

HUMBER

# Et Cetera

HUMBER'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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RAYMOND COSTAIN

## Humber alum keep businesses afloat during the pandemic

**Tina Nalova Ikome-Likambi**

REPORTER

Raymond Costain always wanted to have his own business.

The Humber College alumnus, who graduated from Humber's Culinary Management program in 2009, first expressed his desire of opening a restaurant on the first day of school during orientation.

"It's been hard. It's been a rough road," Costain said.

He founded his food truck business Dope as Duck in 2018, and launched its takeout premises — offering intercontinental meals including tacos and mac and cheese dishes — in November 2020 at 125A 27th St. in Etobicoke.

"A lot of times my mum said to me, 'are you sure you want to keep doing this?' and I said I am going to keep going and keep pushing myself," he said.

Costain said the pandemic led to changes in his business as he among the entrepreneurs whose business was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The pandemic affected the fact that we can't do festivals. It's not as busy as it was but it's still consistent," he said.

According to a study by the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) published in October 2020, 87 per cent of Canadian entrepreneurs are confident they would make it through the crisis.

The study presented data obtained from two surveys conducted between May to June 2020.

The first survey was conducted

among 1,000 small and medium enterprise leaders in June 2020 and looked at post-lockdown business trends and priorities, and the second was conducted in May and June 2020 among 2,000 Canadian consumers.

Nearly four in 10 entrepreneurs will prioritize financial recovery after the crisis, it stated.

Costain said he serves three people at a time but previously served up to 125 people an hour.

"It's a huge difference in the scale of the number of people that we're allowed to serve at a time," Costain said. "So, it slows things down a bit."

However, the will to keep going should always be present, he said.

"I am getting a lot of notice, and a lot of people are supporting [me]. Hopefully, we can just keep moving forward and excelling from there," he said.

Daniel Assing, a Humber College alumnus who graduated from the Culinary Arts program in 2018 and joined Herbal Life nutrition company in 2019, said knowing oneself is key to success.

"It's more of knowing what you want and having that strong reason why you want it," said fitness and wellness coach, Daniel Assing, adding entrepreneurs need to be goal-oriented.

"It creates an opportunity for the average person to become their own boss," Assing said.

He said the pandemic forced changes in his business but he had a smooth transition because he was able to meet clients and dis-



COURTESY RAYMOND COSTAIN

Costain founded his food truck Dope as Duck in 2018 and has since opened his take out location last year.

cuss goals through platforms like Zoom.

"We transitioned the workouts online and made it safer and easier for everyone," Assing said.

Bradley Poulos, a professor of entrepreneurship and strategy at Ryerson University, said entrepreneurs were likely more prepared to make the switch from offline to online because they deal with such changes all the time.

"They're in a better position to adapt and cope," he said. "You have to learn how to deal with obstacles as an entrepreneur."

Poulos said entrepreneurship is now very popular.

"Going forward, people will have a side hustle of some kind and won't only have jobs," he said.

Costain agrees, saying people need to know that they won't be starting off the top.

"You have to go through the steps no matter how great you are, to get to where you have to get to," he said. "Stay passionate about what you are doing and do not let the hurdles scare you."

# 62 per cent of students said they feel left out in online classes

**Alleiya Tinglin-Dystant**

REPORTER

Canadian post-secondary students believe virtual learning has affected education quality, according to a survey of Ontario Confederation of University faculty conducted.

The voluntary survey was conducted between Oct. 16 and 23, 2020, by the Ontario Confederation of University faculty polled 2,710 people, 502 students and 2,208 faculty.

The poll revealed 62 per cent of students and 76 per cent of faculty respondents felt online learning impacted the lack of interaction and engagement, the faculty said.

Christina Bellissimo, a fourth-year Human Resources Management student at Humber College's Lakeshore campus in Toronto, said she finds it very hard to engage because she feels all alone and the collaborative environment is missing.

Tiffany Igbinosun, a second-year Advertising and Marketing student at Humber's Lakeshore campus in Toronto, said she struggled with the disconnect between home and school being under the same roof.



TIFFANY IGBINOSUN

Tiffany Igbinosun's bedroom where she has spent the last year doing online learning.

The two students shared their challenges, coping mechanisms, and provide teachers with strategies for engagement amidst COVID-19.

"All of my professors read off the PowerPoint slides and

rarely engage with the class; this makes it even more difficult to pay attention," Bellissimo said.

The challenges of virtual learning made her think of ways to help cope with the lack of engagement which included

changing her learning environment, taking breaks, and regrouping.

"When I am feeling unmotivated, I usually walk around and play with my dog, this helps me to regroup and feel motivated to do work," she said.

Bellissimo decided to take action and express her concern about the lack of engagement to teachers and suggested ways to engage the class with the use of technology.

One of the teachers followed her suggestion and started to use learning programs, such as Kahoot, an online learning game, for about 10 minutes at the beginning of each class to test knowledge and engage the class, she said.

"It would be great if more teachers could try and engage by taking some time to ask us to write accomplishments we are proud of within the week, it makes us feel like teachers care about what is going on in our lives," Bellissimo said.

"The collaborative and social aspects of learning are missing," she said.

Other students say they're frustrated with virtual learning and a lack of engagement.

"I realized my mindset shifted when I accepted our current reality and started making the most of my time," Igbinosun said.

"The use of checklists helped her use her time effectively by writing down a list of tasks and checking them off when completed," she said.

