

PROTESTERS RALLY TO SAVE GREENBELT



Protesters speak out against Bill 23, which will allow development of Greenbelt, at a rally held by the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) at Queen's Park on January 23, 2023.

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Greenbelt plan 'not about housing, it's about making people richer,' NDP leader says

Scott McLaughlin
Editor-in-Chief

Ontario's Auditor General and the province's Integrity Commissioner announced they are each conducting investigations into Premier Doug Ford's decision to build on protected Greenbelt lands.

Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk responded Jan. 18 to a joint request by Ontario's opposition leaders to look into the Progressive Conservatives' decision to open up the Greenbelt.

She said she would conduct a value-for-money audit in the coming months in response to growing concerns among the Liberals, the Green Party and the New Democrats.

"This issue has garnered significant public attention over the past few months and has been repeatedly raised during question periods in the Legislature," Lysyk said.

Following her statement, Ontario's Integrity Commissioner, J. David Wake, also announced his decision to open an investigation into whether the Ford government tipped off developers before the premier's announcement to open up the Greenbelt.

Wake will consider if Ontario's Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, Steve Clark, broke Section 2 or Section 3 of Ontario's Members Integrity Act.

These sections pertain to conflicts of interest and providing insider information and they govern the behaviour of all MPPs.

The investigation is a response to a Dec. 8, 2022 request from presumptive NDP Leader Marit Stiles.

Wake said Stiles provided reasonable and probable grounds to launch an inquiry.

Earlier this week, Stiles spoke at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference Greenbelt Rally in Toronto at which protesters expressed their concerns about Ford's decision to allow development on previously protected lands.

"It's not about housing, it's about making people richer," Stiles said.

A similar request for an integrity investigation made by Ontario Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner was denied by the integrity commissioner. His request had included a call to investigate Ford.

At the same rally, Schreiner told HumberNews these investigations



SCOTT MCLAUGHLIN

Protestors gather at a Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference Greenbelt Rally at Queen's Park in Toronto on Jan. 23, 2023.

are necessary, whether Ford is included or not.

"To literally have a handful of land speculators making billions while the rest of us are going to pay the price for that is wrong, and it needs to be investigated," Schreiner said.

In his decision, Wake noted that both Ford and Clark addressed and denied the allegations that they discussed opening up land with developers.

"They advised that the selection of the affected lands was made by public servants who were subject to enhanced confidentiality protocol and that the minister was briefed and accepted their proposal only a few days before he presented it to cabinet," Wake said.

Progressive Conservative spokesperson Victoria Podbielski said in a statement the provincial

government will fully cooperate. However, she also urged timeliness, as the government wants to begin construction on housing no later than 2025.

The Ontario Provincial Police also confirmed on Wednesday that their Anti-Racket Branch is still considering looking into allegations made against the Ford government.

Greenbelt Council Chair Hazel McCallion announced her support for Ford's plans following the decision of both Wake and Lysyk in an open letter released on Wednesday.

McCallion took the Greenbelt position following the resignation of the former Greenbelt Council Chair, along with six other members of the Greenbelt council, in late 2020. They left their posts in protest over proposed rule changes that would affect environmental protections of the Greenbelt.



SCOTT MCLAUGHLIN

Mike Schreiner, leader of the Ontario Green Party, addresses the crowd at a ROMA Greenbelt Rally held at Queen's Park in Toronto on Jan. 23, 2023.

ETC •

Humber Et Cetera is the Humber College journalism program laboratory newspaper. It is created journalism students in the Advanced Diploma and Post Graduate Certificate programs. 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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ANDRE LA ROSA-RODRIGUEZ

From left, Bob Barrett, Humber President Ann Marie Vaughan, and Francine Barrett stand beside a commemorative plaque that honours the Barrett family's donation to the college.

Humber receives record-breaking \$30M donation

Andre La Rosa-Rodriguez
News Reporter

Humber College is receiving a \$30 million donation from the Barrett Family Foundation.

"Our roots are built around helping others," said Bob Barrett, founder of the Barrett Family Foundation and CEO of Poly-tainers. "That's why we do it."

The investment marks the largest single-donation that has ever been given to an Ontario college. The foundation has given Humber a total of \$42 million in donations across their years of continued support.

Ann Marie Vaughan, president and CEO of Humber College, said the funding will go towards science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. This includes offering more than 100 annual scholarships and grants while creating more opportunities for experiential and work-integrated learning.

"This transformational gift is an investment in the future of Humber students that will strengthen the industry, the economy, and our communities," said Vaughan, who holds a doctorate in higher education leadership.

She said she gathered students, professors, and Humber leaders into the Barrett Centre for Technology Innovation (BCTI) building on Jan. 24 because it felt "fitting" to make this announcement on the annual International Day of Education.

The BCTI, which opened in 2019, was created with the support of a \$10 million donation from the foundation.

Francine Barrett, co-founder of the Barrett Family Foundation, said the funding has been made to further help prepare students to a "planet that is changing."

"You'll have the education to do it," she said. "I believe in Humber and that the gift will give people knowledge and great jobs in the future."

The Barretts said they are confident that their children, Rebecca and Kim, will continue to show the generosity that they have given to the community.

Premier Doug Ford thanked the Barrett family in a short video shown at the presentation and highlighted the importance of prioritizing funding post-secondary education in Ontario.

"Your recent contribution is

history-making," he said. "This funding will allow for hands-on learning experiences to prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow."

Mikael Mitchell, a first-year international student from Jamaica who holds a part-time job and is a recent recipient of the Barrett Family Foundation Scholarship, said the donation will help him and many students perform at their best.

"There are many great minds out there who are unfortunately limited by their circumstances," he said. "I've always had to work hard, but I found that sometimes even the most hard-working people need help."

"All of us have needed help at one point or another," Mitchell said.

Bob Barrett said it's important to create hands-on experiences because classroom education alone does not always lead to a job.

He hopes the donation will create pathways that put Humber students in better positions to find work after graduation.

"It's because of you that we're here today," Bob said. "We're here to make student life better. To help you get better jobs, and work for your family and the community."



ANDRE LA ROSA-RODRIGUEZ

Humber presented a plaque featuring an etching of the BCTI in recognition of the Barrett Family Foundation's donation to the college.



ANDRE LA ROSA-RODRIGUEZ

Howie the Hawk mascot, Howie, high-fives the crowd during an announcement of a \$30 million donation by the Barrett family towards STEM education.

'We want change': families question police budget increases

Tyreike Reid
Senior Reporter

Surrounded by family and on the verge of tears, Peter Korchinski-Paquet recounts his daughters' final moments before her death.

"She was probably kicking and screaming," Korchinski-Paquet said. "Mom help, mom help, mom help me."

His daughter, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, fell to her death from a Toronto apartment building on May 27, 2020, during an interaction with police.

The Special Investigations Unit, which probes cases where civilians are seriously hurt or killed and sexual assault allegations involving officers, cleared the responding officers in this case.

The Korchinski-Paquet family are among several members of the community who shared their experience with police at an open panel discussion.

The panel, coordinated by the Korchinski-Paquet family, took place inside of Church of the Holy, at 19 Trinity Square in Toronto on Saturday.

The event is one of several demonstrations taking place this month in response to the proposed \$48 million increase in Toronto Police budget.

The city said in a news release that the increase would hire 200 police officers and 90 special constables to the front lines.

Annemarie Whites, mother of Jamal Francique, spoke at the panel to share her son's story.

Whites said her son was shot in the back of the head by Peel

Regional Police — which is seeking \$45.9 million more to police Mississauga and Brampton — on Jan 7, 2020, during an arrest.

An autopsy showed Francique was shot in the left side of the head during his arrest, according to a report by the SIU, which also cleared the Peel officers involved in the case following its investigation.

Whites said although the budget increases are upsetting, a decrease will not guarantee safety for those who fear a police presence.

"I don't think it will make a difference whether they get an increase or decrease, the killer cops are still out there," she said. "My son's killers are still employed."

Speakers highlighted that the effects of these interactions with police are detrimental, and in most cases long lasting.

This is the case for Anthony Marriott, who said he is still grappling with this reality after he fell from the 11th floor balcony of an apartment building in 1997 during a police interaction.

"I remember feeling like, why me? What did I do to deserve this?" Marriott said. "There is a lot of PTSD, there is a lot of trauma from this, I'm a totally different person from this."

Advocates and community members suggest the funds should be used to support marginalized communities instead.

