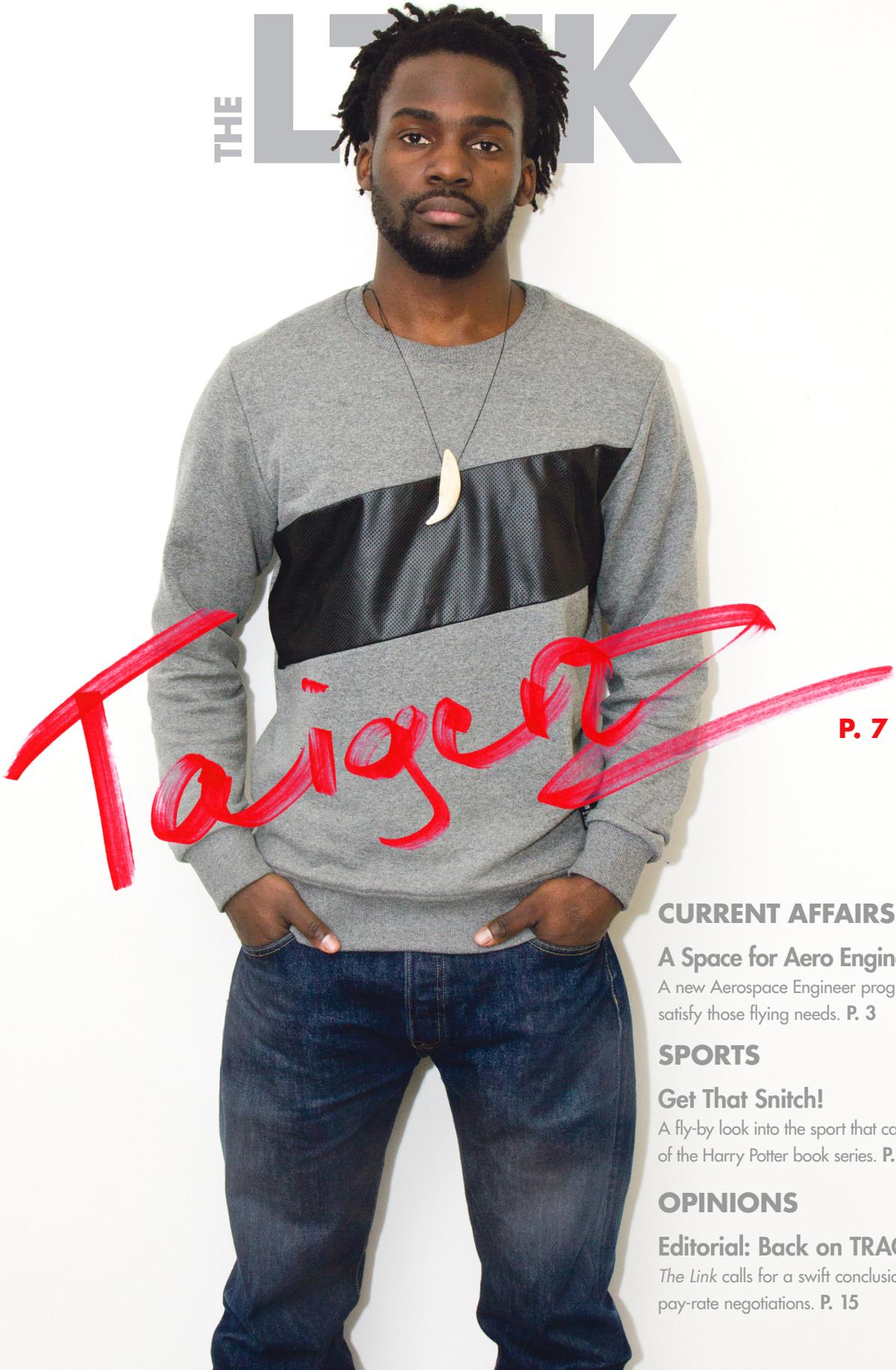


# THE LINK



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NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

# Now Boarding: Aerospace Engineers

## Concordia Hiring Profs for New Bachelor's in Aerospace Engineering

CARL BINDMAN  
@CARLBINDMAN

Flying and space: aerospace. It's a popular theme for undergraduate engineers at Concordia, given that students built Mars rovers, autonomous drones, satellite control systems and miniature helicopters for their final projects last year.

