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OUT OF THE SHADOWS

How Concordians
are exposing
online extremism

Stories that...

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

IN DEFENCE OF BIODIVERSITY

Concordia researchers are focused on the future resilience of our planet's species



FROM NICHE TECHNOLOGY TO MAINSTREAM MARKET

How blockchain-based technologies are reshaping the global financial industry



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How Concordians are exposing online extremism



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GOING PLACES

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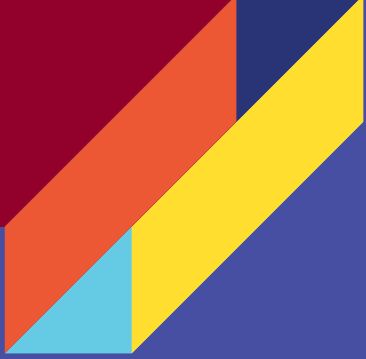


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CORRECTION:
On page 14 of the fall 2021 edition of *Concordia University Magazine*, a gift from the Aune Foundation was noted as \$174,400 instead of \$176,400. We regret the error.

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LEARNING THAT WORKS

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High-speed connection – for better or for worse

When Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web in the 1990s, his vision was for a decentralized, open and free system that would enable knowledge sharing by individual users.

What started as a way for scientists and researchers to quickly and efficiently share their findings soon became part of mainstream culture. Extending across borders and connecting people in ways never thought possible, the information superhighway gave rise to a new era of communication.

More than 4.6 billion people around the world – or close to 60 per cent of the global population – now have access to the internet, according to Statista, a market and consumer data company. While internet technology has benefited society in a multitude of ways, from instant communication and telehealth care to online banking and business transactions, it has also exposed a darker, more dangerous side of the web – one with grave consequences.

It has grown into an incubator for extremists to recruit, plan, finance far-right groups and spread disinformation, conspiracy theories and hate speech. And as more of the world plugs into the web, the internet's potential – for good or for ill – will increase.

With information now so easily available, shared, monitored and manipulated, the question is: Where do we go from here?

In a 2019 interview with *The Guardian*, Berners-Lee offered a hopeful response: “Given how much the web has changed in the past 30 years, it would be defeatist and unimaginative to assume that the web as we know it can't be changed for the better in the next 30. If we give up on building a better web now, then the web will not have failed us. We will have failed the web.”

Concordia researchers and alumni, too, have hope, and offer a way forward in making the web a safer, better-connected place in our cover story (p. 36).

Our spring issue also highlights some of the Concordians working to preserve and protect biodiversity for a more resilient future (p. 26); examines the rise of cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ethereum and how they're changing the global financial system; and introduces some travel and tourism industry leaders in our latest Women and Leadership series (p. 42).



I hope you enjoy reading these and other inspiring stories about how our community of alumni, donors, students and friends stays connected to Concordia. These pieces would not have come together without the support of my colleague and associate editor, Ian Harrison, BComm 01.

He played a key role in this issue, and for that I thank him.

Finally, as another academic term comes to a close, we're welcoming a new cohort of graduates to our alumni family. They – along with those who graduated in 2020 and 2021 – will finally have the opportunity to attend their much-anticipated, in-person convocation ceremonies surrounded by family and peers. My congratulations to each one of them.

Until our next issue, I wish you all the best. And, as always, I invite you to write to me with your feedback and news. I love reading what you have to say. ■

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



CONCORDIA HAS PARTNERED WITH THE MONTREAL CHINESE HOSPITAL TO LAUNCH A **NEW MUSIC THERAPY PROGRAM TO HELP ADDRESS ISOLATION AND LONELINESS AMONG NURSING-HOME RESIDENTS** DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. PART-TIME CREATIVE ARTS THERAPIES FACULTY MEMBER **JOSEPHINE SUNG TAK LEE** WAS HIRED TO DEVELOP THE PROGRAM, WHICH HAS SHOWN A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PAIN MANAGEMENT, MEMORY IMPROVEMENT, ISOLATION, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND END-OF-LIFE CARE.

APPLIED AI INSTITUTE LAUNCHED

Concordia launched its Applied AI Institute on March 18, naming associate professors **Tristan Glatard**, Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, and **Fenwick McKelvey**, Department of Communication Studies, as co-directors. “These new appointments **acknowledge the value of collaboration that we will continue to deliver to society, science and emerging technologies,**” says **Paula Wood-Adams**, Concordia’s interim vice-president of research and graduate studies.

SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

Researchers and faculty members **Monica Mulrennan**, Department of Geography, Planning and Environment, and **Dylan Fraser**, Department of Biology, will play a key role in **FISHES** (Fostering Indigenous Small-scale fisheries for Health, Economy, and food Security) — a national project to **foster the development of sustainable northern fisheries**. The initiative has received \$14.5 million in funding, primarily from Genome Canada and G enome Qu ebec.

NEW BOOK TO COMMEMORATE CONCORDIA AT 50

A **collaborative book project** with submissions from faculty and students past and present will document Concordia’s history as part of its **50th anniversary in 2024**. “We have a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the rich and varied histories that have shaped Concordia,” says university librarian **Guylaine Beaudry**, the book’s editor. “[This] will bring together multiple voices and provide the opportunity to discover the diverse perspectives that have made Concordia the innovative and forward-thinking university that it is today.”

NEW HOME FOR INDIGENOUS SCHOLARSHIP

Concordia’s first recognized Indigenous research centre — the **Indigenous Futures Research Centre (IFRC)** — was launched in November 2021. Co-led by research chairs **Jason Edward Lewis** and **Heather Igloliorte**, the centre will “expand outward and touch every aspect of the university as we go forward,” says Igloliorte. “With new Indigenous faculty joining the university, and future positions realized, **we will grow in dynamic ways.**”



NADIA MYRE, MFA 02, CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR IN INDIGENOUS ARTS PRACTICE, WAS AWARDED MONTREAL'S 2021 PRIX LOUIS-COMTOIS IN NOVEMBER – THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR A CONCORDIAN HAS WON THE ANNUAL PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY ART. SAYS MYRE: "I AM ESPECIALLY THANKFUL TO THE PEOPLE AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED – AND CONTINUE TO SUPPORT – MY WORK AND VISION."

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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

BREAKTHROUGH IN ADDICTION TREATMENT

A study led by **Nuria de Zavalía**, a research associate at Concordia's Center for Studies in Behavioral Neurobiology, and supervised by Department of Psychology Professor **Shimon Amir**, found that alcohol consumption is affected by a protein linked to the circadian rhythm. The researchers believe **the discovery can help treat addiction in humans.**

\$1.9M FOR TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH

As co-principal investigator of a Queen's University-led **project to extend the lifespan of metals**, Department of Mechanical, Industrial and Aerospace Engineering professor **Christian Moreau** has been granted **\$1.9 million in research funds**. "This has the potential to revolutionize our manufacturing processes to produce coatings of exceptional quality that could improve Canada's health, environment and economy," Moreau says. "I am very proud to be part of this team of high-level researchers who tackle crucial challenges for [society]."



CONCORDIA'S **APPLIED SCIENCE HUB** – INAUGURATED IN 2020 ON LOYOLA CAMPUS – HAS EARNED A **LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (LEED) GOLD CERTIFICATION**. THE ARCHITECTS BEHIND THE PROJECT "REALLY ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE," SAYS **MARIE-CLAUDE LAVOIE**, ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT. "IT'S NOT EASY FOR A RESEARCH-INTENSIVE FACILITY TO BE AS ENERGY-EFFICIENT."



CONCORDIA STUDENTS TOPPED THE PODIUM IN BEIJING IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH. AT THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES, **PASCAL DION** (PICTURED FAR LEFT, ON THE PODIUM), A DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE STUDENT, WON A **GOLD MEDAL IN THE MEN'S 5,000-METRE SHORT-TRACK SPEED SKATING RELAY**. WHILE AEROSPACE ENGINEERING STUDENT **MARION THÉNAULT** (MIDDLE) WON THE **FIRST-EVER BRONZE MEDAL IN MIXED TEAM AERIALS**. IN **PARA ICE HOCKEY**, CANADA'S **SILVER-MEDAL-WINNING TEAM** AT THE WINTER PARALYMPICS INCLUDED MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT **ANTON JACOBS-WEBB**.

GAMING WITH A CONSCIENCE

E-CAR SECURITY CONCERNS

In the journal *Computers & Security*, researchers at the **Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science** detailed a **study that assessed the security of electric vehicle charging stations**. The systems that manage these stations could be vulnerable to cyberattacks, with consequences for users and the power grid, the team concluded. Says professor **Chadi Assi**, the paper's supervising author: "We are about to see an exponential rise of electric vehicles, but without a secure charging infrastructure, customers will be reluctant to commit."

It Comes in Waves, a **video game prototype designed by Concordia researchers** with themes of social inequality, was released this past January. Executive producer **Mia Consalvo**, **Canada Research Chair in Game Studies and Design**, says she imagined it as a way to document the experiences of essential workers swept up in the global pandemic. "I wondered what it would be like to be a worker in [a long-term care home], where you were concerned about the people you took care of, you couldn't work from home, but you weren't paid that well either."

HOME RETAILER **BOUCLAIR'S NEW STORE** IN GRIFFINTOWN, MONTREAL, INCLUDES **GALERIE B** – A DEDICATED SPACE FOR EMERGING ARTISTS THAT HAS SHOWCASED WORKS BY A NUMBER OF **FACULTY OF FINE ARTS STUDENTS**.



STUDENTS SCORE BIG AT COMMERCE GAMES

With **11 podium finishes**, a delegation from the **John Molson School of Business** placed **first overall at the Jeux du Commerce**, hosted virtually by Université Laval in January. “We are so proud of our students,” says **Dean Anne-Marie Croteau**. “To deliver such a strong finish across so many disciplines exemplifies the strength and importance of the school’s case competition program.”



MATHEU BELANGER

STINGERS RECEIVER **JAYLAN GREAVES** WAS AWARDED THE **PETER GORMAN TROPHY** AS THE **MOST OUTSTANDING ROOKIE** IN U SPORTS FOOTBALL AT THE VANIER CUP GALA IN QUEBEC CITY IN DECEMBER. “I WAS SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE I BOUGHT INTO THE SYSTEM HERE AT CONCORDIA,” SAID GREAVES AFTER THE CEREMONY.

CANADIAN CYBERSECURITY INNOVATION NETWORK

The Government of Canada announced **\$76.4 million in funding over four years to the National Cybersecurity Consortium (NCC)**. As lead recipient, the NCC will establish the **Cyber Security Innovation Network (CSIN)**, a vital platform for the advancement of cybersecurity in Canada. Gina Cody School dean **Mourad Debbabi** will lead the initiative with other co-directors from universities across Canada to address cybersecurity challenges in terms of research and development, innovation and training, and to help institutions and businesses across the country manage cyberthreats.



PixMob

THE HALFTIME SHOW AT SUPER BOWL LVI GOT A BOOST FROM A COMPANY LED BY **VINCENT LECLERC**, BCOMPSC 03. **PIXMOB** PROVIDED 70,000 NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN, NOVA-POWERED LED LAMINATES TO FANS AT SOFI STADIUM IN LOS ANGELES TO HELP PERFORMERS DR. DRE, SNOOP DOGG, EMINEM, MARY J. BLIGE AND KENDRICK LAMAR ELECTRIFY THE CROWD.



SABINE PLUMMER IS CONCORDIA'S LATEST **RHODES SCHOLAR**. THE CHEMISTRY UNDERGRADUATE, WHO WON A NATURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL AWARD IN 2020, WILL ATTEND GRADUATE COURSES AT THE **UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD** THIS FALL.

ONE FOR THE ARCHIVES

The publications collection of Concordia’s **Records Management and Archives (RMA)** has **officially migrated to the Internet Archive**, a digitization process that began in 2014. The collection, which dates back to 1926, includes *The Loyola News* (1938-1969), *The Georgian* (1936-1970) and *The Thursday Report* (1977-2005). “Our new search capability is an indispensable and efficient tool [that] provides users with rich and valuable information on Concordia’s history,” says archives technician **Caroline Sigouin**. ■

'I have hope for future generations'

Award-winning artist Janice Toulouse shows how Indigenous traditions can offer guidance

JULIE BARLOW, MA 94

In Ojibwe painter Janice Toulouse's 2017 acrylic painting "Tradition in Transformation," curling vines and red flowers frame an eight-pointed star composed of vibrant blocks of purple, turquoise, red and yellow. It's a bold, colourful artwork that offers a message.

"The star is a symbol of hope in Anishinaabe teaching," says Toulouse. "I painted this work to offer healing to our people and anyone else who would help bring balance for Mother Earth."

The 66-year-old artist, who graduated from Concordia with a Master of Fine Arts in 1985, has produced figurative and abstract paintings depicting the conservation of nature and historical events that commemorate Indigenous people throughout her 40-year career.

"My work speaks of our traditions that remain constant while we learn the old teachings to guide us in the transformation of today's world."

Toulouse is candid about how difficult life as an Indigenous artist has been. She recalls her career as a mix of inspiring and frustrating moments, beginning with university.

"Being an Anishinaabe student at that time was extremely challenging. I was very much alone, far from home and without support from my community." Toulouse says she was the target of racist attacks from several students in her program. Yet she maintains that her years at Concordia helped build the confidence that shaped her career.

"I had some wonderful teachers and made lifelong friendships with fellow students and instructors," she says. "I also found my voice at Concordia. I learned how to speak in public. My graduate advisor [Irene Whittome] even recommended I become a public speaker," says the artist, who was declared the first Indigenous person to graduate with a degree in fine arts from the university.



MARINA DODIS



EMILY CARR UNIVERSITY — NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE CAMPUS

"TRADITION IN TRANSFORMATION," JANICE TOULOUSE, MFA 85, ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 65 X 106 INCHES, 2017.

'I NAIVELY THOUGHT ALL DOORS WOULD OPEN'

After graduating, Toulouse moved to France to teach fine art at l'École supérieure d'art d'Aix-en-Provence (ESA Aix). The artist still divides her time between her home in Meaford, Ontario — on the southern shore of Georgian Bay in the traditional territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation — and Paris.

When she returned to Canada in 1995, Toulouse taught drawing, painting and Indigenous art history at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design in Vancouver.

She has participated in dozens of solo and group exhibitions and won numerous residencies and awards, including a REVEAL Indigenous Art Award in 2017 and a fellowship at the Smithsonian National Museum of the

American Indian in New York in 2002. Yet finding galleries to show her work has been a challenge, she says.

"I didn't realize it was going to be such a struggle. As an Ojibwe woman, I naively thought all the doors would open. But when I showed them my work, galleries would say things like, 'We already have a native artist.' And I would say, 'But you don't have me!'"

Toulouse remains hopeful about the future for both Indigenous artists and Indigenous people in general. In "Tradition in Transformation," which was recently acquired by the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation on Manitoulin Island, two blocks of alternating purple and white stripes represent Two Row Wampum, Indigenous people in their canoe, and non-Indigenous people in their boat travelling side by side.

"The two groups can travel the same river in parallel, and neither interrupts the other's journey," she says. "Things have improved for native artists in recent years. I have hope for our future generations." ■

Gina Cody School graduate is 'one of the best cricket players in the country'

Meet software engineer and wicket-keeper Shreyas V. Movva

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

Shreyas V. Movva, MEng 19, once doubted whether he had a future in cricket.

The batsman and wicket-keeper's confidence was badly shaken after a difficult match in his home state of Karnataka, India. Frustrated, he broke down in front of a teammate.

"There were a lot of hopes on me," he recalls. "And I failed to perform."

Redemption came soon enough when Movva scored 150 runs in the next match.

A century in cricket — when a batsman scores 100 or more runs — is a remarkable feat. That Movva did so with a legend of the game in the stands was the cherry on top.

"My father was a fast bowler and he used to tell me that Gundappa Viswanath was the finest batsman he had ever seen. He was there to watch his kid play — and I was smashing boundaries against him."

This type of command on the pitch helped Movva power Canada to a place in the ICC T20 World Cup qualifiers this past February in Oman. (T20, or Twenty20, is a more abbreviated form of the game than One Day International and test cricket.)

While Canada did not ultimately advance to the World Cup, scheduled for this fall in Australia, Movva and company did secure wins over the Philippines, Germany and Bahrain en route to a fifth-place finish.



DAVE ST-AMANT / CBC

CONCORDIA WAS A CONDUIT TO CRICKET IN MONTREAL, SAYS **SHREYAS V. MOVVA**, MENG 19.

SUCCESS IN CRICKET, SUCCESS IN LIFE

"Shreyas is one of the best in the country," says Subrata Mandal of the Quebec Cricket Federation. "He reads the game well and has a real captaincy's sense."

After Movva arrived in Montreal in 2016, a Concordia contact connected him with the city's cricket community.

"Soon after that I played in a tournament where a bunch of us represented the university, unofficially. I performed well and that started my journey in cricket here."

While at the Gina Cody School, Movva juggled a part-time job, graduate courses and cricket practice. He now works as a software quality analyst for 123Loadboard, a Montreal provider of logistics services for truckers.

The company has been especially supportive, says Movva. So, too, has his family.

"When I was struggling, my mom told me, 'Where there is a will, there is a way.' Then during my master's, my sister helped me a lot mentally, emotionally and financially."



MOVVA WITH **GINA CODY**, MENG 81, PHD 89, AT CONVOCATION IN 2019

Movva's current objective is to help Canada rise up the international cricket ranks. This could lay the groundwork for another ambition — one that involves his alma mater.

"I would love to help start a varsity cricket program at Concordia. I think we would have strong encouragement from South Asian, West Indian and perhaps other groups at the university."

Stingers cricket? Has a nice ring to it. ■

Physiotherapy without borders

From acrobats and athletes to grateful patients in Guangzhou, Jun Zou helps heal the pain

ALEXANDER HULS

On a board inside the Guangzhou United Family Hospital in southern China is an array of thank-you notes. One says, “I’m feeling like a new person after your treatment.” Another: “Amazing! Amazing! Amazing!” Addressed to physiotherapist and Concordia graduate Jun Zou, BSc 17, the notes represent the culmination of a unique journey.

Zou studied clinical medicine at Nanjing University in China, graduating in 2001 with a master’s degree specializing in orthopedic surgery. He worked various medical jobs for 10 years before moving to Canada in 2011. As an immigrant in Montreal, Zou faced an obstacle familiar to many: He wasn’t accredited as a physician.

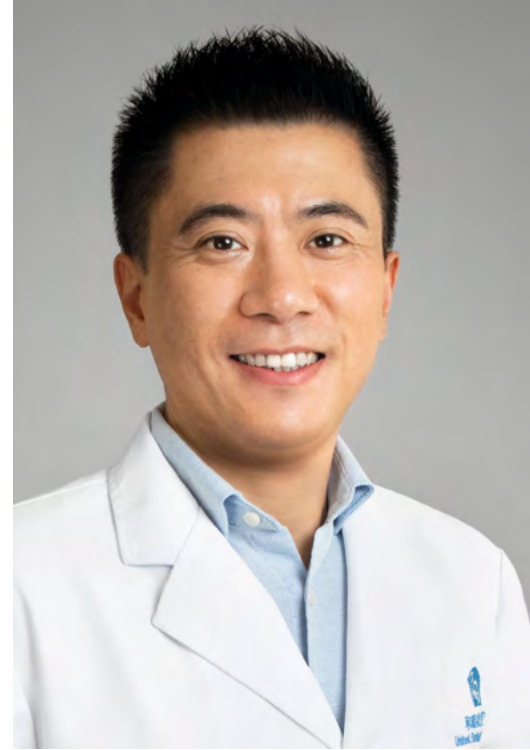
He took jobs in restaurants and warehouses while figuring out his next move. “I realized no matter what you do, if you have a warm heart to help people, you can do it in different ways.”