Outreach worker Doug Hatlem with Sanctuary Toronto said the funds will be better used to support those who are unhoused.

"Those funds would be much better spent actually getting people into housing, building new social



TYRIK REID

Speakers and organizers stand on stage inside of Church of the Holy Trinity, in downtown Toronto, holding up a banner with the names and faces of people who died during police interactions on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023.

housing, which is, you know, the key," he said. "People need rent-gear-to-income housing."

Toronto Police Service spokesperson Stephanie Sayer said in an email response to questions from Humber News that the increase is to improve service, such as faster response times.

"Core service delivery metrics, like how quickly a police officer gets to your door when it's an emergency, are telling us that we cannot adequately meet the demands of our growing city," Sayer said.

"If we can't meet the demands of our growing city, we have a responsibility to ask for the resources we need to do that," she said.

Sayer said that the police have a "legal and moral" obligation to deliver effective police service.

Several newly elected Toronto city councillors released a statement in support of funding more social services than police.

"Investing in initiatives such as Toronto Community Crisis Service should be our top priority, along with increased commitments for

affordable housing, mental health services... and safety," said the statement by councillors Amber Morley, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, Dianne Saxe, Chris Moise, Lily Cheng and Jamaal Myers.

While the Korchinski-Paquet family supports these demands, they continue to grapple with the loss of their loved one.

"My granddaughter has been affected, my daughter, my husband, my son, my cousin, all of us," said Claudette Korchinski-Paquet, mother of Regis. "We want change."

Critics question Toronto police's request for additional \$48M

Angelina Kochatovska
News Reporter

Toronto city councillors are questioning a proposed budget that prioritizes funding for the police.

Last week, Toronto Police Board and mayor John Tory proposed to the city council to increase the police budget by nearly \$50 million. The increase would make the city's police budget higher than \$1.1 billion.

Timothy Bryan, an assistant professor at the University of Toronto whose area of expertise is policing, said for some people the police are an "immediate solution."

"The city has faced an increase in certain kinds of offenses that for some people have been quite alarming and high-profiling," Bryan said.

Toronto's crime rate increased in 2022 compared to last year. Police statistics show homicide and stabbing cases both went up by 6.3 per cent in 2022.

"The mayor has said that people want to feel safer," said Gord Perks, the councillor for Ward 4 Parkdale-High Park.

The budget recommended by the mayor proposed to add 200 uniform officers to the service delivery team.

The addition includes 162 priority response officers, 25 of which will be deployed to support community safety in downtown's core.

Another 22 would be major case management personnel which could allow the police service to meet legislative requirements.

Toronto Police Chief Myron Demkiw said the new funding

could also help cut high-priority response times, build technology advancements and boost community trust by adding an additional 16 Neighbourhood Community officers by the end of 2023.

Police said it took a multi-sectoral approach focused on education, prevention, intervention and suppression in partnership with community agencies.

However, the budget plan didn't convince some city councillors and critics to increase funding.

"My concern with increasing the budget is that there's no conclusive evidence that shows adding the police is necessarily creating more safety," Bryan said.

"The police are not guaranteeing that the crime rate will go down with this additional money. They're not making any commitments

that there will be a difference in a level of crime or an increase of the feeling of safety," he said.

Bryan also said there should be conversation about how the police should look like that might be able to redesign police services and make it more effective.

"But those things are not attached to the budget increase," he said.

Dianne Saxe, councillor for Ward 11 University-Rosedale, said raising funding for other social services could help solve some problems without the police.

"Just increasing the number of armed officers without dealing with underlying problems doesn't increase safety," she said.

"We do need an armed police force, but it makes sense to focus, for example, when they're actually

needed and other social services could take off of the plate what they [police] don't need to be dealing with," Saxe said.

"There are more benefits from spending money on something like the Toronto Community Crisis Service than we do on adding additional officers," she said.

Perks said increasing the police budget and not investing more in other areas of life will create "social conflict."

"I think people feel safer if they know that we are all working together to give people stability and safety through things like housing, public health, mental health support, and so on," Perks said.

Council will vote on police spending and the rest of the city budget at a meeting on Feb. 14 for approval.



DARYNA VIENIORTSEVA

Madliena Hak, a Ukrainian woman, received a CUAET visa but stayed in Germany. Hak said she had concerns about the language barrier and difficulty securing housing in Canada.

Many Ukrainians find Canada not the paradise they expected

Daryna Vieniortseva
Senior Reporter

Ukrainians have the myth that Canada is a paradise, and they will definitely be happy here. With such thoughts, 142,000 Ukrainians arrived in Canada last year, according to government figures.

Ukrainians arrive in Canada frustrated, attempting to restart their lives. They have expectations and dreams of feeling free and safe. Among them is Gleb Perminov, who came to Canada four months ago and plans to stay. He found a lot of positive things in his new home.

“Advantages are accessible essential medical care, lots of educational programs, broadly developed social help programs, and safety,” Perminov said.

The newcomer also believes Ukraine has been given as much support as possible and wishes only that Canada could have more affordable higher education.

Canada does not provide free college or university programs, but there are some free language courses.

Grace Samsel, an English teacher at WoodGreen Community Service in Toronto, conducts classes for Ukrainian newcomers and has noticed that many quit learning as

they prioritize earning money.

“I believe some Ukrainian students are looking for a job, because, to my understanding, the Canadian government does not support them (in their job search), but they are giving them financial support,” Samsel said.

She said Ukrainian students are busy and have work schedules that do not allow them to attend her classes.

Samsel also noticed that for the first few months, Ukrainians were frustrated and had constant thoughts about their country and families.

“They are physically in the classroom, but I can sense that their mind is somewhere else,” the teacher said.

Samsel does not know the exact reason why some Ukrainians return home. She thinks they love their country, and they want to be with their friends and families and have their previous lives.

“It’s a different story if you want to be an adventurer and you always dream about going to another country,” Samsel said. “But if you love your country and have never wanted to go somewhere else, when the situation is improving, a lot of people are going back.”

“With some time, some of the students get more cozy and hap-

pier, and a few months later you see smiles on their faces,” the teacher said.

Madliena Hak never wanted to live abroad, but after mass attacks on Kyiv by Russian invading forces, where she lived, and the occupation of her hometown of Berdiansk, she moved to Germany.

After months in Europe, she got a Canada-Ukraine authorization for emergency travel (CUAET) visa. But six months later, she is still in Germany and does not know if she is going to come to Canada. There are many fears, expectations, and an unwillingness to start over.

“I chose Canada because it is one of the safest countries, and lots of Ukrainians are living there,” Hak said in a phone interview conducted in Ukrainian. “It is an easy process to get a visa because you need only (a) Ukrainian passport.”

More than 350,000 Ukrainians received CUAET visas but still did not come to Canada, and Hak was one of them.

“I decided to stay in Europe because I have fears connected with the language barrier, and I know that finding housing is very difficult,” she said. “The most important reason is the distance with my parents, who stayed in Ukraine, because every day I hope that the war will end and I will

come back.”

Yelizaveta Apolit overcame her fears and arrived in Canada eight months ago, but she couldn’t adapt and needed psychological help.

“I was sure that Canada was a safe country, but one of the situations worsened my morale,” Apolit said in an interview conducted in Russian. “One Russian man verbally abused me because I am Ukrainian, but the TTC worker refused to call the police due to the lack of physical violence.”

Apolit was diagnosed with a depressive disorder but could not get psychological help she needed.

“OHIP does not cover the services of a psychologist and psychiatrist, but I can’t afford to pay \$400 per hour for private specialists, so I have calls with a Ukrainian psychiatrist,” she said.

The Ukrainian woman said there is no Canadian mental support for Ukrainians, but she added that after her depression was diagnosed, she got free antidepressants.

However, she still does not have a family doctor nor the confidence to stay in Canada.

Another Ukrainian myth about Canada is that the labour market is full of vacancies and it is very easy for anyone to find a good job because the country needs people.

Kateryna Gurska came to

Canada two months ago from Kherson. She has a Swiss MBA degree along with international top management experience and owned a digital online agency.

But she couldn’t find work using her expertise.

“I was shocked that newcomers, despite their impressive backgrounds, can get only jobs in housekeeping and fast food. I heard lots of times that you are new, go to McDonald’s,” Gurska said in a phone call conducted in Russian.

Ukrainians who held high positions in their motherland or Europe did not expect that Canada would continue to rely on local working experience and education.