The types of classes she felt engaged her the most were ones that involved the use of breakout rooms, a feature on the Zoom platform that allows for smaller discussion groups outside of the main discussion.

"I believe that providing a combination of text and practicing in a group setting helps share opinions, and we can learn from one another, although some people are not fans of breakout rooms and may not feel comfortable participating," Igbinosun said.

Overall, the challenge has not just been adapting to an online learning environment but also to a new way of life, she said.

"Work, school, and home life has become blurred due to the pandemic, and students are unable to physically go out and socialize; not having the separation between the three is frustrating," she said.

## Toronto and Peel Region remain locked down

**Klaudia Kryczka**

REPORTER

Toronto and Peel Region are remaining in lockdown for an additional two weeks, a government release said.

The two regions will stay in the grey zone, the fifth and most extreme measure in Premier Doug Ford's colour-coded system, until March 8.

Dr. Lawrence Loh, Peel's Chief Medical Officer, did not take this decision lightly.

"There is a situation where we have more and more variants being detected," Loh said in an email interview. "We have seen an increase in variants from five confirmed [cases] last week to over 50 confirmed this week."

The proposal for a lockdown extension in Peel Region arose when a Mississauga condo was

the result of a mass COVID-19 testing blitz over Valentine's weekend.

Loh confirms that to date, Peel had 200 positive tests for variants of COVID-19.

Currently, there is no way to ensure Peel is seeing a consistent decline in new cases. The region lacks adequate testing, tracing, and treatment capacity, putting a greater strain on hospitals, he said.

"Our hospitals continue to be over capacity with patients being transferred over the province," Loh said.

Toronto and Peel Region were originally intended to reopen on Feb. 22. But, Toronto and Peel's Chief Medical Officers of Health sent a joint letter to Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, on Feb. 13 asking to be excluded from the

reopening plan.

The letter argued that Toronto and Peel Region did not see a consistent downward trend in hospitalizations and that the regions continue to see pressures in their intensive care capacity and staffing.

Bearing in mind that various strains of COVID-19 are developing, such as a form of the virus mutating called B.1.427/B.1.429 in California, Loh is weary and aware the possibility a new mutation variant can occur locally.

"Should we not be careful in controlling transmission, home-grown variants could develop in Peel for sure," he said.

As Loh prioritizes the safety of citizens in Peel, some residents disagree with the extension.

Raiza Fernandez, a second-year Marketing Manage-

ment student at Sheridan College, feels confined and anxious about the lockdown extension.

"It's very depressing," she said. "I'm really tired of looking at my four walls in my house. It's kind of exhausting to be in the same place."

Fernandez, from India, moved to Canada on a student visa for her studies last year. She intended to see and explore the GTA and create long-lasting memories. Unfortunately, the pandemic interfered with her plans.

"I just hope someday I can roam without a mask," she said.

Meanwhile, Sandra Wasilewski, a first-year student at Humber's Protection, Security, and Investigation program, is skeptical of the lockdown ending on March 8.

"They're going to extend it to at least April, end of March if

we're lucky," she said.

Toronto recently announced the cancellation of all in-person events until July 1.

Wasilewski is tired of the lockdown but will continue to follow the health protocols despite her wish to return to some sense of normalcy.

"It sucks," she said. "But if everyone wants this whole thing to be done, then follow the rules. It's not hard."

Although residents like Fernandez and Wasilewski are upset about the extension, Loh remains hopeful it will not extend beyond March 8.

"A couple weeks extension gets us closer to spring weather," he said. "Hopefully more available vaccines will start flowing and allow us to determine if the hospital and variant picture stabilizes."

# CaféTO shoots to get a jumpstart this summers patio season

**Vrajesh Dave**

REPORTER

Toronto is looking to save downtown's summer patio season. Although indoor and outdoor dining remains prohibited in Toronto at the moment, the city unveiled its plan to jumpstart local bars and restaurants earlier this month.

CaféTO is a quick-start program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic aiming to help food and drink establishments keep their doors open.

The initiative helped more than 800 businesses during summer 2020 by expanding patios to sidewalks and curb lanes, accessing more space for physical distancing and allowing owners to build decks and platforms outside.

Downtown Thai restaurants PAI, Sabai Sabai, Kiin and Sukho Thai are owned by executive chefs Nuit Regular and Jeff Regular, who used the City's program last summer.

While they said they planned to apply again this year, it's been a steep hill to climb for their

businesses.

"Right now, it's not about making money, it's just about getting to the other side," her husband Jeff said.

The pandemic has changed the operating window for restaurants, replacing a steady stream of customers with takeout orders, spiking only at certain parts of the day.

"The demand and supply are not the same as before," Nuit said.

The owners emphasized they are still all in, rejuvenating their staff who they consider family and maintaining a high level of quality.

"So, therefore, (for) many of our staff, we had to cut down their hours, so their jobs are still there ... but our income has dropped," Nuit said.

This year, the city says it will update CaféTO's registration process, develop more comprehensive traffic management plans, support quicker CaféTO installations and increase accessibility.

CaféTO Guidelines, a rulebook established by the city, outlines

the specific requirements for restaurants and bars.

The rulebook states a minimum pedestrian clearway of 2.1 metres is required at all times, that it is the responsibility of business owners to ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and follow particular fire safety considerations.

