

# HUMBER ET CETERA<sup>o</sup>

Humber's Student Newspaper

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## ONTARIO LAUNCHES VAX PASSPORT APP



ELI RIDDER

Doug Ford speaks about the new vaccine verification app on Oct. 15 2021. Ford said a comprehensive reopening plan for the restaurant and gym industries will be released next week.

**Eli Ridder**  
News Editor  
**Andrew Raghunandan**  
News Reporter

QUEEN'S PARK — Premier Doug Ford revealed a new vaccine verification app on Friday making it easier for Ontarians to access businesses across the province, again deferring plans to address capacity limits for restaurants and fitness centres.

"The enhanced vaccine certificates and Verify Ontario app will

give our businesses further comfort in their ability to operate safely as we take further steps to protect people's privacy," Ford said during a morning press conference.

Ontarians will be able to download an "enhanced vaccine certificate" as of Friday, with a staggered release based on birth month, starting with January to April on Friday, May to August on Saturday and those born September to December on Sunday. On Monday it will be open to all.

Verify Ontario will be used by businesses to certify guests have been fully vaccinated.

"The Verify Ontario app will support Ontario businesses, protect our hard-fought progress by making it quicker and easier to confirm if a person is fully vaccinated, while protecting their privacy," Associate Digital Government Minister Kaleed Rasheed said.

"I encourage all Ontarians to get an official enhanced vaccine certificate with an official QR

code, and businesses to download and use our Verify Ontario app," he said.

Province-wide vaccination rates for those age 12 and older are currently at 83 per cent, according to the government.

Despite Ford's insistence he was supporting small businesses, criticism has been growing over a lack of published plans for restaurants and gyms.

Ford said Friday a comprehensive plan for those industries will be released next week.

The premier explained he was being cautious and wanted to avoid scuttling the limits too early.

When Ford didn't lift restrictions on restaurants and bars while lifting limits on sports arenas and concert halls last week, critics were quick to point out what they viewed a double standard.

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## Restaurants, gyms left out of reopening

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

The Toronto Maple Leafs welcomed nearly 20,000 fully vaccinated fans into the Scotiabank Arena on Wednesday, where they faced the Montreal Canadiens in the 2021-2022 season opener.

Masks were still enforced for fans, with the exception of removing them when eating or drinking.

Meanwhile, restaurants, bars and fitness centres remained at 50 per cent capacity, including the Humber Room, a restaurant run by culinary students at North campus.

Associate Dean of Business Rudi Fischbacher told Et Cetera on Friday the restaurant industry has been “battered badly.”

Fischbacher said he’s looking forward to the capacity restrictions being lifted at some point soon, saying it would mark a “good step forward” towards recovery.

It would also allow the Humber Room to serve more guests, with seating currently limited to 20.

Non-profit advocacy organization Restaurants Canada earlier blasted the provincial government.

“It is beyond comprehension that 20,000 people can cram into an arena, scream, and closely congregate without masks, while restaurants must adhere to strict distancing regulations which severely restrict the number of customers that can be served,” the organization said in a statement.

Michael Garcia-Ortiz, an HVAC student at Humber, said he sympathized with the criticisms from restaurant and gym owners ahead of Friday’s announcement.

“I know how people in the

restaurant and gym industry are feeling right now. They must feel hurt, confused, and worried about the future of their business and the financial toll the pandemic has taken on them,” Garcia-Ortiz said.

While the trades student acknowledged the disappointment of many in the restaurant industry, including some of his own friends, he said.

Garcia-Ortiz was optimistic about the Ford government’s planning and the sacrifices that would need to be made to reopen the province safely.

“They are taking a cautious approach that we may not like but will have to respect,” Garcia-Ortiz said.

# Whitaker leaves Humber more corporatized after a decade in power

Joshua Drakes  
News Reporter

Chris Whitaker announced his retirement for next June after nearly 10 years as president of Humber College, leaving behind a legacy he’s proud of but some critics say made Canada’s largest college become a more corporate institution.

“Humber has been a wonderful experience and very rewarding and I’ve enjoyed every moment,” Whitaker told Humber Et Cetera in an exclusive interview this week.

“It’s an organization filled with great people, all focused on the same thing with a real culture of innovation and support for our students so I would describe it as is a wonderful time,” he said.

Whitaker has been president of Humber College since 2012, presiding over many changes and challenges throughout his term. June 20, 2022 will be his last day in office.

His two terms facilitated the construction of the Learning Resource Commons building and the Barrett Centre, bringing a complete facelift for the front-facing side of the college. He will also finish his term as the highest paid college president in Ontario, with a salary of about \$433,000 this year.

Throughout his time at Humber, Whitaker has given great credit to the staff he has worked with over

the years, and said they made his arrival comfortable.

“The transition to me was, of course, challenging,” Whitaker said.

“But it was made easy because there’s so many great people here that do a lot of the heavy lifting so it certainly made my transition here a lot easier than I would have otherwise imagined,” he said.

Whitaker is encouraged by all the opportunities Humber now has to offer on his way out, which now includes state-of-the-art facilities and equipment for students to gain valuable hands-on experience in a learning setting.

He cannot centre his legacy on any one project, but is especially satisfied with the LRC building that brought administration and student services under one roof.

Whitaker has experienced his share of challenges over his tenure.

“COVID is probably one of the biggest challenges that we’ve ever had and now it’s about just

keeping people motivated,” he said. “Giving people confidence that we have the talent and skills to get through things.”

“I see everything as a learning opportunity,” Whitaker said.

“If you can create that sense of community, if you have the support of the people around you and you’re focused on doing the right things, that will get you

through, and that has certainly gotten me through some of the times that were less than ideal,” he said.

Humber has seen a different atmosphere take hold throughout Whitaker’s presidency.

Milos Vasic, acting president of the local faculty union, said he’s seen the college take on a more centralized and business-oriented approach. Vasic doesn’t necessarily blame Whitaker for the change, but the atmosphere in his eyes has shifted.

“Humber has become a much more business kind of place,” Vasic told Et Cetera. “Which is more bureaucratic, intense, and

more centralized.”

Vasic, president of OPSEU Local 562 worked at Humber from 2002 to 2004 as a sociology professor before returning to Humber in 2013 in the same role.

Whitaker agrees Humber has taken on a more business-oriented atmosphere and approach to operations, but he doesn’t view it as a negative but as a necessity to maintain income.

“I recognize the word bureaucracy; some people think that’s a negative word but I think it’s a necessary word for a modern organization,” Whitaker said.

“One of the things that we’ve had to pay attention to is, like any organization like it or not, you have to have revenue to pay your expenses,”

Whitaker is hopeful this progress will continue long after his departure, and that Humber will continue to develop. The search is already on for who would replace him. Whitaker, however, isn’t concerned, believing his legacy will be carried on long after he’s gone.

“I know people often use that term, passing the torch, and sure, that’s a nice symbolic way of recognizing a new leader,” he said.

“But I would say that torch has always been firmly in the hands of every employee at Humber because they’re the ones that are passionate about what we’re doing,” Whitaker said.

WITH FILES FROM ELI RIDDER



HUMBER COLLEGE

Humber President Chris Whitaker.

## 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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# Workers say 10-cent increase to minimum wage not enough

Jess Munday  
News Reporter

A rise by a dime in Ontario made a lot of minimum wage workers dissatisfied because the change is not enough.