Next year, thanks to the new aerospace engineering bachelor's degree, engineering students in the program will get to design a plane. Naturally, interest in enrollment is high. "We have more than 100 students interested per [year]," says aerospace program director Marius Paraschivoiu—only 50 spots are available per year.

Aerospace engineering opens up much more depth of study than before for bachelor's students, who were previously limited to the one aerospace specialization in mechanical engineering.

Now, aerospace engineering offers three specializations: aerodynamics and propulsion, aerospace structures and materials, as well as avionics and aerospace systems.

Aerodynamics and propulsion deals with the parts that fly, and aerospace structures and materials deals with the construction of the planes and spacecrafts themselves. Meanwhile, avionics and aerospace systems teach about the electronics inside planes and spacecraft.

Paraschivoiu says that the old mechanical engineering specialization will continue to exist—like a pressure valve to let off the high demand for the pure aerospace degree.

"Our plan is not to increase [the size] year-by-year," he says. "The plan is to make it a strong cohort." That means 50 students per year, every year.

To that effect, application is tough. Students transferring to aerospace engineering need a GPA of 3.8 or more—to be accepted in mechanical engineering, students need a 2.5 GPA. To get in from CEGEP, students need a CRC score of 30 or higher—mechanical asks for 25. And to get in from high school, applicants would need an average of 90 per cent—mechanical asks for 80.

Paraschivoiu adds that they're hiring six new professors. "We have a good group of professors," he says. "We have a good base that we're now going to try and augment."

### NSERC money here

Coming to fruition with the new program is a grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada to establish a new research chair at Concordia in Aerospace Design Engineering—or NCADE—that will help guide the direction of the new program.

The \$1 million NSERC grant is joined by contributions from Bombardier Aerospace, Bell Helicopter, Pratt & Whitney Canada, Marinvent and Altair Engineering, bringing the total to \$4.4 million over five years.

"It's an NSERC chair, but it's not research-focused," says Catherine Marsden, the new chair. "It's focused on undergraduate teaching." She says the purpose is to enhance how aerospace design is taught, beyond simply understanding systems.

While NCADE and the new aerospace degree complement each other, they are distinct entities. NSERC funding is applied only to NCADE, says Marsden—not the aerospace degree at large.

The approval processes for the degree and

chair coincided, but are distinct. NSERC is a federal organization, and the aerospace program was provincially approved.

"They have obvious synergies," Marsden says. "To have both of them is amazing. But the NCADE program was awarded to us by NSERC without the aerospace degree in place. Of course when we applied for the NCADE program, the fact that we had applied to offer an aerospace degree was key to that application."

However, Marsden says that the application for an aerospace program wasn't make-or-break in NSERC decision, as there was already an aerospace option in mechanical engineering—not to mention the Concordia Institute of Aerospace Design and Innovation, or Concordia President Alan Shepard's board membership in Aéro Montréal.

"Designing an airplane, it's not good enough to just know about structures, or engines, or aerodynamics," Marsden says. NCADE gives students the chance to learn in a cross-disciplinary environment.

"There's all kind of specialties, and we teach them all," Marsden says, "but one thing we don't do is teach designers. [NCADE]'s contributions to the aerospace degree are on the design side."

She says that students who want to pursue design—how to think about putting together a whole project, as opposed to focusing on, for example, an engine—should be able to.

"There's a feeling that it's not a smart thing to do, to put all your eggs in one basket at the undergraduate level," Marsden says, referring to students' reluctance to focus exclusively on aerospace, "but I tend to disagree."

### The aeronaut's apprentice

"One of the key things that we have launched is an apprenticeship program," Marsden says.

Apprenticeships are like internships—students go out to a company to do work and find mentorship. The difference, Marsden says, is that apprenticeships span over four years.

"[A student] is mentored by one company, from year one, and that company takes on part of their training every summer, for the entire four years of their degree."

She sees students working on the shop floor, in product support, in marketing, in inspections, flight tests, all different aspects of building a product. According to her, after four years students will have their engineering knowledge, plus the knowledge of the people and processes to let them enter the design side of aerospace.

"That's what's missing right now," she says. "The opportunity for them to go work as design engineers."

The first students will go out this summer—selection happens in the next two or three weeks, according to Marsden.

