW PLAYS FOR THE NBA'S DALLAS MAVERICKS. THEY ARE PICTURED WITH GUYLAINE BLANCHETTE.

"Being around teammates and having a common goal really helped us to become better people and parents in the real world."

- Gaetan Prosper, BA 96



FROM LEFT: GUYLAINE BLANCHETTE, OLIVIER-MAXENCE PROSPER, GAETAN PROSPER, CASSANDRE PROSPER AND JAY PROSPER

ALL-STAR ORIGINS

Blanchette and Gaetan actually met playing basketball in Montreal — or at least on the sidelines.

Before they arrived at Concordia, both played for Montreal CEGEP teams, Blanchette for Collège Ahuntsic and Gaetan for Dawson College. The two teams would often play back to back, so Blanchette and Gaetan — both small forwards — eventually got to know each other.

Gaetan's first year with the Stingers was 1992-93, when the team was ranked number one in the country. That team would go on to win the provincial championship that year and the next three, as well as place second at the national championship in 1995.

Gaetan made the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec (RSEQ) all-star team for three of his four years with the Stingers. He was also an academic all-Canadian student athlete.

"Those were some great days," remembers Gaetan. "We had a lot of talent, and just so many great people on those teams. I'm still friends with many of my teammates."

Gaetan says his most memorable season was his last — 1995-96. Not only was he named the Concordia Male Athlete of the Year, but that was Blanchette's and Jay's rookie year with the Stingers. Getting to play at the same school as his girlfriend and on the same team as his brother was "just amazing, a blessing," Gaetan says.

The two Stingers rookies were also talented players. Blanchette would make the RSEQ all-star team each of the three years she played. Jay was an all-star for three of his four years with the team, and league MVP for two. Both were also all-Canadian student athletes.

"We had a lot of girls from Ahuntsic on those teams, so we knew each other and were experienced players," says Blanchette. "We could all play every position, so it was a very dynamic team."

For Jay, the sport was still relatively new. He had only started playing a couple of years before arriving at Concordia. "That both helped and hurt me for the style of game I played and my development, but all in all, I had a pretty good career," he says with a smile. "Let's just say I picked it up quickly."

"Being part of a team gives you so many tools. We all bring our little touch to what we're trying to accomplish and we don't have to be the same to be successful."

- Guylaine Blanchette, BA 00

MORE THAN BASKETBALL

Today, aside from Jay's coaching duties, the family remains connected to the basketball programs and athletics in general at Concordia. It's not rare to find Blanchette, Gaetan, Jay and even sometimes Olivier-Maxence attending games and walking the hallways of the Department of Recreation and Athletics.

"We hope our long-standing connection encourages others to do the same," says Jay.

Looking back, all three say that although their basketball success with the Stingers was life-changing, they picked up a lot more than wins, including a few key lessons they've tried to pass on to their kids and players.

Number one was all about relationships, they say.

"Just being around teammates and having a common goal that we all had to sacrifice to achieve was huge," says Gaetan. "That experience really helped us to become better people and parents in the real world."

Blanchette agrees. "Being part of a team gives you so many tools," she says. "It helps you understand how everybody's different — we all bring our little touch to what we're trying to accomplish and we don't have to be the same to be successful."

One of Jay's first lessons in developing those people skills came during his third year with the Stingers. He was warming up before a game at a tournament in Halifax when legendary Stingers coach John Dore pulled him aside. "Go over and say thank you to that gentleman," said Dore, pointing to a tournament organizer sitting on the sidelines.

Jay did, and he still remembers the man's reaction. "His eyes went so wide, and he was so grateful."

It was a simple thing, says Jay, but it made him realize the impact he could have on others. "It's not just about the sport. It's about the people."

It's those types of skills that Jay and the current Stingers coaching staff try to instill in their players today, he says. "The goal is to make sure that students leave with a degree, but more importantly, that they leave as better people."

"For me, it's about being able to build and nurture relationships, but it's also being ready for the real world," says Jay. "And competition on the court can really help with that."

'IT TAKES A VILLAGE'

Olivier-Maxence and Cassandre grew up in Montreal watching their parents compete in senior basketball leagues, yet Blanchette and Gaetan say they never pressured their kids to play basketball or any other sport. "It was just important for us to expose them to sports and for them to do something," says Blanchette.

"They could see how much fun we were having, working hard, working with lots of different players. And they could see our attitudes and how we behaved, like not complaining to the refs all the time," she adds. "Those kinds of little things, I think, helped them understand how to behave when they're

"The goal is to make sure that students leave with a degree, but more importantly, that they leave as better people."

- Jay Prosper, BA 99



JAY PROSPER (RIGHT) WAS AN ALL-STAR FOR THREE OF HIS FOUR YEARS WITH THE CONCORDIA STINGERS AND LEAGUE MVP FOR TWO. TODAY, HE IS AN ASSISTANT COACH FOR THE MEN'S TEAM.

playing or when they're having difficulty on or off the court."

All these years later, as Cassandre excels at Notre Dame and Olivier-Maxence settles into the NBA, Blanchette and Gaetan couldn't be happier. "We're proud because they truly want to do it," says Gaetan. "They're not doing it because Mom and Dad say so. They really put in the work to get to that level."

Thinking back to that June night in Brooklyn at the NBA draft, Blanchette is still filled with joy. "It feels surreal," she says. "But we're so grateful and so thankful to all the people around Olivier-Maxence who helped him get there."

"It's never just one thing or one person. It takes a village." ■

MIND Matters

AS DEMENTIA CASES RISE, NEW BRAIN RESEARCH
OFFERS HOPE THROUGH EARLY DETECTION



Memory, problem-solving, thought and language are among the key functions of a healthy brain that are vital to daily life. As we age, however, a decline in any of these cognitive abilities can signal the onset of dementia, underscoring their importance as early indicators.

At the start of this year alone, approximately 733,040 people in Canada were living with dementia according to the Alzheimer Society of Canada (ASC). By 2030, it is estimated that the number could grow to 1 million nationwide.

A growing body of research, including studies led by Concordia faculty and students, underscores the importance of early detection for effective interventions in slowing dementia's progression. The ASC reports that delaying dementia onset by even one year could avoid nearly 500,000 cases in Canada by 2050.

"In a disease like Alzheimer's, the most common type of dementia, we now know that changes start to happen in the brain up to 20 years before diagnosis," says Stéfanie Tremblay, BSc 16, MSc 19, a doctoral candidate in medical physics and 2023 Concordia Public Scholar. "That gives us a window of time when we should be able to detect these pathological processes."

Yet a 2016 study published in *BMJ Journals* revealed that dementia goes undetected in more than 60 per cent of the world's population. Why?

The main factors have been found to include beliefs about "normal" cognitive deficits in older adults and a lack of knowledge about dementia symptoms and diagnostic criteria within the medical profession.

The good news is that these knowledge gaps are narrowing, say experts like Tremblay, thanks to the boom in dementia research worldwide in response to aging populations.

One epicentre of that work in Canada is Concordia's School of Health, where researchers across disciplines working out of places like the university's Centre for Research on Aging and the Centre for Research in Human Development are at the forefront of investigations into the aging brain.

Some physicists, for instance, are using MRI and other imaging tools to look deep inside the brain for early markers of neurodegeneration. Psychology experts are trying to answer a whole battery of questions, like why sensory losses seem to make people more susceptible to developing dementia. And then there are researchers from the fields of mathematics, engineering and health sciences who are trying to prevent and treat dementia by equipping doctors with the most cutting-edge tools.

OUR AGING BRAINS

Dementia isn't one specific disease, but a way of describing a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. While Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, there are others, including vascular dementia, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and dementia with Lewy bodies.

Both short- and long-term memory loss are primary symptoms of dementia, but almost 40 per cent of people over 65 experience some form of mild memory loss, most of whom don't develop dementia, indicating that it isn't the only symptom. Other signs include changes in mood or behaviour and challenges with thinking, problem-solving or language that interfere with one's ability to perform everyday activities.

As for why most people living with dementia are over the age of 65, there are a host of reasons, says Natalie Phillips, a Department of Psychology professor and Concordia Research Chair in Sensory-Cognitive Health in Aging and Dementia.

"It could be years of subtle vascular changes or inflammatory processes in the brain that just take time to manifest themselves," she says. "And then the natural mechanisms that the brain has to combat these kinds of insults start to weaken as people get older. You also start to develop other health conditions in later age that can amplify the problem."

COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

Habib Benali, a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, describes those potential inflammatory processes in the brain as "cascades." The Canada Research Chair in Biomedical Imaging and Healthy Aging thinks they could begin decades before an Alzheimer's diagnosis.

A large part of Benali's current work at Concordia involves simulating the neurodegeneration of individuals' brains. His lab does this using artificial intelligence and other highly sophisticated mathematical and computational tools.

The idea is to model the changes or potential changes to the brain long before a possible diagnosis so that doctors can tailor individualized preventions and treatments.

One of the changes that Benali and his team are modelling is the cascade of beta-amyloid, a protein in the brain that is connected to Alzheimer's. When it clumps together between brain cells, it can eventually form into amyloid plaques large enough to block signals from being transferred between brain cells. This can slow or stop communication between brain cells and may play a role in causing those cells to die, leading to cognitive decline.



“The main advice as we get older is to remain physically and cognitively engaged, and to find activities that are motivating for you so that you can minimize your cardiovascular risk factors.”

– **Natalie Phillips**

Another protein that is likely key to the development of Alzheimer’s is called tau. Benali and his team are building it into their model as well. In healthy brains, tau regulates the assembly and maintenance of the structural stability of microtubules (known as axons). But in unhealthy brains, it collapses and twists, forming tangled clumps of fibres that prevent nutrients from reaching brain cells. This eventually leads to cell death and, ultimately, to neurodegeneration.

The unhealthy development of beta-amyloid and tau likely starts decades before an Alzheimer’s diagnosis, says Benali. The problem is that by the time a diagnosis is made, it’s often too late to remedy.

“This is exactly what I don’t want,” he says. “I want to predict when this degeneration starts because we have enough medications — even today — to stop these processes early.”

INNER WORKINGS

Early detection is also a big part of Stéfanie Tremblay’s work. She currently studies the MRI biomarkers of declining brain health in aging as part of her research at the Department of Physics.

Tremblay is particularly interested in those linkages — or axons — between different brain regions that are important to Benali’s brain-simulation work. They form portions of the brain’s white matter, and she likens them to streets in a city.

“There is some evidence that white-matter changes may be a very early marker of dementia,” Tremblay says. “But I’m not looking at its gross loss of volume. It’s more that I’m looking at the state of those streets: Is it a nice road with several lanes or is it a narrow street with a lot of potholes? We can imagine that this has an impact on the speed of transmission, which then impacts brain function.”

“I want to predict when the degeneration starts, because we have enough medications to stop these processes early.” – **Habib Benali**

In one of her main PhD projects, Tremblay uses MRI to look at white-matter health within patients with cardiovascular issues but without dementia. Cardiovascular problems are good predictors of developing dementia later on, so Tremblay wants to see if these patients displayed early brain changes associated with dementia.

