

SPRING 2020

NEW REALITIES
Beyond COVID-19

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

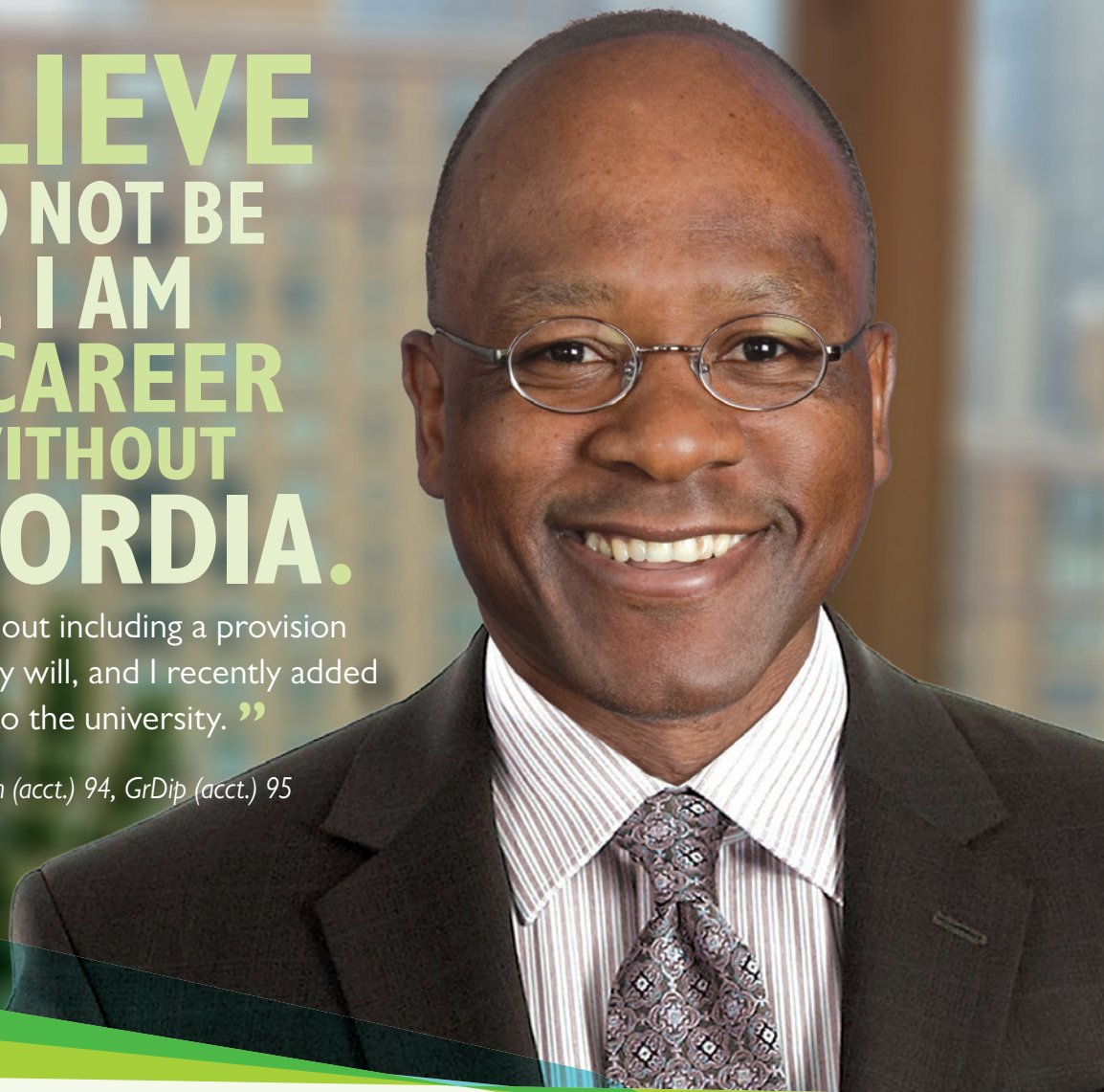
Concordia

WELCOME TO CU AT HOME > NEXT-GEN HEALTH CARE > COMMUNITY vs COVID

**“I BELIEVE
I WOULD NOT BE
WHERE I AM
IN MY CAREER
TODAY WITHOUT
CONCORDIA.”**

I always thought about including a provision for Concordia in my will, and I recently added a specific bequest to the university. ”

– Andrew Forbes, BComm (acct.) 94, GrDip (acct.) 95



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out the best in our
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Illustration by Jordanna Kavanat, created at
a daily virtual creative pop-up with the
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LUNA JULIEN, AGED 11, PARTICIPATED IN A VIRTUAL CREATIVE POP-UP FACILITATED BY CONCORDIA'S ART HIVES AND ARTIST HEIDI LEE SMITH. THE POP-UPS ARE BEING HELD REGULARLY THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 SHUTDOWN PERIOD.

WELCOME TO CU AT HOME

Concordia has created a **virtual support network for students, faculty, staff and alumni** who are at home flattening the COVID-19 curve. **CU at Home** offers webinars, short videos and interactive platforms designed for the community, by the community. Concordians also launched **CU Cares** — a collaboration between the Concordia LIVE Centre and University Advancement to **mobilize students, faculty, staff and alumni to volunteer**. “This crisis is bringing out the best in us,” noted **Graham Carr** (see more from the president on pg. 10).

STUDENT RELIEF FUND

The university has created a **COVID-19 Emergency Student Relief Fund** to complement government efforts related to the pandemic. The \$810,000 fund — bolstered by an anonymous gift of \$100,000, \$50,000 from the Concordia University Alumni Association, and \$110,000 from the Graduate Students' Association (to be earmarked for grad students) — will help alleviate economic hardships precipitated by the crisis. (Find out more on pg. 8 and at concordia.ca/COVID19support.)

COVID-19 DATA CRUNCHING

Results produced by **iCARE**, a global online survey led by Montreal-based researchers, is providing a sense of how countries and their citizens are responding to the pandemic. “The overall goal is to feed the data back to governments and health authorities to help them evolve their messaging strategies,” says Concordia’s **Simon Bacon**, one of the study’s main investigators (see more on pg. 12).

Concordia

Concordia University Magazine welcomes your comments.

Concordia University Magazine is published three times a year for alumni and friends. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, or its alumni association.

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Special thanks: **Howard Bokser** and **the NOW news team**

Design by **University Communications Services**

Photos by **Concordia** or courtesy of the subject (unless specified)

Keep in touch

To update your address, email or communication preferences — including where and how you receive the magazine — please visit our new Alumni & Friends service hub at engage.concordia.ca

TWO NEW DEANS

This spring, **Concordia appointed two new faculty deans**, effective August 1: **Pascale Sicotte**, an internationally renowned primatologist, succeeds André Roy in the Faculty of Arts and Science; and **Annie Gérin**, a curator, visionary scholar and professor of art history, succeeds Rebecca Duclos in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

SEISMIC SHIFT

A \$10-million gift from the Saputo family led to the establishment of the **SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation at Concordia** last fall. SHIFT has since helped fund a number of justice, equity and sustainability focused projects connected to Concordia and the Montreal community at large. These include Walls to Bridges, a program that connects incarcerated and non-incarcerated students, LI-BER-T House, which helps women transition from prison or rehab, and the university's Waste Not, Want Not campaign. "I'm excited that we will get to continue learning alongside these diverse community and university leaders," says Susan Edey, interim program manager at SHIFT.

EDUCATION AT A DISTANCE

Concordia faculty across all disciplines, with expertise from library staff, have **rapidly mobilized to facilitate remote learning** during the pandemic. **Open School**, a new portal launched by the Government of Quebec with **a computer-based interface developed at Concordia**, is offering resources for parents and children to use throughout the mandated period of school closures (see more on pg. 24).



CONCORDIA CONCRETE TOBOGGAN TEAM FACEBOOK

CONCORDIA PLACED SECOND AT THE GREAT NORTHERN CONCRETE TOBOGGAN RACE, AN ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS. THE EVENT WAS HELD IN TORONTO FROM JANUARY 29 TO FEBRUARY 2.



KYRAN THICKE/CONCORDIA STINGERS

JULIE CHU, HEAD COACH OF STINGERS WOMEN'S HOCKEY, WAS NAMED RSEQ 2019-20 COACH OF THE YEAR.

JMSB KUDOS

A record 28 business schools from around the world participated in the John Molson Undergraduate Case Competition (JMUCC) from February 23 to 29 — four more schools than ever before. *CEO Magazine* recently ranked the John Molson EMBA program third in Canada, and 32nd out of 87 EMBA programs considered around the world.

DECOLONIZED CURRICULUM AT GINA CODY SCHOOL

Kasim Ali Tirmizey is one of the professors engaged in efforts to decolonize the curriculum at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. “Given that technology impacts people in different ways, we look at what impact technology has had on settler communities and Indigenous nations and communities, women and men, the Global North and the Global South.”

THE BLACK PERSPECTIVES INITIATIVE

Launched in February through the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Black Perspectives Initiative (BPI) connects and supports activities related to Black perspectives, initiatives and scholarship on campus and within the broader Montreal community. “At its core, this project was informed by Black student activism, which has been very strong at Concordia since the university’s inception. The BPI allows for those perspectives to be heard, respected and supported from within the university’s structure,” says Annick Maugile Flavien, BSc 13, GrDip 15, MA 18, founding coordinator.

AI TECH FOR BETTER TUMOUR DETECTION

Bahareh Behboodi is a PhD candidate in Concordia’s Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering who works in the Image Processing and Characterization of Tissue (IMPACT) Lab. She is developing artificial intelligence-based approaches to ultrasound image processing to make tumour detection and segmentation faster and more accurate (see pg. 20).

NEW BUSINESS SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The John Molson School of Business announced four new program directors: **Rahul Ravi**, director of the MBA in Investment Management program; **Sukyong Yang**, director of the Kenneth Woods Portfolio Management Program; **Amr Addas**, director of the Van Berkom Investment Management Program; and **Michel Deslauriers**, director of the Jonathan Wener Centre for Real Estate.

START THE PRESSES

Everything is Relevant: Writings on Art and Life, 1991-2018, a collection of texts by Canadian artist Ken Lum, and *Les religions de la Route de la soie: les chemins d'une mondialisation prémoderne* by Richard Foltz, translated by Benoit Léger, are **the first two books published by Concordia University Press**. Established in 2016, the non-profit arm reaffirms the university's mission to enrich the world through the dissemination of research.

WINTER OPEN HOUSE 2020

More than 4,500 visitors were warmly welcomed at Concordia's winter open house on February 15 by faculty, staff and student volunteers. Throughout the day, recruiters corresponded with prospective students from around the world on Facebook and Instagram livestreams, and on a Reddit forum.

RESEARCH IN PRIMATE ADAPTABILITY

In a paper published in the journal *PLOS One*, **Jenny Paola Espitia-Contreras**, BSc 19, and research supervisor **Sarah Turner** (assistant professor, Geography, Planning and Environment), detailed remarkable findings on the **adapted grooming techniques of Japanese macaques with congenital limb malformations**. "Monkeys with disabilities are essentially pushed to have to figure out ways of behaving flexibly," Turner explained. "They find ways of participating in grooming and that shows resiliency."



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

CONCORDIA JOURNALISM STUDENT **MERIE M CHIADMI** WAS ONE OF TEN RECIPIENTS OF A **2020 JOAN DONALDSON CBC NEWS SCHOLARSHIP**.

15 CONCORDIA DISCIPLINES RANK AMONG GLOBAL BEST

In the recently published **QS World University Rankings by Subject 2020**, Concordia scored 15 ranked disciplines — up from 14 a year ago. The university once again made the top 100 in Art and Design, tying for second among Canadian universities. Despite the growing number of ranked institutions this year, **Concordia advanced in five subjects**: Communication and Media Studies; Computer Science and Information Systems; Economics and Econometrics; English Language and Literature; and Sociology.

COMMUNITY vs COVID-19

All around the world, Concordians are joining together with their neighbours. Here are three of their stories.

