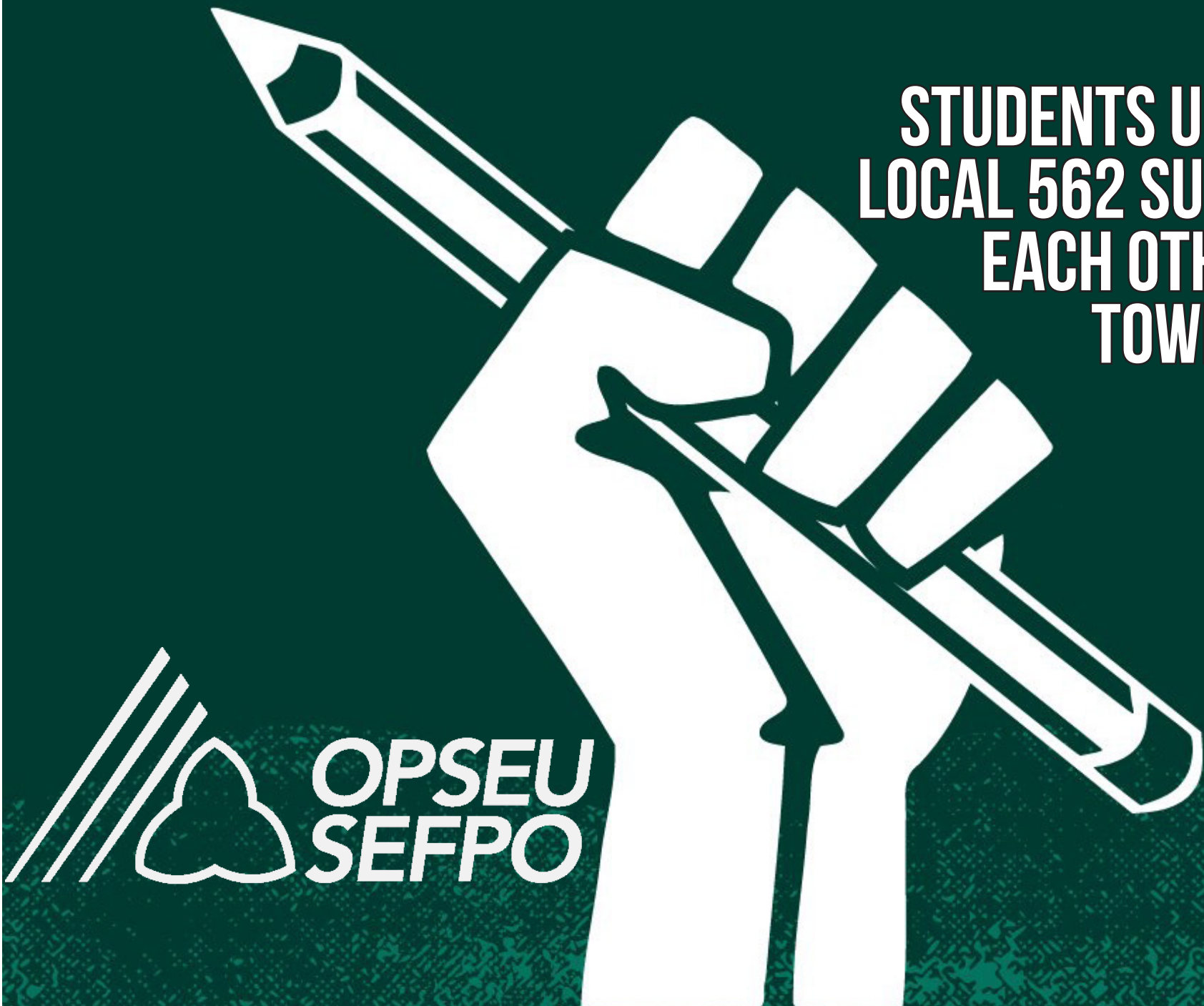


## STUDENT, FACULTY ALLIANCE IN THE MAKING

STUDENTS UNITED,  
LOCAL 562 SUPPORT  
EACH OTHER AT  
TOWNHALL  
P. 2



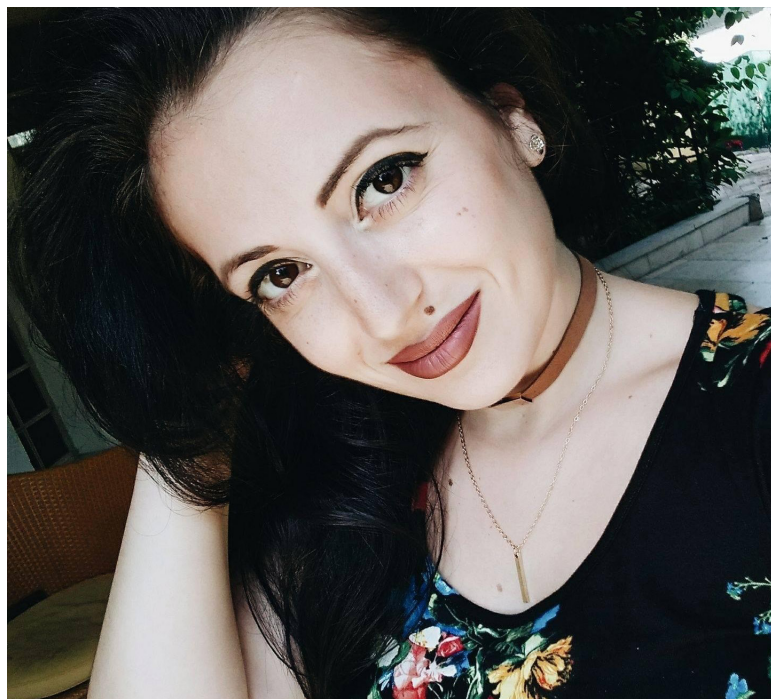
HUMBER  
REVIEWS  
USE-OF-  
SPACE POLICY  
P. 5



IMMERSIVE  
ART EXHIBITS  
IN GTA  
GALLERIES  
P. 8







STUDENTS UNITED

Carolina Breeze, left, and Azi Afousi began Students United to advocate for students' issues with support from Humber's faculty union, Local 562.

## Students United, Humber faculty union show unity at virtual town hall meeting

**Joshua Drakes**  
News Reporter

Humber's grassroots advocacy group Students United and Humber's faculty union, OPSEU Local 562, co-hosted an online town hall meeting on Dec. 9 in a mutual show of support and to make their goals clear.

"One of the main things that we want with the town hall is for the messaging to be consistent," said Azi Afousi, one of the organizers of Students United. "We're promoting this collaboration between students and faculty, because if two groups are divided, they're not going to achieve anything."

"We're going to come together so that we're not conquered, we want to work together," Afousi said.

Students United, a new body of student advocates, has emerged as an influential voice in recent weeks, and has taken the fight for students straight to the college.

The organization has gathered a large number of supporters, more than 5,000 students and some faculty members, bringing them into contact with the faculty union. They hosted the town hall to outline their objectives and ideas for next semester, calling for more transparency and increased accommodations

for hybrid learning.

The open forum town hall was attended by prominent leaders including Students United leaders Carolina Breeze and Afousi, faculty union acting president Milos Vasic, along with many other students and faculty members. Beginning with a briefing, the hosts outlined their goals.

A concern repeatedly brought up by staff and students was communication, especially proposed changes suggested by the college to the amount of in-person learning. The faculty were not advised of the proposal — which would reduce online classes to 65 per cent from 80 — until the students balked.

"The town hall was really focused on, you know, promoting transparency and communication," Vasic said. "What's the rationale for that, 65 per cent in-person and 35 per cent online? "Just be transparent with it," he said. "That's something both us and the students want answered."

Students United challenged the college with a petition campaign, garnering more than 4,000 signatures, and the college reversed its stance.