The city also said it is committed to ensuring more restaurants outside the downtown core are able to use its initiative for outdoor dining this summer. However, the process of getting help from CaféTO is not a piece of cake. In order to apply, applicants are required to submit a certificate of insurance for comprehensive liability coverage of at least \$1 million.

According to Nuit Regular, securing space in front of restaurants is also quite competitive. She said her diner Kiin on Adelaide Street, near Peter Street, was only able to have outdoor seating because it applied earlier than its neighbour, RaviSoups.

"RaviSoups wasn't able to apply because it's a first-come-



REFINERY29

From left to right, Jeff and Nuit Regular. Possessors of four authentic Thai restaurants.

first-served program," Nuit said.

She said she likes CaféTO overall but didn't want to sugar-coat its shortcomings.

The executive chef believes the city could do more to help restaurants like RaviSoups, to find alternatives such as redistributing space in front of office buildings to allow for patios.

Her husband said he was thankful to the city and its intentions to help the restaurant com-

munity, but hopes for more support for new eateries which are just getting off the ground.

Despite the speedbumps with the program, Nuit and Jeff are optimistic about summer 2021 and encourage Torontonians to stay the course.

The first phase of registration for this year's CaféTO is set to open on Feb. 26, with the intention of setting up installations in front of restaurants and bars by May.

## Residents receive improved internet to keep up with life post pandemic

**Kelly Luke**

REPORTER

Toronto announced a program to improve access to affordable high-speed internet for Torontonians.

The ConnectTO program, announced on Feb. 5, will create a broadband network that utilizes existing city assets, such as infrastructure.

The program will help reduce any financial burden and connectivity issues for marginalized and underserved Toronto residents, according to the city's plan.

The first phase will begin testing in late 2021 in select communities.

These communities include the Jane Street and Finch Avenue area in North York, the Golden Mile in the Victoria Park and Eglinton Avenues area, Malvern, in east Scarborough.

The second phase will launch in early 2022 and will extend city-wide.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced a provincial plan in

November to invest \$1 billion to improve access to broadband and cellular access in unserved communities province-wide.

The provincial plan is set to extend six years and will help the 1.4 million Ontario residents who still have yet to gain broadband or cellular access.

"By providing high-speed broadband to unserved and underserved communities, we will create good jobs, unlock new opportunities for businesses and people, and improve the quality of life for individuals and families," Ford said.

Izabella Bachmanek, an event planner for a Canadian national organization, is now hosting all of her organization's events through online platforms due to restrictions placed on in-person gatherings throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

"In general, the consensus seems to be that COVID accelerated the technology that the events industry was using over five to 10 years in a matter of a

couple of months," Bachmanek said.

Bachmanek's organization provides professional development and networking services to its members working in the field of dietetics.

"Internet connectivity issues have been a recurring issue for attendees," she said.

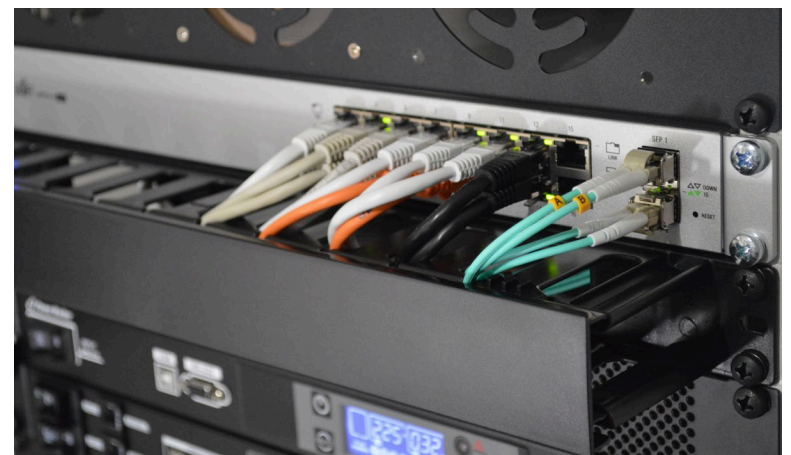
A couple of speakers residing in rural northern Ontario delivered a pre-recorded presentation during a live virtual event for fear that their internet would cut out.

"Virtual events are here to stay," Bachmanek said.

"People who see now how you can reach people who may not have been able to attend your event because they couldn't travel to it.

"Without these initiatives by local and provincial governments, a large population of people may not be able to take full advantage of a shift to online, virtual events.

"In post-pandemic, virtual



THOMAS JENSEN/UNSPLASH

ConnectTO program, announced on Feb. 5, will create a broadband network that utilizes existing city assets to provide underserved residents with better internet.

events will still be integral to the industry.

Looking ahead to the fall, there is a push to host events that will incorporate both in-person and virtual meeting options," Bachmanek said.

"There's lots of value in meeting in-person and having live events, but now that we've seen what's possible virtually.

Everything's going to be

hybrid, hybrid or virtual," she said. Accessible Accommodations for attendees with disabilities is something Bachmanek would like to see progress within virtual event platforms.

For all attendees to have an equal opportunity to participate, she is hoping to be able to incorporate closed captions and other accessibility features in the near future.

# Music podcasts revive scenes lost to pandemic

**Christian Collington**

ARTS REPORTER

Fans and musicians have been finding new ways to recreate communities that have been lost during the pandemic.

Matty Morand, who performs as Pretty Matty and Sam Bielanski, who leads the band PONY, have been finding their own sense of community and creativity with their podcast 2 Much TV.

