

THE VARSITY

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BRIGHTER VS CHANGE



UTSU ELECTIONS UNDERWAY

Competing slates led by Ben Coleman, Cameron Wathey as presidential candidates

Alex McKeen, Tamim Mansour, and Alex Verman
VARSITY STAFF

Two slates are vying for executive positions in the 2015 University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU) elections.

The campaign period for UTSU executive and Board of Directors positions began at 9:00 am on Monday, March 16, 2015.

Team Change U of T is led by presidential candidate Cameron Wathey, incumbent vice-president, internal and services for the past two years. Team Brighter U of T's presidential candidate is Ben Coleman, who currently serves on the Governing Council

as an Arts & Science full-time undergraduate student representative.

Wathey hopes to harness the knowledge and skills he has gained from his two years working as vice president, internal and services to continue the work of the UTSU. "I've been involved and done a lot of great things with the previous teams from small things... like expanding upon our printer, so students can continue using our cheapest photocopying and printing on campus, to bigger picture things such as working on flat fees," he says.

Wathey adds that, though he has had the privilege to do good work with two UTSU presidents in the past, he hopes to approach a new role with the students' union with

his own set of priorities. "This year I really want to focus on making sure there's more of a community at U of T, as well as making sure that students from all over are being represented," Wathey says.

According to Wathey, the main focus of the Change U of T slate is improving student life. "We want to make sure that students are prioritized first," Wathey says. To Wathey, this includes providing support to student-run clubs and campaigns, as well as increasing mental health support. If elected president, Wathey says he will also focus on advocating for representation on Governing Council for international students and including international students on the Ontario Health Insurance Plan.

For his part, Coleman wants his team to be "strategic and realistic."

"When we put more detail in the next week about our platform, it's not going to be bullet points. It's going to be, 'this is how we think we're going to achieve this, this is what we're going to do'... and then at the end this is the change that is realistic that we think we might see," he explained.

On academic matters, Coleman says he wants the university to guarantee all first-years a place in a seminar course and to strengthen the UTSU's Professional Faculties Committee. He also wants to see more information and access to financial assistance for students from lower income families or students who face barriers to education.

Overall, Coleman hopes to have a positive campaign. "I'm hoping to have fun... I mean, it's a big deal, it's important, there's a lot the UTSU can do for students. We're trying to stay really positive, we don't want to be like the kind of opposition campaign that's really negative," he says.

Ryan Gomes, candidate for vice-president, internal, emphasized his time on the UTSU's Board of Directors as engineering director, on the executive of the Engineering Society (EngSoc), and as club representative of LGBTQase. "I know how an executive is supposed to work, and how people work together," he says.

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PHOTO OF THE WEEK



BADBADNOTGOOD entertain a crowd at the Blind Duck Pub on Thursday, March 12, 2015. COURTESY OF MIKE DOPSA/CFRE

Submit your photos to photo@thevarsity.ca.

WHAT'S GOING ON THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY

SHOULD WE ABOLISH THE SENATE?

Music Room, 7 Hart House Circle, 7:30 pm–8:30 pm

The Canadian Senate is a controversial institution and it is the subject of the Churchill Debate, which will feature the current master of Massey College and former Senator Hugh Segal.

TUESDAY

INFO + ACTION SESSION ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE U OF T COMMUNITY, PRESENTED BY HERE

Alumni Lounge, 5:30 pm–8:30 pm

The feminist letter-writing collective HERE is hosting a meeting dedicated to the issue of sexual violence within the U of T community. The meeting will feature presentations by the founders of U of T Thrive and U of T Students Against Sexual Violence.

WEDNESDAY

SGDO STUDY SPACE

21 Sussex Avenue Room 415, 2:30 pm–5:30 pm

The Sexual & Gender Diversity Office is hosting a weekly positive and supportive study space. A learning strategist will be present and is holding drop-in appointments.

THURSDAY

UTSU EXECUTIVE CANDIDATE ELECTIONS FORUM

Medical Sciences Building, Room 2170, 6:00 pm

The executive candidates in this year's UTSU elections will present their platforms and take questions from the floor.

FRIDAY

THE TCDS PRESENTS: THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

George Ignatieff Theatre, 8:00 pm

The Trinity College Dramatic Society presents a musical about six young children competing in a spelling bee. The performance features audience participation and improvisation.

THE EXPLAINER

The University of Toronto Students' Union elections are underway and the campaign period is now open!

Here are some campaign rules for which you should watch out

1. High-gloss posters, laminated posters, and any posters that are not recyclable are not permitted. In fact, all campaign materials should include the phrase "please pass this on to a friend and recycle after the election" wherever possible.
2. If it looks like a candidate has their own wallpaper, in that they have covered an entire wall with their posters, this is not allowed. Candidates' posters may not overlap one another, and all must be at least one foot away from another one of their own posters.
3. Campaign materials may not be affixed to surfaces in classrooms or seminar rooms, but candidates may campaign in classrooms if they have obtained permission from the lecturer before the start of class.
4. If you are a major procrastinator and you count more than 1,000 executive candidate posters, more than 500 at-large director candidate posters, or 200 other director candidate posters, these are the limits for poster quantities. You'll glad we told you that.
5. Using animals for campaign purposes is forbidden. Yes, we know; we'd vote for a candidate who gave us kittens too.
6. Even if candidates had kittens, they would not be allowed to give them to us, as distribution of goods for campaigning is a campaign violation.
7. Campaigning where alcohol is served is also not allowed, for what we hope are obvious reasons.

Students, professors respond to labour shortage

Some TAs continue to work despite strike; professors, undergraduates pick up labour

Iris Robin

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

While new picket lines form on campus every day, some teaching assistants (TAs) are choosing to stay in their classrooms. The labour shortage has led to some professors, and even some undergraduate students, taking on the responsibilities of the striking TAs.

Members of CUPE Local 3902 Unit 1, which represents around 6,000 TAs and graduate course instructors, have been on strike for over two weeks now, following a rejection of an eleventh-hour deal proposed by the university in the early hours of February 27.

Instances of others fulfilling the duties of workers on strike are known as “strikebreaking” and are sometimes referred to derisively as “scabbing.”

NOT ALL TAs ON STRIKE

Marko*, a TA from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and CUPE 3902 member, has chosen to continue to work throughout the strike. According to Marko, most of his research group and department are not on strike either.

“I am not striking... mostly because I think the current strike is misdirected, and is ending up hurting primarily undergraduate students,” he said. “[Undergraduates] are used as bargaining chips.”

Claiming that he has received threats from CUPE 3902, Marko maintains that he has the right to work or not work.

The union, Marko says, sent out an email, which stated that classes taught by strikebreakers may be picketed. “Those who work for the Employer are NOT [sic] neutral in this dispute. They are siding against friends and colleagues and working at crosspurposes to them,” a portion of the email reads.

“[Myself], as well as a number of other students in my research group that I have spoken to, feel threatened and intimidated by this email,” Marko says. “If I am, rightly so, asked not to submit to threats from the University, I will certainly not submit to threats from an organization who claims to be representing me.”

“The Union is not issuing threats to members who work during the strike,” says Ryan Culpepper, chief negotiator and vice chair of CUPE 3902 Unit 1.

Culpepper says that the email, sent to union members, was intended to clarify that continuing to work often creates bad feelings among colleagues and friends.

According to Culpepper, picket lines exist to cause disruption, pointing out that the first picket lines surrounded factories and other workplaces to prevent strikebreakers from entering.

“Of course striking workers are not content to allow strikebreaking to continue unaddressed. Picketing efforts, of course, should never entail bullying or intimidating behaviour, and our Union does not encourage such behaviour,” Culpepper says, addressing what Marko perceived as a threat to picket classes taught by strikebreakers.

Culpepper stands by the belief that it is wrong for union members to work while their union is on strike. “People should respect the collective decisions of Union members if they want to enjoy the many gains the Union has made by bargaining collectively over the years,” he adds.

Jasmine*, a fourth-year music performance student, claims that some lecturers from CUPE 3902 Unit 3, which represents sessional lecturers and non-student staff on contracts of less than one year, were filling in for their Unit 1 colleagues on strike.

Jasmine notes that Unit 3 instructors have started playing piano accompaniment for the



Pickers outside Robarts Library. FILE PHOTO: JENNIFER SU/THE VARSITY

singers in her classes, which is ordinarily the job of a Unit 1 member.

Unit 3 ratified an agreement with the university on March 10. Its members are not on strike.

“I fully support the strike and think that the TAs I’ve had in my classes are hard-working and deserve to be fairly compensated. I think that people standing in to do the work of Unit 1 members is undermining their striking efforts,” Jasmine says.

UNDERGRADUATES TAKE OVER

For its part, the Arts & Science Students’ Union (ASSU) received reports that some undergraduate students were volunteering to lead tutorials — some of whom were being hired to fulfill the roles of TAs.

The ASSU released a statement on their Facebook page encouraging students to report instances wherein classes use undergraduate labour.

Jasmine says that an undergraduate student has become the course administrator in another one of her classes. According to Jasmine, the student volunteered to take responsibility for sending schedules, making photocopies, and acting as a liaison between the class and the professor. “[Quite] honestly, had he not, the class would not be functioning,” she says.

Although Jasmine supports the strike, she says that without intervention from Unit 3 members and volunteers, the Faculty of Music would not be able to continue holding classes. “I’m not sure what the right thing to do here actually is,” she says of the volunteering trend. “Perhaps this illustrates the way that the university administration is incredibly reliant on workers that they do not pay fairly,” she adds.

Veronica*, a third-year history major, claims that a student offered to run informal tutorials in a South Asian History class.

Over the first two classes, the student’s plan

gained support, with the professor offering to give guidelines for the informal tutorials. After Veronica raised her concerns with the professor and with the ASSU, the informal tutorials did not go ahead as planned. Instead, students have formed a small study group to go through the readings.

“I don’t think you could say it is strikebreaking, but you can see how the boundaries kind of blur because people don’t really know what counts as strikebreaking,” Veronica says. “Because of the way it turned out, I don’t think it counts as strikebreaking, but it is an example of ways in which duties are being shifted in really odd ways because of the strike. On one hand, they want to be able to discuss the readings and go through them as normal as possible but then you’re realising that you can’t do that.”

Alexis*, a second-year criminology and women’s studies student, is taking HIS101. She says that the professor made the final paper optional, and that other students in the class would grade it.

Any proposed changes to course syllabi must be voted upon in class. Alexis did not attend class the day that the changes were announced. She does not know whether a vote took place.

“Personally, I think it shows the professors being lazy,” Alexis says. “They made the paper optional. The class is not big to begin with, maybe 200 students. If the paper is optional, very few will choose to do it. Between the two professors that run the course, they could have marked them. It just shows disorganization.”

“There is a complete lack of support for students in this strike. Many of us are left wondering how finals will work. For those of us who take summer classes, we are wondering if they will even be run. It’s absolutely ridiculous,” Alexis adds.

PROFESSORS

Professors have also picked up the slack, with a professor teaching HIS311 allegedly reviewing students’ presentations that were initially to be presented before a TA in tutorial.

Rebecca*, an upper-year international relations student, says that there was no class vote when the professor announced the changes. Although she has already completed her presentation, Rebecca believes that the plan is unfair. “I can’t think of how this is fair to the students who have to present to a professor rather than a TA like everyone else did,” she says. “Also, this is undermining the strike’s efficacy, since all 3 TAs are not holding tutorials.”

Nina*, a second-year English, ethics, society and law, and philosophy student, claims she was not given the right to vote in her ESS205 class when the professor wrote the midterm for the class instead of the TA. Nina reports that the midterm was changed to all multiple-choice questions to facilitate grading.

“It’s not great that [the professor] seems to have either taken over or has gotten rid of the roles played by TAs, but as a student, I’m not sure I’m comfortable with 30 per cent of my grade being put on the line either, even if this is a credit/no credit course for me,” Nina says.

“It’s much worse for non-members to take on Union members’ work while they are on strike,” says Culpepper. He adds that, to him, faculty who are well paid and have near-total job security who take up the work of TAs is especially egregious.

“The strike is only prolonged by strikebreaking. The stronger our collective efforts, the faster we can resolve this,” Culpepper says.

*Names changed at students’ requests.

Trinity to remove gender-segregated language from constitution

Vote draws substantial support five months after original motion failed



Trinity College quad. TOSIN MAIYEGUN/THE VARSITY

Alex McKeen

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The Trinity College Meeting (TCM) last Monday included discussion of several motions pertaining to equity issues, drawing a crowd of about 185 people.

On the meeting's agenda were constitutional motions to remove gender-segregated meetings, to inscribe equity into the constitution, and to change the phrase "Men and Women of College" to "Members of College" in the document.

The latter motion was originally defeated at a TCM in October when it failed to receive the two-thirds majority needed to pass.

Motivated once again by Haley O'Shaughnessy, president of Rainbow Trinity, the motion received overwhelming support at Monday's meeting, and was the last motion to pass before adjournment at 11:33 p.m.

The agenda also included a host of non-constitutional

motions aimed at removing divisive customs and traditions at the college. These motions will be addressed at an "emergency TCM" scheduled for March 23.

Monday's meeting was set to take place in the Buttery of the Trinity College Larkin building, but was moved to the much larger George Ignatieff Theatre due to the unexpected number of students in attendance.

"MEN AND WOMEN" TO "MEMBERS"

If the motion divided students at TCM the second, the same one united a cohort of Trinity members at TCM the seventh.

O'Shaughnessy moved — for the second time in six months — to remove gender-segregated language from the TCM constitution, this time to a room of supporters. They said that, as a student who does not identify within the confines of the gender binary, this show of support from the college was a huge validation of their experience as a student.

WORK YET TO BE DONE

O'Shaughnessy and members of the wider U of T community see Trinity College as a site requiring significant changes to become more equitable and safe.

Ben Donato-Woodger, a fourth-year University College student, left Trinity College in fourth year, saying it was an unsafe space in many ways. "The TCM needs a hard wake up call around issues of equity," Donato-Woodger says.

Donato-Woodger attended TCM the seventh to support the work of Rainbow Trinity on the motions, adding that while he is happy that the "members of college" motion passed, it is not a sign of absolute progress.

"The members of college is great, but to be honest I think it's a bit superficial. I think the meat of the amendments lie in the gender segregated ones," Donato-Woodger said.

The motions to which Donato-Woodger refers are among those postponed to the emergency TCM. They include removing gender-segregation from college traditions and events, writing letters to the dean of students to propose gender-neutral washrooms and equity workshops, and endorsing the U of T Students Against Sexual Violence group.

Donato-Woodger says that, based on his own experiences at Trinity College, these motions are necessary to make Trinity a safe place. He adds that during his participation in Midnight Run in first year — an event that motion 11 would make gender-inclusive — men and women were separated and yelled sexist slurs at other colleges.

"I remember going to UC and chanting that they're dirty because they taught sexual diversity studies," Donato-Woodger says. Though he hasn't participated in the event since his first year, Donato-Woodger says traditions like this one should be highly concerning, and that making them gender-inclusive is a step in the right direction. "I really can't imagine if they had boys and girls together everyone chanting that sort of stuff," Donato-Woodger says.

O'Shaughnessy agrees that there are equity problems to be corrected at Trinity, but believes that the passage of the "members of college" motion shows that the college is ready for change. "It's clear that these traditions have to evolve or die. It's as simple as that. I think that Trin is calling for them to evolve," they say.

"[These traditions are] not important enough to stay the way they are and allow the marginalization of their peers," O'Shaughnessy add.

At TCM the seventh, motions also passed requiring the heads of college, arts and non-resident affairs to attend equity training, as well as large capital projects, including one to renovate Trinity's washrooms and make some gender-neutral.

York strike enters third week

Academic activity resumes after Unit 2 approves agreement

McKenzie Embree

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

Unit 2 of York's teaching union CUPE 3903 is no longer on strike, and classes have resumed.

Unit 2, which represents contract faculty, agreed to a new three-year contract on Monday. With Unit 2 no longer striking, classes recommenced at York on March 11.

The university initially had all three of its Units on strike.

Units 1 and 3, representing teaching assistants (TAs) and graduate lecturers, respectively, rejected the university's deal and remain on strike.

The strike began on Tuesday, March 3, when CUPE 3903, the union representing York's 3,700 teaching staff, did not approve an agreement regarding work contracts.

Among CUPE 3903's priorities is to obtain better job security. The union is pushing for multi-year contracts as opposed to sessional contracts that expire after one semester.

"We believe that our comprehensive settle-

ment offers are highly competitive with if not better than settlements reached with similar employee groups at other universities, including employees at other universities represented by CUPE," said York University in a statement.

"York highly values the significant contributions its teaching assistants and graduate assistants make to the university. We are committed to reaching a fair and competitive settlement," says Rhonda Lenton, provost and vice-president academic at York. The strike at York University coincides with that of the University of Toronto,

whose Unit 1 has been on strike since February 27. Unlike at York, most academic activities continue at U of T despite the strike.

York University currently holds the record for the longest faculty strike at a Canadian university. The institution was on strike for 85 days in the academic year 2008-2009 before legislation ordered staff to return to work.

Undergraduates at both schools are anxious to complete their courses on time, but an academic term has never yet been lost to a strike at a Canadian university.

\$41 million to combat sexual violence and harassment

Provincial government plan includes legislation, awareness campaign

CONTENT WARNING:
Graphic description of
sexual assault

Brittaney Warren

VARSITY STAFF

A young man assaults a young woman at a house party. His friend captures the moment with his camera, and partygoers ignore the scene. The aggressor looks directly into the camera, makes eye contact with the viewers, and says, "Thanks for keeping your mouth shut."

The public service announcement, released by the Government of Ontario in conjunction with their \$41 million action plan to combat sexual violence, has a clear message: "When you do nothing, you're helping him, but when you do something, you're helping her."