“I also got the stereotype that it is easy to find a job and the salary is high, but the reality is demotivating. I gave myself a deadline until May. If I don’t find work, I’ll (go) back to Europe,” she said.

Gurska said every immigrant is an individual case, and lots of Ukrainians were successful and wanted to have decent jobs.

“I had high positions before, and I think that other immigrants created stereotypes about newcomers, but our generation is modern, we are ambitious, educated, and have ideas,” she said.



GLOBE AND MAIL

A TTC bus heads east along Overlea Blvd in East York. The TTC recently announced a 10 cent increase to adult and student single cash fares to compensate for a \$366 million budget shortfall.

Students forced to adjust weekly budgets following increase in TTC rider fares

Samantha Little
Senior Reporter

Reaction continued Monday from students and experts to news of a \$366 million budget shortfall and a 10 cent increase in single cash fares for the Toronto Transit Commission.

“Raising fares will mean readjusting my weekly budget to accommodate bus fares,” Sven Bajaro, a Humber College 3D Modeling and Visual Effect Production student said.

As an international student Bajaro is only able to work up to 20 hours a week and also pays 184.0 per cent more than Canadian students according to Statistics Canada.

“I have a monthly rental, then monthly food expenses, and transit fares that are going up. Personally I believe this would affect me emotionally and thus will affect my performance in school,” he said.

The extra cost for a two-fares-per-day rider would be \$4 roughly per month based on 40 trips. Bajaro said this would make his daily two hour commute to class more expensive.

“Whether or not this will cause a difference for someone who travels daily is how much \$4/month represents a burden, and that will depend on the economic condition of the rider,” Steve

Munro, Canadian blogger and transit advocate, said.

Even though many students and other commuters still struggle from the fare increase, Munro believes there is an attempt to show that the less well off are protected, since the increase applies only to single adult and student fares.

For riders that travel daily there are alternative options available such as the monthly PRESTO pass which is not subject to the increase compared to the single-fare cost.

“Passes are not attractive to people who don’t travel every day, and there is an added concern for people who do not want to make a single big outlay on a pass rather than pay as you go at smaller incremental amounts,” said Munro.

As a result of the ridership levels being 70 per cent of pre-pandemic levels, the TTC was forced to implement fare increases in order to make up for the budget shortfall.

“We understand fare increases are hard for people, but it’s something we needed to do in order to get some more revenue in the TTC,” Stuart Green TTC Media Relations said.

“We also need to invest in safety improvements and maintaining our service levels, so the fare increase will generate another 16 million dollars to do that.

ChatGPT has universities around the world concerned about academic dishonesty

Upkar Singh
News Reporter

Schools and universities are banning ChatGPT after students were caught cheating using it.

ChatGPT is an AI tool that generates human-like responses in the form of text, in response to a query. Created by San Francisco-based startup Open AI, it was launched on Nov. 30, 2022. Open AI CEO Sam Altman said ChatGPT crossed one million users within a week.

But New York City schools are banning the tool after students were caught cheating using ChatGPT.

Recently, Australian universities have returned to the traditional “pen-and-paper” method.

The Group of Eight (GO8), which consists of eight leading research-intensive Australian universities, reviewed their assessment process and decided to eliminate AI.

GO8’s Deputy Chief Executive, Matthew Brown, told Humber News through an email that they are specifically addressing AI in their academic integrity policy and/or their student Code of Conduct.

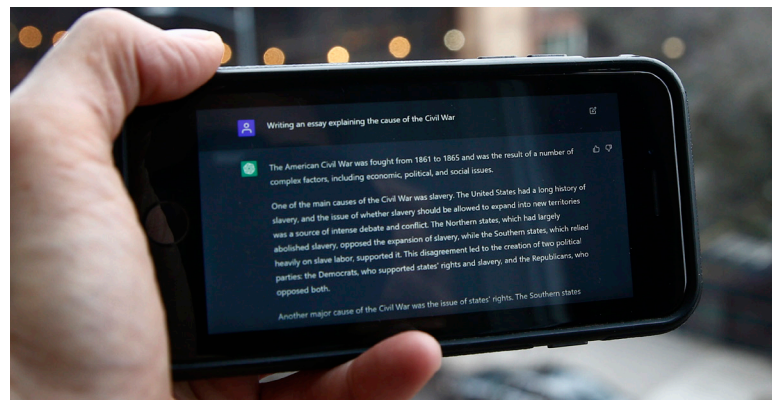
“Our universities have revised how they will run assessments in 2023, including supervised exams and tests with ‘Live+’ proctoring,” said Brown, who holds a doctorate in pure mathematics.

Darren Hick, an assistant professor of philosophy at Furman University in Southern California, said he caught a student cheating using ChatGPT in December. He said he was aware of ChatGPT through other teachers in a Facebook group.

“When I detected plagiarism in the student’s paper my thought was, maybe it was ChatGPT,” Hick said.

Hick said it was an instinct he built over the years of teaching that helped him catch the student using ChatGPT.

“There are little red flags that go off when you read something



CANADIAN PRESS/AP-PETER MORGAN

When it comes to AI tools like ChatGPT and its usage in higher education, experts say it’s an inevitability that students will turn to it.

that isn’t quite right,” he said. “And they were just, they were just bulls***ing, but in a really, really clean way.

“In what turns out to be GPT style,” Hick said. “It was a clean essay, it was just weirdly and thoroughly rolled.”

He said the first indication was that the student wrote about things that weren’t discussed in class and mentioned nothing about what was taught.

“And when the flags start building up like that, you have to stop writing, and you have to do some investigation,” Hick said.

OpenAI developed a detector to find out if something is written by AI or not.

Hick put the student’s paper through the detector and found a match, confirming it was written by AI.

“ChatGPT has arrived on the scene without a lot of warnings,” said Thomas Lancaster, a computer scientist at Imperial College in London.

Lancaster said ChatGPT is not perfect as it can generate incorrect information. He said there is no advantage in moving back in time, and going back to handwriting.

“I think we have to work with this technology, it’s not going to go away,” said Lancaster, who has a



COURTESY DARREN HICK

Darren Hick, a professor at Furman University in California, said there are red flags that can determine if work is written by AI.

background in academic integrity.

However, Rahul Kumar, an assistant professor at Brock University, said the new AI tool could be used by students to learn.

He said the information on ChatGPT can be inaccurate and students can learn to improve upon that information.

“And that would be a learning strategy rather than trying to prevent it,” Lancaster said.

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Humber Local 562 'disgusted' but defiant in face of allegations against former OPSEU executives

James Westman
Newsletter Editor

Tanya D'Anger, a partial-load Humber faculty member and steward of Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) Local 562, is done holding back.

She said because she's on contract she is one of the few willing to go on record about the allegations against the union's former president, Warren (Smokey) Thomas.

"I don't give a s**t anymore," she said. "I've been teaching for 20 years and seeing how the system doesn't work to support so many."

D'Anger said if the allegations were proven true, OPSEU members would have been exploited "shamelessly."

"It's something you see in so-called third world countries or Putin's world where everyone's getting paid off," she said.

OPSEU filed a statement of claim on Jan. 16 in the Ontario Superior Court alleging Thomas unlawfully transferred funds and assets totaling about \$1.75 million. None of the allegations have been tested in court.

J.P. Hornick, the current OPSEU president, said in a statement to members the same day that the union began a forensic audit performed by a third party last April after a new board was elected and Thomas retired.

Thomas' lawyers responded in a statement the next day, saying the statement of claim was "ridicled with errors, falsehoods, and untrue allegations."

It said the claims against the former president are "bogus."

D'Anger said she did not believe Thomas' defence.

"Of course, the lawyer's going to say that knee-jerk reaction, right? Deny, deny, deny," she said.

