

Fall 2018

glue

THE OTTAWA STUDENT MAGAZINE

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Contributors



Writer

Holly Menchetti loves telling stories. From quick-hit pieces on the latest trends to in-depth features, her interest in finding the story behind every person. Her personal journalism feature on her trip abroad and how it changed her perspective on the world is one that resonates with readers. When Menchetti isn't in the newsroom or working, she enjoys reading and spending time with friends.



Illustration

Kave Amini has an eye for illustration and a passion for art. After moving to Canada from Iran less in 2017 ago, Amini is already eager to explore new opportunities, including working with *Glue Magazine*. With his previous illustration experiences in his home country and his keen interest in Canadian art, there's no doubt Amini will be successful in his future studies in the illustration and concept art program.



Advertising

Austin Tenhunen served as *Glue's* promotions manager, but he liked to be involved with all aspects of the magazine. Tenhunen enjoys advertising that keeps consumers involved and connected with the brand in real life. When Tenhunen has the time he likes to head to the cottage with some good friends and enjoy some down time.



Design

Stu Kite is a big fan of live music and visual art. His creative side drew him to his role as *Glue's* design editor. Everything from fonts to folios in this book is thanks to Kite's determination and enthusiasm for layout. When Kite isn't experimenting with new design techniques, he likes to spend time exploring Ottawa with friends and enjoying all that the city has to offer. Walking is still his favourite way to get around.



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Glue is dedicated to reflecting the experiences of Ottawa's college and university students, on their campuses and in their city. Our magazine about student life is unforgettable. *Glue* is published twice a year by students in the journalism and advertising programs at Algonquin College.

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Michael Clarke & Amber Provencal

As the new school year begins, it can be hard to find the time to step away from the books and relax. For this issue of *Glue*, we wanted to offer, you our reader, a variety of topics to indulge in. From features that pull on your heartstrings to quick, relatable pieces, our magazine is packed with content for all Ottawa students. With Indigenous reconciliation making headlines nationwide in recent years, *Glue* went to Ottawa's campuses to find out what our schools' next steps will be.

We also took a look at topics that some may shy away from. Two of our writers share their inspirational personal journalism stories that link to a broader societal issue.

In our back-of-book section, we've offered a light read on Ottawa's campus pubs. We sat down for a beer at each location and reviewed thier offerings — a useful read for sure as the new school year begins. After releasing a digital-only edition in Janurary (check it out at gluemagazine.com), we're excited to give you an engaging print edition.

Flip and enjoy.



Back row, from left: Michael Clarke, Amber Provencal
 Front row, from left: Kelly Speagle, Stuart Kite, Rebecca Atkinson

A whole new world



When you go on adventures abroad, the souvenirs are never as valuable as the experiences you'll take home

By Holly Menchetti

At 11-years-old my family and I went on a cruise ship for vacation. During the trip we visited an island off Haiti called Labadee. It was an island for tourists, so while I wasn't in the heart of the country, I still got to see a completely different culture and lifestyle.

While I was there, a young child from the island approached me and tried to sell me a bracelet. It had black and white thread and what looked like a wooden charm in the middle with the word Haiti rubbing off. I had no change, so I had to refuse. The boy turned to the people behind me and gave it another go. When they declined, he continued to the next couple. It was then I realized the boy wasn't wearing shoes, his shirt was ripped and his shorts were full of dirt.

Geni Trantis Illustration

It's moments like these that really show you how much we can learn from each other and teach each other

Nobody was buying his bracelet.

I got some change from my mom, found the boy and bought the bracelet. About two minutes later his mother found me and thanked me for my kindness. I bought a \$2 bracelet and, in return, a young boy gave me the biggest smile he could.

I didn't realize at the time, but that moment, along with my other experiences travelling, has taught me how different life in Canada is from other parts of the world. It's moments like these that really bring to my attention how much we can learn from each other and teach one another.

I'm not the only one who has gained a lot of perspective learning from other cultures through travel.

Kendrick Train, an 18-year-old student at Guelph-Humber in Toronto, has been involved with Key Club and Circle K for a total of five years. Both organizations volunteer in global projects that help local communities.

One of Train's first volunteer trips was to Miami as part of Key Club. The trip with Kiwanis was his first time travelling without supervision. This made it an opportunity for personal growth and a chance to learn, according to Train, who has been a member of the organization for a good portion of his life. "I've learned that service isn't a means to gain a reward, or to necessarily feel good about yourself. Service in itself is reward enough," says Train.

Since Train's experience, he has learned a lot about himself and now has a passion for global volunteer projects. "All in all, I guess you could say travelling and being a part of this organization impacted me in the sense that it inspires me everyday to do what I love no matter the means," says Train.

Like Train, travelling has inspired me. I've learned to see things through other people's eyes and put myself in someone else's shoes.

21-year-old Algonquin college student Haleigh McKenzie has experienced similar feelings and encounters. McKenzie has been on a few different volunteer trips. Her first trip was in Kenya for a month to help build a school. The other, was in the Dominican Republic for a week teaching English at a primary school.

"It changed my perspective on things," says McKenzie. "Seeing how the little things can go such a long way and how my actions can impact others really opened my mind."

I felt the same way after I had bought the young boy's bracelet. Train felt the same way after he joined Key Club.

When you're in another country, or even somewhere out of your element, it can bring you back to reality. Maybe it is something like seeing a homeless family with three young children, or seeing damage done by a natural dis-

Holly Menchetti Photo



When I look back on souvenirs I've collected over the years, they remind me of the things I've seen, people I've met and the lessons I've learned.

aster, or seeing a child try and sell a simple bracelet. It is these kinds of actions and moments that put things into perspective. "You just learn so much that you can't learn anywhere else," says McKenzie.

Travelling has also given McKenzie a sense of appreciation. It is easy to take things for granted, especially when we don't know what is going on in other parts of the world.

Francis Finlayson, an 18-year-old Carleton University student, has learned this during his travels. Finlayson has travelled to WW1 battlefields like Vimy Ridge, Ypres and more. "Being able to walk through what remained of trenches and bunkers while listening to heroic stories of sacrifices made by Canadians, gave me a new appreciation for the peaceful and beautiful country we live in today," says Finlayson.

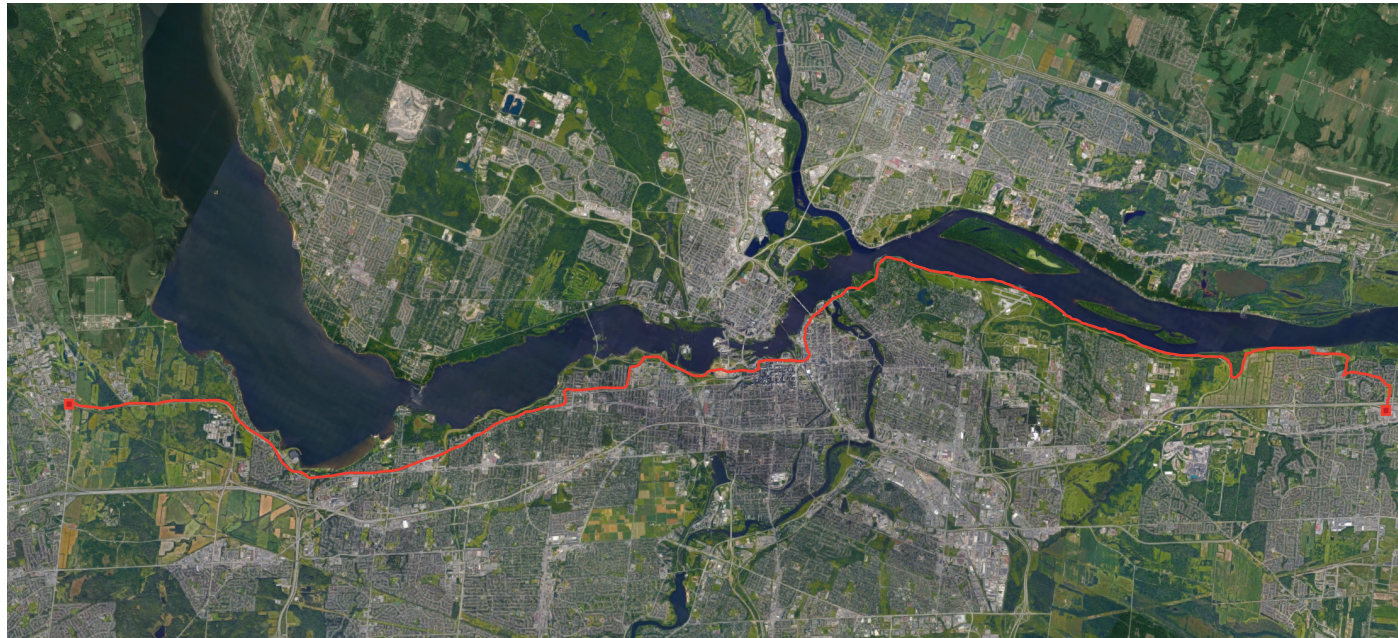
Finlayson participated in a tour to follow the footsteps of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment through France and Belgium in WW1. This trip highly impacted his view on things afterwards. "We take so much for granted," says Finlayson.

For people like Train, McKenzie, Finlayson and me, we have more than just pictures and souvenirs from our trips. When you travel, you see so many things that aren't the norm you almost need to remind yourself, "I'm not in Canada anymore." It is these types of moments that make you realize how much more there is to the world and what little we know and how important it is to use these perspectives to positively impact the lives of others.

A walk across Ottawa

When you want to get to know a place - and yourself - strap on your runners and start walking

By Stuart Kite



I have always been a walker. Living in downtown Ottawa the past four years, I walk everywhere, even when it would be faster to take the bus. But these walks are modest, never taking much longer than an hour. Almost a year ago, inspired by Canada's 150 celebrations, I wanted to take it further, literally, by walking across Ottawa, from Orleans to Kanata.