Kathleen Wynne, Ontario's premier, has proposed a strengthening of laws to combat sexual assault and violence, improve campus safety, and challenge prevailing attitudes that contribute to sexual violence.

The plan commits to introducing legislation that will strengthen provisions related to sexual assault and harassment in the workplace, in housing, through the civil claims process, and on campuses.

The legislation will also require universities and colleges to collaborate with students to adopt campus-wide sexual harassment and assault policies. The policies will include training, prevention, complaint procedures, and response protocols.

The Wynne government has already included recommendations from the Ontario branch of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) in the Action Plan.

Anna Goldfinch, CFS national executive representative, says recommendations include mandatory sexual assault policies with student consultation during creation and review, mandatory public reporting of sexual assaults, and funding for training, consent education, and support services.



Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne. PHOTO COURTESY OF ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

While there is an appreciation for the inclusion of student voices, concerns remain that the plan may not go far enough to fully address the safety concerns of college and university students.

"We believe there are a few things still missing, and we will continue to call for a sexual assault support division to hold institutions accountable to their new policies, and give students recourse if they do not receive adequate support from their institution," says Goldfinch.

Sexual assault rates are five times higher for women under the age of 35.

On campuses, four out of five female undergraduate students have reported a sexual violation while in a dating relationship. Young women have also reported the highest rates of being stalked.

"Campuses are a reflection of our society, which means that they are not immune to issues we face in our daily lives like sexism and rape culture," says Goldfinch. "Post-secondary students experience a disproportionate number of sexual assaults compared to the general population."

According to the Rape Crisis Centre, the term "rape culture" was coined to show the

ways in which society normalizes male sexual violence and engages in victim blaming.

One of the goals of the action plan is to eliminate rape culture on campus by ensuring that all students have information on sexual assault and harassment prevention. Another goal is to introduce a policy that requires post-secondary institutions to publicly report incidents of sexual violence.

All colleges and universities will also participate in a province-wide awareness campaign in September 2015.

"We want to eliminate rape culture on campus. We want school environments to be safe and respectful. We want every student, in every university and college in Ontario, to be able to learn and study and experience campus life at its finest, free from sexual violence and harassment," reads a statement in the Action Plan.

Sexual violence is directly connected to gender inequality. One of the biggest challenges victims of sexual assault face are damaging perceptions of sex and gender, which work to perpetuate sexual violence, and which can have far reaching consequences for victims. Victims of sexual abuse are more likely to experience depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and self-harm.

The hashtags #WhoWillYouHelp and #ItsNeverOkay invite Twitter users to speak out against misogyny and sexual violence, and are beginning to gain traction on the social media site.

According to Belinda Bien, communications and policy advisor to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Ontario government is hoping to introduce the legislation in autumn 2015.

"The Ministry believes the action plan is a bold plan for combating sexual violence. The Ministry is working closely with both Colleges Ontario and the Council of Ontario Universities and has engaged with student associations to ensure meaningful steps are being taken to address this issue," says Bien.

Women in House program aims to bring women into politics

Just one quarter of Canadian MPs are female

Emily Colero

VARSITY STAFF

Last week, a group of female University of Toronto students spent time at Canada's Parliament shadowing female Members of Parliament (MPs) as a part of the Women in House program, which accepts students from a range of programs and includes excursions to Ottawa landmarks. The program runs during the first week of March in honour of International Women's Week.

Just one quarter of Canadian MPs are female. To date, 85 female students and 50 different female parliamentarians have participated in the program.

Past hosts have included Elizabeth May, leader of the Green party; MP Peggy Nash; MP Carolyn Bennett; and Senator Yonah Martin.

Tina Park, a U of T PhD candidate, founded the Women in House program in fall 2012 along with Carolyn Bennett, MP for St. Paul's.

Natalie Petra, who has been active in politics for about a decade and ran for City Council in the last municipal election, participated in this

year's program. She sat in on a caucus prep meeting, a hearing of the industry committee, and question period.

Petra shadowed Peggy Nash, MP for Parkdale-High Park. "It's so valuable for future female leaders to be able to network and experience what it's like to be a female in government. I recently read a statistic that said if you add up all the women who have ever been MPs, across all the governments in Canadian history and sat them in the House of Commons together, there would still be over 50 empty seats," Petra says.

"To be able to learn from strong experienced women who have found success in the institutions that govern our nation is invaluable," she adds.

This year, Rachel J. Gunn, a past participant, was selected to assist in logistics and planning. In 2014, Gunn shadowed MP Laurin Liu in the Committee on International Trade.

Liu was the youngest MP to be elected to parliament and was the only female MP in the Committee on International Trade.

"This brought to mind a common issue among high achieving women — the 'imposter syndrome,' where relative to our male peers, we tend



Women in House program participants. COURTESY OF TINA PARK

to underestimate our competence and potential. Her example powerfully demonstrated that age and gender should not limit our aspirations," Gunn says of her experience.

"I hope the program continues to grow, and do hope that this program could help us take one more step towards promoting gender equity in our Canadian society," says Park.

Province, university respond to student financial concerns

UTSU president criticizes lack of financial support



Governing Council chambers. FILE PHOTO: KENNETH TRUONG/THE VARSITY

Tamim Mansour

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the University of Toronto have responded to concerns regarding increasing student contributions to university revenues and to rapidly rising international tuition fees.

In its Budget Report for 2015-2016, the university expects provincial grants to constitute 30 per cent of operating revenues. It has projected that this proportion will decrease to 25 per cent by 2019-2020.

To compensate for the province's decreasing share of the burden, student contributions from tuition and other fees are expected to increase relative to the total.

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has allocated over \$3.5 billion in operating grant to universities — an increase of \$1.63 billion, or 86 per cent, since 2002-2003.

May Nazar, a spokesperson for the ministry, says that the province's contribution in operat-

ing grants has more than kept pace with the increase in enrolment.

"In 2013-14, the ministry's operating grant to the University of Toronto was about \$662 million. This includes an increase of \$274 million or 71 per cent since 2002-03. By comparison, enrollment at the university increased by 42 per cent over the same time period," she explains.

When provincial inflation is taken into account, the \$274 million increase represented a 39.5 per cent increase in operating grants.

Nazar adds that operating grants are not given for international student enrollment, noting that "tuition collected from international students is an additional source of revenue growth for universities."

However, Yolen Bollo-Kamara, president of the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU), criticized the province for providing inadequate financial support.

"I think it's a tragedy that we're losing that public institution at the University of Toronto, and students should be concerned about that, the society at large should be concerned about that," she

says. "And what we should be pushing for is for more funding from the provincial government."

Bollo-Kamara adds that issues the university currently faces, like the ongoing CUPE 3902 Unit 1 strike and rising international tuition fees, are related to provincial funding.

"We're talking about poor funding for TAS... we have one of the highest tuition fees in Canada [and] increasingly every year, there are more and more students who literally can't afford to go to school here," she says.

While Bollo-Kamara says that Ontario has the lowest per-student funding compared to other provinces, the ministry maintains that post-secondary education is kept affordable through the province's financial assistance programs like the 30% Off Ontario Tuition grant and the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

"When Ontario's various student financial assistance programs are included, the net cost of postsecondary education is often less for Ontario students than for students in other provinces," says Nazar.

Nazar adds that under the new tuition framework introduced in 2013-2014, students are expected to save \$700 million over four years.

Bollo-Kamara believes that these financial assistance programs do not go far enough.

"For example, with the 30% Off grant, the majority of students are unable to access it, whether it's because they're mature students, or part-time students... and that's a problem," she says. "Students who can't afford to pay their tuition fees up front are paying more for their education than students who can."

INTERNATIONAL TUITION FEES

In spite of increasing tuition fees, international student enrollment has increased beyond expectations.

In 2010, the provincial government announced Open Ontario, a five-year plan that included increasing the number of international student enrolled in the province by 50 per cent to a total of 57,000 by 2015.

According to Nazar, over 76,000 international students are currently enrolled full-time in the

province — twice the international student enrollment in 2010.

During these five years, the University of Toronto has increased international student enrollment by 71.2 per cent, from 8,482 to 14,524, while international tuition fees for incoming Arts & Science undergraduates have increased by 65.3 per cent, from \$21,344 to \$35,280.

The university maintains that international tuition fees are competitive globally. Althea Blackburn-Evans, U of T's director of media relations, says that the university "is the only one that is consistently ranked #1 in Canada and in the top 20 internationally."

"Our international fees are very competitive in this global context (and are actually closer to the middle range than the high end)," she says.

The university does acknowledge the contributions that international students provide to the university in choosing to study here.

"These students contribute to the international character of the University, and their presence provides opportunities in our academic and co-curricular programs for the enhanced exchange of knowledge," Blackburn-Evans says. "Outstanding students from all parts of the world contribute to the excellence for which the University is known."

Bollo-Kamara sees the lack of regulation of international tuition fees as the problem, saying that international students pay much more for their education even though "they're sitting in the same classes we're sitting in, have access to the same professors."

She also notes that international students make a significant contribution to the provincial economy.

"International students live here and they work here. International students contributed about \$3 billion to the Ontario economy," she says, citing a report by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade released in 2012.

The report also says that international students in Ontario contributed \$202.9 million in government revenue and nearly 30,000 jobs in 2010, the same year the Open Ontario Plan was announced.

Sexual Education Centre seeks graduate student funding

U of T volunteer group has not held levy referendum since 1996

Iris Robin

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

That bowl of condoms in your college or faculty social space is probably there due to the work of the Sexual Education Centre (SEC) at the University of Toronto, an organization that provides resources, workshops, sex-positive events, and a peer-support service.

The SEC is seeking a levy from all fee-paying members of the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (GSU).

Graduate students voted on the levy via a referendum held concurrently with the GSU elections last week.

"SEC is seeking more funding to be able to meet our increasing service demands," says Mika Howard, SEC's levy coordinator.

SEC receives a levy of 25 cents per full-time undergraduate student per semester, a figure that has not changed since a 1996 referendum, according to Howard.

SEC is requesting a levy from the GSU of 50



The Sexual Education and Peer Counselling Center. JENNIFER SU/THE VARSITY

cents per full time student per semester and 25 cents per part-time student per semester.

Like the levy paid by undergraduate students, the proposed GSU levy is refundable

upon request.

Despite not currently receiving funding from graduate students, Howard says that the "SEC provides approximately 36 per cent

of all bulk orders of [safer sex supplies] to graduate students at U of T."

"SEC would like to be able to better represent and support graduate students. By receiving funding from GSU, this relationship can be strengthened," she says.

As it stands, SEC's levy is not subject to Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). "This means that even though safer sex products have become more expensive, due to inflation, we are still receiving the same amount of money we were 19 years ago. With more funding, SEC would like to be able to meet our increasing demand and expand our services," Howard adds.

SEC has requested that COLA be applied to the GSU levy, which will ensure that the proposed levy can be adjusted based on inflation. According to Howard, COLA are critical to providing continual support.

Howard says that the group also plans to increase its funding from UTSU and that obtaining funding from the GSU is a step towards increasing SEC's overall funding.

New space for software innovations

Computer science incubator to be “open to all disciplines”

Tamim Mansour

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The Department of Computer Science (DCS) has opened a new incubator for innovative software solutions.

The DCS Innovation Lab, located in Gerstein Library, is the eighth and latest incubator at the University of Toronto under the province's Campus-Linked Accelerator (CLA) program. The CLA program is intended “to build world-class innovation and entrepreneurial programs at GTA colleges and universities,” according to a Ministry of Research and Innovation news release.

Helen Kontozopoulos and Mario Grech, directors of the Innovation Lab, want to create an environment for student innovations in software.

“Our end goal here is to create an environment where we're building innovation, which can be in entrepreneurship like startups. They can also be innovations within organizations like intra-preneurship,” says Kontozopoulos. “We want to build an environment where students are working and learning from and developing with industry, with research that we have on campus.”

“The idea here is to teach them how to go about solving significant problems and actually commercializing, whether it's through a startup or industry itself,” adds Grech.

The idea was pitched to the department by the pair just last year, stemming from a fourth-year course in Business of Software that they run.

According to Grech, the program is “[conducted] as a venture capitalist would or as a leader in industry that would be investing in a project in a large company.”

Kontozopoulos recognized that though the students in the department were some of the top students in Canada, they were limited in pursuing their ideas. “A lot of them have this



MEDIA PHOTO

thriving want to create and build something,” says Kontozopoulos.

In developing the concept for the Innovation Lab, the directors consulted with students on the requirements for the space, including Jonathan Webb, president of the Computer Science Student Union.

“I remember having a very clear discussion with [Webb] during the summer months about how students were frustrated because

they didn't have an avenue or clear path to drive innovation beyond the department,” says Grech.

Kontozopoulos echoes this frustration: “Our computer science students didn't have this. They would go to other incubators or accelerators on campus, off campus, or worldwide.”

The space is currently being used by the students in the Business of Software course

and students pursuing an independent studies project. In the coming weeks, the space is slated to open to students through the new summer entrepreneurship program.

Kontozopoulos and Grech also gave credit to Sven Dickinson, chair of the Department of Computer Science, and Paul Gries, associate chair for undergraduate studies in computer science, for supporting the project. “These two men were forward-leaning and had this idea of giving students more than they had now. Helen and I both come from industry, so in our discussions with these two gentlemen, they felt that given the plans and the vision, we managed to help them found a number of things,” says Grech.

Funding for the incubator will come from a myriad of sources, including the provincial government under the CLA program, the equity the university holds in projects that are successful, and industry endowments.

The directors hope that the Innovation Lab will become self-sustaining and that the success of projects from the lab will contribute to more projects. “It has to be a sustainable model that drives money in and doesn't take money out,” says Kontozopoulos.

When asked what makes the DCS Innovation Lab different from other campus incubators, Grech noted that technological innovation is now dependent on software.

“Take artificial intelligence for example; you bring disciplines from all over campus. Anything that wants to be innovated on, whether it's a subject matter on music, anthropology, sciences, at the end of the day has to come to the software funnel,” says Grech.

Kontozopoulos and Grech hope that the Innovation Lab will be open to all disciplines, with a focus on software.

“We very much want to tie in as many faculty and departments as possible. It's the way that innovation is created now. The days of silos are obsolete,” adds Grech.

Islam Awareness Week combats Islamophobia on campus

Muslim Students' Association hosts week-long series of events

Emma Compeau

VARSITY STAFF

Last week, the Muslim Students' Association (MSA) at the University of Toronto hosted Islam Awareness Week, featuring events that included lectures, coffee houses, and a night of the Islamic arts.

While Islam Awareness Week has been held annually at U of T for at least the past decade, it is not unique to the University of Toronto and is held at many campuses across North America.

The theme for this year's week was #WithMuslims and #AgainstHate. The theme, designed to reflect the week's goal of promoting awareness of Islamic knowledge and principles, and inspired by a vigil hosted by the MSA and the Muslim Chaplaincy for the victims of Islamophobic attacks in North America, used hashtags in an effort to facilitate online conversations to call out different forms of hate seen on campus, including Islamophobia, xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism.

According to Dalia Hashim, MSA vice-president, external, Islam Awareness Week encourages the U of T community to engage with Muslim students and learn about the religion through Muslims rather than through the media.

Bushra Nassab, a third-year peace, conflict, and justice studies student, says Islam Awareness

Week is now more important than ever. “[During] Question Period in Parliament, Prime Minister Stephen Harper indirectly called Islam an ‘anti-women culture.’ This small comment speaks about the unfortunate rise of Islamophobia that we are witnessing in Canada, and it [is] crucial that we have weeks like Islam Awareness Week to show non-Muslims what Islam is all about,” says Nassab.

“[We] need to show people that the religion is in fact a peaceful religion, and we should not define our perceptions on Islam based on what groups like ISIS do — who most certainly do not represent Islam,” she adds.

New to Islam Awareness Week this year was Soul Food, a weekly event hosted by the Muslim Chaplaincy at U of T that offered attendees the chance to visit Muslim prayer spaces on campus, as well as opportunities to meet Amjad Tarsin, the Muslim Chaplain.

Many other events were held during the week, such as speakers and poetry events.

When asked about what is unique to this year's Islam Awareness Week, Hashim said that the present climate on campus indicates a need for larger discussions on Islam.

Pointing to recent Islamophobic incidents on university campuses, including the defacing of posters of a Muslim candidate running in the recent Ryerson Students' Union elections, Hashim says that Islam Awareness Week may be especially needed this year.



Dalia Hashim, Muslim Students' Association vice-president, external. TOSIN MAIYEGUN/THE VARSITY

Toronto350 to present at ad hoc divestment committee meeting

Climate change updates included in brief since first presentation

Rachel Chen

VARSAITY CONTRIBUTOR

The Presidential Advisory Committee on Divestment from Fossil Fuels has agreed to have a meeting with Toronto350 on April 17.

At the meeting, Toronto350 will present a revised version of their brief on fossil fuel divestment, last updated in September 2013, to the ad hoc committee.

Toronto350's Divest U of T campaign is asking the university to sell their direct stock holdings in the 200 fossil fuel companies with the largest reserves.

In April, they will present the committee with new evidence in their brief.

Milan Ilnyckyj, the main author of the brief and a PhD candidate in political science, acknowledged concerns the university has regarding endowment funds from those companies. "We do not expect [selling the stocks] will lead to a significant decrease in donations or research partnerships. If these companies feel a research partnership is beneficial for them, they are still going to feel that way if the direct stock holdings have been sold," Ilnyckyj says.

The fossil fuel divestment committee has until the fall to make a recommendation to president Meric Gertler, who will make the final decision. At the presentation, committee members will have the opportunity to ask Toronto350 questions about their brief and the plausibility of divestment.