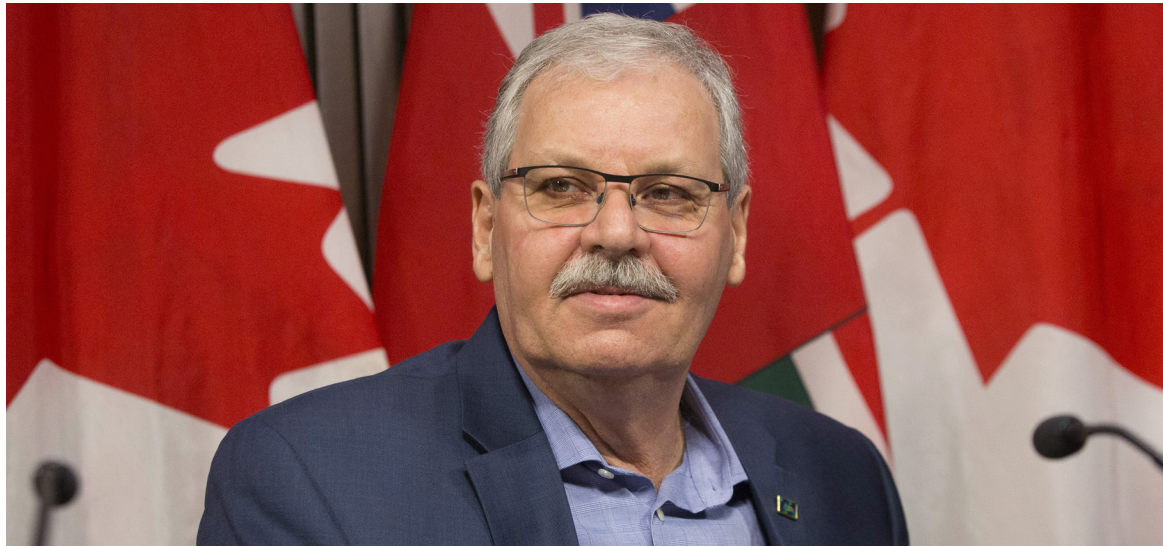
Thomas's statement described him as a leader with a reputation for honesty.

As OPSEU president, he "always put the interests of his members and his union first. That will never change," the statement said.

Miloš Vasić, president of Local 562, said he was shocked by the allegations.

"During Smokey's tenure, there always were tensions," Vasić said. "But regardless of those tensions, the allegations were really ugly."

Jeffrey Kroeker, Thomas' co-counsel, said most lawyers would see the statement of claim more as a political statement than a claim based on allegations.



THE CANADIAN PRESS/CHRIS YOUNG

The now retired Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) President Warren (Smokey) Thomas, seen here in Toronto in 2019, is being sued by the union. None of the allegations have been proven in court.

The findings of the forensic audit were countered by a lack of detail, he said.

"In fact, it's very broad, doesn't refer to any kind of report, is not specific in the slightest," Kroeker said.

OPSEU's communications department said they are "very limited" in terms of what they can repeat or comment on publicly at this time.

Last March, OPSEU transferred ownership to Thomas of a 2021 Jeep Grand Cherokee Overland, purchased by the union in August 2021 for \$97,417, the statement of claim said.

In July 2019, the union transferred ownership to Thomas' spouse of a 2017 Dodge Grand Caravan purchased for \$35,678, in November 2017, a 2015 Dodge Durango purchased for \$65,355 and in May 2017, a 2014 Chrysler 200 purchased for \$25,136, the statement of claim also said.

"These transfers were not known to or authorized by the Executive Board at the time," the union said in the statement of claim. "OPSEU has not located any supporting documentation to indicate that the Union received any value for these transfers or why they were made."

Bernie Monette, a Local 562 steward from the Faculty of Media and Creative Arts, said the allegation of giving cars to one's family, if proven, is "such a dumb mistake."

"In what world can you do that? It's sort of like the Governor General of Canada paying \$300 for orange juice," he said.

Thomas also authorized between 2014 and 2020 the withdrawal of \$620,000 from the union's strike fund to the two other executives, the statement of claim said.

"That was the part when I shook



JAMES WESTMAN

Tanya D'Anger, a Humber Local 562 steward, speaks out on OPSEU corruption allegations. None of the allegations have been proven in court.

my head the most," Vasić said.

D'Anger said the strike fund allegation was "appallingly disgusting."

If funds were removed from the strike fund, "they've literally disenfranchised us from being able to protect ourselves from being exploited and inappropriately ruled by the employer," she said.

Monette compared the allegations to figures such as Donald Trump and Roger Stone cutting corners and finding ways not to pay taxes.

"You would hope that someone who's on the side of the little guy would not treat the union's coffers as their own personal bank account," he said.

Vasić said the breach of trust was the most egregious of the allegations.

"The money itself, that's recoverable. But that trust is really the most damaging thing," he said. "There is this narrative out there that union leaders are corrupt, the whole Jimmy Hoffa thing."

Hornick said "sunlight is the best disinfectant," in her statement to members.

Pursuing the claims in a public forum such as the courts allows

members to follow what OPSEU is doing about these issues, she said.

"I know that this is troubling news to take in, but I give you my commitment that we will work tirelessly to rebuild trust," Hornick said.

Vasić said it's important that OPSEU leadership is pursuing this on their own.

"We are cleaning house ourselves," he said. "This is perhaps going to shake the trust of some people, but the fact that this originated within OPSEU itself speaks volumes to our ability to heal."

However, Kroeker said the claim is not backed up by evidence and must be proven in court of law, where the plaintiffs are held to the strictest burden of proof.

"Just because you claim it doesn't make it true," he said.

D'Anger said she did not know if the allegations would hurt OPSEU membership numbers.

"I don't have a crystal ball. I know it does the complete opposite for me," she said. "When I talk to people, if anything, this kind of revelation makes them angrier and more determined to step up."

Humber full-timers offered early voluntary retirement

Alex Muzychko
Senior Reporter

Classrooms at Humber may look a little different next year as long-serving faculty are being encouraged to consider early retirement.

"If someone was already thinking of retiring, this is an important deal to consider," the president of the local Humber faculty union, Milos Vasic said. "These employees are being offered extra money they would have never had."

Vasic explained that out of 679 full-time staff, well over 100 are at the age when they can retire on a full pension.

This means that one out of seven professors might no longer be in the classroom in the fall term, if they chose to retire early.

Humber sent letters to eligible staff members earlier this month. To qualify, they must be at least 60-years old with 20 years of pensionable services, or 65 years of age with 10 years of continuous full-time service at Humber.

Heather Black, Humber's director of Human Resources, explains the program is not only good for retiring professors but will also create new opportunities for younger faculty.

"This program is being offered as a benefit to Humber's long service employees who are eligible and interested in retiring while also providing new opportunities for others interested in careers at Humber," Black said.

She explains that this program is a one-time offer and the school has no plans to offer it again in the future.

Vasic says the union while the union didn't develop the program, it fully supports the initiative.

"Those who want to take the incentive have until the end of March 2023 to finalize the paperwork," he said.



SCOTT MCLAUGHLIN

Protestors at this week's Rural Ontario Municipal Association Conference Greenbelt rally in downtown Toronto express frustration following the new investigation announcements.

EDITORIAL: Ford must halt Greenbelt plans as probes open

Despite his best efforts to push forward quickly with plans for development in the Greenbelt, Doug Ford is hitting some roadblocks, but delaying the process is just what Ontario needs.

Since announcing his intention to open up the Greenbelt, the premier has faced a mountain of criticism for his plans for the once-protected land.

Initially, many of those concerns were about the damage development would do to Ontario's natural landscape and ecological future. The Greenbelt is an area of protected natural land where Ford's government plans to build over 50,000 homes.

However, we have also recently seen growing evidence that ethical concerns extend to both Ford and his party members' business practices.

Those concerns have now culminated in two investigations, one by the Ontario Integrity Commissioner and another value-for-money audit underway by the Auditor General. Along with this, there is a potential investigation by the OPP Anti-Racket division which would look into possible exchanges of insider information.

In an interview with HumberNews, Mike Schreiner, Ontario's Green Party leader, said he's happy with the decision to move forward with these investigations.

"I'm just happy that both the Integrity Commissioner and the Auditor General are both investigating this because these Greenbelt land deals, they don't pass the smell test," Schreiner said.

Phil Pothén is a Toronto planning and environmental lawyer who is also glad to see these investigations are happening. He's long

argued against new developments in the Greenbelt as a member of Environmental Defence Canada.

"The question of land supply is a complete red herring. We have vast untapped capacity to add more homes to our existing neighbourhoods. Almost every neighbourhood that we have built since World War 2 is built with densities that are far too low," Pothén said.

Ford seemed to agree with that in 2018 and 2020 when he denied there were plans to open up protected lands to housing developers.

"The people have spoken. I'm going to listen to them, they don't want me to touch the greenbelt, we won't touch the Greenbelt," Ford said in 2018.

However, a video surfaced that same year showing Ford contradicting that.

