

# momentum



# Annual student expenses

More and more students rely on financial aid to help make ends meet. On top of tuition, some students must factor rent, groceries and other living expenses into their budgets. Out-of-province and international students face even higher costs.



## TUITION + FEES

\$3,776  
 \$8,675  
 \$19,802



## TRANSPORT + TRAVEL

\$398  
 \$898  
 \$898

## BOOKS + SUPPLIES

\$2,234



## SPORTS + RECREATION

\$300



## RENT + HYDRO

\$5,040



## FOOD + BEVERAGE

\$4,950

## INTERNET + PHONE

\$1,040



## MISCELLANEOUS

\$500



## PERSONAL

\$1,320

## TOTALS

\$19,558

\$24,957

\$36,084



\*Data provided by Concordia's Financial Aid and Awards Office. All costs are approximate, with rent based on shared apartment.

# welcome



## Moving forward as Canada's next-generation university

A MESSAGE FROM CONCORDIA  
PRESIDENT ALAN SHEPARD

I'm proud to present this 2018 edition of *momentum*, our annual newsletter about Concordia student award recipients and those who fund their transformative bursaries or scholarships.

This is an exciting time to be at Concordia. For the second year in a row, we have enjoyed record enrolment and research funding, including \$10 million to explore the field of next-generation cities. We received strong philanthropic support from many donors, including the R. Howard Webster Foundation, Hydro-Québec and proud alumna Christine Lengvari, BSc 72.

Big news for our community: on November 1, 2017, we launched the university's most ambitious fundraising campaign ever. **The Campaign for Concordia. Next-Gen. Now** ([concordia.ca/campaign](http://concordia.ca/campaign)) aims to raise \$250 million in support of our 48,000 students and nine strategic directions that will propel us forward as Canada's next-generation university.

In the following pages, you'll learn more about the campaign and hear from four talented students on how financial awards have supported them both academically and personally. You'll also meet four donors who choose to advance our society by investing in talent at Concordia.

Philanthropy plays a crucial role in making Concordia Canada's next-generation university — and we are truly grateful for your support.

**Alan Shepard**  
President

# 9 strategic directions

These orientations focus on how Concordia can thrive in a changing landscape, tethered to our core values and historic mission while eyeing a future in which the status quo is unlikely to be sufficient.



## DOUBLE OUR RESEARCH

Pursue bold goals in research that reflect our talents and our ambition to tackle big challenges.



## GROW SMARTLY

Add capacity where our strengths and emerging enrolment demand intersect.



## TEACH FOR TOMORROW

Deliver a next-generation education that's connected, transformative, and fit for the times.



## EMBRACE THE CITY, EMBRACE THE WORLD

Achieve public impact through research and learning.



## GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

Use rich experiences outside the classroom to deepen learning and effect change.



## GO BEYOND

Push past the status quo and go the extra mile for members of our community.



## MIX IT UP

Build agile structures that facilitate intellectual mixing and internal collaboration.



## TAKE PRIDE

Celebrate successes and be purposeful about building a legacy.



## EXPERIMENT BOLDLY

Be inventive and enterprising in creating tomorrow's university.

[concordia.ca/directions](https://concordia.ca/directions)



# NEXT-GEN. NOW.

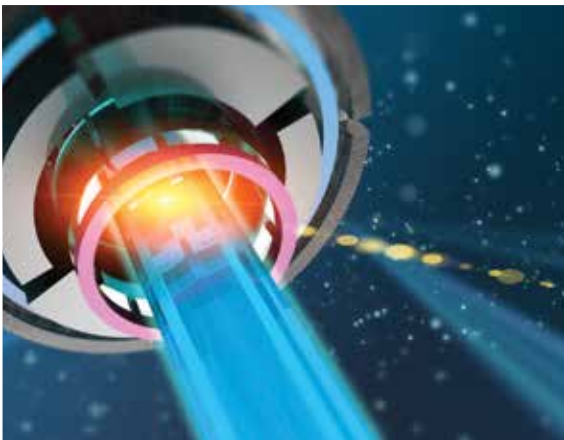


**CONCORDIA HAS MOMENTUM.** We are rethinking the role of universities and 2017 marked the launch of our university's most ambitious fundraising campaign to date: **The Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.** Our \$250-million campaign is chaired by business leaders and philanthropists Andrew Molson and Lino Saputo Jr., BA 89, and will support Concordia's nine strategic directions that cement our position as Canada's next-generation university. To address tomorrow's greatest challenges, we're developing new research centres, think tanks and academic programs.