Miriam Novick, a Humber English professor and chief union steward, said the union was eager to reach out to Stu-

dents United because nobody told OPSEU the 80 per cent online portion had turned into 65 per cent within two days.

"And further, from our understanding, there has been no concerted effort to either establish what areas that's happening with to correlate to any trend and with any transparency," she said.

Students United and the union also laid out mutual goals and shared questions they had regarding the administration and the future of the college.

These included whether there will be distancing measures in place for the next semester if classes are returning to in-person, as well as how students were supposed to adjust to the short notice decision, as many have full-time jobs to make ends meet or cannot come on campus due to COVID-19 or other medically related complications. The meeting opened up to hear directly from staff and students, who shared their opinions and grievances.

All sides of the argument were heard, some pro and some against in-person learning, but the overwhelming majority of students present favoured continuing remote learning.

Students United emphasized it was not seeking to take away in-person learning, but to leave

the choice to students so that they are in control of their own learning.

"We don't want to take away and shut down the school again," Afousi said.

Breeze said the group stressed the importance of student input and choice.

"We always use the word choice. But at this point, it's not only about choice," she said. "These are not people who just want to sit in the comfort of their home, and do it as comfortably as they can."

"We're talking about the need to finish our studies and to receive the education people came for," Breeze said. "We pay thousands and thousands of dollars, especially international students."

Students United support has continued to grow in numbers, and is having an impact on some of the decisions at Humber. The administration is listening and is working to accommodate where they can, but as a business and large college, it isn't always easy to quickly alter policy and plans.

But what is clear is that Students United has caught the attention of IGNITE as its CEO Ercole Perrone was in attendance.

Students United plans to continue working with the Faculty Union into the next semester.

### ETC •

Humber Et Cetera is the Humber College journalism program laboratory newspaper. It is created by second and third year journalism students. Et Cetera serves to inform the Humber community and give its readers well rounded coverage on the things that matter to them.

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THE CANADIAN PRESS/RYAN REMIORZ

Former student of the university Richard Gregoire stands in front of the schools memorial marking the 32nd year anniversary of the tragic massacre at Ecole Polytechnique in 1989.

# Humber marks anniversary of Montréal Massacre

**Jess Kerr**  
News Reporter

A ceremony on National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on Monday noted the minimal changes made by society in dealing with violence against women, and how it affects diverse communities.

Yami Msosa, a black gender-queer person living in the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Treaty territory, couldn't help to think that this day holds a lot of significance.

"We don't know how many survivors are in this space who have witnessed different forms of violence," they said.

Humber College students came together to remember victims of violence and reflect on the diverse community of women and girls, disabled women and LGBTQ+ members who have experienced gender-based violence. "We've been collecting the names of women

and girls since 1990, who have been killed due to gender-based violence," Msosa said. "The number is somewhere formerly in the realm of 1000, although I'm sure it's much, much higher.

"But only recently have we started to consider gender diverse folks and racialized women," they said.

Msosa has spent the last 15 years on Dec. 6 attending vigils against women's violence, and couldn't help to think that it has been years of hearing similar narratives towards ending gender-based violence.

"Over those 15 years, it's been a journey into possibilities of change," they said. "Whether it be through frontline service work on a provincial level ... or turning to post-secondary institutions and looking for solutions there.

"There are many institutions that I have come into contact with over these 15 years, and something to be present within our

bodies is that since 1990, much has stayed the same," Msosa said.

They said it's important to remember women were not killed just because they were women, but because they were feminists and they believed in gender equality.

Melissa Simas, who works at the Scarborough Women's Centre, said she believes women with disabilities are often overlooked when it comes to ending violence.

"I'm actively working in the community to promote inclusion of disability, but I also identify as having various disabilities," Simas said. "I live with a physical disability from birth, and my parents say that I was kind of eager to make my mark on the world."

She said there is a higher rate of women with severe disabilities or women with disabilities who experience violence. A study by DAWN Canada shows that 60 per cent of women with

disabilities are likely to experience some form of violence in their lives.

The study also showed persons with disabilities were more likely than those without disabilities to experience domestic violence.

"It's also important to talk about disability and gender-based violence because we know that unfortunately, women are at risk for becoming injured because of violence," Simas said. "There are 276,000 Women in Canada, who experienced a traumatic brain injury because of intimate partner violence and that's per year."

Seán Kinsella is Centennial's first Director, the Eighth Fire, who identifies as Two-Spirit queer that has descended from signatories of Treaties Four, Six, and Eight. They spoke about the genocide of Aboriginal peoples, as well as settler colonialism.

Kinsella said the Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal

Peoples (RCAP) showed the colonial apparatus of Canada.

"The types of genocide, or behaviours I would call it, that Canada has as a state engaged in and has been reinforced by sort of all of the colonial apparatus that Canada has," Kinsella said.

Kinsella said a 46-page supplemental report about legal analysis of genocide supports the position of "missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada" to be considered a genocide.

They said in the past, Indigenous People were "only were able to call it cultural genocide.

Kinsella said Canadians also must recognize genocide when it targets women and girls.

"It particularly targets women and girls and 2S LGBTQ members and settler-colonial structures that are enabled the genocide," they said. "Then it's intergenerational. People who are survivors under this effort, caused by that mass violence, we have to also recognize."



# Humber making sustainability a way of life

**Khiana Gutierrez**  
News Reporter

For Safa Al-Haji, sustainability is a full-time job and a way of life.

Al-Haji is the environmental coordinator at BEST Service Pro, the company that provides the custodial staff who patrol the halls of Humber College. Al-Haji works at the North and Lakeshore campuses to reduce waste being sent to landfills.

"I work on this through periodic waste audits, waste-sorting training for cleaning staff, and adding in waste streams, such as the new PPE collection boxes," Al-Haji told the Repurpose for Purpose online event on Nov. 29.

The event was hosted by Public Relations post-graduate students to explore Humber's efforts to become more sustainable.

"In 2008, Best Service Pros became a 100-per-cent carbon neutral company that has offset 12,000 tons of CO2 emissions, which is equivalent of taking

4,556 cars off the road," Al-Haji said.

Don Henriques, manager of operations at Campus Services, said third-party contractors at Humber administer the reusable container programs, zero-waste facilities, fair-trade initiatives and the ONEcard contactless payment program.

One goal is to have all non-branded meals on campus be served in a reusable container.

"We've generated a lot of waste in our food outlets. So our goal is to eliminate that and reduce overall waste," Henriques said.

The Barrett Centre at North campus fosters "the spot," which focuses on supporting local fair trade and affordable pricing for its staff and students.

ONECard was also introduced, through which staff, students and residents can sign in with their Humber credentials to make payments to food outlets across campus.

Lynn Short, Indigenous Edu-

cation Specialist for land and culture and Environmental Stewardship Coordinator, said Indigenous concepts can help guide consumers to more sustainable practices.

Short mentioned the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Seven Generation Thinking Systems and the Honourable Harvest Covenant as ways consumers can be a more responsible user of the Earth's resources and contribute to sustainability.

Dish with One Spoon means there is a shared responsibility to ensure the territory is never empty, as it is shared by all "with one spoon." Seven Generations Thinking Systems encourages making sustainable choices today to foster a sustainable world seven generations into the future.

The Honourable Harvest Covenant involves a set of rules that must be followed when taking "gifts" from the land, encouraging sustainability in harvesting practices.



NOAH BUSCHER / UNSPLASH

Post-graduate students in public relations host the "Repurpose for Purpose" online event, exploring sustainability at Humber College.

"We should always consider ourselves as caretakers of the land," Short said.

Similarly, the Humber Arboretum serves the community as a public garden, a conservation area and an educational area.

Michael Naumoff and Max Haber from the Humber Arboretum shared tips for living sustainably through starting a home garden with food scraps.

"You don't even need a garden, you can do it right in your own kitchen, or anywhere you have a

window sill," Naumoff said.