"I've already talked to some of the biggest developers in the country, and, again, I wish I could say it's my idea, but it was their idea as well," he said.

Ford's Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, Steve Clark, also publicly stated last year that he opposed to Greenbelt development, nor would he do a land swap.

"I want to be clear, we will not in any way entertain any proposals that will move lands in the Greenbelt, or open the Greenbelt lands to any kind of development," Clark said.

But that is exactly the opposite of the plans Clark now proposes. Not

only is he opening Greenbelt lands to development, but he's trying to save face by suggesting a land swap of 9,400 acres.

The Ontario Progressive Conservative Party was contacted by HumberNews to clarify these statements, but failed to respond.

Not only did they change their minds but some opposition parties think they broke some rules. The basis of the Integrity Commissioner's investigation is to determine if Clark spoke to land developers before the announcement.

"The commissioner is going to give an opinion in the form of a report on whether or not Minister Clark breached Section 2 and/or 3 of the Member's Integrity Act,"

said Michelle Renaud, manager of communications and outreach for the Integrity Commissioner.

The Greenbelt, which was officially protected in 2005, was created to prevent urban sprawl and loss of farmland, and to safeguard natural resources that clean our air and water.

The land also helps to reduce flood risk, and provides homes for wildlife, as 78 species currently living in the Greenbelt are considered at-risk.

However, more than 450,000 acres of farmland have been lost to development in the area since 1991, according to Environmental Defence Canada, an environmental advocacy group.

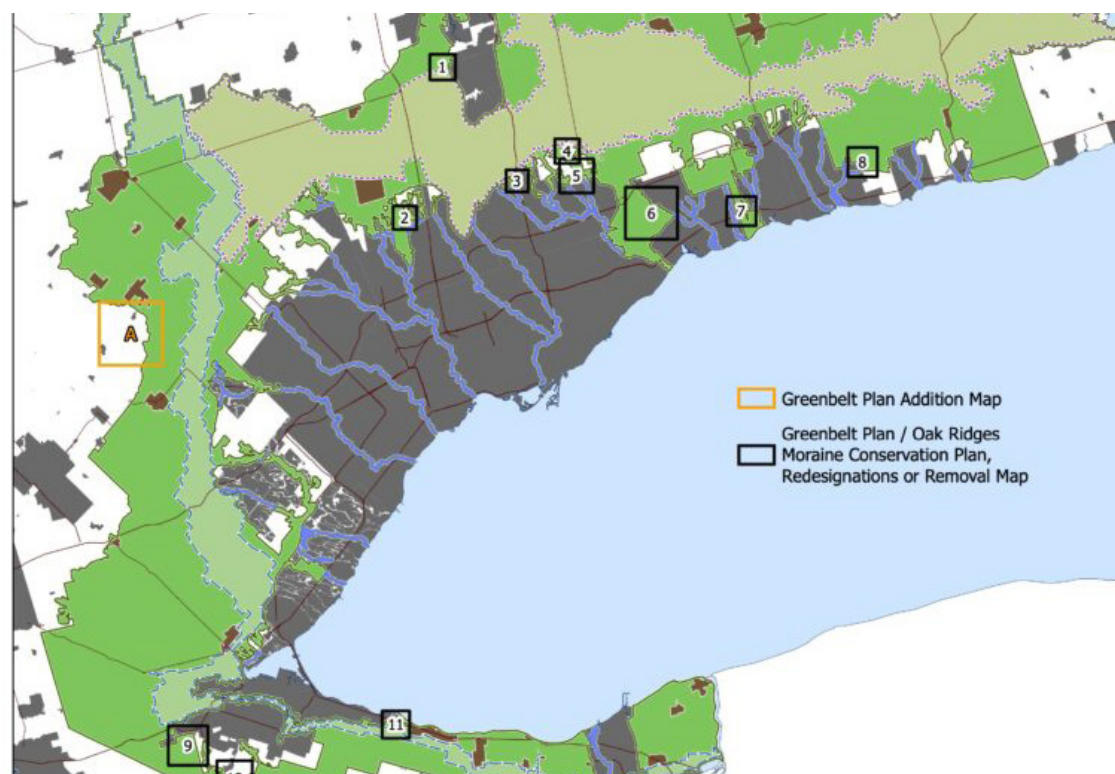
The group says the health of the Greenbelt currently affects the quality of air and drinking water for more than seven million people living in Ontario, with 13.5 million people projected to live in the Greater Golden Horseshoe by 2041.

Considering that, we can't afford to lose more of this land under the guise of creating affordable housing.

This is why, until both the audit and investigation are completed, Ford needs to pause all plans to develop the protected land, even if this is to the detriment of development plans, which according to Clark need to begin by 2025.

Governments can backtrack and reverse course on promises. However, their citizens deserve to know if those changes came through honest dealing.

Accountability will always be important. Ontarians deserve to know not only how this will affect them environmentally and financially, but also how these plans came to be.



Overview of the areas included in Ontario Premier Doug Ford's Greenbelt plan to be removed or redesignated.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGISTRY OF ONTARIO

OPINION: Pharmacy system failure hints at larger problems



Tessa Bennett
Sports Editor

For several days, the prescription management and distribution system used at Shoppers' pharmacies was down, leaving customers needing medication refills in the dark.

Loblaws Companies, Shoppers Drug Mart's parent company, confirmed in an email statement that there were intermittent system issues impacting several stores' abilities to manage and

distribute prescriptions.

The failure also impacted the pharmacy's online prescription distribution system.

Loblaws public relations also said it was a technical issue and not a data or security breach.

Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacies advertise they offer many services beyond just prescription administration. Some of these things include flu shots, various COVID-19 supports and minor illness assessments.

However, the ability for customers to book these appointments were also impacted during this time.

There was seemingly no backup plan in place to accommodate an incident like this.

With limited options to receive vital medications, customers who regularly rely on Shoppers' pharmacies had to use smaller independent pharmacies.

As a result, these locations were

overrun with customers and did not have the resources to accommodate everyone.

These pharmacies were understaffed to deal with the excess amount of foot traffic, and did not carry every type of medication being requested.

A pharmacist at Fortino's supermarket, Anastasia Sourges, confirmed that their normally quiet pharmacy was overwhelmed while Shoppers Drug Mart dealt with their problem.

Even after the system was revived, the backlog of medications needing refills created yet another problem for people and is still being addressed.

This issue is in stark contrast to when another large conglomerate, Rogers Communications, experienced an outage in 2022.

There was immediate widespread media coverage, as it impacted big players in the economy like banks.

A CSIS investigation ensued.

Not only did the pharmacy shutdown not receive media exposure, but it seems to hint at a larger problem within large companies like this.

When Rogers Communications service failed in 2022, the effects were felt so widely and heavily that the company put \$250 million into creating an "always on" network to combat any future outages.

The company took this system failure very seriously, with Rogers employees still declining to comment beyond restating publicly available information, citing it as still being a "sensitive topic."

Tony Staffieri, the CEO and president of Rogers, following the incident said the company would "work hard to earn back the trust of Canadians." Indeed, the company launched a series of television ads citing several members of the board working to restore Roger's reputation.

This begs the question: why don't backup supports and fail-safe systems already exist in these industries that service most of Canada's population?

A Statistics Canada survey conducted between 2016 and 2019 was released in June 2021 that showed more than half of the Canadian adult population uses prescription medication.

The same survey reported that one in 10 Canadians rely on medications to treat issues such as high blood pressure and mood disorders.

Many of these medications need to be taken daily, which the pharmacy system shutdown severely impacted. Specifically, the most common blood pressure medications are designed to be taken once a day, according to GoodRx Health.

Information regarding safeguards Shoppers Drug Mart and Loblaws plans to put in place following this disruption is seemingly unavailable.

OPINION: When diversity cancels out diversity at film festivals



Antonio Peláez Barceló.
International News Editor

PARK CITY, Utah — When I arrived at this year's Sundance Film Festival's press office to pick up my accreditation, two small tags caught my attention.

The tags She/Her and Hablo Español, was hanging on the t-shirt of the public relations assistant who was helping me.

Since their beginnings, international film festivals have been claiming to promote cultural diversity. Cannes, Berlin, Venice, San Sebastian and, of course, Toronto have gathered the best of the best in the art of filmmaking. However, some journalists have differing opinions.

"We're living a kind of moral explosion since cancel culture appeared," said Oti Rodríguez Marchante, a Spanish film critic.