We're multiplying hands-on and work-integrated learning. We are also increasing our impact-oriented activities through entrepreneurship centres, living labs and innovation hubs to build on our long history of community and industry engagement.

With the help of our 7,000 faculty and staff and our generous community, we'll support next-generation ideas, talent and impact — for the benefit of our 48,000 students and more than 211,000 alumni around the world.

Our Campaign for Concordia website promotes our 29 highlighted projects that will advance next-generation ideas, talent and impact. Get inspired by our campaign videos: the first is a fast-paced narrative featuring seven scientists who describe how Concordia is shaping next-generation research. Our next video features donor testimonials. Learn more at [concordia.campaign](http://concordia.campaign).



# 9 highlights that give us momentum



## FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

1

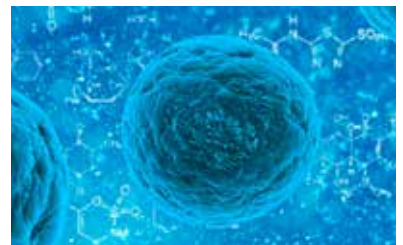


### **\$52.75 MILLION TO ACCELERATE NEXT-GENERATION RESEARCH:**

The Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec have invested in a multidisciplinary research and innovation hub at the university.

**\$9.9 MILLION FOR 63 CONCORDIA PROJECTS:** The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada boosted support by 30 per cent for the university's researchers, in disciplines ranging from biology to geography to computer science.

2



3



### **\$9.3 MILLION FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH:**

Ninety-seven Concordia faculty members and graduate students have been awarded new federal funding through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's Insight and Insight Development grants.



**\$10 MILLION FOR NEXT-GEN CITIES:** Concordia has received the green light to nominate its first Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Cities and Communities. The position comes with \$10 million in research funding over seven years. Concordia is one of only nine Canadian institutions to advance in the CERC competition in the current year.



**\$6 MILLION FOR GENOMICS RESEARCH:** Adrian Tsang, professor in our Department of Biology, will develop an alternative to antibiotics in animal feed thanks to \$6 million in new funding from Genome Canada, Génome Québec and Elanco Animal Health.

**\$1.5 MILLION TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIVING AND ATHLETICS:** A gift from the R. Howard Webster Foundation will fund next-generation preventive health research through Concordia's PERFORM Centre and support Stingers student athletes.



## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



**REINFORCING EARTHQUAKE SAFETY:** Mohammed Albutainy, PhD candidate in the Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering, is helping to protect Canadians in seismically active zones. His findings on the capacity of masonry to withstand earthquake activity will inform the Canadian Standards Association's design protocols.

**NEW WAYS TO REFINE DRUG DELIVERY:** Gabi Mandl, MSc student in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, is researching targeted drug therapy via light-activated nanomedicine. Minimally invasive and highly localized, it could lead to reduced drug-associated side effects.



**IN UTERO CONDITIONS CAN AFFECT TEENS' BRAIN DEVELOPMENT:** Linda Booij, associate professor of psychology in Concordia's Faculty of Arts and Science, in collaboration with other researchers, revealed factors such as placement in the womb and access to nutrition impact later development of the cortical structure, which is involved in regulating emotions and various cognitive abilities.

## Seeing Concordia in a new light

Alumnus **Ghislain Arsenault** supports student athletes and future business leaders.



Though he graduated from Concordia more than 30 years ago, Ghislain Arsenault, BComm 85, always knew he wanted to give back to his alma mater. “For me, giving is more than writing a cheque — this is about discovering my university for the second time,” says Arsenault. “Concordia today is so different from when I studied here and I want to be part of it.”