Before I set my route I spoke to Ottawa local Dan Rubinstein. He wrote *Born to Walk: The Transformative Power of a Pedestrian Act* about his experiences walking thousands of kilometres around the world and its transformative power. He spoke about the different ways long walks, like the one I was planning, can benefit mind, body and soul.

"A sense of yourself and how you fit into the environment of where you are," he says. "The less we walk, the more we engage with the world in fast moving vehicles or digitally, the less connected we

are to the people and places around us."

According to Rubinstein, walking can also benefit creativity. Your perspective slowly changes with each step, constantly providing a new way to look at things.

"That allows you to think about other things, problems, challenges and struggles differently. If not to come up with solutions, it is just to understand things a bit more."

"Whoa," was all I could muster as a reply. For some inexplicable reason, that really struck me. Eventually I was able to mouth words again and ask for advice on my route.

"Be open to serendipity, just to discover what you discover along the way," he says. "Go through boring and unassuming places where you don't know anything about them, because you never know what you are going to see along the way."

That stuck with me.

My plan was to start at Place d'Orleans with a wide finish line of anywhere in Kanata. The route would be made up as I went along to encourage exploration. Also on Rubinstein's advice, I would forgo any navigational aid. No maps, no compasses, no GPS.

The day before my walk, I went to the Running Room in the Glebe for some walking shoes and supplies. The employee Lawrence Wright, Rubinstein and my friend, Dylan Jones, a graduate of Algonquin's outdoor adventure program, all advised me that using brand new shoes was a very bad idea.

I stubbornly thought it was a very good idea. Anything would be better than the shoes I had which contained more holes than a raccoon ravaged garbage bin.

On top of the new shoes, I got socks designed to keep my feet dry, a red Running Room water bottle, an assortment of energy snacks and most importantly: anti-chaffing cream. I have never listened to instructions more carefully than when Lawrence explained where and how to apply the cream.

"The most important part," I said as he handed it to me.

I was starting to get nervous on the morning of the walk. From where I lived, the ride to my starting point felt like it was in another province. I began to wonder if I was in over my head. I became incredibly aware of my body, every little joint or muscle that did not feel 100 per cent stockpiled doubt in my head.

I distracted myself by thinking about another issue: Where will I shit if the feeling comes?

At 7:30 a.m. I reach the deserted parking lot of Place d'Orleans mall. I grew up in Kanata and I think this was the first time I actually got out of a car and put feet on the ground in Orleans. My first directional decision was to go north towards the river. Using the Queensway as reference, I made my best guess and took my first steps.

It is weird how fast the feeling hit me.

I am free. I can go wherever I want. I have all day to explore.

It was a powerful feeling to say the least. I was not going to the store and back. I was roaming. I ditched the sidewalks and walked through the very first field I saw. I laughed aloud at the irony of getting a strong sense of freedom in a suburb. I eventually made it all the way to the path that goes along the river. After cutting through parks and school grounds and hopping some fences I reached my first landmark: The great Ottawa River.

It was pristine. The morning was calm, and the water, a



mirror. I never really saw the river away from the noise of downtown and it was breathtaking.

I began to pass by other walkers and runners on the river path. More importantly, I pet at least five different dogs who were super happy to see me. I shared "hellos" and "good mornings" with almost everyone.

At 8:50 a.m. I took a break and realized how stupid I was for ignoring the advice on my shoes. Blisters were beginning to form on the insides of both heels and I had nothing to relieve the discomfort.

The river path eventually takes a turn away from the river and detours into a small wooded area. My neck got a workout trying to take it all in. A small creek down below, fallen and standing trees intertwined with each other. Thinking about Dan's point about perspective, I focus on one tree and watched the branches on it slowly rotate as I walk by, creating a new design in the branches every second.

Due to the increasing pain in my heel, I take a quick rest on the next bench on the path. I remove my shoes and socks to reveal two fully formed bubbles of body fluid covering each heel.

"Blisters?" a man said while jogging by, never breaking a stride.

"Yeah."

"Ouch."

In the best decision I made all day, I break and clear them out. It hurt for another hour or so, but the pain went away eventually.

At 11 a.m I make it to Rockcliffe Lookout. An elevated view



Top: My haul from The Running Room. The specialized snacks did a good job keeping my energy levels up all day, but the new shoes I could have done without.

Left: The perfectly still Ottawa River mirroring the sky near Orleans in the early morning.

I get the phone call from my concerned mother: “Fuck off! Fuck off! Fuck off! Fuck off!” I yell

over the river into the shores of Gatineau that I never knew existed. It was a picturesque view alien to me and full of aliens too (tourists).

Despite the wonderful view, I find myself more motivated to keep moving, fearing that remaining stationary would hurt more than it would help in the long run.

From Rockcliffe, I moved up Sussex Drive. I lean into the bars at 24 Sussex hoping to catch a glimpse of someone notable. Nothing. A bit further along, I spend time at Rideau Falls, another Ottawa landmark that I have never seen. The water is way more powerful than the pictures show.



Rideau Falls Park, just east of the downtown core, is where the Rideau and Ottawa Rivers meet. Although the falls are an iconic Ottawa landmark, I had never seen them before I took my walk.

At noon, I make it downtown. It was amazing watching the skyline reveal itself on the approach. Buildings popped in and out of view, giving a different layered picture to look at with every block. It is familiar scenery, but in that context it looked new and spectacular. I detour through Major's Hill and boy is it ever scenic (I make note to come here for Canada Day fireworks). I rest at Parliament, and notice my feet are starting to go numb, but I think it doesn't matter.

At 12:20 p.m. I make it to Lebreton Flats and take another rest, the shortest walking stint I did all day. The numbness in

my feet has now escalated into pain. Putting a foot down on anything that was not perfectly flat and level just multiplied the sensation. My strides were accompanied by a limp from here on out.

From Lebreton, I worked my way past the slants of the Canadian War Museum, following the river once again to my favourite picnic spot gone illegal: Prince of Wales Bridge. This was only another 20 or so minutes of walking, but my feet have become twice as painful as before. I make it to the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway near Mechanicsville and decide to change my plans.

Up until this point, I was a wide-eyed walker. Soaking in the beauty in everything around me. Self-reflecting thoughts flew through my mind, allowing everything that I was hung up on to pass by me with my constant forward motion. Now things were different. I set myself a task that I felt I needed to complete. I was past the midway mark and would never forgive myself for not trying my best to finish. The exploratory thoughts

were gone. I took one look at the parkway and all the curves and turns it takes and thought:

No way in hell. I need efficiency.

I cut through Tunney's Pasture to Wellington Street West. It is about 1:30 p.m., I have been walking for six hours so far. Mentally, I feel fine. I still have energy and food, it's just the pain in my feet slowing me down. About a half-hour later my knees start to go. Any meditative state I held or calmness I had is gone. I tell myself this is no longer a sightseeing tour. This is now an endurance test.

While I'm moving down Richmond

Road my phone rings. It is my friend Dylan calling to check up on me. I don't think he understood how much that call meant. I had been alone walking for seven hours and being able to talk casually with a friend gave me a lot of motivation.

At 3 p.m. I am resting at Carling Avenue by the Cineplex. My feet are visibly swollen. I was not sure how much more I could physically do, but I had the willpower.

Andrew Haydon Park, 3:30 p.m., my mom shows up with a car to check in on me. As I was telling her about my physical state, she offers the choice for me to stop and the opportunity get in the car, grab some McDonald's and be sitting on a couch with my legs up all in under 30 minutes.

I decline quickly and leave before I have a chance to think about it.

The last stretch on Carling to Kanata was the closest thing to a personal hell I have ever experienced. Nothing to look at and no sidewalks to separate my fragile flesh bag from cars. I swore at the top of my lungs every few steps due to the pain I had in my knees.

My legs are telling me to stop. My brain is telling me to stop. I override it. In the immense amount of pain I was feeling, I found motivation and drive. I can't go through all this and call it quits. I must keep going or the pain is for nothing.

This is where I get the phone call from my concerned mother.

“Fuck off! Fuck off! Fuck off! Fuck off!” I yell at her number on the phone. I answer and state: “I will call you when I am done,” then immediately hang up.

At the intersection of Carling and Herzberg Road, there is Bourk's Complete Car Care. I decide that could be my finish line. I get a red light at that last intersection. The wait feels like hours. Once the walk symbol comes on I almost fall, that brief stop waiting for the light to change stiffened up my legs. Once across I collapse in

the shade of the sign out front. Unsure if I should count this, I pull out my phone and start Snapchat. A Kanata filter is available. 5:00 p.m. almost on the dot.

Good enough. This is Kanata. I reached my goal.

I call my concerned mother and let her know she can pick me up and take me home. Thanks for supporting me while I did this mom and I am sorry for swearing at your name on my caller ID.

I learned a lot while on this nine and a half-hour journey. The first half from Orleans to Parliament was amazing. It was so peaceful and I found a deeper appreciation for the natural beauty around the city and the downtown core itself. Ottawa is a beautiful place. The river, the trees, the history, the architecture all put together modestly.

I learned a lot about what I can do if I set my mind to it. It really was my mind keeping me going over the 42 kilometres I walked. I had the drive and nothing could stop me, knowing I would eventually succeed as long as I kept putting one foot forward. No matter how small the steps, I would succeed. That is a lesson I will carry for a long time. It seems so simple when put into writing, but it is an incredibly powerful feeling. Pain is temporary, but you can be proud of what you have accomplished forever.