In her other PhD project, Tremblay uses MRI to look at the axons within people with a family history of Alzheimer’s who don’t have the disease themselves.

Her projects are ongoing, but she does see changes in white-matter health in both groups, and these changes are associated with some cognitive deficits. “This is important for early detection,” she says. “If we can find which MRI measures are most helpful in detecting early brain changes, this can hopefully be used to intervene earlier and prevent the development of dementia.”

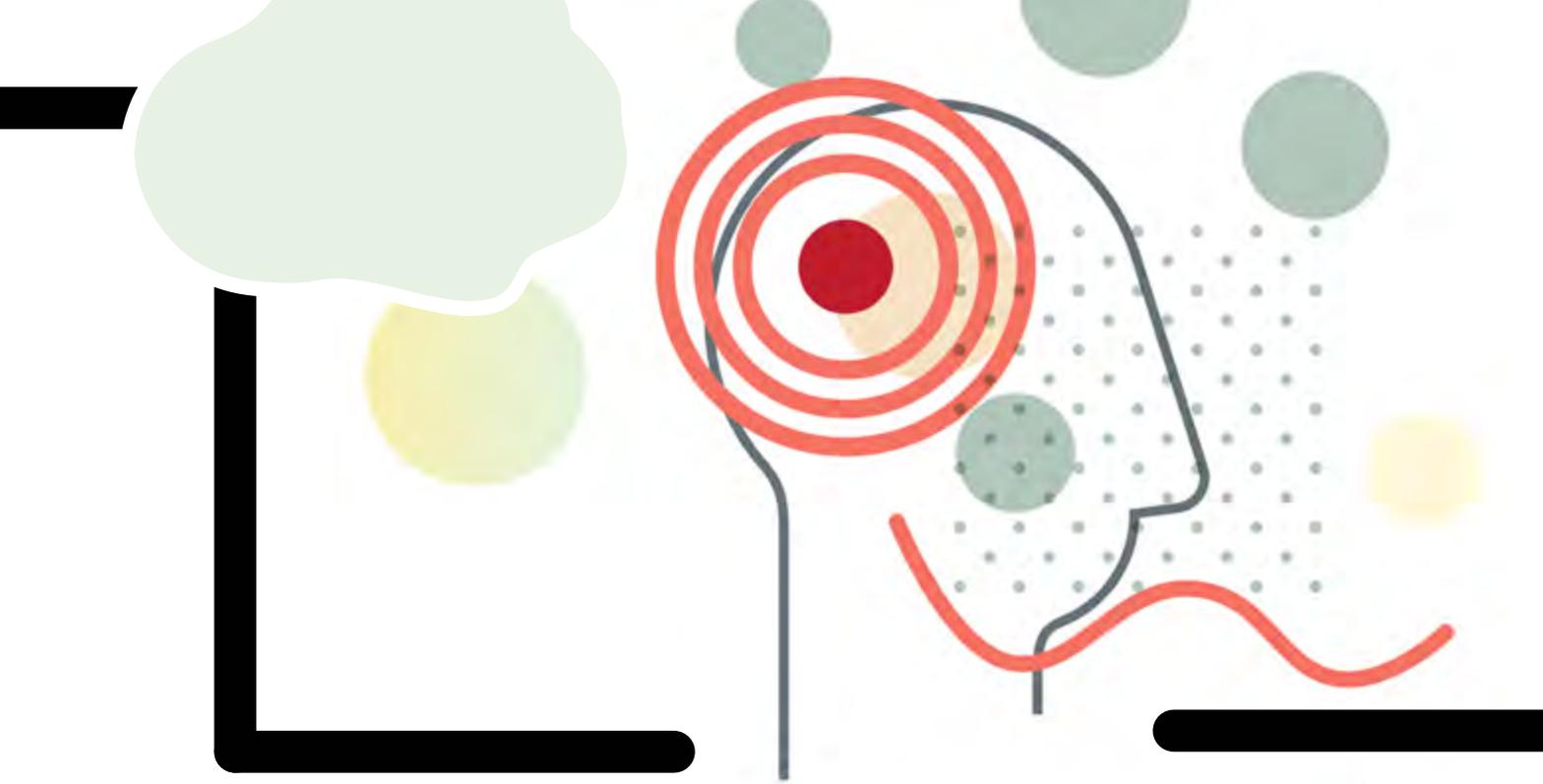
CONNECTING SENSORY AND COGNITIVE ABILITIES

As important as MRI is in spotting the early signs of dementia, researchers and clinicians also use other detection tools. Natalie Phillips, for instance, typically uses cognitive tests to assess language, learning, memory, problem-solving and multitasking skills in older adults.

In 2005, Phillips played a key role in designing the Montreal Cognitive Assessment, a screening tool that is now considered the world standard for detecting the dementia-risk state known as mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

More recently, as one of the associate scientific directors of the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging (CCNA), she has been involved in Canada’s largest study of dementia, called the Comprehensive Assessment of Neurodegeneration and Dementia (COMPASS-ND). It collects a huge range of data on participants at risk for or living with dementia.





Of particular interest to Phillips is sensory function. Some of her more recent research has looked at why olfactory or auditory loss seems to increase the likelihood of developing dementia. She doesn't have any answers quite yet, but there are hypotheses.

For smell, one theory is that the brain area that mediates this sense is the same where Alzheimer's pathology starts.

For hearing, it's no doubt quite different, says Phillips.

"There are probably some common biological causes, but we also know that if you have a hearing loss, your brain is going to be working much harder when you communicate and will need to recruit additional areas to compensate," she says. "Over the long term, that may start to be a problem if the brain is continually trying to compensate."

Those with hearing loss also tend to limit their social lives, says Phillips. "Going out becomes more effortful, it's harder to hear people at parties, so you might not do those things as often. And we know that social engagement is really important for helping older adults maintain their vitality."



EXERCISING THE BRAIN

Karen Li, a Department of Psychology professor, is also interested in developing non-MRI methods to detect neurodegeneration. Her research largely focuses on how our ability to be attentive when multitasking changes with age.

Some of her lab's studies involve getting people to perform an exercise, such as walking on a treadmill, while doing a cognitive task, such as subtracting by threes.

A common conclusion to come out of Li's lab is that a multitasking test can actually pick up the beginnings of neurodegeneration with more sensitivity than a test that involves only a cognitive task or only a physical activity. This may be due to the overlapping demands for frontal brain regions during walking and cognitive processing.

"So, then we kind of turn that around and say: 'Okay, if these are the neural circuits that are getting weaker in aging and in neurodegenerative conditions, then we're going to find ways to strengthen those circuits,'" says Li, who is a member of the CCNA like Phillips.

Li's multidisciplinary CCNA team looks at interventions to improve cognition and mobility in older adults. They are currently recruiting for a large clinical trial assessing the impacts of moderate aerobic exercise and resistance training, as well as computerized brain training in people at risk for developing Alzheimer's.

The hope is to build on her own research and that of others to underscore just how important physical and cognitive exercise is to healthy aging brains. "The new clinical trial also brings in additional factors, such as healthy sleep and dietary practices," says Li. "This helps acknowledge that supporting and improving brain health to reduce the risk of dementia is multifaceted and multidisciplinary."



“If we can find which MRI measures are most helpful in detecting early brain changes, this can hopefully be used to intervene earlier and prevent the development of dementia.”

– **Stéfanie Tremblay, BSc 16, MSc 19**

ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS

The kind of collective work that Li’s team is engaged in is vital when trying to detect and prevent such a complicated umbrella of diseases, says Tremblay. “Especially because we know that dementia is more prevalent in populations that are underprivileged and from ethnic-minority communities. We need a stronger collective approach to try to deal with this.”

The good news is that more researchers are recognizing this, she adds.

Take the brain simulation work that Habib Benali and his team have been doing. Benali says that none of it would have been possible without the expertise of Canadian and international scientists working in artificial intelligence, neuroimaging, computational biology, digital health, genomics, Alzheimer’s research, statistics, epidemiology and other disciplines.

Now his team is even trying to include individuals’ environments in brain simulations, which requires a whole other suite of collaborators.

“If I want to follow a person for 10 years and predict if they are going to develop the disease, I have to include their environment within their physiology,” Benali remarks. “That’s a big, big problem, but this is exactly what my team is developing today.”

Those environmental risk factors can be significant. According to a 2020 report published in *The Lancet*, 40 per cent of dementia cases can be attributed to 12 potentially modifiable risk factors, including air pollution and low social contact. The other risk factors include less education, hypertension, hearing impairment, smoking, obesity, depression, physical inactivity, diabetes, excessive alcohol consumption and traumatic brain injury.

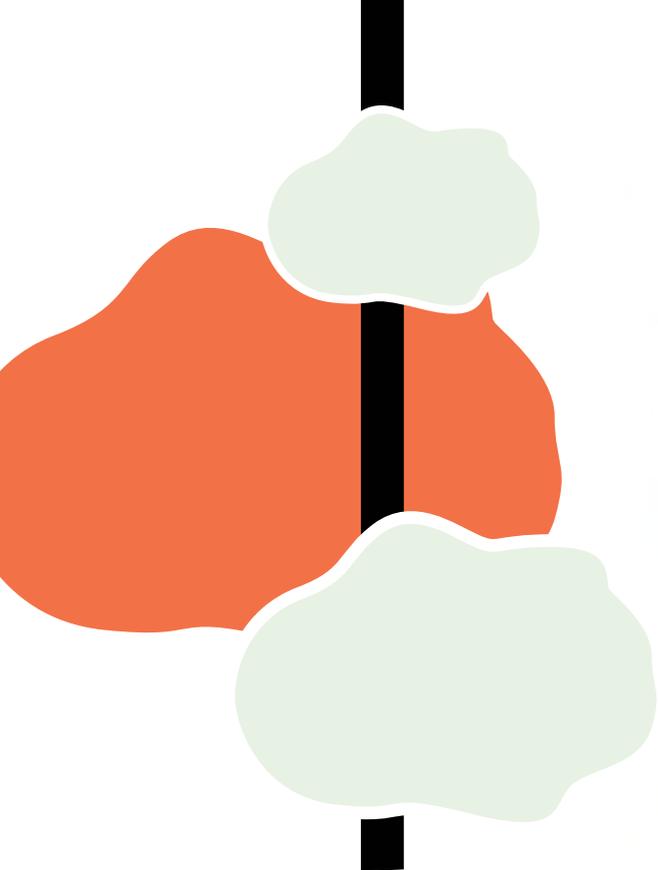
“The main advice as we get older is to remain physically and cognitively engaged, and to find activities that are motivating for you so that you can minimize your cardiovascular risk factors,” says Phillips. “Do everything your grandmother would have told you to do — stop smoking, eat more vegetables, go outside and get more exercise.”

It’s also important to stay hopeful, she adds. Yes, the raw number of dementia cases is going up, but that is also because there are more people over the age of 65 than there were decades ago.