According to Toronto350 treasurer Graham Henry, the committee has only met once since its creation last November — in December 2014.

"The thought was that they would be meeting monthly, maybe bi-monthly, reasonably regularly, and they just haven't met since," Henry says. "We've got a date that they will be meeting us. It's just four months later than we thought it would be."

However, according to Althea Blackburn-Evans, U of T director of media relations, the committee has met several times. "The Advisory Committee on the Divestment of Fossil



Simcoe Hall. TOSIN MAIYEGUN/THE VARSITY

Fuels is continuing an intensive and methodical consultation process," she says.

The next committee meeting is on March 27 and will only be open to the appointed members.

Ben Donato-Woodger, operations director for Toronto350, worries about the committee making a timely recommendation because other universities have tried to slow divestment by postponing their rulings. "The evidence of climate change was clear 25 years ago and nothing

is being done," he says. "If it's a crisis you treat it like a crisis. We want to convey a sense of urgency to the committee members and the Governing Council," Donato-Woodger says.

Toronto350 members hope to shift investments towards energy options that are safe for the climate. "We have all the technology that we need to deal with climate change," Ilnyckyj says. "What we need is policy will and the investment determination to drive the transition

at the rate that is necessary."

With the number of divestment supporters in elections for student seats on Governing Council this year, Donato-Woodger says that he feels students want divestment.

"Whatever the outcome of this important debate, these students have demonstrated the highest ideals of student activism and represented the University of Toronto with integrity," Blackburn-Evans says.

Environmentalism in the mainstream

Author Ryan O'Connor visits U of T as part of Ecofest



Ryan O'Connor's book launch for *The First Green Wave*. COURTESY OF MILAN ILNYCKYJ/FLICKR BY CC

Salvatore Basile

ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

"People that are concerned about the environment are often bombarded by bad news... I think that it's important to remember every once in a while that there has been good done."

So said author Ryan O'Connor at a talk on campus last Wednesday, March 11 as part of Ecofest, a series of events designed to highlight environmental issues.

O'Connor discussed *The First Green Wave*, his new book that traces the history of early environmental activism in Ontario.

Central to the book is the story of Pollution Probe, an organization created by students and faculty at U of T in 1969 that still exists today.

O'Connor feels that Pollution Probe achieved many successes by helping solve issues that caught the attention of everyday people, such as with the "Dead Ducks" inquiry into the spraying of pesticides by the city of Toronto.

He began his talk by describing what he sees as the hostility of the current Canadian

government to environmentalism, adding that Pollution Probe is an important example of the mainstream nature of the environmental movement in this country.

"When I bring up that point, I'm playing against the conception that many people have that environmentalism is some kind of wingnut idea — but it's front and centre," he said.

Peter Middleton, who served as the first executive director of Pollution Probe from 1969 to 1974, was in attendance at the talk. Middleton fielded questions and provided his own views on environmental activism.

"The culture of Pollution Probe when I was there was very much like that of an Internet startup; there was intense communication and intense sharing of ideas," said Middleton.

Riley McCullough, University of Toronto Students' Union vice-president, university affairs, and former sustainability commissioner, says O'Connor's talk was important because of its relevance to U of T history and to environmental activism.

"We want to provide options so that students realize the environment does connect to everything," says McCullough.

NEWS IN BRIEF

George Connell, former U of T President, dies

George Connell, a renowned biochemist who served as the twelfth president of the University of Toronto, died on Friday, March 13 at the age of 84.

Connell, who earned a PhD in biochemistry at U of T in 1955, was also an Officer of the Order of Canada.

"Professor Connell was an outstanding champion of U of T, whose presidency cemented our position as one of the world's great universities," said U of T president Meric Gertler in a statement.

Connell worked as a professor at U of T, acting as chair of the biochemistry department, associate dean of medicine, and vice-president, research and planning before becoming president of Western University in 1977. Connell later returned to U of T to serve as president in 1984.

In addition to his distinguished academic career, Connell was more than once called upon to advise Canadian government officials on important biomedical issues.

He assisted the Krever Inquiry in 1990, which dealt with tainted blood stocks, and also the inquiry into the Walkerton tragedy in 2000.

— Salvatore Basilone
With files from the Toronto Star

Ryerson University president agrees to remain in role for up to two more years

Ryerson University president Sheldon Levy has agreed to remain in his role for up to two more years.

"I'm a university president who was planning to go ride his motorcycle — I had cleaned out all my files and sorted out which books to keep — but then I got a call that things haven't worked out," Levy said.

The university had hoped to have a replacement by now, but a tentative agreement with his successor reportedly failed.

The university did not name the potential successor.

"I have no clue what led us to this position, but sometimes dominoes get lined up and one is off-kilter and then the whole pile doesn't fall the way it's supposed to," Levy added.

Levy had initially turned down an offer to stay on for another five-year term.

— James Flynn
With files from the Toronto Star

Federal government allows AUCC oversight for temporary foreign workers

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) has reached an agreement with the federal government to ease recruitment of global academic talent by loosening regulations for temporary foreign workers.

Post-secondary institutions are no longer required to disclose plans for moving jobs from highly paid foreign workers to Canadian citizens.

Schools will now report solely to the AUCC. Universities' self-governance is limited to certain requirements of the temporary foreign worker program, and universities are the only sector to which the exceptions apply.

Under most circumstances, universities with temporary foreign worker permits intend to employ foreign academics in permanent positions.

"Academic specialties can be very specific [and] that flexibility of being able to hire from around the world is important, as are the global connections that academics make," said Christine Tausig Ford, vice-president and COO of the AUCC.

— Andreea Musulan
With files from The Globe and Mail

Trudeau says "Enough is Enough" to McGill BDS campaign

As the Students' Society of McGill University readies itself to address a motion in support of the Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions movement Sunday March 15, Justin Trudeau publicly denounced the motion.

"The BDS movement, like Israeli Apartheid Week, has no place on Canadian campuses. As a @McGillU alum, I'm disappointed," the Liberal Party leader tweeted Friday, using the hashtag #EnoughIsEnough.

The BDS movement calls for divestment from certain companies which, the campaign alleges, are complicit in war crimes in Palestine.

Critics of the movement say that the campaign divides university campuses, and that Jewish students would be marginalized if student societies condoned the campaign.

Supporters say that the movement is a matter of free speech, and reflects a valid viewpoint on human rights issues.

The Montreal Gazette has recommended a "No" vote to this motion.

The BDS movement has been condoned by both the Graduate Students' Union, and the Scarborough Campus Students' Union at the University of Toronto.

— Alex McKeen
With files from The McGill Tribune and The Montreal Gazette

Team Brighter of U of T faces off with Team Change U of T

CONTINUED FROM COVER

Gomes has been closely involved with issues around the board restructuring debate, which he saw as something of a lesson in compromise and moderation.

He hopes that his experience will help him implement the kind of initiatives he feels the UTSU needs to take on — namely, branching out to take services to students. Gomes says his priority is to partner with colleges to bring union activities and resources more directly to the general student body.

Grayce Slobodian is running against Gomes for vice-president, internal and is also hoping to draw on her experience to provide quality services to U of T students. Slobodian is currently UTSU vice-president, external and previously served as UTMSU's vice-president, campus life.

Slobodian is focusing primarily on service delivery as well as continuing initiatives that have been priorities of the current UTSU executive, such as eliminating the exam deferral fee.

Agape Amponsah-Mensah is Change U of T's candidate for vice-president, external. She is the current president of the African Students' Association. She cites her previous work with other campus organizations and Black Lives Matter as experience for her candidacy.

With her background in equity studies, Amponsah-Mensah is committed to improving accessibility issues, such as transit. Amponsah-Mensah wants to "[eliminate] having two TTC cards when you're taking the bus."

Jasmine Denike is the only Brighter candidate that was not previously a member of the UTSU executive or Board of Directors; she has served with the Innis College Student Society (ICSS) as a marketing director, student representative, and a graduation representative.

Denike was also one of the core students involved in the Students Against Sexual Violence project and with the Thrive Initiative.

Though she actively participated in student



Ben Coleman. MALLIKA MAKKAR/THE VARSITY

life at Innis College, Denike said that she had a difficult time learning about and accessing services and resources in her first two years at U of T. It is a priority for Denike to ease the transition for new students before frosh week to make sure students are coming in aware and prepared to connect to the services they need. "A big thing for me is accessibility for first- and second-year students," she says.

Vere-Marie Khan refers to her extensive involvement at St. Michael's College (SMC) as preparation for the position of vice-president, university affairs. In addition to her previous role as the SMC representative on the UTSU Board of Directors, she has served as finance



Cameron Wathey. JENNIFER SU/THE VARSITY

commissioner for the St. Michael's College Student Union (SMCSU).

Vere-Marie Khan says that she was motivated to run for Brighter because, though she was initially disenchanted by the UTSU, she now sees opportunity for action. "Watching the changes that have just started to happen, I've really... been encouraged to see the difference that I can make," Vere-Marie Khan says.

Vere-Marie Khan will prioritize mandatory mental health training for faculty and teaching assistants, as well as outreach to international students and lobbying for the drop credit should she be elected vice-president, university affairs.

Xinbo Zhang says he would prioritize the development of a world-class career fair if he is elected vice-president, university affairs. "One of my goals for next year is [to] have an on-campus career fair that targets everyone and all students, and all of the majors, including majors such as philosophy; those majors people don't really think of [at] the career fair," Zhang says.

He adds that his experience with U of T clubs has given him the tools to successfully execute Change U of T's plans. "I would try to make [the career fair] at least the largest in Ontario, if not Canada," Zhang adds, saying that the career resources currently offered at U of T do not benefit the caliber of the school.

Brighter U of T candidate Sania Khan, associate to the current vice-president, equity at UTSU, is hoping to take up the same mantle. Sania Khan believes that her background in women and gender studies and peace, conflict, and justice studies has prepared her uniquely for the position of vice-president, equity. She is the president and founder of the Pakistan Development Foundation, a non-profit, student-run organization.

Sania Khan says that her experiences as a Muslim, a Pakistani, and a woman have helped her realize the need for spaces to accommodate marginalized and racialized groups. "I understand the difficulties that minorities face," she says.

Should she be elected vice-president, equity, Sania Khan says she will prioritize the representation of minority groups, equal opportunity for campus club funding, and lobbying the university for action on mental health and sexual violence policies.

Change U of T candidate for vice-president, equity, Frishta Bastan was not available for comment.

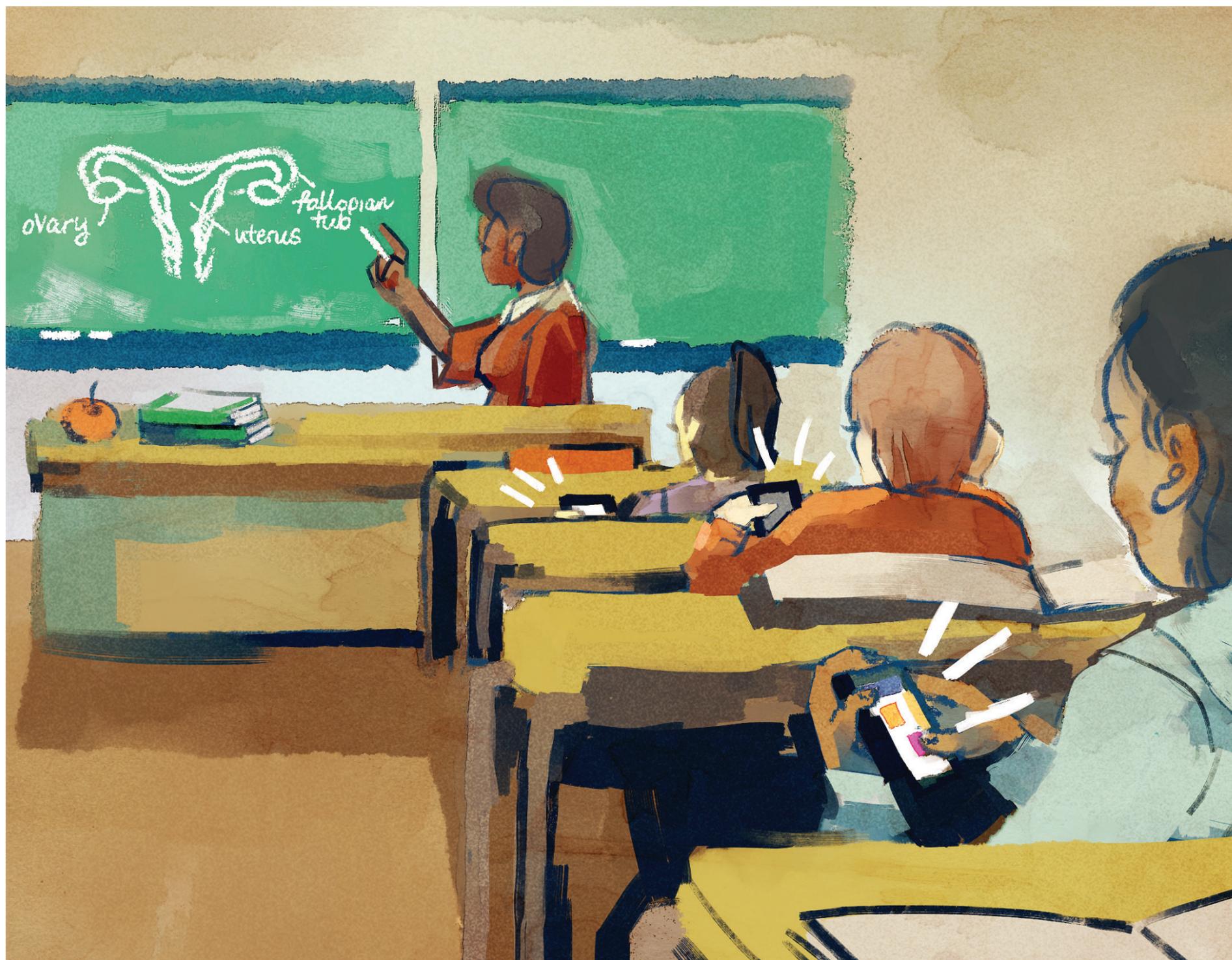
The All-Candidates Debate is scheduled for Thursday at 6:00 pm in Medical Sciences Building room 2170.

SEE SOMETHING, HEAR SOMETHING?

tips@thevarsity.ca

What's all the fuss about?

Revised sexual education curriculum does more to represent today's social realities



JANICE LIU/THE VARSITY

Omar Bitar

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

Ontario's recently revamped sexual education curriculum has polarized the public. Among the variety of signs raised and slogans chanted during the protests at Queen's Park last month, two factions took form: a vehement disapproval of the state's incursion into the family's domain of influence and a gleeful hope for a more sexually aware youth.

Disgruntled protestors held signs with slogans like "math, not masturbation; science, not sex!" whereas others applauded the move with slogans like "ignorance endangers children!" CBC reports that the new curriculum — which hasn't been revised since 1998 — is the most up-to-date one across the country. Applying to grades one through 12, the curriculum is more representative of the demographic, technological, and cultural developments of today's society than its predecessor. The policy's redesigned structure not only encourages tolerance and inclusive dialogue, but also seeks to educate young students on pertinent social issues in Canada, from sexual violence and consent to sexting and digital privacy.

Much of the uproar has centred on the classic problem of governmental overreach. To what extent should a government-mandated program of sophisticated sex-ed complement the private role of the family — the latter, supposedly, being the primary socializing institution? While this is a relevant concern, I believe that it actually overlooks the more important controversy at hand: the basic purview and purpose of education itself.

The overall success of any cosmopolitan educational system lies in its capacity to self-renew in accordance with our expanding body of knowledge about the world and with the multifaceted development of the society surrounding it.

Albeit sensitive and often contentious, sexual education is an interdisciplinary form of education. This ongoing debate, certainly not the first of its kind in the province, reflects an implicitly held assumption that sexual education is somehow inherently distinct from the domains of knowledge that collectively constitute it.

Yet, sex-ed is inseparable from the areas of reproductive physiology, anatomy, epidemiology, virology, gender sociology, affective psychology, cultural anthropology, and pharmacology, to mention a few. With this complexity in mind, the rationale behind the updated organiza-

tion and distribution of lesson expectations becomes clearer.

In response to the aforementioned protest slogan, I would say that mathematics and science are in fact part and parcel of a comprehensive sexual education. We must ask, then, why should sex-ed be circumscribed or cherry-picked? Of what benefit is a deliberate deferral of some of the most basic lessons about human sexuality? If all curricula are subject to renewal, lest they become anachronistic, sexual education shouldn't be considered any differently.

Delivered and discussed as objectively as possible, the curriculum can act as an empowering tool for intrapersonal and interpersonal success. It is easy to conflate objective facts and social realities with moralizing tendencies.

For instance, it is one thing to raise awareness of the gender spectrum or varying sexual orientations, and another thing to profess the dominance or inferiority of some variants over others. The same goes for sexual habits and practices. Hence, a constructive sexual education curriculum merely provides the pupil with a knowledge toolkit, which serves to improve and refine their decision-making. The application of the curriculum next September should be as detached as possible from the value-laden realms of ideology.

My assessment of the value of the recent changes also derives from local and global considerations. Youth are often among the first adopters of new consumer technologies as they become available. Almost all high school students in the province have a smartphone in their pocket and a Facebook or Twitter account, each of which afford them abundant opportunities to communicate with their networks, check in with friends, post photos, and more.

Participation in these global and local networks has never been easier, and the accompanying risks have never been more conspicuous — one need not look further than the sexualization of photo-messaging mobile applications. Does this not highlight the importance of educating young students about sexting and the privacy-related dangers associated with sharing explicit content online?