Lauren Murray is a minimum-wage retail worker in Barrie, Ont., who works two jobs “and even then I can’t afford my car,” she said.

“I can’t afford groceries. I only eat one full meal a day,” Murray said. “Even then I struggle to pay small bills like my phone, car and with these rising gas prices I feel doomed.”

In Ontario, the minimum wage was recently increased by 10 cents to \$14.35 an hour from \$14.25 — a bump that left minimum-wage workers interviewed by Et Cetera unimpressed.

Quinn Smith, a big-box store warehouse employee, said he’s having difficulty making ends meet.

“I do not think people should have to work several minimum wage jobs to afford to live in Ontario, but currently with working a minimum-wage job 40 hours a week, I can barely afford to pay rent,” he said.

Many of those who make minimum wage do not feel they are paid what their labour is worth. Many jobs require intense physical labour from their employees to get the job done.

“I’m definitely not paid what my labour is worth,” Smith said. “I work eight hours a day five days a week unloading several trucks a night, and I’m constantly sorting, stalking and binning freight.

“Our work in the warehouse is very physical and hands-on using power equipment and such, but we still only get paid minimum wage,” Smith said.

The low-income classification in Ontario is \$38,500, which is about \$19 an hour. A 40-hour

work week on minimum wage is \$14.35, starting this month, which is about \$28,000 a year.

The largest increase in the minimum wage in the last decade was in 2017 when the then Liberal government headed by Kathleen Wynne increased the rate to \$14 from \$11.60.

After the 2018 election, the Progressive Conservative government of Premier Doug Ford froze the hourly minimum wage at \$14 and scrapped legislation that would have raised it to \$15 that fall.

This week, David Card, a Canadian economist, won a Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for his research on minimum wage and how a higher minimum wage affects the labour market. He concluded it did not harm the economy, an argument frequently made by employers.

Minimum-wage workers said the current rate makes them feel hopeless and limits their abili-



TIGER LILY/PIXELS

Many warehouse employees believe they are not adequately compensated. Ontario’s minimum wage went up 10 cents to \$14.35.

ties to participate in everyday life.

“The idea of working isn’t what bothers me, I like my job,” said Logan Fargo, a Toronto-based lumberyard employee. “I’m okay being around heavy machinery and having to do some heavy

lifting. It’s the fact that I put in a lot of work and I don’t feel that I’m paid fairly.

“I feel like the recent increase has done more harm than good,” Fargo said. “I honestly feel like the government has spat in my face.”

# Ontario’s throne speech silent on post-secondary education

Trishelle Dotson  
News Reporter

For post-secondary campuses around Ontario, the recent throne speech by the Progressive Conservative government of Premier Doug Ford to open the new legislature session offered sounds of silence.

Austin Hurley, a Brock University student and member of the board for the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, said the alliance was “disappointed that there was no targeted mention of the post-secondary sector in the throne speech, particularly when it comes to supporting affordability and access to education.”

The Oct. 4 speech read by Lt.-Gov. Elizabeth Dowdeswell focused on the province’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, health and long-term

care, and emerging from the crisis of the last 18 months to rebuild the Ontario economy.

“Ontario cannot go backward,” the speech said. “After 18 months of fighting this pandemic, we owe our businesses stability and certainty.”

But there was no mention of education and only passing reference to post-secondary education. Issues of concern to students, such as financial

food banks on campus, and off it.

“That is unacceptable,” Baryluk said.

Rising housing prices, along with spiking tuition and living costs, forced some students to choose between furthering their education or going straight into whatever entry-level position they can find in the workforce.

“We’re discouraged that Ontario has clawed back their provincial contribution to the

Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) by \$400 million,” Hurley said.

“The throne speech made no mention of any intention

of ending the clawback or providing additional supports for students,” he said.

York University graduate Shevaughn James believes education is essential. However, he also believes it has never been a priority for the Ontario government and the throne speech

**“THERE IS ACTUALLY A LACK OF FOCUS ON EDUCATION FROM ALL FORMS OF GOVERNMENT. EDUCATION IS A STAPLE OF ANY KIND OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE.”**

Shevaughn James  
York University Graduate

support, accessibility, childcare and mental health services, also received short shrift.

Jason Baryluk, interim general manager and director of advocacy for the College Student Alliance, said that “in order to just get by, we’ve seen a massive intake of students who are using



ELI RIDDER

Student groups have criticized the provincial government’s recent throne speech for not addressing issues in post-secondary education.

made that obvious.

“There is actually a lack of focus on education from all forms of government,” said James. “Education is a staple of any kind of social structure.”

“Education should be a focus,” he said. “Not an afterthought.”

With many classes switched to online learning due to the pandemic, mental health has been a struggle for students. A survey

conducted by the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations in June found 70 per cent of students reported feeling stressed, isolated or anxious.

“You may hear from politicians like, ‘Well, that’s a lot to kind of fix,’” Baryluk said. “It’s not. We’ve seen over the course of the pandemic, that they are able to do these things if they want as a matter of political will.”

# ICIJ's Pandora Papers expose global tax shelters

**Ashima Agnihotri**  
Reporter

The Pandora Papers revealed worldwide riches hiding in shadowy tax havens by researching almost 12 million financial records over two years.

Journalists like Sheila Wang with The Toronto Star collaborated internationally to bring to light the explicit use of offshore tax havens and published them in October 2021.

Wang researched corporate registration records, ledgers, trading history of shares and other financial records to find Canadian leads in the documents in the ICIJ database.

"I made more than 30 phone calls to find information, to find something," she said.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) brought together 600 journalists from 117 countries to unveil their findings.

"We worked on international news without being abroad, all thanks to the journalists from around the world," Wang said. She started working on the report in May.

Wang said the leak was given the name in September, this year, and refers to an artifact in the Greek mythology named Pandora's Box.

"It evokes an outpouring of troubles and problems," she said.

The leak includes 6.4 million documents, almost three million images, more than a million emails and almost 500,000 spreadsheets. The documents span five decades, with most created between 1996 and 2020.

"This entire world is set up as a hidden parallel economy that does all sorts of things that are clearly against the public interest," said Marco Oved, a reporter at the Toronto Star who reported on the leak.

Offshore accounts are used to hide the businesses and finance of the wealthy from the rest of the world and avoid paying taxes, as information is limited to the public. It's the largest data dump of tax havens, succeeding its predecessors, the Panama and Paradise Papers.

The Panama and Paradise Papers leaked in 2016 and



AP PHOTO/BRIAN INGANGA

Kenyans in the low-income Kibera neighbourhood of Nairobi read Oct. 5 newspapers reporting President Uhuru Kenyatta is among more than 330 current and former politicians identified as beneficiaries of secret financial accounts. Calls are growing for an end to the financial secrecy.

2017 included names and personal financial information of wealthy individuals and public officials who used offshore business entities for illegal purposes including fraud, money laundering and tax evasion.

This release found Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, Panama, and the Bahamas are the most popular tax havens along with Russia, the U.K. and even Canada.

The list of political leaders in the Pandora Papers include former U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair, the King of Jordan Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, and they indirectly tie Russian President Vladimir Putin to secret assets in Monaco.