“In Western countries, the percentage of individuals with dementia in that older age range is actually going down compared with 20 years ago,” notes Phillips. “That’s probably because of a lot of the public-health messaging around cardiovascular risk factors and general increases in education and quality of life. So that’s a good-news piece of the puzzle that we have to remember and keep building on.” ■

“Supporting and improving brain health to reduce the risk of dementia is multifaceted and multidisciplinary.” – **Karen Li**





WIDE AWAKE

A GROWING BODY OF RESEARCH CONNECTS POOR SLEEP WITH DEMENTIA

It's no secret that the quality of our sleep declines as we age, but until recently there have been few large studies looking at the relationship between sleep in older adults and cognitive impairment.

About five years ago, a team of researchers from Concordia, the Université de Montréal and McGill University took a deep dive into data from the more than 26,000 participants of the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging to better decipher if lack of sleep played a role in memory decline.

They specifically looked at three groups: people sleeping normally, chronic insomniacs and people with symptoms of insomnia but not reporting problems with daytime functioning.

Their results, published in the journal *SLEEP*, show that chronic insomnia, in particular, has a significant impact on the memory of those aged 45 or older.

That chronic-insomnia distinction is an important one to make, says Nathan Cross, one of the co-leads of the study who was a postdoctoral fellow at Concordia's Sleep, Cognition and Neuroimaging Lab at the time.

"Insomnia is a sleep disorder, but it's primarily a psychological disorder where you're perceiving that your sleep has a negative impact on you in the daytime," he says. "And we found that it was only in those with the daytime complaint who had the deficiency in memory performance."

Cross was also part of a follow-up study published in *SLEEP* showing that those whose sleep quality worsened between 2019 and 2022 were also more likely to experience memory decline.

Although these studies don't prove that bad sleep is among the causes of dementia, they do show a direct link between chronic insomnia and memory loss, which can lead to conditions such as Alzheimer's disease. They also add to a growing body of research that suggests that insomnia is associated with a significant risk of dementia.

Cross, now a research fellow at the University of Sydney, Australia, says that there is a lot more to unpack with the sleep-dementia link. And he believes that new improvements in technology will help make that happen.

"A lot of the blood-based biomarkers are much better at predicting who's at risk for cognitive decline, and I think the link between those and sleep is going to be really important," he says. "Even tools like MRI are constantly improving, and I think we'll soon understand more about the brain-structure changes related to sleep."

GUARDIANS OF OUR HISTORY

HOW RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVES HAS HELPED CONCORDIA REMEMBER ITS PAST - AND PRESERVE A BETTER FUTURE - FOR FIVE DECADES

SAMANTHA RIDEOUT, GRDIP 10



As Concordia's 50th anniversary draws near, archivist Eric Côté thinks that more people should know about the department that serves as official custodian of heritage.

"One of our roles is to promote the university's history," says Côté of Records Management and Archives (RMA). "It includes many achievements, and also mistakes that we need to remember so that we don't make them again."

The small but dedicated RMA, which itself turned 50 in 2023, encompasses two groups of employees: a records-management team that helps faculty and staff to organize their documents in compliance with laws and university regulations, and an archives team that stores and catalogues materials for current and future generations to consult.

Not only do the archivists continually collect documents through institutional channels such as academic units, they also accept private donations from faculty, staff and alumni. As a result, their extensive holdings — which predate the merger of Sir George Williams University and Loyola College in 1974, and include photos, event posters, lecture notes, press releases, yearbooks, sports jerseys, trophies, videos and more — cover wide swaths of university life.

"Not counting digital documents, we have around 6,200 boxes of papers in our vault," says Julie Daoust, Concordia's RMA lead.

All that material has survived until today despite the fact that much of it was soaked by firefighters' hoses when a blaze broke out in one of Concordia's annexes in the winter of 1982.

The archivist at the time, Nancy Marrelli, BA 84, contributed greatly to saving the collection. Her written account tells how papers that had become solid blocks of ice were stored in freezer trucks until the university could arrange to freeze-dry them at a food-processing plant.

The current archivists don't have challenges of that magnitude to face, but 2024 is a busy year for them because of requests from groups that are planning to celebrate Concordia's 50th.

To mark the occasion, RMA is also collaborating with the Concordia Library in the creation of a virtual timeline of notable events in the university's history.

It's been tough to whittle down the interesting stories to a digestible number.

"When we started, we had 700 entries for the timeline," laughs Côté. "We've reduced that to around 300."

These events include the cancellation of classes at Loyola in 1918 because of the flu pandemic, the first issue of *Concordia University Magazine* in 1977 featuring literary giant Mordecai Richler's humorous account of his time at Sir George Williams, the implementation of Concordia's HIV/AIDS policy in 1988 (making it one of the first Canadian universities to issue formal guidelines about AIDS education and health services) and the founding of the People's Potato to fight student hunger in 1999.

A CORNERSTONE OF PRESERVATION

As the anniversary commemorations approach, the significance of these events and milestones — and how they strengthened Concordia — has become more and more apparent.

So, too, has RMA's role as a preserver and promoter of this rich history.

One of the most notable events on the virtual timeline, for example, had its genesis in the spring of 1968, when six Black students at Sir George Williams accused a professor of racial discrimination.

No resolution had been reached by the following winter, when around 200 students occupied a computer centre and faculty lounge in the Henry F. Hall Building. Their aim was to show their dissatisfaction with how the administration was handling the allegations as well as racism on campus more generally.

Twelve days later, after negotiations between the students and the administration failed, the university called in the police. In the ensuing chaos, officers arrested 97 people.

For some students, the fallout included job loss, unfinished studies, jail sentences and even deportation.

Although those involved would never forget the incident, it might have been largely forgotten by the broader community had records not been archived, then revisited and highlighted over the years.

For instance, in 2015 the National Film Board was able to make a documentary on the subject using well-preserved archival footage that was originally captured on reel-to-reel videotape.



“Our mandate is to help people.” – Julie Daoust



BY THE NUMBERS

Take a deep dive into some of the data at Records Management and Archives:

- **90,000+** digital items viewed in 2023
- **10,000+** digitized and born-digital photos
- **6,200** boxes of paper archives in RMA's vault
- **1,796** digitized posters and promotional materials
- **160** fonds donated by private individuals
- **93** digitized yearbooks

Concordia has since issued a formal apology for its handling of the racism complaints, for the harms caused to protestors and for its silence surrounding these matters during the decades that followed (more on p. 48).

Côté considers this outcome to be an example of why cataloguing the past matters, and why it is fortunate that Concordia has been doing so for the past five decades.

FROM ANALOG TO DIGITAL

Thanks to the vision and leadership of Marie-Pierre Aubé, RMA's director and Concordia's university archivist since 2010, the digital age has brought improvements to the department. For starters, scanning analog materials makes them easier to search and retrieve.

“What used to take days to find can now take minutes,” says Eric Côté.

Digitization also helps with preservation, since the people who want to see brittle old files now won't need to handle them.

Meanwhile, to protect digital data itself, the archivists store select content in a specialized digital-preservation environment. It's also backed up on servers at multiple geographical locations to reduce the risk that a single disaster could take out all the copies. Finally, they perform regular bit-level checks to ensure file integrity and trustworthy data over time.

One of the team's greatest digital-transformation challenges is deciding what to put online. Materials with high historical value get priority, although the archivists need to watch out for materials that might be under copyright protection.

They've also come across documents that deserve a content warning when they go on the web. Unfortunately, but

unsurprisingly, a lot of racist and sexist ideas plague publications from decades past. And every so often, something just “goes over the edge” of today's content norms, as Côté puts it.

“As an example, Loyola College was fairly conservative, but things sort of exploded there at the end of the 1960s,” he says. “In an issue of *Gamut*, a student-run magazine, we found a whole series of nude photos. I mean, they're artistic, but we still have to make sure people know it's in there before they click.”

GETTING 'CREATIVE TO FIND SOLUTIONS'

Many new records are “born digital,” meaning that when hard copies exist at all, they're just printouts of the original digital format.

Some of this content makes its way into RMA's web collections with the help of Olivier Bisailon-Lemay, an archives reference technician whose responsibilities include sending web crawlers to capture relevant pages and posts. Archived web content will remain available even after the original host takes it down.

Some of Concordia's web collections try to gather everything coming from a particular source, such as the news section of Concordia's website. Others are centred on topics that may be of special interest to future researchers, such as COVID-19 or Concordia's Indigenous community.

Then there are the born-digital files that don't live online but rather on storage devices such as discs and drives. Some of these media can be troublesome, according to Julie Daoust.

“Especially CDs and DVDs: Archivists don't like them!” she says. “People used to use them a lot, but they're not the most stable format. Even though they're not terribly old, we're not always able to extract the information, which is kind of heartbreaking.”

So far, few university archives have tackled the issues posed by the degradation of digital media.

“That forces us to be creative and find solutions,” says John Richan, Concordia's digital archivist.

In a trailblazing move, Richan and his colleagues opened a digital preservation lab in 2020. It's a space dedicated to migrating vulnerable data into formats that meet the best practices of today.

“As much as the lab is a space for us to work, we've always envisioned it as a research and teaching opportunity, too.”

– John Richan

“One of our roles is to promote the university’s history. It includes many achievements, and also mistakes that we need to remember so that we don’t make them again.”

– Eric Côté

The lab’s legacy hardware and specialized equipment mean it can take on large and challenging projects.

“For example, we discovered that putting CDs into a drive one at a time and copying and pasting the data is not very efficient for the volume of discs we receive,” says Richan. “So, we have a machine that can stack up to 100 CDs at once and pull the data. It’s been a lifesaver.”

Students from Concordia and other Montreal universities visit the lab to gain experience with digital archiving.

“As much as the lab is a space for us to work, we’ve always envisioned it as a research and teaching opportunity, too,” he says.

A RICH RESOURCE FOR THE COMMUNITY

Last year, Bisailon-Lemay fielded nearly 150 requests from people who wanted to consult Concordia’s archives.

“That part of my job is getting easier as time goes on,” he says, explaining that researchers can now often find what they need without him thanks to RMA’s online research tools.

Still, he emphasizes that he’s available to assist anyone who finds the tools tricky to use or who’s interested in digging into records that haven’t been digitized.

In addition to the obvious — documenting Concordia’s history as an institution — the archives are also useful for people who are researching the lives or ideas of notable faculty or alumni.

For instance, RMA recently received more than 50 boxes of donated material from Pnina Gagnon, a prolific contemporary artist and the widow of the art historian François-Marc Gagnon, an affiliate professor at Concordia and the founding director of its Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art.

“He’s a big part of Quebec’s cultural landscape,” says Eric Côté with enthusiasm. “He published so many books and gave presentations around the world, and he was on TV for most of the ’90s. I remember watching him as a teenager! It’s humbling when you arrive in front of a body of work like this.”

In addition to professional academics and journalists, RMA’s team also assists students, employees and alumni, including those who are doing research for personal reasons.

“A few years back, there was a person who had an illness that made her forget a lot of things about her life,” says Daoust. “So, she asked us questions and we were able to help her recall her time at Concordia.”