ADAD HANNAH: 'I wanted to see if I could capture this in-between moment'

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

A woman in gray slacks, a trenchcoat and white shoes stares at a smartphone, a red backpack at her feet. She holds still for what feels like an eternity while a breeze flutters her hair.

The poignant video clip, posted to Instagram on March 14, was the first in what has become a “Social Distancing” series by Adad Hannah, MFA 04, PhD 13. The internationally acclaimed artist is renowned for creating *tableaux vivants* that re-enact and re-contextualize historic events and iconic artworks.



SOCIAL DISTANCING PORTRAIT 23 – PRADEEP, SHRUTHI, ANEESHA, NAHEEMA – VIDEO, 2020, ADAD HANNAH



SOCIAL DISTANCING PORTRAIT 39 – KIM AND KEN – VIDEO, 2020, ADAD HANNAH

After a trip to New York and Ottawa, Hannah returned to his Burnaby, B.C. home just as COVID-19 “hit the fan.” He spent a few restless days indoors with his family before the idea for “Social Distancing” emerged.

Hannah, whose work graces the facade of Loyola Campus’s PERFORM Centre, has since ventured around his community every other day with his tripod and camera. He chooses subjects at random and shoots from a distance with a long lens.

Not everyone Hannah approaches agrees to be filmed.

“I get a lot of nos from people and a lot of ‘What’s this all about?’,” he says. “But I enjoy these little conversations.”

Amusement, defiance, vulnerability — Hannah’s subjects, who are asked to hold still for 20 to 30 seconds, display a range of moods. Testimonials about life under quarantine provide colour.

The combined effect offers not only a sense of how people in Burnaby are surviving — often in mundane, workaday ways — but a feeling of universality.



IMAGES COURTESY OF PIERRE-FRANÇOIS OUELLETTE ART CONTEMPORAIN, MONTREAL



SOCIAL DISTANCING PORTRAIT 38 – ROXY – VIDEO, 2020, ADAD HANNAH

You have to turn the volume up to fully experience Hannah’s “Social Distancing” project, too. Scored by Brigitte Dajczer, MFA 05, since March 22, the unmuted videos have a haunting quality.

“Working with Adad has brought me back to the wild, creative energy we had when we were doing our master’s degrees,” says Dajczer, a composer, producer and multi-instrumentalist. “If there’s one thing this project speaks to it’s that there’s a vast cross-section of humanity collectively living this pandemic, yet coping in our own unique ways.”

“Social Distancing” has also helped Hannah cope and given him a sense of routine. Significantly, he says, new layers of meaning have been revealed as the project has evolved.

“I feel like it’s exposing some kind of arc and creating a narrative the deeper I get into it. You’re getting a sense of what people were like at the beginning of the crisis, to now, and beyond. So I think I’ll keep doing it.” ■

To see more of Adad Hannah’s “Social Distancing” series, go to adadhannah.com.

GRIFFIN PAYNE: Harnessing social media for good

After an anxious night thinking about Montreal’s looming quarantine measures last month, Griffin Payne, MA 19, “woke up determined to reframe the panic.”

Payne promptly set up MTL COVID-19 Mutual Aid Mobilisation d’entraide, a goods and services exchange platform that connects volunteers and other providers to people disadvantaged by the pandemic. The Facebook group has since amassed close to 17,000 members.

“A single mother who recently moved from Bangladesh told me that this group — and the kind of responses she got — has made her feel like she’s not alone in Canada.”

GRACE SEBEH BYRNE: Helping our neighbours who are in need

“My mom lived in a residence before she passed away. I saw how isolation can be a huge demoralizer,” says Grace Sebeh Byrne, BA 86.

This experience inspired the Concordia grad to start the Coronation Block Assistance Group in Montreal’s Notre-Dame-de-Grâce neighbourhood. Sebeh Byrne created a WhatsApp group to facilitate communication and a spreadsheet to organize tasks, and called on volunteers to periodically monitor the welfare of older residents.

“I’m just hoping other people will do this. I think if everybody just checks in on their neighbours, especially the elders, that’s the compassionate thing to do.”

For other inspiring stories, see concordia.ca/CommunityvsCOVID.

'This is an opportunity for us to show solidarity'

The Concordia University Alumni Association gave \$50,000 to support students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic – and it is also reaching out to its broader network



MARTA SAMUEL, GRDIP 10

This spring, when Concordia announced the creation of the COVID-19 Emergency Student Relief Fund, a community of graduates answered its public appeal with a gift of \$50,000 to help students who are facing economic hardship.

"The need is now and we wanted to respond to that," says Kim Fuller, BFA 96, president of the Concordia University Alumni Association (CUAA). "People need to come together during this time, and having a network that you already share values and experiences with strengthens those community bonds."

The CUAA has stepped forward to help facilitate the needs of students affected by COVID-19 and its subsequent shutdowns. The \$50,000 donation is a direct gift, and the association is also encouraging its broader alumni network to support the fund, should they have the means.

"We already know that students are under a lot of pressure academically, but they also have a lot of personal responsibilities," says Fuller.

"Maybe they're a caregiver for someone in their family or they provide money to their families with part-time jobs that they now no longer have — there's this whole ripple effect. Being able to alleviate at least some of that stress is already a step in the right direction."

'WE HAVE A DUTY TO EACH OTHER'

To complement the Government of Canada's initiatives, Concordia created the COVID-19 Emergency Student Relief Fund with an initial \$500,000 to assist students who are unable to pay rent, buy groceries or meet other basic necessities.

The university launched a public appeal in March, calling on donors, alumni, friends, faculty and staff to support its students. Within the first week the fund has raised more than \$25,000 in addition to the new gift from the CUAA. The Graduate Students' Association has also donated \$110,000, for grad students in need.

"These challenging times remind us of the pivotal role our alumni play in supporting our university and in meeting the needs of our students,"

says Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement at Concordia. "We are grateful to the CUAA for coming together to show what it means to be a Concordian. The association's support of our community matters now more than ever."

With events and activities put on hold during the pandemic, the CUAA — which serves more than 220,000 alumni of Concordia and its founding institutions, Sir George Williams University and Loyola College — saw a way to redirect unused funds towards a greater good.

"We have a duty to each other and to our community to help out as best as we can," says Fuller.

"In my opinion, that is what an alumni association is for: to rally together when there is a time of need. This is an opportunity for us to show our solidarity and help out of fellow Concordians." ■

If you can, please consider making a donation to the COVID-19 Emergency Student Relief Fund at concordia.ca/COVID19support.

'I want to turn negative energy into positive action'

How one student is helping inspire schoolchildren in Haiti

CELESTE-MELIZE FERRUS,
BSC STUDENT

As a physics student at Concordia, I have a few paths that I want to explore.

At Space Concordia, a society of more than 200 students where I worked with a rocketry team and served as business development director, I was able to indulge my interest in astrophysics.

I also work to make sure that Loyola Campus has an active student life as Loyola Coordinator for the Concordia Student Union.

But the initiative that I take the most pride in is a project that I started at Concordia called Katalis. The name is a play on the word “catalyst” in Haitian Creole. Our mission is to ignite a passion for STEM in students from all backgrounds.

The idea for Katalis had been on my mind since I was a high-school junior in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

I was fortunate to discover that physics was my passion at a young age, but a lot of children in Haiti are not exposed to science education, and many are not even taught how to read. As a result, the generation of tomorrow is not getting the training it needs to transform the country into the star that it should be.

I had to go back to Haiti in August 2018 for a family member’s funeral. My first two years at Concordia taught me how to turn negative energy into constructive action, so while helping with funeral preparations, I posted on social media that I wanted to put together a team to go to Haiti the next summer to teach.

The response was incredible. We raised over \$15,000 through sponsorships and Concordia’s FundOne platform, and on August 25, 2019, 14

of us boarded a plane with more than 40 boxes of school supplies. We were bound for the small town of Bayonnais, a four-hour trip north of Haiti’s capital. We had one goal: to inspire.

Once there, we set out to teach groups of schoolchildren about physics, chemistry, biochemistry, biology, engineering and computers. We organized hours of demos and rotated through subjects like rocket dynamics, density, light absorption, osmosis, scratch code, emulsion and more.

The week was an amazing experience. It was incredible to see people who I had been sitting next to in classes suddenly open up and break down their walls. We left Canada as virtual strangers and returned as family.

Thanks to a grant from the Experiential Learning Office at Concordia, I was able to start up the Katalis Award last summer. The objective is to encourage female

students of Afro-Caribbean descent who are interested in STEM careers.

Concordia has given me opportunities that I don’t think I would have received at any other university. That’s why it’s really important for me to give back. When I worked at the alumni call centre I supported the university’s Community Campaign — a portion was taken out of my paycheques and donated to the physics department and to Space Concordia.

Once you get into the mode of giving, it just warms your heart. The good news is that there’s something for everybody to give to at Concordia. It may not be the same things I love and support, but if you look hard enough, you’ll find something you feel passionate about, too. ■

Celeste-Melize Ferrus was one of ten recipients of an Experiential Learning Grant in 2019. To learn more about her Katalis project, visit katalisoutreach.com.





“This crisis is bringing out the best in our community”

A letter from Graham Carr

Dear Concordians,

I hope you and those close to you are in good health.

As much as I sincerely wish otherwise, these are not normal times. I recognize that many of you are experiencing real financial hardship and that all of us are living with profound uncertainty about what the future will bring.

Rather than dwell on the many stresses we're all confronting, I want to salute how our community has rallied to tackle the crisis head on.

Let me begin with enormous gratitude to everyone who is contributing to the **COVID-19 Emergency Student Relief Fund**.

Thanks to an anonymous gift of \$100,000, plus \$50,000 from the Concordia University Alumni Association and \$110,000 from the Graduate Students' Association, the fund now stands at \$810,000. The lives of many of our students have been turned upside down so, if you can, please consider making a gift at concordia.ca/COVID19support.

I also want to share some examples of how, in the midst of this crisis, Concordia is collaborating with other universities and organizations to take on pressing needs in our society.

With schools in Quebec closed for the foreseeable future, our Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance, in collaboration with Université du Québec à Montréal, has made available a bilingual version of its innovative digital literacy-development tools, ABRACADABRA and READS, for all parents and primary schoolchildren.

The software, which won a UNESCO Prize in 2017, is available on the Ministry of Education's Open School portal. In just four days, the programs attracted more than 30,000 users.

The Government of Quebec has designated one of our engineering labs as an essential facility to ensure that masks sourced from emerging Quebec suppliers, or uncertified masks received from suppliers outside our province, meet safety standards.

We are proud to collaborate on this initiative with the Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail (IRSST), the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation to help supply masks to frontline personnel.

Like other universities, Concordia is donating large stocks of personal protective equipment — much of it coming from faculty research and teaching labs to support frontline health workers. And we have deployed key equipment, instruments and chemical supplies to support fundamental research.

Working in partnership with École de technologie supérieure (ÉTS), for example, our faculty and students are using 3D printers to produce components for health care face shields. A similar project using 3D printers at the Webster Library's Technology Sandbox has delivered more than 200 face shields to Montreal's Jewish General Hospital.

Elsewhere on the spectrum of needs, our Ageing + Communication + Technologies (or ACT) research centre is tackling the vital issue of food security for seniors confined to their homes and who don't have access to digital tools to place orders for delivery.

The COVID-19 Grocery Response Project is partnering with various Montreal community groups to dispatch and deliver food to seniors and is also developing a toolkit to help other organizations in the city move to a similar footing.

I'm also extremely proud of how many of our graduates are doing their part to help face down this crisis. My hat goes off to Lili Fortin, BComm 04 and president of the Tristan fashion chain, who redirected her company's manufacturing facility in Cookshire, Quebec, to produce 1,400 medical visors a day.

“We are collaborating with other universities and organizations to take on pressing needs in our society.”

And during what is truly a dark time for many, I can only applaud the wit and ingenuity of NJ Wight, GrDip 92, MA 95. Her YouTube channel, Pluto Living, about the exploits of her miniature schnauzer, has brought joy to more than two million viewers worldwide.