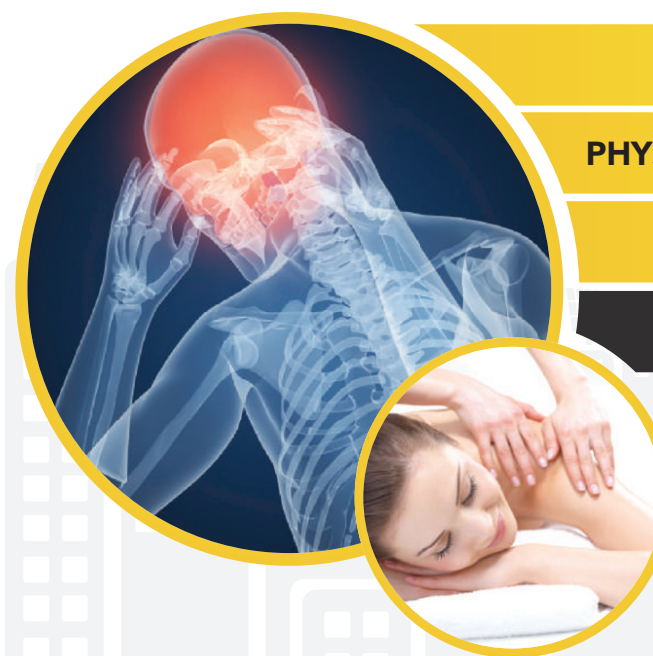
As it was early spring when I did the walk, sunscreen did not cross my mind. By the end of the day I had a good sunglasses tan and a peeling forehead.



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Spirit of reconciliation

Post-secondary institutions are good places to learn and talk about truth. In the three years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its report, what have Ottawa's schools done to look back – and move forward?

By Devyn Barrie

When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission issued its six-volume final report in 2015, it cast a long shadow over Canadian society. Governments and institutions still grapple with understanding reconciliation with Indigenous communities and how best to further it. One of the most eager pillars to tackle the issue has been post-secondary institutions, many of which have pressed forth to reconciliation in their own way.

Three years after the TRC's report, *Glue* checked in with students and officials to gauge how Ottawa's post-secondary institutions are planning their approach to truth and reconciliation, as well as learn what challenges lie ahead.

Algonquin College

In early 2018, Ron Deganadus McLester, of the Oneida Nation Turtle Clan, was appointed Algonquin College's executive director of truth, reconciliation and Indigenous education.

While McLester already worked at the college as executive director of Aboriginal initiatives and special advisor to the president, it was hailed as a big move in the spirit of reconciliation. "Not only does it reflect our commitment to excellence in Indigenous education, but it underscores our commitment to truth and reconciliation for all," McLester says in a news release. In an interview with *Glue*, McLester expresses an earnest intent to improve how the college tackles the issue. "As we look forward and look backward, education plays a key role in understanding our collective history, some of the events, some of the atrocities," he says.



Kave Amin Illustration

Some places showcasing our culture, doing things like territorial acknowledgement, skim the surface for sure. I don't know why other than it's kind of flashy and sort of the 'now' thing

He believes before moving onto reconciliation, more time should be spent focusing on the truth. And he says post-secondary institutions are a unique place to learn and talk about the truth.

One strategy many schools have taken is "Indigenization," which is typically where an institution integrates Indigenous content into its programs or makes it mandatory for students to take an Indigenous studies course. "Indigenization is really interesting," he says, acknowledging it tends to be ambiguous in definition. "I know there's a handful of definitions for Indigenization, right now we're working on ours."

Algonquin is looking to embed Indigenous ideas into its entire operation, which he says will be more holistic than anything any other institutions are doing so far.

Carleton University

Katherine Graham, professor emerita of Indigenous and northern development policy at Carleton University and senior adviser to the provost, says that the reconciliation process will take a long time.

"I would not say 'check it out in five years and see how we're doing,'" she tells *Glue* in a phone interview. "We have active programs, we have a very active Centre for Indigenous Initiatives." The centre, like similar ones at Algonquin and uOttawa, acts as a liaison with the larger university community and provides outreach services to Indigenous students.

Graham says Indigenization is a part of the larger discussion and something they are looking at closely. "We are thinking about ways to move forward on that." One initiative that Carleton is examining is the possibility of incorporating Indigenous ideas of leadership – which focus more on collective effort rather than individual persons – into the school community.

She said other institutions have taken good strides – such as the University of Saskatchewan, which she says has sought to have its faculty be representative of the Indigenous population.

University of Ottawa

Tareyn Johnson, director of Indigenous affairs at uOttawa, says her team is taking a gradual approach to reach reconciliation. "It's a goal. We're not in the process of reconciliation at this point," Johnson, who is Anishinaabe, says. "We need to be careful not to just jump into reconciliation."

Johnson, who was hired in September 2017, says her team is very new and is still laying a foundation by introducing themselves to the community and various groups in order to build a relationship. Otherwise, they're still learning how they will fulfill their roles. "We're the first people to hold [these] positions at the University of Ottawa," she says.

Johnson says her team will need to work with the Indigenous community before moving forward with new initiatives. But she says they are looking at better reflecting Indigenous identity on the campus by inviting speakers and bringing in more art. There will also be external outreach aimed at educating the wider community.

Students' perspective

Some students tell *Glue* they're skeptical about reconciliation efforts at schools. Orlando Blacksmith, a Cree student at uOttawa in the bachelor of digital journalism is one of them. "It just feels like they're doing it because people are talking about it," he says when asked about reconciliation at post-secondary schools in general.

He says the main motivator behind reconciliation efforts in general are just "white guilt" and that people are making too big a deal out of it. "They could do more, but at the same time I feel this whole situation has gotten to the point that we're like animals in a zoo being looked at," he says.

He says he wasn't aware of major efforts at school other than the Aboriginal resource centre and some programs being Indigenous. Johnson replies that Indigenous people are still adjusting to the

relatively new idea of reconciliation and opinions vary. "I think that everyone's entitled to their own opinion and I think that if you take a survey of different students across different institutions in different cities you'd get a variety of different responses," she says. "I don't think it's my responsibility to speak on behalf of students."

One Anishinaabe student at Algonquin College said he was also cynical and suggests his school could go further. "I would say that Algonquin College, using this name, has to provide more courses that represent Algonquin people," says Phil Edwards, a 58-year-old student in the electromechanical engineering program and an unsuccessful candidate for the college's Board of Governors in 2017. He says a mandatory course on Algonquin culture, language and issues would go a long way toward improving understanding between people. Edwards says that as an Anishinaabe, he does not represent Algonquin people. But for him, reconciliation means society should move closer toward Indigenous culture.

"I would say reconciliation includes the idea that white culture," he explains, "moves toward our way of thinking rather than us moving toward your way of thinking."

McLester says he isn't a fan of mandatory content and doubts most people want to be told what to do. "My personal thoughts are I'm not a fan of anything mandatory," he says. "People generally don't like that." When asked about Blacksmith's comments about Indigenous students being like animals at a zoo, McLester says he has heard similar sentiments before.

"It's quite possible that at some places showcasing our culture, doing things like territorial acknowledgement, skim the surface for sure and I don't know why other than it's kind of flashy and sort of the 'now' thing," he says.

"But I can tell you, I wouldn't work at this institution if that's what we were doing... The last thing we're doing at Algonquin is doing it because it's anything other than genuine."

Fake it,

The transition into the real world can be difficult. Writer Acton Clarkin found six ways to succeed in a rapidly changing workforce

By Acton Clarkin

Most people have heard the phrase “fake it ‘til you make it.” As in, if you project false confidence, know-how and have an optimistic mindset, it can help get you through a challenge - even if you secretly feel unprepared.

But can grinning and bearing it really help you when you dive head first into new opportunities and learn on the fly? According to experts and standouts in their respective careers, the answer is a resounding yes.

As a student applies and prepares to enter the workforce, feelings of nervousness and unpreparedness can creep in. It’s easy to arrive on the first day at a workplace and feel like a small fish drowning in a big pond. While these feelings are normal, check out these strategies to help cope.

1. Be a sponge

Quickly breaking through the mental barriers of learning new skills quickly and building self-confidence can be helped through something called cognitive behavioural therapy: a cycle where your thoughts influence your feelings, your feelings influence your behaviour and your behaviour influences your thoughts. But this doesn’t mean that simply thinking hard enough that you’re an expert at something will make you one.

Veteran CBC News anchor, Suhana Meharchand (full disclosure – she is my mother) has a unique job. As a journalist, she interviews experts and presents news and information to people every day in a knowledgeable, confident manner. This requires her to be informed about, but not an expert in, a wide array of topics. For Meharchand, when she has to interview someone in an unfamiliar industry, the

most important thing for her is listening.

“I listen, listen, listen and be a sponge,” she says. “My strategy whenever I’m doing an interview, for example, with some scientific-wiz person, I try to understand what they’re saying in a very down to earth way. Because if I don’t get it, I can’t ask follow-up questions by any means that relate to the topic in an intelligent way. If you take information in, digest it and use what is valid for you, then you will be better at your job.”

Meharchand says that listening demonstrates your ability and willingness to learn and understand new information, which ultimately allows you to care more about your work. Caring about her interview guests builds her empathy towards them and knowledge of their area of expertise. She says the more she cares, the more she’s able to learn.

2. Without a goal, you can’t score

In any job, there will be aspects of it you will be forced to learn on the fly. It’s important to ensure you’re learning about the right things and being smart with your goals. Riaz Sidi knows this first hand.

Sidi is a marketing consultant and founder of Riaz Sidi Performance Marketing. Since graduating from Algonquin College and Carleton University, he has worked as one of the youngest senior managers at one of Canada’s largest media companies and has now launched his own business. He’s experienced what it’s

make it

like to be a young, rising star in the corporate world and has dealt with the ups and downs of being a full-time entrepreneur.

Sidi’s experiences have taught him to avoid situations where there’s no way you would ever be able to fulfill unrealistic expectations. “Say I need to produce something in Photoshop where my skills are an eight out of 10, and what’s required of me is a 10 out of 10,” he explains. “Well then I can probably take myself from an eight to a 10.”

That’s a realistic goal. Your skills will be better suited to some projects than others. In contrast to his Photoshop example, Sidi says that if he tried to take on a project that requires him to be a professional body-builder, for instance, he’s already set himself up for failure. There’s a much better chance he will succeed in the projects where he already has a strong base of underlying knowledge, skill and experience.