Arsenault is the founder and chief executive officer of Truck N’ Roll, one of North America’s largest truck carriers for the entertainment industry. After graduating from Concordia, he wanted to stay in touch with his alma mater, yet wasn’t sure how to go about it.

An avid sports fan, Arsenault found his opportunity when he met the Stingers’ football coach at the time, Gerry McGrath, at a banquet more than 10 years ago. Their conversation triggered Arsenault’s desire to get involved in fundraising for student athletes.

“I always thought that to get people interested in fundraising, you have to do something fun while doing it,” says Arsenault. That conversation led to the creation of Concordia’s Champions Club in 2009, which would become an annual fundraiser banquet for the Stingers football team.

Nearly 10 years later, Arsenault and other dedicated supporters have raised close to \$500,000 through the Champions Club for student awards to recruit top football talent and fund Stingers athletic programs.

### Win-win for everyone

Arsenault also volunteers his time as a coach for Concordia’s John Molson School of Business (JMSB) case competition teams. The competitions give JMSB students the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-life business situations.

While he shares his expertise with the next generation of business leaders, Arsenault also takes away a lot from the experience. “If you find something you’re passionate about, it’s win-win for everyone involved,” he says. “Students benefit from my professional experience — and I am surrounded by great people, so I always learn from them, too.”

In 2017 Arsenault received the Humberto Santos Award of Merit from the Concordia University Alumni Association in recognition of his exceptional leadership and service to Concordia and to the community.

“If you’re lucky enough to have some success in life, it’s important to give back — and I can’t think of a better place to do it,” he says. “The more I learn about Concordia, the more I fall in love with it.”

“THIS IS ABOUT  
DISCOVERING  
MY UNIVERSITY  
FOR THE  
SECOND TIME.”





## Taking risks in her art

**Florence Yee** is grateful for the Ann Duncan Travel and Tuition Award in developing her practice.

“FUNDING IS ONE OF THE MOST VITAL PARTS OF DEVELOPING YOUR PRACTICE AND FEELING ASSURED YOUR WORK IS WORTH IT.”

Florence Yee was drawn to the world of visual arts from watching painter and television host Bob Ross on PBS television as a child. What began as a desire to paint landscapes evolved into a need to challenge ethnocentric stereotypes.

“I used to just make boring landscapes,” says Yee, who is in her final year of her Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in painting and drawing. “But then I got to university and suddenly my work was being ethnicized. People started seeing characters that looked vaguely Asian in the trees and something green suddenly became ‘jade.’ As people kept asking these questions I felt compelled to answer through my work.”

Yee describes herself as a “2.5-generation Cantonese, struggling visual artist based in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal, unceded Mohawk territory.” An interdisciplinary artist, she often combines oil painting, drawing, fibres and digital media. Her work has been shown in Canada, the United States and Australia.

Yee was also recently named the undergraduate coordinator for Concordia’s Ethnocultural Art Histories Research Group, a student-driven working group. “I’m very interested in art history, curating, archiving and collecting. I’ve been happy to find a community of people who are equally interested in what I’m doing as I am in what they’re doing.”

### **Necessary financial support**

Yee attributes her early artistic success in large part to the support she received from awards, such as the Ann Duncan Travel and Tuition Award, funded by Concordia’s Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery.

“I wouldn’t be anywhere if I didn’t have the funds to travel and transport my art,” she says. “I think the biggest barrier to most art studies is definitely financial. No matter how hard you try, it’s really difficult to break into the art world — at least the mainstream — if you don’t have the money. Funding is one of the most vital parts of developing your practice and feeling assured your work is worth it.”

Yee reveals the financial support gave her the courage to take risks with her art, travel to conferences in the U.S. and complete a residency in Ottawa. “I feel so lucky to have this funding because without it I wouldn’t have tried going to Concordia or applying to fine arts, or known how to deliver my art to another city,” she says.

“In the art world, a lot of things just snowball. When you do one thing, another thing happens next to it and it really builds your momentum.”