“Our mandate is to help people,” Daoust continues. “We know it can be difficult to work with archives when you aren’t used to it. But 95 per cent of the time, we can find what you’re looking for, or at least something relevant. We’re here for you.” ■

For support in using Concordia’s archives for professional or personal research, write to archives@concordia.ca.

Learn what Concordia did first in Montreal, Quebec, Canada and the world at concordia.ca/concordiafirsts.



LEAVE YOUR MARK

Records Management and Archives welcomes donations that relate to Concordia or either of its founding institutions.

From alumni, the archivists are interested in materials that speak to classwork, academic and professional paths, and life on campus or in Montreal, among other topics.

“We don’t have enough about extracurricular activities such as student associations, in particular,” says reference technician Olivier Bisailon-Lemay.

“That means we’re missing a huge part of student life. So, if anyone’s been involved in something like that and they kept photos, videos, documents or whatever else they produced, we would love to have it.”

To donate materials to the archives, visit concordia.ca/donate/archives.

Lens on Concordia

CHARTING 50 YEARS OF GROWTH ACROSS TWO EVOLVING CAMPUSES

MARTA SAMUEL, GRDIP 10, AND MICHAEL GANNON, BA 15

As the Concordia community gears up to celebrate 50 years since the merger of its founding institutions — Sir George Williams University and Loyola College — learn more about the evolution of the university’s two campuses throughout the decades.

Humble beginnings laid the groundwork for the next-generation buildings and innovative spaces that fill Concordia’s downtown Montreal and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce campuses today. Take a journey into our storied past while celebrating the transformation and progress as we lead into the future.



PHOTO: MICHAEL DRUMMOND

LEFT: THE HENRY F. HALL BUILDING OPENED ON OCTOBER 14, 1966, WITH AN ESTIMATED 5,000 PASSERSBY STOPPING THROUGH ITS ATRIUM TO VIEW THE NEW SPACE. **TOP RIGHT:** PICTURED IN 2005, THE HALL BUILDING’S ATRIUM FEATURED A CAFÉ WHERE STUDENTS COULD PICK UP A SNACK BETWEEN CLASSES. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** TODAY THE HALL BUILDING HOUSES A NUMBER OF SOCIAL-SCIENCES ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS, ENGINEERING TEACHING AND RESEARCH LABS, THE CONCORDIA THEATRE, AS WELL AS STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS AND SPACES INCLUDING THE OTSENHÁKTA STUDENT CENTRE, NOULA STUDENT LOUNGE, HIVE CAFÉ, REGGIE’S PUB AND PEOPLE’S POTATO.





LEFT: STUDENTS BRAVE THE WINTER CHILL BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND THE CHAPEL ON LOYOLA CAMPUS IN 1974. THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING WAS ONLY TWO STOREYS HIGH UNTIL IT WAS FINALLY COMPLETED IN 1927. **RIGHT:** THE RELAXED GREEN SPACES OF LOYOLA CAMPUS NOW HOUSE RENOVATED STUDY AND LIBRARY SPACES AND OFFER STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES LIKE THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH, APPLIED SCIENCE HUB, RICHARD J. RENAUD SCIENCE COMPLEX AND OSCAR PETERSON CONCERT HALL.

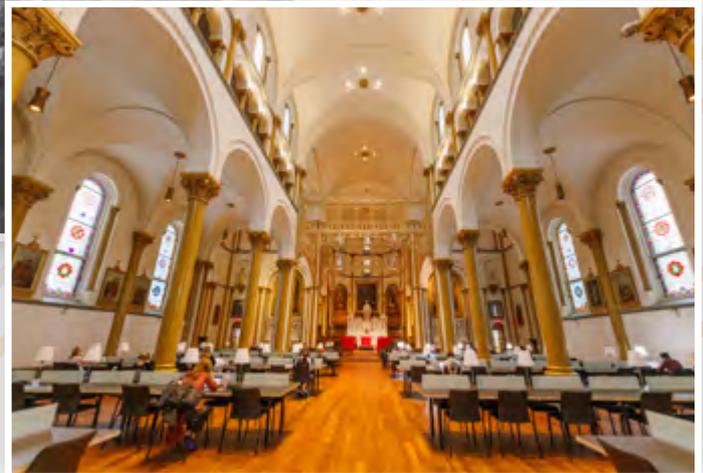


LEFT: BEFORE CONCORDIA PURCHASED THE FAUBOURG BUILDING – ON THE CORNER OF GUY AND STE. CATHERINE STREETS – IN 1997, THE SPACE WAS HOME TO AN AUTOMOBILE SHOWROOM, POOL ROOM, BOWLING ALLEY, TAVERN AND THEN AN URBAN MARKET (PICTURED), PART OF WHAT WAS THEN KNOWN AS LE FAUBOURG. **RIGHT:** TODAY, THE TOWER – INITIALLY INTENDED TO BE A HOTEL – SITS NEXT TO THE ORIGINAL BUILDING AND INCLUDES NEXT-GEN STUDY SPACES, AS WELL AS THE MEL HOPPENHEIM SCHOOL OF CINEMA, THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AND DISTRICT 3 INNOVATION HUB.



PHOTO: SŒURS DE LA CHARITÉ DE MONTRÉAL 'SŒURS GRISES' – SERVICES DES ARCHIVES ET DES COLLECTIONS

LEFT: THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF MONTREAL – ALSO KNOWN AS THE GREY NUNS – FIRST ESTABLISHED ITS MOTHER HOUSE AT THE INTERSECTION OF GUY STREET AND DORCHESTER BOULEVARD (NOW RENÉ-LÉVESQUE) IN 1871. AT ITS CENTRE WAS THE CHAPEL OF THE HOLY CROSS, WHICH HOSTED ITS FIRST MASS IN 1878. **RIGHT:** THE MOTHER HOUSE, WHICH WAS ACQUIRED BY CONCORDIA IN 2007, NOW FINDS RENEWED PURPOSE AS THE GREY NUNS BUILDING. IN THE CHAPEL'S PLACE TODAY IS THE GREY NUNS READING ROOM (PICTURED), PART OF CONCORDIA LIBRARY, WHERE STUDENTS SIT AT LAMP-LIT TABLES RATHER THAN PEWS. IN THE APSE, WHERE PRIESTS ONCE ORATED, STUDENTS CAN NOW SIT BACK AND STUDY OR RELAX IN COMFORTABLE READING CHAIRS.



LEFT: LOYOLA COLLEGE WAS BUILT ON AN APPLE ORCHARD, DONATED BY GIOVANNI DONEGANI IN THE MID-1800S. CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW CAMPUS DIDN'T BEGIN UNTIL 1913, YET THE FIRST STUDENTS MOVED IN JUST TWO YEARS LATER BEFORE THE BUILDINGS WERE FULLY COMPLETED. THE COLLEGE FIRST OPENED COURSES FOR YOUNG MEN, OPENING ITS DOORS TO WOMEN ONLY IN 1959. **RIGHT:** CONCORDIA'S LOYOLA CAMPUS IN MONTREAL'S NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE NEIGHBOURHOOD NOW BLENDS CUTTING-EDGE FACILITIES WITH TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY BUILDINGS AND RESIDENCES, AND AN ATHLETICS COMPLEX.



PHOTO: RICHARD ARLESS ASSOCIATES

All archival photos courtesy of Concordia University Records Management and Archives, unless otherwise specified.



TOP: RANDY PHILLIPS, BA 74, WAS A MEMBER OF THE CONCORDIA STINGERS MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FROM 1972 TO 1975.
BOTTOM: STINGERS WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PLAYER SERENA TCHIDA RECREATES THE IMAGE WITH MONTREAL'S SKYLINE BEHIND HER ON CONCORDIA'S DOWNTOWN SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS CAMPUS. TCHIDA IS AN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT IN MARKETING WHO WAS NAMED TO THE RÉSEAU DU SPORT ÉTUDIANT DU QUÉBEC'S ALL-STAR TEAM THIS YEAR.

Novels, kid lit, poetry and other new works by Concordia alumni



IAN HARRISON,
B COMM 01

The Legend of Baraffo (Bookhug Press, \$23), by **Moez Surani**, MA 05, tells the story of a boy named Mazzu who grapples to understand Babello, a man imprisoned for arson. When the accused begins a hunger strike and another fire is deliberately set, tensions flare in Baraffo, a town gripped by revolutionary fervour, and Mazzu considers a brazen risk.

Painter **Mathieu Laca**, BFA 05, recently published his first novel in French, ***L'invention d'un visage*** (Leméac, \$29.95). The story centres on Antoine, a fine-arts student at Concordia, and his creative attempts to reclaim his lost ability to recognize people facially after a terrible accident.

In ***The Atomic Bomb in Images and Documents*** (McFarland & Company, \$49.95), **Samuel S. Kloda**, BSc 71, MSc 75, provides a comprehensive overview of the scientific advancements and human efforts that shaped the Atomic Age, from the Manhattan Project to the tragic annihilations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

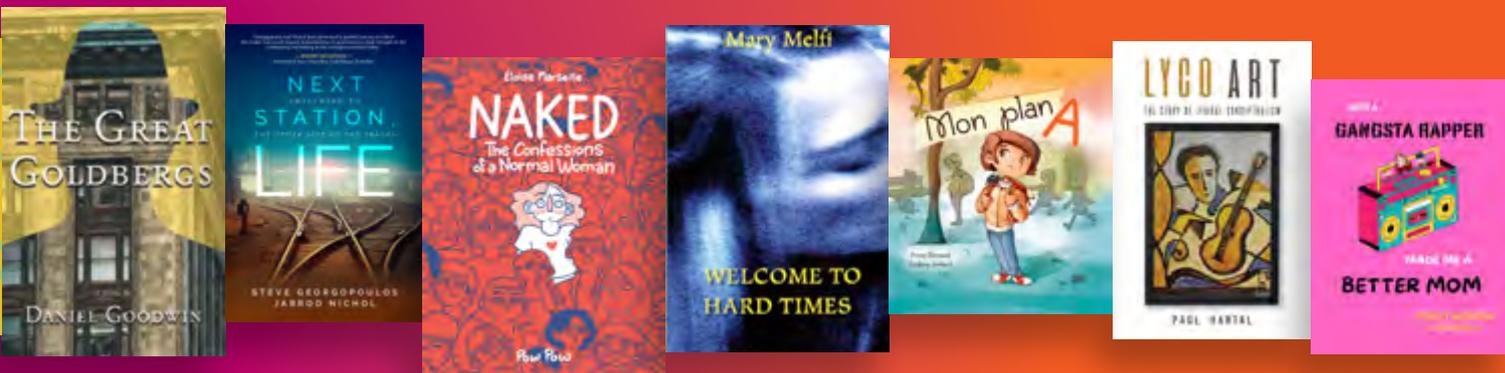
Artist **Guy Giard**, BFA 83, shares how art, music, meditation and humanitarian acts gave him purpose in the self-published ***The Courage to Love: From Abuse to Happiness, a Healing Memoir*** (\$24.99). Written as a mystery, the memoir includes a foreword by Patch Adams.