Entertainers like Shakira, Jackie Chan, Elton John and others were exposed in the Pandora reports. During the investigation, reporters found an 11-year-old boy from Azerbaijan who owns nearly \$50 million of prime commercial real estate in London.

More than 1,200 offshore

companies were found to be tied to Canada.

Among the Canadians who were identified include Formula 1 champion Jacques Villeneuve, money transfer mogul Firoz Patel, as well as dark web marketplace mastermind Alexandre Cazes, who died in Thai jail in 2017.

Wang's biggest difficulty came in translating data from different languages and understanding the technical slang. She talked to experts and went over the documents line-by-line.

"Deciphering the documents was like learning a new language," Wang said.

More than one hundred billionaires, 29,000 offshore accounts, 30 current and former leaders and 336 politicians were named in the first leak on Oct. 3.

"In today's information era, people sometimes rather not know and that's not right," said Wang. "People say I don't care about the rich but you should, because what they do has an impact on society."

People can hold funds and assets in foreign countries for doing business, investing abroad and more. While owning an offshore company is legal, the secrecy it provides can mask illicit money flows, enabling bribery, money laundering, tax evasion, terrorism financing and human trafficking and other human rights abuses.

"One of the features of tax havens is that it's basically impossible to figure out who's behind them," Oved said. "So this leak connects the dots for everyone and exposes the names and reasons behind these tax havens."

Both Wang and Oved noticed multiple countries making changes after the leaks but Canada remained silent.

"People have gone to jail, presidents have toppled and lost power, so why not Canada?" Oved asked.

"Enforcement is important," Wang said. "So far we've heard a lot of big talks but now people want to see it."

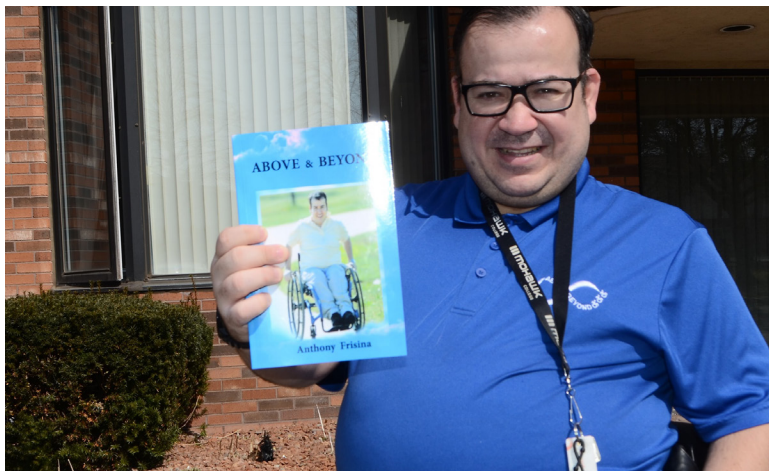


JACQUES VILLENEUVE/INSTAGRAM



TONY BLAIR INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

Jacques Villeneuve, above, and Tony Blair, below, were named in the millions of documents released in the Pandora Papers.



MARK NEWMAN

Anthony Frisina, media director for the Ontario Disability Coalition, wants to end stigma towards disabled persons, improve accessibility.

## Access barriers a problem for disabled Canadians

**Alex Thomas**  
News Reporter

Anthony Frisina, media director for the Ontario Disability Coalition, is quick to acknowledge improving attitudes toward people with physical disabilities, better access in public spaces, and supports provided by governments and service agencies.

But, Frisina told Humber Et Cetera there's still a lot of work to do.

"I've been working to help pave the way so that acceptance is more prevalent for the disability community," said Frisina, who also founded the organization Above and Beyond.

"It comes in the way of providing more accessible streets, providing more accessible areas whether it be in a commercial building, public building," he said. "Just utilizing the lived experience of people with disabilities when it comes to decisions that are made."

PeopleAccess reports that in Ontario, more than 15 per cent of the population, or about 1.9 million people, have either a long-term or permanent disability. Most of those are over age 65.

Statistics Canada stated in a report on accessibility in federal sectors for 2021, about 73 per cent of Canadians with a disability reported encountering an access barrier.

Accessibility often determines whether people with disabilities can find work and build financial stability. Mobility devices and other supports often cost considerable amounts of money.

"You've got to look at personal care, other medical medicines or devices that aren't covered, but come out of pocket as well," Frisina said.

Statistics Canada says students with a disability in Canada receive up to \$4,000 annually.

The Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services provides basic needs such as food, clothes, water and shelter. The amount is based on the number of people in a family, if a spouse has a disability and the age of family members.

For children, cerebral palsy is the most common disability, affecting both communication and movement control. According to the Ontario Brain Institute, it affects more than 34,000 people in the province.

Vanessa Giancaterini, an eight-year para-athlete with cerebral palsy, said basketball was great in helping her cope.

"I think it's the community," she said. "They're so welcoming and it's a judgment-free zone, which I love. I needed that as a teenager."

Josee Matte, high-performance manager for the Ontario Para Network, says the social aspect of para-athletics is hugely important and everyone felt the effects when facilities were closed and events were canceled during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We had one of the longest lockdowns in Canada, in the world, and I think that really took a mental toll," Matte said. "Especially on some of the younger people who are in high school or just starting post-secondary."

## Small businesses are more reliant on local shoppers to stay afloat

**Carter Roy**  
News Reporter

Small businesses have been struggling to survive since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and, now more than ever, their future depends on consumers shopping locally.

David Hessels, a manager for Businesses Improvement Area For Toronto, knows the city has numerous programs to support small retail businesses as they continue to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Small businesses are hoping local communities and shoppers will support them and help to grow their businesses.

"Current programs are being expanded and others are being created so that small businesses can draw upon resources to bolster their resilience," Hessels said.

But small business owners and workers typically rely on their loyal customers, tight-knit communities and connections.

According to a 2020 Statistics Canada report, more than one-quarter of small businesses in Canada indicated revenues were down about 30 per cent compared to 2019. Businesses with

one to four employees saw a 32.7 per cent plunge while businesses with 20 to 99 employees reported a 25.2 per cent drop.

After a few weeks into Ontario's second lockdown beginning in November 2020, businesses slowly changed over to online sales, curbside pickup and delivery, reducing and laying off staff, and relying on rent relief from the federal government.

Still, Statistics Canada reported one-quarter of businesses gave employees some sort of support that was not given before the pandemic.

The family-like community of small businesses, usually saw those who lost their jobs hired back when lockdowns lifted - as long as the business itself had survived.

A big winner while small businesses suffered was Amazon and other delivery services.

Sarah Lourdes worked at an Amazon warehouse in the GTA during the first lockdown in 2020, saying orders significantly increased in April and May of 2020.

"On a normal day it's pretty busy, but we were hit so hard once people could only order

online," she said. "Within one day we had to move a lot quicker than normal so orders could be shipped. It was a busy time."

Small business owners are trying to recoup some of their lost revenue from the 2020 and 2021 lockdowns. They are encouraged to build an email list, blog and use social media, and seek the help of public relations and communication specialists.

Twyla Willis, who runs a small black-owned catering business selling seafood boils, said it was the pandemic that actually caused her to start her own business.

"I was looking for ways to make money since I was laid off from my job," Willis said.