"This is unique to the NCADE program," she says. "It's a pilot project, but I think it's going to be very successful."

And while her chair is specific to aerospace, Marsden sees the apprenticeship spreading across disciplines—engineering or otherwise.

"The aerospace degree shouldn't be just producing designers," Marsden says. "There should be people that want to be specialists, academics, all kinds of things. But I just want there to be a space there for people who want to be designers."



Jordan Lindsay, who works at Burritoville, cooks up Mexican-inspired food.

NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

## Burritoville Making Steady Progress

### New Solidarity Cooperative in Midst of Renovations and Growing Membership

JONATHAN CARAGAY-COOK  
@HIIMBIRACIAL

In only seven months under new ownership, the restaurant Burritoville is 70 per cent of where it wants to be.

"This place was basically just a giant wind tunnel before this," joked Jordan Lindsay, a worker member at Burritoville, referring to ongoing interior renovations to the three-storey restaurant on Bishop St.

After ten years of ownership, a team of three people sold the Mexican-style vegetarian spot to a group working under the Concordia Food Coalition—a student-run, fee-levy organization—last August. This change in ownership was different than just three guys handing the keys over to another pair of hands. Burritoville became a solidarity cooperative, which means it's run by its membership through a board structure, according to Ashleigh Bond, its administrative coordinator.

There are three types of members for a solidarity coop, Bond explained: worker, user and support members. She, along with Lindsay and 12 other staff, fall under the worker membership status. Three quarters of the staff are Concordia students or alumni, including Lindsay and Bond.

User members pay a one-time, lifelong fee of \$10, Bond explained.

"They automatically become an owner of the cooperative," she said, adding that there are over 200 user members. Worker members have three seats on the restaurant's board, while the user members have five. The remaining three seats are given to support members, which include a councillor from the Concordia Student Union, a CFC representative and one open spot that the Sustainable Action Fund has filled so far.

Benefits of being a user member include special deals, discounted prices, the ability to vote and run for the board and the chance to have a say on how Burritoville operates, according to Bond.

"We're working directly for our members," she said. The coop's first annual general meeting will be in mid-to-late March.

The restaurant is also a non-profit organization, which means any surplus is directly invested back into the business. Bond said sales are slowly increasing, and that they don't expect a surplus yet as Burritoville remains a "break-even" model.

"The goal right now is for social benefit and not profit," she explained.

Being affordable for students is one of Burritoville's mandates, according to Bond, as she said prices haven't changed for the past five years. To offset inflation and the fluctuating Canadian dollar, the restaurant tries to cut in-house costs of employee hours and inventory, Lindsay explained.

"We can't lie and say it's not a challenge," Lindsay commented about the balance of remaining affordable and running a financially sustainable business.

Burritoville won't sacrifice quality of food to have cheap prices though, as Bond said most of their products are organic. Local sourcing is also a priority, she added. For example, she said a portion of their produce comes from two Concordia students who collect unsold batches from farms around the area, while the sprouts they use come from the greenhouse on the 12th floor of the Hall building.

#### Becoming a coop

The CFC created a working group in August 2013 to begin assessing the feasibility of purchasing Burritoville and possibly transforming it into a coop, according to Bond.

There were seven founding members of Concordia students and one professor who wanted to make sure Burritoville stayed after the owners left, she said.

An accounting student was hired to analyze the restaurant's value and see how much it would cost to buy it, while the working group put together a business plan, Bond explained. The first evaluation estimated that Burritoville was worth upward of \$270,000, Lindsay recalled.

"This was way outside of the range of what was possible for us," he said.

With close relations to the former ownership team, Lindsay said they were able to negotiate a price down to \$120,000.

In April last year, the council of the CSU approved to give the CFC team \$100,000 to help purchase the restaurant. By buying Burritoville, Lindsay explained that they inherited the image rights, liquor license, furniture and kitchen appliances, among other things. They did not buy the physical space itself, as Bond said a woman from the area owns it.

#### Looking ahead

Being 70 per cent complete, Lindsay said one of the main concerns right now is to insulate the building to deal with the cold. Bond said this should be fixed in the next six months.

In January, Lindsay set up a crowdfunding campaign on Indiegogo.com, mentioning the need to fix how cold the space gets in the winter.