Today's youth, caught in the midst of the ebb and flow of the twenty-first century, are in need of a modern and versatile sexual education curriculum that succinctly addresses the challenges of a rapidly evolving society. Overall, it seems to me that the new curriculum is reasonable.

Omar Bitar is a fourth-year student at University College studying neuroscience, sociology, and biology.

The oil industry divestment campaign isn't working

In order to effect real change, we need to focus on consumption, not production

Column

Li Pan

VARSITY STAFF

Lately, the fossil fuel divestment campaign has garnered a lot of attention. This past Monday, the activist group Fossil Free U of T held a meeting at Simcoe Hall in front of President Gertler's office to draw his attention. And this is disconcerting, because divestment simply doesn't work. As such, activists' energy would be better spent elsewhere.

Divestment cannot hurt oil companies financially. Indeed, divestment, or the sale of shares, will only transfer these shares between investors without any discernible effect on profits or share prices.

Some might argue that the negative publicity that accompanies divestment is reason enough to continue the campaign. In the case of the oil industry, however, more bad press won't matter — the sector already ranks last or second-last in US public perception polls, largely due to the British Petroleum oil spill in 2010. In any case, three-quarters of the world's oil production come from state-owned companies, which are immune to divestment.

Disputable claims on financial impact aside, Toronto350's stated objective is actually to fight global warming by revoking big oil's social license to operate. That is, big oil's "extraction of dirty energy" should become "socially and politically unacceptable." This goal doesn't make sense.

Global warming is actually a consumption problem: fossil fuel is over-consumed because people only care about the price they pay at the pump. The pollution that this consumption causes is not reflected in the price of gas, and is therefore ignored at the consumer level. As such, the way to effectively fight global warming is to reduce the demand for gasoline. Campaigns to that effect could call for more global warming awareness, much heavier taxes on gasoline, or more subsidies and investment in alternative energy sources to make them cheaper.

What's more, demonizing big oil won't reduce the amount of fossil fuel we burn. If anything, it is the consumption, not the production, of



Stuart Basden, president of Toronto350, presents the Divestment Brief at the University of Toronto on March 6, 2014. FILE PHOTO: CAROLYN LEVETT/THE VARSITY

gasoline that needs to lose its social license. One need not look any further than the tobacco industry — the poster child of divestment campaigns — to see an example of how targeting consumption, rather than production, can be a more effective tool for activists.

Smoking prevalence in Canada has dropped from 50 per cent of the population in 1965 to 15 per cent in 2012, this pattern continued without any deviation during the early 1990s when divestment was occurring. This is not surprising. People don't stop smoking because tobacco companies are evil. Rather, they stop smoking because smoking is evil. Cigarette consumption is now frowned upon because it imposes heavy costs on the public healthcare system, harms others through secondhand smoke, and, most importantly, kills the consumer. This change in attitude towards consumption is achieved

through research on the effects of smoking, package warnings, and bans on smoking in public spaces. The quickly forgotten divestment campaign played little, if any, role.

One might wonder why divestment cannot just take place alongside other campaigns to fight global warming. If nothing else, it might serve as a good symbolic victory. Well, this is because divestment sends the wrong message.

For change to happen, average consumers will need to make significant sacrifices.

Of course, governments and companies should play a role too. In many cases, they already are. Purchases of electric cars in Ontario, for example, are already accompanied by a rebate of up to \$8,500 from the provincial government.

The problem we face is one of collective inaction. The public is all too ready to shrug off the necessary sacrifices when they think that there

are environmentalists out there to take care of the problem for them. The divestment movement actually contributes to this problem to some extent. By shifting the blame for global warming onto big oil, the campaign is covering up for the real culprit: average consumers who refuse to cut back on consumption to save the environment.

In the fight against climate change, nothing will make a difference in the way that changing the public's attitudes towards consumption will, and to that extent, the divestment campaign is futile. Whether or not oil companies do well is irrelevant to the end goal. The thing that keeps big oil up at night is the thought that people might stop consuming gasoline.

Li Pan is a third-year student at Trinity College studying financial economics and math. His column appears every three weeks.

My professors are lazy

Quality control is desperately needed in U of T's classrooms

Anita Penn

VARSITY STAFF

When my academic career at U of T began, I was astounded to find myself in classes with more students than there are people in my hometown. People around the university often say that it is easy to get lost in the crowd here, but I revelled in large lectures. I found that, as my professors were speaking to crowds of several hundred students, they worked hard to deliver dazzling lectures. Many of my classes were held in theatres and I often felt as if I were watching a thoughtful, well-rehearsed one-person show, rather than a dry academic talk.

Now that I am in my fourth year, however, nearly all of my classes are seminars, with somewhere between 15 and 50 people. Initially, I was excited to hear my professors talk about their most beloved subjects, and to engage with them and my classmates in a more intimate setting. Alas, my seminar experience has revealed a darker truth instead: my professors are lazy.

An ideal seminar should combine the best of both lectures and tutorials: professors should share their expert interpretation of the subject matter, and students should feel comfortable asking questions and discussing concepts with the class. Rather, I have found that seminar professors tend to abandon the idea of a cohesive lecture in favour of activities that seem to focus on students, but really only save the professor time and effort.

For instance, one of my literature professors starts every lecture by surveying the class for their thoughts on that week's book. The entirety of the two-hour class stems from students' responses, with little to no mediation from the professor.

My grievance is not that my peers are incapable of contributing meaningfully to class discussion, but that they could not possibly approach the nuanced perspectives of professors who have devoted their academic lives to the subject matter.

Undergraduates have much to learn from their professors, even in upper-year courses.

We should not be robbed of their insights in seminars under the guise of student-centered learning. Without a professor's interpretation of course material and their conscious mediation of discussion, a literature class is no more than a glorified book club.

What is worse, some professors devise time-wasting activities that relieve them from having to actually teach, or even staying in the room for that matter. In three of my courses, we watched full films during valuable class time. None of them are film studies courses.

Sadly, the laziness I've observed in my professors doesn't stop in the classroom. One of my professors refuses to accept emails. Another is regularly absent from his office hours. Yet another grades essays without providing any comments. Several of my professors refuse to use Blackboard, making it incredibly difficult to keep up with changing syllabus and assignment instructions, which often arrive weeks after they were promised. Where is the quality control in our classrooms? It seems

that professors are under no obligation to be good educators.

When teachers don't teach, students are cheated — yet there seem to be no consequences for lazy teachers. We get so few contact hours with our professors that there are no excuses not to make the most of them. To be sure that professors are teaching and not wasting students' time, the university ought to implement more frequent course evaluations and take their results into consideration through professional performance evaluations.

Students should be able to comment on, and hopefully affect, the quality of their professors' teaching while the course is still in session. We should have the right to be taught by professors who work hard for our education so that we may do our best work for them and for ourselves.

Anita Penn is a fourth-year student at Victoria College studying English.*

**Name changed at the author's request.*

Shattering the glass ceiling

The progress is impressive, but women still have a long way to go in the valley

Column



Emma Kikulis
ASSOCIATE COMMENT EDITOR

Long gone are the days when young girls idolized cutesy pop stars, giggling romantic-comedy heroines, and the dreaded Disney princesses.

In an increasingly competitive technology-driven society — especially in North America — many girls are forgoing plastering their bedroom walls with posters of Miley Cyrus, Belle, or Cinderella. Instead, they are learning and reading about Sheryl Sandberg and Marissa Mayer — some of the most successful women working in Silicon Valley.

For anyone with even a bit of knowledge about the rise of digital engineering, the valley is synonymous with the pioneering of innovative technologies. Names like Mark Zuckerberg and Steve Jobs are often associated with the valley, which is home to 22 Fortune 500 companies. It boasts a high concentration of startup companies, as well as \$5.57 billion in venture capital investment in 2014 alone.

With impressive numbers like these, it is no wonder that, now more than ever, young girls are expressing interest in tech-driven fields and businesses. Unfortunately, hard work and determination aren't always enough for budding female tech entrepreneurs to make it in Silicon Valley.

It's not for lack of trying. It's no secret that women trying to enter traditionally male-dominated fields are can be subject to sexism, exclusion, and misogyny — especially when trying to establish themselves in positions of authority.

Women are subject to a series of challenges when initiating start-ups. Is it because their



LAURA WANG/THE VARSITY

proposals are sub-par? No. Nor is it because women lack the proper qualifications.

Women are underrepresented in C-level executive positions and there are fewer female top-earners in many tech ventures. A survey by

Babson College in 2014 found that a mere 15 per cent of US firms had any female representation on their executive teams, and less than a quarter — 2.7 per cent — were spearheaded by a woman.

A recent story in *Newsweek* titled “What Silicon Valley Thinks of Women” caused controversy with its illustration, which featured a cartoon of a woman with a mouse cursor lifting up her dress — simultaneously demeaning and satirizing the struggle of the women explored in the piece. Although problematic, the article was able to shed some light on the struggle that highly qualified, completely competent women face in Silicon Valley.

Young executives cracking “gang-bang” jokes, wealthy entrepreneurs beating their wives, and a catalogue of misogynistic tweets make up only a few of the offenses committed by wealthy, successful males in the valley. These men suffer minimal consequences, as do their companies.

It's an unfortunate truth that there is a double-standard among the sexes in these professions. Women have been fired for demanding the same level of respect and financial compensation as their male counterparts. This is an obvious problem — just ask “pushy” Jill Abramson.

The problem, I argue, is not getting women into the tech and top-management fields — U of T boasts the highest percentage of female first-year engineering students in all of Ontario at a record-breaking 30.6 per cent. The issue is breaking the glass ceiling that prevents women from riding the escalators to the top positions of these firms.

As companies evolve to see women in the top decision-making and top earning positions, there's no more room for Jordan Belforts or Don Drapers. The culture of the tech industry is in need of a major overhaul.

Emma Kikulis is an associate comment editor at The Varsity. She is studying sociology and English. Her column appears bi-weekly.

Students in solidarity

A new format for undergraduates to share their thoughts with the administration

Op-ed



Victoria McKenzie initiated the Students in Solidarity letter writing campaign. EVAN LUKE/THE VARSITY

Victoria McKenzie
CREATOR OF STUDENTS IN SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

I am not a pawn in this war and that is a powerful thought — powerful to the point that it moves me to speak. My voice is my weapon, and with it I began the Students in Solidarity letter writing campaign because I wanted all of my fellow undergraduates to know that they too have voices. We are suffering, we are being starved of an education that we paid for.

My concerns are in the arena of justice and I urge the university to take the undergraduates out of purgatory. Their actions, or lack thereof, have implications.

Students who planned on graduating this year are now having to reconsider their plans. Students who took out loans to pay for the quality education that U of T claims to offer are now wasting money they never had to begin with. International students are suffering higher fees and cross oceans to get here in anticipation that an established, organized, and renowned institution would deliver on its promise. What is happening? We are being cheated, and that is not something I passively accept.

The Students in Solidarity letter writing campaign began as a small Facebook event that I shared among friends at U of T. With the approval and support of the CUPE 3902 outreach coordinators, I asked that everyone use their

voice to write a letter to the university administration and ask for a refund. Because if you didn't get the service you paid for, you should ask for your money back.

My vision was to make Friday, March 13 the day for students to send their emails, so that on the day the U of T administration would be bombarded with student grievances and be forced to respond.

This is a busy time of year and not everyone will have the time to construct a letter so I've also created a petition on *change.org* that students could sign in solidarity. On it is a draft letter as well as a list of administrative emails so that whenever a student signs, the administration receives a letter. The petition will be up, and the letters will be sent, until this conflict is resolved.

This is a call for action, in all aspects. It is a call for my fellow undergrads to rise up and exercise the power they hold. It is also a call for the university administration to get back to the negotiation table, and recognize CUPE 3902 Unit 1. It is a call for a refund; a call for a compromise; and most importantly, it is a call for undergraduate students to be heard.

Victoria McKenzie is a third-year student at St. Michael's College studying comparative literature, religion, and philosophy. She is responsible for launching the Students in Solidarity letter writing campaign.

Issues of consequence

With UTSU campaigning underway, candidates should consider these as priorities

This week marks the opening of the campaigning period for the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU) team for the next academic year.

On Thursday, March 19, contenders for each of the UTSU's executive portfolios will participate in an open forum discussion to expand on their respective priorities and goals should they be successful. Equally important, however, is that this forum will offer the UTSU's constituents — the students — the opportunity to interact with their would-be representatives, ask them questions, and judge their suitability.

In advance of this Thursday's forum, *The Varsity* offers the following ideas for consideration. Selected from across the spectrum of the UTSU's responsibilities, these are some of the issues that we believe are of the greatest consequence to students and the university for the foreseeable future.



FEES

The issue of ever-rising tuition costs has been at the forefront of recent executive platforms heading into the UTSU elections. Next year, incoming and continuing domestic students in the Faculty of Arts & Science will experience a three per cent increase in line with the province's capped tuition framework. Most professional programs will undergo a five per cent increase.

International students have and will continue to bear the most significant financial burden — their fees are set to increase by five per cent for continuing students, nine per cent for incoming Arts & Science students, and an astounding 10 per cent for Applied Science and Engineering students.

The incoming executive team should continue the lobbying work of its predecessors in earnest, with a particular focus on student organization and mobilization in protest. Currently, lobbying efforts are in desperate need of new tactics and ideas. If our elected representatives are to attempt to effect change to our fee structure, they will need to focus on creative and bold strategies.



ACTIVISM

Addressing advocacy issues on campus must remain a top priority, particularly with respect to mental health and sexual violence. Large-scale university projects like the Advisory Committee to the President and Provost on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence, the Provostial Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health, and proposed Mental Health and Physical Activity Research Centre need to be supplemented with efforts that better provide for the immediate needs of students.

Whoever finds themselves in office following the last day of voting on March 26 should make continuing the work that current president Yolen Bollo-Kamara began with making the Mental Health Action Team a priority from day one. Additionally, enhanced support for initiatives like U of T Students Against Sexual Violence and U of T Thrive could go a long way towards addressing community concerns and raising awareness.

This work needs to result in practical and immediate options for students that can fill the void and combat resource decentralization while we await future systemic change. If elected, candidates must be willing to advocate for students by pressuring the university to make progress on long-term promises.



STUDENT COMMONS

All full-time undergraduate students at U of T contribute \$16.40 a year to the commons through their tuition fees. In light of recent developments that will enable the commons project to finally be built, the incoming executives need to be committed to seeing the project's completion through to the end.

Executives must take pains to ensure that, once it has been built, the administration of the commons remains as professional and impartial as possible. They must also ensure that the composition of the commons' appointed management committee is reflective of the U of T student population.

In developing the Student Commons, the UTSU is taking on unprecedented responsibility and control over student space on campus. It is imperative that any political disagreements that could, and inevitably will, arise between the union and clubs, colleges, or other student societies not influence the management of the space.



DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

Although not the most attractive topic to include in a platform speech, U of T's staggering maintenance costs must be addressed in a timely manner. Candidates would do well to draw potential voters' attention to the university's \$515 million in deferred maintenance costs, which, at this point, will require a \$19.8 million annual investment on the part of the university to be resolved.

The state of U of T's older and more frequently used buildings is measured using a Facility Condition Index (FCI) where anything above 10 per cent on the index is considered problematic — Sidney Smith's index is currently at 47.8 per cent. Once in office, the executive team should actively petition the university's Governing Council to prioritize delayed maintenance.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESTRUCTURING

A major point of contention this year was the potential restructuring of the union's Board of Directors. Colleges do not want to lose their representation, while many on campus are calling for directors for underrepresented minority groups. Regardless of where you stand on how the board should operate, it is universally acknowledged that a new structure for the body will need to be agreed upon by next year in order to bring the union into compliance with Canadian law.

The successful candidate should address this topic in a meaningful way and have a sophisticated outline for addressing this issue. They must be open to compromise and consult with every stakeholder group before moving forward with a proposal. Ideally, the board would retain college and divisional representation while moving forward to address the underrepresentation of marginalized groups on campus — all within a structure that ensures the democratic legitimacy of its membership and remains an effective tool for governance.

CONCLUSION

While far from being a complete list of potential priorities for next year and beyond, each of these issues demands the immediate attention of the university's student representatives. It is crucial that the union focus its efforts and energy on addressing points that affect students — we cannot afford to continue being distracted by bickering and politicking.

The Varsity's editorial board is elected by the masthead at the beginning of each semester. For more information about The Varsity's editorial policy, email comment@thevarsity.ca.

LETTERS TO — THE EDITOR —

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UTGSU urges U of T administration back to bargaining table

The University of Toronto Administration has not returned to the bargaining table to negotiate with CUPE 3902 for just over two weeks. The University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU) expresses its disappointment with the university administration and stands in solidarity with CUPE 3902 in its efforts to negotiate fair contracts with the University of Toronto. The UTGSU represents over 16,000 graduate students in 85 departments at the University of Toronto, over 6,000 of whom are also CUPE 3902 Unit 1 members.

Graduate students know that budgets are about priorities, and that these priorities are determined by those in positions of power. Seventy-three per cent of the university's operating budget is allocated to administrative, faculty, and staff salaries, many of whom enjoy incomes in the six-figures. Sixty per cent of the teaching done at the University of Toronto is compensated with only 3.5 per cent of the operating budget. It is apparent that the top priorities for the university administration do not put students — graduate or undergraduate — first, nor do they reflect an institution that takes seriously its responsibility to protect its workers from job precarity or poverty.

Over the last decade, we have seen deepening commitments to a neoliberal provincial funding structure that positions post-secondary education less as a public good and more as a commodity. Our publicly-funded universities have been transformed into publicly-assisted institutions, a scheme that poses fundamental challenges to the quality and accessibility of higher education for students in Ontario. The UTGSU has repeatedly asked university administration to join graduate students in pressuring the province to provide a more equitable distribution of funding and resources. Repeatedly, the university administration has failed to stand behind us in these efforts, choosing instead to continue relying on tactics that individualize financial responsibility and deepen student debt. What we are seeing now during the CUPE 3902 strike is further evidence of the privatization and corporatization of the University of Toronto, at the expense of students and student workers.