Finally, we recently launched a new feature called **CU at Home** (concordia.ca/cuathome). A virtual learning and entertainment series designed to help members of our community and their families cope in this crisis, CU at Home will feature webinars, short videos and interactive platforms designed by our faculty, staff and alumni.

As these examples show, the crisis is bringing out the best in our community. It's their spirit of resilience and determination to engage that I will reflect on as we go forward.


Please take care of yourself and continue to follow the advice of public health officials wherever you are.

All the best,



Graham Carr
Concordia President

president@concordia.ca



25 countries
40 languages
110 researchers

**HOW
DATA
CAN HELP
FLATTEN
THE
GLOBAL
CURVE**

A Montreal research team is leading an international study of COVID-19 prevention behaviours and responses

PATRICK LEJTENYI, GRDIP 99

A global online survey led by researchers in Montreal is looking at how countries and their citizens are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also examining how different government responses are affecting people's awareness, attitudes and behaviours toward the disease.

The study, called iCARE (International COVID-19 Awareness and Responses Evaluation), is being conducted by the Montreal Behavioural Medicine Centre (MBMC), a joint Concordia / UQAM / CIUSSS du Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal academic research and training centre.

Simon Bacon, professor of health, kinesiology and applied physiology in Concordia's Faculty of Arts and Science, is a co-founder of the centre and one of the study's main investigators.

He launched iCARE with Kim Lavoie, professor in the Department of Psychology at UQAM, who is also co-founder of the MBMC. They are collaborating with 110 researchers in more than 25 countries.

The study consists of three main components.

The first is an online survey, open to all and soon to be available in 40 languages. The questionnaire asks respondents to fill out answers about their health, their attitudes toward their government's anti-coronavirus measures, their behaviour during the pandemic and more.

The researchers will also compile data from various sources on the number of cases, recoveries and deaths worldwide, as well as examine the kinds of policies being enacted by different national governments.

They plan four waves of pushes for the study, which is open now, and hope to reach 100,000 respondents each time. The pushes will take place every four weeks, with the researchers making new data analyses available every two weeks.

"The idea is to merge all this data together to give us a mapping of what countries are saying people should be doing, how people are interpreting those messages and how that is translating to their actual behaviour," says Bacon, who is also the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's SPOR Mentoring Chair in Innovative, Patient-Oriented, Behavioural Clinical Trials.

"To really understand what is working and what is not working, we must capture as broad a cross-section of the world as possible."

"This study will provide us with ongoing information about how people are responding to government messages and strategies and to identify not only what is working but where," Lavoie adds. "This is important to understand so that we can adapt as quickly as possible to develop new strategies to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic."

The researchers also hope the data can be used to develop new strategies and measures to reduce the current pandemic both locally and across the globe.

"The overall goal is to feed the data back to governments and health authorities to help them evolve their messaging strategies to try to get more people to engage in protective behaviour," Bacon explains.

With the survey available in languages understood by two-thirds of the global population, Bacon believes his team will benefit from a diversity of opinions that will create a clearer understanding of global attitudes toward the pandemic.

"This is critically important because different countries are at different stages of outbreak and are deploying different policies," he says.

"To be able to really understand what is working and what is not working, we must capture as broad a cross-section of the world as possible. This range of answers will let us compare different policies across the globe."

iCARE is supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé and the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture. The study's sponsors played no role in the design of the database and data collection. ■

To take the iCare survey, visit
mbmc-cmcm.ca/covid19

*The future of health care is
interdisciplinary*



Concordia researchers are cooperating to develop a fuller understanding of common diseases and their treatments

NATALIE PHILLIPS

PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

ASSOCIATE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR, CANADIAN CONSORTIUM ON NEURODEGENERATION IN AGING

Neuropsychologist Natalie Phillips' research explores the link between hearing and vision loss and cognition, to see how the changes play a role in the development of diseases like Alzheimer's and dementia. Her work seeks to understand the complex relationship between our sensory and cognitive abilities.

Phillips comes from a large family in the Maritimes and was surrounded by aunts and uncles growing up. "I've always found older adults really interesting," she says. "They have fascinating stories to tell. I was just generally interested in all the wisdom and experiences that they had."

That interest led Phillips to study psychology and engage in research at the intersection of aging, cognition and brain function. What she hopes to achieve with her work is a sense of how older adults process speech and language as they age.

If this time of physical distancing has conveyed any pearls of wisdom, it's that we're all in this together.

Indeed, tackling the complex health challenges of tomorrow – and all of their far-reaching social and economic consequences – requires cooperation from global experts engaged in a variety of fields.

Thanks to the interdisciplinary mindset of a group of academics at Concordia, solutions to such widespread problems as low back pain, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's and dementia, and more may not be that far off on the horizon.

"As we get older, our hearing and vision decline and we tend to process information a little more slowly," says Phillips. "That can make it challenging for understanding speech. On the flipside, people have a lifetime of processing language, and have crystalized abilities when it comes to word knowledge and semantic relationships. I'm interested in how those two factors play out together in healthy older adults."

Phillips' team of researchers came together under the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, Canada's largest research initiative for Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative disorders. The team includes an audiologist, an ENT surgeon, a vision rehabilitation specialist and a geriatric speech-language pathologist.

Having enough resources, in terms of funding, time and personnel, remains one of the biggest challenges.

"We feel like we're at the beginning of the process, so we recognize that it's just going to take more work and effort," says Phillips. "We have more questions than we have the resources to address, right now."

One of the most groundbreaking moments of Phillips' research career – other than the results that clearly indicate that older adults with poorer

sensory function have more cognitive issues – has been coming up with one of the most widely used cognitive assessment tools, worldwide.

"In 2005, colleagues and I published a short cognitive screening test called the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA). We designed it as a ten-minute cognitive screening test for mild cognitive impairment, which is considered to be a risk for developing Alzheimer's disease," she explains.

"That test is now used globally in over 40 languages; we did not expect that to happen! It's been immensely gratifying, addressing a clinical need in that manner."

Because there aren't any proven pharmaceuticals that currently change the course of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, Phillips is encouraged by the knowledge that there is good scientific evidence that lifestyle factors like managing hearing loss and cardiovascular disease, being physically fit, having a healthy diet and being socially engaged are important variables in lowering the risk for dementia.

MARTA KERSTEN-OERTEL

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE
AND SOFTWARE ENGINEERING

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH
CHAIR IN APPLIED PERCEPTION

Marta Kersten-Oertel's research focuses on developing navigation tools to assist doctors in the operating room. The techniques developed in her lab are used to provide more intuitive depth and spatial perception of patient anatomy to better guide surgeons during invasive medical procedures.

What's fascinating about her current field of research is how she got there, which was through an interest in the arts.



"I ended up studying both art history and computer science," she explains. "I became interested in how art evolved, particularly from the Gothic period, when paintings were flat, to the Renaissance, where artists learned to use perspective cues to make 2D images look 3D. I was lucky enough to meet some great professors at Queen's and apply these notions to medical images coming from, for example, MRI or CT scan."

In the Applied Perception Lab at Concordia, Kersten-Oertel's team is working on developing and testing novel visualization techniques (e.g. using augmented reality), new interaction

methods and the application of novel display devices, (e.g. the Microsoft HoloLens) in the clinical and health domain. Their main goal is to be able to provide clinicians with new technologies to improve the way they're able to diagnose, plan treatment and perform surgical interventions.

"We've been developing augmented reality tools for clinical tasks such as image-guided neurosurgery and breast reconstruction surgery," she says.

"I think one of the things that stands out about how we do things is that we really try to get the stakeholders involved, work closely with clinicians and evaluate the technologies that we're developing to ensure that they fit into clinical workflows, aid the surgeons in their tasks and ultimately improve patient care."

Backed by a multidisciplinary approach that intersects psychology and human-computer interaction, and software engineering and the health sciences, the most challenging aspect of Kersten-Oertel's work is ensuring that her team isn't developing tools simply for novelty's sake.

"This is sometimes difficult because it requires close communication and interaction with clinicians and it requires us to test systems in operating rooms," says Kersten-Oertel, who's also a member of Concordia's PERFORM Centre. "As you can imagine, there are a lot of hurdles to this."

Kersten-Oertel is thrilled when she's able to move a technology developed in the lab to a place where clinicians can use them in practice. "It can be scary but when things work, or when clinicians get excited about what we're doing, it's so rewarding," she says.

"In terms of our research, one interesting thing has been the fact that the gaming industry has pushed technologies that used to be so expensive to commercial products. This has really enabled us to explore virtual reality, augmented reality, gesture-based interfaces, eye-tracking and so much more in the lab, and look at how these technologies can help patients and the clinicians that care for them."



MARYSE FORTIN

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH, KINESIOLOGY AND
APPLIED PHYSIOLOGY

RESEARCH MEMBER, PERFORM CENTRE

Maryse Fortin's main area of research and clinical expertise is in musculoskeletal spine imaging and rehabilitation. Using advanced MRI technologies, she focuses on the role of the back's muscles in the development and recurrence of low back pain as well as the different kinds of exercise that can be used to help prevent and treat it.

"Over the past decade, there's been a lot of interest in the lumbar multifidus (LM) muscle and its role in low back pain. My research aims to clarify different aspects of the causal relationship between that pain and the LM muscle," explains Fortin.

"I use different imaging techniques to investigate the morphology and the function of these muscles, and I also test

"My research is very interdisciplinary in nature because it combines imaging, rehabilitation, medicine and electrical engineering."



different exercise programs. The overall goal is really to improve the treatment and management of low back pain, as well as other common spinal conditions.”

Fortin’s team’s approach is comprehensive and multidisciplinary; it includes examining different aspects of pain, including psychological factors such as a fear of movement.

My research is very interdisciplinary in nature because it combines imaging, rehabilitation, medicine and electrical engineering,” she says. “Working with engineers allows me to focus on standardizing some of the techniques that I use, and also automating them.”

Standardizing techniques worldwide is important because if everyone is using their own methods, it becomes difficult to compare studies and — most importantly — results.

“Using standardized and automated methods that we can share among researchers, like a code, helps everybody,” Fortin says.

“During my PhD, I developed an MRI technique that allowed me to quantify fat in spinal pathology that generated a lot of attention worldwide. With engineers, I was also able to develop a semi-automated way to get that same measure.”

On a global scale, Fortin believes that artificial intelligence and machine learning are powerful tools that will continue to play a key role in advancements in learning and research in medicine and health care.

CLAUDINE GAUTHIER

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

MICHAL AND RENATA HORNSTEIN
CHAIR IN CARDIOVASCULAR IMAGING,
MONTREAL HEART INSTITUTE

Claudine Gauthier’s research explores how the brain is affected by cardiovascular disease through innovative techniques in MRI as a way to measure, and better understand, the complex causes of cardiovascular diseases as well as how to prevent and treat them.

“One of the problems that we have now is that we know what a lot of diseases look like — heart attacks, stroke, dementia — once irreversible damage has been done, not before. What I hope to achieve is the development of techniques that can be used to measure changes in the brain at the point where it’s already starting to change but not irreversibly,” explains Gauthier.

“Right now, we don’t know what the brain looks like before damage happens, so we don’t have anything to target with preventative interventions.”

Gauthier’s team approaches cardiovascular disease by looking at brain-imaging markers that can be impacted by exercise and diet.

“What’s novel here is that what most people do is either look at markers that are easier to measure but might not be specific enough to be useful as real biomarkers [measurable indicators of the presence of a disease], or try to characterize the disease,” she says.

“We’re trying to study this phase where people are still healthy but will develop disease later, to see if we can measure something useful that can be targeted by preventative interventions.”

A lot of what Gauthier’s physics department team does is extremely technical, with many other disciplines involved. “It’s in the realm of MR physics and bio-physical modeling; trying to have models of physiology that are quantitative and allow us to create biomarkers that are more specific.

“A lot of what we do is also physiology — trying to understand the underlying physiology of the process of aging, to see where we would have targets for biomarkers — and some of it is related more specifically to exercise physiology. Finally, there’s a lot of neuropsychology in there, because what we’re also targeting, more in the long-term, is cognitive health and aging.”