Haber said reusing food scraps reduces waste and the travel time of trucks needed to haul the waste to landfills.

Devon Fernandes, Humber's sustainability manager, said his office works closely with vendors to embed a sustainability component in all programs as part of the college's five-year sustainability plan.

"If we really want to be sustainable, we need a culture that allows us to be that way," Fernandes said.

## Humber takes lead in fighting climate change, Canada lags behind

**Joshua Drakes**  
News Reporter

Canada's Federal Environment Commissioner Jerry DeMarco admits that the nation lags behind its G7 counterparts in combating climate change.

Canada is a global advocate for fighting climate change, but domestic issues within the government have severely limited its ability to act.

"Canada was once a leader in the fight against climate change," DeMarco said. "However, after a series of missed opportunities, it has become the worst per-

former of all G7 nations since the landmark Paris agreement on climate change was adopted in 2015."

If Canada wants to improve its standing in fighting climate change, communication and coordination will need to be taken into a more serious focus moving forward.

A key part of his briefing and reports is a shortfall of communication between different organizations and agencies. A 2021 report by the Auditor General notes poor communication between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada. DeMarco told the media in Ottawa that these agencies did

not follow recommendations to better coordinate.

"Overall reporting on actions to achieve the federal goals was poor," DeMarco said. "For the majority of these actions, federal departments and agencies did not follow guidance on reporting, and important information was missing consequently. They did not report results for almost half [of] their actions."

DeMarco said Canada must do more and be quicker to act if the country is to reduce the impact of climate change.

Humber Sustainability Manager Devon Fernandes echoed DeMarco saying the college is making great progress, but the effect needs to be widespread and frequent if we are to achieve sustainability.

Humber has made significant progress in reducing its carbon footprint in recent years, committing to cooperation in reducing waste and power consumption.

"We have a very strong focus on cooperation for sustainability at Humber," Fernandes said. "If you're doing sustainability alone, you're going nowhere."

Initiatives operated by the Office of Sustainability, in coordination with other departments, have put Humber on the continental map of protecting the environment.

Humber has hosted numerous green initiatives aimed at promoting sustain-

ability, the largest being the NX building. As one of the most energy-efficient buildings in North America, it is a great example of teamwork and investment. Fernandes said the building itself was an accomplishment, but it also provided education as well.

"Various departments and the energy program at Humber designed a way to retrofit the building while people are still in it," Fernandes said. "We really kind of designed it as a transformative project for everyone who was a part of it."

A key point Fernandes made is the need for education and awareness. While it is possible to simply put up solar panels and use recyclable items, there needs to be a shift in consciousness towards sustainability for things to truly change.

"My vision, and that of the college, is that regardless of what class you're in, you'll learn about how sustainability applies to your field," Fernandes said. "When I was in my undergrad and grad school, sustainability was taught in my psychology classes, despite it not being kind of an obvious connection at the outset, and we need to include more of that cooperation."

Cooperation is a recurring theme when discussing sustainability and climate change, and that is a goal that Canada as a whole is struggling to meet in some places.



JOSHUA DRAKES

Fully approved as a zero-carbon building, the NX building is one of the most environmentally friendly in North America. It is also the largest achievement in sustainability at Humber.





ELI RIDDER

Manan Nijhawan attempted to enter Humber's North campus gym earlier this semester to report on a sports story, only to be stopped in his tracks due to the use-of-space policy.

# Humber reviewing flexible use-of-space policy

**Eli Ridder**  
News Editor

Humber College will consider adding flexibility to its use-of-space policy after backlash from journalism students who say the rules restrict their ability to gather stories on campus, Humber Et Cetera has learned.

"We have actually asked for a meeting with facilities and the creators of the temporary space committee, so that we can have a chat about if there's some flexibility," Humber's Lakeshore campus principal June MacDonald-Jenkins said Monday.

The use-of-space policy is the result of Ontario Progressive Conservative legislation that aimed to protect the freedom of speech for students of a variety of affiliations while on campus.

The policy requires that forms are filled out and verified for access to campus space.

It can take up to 15 days for an applicant to receive permission, a length of time often longer than the deadlines of journalism program students.

The principal acknowledged the need for campus to be a "real, actual environment where spontaneous learning can occur," the process student reporters often go through to get stories by interviewing and taking photos of those on campus.

"I am glad to hear there is a meeting next week to look at adding much-needed flexibility to this use-of-space program because it clearly does not meet the needs of journalism students at Humber," North campus journalism program coordinator Mike Wise told Humber Et Cetera.

"As educators, we need to support them as they learn the craft of journalism by emulating what they'll experience in the real world," Wise said, describing Humber's public spaces as "sidewalks" of the school where students can practice the art of reporting.

**"I WOULD CONSIDER ANY PLAN TO PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON WHEN OR WHERE OUR STUDENTS CAN REPORT ON PUBLIC HAPPENINGS A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS ON CAMPUS."**

**Mike Wise**

*Humber Journalism Program Coordinator*

MacDonald-Jenkins suggested one of the modifications to the policy could include a rule that journalism students would only be able to access certain hallways at designated times.

Wise found the idea counterintuitive to the learning experience.

"I would consider any plan to place restrictions on when or where our students can report on public happenings a significant challenge to freedom of the press on campus," said Wise, the former host of CBC News in Toronto.

The space policy was first highlighted as a significant issue when a third-year journalism student attempted to interview people at the North campus gym for an assignment earlier this semester.

Manan Nijhawan attempted to enter Humber North's gym earlier this semester to report a sports story, only to be stopped in his tracks to go through a series of bureaucratic steps that included confirming his identity and purpose.

Nijhawan was the first journalism stu-

dent this year that was stopped.

At Lakeshore campus, journalism professor Dan Rowe said that film students have previously received complaints for taking video in public areas of campus.

But it has not yet been an issue for journalism students at Lakeshore campus this year.

While MacDonald-Jenkins will soon meet with stakeholders to find an operational way forward for the use-of-space policy, others met this week to establish the public relations response to the backlash from the Faculty of Media and Creative Arts.

A meeting over Humber's public relations response took place on Thursday, Associate communications director Emily Milic confirmed to Humber Et Cetera.

Milic didn't go into further detail over what was discussed and it was not immediately clear what Humber's formal stance would be.

She explained in an email message the use of space policy helps "ensure spaces are designated to a specific group for a specific purpose, help ensure that any relevant safety information is passed along to the person/group using the space and that guidelines are followed and so on."

The policy has been suspended in the recent past for specific purposes, as outlined in the 2020-21 Humber Annual Report on Free Speech Policy Statement.

Humber Et Cetera reporters reached out to communications director Andrew Leopold several times over the last week but there was no response before publication time.

The president of the Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) called the policy arbitrary for student reporters that are "critical to campus life."

"They're definitely part of the part of the life and vitality of making sure you have an intellectually stimulating campus, and one where people are aware of what's going on," CAJ President Brent Jolly told Humber Et Cetera.

"I think it's important that they should have a better explanation for why this is happening," Jolly added.

*With reports from Sarah Hurtado, Barbara Patrocinio, Christian Collington and Nathan Abraha at North campus, and Tatiana Furtado and Sara Poraria at Lakeshore campus.*





STEVE FINN/XINHUA/ZUMA PRESS

Migrants land on a beach in Dungeness, U.K., on Nov. 24. Experts have called for a holistic approach to address the illegal immigration crisis after 27 people drowned in the English Channel.

## Refugees gamble on life or death journey seeking new life

**Megan Rampersaud**  
News Reporter

Many people live with hope as they flee their homelands, to find a place they can live in without suffering human rights violations, persecution, and poverty. However, those journeys sometimes end in tragedy.

In the last week of November, 27 migrants hoping for the chance at a better life died crossing the English Channel when their overloaded vessel capsized.