He eventually decided to pursue athletic therapy at Concordia in 2012.

By then, he was in his late 30s and the oldest student in the classroom. Because of his career and experience in China, students would often ask him questions about anatomy and medical terminology. Zou gained something in return, too. “At that time, my English wasn’t great, but I was happy to answer their questions. By doing so, I improved my English. They were helping me as well.”

Zou also credits his time at Concordia for cultivating his approach to physical therapy. “It’s holistic. We treat people as a whole human being, not just as a part,” he says. If a patient comes in with knee pain, for example, Zou considers why the body has changed to produce that pain and how the problem may not be the knee itself, but caused by the pelvis or misalignment of the spine.

Zou practices what he calls an individualized concept. “Everyone has a different history of injury. Everyone has a different pattern of movement, walks differently. So you have to assess each individual in a personalized way and consider those components.”



JUN ZOU, BSC 17



ZOU’S WALL OF
THANK-YOU NOTES
FROM PATIENTS.

“WE TREAT PEOPLE
AS A WHOLE HUMAN
BEING, NOT JUST AS A
PART,” SAYS ZOU.

CHANGING THE GAME

After graduating from Concordia in 2017, Zou used these approaches with athletes, working with hockey, soccer, American football and rugby players, as well as Chinese athletes sent to Montreal to train for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games.

In 2018, he was hired by Cirque du Soleil as the head therapist for a show set to run in China, which led him to move back to his home country. One year later, Zou applied for and was offered his current job at Guangzhou United Family Hospital, a state-of-the-art facility that opened in 2018.

There, Zou is transforming care for the patients he serves. “Most people in China are not aware of the profession of physical therapy,” he says. As one of the few practitioners, Zou’s patient schedule has reached more than 80 per cent capacity within three months. He says he’s been able to heal many patients — who had been seeking treatment from other doctors for years — within five or six sessions.

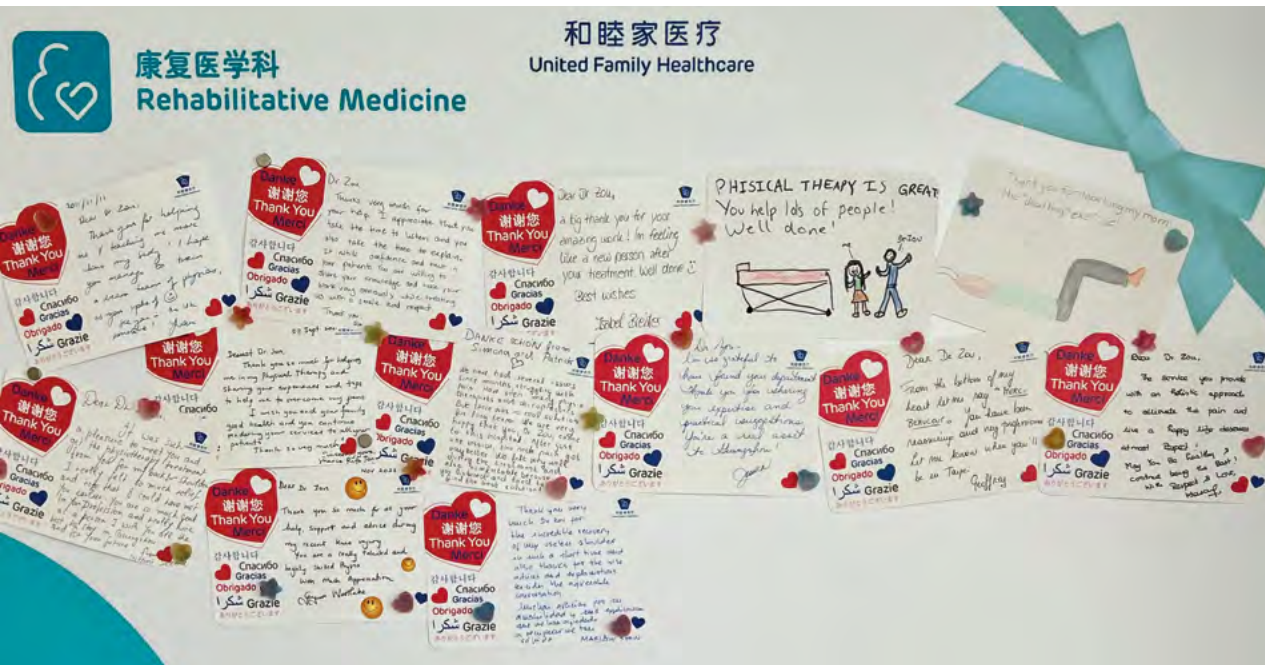


ZOU IS TRANSFORMING CARE FOR THE PATIENTS HE SERVES IN GUANGZHOU, CHINA.

“With 90 per cent of my current patients, I spend a lot of time talking about modifications to their daily posture and habits to prevent future injuries. Most of them have no acute injury. They are chronic conditions caused by improper posture or bad ADL [activities of daily living] habits. So it becomes more important for me to educate them. What is a better way to sit when seated for a long time? What is a better way to use the computer? What is a better position to sleep in?”

It’s that combination of treatment and prevention that has earned Zou all those thank-you notes. And it’s that gratitude that motivates him to help more people in the future, primarily by training others in physiotherapy.

“I work eight hours a day, so I can help a maximum of eight people each day. The total number is not huge, but if I stay here for a couple more years, and if I can successfully build up a team, that number will be amplified a lot,” he says. As, presumably, will the number of thank-you cards on that wall. ■



KAHÉRAKWAS DONNA GOODLEAF, DIRECTOR OF DECOLONIZING CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY, AUTHORED THE PROPOSAL FOR THE INDIGENOUS LAND-BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM.



Montreal family funds new Indigenous Land-Based Education Program

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01,
WITH FILES FROM
KAHÉRAKWAS DONNA GOODLEAF

A gift of almost half a million dollars from Montreal's Chamandy Foundation to the Campaign for Concordia will support a new Indigenous Land-Based Education Program at the university.

The primary objective of the 15-credit microprogram is to offer Indigenous and non-Indigenous students an Indigenous-led, land-based education platform that provides immersive survival-skill experiences. Courses that examine land and water rights, climate change, food sovereignty and other political and socio-economic concerns impacting Indigenous communities and society at large will also be included.

"This is an important program that will positively contribute to the health and well-being of students," says Kahérakwas Donna Goodleaf, Concordia's director of Decolonizing Curriculum and Pedagogy. "It will reconnect them to the land and deepen their understanding of self in relationship to the land, to kinships, to community and to the responsibilities

that come with gaining a better understanding of addressing the impacts of climate change as future leaders in their communities."

President Graham Carr adds: "Concordia is extremely grateful to the Chamandy family for this generous gift. It supports our commitment to advance the work of our Indigenous Directions Action Plan. It aligns with our pledge to provide experiential-learning opportunities for all students, including those who have not always been fully served by the university. It supports our desire to partner meaningfully with Indigenous communities. And it puts land, water and the environment at the heart of curriculum and well-being. It's especially powerful that a foundation based here in Tiohtià:ke [Montreal], as Concordia is, has stepped forward so decisively to support this bold vision."

TOOLS TO SUPPORT SOCIETY AND ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

Goodleaf authored the proposal for the program that was submitted to the Chamandy Foundation.

Floriane Lemoine, a representative for the non-profit, says that "when we received it we quickly had the sense that it aligned

with the mission of the foundation."

"The Chamandy family is very passionate about nature and the environment. They have been humble, quiet philanthropists for a very long time and endeavour to stay attuned to the current needs of society, which I think this gift reflects."

The microprogram's launch is the result of a partnership between the Chamandy Foundation, the Kahnawake-based Ionhntionhnhékwen Wilderness Skills and Concordia's First Peoples Studies and School of Community and Public Affairs. It comes after a successful pilot project last fall, in which students confirmed that the experience contributed positively to their health and well-being, bolstered their connections to land and cultural identity and motivated them to learn more about what land-based education has to offer.

This was tremendously encouraging, says Lemoine.

"The foundation's hope is that there will be sufficient support for this to eventually become an accredited program to enable students with different gifts to go to university and find courses suited to their needs. We also hope that this gift inspires other donors." ■

Calgary-based donor bolsters Social Justice Centre at Faculty of Arts and Science

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

The work of Concordia's Social Justice Centre has been strengthened thanks to a \$1-million gift from the Flanagan Foundation.

The gift will support the operations and activities of the centre, originally launched in 2019 with \$200,000 in seed funding from the Calgary-based foundation.

"This new donation from the Flanagan Foundation expands social-justice research and teaching at Concordia," says President Graham Carr. "Our founding institutions, Sir George Williams University and Loyola College, pioneered the academic study of social justice, and we thank the foundation for recognizing our university's long-standing commitment towards the advancement of equality and progress for all Canadians."

"Social justice is an urgent issue that must be addressed from multiple perspectives," says Flanagan Foundation founder and co-director Jacqueline Flanagan, C.M. "Accelerating research, dialogue and fellowships in social justice is a priority shared by our foundation and by Concordia."

Natasha Pashak, MA 10, co-director of the Flanagan Foundation, says: "We chose to give to Concordia's Social Justice Centre to further the understanding of the effects of poverty, racism, oppression and other forms of inequality. The centre will advance the aspirations of my late father, Barry Pashak, whose life's work was to advocate for the inherent dignity of all people."

Calgary native Barry Pashak was an instructor at Mount Royal University as well as a two-term New Democrat member of Alberta's legislative assembly. As a civic leader, he worked hard throughout his life to eliminate barriers to social justice. He died in February 2021 at the age of 83.

"The Flanagan Foundation's generosity will strengthen our centre in a variety of ways," confirms Pablo Gilabert, Department of Philosophy professor and co-director of the Social Justice Centre. "This gift will help us attract international talent through more fellowships — one of which will now be named after Barry Pashak — foster increased dialogue through signature events and promote research to a wider audience."

Adds Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement: "This gift advances our university's ideals

"THE CENTRE WILL ADVANCE THE ASPIRATIONS OF MY LATE FATHER, **BARRY PASHAK**," SAYS **NATASHA PASHAK**, MA 10, CO-DIRECTOR OF THE FLANAGAN FOUNDATION.



and values. We thank the Flanagan Foundation — the founding supporter of our Social Justice Centre — for investing in next-generation teaching and learning to advance social justice for all." ■

PRESIDENT **GRAHAM CARR** AND **PAUL CHESSER**, BA 94, GRDIP 97, VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT, COMMEMORATED THE FLANAGAN FOUNDATION'S GIFT AT A SPECIAL HYBRID EVENT IN DECEMBER.



Former standout athlete champion Stingers basketball

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01,
WITH FILES FROM
STINGERS ATHLETICS

Long-time donor George Lengvari, BA 63, has given \$2 million to varsity basketball in Montreal — \$1 million each to the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen Now and Made by McGill; the Campaign for Our Third Century.

The simultaneous donation, celebrated by both schools at a hybrid event at Concordia on December 14, is thought to be the first such gift in the history of university sports in Canada.

“I was very fortunate to have the support I needed to play basketball and advance my education at the same time,” says Lengvari, a Concordia Sports Hall of Famer and the recipient of the 2021 U SPORTS Mitchell Family Alumni of the Year Award. “I want to pass this on to the student athletes of tomorrow.”

The seven-figure gift will support players through annual awards — five for the men’s program at both schools and, at Concordia, an annual award for the women’s program named after Lengvari’s mother, Trudy Lengvari. Funds will also be used to enhance coaching, training, recruitment and other activities.

“Varsity basketball imbued in George a sense of teamwork and achievement that he later applied in business,” says President Graham Carr. “We thank him for graciously supporting his alma matters, Concordia and McGill, so that the next generation of students can triumph on and off the court.”



LEFT TO RIGHT: PRESIDENT **GRAHAM CARR**; STINGERS MEN’S BASKETBALL COACH **RASTKO POPOVIC**, BCOMM 05; **INEZ LENGVARI**; STINGERS FORWARD **SAMI GHANDOUR**; **GEORGE LENGVARI**, BA 63; **SUZANNE FORTIER**, PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY; **MARC WEINSTEIN**, VICE-PRINCIPAL, UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT, MCGILL; **RYAN THORNE**, MCGILL REDBIRDS MEN’S BASKETBALL COACH; AND **PAUL CHESSER**, VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT.

Lengvari obtained his bachelor’s degree in economics in 1963 from Loyola College, one of Concordia’s founding institutions. He later enrolled at McGill and completed a civil law degree in 1966. A star forward at both schools, the annual George Lengvari Cup was inaugurated in 2019 in his honour.

A COACH’S LEGACY ENDURES

The legacy of legendary Sir George Williams University basketball coach Magnus (Mag) Flynn, who passed away in 2005, will live on thanks to the generosity of former player Richard MacKay, BA 58.

MacKay, who played for Flynn as a member of the Georgians in the late 1950s, recently gave \$100,000 to support Stingers men’s basketball.

“Mag was instrumental in convincing me to return to school [to get] a college degree, something that changed my life,” MacKay told the *Montreal Gazette* in 2004.

MacKay went on to an exceptional varsity basketball career and was a member of the 1957-58 championship team that was inducted into the Concordia Sports Hall of Fame in 1999. ■



A SPECIAL JERSEY WAS DESIGNED BY CONCORDIA TO COMMEMORATE LENGVARI’S JOINT GIFT TO HIS ALMA MATERS.



MAGNUS (MAG) FLYNN SPENT MORE THAN 30 YEARS AT SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY AS A BASKETBALL COACH AND ADMINISTRATOR.

Opera singers support Department of Music students through planned gift

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

United through music — and with a little help from Concordia — soprano Maria Diamantis and tenor Dimitris Ilias, BFA 92, GrDip 99, have built a life and created a community together.

As the co-founders of Chroma Musika, the opera singers and musicians have put on performances, organized seminars and recorded albums devoted to ancient Greek music and contemporary music from Canada and Europe.

They have employed scores of local musicians as a result and, what's more, given thousands of Quebec schoolchildren an opportunity to discover and make symphonic music through special concerts — many of them facilitated by the Concordia community.

These accomplishments earned them the Medal of the National Assembly of Quebec in May 2021.

More recently, Diamantis and Ilias decided to make a bequest to Concordia's Department of Music. When they agreed to a video interview to discuss their philanthropy, they requested that it take place at Oscar Peterson Concert Hall on Loyola Campus. Diamantis and Ilias know the stage well.

"This is our second home," says Ilias. "Not only did I perform a solo for the hall's inaugural concert in 1990, this is where Maria and I have done the majority of our productions.

"This hall has seen thousands of our Chroma Musika children singing in different projects. Every time I come here, I feel such warmth and hospitality and fondly remember my student days. It's a magnificent place and I'm very honoured to have been a part of it for so long."

Another Concordia link that prompted the planned gift: The couple met at the university.

"I was auditioning to get into the music department in both violin and voice, and Maria was recommended to accompany me on the piano," recalls Ilias.

Adds Diamantis: "I remember being excited to meet you because you were also of Greek descent and a musician to boot."

It was destiny, say the couple, and "kind of like an opera," too.

Ultimately, says Ilias, a planned gift made intuitive sense.

"For myself, it was very, very important to be able to give back to the university that gave so much to me. It's the least I can do. It's gratifying to know that for as long as Concordia is around, one music student will receive a scholarship every year through this gift."

Diamantis says Concordia is like family. "Because we decided not to have children of our own, we just felt it would be important to give back and build a legacy in this way." ■



OSCAR PETERSON CONCERT HALL HAS BEEN A SECOND HOME TO MARIA DIAMANTIS AND DIMITRIS ILIAS, BFA 92, GRDIP 99.

3 gifts target tomorrow's tech-sector professionals

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01, WITH FILES FROM LOUISE MORGAN, GRDIP 99, AND DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

Three recent gifts to the Campaign for Concordia have provided considerable support to students enrolled in programs addressing the needs of Canada's 21st-century economy.

'WOMEN CODERS ARE KEY'

A \$45,000 gift from Quadbridge will fund annual scholarships for two female undergraduate students — one in Business Technology Management at John Molson and one at the Gina Cody School.

"We notice more women in business development and project management, yet very few in more complex IT roles, such as coding," says Quadbridge CEO PJ Emam. "Women coders are key to making technology more appealing to women."

Adds Mourad Debbabi, dean of the Gina Cody School: "We express our gratitude to Quadbridge for its generous donation, which will enable us to attract more female students to our excellent academic programs and thereby enhance the diversity of our student population."

'WHAT DRIVES ME IS OPENING DOORS FOR OTHERS'

After a tsunami struck Sri Lanka on December 26, 2004, Ian Selvarajah, BComm 07, whose family had escaped the country's civil war when he was a child, watched the disaster unfold from Montreal.

Selvarajah, then an undergraduate, decided to transform a Co-op work term into a relief effort. Within six months,



QUADBRIDGE

QUADBRIDGE CEO PJ EMAM



ULRIKE DE BRENTANI, BCOMM 68, MBA 73



IAN SELVARAJAH, BCOMM 07

he had helped rebuild a church and launch a microfinance program with pivotal support from the university.

In 2020, Selvarajah showed his affinity for his alma mater with a \$33,000 gift to support students enrolled in business technology management.

More recently, Selvarajah founded Someone Like Me, a non-profit that advances diversity in leadership. It also offers mentorships and financial support to Concordia bursary recipients.

"What drives me is opening doors for others," Selvarajah says. "If someone like me can do it, so can you."

BUSINESS SCHOOL PIONEER GIVES BACK

A generous gift from a Concordia trailblazer will also support the Business Technology Management program at the John Molson School.

Ulrike de Brentani, BComm 68, MBA 73 — whose career began at Loyola College's Faculty of Commerce in 1970 and lasted until her retirement in 2017 — has donated more than \$32,000 to fund scholarships for Canadian women undergraduates.

"I wanted to donate to an area that is relevant to the Canadian economy and where women can make a valuable contribution," she says.

Adds Dean Anne-Marie Croteau: "Ulrike was an inspiring professor, researcher and administrator. She mentored female colleagues, fought for pay equity and spearheaded research policy developments for the faculty. It's fitting that her legacy now includes this scholarship fund that will encourage more women to contribute to such a dynamic field." ■

Donor support propels Concordia Institute for Water, Energy and Sustainable Systems

DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

A new gift of \$30,000 from Marilyn Simpson, BA 84, will help protect Quebec's lakes and rivers through support for the Concordia Institute for Water, Energy and Sustainable Systems (CIWESS).

"It has always been important for me to consider the outside world, whether it's the local or global community," says Simpson.

After she graduated from Concordia in 1984, Simpson became a community nurse in Montreal when she noticed that "so many needs in the community weren't being met."

She later worked in community health in Markham, Ontario, on difficult cases that involved child abuse.

Simpson now spends much of her time in the Laurentians, close to Lac Barron, north of Montreal. Her proximity to the lake prompted her concerns about the waterways in her community.