What makes her team’s work so challenging, though, is biology.

“It’s always more complicated than you think it’s going to be,” says Gauthier. “Trying to understand, at a very fundamental level, not only all the physiological components that could be involved, but also all the physics of what you’re measuring.”

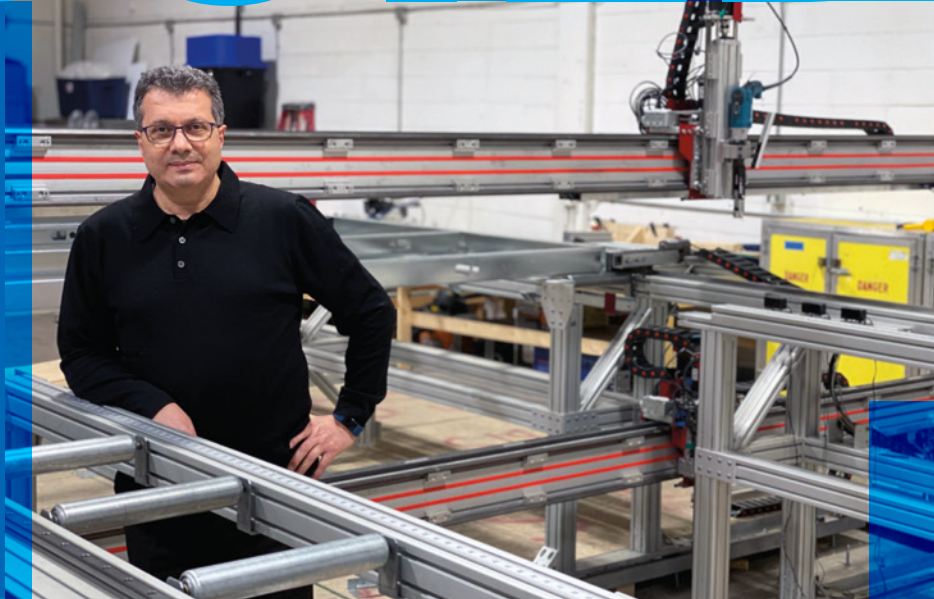
Making the team as multidisciplinary as possible helps achieve that, “so we can have more well-informed models that really take into account all of the disciplines that are required for this work.”

Globally speaking, Gauthier is most excited by all of the new, genetic approaches in health research and the promise they may someday offer, including in the realm of optogenetics in brain imaging. ■

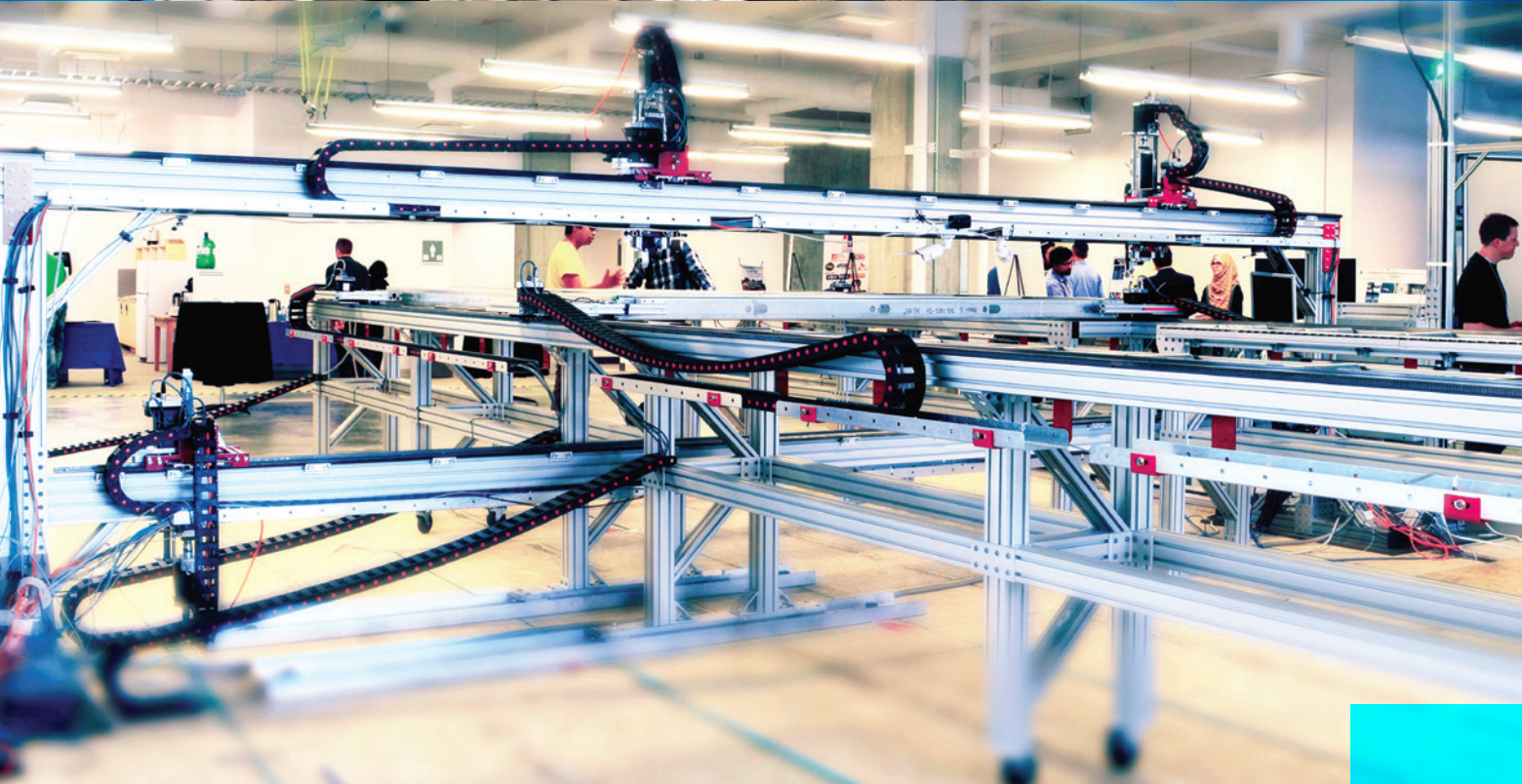




BUILDUP



As a world authority on modular construction, Mohamed Al-Hussein uses technology to spur change in an age-old industry



What if the efficiencies of automotive manufacturing — car plants with robotics and semi-automated assembly lines — could inspire change in the construction industry?

That's the kind of question that drives Mohamed Al-Hussein (MAsc 95, PhD Eng 99), NSERC Industrial Research Chair (IRC) at the University of Alberta.

The Concordia alum is one of the world's foremost experts in modular construction — wherein building components are completed off-site (bathrooms for a new hotel, for example) and installed as one finished piece.

With the potential to improve workplace safety, workflow and costs, advocates see modular construction as the way of the future.

"We can learn quite a bit from lean manufacturing, so why not adapt and modify it to fit the housing and building industry?" says Al-Hussein, whose Edmonton-based chair is also funded by private business and the Modular Building Institute, a non-profit trade association based in Charlottesville, Va.

FROM THE LEVANT TO SOUTHEAST EUROPE

After winning a scholarship in the early 1980s, Al-Hussein left his family farm in the Syria to pursue a civil engineering degree in Sofia, Bulgaria.

"That's where I developed an interest in pre-cast concrete, which was popular at the time," recalls Al-Hussein. "I then chose Concordia to do my master's and PhD with Osama Moselhi and Sabah Alkass, specifically because of their reputations."

Al-Hussein's graduate research focused on how to select the best kinds of cranes and how to best position cranes on job sites. This drew the attention of Guay Inc., a Quebec-based crane rental company that eventually funded his work.

"This set Mohamed on his path," says Moselhi, Al-Hussein's PhD advisor at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. "Cranes are instrumental in modular construction,

lifting large pieces into place at job sites. Of course, his work stretches far beyond cranes today. It embraces construction automation, prefabrication of building components and off-site construction."

STARCHITECTS AND PREFAB PIONEERS

Al-Hussein has had the opportunity to put his research into practice with the likes of renowned New York architect Steven Holl — whose projects include Beijing's Linked Hybrid complex and the University of Iowa School of Art and Art History — and New Jersey's famed Kullman factory, a pre-war pioneer of prefabricated Art Deco diners. He has also worked with a variety of Alberta-based construction firms.

"When my research chair began in 2011, I spent the first five years focusing on productivity and efficiency off-site," says Al-Hussein. "But now I'm building machines — robotics — that mimic human movement with the goal of a fully-automated production line for things like wood framing, light-gauge steel framing, kitchen-cabinet making and more."

"In Alberta, we partnered with three companies to erect a 68-unit retirement residence in just three days."

Al-Hussein helped build several linked three-storey buildings at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania in just ten working days. Off-site construction included the creation of 18 large-scale modules, the roofs and a bridge linking each building to the sidewalk.

"The entire project, from excavation to the final landscaping, was done in one summer," says Al-Hussein. "Closer to home, in Alberta, we partnered with three companies to erect a 68-unit retirement residence in just three days after the foundation was ready."

In 2008, he worked on a twin-tower apartment complex in Westlock, Alberta. Modules were fabricated in Kamloops, B.C., then shipped for installation.

"The location and the site presented many complications for the cranes, so we brought the crane operators to my lab, where we used virtual reality to provide training and practice," says Al-Hussein. "It was a success. The plan was to build the apartments in four days, but we delivered in just two days."

VR FOR THE BENEFIT OF WORKERS AND CUSTOMERS

Currently, Al-Hussein's lab is pushing forward with several initiatives, including the use of virtual reality and augmented reality to study ergonomics to decrease stress, strain and injury in modular factory workers and on-site crews. The technology is also helpful with purpose-driven design — prospective users can build a virtual dream kitchen, for example, and then seamlessly modify the design if they so desire.

Al-Hussein has also finished two full-scale machine prototypes, one for automated wood framing and the other for light-gauge steel framing; they will be ready for market soon.

"The demand is there, the industry is waiting," says Al-Hussein. "Dr. Moselhi will tell you that two-thirds of success is hard work. At Concordia, he taught me dedication and integrity. The thing I feel the most proud of is passing this along to my students now and giving them the tools to create Canadian-made machines for the future."

"It gives me great pleasure to see Mohamed become such a pioneer and an internationally recognized leader in modular and off-site construction," adds Osama Moselhi.

"Mohamed was always interested in work that would advance the field and that's exactly what he has done with his lab in Edmonton and his worldwide industry partnerships." ■



KEEP
CALM
AND
LEARN
ON

Concordia's award-winning literacy tools are a key part of the Government of Quebec's new online learning portal

For many parents of school-aged children, the coronavirus pandemic is an incredible trial. First, there's the baseline stress from being cooped up and worrying about falling ill. Plus, many are juggling childcare and working from home for the first time.

And then there's the background concern that kids are missing out on the foundational skills they would normally be getting in school. It's one thing for parents to know how crucial literacy skills are to success in school and life but quite another to know what and how to teach them.

This has suddenly become a global problem, says Philip Abrami, former director of Concordia's Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance (CSLP).

"Right now, there are 1.5 billion children in 165 countries around the world who are out of school," he explains. "Everyone at every level, from schools to governments to NGOs, is trying to provide homeschooling alternatives. Because the realistic prognosis is that this could go on for many, many months."

QUEBEC'S PLAN DRAWS ON CONCORDIA RESOURCES

The Government of Quebec quickly created the École Ouverte / Open School. This free online portal is a repository of "thousands of resources for learning, creating, having fun and staying active, just like at school," as Jean-François Roberge, Minister of Education and Higher Education, writes on the website.

Since the portal was created under such extreme time constraints, says Abrami, the government was particularly keen on tools that were ready right away.

This led them to ABRACADABRA and READS, the two most popular of five tools in Concordia's Learning Toolkit+ — a computer-based interface developed and refined over the past 20 years by the CSLP's pedagogical experts, under Abrami's leadership.

ABRACADABRA supports beginning readers from kindergarten to third grade (ages five to nine) through dozens of engaging interactive activities and stories.