About a week later, a Turkish prosecutor, who was dismissed by the government and spent 15 months in jail, and his wife drowned in the Aegean Sea when their inflatable speedboat overturned. They were fleeing oppression imposed by the government of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, they were among the most recent victims who lost their lives as they tried to reach freedom.

About 2,275 people died in the Mediterranean Sea in 2018— an average of about six deaths a day, the agency said. The COVID-19

pandemic has only added to the number of migrants attempting to cross multiple borders.

The reasons people are willing to take such risks vary based on the lands where they are fleeing. Persecution, poverty, abuse, and oppression are the most common reasons people are willing to risk their lives as they flee.

Maher Hawa, a manager at Citron Hygiene, escaped from Palestine to Canada. His journey to Canada consisted of an arduous trek filled with disappointment, long waits, jail and uncertainty.

“When I travelled into Jordan, which is the country neighbouring to where I was born, they denied me leaving because they assumed that I was trying to flee the country and not serve in the army,” he said. “I was put in a middle standstill and it was very difficult to leave.”

Hawa wanted to go to the U.S. where his uncles and brothers reside.

“I did not have anyone in Canada, and they denied me that, and I was put in jail,” he said.

The stories that make news only reflect a little piece of what

they suffer. Only those refugees who have undergone such arduous and potentially deadly journeys fully know the desperation they face. They only know the trauma irreversible decisions pose, the terror of those risky crossings, and the hope on which they are all based.

Omar El Akkad, a Humber College creative writing instructor, won the Giller Prize for his novel *What Strange Paradise*, the modern fable of a young boy fleeing Syria.

But El Akkad warned that people “cannot afford not to be hopeful.”

Edwan Pestano, a manager at Midas, said that once people leave their countries, it is difficult for them to go back.

“The government sees it as a betrayal,” Pestano said.

“My friend was a journalist in Turkey, but he was threatened for writing about his views on their government, so he fled to Canada because he feared for his life,” Pestano said.

Zelika Mohamed, a medical administrator at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, said her aunt, a magistrate, had to flee Guyana because she had

received death threats.

“She basically put people who were gang members behind bars, and the people retaliated and threatened her life, so she had to flee to Canada with her husband and two kids,” Mohamed said.

In his book, *The Human Tide*, Paul Morland said world history has been shaped by the mass movement of people.

While every day is a “struggle against hunger, disease or some other disaster, the risks of leaving by any means possible seem increasingly worth taking,” wrote Morland, a professor of demographics at the

University of London.

In the 18th Century, there were about one billion people on the face of the Earth, Morland said. Now, there are about eight billion. For the multitudes living in danger or poverty, finding a better place in the world is a constant challenge.

Morland said that the movement of people from their tides shaped the modern world, and those tides are too difficult to hold back.

Yet that tide is comprised of individual people. People like Maher Hawa. People with a dream and the desperation to pursue it, however high the stakes.



PETER KELLFUR/PEXELS

Woman, right, in a blue hijab sits with an elderly women and a child, awaiting for their next steps in the refugee process in Greece in 2019.



# Some Canadians shocked by notice to repay emergency benefits

**Karl Lewis**  
News Reporter

The federal government will soon ask Canadians who were ineligible to receive benefits during the pandemic lockdowns to make repayments.

It has been more than a year since the Canada Emergency Response Benefits, known as CERB, was launched by the federal government. Many Canadians who received the \$2,000 payment benefited tremendously.

"I was really happy when the government introduced the CERB," said Kimberly Brown, a resident of Brampton, expressing her gratitude for the benefits she had received during the lockdowns.

"I was able to get groceries and pay my rent," she said.

The Canada Revenue Agency said it provided ways for individuals to get the Canada Emergency Recovery Benefit (CERB) as quickly as possible, but some people who were ineligible also received the payments.

A notice to repay the benefits may appear on their online accounts with the Canada Revenue

Agency after an audit revealed more than 800,000 people who received CERB were ineligible.

The benefits were offered between March 2020 and were extended to January 2021. They gave Canadians a payment of \$18,000 if individuals applied for all periods. The benefits are considered taxable and those ineligible could face consequences in receiving payments.

Brown was among those who received payments for all periods.

"There was no way I would be able to survive, especially if my employer had closed some of their businesses for good," she said.

Brown is an employee with the Aldo group, a Canadian retailer that reported bankruptcy during the pandemic and closed more than half of its stores in Ontario.

She is, however, required to repay a portion of what she received in benefits.

"I was so confused. I thought I was eligible for the benefits," she said. "How will I repay this?"

Christopher Doody, spokesperson for the CRA, told Humber Et Cetera the agency acknowl-



KMR PHOTOGRAPHY/FLICKR

Millions of dollars went to Canadians later deemed ineligible for the Canadian emergency benefit programs.

edges some applicants made errors when applying for benefits or applied for benefits they weren't eligible for.

Doody said the CRA understands the hardship Canadians faced during the pandemic lockdowns and that it may have changed their financial status because businesses were forced to close their doors.

A repayment arrangement was introduced by the agency to give Canadians time to pay based on their financial status.

"If an individual is unable to repay ineligible CERB or CESB amounts, we will evaluate their situation and follow-up when their financial circumstances change," Doody said.

Canadians who applied for the CERB because of their financial situation and were later determined to be ineligible will be required to pay the money back without penalties or interest.

In order to repay ineligible amounts, people are asked to refer to the notice on their

"MyCRA" account.

"For situations where an individual can pay and refuses to reach a payment arrangement, the CRA may take legal action," Doody said.

This situation may be frightening for some Canadians, but it brought a sigh of relief for Brown, as she now knows her status and what she will be doing towards repaying.

The CRA implores the public to call and inquire about their status.

# Students struggle to find jobs amid global pandemic

**Drew Chambers**  
News Reporter

The challenge of finding a job has been intensified thanks to the pandemic and students say they're losing hope of getting one.

Along with the strain COVID-19 has put on the workforce, students now face a plethora of obstacles in the search for employment, and the new addition of virtual interviews proves to be a great one to many.

"It was hard doing an interview over the computer," said 26-year-old Marcie Mingo, a student at Seneca College. "I would have preferred a telephone interview, but the virtual interviews made me feel self-conscious and there was no option like in school where I could leave my camera off."

Mingo was a server at JOEY Restaurants before the pandemic arrived. She said many of the jobs she came across in her search for another job had to deal with healthcare but she lacks the experience and confidence to take them on.

"Hiring events seemed to pop up out of



RON LACH/PEXELS

Students are facing more obstacles as they seek employment amid the global pandemic.

nowhere with little notice to register and most of the jobs had to do with healthcare and experience was required or I was scared to work in the field because of the COVID-19 virus," she said.

This came with the feeling of a lack of support for students facing hiring challenges, a sense that 23-year-old George

Brown College student Kingsley Brown understands well.

"When I kept applying and not getting any responses I started to be concerned," Brown said. "I know that there were supports available, but I really didn't know a lot about them, and it was really overwhelming trying to survive financially,

pay my bills and just live the way I used to."

He worked at the concession stand at a Cineplex theatre prior to the pandemic. He said the pressure of not finding a job and not getting any support took a toll on him.

"It seemed like everything was happening all at once," Brown said. "The hiring challenges also affected my mental and physical health. I couldn't focus on school the way I needed to because I was so worried about my finances. I couldn't go for walks or attend the gym."

While these are trying times for many, some also see this experience as a lesson.

"I really learned that many jobs and people are replaceable," Chevon Gregory told Humber Et Cetera.

"You really have to try to broaden your skills and work experience to make yourself more attractive to employers," said the 20-year-old Sheridan College student who previously worked as a stock person at The Bay. "I also learned that you really shouldn't rely on one source of income because you never know what life throws your way."



## EDITORIAL

# BIPOC journalists should not be criticized for covering stories in their communities

It is upsetting that journalists of colour are criticized and abused for reporting on stories about their own communities.