"My mission has been to make people realize that just because it looks clear, doesn't mean it's healthy," she says.

This mission inspired Simpson to support the CIWESS, which prepares students to be at the forefront of sustainable-development practices. The latest gift from the long-time Concordia donor will contribute to the salary of a research associate and assist with water and sediment analyses from lakes such as Lac Caron, Lac Johanne and Lac Barron.

Importantly, the gift will also encourage knowledge that can be used to help address water sustainability both locally and around the world.

Says Simpson: "I think there is a holistic aspect to health, but first and foremost, people need clean, fresh water." ■



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

#GivingTuesday tally 'surpassed expectations'

The Concordia community raised an impressive \$385,000 on #GivingTuesday – an annual global day for philanthropy held last November 30 – for more than 60 projects and initiatives at the university. The show of support for Stingers athletics and the Student Emergency and Food Fund was particularly strong.

"The generosity surpassed our expectations," says D'Arcy Ryan, MA 01, MBA 09, director of Recreation and Athletics. "We are overwhelmed. And it's not just the financial support – many alumni and friends reached out with emails and phone calls. To know so many people recall with great fondness their experiences [at Concordia] is really remarkable."

Adds David B. Kierans, BA 75, Campaign for Concordia donor and former executive vice-president of the Concordia University Alumni Association (CUAA): "Generosity among members of a community strengthens bonds and encourages us to work towards common goals. Giving together is a reminder that we are not alone in this life and that we are all stronger as a community." ■

Memorial fund honours Jean-Marc Vallée, who inspired film students and alumni weeks before his death

IAN HARRISON, BCOMM 01

A memorial fund in honour of Jean-Marc Vallée has been established — to top up a donation the famed director personally made to the university — in support of future filmmakers at Concordia’s Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

Vallée, whose work included the films *C.R.A.Z.Y.*, *Dallas Buyers Club* and *Wild* as well as the television dramas *Big Little Lies* and *Sharp Objects*, passed away on Christmas Day at the age of 58.

His untimely death was shortly after his final public appearance — at Concordia’s annual Wild Talks Lecture Series on November 16, 2021. His discussion with long-time artistic collaborator and cinematographer Yves Bélanger, BFA 84, moderated by director Tim Southam, focused on the creative process.

About 300 guests attended the first public event at Concordia since the onset of the pandemic. The crowd included mostly film students, alumni and a special appearance by Dominique Ollivier, Montreal city councillor and executive committee chair.

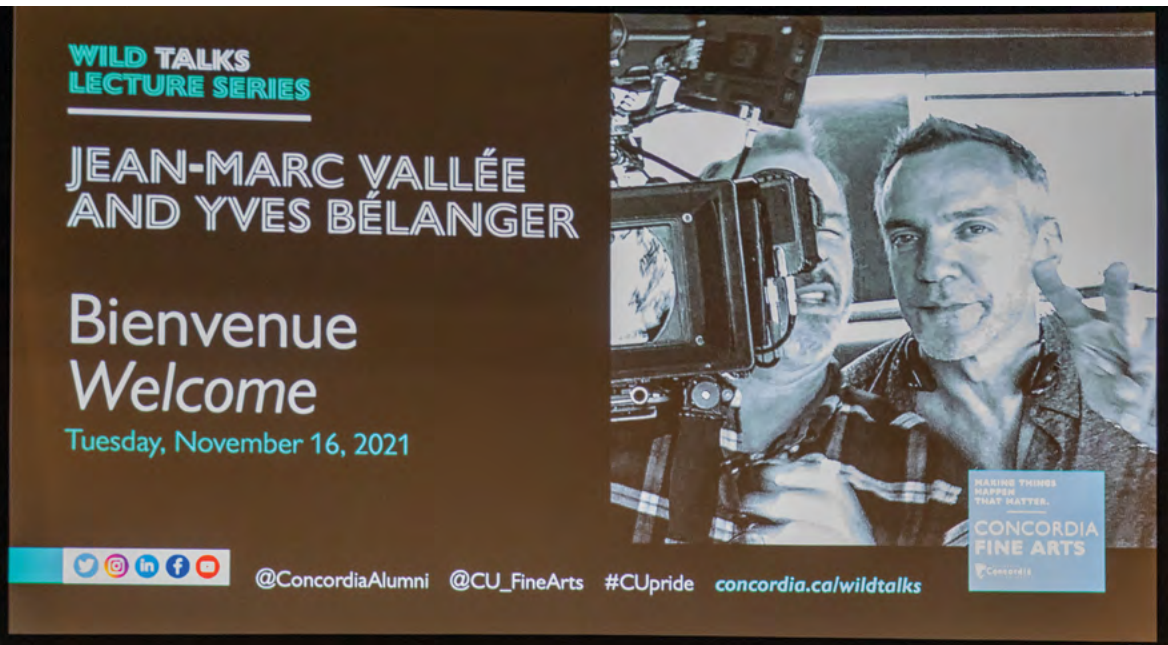
“The Hoppenheim School, the largest cinema school in the country, gets 700 student applicants, but only has space for 70,” announced President Graham Carr, who opened the event with Faculty of Fine Arts dean Annie Gérin. “Our objective is to triple that number in time for Concordia’s 50th anniversary in 2024.”

‘CHOOSING A FILM IS CHOOSING YOUR LIFESTYLE’

Vallée, who generously gave students an additional private master class, focused his hour-long public talk on technique. He showed clips from 2013’s *Dallas Buyers Club*, which netted Academy Awards for actors Matthew McConaughey and Jared Leto, as well as excerpts from 2015’s *Demolition* and *Big Little Lies*, for which Vallée won a Primetime Emmy Award in 2017.

“We’re not just here to learn from these two gentlemen, but to steal from them,” quipped moderator Tim





CONCORDIA



JEAN-MARC VALLÉE (CENTRE) PASSED AWAY ON DECEMBER 25, 2021, WEEKS AFTER HIS APPEARANCE AT CONCORDIA'S WILD TALKS.

Southam, past president of the Directors Guild of Canada.

Bélangier urged students not to be afraid to shoot continuously with handheld cameras and a minimum of equipment — a style Vallée refined.

“I was afraid actors would think it was weird, but they love it,” said Bélangier. “Everybody becomes more free.”

Vallée remarked that choosing a script is akin to choosing a lifestyle. “I always want to react to the script. You want to wake up happy to serve the story because ultimately, you will be engaged with that story for two or three years of your life.”

The director also shared an exclusive update about what was to be his next project: a feature film about John Lennon and Yoko Ono. “I wrote the script during the pandemic and delivered the draft on October 9 — which I only realized after is John Lennon’s birthdate.”

Vallée is survived by his sons, Émile Vallée, BFA 20, and Alex. ■

Support the next generation of filmmakers with a gift to the Jean-Marc Vallée Memorial Fund:
concordia.ca/donate/jmv

Lights, cameras and plenty of action

Concordians are thriving in the world of streaming media

DOUG SWEET

In the beginning, there was the tube. And the antenna. And the network, with a programming schedule. Millions of people tuned in to watch the same program at the same time — television worked this way for decades.

While some technologies have since helped advance the way viewers engage with content, not much changed until the turn of the millennium, when key developments allowed broadcasters to fling programs over the internet. Streaming had arrived.

Faster connection speeds moved the needle in a big way. From 2005 to 2020, streaming revenue in the United States

rocketed from \$7.1 billion to \$24.1 billion, according to data produced by Grand View Research, PwC and Statista. As new platforms emerge and access to high-speed broadband increases, some industry watchers expect the figure to reach \$42 billion by 2025.

Unsurprisingly, many Concordians have found homes in the streaming industry. Alumni, some in senior positions, work at many of the major streaming enterprises, including Netflix, Disney, Crave, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Paramount+ and Apple TV+.

Here's how four graduates are making their mark in the streaming world.



AUDREY GARDINER, BA 01 NETFLIX

Faculty of Arts and Science graduate Audrey Gardiner has a job to make cinephiles drool. As head of Netflix's global independent and documentary film licensing efforts, she spends a lot of her time watching movies at the company's Los Angeles offices.

"On a typical day, my team and I are screening finished films we can pick up globally or multi-regionally," says Gardiner, who also manages U.S.-based studio film-licensing partnerships.

"We're reviewing lists of available new-release and catalogue films from distribution partners in the U.S. and around the world, and working through longer-term strategic partnerships. It's been amazing to work for as long as I have at a global company and enter new markets."

Part of what fascinates Gardiner about her industry is the way streaming can broaden viewers' horizons.

"Something we say a lot at Netflix is that 'great stories can come from anywhere and be loved everywhere,'" she explains. "I think this will continue to be true as more people adopt streaming as one of their primary means of entertainment, and are able to discover and escape with film and TV from every corner of the world, not just the country they're living in."



KERRY SHAW

Gardiner was able to use her background in journalism and political science to pivot to entertainment fairly quickly.

"Concordia helped foster my curiosity and passion — two things that have really driven me."

While Gardiner's longer-term plan includes leading a company getting into streaming for the first time, she's excited by Netflix's ability to appeal to a worldwide audience.

"We're working with incredible storytellers in Hollywood and around the world and have really raised the bar over the last few years," she says. Given its 27 nominations at the 2022 Academy Awards — including two for Best Picture — it looks like she's right.

VIVEK PANDEY, MENG 10

DISNEY+

As senior network engineer at Disney+, Vivek Pandey is focused on the IT infrastructure side of streaming media. The resident of Mountain View, California, is convinced streaming is here to stay and that most platforms will create content rather than pursuing licensing deals to broadcast someone else's productions.

Like many platforms, Disney+ has carved out its own niche, as it aims to capture a big share of the youth market with powerful brands such as Pixar, Marvel and Star Wars, not to mention Disney itself.

"Being on the engineering and implementation team, my responsibility is to ensure new data centres are deployed on time for launch in new



regions," says Pandey, who earned a bachelor's degree in Thailand in 2005. "I also work on projects to continually improve the user experience."

At Concordia's Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, Pandey found good value in the Electrical and Computer Engineering program and one bonus of note: "the vibrant city of Montreal!"

And he's not done with his education. He'll be enrolled at the University of

Southern California's Marshall School of Business this summer and his sights are set on a more product-oriented role at Disney.

"I have always been flexible in my career, pursuing that next opportunity all the time," Pandey says. "Concordia helped establish the foundations of my career and the analytical skills required to advance my journey in IT engineering."

ISABELLE SULLIVAN, BA 06

CRAVE

As director of strategic planning at Bell Media, Isabelle Sullivan manages the programming of its Crave streaming service, as well as pay-TV services Super Écran and Cinépop. These days, her focus is on expanding Crave's reach in Quebec and the rest of francophone Canada.

Sullivan began at Bell in 2013, as director of original programming for its French specialty channels, having worked previously for a variety of digital producers, managing relationships with the likes of Disney, AMC, NBC Sports, CBC, Radio-Canada and Astral.

Cultural diversity is a big plus, Sullivan says, especially for a bilingual service like Crave, unique among Canadian streaming companies for that very reason.

"We're lucky in Quebec because the French community has its own star

system, which has helped our industry stay so strong," she notes. "We were able to keep shooting during the pandemic, which allowed us to premiere amazing shows to strong numbers. Original content for Canadian streamers remains the key, and a big differentiator and subscriber driver.

"Having strong original programs in both English and French allows us to attract bilingual viewers looking for different types of content."

Sullivan was fortunate to get her start right out of high school, moving up from intern, first in production space, and then to the broadcast side of things.

As an undergraduate in communication studies, she focused on television.

"Learning communications theory helped me understand certain decisions and the inner workings of the TV industry," she says. "I also made great



contacts who have followed me through the years.

"Being equipped with relevant experience and a degree, a strong work ethic and a little bit of luck helped me get to where I am today."

SARAH BECKETT, BFA 04

PARAMOUNT+

“The only thing I think about when I take on a new project is, ‘Is this a good story?’” says Sarah Beckett, a California-based writer currently working at Paramount+ who has a wealth of experience in streaming and cable television.

“In my line of work, good storytelling is everything. What’s so wonderful about this expanding world is seeing doors open for storytellers who would never have had a hope in hell of getting their show on a traditional network, or even cable,” she says. “There is an element of increased risk-taking that has led to the discovery of some really terrific new voices.”

Yet there are fewer differences of note between streaming and cable, adds Beckett, with the possible exception of the former’s flexible episode lengths and greater freedom when it comes to things like profanity.

“Streaming is the future of home entertainment, whether people love it or hate it,” she says. “I suspect we will eventually see some type of bundling of platforms, sort of like the old-school cable model.”

So what is a typical day like for Beckett?

“The bulk of my responsibility is writing,” she says. “Since the start of the pandemic, writers’ rooms have just about all gone virtual, so I’m on Zoom most of the day.

“My office is a 1963 Streamline trailer 50 feet from my door in Joshua Tree, where I recently moved from Los Angeles with my husband and daughter. I no longer have to commute 10-plus hours a week, so that’s been a major bright spot,” says Beckett, who is listed as a co-producer on an upcoming crime-drama series called *Happy Face*.

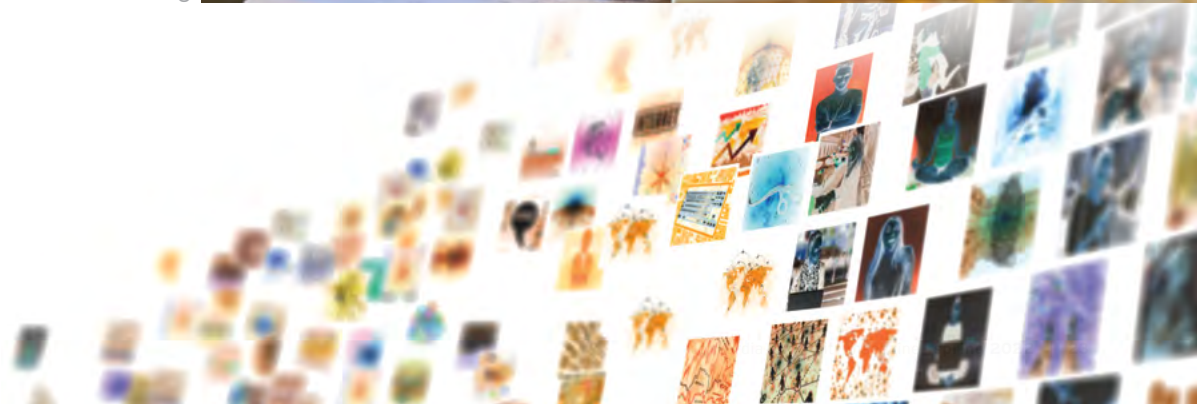
Following graduation from Concordia’s Faculty of Fine Arts, Beckett worked with a Montreal documentary film producer, then as a researcher and writer for a true-crime series at Toronto-based Cineflix.

“It has always been interesting,” she says of her career. “To new writers, I would simply say: Live a life worth writing about, love the work and actually do the work. That’s something my first boss in L.A. used to say — there’s no secret handshake, no one person who will make your career happen for you. Just do the work.” ■

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



CHRISTOPHER KUBEK



'He lived each day trying to make the world a better place'

Sisters Sherin and Aya Al-Safadi establish Concordia bursary in memory of their father, Ruchdi Al-Safadi

SHERIN AL-SAFADI,
MBA 10, PHD 14

The world lost a passionate humanitarian with the biggest heart in the summer of 2021 — a devoted husband with a timeless love story, an incredible father with the deepest affection for his two daughters. Our dearest dad (“baba” in Arabic), Ruchdi Al-Safadi, passed away unexpectedly, yet peacefully, on June 8, in the comfort of his home.

Baba was a force majeure of life, radiating with charisma and integrity. When he set his mind on something, there was no stopping him. He lived each day of his life trying to make the world a better place and to teach me and my sister, Aya, how to face life’s ups and downs head-on. His impact was far-reaching — from his own family to his community and beyond.

Philanthropy, to our father, was giving himself to whatever came his way. We

grew up watching him embody random acts of kindness every day. He led fundraising efforts to support families across the Middle East in need of critical medical care, especially during times of war.

Baba had a soft spot for animals and sea life. When we lived in Saudi Arabia, he would provide water for the pigeons and milk for the street cats to ensure they weren’t dehydrated by the excessive heat. A lover of the sea and an experienced scuba diver, our baba led a Red Sea reef dive to help clean up the coral.

One of our family pillars was the pursuit of higher education. Baba was a huge advocate of academia to shape our independence and confidence as young women with limitless career aspirations. He believed that education would encourage us to inspire compassion in the world around us. That it would

guide us in making a positive impact and engaging in philanthropy. And, most importantly, that it could empower other Arab women to pursue this fundamental right and contribute to a foundation of sustained economic growth.

As the fog of grief started to lift after our father’s passing, we looked for ways to continue his legacy. Both my sister and I pursued higher education in science, and so the Ruchdi Al-Safadi Memorial Bursary in Science at Concordia became our family’s way of marrying our baba’s love for humanity with his championing of education. My sister and I owe much of our personal and professional successes to our academic journeys in science. I know that if our baba were here today, he would have loved to support this bursary with us.

The painter and writer Khalil Gibran once wrote, “Beauty is not in the face; beauty is a light in the heart.” What made our father so magnetic was his honesty, pure kindness and willingness to go above and beyond for others. My family’s hope is that this bursary will bring its recipients one step closer to securing future success, while also finding inner peace by thinking kind and being kind — just as our baba was with us and so many others. ■

Join Sherin Al-Safadi’s support of higher education by visiting concordia.ca/campaign.



FROM LEFT: SHERIN AL-SAFADI WITH HER FATHER RUCHDI AND SISTER AYA.





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A photograph of a bee in flight over a field of purple lavender flowers. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting trees or foliage. The entire scene is framed by a thin blue border.

IN DEFENCE OF

**BIO
DIVER
SITY**

**CONCORDIA RESEARCHERS ARE FOCUSED ON THE
FUTURE RESILIENCE OF OUR PLANET'S SPECIES**

CHARLIE FIDELMAN



As urban landscape ecologist Carly Ziter follows the winding paths in Montreal's Angrignon Park, she passes Norway maples, an invasive species crowding out indigenous red maple, sugar maples and red oaks, as well as a few ash trees.

"The ash aren't doing very well," observes Ziter, a Department of Biology assistant professor, research member of the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science and fellow of Concordia's Loyola Sustainability Research Centre.

"When I'm out for a walk, I like to think of how the old trees are like a window into the past, reflecting the choices that have shaped our city."

Ziter is among a growing number of Concordia researchers helping to enrich biodiversity conservation in urban landscapes and beyond.

Her research on human-dominated landscapes examines how green spaces across the city — parks, trees, backyards, hedges and bits of forest — coalesce to provide a rich biodiverse environment.

Urban greenery, she notes, lowers temperatures, protects from heat waves, pollution and smog, provides food and shelter for animals and stores carbon.

NATURE AS CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

As COVID-19 has recently underscored, green spaces are also crucial for mental health and physical well-being. A recent survey found that Canadians flocked to local parks in greater numbers throughout the pandemic.

"Green spaces can make us happier, healthier and safer in our cities," Ziter says. "But do we need biodiversity for that?"

Consider the ash, she says. It was once planted all over Montreal, replacing rows of elms that graced many streets until the advent of Dutch elm disease. Then came the emerald ash borer, a beetle native to northeastern Asia that decimated thousands of ash trees in the city.