The Repository of Ebooks And Digital Stories, or READS, is a database of more than 600 free stories (or 2,500 plus when considering multiple languages of the same book) from 13 countries. It's designed as a supplement to ABRACADABRA to help develop students' fluency and comprehension skills. And, crucially during this pandemic of indeterminate length, it will also supply children and parents with fresh reading material.

As Abrami explains, many learning tools and apps teach and reinforce one aspect of literacy.

"Right now, there are 1.5 billion children in 165 countries around the world who are out of school."

"What is very important and special about ABRACADABRA is that we take a comprehensive view of those skills and sub-skills that emerging readers must acquire to become successful. And we find ways to integrate them, so that the whole is much greater than the sum of its parts."

The evidence-based methodology is also evidence-proven: among 20 validation studies of ABRACADABRA performed around the world, emerging readers saw positive outcomes in every case.

'WE QUADRUPLED THE HORSEPOWER'

Given its efficacy, ABRACADABRA, which includes first- and second-language instruction in both English and French, has enjoyed widespread popularity.

The Learning Toolkit Plus has been used over the years by all nine of Quebec's English-language school boards and a number of French-language school boards, plus districts in Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and New Brunswick.

In the United Kingdom, the success of a pilot project in 60 schools has now doubled its reach.

And its rollout in Kenya, which garnered the CSLP and its partners the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize in 2017, has led to that project's expansion throughout Kenya and into Bangladesh and Rwanda, funded by the Global Partnership for Education.

However, in all of these cases, the software is run and managed locally by the school boards.

A web version did exist, to accommodate homeschoolers and other children who required additional help at home, but it had limited traffic capacity on the Department of Education's server at Concordia.

As such, hosting ABRACADABRA and READS on the web through Open School required some fast technical wizardry during a busy time for Concordia's Instructional and Information Technology Services (IITS), Technical Services from the Education Department, and the CSLP.

"We had to quickly build up a server that can maintain the expected capacity and firm up security around the server, which meant a lot of coding," explains Alex Aragona, executive director of application portfolio management and chief information security officer at IITS. "Essentially, we quadrupled the horsepower of these tools' platforms."

A good thing, too, as demand has already been high. In their first four days online, ABRACADABRA and READS had more than 30,000 users through the Open School portal.

"Getting this online so quickly has been a huge team effort, from President Graham Carr right on down through many departments," says Abrami. "We were all working to meet, initially, the provincial need, but ultimately the national and international need."

And as long as the need is there, the tools will be hosted by IITS at Concordia. Plus, teacher resources are being enhanced, too.

"You can't just make these tools available; you have to provide good ongoing professional development," Abrami adds. "Of course, it's even more important that we do that now, when the educators are not only the professionals, but also mums and dads." ■

Find out more about Concordia's Learning Toolkit+ at concordia.ca/ltk.

CEO

FOR

DAY

ADREANO ALACCHI
WITH CEO SYLVAIN
COSSETTE



Shadowing top execs gives JMSB students a boost

For the past seven years, executive search firm Odgers Berndtson has offered university students across Canada a taste of life at the helm of a company.

The concept of CEOx1DAY is simple: after an intensive application process, selected candidates are paired with a company president or CEO for a day.

This winter, three students from the John Molson School of Business – Cristian Pulido, Adreano Alacchi and Maurice Ngwakum-Akisa – were among an elite group of 20 finalists.



CRISTIAN PULIDO WITH CEO
JEAN-FRANÇOIS GAGNÉ

CRISTIAN PULIDO WAS MATCHED WITH JEAN-FRANÇOIS GAGNÉ AT ELEMENT AI

While heavy snow was forecasted for Montreal, I was ready to break the ice with JF — joining his morning CrossFit session definitely did the job!

After burning a few holiday calories, I felt physically and mentally prepared for the rest of the day. Soon, it was time to explore the Element AI Lab, where novel solutions to business challenges are built.

The excitement made my stomach grumble, and I was thankful when lunchtime arrived. When JF and I sat down to eat, he mentioned that we would be joined by a few others.

As it turned out, our guests included staff who wanted to have an informal chat with the CEO. JF's goal was to connect on a personal level with employees — like friends sharing anecdotes around great food.

Throughout the day, I was struck by how dedicated JF and the Element AI team were to humanizing the conversation around artificial intelligence. How can the next technological revolution materialize if people don't fully understand it, or its implications?

For JF, AI represents a collaborative effort between human and machine: a tool for the betterment of society, not for the control of it.

Later, before we headed out to a non-profit fundraiser, I asked one last question: "JF, what is your outlook for AI?"

He answered: "There will be a point in time when you will not believe how you went through your daily routine without it."

MAURICE NGWAKUM-AKISA WAS MATCHED WITH LUCIA POLLICE AT CDMV

Lucia Pollice is CEO of CDMV, a Canadian distributor of veterinary products. My day started with an hour-long carpool at 8 a.m. from Laval to CDMV's office in Saint-Hyacinthe.

The first thing that struck me about Lucia is that, despite her busy schedule and numerous responsibilities, she gave me 100 per cent of her attention and was fully invested in making sure that I had an incredible experience.

We exchanged stories and really got to know one another. I learned a lot about her career path and her values, and received advice on the skills I need to develop in order to be in her seat someday.

At the CDMV office, I met with all the top executives. I learned about their industry and the transformations they're currently undergoing. I also sat in on strategic meetings where all of the tools that I had learned in my case classes at JMSB were on display.

This was an unbelievable experience — there's nothing like it!

***"I FELT INSPIRED TO PURSUE A
PATH OF HUMANISTIC LEADERSHIP."***

***"THE TOOLS I LEARNED IN CLASS
WERE USED IN REAL TIME."***

***"I WAS ENCOURAGED
TO SHARE MY OPINIONS."***



MAURICE NGWAKUM-AKISA
WITH CEO LUCIA POLLICE

ADREANO ALACCHI WAS MATCHED WITH SYLVAIN COSSETTE AT COMINAR

My time with Sylvain Cossette, CEO of Cominar, was a remarkable experience. I spent the day sitting in on executive meetings at the real-estate investment trust — all while being encouraged to share my opinions.

The first meeting of the day involved the CEO, CFO and several VPs. We discussed employee engagement and team performance. It was incredible to see how dedicated these executives were to their respective groups.

I had the chance to sit down with the VPs and learn more about their work. Looking over actual project proposals and plans was enlightening and demonstrated how real estate was not the business I had understood it to be.

I was able to discuss this further over lunch with Sylvain — we also spoke at length about our hobbies and families.

My day ended with a roundup of the technological changes faced by Cominar, and the company's plans to become more tech-focused in the future.

All in all, my CEOx1DAY experience was extremely eye-opening, not only to the realities of Cominar's industry but to the realities of leadership itself. ■

These first-person accounts were edited for length and clarity.

GRAD STUDENTS CYBER IS ATTACKS!

Paria Shirani and Olivier Cabana are serious about safeguarding your security

DANIEL BARTLETT, BA 08

When Olivier Cabana, BCompSc 17, gives presentations on his research in cybersecurity, he often begins with a section describing the current threat landscape and its impact on individuals.

“Think about how many critical infrastructures are being controlled by software. If they’re taken out of service or controlled by a hacker, then you’re paralyzing a city or a country,” says Cabana, a second-year PhD candidate at Concordia’s Security Research Centre.

“If somebody manages to shut down the power grid during the winter, everybody is going to have a miserable experience.”

Today, cyberattacks come in many forms and sizes, from phishing emails to malicious software, or malware, and

advanced persistent threats. In Canada, attackers have infiltrated corporate and government servers, stolen personal information from millions of individuals and crippled the computer systems of several hospitals.

That’s why graduate students at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science are working hard to detect threats before they’re triggered. Their research projects aim to protect personal data, ensure the integrity of online services and secure digital environments and critical infrastructures from cyberattacks.

“We want users to communicate with services without the fear of being stopped, hindered or intercepted by somebody,” Cabana says.

Here’s how two researchers at Concordia are engaging with the most pressing cybersecurity issues of the day.

OLIVIER CABANA: ACCURATE AND RELEVANT FORECASTS

Cabana (pictured upper right) studies network traffic data to uncover evidence of cyberattacks. His work mostly focuses on the Industrial Internet of Things (IIOTs), which refers to internet-connected devices often used in power plants, electric power grids and other industrial environments.

“The hope is to harden systems against cyberattacks,” he explains. “The basic idea is if we are able to protect Industrial Control Systems—if we can detect and stop power outages before they start—then we improve the reliability of critical infrastructure.”

Cabana first became interested in cybersecurity after taking a couple of undergraduate courses on artificial intelligence and software security at Concordia. Upon graduation,

“The total economic loss of a large-scale cyberattack on the U.S. power grid could range from \$243 billion to \$1 trillion.”

"We want users to communicate with services without the fear of being stopped, hindered or intercepted."

he accepted an offer from Mourad Debbabi, NSERC Research Chair in Smart Grid Security, to join the Security Research Centre (SRC) as a master's student. After a year, he fast-tracked into the PhD program.

"In my graduate work, it helps to have access to data from diverse groups and companies through the SRC," says Cabana. "We're a hub of information and that allows us to conduct research that other centres can't."

For students who want to pursue studies in cybersecurity, Cabana suggests taking courses in different fields because the research area is so broad. Once they find what they like, he recommends approaching professors and asking if there's room on their research teams.

"If you're interested in security, Concordia is definitely the place you want to go."

PARIA SHIRANI: FROM PUZZLES TO SMART GRIDS

As a child, Paria Shirani (pictured below), a sixth-year PhD candidate at the Security Research Centre, loved solving

problems, building puzzles and decrypting brain-teasers. She sees many similarities between these childhood pastimes and her current cybersecurity research.

"Even if you're an attacker, you need to have critical thinking or an innovative mind to infiltrate the system," Shirani says. "Meanwhile, security experts have to be able to generate ideas, know how hackers are thinking and harden the security."

Shirani's work focuses on the smart grid and the different devices that communicate within it. She thinks this research area has recently garnered more attention from governments and media outlets because people have started to realize that attacks do happen — and at significant costs.

A 2015 report by Lloyd's and the Centre for Risk Studies at the University of Cambridge found that the total economic loss of a large-scale cyberattack on the U.S. power grid could range from \$243 billion to \$1 trillion. Research by Accenture and the Ponemon Institute



suggests that cyberattacks cost firms based in Canada an average of \$12 million in 2018.

"The cost is too much to the economy, and it has other effects, including the safety and security of people," Shirani says.

"Different devices generate electricity and distribute it to various customers. Our research focuses on analyzing the codes inside these devices to prevent attacks in the smart grid or any other IT-related systems."

This summer, Shirani is heading to Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pa., as part of a NSERC postdoctoral fellowship. Her recent successes also include the creation of a new security framework, called BinARM, an accurate and scalable approach to detecting vulnerable functions in intelligent electronic devices in smart grids. She presented at the 15th International Conference on Detection of Intrusions and Malware, and Vulnerability Assessment in June 2018.

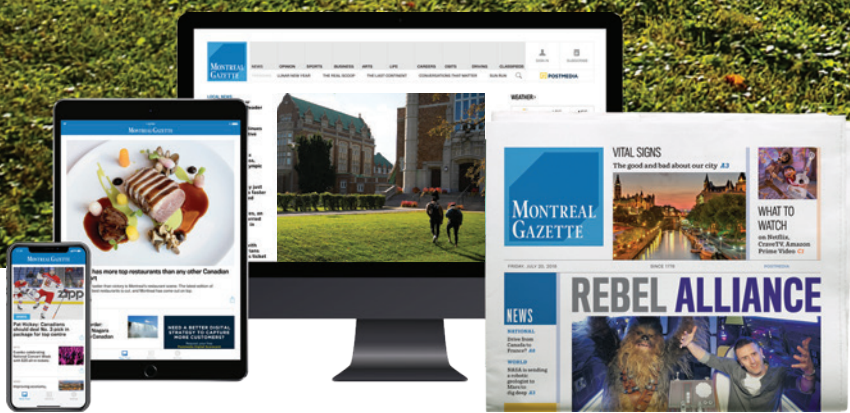
Despite her many achievements, Shirani simply hopes her work will help people feel more secure in digital environments.