## Shuffling for a cause

**Danielle Tessier** walks to raise funds for Concordia student scholarships and bursaries.



“THERE’S NO  
SCIENTIFIC  
REASON  
BEHIND IT.  
IT JUST FEELS  
GOOD.”

Just two weeks into her new job at Concordia in 2000, Danielle Tessier, attendee 88, participated in her first-ever Shuffle. The university’s 6.5-kilometre walkathon from the Sir George Williams Campus to the Loyola Campus is an annual tradition to raise funds for student scholarships and bursaries.

Nearly 18 years into her career, Tessier admits she’s hooked. “I started giving and it was so rewarding,” she says. “We’re part of a community and we have to help each other out.”

A critical moment for her came in her second year raising funds for the Shuffle. Tessier asked a member of the Board of Governors if she would like to donate. Not only did that person agree — she wrote a cheque for \$500.

“I nearly fell over. I did not expect her to sponsor me for such a large amount,” says Tessier. “It really motivated me to make more of an effort to ask people. The worst thing someone can say is ‘no.’ Once I realized I could ask my connections to support our students, I was so happy to do it.”

### Record-setting Shuffle fundraiser

Today, as Concordia’s associate secretary-general, Tessier manages the governance bodies of the university, which include Concordia’s Board of Governors and Senate.

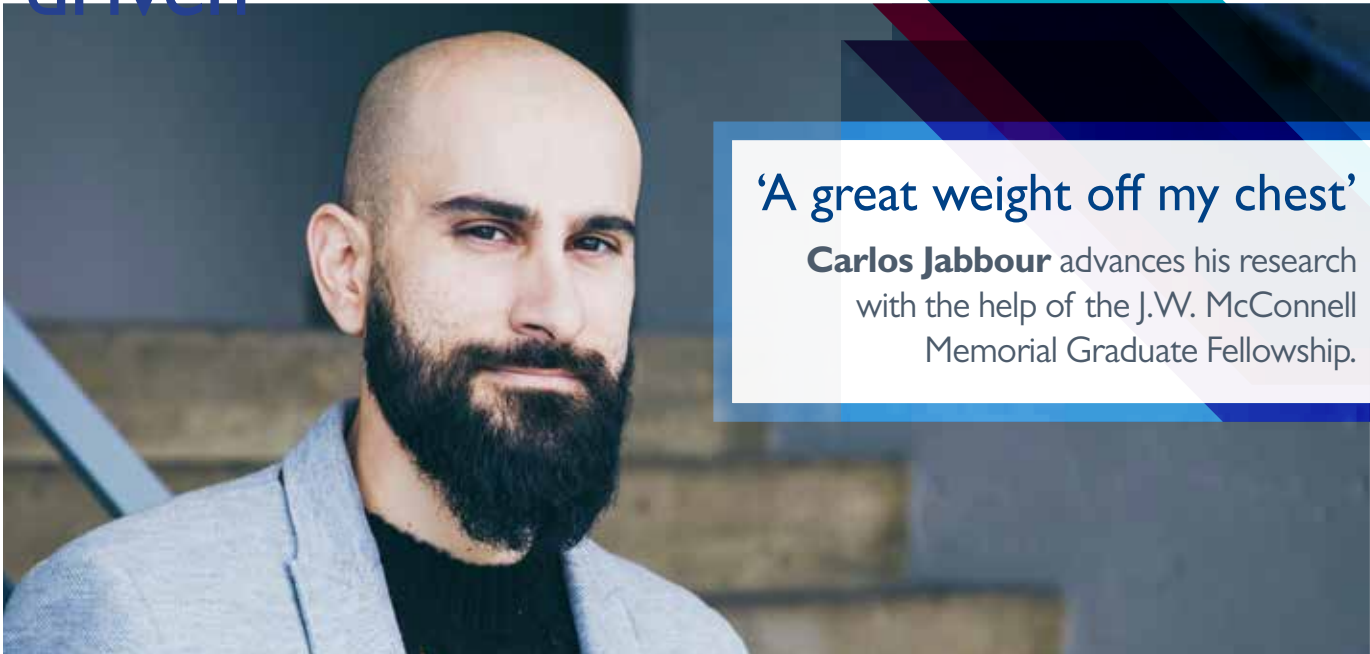
She’s also the most successful Shuffle fundraiser through the years. Tessier set a record in 2017 — collecting \$14,500 for Concordia students. She also co-chaired the Shuffle organizing committee in 2016 and 2017.