"We both had records finished," Morand said. "So, the idea of writing music in the way that we had before seemed kind of daunting."

Morand and Bielanski decided to combine their love of music as well as the amount of television they watched during the pandemic.

Bielanski was first approached in March last year with the concept of writing songs about television episodes on the Super Cast podcast.

"It was a podcast where music supervisors would interview musicians and talk about music and TV placement," Bielanski said. "The man who was interviewing me asked me if I ever wrote songs about television episodes or TV in general."

When Bielanski writes songs, they watch a TV episode more than once and take notes.

They take a different approach with every episode depending on the show.

"One of the first episodes we did, I just wrote down a character's whole monologue," Bielanski said. "Then I just turn those into the lyrics of the song."

Bielanski said writing a song about a TV show like *The Office* is difficult because of the show itself.

"The episodes are so short and there are so many characters," Bielanski said. "They all have little one-liners, so you just have to run with it and write about what I imagine this person's journey would be."

Morand tackles writing songs leaning towards a genre approach.

They want to explore something different than the music they normally perform.

"I'll often be doing a genre study type thing," Morand said. "Like, I want to write a song that sounds like The Cure this week or I want to try to write a hardcore song."

The popularity of their podcast has been refreshing for both Morand and Bielanski.

Listeners of the podcast enjoy the music they come up with and have been inspired themselves.

"It's been nice to hear people just talk about the podcast," Bielanski said. "It seems like it's something that we're doing that is helping people get by."

Sanchit Sethi, a first-year Paralegal student at Humber, said the podcast has

allowed him to feel less alone during the pandemic.

"It's a really inspiring podcast," Sethi said. "Hearing the music they make and knowing it came from scratch just makes me enjoy it more."

Sam Sutherland, an executive producer at Universal Music Canada, and Josiah Hughes, a senior online editor at Exclaim! magazine, started the 155 podcast to dissect Blink-182's entire music catalogue.

"It was Sam's idea," Hughes said. "He asked me if I wanted to do it because we didn't really know each other, but we had always bonded over our love of Blink-182."

The duo ran through 155 Blink-182 songs and as the band released more music, they followed along with each song.

Along with discussing the band's music, they also shared covers from listeners of the podcast.

"From time to time, we would find covers created by people that we knew were a part of the audience of the podcast," Sutherland said. "It has sort of taken a life of its own."

They switched to cover punk in general after reaching the end of Blink-182's discography.

They don't have a specific way to find songs to discuss, but it reflects their musical interests.

"We've just been alternating picking songs," Sutherland said. "So, it's been a reflection of each of our tastes and what we're just interested in talking about."

The community of the podcast has been engaging by not only listening to the podcast but also by submitting covers of the songs being discussed each week.

They also teach each other how to record and mix music and help with learning instruments.

"It's kind of surreal how this enormous community has emerged because Sam and I blab away into our microphones once a week," Hughes said. Geetpal Singh, a first-year User Experience Design student at Humber College, said the community that the podcast built is his favourite thing about it.

"It's great to know that a lot of people love music as much as I do," Singh said. "The creativity of the community is bewildering."

They come up with amazing covers." Moving forward, Sutherland and Hughes plan to keep the 155 podcast going and explore more songs to discuss while also releasing compilation cover albums.

Morand just finished recording their second full-length project and move to the mixing stage and Bielanski has their debut album coming out in April.

In the meantime, they'll continue to watch TV and write songs about it.



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXIS KHO, PHOTO COURTESY OF SAM SUTHERLAND

Josiah Hughes and Sam Sutherland, top, give the community a platform on Bandcamp to share and show their music through compilation covers albums.

COURTESY MATTY MORAND  
Matty Morand and Sam Bielanski, right, who host the podcast 2 Much TV, enjoy writing songs in a one week timeframe.

## EDITORIAL

# IGNITE changes begin new era for organization

Humber Et Cetera has written almost 20 stories in the last two years about IGNITE and its governance, from elections to board meetings. Thousands of words have been devoted entirely to this organization, with good reason. It has a \$13 million budget paid into by students and are a massive part of every Humber student's college experience.

While the coverage has always been fair, it has not always been complimentary. IGNITE has stumbled with transparency issues, bylaw violations, and a historically frosty relationship with the media. But this past week a decision was made by IGNITE's Board of Directors that can only be met with full-throated support: it rejoined the College Student Alliance.

After around seven years apart from the student advocacy orga-

nization, the board voted unanimously to return to the fold at their Feb. 17 meeting. Humber will join seven other colleges on April 1 with the intention of making their presence known on a provincial level.

The CSA is a non-profit organization advocating for post-secondary students on the provincial level.

"We're not joining just to join, we're joining to influence," Ercole Perrone, the CEO of IGNITE, said at the Feb. 23 media day. This is a welcome change of opinion from Perrone, who as recently as last year was against joining an organization like CSA, saying he did not think it offered enough to students. However, he cites conversations with current board chairman Eli Ridder, a second-year journalism student, and the lessons learned from students spending

the year at home in changing his mind, saying if this was not the time to try and have a louder voice, when would it be?

And there is no doubt they are in a position to do just that. IGNITE is by far the largest student advocacy group in the CSA, immediately positioning them as one of the loudest voices in the room. The question is what will that voice be saying?