À tout prendre et il était une fois dans l'Est (McGill-Queen's University Press, \$37.95), by **Julie Vaillancourt**, BFA 05, MA 07, is a tribute to the pioneers of queer cinema in the province of Quebec. Through the lens of sociology, Vaillancourt analyzes the works of influential filmmakers

from the Quiet Revolution to the present day.

In her debut book of poetry, ***Hoods of Motherhood*** (Prolific Pulse Press, \$14.86), **Lindsay Soberano Wilson**, BA 00, compiles a bittersweet portrayal as she contends with intergenerational trauma, recurrent miscarriages and the routine ups and downs of maternity.

"Meet your trivia match with 555 pop culture challenges!" is the promise of ***Trivia Fusion: Connect the Thoughts*** (\$14.50), the latest self-published book by satirist and word-game enthusiast **David Mitchell**, BA 75.



Daniel Goodwin, MA 96, has published his third novel, **The Great Goldbergs** (Cormorant Books, \$24.95). Protagonist Sean McFall is enamoured with the Goldberg family until he discovers a dark underbelly that includes abuse and plenty of secrets. As he confronts this reality, Sean must redefine his identity amid the allure of wealth and acceptance.

In **Next Station, Life: Switching to the Other Side of the Tracks** (Prominence Publishing, \$24.95), Steve Georgopoulos, BComm 76, and Jarrod Nichol, MBA 20, provocatively explore how the smallest of decisions can alter the course of a life. The authors returned to their alma mater in January to discuss their book.

Éloïse Marseille, BFA 20, has published **Naked: Confessions of a Normal Woman** (Pow Pow Press, \$24.95), a graphic memoir that examines her sexual education (and miseducation), questions of lust and love and her nuanced relationship with her own body and self.

Through a hopeful and darkly humorous lens, the poems in **Welcome to Hard Times** (Ekstasis Editions, \$24.95), a new collection from Mary Melfi, BA 73, navigate emotional conflicts amid societal challenges related to class, ethnicity, gender, dysfunctional family dynamics and more.

Mon Plan A (Éditions de l'Isatis, \$22.95), an illustrated children's book by Anne Renaud, BA 83, features Lou, a resourceful grade-schooler who devises a clever strategy to seek resolution — and perhaps even friendship — with his bully.

Five decades after he wrote *A Manifesto on Lyrical Conceptualism*, Paul Hartal, MA 77, has published **Lyc0 Art: The Story of Lyrical Conceptualism** (Austin Macauley, \$40.17), a new exploration of the painter and poet's attempt to unite the scientific with the creative.

In her debut novel, **How A Gangsta Rapper Made Me a Better Mom** (LR Price, \$17.57), Stacey Jackson, BA 91, tells the story of stay-at-home mom Stephanie Bloom, whose dream of becoming an international pop star is confronted by obstacles — and a life-changing opportunity — along the way. ■

Emergency Orchestra



ISABELA MARINO

Bridget Huh
was the 2022-23
winner of the
Gabriel Safdie
Award in Creative
Writing for Poetry

I.

For what we call the present.

For the sake of future loss.

For what we hope will endure.

For the essential nature of a work.

For its body bound in time.

For the rhythm of a language.

For the glorification of singing.

II.

The trees want
me to recite.
What do you save

from the disaster? Hunting
rifle, camera, cast
-iron pan. The Buddha

wants nothing. He is
only a porcelain
statue. What do you say

in the disaster?
I want
to untangle the voices

of past from those
of present. I want
to recover

the last point in
history at which
we could have turned

around. The voices
are living and they
want

to go somewhere.
I want to let them.
I want

the violins to shimmer,
I want them to stand
for impermanence

while the soloist
hangs over them
like an omen

—you too
will one day find
yourself alone

floundering
in a flood of
fire

III.

To end without resolution.

To leave a hole for unending time.

To believe that time faces only one direction.

To live as though there is enough of it.

To carry on forever. ■

Bridget Huh is a queer Korean poet pursuing her undergraduate studies in creative writing and English at Concordia. Her poetry and criticism have appeared in Arc Poetry Magazine, PRISM International, The Ex-Puritan and Canthius. She is the winner of the 2023 Vallum Poetry Award, and her forthcoming debut collection of poetry will be published by Véhicule Press.





Happy 50th from your CUAA!

As we celebrate our golden anniversary, the Concordia University Alumni Association (CUAA) thanks you for making our university an incredible place to be.

Discover the benefits of being part of our network of 260,000 alumni around the world:
concordia.ca/alumni.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
ALUMNI  ASSOCIATION

f in @ X
#CUalumni



Three new honorary doctorates were commemorated at a dinner reception and at faculty convocations in November: **1** Farah Alibay, DSc 23; **2** Anita Marangoly George, LLD 23; and **3** Ed Rosenthal, BA 74, DSc 23.

4 The eighth edition of the Black Students Career Development series — hosted by the Black Alumni Network and Black Students Career Development Team — connected students and alumni to share industry knowledge and explore pathways to successful careers on January 27.





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5 A cocktail reception was held on November 21 in Montreal to celebrate the newest cohort of Concordia's **Top 50 Under 50 Shaping Tomorrow**.

6 **Gina Cody**, MEng 81, PhD 89, delivered a keynote address at a Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 fundraiser on November 16 at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

7 The Concordia community came out in celebration of **National Philanthropy Day** on November 16.

8 The volunteer-run **Concordia EPIC Used Book Fair** raised a record **\$43,635** on March 12 and 13. More than 10,000 books were sold, bringing the total funds raised by the fair to more than \$325,000 in its 23-year history.

9 The 2024 edition of **Wild Talks** — a lecture series launched in 2017 and supported by donor Erin Hogg — was held on January 29 with award-winning dancer and choreographer **Louise Lecavalier**. The event

attracted 228 students, alumni, faculty and staff to the Concordia Theatre.

10 A thank-you dinner and reception for honorary co-chairs and co-presidents who generously support the annual **Concordia Golf Classic** was held on February 19. The event was emceed by **Paul Chesser**, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement at Concordia, with keynote remarks from **President Graham Carr**.

11 A commemorative plaque was unveiled on February 1 at the start of **Black History Month** in honour of the historic anti-racism protest organized by Black students at Sir George Williams University, one of Concordia's founding institutions, in 1969. Members of the President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism, the NouLa Black Student Centre as well as administrators, students, staff and alumni gathered in the lobby of the Henry F. Hall Building for the occasion.



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12 Hosted by the **National Bank Initiative in Entrepreneurship and Family Business, entrepreneur and investor Ulric Jerome, BA 00,** spoke at Concordia on April 2. The former CEO of MatchesFashion and co-founder of PIXmania is known for scaling both into billion-dollar businesses. Jerome discussed how he navigated the challenges he encountered and shared the strategies for success he learned along the way.

13 A lecture on the current state of global geopolitics given by **Vikas Swarup, LLD 23,** author of *Slumdog Millionaire* and retired High Commissioner of India to Canada, was held on October 18 as part of Concordia's **Henri P. Habib Distinguished Speaker Series on Peace, Conflict and Global Politics.**

14 A **Women Who LEAD event on October 24 focused on athletics and leadership** and featured

a panel of Concordia experts: **Julie Chu,** head coach, Concordia Stingers women's hockey; **Tenicha Gittens,** head coach, Concordia Stingers women's basketball; **Katrina Monton,** BA 17, organizational psychologist; **Emmy Fecteau,** student and Stingers hockey player; and moderator and CBC sports reporter **Jessica Rusnak, BA 10.**

15 A **Women Who LEAD event focused on how to**

create sustainable brands for a healthier future was held on November 14. It featured (from left): **Mishel Wong, BComm 12,** founder and owner, Bo; **Rajshree Prakash,** associate professor, Department of Management; **Anne-Marie Laflamme,** co-founder, atelier b; **Halina Torresan, BComm 13,** director of Marketing, The Unscented Company; and moderator **Mélodie Le Siège, BA 10,** manager of Strategic Content, 50th Anniversary, University Advancement.



16

16 Auditor General of Canada Karen Hogan, BComm 93, GrDip 95, returned to her alma mater on April 3 for a conversation with **President Graham Carr** about her career trajectory and her role in addressing some of the most pressing issues in Canadian current affairs. The event was emceed by **Anne-Marie Croteau**, dean of the John Molson School of Business.

17 A conversation about the arts between **Annie Gérin**, dean, Faculty of Fine Arts, and **Anthony Kiendl**, BFA 93, **CEO and executive director of the Vancouver Art Gallery**, was held in Vancouver on October 6.



17

18 Cree artist **Kent Monkman** and his long-time collaborator **Gisèle Gordon** discussed their new work, *The Memoirs of Miss Chief Eagle Testickle: A True and Exact Accounting of the History of Turtle Island*, on November 20 at Montreal's Grande Bibliothèque. The sold-out event, co-presented by the Faculty of Fine Arts, was moderated by Kanien'kehá:ka artist **Skawennati**, BFA 92, GrDip 96. ■

View our event schedule at concordia.ca/alumni-events. To receive invitations to alumni events, update your contact information by writing to records@concordia.ca.



18

ALUMNI UPDATES

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

77 Norman E. Hébert, BComm, joined the board of directors of the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation.

78 Peter Kruyt, BComm, joined the strategic taskforce of the International Tennis Federation.

80 Michel Timperio, BComm, joined the board of directors at Geekco Technologies Corporation.

82 Pasquale (Pat) De Marco, BComm, GrDip 83, was appointed CEO of Journey Freight International.

85 Ralph Paroli, BSc, was appointed to the Standards Council of Canada's Governing Council.

87 Caroline Goulian, BComm, GrDip 88, joined the 2023-24 board of directors of the Quebec Section Financial Executives International Canada.

Robert Frances, BComm, MBA 91, was named industry director of the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization.

89 Angela D'Angelo, BA, was appointed vice-president of Business Development and Growth (Quebec) at Scotia Wealth Management.

Rochelle Douris, BFA, joined Brandon University Theatre as a Drama program instructor for the winter 2024 term.

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, BSc, was named ambassador to the Fondation du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

90 Robert Pothier, BComm, was named president and CEO of Telecom.

Paul Stinis, MBA, joined the board of directors at Laurentian Bank of Canada.

91 Peter Filato, BComm, GrDip 93, was appointed chief financial officer at WSP Canada.

93 Anne Fortin, MBA, was named president of Intact Insurance.

Naveed Irshad, BSc, joined the board of directors of Squash Ontario.

96 Zahia El-Masri, BA, GrDip 01, MA 06, was appointed to the Intercultural Council of Montreal Administration.

97 Raffi Sossoyan, GrDip, was named CEO of Vision Marine Technologies.

98 Fay Arjomandi, BEng, joined the board of directors at Edge Total Intelligence Inc.

Hatem Bedair, MAsc, PhD 08, was appointed director of Forensic Engineering Practice at HKA.