About 3,600 trees in Angrignon Park — which spans 97 hectares in the Sud-Ouest borough — were targeted for removal in 2019 as a result. The year before, 40,000 ash trees on Mount Royal were felled.



“We need to see natural elements – trees, parks, waterways – in our cities as critical infrastructure.”

– CARLY ZITER

Entire streets lost their leafy canopies, Ziter adds: “It’s a reminder of the way biodiversity changes in our cities depending on disturbances that occur. Today, new plantings are more diverse, with the idea of future resilience in mind.”

Disturbances both local and global, from habitat loss to pollution and climate change, concern researchers like Ziter affiliated with Concordia’s transdisciplinary Next-Generation Cities Institute.

“We need to see natural elements — trees, parks, waterways — in our cities as critical infrastructure, the same way that we pay attention to roads, bridges and buildings.”

Better management of urban green spaces will help birds, insects and migratory species, which will subsequently impact ecosystems beyond a city’s borders, adds Ziter.

Efforts to improve urban biodiversity are important but can sometimes be misguided without scientific guidance. Ziter cites the example of bees, a prominent symbol of biodiversity and conservation that has spurred an urban apiary craze.

Gail MacInnis, MSc 12, a postdoctoral fellow in Ziter’s lab who looked at the effects of urban hives, concluded that they did little to help native bees.

“It’s like saying, ‘I’m concerned about the birds and the loss of bird species, so I’m going to get a chicken coop,’” explains Ziter. “You can see that sounds silly when we say it about birds. How will your chicken coop help save bird biodiversity?”

An overabundance of honeybees could actually endanger wild bee species. The domesticated European honeybee is a managed species that competes with native wild pollinators for limited food sources.

So what would a constructive strategy to help bees look like? Promoting the growth of wildflowers and trees with pollen would be a good start, asserts Ziter.

THE COMPELLING CASE FOR BIODIVERSITY

Growing evidence connects trends in human development and biodiversity loss to disease outbreaks. Wild species carrying diseases are pushed into human-dominated ecosystems. Animals that tend to survive and thrive are likely to host potentially dangerous pathogens that can make the jump to humans.

The degradation of coastal regions and the transformation of forests, grasslands and deserts into cities, suburbs and agricultural land has caused many species to decline or disappear.

Accelerated encroachment in the last 100 years has fast-tracked habitat destruction, says Jean-Philippe Lessard. The Department of Biology associate professor’s lab investigates biodiversity dating back to glaciation and the formation of continents.

“It’s the single leading threat to biodiversity,” says Lessard, who holds the Concordia University Research Chair in Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning.

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services’ 2019 Global Assessment Report estimates that one million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction. That’s the highest number ever recorded in human history. And the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) adds that such activity — overfishing oceans, clearing forests, polluting water — has significantly altered 75 per cent of land and 66 per cent of ocean environments.

Some, however, believe the decline is underestimated. The WWF Living Planet Database is heavily biased towards species that get more conservation attention, and losses may actually be worse than described in the latest edition of the Living Planet Report.

“If plants can’t reproduce, we won’t have food. It’s as simple as that.”

– JEAN-PHILIPPE LESSARD



Curiously, the highest rates of human-driven extinction are found in the most biodiverse areas — habitats teeming with a disproportionate number of species — or “what we call biodiversity hotspots,” says Lessard.

More than simply a collection of plants and animals on earth, biodiversity is about local ecosystems and promoting healthy conditions for organisms to thrive.

Lessard refers to the Rivet Hypothesis, coined by Stanford University ecologist Paul Ehrlich, which compares an airplane to an ecosystem. Key species are the rivets that hold the plane’s wings in place. Lose a rivet, lose a species — and the integrity of the whole is in peril.

Adds Lessard: “The question then becomes, how many rivets can we afford to lose before the plane crashes?”

‘A WIN-WIN SITUATION’

The New York Times called the dwindling number of species an apocalypse. Their decline is linked to multiple factors — habitat destruction, deforestation, fragmentation, urbanization, agriculture, herbicide and pesticide use.

Although less cute and cuddly, insects and other creepy-crawlers are the most diverse group of animals on the planet, says ant specialist Lessard.

Representing up to 80 per cent of the world’s species, insects are the sole food source for many amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, and, as such, are vital to healthy ecosystems that humans depend on.

Insects pollinate fruits, vegetables and nuts, provide food for other creatures and recycle nature’s waste, which contributes to soil formation and water purification.

“If plants can’t reproduce, we won’t have food,” says Lessard. “It’s as simple as that.”

STEPHANIE GAGNON, CARLY MCGREGOR, BSC 19, AND SERGIO VEGA, MSC 18, FORMER STUDENTS IN JEAN-PHILIPPE LESSARD’S LAB, INVESTIGATE HOW TO MAXIMIZE POLLINATOR DIVERSITY AND SERVICES IN COMMERCIAL BLUEBERRY FIELDS IN QUEBEC’S MONTÉRÉGIE REGION.



‘PEOPLE ARE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE’

Conserving the natural world at Concordia and beyond

When Concordia partnered with WWF-Canada in 2020, it became the first university in Quebec to join the Living Planet @ Campus program. The goal? Do good for the planet by involving students in meaningful sustainability and conservation work, both on and off campus.

The initiative quickly gained momentum despite the pandemic restraints “because these are issues our community really cares about,” says Cassandra Lamontagne, BA 12, MSc 16, coordinator for Concordia’s Office of Sustainability. “With climate change and the biodiversity crisis, people are looking for ways to contribute.”

The program supports hands-on action to help steward, protect and restore nature in communities where students live, learn and work. Students can power down for Earth Hour, launch energy-reduction challenges in their departments, create spaces for nature to thrive and represent Concordia in national environmental-design competitions.

The program also offers special funding for biodiversity projects. Last year, for example, several departments collaborated on an innovative student-planned garden on Loyola Campus.

With its perennial flowers and native trees, the pollinator-friendly garden contributes to biodiversity corridors and encourages students to put into practice what they learn in the classroom.

Students can also take on the self-guided Living Planet Leader certification or apply to represent Concordia at the annual Designing Change for a Living Planet conference.

“Students who take part in these initiatives graduate from Concordia with hands-on experience and the capacity to continue their sustainability journey,” says Lamontagne. “We’re thrilled with the value that they get out of the program.”



“There’s tremendous opportunity, if we can do this right, to fulfill multiple objectives.”

– MONICA MULRENNAN

Bees and butterflies, however, show that sustainable cities can be designed to reduce negative impacts on biodiversity.

Largely stressed by agricultural practices, monarch butterfly populations have declined to historic lows, according to Montreal’s Commission for Environmental Cooperation.

Monarch-friendly cities, however, are planting milkweed — the only plant the butterflies feed on — and supporting projects dedicated to monarch conservation, such as one in place at the Montreal Insectarium.

Relatedly, researchers at Lessard’s lab analyzed what happened when blueberry and strawberry farmers allowed fallow fields to bloom into wildflower meadows.

Intact patches of forested land and rewilded fields provide good nutrition for bees, attracting wild species that have co-evolved with the local ecosystem. It turns out that native species are more efficient pollinators — and produce higher crop yields.

“It’s a win-win situation,” says Lessard.

Nature is adaptive and bounces back when allowed to do so, he adds. Catastrophic prediction models employed 15 to 20 years ago didn’t take into consideration the ability of species to adapt quickly to pollution, climate and habitat changes.

“I’m not saying there’s no problem — there is a biodiversity crisis,” he says. “But there are some things that we don’t fully understand yet that should give us hope.”

SCIENCE, INDIGENOUS WISDOM AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

It’s becoming clearer that relationships, rather than individual species, should be the linchpin of conservation efforts, says Katja Neves, a professor in Concordia’s Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

“Relationships bring ecosystems to life,” she says.

“They also emphasize a specific way of thinking.

“When you focus on individual species — lions, whales and so on — you lose sight of the complexity of the ecosystem.”

Neves is working on a special issue for the peer-reviewed *Sustainability* journal on botanical gardens as institutions of biodiversity conservation. Her aim is to spotlight lesser-known researchers. In Canada, that would include Indigenous scholars.

“We need to have Indigenous people as equal partners,” she says. “Wisdom of the elders, practical knowledge and an understanding of the power of personal stories are good ways of relating to ecosystems from the point of view of the production of scientific knowledge.”

Including Indigenous voices opens up venues of complementary types of knowledge that would otherwise be invisible, Neves adds.

“What does conservation mean to the different people at the table? These are conversations we’ve been having for a long time at Concordia — it’s a wonderful place to be doing this work.”

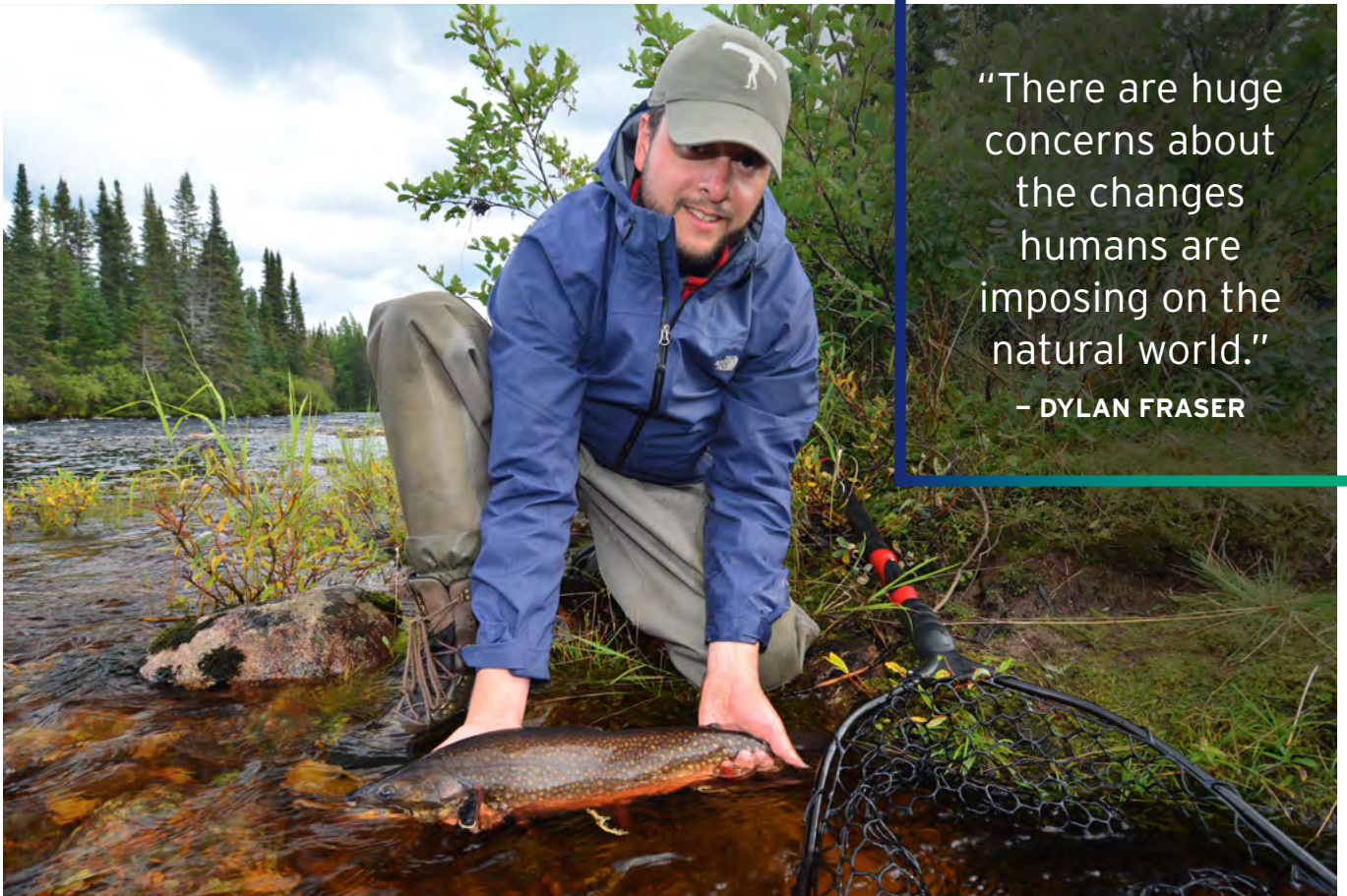
Engaging Indigenous partners is critical for conservation to succeed, agrees Monica Mulrennan. The Department of Geography, Planning and Environment professor works with the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee on efforts to fulfill stewardship responsibilities to the lands, waters and wildlife of their traditional territories.

Mulrennan was part of a partnership between university researchers and the Cree Nation of Wemindji in northern Quebec that led to the creation of the Paakumshumwaa-Maatuskaau biodiversity reserve. The reserve put a moratorium on mining in two critical watershed areas and protected nearly 5,000 square kilometres of Cree territory from large-scale resource development.

SMOKED FISH IN EYYOU ISTCHEE, QUEBEC, WHERE MONICA MULRENNAN WORKS WITH THE CREE NATION TO PRESERVE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES.

“What does conservation mean to the different people at the table?”
– KATJA NEVES





“There are huge concerns about the changes humans are imposing on the natural world.”

— DYLAN FRASER

“What distinguishes this type of environmental protection is Cree insistence on reciprocal relations, or the mutual caretaking between people and place.”

‘WE HAVE MORE DIVERSITY THAN WE THINK’

Mulrennan and Dylan Fraser, a professor in the Department of Biology and Concordia Research Chair in Population Biodiversity and Conservation, are part of a \$14.5-million partnership called FISHERS that weaves scientific and Indigenous knowledge to protect fisheries in Canada’s north.

“There’s a tremendous opportunity, if we can do this right, to fulfill multiple objectives,” says Mulrennan.

The FISHERS project (Fostering Indigenous Small-scale fisheries for Health, Economy, and food Security) pairs Cree, Inuit and Dené communities across northern Canada with biologists and social scientists to foster the development and co-management of sustainable northern fisheries and contribute to increased food security.

“There are huge concerns about the changes humans impose on the natural world, and the theory is that you need variation to adapt and survive,” says Fraser, whose lab integrates ecology, evolution and genetics in the study of effective biodiversity conservation.

Part of Fraser’s research looks at conservation and restoration of native fish important to Canada’s economy and society through fisheries and aquaculture. Native fish are also a primary food for many Indigenous communities.

Fraser’s fish restoration projects include Atlantic salmon at Fundy National Park, New Brunswick, and on Lake Champlain in New York and Vermont, in collaboration with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

People rightly value the Amazon for its species richness, says Fraser. But Canada also has great potential in its northern lakes.

“We have more diversity than we think. Many populations within species are evolving to live in different habitats. This diversification could lead to new, evolutionary young species and give us future options.”

That matters, adds Fraser, because conservation of variations at all biological levels — ecosystem diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity among and within populations — provides buffering and resilience to disturbances like climate change and disease.

“It could be that one of these divergent population species of fish or animals will be able to deal with new pathogens that are showing up or provide greater resilience to sustain food security for humans.

“Canada has an unprecedented opportunity for global conservation leadership in the 21st century,” affirms Fraser. “We can do this by maintaining the country’s relatively high proportion of intact natural areas and by doing it the right way — by fostering Indigenous-led conservation.” ■



SHUTTERSTOCK

FROM NICHE TECHNOLOGY TO MAINSTREAM MARKET

Though blockchain-based currencies like Bitcoin and Ethereum are still evolving, Concordia experts agree: They're reshaping the global financial industry

DAMON VAN DER LINDE, BA 08

Once considered the domain of diehard libertarians, dark-web denizens and tax evaders, cryptocurrencies now pad the portfolios of everyone from retail investors to venture capitalists and multibillion-dollar pension funds.

"There is a consensus that it will not disappear," says Emilio Boulianne, professor of accountancy and director of KPMG Entrepreneurial Research Studies at Concordia's John Molson School of Business.

Cryptocurrency is enabled by blockchain technology, which provides a decentralized digital ledger that can be public or private, maintaining a secure record of transactions outside a conventional financial institution or government central bank. The downside cited by critics is that no central, regulated authority backs the value of the currency — or ensures that transactions run smoothly.

"Going through the banking system there is no anonymity — you need to use an established government-issued currency and you're often charged fees," says Boulianne.

"Cryptocurrency gets rid of the middleman."



"Cryptocurrency became a revolution for those who disagree with the established financial system."

— EMILIO BOULIANNE

CHALLENGING THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM

The 2008 financial crisis was the most severe economic disaster since the Great Depression, wreaking havoc on big and small investors alike. It first hit headlines with the collapse of Lehman Brothers, one of the largest investment banks in the United States. While economies have largely recovered, many people never regained their trust in the institutions that failed them.

Boulianne says this disillusionment, paired with widespread internet adoption, has elevated cryptocurrencies from a niche technology to a thriving market that topped \$3 trillion USD in November 2021. They have also branched into other assets that don't exist in traditional finance, such as the digital art of non-fungible tokens (NFTs).

The genesis of blockchain-based currency can be traced to a nine-page paper published in 2008 by the mysterious Satoshi Nakamoto, the pseudonym of the person or people who created Bitcoin.

"The initial intention of cryptocurrency was not to replace the American or Canadian dollar — it was an experiment," says Boulianne.



“Cryptocurrencies aren’t science fiction anymore.”

- JEREMY CLARK

“It became a revolution for those who disagree with the established financial system.”

Bitcoin was issued in 2009 as the world’s first digital currency. As of February 2022, more than 10,000 cryptocurrencies have been created, often by companies seeking to raise money through initial coin offerings (ICOs).

Boulianne, along with Melissa Fortin, professor at Université du Québec à Montréal, was the first researcher to study how Montreal-based Impak Finance raised money through a legal ICO with Quebec’s financial regulators providing a fast-tracked “sandbox” system.

“The old, regulated system was very involved, very complicated and took a lot of time. But if you do it unregulated, you could go to jail,” notes Boulianne.

“What our research suggests is that there is a possibility to make it legal and work with financial regulators.”

NO LONGER SCIENCE FICTION

Jeremy Clark, associate professor at the Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering, has a background in studying cryptography for voting systems and authored one of the earliest academic papers on Bitcoin. He also holds the NSERC/Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton/Catallaxy Industrial Research Chair in Blockchain Technologies.

“[Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton] is an auditing firm, so customers come to them holding cryptocurrency and wanting a financial audit,” he says.

“Cryptocurrencies aren’t science fiction anymore. There are real companies in Quebec that have them on their balance sheet.”

In just over a decade, a single Bitcoin went from being worth a slice of pizza, to being worth a new Tesla.

Clark says that while it is hard to speculate on the future of the cryptocurrency landscape, the astronomical valuations of some blockchain-based currencies do remind him of the dot-com bubble — which eventually popped in 2001.

“There were all sorts of legitimate internet companies that are still successful and here today. There are also a lot that aren’t around anymore.”

CASH, CARD OR CRYPTO?

Many aspects of cryptocurrency still need to be ironed out before it becomes ubiquitous in everyday life.

For one, it’s slow. Mahsa Moosavi, MASc 18, is a Concordia PhD student whose research under Clark’s supervision focuses on how to securely reduce the onerous transaction times that accompany decentralized finance.

“You can’t go to a café and buy a cup of coffee with Bitcoin because it’s not practical to wait 20 minutes for a transaction to go through,” she says.