"People always told me I should sell my food, but it was never my passion," she said. "After bringing my cooking to different events, people would ask if I sell my platters and for how much, that's when it hit me that people would actually buy it."

And Willis will be happier, like all small business owners, as things return to normal for customers and can support local retailers.



NUR DOGAN

According to Statistics Canada, small businesses make up 98 per cent of all employer businesses in Canada.

# Arboretum offers nature as respite to students, faculty

**Samantha Little**  
News Reporter

Many Humber College staff and students have found a relaxing and educational solace in the Arboretum amidst the hectic start of the school year.

"It is amazing to see people become excited about something in nature that's new to them," said Marilyn Campbell, communications assistant at the Arboretum.

"[It is] not just for people who visit the Arboretum or attend our events — the staff are constantly learning from the land and each other as well."

The Arboretum is located along the West Humber River. It includes 101 hectares of large gardens and natural areas for visitors to enjoy. The Arboretum is free to visit and is open every day during daylight hours.

"My favourite part about the Arboretum is the diversity of flowers. They are so colourful and nice to look at," said Maxime Makamdop, a Humber College Bachelor of Engineering-Mechanics student.

Among the Arboretum's many gardens is the Native Pollinator Demonstration Garden, filled with flowers to provide for pollinating species such as bees and butterflies.

A similar area, the Tranquility Bird Garden, was created in partnership with Birds Canada to provide a habitat for local and migratory birds, which help pollinate

plants, disperse seeds and recycle nutrients back into the earth.

There are also many walking trails of various lengths and difficulties throughout the Arboretum, with information and sighting areas. A popular spot for photography is the Garden Of The Rising Moon, which was created with the help of the Humber landscaping and horticultural students.

The Arboretum offers in-person education programs and special events at the Centre for Urban Ecology. However, it is closed for the time being due to COVID-19.

Virtual events are offered instead and are recorded for those who cannot make the live sessions. The Etobicoke Master Gardeners will be offering a virtual pruning workshop from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Oct. 16. Students who wish to attend can register through Eventbrite.

The Arboretum also has the Learning by Leading program, which helps students gain life experience and have an impact on real-world issues in the environment.

"This program also helps students that are involved in the program learn many different life skills, such as leadership and communication skills," said Angel Suarez, the Learning by Leading program coordinator. "It also gives students a sense of belonging, and allows [them] to experience nature in ways they weren't able to before."



SAMANTHA LITTLE

The Native Pollinator Demonstration Garden features native plants that attract and support pollinators such as monarch butterflies and bees.



MARKUS SPISKE/UNSPLASH

Students and staff at Humber College share the same sentiment that the federal government needs to act with urgency in fulfilling its promises to fight climate change as it continues to severely impact our planet.

## Humber community says federal action on climate change doesn't go far enough

**Andrew Raghunandan**  
News Reporter

The Humber community wants to see the federal government take more action in fighting climate change, a crisis that continues to grow.

Devon Fernandes, Humber College's sustainability manager, is concerned about the progress the federal government has made on fighting climate change. It's "increasingly urgent" that its performance starts to match its promises.

"It's amazing to see that the government has an ambitious goal of fighting this crisis, but I see that there are more areas of improvement to be made," Fernandes said.

The government didn't fulfil its plan of banning plastics as a number of grocery stores continue to offer them to customers, although stores charge a small fee — usually a nickel — for each bag.

The government planned on investing more into renewable energy, public transportation and Indigenous communities to switch to a cleaner energy source.

Making it more accessible and efficient for personal and business use may also have a positive impact on the economy because energy is planned to be produced in Canada.

"I see that they need to be making more strides and targets by fulfilling their promises quicker," Fernandes said.

The latest United Nations report confirmed climate change was caused by human activity. It also pointed to irreversible changes and a shortened window for taking action.

"We are not just there yet in fighting this crisis," Fernandes said. "The government has to push harder to lead the horrible trend we are facing in the present into a positive trend for the future," he said.

Sukhvir Ghuldu, a Humber College Computer Programming student, says the government isn't doing enough for the climate crisis.

"I don't think Trudeau is doing enough nor has done enough to fight climate change," Ghuldu said. "I want to see more action from all the promises he has made."

Ghuldu said he wants to see Trudeau ban plastics from all stores and provide more clean and healthy services for Indigenous communities.

The first step UN recommended to speed up the switch to renewable energy use "by making it a key performance indicator for every economic activity, budget and public purchase."

Spencer Wood, director of Humber College's sustainability department, said the carbon tax is already the big driving piece of the federal plan.

"It's part of a plan by the government to reach and eventually pass its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent below the levels we've seen in 2005," Wood said.

The current carbon tax on gasoline is 8.8 cents and it plans to reach 40 cents by 2030 according to the April 2021 report by Canadian Energy Centre.

Quebec became the first province to implement a carbon tax in Canada in June 2007, while Conservative premiers in Western Canada and Ontario have resisted the plan.

## U.S. to finally open border to vaccinated Canadians on Nov. 8

Eli Ridder  
NEWS EDITOR

The United States will finally open its land borders to fully-vaccinated, non-essential travellers from Canada and Mexico on Nov. 8, White House officials said on Friday.

Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas noted the reopening will bring back “significant economic activity” for communities near the Canadian and Mexican borders.

Canada opened its borders to non-essential vaccinated Americans on Aug. 9 as the pandemic began to ease.

When Washington and Ottawa first agreed to close down the world’s longest land border to non-essential travel due to the global health crisis in March 2020, it drained cross-border business and divided friends and family.

Chuck Schumer, the U.S. Senate’s top democrat, said “members of our shared cross-border community have felt the pain and economic hardship of the land border closures.

“That pain is about to end,” he said.

Canada’s public safety minister hailed the U.S. decision as “one more step toward returning to normal.”

“We continue to closely monitor the progress of COVID-19 and will work with our partners in the U.S. to ensure the safety, security and well-being of our respective countries,” Bill Blair said in a statement.

It’s not only the U.S. border that will require a vaccine passport. Ottawa said earlier this month that Canadians will need to prove full vaccination to travel by plane or by the federally-mandated Via Rail.

The exact date in November when U.S. border restrictions will be lifted has not yet been determined.

## OPINION



Rodrigo Duterte plans to retire as president of the Philippines. His daughter Sara Duterte-Carpio, mayor of Davao, may run for president in 2022.

DENNIZ FUTALAN/PEXELS

# The welcome departure of Rodrigo Duterte



Khiana Gutierrez  
NEWS REPORTER

In announcing his plan to retire as president of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte gave what was, for a politician, a decidedly unusual reason.

“The overwhelming sentiment of the Filipino people is that I am not qualified,” Duterte told Global News. Few voices said he was wrong.

Duterte, a former mayor of Davao City, was elected president in 2016 and announced on Oct. 2 his plan to retire. He is infamous for his ruthless crack-down on crime and illegal drugs.

Duterte ordered in July 2016 police and military forces to kill any Filipino citizen with a connection to the drug trade. Thousands of people were executed. He took the lives of fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters.

Duterte is a well-known “strong-man,” a leader who

trades in violence and threats.

“My order is to shoot and kill you,” he said. “I don’t care about human rights, you’d better believe me.”