He said topics like gender, ethnicity, language, and exotic cultures were more important now than the artistic quality of a film.

"And ideology, everybody thinks



ANTONIO PELÁEZ BARCELÓ.

Lucia Florez, she is the director of the documentary Shirampari: herencias del rio. At Sundance festival in Park City Utah, january 2023.

they have an ideology, but mostly nobody has it," Rodríguez Marchante said.

I was afraid he was right when I read through the program of this year's Sundance Festival. All these topics seemed to be prominent somehow in the arguments.

I've been reporting about film festivals for more than 20 years, which means I've shared the bathroom with John Travolta, crossed paths with Sylvester Stallone and almost stepped over Kristen Stewart's bare feet.

But nothing has made me learn more about cinema than talking with a Turkish filmmaker about Muslim customs, watching a Senegalese man selling charcoal on

the streets or listening to a female Peruvian filmmaker talking about how parents teach their children how to fish in the Amazon jungle.

Lucia Flórez, the Peruvian filmmaker who filmed in the Amazon, also wore two tags: She/Her, Hablo Español.

Her short documentary, Shirampari: Herencias del río, was shown at Sundance. It is a very touching story about a father and a son, about how tradition and knowledge passes through generations.

Sundance has provided the film with a powerful platform to gain attention, mainly in the U.S.

However, it did the opposite to Jihad Rehab, a feature documen-

tary selected for the 2022 edition of Sundance. This film, a "journey inside the world's first rehabilitation center for 'terrorists,'" according to its website, was publicly rejected by Sundance.

After being shown, several people protested against it using social media and underlined that its female director, Megan Smaker, was not Muslim. The film has been renamed The Unredacted and Smaker is distributing it in U.S. theatres herself.

Nowadays, many film festivals have their own funds to help produce films, which are selected often by themselves when they're done. Neither The Unredacted nor Shirampari received these funds,

but art-house cinema depends more and more on this funding.

I don't fully agree with Rodríguez Marchante. Sundance 2023 has been a very good festival, with films that were finally more interesting than what their summaries suggested.

But art has always been linked to discrepancies, debates, and protests, that show the contradictions of being human.

The two tags demonstrate that they care for gender and language diversity. But perhaps they should care more for their own programming criteria, unless they want challenging films to wear a tag saying I was not selected by Sundance.

TIFF highlights Canadian film Riceboy Sleeps in Top 10 showcase

Vancouver native Anthony Shim's semi-autobiographical film Riceboy Sleeps won TIFF's \$20,000 Platform Prize program.

Nathan Abraha
Senior Reporter

TIFF's top 10 Canadian films of 2022 will be screened starting Thursday at TIFF Bell Lightbox. One of the films selected was Vancouver native Anthony Shim's sleeper hit *Riceboy Sleeps*.

The film follows the story of single mother So-young trying to navigate the many hurdles of life in 90s west coast Canada as a Korean immigrant. Resonating with audiences for its raw and powerful capturing of the immigrant experience, the semi-autobiographical film went on to win TIFF's \$20,000 Platform Prize program.

"We definitely knew the film was something special," Hilary Hart, director of distribution and acquisitions at Game Theory Films, the Canadian distributors.

"Once we started submitting it to different festivals it was pretty instant that we got positive feedback from programmers but you never know — sometimes great films get lost, but the support we got out of TIFF made a huge difference," she said.

Hart said she's thrilled with the reception for the film.

"Having it programmed in the platform section, which is very prestigious, and then for the film to win — that was definitely a surprise. I mean I knew how I felt about it but for the jury to bestow that upon it was really the moment we realized this was going to be bigger than we hoped," she said.

"I think what people are responding to so much to Anthony's film is how authentic and real it feels. There has definitely been a movement in the last few years in Canadian cinema where we can see a generation of filmmakers who are proud of their heritage and are telling their stories."



THE CANADIAN PRESS/ALEX LUPUL

Actress Choi Seung-yoon, who stars in the film *Riceboy Sleeps*, seen here at TIFF in Toronto last September where the film won a juried prize.

Also being shown this week at TIFF is the Canadian drama *Brother*, directed by Clement Virgo, and *Cette Maison*, directed

based in Toronto.

"Every minority can relate to that immense disappointment when you see a character that

looks like you on screen portrayed offensively and stereotypically. In my days growing up it was characters like Long Duk Dong from *16 Candles*. Today we see films like *Riceboy Sleeps* among many others made

with sensitivity, authenticity and care," Wong said. Reel Asian film festival was found in 1997 to give voice and advocate for Asian representation in media arts, something Wong sees all across film such as indie films like *Riceboy Sleeps* or mainstream hits such as 2022's *Everything Everywhere All At Once*.

"Our festival has been ongoing for 26 years and I feel it's a really exciting time for Asian representation in cinema," Wong said.

"THERE HAS DEFINITELY BEEN A MOVEMENT IN THE LAST FEW YEARS IN CANADIAN CINEMA WHERE WE CAN SEE A GENERATION OF FILMMAKERS WHO ARE PROUD OF THEIR HERITAGE AND ARE TELLING THEIR STORIES."

Hilary Hart

Director of distribution and acquisitions at Game Theory Films

by Miryam Charles.

Riceboy Sleeps was also the opening film at this year's Reel Asian Film Festival, an honour that was given to the film among tough competition. The film went on to win the festival's best Canadian feature film award.

"We had people in our audience sobbing. People really relate to stories that are real, at its core it's a film about a mother and a son and that's something that many can relate to," Deanna Wong, executive director of Reel Asian, which is



MUHAMMAD HAMZA

Jermaine and Marlene Spence are hosting a session about the new program "Open House" at Hope Endoors' office on Jan. 14, 2023.

Hope Endoors launches support program for adults with functional needs

Muhammad Hamza
Senior Reporter

Hope Endoors Community Services in Brampton has launched a support program for adults with functional needs to assist them in gaining social skills, independent living, and meaningful relationships with their community.

The 12-week program, which begins Feb. 5, will provide older adolescents with functional needs with educational and physical activities aimed at boosting their confidence, training them for employment, and providing them with life skills.

The interactive session for a new program called "Open House" was announced by Hope Endoors Brampton on Jan. 14 and was hosted by the service's co-founders Jermaine Spence and his wife Marlene.

He said the new program assists older adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities, including autism, Down syndrome, learning disabilities, and other neurodevelopmental conditions.

They will also help develop important social skills, on-the-job training, math and literacy skills, and cooking skills that will enable them to participate in the community and find employment, Jermaine said.

Registrations are open for program enrollment, and they are visible online on the website, where anyone can apply, he said.

The program is also for those between the ages of 18 and 40 who have alcohol spectrum disorder, he said.

Morning and afternoon activities are part of the program, which includes indoor and outdoor activities, Jermaine said.

Morning activities include meetings, sitting with staff, sessions on enhancing functional life

skills, physical activity, and being part of the community, he said.

Afternoon activities include swimming, life skills, social skills, lunch, gym and other exercises, job readiness, and resume writing, Jermaine said.

"Our vision is to help neurodiverse families feel happy, hopeful, confident, and connected," Jermaine said.

The program is also focused on enhancing the social skills of adults, such as cooking, grocery shopping, community engagement, and other activities, he said.

Marlene Spence said the program is an opportunity for adults aged 21 and older with developmental and intellectual disabilities to gain independent skills.

She said the major goal is to work on their personality development and enhance their social abilities, which will be necessary for them in the future, such as time management and financial management.

Marlene said they also teach people how to clean, get involved in arts and creative work, and improve their communication skills.

The purpose of all these activities is to see those adults succeed in life, she said.

Joseph Sowa, the father of Joshua Sowa, 21, said his son has a mild form of autism and he wants him to be engaged in everyday activities.

His wife, Sharm Sowa, told him about the session, he said. Joseph Sowa said he wants to see his son become more engaged in social life activities, enhance his learning abilities and communication skills.

He hopes his son will be able to live a healthy, confident, and intellectual life after completing this course, he said.



PHILIP LAU

People gathered for Lunar New Year celebrations in Toronto's Chinatown on Jan. 22, 2023, the first day of Year of the Rabbit. The closing ceremony featured the signature lion dance.

Chinatown hops into Year of the Rabbit with diverse performances

Philip Lau
Political Editor

Performers and visitors from different cultures gathered in Toronto's Chinatown on Jan. 21 and Jan. 22 to kick-start the lunar year.