In the past year, CSA's advocacy has focused on a variety of issues, including funding for student mental health programs and strengthening policies surrounding sexual violence on post-secondary campuses. All worthy causes, but not the only issues that will be on IGNITE's to-do list.

Sustainability has the potential to be a focus, as in the same meeting the CSA decision was approved, there was continued

discussion of board member Gabi Hentschke's sustainability plan, which they hope to vote on next week.

The plan focuses on an official commitment to sustainability by IGNITE, including things like healthier food options for students.

No matter what they choose to focus on, it is better not only for Humber students but all post-secondary students, college and university, when we band together in the name of student advocacy. It is the only way to show the powers that be we have a voice on issues that concern us. Look at what the CFS was able to accomplish in regards to the Student Choice Initiative in 2019. If a single student advocacy group had attempted that who knows what would have happened.

It was the will of many that instituted real change.

Humber is the largest college in Ontario, and its student advocacy voice should be heard on a provincial scale. This move appears to be the first step in that process. But more importantly, it is a step in the direction of change for IGNITE.

Et Cetera has been quick to comment when IGNITE has done something wrong and stands by every story. Our job is to report the news, and any organization handling millions of dollars of student's money is undoubtedly that. But 2021 has the chance to be a huge year for the organization, and our publication looks forward to reporting more positive changes, like this one, should they continue.

Optimism, no matter how cautious, is a good thing, something students deserve after a year of online learning. This week, IGNITE has given us just that.

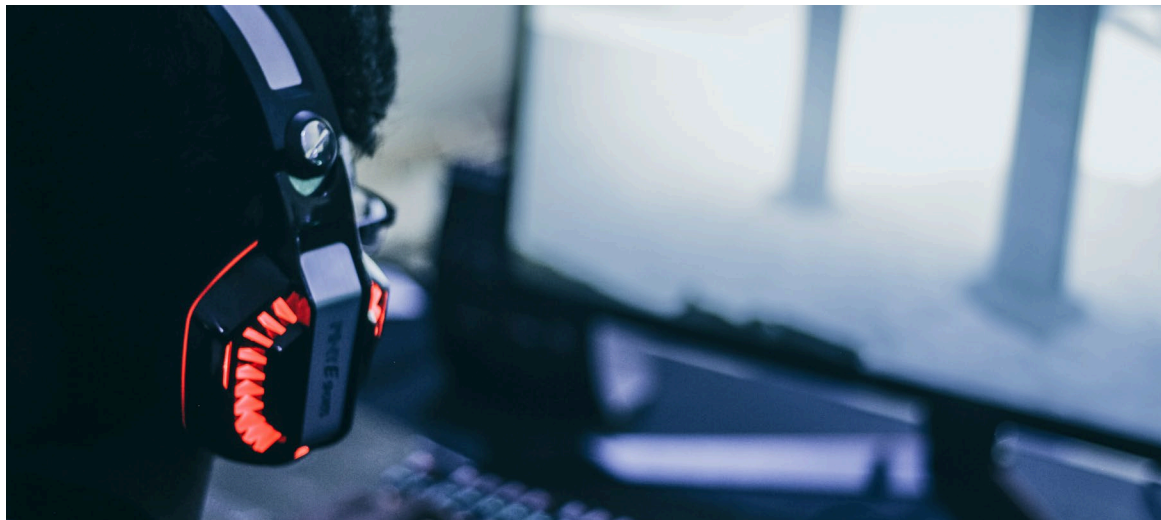
## OPINION

# Canada needs to invest in Esports for teams to be contenders



**Kyle Drinnan**

NEWS EDITOR



FREDRICK TENDONG/UNSPLASH

Canadian Esports needs more infrastructure to support the scene to sustain the proposed arena in Toronto.

Canada is not well-represented when it comes to Esports. Indeed, only in the last few years has bigger Esports organizations looked at the country as a valid Esports contender.

OverActive Media has been leading the charge in investing in Canada, specifically Toronto. The company started in Spain with two teams under the name

Esports in Canada reached a new level of credibility when Overactive Media announced a new 7,000-seat stadium in Toronto.

Mad Lions. However, OverActive Media has been branding its new teams with Toronto on them. One of them being Overwatch League's Toronto Defiant and the second is Call of Duty League's Toronto Ultra.

However let's not overlook Vancouver. Overwatch League's Vancouver Titans is also owned by the same parent group that owns the Vancouver Canucks. The Canucks' hosted the Dota 2

World Championship in 2018, a multi-million-dollar tournament, which remains the largest Esports tournament ever played in Canada.

Toronto's new proposed 7,000-seat building will cost between \$500 to \$800 million. Although this can be the start of Canada finally having a stake in the Esports world, this can't be where the investment ends.

But the next investment

doesn't cost nearly as much as the huge arena.

All popular sports with million-dollar investments are built up by lesser, but sustainable choices. For example, Ontario has one of the biggest and dependable hockey farm systems in the world. Another example is Orangeville and other GTA basketball farm systems that are able to make hometown heroes in the NBA.

For a sport or organization to thrive, it needs to support the bottom line. The Toronto Ultra seem to understand the importance of this as they teamed up to do multiple events with local colleges and universities. But even with Call of Duty and Overwatch having more of an impact on its current community, that still leaves out many others.

League of Legends, Counter-Strike, Dota 2 and many more games aren't represented well by Canadian organizations even though there has been notable Canadian representation in the teams.