Duterte was part of a wave of populist leaders around the world, including Narendra Modi in India, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Donald Trump in the United States, Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey, and Viktor Orban in Hungary, all men claiming to know what “is best” for the people and ruthlessly carrying it out.

My relatives began to feel hopeful for their country when they heard the news about Duterte’s retirement.

From Parañaque, part of the country’s Capital Region, my grandmother Josephine Cantuba celebrated the news of Duterte’s departure.

“It’s good he’s out because he was bad,” she said. “He killed our people.”

As my Filipino heritage is strong, I ache for those who suffered five years of inhumanity and misogyny.

The misogynistic comments Duterte makes during his speeches are beyond ignorant. These remarks cannot be camouflaged as “jokes,” as his spokespeople often say, because there is nothing humorous in the sexist remarks he targets towards women.

Earlier this year, Duterte said

women are not fit for the presidency because of their “emotional set-up.”

“This is not for women. You know, the emotional setup of a woman and a man is totally different,” he told Radio Television Malacañang.

He said that about his own daughter.

What father belittles his daughter — who took over as mayor of Davao — for being a Filipino woman?

On a visit to South Korea in 2018, he kissed a woman on the lips uninvited. He called it a “gimmick,” done for “entertainment purposes.”

Another term for it might be assault.

I remember sitting in my Grade 12 English class, embarrassed because my teacher derided the

president of the Philippines for his abuses. But it was true.

His retirement means a return to national dignity and, hopefully, fewer deaths.

While Duterte resigns from politics, his daughter, Sara Duterte-Carpio, could be running for the presidential candidacy in 2022. She has no intention of joining her father’s party, PDP Laban, and has time to decide to run until Nov. 15.

Duterte-Carpio can change the Philippine government if she does not follow in her father’s footsteps.

The national motto of the Philippines says “For the Love of God, People, Nature, and Country.”

I hope that next year’s election can showcase change and represent what the Philippines needs to bring to its citizens.



EZRA ACAYAN/GETTY IMAGES

Rodrigo Duterte, Philippine President, announcing retirement from politics.



THE TORONTO STAR

Anishinaabe journalist Tanya Talaga tackles the hardships facing Indigenous communities in Canada with her new documentary *Spirit To Soar*, a followup on her 2017 non-fiction book.

## Telling stories that need to be told: A one-on-one with Tanya Talaga

**Et Cetera reporter Alex Muzychko spoke with Indigenous filmmaker Tanya Talaga to discuss the reason behind her new documentary, *Spirit To Soar*, and what she hopes to achieve by telling the stories of Indigenous communities and how Canada has failed them**

**Alex Muzychko**  
*Arts Reporter*

**T**anya Talaga, author of the award-winning book *Seven Fallen Feathers*, has produced the film *Spirit to Soar* as a continuation of the story chronicling the period following the mysterious deaths of seven young Indigenous students in Thunder Bay, Ont.

The students, without access to high school in their own communities, travelled to the Lakehead to pursue their education. They had left their families, communities and everybody they knew. But in the city, alone and inadequately unsupported, they lost their lives.

Talaga, an Anishinaabe journalist, initially came to Thunder Bay as a reporter for the *Toronto Star*. During her time there, she discovered the story of the students. She turned their deaths into a book that became a huge success even as it challenged Canadian attitudes toward First Nations.

*Spirit to Soar* is the story of how things have changed — or not — since the release of her book. Answers have been edited for length.

**What prompted you to produce this documentary?**

"I felt that a lot more of a story needed to be told, and visually told. I wanted it told by First Nations filmmakers and storytellers. It's important that we tell our stories, and that we do so on every angle, you know, from filmmakers, directors, executive producers to the director of photography. It's important that we're the ones in our communities telling our stories, so that's why I wanted to make a documentary on it."

**What help did you have producing this film?**

"We had a broadcasting partner, the CBC. We also had funding from the Canadian media television fund CMF Telefilm Canada and we use the Indigenous umbrella of funding. We also pitched them, and they accepted us having a second version of this film that's all in Anishinaabemowin, which is our language. And we also produced a podcast as well. We had a three-part pitch and Telefilm accepted it all. I made all the business decisions with the film. I directed it, I wrote it, and I was in it."

**What makes this film so important for everyone to see?**

"It's important people know the

truth about Canada. It's important that we continue to honour the lives of all of the people that we are losing in Thunder Bay and across Canada."

**What are some of the issues faced by Indigenous communities?**

"We see interactions with police, and Indigenous people dying at far greater rates than anyone else. We see our people being incarcerated by far greater rates than anyone else. We see the continued taking of our children into child welfare. We still feel racism in so many cities, and Canada really needs to take a hard look in the mirror and realize what policies they have. Policies that have made this country this way, what colonization has done. If our film can help explore that, then it's done its job."

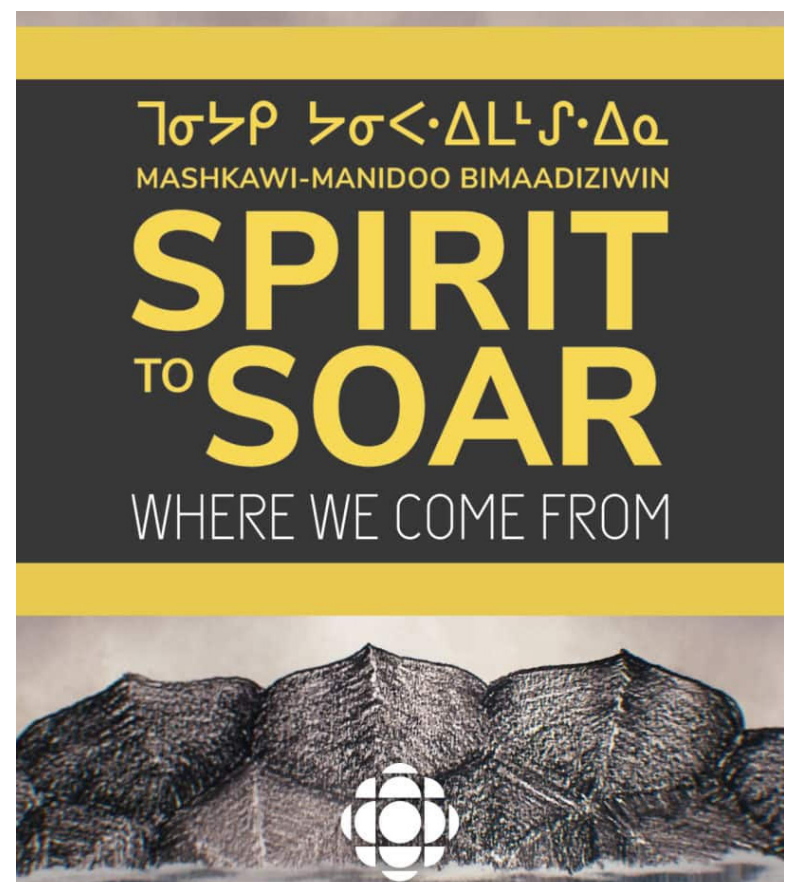
**What were you trying to achieve with this film?**

"We're trying to tell our stories. We're trying to make a film that told our stories and our way and represented the families correctly, and also the honour the children. And told the story of what happened to them through the eyes of people that were there, the leadership, people that are experiencing this. We wanted to tell our story

our way."