The celebrations marked the first time Chinatown had met together in three years, Tonny Louie, chairperson of the Toronto Chinatown Business Improvement Area, said in the event's closing ceremony.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced some Lunar New Year activities to go virtual in 2021 and 2022, according to Chinatown's website.

Chinatown filled the two-day festival with traditional Chinese cultural performances, from the signature lion dance to a Chinese orchestra which featured the 61-year-old yangqin artist Pingxin Xu, who said he plays the Chinese dulcimer as a professional.

Xu said while he has years of experience playing the instrument, he was still excited to see crowds gathering again and enjoying his Lunar New Year performance.

"It is nice to be back to normal life and to see celebrations for some special events like the Chinese Lunar New Year," he said.

The orchestra also saw younger musicians like 20-year-old Chanel Zhang, who said she has performed pipa on stage for about seven years.

Zhang said she played her favourite song on the Chinese lute, *Blue and White Porcelain* from Taiwanese pop singer Jay Chou, to bring joy to the audience.

"It brings a lot of people

together," she said.

Rachan Gavish, an Israeli who moved to Canada with her family a year and a half ago, said she was excited to join her first-ever Lunar New Year celebrations.

Gavish said all the performances amazed her as they showcased the variety of Chinese culture.

"Come on everybody," she said. "Join and see by yourself."

The lure of Chinese culture did not stop at visitors.

Aaron Seunarine, who played steel pans and covered some traditional Lunar New Year songs on stage, said it was his first time performing for the festival.

Seunarine said he has watched steel pan orchestras from China and Japan playing traditional songs from their cultures, but he has never tried it himself.

He said he could see why the instrument and the songs blended well.

"Music in all is a universal language," he said.

Seunarine said he also cherished the chance to perform in front of a wide spectrum of people, ranging from Asians to Caucasians.

"I felt my diversity of songs, as well as the traditional Chinese New Year songs that I chose, complemented Toronto and the people that were there," he said.

Kathryn Zhao, co-founder of the dance group Haykz which performed in the celebrations, also said she wanted different people to experience the diverse Asian culture.

Zhao said while her group performs all year round, she brought



PHILIP LAU

Dance team Haykz performs to K-POP songs from popular groups at Toronto's Dragon City Mall on Jan. 21, 2023.

her Japanese husband, Hayato Kobayashi, to this year's festival to let him learn more about Chinese culture.

She also said she saw ties between different Asian cultures.

"We use most of the same things like the fans and the sword and the umbrella," she said. "But it is a different way."

Zhao said Haykz also features a young team which includes her son and daughter.

The young team danced on stage K-POP songs like the recently released *Antifragile* from Le Sserafim, she said.

Zhao said while the teens' performances were not something

traditional, they were a good starting point.

"If the whole show is only me, like a traditional Chinese, people will get boring (bored)," she said. "I want to put all together."

The group's next stage is to add some traditional Korean culture and create an Asian fusion, Zhao said.

"I really wanna just to help my husband and push Asian culture to the world," she said.

Hong Kong Canadian Jon Tong said in a God of Fortune costume that he shared the same desire to promote Asian culture.

Tong said he has appeared as the God of Fortune in Chinatown's Lunar New Year celebrations for

three years.

"It is to showcase my culture," he said. "I (would) like to play a part in continuing the tradition."

Peter Ly, a Vietnamese Canadian who has helped with the annual celebrations for more than 10 years, said the promotion of Asian culture made this year's event a great success.

"I believe (this year is) the biggest in my 10 years, or 11 years, being a participant," Ly said. "And I found the event attracts a lot of not only Chinese, but mainstream people."

"I found that they are very interesting (interested) in our culture," he said.



KRYSTAL YEUNG

Hawks captain Jake Gomes celebrates after his team scored in a matchup against the Fanshawe Falcons during a game on Jan. 19, 2023. Hawks rank eighth in OCAA men's volleyball.

Captain Jake Gomes leads men's volleyball to four-win streak

Krystal Yeung
Sports Editor

Humber Hawks men's volleyball team captain Jake Gomes dove into the floor to dig the ball that was within his reach. The setter swiftly stood up and prepared to run the next offense.

All he did was create an attack attempt, one of the 124 attack attempts during that game.

There are only a few games left in his college athlete career, the final year student in Management Studies said after the match.

"I'm going to make everything (work), make (it) the best year I can," he said.

Gomes led the Humber Hawks men's volleyball team, eighth in OCAA rankings with a 3-2 to win the game in five sets against the number 1 ranked Fanshawe Falcons.

Gomes, who took Athlete of the Week honours last Nov. 28, contributed with 39 assists.

Humber volleyball coach Wayne Wilkins said it wasn't their best outing of the season yet, but they improved when compared to their last matchup against the Falcons.

"The reality is I think we have the capability to win at the national stage," Wilkins said.

He said Gomes brought a "Michael Jordan effect" to the team as he made people around him better.

"Jake's good and Jake's good," Wilkins said. "But he helps make the middle better, he holds his

passes accountable."

Gomes's journey to the setter position for the Humber Hawks was a deliberately chosen path that began in elementary school. There was much blood, sweat and tears along the way.

He said he first tried volleyball at Grade 5, when he "wasn't tall," wasn't a good hitter, and "wasn't a great jumper."

But he realized that he had good hands, which enabled him to distribute the ball around him, Gomes said.

Together with his leadership skills, he started his career as a setter, which involves designing the play. The setter is much like a football quarterback as the offensive driver who sets the ball in the right spot for attacking players.

"I read the play before it even starts," Gomes said. "You kind of read the defenders."

He could determine which offensive strategies he wanted to run before the game, he said. But Gomes said there could be numerous variations at any point, such as factoring in which players are on the court, the other team, and every rotation at any point, he said.

"Knowledge comes from playing," Gomes said.

Setters send the ball to hitters at any position, hopefully at a perfect trajectory, but it's also important to understand "some players jump higher, some players are faster, some players swing more across

instead of align," he said.

He made sure he had the same set of specific players every single time, Gomes said.

He said he acquired different strategies through watching videos of himself and replays and evaluated what he could have done better, he said.

His coaches helped him greatly in developing strategies, Gomes said.

"Especially my strategies, (which) definitely got better after coming to Humber, playing at this high level," he said. "I would say definitely from the coaches."

A setter could be stressful at times and coach Wilkins helped him, he said.

"He will give me signs, just so I can take my mind off and he will help me out," Gomes said.

His coach said the position is a difficult one. Wilkins said the dedication seen in preparational work was something the rookies could learn from him.

"When you look at guys and you task them with a job to do, sometimes they will do it, and sometimes they will do it half-hearted," he said.

"Jake goes out with 100 per cent effort every single day," Wilkins said.

He said he wasn't surprised when Gomes broke the service aces record.

Gomes said he came to Humber as a float server and started spin serving in the summer after the

first year. After four years, he now holds the highest service aces per set in Humber.

"Repetition, that's it," he said.

Gomes said he is still improving and changing his form.

His teammate, middle blocker Jaskarn Kalsi, said it was Gomes who made him look good in volleyball.

"Honestly I don't even know where I'm swinging," he said. "I just pull my arm up and he just placed the ball perfectly in my hand."

Kalsi said Gomes was a captain who made people around him better. And Gomes made them the best players they could be as a setter, he said.

Gomes said he made sacrifices in being a student athlete. There were concerts and sporting competitions he missed because he had practice, he said.

Gomes wanted to go to the Rolling Loud hip hop concert with his teammates, but they scrapped their plan when they knew there was a schedule conflict, he said.

But he convinced himself that it was only for five years where he had to give all he had to the game.

"I love playing volleyball, I love the sport, do I wouldn't want to be anywhere but here," Gomes said.

He said one reason he played volleyball was his brothers, as the Athletics Department is a family to him.

Gomes said team traditions include wearing crocs, "a game day thing" for him and his teammates.

Outside hitter Teyven Black-

more said it was a teambuilding activity for them.

Blackmore said they would buy and share charms with one another every two weeks. They got several pairs because they ran out of holes for new charms, he said.

"It's great to be a part of," Gomes said. "It's a huge part of my college experience."

He said it was sad he was approaching the finale of his student athlete life.

"I'm definitely proud of the career I have had," he said, but he acknowledges the end of his student athlete life marks a brand-new start.

Gomes said he would like to continue his volleyball career.

"If I do get the opportunity to go play overseas in Europe, I would definitely take that opportunity," he said.