Their goal was to raise \$30,000, but they only received \$470 from four backers after a month's time. In the page's description, it said they need a total of \$90,000 to finish the space's transformation. With this goal still in progress, Bond wants the solidarity coop to be a place where its members and students feel comfortable. It's already a venue for comedians, musicians and artists to display their work on the second floor. It has a library on the third level.

In five years, Bond wants to buy the building. In ten, she foresees the restaurant having a foundation to help fund community-driven initiatives and events. Lindsay is positive about these changes coming to fruition.

"We're paving the way here at our own peril if things go awry, but so far things have been going great," Lindsay said. "I'm loving work here."



From left, Ashleigh Bond, Paige Hilderman, Erika Licon, Seth DeFayette and Jordan Lindsay are Burritoville coop members.

NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER



## An Inside Look at the Hive Café

With Over 4,000 Members and New Kitchen Space, Coordinators Still Seek Growth

**HÉLÈNE BAUER**  
@HELENEVBAUER

The 'take a book, leave a book' nook at the Hive Café was an idea brought forward by a student.

The downtown Hive—there's one at Loyola too—opened its doors in the fall of 2014, in an effort to provide more student-run initiatives, like the book nook, for the Concordia community.

"It feels really nice to see more and more of these spaces opening within Concordia that are student-run," said Jessica Cabana, the Hive Café Mezzanine coordinator. "It's a different option from the core food monopoly on campus." She's referring to the corporate food companies on campus like Concordia's food provider Aramark, and the recently opened Starbucks café in the basement of the LB building downtown.

The Hive Café aims to provide a sustainable food model for the Concordia community, said Cabana, who also worked on the project as the VP Sustainability at the Concordia Student Union in 2014-2015.

Moving towards this goal, the café's kitchen moved to the seventh floor of the Hall building, next to People's Potato, in summer 2015. The space was formerly the cafeteria for first-year residents downtown. By making this move up from the mezzanine, Cabana said employees can prepare more food by themselves.

"We moved food production towards in-house cooking, allowing us to have more local food for an affordable price," Cabana said.

Before the move, the Hive was buying food from various catering services. Food prices were higher and the café was unsure of the quality of the food being served, which is an important aspect of its mandate.

Now, thanks to the new kitchen space, the Hive produces most of its food, like sandwiches, salads and soups, as well as some baked goods. The average price of sandwiches was reduced by approximately \$2, responding to student complaints regarding high prices.

"We're providing a service. Not every student can afford local, organic food," Cabana said. "Being in such a primordial space and being on two campuses and being able to provide—that feels really good."

The Hive Café now has a direct relationship with its producers, and is conscious about bringing more local and organic food

to their menu. According to Cabana, about 70 per cent of the food is local and organic. They also get their sprouts from the Concordia greenhouse.

"It's a balance of what students can afford, to what we can bring in locally and what we can bring in organically," Cabana said.

With approximately 4,400 Hive members, the café is catering to a large student, faculty and staff community. Functioning as a solidarity cooperative, clients of the café can benefit from becoming members by receiving discount prices and taking part in the decision-making process and overall functioning of the café.

The membership fee is set at \$10, as requested by the government of every solidarity coop, and the Hive subsidizes half of that fee for undergraduate students. As of this year, it subsidizes the whole membership fee for graduate students, who have voted to pay a fee-levy each semester.

The money received from memberships must be kept aside for a minimum of two years before the coop can incorporate it into its budget. The Hive monitors all its members through their point of sale system, which tracks each member's activity at the café, including what they buy and how much they spend.

The non-profit coop was initially funded by the CSU's Student Space, Accessible Edu-

cation and Legal Contingency Fund, which provided \$102,536.79 to fund start-up costs. Two years later, the Hive is still in deficit, but they are right where they're expected to be, according to Paige Hilderman, the Hive Café Loyola coordinator.

Cabana and Hilderman mentioned there is talk among the board to have a vote for a fee-levy for the daily free lunch on the Loyola campus.

"The Hive Free Lunch has a completely different budget than [the Hive Café]—they are self-sufficient," Hilderman said. "They get money through the CSU. If there were a fee-levy, we would no longer take money from the CSU." She said that the free lunch operates on a "very, very tight budget."

All of these decisions are passed through the board first and foremost, though.

"We're very consent based," Hilderman said. The board has three core groups of members—the worker, the user and the support.