Meaningful gains for CUPE 3902 members are long overdue, and once secured, will support a challenge to neoliberal trends in public education. The UTGSU commends the dedicated efforts of all those on strike, and remains strong in its resolution for the provision of a liveable funding package for all graduate students at the University of Toronto. It is time our institution makes real commitments to graduate student education, and

prioritizes sustainable learning conditions for research, teaching, and overall scholarship.

We call on the university administration to return to the bargaining table, and to demonstrate their support for students in their teaching and research by offering fair funding to all graduate students.

— Nickie Van Lier: internal commissioner, University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU)

Re: Little movement as strike passes one-week mark

What I don't understand is the organization of this union in general. Are TAs and contract faculty really a part of the same problem? Speaking of just the TAs, myself included, with so much difference between funding in different graduate units, can it really be said that a single overreaching organization can be representative of all points of view?

From my perspective, this strike is absolutely foolish. As an engineering PhD candidate, the faculty pays my \$9,000 tuition and provides a minimum of \$17,500 in research assistance-ships and departmental fellowships which goes up astronomically if you can grab some of your own grants. As this entire \$17,500 is treated as a fellowship covering a qualified graduate program — as would any additional grant — it is exempt from income tax — section 56(3)(a) of the income tax act. For those keeping score at home, that is now up to \$26,500 in tax free funding, tuition included. On top of that, I can work as a TA. These jobs are by no means guaranteed, but so far I have not had very much trouble. If you TA three terms a year — summer being by far the hardest to find a job; some faculties actually don't even offer them — you can make approximately \$12,000 on top of minimum funding. Let's say that two of four PhD summers you cannot find a TA job. On average, then, you can make \$10,000 a year from TA earnings. This is taxable income, but with the minimum taxable being somewhere in the \$12,000 range, it generally falls below the threshold or so close that it doesn't matter. So, in summary, I am making about \$28,000 net after tax plus \$9,000 tuition, which is the equivalent to about a \$40,000 a year job, maybe a bit more when you count EI and CPP deductions we aren't paying. Do some faculties extort students and "encourage" them to stay past their funding expiration? Sure, but why are we not just striking against those faculties? Mandate tuition plus minimum funding for the entire time it takes to earn the degree and stop hurting the undergrads in faculties doing the right thing.

— James (from web)

Letters to the editor should be directed to comment@thevarsity.ca. Please keep letters to 250 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



I step inside Courage My Love, a vintage shop in the heart of Kensington Market, and am struck by an arresting medley of colour, pattern, and texture. Vintage cowboy boots and artfully worn denim are arranged around the doorstep. Wooden beads and crystals hang from the ceiling. Bowls of vintage jewelry are perched on the countertops, and racks of men's suits and flannel shirts line the walls. Cece Scriver, owner, has a good mantra to sum up the store's collection: "If you can't find something somewhere, you can probably find it here."

OLD TO NEW

This phrase rings true as I walk up and down the aisles of Courage My Love, which sells everything from belt buckles to antique lamps to pocket squares. The store is its own piece of art, taking objects and transforming them from used to vintage. However, Scriver emphasizes that the store isn't just about vintage. "We do seasonal stuff and we try to follow the trends," she explains. "We get stuff that is in fashion or work with what we can get a lot of and turn it into fashion."

The fusion between the old and the new becomes clear as I walk through the store. Rows of leather moccasins are tucked under shelves of silk scarves, while painted masks fill the gaps between the racks of clothing on the walls. Scriver points out a costume hat adorned with a sprig of cloth flowers, explaining that she sewed it herself.

The store's mix of old and new pieces is emblematic of growing trends in the fashion industry. Trends have a tendency to lead a cyclical life, as marked by the return of high-waisted pants, grungy florals, and studded leather jackets.

However, unlike the efforts of the fashion world, which brings the old back in physically new pieces, the act of shopping vintage revives old items in a way that is amenable to high fashion and upcycling philosophies.

In 1980, Black Market Vintage opened on Queen Street West to provide a niche market catering to alternative clothing — one that, according to Tracey Opperman, didn't really exist at the time. Opperman, along with John Christmann, the store founder, and Bernard Chung, are the co-owners of Black Market Vintage.

"I think there's a segment of the population that will always want an alternative fashion to what is available in the standard retail environment," Opperman explains. "...[We have] the ability to offer one-of-a-kind pieces that pre-date fast fashion."

A stone's throw from Osgoode subway station, the main Black Market store is actually located underground. After descending the narrow steps, I find myself in a vast, warehouse-style space. Racks of vintage band t-shirts, bomber jackets, and colourful sunglasses are everywhere. The atmosphere is reminiscent of the grungy, punk rock scene that dates back to the store's inception. Best of all, everything is \$10 or less.

Black Market also has a sister store in Parkdale. The Public Butter sells vintage clothing as well as furnishings, architectural salvage, used bicycles, and household goods.

The appeal of vintage fashion is twofold. Not only is it a unique way to make a statement, but many of the pieces sold in vintage shops are of exceptional quality, certainly compared to modern mass-produced goods. It's up to shops like Black Market and Courage My Love to sift the treasure from the trash.

"A lot of vintage comes from an era of quality-made manufacturing that pre-dates fast-fashion," Opperman emphasizes. "It just lasts longer, and [people are aware] that much of it would be landfill without the vintage and thrift stores of the world."

A FAMILY JOURNEY

The stories behind some of Toronto's thrift stores are in many ways as unique as the wares

they sell. Often, they also serve to build neighbourhood communities.

Courage My Love started out as a "junk store," opened by Scriver's parents in 1975. Travelling across Toronto, and later all of Canada, they collected antiques and unique pieces to revitalize and sell at the store. They bought old stock from general stores when Scriver was only three or four years old. She referred to this as "dumpster diving, but not really," explaining that you never know what valuable things people are going to toss to the curb.

Forty years later, the store has expanded its niche, but it remains a family business. The sense of engagement in the store's manage-

SPLIT PERSPECTIVE

The language of thrifting tells a distinct story. "Vintage," with its nod to eras past, implies unique and individual. It also doesn't necessarily reflect low-cost. "Second-hand" or "used" can carry very different connotations. This language reflects a split in the existence of thrift stores which is very much reflective of the difference between the fashion-conscious "vintage" and the value-conscious "thrift."

The impact of second-hand stores goes far beyond the physical goods you can purchase. They can also take the form of community-building efforts.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

The main goal of the store and the Yonge Street Mission is to be an active partner in helping to eliminate poverty in Toronto.

Webster explains the multiple levels on which the store works to achieve this goal. "We are still here for the community which is still one of the most impoverished in Canada," Webster says. She adds that the efforts go beyond the goods sold. "...Residents of the community [are] employed and trained and the mission supports them in building resumes, eventually helping them on their way to a career," she says.

"You can probably find it here"

The influence of thrift and vintage stores on and off the rack

ARTICLE BY **TEODORA PASCA**
PHOTOS BY **TOSIN MAIYEGUN AND SANDY MA**

ment is clear. The majority of Scriver's family lives in Kensington Market and is involved in the community. Employee turnover is low, resulting in a strong relationship between store workers as well as their customers.

As I spoke with Scriver, several customers that she knew by name drifted in and out of the store, exchanging friendly remarks. One customer dropped by to ask about how her family was doing. "That's my uncle," she explained.

"We've watched people who have grown up," Scriver says. "...We do know how much this street has done for us and the community... We take care of what we have and know how much it means."

Double Take Thrift Store opened in 1999, and it quickly became a popular place in the neighbourhood to shop for inexpensive wares. The store is run through the Yonge Street Mission, an organization that provides services for the community, including food banks, daycare, and programs for street-involved youth.

"It was originally intended to help ease some of the difficulties people had financially and a way for donors to express giving," says Kathy Webster, store manager. "It started as a one-room operation and became this store," she adds.

Located on Gerrard Street just east of Parliament Street, Double Take is right on the edge of Regent Park, Canada's largest social housing project. Since 2005, the neighbourhood has been working through revitalization, aiming to curb poverty and youth crime and diminish the effects of its negative reputation.

Roaming the aisles of the store, the history and enduring reputation of the area is inconsequential. Clothing is well organized by size and shape, and a wide variety of books and knick-knacks are displayed in the corner. The store windows showcase neatly dressed mannequins modeling the latest fashions. The

latter is of penultimate importance to Double Take, particularly their aim to create a shopping experience resembling that of a "regular" department store.

"We're very much about respect," Webster explains. "...Our aim is that no matter how much someone has to spend, whether it's a dollar or a hundred dollars, they don't feel belittled or like second-class citizens," she adds.

It's often a challenge, according to Webster, particularly in light of strict budget constraints. Regardless, Double Take operates on a relationship of mutual respect between customers and the retailer. Indicative of this is their dedication to ensuring every

who will themselves go on to change the community for the better.

"We don't offer a hand out, we offer a hand up," Webster adds. Creating agency for individuals is a core component of that mentality, Webster explains, saying, "We work together with people, rather than simply directing them."

BEYOND THE RACK

Over time, Toronto has evolved as a vibrant hub for culture and ideas. Thrift and vintage shopping is just another piece of the puzzle.

Some of this impact comes from the stores themselves. Scriver and her family have played a crucial part in shaping the Kensington Market neighbourhood into what it is today.

"What I've been told is that in the '80s when we moved to Kensington Market... we were the first in the area and we shifted the whole market into what it is now," Scriver explains, "where more fashionable people are coming in."

Since Courage My Love opened, Kensington has become one of the prime spots in Toronto for vintage wares. Numerous stores have opened up in the neighbourhood, making it a shopping hotspot for tourists and locals alike.

"Toronto has a big vintage scene," says Scriver. "People come from other countries to shop here for their stores," she adds.

There is a growing presence of thrift stores in Toronto that cater to different demographics and needs.

"Toronto can be a very expensive city, especially for youth and students," Opperman says. "[Black Market offers] an affordable option that's unique and funky."

Thrift and vintage has been steadily growing in popularity, with students increasingly becoming a core demographic. "Our love of pop culture has a direct correlation to how we pick and purchase merchandise for the store, so it speaks to many generations," Opperman says. "We love to see what the students are wearing and hear what they're looking for," she adds.

The University of Toronto is not new to the thrift and vintage scene; in fact, many groups on campus have set up related events. For example, clothing swaps hosted by organizations like Caffiends and UFashion allow students to bring in their gently used items to trade with others.

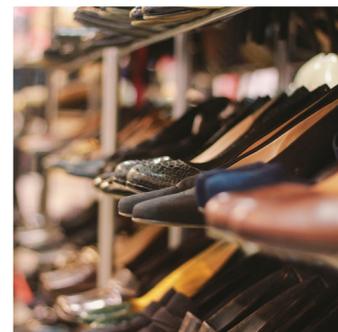
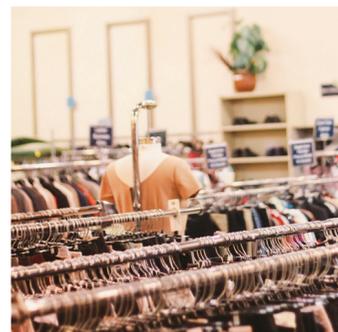
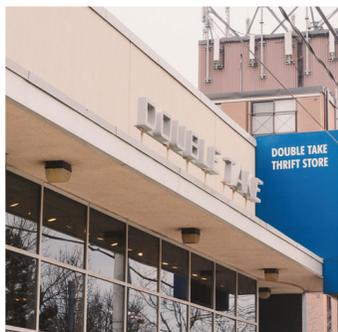
Entrenching thrifting habits into younger generations could have a significant positive impact on larger social movements. Vintage shopping has been connected to environmentalism in an attempt to promote recycling and reduce waste.

"Many people say this generation, [they] only think about themselves, and I don't believe that at all," Webster emphasizes. "I see many young people with a high social conscience."

Characteristic of many thrift stores is the sense of finding value in something that others cast away. Depending on the stores' aims, this awareness can be manifested in their respect and understanding of generations past or their goals to build a sense of community. Making the choice to buy used is a support of these efforts, which, in many ways, extends beyond the desire for the material thing.

"I think there should be more thrift shops and more emphasis on this activity, and less emphasis on buying the newest, greatest thing," Webster says. "There's nothing wrong with buying new things, but perhaps less consumerism could be achieved through things like thrift stores."

With pasts as diverse as the objects they display, Toronto thrift stores and the growing culture surrounding them bring something unique to the retail world. They bring new life to old possessions and an awareness of the value of saving rather than throwing away, creating a sense that the purchase you carry out the door is not something bought, but something borrowed.



Arts & Culture

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“An ambiguous sound”

Toronto-based band BADBADNOTGOOD speaks about their new album, live performances, and making it in the industry

Badbadnotgood performing at UTM last Thursday. PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE DOPSA/CFRE

Jacob Lorinc

ASSOCIATE ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

I found BADBADNOTGOOD (BBNG) tucked away backstage in the UTM Student Center, casually playing a round of *Super Mario Smash Bros.* before taking the stage. For a band with such an unusual sound, their ordinary disposition is deceiving. Since their inception, they've been given labels such as “Jazz-Hop,” “Post-Bop,” “Jazz-Trap with a hint of Hip-hop,” and pretty much any other combination of musical terminology that could potentially shed light on their unparalleled sound. “We all call it different things,” says drummer Alexander Sowinski, referring to the band's genre, “but usually the word ‘weird’ comes up.”

Last Thursday night, the musical trio brought their ambiguously categorized music to the UTM Student Center as an extension of their current North American tour. Their most recent album, *Sour Soul*, marks their fourth album to be released, and adds another chapter in the group's ever-progressing success story.

Having grown up in Toronto, the band's three members, Alex Sowinski (drums), Matt Tavares (keyboard), and Chester Hansen (bass) all met at Humber College before forming as a band. After a series of YouTube videos that showed them performing Jazz renditions of Odd Future songs, BBNG found themselves garnering attention from popular musicians such as Tyler The Creator, MF Doom, and Danny Brown. Before long they had developed a prominent fan base and were playing sold out shows across North America.

Now, the band finds themselves back on a university campus, but this time for different reasons. Backstage, Hansen quietly directs his attention towards the video game at hand, while Tavares leans back against the red sofa, spewing out information on early French cinema. The best thing about playing in Toronto, he points out, is that he can crash at his parents' place after the show.

The band collaborated on *Sour Soul* with Wu-Tang Clan member Ghostface Killah to develop 12 tracks of jazz-oriented instrumentals combined with a series of vigorously executed verses. The rapper has been active for over two decades, almost tripling BBNG's career. “The experience was definitely intimidating,” says Tavares, recounting their collaboration with Ghostface Killah. “I mean, the guy is such a legend. When we play these

songs with him, we want to make sure they feel good, sound good, and have an energy fit for a live setting. Each performance, we're kind of nervous but excited.”

The band is calm and collected on stage, and can easily transition their audience from casual head bobbing to sporadic bursts of jumping and flailing about. Sowinski, a master of rhythmic coordination, shouts out instructions to the audience while simultaneously keeping track of the beat. Tavares whirls his fingers up and down the keyboard, occasionally rising out of his seat, while Hansen leaps into the air at the mark of every bass drop. Together, they create a whirlwind of energy and awe-inspiring noise — made especially noticeable at their recent Opera House show, when Ghostface Killah, dumbstruck by what he was hearing, turned around and declared to the audience, “This shit is amazing!”

This time, Ghostface Killah wouldn't be joining them, but that wouldn't stop them from entertaining their crowd. Putting their jazz knowledge to the test, BBNG uses their instruments to create a slightly different sound every time, so that no two BBNG concerts will sound the same. “We want to bring whatever we can to get the right feeling to our sound,” notes Hansen. “When we play a song, we'll try to let it breathe, and not play it the same way each time. That's the jazz side to our music.”

BBNG's success can be seen as a victory for aspiring musicians hoping to make it in the seemingly distant realm of the music industry. The band sprang to fame from a few viral YouTube videos, fueled by nothing but raw talent. Sowinski, reflecting on the band's unexpected success, gives advice for other musicians trying to gain recognition from labels and record producers.

“The number one thing is not to stop,” he says. “We've busted our ass to go play with other musicians and groups, and keeping a network of people to play with is definitely worth it.”

Tavares chimes in as well, noting the importance of listening to new music: “I try to listen to something new everyday. It's good to have favorite records and what not, but if you keep listening to the same thing, then you're only going to draw inspiration from the same music. Listen to music from every era, and keep an open mind. Just because an album got a bad Pitchfork review, doesn't mean you shouldn't listen to it.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE DOPSA/CFRE



MARI ZHOU/THE VARSITY

Unconventional summer classifieds

Looking for a job this summer? Look no further



Alex Fernandes
VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

With summer quickly approaching, all of us unemployed students need to get out there and start looking for a job. Thankfully, I've gone and to the far away regions of the Internet to com-

pile a list of off-beat jobs for the ultimate unique summer experience. Don't settle for a lacklustre office job or for soul-sucking minimum-wage food sector hell. I've prioritized several key factors for ultimate summer job satisfaction: mostly outdoors and good for a story. Come September, with these jobs, you'll have the best "interesting fact" to share around the tutorial table.

PROFESSIONAL SLEEPER

This job is perfect for those of you who hate to get out of bed in the morning. Both scientific studies held at the university and living arts productions are often looking for volunteers willing to act as stand-in sleepers. The pay varies depending on the legitimacy of your employer, but plenty of researchers at our very own U of T are always looking for students to take part in their studies. I would recommend using University websites instead of Craigslist or Kijiji just to be safe. Who wouldn't want to earn some money catching up on all that sleep they lost during the school year?