Through her research and part-time work as a software engineer at Offchain Labs, Moosavi is helping to develop security measures for order books that allow more and faster transactions at a lower fee.

“Every transaction on blockchain takes some time to be confirmed, because it has to be executed by every node in the network,” she says, referring to the computers that validate each block and transaction before adding it to the blockchain database — a.k.a. the permanent digital ledger. “And it’s expensive because you are paying for every node to execute your transaction.

“You might get a result instantly in your account, but that’s not really what’s happening in the background.”

A NEW WAY TO TRADE

Though crypto is still fraught with uncertainty, practitioners from all walks of life aren’t waiting for a perfect system before wholeheartedly pursuing this nascent sector.

Jason Dolgy, MBA 16, bought his first cryptocurrency in 2016, only to watch it plunge 50 per cent the next day. Rather than be deterred, Dolgy saw exciting new possibilities beyond what was available in traditional finance.

“It took a month to break even and I figured that if this volatility exists, and it is liquid, this can be the greatest transfer of wealth for my generation,” he says.

Now head of research at the Credo Ventures hedge fund, Dolgy trades in a variety of cryptocurrencies, as well as even newer financial instruments in the form of derivatives like crypto futures, options and swaps.

“You can’t buy a cup of coffee with Bitcoin because it’s not practical to wait 20 minutes for a transaction to go through.”

- MAHSA MOOSAVI



“We are able to take advantage of the volatility on both sides of the market. In my opinion, crypto moves at four times the speed of traditional markets, and as such requires an active approach.

“I don’t think Bitcoin will ever disappear. Not all [blockchain-based assets] will survive, but the ones that do will become part of most people’s lives.”

One sign of that potential staying power? In February 2022, Warren Buffett — Berkshire Hathaway’s legendary CEO and the world’s most famous crypto-skeptic — invested \$1 billion in a Brazil-based digital bank focused on crypto.

PEOPLE AND PASSION

As with any growing industry, these trail-blazing enterprises constantly seek new talent with the right skills.

Nako Mbelle, BA 95, was already actively recruiting for the technology and finance sector as founder of FinTech Recruiters when, in 2017, a client offered to pay in Bitcoin.

“I realized this is a legit industry with people working at companies. It’s not just for drug dealers,” she says.

Mbelle reports that around 90 per cent of blockchain sector job-seekers are computer engineers by training, even if that experience is in traditional common programming languages. The rest, she says, work in marketing, business development and even content for social media.

“A lot of the skills are highly transferable and [blockchain sector workers] don’t need unique blockchain skills or experience,” she says.

“The best people are those who are entrepreneurial and can pivot very easily.”

Fauve Altman, BA 16, who has a background in public affairs, was drawn to blockchain’s ability to break down barriers and bring people together.

“I saw crypto as something that needed people with a soft-skill approach in a space that was initially very hard tech,” says Altman, who works as a blockchain and cryptocurrency consultant and has presented at ETHDenver and other major conferences.

Mbelle says she has also seen cryptocurrency’s ability to offer a more even playing field for well-paying jobs than traditional finance.

“I interview people in Nigeria, Russia or Brazil who probably would not have the same opportunities in any other industry,” she says.

“I’ve come across a 17-year-old who is self-taught. While the COVID-19 pandemic was detrimental to a lot of young people, there are also kids who learned how to code and immersed themselves in this ecosystem.”

This socio-technical experiment has grown so fast that it’s easy to forget that cryptocurrency is little more than a decade old. The technology and its users will mature and evolve, but whatever their fate, they have already transformed not just the global financial system, but the nature of money itself. ■



“This can be the greatest transfer of wealth for my generation.”

- JASON DOLGY



IMPROVING GENDER DIVERSITY IN CRYPTO

Although the cryptocurrency space has the potential to transcend biases, some have noticed a lack of representation and accessibility in this new industry.

Jazna Rossi, BComm 17, and Concordia student Michelle Tzontchev aim to change this.

“Now is the time for us to build the future mindfully, and represent the world we actually live in by having all voices present,” says Tzontchev.

As founders of Women in Crypto, Rossi and Tzontchev offer introductory courses to women and gender-non-conforming individuals on leading-edge applications such as creating NFTs, meme culture and decentralized finance, or DeFi, as well as audience-specific programs, including one exclusively for moms.

“I’ve often heard ‘I don’t know where to start.’ This industry is moving so fast that navigating this space by yourself can feel daunting,” says Rossi.

“It came naturally to build a community where connections are fostered, and where creativity is an open discussion that brings about collaboration.”

The response has been so enthusiastic that Women in Crypto has wait-lists for all its upcoming courses. Rossi says that while she does not believe the money-making boom of the cryptocurrency industry is sustainable at its current trajectory, what will last is the technology that people are building.

“These building blocks will inevitably be the foundation behind many companies and applications of the future.”

OUT OF SHADOWS



5 TOWNS

How Concordians are exposing online extremism

ALEXANDER HULS

The infamous events of January 6, 2021 — when more than 2,000 Donald Trump supporters stormed the United States Capitol — marked the culmination of several related phenomena: acute polarization, the sway of conspiracy theorists and the incitement of violence by unsavoury political actors.

The attack in Washington, D.C., was also the climax of efforts by far-right extremist groups like the Proud Boys, the Oath Keepers and the Three Percenters to radicalize those sympathetic to their causes.

Extremist propaganda has been pervasive online since the advent of the internet, with groups as disparate as the Islamic State and citizen militias

leveraging platforms — from primitive bulletin-board systems to social-media networks — to advance their ideological goals.

“What is evident among them is that they all exploit affordances of various platforms to plan events, recruit, finance and communicate,” says Yasmin Jiwani, a professor of communication studies and the Concordia University Research Chair in Intersectionality, Violence and Resistance.

Those efforts have been accelerated and rewarded of late — the COVID-19 pandemic, notably, has been used by many as an excuse to capitalize on and exploit anti-government and anti-science sentiment.

For researchers at Concordia who study online extremism, the question is: What can be done about it?

WHO ARE ONLINE EXTREMISTS?

When the threat of online extremism was discussed roughly a decade ago, the conversation typically centred on the Islamic State’s use of social media to convert and recruit. While such extremists have hardly gone away, far-right extremists most concern many observers these days.

These groups — whether white-supremacist, anti-government, incel (“involuntary celibate”), military or all of the above — have felt empowered to come out of the shadows.

“For many years, most white supremacists were hiding who they were online,” says Joan Donovan, BA 06, MA 08, a research director at the Shorenstein Centre on Media, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government.

“What’s at stake? Democracy, social cohesion, trust between individuals and society.”



YASMIN JIWANI

“Not anymore. It’s no longer the case that there’s only a few active groups.”

In 2020, an Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) report identified more than 6,000 right-wing extremist channels, pages, groups and accounts across different social-media platforms. Right-wing content on Facebook increased by 33.7 per cent last year, and on 4chan by 66.5 per cent.

Over the last five years, far-right extremist activity online has more than doubled. The Center for Strategic and International Studies, a D.C. think tank, also found that 90 per cent of domestic attacks and plots in the United States in early 2020 were conducted by right-wing extremists. That was up by two-thirds from 2019.

Even without overt acts of terrorism, right-wing extremists have had a profound impact on society as ideological polarization has spread worldwide. Online harassment, doxxing and death threats have targeted individuals within the government and beyond.

Conspiracy-theory groups — such as QAnon, with “Stop the Steal” — and anti-vaccine movements have been fuelled by misinformation and disinformation online. This has resulted in significant events like the January 6

Capitol attack and the disruptive trucker convoy in Canada, and has prompted researchers to explore the root causes of these movements online.

It’s an onerous task, says Vivek Venkatesh, MA 03, PhD 08, UNESCO Co-Chair in Prevention of Radicalization and Violent Extremism and professor of Inclusive Practices in Visual Arts in the Department of Art Education.

“We understand that discrimination, xenophobia and bigotry exist and that these are precursors to violent forms of extremism. Yet we’re unable to bring to bear the instruments that are at our disposal — whether they’re legal, political, social, financial or even cultural — to begin to understand why these issues persist.”

HOW EXTREMISTS OPERATE

“The resiliency of these groups is tied into recruitment and retention,” says Donovan.

Online extremists wield the internet to recruit, radicalize, disperse fabricated information and coordinate. They do so primarily through social-media platforms like Facebook, Reddit, Twitter and YouTube as well as niche alternatives like Gab, 4chan and 8kun.

Successful recruitment often occurs when vulnerable targets are manipulated through offers of sympathy and friendship.

“What we’re seeing now in terms of online extremism and the mobilization of more far-right populism is that they are able to channel people’s emotions,” says Venkatesh, whose work includes Project SOMEONE (SOcial Media EducatiON Every day),



JOAN DONOVAN, BA 06, MA 08

“For many years, most white supremacists were hiding who they were online.”

an online multimedia platform devoted to the reduction of hate and violent extremism.

Recruitment, however, can also occur through disinformation — false information designed to mislead.

“There is something that is referred to in the literature as ‘subversive exposure,’” says Jiwani. “This is the circulation of disinformation, coded and cloaked language, memes and more. These are slow-working and subversive in the sense that they make people who are inclined towards right-wing extremism entertain the possibility and factuality of the disinformation.”

The rate and volume at which disinformation can be produced is significant. For example, the ISD report identified 2,467 right-wing extremist active accounts, channels and pages that yielded more than 3.2 million pieces of content.

“You can live in this environment, this media ecosystem, full-time,” says Donovan. “Some people do. We refer to that effect as ‘the Rabbit Hole.’”

Within that rabbit hole, individuals are not only subjected to the same information over and over again, but across multiple platforms.

That information can be highly weaponized. A recent report by the RAND Corporation think tank revealed that two-thirds of white supremacists and Islamic extremists interviewed felt they were radicalized by online propaganda.

The consequences can be devastating. Lone actors like the Pittsburgh synagogue shooter in 2018, the El Paso Walmart shooter in 2019 and the Christchurch, New Zealand, mosque shooter in 2019, were all consumers of right-wing hate speech. The 2017

Quebec City mosque shooter was also indoctrinated online by alt-right conspiracy-mongers.

The radicalization of these four men led to the deaths of 91 people and the injury of 88 more. Coordinated group attacks have also been incited, such as the plot to kidnap and execute Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and the efforts to subvert the results of the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

Right-wing extremists also benefit from the ability of misinformation — the sharing of misleading information — to convert people to adopt more extremist views.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem. According to Statistics Canada, 41 per cent of Canadians spent more time online throughout 2020 and 2021.

“The pandemic really created an online ecosystem that was just ready to amplify misinformation, disinformation and extremism,” says Aphrodite Salas, MA 99, a Department of Journalism assistant professor and trainer for the Journalists for Human Rights Misinformation Project.

The cocktail of inflated screen time combined with anger over lockdowns, vaccine mandates and false claims of election fraud has only complicated matters. The result?

“The pandemic has led to growing engagement with extremist material online,” says Salas.

Given the recent occupation of Ottawa by anti-vaccine, anti-government truckers (fomented by extremist groups online) and the distinct possibility of another Donald Trump run for president in 2024, observers like Salas are concerned that the fight has just begun.



VIVEK VENKATESH, MA 03, PHD 08

“[The goal is to teach] people to think about the validity of their sources.”

THE BATTLE AGAINST ONLINE EXTREMISM

Part of the challenge of combatting online extremism is that researchers, journalists, activists, politicians and more were all ill-prepared to respond to the threat.

“We’ve been reacting to everything,” says Kyle Matthews, executive director at Concordia’s Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies. “When you’re reacting to everything, you’re always behind the curve. You have to get ahead and try to bend the curve so that it’s less harmful.”

Several countermeasures have emerged. Nations like the United States, for example, have recently dedicated funds (\$77 million, in the Department of Homeland Security’s case) to better respond to domestic terrorism, which it designated a national priority.

Globally, there are initiatives like the Global Network on Extremism and Technology, the European Union Internet Forum and the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, among others. Support for more academic research on online extremism — specifically on how to prevent and address it — has increased as well.

That’s critical, says Donovan. “Knowledge is expensive. You can’t just make knowledge out of experience or perception. You have to test your assumptions, collect data and analyze it in a way that is objective.”

Adds Matthews: “There’s also a lot of pressure on social-media companies right now to do more to take extremism offline.”

Tech firms have responded (how sufficiently is a contested point) by deplatforming certain content, individuals and groups. This method, however, is only effective in the short term, observers point out. When a far-right extremist group is removed, it typically pops up elsewhere or gets replaced by another one.

Since 2020, Facebook has banned more than 11,000 groups and nearly 51,000 individuals associated with extremism. And yet, the 2021 Institute for Strategic Dialogue report found that year-to-year there is often no decrease in the number of Facebook and YouTube channels dedicated to, for example, right-wing extremism.

“It’s a bit like Wack-A-Mole,” admits Salas. “Facebook or Twitter might remove or restrict a group, but then they migrate to the fringes or get replaced by another group.”

Many deplatformed users simply find a new — and more receptive — home on fringe platforms that have more permissive content-moderation policies. The use of encrypted messaging services like Telegram can also provide cover.

The ripple effect is that toxic behaviour increases, as does radicalization, among users who move to under-moderated — and under-monitored — platforms.

Removal and moderation also doesn’t address a more deeply rooted problem.

“There’s a wider discussion we need to have about algorithms,” says Matthews. “Sometimes users go down a rabbit hole of suggested videos to watch that are full of false information and



APHRODITE SALAS, MA '99

“The pandemic really created an online ecosystem that was just ready to amplify misinformation, disinformation and extremism.”

“When you’re reacting to everything, you’re always behind the curve. You have to get ahead and try to bend the curve.”

they become radicalized.”

As a result, adds Matthews, policy-makers are more and more focused on how and why certain extremist content lands in people’s feeds. Preventive efforts could include wholesale audits of social-media algorithms. That, however, will require powerful policies to overcome what will likely be fierce resistance from tech executives.

PREVENTIVE, NOT REACTIVE, MEASURES

A noble pursuit that is often proposed is to simply deradicalize online extremists. This is not easily achieved.

“It’s not like deleting a software on your computer,” says Matthews. “You’re dealing with people who form ideas that become part of their identity.”

As a result, deradicalization is unlikely to be prompted by outsiders. Studies have shown that life changes — new jobs, new relationships, new experiences — are much more likely to instigate transformation.

Deradicalization is also reactive. Many experts think preventive measures offer the greatest potential for change — with one cited more than any others.

“You really need to focus on digital literacy and education to build resilience in this new ecosystem, especially among young people,” says Salas.

When media literacy is advanced, people become less susceptible to misinformation or disinformation that

could send them down a dangerous path.

“We have to start ramping up our education system with digital-literacy skills, responsible citizenship, the ability to think critically about these things,” urges Matthews. “If we don’t, we’re just going to fall further behind.”

Venkatesh says the goal is to teach “people to think about the validity of their sources and then also have people go back to the root articles and the empirical data.”

That can provide an effective shield.

“You’re on guard about what you’re seeing and thinking about instead of just being a passive participant in whatever is happening online,” says Salas. “It’s a long and slow process but it’s important because it will allow people to develop resilience.”

Cataloguing and addressing online extremism can create a sense of despondency. But, as Venkatesh notes, “change won’t happen overnight.”

Now that governments, the tech industry, policy institutes, academia and, indeed, the public are more actively focused on the problem, there is ample reason to be hopeful.

“It’s easy to get discouraged,” admits Salas. “But if you give up, where are you at?” ■



KYLE MATTHEWS

“We have to start ramping up our education system with digital-literacy skills.”

Going places

Meet 4 Concordians at the top of the travel and tourism industry

AVIVA ENGEL, BA 02

The gradual easing of COVID-19 restrictions worldwide has been cause for celebration — and a boon for workers in travel and tourism.

Among the grateful is a select group of graduates who have impacted these sectors with equal parts passion, perseverance and visionary leadership.

Meet four women who credit Concordia with launching their journeys to the top of the travel and tourism industry.

**KAREN SEYMOUR,
MINISTRY OF TOURISM, BAHAMAS:**

'I RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS WORK'

What keeps Bahamas native Karen Seymour, BA 94, focused on her job as an executive director with the country's Ministry of Tourism?

"Approximately half of our GDP and workforce is dependent on this sector," notes the Nassau-based Seymour, who has served her department for more than two decades. "So I recognize the importance of this work. The ministry is the backbone of the industry. And that genuinely keeps me going."

Seymour's career with the ministry began in the United Kingdom, where she also completed her MBA at the University of Surrey. But even as a French studies major at Concordia from 1992 to 1994, Seymour's goal was to someday return to the Bahamas to directly contribute to her country's growth and prosperity.

"I always wanted to work for our Ministry of Tourism," she says proudly. "I had begun to study French in the Bahamas, and Concordia was one of the best and most affordable options for me to complete my bachelor's degree. I had a few wonderful professors and thoroughly enjoyed my time in Montreal."

As executive director of Industry Facilitation, Seymour oversees a number of programs and initiatives — special events and conferences, heritage and culture, and sports tourism — across 15 islands.



KEMUEL STUBBS

Global tourism was severely impacted by the pandemic and the Bahamas was no exception, says Seymour. She and her team dealt with the challenges of COVID-19 with creativity and resourcefulness.

"We quickly pivoted to a virtual environment in order to stay in contact with our industry partners. While we were unable to communicate directly with our consumers, we compiled a comprehensive recovery program which involved training and promotions, and which ensured the health and safety of our visitors and our residents."

Seymour describes her work as a true calling. Being able to travel extensively is a nice perk of the job, too.

"I've been to and seen so many wonderful places and met so many amazing people. I sometimes laugh when I think back to what I assumed my career would look like. My outlook was shockingly naive. But I have truly come a long way."



CONNIE SUAREZ BRAVO

STEPHANIE FARR, MAYA LUXE:

'MY EXPERIENCE AT CONCORDIA PAVED THE WAY'

Stephanie Farr, BComm 03, foresaw a career in veterinary medicine before a summer job cleaning pools persuaded her to pivot.

“I realized how much freedom I had being my own boss, making my own money and being in control of how quickly I could scale my financial success,” says the founder and owner of Maya Luxe, a company that offers luxury villa rentals and authentic experiences throughout Riviera Maya, Mexico.

“It was one of the best decisions of my life. My experience at Concordia paved the way for where I am today.”

As a first-year student at the John Molson School of Business, Farr travelled to Cuba on a trip coordinated by the university’s Latin American Student Organization (LASO). She eventually joined the group and helped organize events herself, all of which prompted a profound interest in and exploration of Latin America.

“Then, during my last semester, I embarked on an exchange program at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Mazatlán campus, where I studied Spanish and

international business. I was very grateful to Concordia for the opportunity. It led to my career and business in Mexico.”

The day-to-day of running Maya Luxe, which also offers property management and real-estate development services, keeps Farr pretty busy. So, too, does Rise Relief Fund, a non-profit arm of the business focused on sustainability, community development and support for locals in Riviera Maya.

“What gets me up in the morning is knowing I can make a difference for our environment and community,” says Farr. “I truly believe in social entrepreneurship — and we have the ability to leverage our business to be able to give back and make a positive impact.”

Curating unforgettable experiences for her clients — “the why of what we do” — also inspires the Concordia alumna and deepens her attachment to the Yucatán Peninsula.