Talaga plans to continue her work telling the stories of Indigenous Canadians. She recently signed a three-book contract with Harper Collins Canada, the

first of which will deal with residential schools and the national reckoning surrounding them. She continues to write for *The Globe and Mail* and plans more documentaries.



CBC

Tanya Talaga hosts a podcast of the same title as her documentary as a companion piece and is narrated by Elder Sam Achneepineskum.



# Michael K. Williams' death sparks discussion about opioid epidemic

Jesse Glazer  
Arts Reporter

Actor Michael K. Williams from *The Wire*, *The Sopranos* and *When They See Us*, last month joined the skyrocketing — and tragic — number of people to die of an opioid-related overdose.

Those working in entertainment are no stranger to the epidemic. Philip Seymour Hoffman, Heath Ledger, Chris Farley, and most recently Williams are all actors who died of opioid overdoses.

Statistics Canada reports opioid toxicity-related deaths have risen dramatically in the last few years, particularly during the pandemic. Between January 2016 and March 2018, 22,828 people died from apparent opioid toxicity deaths, with 1,772 between January and March 2021.

"Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, 6,946 apparent opioid toxicity deaths occurred (April 2020 to March 2021), representing an 88 per cent increase from the same time period prior to the pandemic," according to a report on Opioid and Stimulant-related harms in Canada from Statistics Canada.

Karl Pruner, communications director at ACTRA Toronto, a local chapter of the union representing artists and entertainers, said what actors face is particularly troubling because they are considered, for the most part, freelance professionals working from contract to contract.

"Jobs are few and far between, hours are long and paychecks often uncomfortably far apart," Pruner said. "The resulting stress can take its toll on mental health, which is one of many risk factors for addiction."

Josh Fletcher, a physician at North York General Hospital in Toronto, said almost all health-care professionals he knows believe the opioid epidemic is the most significant health crisis beyond COVID-19.

"The number of hospitalizations of overdoses, due to opioids and substance use, is up every year and at an all-time

high," Fletcher said.

He said governments should invest in educating people about the lethality of opioids and in ways to protect and help users.

"We know people are going to use, that's inevitable," he said. "The best we can do as healthcare professionals is support, educate, and assist them in getting better and doing whatever we can to prevent them from abusing."

To combat the rising numbers of deaths related to opioid overdoses, the City of Toronto is petitioning Health Canada to decriminalize possession of illicit drugs for personal use.

Fletcher said that would be a big step towards helping those suffering from substance abuse disorders because of the stigma that has surrounded illicit drug use.

Dr. Caryn Green, a physician at The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic at North York General Hospital, helps patients who've suffered through various forms of substance use disorders.

She said in addition to social stigma, societal and systemic barriers hinder people from getting help.

"If someone is homeless, if someone doesn't have a telephone, if someone doesn't have housing or finances, those are some of the biggest barriers," Green said. "So if I see someone who clearly needs support or wants support, but they don't have those things, I sometimes can't find them again, and I can't offer them further support."

"There are so many social barriers and systems of oppression that put folks who are already systematically oppressed at more risk of using drugs and thereby at more risk of overdosed poisoning from opioids," she said.

Green said opioids pose such a significant danger because of how lethal and potent they are.

She said it was in the mid-2010s when fentanyl "really arrived on the shores of Canada, and it was a disruptor to the entire opioid [ecosystem]. It gave people, already with problematic opioid use a much more potent substance to use."



KARL LEWIS

A visitor observes "Moko Jumbie", a sculpture created by British-Trinidadian visual artist Zak Ové, in the "Fragments of Epic Memory" exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The exhibit showcases Caribbean art.

## AGO celebrates Caribbean Heritage Month showcasing African diaspora, community

Karl Lewis  
Arts Reporter

Chatter filled the air inside the Art Gallery of Ontario recently, with a Picasso display of works from "Painting the Blue Period" and the Andy Warhol exhibit seeming to draw the biggest crowds.

But it might have been the "Moko Jumbie" — a sculpture created by British-Trinidadian visual artist Zak Ové, mimicking traditional Trini-carnival practice in modern attire — that drew the biggest "wows."

"Jumbie" is a West Indian term used to describe the evil spirit of a dead person. Supported by long golden bamboo-like stilts, the nearly 11-foot sculpture reveals a male figure wearing golden open-toed Nike Air-Jordan sneakers.

"That sculpture where the artist turned the basketballer's stomach into a face was epic!" said Nesta Golding, an international student from Jamaica.

The AGO's new department of Arts of Global Africa and the Diaspora has created a colourful exhibit called *Fragments of Epic Memory*, portraying Caribbean Art before and after emancipation from colonial control.

Golding said it is his first time in Canada "and I am pleased to see that our art is on display - not to mention the '90s dancehall cinematographic."

Some visitors had mixed emotions, however, about the AGO's diversity and inclusion plan.

"I only feel represented once a year or whenever they have a special display," Byron Steve said.

For her part, Bunmi Adeoye, a senior vice-president at the Toronto public relations firm Proof Strategies, said she felt "excited about this initiative and what is to come for the future of Caribbean and African art."

Adeoye was standing at the exhibition entrance, where Dominican artist Firelei's colourful work called "Adjusting the Moon" stood beside a

three-dimensional turquoise blue hallway that onlookers described as heavenly.

"My favourite was the display with the lady at Trafalgar Square in the blue coat feeding pigeons," she said.

Sandra Brewster's "Feeding Trafalgar Square" appeared to be a crowd-pleaser as many people carefully studied the display before moving along.

"Since I got out of the lockdown, this is my first time at the AGO, and I am pleased," Adeoye said.

"However, it's hard to know when you're young about these art displays," she said. "I implore the youths to take part since membership is free (up to) 25 years old."

People wishing to experience this "epic memory" can visit the AGO's website and book a date to visit and explore the more than 20 pieces on the gallery's fifth floor.

The exhibition runs until Feb. 21 ending during Black History Month.

# Video games can power up education

**Drew Chambers**  
Arts Reporter

Ask parents about video games and school and many will say the two simply don't mix, that the games are a distraction and a potentially addicting one at that.

But experts also say the world of gaming can provide many benefits and skills.

"Games can be used in the classroom for many purposes, to teach the art of storytelling, to teach elements of design, UI and interface design, to teach collaboration, having students work in teams working towards a goal," said Vishaal Bedi, professor of User Experience Design in Humber College's Game Programming program.

"A game provides the opportunity for engagement and also developing social skills when working in a team-based environment," Bedi said. He's written on how games like Nintendo's Super Mario Maker help develop the process of brainstorming, creativity and collaboration by allowing students to design their

own levels in games.

"There are many games today like Super Mario Maker, Dreams and Game Garage Builder that teach people how to design, animate and code," he said. "Even if you don't end up doing those things related to games, those skills can be applied to other fields.

"Games teach social skills, specifically games that require coordination and collaboration like Snipperclips on Nintendo Switch," Bedi said.

He has seen firsthand how gaming can transform a classroom and its students for the better.

"In our game program, the main focus is making games," but Bedi said in Humber's other programs such as user experience design, games help build competency in other significant areas including design and coding.

It's done in a fun way without added pressure "so students get to see how the skills they are learning can be applied to different industries and domains," Bedi said. "You can take the tools and processes you learn and

apply them across industries based on your interest."