ORDER PICKER

If you consider yourself a beer connoisseur, then Labatt Breweries has the job for you. They are looking for summer students, over the age of 19, to test out their beers, recommend them to different restaurants, and box the beer for shipping. The job involves a bit of heavy lifting and some drinking, so hopefully you aren't too much of a lightweight. Its located in Mississauga so not much travel necessary — just be sure not to drive to this job.

HERITAGE INTERPRETER

History buffs will love this listing: Parks Canada is looking for students to re-enact historically significant events as well as military parades and demonstrations in uniform. Some examples provided are panning for gold, canon fire, or high tea celebrations. No experience required, just days full of dress-up and impersonations that are sure to make your summer a little more fun.

POND DIVER

Apparently you can get paid quite a bit of money if you are able to score this job. Golf courses are always looking for brave individuals to go diving into their course ponds to retrieve all the golf balls that many not-so-talented golfers lost when trying to reach the fairway. This job isn't the easiest to get but contact your local golf course because somebody has to do it.

UNDERCOVER ANIMAL INVESTIGATOR

Green Work Canada, a website that lists environmentally friendly jobs, has some work for animal lovers who are willing to go undercover. This job requires you to travel to farms to look for potential animal cruelty. It isn't the most light-hearted employment, but its for a good cause and requires no formal education.

STAND-IN BRIDESMAID

The final job is for all you ladies out there with an entrepreneurial spirit. There is a high demand for stand-in bridesmaids for all those brides out there that either don't have enough friends or have uneven numbers in their bridal party. The best way to go about this one is to create your own website and advertisements, so it takes a little bit of extra work. The upside to all this is that you get to enjoy free dancing, free drinks, free food, and still get paid! The only requirements are to be charismatic, sociable, and a good actress, because some brides may ask you to play the part of a friend or family member to shield the fact that she hired you.

Do you hear the TAs sing

A playlist for all involved in the ongoing TA strike

Jacob Lorinc
ASSOCIATE ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

For the past week or so, disgruntled TAs have provided the St. George campus with loud, ambient noise in the form of chanting, singing, and the general clamor of a group that is demanding something. While studying undergraduate students, like myself, have gone to great lengths to stay focused (or, in some cases, hit the picket lines and joined in), we nevertheless find ourselves unable to escape the ever-present TA strike that leaves us without tutorials or graded papers.

But all opinions aside, is it not fair to say that our beloved TAs could express their anger through a more melodically driven musical number? Wasn't Bono speaking to the hearts of the TAs when he sang "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For?" And, alternatively, when the administration negotiates with the TAs, aren't they just trying to say what ABBA had been saying all along with "Take A Chance On Me?"

Maybe, just maybe, a TA Strike: The Musical is in order.

But that's for another time. Now, in the spirit of throwing a little sunlight over this otherwise gloomy episode in our institution's history, we've configured a playlist of songs that we feel accurately express the TAs' woes — and, just for good measure, we've included a list of songs that speak to the administration's point of view, as well.

SONGS FOR THE TA'S

"Too Little Too Late" – Jojo

In this classic, Jojo tells us the story of a woman who catches her boyfriend flirting with another girl at a frat party. Is he cheating on

her? The idea makes her upset. Will the TAs' salary be able to support them through the year? This idea makes them upset as well. Obvious connection.

"Wasted Hours" – Arcade Fire

The university caps the TAs' hours at 205 per year, however many TAs end up working much more than these allotted hours — Arcade Fire tells it like it is.

"You Never Give Me Your Money" – The Beatles

When summing up the TAs' unfortunate situation, this song is actually right on the money (pardon the pun). "Out of college, money spent/see no future, pay no rent/all the money's gone, nowhere to go," sings Paul McCartney. Bleak, but not far-fetched.

"So Appalled" – Kanye West

This is applicable mainly because Kanye spends the better part of his time trash-talking large corporations on radio shows. Yeezus is with you, TAs. Yeezus is with you.

"Everyday Struggle" – Notorious B.I.G.

Thankfully, the TAs have not found themselves in a situation where they have to sell crack on the side to make up for their low-income wage, so the song's relevance is really just in the title.

SONGS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION

Baby Come Back – Player

"Baby come back, you can blame it all on me/I was wrong, and I just can't live without you." They haven't admitted it yet, but we know that this is exactly what the administration has been feeling all along.



KAWMADIE KARUNANAYAKE/THE VARSITY

"Where Is The Love?" – Black Eyed Peas

In this somber ballad, the administration takes a step back, and tries to consult their president, Meric Gertler, asking desperately, "Father, father, father help us, send some guidance from above, 'cause people got me, got me questionin', where is the love?" And by people, they mean TAs.

"All You Had To Do Was Stay" – Taylor Swift

The administration tries to make life easier for both parties with this T-Swift number. Why leave when all you have to do is stay? Alas, if only it were that easy.

"Money Grabber" – Fitz & The Tantrums

The administration and the TAs reached a ten-

tative deal last Friday, however, upon the TAs' near-unanimous rejection of this deal, the administration became bitter. Now, they preach the good word of Fitz & The Tantrums, singing "Don't come back anytime/I've already had your kind/This is your pay back/Money Grabber."

"Tainted Love" – Soft Cell

Have we lost all hope? Have we been pushed to the point where we need an excessively campy '80s song to describe this situation? Apparently so, and really, no one's happy about it.

BONUS: A SONG FOR THE STUDENTS

"Stuck In The Middle With You" – Stealers Wheel

Let's just get this strike over with, shall we?

Press start (or clap) to begin

Video Games Live makes for a harmonious union of music and gaming cultures



Video Games Live performs video game soundtracks live. MICHAEL J. TRIFILLIS/THE VARSITY

Corey Van Den Hoogenband

VARSITY STAFF

When I was in high school, my afternoons and evenings were made up of two things. The first was the near-daily band practices I'd committed myself to as a member of the school's junior and senior concert bands, and the other was the hours spent on gaming sessions with the likes of *Uncharted*, *Assassin's Creed*, and *The Legend of Zelda*. While my high school self had a fairly romanticized view of the two art forms, I always saw them as entirely unrelated. Never would I have imagined that the mediums could come together quite the way they do in Video Games Live.

Video Games Live is a passion project by composer and gaming personality Tommy Tallarico that sees symphonies and choirs extracting music out of the 8-bit world and loading them into large scale concert halls across the globe. The show's ambition is twofold: to earn games rec-

ognition in mainstream culture as artistically significant rather than as a purely recreational pastime, and to get young people out to see and experience the symphony.

Alongside conductor Emmanuel Fratianni and roughly 40 symphony and choir members made up entirely of Toronto musicians, Tallarico returned to Massey Hall on March 7th, hosting a two and a half hour journey into the sonic depths of video game classics. The sold-out show contained several interactive segments — an essential part of any game — as attendees were invited on stage as part of a costume contest, for a round of *Space Invaders* fully scored by the symphony, and many other surprises. An all but essential round of *Guitar Hero* took place, where a fan played through "The Pretender" by the Foo Fighters on the plastic peripheral while Tallarico backed him up on his own electric guitar.

As for the music itself, the symphony powerfully swept through score after score, hitting every beat and packing nostalgic punches

thanks to Fratianni's renowned conducting. I caught myself tearing up during a rendition of the theme from *Kingdom Hearts*, a Disney/*Final Fantasy* crossover game that meant the world to me as a youth. The show benefited from a large screen behind the band that projected iconic scenes from the game being performed at that moment. This, to me, also seemed to be an excellent way to fill in the gaps for songs originating from games with which I was unfamiliar, enticing me to try them out.

As if the concept wasn't unique enough, Video Games Live occasionally mixed things up by diverging from the symphony in favour of other methods of performance. A bearded YouTube guitarist, for example, referring to himself only as "Viking Jesus," came on stage to perform a heavy metal tribute to Pokémon ("Because heavy metal and Pokémon go hand in hand"). Later, talented vocalist and cover artist Jillian Aversa provided vocal accompaniment to the band during "Zelda's Lullaby/Skyward Sword

Medley" while dressed in full Princess Zelda cosplay.

A brief look at the fans in attendance proved that Video Games Live achieved its two aforementioned goals. The number of occupied seats exemplified the emotional significance of video game music for many Torontonians, and the excited, glimmering faces of young and old fans alike revealed that the exposure to live music had an all-around positive reception. It's an entirely unique show in which fans waving lighters and cell phones are both outnumbered by those waving their Nintendo DS'. The show returns to Massey Hall every year, each time with a new set list crafted largely by requests Tallarico receives in the weeks leading up to the performance.

Last year, after Luminato Festival's Music Mob event, I told a friend that it's great to be a music nerd in Toronto. While I meant it at the time, that's never felt more true than when I walked out of Massey Hall after Video Games Live.

Ready, set, edit!

Combatting gender bias, one Wikipedia article at a time

Alice Roe

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

Love it or loathe it, we all use Wikipedia. In spite of our professors' warnings, the online encyclopaedia is most students' first port of call for instant information.

A survey published in 2011, however, found that there was a shocking gender bias in the volunteer-edited database. The Wikimedia Foundation found that less than 10 per cent of its contributors are female. Although the reasons for this disparity might be unclear, its practical effects are not: Wikipedia relies on the expertise of its contributors to build up its databases, meaning that if men are responsible for 90 per cent of the contributions, the content of the encyclopedia disproportionately reflects masculine interests.

This lack of diversity manifests itself in several ways. A quick search of two popular TV shows, both released on Netflix in the same year, illustrates the imbalance of information. The Wikipedia page on the Emmy Award-winning *Orange Is The New Black*, with the predominantly female audience, includes only a list of cast and characters. The corresponding page on *House of Cards*, however, offers mini-biographies on most major and minor characters and extensive full-season plot summaries.

As you frantically scour Wikipedia the night before a deadline, the information you receive is skewed by a significant gender bias. While you may be able to find a Wikipedia article on just about anything, topics relating to women's issues are disproportionately under-informed.

This prompted Siân Evans and Jacqueline Mabey to establish the Art+Feminism cam-

paign, organising a series of "edit-a-thons" to address the discrepancy in Wikipedia articles relating specifically to women and the arts. The inaugural edit-a-thon was held last February, and around 600 participants from across the world came together to create more than 100 new Wikipedia pages and improve upon around 90 pre-existing ones.

This year, on International Women's Day, another worldwide edit-a-thon was held. I headed to the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), the event base for Toronto, to see what was happening.

Stressing that no editing experience was necessary, the event started with a short tutorial on how to edit and upload information to Wikipedia, and experts remained on-hand throughout the afternoon to offer one-on-one coaching. We were taught how to edit a page, the importance of writing without bias, when and where footnotes are necessary, and

what counts as a reliable source. Then, using the wealth of resources available in the E.P. Taylor Research Library & Archives, we set about to correct the gender imbalance — one Wikipedia article at a time.

Across the weekend and across the globe, over 330 new articles were created and another 450 significantly improved. At the AGO, Canadian artists Penelope Stewart and Lori Blondeau, along with 27 others, were given Wikipedia pages.

I would never have thought to contribute to Wikipedia before discovering the Art+Feminism campaign, but the event highlighted how such a small gesture — sharing your knowledge — can help reverse the gender bias and correct the imbalances that manifest themselves in the most subtle yet significant ways — simply searching Wikipedia, for example.

Green is the new black

Victoria College's annual Enviro Fashion Show champions eco-friendly fashion



Kate Stoehr

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

The Vic Enviro Fashion Show is an annual event at Victoria College featuring original and second-hand pieces from student designers. The show promotes environmental awareness and sustainability in the world of fashion.

This year's theme was *Blade Runner*, the iconic 1980s sci-fi flick. Set in a dystopian Los Angeles, *Blade Runner* was chosen as a theme for its portrayal of a "lived-in future," a scenery staunchly opposed to the attractive and clean futuristic images of films like *Star Wars*. The *Blade Runner* vibe was very apparent in the feel of the show — the lighting, music, and, of course, the clothing itself.

As soon as the lights dimmed and the atmospheric music came over the speakers, the venue was transformed from a regular hall to a futuristic runway. The models, most of them first-time runway walkers, each gave off an air of confidence and experience that convinced the audience otherwise. The clothing ranged from casual everyday-wear to formal dress, and, in true *Blade Runner* tradition, featured an abundance of trench coats. While the clothing was predominantly wearable, some combinations appeared dramatic on the models, giving off a serious impression of haute couture.

Aside from showcasing student talent, the show had a deeper purpose: to promote eco-friendliness and sustainability in the fashion industry. "The fashion industry can be really unsustainable, with rayon made from slow-

growing trees, and garments you can only wear five times before they wear out or go out of style," says one of the event's fashion designers, Arlie Millyard, adding, "I think there needs to be a shift in both the industry and the way we think about clothes."

There was a very strong DIY message in the show, which was encouraging for a student who can't mend her own socks, let alone design an entire dress. Each piece featured in the show was made from entirely repurposed materials — a mix of altered vintage pieces, thrifted ensembles, and entirely original creations. In a society where high fashion is usually reserved for those with full pockets, it was promising to be shown stylish, original alternatives that were accessible within a student budget.

Along with sustainability, a large focus of the show was affordability. "By designing my own clothing and reworking material I already had, I established my sense of self and style through clothing with little to no money. This event embodies that feeling, and that chic and fashionable does not always mean big bucks," says Ivy Pan, one of the show's designers.

After the show, there was a buying period in which nearly all the pieces were brought out for the public to purchase. Audience members flocked to the racks to pick out their favourites, and, of course, each piece was priced economically. "There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes, administrative stuff," shares head designer Elana Moore, who's been involved with the show for four years. "It's hectic and crazy, there are 20 models and around 10 designers. It's a lot of work, but it's so rewarding."



Farewell, Long Winter

Last Friday was the final installment of this year's Long Winter Festival



Aneta Perehinets

VARSITY STAFF

The final installment of the ongoing Long Winter Festival came on a fittingly spring-like night. The festival markets itself as a multi-sensory experience of music, art, gaming, and talk. While this may sound overwhelming, the Great Hall was perfectly structured so as to allow festival-goers to take in a variety of pieces and performances.

I was lucky enough to have a chance to speak to one of the main organizers of Long Winter, Josh Zucker. Zucker is a member of Toronto band Fucked Up, and actively involved in Toronto's artistic community.

"In the mid-2000's Fucked Up would organize these three-day, multi-venue punk & hardcore festivals around Halloween," Zucker says, continuing, "Three years ago, [they] decided to promote something again in Toronto that [they] saw [themselves] playing at and had this idea to promote inter-arts shows. [They] then met with a few different friends in Toronto and launched Long Winter. That

first year Fucked Up played most of the shows, this year [they're] not playing at all. That was part of Long Winter becoming its own thing."

When I ask about how the festival has grown into their vision, Zucker says that it's become this "kind of artist-run festival and the end-goal — at least the goals for the next while — is to push that further, get more artists involved to take some control over curating and programming, with Toronto artists to own this thing and feel like they have a stake in it."

This was clear in the variety and blend of performance and art — even the Main Stage, which was the central room of the Great Hall, contained multiple instalment pieces as bands took the stage. A piece by the Analog Preservation Network was posed as a massive cubic disco ball (which I thought was decorative at first), but acted like a Jumbotron screen on acid during performances.

I started out at the Main Stage, but quickly began exploring around the building. I was surprised at the difference in mood and crowd in each particular room. At the beginning of the night, the Conversation Room contained



The last installment of this year's Long Winter festival happened last Friday. MALLIKA MAKKAR/THE VARSITY

two instalment pieces at opposite ends — Lucy Satzewich's Shit Talk pop-up wall and Bottom's Dream Collective interactive forest set-up. I then decided to go to the basement where I realized that talk show Long Night with Vish Khanna was beginning. The panel of speakers was fantastic, particularly Kids in the Hall's Scott Thomas.

It was an interesting sensory experiment to go from listening to noise rock band Not Of and appreciating installation art to laughing at Vish Khanna's opening sequence. Because I came early, there was no line and I was able to openly explore. Along with another 250 people, I also received a free vinyl featuring Long Winter acts Elsa and Dreamsploitation, although it was a really welcoming gesture. There truly was no judgement in the space as the mesh of art brought a vastly diverse crowd of people. As the night wore on, however, the event gained a heavier youth presence and progressed into a crowded party with a line-up extending around the block.

There is a room, a time (the crowd gets more interesting toward 2 am), a medium, and a performance or piece for anyone in the vicinity

to stop by. Long Winter is an exciting festival that will hopefully grow into a notorious Toronto event.

Zucker feels that, "As far as popularity, I just think it's a winning combination — there is a lot of good music and good art, the door price is Pay What You Can, it's all ages and it's a fun party. We're trying to be a portal for young people into the arts scene and a way to discover stuff in person, meet people, have fun."

DJ Maylee Todd, a multi-faceted Toronto-based artist, agrees, adding, "It's a really liberating event, where I feel like anything goes. It's amazing because in my experience, the people who are already coming to view stuff seem to have an open mind and an intention to communicate."

Jonathan Rogers, the vocals & guitarist of Toronto indie dream-pop band Elsa, added his two cents to the mix: "I think the whole point of the Long Winter festival was to have varied art forms. Like there's a talk show downstairs, new up-and-coming bands in the Conversation Room, and then there's some bands that have been around for a long time and come from different walks of life and genres. They want it to be all over the place."

Hall of art

Seeley Hall was home to many students' artistic endeavours

Sara Rebelo

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

The Trinity Art Show took a chance this week to promote a more creative side of the U of T student community. Seeley Hall in Trinity College was transformed to present a free, inclusive space that allowed for artistic expression and the collaboration between students, patrons, and artists.