Tessier acknowledges that the cost of living for students today is much higher than it was when she was growing up. That’s one reason she also gives to Concordia’s Student Emergency and Food Fund — a program that provides grocery gift cards to students in immediate financial need. Tessier recalls an international student saying at a Senate meeting that he depended on the fund, which aided him immensely during his studies away from home.

“When you hear testimonies like that, how can you not give?” Tessier asks. “Everyone deserves the same chances in life. Even if it is a small amount, you’re contributing to the betterment of society well into the future. I am quite fortunate to work in such a rich and stimulating environment,” she says. “Universities offer diversity and promote ideas and debate. That is what helps society evolve.”

The primary reason she gives is to help others, yet Tessier admits she derives happiness from doing so. “There’s no scientific reason behind it. It just feels good.”

In 2017 the shuffle raised \$110,000. Since 1990, Shufflers have raised nearly \$1.4 million.



## 'A great weight off my chest'

**Carlos Jabbour** advances his research with the help of the J.W. McConnell Memorial Graduate Fellowship.

"If my donor was here right now I would probably give them a hug," says Carlos Jabbour, a master's student in Concordia's Department of Economics. "I would explain to them how much the award helped me and thank them for their generosity. When I won the fellowship it took a great weight off my chest at a very stressful time of my life."

Jabbour, who received the J.W. McConnell Memorial Graduate Fellowship in 2017, adds, "I was really worried about how I was going to make tuition payments, maintain my standard of living and focus on my research and studies. The fellowship allowed me to reduce the number of hours I worked and it really helped me move along with my research and maintain a high GPA."

Even with his hours cut back, Jabbour still works three part-time jobs, including at Concordia as a teaching assistant and for the Graduate Students' Association. His third job is as a consultant for a private company.

Jabbour's research explores the impact of technology on the labour force and population welfare. "There are a lot of smart systems out there that have taken over many of the activities that used to be done manually," Jabbour explains. "They've also replaced a lot of service jobs. I'm interested in understanding what kind of impacts we're going to see over time as technology becomes more and more advanced."

### Developing tools for the job market

"My time at Concordia has been an overwhelmingly positive experience," he says. "I've received great support from both my department and my peers and the learning was a good mixture of theory and practice. It's definitely allowed me to develop the tools I'll need when I enter the job market."

Jabbour is set to graduate this spring. He has already accepted a position with the federal government, slated to begin in September. His goal is to gain real-world experience for a few years before heading back to the classroom.

"I'm going to continue working in the area of socio-economic sciences. Later on, I would like to revisit economics at a PhD level and conduct more in-depth research on various social issues in Canada. I will definitely consider coming back here for my PhD," Jabbour says.

**"MY TIME AT  
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POSITIVE  
EXPERIENCE."**

## Supporting ‘hands-on’ learners

Alumni **Gary Vegh** and **Sarah Sajedi** help pave the way for students to focus on their studies.



More than 20 years after co-founding ERA Environmental Management Solutions, Gary Vegh, BSc 88, GrDip 92, and Sarah Sajedi, BSc 91, credit the opportunities they received as students at Concordia for helping them build their environmental consulting software firm.

Today, the entrepreneurs choose to give back to their alma mater. Their recent \$60,000 donation funds the annual ERA Environmental Bursary, which supports students entering the sciences, engineering and computer sciences. They also sponsor other awards to help students benefit from the same opportunities they had at Concordia.

“We both know from experience how difficult it is for young people to balance work and studies,” says Vegh.

Vegh and Sajedi met as undergraduates at Concordia. After graduating, the recession of the early 1990s forced them to look for jobs in the United States, where they became environmental researchers and consultants. Their consulting experience helping companies submit environmental reports opened their eyes to the enormous potential in the software market. A short time later, the idea for ERA Solutions was realized.