Most top Esports organizations are American and Canadians who do have talent find themselves travelling south if they want to compete at a higher level.

And now, let's hope that the new building slated for Exhibition Place is the first step in making Toronto — and possibly Canada — more influential on the Esports scene. The decisions made after this will define the Canadian Esports scene.

## TALES FROM HUMBER

# Trains, planes and 3 COVID tests make trip to Humber an ordeal for int'l student

**Sofiia Rusyn**  
NEWS REPORTER

I left Pearson Airport half an hour after I arrived in Canada on Feb. 11 and the wait for an Uber ride was twice as long. But these were minor inconveniences.

The trip to Canada to resume classes at Humber College was filled with obstacles both natural and man-made, making me wonder if there was something trying to stop my return.

My plans were put into motion with the announcement of travel restrictions introduced by the federal government on Jan. 29. I originally thought I would come back to Canada close to the start of my on-campus classes after the winter reading week.

I was at my cousin's birthday party in Ukraine on Jan. 29 when I saw a press release outlining the government's restrictions on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. And I am glad that I didn't read it all, otherwise, the jolly mood would have evaporated.

The following day I realized my plans to return to Canada needed to change.

It was a confusing time. I could have booked a flight right away, but there was no date for when the new restrictions would be effective. And that was making me even more anxious.

My family and I took three days to develop a plan. On Tuesday, Feb. 2, I bought a ticket for Feb. 11 to Toronto from Kyiv, with a transfer to Amsterdam.

I had 10 days to prepare for my flight.

I was required to apply for a quarantine plan with a self-isolation address, a travel letter and be tested for COVID-19. This was on top of my assignments, my job, and giving 10 English and French classes to people from my area every week.

Finding the apartment in Toronto was a challenge. I needed it urgently so I could start preparing my documents.

I was shaking while surfing online and checking all the possible places. My dad was searching with me. We asked all our friends in Canada. People were ready to take me to live with them for free, but only after my self-isolation was completed.



SOFIIA RUSYN

Finally boarding the flight in Kyiv to Amsterdam to begin on Feb. 11 the second part of the return journey to Humber College.

Luckily, I found the apartment in two days on the Russian forum 'Torontovka'. It was the first time I was glad I'm able to speak Russian.

I applied for all my documents and finally breathed without worrying about my flight.

Little did I know, that on Feb. 8, everything would change. Again.

I woke up with an email notification from the airport. Two COVID-19 tests were required before boarding, one of them four hours before the flight.

I live in Zbarazh, a city in the Ternopil region about 400 kilometres west of Kyiv. Trains from Ternopil to Kyiv are scheduled four times at night. But exactly for the night I needed, only the

two worst scheduled times for me were available, arriving at the capital at 11 p.m. Feb. 10, or 6:30 a.m. Feb. 11.

Waiting all night in a big unknown city or risking being late for the flight were both poor options. My mum was accompanying me to Kyiv and suggested renting a car.

Alas, not to be as heavy snowfall hit Ukraine the next day. There was no choice but to take a train and arrive in Kyiv on Feb. 10.

Before boarding the train, I took my first COVID test. After lunch, the results were apparently ready and my dad went to check on them. But the clock was ticking at 3 p.m., the train was to leave in two hours, and I didn't

have the results of my test or a quarantine plan.

Everything arrived just minutes before leaving the house. At last, some calm while on my way to the train station.

My mom and I arrived at the airport two hours before the flight. Never in my life have I seen Boryspil Airport so empty. It was also closed to non-passengers and my mum waited two hours in the freezing weather until I departed.

My trip to Toronto however was smooth. I had a short stopover in Amsterdam and a pleasant flight from there as well until finally arriving at Pearson airport, where an Uber is slower than the border inspection.

Finally, I was home.

## INTERNATIONAL

# Rio de Janeiro cancels famous celebration due to COVID-19

**Anna Beatriz De Santanna**  
NEWS REPORTER

RIO DE JANEIRO — The COVID-19 pandemic forced Rio's City Hall to cancel the famous Carnival parades and parties that last year attracted about two million tourists from around the world.

The parties take place during the four days of Carnival, at different times and locations. The Samba Schools' Parade, the main attraction of the celebration, takes place over the weekend at the Sambadrome Marquês de Sapucaí, an area specially built for Carnival.

The 570-metre long Sambadrome is where the public enjoys the parade of dancers from competing schools, and

judges choose a champion.

"The week before the carnival is usually a week that we exude carnival in essence," said Thiago Lepletier, an administrator and Carnival director for G.R.E.S. Caprichosos De Pilares, a samba school.

Lepletier has to inspect and check if everything is right with the floats and costumes, as for organizers and planners, "there is no day or night, we do not sleep and food is scarce, only eating when we can."

But celebrations were cancelled in January by Rio's mayor, a decision that is bad for the economy and disappointing for people. The celebration itself brings a lot of money to the city with tourism and is responsible for employing

thousands of people.

"In Carnival, there are people who work because they need it to survive, like any other job, there are those who work in carnival because they like it and those who work in the carnival as a secondary source of income," Lepletier said.

This week, Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes said more than 1.5 million reais (about C\$347,000) will be distributed to support samba schools and carnival parties.

There was talk in 2020 of moving the party to July 2021, a plan that was eventually discarded.

Marlize de Azevedo, a social worker, is one of the people who are passionate about Carnival. But as passionate as she is, Aze-

vedo believes it would not have been a viable option to transfer it for July.