Games can help form a community, he said. For people who might suffer from a certain disability or be going through a difficult time, a game can be a positive way to provide support, Bedi said.

But there is a downside.

Playing video games too much can lead to physical and psychological issues if not addressed, including increased risk of obesity, social isolation due to game addiction, depression and more.

With such risks, parents wonder if video games belong in school.

"They become consumed with the challenges of the games and spend considerably more time on them than they do their homework, reading and assignments which will have affect their overall performance and grades," said Julie Campbell, a mother of two.

"The games for some can seem so real at times that the line between reality and fantasy becomes blurred," she said.

Leonard Campbell, a father of two, said the main reason he



NINTENDO

Super Mario Maker gives players the chance to put themselves in the developers' shoes and create their own levels with no limitations.

believes video games are not conducive to education is "that with all the overload of information being displayed through the games or gaming chat rooms, video games have in many ways become the new teachers.

"Students are learning and experiencing life through the games and may start to feel that they don't need formal education," he said.

For Bedi, the issue comes

down to how gaming is viewed and utilized.

"We're strategically selecting specific games with an end goal in mind that helps teach a particular topic, whether it's writing or narrative or storytelling or design," he said.

The more transparent educators are about how video games are being used, Bedi said, the more skeptics might be to using that form of media in education.

## Legends of Horror is back at Casa Loma after a year of lockdown

**Barbara Patrocínio**  
Arts Reporter

The reason why so many horror books and movies take place in spooky old castles becomes clear at the Legends of Horror

event at Casa Loma in Toronto.

The secret chambers, the long dark and dimly lit corridors and narrow staircases provide the perfect backdrop for an atmosphere of fear and uneasiness.

And on the COVID-19 front —

as Casa Loma returns to present its annual Halloween installation, after being cancelled last year on the eve of opening — there's nothing to fear.

"We are making sure that everyone coming through is double vaccinated, wearing masks and maintaining social distance between the groups along the trail," said Corynn Gonçalves, the guest services supervisor at Casa Loma.

"Security guards are making sure that these protocols are being followed," she said.

Now in its sixth year, the attraction is a self-guided tour along the castle property.

The experience starts on a two-kilometre trail in the lower gardens of Casa Loma, heading to the castle's tunnels and into some of its darkest spaces. Along the way, professional actors play horror characters engaging with the audience.

And as with any good horror experience, no one can really tell when the actors will show up to

scare people.

Are they around the corner? Are they about to jump out from behind some bush in the garden? Or maybe they'll just silently blend into a tour group in one of the darkest parts of the trail and won't notice until it's too late.

"I'm playing someone who lives in the haunted house," said Seemab Aslam, an actress who performs in the later hours of the event. "Basically, my job is to give you the most fun and scary experience possible."

Aslam said she's satisfied with pandemic safety measures and the actors must wear masks at all times. Casa Loma is working with the City of Toronto and Toronto Public Health to ensure the event is in compliance with health regulations.

The experience also relies on a great deal of technology and illusionary tricks to increase the sense of unease while going through it.

Disorientation is a great strategy to create fear, and it is

used to perfection in the first part of the walk: secret chambers with mirrors, smoke and light games work to make a person completely lose their sense of direction.

Besides, knowing that a particular villain from a certain Stephen King novel is mingling about doesn't really help anyone relax.

The second part of the walk is in the tunnels and has a more historical approach, but is still as scary as the first one — or even more so.

The details in this section are impressive, leading visitors through a path that ends with a 3D exterior projection on the walls of the castle.

On leaving, Joanna Rog shared a little of the experience she described as unique: "It was fun!

"For sure, it's better when it's dark, and I'm already looking forward to going back next year," she said.

Legends of Horror takes place until Oct. 31 and tickets are available at [casaloma.ca](http://casaloma.ca).



BARBARA PATROCINIO

Special 3D lighting is seen at the end of the Legends of Horror event on the walls of the castle at Casa Loma. The annual Halloween event has returned for the first time since 2019 with COVID safety precautions.

## EDITORIAL

## Stronger support needed for students' mental health

After more than a year of complete isolation in remote learning, returning Humber College students deserve access to stronger and more accessible mental health resources on campus.

The 2020 school year proved to be mentally and emotionally draining for many post-secondary students. The option of turning to peers for help, or taking a break from the day's overwhelming workload with friends was no longer available, as Ontario faced multiple lockdowns. As a result, mental health took a devastating blow.

The return of on-campus learning seemed to offer an escape from that stress, but as the problems caused by online learning were left in the past, new ones surfaced, and Humber was not prepared to deal with them effectively.

"We need not only more hands on deck, but more hands on deck in a timely manner," acting Humber College Faculty Union 562 President Milos Vasic said of the college's

counseling services. "There's quite a bit of burnout among the counselors. They do a fantastic job but it's not easy."

He said he doesn't think the college is doing a great job backfilling positions, or even hiring new positions.

There are currently only 10 counselors and seven accessible learning services consultants to serve the student body of 56,000 full and part-time students.

"I am sympathetic to that because it takes a long time to hire someone new, but it just seems like it takes a long time to get counselors in those positions," he said.

Vasic said that the shortage of counselors means that students who come in seeking help for mental health issues "need to be triaged" and prioritized based on which cases are the "most important." If this goes on, it will result in students slipping through the cracks and not getting the help they need to manage their mental health, which could become catastrophic.

Counselors have seen more cases of

mental health issues among returning students, but also increased severity of cases, which is to be expected after months spent in lockdown, anxiety due to the virus itself, and the tragically high number of lives lost to the pandemic. Balancing a heavy course load, a job, social life, and health is extremely difficult, and not being able to get help when needed in a timely manner can make it difficult for some, unbearable for others.

Another big factor that can affect the mental health of students returning to campus is the cost, compared to staying at home. While tuition fees were still required for online classes, many other costs were not. For example, many students have to either commute to campus or find accommodations.

The cost to stay on residence at Humber ranges from \$7,024 to \$8,870, plus meal plans which cost \$2,350 to \$3,400 per academic year. In addition, students face increasing transit fares, gas prices that are

predicted to reach \$1.50 per litre by the end of the year, and housing that is unaffordable for minimum-wage-working students — especially those who were out of work due to COVID-19 for months at a time.

The Canadian government identifies financial wellness as one of the "three pillars of good health," and states those facing financial strain are more likely to suffer from anxiety, depression, and sleep loss. Access to adequate mental health resources is a crucial factor in managing this added stress.

While counselors at Humber are dedicated to helping students, they are unable to reach everyone who needs help in a timely manner. The reality of it is this: there are simply not enough counselors to manage the number of students needing support.

To avoid burnout in counselors and take care of Humber's students, the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre needs to increase staffing, and soon.

## OPINION

## My Colombian heritage will be shared in two places



Sarah Hurtado  
News Reporter

CALI, Colombia — When you're 14, the only thing you want is to feel like you belong and, in my case, it took me a long time to find my place and my people.

Then, not long after I did, my father came home with the news that he was offered a job in Toronto and that he had accepted it.

The joy and excitement in my parents' faces were palpable. They were finally getting a chance to achieve the future they had dreamed of for the last decade, not only for themselves but for their daughters.