As if they have not been scrutinized in the industry enough just for being minority groups and not getting the same amount of equal opportunities as white journalists.

In the Canadian media, systemic racism against minority journalists, mainly Black, Indigenous and women, are the ones who face the greatest backlash.

It is reaching an all-time high with harassment and scrutiny online.

Social media plays a huge role in BIPOC journalists being harassed and abused. Gone are the days when there weren't any social platforms for people to write their opinion on an article in 280 characters.

According to an Ipsos survey of 1,093 journalists on online harm in Canadian journalism, BIPOC journalists along with women and LGBTQ+ persons are among the groups who are at greater risk and disproportionately face more online

harassment.

These harassing attacks online have made it harder on BIPOC journalists, feeling they have to be prepared for the criticism and emails that they're going to get before the story is published.

The expectation of minority journalists to ignore criticism and move on to the next story is easier said than done.

White journalists don't get the same backlash and are not questioned about the stories they decide to report on as BIPOC journalists do.

Gruelling events last year and issues surrounding race saw many BIPOC media organizations call out the industry for lack of support and opportunities.

Change is happening but BIPOC journalists feel like they have to explain themselves every time they are covering stories related to race and other issues in their communities. It seems that we are going backward.

No one is better for the task of covering

these important issues in their communities than the journalists who come from them. They're being the voices for their communities and are helping in bringing these problems to the forefront.

The online abuse has caused many BIPOC journalists to leave the industry all together feeling that dealing with all of this horrifying harassment is not worth staying in a career where they feel not wanted.

The Canadian Association of Journalism (CAJ) issued a statement urging government and law enforcement address the targeted harassment against Black journalists. CAJ was one of many organizations involved in the Online Harm in Journalism survey.

"In journalism, criticism is expected; harassment and hateful messages are not."

BIPOC journalists shouldn't have to be fearful for their lives and face insults for reporting on stories about their community's issues.

Over the years, many BIPOC journalists have shied away from touching on topics related to racism and issues involving their communities. Today they're reporting on these topics more than in the past.

These substantial issues happening in the industry have added obstacles to BIPOC journalism students training at school to get into the field as they themselves feel that this is not the right career for them.

These are problematic and damaging issues against BIPOC journalists who are doing their job, and will cause BIPOC journalists to leave the industry in the future.

The harassment is going too far and can be terrifying. The Canadian government, as the CAJ said, has to step in and take action. BIPOC journalists should be the ones to cover these stories because there is no one better to do it, and no one should ever question them for it.

## OPINION

# Women protesting violence attacked by Turkish police



**Nur Dogan**  
International Editor

The names of women who are subjected to violence change on an all-to-regular basis, as domestic violence and femicide are the same all around the world.

Women do not feel safe and secure in the streets walking alone, at work, school, and even in their homes for the fear of being exposed to physical or sexual violence.

Have you ever walked in the streets in the evening frequently looking behind with fear of being kidnapped or abused by someone? Have you ever dragged your heels going to

work because your boss violated you psychologically? Have you ever been scared of going home if you might be hurt or killed by your partner?

These are the questions many women face every day. They experience gender-based violence and they want it to stop.

Turkish authorities stepped in violently as several groups of women tried to celebrate International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on Nov. 25. Their march was meant to protest growing violence against women. "Women should live without fear," they cried knowing that it is almost impossible in their homeland.

Women protesters marched to defend their rights and to condemn gender-based violence and femicide. They gathered on Istiklal Avenue, among the busiest streets, which has hosted human rights protests for decades.

Turkish police confronted demonstrators as they arrived in Istiklal with their flags, banners and hopes. Police broke up the women's protest by shooting them with pepper spray cap-

sules and plastic bullets.

"The police blocked us off with barriers and never let us take a single step forward," said Zeynep Duygu Agbayir, sociologist and human rights defender and one of the protesters. "But we were insistent because we could not use our constitutional right to peaceful assembly and demonstration."

The riot police understood they could not disperse the crowd, firing pepper spray on the women who were shouting the slogan "government resign."

Agbayir said they were in the area to protest the widespread exploitation, rape of women and domestic violence.

"However, we were subjected to the police violence," she said.

Istanbul was not the only city where women's rights defenders protested. Women demanded urgent action against gender-based violence in more than 10 cities of Turkey.

The demonstrators called on President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to restore the country's membership in the Istanbul Convention, an international agreement to protect women's rights. The

Turkish government withdrew from the Convention at midnight on March 20.

The major component of the Convention is to save the LGBTQ+ community. As an Islamic leader Erdogan refused to be a protector and by withdrawing, he was to consolidate his decreasing power among religious and conservative voters.

Agbayir said the Istanbul Convention was not applied actively before Turkey announced its withdrawal, but it was considered a deterrent for men.

"Now, men know that they will not receive imprisonment for too many years, and they hide behind the government's decision," she said.

Women's rights organizations considered the Convention as legal insurance. In the aftermath of the government's withdrawal from the pact, the number of violent incidents against women soared.

According to the We Will Stop Femicide, a women's rights advocacy group, 353 women have been killed in Turkey so far in 2021 and another 171 women died under suspicious circum-

stances, where the causes of death could not be established. Compared to 2021, 409 were murdered in 2020.

In October, 18 women were the victims of femicide by men, and 19 others were found dead under suspicious conditions.

"There is a power — the ruling party — that maintains the patriarchal order and insists on it," Agbayir said.

According to the patriarchal mindset, women are just mothers, and only they must be responsible for the kids, unlike fathers. Women are just housewives who cook dinner, clean their homes and obey husbands.

Women have no other option than to shut up when they argue with their partners, unlike men.

Since females have to seek their rights and equality, they are likely to become a victim of gender-based violations, from femicide to the pepper gas of the police.

So, what does the Turkish government do to stop femicides and protect women?

Nothing.

The result is that femicide is political.



# Saying goodbye from the other side of the glass



**Sierra MacPherson**  
Science Editor

I was digging through dust-covered boxes in my basement, looking for a photo album when I came across a box of my old birthday cards instead. Inside was one from my nana, Evelyn Jean Urquhart, who passed away in May last year.

I read over the last line over and over again until the words were blurred by the tears welling up in my eyes.

"All my love always, nana," she wrote.

It's strange how, after you lose someone, the hurt and the loss just seem to hit you out of

nowhere from time to time. It's as if you're fine most of the time, you're going about your day, and suddenly some tiny, random detail reminds you of them and you find yourself crying and feeling just as you did the day you first heard the news.

For me, that was news I had already been dreading for months.

A year before my nana passed, she was in a long-term care facility in Barrie, Ont. My family and I would go see her often, and she would come home with us on occasion. That all came to an abrupt end in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic confined us all to our homes and stopped us from visiting. Dismally, that was around the time her health started deteriorating, and fast.

Right before the pandemic, she had just started to show signs of dementia, but she still remembered who my family and I were, where she was and details about her life. In the short amount of time between the beginning of the lockdown and her death, her condition declined faster than I

ever could have imagined.

It was so indescribably painful to know that she was suffering and we couldn't be there with her, to hold her hand and keep her company. It was even worse knowing that she didn't understand why we couldn't go see her. Her symptoms were so severe at that point that she wouldn't remember when we would explain. It reached the point where she would refuse to talk to us on the phone — the only contact we were able to have with her — because she thought we were simply choosing not to visit.

It wasn't until September this year, nearly a year and a half after she died, that we were finally able to lay her to rest and bury her ashes at her family plot in New Glasgow, N.S. She always said she wanted to be buried with her parents, so that day brought my family some form of closure, even after all that time.

Of course, we couldn't have the celebration of life she told us she wanted, because we weren't allowed to gather.

COVID-19 took much more away from us than the funeral.



SCOTT MACPHERSON

My nana and I outside of my middle school graduation in 2014. She helped me get ready and then cheered me on as I received my diploma.