“Waking up every day in this paradise is very rewarding. I’m beyond grateful to be surrounded by so much beauty and cultural richness.”

MARIA PAGANO, AIR TRANSAT:

'I FEEL LUCKY TO NURTURE MY CHILDHOOD PASSION'

As a child, Maria Pagano, BComm '03, longed to be like Angela Bower, the driven marketing executive played by Judith Light on the 1980s sitcom *Who's The Boss?*.

Hired to oversee Brand and Customer Experience for Air Transat in October 2021, Pagano takes a lot of pride in providing exceptional and personalized customer experiences.

"It's rewarding to work in a job that truly sparks me," says the civil and commercial aviation industry veteran. "I have fun every day and feel lucky to be able to nurture my childhood passion."

In her role, Pagano leads brand and positioning strategy for all Transat brands in Canada and in international markets. The work includes strategic planning, market research, customer segmentation and the execution of brand-awareness campaigns.

It's all for a greater good: helping people realize their travel dreams. And that's meaningful, says Pagano.

"Our marketing campaigns help people discover new destinations. Travel has the transformative power to help us restore energy and creativity, expand knowledge of other cultures and connect with loved ones. It's a great privilege to be involved in connecting individuals to discovery and travel, particularly after COVID-19 restricted our ability to do so."

Pagano describes her experience as a Department of Marketing student at John Molson as crucial. She certainly made the most of her time, serving in key roles with the John Molson Marketing Association and earning valuable summer internship experience that led to a full-time job with Bombardier after graduation.

"My time at Concordia was critical to where I am now in my career," says Pagano. "The Marketing program helps prepare students for the real world. The multiculturalism of the student body and staff enlightened and equipped me for my future roles. And I also appreciated the emphasis placed on teamwork and strong communication skills, which continues to serve me immeasurably well as a business leader."



VADIM DANIEL

RITA TOPOROWSKI, VIA RAIL CANADA:

'WHEN PEOPLE SEE THE WORLD, THEY GAIN A BROADER PERSPECTIVE'

Rita Toporowski, MBA 90, is both a big-picture and detail-oriented thinker. She has to be as vice-president of Customer Experience at Via Rail Canada, where she and her team contribute to the company's strategic vision and to major projects associated with its efforts to upgrade and modernize.

From a customer-experience perspective, Toporowski oversees a variety of operations, such as direct customer interactions and delivering a safe, comfortable, accessible and enjoyable travel experience.

"My days are not routine, which is attractive to me," says Toporowski, who indirectly manages more than 1,000 employees. "My job ranges from one-on-ones with my direct reports and helping to facilitate things for them, to driving improvement projects and, of course, adjusting to COVID-19, which has been anything but routine."

Toporowski has channelled her passion for travel into a career that has now endured for more than two decades. She got her start when two companies recruited her out of Concordia: One offered a position in sales; the other a more strategy-oriented role.

"I chose the strategy role, which was with Air Canada," she says. "Once I was in it, I got excited because travel is something personal and tangible. It affects people's lives. When people see the world, they open up their eyes and gain a broader perspective on life."

Toporowski has fond memories of her time at what was then Concordia's Faculty of Commerce and Administration. She was involved in a number of student associations and participated in the Concordia Small Business Consulting Bureau, an initiative designed to equip MBA candidates with constructive advice and tools.

"It enabled me to take theory and apply it in the real world, in a controlled environment," says Toporowski. "It was really good, practical experience. One of the contracts we had was with a small paper company — we had to analyze its performance and recommend improvements."

The Via Rail Canada executive encourages current John Molson students to "take opportunities outside your wheelhouse and learn from them. Highlight your transferable skills, even if you lack the specific expertise of a given position."

Finding mentors and building networks is also important, adds Toporowski.

"Look for opportunities to help others learn and grow. Always be mindful of other people, whether it's your customers or your team members. Their success is your success." ■



VIA RAIL

The Concordia Alumni Women and Leadership program empowers women graduates to connect, share professional experiences and expertise, and learn from each other. In this series, meet leaders from among Concordia's nearly 110,000 alumnae who fill the ranks of business leaders, media, engineering, science, the arts, humanities and more. Learn more at concordia.ca/alumni/women.

Tanea Hynes is a master's student in Concordia's Department of Studio Arts' Photography program. Her work tells the intimate story of the place of the individual within a relentless and unforgiving extraction industry. Her closeness to extractive mining in Labrador City has given her a unique, incisive perspective of the industry and the community that developed around it.

Hynes is a third-generation open-pit mine worker, self-identified socialist and woman of colonial-settler ancestry. Her works take an autobiographical and documentary approach to focus on the complex nature of extractive industries and the place of corporations within small, isolated towns. Through her images and works of various media, Hynes intends to build an intimate personal map of survival as a young woman, a hopeless romantic and a worker under late-stage capitalism. Learn more at taneahynes.com. ■



Extraction

Tanea Hynes is the 2021 recipient of the \$10,000 Roloff Beny Foundation Fellowship in Photography

WAKE UP! STOP TAKING SHORTCUTS SURPASS MY OWN POTENTIAL



FUNCTION MORE LIKE A MACHINE



2

- 1 "MORE LIKE A MACHINE"
- 2 "INUKSUK"
- 3 STILL FROM A SPIDER'S SILK, EXPERIMENTAL SHORT FILM
- 4 "ROSS BAY"
- 5 "TAMARACK"



3



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5

Triumph in the face of adversity figures prominently in new works by Concordia alumni



MARCO BUTTICE, BA 21

Pretty Weird: Overcoming Impostor Syndrome and Other Oddly Empowering Lessons (Simon & Schuster, \$32), by acclaimed writer **Marissa Miller**, BA 13, contains a series of relatable and heart-wrenching true stories about her Jewish upbringing, battling self-doubt and learning to be proud to stand out.

Co-authored by **Emily Anglin**, MA 06, **Devon Code**, MA 07, **Jean Marc Ah-Sen** and **Lee Henderson**, ***Disintegration in Four Parts*** (Coach House Books, \$21.95) centres on the problematic concept of purity. Wildly different in style and subject matter, the novellas in this

fiction anthology provide a complete view of a subject matter that has never felt so urgent.

A writer of over a dozen books, **Stephen Henighan**, MA 86, recently published ***The World of After*** (Cormorant Books, \$24.95). In this novel, historical change opens up the possibility of self-discovery for Kevin, an Anglo-Montrealer struggling to redeem a friendship he betrayed as a graduate student at the University of Oxford in the early 1990s.

The World That Was Mine (self-published) from **Louis Leprohon**, BA 64, includes 15 outstanding paintings (with an additional 86 colour visuals) by Marcel Dargis.

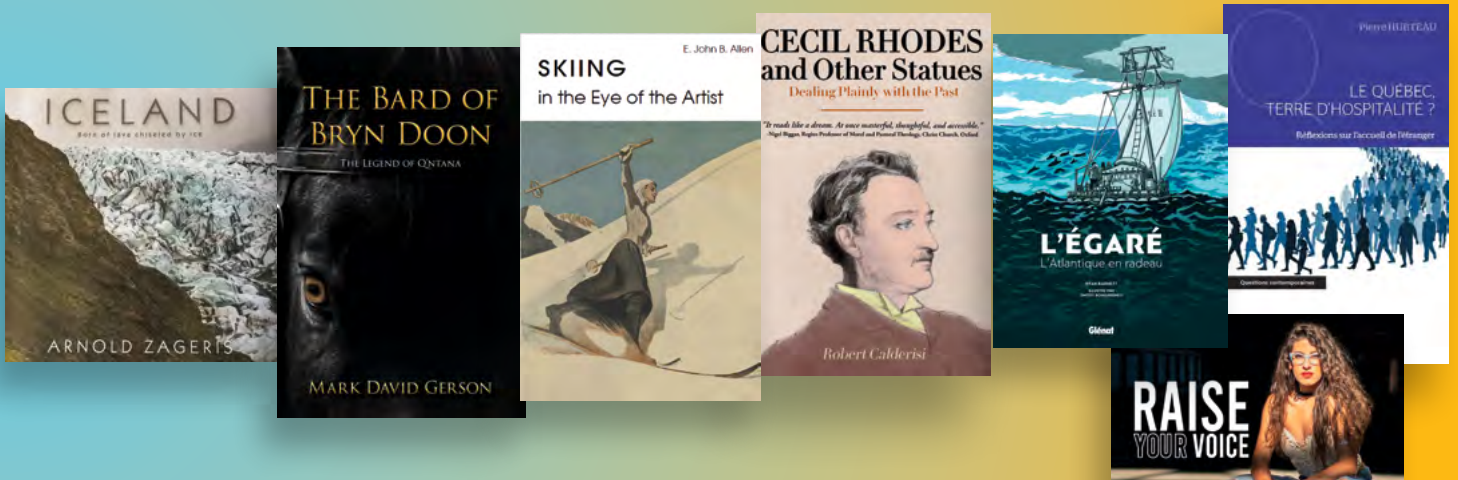
The book serves as a catalogue for museum exhibitions that feature the Quebec artist's work. Each painting conveys an accurate recollection and interpretation of life in Quebec through the years.

Ceilidh Michelle, BA 20, writes of outrunning family turmoil and homelessness in the new memoir ***Vagabond: Venice Beach, Slab City and Points in Between*** (Douglas & McIntyre, \$22.95). As she drifts through the California coast and finds community with other travellers, Michelle's peripatetic lifestyle becomes a habit she can't break. Told with deadpan humour and insightful lyricism, *Vagabond* is an observant and at times shimmering narrative

suspended between a traumatic past and an unimagined future.

In ***The Fight for Autism Treatment in Canada*** (Kindle Direct Publishing, \$5.99), **Andrew Kavchak**, BA 85, details his son's diagnosis with the disorder and a historical overview of the varying efforts by numerous organizations and individuals to help improve access to autism treatment across the country.

Arnold Zageris, BSc 69, published ***Iceland: Born of Lava Chiseled by Ice*** (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, \$60), in which the photographer explores less visited and undiscovered features of the country.



It is an opportunistic and compelling portrait of the small island nation, which Zageris calls a “photographer’s paradise.”

Mark David Gerson, BComm 75, recently added a fourth story to his *Legend of Q’ntana* fantasy series. **The Bard of Bryn Doon** (Kobo, \$10.99) takes place many generations after the end of third installment *The SunQuest*, when a young bard embarks on a perilous journey to save Q’ntana from an evil sorcerer and return the fabled Stallions of Bryn Doon to their mystical home.

In his latest book, **Skiing in the Eye of the Artist** (Egoth Verlag, \$25), **E. John B. Allen**, BA 65, curates a

collection of images, paintings, drawings, lithographs and cartoons depicting the art of skiing. Allen, a historian at the New England Ski Museum, highlights works dating from 1867 to the early 21st century by artists around the world. The book is also available in German.

Cecil Rhodes and Other Statues: Dealing Plainly with the Past (Gatekeeper Press, \$15.95) by economist **Robert Calderisi**, BA 68, LLD 17, focuses on a pivotal and controversial figure of the British Empire and Europe’s colonial period. Calderisi’s account relates the history of the Rhodes scholarships and offers guidelines on how to commemorate contested historical actors.

L’Égaré (Glénat, \$39.95) by **Ryan Barnett**, MA 13, and comic illustrator Dmitry Bondarenko, is an adventure-fuelled non-fiction account about a French crew’s 1956 attempt to traverse the Atlantic Ocean by raft. Archival photography and film stills taken aboard the raft, along with news reports and contemporary interviews, round out the retelling of this amazing journey.

Pierre Hurteau, MA 84, PhD 91, published a new book, **Le Québec, terre d’hospitalité? Réflexions sur l’accueil de l’étranger** (L’Harmattan, \$34.95), that addresses the topic of immigration and examines society’s

obligations to newcomers within the context of contemporary Quebec.

Pop vocalist and songwriter **December Rose** (stage name of **Rosie La Posta**, BFA 14) released a new album in 2021 entitled **Raise Your Voice** (Slammin Media, iTunes price \$8.99). A six-part docuseries, *December Rose – Up Close and Personal*, was created in support of the project, which deals with themes of hardship and healing. According to Rose, “the album is about real life. It looks at the before, during and after phases of recovery from abuse and mental unwellness.” ■

1 The Government of India established the **Guru Nanak Dev Ji Academic and Research Initiative** at Concordia to honour the founder of Sikhism. Co-funded by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Concordia grad **Cuckoo Kochar**, MEng 78, the initiative will support a visiting scholar at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.

2 In honour of Black History Month, nine Concordians shared words of wisdom in video messages promoted in February. Alumni, staff and faculty featured included **Annick Maugile Flavien**, BSc 13, GrDip 15, MA 18; **Will Niava**, BFA 17; **Chanel Sutherland**, BA 10; **Sarah Mazhero**, BA 21; **Angélique Willkie**; **Esther Calixte-Bea**, BFA 20; **Omari Akil Newton** BA 06; **Allison Saunders**; and **Sitsofe Kudjoe Dorvlo**, MASc 08.



"OUR MANDATE IS TO SERVE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE," SAID APTN'S **CHERYL MCKENZIE** AT THE 2022 READER'S DIGEST ANNUAL LECTURE SERIES.

3 **Cheryl McKenzie**, APTN's executive director of News and Current Affairs, was the featured speaker at Concordia's virtual **Reader's Digest Annual Lecture Series in Journalism** on February 24. McKenzie spoke about her professional journey and the role of Indigenous voices in Canada's media landscape in a conversation moderated by **Aphrodite Salas**, MA 99, assistant professor and director of Concordia's Journalism Graduate Diploma program.

4 The Juno Award-winning music ensemble Bell Orchestre performed its *House Music* album with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM) on November 25. The group's ranks include **Richard Reed Parry**, BFA 03, **Sarah Neufeld**, BFA 03 (both members of Arcade Fire), **Kaveh Nabatian**, BFA 01, current student **Stefan Schneider**, **Pietro Amato**, ATTD 05, and Michael Feuerstack.

5 Concordia alumnae celebrated International Women's Day in March through video messages in support of the next generation of women leaders. Videos shared included **Lillian Vineberg-Goodman**, BFA 83, the first woman to chair the university's Board of Governors; **Samira Nasr**,



FROM LEFT: **CUKOO KOCHAR**, MEng 78, **MOURAD DEBBABI**, DEAN OF THE GINA CODY SCHOOL, AND **AJAY BISARIA**, HIGH COMMISSIONER OF INDIA TO CANADA



MEMBERS OF CONCORDIA'S BLACK COMMUNITY RECORDED INSPIRATIONAL VIDEO MESSAGES AS PART OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN FEBRUARY.

BA 93, editor-in-chief of *Harper's Bazaar*; and **Erika Rath**, BA 04, Cert 06, recipient of the 2021 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

6 The second **Gina Cody School Day** took place on March 16. The celebration included a virtual discussion on the impact of AI in health care that featured **Jahangir Mohammed**, MASc 93, DSc 17, founder and CEO of Twin Health; **Marta Kersten-Oertel**, director of Concordia's Applied Perception Lab; and **Negin Ashouri**, MCompSc 21, co-founder and CEO of Femtherapeutics. Another

virtual event showcased student-led research and projects at the school.

The **John Molson School of Business** launched its inaugural day of pride on November 18. **John Molson School Day** was celebrated with a social-media campaign, a virtual event that featured six speakers and several informal in-person activities. More than 160 people attended the virtual event, and prizes valued at more than \$3,000 were awarded to students and alumni. ■

View our latest events at concordia.ca/alumni-events.



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ALUMNI **RICHARD REED PARRY**, BFA 03, **SARAH NEUFELD**, BFA 03, AND **KAVEH NABATIAN** ARE MEMBERS OF THE BELL ORCHESTRE INSTRUMENTAL BAND.

ASHLEY JANE RICHARDS



5

ALUMNAE **LILLIAN VINEBERG-GOODMAN**, BFA 83, **SAMIRA NASR**, BA 93, AND **ERIKA RATH**, BA 04, CERT 06



6

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **EMAD SHIHAB**, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES AT THE GINA CODY SCHOOL, MODERATED A GINA CODY SCHOOL DAY PANEL THAT FEATURED **JAHANGIR MOHAMMED**, MASC 93, DSC 17; **NEGIN ASHOURI**, MCOMPSC 21; AND **MARTA KERSTEN-OERTEL**.



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NEXT-GEN NOW.

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

58 Paul Goldstein, S BA, had his dissertation on the Balfour Declaration published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

77 Mario Settino, BComm, joined Balcan Innovations as chief financial officer.

80 David Gibbins, BComm, was appointed inaugural member of McMaster Innovation Park's North America Life Sciences Capital Markets Advisory Council.

Clifford Grossner, BCompSc, MCompSc 82, was named vice-president of Market Intelligence at Open Compute Project Foundation.

Charles-Andre Marchand, BFA, published a new literary series, *Arcade et Gail*, with Katherine Girard in November 2021.

81 Emilio Imbriglio, BComm, GrDipl 82, was appointed chairman of the board at Equisoft.

J. Roy Pottle, BComm, MBA 85, was featured in *CEO Magazine* for his work as chairman and CEO of American Messaging Services.

82 Loraine (Popkin) Cook, BA, joined the University of the West Indies as a professor in its Faculty of Humanities and Education.

86 Simon Pedder, MSc, was appointed CEO and director of Nirogy Therapeutics.

87 Ken Barnes, BFA, recently completed his feature drama film *The Bones on Greenwich Shore*, which will be distributed by Bayview Entertainment.

Line Rivard, MBA, was named Quebec's Delegate General in London, England.

88 Jennifer McGuire, GrDip, was named chief content officer of Pink Triangle Press.

89 Tony Cioffi, BSc, was appointed president of Lowe's Canada.

90 Susan Graham, MA, PhD 96, was named scientific director of the Azrieli Accelerator at the University of Calgary.

Lisa Shemie, BComm, was named general counsel and corporate secretary at OANDA.

91 Jacqueline Grossman, BComm, was appointed chief marketing officer at the Just for Laughs comedy festival.

Rhonda O'Gallagher, BA, was named vice-president of Strategic Marketing and Communications at the Montreal Jewish General Hospital.

Anne-Marie Trudeau, BA, was named president and general manager of Trudeau Corporation.

92 Peter Brues, GrDip, was named president and CEO of Transcontinental Inc.

93 Alberto Autmezguine, BA, was appointed managing director, chief financial officer and chief actuary of Global Atlantic Financial Group's Bermuda companies.

Panagiotis (Peter) Sarganis, BFA, presented his *inhale - exhale* exhibition at the SAMC Gallery at Trinity Western University in fall 2021.

94 François Bourdon, BSc, was named managing partner at Nordis Capital.

Daniel Marchand, BA, was appointed managing director, Capital Raising and IR, at BentallGreenOak.

95 Marie-France Benoit, BComm, was hired as director of National Insights at Avison Young.

96 Edward (Ted) Gallivan, BA, was named executive vice-president of Canada Border Services Agency in September 2021.

Jennifer Hayes, BA, MBA 01, was appointed chairperson of the Canadian Dairy Commission. Hayes is the first woman to hold the position.

Arun Jaura, PhD, was named chief technology officer at Hero MotoCorp.

Jules Koostachin, BFA, contributed to *A Perfect Offering: Personal Stories of Trauma and Transformation*, a compilation of 31 stories on trauma.