"I always prefer conducting research and contributing to society in ways that are beneficial to people," she says. ■



Stories that...

INFORM CONNECT ENLIGHTEN



The Montreal Gazette and its award-winning journalists are dedicated to bringing you comprehensive, trustworthy stories that matter to you and your city.



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

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LES LAWTON IS ONE OF THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED COACHES IN WOMEN'S HOCKEY HISTORY.



Stingers standout!

With more than 600 wins, Les Lawton dedicated his life to women's hockey – and coached his way into Concordia's Sports Hall of Fame

MOLLY HAMILTON

Les Lawton, a stalwart member of the Stingers community, will be recognized for his service to Concordia at the university's next Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

"Les's name is synonymous with women's hockey and, specifically, university hockey in Canada," said Chris Larade, coach of Saint Mary's women's hockey, at an awards gala in 2018.

"You want to make your players understand the impact a guy like that had on the growth and development of the game."

Lawton began his career at Concordia as an assistant coach with the Stingers women's squad in 1982. The next year, he was promoted to head coach, a job he successfully held for more than three decades.

In 2003, Lawton became the first women's coach to capture 500 wins at the university level in Canada. By 2012, he had coached over 1,000 games, with a remarkable .639 winning percentage.

Lawton laughed off the accomplishment at the time. "Seriously, I don't think anybody ever thinks of numbers like that, especially when you play a 35-game schedule every year."

He memorably piloted the Stingers to two national championships, in 1998 and 1999, and an extraordinary 15 Quebec conference championships. In 2000,



THE 1986 STINGERS SQUAD

Lawton was named the top women's university hockey coach in the country.

"Any time you're around Concordia, you know Les is part of the fabric," said current Stingers coach Julie Chu. "We have this incredible league right now because of all the work that Les and other pioneers put in."

Indeed, while still coach of the Stingers, Lawton led Canada's national team to victory at the 1994 IIHF World Women's Championships in Lake Placid, N.Y. The team defeated the United States 6-3 to secure a third consecutive gold medal.

Eleven years later, Lawton coached Canada's women's team at the 2011 Winter Universiade in Erzurum, Turkey. Under his stewardship, Canada ran the table with a perfect 7-0 record and won gold over Finland.

In 2015, Lawton stepped down as Stingers coach after experiencing a stroke. He has, however, managed to remain an active and valued contributor as team advisor.

Lawton has participated in three Shuffle walkathons since 2017, with thousands of dollars raised in the process. His 2019 total of \$9,535 was the largest amount collected by an individual that year.

"He got right back up, and to see how far he's come is inspiring," said Chu. ■

With files from CUSN, The Globe and Mail, Catherine Grace, stingers.ca and Doug Sweet.

Les Lawton will be inducted into the Concordia Sports Hall of Fame at a special ceremony on Saturday, September 12, 2020.

Welcome to CU at Home

Concordia recently launched CU at Home, a virtual learning platform created by the community, for the community. The university-wide effort includes webinars, online events and other content created by a vast network of faculty, staff, alumni, students and partners.

The initiative aims to bring Concordians together to learn and share during this time of social isolation. The month of April featured programming by Alumni Relations, 4th SPACE, the Student Success Centre, the Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery, PERFORM Centre and more.

Alumni played a key role in the program's immediate

popularity. Alumni Relations saw unprecedented success in its participation rate, at 72 and 74 per cent of registrations, for the first two legs of its "Happiness Lab" series piloted by **Gillian Leithman**, BA 00, MSc 05, PhD 16.

The month of May promises a robust lineup of webinars and family fun — meditation workshops, yoga for kids and adults, cooking classes and much more. Discover all CU at Home programming by visiting concordia.ca/cuathome. ■

As a result of COVID-19, this magazine's "Alumni News" section is shorter than usual. We look forward to publishing more news again in the fall.



COURTESY OF YASMIN FUDAKOWSKA-GOW

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ALUMNI UPDATES

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

83 Jean Laguë, BA (geo.), was hired as director of property management at the Palais de congrès de Montréal.

84 Denis Hebert, BComm, EMBA 92, was appointed to Autonomous ID Corporation's Chairman's Advisory Board as a principal advisor on biometric identity and access-control systems.

85 Geneviève Morin, BA (econ.), MBA 96, was named president and CEO of Fondation after the retirement of founder Léopold Beaulieu.

86 Bernard Mercier, BSc, was named partner and wealth business leader at Mercer's Vancouver division, where he'll be responsible for leading the pension and investment team.

87 Andrew Crouch, PhD (chem.), was appointed vice-chancellor and principal at Sol Plaatje University in Kimberley, South Africa. He began his mandate on April 1, 2020.

88 Monica Bhattacharya, MBA, was named the new director of communications and corporate affairs at Vanier College, a role she assumed on January 6, 2020.

Patrick Rioux, PhD (elec. and comp. eng.), was named director of information technology at Collège de Valleyfield.

90 André Choquet, BSc, was appointed director of client portfolio management at Russell Investments Canada.

Silvie Letendre, BA (psych.), was named president and general manager at Capital-Image, a public relations agency.

92 Jacques Deforges, MBA, was named director general at Finance Montréal, which aims to develop and promote Quebec's financial services industry.

93 Denis Maranda, EMBA, was named head of production at Neptune Wellness Solutions' cannabis-processing facility in Sherbrooke, Que.



97 Jennifer Hollett, BA (comm. and journ.), assumed the role of executive director at *The Walrus*.

Shannon Simpson, BA (women's stud.), was named the director of the Office of Indigenous Initiatives at the University of Toronto.

98 Leah Olson-Friesen, BA (poli. sci.), MA 00 (public policy and public admin.), was named chief operating officer at Lumeca Health, one of Canada's leading virtual health-care platforms. Olson-Friesen was recently named one of Concordia's top 50 under 50 shaping business for her leadership in technology and entrepreneurship.

01 Nicolas Moskiou, BSc (actuarial math.), was named vice-president of operations and customer experience at Humania Assurance.

02 Anthony Housefather, MBA, was named Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Luc Rabouin, GrDipl 02 (community econ. dev.), the new mayor of Montreal's Plateau-Mont-Royal borough, was made a member of the executive committee responsible for economic and commercial development, and design at the City of Montreal.

Sandeep Singh, BEng (mech. eng.), was named president of Osisko Gold Royalties Ltd. Singh joins the intermediate precious metal royalty company from Maxit, where he was co-founder and managing partner.

03 Joseph Gallucci, BComm (mktg.), MBA 08 (investment mgmt.), was appointed to the board of directors of Skyharbour Resources in March. Gallucci, a capital markets executive, has over 15 years of experience in investment banking and equity research focused on mining, base metals, precious metals and bulk commodities on a global scale.

05 Daniel Silverman, BA (soc.), was named vice-president of foreign direct investment at Investissement Québec International.

Stuart Kozlick, BEng, MASC 14 (mech. eng.), was appointed to the advisory board of Real-Time Innovations, an Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) connectivity company.

06 Jason Schonfeld, BComm (fin.), was appointed senior vice-president of business development at New Look Vision Group. He joined the company in 2015 as director of corporate development and has served as chief financial officer of Iris, The Visual

Group Inc., New Look Vision's optometric division, since 2017.

Thierry Roldan, BComm (int. bus.), was named chief operations and experience officer at Groundz, a company that provides floor coverings for special events and temporary installations.

07 Peter Schiefke, BA (poli. sci.), was named Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

08 Alanna Ramgoolam, BComm (fin.), was named senior public relations account executive at 1Milk2Sugars Communications.

09 Koralie Deetjen-Woodward, BFA (theatre), was named content and social media strategy advisor at Oboxmedia, an advertising agency.

10 Alexandre St-Jacques Burke, BComm (fin.), was named chief financial officer at SOLLIO Groupe Coopératif (formerly La Coop fédérée), effective February 28. Burke, who has held several roles with the organization since 2007, is the youngest person named to an executive position with the cooperative group.

13 Fady Toban, BA (poli. sci.), was named litigation associate at Langlois Lawyers, LLP.

14 Isaac Lemprière, BComm, was recently appointed associate director of investments at Prime Quadrant, a Toronto-based investment research firm and consultancy.

15 Mélyse Mpirany, BA (poli. sci.), was hired as an attorney in the Estate Planning and Administration practice group at Lavelle Law in Chicago, Ill.



1 Robert Walker, BA 69, is the featured photographer in *Griffintown - Evolving Montreal*, an exhibit at the McCord Museum scheduled to run until August 9, 2020. 1) *Ottawa Street, Griffintown*, 2018.

2 Pierre Dalpe, BFA 93, will present a solo show at the Head on Photo Festival, Australia's premier photography event. His body of work entitled *Wigstock* will be exhibited at Sydney's Gafa Gallery from April 30 to May 11, 2020. 2) *Wigstock*, 1994.

3 Rochelle Mayer, BComm 83, BFA 10 (stud. arts), took part in the 25th anniversary of Atelier Glypto's collective exhibit with her monotype print *Wild Turkeys* at Salon du Printemps - l'Association des Artistes de LaSalle, from April 16 to 25, 2020. 3) *Wild Turkeys*.

4 Raymonde Jodoin, BFA 83, participated in the 14-artist group show *Quoi de neuf?*, at l'Arthothèque de Montreal from January 23 to February 21, 2020. 4) *Pelure de betterave #1* (2018).

5 Ann McCall, BFA 78, exhibited 39 works at the Dollard Centre for the Arts from February 22 to March 22, 2020. *The Faune et Forêt* exhibit explored Quebec's landscape and wildlife, with a focus on environmental threats and endangered species. 5) *Wolf Pack*.

6 Patricia (Kidd) Nelder, BFA 77 (studio arts), has created an interesting career for herself in the boating world. Most recently, Nelder, along with her husband and daughter, completed the building of *Dark Harbour*, a sailboat inspired by early 20th-century design. 6) *Dark Harbour*

7 Chrissy Cheung, BFA 00, has an exhibit entitled *Integration: Art + Culture + Canada* scheduled to show at the Capulet Art Gallery in Richmond, B.C. from May 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020. 7) *Composition 55*, ink and coloured pencil on 100% rag.

Due to COVID-19, event details may have changed by the time of publication.



H. Nigel Thomas, BA 74, MA 75 (Eng.), was the recipient of the 2020 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award from Montreal's Black Theatre Workshop. He was recognized for his contribution to the development of Black arts and cultural life.

Allan Shaw, GrDip 92 (sports admin.), was named the winner of the Russ Seltzer Award for Contribution to Counsellor Education by the Ontario School Counsellors' Association in October 2019. He was also the recipient of a 2013 Award of Teaching Excellence from Western University's Faculty of Education.

Patrice Leroux, MA 92 (media studies), was inducted into the 2019 College of Fellows of the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS). The honour recognizes extensive contributions to public relations and communications management.

Alyssa Quint, BA 93, was named a finalist for the 2019 National Jewish Book Awards in the scholarship category for her book *The Rise of the Modern Yiddish Theatre*.

Iranian-Canadian journalist **Maziar Bahari**, BA 93 (comm. studies), was to be honoured with the Elie Wiesel Award by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at its National Tribute Dinner on April 21, 2020. He was recognized for his exceptional courage in communicating the truth of the Holocaust in Iran and throughout the Middle East and for his powerful voice against anti-Semitism.

Barry Julien, BA 94, was co-nominated for a 2020 Writer's Guild award in the "Comedy/Variety Talk Series" category for his work as a head writer on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*.

Production designer **Jade Healy**, BA 05, was nominated for an Art Directors Guild award in the category of "Contemporary Film" for her work on *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*.

Sheima Benembarek, BA 09 (Eng. lit.), was named one of the five Emergent Writers for the RBC Taylor Prize 2020 Mentorship program. Benembarek was paired with investigative reporter Robyn Doolittle.