The show was able to lend a creative outlet to a variety of different mediums, and a wide array of artistic talent — from painting to sculptures to digital photography. "L'umanita contro il male" by Valerine Chandrakesome was one of three paintings in a series that represented the multiple performances that one body can consume. The use of colour and blurred lines gave the onlooker a feeling of movement and motion. Throughout the exhibit, artwork was hung on one of three sides of erected wooden stands.

Kayla Tremblett's piece entitled "Harmful Algae Bloom (HABS)" used a mix of digital pho-

tography on canvas and was meant to draw on the uncertainty of life, influenced by decay. Her ability to portray the vulnerability of life through the delicate, permeable fabric created an innovative illusion that combined two very different mediums.

In contrast, several postmodern pieces hung throughout the exhibit. Charlene Lo's two pieces, "Reality" and "Untitled," used consumer products to question the illusionary truth of reality. She used consumable products to create structures that led the onlooker to question how the eyes perceive their surroundings. The bright colours of her pieces stood out in a room full of muted creations.

Overall, the Trinity Art Show provided an opportunity for emerging artists to contribute to a growing creative culture at U of T. A silent auction offered an incentive for students to commission the work exhibited at the show. Fifteen per cent of the proceeds from the silent auction went towards the Trinity Art Fund Initiative that will allow for the promotion of the artistic community at the college.



Untitled performance by Alexandra Coulson. AMY WANG/THE VARSITY

In conversation with Molly Shoichet

U of T professor wins Women in Science Award



Molly Shoichet recipient of L'Oréal-UNESCO Women in Science Award. PHOTO COURTESY OF MOLLY SHOICHET

Anastasiya Muntyanu

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

In recognition for her novel research, University of Toronto professor Dr. Molly Shoichet has been named the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women In Science North American laureate for 2015. Shoichet was one of five award recipients worldwide, representing North America, and received a prize of just under \$140,000.

This award has been given out annually since 2008 to support top women scientists and recognize their significant scientific accomplishments. One of the goals of this program is to encourage young women to pursue careers in science and engineering.

Incredible biomedical research conducted at The Shoichet Lab has

the potential to change the way diseases are treated. Professor Molly Shoichet guides a group of 25 researchers to make breakthrough advancements in medicine at the intersection of engineering, chemistry, and biology.

Shoichet's work involves targeted delivery of stem cells to the spinal cord and the brain, using novel biodegradable hydrogel polymers. Polymers are long, chain-like structures made up of smaller, repeated molecules. The hydrogel polymers can be injected through a needle and then set almost immediately in the target area. This delivery system, invented in the lab, can be compared to a space suit that holds fragile stem cells inside a hydrogel. To enhance integration and promote survival of these stem cells, support cells are added

into the hydrogel network. The next step is to refine the technique and then translate the science from the bench to the bedside by beginning clinical trials.

The Varsity spoke with Professor Molly Shoichet about the award, which she will be presented with during a ceremony in Paris on March 18.

The Varsity: What does it feel like to be part of the high recognition events for women in the science?

Molly Shoichet: This award recognizes excellence in science. It is a tremendous honour to have our science recognized. I feel privileged to work in Canada, at the University of Toronto, with great collaborators and exceptional students, post-doctoral fellows, technicians.

TV: What is the inspiration/motivation behind your work?

MS: We're inspired to advance knowledge towards clinical application — to ultimately make a difference in people's lives. We are tackling big questions in science and engineering and are motivated to make a difference.

TV: How will your research findings benefit patients and what is the next challenge that stands before implementation of these new methods in clinic?

MS: There are many stars that need to align in order for us to advance our research to the benefit of patients. We start with models, which advance our understanding and refine our science. We patent our inventions, providing opportunities for licensing or company formation. Ultimately, we need to partner with industry in order to advance beyond academic research toward product development and clinical trials.

TV: Where do you hope to take your research in the future?

MS: Our goal is to ultimately advance research to the clinic. We are pursuing several strategies — cell delivery to the back of the eye (the retina) to overcome blindness, cell and biomolecule delivery to the brain to overcome stroke, cell and biomolecule delivery to the spinal cord to overcome spinal cord injury, [and] drug delivery and drug screening applied to cancer. Through active collaboration, we are confident that we can make a difference.

TV: What piece of advice do you have for women thinking of pursuing a career in science?

MS: It's a fantastic career. It allows you to be imaginative, creative and innovative. You have the opportunity to invent the future. Moreover, you can have a career and a family — they are not mutually exclusive. I have both and so can you. Make sure to choose a partner who values your career as much as you do.

TV: How do you manage to achieve a good balance between your personal and professional lives?

MS: I have a lot of help — I don't do anything alone. Professionally, I work with leading international scientists and clinicians and have an amazing research group of creative and independent thinkers. I work with a great admin[istrative] staff as well, which enables me to tackle new projects. Personally, I have a great husband and additional support from my mom. I spend many hours working... but I also find time to spend with my sons and husband. There's never a dull moment and very little down time, but I thrive on being busy. I also eat a lot of chocolate — [that's the] secret to my success.

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity and length.

Atherosclerosis from a lymphatic point of view

Hosted by the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, this seminar features Dr. Gwendalyn J. Randolph, a professor at the Department of Pathology & Immunology at Washington University School of Medicine

Monday, March 16
4:00 pm-5:00 pm
Medical Sciences Building
Room 2172
Free; no registration necessary

Massey Grand Rounds, 9th Annual Symposium - The Science of Stress

Centred on the topic of mental health, this symposium features a keynote address by former Senator Romeo Dallaire.

Wednesday, March 18
11:00 am-5:00 pm
Massey College
Free; Register online

Strategies for systematic, scoping or other comprehensive searches of the literature - Part 1

Hone your evidence-based research skills as you learn about databases beyond MEDLINE/PubMed with the first of this two-part workshop presented by Heather Cunningham and Carla Hagstrom

Wednesday, March 18
4:00 pm-5:30 pm
Gerstein Library, Instruction Lab
Register online

The Success of Quotidian (Everyday) Ethics Aided by Students, Fellows and JCB Colleagues

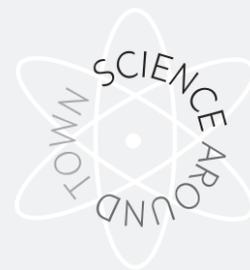
Hear from Bob Parke, a clinical ethicist at Humber River Hospital; don't fret if you can't make it — the talk will also be webcast online.

Wednesday, March 18
4:00 pm-5:30 pm
Health Sciences Building
Room 108
Free; no registration necessary

S.E.E.D.S. Third Annual Gala: Building a Healthy Future

The gala will showcase presentations from the finalists of the Built Environment conference and case competition; in addition, local artists will perform live.

Friday, March 20
6:30 pm-9:30 pm
Hart House Debates Room
By donation; register on Eventbrite



Use your phone to focus

Flipd is a new Android app with features to lock mobile devices and more



BRITTANY GEROW/THE VARSITY

Sandy Wang

VARSITY STAFF

In the current age of technological advances, it's hard to avoid getting distracted by the countless notifications and messages that we receive on our mobile devices.

As part of a Toronto-based startup, third-year U of T computer science student Andres Moreno has come up with a solution to help control the excessive use of our mobile devices. Moreno is the lead developer of a new mobile application called Flipd, which advocates "freedom from mobile distractions."

Moreno, like us all, has noticed the very visible phenomenon of people being glued to their phones. "I think that everyone would be much more productive if they could put it down and focus on their work or go out and have some fun," he says.

In essence, Flipd allows users to lock their devices so that they are unable to access them in order to avoid distractions.

Many apps for this purpose are currently available on the market; Flipd, however, comes equipped with many additional convenient features, taking the prevention of excessive device use to a new level. Users can choose to completely lock their mobile devices or tablets for up to 12 hours. With a feature called "smart lock screen," users can still make emergency phone calls, receive notifications, and enable auto response text messages so that they won't be completely disconnected from the social world. Further, Flipd can be used in groups — a person can

limit another person's mobile device usage in a non-invasive way.

Moreno is more interested in seeing a behavioural change in users than in just providing a lock screen.

"For example the app provides 60-second breaks while you're locked in case you need to use [your phone]," he says, adding, "There's also an auto response feature that provides a personalized response so that you don't get the feeling that you need to respond right away."

After taking courses on mobile application development and network communication, Moreno became interested in both areas and learned more about them on his own time. "[W]hen the idea for this app came along it was a great opportunity to put them in practice and learn more," he says.

The Android version of the app has been in beta since December and was launched in late February. Moreno is currently working on an iOS version of the app with his team, which they are planning to launch in the summer. "Following that, we have ideas to expand our market and release a version geared towards businesses or schools," says Moreno.

The app is already gaining momentum, with over 1,000 downloads. "It feels great knowing you're creating an app that people from several different countries are using right now," Moreno says.

Teamwork is key for Moreno, and he would recommend that to all new developers as well. "I would advise them to be part of a team when creating the app," he says, adding, "You get a lot more ideas and different viewpoints that will make your app much better."

Bubbling up

Study: researchers brew magma in U of T basement to uncover new mechanism for volcanic sulphur transport

Nadezhda Woinowsky-Krieger

ASSOCIATE SCIENCE EDITOR

In 1991, the world witnessed the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, a volcano in the Philippines that spewed out so much sulphur into the atmosphere that the global temperature dropped by one degree for an entire year. For two decades, scientists wondered how Mount Pinatubo and other volcanoes like it could produce such a tremendous amount of sulphur, as it was believed to be physically impossible that one single magma source could send that much of the substance to the surface. Now, U of T professors James Mungall and James Brenan, along with their French and Australian colleagues, have finally found the solution to the puzzle.

Published in *Nature Geoscience* at the end of last month, the research describes a newly-discovered mechanism for transporting sulphur and other elements, including copper, nickel, and precious minerals, by means of vapour bubbles.

"When a magma contains a lot of sulphur — one thing that can happen is that it can actually produce a sulphur-bearing separate phase," explains Brenan, who is part of the Department of Geophysics, "and it's much like if you have oil and vinegar in a salad dressing, the two don't actually homogenize. They can remain in separate phases, [and] you have to shake it up a lot for it to be homogeneous."

"The same thing happens in magmas," he continues, "if they have too much sulphur they actually produce blobs of iron sulphide magma."

By conventional wisdom, these blobs of iron sulphide, which as the name suggests are highly rich in iron, would be far too heavy to



JULIEN BALBONTIN/THE VARSITY

reach the surface. It was thought that this dense and heavy magma would sink deeper into the Earth and settle too far from the surface to become available to erupt into the atmosphere. However, as the new research shows, the iron sulphide "blobs" will instead actually attach themselves to vapour bubbles, and then hitch a ride to the surface.

Despite being chock-full of iron, this bubbly-buddy system still works for two reasons. First, the force that keeps the iron sulphide attached to the vapour bubbles which physicists call "surface tension," is, in this case, stronger than the gravity trying to pull them back down. Sec-

ondly, the buddy-bubble is usually composed of water and carbon dioxide vapour, which is less dense than the rest of the magma, so it actually serves as an efficient transport mechanism to carry the sulphide up to the part of the system that's erupting.

The research was conducted using experiments performed below the surface of the U of T campus. "We have a lab down in the basement where we do experiments," says Brenan from his office in the Earth Sciences Centre, indicating downwards, "We have furnaces that go to temperatures at which magmas would form. We create the conditions in the laboratory — so

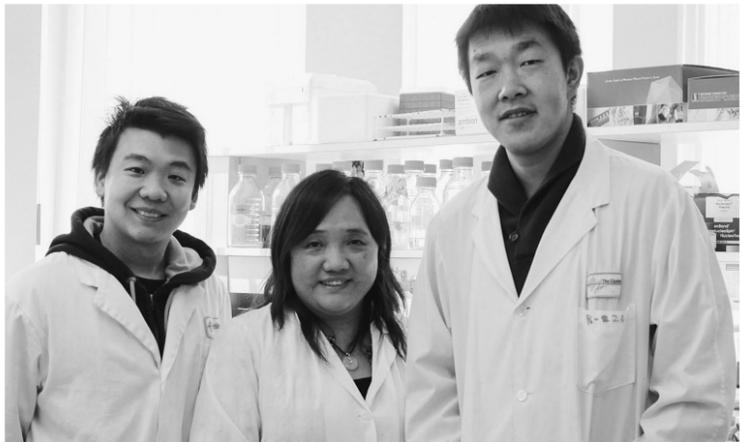
these are big furnaces, and they get hot enough to melt rock."

What the observations showed was that so long as there was a gas present in Brenan's home-brewed magma, the iron sulphide blobs, against all intuition, would want to attach themselves to the vapour bubbles every time.

As well as contributing to our knowledge of how sulphur from volcanic emissions can affect climate, the vapour-carrier mechanism is thought to be responsible for depositing copper, nickel, and precious metals, such as gold, near the surface in areas where there is lots of volcanic activity.

Hope for treating multiple sclerosis

Breaking up two proteins may contain the answer



Dr. Fang Liu and her team at CAMH. SANDY MA/THE VARSITY

Kethika Kulleperuma
VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

Scientists may have found a promising lead to follow for treating multiple sclerosis (MS) — the most widespread neurological disorder disabling young adults between the ages of 20 and 40.

Individuals with MS can suffer from almost any nervous system-related functional decline with varying intensities. Defects in vision, sensation, balance, and coordination are the most common symptoms.

Recent evidence suggests that, in the case of MS, glutamate — a brain chemical that relays signals between nerve cells — excessively stimulates nerve cells, causing them to be damaged or, at times, killed. Glutamate mediates its effects on nerve cells by binding to and activating an AMPA re-

ceptor, which is a protein located on the surface of nerve cells.

Dr. Fang Liu and her team from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto were looking for a plan of attack to block specific AMPA receptors that get excessively activated by glutamate. “This is an important distinction from normal AMPA receptors that otherwise play a critical role in learning and memory,” explains Dr. Dongxu Zhai, the lead researcher of the project.

Published in *Annals of Clinical and Translational Neurology* early this year, the team detailed how it tracked down those specific AMPA receptors, suggesting a novel therapeutic target for the development of MS medications.

The researchers referred to one of

their previous studies showing how excessively activated AMPA receptors by glutamate can initiate cell death through a protein-protein two-some between a part of AMPA receptor and another enzyme, which is also a protein.

In the current study, they showed that the same complex was present at significantly higher levels in dead tissue from MS patients and mice that mimic MS symptoms.

The team then wondered whether breaking up this protein-pair would reduce nerve cell death in the sick mice. To this end, Zhai designed a peptide — a small chemical chain — for subsequent treatment.

The sick mice treated with the peptide showed regrowth of nerve cells, increased survival of parent cells from which the insulating coat around the nerve cells grow, and the rescue of thinning of the very same coat.

Commenting on the putative drug-like features of the peptide, Zhai adds, “Based on our current experiment, the treatment of this peptide had very minimum side effects and that is very encouraging.” The team did not detect any direct effect of the peptide on the immune system of the mice model.

“Hopefully we can develop a drug based on this peptide. Some challenges, however, exist — one of which is we now need to determine the best route of administration since that can greatly affect the efficacy of the drug,” Zhai remarks.

Too much added sugar in children's menus

Canadian sugar levels exceed WHO guidelines



NOOR NAQAWEH/THE VARSITY

Jasper Lim

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

A recent study conducted by researchers at the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Toronto found that, of 3,178 meals sourced from 10 fast-food and seven sit-down restaurants, 50 per cent are found to exceed the WHO's proposed daily recommendation for sugar intake.

The WHO recommends that added sugar not make up more than five per cent of daily dietary consumption — a 50 per cent drop from the older guideline published in the early 2000s, which recommended that it make up less than 10 per cent.

Mary Scourboutakos, the lead author of the study and a doctoral student at the Department of Nutritional Sciences, says that consuming high amounts of sugar can lead to long-term potential harm, such as causing obesity and tooth decay.

Scourboutakos's research focuses on added sugar, otherwise known as free sugar, which is “table sugar added to foods and drinks by the cook or consumer and sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit juice concentrates.” The research is important as there is an ongoing obesity epidemic in Canada: one in four children and youth in Canada is found to be overweight or obese.

Obese children are much more likely to experience health conditions, such as Type 2 Diabetes and high blood pressure, which were previously seen only among adults.

Restaurants offer a mix of unhealthy and healthy options on their menus, varying in the amount of sugar, but it remains unknown to researchers whether or not children choose the healthy options over the unhealthy ones. In their research, they recommend incentivising children to select the healthy options, such as negative incentive of refraining from selling toys with meals that do not meet nutritional criteria.

However, as profit-driven organizations, restaurants are likely to continue the unhealthy options due to continual demand and preferences of consumers. Until we, as consumers, make a clear decision to not have these options made available to us, our children may continue to fall into the temptation of soda and deep-fried food.

In addition, Scourboutakos warns against consuming food that claims to be sugar-free, such as sugar-free cola, because “artificial sweeteners make you crave for more sugar.” Thus, parents and children would be better off consuming naturally flavoured food.

When asked about the current state of school meals, Scourboutakos says, “While recently, it is included in the provincial legislation to ensure the [nutritional] quality of meals in school canteens, we know little in whether it is actually being implemented.” She added that there has been much wider discussion and active implementation of new measures in the United States, though some new ones have yet to be successful.

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Green solutions and the 600-ton threshold

What happens when green solutions aren't really that eco-friendly?

Alexandra Rusu

VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

In recent years, government policies and individuals have been pushing for more eco-friendly transportation and energy production.

"In total, the US transportation sector — which includes planes, trains, ships, and freight — produces around thirty percent of all US global warming emissions," states an article, titled, "Science for a healthy planet and a safer world," written by the Union for Concerned Scientists.