So how could I, a girl just coming into her teens, tell my

hard-working parents that I did not want it?

I had my life, my friends and my family, all in one place, in Cali.

When you grow up in Cali, you always hear the saying, "Cali es Cali, y lo demás es Loma," which means "Cali is Cali, and the rest is hill." And the boast is true.

Nothing compares to Cali, the warmth of not only the city, but its people, the sounds of salsa when you walk past bars on a weekend, the breeze you feel on your skin when you're in Barrio San Antonio, the food you eat, which is not just food, but a memory.

How could a faraway land that I had never thought of before hope to compare?

I didn't dwell much on the potential benefits of the move. All I knew was what I was losing, and what I would be taken away from.

Even so, at first, I was excited to be in Canada. The first month felt like a vacation. Everything felt new and it looked like a movie.

I remember everything. My first time seeing snow. My first time at Tim Hortons. And also the first time I felt completely lonely.

Canada was a different place,



Reporter Sarah Hurtado and her extended family during their first lunch together since Hurtado's immediate family moved to Canada in 2019.

the people were different, the ambiance was different, everything was different, which is a good thing. I just wasn't aware of that yet.

My mental health was at its lowest during my first year living in Canada. As much as I tried to step out of my comfort zone, I never seemed to fit in a culture that was so different from my

own. So I isolated myself and lived in a lonely bubble for a long time.

A full year and two months after living in Canada, I was introduced to therapy, something I never thought of before, but something I found was desperately needed.

My therapist, also a Latina immigrant, became my confi-

dante. It felt so good to share my thoughts, feelings and problems with someone who understood.

It was 2018 when things started to change for me, I had found a group of friends who all shared the same experience, and together we created our own community, where we missed our first home while creating our second together.

I finally accepted Toronto as my second home, which although bigger and different, still had those little glimpses of the warmth of the place I grew up in, the one I carry in me forever.

My life in both places is completely different. When I'm in Colombia, I feel connected to my roots and culture. I take time to enrich myself with all of what my beautiful home country has to offer.

And when I'm in Canada, I make sure to share my Colombian heritage with my loved ones and friends who so eagerly listen to the memories of my life back there.

But I also make sure that I make new memories with them, so I never forget that one person can belong to more than just one place.

# Brampton mayor proposes new cricket stadium for the city

**Joshua Drakes**  
Sports Reporter

Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown has seen the future for his community, and a big part of it is cricket.

He proposed a \$35 million cricket stadium for Brampton that would make it a national hub for the sport and bring a variety of athletic entertainment to the city.

"The greatest demand we have right now on our recreational infrastructure is cricket," Brown said.

"Cricket is one of those sports where there's a real passion for it, whether it's our Caribbean residents, our Pakistani-Canadian residents, or Indian residents, Sri Lankan residents," he said.

"We have 140-plus teams on our waitlist for cricket, so we are investing in cricket fields across the city," Brown said.

He said the city has a funding plan in place and hopes to get the stadium if approved under construction as soon as possible, along with a host of other, smaller recreational fields to meet the area's increasing demand.

"The key was reallocating funding from multiple smaller projects with little to no demand," Brown said.

"Instead of building new recreational facilities in sports that don't have a waitlist, we're going to be building a facility that has a tremendous waitlist," he said. "So we already have the funds in our budget,"

The grounds of the CAA Centre, formerly the Powerade Centre, on Kennedy Road South just north of Highway 407, would host the new facility. Discussions are still underway of whether the new stadium should be a multi-sport complex.

Brampton has been eyeing building a cricket stadium since at least 2011, when the city's annual report stated there was a plan for Gore Meadows, in The Gore Road and Castlemore Roads area.

Cricket is especially popular among populations of South Asian and Caribbean descent, demographics that constitute a large part of Brampton's population and the student body at Humber College.

Nauman Zafar, a member of the Humber extramural cricket team and originally from Pakistan, said he knew from age 12 he wanted to be a cricket player.

"We get so many opportunities through Humber to play against some of the top colleges and universities, not only in Canada but also in the U.S.A. as well," Zafar said. "It's a great experience."

Zafar would like to see Humber expand cricket into a varsity team and hopes a new stadium would help support that goal.

"There's no reason for colleges and universities not having a full-time varsity cricket team," Zafar said. "If the stadium works out, it's going to be a big moment for all the players and sports lovers in the GTA."

Humber coach Uzair Modan has been attempting to bring cricket to the varsity level for some time, but there are roadblocks.

One of the main challenges is building a female team, which was interrupted by the pandemic. It is hoped a team can be formed, which would be the first step to preparing for varsity cricket.

Modan has high hopes the new stadium would serve as a beacon to attract more cricket talent to the region, and would encourage schools to establish varsity cricket. It's hoped that it would also attract more international students to Humber.

"Cricket is on the rise at the moment," Modan said. "If you have a proper stadium, it will attract more people."

"Once a varsity cricket team is in place, scholarships will likely follow," he said. "Setting a beneficial cycle in motion for the community, the sport, its players and this college."



HUMBER ATHLETICS

Nikki Ylagan participated in the 2021 Women's three point contest which took place on March 5, 2021.

## Women's basketball prepares for season: 'Winning is tough but it's what we do'

**Jacob Tye**  
Sports Reporter

Ajay Sharma and Omar Miles, head coaches of Humber's women's and men's basketball teams respectively, understand how high the bar is set.

"Playing and coaching basketball at Humber should be tough, but it's what we do," Miles said. "Winning is tough, but it's what we do. Nothing is easy."

The two coaches have been leading their respective squads through exhibition games to prepare for the new season. Sharma is entering his tenth year as women's head coach and the men's team is starting fresh in Miles' first year as head coach.

"The transition is quite easy from being an assistant to associate coach to now being the head coach," Miles said. "You move a couple seats over and your responsibilities become slightly greater, but the relationships are still always the same."

Miles started his coaching career at the high-school level, where he led the men's and women's teams at St. Edmund Champion Secondary School to championships before attracting the attention of former Hawks coach Shawn Collins, who brought him on board as an assistant.

During his time as an assistant and associate coach for Humber, Miles has seen the Hawks win

four OCAA medals and a record of 76-23 in just four seasons.

"It has been a great learning experience," he said. "As an educator, I always like to think that I'm a lifelong learner. I'm constantly learning from the players, the support staff, and the coaches we have around."

Sharma has built a legacy over nine seasons as head coach at Humber, with his team setting the gold standard for the OCAA.

He has amassed a 181-28 record along with winning two national championships and four provincial titles. Sharma's Hawks won four straight provincial gold medals from 2015 to 2018. They look to regain that status this season.

"We'll be talented enough and

I'm optimistic," Sharma said. "I think when we get everyone in the same place at the same time and get into the flow of things, I like our chances to be as good as anyone in the province."

Miles' team will look to take a page from their female counterparts as they haven't won an OCAA gold medal since 2016. The Hawks have had trouble in the finals, losing three straight championships over the past three seasons.

It's a challenge Miles believes his coaching staff can take on.

"I was given the chance to pick my coaching staff and I went with an experienced coaching staff," he said. "We've had great coaching staffs in the past but never this experienced."



HUMBER ATHLETICS

Women's basketball head coach Ajay Sharma during timeout versus Fanshawe in 2019. He's led the women's team to multiple OCAA medals.