“Everyone has different skills and everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. There’s value that you can provide for one thing that someone else may not be able to.”

3. Be open and honest

It’s important to note that expressing self-confidence in your existing skills and willingness to learn new ones doesn’t mean you should inflate your abilities

or pretend to be something that you’re not. Meharchand believes that showing vulnerability and gaps in your skills can even be a plus.

“Feigning knowing it all never gets anybody anywhere,” she says. “When you say I don’t know the answer to that, but I will get back to you with the answer quickly and clearly, that’s something that people respect. I try to make them feel comfortable with my lack of knowledge and allow them to teach me.”

“It’s not being ignorant, it’s just showing that you’re willing to find out and willing to learn. That’s the key. And really, I think that’s what employers are looking for.”

4. You’re your worst critic

Another thing to avoid in a new job is being too hard on yourself. New graduates and students aren’t being hired for their wealth of experience. There will be bumps and growing pains along the way. Sidi says he has had lingering feelings of doubt, nervousness and anxiety multiple times in his career and that ultimately we notice our own faults way more than others do. His advice? Don’t worry about being judged.

We just need to remind ourselves that no one is perfect. No one says the right thing all of the time. Telling ourselves that “everyone gets nervous,” he says, is a great way to make a situation feel more normal.

5. Expectations management

David Hall manager of co-op at Algonquin College, talks with students about workplaces daily. He stresses that people often overthink their expectations of their role.

“Often we feel when we leave school that we don’t know the entire company or the role of the job right off the bat, and that’s okay,” he says. “The organization doesn’t expect you to. You don’t need to be an expert day one. That’s not the expectation.”

So how can you perform well during the first few days and weeks on the job? “The things employers want most are good communication skills, being a good team player and a willingness to learn,” Hall explains. “Your employers are expecting to teach you.”

To really stand out, Hall says it goes beyond the hard skills that separate top performers from the pack. “Students and new employees should be listening to and asking questions to their boss and colleagues, but the best are the ones who bring new ideas,” he says. “Everyone can have good hard skills, but [the soft skills], that’s what’s going to put you above the rest.”

6. Shape your personal brand to stand out

If you don’t have wealth of experience in a field, it’s an opportunity to build up your own personal brand from scratch. The best part? You can tailor it on your terms.

Second-year advertising and marketing communications student Mackenzie Swanson says her faculty at Algonquin encourages students to craft unique online personal brands to help them stand out to employers.

Swanson says her professors stress the importance of actively managing your social media profiles, especially LinkedIn. “Employers all search for you before you meet,” she says. “On LinkedIn, even things like sharing articles, commenting and posting your own opinions can help you. Brand yourself as what you want potential clients or companies to see you as.”

Beyond LinkedIn, one of Swanson’s professors shared a tip: “Google yourself and see what comes up. Now think, what is an employer going to think of you? Knowing what’s already out there gives you the opportunity to start to brand yourself or even re-brand yourself.”

The best new hires are people who bring new ideas – do this and you’ll rise above the rest

Uber cab confessions

To witness humanity at its best and worst, there's no better place than the comfortable confines of an Uber ride. Writer Kelly Speagle spoke with three young drivers and heard about some of their bizarre (and enjoyable) experiences

By Kelly Speagle

Patrick Brodie, 23: Uber Driver since December 2017

Q: What’s one of the funniest moments you’ve had as a driver?

A: On New Year’s Eve I picked up this guy that looked vaguely like a guy I work with. We’ll call him Brad. Brad, his girlfriend and another guy got into the back seat and Brad had a lot to drink. The other two kept commenting on how they didn’t know how he drank so much. I think it was like two 26’ers or something ridiculous.

So, a little bit down the road Brad exclaims, “Projectile vomit!” as I’m about to turn left. I go, “Oh shit, okay just hold on one second. I’m pulling over,” I make it to the side of the road and Brad gets out. Me and the other two figured he would’ve just hurled just outside the door, but he decided to take a walk to a nearby fence.

When I get to work for my next shift, one of my other co-workers goes “Here he is! Pat, the Uber driver of the year!” Turns out Brad was the guy I work with. He came in for his shift and was like “Yo, Pat was my Uber driver last night!” We didn’t really talk too much before that, but we’ve become good buddies since then.

Q: What do you enjoy about being an Uber driver?

A: One of the reasons I like driving is because I get to tour around the city and sightsee, while meeting new and interesting people. I’ve met people from across the globe like France, Australia and Scotland. Though I’m a quiet person, I have no problems chatting with anyone that gets in and I enjoy it quite a bit. It’s an adventure. I have no idea where I’ll end up when I log in.

Salma Ahmed, 21: Uber driver since 2015

Q: What is the craziest story you have as a driver?

A: A favourite of mine happened last year where a group of 16-17-year-old boys had forewarned me of their friend who was obviously inebriated in some way. I had a minivan and he was sat in the farthest seat while his friends were in the middle. During the ride I’d check my rear-view every few minutes and he was curled up in the fetal position and was sort of rocking back and forth looking dismayed. I asked if he was okay and they informed me that it was his first time doing acid and that he’d be fine. I kind of shrugged it off and continued on. The next time I looked back, he was completely naked. I was so shocked that I started laughing hysterically while his friends

tried to get him clothed again.

Most things are usually pretty annoying in the moment but are hilarious looking back. Like this one time a guy hid in my back seat after having dropped his friends off only to pop out five minutes later in an effort to scare me.

Q: Are people usually pretty willing to chat and be open about their lives or are they pretty closed off?

A: I find it can go either way. I can either be a counselor to the person or I don’t even exist in their mind. I’ve helped plenty of women with relationship advice or friend troubles and I once was giving a man a pep talk before he proposed to his girlfriend. I thought I’d never hear of the outcome but he had left a driver comment for me saying “She said yes!” and my day was made.

Meghansh Bajaj, 24: Former Uber driver

Q: What’s a memorable story you have from being a driver?

A: I remember a brother and sister took a ride with me and during the ride she was consistently talking about money and wanted to purchase some stuff. She looked somewhat panicked. I suspected her initially and when I reached her given destination, I saw some cops there and she told me to wait for her as she was going to get something from the building and she needed a drive back. Her brother stayed inside the car.

As she came out from the building, I noticed her hiding something which I suspected were drugs, so I refused to drive them back and closed their trip in case to avoid any trouble for me.

Q: Do you have anything to say to anyone looking to grab an Uber?

A: Never get too drunk.

I was waiting over a red light and an Uber request popped up on my screen. The location for pickup was just after the lights. So, I pulled up my car to the side and texted the rider that I was waiting.

After 20 or 25 minutes, he showed up. In Uber, you start getting charged after two minutes of wait time. And as he came down, he offered me a good tip for waiting for him. As I started his ride, I realized where he was going was just next to the same traffic lights where I was waiting for him. So just 50 to 100 steps from where I picked him up.

He was so drunk that he didn’t realize where he was going. Indeed, for a two-minute ride, he paid a good amount of money.

From passion to profession?

If you want to succeed in a career – we mean, *really* succeed – work hard and don't budge. Here's how these tenacious students made it

By Rebecca Atkinson

Sarafina Pagnotta stands in the lobby of the Canadian War Museum, her attention suddenly grabbed by a group of visiting students. “It's not usually this busy on a Wednesday morning,” she says. But Pagnotta isn't bothered. After all, it was on a school trip when her desire to work at the museum first sparked. “I was fascinated by the winding hallways of the gallery spaces and the amount of knowledge that's held both in the exhibitions and the collections,” says Pagnotta.

Pagnotta, 23, is in her second year of graduate studies at Carleton University in art history with a concurrent diploma in curatorial studies. In 2016, she graduated from her undergrad in history and religious studies at the University of Ottawa and during summer 2017, completed an internship at the war museum. There, she worked on exhibi-

tions as a curatorial assistant and was credited as co-curator of a banner exhibition that displayed in Stockholm.

“I was able to learn the inner workings of the museum and follow the development of exhibitions from beginning to end,” says Pagnotta. “It was amazing practical experience, and just further confirmed that I'm on the right path.”

Many students are uncertain of what they want to do. But some, like Pagnotta, found their niche unexpectedly – and stayed with it. While it's common for students on the path from high school to post-secondary to weave between career dreams and aspirations, others don't budge. In Pagnotta's case, the road has been simultaneously smooth and rough. While she's known what she wants for some time, the fear of the unknown still sinks in from time to time.

I've been working toward this goal for so long, the possibility that it might never happen, or at least not happen in the way I've planned, is extremely daunting

Rebecca Atkinson Photo

“Some of my friends have told me they're envious that I figured out what I wanted to do at such a young age and, most of the time, it is a blessing,” says Pagnotta. “But because I've been working toward this goal for so long, the possibility that it might never happen, or at least not happen in the way I've planned, is extremely daunting.”

Pagnotta plans to continue studying, then perform research at various institutions. She hopes to eventually return to the place that “sparked her passion for Canadian history” and, perhaps, spark that passion for another generation. “I want to work at developing exhibitions that will hopefully have the same impact on some other 13-year-old that they had on me.”

A personal experience is what led Hunter Grad to pursue his field, too. Grad was in a serious snowboarding accident when he was a young teen, which led him to the ER. Now, five years later, the 19-year-old Carleton University biomedical sciences student wants to give back. “It would be really great to help people like I was helped,” says Grad.

He was torn between going into marine biology or medicine, but he hasn't had any doubts since starting the program. “I'd be equally as happy as doing marine biology as medicine, but the money is better in medicine,” he says. “But it's not mainly for the money. I'm just interested in medicine because I have a lot of experiences as a patient.”