The user member is the Concordia student or staff that has paid the membership fee. They can then take part in board meetings and bring up concerns and suggestions.

The worker members are those who are employed by the Hive Café, and the support members act in partnership with the café. There are two support members that have

permanent seats. They are the CSU and the Concordia Food Coalition, who helped co-found the café. This year, the greenhouse is the third support member sitting on board.

"They have a say in how the products are being used and in the development of the Hive," Hilderman said. There's a "symbiotic relationship" with the support members of the Hive in that they help the café develop and move towards a sustainable and "just food system."

When speaking of future plans for the coop, Hilderman said that "there are not a bunch of huge projects, but a bunch of small ones that make up a big change."

In recent sessions open to all members, the Hive envisioned six main goals to help the café reach their vision and mission values. These goals are to build a model food system, empower the student community, nurture safer spaces, invest in organizational learning and uphold the solidarity co-op model principles, Cabana said.

The Hive hopes to achieve these goals in the first three-to-five years of their opening through different committees. They will solidify the café's mission, which is to remain an open space for students and student groups to gather.

The Hive Café aims to "be somewhere safe for students to enjoy, somewhere where we're providing real, healthy food," Hilderman said.



The Hive Café's kitchen moved to the seventh floor of the Hall building, next to People's Potato.

MICHELLE PUCCI

[thelinknewspaper.ca/news](http://thelinknewspaper.ca/news)

### Second Tribunal Result

16 student-strikers facing charges from a professor for their involvement in last spring's protests have received letter of reprimands from an independent panel.

# TRAC Mobilizes Outside of President's Office

## Concordia TAs Demand Livable Wages

MICHELLE PUCCI  
@MICHELLEMPUCCI

The union that represents teaching assistants at Concordia hasn't sat down at the bargaining table with the administration since the fall semester, yet some members have tried to garner "support" from senior school officials.

About a dozen Teaching and Research Assistants of Concordia union members, including union executives, visited the Concordia president's offices last Wednesday wearing red t-shirts that read "TRAC Union Concordia TA/RA Mobilization." They were blocked from seeing the president, according to Nader Jafar Nodoushan, TRAC's president.

The group wanted president Alan Shepard or management to "support TAs and RAs by signing" the petition. They waited outside glass doors leading into the Shepard's office on the eighth floor of the GM building, before at least three security guards appeared.

"To us it looks like they don't want to support us," Nodoushan said. "Sometimes the employer wants to show that they are supportive, but their hands are tied, but we didn't see any support."

TRAC circulated a petition that gathered 701 signatures online and in person. The petition reiterates TRAC's negotiation demands for the "same pay-rate for the same job" across faculties, and no cuts to current hourly wages.

In the end, Nodoushan left the petition with Roger Côté, VP Services, who refused to sign the petition. The online version had 236 signatures by the end of February.

"We're waiting for a proposal," Nodoushan said. "We believe Concordia can handle that, but they don't want to."

He pointed to the \$235,000 severance recently given to the university's former CFO, who was only employed for three months. TRAC is asking for an increase of \$360,000 in total for salary increases for all TAs.

Nodoushan says Concordia's proposals so far have been unsatisfactory, and even slightly below the 2014-2015 TA salary budget. Nodoushan would not specify the details of the current pay-rate demands and Concordia's standing offer.

"I don't think our members are satisfied and I don't think they will tolerate it," Nodoushan said. In an interview earlier this month, Shepard declined to comment on the status of negotiations but said TAs are "valued members of the team."

The average salary for a teaching assistant is \$1,000 per semester. Most undergraduates, in arts and science, fine arts and JMSB, earn \$14 an hour and work several hours a week. Graduate students in these faculties and the School of Graduate Studies can earn between \$18 and \$25 an hour. In Engineering and Computer Science the lowest pay-rate is \$17 and the highest is \$25 an hour.

"We have TAs at Concordia that are making \$300 a semester," he added. "I don't even know if I can comment on that. I don't think anyone can live with such an amount of money as a student with no other job."

Nodoushan also encourages undergraduate TAs in arts and science, fine arts and JMSB

to contact the union if they are performing tasks outlined as "Grade 1" teaching assistantships, which are only available to master's and PhD students.

"Because they're undergrad students, their salary is \$10 less than what they deserve," he said.