"If without officially having Carnival, people are lacking control, having clandestine parties and (with) full beaches every day, imagine in July with open borders and everyone coming to the city," Azevedo said.

This year, she celebrated Carnival at home with her family, hoping next year she can enjoy it twice as much.

"Carnival is where I leave my pains and sorrows, where everyone is the same, there is neither rich nor poor, people want to kiss and hug, to use glitter and costumes," Azevedo said.

Andre Pimentel, a dentist, is

also passionate about Carnival. He works as a samba composer outside of work and runs one of the largest samba schools in Rio de Janeiro, G.R.E.S. Mocidade Independente de Padre Miguel.

The dentist also hopes in the next Carnival, when the pandemic is over, people can "enjoy it much more, having more time to be organized I think it will be a better party than it was last year. Samba schools will have more time to collect money."

Pimentel has been passionate about the celebration since he was a child. He and his wife Vanessa Oliveira have been parading at the samba school for 20 years because "carnival gives us a tremendous sense of freedom."

# Northern Ontario community launches mental health and addiction bus

**Danielle Dupuis**

REPORTER

SAULT STE. MARIE, Ont. — In the months to come, Sault Ste. Marie will be preparing to launch its first-ever mobile outreach service bus to help those suffering from mental health and addiction.

The Wellness Bus will assist the community's downtown core struggling the most by offering support and healthcare to those suffering from addiction, mental health and homelessness within the downtown area.

The bus, which will likely be a refurbished old ambulance, is expected to arrive in the spring and modelled to provide people with proper care services to reduce hospitalization in the city.

The mobile outreach service will offer counselling, case management, medical assessments, referrals to the emergency departments and services to help build stability within the city, said Erik Landriault, director of integrated care with the Algoma Ontario Health Team.

"The Community Wellness Bus is being designed to deliver culturally sensitive care, by a gateway for patients to health

and social services, and potentially reduce ED and EMS utilization," he said.

Landriault said the bus will also make referrals when needed, provide some necessities and help build community relationships "while improving community safety by being a welcoming presence."

Sault Ste. Marie's hospitalization rate for those struggling with mental health and addiction is 554 per 100,000 residents, compared to the average rate of 184 in Ontario. The leading causes are opioid toxicity, drug toxicity, and self-harm, as indicated by Landriault's report to city council on Jan. 18.

The Wellness Bus is a partnership between many organizations, including the District of Sault Ste Marie Social Services and Administration Board, Sault Ste Marie Police, Algoma Family Services, Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, Superior Family Health Team, the Canadian Mental Health Association, and Sault Area Hospital.

The bus will be operated by a team that includes a registered practical nurse, a social worker, a registered mental health, an

addiction service worker, and a peer worker, Landriault said.

The bus will operate seven days a week and assist during the day and after hours.

"Initial staffing will be provided by Sault Area Hospital and the Canadian Mental Health Association," he said. "However, we are developing our programming and partnerships right now to ensure we utilize the expertise of all our partners and more."

Although the city is moving forward with providing more addiction-based services, one resident, Susan Milne, a parent of a recovering addict, doesn't think this initiative will make a difference in the community.

"It's a joke," she said. "They need a residential treatment centre. This band-aid will do minimal to help. It's too little too late. The people the bus will reach are not the ones needing the help most."

"People of all ages are dying, trying to get clean," Milne said. "A bus won't help. Residential treatment services are what's been advised for years and are the most needed."

The closest residential treatment facility is in Elliot Lake,



ERIK LANDRIAULT

The Community Wellness Bus design presented to Sault Ste. Marie city council.

Ont., which is more than two hours west of the city.

Social services worker Luke Dufour anticipates challenges with the bus and says this work is difficult. He said it is a challenging population to serve because the needs are complex and differ from person to person.

He holds firm the community needs to stand together and work as a team to help solve this issue.

"It takes an entire team effort, from those with political influence to the front-line workers, to make the difference that our community needs," Dufour said. "This is not glamorous work, and

that is why we need our community to stand with us."

He does believe these efforts will break hurdles and allow more access to those needing it most.

"I think that these services will assist Sault Ste. Marie by removing some of the barriers that prevent the homeless, mentally ill, and addicts from accessing health care and mental health services," Dufour said. "By having so many of our service providers working together under one umbrella, we expect to see a better client experience and better health care outcomes."

# India begins second phase to vaccinate 270 million people

**Manan Nijhawan**

NEWS REPORTER

NEW DELHI — Phase two of the COVID-19 vaccination drive starts on March 1 in India with priority being given to citizens above the age of 60 and citizens above the age of 45 with co-morbidities.

Government officials stated people aged 45 and older with diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases will be given a priority over citizens.

Being the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, around 270 million Indians are expected to be vaccinated in the second phase, with frontline workers and senior citizens being given priority.

"Given the sudden increase in cases in some states of the country, I think the second phase of the drive needs to start as soon as possible and covering

a large portion of the population," said Dr. Sharat Latta, the head of the Ear, Nose and Throat department at Jaypee Hospital in Noida, near New Delhi.

The vaccination drive in this country of about 1.38 billion people will take place in 10,000 government hospitals where the vaccine will be administered for free. The vaccine will also be administered in 20,000 private hospitals where the people will be charged.

The Health Ministry has not yet decided what the charge of the vaccine at private hospitals will be, but they are in talks with manufacturers and hospitals and expect to give an update in the coming week.