Like Grad, an experience as a patient is what brought Kariisa Brazier to her field, too. The 22-year-old Algonquin College dental hygienist grad wanted to work in dental health after her childhood visits to her aunt's dental office. “I knew I wanted to be in the health field and I enjoyed being at the dentist so I felt that was a good fit,” says Brazier, who's been working as a dental hygienist in Muskoka Valley since receiving her accreditation in July 2017.

Although she always knew she wanted to be a dental hygienist, Brazier had her challenges during college. One of her biggest hurdles was the practical evaluations she had to go through, because of how critical they could be. “When it got really hard,” she says, “I had doubts if I wanted to finish it or not. I thought, ‘this is too hard, I'm going to fail.’ My family and friends were the only thing that got me through that.”

And with persistence and hard work, Brazier got through it. Practicing persistence is one of the most important things for young professionals to keep in mind, according to David Hall, cooperative education manager at Algonquin College. “If you don't get your dream job or you're not where you want to be, think of it as a stepping stone,” says Hall. “Our students who are persistent are the ones who succeed.”

Hall encourages students to be open-minded when applying for jobs. The students he works with are usually set on working in their fields, but the ones who end up employed are the ones who are also open to testing the waters of jobs within the field.

“A career isn't one thing where you can find your apex,” says Hall. “One thing always leads to the next and sometimes you just never know what the next is.”



Cooking up clothing

As graphic design student Alexi Costa stood in the kitchen of an Aylmer restaurant, he had an epiphany: It was time to stop dicing chicken and start designing clothes

By J-D Potié

On a slow day in the kitchen, with plenty of time to kick around and socialize, Alexi Costa began speaking with his co-worker and long-time friend Sebastien Desharnais, about a life-long dream of his: he wanted to design his own clothing line, but he didn't know how to go about it. He pitched different names, already had some logos and designs in mind, but that's as far as it went.

A business-savvy person by trade, Desharnais was intrigued by the idea and said he wanted to contribute to making the dream happen. Sick and tired of dicing chicken and cleaning the grease behind the fryers, the two decided it was perhaps the right time for a change of scenery. The rest is history.

In the last couple of years, the long-time friends – joined by Patrick Lozinski – from the Gatineau region have put together a project which they claim to be something significantly new and different to any other clothing line in the world: the most affordable hemp-based street-wear clothing on the market.

The project is a company called Elevated Life Apparel, ELA for short. It's a brand of unisex sweatshop free t-shirts, made

out of 55 per cent hemp, which they say promotes “living life with an open mind and to its fullest in order to reach one's maximum potential.”

Now, looking back on the launch of their brand, the people at ELA have learned many valuable lessons about not only the business world, but it's opened their eyes to the grim realities of adult life. “You really have to work your ass off man,” says Lozinsky, 22, co-founder of ELA. “People aren't just gonna buy your stuff. If you want something you really have to show it and put it right in their faces. That's been the biggest challenge so far.”

And that's what they've done so far. With all three co-founders busy pursuing their respective career goals, it hasn't been easy. Lozinsky is a self-employed video director and producer. Costa handles the busy life of a full-time student. And Desharnais stays involved in separate business ventures altogether. This has made it tough for them to put all of their energy towards what Lozinsky refers to as a “passion project.” However, he says, with the limited time they have, they've done everything they can to live up to their brand's identity.

“We wanted to be the most affordable hemp street-wear brand,” said Patrick Lozinski, 22, co-founder of ELA. “Right now, hemp t-shirts are like \$45 or \$50. We're doing them at \$30, which people still think is pretty pricey. But, to our knowledge, these are the cheapest you can get in the world.”

One of the goals of the company is to provide an option for fashionable, high-quality clothing at a lower price. Most street-wear brands usually sell either expensive high-end clothes or inexpensive clothing with sub-par fabric.

Conceived in the kitchen of a rotisserie chicken restaurant in Aylmer, the founders' stories are cooked into the brand's humble beginnings.

First, there's Costa, a 22-year-old graphic design student at UQO and designer of the ELA logo. “He's the visual identity,” says Lozinski.

As the one who came up with the idea, Costa plays a crucial role in the company. He's the person behind every logo and every print that give ELA it's unique look and identity. “ELA was just a result of discovering myself in my own visual identity and expressing how I felt at the time,” he says.

The main emblem of the company, a fictitious species of bird designed by Costa, which he refers to as an “Egyptian falcon,” is embroidered on the sleeve of every shirt. Every print is meant to reflect elevation, and all are his own original designs

Then, there's Sebastien Desharnais, a 22-year-old real estate agent and entrepreneur. He's in charge of the business side of things. He handles relations with suppliers and meeting with retailers in hopes of finding ways to sell and promote ELA products.

Last but not least, there's Patrick Lozinski. The 22-year-old CEGEP dropout left school after receiving numerous job offers in his field. He is now a somewhat well-known video director in the region. He's filmed music videos for musicians in Montreal all the way to Brooklyn and has done countless promotional videos for skate-boarders, tattoo-artists and festivals. His role with ELA involves social media relations, the website, promotion and everything that is photo and video.

Costa credits him for the final push that officially kicked off the business. He made one of their life-long dreams a reality. “At the start it was kind of just talking and nothing really happened,” says Costa. “But things started to get more serious when I went to talk about it with Pat.”

Now, ELA has its own website, which has been up for almost a year, where folks can shop for the uniquely designed hemp t-shirts. They come in four different colours – white, black, grey and rust red – all with their distinctive designed print on the front and back of the shirt, including the falcon embroidered on the bottom-right on of the back side.

The site also explains how to properly wash the items to ensure the quality of the fabric and prevent shrinking, which hemp clothing can do if mishandled. When properly handled, however, shirts made out of hemp fabric are softer than most other fabrics. It provides a lighter feel than perhaps a shirt made out of cotton.

“Hemp gives you a lot of love, but you gotta give it back,” says Lozinski. “You have to wash it less. It's really comfy, it breathes well, but you have to just care for it more.”

So far, the brand hasn't had much financial success. With the vast majority of sales accounting to family, friends and promotional usage, monetary profit has yet to fulfill itself – not being the brand's priority in the first place.

But, with plans to keep promoting the brand through social media, namely via music videos from notable artists which he is directing, Lozinski is especially optimistic about what

could potentially happen for ELA in the near future.

“I've had numerous people that want to represent the brand and wear it during videos and stuff,” says Lozinski. “It's just that we're kind of like at a crossroads where it's hard to give away free stuff for promotion. I've got a few things planned out.”

Lozinsky is a big believer in living life free-spiritedly, free-minded and to its fullest, which is the very foundation ELA stands on. The guys have also discussed bringing other types of clothing into the ELA collection, such as hats and sweatshirts.

However, with all three co-founders heavily consumed by their respective careers or educations, it's difficult for them to prioritize the clothing line over everything else. Working via desktop, with piles of shirts taking up the space in their closets, it would be nice to move some, of course. But for now, the guys are simply focusing on living life one step at a time.

“We're just trying to be like a nice wholesome brand of cool stuff,” says Lozinsky. “We're all doing our own things for money. This is kind of like a passion project. If it works out we're gonna be all so happy and we're gonna be able to just have fun living, man.”

The goal of the company is to provide fashionable, high-quality clothing at a lower price. Most street-wear brands sell either very high-end and expensive clothes or inexpensive clothing with sub-par fabric



A Harsh Reality

Three years ago, my mom's mental illness pushed her to her worst. I didn't know how bad it was until that moment holding her hand

By Amber Provencal

Jenny Owens Illustration

I sat on my bed cramming to do my grade 11 homework, not knowing I would never end up handing it in. My mom, Tara, yelled to me from another room that she was going to take a nap, much like any other day. I knew my mom wasn't happy, but she definitely hid the severity of her illness from us. I wanted to believe she was just going through a hard time and needed some space. When in reality, space was the last thing she needed.

My dad, Darren, was visiting a friend and my sister was spending the day elsewhere. I was pretty happy that the house would be quiet for me to finish this homework I thought I'd never get done. Then my cell phone rang and I was slightly annoyed that yet another interruption was underway. It was my dad.

"Hello?" I didn't say much else. I had no idea what else I could possibly say. It was a short conversation. Not really a conversation at all. As soon as he started talking I could immediately hear the slight panic in his voice that he was unable to hide from me.

"I'm on my way home," he said. "Keep an eye on her." And hung up.

As I'm writing this, now 19-years-old and in my second year at Algonquin College, I sit in the exact spot I did in February 2015. The same spot I sat in when my dad told me my mom was texting him some "off" things. The same spot I found out my mom had taken a handful of pills. The exact spot I sat in for the next three days as I waited for my mom to return home from the Mental Health Centre of the Brockville General Hospital. Physically, she was okay. Mentally, not so much.

Growing up I was just like how most kids are now: oblivious to the fact that mental health issues are extremely common. I had often heard about how important it was to take care of your own mental health, but I was never taught how to help someone else. I was never taught what warning signs to look out for or what to do when you know someone with mental health issues.

The way that the mental health of a parent can affect our own mental health is something very real. We often talk a lot about our own challenges, but rarely hear about second-hand mental health challenges. In my case, my mom's challenges have caused me to pay more attention to my own mental health and those around me. It has made me want to talk more openly about mental health challenges, but not the challenges that I have experienced.

I faced a situation I never thought could happen. I was scared and had no idea what to do. Three years ago, I was the one isolating myself. Three years later, I still am. But I am on my

I faced a situation I never thought could happen. I was scared and had no idea what to do. Three years ago, I was the one isolating myself. Three years later, I still am

Michael Clarke Photo



Growing up we spend a lot of time learning about mental health and how to care for ourselves. We seldom talk about second-hand mental health and how to help someone else when you are being effected too.

way. I am taking baby steps forward. I decided to talk to others, write my story and in doing so, I learned some things. Now I'm ready to share.

My sister, Ashley, was the only person that I even somewhat talked to about this until now. As someone who doesn't like to talk about what upsets me, even with her, I probably didn't open up as much as I could have.