Nothing was confirmed, but Humber and his coaches were helping him along the way, Gomes said.

He also said he had faith in the future Humber Hawks men's volleyball team.

"A lot of guys from the starting line-up, a lot of recruits this year," he said. "The setter behind me, he's improving a lot throughout this year."

Gomes said he could see the Humber Hawks being a strong team in the coming years.

"Fight for what we want more than anyone else," he said. "Want it, chase it, go for it."

Messing wins gold at final national championship

Krystal Yeung
Sports Editor

Two-time Canadian champion and two-time Olympian Keegan Messing lingered along the rink before closing his last figure skating nationals in Oshawa.

Messing, 30, who is retiring after this season, stayed with the crowd until the last possible moment.

He held back his tears.

"I don't want to leave," he said.

Messing earned his second national gold medal back-to-back with a total skating score of 257.78 before bowing out.

"It is special," Messing said.

He said the 2023 Canadian Tire Skating National Championships was difficult as this marked the closure of his 28 years on the ice.

He was trying to keep all of his emotions in check to focus on skating, but it was difficult, he said.

His best friend, the 2019 Canadian champion Nam Nguyen, said he would like to congratulate Messing on the astounding career he has had.

"I think he deserves everything," Nguyen said. "I'm really really happy that he's wrapping up this season the best way that he can."

Nguyen said Messing's innate positive energy has inspired him to be "a better person, a better skater."

Messing said figure skating brings him excitement and positivity.

He started skating at the age of three after watching Elvis Stojko in the 1992 Olympics in Albertville, France, he said.

"I couldn't even put my excitement into words," he said. "I was shaking my hand up and down, and twirling my finger to ... I want to do this, I want to do this."

His mom then brought him to the nearest rink in town, where his love for skiing transferred to skating, Messing said.

His mom found his old journal written in 2007, and it was like reading a child's mind, he said.

"I was like 'yay yay yay yay, I landed my triple lutz! I don't even feel, like, sick anymore, I'm so excited to do this,'" he said.

Messing said it was special to see how his love towards skating has transferred to the crowd.

"Thank you for being with me through this entire ride," he said.

It was a tough call to end this 28-year expedition.

"Going to the rink every day, willing to hurt, willing to push my body to the breaking point is getting more and more difficult every year," he said.

It was hard to juggle between "being the best father you can



Keegan Messing (middle) will retire after winning gold at the 2023 Canadian Tire Skating National Championships in Oshawa on Jan 14, 2023.

KRYSTAL YEUNG

be" and his figure skating career, Messing said.

He said it was uneasy stepping into his parenting shoes with his body drained after training.

"Absolutely exhausted from the ice, and then have your little one all energized, run up to you and ready to go," he said. "It's so exhausting."

It was harder and harder to maintain the balance between the two roles, he said.

Messing said it was impossible to have those shining medals without the hard work.

That is why he decided to retire this year, he said.

Messing is stepping out of the competitive ice, but he is imprinted on people's hearts.

His coach, Ralph Burghart, said Messing was a unique athlete.

"He has the heart, the desire, the dedication you need to go where you want to go," he said.

"He's just a pure heart, he's very honest," Burghart said. "All that together contributes to his success in the end."

He said Messing made him realize that he had to grow as a coach.

Burghart also said Messing emphasized to him the importance of perseverance and passion.

What the next generation of skaters could learn from Messing was that "you have to skate with your heart," he said.

Messing's best friend, Nguyen,



KRYSTAL YEUNG

Two-time Canadian champion and two-time Olympian Keegan Messing said he is retiring because it was hard to balance his career and parenthood. He said he wants to focus on 'being the best father [he] can be.'

said Messing was a great ambassador for figure skating.

"I think the sport would definitely miss a huge piece to first, our Canadian community, and our international skating community," Nguyen said.

Messing, however, said he would not be disappearing from public sight that soon.

"I'm definitely hoping to do shows for a few years and do as many shows as I can after the com-

petitive season's done," he said.

He also said he has bright hopes for the next generations.

"They are so talented," Messing said. "I definitely can't wait to see what the next generation brings."

But he was not sure if he would introduce figure skater Keegan Messing to his kids, he said.

He said he knew how mentally draining competitive skating was, therefore, he wasn't sure if he would make his children skate

competitively.

Messing said he would be teaching his kids to ski and skate instead.

"I just want them to love whatever they do," he said. "I think that's the best goal any parent can give to their kid."

"I would say I always loved the sport, this is where my heart has been," Messing said.

"Really at this time, thank you," he said.



HENRI SWZARC/STARFACE VIA ZUMA PRESS

Kylian Mbappe plays in the Soccer World Cup Qatar 2022 match France vs Denmark. Qatar became the first Arab nation to host the World Cup which drew record-breaking TV viewers.

Middle East becoming next sporting hot spot

Jack Albana
Senior Reporter

In the past two weeks, the football world has seen Saudi Arabia host the biggest rivalry in club football and sign one of the most iconic athletes in the history of sports to an illustrious deal.

This all comes a few weeks after Qatar became the first Arab nation to host the FIFA World Cup, which drew in record-breaking TV viewership.

James Tucker, a specialist in education policy and elite sports has extensive experience in the Middle East and he said the growth of sports particularly in the Persian Gulf has been overwhelmingly evident in the past few years.

"I do think sports will have a very permanent fixture in the Middle East," Tucker said.

Tucker has also project managed and consulted for the English Premier League and La Liga, and he said the EPL was the first major football giant to make their move on the Middle East by selling

television rights in order to target a massive growing audience.

Although football is not the only sport to move to the Middle East.

The ever-growing Formula One has had multiple events in the Gulf countries, major tennis tournaments have taken place in the region, massive boxing events such as the rematch between Oleksandr Usyk vs Anthony Joshua, and several other box office spectacles.

During the global shutdown of sports as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ultimate Fighting Championship went as far as working alongside the United Arab Emirates to build an entire island (Fight Island) dedicated to hosting UFC events which grew the company's fan base exponentially.

The obvious conclusion that people may point fingers to is money.

Although Tucker said that this popular belief is actually a "myth" because it's not so much an infinite budget to attract attention, it's more of a devised plan to benefit

the Gulf nations in other ways.

Tucker said just as the UAE developed this idea, other nations in the region such as Saudi Arabia have begun following suit due to the growth it brings to the nation.

"40 odd years ago the ruling

professor of sport management at Brock University, has a similar perspective to Tucker's.

"I wouldn't necessarily say sports are migrating to the Middle East, but it's more the Middle East are migrating towards sport," Naraine

"I WOULDN'T NECESSARILY SAY SPORTS ARE MIGRATING TO THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT IT'S MORE THE MIDDLE EAST ARE MIGRATING TOWARDS SPORT"

Dr. Michael Naraine

Associate Professor of Sport Management, Brock University

families of the UAE, particularly Dubai, sort of said, OK, we need to have this long-term strategy of moving away from oil and gas. We want our economy to be a commercial hub, we want our economy to attract tourism," Tucker said.

Dr. Michael Naraine, an associate

said.

Naraine pointed to the incredible infrastructure dedicated towards sports which can be seen all over the Gulf nations and he described them as a contributing factor to their success.

"Today, there's greater recognition that investing into the

sport and entertainment industry can generate significant return on your investment," Naraine said.

Naraine said this dedication to success is a direct result of their willingness to get things done.

"Toronto could probably support an NFL team, but it requires having an NFL stadium and that requires money and resourcing, and no one wants to put up that money. If you tell the Saudis, hey, we'll give you an English Premier League team playing in Riyadh, but we have to build a 100,000 seat stadium, what do you think? They will build it in the next three months."

He said this sudden progression of sports shouldn't come as a surprise to fans because "sport is constantly changing"

Whether or not the Middle Eastern nations surrounding the Persian Gulf decide to construct similar plans, what countries such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have managed to produce in a short time period is a clear indicator that they don't plan on slowing down any time soon.

CANADIAN CHAMPION RETIRES WITH A GOLD



Keegan Messing poses proudly with his gold medal at the 2023 Canadian Tire Skating National Championships in Oshawa. Messing announced his retirement after 28 years on the ice.

**CAPTAIN JAKE
GOMES LEADS
HAWKS MEN'S
VOLLEYBALL
P.12**



**MIDDLE EAST
BECOMING
WORLD'S NEXT
SPORTS HOT SPOT
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