“The Clean Air Act in the U.S. was being amended, which meant that industries would have to do a lot more record keeping and reporting,” explains Vegh. “We got into the business doing air permit applications, and from there we grew into the software industry.”

ERA Environmental Management Solutions has grown significantly. The company has two offices: in Saint-Laurent, Que., and Bala Cynwyd, Penn. Their once-small startup now counts BMW, Lockheed Martin, J.B. Poindexter and other multibillion-dollar companies among its growing client base. The company also employs a number of Concordia graduates and Co-op students.

“Gary and I had to travel many miles to go find a suitable job,” says Sajedi. “We’re hoping students don’t have to do the same, so creating jobs is another way of giving back. We have grown from a startup with a small handful of employees to nearly 100 full-time employees — all because we focus on job growth.”

### Building a better future

Sajedi knows the importance of investing in women’s education in the sciences. “Girls are not given as much of a push to get a degree where I come from, but my mom pushed me very, very hard rather than forcing me down the more traditional path.” ERA employs many strong women from the sciences for management and leadership positions.

“We never imagined what we could do with our degrees,” says Sajedi. “It’s a really amazing feeling what we’ve achieved, but isn’t it more amazing to give that to somebody else?”

“WE BOTH KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE HOW DIFFICULT IT IS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO BALANCE WORK AND STUDIES.”



## Enabling the dreams of a future engineer

Receiving the ERA Environmental Bursary motivates **Kayla Starr** to strive for excellence and give back.

“WHEN I WAS 13, I KNEW I WANTED TO GO INTO CIVIL ENGINEERING.”

“When I was 13, I knew I wanted to go into civil engineering,” says Kayla Starr.

“At my high school we were fortunate to have a structures class, where they taught us about different types of bridges and trusses — or supports. I thought it was so cool that I could see the problem, find a solution, plan it on a computer and then actually build it.”

Starr happened to be naturally gifted and her bridge won first place in the class competition.

Growing up in the suburbs of Boston, Mass., she visited Montreal several times as a teenager and fell in love with the city. When the time came to decide where to go to university, the decision came easily.

“I had been looking at schools that were really good for civil and structural engineering and I read an article that Concordia was one of the top universities for civil engineering,” explains Starr, who is now in her second year of the civil engineering undergraduate program in the Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering.

She knew one of the challenges she would face in Montreal was difficulty getting work because she doesn’t speak French. This made winning the ERA Environmental Bursary even more special for her. “The bursary had a very big positive impact on me,” Starr says. Her financial stress disappeared. “Yet I now had these people who saw potential in me — and I had to work extra hard to do well in school to make them proud.”

### Investment in education

Starr is a strong believer in giving back. She and her two brothers were raised by a single mother and they struggled financially for many years.

“We lived in a battered women’s shelter for much of our childhood,” Starr says. “I remember receiving toys on Christmas from a charity and thinking it was the greatest thing ever. When I go home for Christmas, I wrap toys for children and it’s really special for me.” She also spends summers and holidays volunteering with a charity that delivers furniture and food to families in need.

Starr is grateful the bursary committee believed in her. Her goal when she completes her degree is to show the investment in her education was worth it. “I’m going to be a great engineer and hopefully improve lives of others,” she says. “It might be building a highway overpass that shortens people’s commute to work, or building a fountain system in a park where families go with their kids.”

## ‘It’s part of my nature to give’

Alumnus **Richard Stilwell** supports students in financial need and those who want to learn more about Montreal’s history.



“I’VE ALWAYS SAID THAT WHATEVER I GIVE, I GET BACK A HUNDREDFOLD.”

When Richard Stilwell, BA 68, set up the Richard T. Stilwell Sr. Memorial Entrance Bursary some two decades ago in his father’s name, his aim was to help first-year undergraduates having difficulties paying for their textbooks and tuition. “My father was very interested in education,” Stilwell recalls. “Not having very much himself, he valued education — specifically higher education.”