Meryam Joobeur, BFA 13 (film prod.), was nominated for an Academy Award in the "Live Action Short Film" category for her film *Brotherhood*, which tells the story of a Tunisian man who returns home after fighting with ISIS in Syria. **1**

Air Canada President and CEO **Calin Rovinescu**, LLD 16, was inducted as a Companion into the 2020 Canadian Business Hall of Fame. Rovinescu has served as president and CEO of Air Canada since April 1, 2009.

Lorne Trottier, LLD 18, was named CEO of the Year in the Social Engagement category by *Les Affaires*. Trottier was chosen for his dedication as an entrepreneur and philanthropist. Along with his spouse, **Louise Roussele Trottier**, BA 76, DSc 18, he created the Trottier Family Foundation in 2000 to support initiatives in education, science, technology, the environment, and health care.

LA FORGE QUÉBÉC CINÉMA

Québec Cinéma, in partnership with Netflix, launched a new annual mentorship program to train the next generation of filmmakers. Three Concordians were selected:

Sandrine Brodeur-Desrosiers, BFA 10 (film prod.)

Pierre-Marc Drouin, BFA 07 (film prod.)

Simon Lamarre-Ledoux, BFA 08 (film prod.)

BUSINESSWOMEN PHILANTHROPISTS

The flagship fundraiser of West Island Community Shares, the annual Red & White benefit, was held on Monday, January 27, 2020. As part of the event, ten influential businesswomen philanthropists were celebrated, with three alumnae among them:

Evangelia (Eva) Chalkiadakis, BA 99 (econ.)

Roberta Lacey, BFA 96 (visual arts)

Rhonda O'Gallagher, BA 91 (econ & poli. sci.)

2020'S TOP 25 WOMEN OF INFLUENCE

Canada's annual Top 25 Women of Influence awards recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of diverse women role models. This year, two prominent Concordia graduates were recognized:

Gina Cody, MEng 81, PhD 89, engineer and business leader

Carolyn Loutfi, BFA 14, executive director of Apathy is Boring

'Go Mom!'

How Concordia became a rite of passage for three generations of one indomitable family

IAN HARRISON,
B COMM 01

As Suzan Denoncourt, MBA 92, lined up to accept her degree at convocation, she barely had time to register her pride in the accomplishment before she spotted a familiar face on stage.

It was her mother. All of a sudden, a different sense of pride took hold.

"We were about ten people away from each other and she was within earshot. I yelled, 'Go Mom!' Because the diplomas came before the MBAs, that was just how it worked out. It was so surreal."

Suzan's mother, Diane Denoncourt, BA 83, GrDip 92, had returned to Concordia to hone the management skills she needed as a school principal.

Coincidentally, Suzan had also decided to go back to the university and build on the Linguistics degree she had obtained from McGill in 1988.

Although their paths did not cross on campus — Suzan was a full-time student, while Diane worked and attended part-time — the experience did provide an opportunity for mother and daughter to become closer.

"My mother was far less passionate about business than she was about teaching and English literature," says

Suzan. "She was also older and working a demanding job. But because I was doing my MBA, I knew I could help her."

For someone who went on to ascend the upper echelons of business after Concordia — namely as the executive at the helm of Ingenico Group Canada, the French-based financial services giant — it seems unthinkable that Suzan ever doubted her MBA bona fides.

"In those days, an MBA was rare," she says. "It just wasn't as commonplace. So my first thought was, I can't do that, I would never be able to get into that kind of program. I had a BA in a completely different field. To me, the MBA was what the elite went and did. I didn't consider it at all."

With the encouragement of a friend, Suzan attended an MBA info session at Concordia. When a second-year student got up to address the room, Suzan was captivated. Two years later, she was the one selected to extol the benefits of the program.

"I immersed myself in as much of the experience as I could," she says. "Student council, case competitions, different committees, you name it. When you're more involved, you tend to learn and grow more. That's what made my time at Concordia such a success."



SUZAN DENONCOURT

The skills that Suzan amassed helped her step up to the plate later in her career.

The most prominent example is when David Chaudhari, her predecessor as director of Ingenico Group Canada, unexpectedly passed away in 2016 at the age of 51. Suddenly, Suzan had to rally an anguished staff and take care of business, which she did with aplomb.

She also took on a more active mentorship role at Ingenico and within the payments industry at large, particularly for younger women. And while she left the company last January to pivot to corporate board roles, Suzan has no plans to reduce these efforts.

The Denoncourt family's association with Concordia runs even deeper. Not only is Suzan's brother, Paul Denoncourt, BA 91, a grad (with a daughter, Raquel, at JMSB to boot) but her daughter, Lisa Sassi, BSc 17,

GrDip 19, is a two-time alum on the cusp of her own career in business.

Son Philip Sassi, meanwhile, has competed as a sprinter at Canada's track-and-field championships and attends the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

As Suzan talks about her children's accomplishments at Concordia, her pride is as irrepressible as it was on that auspicious day in 1992 when she followed her mother on the convocation stage.

"I always encouraged them to get an education and figure out what they wanted to do. After some doubts, Lisa recognized the advantage of a graduate diploma and cranked out a 3.9 GPA. As for Philip, he recently told me that if his career is as successful as he hopes, he would happily return to Concordia to teach a scriptwriting class!" ■

The Honourable Herbert Marx (1932-2020):

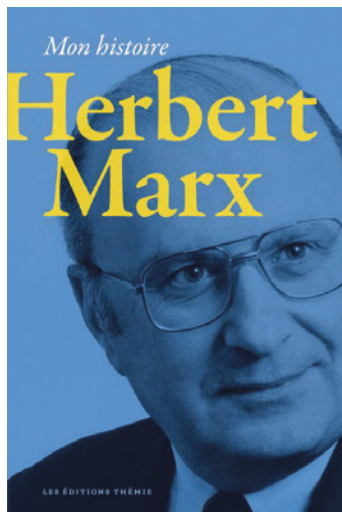
'He embodied the finest principles and values of justice'

WITH FILES FROM THE
MONTREAL GAZETTE

Former Quebec justice minister Herbert Marx, BA 58, passed away on March 19, 2020, after a lifetime of public service. He was 88.

After graduating from Sir George Williams University, one of Concordia's founding institutions, Marx pursued a career in business. At the age of 32, he returned to school, first obtaining a master's in English literature and a law degree from Université de Montréal, followed by a master's in law from Harvard University in 1969. He was admitted to the Quebec Bar Association in 1968 and joined the Montreal firm of Stikeman Elliott.

Before becoming a respected politician, Marx taught law at Université de



Montreal for ten years. He helped establish the first legal-aid clinic in Montreal as well as Project Genesis, a not-for-profit organization focused on social and legal aid for the underprivileged.

Marx won a byelection in 1979 to become Liberal MNA for D'Arcy-McGee and was

re-elected in 1981 and 1985. That same year, Premier Robert Bourassa named him Minister of Justice. Marx held the position until 1988, when he resigned following the Bourassa government's use of the notwithstanding clause to override a Supreme Court of Canada decision declaring parts of the Charter of the French Language unconstitutional.

"It was a very difficult decision for him and Bourassa understood it completely," recalled John Parisella, Bourassa's chief of staff at the time. "It was a departure based on principle. I do recall that he had a very progressive agenda and cared very much about people in need."

Although his political career ended, Marx was appointed a Justice of the Quebec Superior Court in 1989 by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, where he served until his retirement in 2007. He published his memoir (pictured) in English and French in 2018: *My Story* (Les éditions Thémis).

In a Facebook post, Fo Niemi, executive director of the Center for Research-Action on Race Relations, remarked that "[Marx] embodied the finest principles and values of justice, liberalism and, of course, his Jewish faith. As justice minister, he was instrumental in promoting civil rights for racial minorities, women and the poor." ■

Sherman Moreland (Bud) Adams, BSc 58, December 26, 2019, Montreal, Que. He was 85.

Florence (Yates) Ahmed, BA 79, December 9, 2019, Montreal, Que. She was 89.

Colin Dickson Anderson, BA 84, December 10, 2019, Toronto, Ont. He was 62.

John David Ashdown, BA 74, February 2, 2020, Montreal, Que. He was 88.

Adam Baum, BComm 79, January 31, 2019, Montreal, Que.

Peter Dezso Béda, BSc 59, February 18, 2020. He was 95.

Biagio Brescia, BSc 65, October 13, 2018, Laval, Que. He was 77.

Marc Y. Brousseau, BComm 74, January 3, 2020. He was 78.

Dennis Burns, BSc 63, November 17, 2015, Issaquah, Wash. He was 75.

Rebecca Rivka (Caplan) Butovsky, BA 66, December 9, 2019.

Alexander Campanelli, Attd, December 21, 2019, Montreal, Que. He was 24.

Man Hin (Benedicta) Chan, MBA 15, December 27, 2019. She was 41.

Pasquale Civitillo, BCompSc 88, November 8, 2018. He was 55.

Leslie R. (Cohen) Clement, BA 81, MA 84, PhD 93, January 28, 2020. She was 62.

Wendell Minchin Coffin, MBA 77, March 3, 2020. He was 80.

Robin E. Cooney, BA 79, MA 87, PhD 93, January 3, 2020, Ottawa, Ont. She was 72.

Donald G. Darlington, BSc 63, July 3, 2017,

Saint-Mathieu-de-Beloeil, Que. He was 78.

Norman Joseph Di Perno, BSc 82, MBA 86, December 30, 2019, Calgary, Alta. He was 60.

David I. Ditkofsky, BA 75, March 3, 2020.

Frank P. Dougherty, BComm 59, August 14, 2019. He was 91.

Livingston Drayton, BA 95, December 6, 2019, Montreal, Que. He was 92.

Phillip Dunn, BA 70, February 6, 2019, Pickering, Ont. He was 70.

Wesley Robert Eardley, BComm 61, BA 65, February 29, 2020, Peterborough, Ont. He was 88.

Annette (Turgel) Elfer, BA 59, February 21, 2020.

Meyer Elkeslassy, BComm 75, August 25, 2018, Montreal, Que.

Frances Ezzy-Jorgensen, Attd, April 29, 2018, Montreal, Que. She was 71.

Rhona J. Fainman, Attd 10, December 14, 2019.

Albert J. Ferrari, BComm 51, December 15, 2019, Montreal, Que. He was 88.

Neil Raphael Finestone, BComm 82, January 23, 2020. He was 63.

Linda Fong, BSc 93, October 26, 2015. She was 45.

Shulom Friedman, BA 52, BSc 53, December 7, 2019. He was 91.

Elizabeth Gardham, BA 88, January 19, 2020, Lachine, Que. She was 91.

Charles William (Bill) Girard, BComm 75, November 23, 2018, Trenton, Ont. He was 77.

Arthur A. Grynspar, BEng 69, December 28, 2019, Montreal, Que. He was 72.

Peter Hechtman, BA 04, March 4, 2020.

Sylvia Heuckendorff, BComm 97, BA 07, February 24, 2016. She was 78.

Robert A. Hill, BSc 67, January 23, 2020. He was 89.

Brenda L. Hutchings, BA 65, January 13, 2019, Milford, Mass. She was 76.

William D. Johnson, BA 49, March 2, 2020, Gatineau, Que. He was 88.

Maureen W. Jolley, BA 13, February 5, 2020, West Brome, Que. She was 74.

Eliane (Gossing) Jorisch, Donor (wife of the late Georges Jorisch), January 15, 2020. She was 89.
**The Jorisch family created an endowment in 2016 to fund the Jorisch Family Artist Residency*

Sandra W. Kelly, BA 87, December 8, 2019, Vancouver, B.C. She was 56.

Joseph Koltai, BA 72, March 9, 2008, Saint-Eustache, Que. He was 61.

Gaston Lamontagne, Donor, February 20, 2020, Montreal, Que. He was 65.

Theodore Laszlo, BSc 54, October 6, 2012, Toronto, Ont. He was 79.

Marla (Ciubotaru) Lefcort, BFA 84, January 15, 2020. She was 58.

Frank Liebmann, BA 67, March 4, 2019, Toronto, Ont.

Robert Lindsay, Attd 44, April 5, 2005, Calgary, Alta. He was 80.