As we got older and realized that maybe everything wasn't okay, Ashley always perfectly played the role of the older sister reassuring me that everything would be fine. Even that day, I admired her strength and only wished I could mirror it. Little did I know she was hiding that she was struggling with it for my sake. I only realized this months later.

Much like me, she was too young to notice when it started. Growing up we never really realized something was wrong because it was kind of the norm for my mother. It was how she always was in our eyes. We thought it was her personality.

*We always expect our parents to be strong but they're humans too.
We just need to support them just as much as they've supported us*

"As I got older, I started to realize that mental illnesses affect almost everybody," she says. "But I never thought it would go as far as it did for us. I never worried about anything until that day." We both had a hard time understanding why it all happened.

I met with Maria Taylor, a counsellor at Algonquin College. According to her, the effects of parental mental illness are unique to everyone. However, it is quite common for her to find that family issues will come up in conversation with a lot of students experiencing their own mental health illnesses.

"Everything comes from something," she says. "Often that something relates to how they were raised and what the student was exposed to."

I for one have had parental mental health issues impact my life in a huge way. Yet I have never been able to express my feelings about it, nor was I shown how to handle such a serious situation. Maybe if I had, I would have been able to help my Mom before her depression pushed her to her worst. Maybe the day she tried to take her own life with just me in the house would have never happened.

According to Friends for Mental Health, an organization working with families facing mental illness, children will often withdraw and isolate themselves. When a child is faced with these situations and has not yet learned the appropriate way to cope and deal with them, a number of problems may arise.

I am certainly not the only one stuck in a situation I never thought I'd have to face. *Amanda Smith studies at Algonquin College. Her father has been fighting depression for about five years now. At first, she didn't understand why her father's moods would change so drastically. She noticed it affecting her entire household. As years passed, she now understands why things have changed but finds herself worrying about her father everyday.

"We always expect our parents to be strong but they're humans too. I never expected my dad to go through something like this," she says. "We just need to support them just as much as they've supported us."

Much like my mom, Smith's father has periods that are worse than others. On a daily basis, she does her absolute best to cope and try and help in any way she can.

That day still replays in my head continuously. Although I have watched my mom's mental health improve more than I ever thought was possible after that day, I don't think I could ever forget it.

This is exactly how Ariana Elizabeth feels about her list of memories. She currently studies fine arts at St. Lawrence College. Her mother has struggled with bipolar disorder for longer than Elizabeth has been alive. She remembers specific things from when she was only six years old.

"Mental health affects more than just the person with an illness," she says. "I understand it more now that I'm older, but it

doesn't make things easier."

As much as these experiences still affect me on a daily basis, I don't think it should be something people are afraid to talk about. Deciding to write this story was probably the first time I have actually acknowledged out loud what happened. It's probably also the first time I had even expressed how I felt to my Mom. Just that made me realize it isn't something I should shy away from.

My Mom is aware I am writing this story. When I first brought the idea up to her, she seemed mainly concerned about the reaction of others. She still seems to go back and forth between this and being open to sharing her story. She is not embarrassed about what she went through, which is why she decided she is okay with this.

I asked her if she could read my story and give me her initial thoughts. Here is what she had to say: "I have days where it's hard to visualize that my brain was where it was. I have other days where it feels like it was just yesterday. Looking back, I know that I did everything in my power to try and hide it from you guys, but now I don't feel that it was the right thing to do. But I don't know if the alternative would have been better or worse. I just felt a guilt as a Mom that I wasn't mentally there for you guys. I just couldn't function."

Second-hand mental health is very real. It happened to me. It's still happening.

*Names have been changed

According to Stats Canada, it is estimated that 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental illness throughout their lifetime. If you or a loved one are suffering, help is out there.

Ottawa Distress Centre:
613-238-3311

Ottawa Crisis Line:
613-722-6914

Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa:
1-877-377-7775

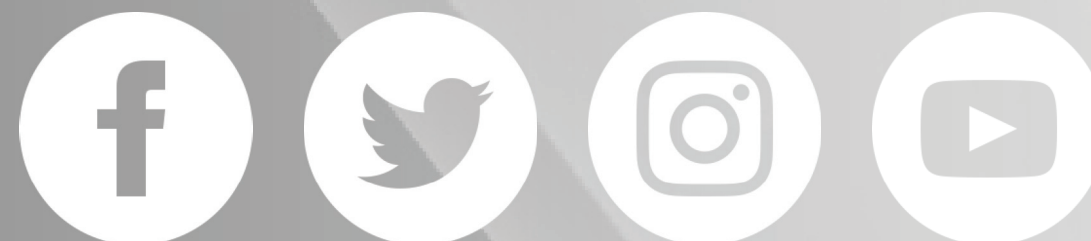
Good2Talk Post-Secondary Student Helpline: 1-866-925-5454

The Royal Ottawa Crisis Line:
1-866-996-0991

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haute HIJAB

How three trailblazing Muslim fashion bloggers are redefining the idea of modesty

By Mariam Jheran



Ottawa blogger Roda Hussen describes her style as "feminine with a kick."

As she filters and crops her next Instagram post, Roda Hussen, an Ottawa based hijabi fashion blogger, reflects on how she never expected to gain such popularity. "It was always just a hobby for me. I didn't realize people were actually following what I wore until I saw the numbers rise," she says.

Thanks to social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram, the popularity of hijabi fashion bloggers worldwide has spiked tremendously over the past few years. The internet has given fashion and beauty lovers from all over the world a chance to showcase their talents and individuality.

Although fashion is not the answer to integration and socialization for Muslim women, it is the answer

to representation and representation in today's political climate is essential. The rise of hijabi bloggers has influenced mega brands and fashion houses to be more inclusive and diverse in their campaigns. With Nura Afia, a YouTube beauty guru turned CoverGirl ambassador, Amena Khan a UK blogger turned L'Oreal spokeswomen and Ruba Zai, a street style influencer turned Dolce and Gabbana muse, there's no stopping these hijabi trailblazers. There is certainly no shortage of inspiration for fashion that is both modern and modest.

In Ottawa, the hijabi fashion blogger scene continues to grow on and off campus. There are more than sixty hijabi fashion bloggers in town. Here are three of them you should definitely check out:

Hijabis are often sandwiched between criticism: too oppressive – or not traditional enough

Mariam Jheran Photo

Roda Hussen AKA @RodaSoda_

Age: 27

Algonquin College:

business administration

Favourite hijabi bloggers: Dina Tokio, Sabina Hannan, Habiba Da Silva

Hussen started wearing the hijab when she was 8-years-old and has been committed to it ever since. "I've been wearing it so long that it's become such a huge part of me. It's like putting on a shirt or shoes before leaving the house, you never think to go without it," says Hussen.

Hussen started "taking blogging seriously" about a year ago after feeling inspired by other hijabi bloggers. "Nowadays there are so many hijabi bloggers, the style has evolved so much over the years," she says. She describes her personal style as "feminine with a kick." Hussen mastered her personal style four years ago after learning how to balance trends while sticking to the requirements of wearing a hijab. "You can't just put anything on and walk out the door," she says. "I guess that's where my fashionista side comes out, you have to mix and match and get creative."

Hijabis are often sandwiched between criticism coming from all directions. On one hand there are people who oppose the hijab and believe the ideology behind it is primitive and oppressive. On the other, there are fellow Muslims who believe that beauty and fashion bloggers aren't representing the hijab in line with their perspective. Hussen experienced being caught in this kind of cross-fire in 2010 when she was forced to take down her YouTube channel after receiving hate comments. "Some of the comments are really horrible," she says. "I try really hard not to get involved in those petty arguments, but sometimes it's hard."

Luckily, Hussen has since brought back her channel. "It's not supposed to be easy to be a hijabi," she says. "And the struggle only makes it more empowering."

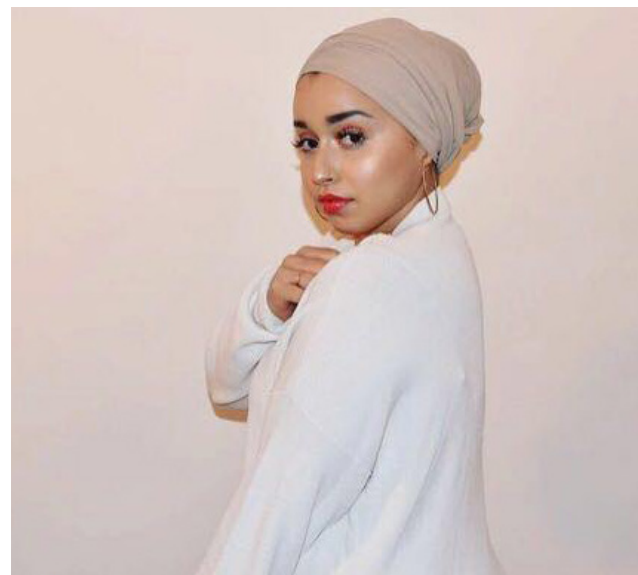
As for the continued growth of hijab popularity, Hussen is all for it. "I want to see hijabi's everywhere, I want us to get the recognition we deserve," she says. "We influenced each other locally for so long, but now it's time we influence each other globally."

Amina Dimia AKA @TheeUrbanVeil

Age: 24
Everest College: dental assisting
Favourite hijabi bloggers: VelaScarves, MariaaAlia, SabrineCat

Dimia started documenting her “sporty-luxe” style on Instagram a little over a year ago. She credits the inspiration behind her sporty street style to brands like Adidas and Nike. “I don’t think it’s difficult to balance modern and modest these days,” she says. “Hijabi-friendly style is in these days.”

With 90s influences like over-sized sweaters, mom jeans and maxi anything, Dimia believes it’s easier now more than ever to dress modestly and remain stylish. “I’ve always been modest, even before I started wearing the hijab at 19. The transition wasn’t very hard for me,” she says.