The last time I ever saw her was through the window of her room while my dad held her hand and had to say our goodbyes to us as she passed. He was the only one allowed inside. The only one allowed to be there for her final moments.

My heart breaks thinking of all the other families who have had to go through this during this pandemic.

It's devastating enough to lose someone you love in normal times, but losing someone you

love and not getting to say goodbye is completely and utterly heartbreaking. That pane of glass prevented me from sitting at my nana's bedside when she needed me and telling her I loved her one last time.

When I stared at that birthday card from the dusty box in my basement, that moment replayed in my mind vividly. Overshadowing all of the wonderful, funny memories was one thought:

I never got to say goodbye.

## TALES FROM HUMBER

### Toxic relationships have long term impacts on physical and mental health



**Sarah Hurtado**  
News Reporter

It was like an invisible disease. My life was defined by negativity. I often felt like I had a pit in my stomach. Sometimes I had trouble breathing.

Toxic relationships are like that. And I didn't really know I was in one, or recognize the impact on my mental health, until it was over.

Something that started like

a 2000s rom-com turned out to be more of a psycho-drama. The relationship was a series of highs and lows, until it began fluctuating between low and extremely low.

Some might say that if you notice the signs early on, you can leave. But how can a 16-year-old distinguish toxicity and love?

At an age when everything is romanticized, mistakes and betrayals are just obstacles, disrespect goes unnoticed and attachment is seen as love.

It is only now, at 20, that I reflect on that time and realize the fairytale love story I thought I was living in was 50 per cent a lie.

I say 50 per cent, because the good moments were there, and there were plenty of them. But the other 50 were just dismissed red flags, ignored disrespect and endless apologies accepted.

My mind only focused on the good 50, the good memories,

like how much fun we would have when having a few drinks and laughing way too loud at a small, frozen-cocktail stand.

I wouldn't focus on the fight when we got home, or the way I cried out in the hallway while walking away from him, not being able to bear the feeling of his touch, because every time he touched me, I remembered how he did that with the other girl too.

I would focus on his apology, and how he promised to never do it again, while ignoring the "It was a long time ago," "you said you forgave me," and "if you loved me you would forget about it."

As a person suffering from anxiety for most of my life, I was often confused when in the past, I would just so much as think of my partner at the time, and the only thing I would feel was anxiety rushing through my body and immediate uneasiness.

Why does the thought of the

person I love trigger my anxiety?

According to the Whitehall II Study by Michael Marmot and Eric Brunner, published in the International Journal of Epidemiology, research involving more than 10,000 people over 12 years showed that those in negative relationships were at greater risk of developing heart problems, including heart attacks and strokes.

Humans have something called a conserved transcriptional response to adversity (CTRA). Long-term stress caused by an unhealthy relationship can provoke a long-term activation of the brain's CTRA, contributing to chronic inflammation and increasing the risk of health problems.

I didn't realize that the toxicity of the relationship was not only harming me mentally but also physically.

There is a point in which

anxiety manifests in physical ways, and for me, it showed as unbearable headaches, difficulty breathing and stabbing pain in my chest, most of which I felt endlessly during that relationship.

However, I haven't had that feeling in a while now, only once in the last month.

It was the day we broke up, as unbearable as that pain was, I now realize that my life has significantly improved, my mental health is somewhat steady now, with nothing to overthink about, and I don't wake up or go to sleep with my heart racing and troubled breathing.

But even now, speaking out, I still sit here anxiously, scared that I might hurt him with my words because unlike him, empathy is not something I lack.

But then, I remember who I am, and what I deserve, not who I was and what I put up with.



# Digital exhibits allow new, innovate, safe ways to showcase art

**Santiago Arias Orozco**  
Arts Reporter

Immersive art exhibits are overtaking Toronto galleries, filling up empty salons with audio-visual productions, wrapping around the viewer while showcasing renowned artists' artwork from different angles.

Immersed in a sensory journey that brought Gustav Klimt's artwork to life, Melanie Anthony said she rediscovered her favourite Austrian painter after attending the Immersive Klimt Revolution exhibit at Toronto Lighthouse Immersive.

"When you step inside his painting, you get to have a more intimate relationship with Klimt," Anthony said. "Which allows you to see his controversial paintings differently."

The 40-minute show re-scaled the six-foot-tall frame paintings into a wall-size video that swallowed the room while being projected onto the gallery's walls and floor.

"This exposition simply takes you into another world," said Ethan Sperling, who attended Klimt's exhibition.

Allowed to walk around, run, sit down on the floor, or stand up



SANTIAGO ARIAS OROZCO

Gustav Klimt's artwork was showcased in a new immersive art exhibition in downtown Toronto. The exhibition is part of an art trend where pieces are re-scaled and projected with ambient background music.

still, viewers are free to choose the angle when looking at the paintings.

Johana Dinatale, a Klimt's exhibit auxiliary, adds more uniqueness to the experience. "It makes it boundless; you do not confide as in a normal gallery to just look and walk," she said. "Here it all comes down to living the art."

Created by Massimiliano Siccardi, an award-winning digital artist and European pioneer of immersive exhibits, Klimt's exhibition will run until Jan. 3.

Klimt's display is part of an

increasingly popular art trend in Toronto, immersive art, which has brought four exhibits to the city since last year.

"Immersive art is all about not seeing the paintings, you still have the chance to experience the art," said Haru Hyunkyung Ji, an associate professor at OCAD University.

By showcasing an artist's artwork throughout film-making, Hyunkyung said these displays merge its facets, techniques and pieces into a new story.

"That's the magic behind immersive art exhibitions," she

said.

For the media artist and immersive world researcher, these exhibitions touch a greater audience by summing up the artist's history.

"The canvas is painted with his acclaimed gold era and countless women portrayed," Dinatale said. "That then that contrasted with his early catholic and mythological pieces."

Building a bridge between the artist and the viewers goes beyond the eyesight. Composed to match the video sequences and mark the transition between paintings,

background sounds and music are a deal-breaker between still exhibitions and immersive exhibits for Hyunkyung.

"When done appropriately, music can immerse the visitor, making it feel involved," Hyunkyung said.

"All experienced differently, but I have seen people crying and laughing," she said. "It's clear how they were experiencing Klimt's art."

Dinatale said contrary to what she expected, the lineup outside the exhibit is not getting any shorter as time goes by and the display becomes less novel.

"People are still picking up this room, which makes me think that art's future is in the immersive exhibitions," Dinatale said.

Hyunkyung disagrees.

For her, the public's interest in immersive art exhibits relies on innovative character, setting off from the museum's art-viewer dynamic that has stayed still through the years.

"People generally go because they haven't been to one before and they want to experience something new," Hyunkyung said. "Art galleries aren't going anywhere, but immersive exhibits have come to stay longer."

## Massey Hall reopens to Canadian legend Gordon Lightfoot

**Jacob Tye**  
Arts Reporter

Toronto's long-standing concert venue Massey Hall has finally reopened after being closed for 40 months, featuring Canadian music legend Gordon Lightfoot in its first show.

Radio host Roy Green was certainly excited to be back at the Grand Old Lady of Shuter Street to see Lightfoot.

"I've been a fan of Gordon Lightfoot since the late '60s when I was breaking into radio in Montreal," Green said. "I saw Gordon live several times over the years and it's always a great experience. Never disappointed."

The hall underwent extensive renovations worth more than \$180 million.

"It appeared many in attendance last Friday evening had been to Massey Hall multiples of times and were happy to tell

everyone within earshot about that," Green said. "I think it's also impactful for the performer, as Gordon Lightfoot spoke about on stage.

"It was thoroughly energizing to be out for the evening."

David Hamer, a retired litigation lawyer, also loved the show and really appreciated all the changes

made with the renovations.

"I've been a fan since the early 1970's. It was very moving to see him at age 83 for the reopening of the iconic Massey Hall," Hamer said. "It was a very appropriate act to reopen the venue as he's played it hundreds of times.