97 Cammi Granato, ATTD, was named assistant general manager of the NHL's Vancouver Canucks.

Eryn Griffith, BFA, was named arts and culture manager for the city of Fort St. John, British Columbia.

Lambert Morvan, BSc, was appointed CEO at ONLIA, a leading provider of car and home insurance.

Gregory Reid, MBA, was named vice-president at PDS Biotechnology Corporation.

98 Giuliano La Fratta, BComm, was appointed senior vice-president and chief financial officer at Aeterna Zentaris Inc.

Louis Vaugois, BComm, EMBA 06, was named chief technology officer at Andy Transport.

99 Stewart Campbell, BSc, was appointed executive vice-president and president of North America at Ipsen.

Andre Mainella, BComm, GrDip 01, was appointed chief financial officer at PyroGenesis Canada Inc.

Ben O'Hara-Byrne, GrDip, was named weeknight host of Corus Talk Radio's *A Little More Conversation with Ben O'Hara-Byrne*.

01 Ardem Keshishian, BSc, BSc 03, MBA 06, was named vice-president of Corporate Development at Moneta Gold Inc.

David Mastroberardino, BComm, was appointed CEO of Valsoft Corporation.

Keena Trowell, BFA, GrCert 02, BEng 14, joined McMaster University as assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

02 Ritesh Mukherjee, MCompSc, PhD 05, was named senior vice-president and general manager of Enterprise Networks at Inseego Corp.

03 Michael Gentile, BComm, is a founding partner and senior portfolio manager at Bastion Asset Management.

Charles Hagggar, BComm, GrDip 17, is a founding partner and chief information officer at Bastion Asset Management.

Lina Roessler, BA, directed the film *Best Sellers*, starring Michael Caine and Aubrey Plaza, which was released in September 2021.

Araz Toukmahji, BSc, was named a youth ambassador by the Armenian Prelacy of Canada.

04 Roberto Santaquida, BFA, presented his *First Fifth* exhibition at Montreal's OBORO centre in January. The exhibition featured a 15-channel video installation telling the story of human life.

05 Harley Finkelstein, BA, president of Shopify, co-founded Firebelly Tea, along with DAVIDsTEA founder David Segal.

Nather Jarrar, BComm, was appointed to lead the Boys MLS Prospects program of the Whitecaps FC Edmonton BMO Academy.

Tytus Zurawski, BComm, was named president of Bitume Québec.

06 Arye Weigensberg, BComm, was appointed general manager at Cronos Research Labs, as well as vice-president of Research and Technology and interim head of Research and Development at Cronos Group Inc.

07 Melodie Farkas, BFA, was cast in *The (Quarantine) Dream Play*, a virtual performance supported by the Toronto Film School.

08 Justin Kausel, BA, was appointed vice-president of Business Development at Laurentian Organic Inc.

Shawn Prodgers, BComm, joined Mako Financial Technologies as vice-president of Operations and Finance.

09 Andria Hickey, MA, was named chief curator of The Shed art centre.

Syrine Tlili, PhD, was appointed CEO of Tunisie Telecom.

10 Fadhil Al-Bayaty, BEng, MEng 13, was appointed director of Product Management at VuWall.

Sherin Al-Safadi, MBA, PhD 14, was named vice-president of Medical Affairs at POINT Biopharma Global Inc.

Jessica Dymond, GrDip, was a core creative (editor) on the National Film Board of Canada's VR experience *This Is Not a Ceremony*, which celebrated its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival.

Lauren Scott, BComm, was appointed vice-president, Marketing and Sustainability, Intelligent Spaces Group at Acuity Brands.

11 Antoine Dionne-Charest, BA, was appointed vice-president, Consulting and Development, at Imperium Strategies.

Vanessa Herrick, BA, was named executive director of the English Language Arts Network.

Maxime Joyal, BA, was named coordinator of sports programs at CEGEP de Thetford.

Vanessa Pendenza, BComm, was named partner at Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg.

Sherry Romanado, EMBA, was appointed Deputy Leader of the Government in Canada's House of Commons.

12 Emily Bourassa Brass, BA, is the host of a new CBC Manitoba podcast called *Type Taboo: Diary of a New Diabetic*.

Christine May, MA, was named curator at the Kelowna Art Gallery.

Theodros Wolde, BComm, was elected mayor of the LaSalle borough, representing the Mouvement Montréal municipal party.

13 Joey Alfieri, BA, joined the Montreal Alouettes as a content provider, writer and podcast contributor.

Angela Parker, BA, MSc 16, was named as sustainability coordinator for the City of Cornwall, Ontario.

14 Dominic Desjardins, BFA, released his album *Maestro* in September 2021.

Michael Bramadat-Willcock, BA, joined BlackPress Media as a reporter for its *Omineca Express* and *Caledonia Courier*.

16 Fanny Castonguay-Babin, BA, joined the boutique firm SYRUS Réputation as an advisor.

Cindy Phenix, BFA, was a part of *Group Chat*, a group art exhibition at Julius Caesar Gallery in Chicago, Illinois.

Kevin Victor, BComm, was named vice-president of Sales at Mako Financial Technologies.

17 Jérémie Poirier Pratte, BComm, was named vice-president at Patrimonica.

Charles-Alexandre Vennat, EMBA, joined Wondr Gaming as a special advisor.

18 Adam Perez, BComm, was named operations administrator at PWL Capital Inc.

Ethan Soil, BFA, released the *Stunning and Atrocious* LP with the Montreal LGBTQ indie band Fleece in September. Soil is the band's drummer.

19 Shreyas Vasudevareddy Movva, MEng, was selected to represent Cricket Canada at the international level (see p. 9).

Louis Vachon, LLD., was named operating partner at investment firm J.C. Flowers & Co.

20 Berirouche Feddal, BFA, was featured in *La Presse* for his art exhibitions in Toronto and Montreal.

Emmanuel Gendron-Tardif, BFA, directed the film *Soumissions*, which was released to Quebec theatres in October 2021.

Jonathan Séguin-Forest, EMBA, joined Blain, Joyal and Charbonneau CPAs as new partner.

21 Swapnaa Tamhane, MFA, is a contemporary artist whose first solo museum exhibition, *Swapnaa Tamhane: Mobile Palace*, is showing at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum until August 1. ■

Richard Pound, S BA 63, LLD 10, was named honorary founding president by the World Anti-Doping Agency. Pound helped establish the global watchdog in 1999 and is the longest-serving member of the International Olympic Committee.

H. Nigel Thomas, S BA 74, MA 75, was honoured with the Judy Mappin Community Award from the Quebec Writers' Federation for outstanding contributions to English-language literature in Quebec.

Kathleen Zellner, BA 74, was hired to join the legal team of actor Johnny Depp in his defence against ex-wife and actress Amber Heard.

André Desmarais, BComm 78, LLD 07, chairman of Power Corporation of Canada, has been inducted into the 2022 Canadian Business Hall of Fame.

Monique Polak, MA 84, won the Janet Savage Blachford Prize for Children's/Young Adult Literature from the Quebec Writers' Federation for *Room for One More*.

Darren Entwistle, BA 86, LLD 12, president and CEO of Telus, has been named to *Vancouver Magazine's* latest Power 50 List, which highlights individuals "who use their platforms to uplift others."

Jacques Goulet, BSc 88, president of Sun Life Canada, was named CEO of the Year in the Large Business category by *Les Affaires*.

Barbara Kanerattoni Diabo, BFA 91, was awarded a Prix de la Danse de Montréal.

Ula Ubani, BA 91, was named among Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 award winners in 2021 by the Women's Executive Network.

Jahangir Mohammed, MSc 93, DSc 17, founder and CEO of Twin Health, has been named to CB Insights' Digital Health 150, which showcases the 150 most promising private digital-health companies in the world.

Emma Tibaldo, BA 93, BFA 99, was the winner of a 2021 Sentinel Prize from the Conseil québécois du théâtre.

Mauro Cifelli, BComm 94, received the Pursuit of Excellence Award from the Aftermarket Warehouse Distributors Association.

Rodolphe Saadé, BComm 94, was named France's Entrepreneur of the Year for the South-East region.

Mohamed Alkadry, MA 96, was named a 2021 Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Julie Flett, BFA 99, is a co-winner of the 2021 Governor General's Literary Award in the category of Young People's Literature – Illustrated Books for *On the Trapline*.

Karen Trask, MFA 99, was one of five winners of the inaugural PHI Montreal artist residencies.

Sarah Venart, MA 02, was awarded the Quebec Writers' Federation's A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry for *I Am the Big Heart*.

Amin Alhassan, PhD 03, was named Ghana's Most People-Focused CEO of the Year.

Nicolas Schulman, BA 05, was selected as one of Canada's Top Wealth Advisors by *The Globe and Mail*.



Mickey Donovan, BA 06, joined the Toronto Argonauts 2022 coaching team as special-teams coordinator. Donovan was head coach of the Concordia Stingers men's football team from 2014-17.

Mandy Gull-Masty, BA 06, BA 08, was named the first female Grand Chief of the Cree Nation Government in Quebec.

Eric St-Pierre, BA 06, was selected as one of the honourees of the 2022 Clean50 Awards and a finalist for the Young Bar of Montreal Lawyer of the Year award in the Alternative Career category.

Caitlin Durlak, BFA 07, was awarded the Special Jury Prize for *Dropstones* at the Montreal International Documentary Festival.

Vincent Giove, BA 07, was named among Canada's Top 40 Under 40 by Caldwell and PwC.

James Lynn, BFA 07, MBA 19, is among 25 winners of C2 Montréal's Emerging Entrepreneurs Contest.

Eleonora Eusepi, BA 09, was a finalist for the Young Bar of Montreal Lawyer of the Year award in the Corporate Law category.

Gohar Manvelyan, BFA 10, GrDip 12, received the Young Conductor's Fellowship 2021 from the Hnatyshyn Foundation and was the recipient of the 2021 Christa and Franz-Paul Decker Fellowship in Conducting.



2 Chanel M. Sutherland, BA 10, won the 2021 CBC Nonfiction Prize for *Umbrella*. The prize comes with a \$6,000 award from the Canada Council for the Arts, and Sutherland will attend a two-week writing residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts and Creativity.

Amy Ball, BFA 11, was a finalist for the 2021 Yukon Prize for Visual Arts.

Sonya Stefan, BFA 11, MFA 18, won Best National Short or Medium-Length Film for *The Truss Arch* at the Montreal International Documentary Festival.

Eunice Bélidor, BFA 12, curator at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, was selected as one of seven inspiring women of 2021 by *Chatelaine*.

Lise Gaston, MA 12, won the 2021 CBC Poetry Prize for *James*.

Amélie Guèvremont, PhD 15, received the Prix de la relève professorale from Université du Québec à Montréal.

Dan Doran, MBA 16, a lieutenant-colonel with the Canadian Armed Forces, was the commanding officer overseeing forces deployed in Montreal to help with Quebec's third-dose vaccination efforts.

Laurence Hervieux-Gosselin, BFA 16, was the winner of the Prix Lynne-Cohen for photography.

Hawa Keita, BComm 17, was named one of Canada's Top 30 Under 30 Sustainability Leaders of 2021 by Corporate Knights.

Sarah Abou-Bakr, BA 19, was the recipient of the Centre culturel islamique de Québec (CCIQ) Memorial Award for her efforts to promote awareness and understanding of the Muslim experience in Quebec and Canada.

Santiago Tamayo Soler, BFA 19, was one of five winners of the inaugural PHI Montreal artist residencies.

Jennifer Flanagan, LLD 20, was named one of Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 award winners in 2021 by the Women's Executive Network.

Aurelio Meza, PhD 20, was named a 2021-22 Fellow of the Electronic Literature Organization.

Patrick Brian Smith, PhD 20, was awarded the British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Warwick.

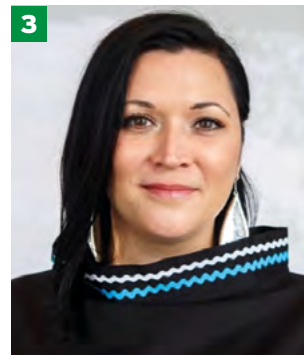
Maggy Hamel-Metsos, BFA 21, was the Quebec Regional Winner of the 2021 BMO 1st Art! Competition.

Ahreum Lee, MFA 21, was named winner of the 2021 Impressions artist residency by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and Conseil des arts de Montréal.

Claire Staton, BSc 21, earned a Clarendon Scholarship to the University of Oxford.

Barry F. Lorenzetti, president and CEO at BFL Canada, was awarded the International Business Leader of the Year Award from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. In 2021, Lorenzetti established the Barry F. Lorenzetti Centre for Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership at Concordia's John Molson School of Business.

In honour of India's Republic Day on January 26, **Gad Saad**, professor, Department of Marketing at Concordia, was congratulated by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his work in evolutionary behavioural sciences and marketing.



3 Heather Iglioliorte, associate professor in the Department of Art History, was awarded the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts Medal in recognition of her contributions to the field of arts and culture.

ORDER OF CANADA

Three members of the Concordia community were recognized in December 2021 with the Order of Canada — one of the country's highest civilian honours — for their outstanding achievement, dedication to community and service to the nation:

Barry Bultz, BA 69, Officer
Morris Goodman, Member
Joy MacPhail, Member

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

The following alumni were elected as Members of Parliament in their respective boroughs:

Anju Dhillon, BA 02, Dorval–Lachine–LaSalle
Anthony Housefather, MBA 02, Mount Royal
Tom Kmiec, BA 05, Calgary Shepard
Francis Scarpaleggia, MBA 84, Lac-Saint-Louis
Peter Schiefke, BA 07, Vaudreuil–Soulanges

2022 BLACK HISTORY MONTH LAUREATES

Four Concordia alumni were among the 2022 laureates for Black History Month in Montreal:

Leon Llewellyn, BFA 74, GrDipl 75
Quincy Armorer, BFA 97
Roen Higgins, Cert 08, BA 12
Naya Ali, BA 11

CBC 2022 BLACK CHANGEMAKERS

CBC Quebec honoured its 2022 Black Changemakers in February — its second edition celebrating exceptional members of the province's Black communities who are making a difference. Five Concordians are among this year's changemakers:

Dorothy Williams, BA 84, MA 99
Mubeenah Mughal, BA 02
Loreena Gabriel, BA 12
Gift Tshuma, BA 16
Temi Akin-Aina, associate director of Concordia's Alumni Relations ■

TAKE PRIDE in your alma mater!



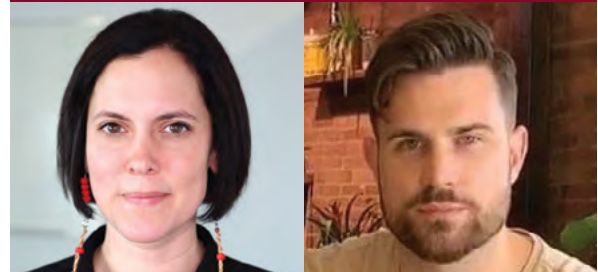
Samira Nasr, BA 93
Editor-in-chief, *Harper's BAZAAR*

Salim Valji, BA 17
TSN Calgary correspondent



Vincent Leclerc, BCompSc 03
Founding partner and CEO, PixMob

Chanel M. Sutherland, BA 10
2021 CBC Nonfiction Prize winner



Sonia Bonspille Boileau, BFA 06
Award-winning filmmaker

Steven Regimbal, BComm 14
Co-founder and CEO, Workden

You are part of Concordia's accomplished 235,000-member alumni family.

- Tell us where you're at:
concordia.ca/keepintouch
- Share your successes:
alumni@concordia.ca
- Join us on social media:
[@Concordia.Alumni](https://www.instagram.com/Concordia.Alumni)



#CUpride #CUalumni

1 Multidisciplinary artist **Esther Calixte-Bea**, BFA 20 – who goes by Queen Esie on social media – took part in the *Dos à Dos, Face à Face* exhibition at Institut National Art Contemporain from March 3 to April 17, 2021. Queen Esie's work can be found at estercalixtebea.com and on social media. 1) "The Art of Interpretation," acrylic on canvas (2020).

2 Visual artist and batik designer **Avy Loftus**, MA 20, presented her drawings at the 14th anniversary of Peace, Love and Hope – an Indonesian batik project in collaboration with schoolchildren – aimed at fighting bullying. The event took place at Gallery 2903 in downtown Montreal in December 2021. 2) "We do care," pencil, ink and watercolour with batik on linen paper (2021).

3 Inspired by the metaphor of the Stations of the Cross, **Frank DiMauro**, BA 78, exhibited *The XI Stations: The Passion According to Mother Nature* at Almannance Arts gallery in Graham, North Carolina. The mixed-media exhibition, which ran from July to August 2021, presented 11 tableaux depicting the quickly deteriorating state of the world's natural habitats and environment.

3) "Mortal Remains," cloth, real bird's nest, simulated bird eggs (2020).

4 **Ilsabey Siemens**, BFA 05, recently joined fellow artists exhibiting their works on the online platform artistsinmontreal.com. While Siemens creates many paintings on canvas, her main passion is porcelain painting.

4) "Courage, le printemps s'en vient," acrylic on canvas (2017).

5 *Queer Photographs*, an exhibition by **JJ Levine**, BFA 10, MFA 18, is on display at Montreal's McCord Museum from February 18 to September 18, 2022. Composed of 52 large-format photographs, Levine's work questions the representation of traditional binary gender roles.

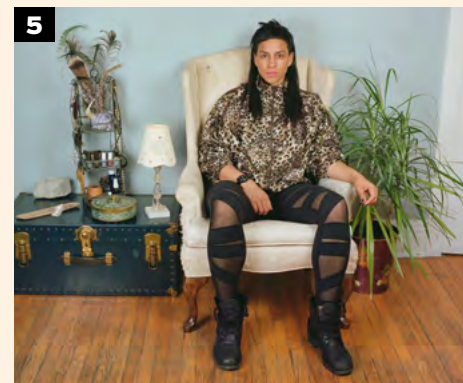
5) "Lee Lee" (2015).

6 **Walter Moodie**, BFA 20, is a 2021 grant recipient from the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation, a Montreal-based organization that supports emerging artists around the world. "I am extremely grateful for the foundation's generous support, which has been invaluable in helping me pursue my current MFA studies," says Moodie, whose artwork can be viewed at waltermoodie.com.

6) "Party in Larry's River," oil on canvas (2020).



PAUL LITHERLAND



William Bronstetter,
L BA 37, December 15, 1998.

Lorne A. Booth,
S BA 49, S BComm 77,
December 4, 2021.

Gerald Wareham,
S BComm 50, October 17,
2021. He was 93.

Murray Heselton,
S BComm 51, November 12,
2021. He was 96.

Carl V. Outridge, S BComm
53, S BA 62, December
2, 2021, Mississauga, Ont.
He was 92.

J. Brian McMullan Sr.,
L BA 55, June 24, 2021.
He was 86.

David J. Waters, L BA 56,
August 27, 2021. He was 86.

Mitchell H. Klein, S BA 57,
August 15, 2021. He was 85.

Alexander D. Karapita,
S BSc 58, September 15,
2021. He was 92.

**Gayla Edith (Wood)
Freitag**, S BA 59, March 2,
2022. She was 83.

Maurice Gingerysty,
S BA 59, March 13, 2021.
He was 95.

Robert J. Sebaski,
S BSc 59, November
26, 2021.