"I think it's fair that the government is giving everyone an option but they also have to make sure that the private hospitals are not charging a lot," said Anita Thakur, a senior citizen.

The vaccination drive has

received a mixed response, some feeling that it is necessary to get vaccinated while some not comfortable being vaccinated at all.

"I just want to make sure that the vaccine is safe and will not have any long-term effects on senior citizens," said Vinesh Kumar, also a senior citizen.

The private sector will have a major role in the second phase of the distribution of the vaccine. The first phase which began on Jan.16, where 30 million frontline workers were administered with the vaccine, was not successful.

Only 10 million frontline workers were vaccinated and out of these, only 140,000 were administered with the second dose of the vaccine.

"With shots being administered in the private hospitals too, it will help give citizens an option and help roll out the second phase of vaccination drive at a faster rate than the

first phase," Latta said.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with other

politicians, will also be vaccinated as part of the second phase of the vaccination drive.



ADNAN ABIDI/REUTERS

A man receives a Bharat Biotech's COVID-19 vaccine in New Delhi, India on Feb. 13.



# Brampton Beast collapse due to lack of season last three years

**Garrett Thomson**

SPORTS REPORTER

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many companies and organizations to shut down, and now it's forced one of Canada's two current Eastern Coast Hockey League teams to shut down.

The Brampton Beast hockey team started in 2013 in the ECHL announced it was ceasing operations on Feb. 18. The team was part of the third tier of professional hockey behind the American Hockey League (AHL) and the National Hockey League (NHL).

The team — part of the Ottawa Senators system, Tampa Bay Lightning and Montreal Canadiens at points of their tenure — suspended operations last year because of the pandemic and then opted not to play this year.

The pandemic also shut down the season for the rest of the north division teams, a major consideration being cross-border travel. The time without



BRAMPTON BEAST

Cary Kaplan, team president and manager, said the city of Brampton is a great hockey market and is losing more than just a team.

games hurt the team financially.

"The pandemic really cost us three seasons," Cary Kaplan, team president and general manager, said.

The Beast were not only a major presence on the ice but also off the ice and in the surrounding

community. Team members frequented local schools and hospitals visiting patients and students, reading to fans, and just being around to talk and interact.

The team is now asking fans to send in their memories from the team's time in Brampton with

photos and videos of individual fans at games and with players at community events.

"I'm gonna miss the community aspect of it all, going out to all the hospitals and the schools," said Anthony Fusco, the Beast's public relations head and play-

by-play announcer.

The Beast infused themselves into the community, each player and member of the organization became apart of the surrounding area. The team wasn't just made up of the players and staff, it was made of 700,000 people, Kaplan and Fusco say.

"Of the roughly 700,000 people, the only people in all of Brampton signing autographs are the 20 players of the Brampton Beast," Kaplan said.

In turn, the outreach motivated an average of about 2,700 fans to attend games at the CAA Centre on Kennedy Road South.

One of the four professional hockey teams in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), the Beast represented other nearby communities.

"I would argue with anybody that says Brampton isn't a good hockey market," said Kaplan, talking about the number of hockey fans in the city, but also in the surrounding area.

# OverActive Media announces new Esports venue in Toronto

**Eli Ridder**

NEWS REPORTER

Toronto has long been home to sport franchises and their massive headquarters but it will soon add to its roster a new flagship building for its esports teams.

Overactive Media on Monday announced plans to build a nearly-\$500 million entertainment complex at Exhibition Place that will serve as the home turf for its esports franchises while simultaneously providing a space for concerts and other big events.

The futuristic looking 7,000-seat venue — expected to open in 2025 and host more than 200 events a year — was billed by the company in a release as an "unparalleled experience" for fans and concert-goers.

It will be the home of Defiant, Toronto's top-tier Overwatch squad and, perhaps most notably, the home turf of Toronto Ultra, Canada's only team in the international Call of Duty League.

"It has always been our intention to develop a venue and hosting strategy and to build a facility that could not only serve

as an iconic home for our two franchises, but ultimately emerge as a global hub for major international esports events," company president Chris Overholt said.

Overholt and his company plan to attract big-name talent and host large events with the highest level of esports.

The new "performance venue" won't only be for the top-tier professionals, however. Hunter said it will also be a place accessible to the amateur scene.

"We see it from a professional and an amateur standpoint: a wonderful esports venue for utilization," Bob Hunter, vice president at Overactive Media, said, adding the space will have opportunities for college and university teams.

"That's how you build your fanbase," he told Humber Et Cetera.

For amateurs like Marcus Macapinlac of Humber College's competitive Call of Duty team, Overactive Media's plan points to a growth of the esports scene.

"I think it's a great investment," Macapinlac told Et Cetera. "Esports is growing more and more every single year, and it's not just something that's seen as



OVERACTIVE MEDIA

An artist's rendition of OverActive media's planned Esports building in Toronto of Lakeshore Road. The building will fit 7,000 fans.

a hobby anymore."

Macapinlac, who balances schoolwork while playing as "Macka" on Humber's Gold Call of Duty team, said if post-secondary amateur teams are able

to compete in-person at the new venue, it would be huge for career-building.

"It's always been a dream of mine to become a professional college player ever since I was

a lot younger," he said. "I'm definitely going to be pushing myself a lot and hopefully in the near future, you guys can be seeing my name up on the mainstage in the CDL."