"The external corridors and new bar space are brilliant. I

can't wait to see the smaller annex venues they're still working on," he said.

Massey Hall has become a staple of the city and its history with music. Metalworks Institute student Chris Martins, 20, sees the impact the venue has on the city.

"There is a huge demand to just see a show at Massey Hall

as it's a big part of Toronto and people love to just see it," he said.

The feeling of being out in a live venue listening to live music was something all concertgoers that Friday evening felt as if there was a feeling in the air of relief and joy.

"It was such a splendidly happy occasion. You could really feel Torontonians emoting together," Hamer said.

The joy of being out to see a live show is something that Martins envied as he had never been to Massey Hall. After all the buzz around Lightfoot's stellar show, he is more eager than ever.

"You don't get that isolated corporate feeling when you're at Massey Hall that you get at Scotiabank arena or other arenas," Martins said.

"It's a more intimate setting and it's like a setting best for and designed for those concerts," he said.



THE CANADIAN PRESS/COLE BURSTON

Gordon Lightfoot performs during the first concert at the newly re-opened Massey Hall in Toronto on Nov. 25.



## OPINION

## Tech replaces instruments in contemporary music



**Megan Rampersaud**  
News Reporter

Technological music production has replaced the use of instruments because of the innovative ways it allows creators to arrange, edit, mix, and master music with access to guitar, piano, and drum kit samples.

"I was really interested in that announcement that came out a few weeks ago about Anderson .Paak's new record label, just giving folks that play instruments a space to do that," said Hannah Burge, a music professor at Humber College's Lakeshore campus and PhD candidate.

However, there are crucial benefits that come with using instruments.

Technology is now found everywhere and has had a sweeping influence on the art of music. When undergoing the trial and error of playing instruments it creates a bond with the artist and the producer, in which the emotion and the time spent, prevails through the final product.

Learning to play and use instruments can also help individuals to understand music theory and concepts. This can support an artist or producer to better communicate with other musicians and to produce balanced music.

According to the College Music Society, synthesized or sampled sounds are now used instead of a real instrument, such as a pipe organ. Different instruments are available through digital synthesizers and are accessed using a MIDI digital piano keyboard that will sound similar to piano timbres.

Digital sounds that are used today can have an impact on brain stimulation.

Playing instruments can improve a person's brain neu-

roplasticity. When repeating an activity frequently, the more proactive neurons become, which results in stronger connections made, according to research studies cited in Scientific American.

Learning how to play an instrument can bring on neuroplastic changes in all areas of the brain which can benefit retention and memory.

The research shows the occipital lobe interprets pitch and rhythm, the temporal lobe processes sound, the frontal lobe digests the music and will remember what was just played, and the parietal lobe combines all the incoming sensory information to the brain.

Using original forms can elevate creativity. Single voice instruments, like the violin and cello, give limitations because it forces a person to focus on one aspect of music at a time and propel creativity. Learning the instrument chord progression can also help to better read and understand when producing through software such as Logic Pro or Garageband.

"These folks are not only working with new technologies, but they're submitting their parts that they've recorded at home to be on projects ... so someone could submit their drum parts and that gets imported and worked into someone else's track, which wouldn't have been possible without technology," Burge said.

Technological production, however, has provided many new ways to create and collaborate with music. Due to the pandemic producers use social media platforms to reveal their production processes. Although this can be a short summary of the steps involved, there is an opportunity for collaboration worldwide to learn the general ropes behind software music production.

"I think digital collaborative spaces between audiences and artists like slide room, have really made a space for artists with diverse ranges of abilities to connect with audiences in digital ways, there wouldn't be the same limitations and challenges," Burge said.



BTS/INSTAGRAM

BTS' recent single Butter broke records by getting over 11 million streams in the first 24 hours of its release.

## BTS returns with hot new single, continues influential dominance

**Ashima Agnihotri**  
Arts Reporter

Battling cancer for the third time was easier for Maya Kahn because this time she wasn't alone and had her idols, BTS, with her through her journey of recovery.

"Their lyrics run through my veins like a saline drip," she said.

"I don't know how I would've fought cancer if BTS weren't in my life. They took away my depression and gave me hope."

Kahn is a 34-year-old Toronto woman who had an on-and-off battle with breast cancer for 12 years. She works as a freelance web designer and loves to fangirl over her favourite artists.

BTS or Bangtan Soneyondan is the most famous K-pop boy group in the world right now. Their influence has spread all over the world with millions of fans supporting the artists through different means.

"I have all of their stuff, ARMY Bomb (official lightstick), their albums, merch, BT21 figures and of course I used to have a fan account on Instagram to express my undeniable love for them," Kahn said. "You name it, I have it."

Jazmine Sanders, a Humber alumni deems BTS as her muse. "Even when I paint the sun, I

can see their faces shine through my art and their music playing at the back of my mind," she said.

Sanders' love for BTS began when she came across their music on the radio. She describes the moment as "meant to be" and alleges she was destined to fall in love with them. The language barrier was never a hurdle for her but she is now adamant to learn Korean to understand the

**"EVEN WHEN I PAINT THE SUN, I CAN SEE THEIR FACES SHINE THROUGH MY ART AND THEIR MUSIC PLAYING AT THE BACK OF MY MIND."**

**Jazmine Sanders**  
Humber Student and BTS fan

lyrics better.

"Their words were in a foreign language but somehow I could understand them, I felt calm and collected," she said. "It was as if someone was saying all the things I wanted to hear."

Map of the Soul: 7 became the best-selling album in South Korea, selling more than 4.5 million copies. They recently won three American Music Awards and became the first Asian artist

to win Artist of the Year at the ceremony. They are also nominated for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance at the Grammys 2022.

"I feel like a mother proud of her children's accomplishments. They've come a far way," Kahn said. "From being under a company almost going bankrupt to becoming the powerhouse of Korea, BTS have become The BTS."

Their four-day Permission to Dance tour in the SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles, with a capacity of 70,000 people, sold out within minutes after the tickets went online for sale. The offline tour grossed \$33.3 million and became the first concert during the pandemic to accommodate a mass gathering.

The band was afraid that after being away from touring for two years, people wouldn't like remember them.

"But after looking at the beautiful ocean of ARMYs I feel relieved," BTS leader Kim Nam-joon said during day four of the tour.

Their most recent single Butter gained more than 11 million global streams in just one day on Spotify and broke the record for the most-streamed track within the first 24 hours since its release.



# Young gamers struggle with screen addiction

**Samantha Little**  
Arts Reporter

What many people enjoy as a hobby can turn into a withering addiction if care isn't taken.

More than two billion people play video games around the globe, and between one to 10 per cent of gamers suffer from compulsive addiction issues, according to the Recovery Village.

"I play video games roughly 25, 35 hours a week," Humber College esports staff member Peter Antonelli told Humber Et Cetera. "In the past I had a gaming addiction and would do nothing but play video games, and stay up late."

Addiction to video games can disrupt eating and sleeping habits resulting in fatigue, headaches, and lack of personal hygiene.

"I have struggled with bad sleeping and eating habits because of my gaming interest," gamer Keenan Friday said. "I sometimes find myself getting

only four hours of sleep."

Video game addicts can find themselves self-isolating because of their video game habit. This can result in a loss of relationships.

"I was in a relationship with a gaming addict," Amy Jeaine said.

"He would choose video games over our relationship and when I asked to spend time with him he always told me he didn't have time even though he spent at least 14 hours a day gaming," she said.

"His gaming addiction was the cause of our breakup because he refused to get help. He'd rather spend hours getting better in his games, than doing anything productive in real life," Jeaine said.

Gaming can also become an expensive hobby.

According to a Statista report last year, gamers aged 18 to 34 spent an average of US\$166 on computer games in 12 months.