Yasmine Abouzeeni AKA @YasmineXAZ

Age: 29
University of Windsor: chemistry
Favourite hijabi bloggers: Dina Tokio, Ascia AKF, WithLoveLeena

After moving to Ottawa from Windsor four years ago, Abouzeeni started blogging as family and friends encouraged and inspired her to do so. She was a professional makeup artist for seven years prior to starting her Instagram. “My proudest moment was when I was able to quit my job and blog full-time,” says Abouzeeni.

Running a fashion and makeup based Instagram was just a hobby until brands and companies started reaching out to Abouzeeni to review and promote their items.

Abouzeeni tapped into the fashion world after she felt there was a high demand for modest and plus-size fashion inspiration. “I just try to find pieces that compliment my body without being too revealing,” she says. She calls styling herself in a modest fashion “Muslimifying” her looks.

She believes that hijabi makeup and fashion influencers are normalizing the hijab. More so, being represented in popular media opens up a conversation which can help us reach a new level of understanding.

Abouzeeni believes, now more than ever, that the fashion industry is on our side and with the rise of Islamophobia, it is vital to use your platform to shed these stereotypes. “The more people see hijabis in these popular campaigns, the less people are able to blanket Muslims under one specific banner,” she says.

For Abouzeeni, running a blog is about much more than just style and vanity. “My intention is to give women of all religions and races confidence through skincare, makeup and fashion,” she says. “Perception is key.” **9**

Mariam Iqbal Photos



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How alternative education can influence individual development inside and outside the classroom

By David Smith

A foosball table, chess boards, orange couches and a full kitchen, complete with stove and stocked refrigerator. Not things you ordinarily find in a classroom. But Cedar Ridge High School in Bridlewood is far from ordinary: It's one of a select few institutions in the country that offers grades 9 to 12 in a Montessori curriculum.

Early childhood education, as much as parenting and demographics, will inevitably influence and shape who we become as autonomous adults. Social skills, general interests, core values – it all starts in the classroom.

This fall as thousands of kids go back to school, thousands of parents will enrol their children in kindergarten or primary education for the first time. The season is accompanied by a looming question for parents: Which school do they pick? It's an important choice, one that will affect the course of a child's future.

The average Carleton University, uOttawa or Algonquin College student will have more or less similar recollections of individual forward-facing desks, chalk boards and standardized testing.

But some students have slightly different memories of elementary school. Whether it was homeschooling, uniform-clad private institutes or, in my case, the nearly-structureless adventure of Montessori school.

Amber Provencal Photo

I attended Kanata Montessori School (KMS) in Ottawa from “Casa 2” (what most will know as junior kindergarten) until Grade 6, age four until 11. My typical class was of about 30 to 40 students in a three-grade split. Having multiple age groups together in a single classroom is a cornerstone of Montessori's educational philosophy. It gets its name from Italian physician and scientist Dr. Maria Montessori, who opened the first school bearing her name in Rome, 1907.

According to the American Montessori Society, the philosophy fosters the child's natural desire to learn and initiate their own learning. In essence, it's all about creating a supportive environment where the student is able to choose the path of their own learning. There are around 500 Montessori schools in Canada, accounting for a small percentage of some 22,000 worldwide.

Going through Grades 1 to 6, our classroom environment was set up very differently: large blocks of free work time, where the student chooses which assignments to complete and when, were punctuated with specific lessons taught to individual grade groups gathered at the teacher's desk. Instead of individual desks, there were large tables encouraging students to sit with older peers for assistance. There was never an assigned seat. In many ways, it is an idyllic way to learn.

Even though the consistency and duration of my Montessori experience, I think, gave me some skills I may not have developed in public education, I feel it may have influenced the development of my personality. This, in turn, may have impacted my study habits through high school and into post-secondary.

From daycare until Grade 3, third-year Ottawa University biomedical science student Mohan Rakesh attended KMS for seven years. Rakesh recalls the transition into public school in fourth grade being strange for him. It felt like everything in the classroom was happening at a slower pace than he was used to. When he got to high school, he began skipping class and learning course material on his own at home. He continued this in his first year at university. Rakesh would routinely look at his course syllabus and figure out which assignments he could skip, and still maintain a desired GPA.

“I never really fixed it, but it didn't matter,” he says. Although Rakesh can't say for certain his Montessori beginnings made university more difficult, he admits there may be a correlation.

“I may have always been a little weird and Montessori made it worse, but I think [those habits] would still be there even if I went to public school,” he says. “I can't learn at someone else's

I feel Montessori may have influenced the development of my personality. This, in turn, may have impacted my study habits going through high school and transition into post-secondary



Montessori's philosophy on education is a large step away from the methods used in public schools. Public schools follow a rigid schedule. While at Montessori schools, students have more freedom in how they spend school hours.

pace, I have to be 100 per cent dialed in and if the person is going too slow I always get distracted.”

For this reason, Rakesh prefers to watch recorded lectures at home, instead of sitting in them.

In 2015, KMS opened a separate campus across the street to house Cedar Ridge High School – a Montessori environment hosting Grades 9 through 12. The building has an upstairs study space, one downstairs common area and a handful of smaller private rooms where lessons are delivered. The school offers 60 courses to about 45 students year-to-year meaning lessons are often delivered one-on-one.

The students love Montessori's sense of community. According to grade 11 student Patrick Watson, with everyone in one shared space it's impossible to form social cliques or be exclusive – you're simply forced to work and socialize with everyone at some point. Watson came to Cedar Ridge against his own accord after struggling in Grade 9. He is now thriving at Montessori.

“The whole vibe of the school promotes responsibility,” Watson says. “They teach you how to be people.” He says he wouldn't go back to public school given the choice, except maybe to socialize.

The social aspect is the only thing Grade 12 student Lauren Walker misses about All Saints Catholic High School, where she spent Grades 9 and 10. Although she feels her social life may have been negatively impacted outside of school, her friends from Montessori are more genuine. Although, both students admit that their class still experiences its fair share of drama. “It’s still high school here even though it’s a different environment,” she says.

Walker has been accepted to multiple universities and says her teachers at Cedar Ridge helped her explore options like early acceptance she wouldn’t have previously considered. Excited to start university in the fall, Walker feels confident she has the skills to succeed, despite her very unusual high school experience.

With the exception of a more limited social landscape, neither student feels that Montessori is doing them any disservice.

It seems alternative education isn’t exclusively to blame for bad study habits. In fact, for some individuals it may be a better way to get through the emotional trauma of high school. But being in that environment for so long during formative years may very well impact your adult personality.

Jonathan Robinson has been principal of KMS since 1998. Before that, he worked in public elementary and high school, special education and as a university professor. He says it’s common for any alternative education student to have difficulty transitioning into public education. In his opinion, the public stream simply can’t do enough to support the student’s desire to learn, leaving some students burnt out by the end of high school. “I think education has a lot to answer for because it in many ways does not meet the needs of students,” he says.

Robinson has worked with pupils aged three to 30 across eastern Canada in his career. So far, as the long-run impacts of having a diverse educational background go, there are definitely differences that can be seen in adult life, but overall he thinks that’s a good thing.

“It’s invaluable, and I think it does give you an anchor however your life unfolds. That foundation, I believe, makes a huge difference,” he says of the Montessori experience.

He agreed candidly that some individual personalities aren’t suited to unstructured learning environments. Although he says it’s a rarity, Robinson has had students he recommended leave Montessori.

“Some students need a lot more structure than we would normally give them. Not every child is self-motivated and not every child understands what they want to learn.” **g**



During free time the students are encouraged to have “anything but screen” time. Students can play chess, foosball or hang out with the class hamster among other things

Full-day tuition at Ottawa Montessori schools:

Glebe Montessori:

- Toddler - \$18,253
- Preschool - \$13,215
- Grade 1-6 - \$13,787

OMS Montessori:

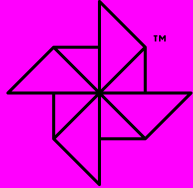
- Toddler - \$20,760
- Grade 1-6 - \$14,232
- Grade 7-8 - \$18,288
- Grade 9-12 - \$16,608

Parkdale Montessori:

- Toddler - \$17,550
- Preschool - \$13,948
- Grade 1-6 - \$7,000

Numbers taken from each school's respective website

APATHY IS BORING’S RISE PROGRAM PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED BY WORKING IN A GROUP ON A COMMUNITY PROJECT. IN SPRING OF 2018, THE RISE AMBASSADORS IN OTTAWA CREATED A PROJECT USING ART AS A MEANS TO TALK ABOUT THEIR PEERS’ EXPERIENCE WITH SOCIAL EXCLUSION.



MORGANE THERY-LEGRIX

“To the first-encounter question of ‘What do you do?’, students typically refer to their degree or part/full-time job position. I used to answer, “I study journalism and photography with a strong interest in sociology of conflicts.” But then it occurred to me, what do I do with my degree in my everyday life? This question raised in me a feeling of personal disappointment; I was aware and interested in social issues affecting Ottawa, the city that I now call home, but I wasn’t doing anything towards solving them. A month later, I found myself taking part in a life-changing experience – Apathy is Boring’s RISE program. Taking part in RISE is about sharing your story and voicing your concerns on the issues that affect you personally or your community at large. It is about connecting with young people who come from different backgrounds and demonstrating that no matter where we come from or which community we identify with, we are a part of something bigger. We have the opportunities and the power to make a difference. And honestly, answering “I make a difference in my community” to the typical question of ‘What do you do?’ gives me a real sense of accomplishment.”



DAVID GARROW

“As an Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee youth, I had always let others talk for me for far too long. I decided to change that - I applied to be an Ambassador for the Apathy is Boring’s RISE Program in Ottawa. Over the following few weeks I became acquainted with eight amazing and unique youth members of the Ottawa cohort, and attended a weekend retreat in Mont Tremblant accompanied by other inspirational ambassadors from Edmonton and Montreal. Through our retreat and weekly meetings, we discovered that, in fact, apathy IS boring. We also explored the question that led our project: “What does social inclusion look like to you?” In Ottawa, we held three Creation Workshops to engage youth in providing voices and artwork that speak to and symbolize social inclusion. Art, music, writing, and the other expressions of creativity within our cultures will always remind us that we’re all human. There isn’t a single correct answer, as it’s subjective and ever-evolving but if we can continue to speak up, and even more important, to listen – then we can, and will, RISE.”