Judith Fraser Lyon, MSc 77, October 18, 2018, Pointe-Claire, Que. She was 72.

James N. MacKinnon, BA 73, January 18, 2020, Lachute, Que. He was 86.

Harold W. March, BEng 80, February 25, 2020. He was 65.

Robert Marvin, BA 55, February 21, 2017, Haileybury, Ont. He was 85.

William J. McCarney, Attd, January 19, 2003. He was 76.

Maureen Ellen McKeown, BA 76, November 25, 2017, Montreal, Que. She was 70.

Vincenzo (Vincent) A. Mendaglio, BSc 74, MSc 76, July 29, 2019. He was 66.

Aura L. Mendelson, GrDipl 80, March 10, 2020.

Antonietta Micone Miceli, BFA 95, Montreal, Que. She was 49.

Avril Mulcahy, Attd 83, October 13, 2019, Montreal, Que. She was 96.

Beverley Joyce Oram, BA 69, December 21, 2019. She was 81.

Linda (Yegendorf) Oren, BA 98, January 17, 2020.

Frédéric Pellerin, EMBA 01, December 14, 2019, Montreal, Que. He was 55.

Regina (Staskevicius) Piecaitis, BA 72, March 14, 2020. She was 68.

Gloria Pietracupa, BA 80, July 8, 2017, Lachine, Que. She was 88.

Rolland G. Plamondon, MBA 75, February 1, 2018, Montreal, Que. He was 84.

Margaret C. Pucet, BA 82, BA 85, December 10, 2015, Aurora, Ont. She was 94.

Claude B. Robert, BEng 75, April 24, 2019. He was 73.

Claudio Sandrin, BA 70, July 22, 2018. He was 70.

Harvey Seasons, Attd, May 23, 2015, Halifax, N.S. He was 93.

Benjamin Sedlezky, BFA 95, January 19, 2020. He was 92.

Hyman Shoub, BComm 63, January 24, 2020.

Howard E. Smith, BA 53, March 20, 2020.

Desmond B. Soltendieck, BComm 77, October 14, 2019. He was 65.

Elizabeth Spencer, LLD 88, December 22, 2019, Chapel Hill, N.C. She was 98.

Morton Stein, BComm 74, February 21, 2020.

Derry G. Timleck, BA 68, December 19, 2017, Ottawa, Ont. He was 83.

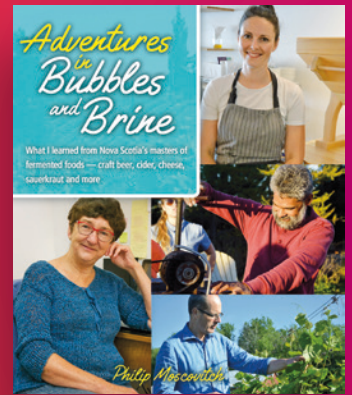
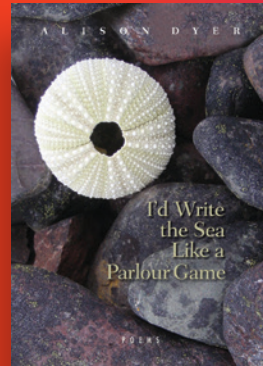
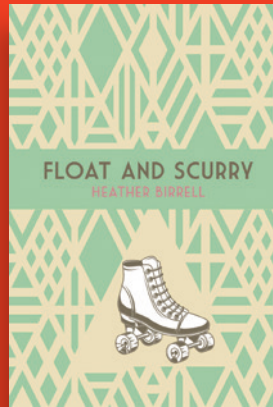
J. Bernard Tonchin, BSc 52, March 9, 2020. He was 92.

Wendy Vanderheyden, BA 92, February 10, 2020, Maitland, Australia. She was 52.

Margherita (Mura) Villatora, BA 75, March 8, 2020. She was 89.

Jeannette St. John Winter, BA 84, MA 87, March 18, 2020, Montreal, Que. She was 90. ■

From the modern self-help compulsion to life on Nova Scotia's fermentation trail



MOLLY HAMILTON

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An unforgettable and uplifting album by jazz composer and pianist **Guillaume Dion**, BFA 19, and his namesake combo.

BOOKS

The Cat Between (Signature Editions, \$16.95) is the third book in **Louise Carson's**, BFA 79 (music), *Maples Mystery* series. When she's not teaching art history at a local college, Gerry Coneybear is out trying to beat the mid-winter blues by snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. As she begins to get her busy life under control, she stumbles upon a dead body. And she even knows the victim ... The fourth installment of Carson's series — *The Cat Possessed* — is planned for a fall 2020 release.

Acclaimed short-fiction writer **Heather Birrell**, MA 99, shows the extraordinary side of the mundane in her debut full-length poetry collection *Float and Scurry* (Anvil Press

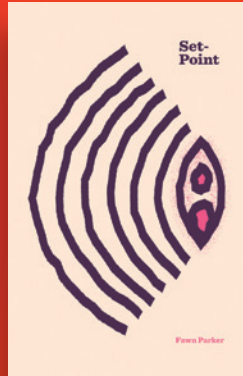
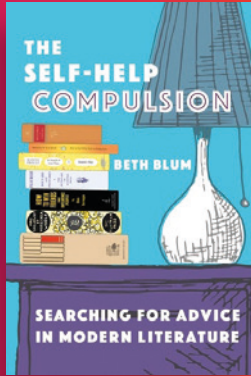
Publishers, \$18). With occasional deft humour, the poems in Birrell's collection explore the implausibility and perseverance of love between friends and family, the importance of libraries, and ways to live with meaning in the face of looming apocalypse.

In her debut poetry collection, *I'd Write the Sea Like a Parlour Game* (Breakwater Books, \$14.95), **Alison Dyer**, BA 81 (physical geography), explores the diversity and resilience inherent in life at the margins with curiosity, intimacy and wry humour.

After traveling the beautiful province of Nova Scotia and discovering a lively fermentation industry, freelance writer **Philip Moscovitch**, BA 91, MA 96, published his first book, *Adventures in Bubbles and Brine* (Formac

Publishing, \$27.95). The travel and culinary memoir documents Moscovitch's encounters with the people making wine, beer, cider, sauerkraut and more, all while giving readers an inside look into the history and science of fermentation, and everything they need to know to start safely at home.

As the food and wine guru on Netflix's sensation *Queer Eye*, **Antoni Porowski**, BA 08 (psych.), is well-versed in teaching cooks of all levels how to become more confident and comfortable in the kitchen. Named one of *Food & Wine's* "Essential New Cookbooks for Fall", Porowski's first cookbook, *Antoni in the Kitchen* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$30), is part culinary memoir, honouring his Polish heritage, his upbringing in Montreal,



and his time in his current home, New York. Recipes include healthy(ish) meals for weeknights and last-minute entertaining, often with five ingredients or less.

In *The Self-Help Compulsion: Searching for Advice in Modern Literature* (Columbia University Press, \$30), assistant professor of English at Harvard University, **Beth Blum**, BA 05, reveals the complex connection between modern literature and commercial advice from the late nineteenth century to the present day, and contrasts the immense popularity of self-help literature with critiques of the genre.

Critic, columnist, screenwriter and novelist **Nathalie Petrowski**, BA 76, explores her career as a journalist in the recently published memoir *La critique*

n'a jamais tué personne (Les Éditions La Presse, \$29.95). Petrowski's book offers a critical look at journalism and culture, and takes on her reputation as a fierce critic, all while documenting the rapid evolution of Quebec media over the past 40 years.

The new novel *Set-Point* (ARP Books, \$20), by **Fawn Parker**, BA 17, is an understated portrait of Lucy Frank, who takes up digital sex-work to help pay the bills while aspiring to work as a screenwriter in Montreal. Within a complex web of half-hearted relationships with lovers, friends and co-workers, Lucy struggles to cope with her self-image, an eating disorder and the illness of her mother. Wanting—but struggling—to believe in her work and worth, Lucy goes back and forth between self-sabotage and

ambition as she tries to develop a parodic script set within a massive, multiplayer, world-building game.

In his new short-story collection, *The Angel Tiger and Other Stories* (Epigram Books, 18.90), **Barrie Sherwood**, MA 99, explores the intricacies and complications of human relationships—from the bonds that bring people together, to what pushes them to the point of breaking, and the often strange and touching ways we define ourselves and our relationships in a fluctuating world. The short stories include one of a couple's cat leaving offerings of dead birds freighted with mysterious import; a foreign worker reawakening his musical longings while helping to construct a concert hall; and a young diver hunting venomous cone snails for a lovelorn researcher. ■

Unlocking the healing power of creativity

BRONIA ZAKS, BA 84,
GRDIP 96

My parents were Holocaust survivors.

My father, Ignacy (Issak) Zaks, enlisted in the Russian army in 1939 with his two brothers. The Germans captured and placed them in a prisoner-of-war camp for Russian soldiers, where they had to conceal their Jewish identity to survive.

After a daring escape, they returned to Będzin, Poland only to find that the family home had been destroyed. The Jews of Będzin — a once-vibrant community of more than 20,000 people — were gone. Most perished in Nazi death camps, my father's extended family included.

My mother, Barbara (Relica) Cuperman, was born in Romania. Under tragic circumstances, she was separated from her family at the age of 16, when the Jews of her town were forcibly deported.

“Even though my father didn't talk much about the war, he captured his pain on paper.”

My mother had gone to buy doughnuts at the train station. When she heard the whistle, she thought the train had arrived — but it had just left, with her mother and four siblings on board.

With no one to take her in, my mother decided to travel to Russia on foot, under cover of darkness. She subsisted on scraps of garbage scavenged along the way. She never saw her mother again.

After my mother found work in a Russian hospital as a nurse, she met my father. They wed and moved to Wałbrzych, Poland in 1946, where my sister, brother and I were born.

In Russia, my mother had reconnected with her own brother and



BRONIA ZAKS'S TATA IS PART OF THE U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM'S DIGITAL COLLECTION.

sister. Another sister, who had relocated to Montreal, sponsored our family to come to Canada (yet another brother emigrated from Israel).

Learning that zlotys (Polish currency) were not worth much outside of Poland, my father bought three large cases of vodka to barter. Along with dishes, a sewing machine, two carpets and some clothes, we boarded the *M.S. Batory* and arrived in Montreal in June 1960. We had never heard a word of English.

My father never spoke much about the trauma he endured. But he liked to draw.

One work he created was a haunting scene of Nazis marching Jews through a forest. It wasn't until I was older that I realized that even though my father didn't talk about the war, he captured his pain on paper.

My own artistic side led me to enrol as a Fine Arts student at Concordia at the age of 19. While my career path ultimately took a different turn, like my father, I found myself harnessing my creativity to process difficult emotional subjects.

A canoe trip I took in Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park in 1987 partly inspired me. Two German medical students were part of our group. As we sat around the campfire one night, I told

them I was a Polish Jew and asked them what their fathers had done during the Second World War. They said they had been medics; healers, not oppressors.

I was relieved but couldn't help but wonder what would I have done if they had answered differently.

Meeting these two young men helped me break through a lot of the fear that had shackled me for much of my adulthood. Suddenly, I could see them for who they were: students experiencing the Canadian wilderness before returning to medical school.

The painting this prompted me to create shows us waiting for our campfire breakfast, while a death train weaves itself through the park's treetops.

Another painting I made also had a significant impact on me. *Tata* depicts my father balancing me as a baby on his lap, while he draws in our living room. A Nazi guard, hiding behind a curtain, holds a snarling dog by a leash while children's shoes peek out from the bottom.

In 2016, this work was admitted to the digital collection of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, along with all of my father's drawings. Art — and time — really can heal. ■

Bronia Zaks is part of a family of Concordia alumni that includes her husband, Asher Waldman, MEng 82, and son, Daniel Waldman, BComm 18.



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Newly appointed Concordia President Graham Carr welcomes Helen Antoniou (left) as incoming chair of the university's Board of Governors and Gina Cody as co-chair of the Campaign for Concordia (with Andrew Molson and Lino A. Saputo Jr.).

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