An alumnus of Loyola College, one of Concordia’s founding institutions, Stilwell grew up in Montreal’s Pointe-Saint-Charles neighbourhood, where he started contributing to his community at a very young age. He remembers assisting with the milk and breakfast programs at his elementary school, as well as running errands for elderly ladies living in the neighbourhood when he was around 11 years old.

“For three years, I took care of all of their needs in terms of shopping, getting their dry cleaning done and paying their bills,” Stilwell says. “It’s part of my nature to give.”

After completing his degree in the late 1960s, Stilwell moved to Ontario, but returned to Montreal in 2014 to fulfill one of his retirement goals — to work in social services. He has since joined the administration at St. Columba House on a voluntary basis. The organization empowers Pointe-Saint-Charles residents in the development of their neighbourhood and within the wider community.

### Collaborative contributions

Recently, Stilwell extended his support to Concordia’s Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, a database that archives digital video and audio materials in such a way that researchers can annotate, analyze and evaluate materials.

His interest in the program began when he learned about a project to develop an oral history book and audio tapes focussing on the Lachine Canal. This led Stilwell to contact Steven High, a professor of history in the Faculty of Arts and Science, and founding member of the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling.

“High indicated to me that he was also going to do an audiotape and booklet on Pointe-Saint-Charles,” Stilwell says. “I said I would show him around the neighbourhood and point out various institutions and what they were like in the ‘50s and ‘60s.”

The collaboration would lead to *La Pointe: On the Other Side of the Tracks*, a historical booklet designed for use with an audio tour of Pointe-Saint-Charles. Stilwell remains active in the centre through conversations with students about the neighbourhood and the Lachine Canal.

He notes the program is just one of many ways Concordia continues to make an impact in the world. “I’ve always said that whatever I give, I get back a hundredfold,” Stilwell says. “It’s been the way I’ve lived my life and I don’t know any different.”



## Support inspires student to help new immigrants

**Kurusoth Vaithilingam's** parents fled war in Sri Lanka to give their children a better life in Canada.

Kurusoth Vaithilingam is a first-generation Canadian. His parents came to Canada after fleeing war in Sri Lanka — his father in 1983, followed by his mother in 1992. Like many immigrants, they came with high hopes of providing a better life for the next generation.

In his first year at Concordia, Vaithilingam received the Richard T. Stilwell Sr. Memorial Entrance Bursary, destined to support students in financial need. Now in his second year, he has transferred into the accountancy program at the John Molson School of Business (JMSB).

Receiving the bursary motivated Vaithilingam to excel in his studies. “The bursary was a huge help — it allowed me to really focus on my school work, rather than thinking about the financial burden of going to school,” says Vaithilingam. “I was able to put more time and effort into my studies.”

Vaithilingam was happy to receive the financial support, yet knew how much more it would mean to his parents. “When my parents moved here, their plan was to give my brother and me a better education,” he says. “I know they were relieved that I wouldn’t be dependent on a loan. This is a true blessing.”

### **Thankful for the support of strangers**

Inspired by his parents’ move to a new country, Vaithilingam wants to chart new territory and become an entrepreneur. He aims to open a business consulting service to help new immigrants to Canada settle in and start their own enterprises.

Though he has never met the person who supported him in his first year at Concordia, Vaithilingam is grateful. “I’d love to shake the donor’s hand and truly say thank you,” he says. “The bursary means a lot to me — it helped me get through my first year with good grades so that I could transfer into JMSB.”

Vaithilingam says he chose Concordia because he knew JMSB had a great reputation and wanted to be associated with it. Thanks to the Richard T. Stilwell Sr. Memorial Entrance Bursary, he’s doing just that.

“Knowing that someone took the time to give to Concordia — to students like me — I’m just so grateful.”

“THIS MOTIVATES ME TO DO BETTER.”

# momentum

THANK YOU  
TO ALL OUR DONORS,  
WHO PROVIDE CONCORDIA  
WITH MOMENTUM!

• **Learn** how you can support the next generation of Concordia students. Contact our development staff at 514-848-2424, ext. 4856.

• **Share** your **#CUpride** and **#CUalumni** stories via **@ConcordiaAlumni**



[concordia.ca/campaign](http://concordia.ca/campaign)

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