While most AAA games are roughly C\$60, most of them also offer purchasable cosmetics that

can be more than the game itself.

Valorant, for example, is a free game, but a skin costs roughly \$25 and a collection costs \$127. New in-game cosmetics such as skins and collections are released often in games like Valorant to keep gamers interested in having the next best thing.

This can result in gamers spending large amounts of money to feed their addiction.

"Although Valorant is a free game, I have spent roughly \$450 on Valorant for the cosmetics," Friday said.

Gaming addictions can be overcome or prevented by setting time limits, finding other hobbies, or making other plans during the week to stay busy.

"Recently I have been able to have a good balance with gaming because I find myself managing a lot of different things in my life, rather than just video games. I also try to go out during the week as much as possible," Antonelli told Humber Et Cetera.



NIKA KNOW

Nika Knox, an LGBTQ+ gamer, experienced homophobia while gaming and joined a few LGBTQ+ Discord servers run by the community.

## Gamers harassment, homophobia targeting LGBTQ+ 'gaymers'

**Samantha Little**  
Arts Reporter

Many members of the LGBTQ+ community experience harassment and homophobia while playing video games.

Humber College social service worker student Seth McDermott, who identifies as an ally of the LGBTQ+ community, has noticed this while gaming.

"Homophobia in the gaming community is present right now, which is scary to see," McDermott said.

Many people in the community receive death threats, are harassed, or even sexualized because of their identity. This results in many LGBTQ+ gamers avoiding using their mics in-game to prevent being harassed or receiving homophobic comments.

"I mute homophobic gamers and don't normally wear a mic," said Ivy Ellis, a transgender woman.

"This causes me to be unable to get the full experience of games because I fear the hate I'll get while playing, and trying to have fun," Ellis said.

Steaming platforms such as Twitch, and games such as Valorant, Fortnite, Overwatch, and Call of Duty have added a variety of Pride items to support the LGBTQ+ community in hopes to create a more positive gaming environment for that community of gamers.

"I think Pride cosmetics are great, I especially love the Valorant ones and how they include more than one identity, and include multiple flags," queer gamer Pooshpita Chowdhury said.

Many people in the LGBTQ+ community are happy to see Pride cosmetics and enjoy using them.

However, some people in the community don't feel safe using LGBTQ+-themed cosmetics due to the amount of homophobia and hate that they receive in the gaming community.

"I don't feel exactly comfortable using Pride stuff because people in the gaming community can be ignorant and very homophobic," Chowdhury said.

Ellis likes to equip in-game Pride banners and tags.

"I like to use Pride cosmetics such as the LGBTQ+ tag, and the transgender tag for Twitch, however, it can be a beacon of hate," Ellis said.

Since it is hard for LGBTQ+ gamers to have a positive experience while gaming, members of the community have created Discords to make a safe gaming environment for queer gamers.

"I've experienced homophobia while gaming, and have also heard people using homophobic slurs while gaming, which is why I joined a couple of LGBTQ+ Discords that are run by members of the community," said Nika Knox, a gamer who identifies as lesbian.



PETER ANTONELLI

Humber College esports staff member Peter Antonelli says he is trying to improve his gaming-life balance.



# Stroll through Santa's Village at Toronto's holiday-themed pop-up

**Jess Munday**  
News Reporter

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas so it's time to get back into the holiday spirit once again and Miracle on Bloor Street is just the place to bring some of that Christmas joy.

"It's very fun and festive," said Mackenzie Taylor, who was visiting Miracle on Bloor with some friends last weekend.

Civil Liberties, a restaurant on Bloor Street near Ossington Avenue, has been doing its holiday-themed pop-up bars since 2018 with breaks in between due to the pandemic. Their two pop-up spaces this year are called Sippin' Santa and Miracle on Bloor, both steps away from their main location.

The pop-ups offer a laid-back and cozy atmosphere, as if going to people's houses for Christmas, the restaurant says.

Both locations were decorated floor-to-ceiling with everything related to Christmas, so people might feel as if they stepped right into Santa's workshop. From the server's uniforms to the Christmas-themed cocktails there wasn't anything but holiday cheer throughout the bar, with many photo opportunities for guests including a giant hugging teddy bear.

"The food was great," Taylor said. "The cookies were amazing."

Though Miracle's menu is mostly Christmas-themed cocktails that come in their limited edition Santa-themed cups, they had some snack options which included Christmas cookies and other staple holiday treats.

"It was a fun night," said Stefan Watson, who visited Miracle last weekend. "I'd love to go back again and try out some different drinks, and after I told my

parents about this night, they were intrigued by the drinks offered and they want to try and re-create them. So I know what I'm doing over the holidays!"

Miracle and Sippin' Santa are both open seven days a week from early evening into the next morning until Christmas at 875 and 866 Bloor St. W. There is no waitlist at either location, it is first come, first serve to give everyone a chance to dash through the snow to get into the Christmas spirit.

"I usually get into the Christmas spirit when I go home for Christmas after school," Watson said. "So this was a great way to get into the spirit before going home for the holidays."

A bar wouldn't quite be Christmas-themed without some classic non-stop music throughout the space. From Mariah Carey to Elvis Presley, the room was filled with Christmas



JESS MUNDAY

Festive drinks and snacks are a part of Civil Liberties' pop-up bar.

tunes to match the decor.

"It was a pretty good night," Jordon Schaffer said. "The drinks that I tried were really good and very Christmassy."

"I wasn't feeling festive before, but with the six-foot teddy bear, Christmas menu, and all the decorations, I would say it is the season for sure," Schaffer said.

# Union Station ice rink returns with free skate rentals

**Barbara Patrocino**  
News Reporter

The colourful lighting mimicking the Northern Lights, the cheery music and carols, and the illuminated decoration of the holiday ice rink at Union Station inspired Ingrid Leal to lace up her skates last Saturday.

"It's definitely one of the best ice rinks I've ever been to here in Toronto. The ice is solid and great for skating and the decor is really beautiful," she said.

The free ice rink on Front Street is part of the Union Holiday event. Everyone is invited to skate for free — including those who don't have their own skates.

To support this initiative, Bauer Hockey donated the best-quality skates and helmets that are at everyone's disposal at no cost.

"We just wanted to bring something that is free, so doesn't matter who you are, you can register and skate. We just wanted that accessibility for everybody," event supervisor Danielle Arsenault said.

Arsenault said all equipment is sanitized after each guest's use and visitors can also take skating lessons and enjoy free giveaways and DJ music in December.

For Leal's husband Danilo, it



BARBARA PATROCINIO

People enjoying the colourful lighting and illuminated decoration of the holiday ice rink at Union Station.

was fun to have his first experience in an outdoor rink with his wife there.

"My wife is great at it, but I'm not a very experienced skater so I enjoyed how friendly they

were with people who are still learning," he said.

The event is following COVID-19 guidelines placed by Toronto Public Health and the Ontario government. Masks are

required inside the station and on the rink.

"Vaccination is strongly recommended, but is not mandatory," Arsenault said.

"Also, the rink is operating

at reduced capacity, so only a maximum of 25 people per hour can use it to facilitate social distancing, and everyone at the rink must wear masks," she said.

The event also involves the promotion of different retailers available within Union Station, where the perfect Christmas gift can be found.

A new Foodie Aisle is also available under the Bay Concourse, featuring a selection of specialty appetizers designed by local Toronto chefs.

Arsenault said the non-profit event creates an inclusive space that could make all participants, no matter their background, native country, or who they are, and to feel as if they belong to Toronto by enjoying the festive season with an activity that is considered a truly Canadian winter one — ice skating.

Union Station and TD Bank, a sponsor, will donate \$1 to the United Way for each social media post with the hashtag #TDUnionHoliday, so all visitors are encouraged to share their experiences with this hashtag.

Skating times can be booked on Eventbrite. Accommodations and free equipment rental must be noted during registration.