Gerald A. Smith, S BSc 59,
S MTM 72, June 23, 2018.

Claude Desjean,
S BComm 60, S BSc
66, passed away on
December 16, 2021, in
Montreal, Que. He was 85.
Following graduation from
Concordia's Sir George
Williams University, Desjean
became a chartered
accountant and had a
successful career with
KLM in Montreal and as
president of a company
in Toronto. Grateful for
his student experience at
Concordia, Desjeans made
a bequest of his estate
towards an endowment
for student scholarships
at the university.

**Barbara A. (Thomas)
Jamison**, S BComm 60,
October 5, 2021. She was 87.

James A. Scott, S BSc 60,
October 8, 2021. He was 90.

Milton Kavanat,
S BComm 61, S BA 64,
December 3, 2001.

William Pencer,
S BComm 61, October 28,
2021. He was 82.

Gerald A. Mulhall,
S BComm 62, September 8,
2021. He was 89.

Allan J. Benjamin, S BA 63,
April 18, 2021, Nassau,
Bahamas. He was 83.

Peter C. Connolly, L BA 63,
April 4, 2021. He was 79.

Edward Schneerer,
S BA 63, December 13, 2021.
He was 80.

Richard W. Phidd, S BA 64,
July 29, 2021, Guelph, Ont.
He was 81.

David J. Schurman,
S BComm 64, August
7, 2021, Red Deer, Alb.
He was 80.

David D'Alton, S BComm 65

Michel J. Tanguay,
S BComm 65, S BA 68,
November 29, 2021.

Frederick H. Cowie,
S BComm 66, October 17,
2021. He was 80.

John M. Cybulski,
S BSc 66, May 17, 2014.
He was 81.

Lynton H. Martin, S BA 66,
August 22, 2021. He was 97.

Donald P. Pichovich,
S BSc 66, September 16,
2021. He was 81.

Miriam (Musia) Schwartz,
S BA 66, S MA 70,
September 8, 2021.
She was 92.

Richard O. Bubb-Clarke,
S BComm 67, October
3, 2021, Toronto, Ont.
He was 78.

Reinhold Grudev,
L BA 67, May 20, 2021.

Fred W. Popowich,
L BA 67, August 6, 2021,
New Glasgow, Nov.
He was 74.

John H. Ceriko,
S BComm 68, July 7, 2021.
He was 82.

Patricia Kostiuik, L BA 68,
April 15, 2019. She was 75.

Dennis M. Oldham,
S BComm 68, September 12,
2021. He was 79.

James F. Routh, L BA 68,
July 5, 2021, Grafton, Ont.
He was 74.

Nino Cesari, S BSc 69,
BEng 76, October 20, 2021.
He was 73.

Maurice J. King,
S BA 69, December 2, 2019.
He was 92.

Michael Gerard Ryan,
L BA 69, June 3, 2021,
Ottawa, Ont. He was 73.

Imre Weinberger,
S BComm 69, November 21,
2021. He was 75.

Romualdo Biancardi,
L BSc 70, L BComm 74,
March 28, 2021. He was 70.

Rosemary Coughlin,
L BA 70, June 20, 2021,
Toronto, Ont.

Richard King, S BA 70,
January 2, 2022. He was 76.

Eileen Pratt, L BA 70,
July 14, 2021, Mississauga,
Ont. She was 80.

Katherine Morrison,
S MA 71, October 3, 2019.
She was 94.

Ritva Orvokki Seppanen,
S BA 71, October 1, 2021.
He was 78.

Françoise Genest-Schmidt, S BComm 72, February 3, 2021. She was 92.

Grace (Goldschmeid) Kirkham, S BA 72, November 4, 2021. She was 75.

Thomas Mowat, L BA 72, October 15, 2021.

Thomas C. Petts, S BA 72, October 16, 2021. He was 71.

Rolf Blydt-Hansen, S BComm 73, September 5, 2021. He was 90.

Nancy Bangs, L BComm 74

Edward S. Bond, L BSc 74, MSc 76, November 4, 2021. He was 73.

Ronald A. J. Cadieux, BA 74, November 5, 2021. He was 73.

Paul Delaney, L BA 74, July 18, 2021, Calgary, Alb. He was 72.

Joseph A. Hackett, L BA 74, MA 82, October 12, 2021. He was 71.

Orest Jaszczyszyn, L BA 74, October 15, 2021. He was 68.

Joann M. Pasquale, L BA 74, October 30, 2020, Sarnia, Ont. She was 68.

Walter W. Carroll, BA 75, November 6, 2021. He was 83.

Robert Lamb, BSc 75, November 29, 2021.

Grace (Rinzler) Stober, BA 75, July 10, 2021. She was 94.

Margery I. Doutre, BA 76, November 30, 2021.

Peter Firlotte, BA 76, February 9, 2021. He was 68.

Michael Lieberman, BA 76, October 31, 2021. He was 82.

Robert W. Smith, BSc 76, September 2, 2021. He was 68.

Iris R. Biteen, BFA 77, September 30, 2021. She was 69.

Roney Hilbig, BA 77, November 4, 2021, Kingston, Ont. He was 64.

Antonio Pascarella, BComm 77, July 8, 2021. He was 65.

James Fine, BComm 78, November 20, 2021. He was 66.

Eugene E. Homenock, BA 78, January 9, 2022, London, Ont. He was 69.

Stephen G. Taylor, MSc 78, GrDip 86, MA 90, PhD 99, August 9, 2021. He was 76.

Christian Penda Ekoka, MBA 79, August 8, 2021. He was 69.

Brian A. Evans, BA 79, MA 88, January 2, 2022, Longueuil, Que. He was 80.

Gordon B. Lee, BFA 79, January 25, 2018, Westerville, OH. He was 63.

Murray Laufer, LLD 80, June 17, 2021, Toronto, Ont. He was 91.

Hanna Eliashiv, BA 80, November 20, 2020. She was 73.

Catherine Rotiroti, BA 80, September 8, 2021. She was 63.

Giuseppe DiMauro, BComm 81, April 18, 2021. He was 62.

Helen Huza, BComm 81, November 30, 2021, Pointe-Claire, Que. She was 93.

Inara S. Leimanis, BFA 81, July 26, 2021. She was 78.

Barbara A. Potash, BFA 81, August 20, 2021. She was 86.

Michel Provost, BComm 81, July 11, 2021. He was 70.

Steven S. Walsh, BA 81, August 19, 2021, Ashland, MO. He was 63.

John Halme, BComm 82

Alice M. Hamilton, BFA 82, October 23, 2021. She was 79.

Nancy (Handelman) Bohbot, BA 83, Cert 01, August 10, 2021. She was 78.

Evelyn Murphy, BA 83, October 5, 2021. She was 88.

John Cameron, BFA 84, June 23, 2021. He was 62.

Dan De La Fosse, BAdmin 85, August 5, 2021. He was 62.

Shiela M. Hamill-Bjork, BA 85, April 16, 2021. She was 78.

Lesley-Ann Lacate, BA 85, November 10, 2021. She was 68.

Andre S. Turcot, BSc 85, June 23, 2020, Hawthorne, NY. He was 57.

Jean-Paul Gourdeau, LLD 89, June 29, 2021. He was 96.

Annette Rudy, GrDip 89, MBA 93, June 23, 2020. She was 71.

Anne Julie (Schnitzer) McCaffrey, BComm 89, June 1, 2021, Calgary, Alb. She was 54.

Alan R. Hudson, BA 91, October 29, 2021. He was 79.

Mary (Pancel) Palinkas, BA 94, passed away on December 8, 2021, after a long battle with cancer. She was 79. A refugee of the Hungarian Revolution, Palinkas moved to Canada in 1956 at the age of 14. She later married in Montreal and had four children, after which she returned to her studies as an undergraduate student at Concordia in 1981. Palinkas was a life-long learner who overcame many barriers. Studying at Concordia was among her proudest life experiences.

Justin Powlowski (1958 - 2021)

'One of our strongest, most reliable colleagues'

KELSEY ROLFE

The Concordia community mourned the death of Justin Powlowski, associate vice-president of Research, Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships, on December 19. Powlowski was a respected researcher, committed professor, accomplished administrator and a beloved colleague.

"Justin was one of the most humble, understated, self-effacing people you could ever meet. Yet he touched so many people and contributed massively to a host of key transformative changes at Concordia," said President Graham Carr.

Anne Whitelaw, BFA 87, GrDip 92, PhD 96, provost and vice-president, Academic, also expressed her heartfelt condolences.

"We lost a great Concordian," she said. "Between his engaged teaching, extensive research and dedication to Concordia, Justin has been one of our strongest, most reliable colleagues for decades. He is irreplaceable and will be greatly missed."

Powlowski joined Concordia as an assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry in 1990.

In 1998, he co-founded Concordia's Centre for Structural and Functional Genomics. He was also co-investigator of a Canada Foundation for Innovation Institutional Award in 1999, which helped establish the genomics facilities on Loyola Campus.

Since 2002, Powlowski was a co-investigator on five Genome Canada awards with total funding exceeding \$80 million.

'HIS CONTRIBUTIONS CANNOT BE OVERSTATED'

After 16 years as a talented researcher and professor, Powlowski served as associate dean of academic facilities in the Faculty of Arts and Science from 2006 to 2012. He joined the Office of the Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies as interim associate vice-president of research, strategy and operations, before assuming the role full-time in 2013.



In 2018, Powlowski was appointed associate vice-president of research, strategic initiatives and partnerships.

His leadership while interim vice-president contributed to the university's successful Canada Excellence Research Chair application. He also played a key role in the construction and opening of the PERFORM Centre and the Genomics Building, and the launch of 4TH SPACE.

"He was able to bring his own experience as a

successful researcher into so many of our discussions and decisions, said Paula Wood-Adams, interim vice-president of research and graduate studies.

"His contributions to research at Concordia simply cannot be overstated, nor can his impact on all of us."

Powlowski leaves behind his wife, Lena Sahlman, a part-time faculty member in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and his sons, Mats and Pavel. ■

Thomas Donald Green, BA 98, August 9, 2021. He was 92.

Catherine Lloyd, BA 01, October 23, 2021. She was 64.

Sandra J. Robinson, BA 04, July 14, 2021. She was 77.

Kristopher Baker, BA 08, November 22, 2021. He was 44.

Tristan Ledent, BComm 11, November 1, 2021. He was 35.

Abesan Kandiah, BComm 16, July 5, 2021, Thunder Bay, Ont. He was 30. ■

Helen Bambic-Workman (1935 - 2022)

'She made it feel like anything was possible'

SARA MORLEY, BFA 94

Helen Bambic-Workman, BEA 79, MFA 86, was a Concordia audiovisual department staff member from the mid-1970s until her retirement in 1995. She was the creator of MITE AVISTA, the university's groundbreaking multimedia lab that provided a range of students and staff access to burgeoning technology from 1989 to 2003.

Sara Morley — with help from Scott Prentice, Salvatore Barrera, BA 93, and Holly Workman — recalls her former colleague.

Helen Bambic-Workman took her last breath on January 31. Helen was a bright spark and a techno matriarch who will be deeply missed.

Born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, Helen and her family soon moved to Val-d'Or, Quebec. At 18, she came to Montreal to study nursing at McGill University and trained at the Royal Victoria Hospital. Helen was denied certification when she became pregnant. She and her classmates made enough trouble that this policy was revoked the following year.

Helen married in 1955, had four children and, like many women of her generation, stayed home to raise them. She divorced, and at 40, enrolled in Concordia's Cinema



program. After graduating in 1979, she was hired to run the university's AVISTA (Audio-Visual In-Service Teaching Area), while continuing her studies at night.

By 1989, Helen had been running AVISTA for 10 years and had earned a master's in educational technology. She loved her job and felt privileged to provide students with the best media-production tools available.

'SHE EMPOWERED US'
Helen and her AVISTA colleagues dreamed up the model for the MITE (Media Integrated Technology Environment) Lab in the Henry F. Hall Building

— a kind of technology playground for students across the university, dubbed "the mighty lab" by those who worked there. Helen encouraged her team to be imaginative, independent, focused and curious.

Concordia's landmark Women and the Fine Arts course introduced students to the works of pioneering women video artists and encouraged them to create their own videos at the MITE Lab. It was this class that led Deborah VanSlet, BA 03, now a veteran videographer and storyteller, and me to the lab — and it changed the direction of our creative lives.

Helen made it clear to all the young women who dared to walk in the door that there was a place for them here. She empowered us and made it feel like anything was possible.

In 1995, Helen retired. The MITE Lab closed in 2003, but its impact is still felt by the students and staff who began exploring multimedia technology there — many of whom continue to work, create and innovate in this domain.

After living full-time in the Eastern Townships, Que., Helen moved to Victoria in 2001 to be near her children. She is mourned by the four of them — and all her MITE family. ■

Sean Gordon (1971-2022)

'A tremendous athlete and a great Concordian'

ELISABETH FAURE,
GRDIP 10

The Concordia community mourned the sudden loss of Sean Gordon, BA 06, a former Stingers football star who enjoyed a long career at Concordia, where he was loved and well respected by colleagues.

Gordon graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics in 2006. He played football for the Stingers from 1996 to 1999 and earned team all-star honours his final two seasons.

Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president, Advancement, was the defensive coordinator for the

Stingers when they made a remarkable run for the Vanier Cup in 1998.

"I had the pleasure of coaching Sean in his student days — he was a tremendous athlete and a great Concordian," says Chesser. "My sincere condolences to his loved ones."

Gordon went on to work at his alma mater in a variety of functions, including as graduate program assistant in the Department of Education and, from 2006 to 2013, service assistant at the Birks Student Service Centre.

Most recently, Gordon was graduate program assistant at the Department of Applied Human Sciences.

Peter Morden, chair of Applied Human Sciences, expressed his sadness at Gordon's passing.

"As graduate program assistant, Sean was the bedrock that allowed our graduate programs to thrive and was the proverbial go-to guy for faculty and grad students who needed any questions answered," Morden says.

Alison Piela, a coordinator in Applied Human Sciences, met Gordon in 1996 when they were both Stingers varsity athletes.

"We then worked together in Athletics and became friends," says Piela. When they both landed jobs at Applied Human Sciences,



the two were happy to be back on the same team.

"Stingers always stick together," says Piela. "I am deeply saddened by his loss. Sean was a good man — my heart is broken." ■

Jim Donaldson (1937-2021)

'His love for Loyola Campus was without bounds'

IAN HARRISON,
B COMM 01

Jim Donaldson, BSc 52, who contributed to the revival of Loyola Campus, died on November 12, 2021. He was 88.

"Jim was a champion of our university who truly represented the service-oriented spirit of Loyola," says Paul Chesser, BA 94, GrDip 97, vice-president of Advancement. "As a volunteer with the Loyola Alumni Association, where he served as president and a long-time member of the board of directors, Jim helped strengthen scholarships for students as well as efforts to refurbish the Loyola Refectory."

The result of those efforts was the inauguration of Loyola



Jesuit Hall and Conference Centre in 2012, which helped launch a new era for Loyola Campus and Concordia.

Dominique McCaughey, BA 96, MA 02, former associate vice-president of Advancement and Alumni Relations, got to know Donaldson through his work on the Refectory Campaign Committee.

"Jim was limitless in his energy, dogged in his determination and seemed to

know every Loyola graduate," says McCaughey. "He had a knack for bringing people together and his love for Loyola Campus was without bounds."

A native of Revelstoke, British Columbia, James M. Donaldson grew up in Montreal. He graduated from Loyola High School and then, in 1952, Loyola College.

After a stint in sales, Donaldson pivoted to architecture at McGill University, where he earned his degree in 1962.

The firm he co-founded in 1964, Donaldson, Drummond and Sankey, enjoyed success with projects like the Pavilion of the State of New York at Expo 67, the Town of Mount Royal Library and commissions for Bank of Montreal and Bell Telephone.

Donaldson was elected a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 1987. He volunteered his time and expertise extensively, notably as president of the St. Patrick's Foundation Board, a member of Loyola High School's expansion committee and a member of the committee to develop the campus of St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal.

Concordia honoured him with the Benoît Pelland Distinguished Service Award in 2009.

Jim Donaldson leaves behind his wife, Marianne (Bellmore), a former member of Concordia's Board of Governors, daughters Kim and Anne (E. Donaldson-Pym, BA 80), son Michael, and five grandchildren. ■

'I, too, was in great shape, until COVID-19'

Reckoning with the 'otherworldliness' of the pandemic

RHONDA MULLINS, MA 96

Five weeks into my stint with COVID-19, I awoke to the thought that maybe you can die from exhaustion.

Lying in bed, I felt for my phone and googled "Can you die of," and then stopped. I was afraid of what I would find if I completed the query.

Normally, I have a strict policy against googling things medical, because all roads lead to imminent death. But in those early days of the pandemic, doctors had precious few answers. You took them where you could find them.

I was reassured, as my search hung there, suspended, that the word "exhaustion" did not appear in the autocomplete section — as if that were a measure of anything. People, it seems, worry more about dying of a broken heart, boredom, laughter, hunger in Minecraft, old age, pain and sadness. Fair enough.

COVID-19 is unpredictable — that is its hallmark. The variety I had was like running an ultramarathon and then being strapped to a bucking bronco for six months, not knowing whether you would be thrown clear or trampled to death. The exhaustion was otherworldly.

Much has gone viral alongside COVID-19. I missed the sourdough days, but I do Wordle religiously. And I have become acquainted with Noodle, the TikTok pug behind the expression "no bones day."

Every morning, Noodle's human lifts him to his paws as a kind of energy litmus test. Some mornings, known as "bones days," Noodle remains standing. On "no bones days," the pug sinks back to the bed, all soft tissue and fur. All puppet, no hand.



"Perhaps hope is somewhere up there, down the road, a little further ahead, around the next bend."

I would self-administer a similar test every morning in bed when I was sick. I would stretch, not theatrically, arms in a V, fists balled, eager to greet the day. My test stretch was imperceptible, the slightest tensing and release invisible to the naked eye.

More often than not, I did not have the strength to contract any muscle, and that was my bellwether for the day. Muscles or no muscles. Bones or no bones.

The otherworldliness continues, because I feel like I have been abducted by aliens and am running through the

streets, trying to warn people, waving my arms and pointing to the sky.

But many have not even seen the spaceship. They wield words like "I'm healthy" and "I take care of myself," and they assume the odd horror story in the news is a case of man biting dog, a rarity. They believe their age or good health or habits will protect them, but I know better. I eat right, exercise, do yoga and meditate. I am not old, merely oldish.

I, too, was in great shape, until COVID-19 had me in its maw for three days. By then, my virtue was no longer enough.

I am much better these days — and some mornings, when I'm meditating, I'm awed as I watch my breath come and go, this filament with the strength and delicacy of spider silk that carries us through life. For it, I am grateful.

Alongside this gratitude, one wants to be hopeful, but, like my glasses, my hope has been temporarily misplaced, and I won't find it by retracing my steps.

Because we can't go back, any of us. Not the people who have had COVID-19, lost someone to it, avoided it, been scared of it, cared for and about others who have had it, be they strangers or not.

The way is forward. Perhaps hope is somewhere up there, down the road, a little further ahead, around the next bend. So, onward, my friends. ■

Rhonda Mullins is a Montreal-based writer and translator. She has won a Governor General's Literary Award for her translation work and was named Concordia's first translator-in-residence in 2018.

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