99 Benoit Hudon, BComm, was named president and CEO at Drakkar Group.

Kim Rapagna, BA, joined the board of directors of Forest Ontario.

00 Mark Rossi, BComm, was appointed partner and senior vice-president of Strategy and Transactions, and Mergers and Acquisitions at EY.

02 Sandeep Singh, BEng, was named CEO at Western Copper and Gold Corporation.

03 John McKirdy, EMBA, was appointed chief commercial officer at Kellstrom Aerospace Group.

04 Fatima Asad-Bakhtiari, BComm, was named managing director and head of Distribution Middle East at Edmond de Rothschild Asset Management.

Eva Azoulay, MBA, was named Group CEO at ITP Aero.

05 Harley Finkelstein, BA, joined the board of directors of the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation.

Sabrina Ratté, BFA, MFA 12, was named ambassador to the Fondation du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

Rishi Sharma, BComm, was named chief financial and administrative officer at Velan Inc.

Yasser Waly, BA, was appointed partner and senior vice-president of Strategy and Transactions, and Mergers and Acquisitions at EY.

06 Daniele Hamamdjian, BA, joined Global News as special correspondent reporting from the Middle East.

08 Baljit S. Chadha, MBA, joined the board of directors of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

10 Sandy Poiré, BComm, was named president of CFA Montreal's board of directors.

11 Jason Parravano, BComm, GrDip 14, was appointed chief operating officer at Plaza Retail REIT.

Sherry Romanado, EMBA, was appointed parliamentary secretary to the president of the King's Privy Council for Canada, and Minister of Emergency Preparedness.

12 Samuel Nasso, BComm, was named partner at Novacap Management.

13 Frédéric Vachon, BComm, was named lawyer at DS Avocats/Lawyers Canada.

14 Philippe Castaigne, GrCert, joined the 2023-24 board of directors of the Quebec Section Financial Executives International Canada.

17 William Gagnon, BEng, was chosen to lead the implementation of health-care decarbonization at the National University of Singapore's School of Medicine.

18 Clare Akamanzi, LLD, was appointed CEO of the National Basketball Association (NBA) Africa.

21 Karl Gagné, MBA, was appointed to the CFA Montreal board of directors.

Richard Pound, BA 63, LLD 10, was awarded a Frank Game Prize from the World Anti-Doping Agency.

Edward John Allen, BA 65, won the 2023 Spirit of Skiing Award from the New England Ski Museum.

Dominique Blain, BFA 79, received a 2024 Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts for Artistic Achievement.

Edeet Ravel, MA 85, won the Janet Savage Blachford Prize for Children's and Young Adult Literature at the Quebec Writers' Federation Literary Awards gala for her novel *A Boy Is Not a Ghost*.

Nelson Henricks, BFA 94, was awarded the 2023 Prix Louis-Comtois for his contributions to Montreal's contemporary art scene.

Gwen Tolbart, BA 95, became the first Canadian journalist and first meteorologist to be inducted into the National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Fame.

Patricia Occhiuto, GrDip 97, was a finalist for a Quebec Business Women's Award from the Quebec Business Women's Network.

1 Christopher DiRaddo, BA 98, was named the inaugural writer-in-residence at The Hideout on Prince Edward Island. DiRaddo is the author of *The Family Way* (2021) and *The Geography of Pluto* (2014).

Aphrodite Salas, MA 99, along with her team of Concordia student journalists, community partners in Inukjuak, Northern Que., and CTV News Montreal, won the Best Canadian Local News Award from RTDNA Canada for "Arctic Shift to Clean Energy."

Nakuset, BA 00, was honoured by the City of Côte Saint-Luc with a plaque on its Human Rights Walkway in Pierre Elliott Trudeau Park.

Karen Cho, BFA 01, won a \$30,000 film grant from Project: Hatched 2023.

Dawit Petros, BFA 03, was a finalist for the 2023 Prix Louis-Comtois.

Deborah Vanslet, BA 03, was a co-winner of the Ian Ferrier Spoken Word Prize at the Quebec Writers' Federation Literary Awards gala for her story "Laughter in the Rain."

Julie Hubert, BComm 04, was a finalist for a Quebec Business Women's Award from the Quebec Business Women's Network.

Danielle Nguyen, BEng 04, was a finalist for a Quebec Business Women's Award from the Quebec Business Women's Network.

Aaron Derfel, BA 06, was the winner of the Local News Prize from the Canadian Hillman Prizes for Journalism.



MARLON KUHNREICH



Katia Grubisic, MA 06, was the winner of the Cole Foundation Prize for Translation at the Quebec Writers' Federation Literary Awards gala for her translation of David Clerson's *Dormir sans tête (To See Out the Night)*.

Éric St-Pierre, BA 06, was shortlisted for the Jack Layton Progress Prize by the Broadbent Institute.

Lana Khoury, BComm 08, was a finalist for a Quebec Business Women's Award from the Quebec Business Women's Network.

Sarah Bernstein, BA 09, was the winner of the 2023 Sociabank Giller Prize for *Study for Obedience*.

Mélanie Demers, BFA 09, multidisciplinary artist and choreographer, received the National Arts Centre Award.

Rémi Quirion, DSc 11, was bestowed the Science Diplomacy Award for Science Advice with Global Impact at the Science Forum South Africa.

Emily Skahan, BFA 11, whose alias is Georgette, was named Artist of the Year for the central Quebec region by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

Johnnie Vu, BComm 11, was named one of The Peak's Emerging Leaders 2024 in the Finance and Investing category.

Meryam Joobeur, BFA 13, was selected for official competition in the 74th Berlin International Film Festival for her film *Who Do I Belong To?*

Andrew Labbad, MBA 13, was among Wealth Professional's Top 40 Under 40 Rising Stars for 2023.

Corinne Boyer, BA 17, was among six recipients of the inaugural Canadian Journalism Foundation-Narcity News Creator Fellowships.

Measha Brueggergosman, LLD 17, received a 2024 Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement. She was also awarded the 2023 Christian Culture Series Gold Medal from Assumption University in Windsor, Ont.

Vincent René-Lortie, BFA 17, was nominated for an Academy Award in the Live Action Short Film category for his film *Invincible*. Fellow grad **Alexandre Nour Desjardins**, BFA 17, served as the film's cinematographer.

Jessica Barile, BA 19, GrDip 20, was among six recipients of the inaugural Canadian Journalism Foundation-Narcity News Creator Fellowships.

Mara Eagle, MFA 20, was a finalist for the 2023 Pierre-Ayot Prize.

Emily Kroft, MSc 21, was named one of Corporate Knights' 30 Under 30 Conservation Leaders of 2023.

Jennifer Flanagan, DSc 22, received a 2023 Bold Woman Award by Veuve Clicquot.

Joyce Joumaa, BFA 22, was a finalist for the 2023 Pierre-Ayot Prize.

Suzanne Kite, PhD 23, received a Ruth Award, a new prize awarded by the Ruth Foundation for the Arts to contemporary artists working in North America.

Justine Martin, BFA 23, was shortlisted for an Academy Award in the Documentary Short Film category for *Oasis*.

ORDRE DE MONTRÉAL

Four Concordians were named to the Ordre de Montréal in honour of their achievements and contributions to the city:

J. Sebastian van Berkomp, BComm 69, LLD 17

Marquerite Mendell, BA 72

Dorothy Williams, BA 84, MA 99

Nancy Neamtam, LLD 15

3 MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL BLACK FILM FESTIVAL

A number of Concordians were at the helm of the 2023 Montreal Black Film Festival held from September 27 to October 1. The not-for-profit organization is dedicated to education in the arts and to showcasing Canadian and international cinema, art and culture.

Kym Dominique-Ferguson, BFA 07, panellist
Joyce Fuerza, BComm 13, programming and coordination

Schelby Jean-Baptiste, BFA 18, spokesperson
Steven High, professor in Concordia's Department of History; speaker
Phyllis Gooden, BFA 95, panel moderator
Patricia Chica, BFA 95, panellist
Marlene Millar, BFA 90, filmmaker
Philip H. Szporer, BA 79, GrDip 82, filmmaker
Sofia Laroussi, BComm 11, coordination and sponsorships
Bethan K. Mowat, BA 02, speaker (not pictured)



ORDER OF CANADA

Six members of the Concordia community were among 78 new appointments to the Order of Canada, announced by Governor General Mary Simon. The country's highest distinction recognizes people across sectors who have made extraordinary contributions to their communities and society:

Osama E. Moselhi, PhD 78, Member
Louis H. Francescutti, BSc 80, Member
Richard J. Burzynski, Attd. 83, Officer
Lino A. Saputo, BA 89, Member
Kim Thúy, LLD 17, Member
Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, LLD 18, Companion

WHITNEY BIENNIAL

Three alumnae were among 71 artists selected to feature their artwork at the 81st Whitney Biennial: *Even Better Than the Real Thing*, which opened on March 20 and runs until August 11:

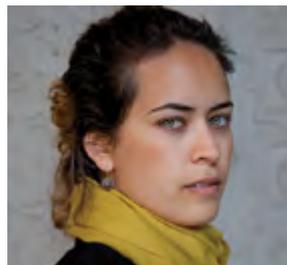
Lotus L. Kang, BFA 08
Suzanne Kite, PhD 23
Alisi Telengut, BFA 13, MFA 16

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY GROUP

Concordia welcomes 12 community leaders to the new President's Advisory Group, an informal consultative body that will provide diverse perspectives on complex issues facing the university and higher-education sector:

Morton S. Minc, BA 67, chair
Nahlah Ayed, LLD 16
Yolande James
Vickie Joseph
Mélanie La Couture
Larry Markowitz
Brigitte Monneau
Sabaa Quao, BComm 89
Paule Robitaille
Allan Rock
Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer
Thupten Jinpa

TAKE PRIDE in your alma mater!



Meryam Joobeur, BFA 13
Oscar-nominated filmmaker



Mark Weightman, BComm 96
CEO, Montreal Alouettes



Pan Bouyoucas, BFA 77
Award-winning writer



Maria Abi-Habib, BA 06
Investigative correspondent, *New York Times*



Lisa Qiluqqi Koperqualuk, BA 08
President, Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada



Benjamin Crudo, BEng 12
CEO, Diff Agency

You are part of Concordia's accomplished 260,000-member alumni family.