NICK BEAUDOIN-MILLER

“For as long as I can remember, I have always been interested in the events happening around me whether it be culture, sports, politics, scientific innovation, or social movements. Unfortunately, learning about and acting on an issue are two completely different things, and at no point did I believe that I could act, that I could make a change in my society or even my community. Then I did something truly uncharacteristic, I applied to be an Apathy is Boring RISE ambassador and I was offered the position. Through RISE I have had the opportunity to meet so many inspirational people, I have learned that not only is it possible for young adults such as myself to contribute and enact meaningful change in our communities, but that we must act. I now volunteer at a local youth center and participated in a 6-week civil engagement workshop series - neither of which I could have imagined myself taking on if not for my extraordinary experience as a RISE ambassador. It’s thanks to RISE I’ve begun to find my voice; nowadays I’m standing tall and making myself heard.”

Learning Through Loss



The loss of my father changed Christmas time forever. It changed me too. But in coping with his loss, I've also come to focus on the lessons he left behind

By Dennis St. Pierre

I remember getting a San Jose Sharks hockey jersey for Christmas in 2007 labelled “From: Santa, To: Dennis.” It was obviously from my mom and dad, but regardless, Santa always gave the best gifts.

That year was a traditional Christmas morning for all of us. My mom, my dad, my brother, my grandmother and me were all exchanging gifts early in the morning while sitting around the Christmas tree in the pyjamas our grandmother gave us earlier that morning. But that jersey was the most memorable gift I’d ever gotten. My dad never really did gift shopping. Yet, this time, I knew he was the one who went and got it for me.

The holiday is known, after all, for bringing family together regardless of what may have occurred throughout the year. The Christmas season of 2011, however, was a different story for my family. It all started on the night of Dec. 4.

Dennis St. Pierre Photo

All I remember is my brother in the background panicking and shouting as if something horrible happened. Moments later the phone went silent and I was left with thoughts racing through my mind

I knew something was wrong the moment my mom didn’t answer any of my phone calls on the night of Dec. 4, 2011.

Even from inside my house I could hear the bone-chilling wind whistle. The type of cold that went through every layer of clothing I was wearing. The moon lit up the night as a light blanket of snow covered the ground. There was something different about that night.

I was 18-years-old and filled with curiosity. I needed to know why everything felt so strange. Whenever I was feeling down or just not right, I would call my mom, but she wasn’t picking up.

I knew my mom and brother went to my dad’s house that evening, so I knew something was wrong. My parents weren’t together at the time but that didn’t mean they didn’t love one another. They were each others’ first loves.

After I finally got through to my mom, all I remember is my brother in the background panicking and shouting as if something horrible happened. Moments later the phone went silent and I was left with thoughts racing through my mind.

“My dad is dead.”

My friend Connor was with me at my house, but in that moment, not even home felt like home. As any good friend would do, he tried to reassure me everything was fine, but I knew this time I was right.

Approximately 10 minutes went by with me repeatedly trying to call my mom and brother back, but I was left alone imagining the worst possible scenario. I had already put everything together when my grandmother finally called me to tell me what had happened.

After 35 years of being together, my parents had recently separated. There were talks of divorce, but as the nosy child I could have sworn things were getting better and plans of getting back together were near. My dad lived in a simple townhouse in Kanata’s Bridlewood neighbourhood. While my mom, my brother and I lived in a spacious two-storey home in Qualicum-Graham Park, a suburban neighbourhood in Ottawa’s west end.

In 2004, my mom and dad bought that home together to accommodate their growing family. Due to school, friends and practically our whole lives being spent in Qualicum, we decided to live full-time with our mom, while visiting my father occasionally. My dad was a big outdoorsman. He spent as much time possible outside, either fishing or hunting. Growing up I tagged along on some minor trips, but since I was too young I never got to experience a full-fledged boys weekend.

Today, I have my own friends, and we have our own trips, but the thought of going out with my dad and my brother is something I always wished would have happened. I was put in a spot to fend for myself, teach myself the things a father teaches his son, from changing a tire to how to fillet a fish.

Not only did the event of my father’s death lead to a period of grief and darkness, but it also brought me to a phase in my life, but after two of my close friends lost their parents shortly after my father’s passing, they came to me for help and support.

I became wise beyond my years and it seemed like all of the hard-hitting questions people had were directed to me. I did face something not many of my friends had experienced, so I was confident I had the answers.

The death of my father shaped the person I am today. It’s tough not to ask, “Who would I be today if my dad was still alive?” From the bad thoughts to the bad decisions, his absence hasn’t gone unnoticed. From then to now, I’ve learned from everything and it has moulded me into the man I am today.

All of this happened during a time in my life when I was finally transitioning from a boy to a man. I was just 18-years-old that December when my dad died, I was left to figure things out on a road that was new to me – alone.

The one thing that has remained consistent for me throughout the entire process is the presence of my family and friends. Regardless of what I’ve lost, there’s still so much for me to gain.

Every Christmas without him will be different, but after six years, I can finally say things are on the right track. The most important man in my life is gone forever, but his lessons have been passed through and I will forever cherish them.

I love you, Dad. **g**

3 pubs, 3 schools

By Michael Clarke



As Drew White, a bartender at Algonquin College's student bar the Observatory, explains that Budweiser is the Ob's most popular beer, a student sporting a black ball cap and baggy blue jeans arrives at the bar.

"Can I get two Bud pints please?" the student asks.

As White begins to pour the pints he smiles with his mouth shut at the coincidence and nods his head.

The Observatory is one of three campus pubs for Ottawa students to unwind, or wind up at, after class. With Oliver's pub at Carleton University, UOttawa's 1848 and the Observatory at Algonquin, students get to choose from a variety of pub experiences available right on their campuses. The new semester is well on its way, and with it comes new stresses.

Finding a place on campus to unwind after or before a big class can help students get through approaching deadlines and pressures post-secondary schooling puts on all of us.

Oliver's 'Ollie's' Pub & Patio, Carleton University

Most Popular Beer: Ollie's signature beer, "Raven's Ale."

Claim to Fame: Thirsty Thursdays. Every Thursday, Oliver's goes from pub to club. The front half of the bar is turned into a dance floor decked out with lights and a DJ who plays throwback jams and today's top hits for students. The 19 plus event is a popular facet of Carleton's campus life.

Atmosphere: Ollie's lighting and decor help it appeal to the average university student. Whether you're sitting in one of the large booths in the front half, or the smaller tables in the back room, there's ample space to sit and enjoy your drinks with friends without knocking elbows.

"The vibe in here really depends on the day," says fourth-year Carleton journalism student and Ollie's bartender Nick Laws. "But for the most part it's fairly casual here. Some nights can get a little rowdy depending on the crowd."

Ollie's isn't just for the beer. The food options are affordable and include an all-day breakfast for the late risers.

"I come here because of the atmosphere," says sixth-year Carleton engineering student Alice Fernandes. "The food is pretty cheap too, which is always a plus."

Music: Ollie's plays a variety of music from classic hits to top 40 jams throughout the day. On Thirsty Thursdays, they pump up the crowd with sing along hits and songs perfect for a dance off with friends.

1848, University of Ottawa

Most Popular Beer: Moosehead.

Claim to Fame: Toonie Tuesdays. 1848 offers students two-dollar Fireball shots and half-priced Pabst Blue Ribbon every Tues-

day. Similar to Ollie's, uOttawa's student pub brings in a DJ and makes room for a dance floor.

Atmosphere: With seats at the bar and booths spread throughout, 1848 gives off a casual pub vibe. The large red pool table, something Ollie's and The Observatory lack, is the first thing you notice as you walk in. Other than a game of pool, 1848 doesn't seem too much like a sports bar, but rather a relaxing bar environment to study with friends or have a drink after class.

Music: 1848 plays a variety of music from top 40 to classic rock.

"I'd definitely say it's got a cozy home vibe," says uOttawa second-year law student and 1848 bartender Nader Fakihi. "People come here to chill for a bit and study or just hangout. It's nice for us students to have a place like that."

If you're looking for a bite to eat during your visit at 1848, the food options are plentiful. With six appetizers and 11 meal options, 1848 has a variety of food for students to order and features discounted menu items on Mondays.

The Observatory, 'The Ob,' Algonquin College

Most Popular Beer: Budweiser.

Claim to Fame: While the Ob doesn't have a day of the week that attracts large crowds, they host a variety events each month including Dirty Bingo and open mic nights. With drag queens as the hosts and giveaways ranging from condoms to dildos, Dirty Bingo attracts a large and rambunctious crowd to the Ob every second Wednesday of the month.

Atmosphere: As students enter the Ob they can choose between the booths on the upper tier, stools lining the bar or chairs seated at tables on the main tier. Bright, modern lighting and sports on the TVs surrounding the pub gives The Ob a social, casual vibe that welcomes any student in for cold pint or a meal from the kitchen.

Music: The Ob's music keeps the atmosphere more laid back. Artists from Mumford and Sons to Michael Bublé play quietly in the background, appealing to a variety of music tastes without overshadowing visitors' conversation.

"Everyone is pretty friendly here," says Algonquin travel and tourism student Kayla Nordoff. "The diversity is great here too. You can find anyone here, which makes it pretty welcoming."

The Ob has plenty of food options for hungry students. Pub classics like nachos and burgers are available to-go or to bring back to your table. Vegan options are available for students too, making the Ob a great option for hungry students on their way to class or taking a study break.

For the really adventurous, the Ob offers taco-in-a-bag: a bag filled with seasoned chicken and all of the available taco toppings you want. **g**

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