We have seen this change implemented in many places. Coal furnaces have been replaced by natural gas generators and gasoline-consuming vehicles by hybrids.

However, what happens when "eco-friendly" solutions result in more carbon emissions than their fossil fuel counterparts?

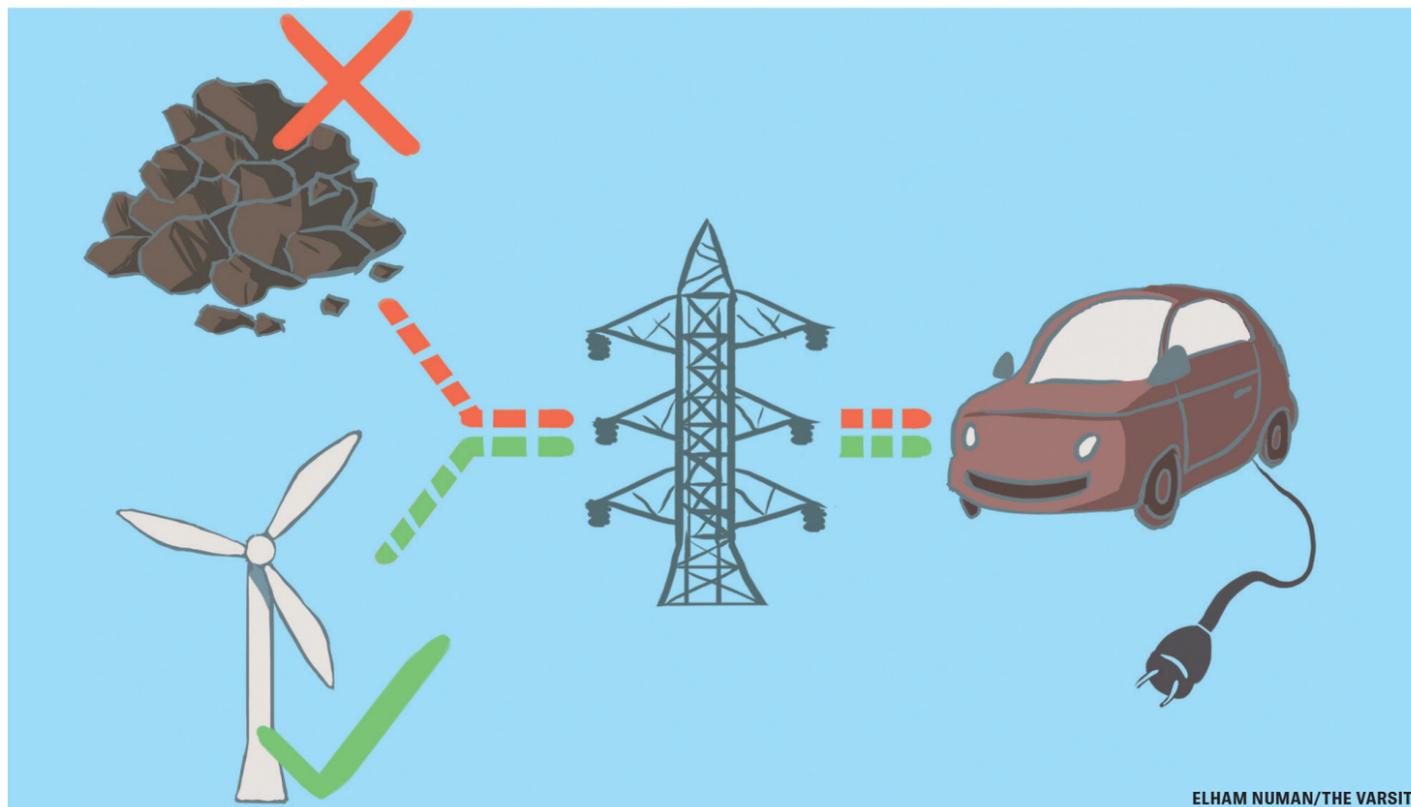
Professor Christopher Kennedy of the Department of Civil Engineering at U of T recently published an article in *Nature Climate Change* entitled "Key threshold for electricity emissions," which deals with the issues facing so-called eco-friendly solutions and how to resolve them.

"The threshold refers to the level of carbon intensity of electricity supply (tonnes of [carbon dioxide] equivalents per [gigawatt hours (GWh)] of generation) above which electrification strategies (e.g. replacing gasoline cars with electric vehicles) typically lead to higher [greenhouse gas] emissions," says Kennedy.

The problem with so-called eco-friendly solutions is that they sometimes produce more carbon emissions than their fossil fuel or natural gas-burning counterparts.

This happens when the energy used to produce the electricity for electric vehicles comes from "dirty" sources such as fossil fuels and the burning of natural gas.

"Alberta, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia are the only Canadian provinces with electricity



ELHAM NUMAN/THE VARSITY

generation over the threshold," says Kennedy. In the case of Alberta and Saskatchewan, this may be due to the prevalence of fossil fuels in comparison to other, renewable sources, such as hydro.

"They could reduce their carbon intensity by greater use of renewables or nuclear. They have to, otherwise they'll be left behind in the evolving green economy," says Kennedy.

Ontario, which uses mostly nuclear and hydro-power to operate, is at 96 tons of carbon dioxide produced per GWh of en-

ergy, which is well below Kennedy's 600-ton threshold. With the proximity of Niagara Falls and numerous nuclear facilities, "Ontario is a great place to be driving electric vehicles," says Kennedy.

For international policies, as well as US-Canada negotiations on climate change, the 600-ton threshold could give governments a starting point when negotiating emission levels.

"Governments will begin to include carbon intensity of electricity generation as a

key metric in their climate change negotiations. The 600-ton threshold will be used as a short-term target for the high emitters," states Kennedy, suggesting that countries such as the US and China could have something to work towards on a short-term basis.

"The 600-ton threshold is based on a review of international studies. It's an approximate universal global number... the 600-ton threshold is robust enough that governments can use it to guide energy policy," Kennedy says.

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Third time's the charm

Blues runner Gabriela Stafford recounts her experience at this past weekend's CIS track and field championship win



Women's track and field team poses with CIS championship banner. MARTYN BAZYL/VARSITY BLUES

Gabriela Stafford
VARSITY CONTRIBUTOR

It will be difficult to try to represent all of the heart and passion that I have experienced as a part of this team with words on a piece of paper, but I will do my best.

Every journey has a starting point, and it's difficult to pinpoint exactly where ours began. At the very least, this Canadian Interuniversity Sports (CIS) championship title was three years in the making, so I suppose our journey began in 2013 when we lost the overall title by a mere two points.

In 2014, we experienced a similar heartbreak when, despite the amazing breakout performances and beating our ranking, the banner was two points out of reach again. I remember as a rookie last year agonizing over those two measly points.

There was no agonizing over points this year, and there was no leaving it to chance. There was a lot of heart, a lot of guts, and relentless self-belief — and we finally walked away with our CIS banner. At the end

of the three days, our individual performances culminated into a whopping total of 131.50 points, ahead of Trinity Western University in second with 79 points.

The moment when we finally got to hold this coveted banner — when this banner became our banner — at the awards presentation, my breath was taken away. Winning the team title meant so much to us. No team was more deserving than this group of ladies.

We were there on a mission and we were confident that we would achieve it, but not one of us takes this victory for granted. After the past two years, we know more than anyone that just because something can happen doesn't mean that it will happen. But these ladies never stopped believing in themselves, and our coaches never stopped believing in us either.

My favourite race memory from the weekend was the 4x800-metre relay. We had a dominant team lined up and we had just broken the Canadian record at the Ontario University Athletics championship, but we knew that we would have a great



Stafford competes in relay earlier this season. MARTYN BAZYL/VARSITY BLUES

battle with the University of Victoria.

Rachel Jewett did an amazing job leading us off, Honor Walmsley continued to stretch our lead, and Sasha Gollish — the CIS Athlete of the Year — dropped the hammer to give me a very comfortable lead.

As the anchor, I had to run away from one of the best 800-metre runners in Canada, Rachel François, and I knew the race wasn't won until I crossed the line. When I grabbed that baton, I ran for my life. I would not settle, and I refused to be caught.

Running scared clearly worked, because we ran a new national and CIS record of 8:32.36, shattering the previous record by 10 seconds. Nothing can compare to anchoring with the fastest 800-metre of my life, and then running into the arms of my fellow record-breakers who held me

when my legs gave out.

Behind every great team is an even greater support group, and we are blessed with the best in the country. We were all so proud when our head coach Carl Georgevski was awarded with the CIS Coach of the Year.

Georgevski, along with the rest of our coaches, has taught us never to dismiss heady goals out of hand. Instead, we've learned to ask, "How? Where? When?" — they have taught us that we are limitless.

Looking ahead, I am confident that we will continue to be a force to be reckoned with. We have many athletes graduating from our program this year, and they leave us with big shoes to fill, but I believe that we are up for the challenge. One thing is certain: as long as we have a team with this much heart, we will never be defeated.

WOMEN'S TEAM FINISHES
IN FIRST PLACE

131.5 POINTS

MEN'S TEAM FINISHES IN
SIXTH PLACE

42 POINTS

WOMEN'S MEDALS COUNT

GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



STAFFORD'S MEDALS
COUNT

GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



MEN'S MEDALS COUNT

GOLD



OUTSTANDING ATHLETE OF
THE MEET

SASHA GOLLISH

The physicality of acting

U of T students explain the physical exertion required while acting



The UC Follies' 2014 production of *Woyzeck*. FILE PHOTOS: RUSABA ALAM/THE VARSITY

Zaigham Ali
VARSITY STAFF

Learning how to act is much more than imitation — it is an all-around effort requiring hard work. The majority of actors spend many years studying and training. One of the most

overlooked aspects when it comes to acting is the fitness and physical endurance required.

Fitness and physical activity play a huge role in putting on a good performance, especially when it comes to fight choreography.

"Good warm-ups are essential for this to work [and actors have a lot of

fun warm-ups], but knowing your fellow cast-mates and really getting on the same wavelength as them before even entering the stage is also a necessity," says Arun Radhakrishnan, co-president of the Trinity College Dramatic Society (TCDS), on the topic of fight choreography.

Radhakrishnan has experience with fight choreography from acting in plays such as *Richard III* and *Murder in the Cathedral*.

Travis DeWolf is a fourth-year student currently taking the course DRM403, Performance III. Last week, the class performed *Katie of Heilbronn: An Obsession*. The show was directed by Banuta Rubess, the instructor of the course.

The play is very physically demanding. "Almost all of the actors are playing anywhere from two to five different characters across a show which, when you include preshow and intermission, runs about two and a half hours," says DeWolf.

"This means that not only do actors have to be very aware of their distinct character physicalities on stage, but also have little 'downtime' backstage between scenes due to fairly extensive costume and makeup changes," she adds.

"I think there are two vital components to keeping ourselves as healthy and ready to work as possible. The first of which is having a thorough, though not overly physically strenuous, warm up of the body, voice, and mind through stretching, light cardio, massage, focus exercises, and a vocal warm up. This addresses the majority of the physical needs for the show and prevents muscle/vocal strain within each performance and for subsequent performances," DeWolf adds.

All drama students at U of T are required to take the Introduction to Movement for the Actor class (DRM211). Movement classes are fundamental to becoming a great actor.

If actors misuse their body to a

certain extent, the damage will not be easily repaired, if repaired at all. A poorly done stage fall resulting in a bruised knee is an example of a potentially "career shortening move." It is important for aspiring actors to begin movement training as early in their career as possible.

"An actor has three tools at his or her disposal: the mind, the voice, and the body. Should any one of those elements be neglected or underused, the actor's success at any project will be diminished proportionally. Therefore, it is imperative that all actors begin movement training as soon as they enter any acting program, and that they continue to incorporate the skills and knowledge learned in those courses long after graduation," says DeWolf.

In a director's shoes, it is important to recognize that each actor, and indeed each person in general, has a different vocabulary about movement and their bodies.

Blues football team finds challenges in recruiting athletes

U of T struggles to compete with other Canadian and American universities while recruiting players

Anthony Piruzza

VARSITY STAFF

A university football team's success can usually be traced back to the quality of the players that previous recruitment drives attracted. This makes recruitment a high stakes pursuit, with numerous schools competing for the same top prospects.

YouTube is cluttered with highlight videos made by high school football players, but head coach & management of football operations, Greg Gary says that the team still relies on traditional means of evaluating talent. He says that "[the] OVFL [Ontario Varsity Football League] is a really good place to identify... up and coming good football players in Southern Ontario."

The Varsity Blues also rely on grassroots relationships with high school coaches across the country to connect with incoming prospects.

Top recruits are often contacted by interested coaches in their second year of high school, and interested coaches follow their athletic development closely, according to first-year student Mac VanDuzer, who was recruited to the Blues but was not ultimately granted a place on the team.

Scholarships are usually offered between December and January, after an athlete completes his final high school football season. These scholarships are dependent on the player maintaining a minimum academic average and making the football team, which is not guaranteed.

Gary notes that first-year athletes occasionally withdraw from varsity football after realizing the academic pressures of being a full-time university student. This results in a loss of their athletic scholarship.

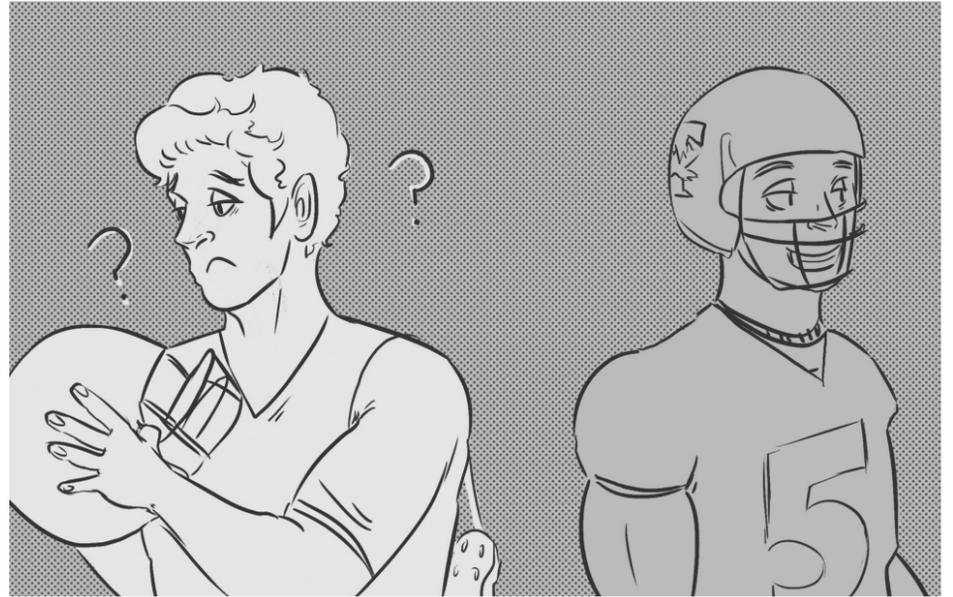
Along with other teams in the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) Conference, the University of Toronto faces an uphill battle in attracting athletes with scholarship money. The conference's rules stipulate that Athletic Financial Awards (AFA) awarded to a player cannot aggregate to more than \$4,000 per year.

This maximum value is unique to the OUA, as all other CIS conferences are free to award the full cost of tuition to incoming athletes. Additionally, OUA players must maintain a 70 per cent average in order to renew their AFA's while athletes in the other three Canadian conferences need only a 65 per cent average.

Despite the financial restrictions, Gary believes that the University of Toronto's academic reputation is a unique factor that draws top student athletes. "If you're a serious student athlete, this is where you want to be," says Gary.

VanDuzer explains, "What drew me to the University of Toronto was the way their football program works alongside the academic programs in order to ensure that students are taking their schooling at least as seriously as their athletic careers."

Convincing prospective athletes to look past the Varsity Blues football team's recent losing records was an early challenge for Gary when he was promoted to the head coach position in



JULIEN BALBONTIN/THE VARSITY

2011. Gary admits that this legacy presented an obstacle in attracting top level recruits. "The initial aim was just trying to stabilize the program and just bring in recruits," he says.

He went on to say that the team's 4-4 record in 2013 has improved relations with possible recruits. "I think our program, with the 4-4, I think that made it easier to recruit," says Gary.

OUA teams also have to compete with American universities to keep football recruits in Canada despite the heightened popularity and

financial resources of NCAA teams.

In an attempt to expand its national visibility, the CIS signed a 2013 deal with Rogers Sportsnet to broadcast an expanded array of Canadian university sports, including the Vanier Cup. Gary explains, "I think the CIS has done a great job of promoting their product."

Although the Varsity Blues football season is over, their success in future years will be founded in their current efforts to attract the 2017 class of recruits.

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..... The candidates

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Hussein Fawzy
Alexander Marshall
Joshua Oliver
Alexandra Rusu

Details of the election can be found at
var.st/boardelections2015

If you have any questions or concerns about the election, please email the returning officer, Kelly Rahardja, at elections@thevarsity.ca.

Sudoku

Fill the column so that every column, row and box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

EASY

			7			3		
		8			2	5		
5		2			3	4		9
	6	3		2			1	5
	9		6	8	1		4	
1	8			5		6	9	
7		4	1			3		6
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	1			3				

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HARD

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Answers online at var.st/crossword

Varsity Publications' Spring Meeting of Members

Date & time:

Thursday, March 19, 2015, 5:15 pm

Location:

21 Sussex Ave., room 200

Proxies:

Forms are available online and due to the meeting location at 5:15pm on March 18, 2015.

All members of Varsity Publications Inc. are eligible to attend and vote at the meeting.

Details of the meeting, including proxy forms, can be found at var.st/smm2015

If you have any questions or concerns about the meeting, please email editor@thevarsity.ca.