- Tell us where you're at:
concordia.ca/keepintouch
- Share your successes:
alumni@concordia.ca
- Join us on social media:
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#CUpride #CUalumni

1 Rochelle Mayer, BComm 83, BFA 10, received an honourable mention for her work "La parade" at the 2023 Women's Art Studio Annual Exhibition, which took place from November 1 to 5, at Galerie Erga in Montreal. 1) "La parade," linocut print. rochellemayer.com

2 A vernissage for the work of Frank Mulvey, BFA 82, MFA 87, took place on Saturday, March 30, at Montreal's HANGAR 7826. The *Prism Schism* exhibition showcased the artist's multifaceted project, which includes drawings, artifacts, an artist book and an art film featuring an original soundtrack composed by Alexander MacSween. 2) "Angular Aberrations of Light," charcoal on paper, 2024. frankmulvey.com

3 New work by artist Wayne Millett, BFA 85, is available online. His latest series features painted images of classic steam trains and airplanes in flight. 3) "Canadian Front," oil on board. waynemillett.blogspot.com

4 The work of Francesca Penserini, BFA 84, will be on display as part of the *Éphémères imaginaires* group exhibition at Galerie Montcalm in Gatineau, Que., from August 8 to October 6. The exhibition will be curated by fellow alumni Frank Mulvey, BFA 82, MFA 87, and Giuseppe di Leo, BFA 78. 4) "Abysses & Labyrinths," drawings, sculptures and mosaic. francescapenserini.com



ÉLIANE EXCOFFIER

Daniel Langlois (1957 - 2023)

Donor and visionary businessman

Daniel Langlois, LL.D. 2004, businessman and philanthropist, tragically passed away with his partner Dominique Marchand on the island of Dominica on December 1, 2023. He was 66.

Langlois left an indelible mark on cinema and technology, and was commemorated “as one of the most active patrons of culture of our time” when conferred an honorary doctorate by Concordia in 2004.

In 1986, Langlois founded Softimage, which went on to



develop software used in *The Matrix*, *Titanic*, *Men in Black*, *Jurassic Park* and other films.

Langlois also gave generously to empower artistic, scientific and technological research throughout Montreal,

the province of Quebec and beyond.

A supporter of Concordia, he donated a total of \$300,000 to fund a variety of initiatives, particularly at the Faculty of Fine Arts.

On Dominica, Langlois and Marchand helped develop Coulibri Ridge, an eco-complex that became a source of national pride.

In recognition of his impact on sustainable development on the island, Langlois was honoured with Dominica’s Meritorious Service Award months before his death. His other honours include a Scientific and Technical Oscar in 1997 and an Order of Canada induction in 2000. ■

Maria Birks (1945 - 2023)

Philanthropist and community volunteer



Maria Birks, former director of the Birks Family Foundation and a dedicated volunteer, passed away on November 19, 2023. She was 78.

The Birks Family Foundation has funded numerous student awards, as well as innovative projects at Concordia over the decades. This includes the Concordia

University Press, which became the first open-access press in Quebec when it was launched in 2016.

The family additionally strengthened the efforts of Concordia’s Centre for the Arts in Human Development to utilize creative arts therapies — a mission Maria Birks was passionate about.

“The Concordia family has lost a cherished partner and supporter,” said Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement. “We are grateful for Maria’s contributions, and her generosity towards our students and community.” ■

Nelio Renzi, L BA 47, January 9, 2024. He was 98.

Brian F. O’Neill, L BA 49, July 21, 2023, Montreal. He was 94.

Gerald Joseph (Sam) McGee, BSc 51, April 5, 2023. He was 92.

Estelle Newman Katz, S BA 52, January 25, 2024, Montreal. She was 93.

Jim J. Smith, L BA 52, February 5, 2024. He was 94.

Maurice Vézina, L BA 52, July 26, 2023, Montreal. He was 92.

Stanley Asher, S BA 53, November 26, 2023, Laval, Que.

Edmond Taschereau, L BSc 53, October 8, 2023, Montreal. He was 92.

Paul F. Dingle, L BA 54, February 17, 2024, Uruguay. He was 91.

Gerald Laurence Welden, S BComm 55, December 26, 2023, Topsham, Maine. He was 91.

Hascal A. Rosen, S BComm 56, October 23, 2023.

Norman Coates, S BA 57, December 17, 2023, Providence, R.I. He was 92.

Ed Broadbent (1936 - 2024)

Honorary degree recipient and former NDP leader



Ed Broadbent, LLD 99, former head of the federal New Democratic Party (NDP), passed away on January 11, 2024. He was 87.

Broadbent served as a member of Parliament from 1968 to 1990, and from 2004 to 2006. Under his tenure at the helm of the NDP from 1975 to 1989, the party gained a significant number of seats in the House of Commons.

In 1990, Broadbent was named founding president of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development in Montreal, a position he held for six years.

At Concordia, Broadbent provided counsel to the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies. His many campus visits included a guest lecture in 1991.

In 2011, he founded the Broadbent Institute, a progressive think tank. *Seeking Social Democracy*, his 2023 book, reflected on his seven decades of public-policy work.

Broadbent is survived by his daughter, Christine, and stepson, Paul. ■

Burke Dales (1977 - 2024)

Concordia and CFL football standout

Burke Dales, BA 03, a Canadian Football League (CFL) all-star punter, passed away on January 6, 2024. He was 46.

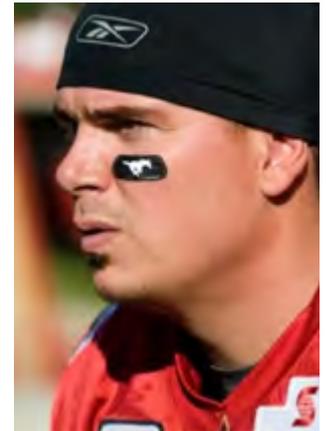
As a varsity student athlete, Dales made his mark as an All-Canadian punter with the Concordia Stingers. His college exploits helped him earn an invitation to try out for the Pittsburgh Steelers of the National Football League.

After he failed to secure a roster spot, Dales rebounded to become a two-time CFL all-star with the Calgary Stampeders, a 2008 Grey Cup champion and “the most aggressive punter” in history, per CFL Hall of Fame quarterback Henry Burris.

“Burke had an amazing energy and positive attitude,” said Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of

Advancement, who coached Dales with the Stingers.

“I enjoyed his enthusiasm and competitive approach. He was committed to being the best at everything he did. He is mourned by his friends and teammates, and will be missed by all.” ■



John S. Drblik, S BA 58, December 8, 2023. He was 91.

David A. Robb, S BComm 58, S BA 62, November 29, 2023, Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, Que. He was 87.

Marcel Beauchamp, S BComm 59, September 14, 2023, Chomedey, Que. He was 96.

Elliot Godel, S BA 59, December 30, 2023, Toronto. He was 94.

Gerald A. Potter, L BA 59, L BComm 70, November 1, 2023, Montreal. He was 85.

Harry Baikowitz, S BSc 60, March 8, 2024, Montreal.

Donald E. Hushion Jr., L BA 60, July 7, 2023, Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Que. He was 85.

Richard Samuelson, S BComm 60, January 4, 2024.

Trevor D. Burridge, S BA 61. He was 91.

Irene Bloomstone, S BA 62, September 24, 2023, Montreal. She was 86.

Nicholas Stuber, S BSc 63, 2023.

Morris Werbin, S BComm 63, October 18, 2023, Montreal.

Donald M. Bridgeman, S BComm 64, January 7, 2024. He was 95.

Peter Richter, S BComm 64, BA 96, August 30, 2023, Toronto.

Paul H. Crevier, L BA 65, September 24, 2023, McLean, Virginia. He was 79.

Kenneth F. Broden, L BComm 66, November 15, 2023.

Michael S. Goodwin, S BComm 66, October 22, 2023, Montreal. He was 81.

Brenda Cheryl Dickinson-Dash (1945-2024)

1969 Sir George Williams University student protest figure

Brenda Cheryl Dickinson-Dash, a significant figure in the 1969 student protest at Sir George Williams University, one of Concordia's two founding institutions, passed away on November 29, 2023. She was 78.

Born in the Montreal neighbourhood of Little Burgundy, Brenda was instilled with a strong sense of social justice by her parents, Marcus Dash and Maisie Dickinson-Dash.

As a student, she played a central role in the historic demonstration against institutional racism faced primarily by Black students from the Caribbean.

After negotiations failed, university administrators called the police, which



resulted in the arrest of 97 students, Dickinson-Dash included.

In 2022, Concordia extended a public apology for how the institution mishandled the events — an apology Dickinson-Dash deemed too little, too late.

Beyond her activism, Dickinson-Dash co-founded *Uhuru*, a Montreal-based

Black-community newspaper that circulated throughout Canada and the United States.

In the mid-1970s, she relocated to the United States, where a successful music-industry career led her to manage artists such as Digable Planets and Regina Belle.

Dickinson-Dash returned to Montreal in 2019 to mark the 50th anniversary of Canada's largest student protest against anti-Black racism. She participated in a two-week commemorative program arranged by a research collective comprised of Concordia faculty, staff, activists and members of the Black community.

As reported by *The Globe and Mail* at the time, she

remarked: "All we initially aimed for was to secure fair grades for six students from a single professor. We never anticipated that it would evolve into such a monumental event that profoundly altered our lives forever."

On February 6, 2023, Concordia unveiled a plaque at the 1969 protest site, the Henry F. Hall Building. Led by administrators and members of the President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism, the ceremony affirmed the historical impact of the protest and commended those demonstrators, like Dickinson-Dash, who bravely opposed bigotry and inequality. ■

Peter Lowensteyn, S BA 66, S MA 72, October 17, 2023, Montreal. He was 88.

Donald Myles, L BA 66, January 17, 2024. He was 84.

Doris Brown, S BA 67, December 2, 2023, Montreal. She was 102.

Barry B. McKinnon, S BA 67, October 30, 2023, Prince George, B.C.

Franklin D. Robinson, S BComm 67, November 23, 2023, Pierrefonds, Que. He was 80.

Peter Derry, S BA 68, September 15, 2023, Montreal. He was 77.

Peter Kovac, S BA 69, December 31, 2023. He was 76.

Karen Margaret Davison Wood, S BA 69, S MA 69, PhD 82, February 26, 2024, Alexandria, Ont. She was 81.

John K. Tobin, S BComm 69, August 11, 2023, Kingston, Ont. He was 87.

Peter W. Bigney, L BA 70, September 2, 2023, Toronto, Ont. He was 76.

Chaim Moosa, S BComm 70, S MA 71, July 13, 2023, Sea Ranch Lakes, Florida. He was 84.

Orest Mytko, S BComm 70, Montreal.

Louise Calfat Stock, L BA 70, February 15, 2024, Montreal. She was 74.

David Adler, S BComm 71, September 16, 2023, Montreal. He was 75.

Avery G. Dash, S BA 71, July 19, 2023, Nelson, New Zealand. He was 77.

Zbigniew R. Geissel, L BSc 71, November 12, 2023, Montreal. He was 76.

Robert Miele, L BComm 71, L BA 72, February 5, 2024, Vancouver, B.C. He was 73. Miele was a member of the 1968 Loyola men's football team that was inducted into the Concordia Sports Hall of Fame in 2006.

Gabriel E. Sella, S BSc 71, September 10, 2023, Wheeling, West Virginia. He was 75.

Helen Allain, L BA 72, December 19, 2023, Pointe-Claire, Que. She was 83.

Steve Andrusiak, L BA 72, September 5, 2023, Montreal. He was 73.

Chana Goodfriend, BA 72, September 5, 2023, Montreal. She was 78.

Claude J. Paquet, S BSc 72, September 6, 2023, Montreal. He was 76.

Bruce Shadeed, S BComm 72, February 27, 2024. He was 73.

Brian Mulroney (1939 - 2024)

Former prime minister and member of Concordia's Board of Governors

Brian Mulroney, LL.D., prime minister of Canada from 1984 to 1993, lawyer, businessman and public figure, died on February 29, 2024. He was 84.

“Before Brian Mulroney went on to lead our country as prime minister, he supported our university’s development as a member of our Board of Governors from 1978 to 1983 and later as a donor,” said Concordia President Graham Carr.

“He was an enthusiastic supporter of our Irish Studies program and we remain immensely grateful for his leadership, generosity

and guidance. As Canadians grieve his loss, I extend my deepest sympathies to the Mulroney family.”

Mulroney was selected as leader of the Progressive Conservative (PC, now Conservative) Party of Canada in 1983. He guided the party to a historic victory and became the country’s 18th prime minister the next year.

His political legacy includes the goods and services tax (GST), introduced in 1991, and the 1992 North America Free Trade Agreement.

Mulroney’s distinctions include the Order of



Canada in 1998, the Ordre national du Québec in 2002, and the Global Citizen Award from the United Nations Association in Canada in 2001.

Mulroney is survived by his wife, Milica (Mila) Pivnički, attendee 1973, and their four children: Caroline, Ben, Mark and Nicholas. ■

Marjorie Rose Benjamin, S BA 73, July 15, 2023, Montreal. She was 87.

Keith Eady, S BComm 73, February 8, 2024, Moncton, N.B. He was 88.

Issie Lieberman, L BSc 73, January 9, 2024, Montreal.

Michael E. Ballard, S BA 74, January 4, 2024. He was 84.

Bruce D. Cappell, S BA 74, BA 89, October 8, 2023, Montreal. He was 71.

Ann (Cohen) Gross, S BA 74, March 8, 2024, Toronto. She was 84.

Hans J. Pahl, L BSc 74, October 7, 2023, Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Que. He was 92.

Ron Swan, L BComm 74, January 24, 2024, Kingston, Ont. He was 73.

Imelda A. Ariens, BA 75, August 11, 2023, Pointe-Claire, Que. She was 84.

Stephen J. Berns, BComm 75, January 15, 2024. He was 70.

Richard J. Gough, BA 75, November 2, 2023, Sarnia, Ont. He was 71.

Larry Graham, BSc 75, MSc 81, November 29, 2023, Beaconsfield, Que. He was 76.

Roman Petraznyk, BSc 75, BA 90, February 21, 2024. He was 76.

Lillian Simpson, BA 75, GrDip 80, June 26, 2023, Victoria, B.C. She was 92.

Albert Niedzviecki, MSc 76, MA 77, December 22, 2023.

Barbara C. Moore, GrDip 76, December 18, 2023, Westmount, Que. She was 96.

Jocelyne Picot, MA 76, November 18, 2023. She was 84.

Delmer Tennant, BA 76, February 24, 2024.

Dorothy (Fallen) Wise, BFA 76, March 4, 2024. She was 95.

David S. Armstrong, BEng 77, November 25, 2023, Montreal. He was 74.

Marilyn P. Cummings, BA 77, November 8, 2023, Hudson, Que. She was 68.

Paul Loftus, BA 77, February 25, 2024, Montreal. He was 79.

Patricia O'Rourke, BA 77, GrDip 85, MA 92, PhD 01, December 24, 2023, Montreal. She was 79.

Peter Rozum, BA 77, October 29, 2023, Montreal. He was 78.

Kenneth H. Sinclair, BComm 77, December 21, 2022. He was 67.

Pasquale Di Prima, BA 78, December 10, 2023, Montreal. He was 68.

Lawrence Boyle (1934 - 2023)

Former dean of Commerce at Loyola College

Lawrence James “Larry” Boyle, BA 57, BComm 58, former dean of Commerce and dedicated community leader, passed away on December 12, 2023. He was 89.

Boyle was a proud alumnus of Loyola College, where he was actively involved as a student, particularly in athletics.

Boyle went on to earn a master’s degree from McGill University and a PhD from

the University of Maryland. In the 1960s, he returned to Loyola to teach at the Faculty of Commerce, assuming the role of dean in 1973.

“Loyola was his heart,” said Brianna Thicke, BA 16, Boyle’s granddaughter and an event coordinator at Concordia.

“His community in Montreal and the strength of his alumni family were what drew him back here. I think he felt he

could do so much more for the college.”

As a Canadian Irish Studies Foundation trustee, Boyle also supported Concordia’s School of Irish Studies.

In recognition of his contributions to his alma mater, the Concordia University Alumni Association presented Boyle with its Distinguished Service Award in 1991. ■



Verda M. Hamilton, BA 78, September 15, 2023, Aylmer, Ont. She was 89.

Susan M. Murray, BEd 78, MA 86, July 26, 2023, Vancouver, B.C. She was 80.

Ronald A. Noel, BA 78, July 13, 2023, Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Que. He was 91.

Saul Schneider, BA 78, December 22, 2023. He was 72.

Christopher Bradley, BComm 79, September 5, 2023, Montreal. He was 71.

Adrien F. Hotz, BA 79, 2023.

Tony P. Meti, BComm 79, October 25, 2023, Montreal. He was 68.

Richard Pellino, BA 79, GrDip 90, October 7, 2023, Saint-Jérôme, Que. He was 69.

Pauline Smith, BA 79, November 26, 2023. She was 92.

Joanne Hewson Rees, BFA 80, December 1, 2023, Westmount, Que. She was 93.

Joyce Abracen, BA 81, December 17, 2023, Montreal. She was 96.

Jaroslav Vilem Bures, BComm 81, July 28, 2023, Pointe-Claire, Que. He was 90.

Ian Ferrier, BA 81, November 3, 2023, Montreal.

Ila E. Grayland, BFA 81, BA 91, September 29, 2023, Dundas, Ont. She was 91.

Allan Miller, BComm 83, December 11, 2023, Toronto. He was 62.

Helen Elizabeth Kurlents, BFA 84, December 25, 2023. She was 87.

Murray Sklar, BComm 84, October 28, 2023, Montreal. He was 62.

Darin Scanzano, BA 85, September 29, 2023, Oakville, Ont. He was 62.

Charlotte Mirman, BA 87, September 23, 2023, Rockville, Md. She was 73.

Shafferun Shaieb, BA 87, January 11, 2024. She was 88.

Ophra Benazon, MFA 89, PhD 99, October 12, 2023, Montreal. She was 91.

Andre Laurin, BA 89, January 7, 2024. He was 62.

Andrew Teri, BA 91, February 22, 2023, Montreal. He was 79.

Keith Donoghue, BComm 92, November 19, 2023. He was 53.

Margaret L. Laurin, BA 92, August 17, 2023, Montreal. She was 74.

Antonin Jancarik, GrCert 93, July 7, 2023, Longueuil, Que. He was 80.

Ann Murphy, BA 93, October 10, 2023, Montreal. She was 79.

Hugh Tollett, BComm 93, January 16, 2024. He was 58.

Sheila (Thatcher) Farthing, BA 96, January 4, 2024. She was 91.

Margit Dumitrescu, BA 97, Monterrey, Mexico.

Arleen Rudakoff, BA 00, November 18, 2023, Montreal. She was 72.

Rivka Wiseberg, BA 00, July 24, 2023, Montreal. She was 84.

Gregory Ronald Yule, BA 02, January 14, 2024. He was 45.

Rally Levy, BFA 04, December 11, 2023. She was 68.

Ronnie Shak, BComm 13, October 28, 2023. He was 37.

A lasting impression

How the 'generous mind' of the late Father Marc Gervais helped shape a grad's path

MICHAEL LEO DONOVAN, BA 81

In Concordia's early years, I was a young banker when I learned about a "Shakespeare in Cinema" course being offered at the theatre on Loyola Campus. The audacity of someone conceiving such a rarified thing during the birth of summer blockbusters fascinated me.

Evening classes were convenient for my banker's hours. So, straight from work I'd find myself hiding in the back of the packed theatre where Marc Gervais [BA 50] taught, and I was soaking it all in.

I eventually summoned the guts to ask a question. I remember when he found me in the cheap seats — a suit and tie among jean jackets and book bags.

"Thanks for dressing up," he said. Marc was a Jesuit priest, I later learned. He owned nothing but a generous mind.

And that was it. I left banking with nothing but the phone number of a woman named Jane — my replacement on cash three — and went back to school. I enrolled in the Department of Communication Studies, where I won an award for my scriptwriting. On a pad of yellow paper, Marc handwrote a letter that got me into the University of Southern California's competitive graduate writing program.

When I returned home to Montreal with my degree, Marc helped me get a job at Concordia, teaching scriptwriting in the very department I once studied in.

At the start of every new term, he would barge into my classroom, make fun of my process, then leave.

Every student knew who Marc was, and he was making sure they knew who I was. As time went on, I borrowed more and more from the combination of wisdom and wonder that was his teaching



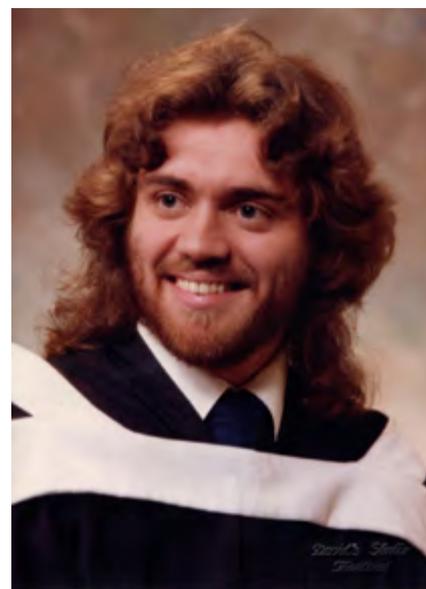
THE DONOVAN FAMILY ALL SHARE A CONNECTION TO THE LATE FATHER MARC GERVAIS. HE MARRIED MICHAEL AND JANE AND BAPTIZED THEIR CHILDREN, KAYLEIGH AND MATTHEW. "WE'RE ALL HIS, STILL," SAYS MICHAEL.

method. Surely, all who sat in his class remember; one minute he'd seen everything, and the next was as if he was looking at something for the first time.

After meeting my beloved Jane, and warning her about my career prospects, Marc performed our marriage ceremony at her request. Soon enough, he baptized both our children, Kayleigh and Matthew [BA 20].

A decade after I left teaching for what became a scriptwriting career, I brought my family to a downtown Montreal bookstore where Marc was signing his latest work. The crowd was huge, but he pointed us out. "Donovans!" he said. "They're all mine." Suddenly I was that young man in the back of a dark theatre again, being seen for the first time.

See you in the last reel, Father Gervais. ■



MICHAEL LEO DONOVAN, PICTURED IN HIS 1981 GRADUATION PHOTO

Father Marc Gervais, a celebrated film scholar and cherished Concordia professor for four decades, passed away in 2012 at the age of 82. Michael Leo Donovan is a scriptwriter, novelist and ex-banker.



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