TRAC was supposed to negotiate 2015-2016 pay-rates by May 2015. When the union and university agree on a new pay-rate, any increases will likely be retroactively paid to

current TAs.

But TRAC has two months before its collective agreement expires, and the union has to negotiate new pay-rates, hours of work, and other working conditions.

Invigilators—the individuals responsible for distributing and overseeing final exams—are also in the process of negotiating a collective agreement, after voting to unionize and join TRAC last year. Invigilators earn minimum wage salaries for their work.



TRAC gathered outside President Alan Shepard's office on Feb. 24, 2016. COURTESY M. R.

## THE LINK VOLUME 37 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Tuesday March 1 @ 4 p.m. in *The Link's* office

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**Elections will be held Tuesday, March 1 at 4 p.m. in *The Link's* office (1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. Room H-649). All staff members are eligible and encouraged to vote.**



NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

## Old School Paved the Way

Montreal Rapper Taigenz Talks Talent Shows, Concordia Classes and Inspiration

ZACH GOLDBERG-MOTA  
@ZACHGOLDBERGG

"I'm Taigenz. I make art because that's what's going to grow my reaches and enable what I'm going to do with my life."

Taigenz was born Tamfu Terry Ngala in Côte-des-Neiges, the son of Cameroonian immigrants. His childhood was normal, his parents a banker and a government

employee. Reserved but funny, he played basketball and hung out with friends, until music became a focus. Initially, his interest was in techno, and some alternative punk—until he discovered Eminem at age 8.

"[Eminem's] performance of 'Forgot About Dre' with Dr. Dre, that was the first time I really sat down to watch a rap performance," Ngala said. "From then on I was just on it. Ask any of my friends—when I was eight,

nine years old, I was just memorizing all of his lyrics."

Today, Ngala is a full-fledged rapper. His music plays like a mix of Yung Jock and early Ye; hard gospel influences infused with flowing jazz, contemporary classical, and electronica, with beats alternating between trap bangers and grimey soulful ballads. His flow is thick with Montreal's accent, a staccato sense of rhythm that starts and stops without breaking stride. With 5 full-length releases and a litany of videos under his belt, Taigenz is definitively on the cusp. His beginnings, though, were humble.

"I started writing when I was 11. My first performance, I was 13 years old," he said. "At the end of the year, there was a variety show put together by the school. I figured I'd try my hand and see what it'd give me."

Ngala says this sentence often: "see what it'd give me." Throughout his life, the Montreal rapper seems to take what's on his plate for the sake of the experience. He's excited to learn, never trying to put himself into a box as one thing or another. Even when asked to describe himself, he shuns words like "rapper" or even "artist." Instead, he simply "[makes] art because that's what's going to grow my reach."

So, at age 13, he tried his hand at music, crushing his variety show with an original track he had written just days before. Despite a dodgy opening, punctuated with some awkward silences and forgotten lyrics, he got more comfortable quickly. By the song's end, he was dancing around, commanding the stage.

"It was a go since then," he recalled, laughing. By the time Ngala hit Concordia University, he was hungry for more. Looking for

new insight, he enrolled in FFAR 398B, Hip Hop: Past, Present, Future. Taught by Yassin "Narcy" Alsalmán, better known as The Narcycyst, Ngala credits the class, and the professor, as a huge encouragement for his work.

"I took the class, and it engaged me in a way that creatively got me better. He himself is just an amazing artist, out of this world in terms of what he does," Ngala said of his professor. The class may have allowed Ngala to tap into his own style and energy.

"A lot of artists, when they start off, sort of emulate their influences," Alsalmán explained. "But [Taigenz's] project resonated as genuine, it was definitely him."

By 2014, Ngala had joined the Concordia Student Union. Though this form of public service might seem unrelated to an interest in music, for him, it was a natural progression.

"Already what I do is kind of public service, in terms of music. You're serving the public by helping them escape their world and enjoy what you have to offer," he said. "[But] I decided to try my hand at the CSU and see how things worked."

After a year and a half as a councillor, though, Ngala left university to pursue Taigenz full time. Now, making it is his full-time job.

"In the next year or so, I see myself at a higher level in terms of where my brand and name are perceived, and the art just getting better. It's a process."

*Check out our full video interview for The Scratch, on [thelinknewspaper.ca](http://thelinknewspaper.ca) where Taigenz breaks down his time in the CSU, the origins of his name, and much more. For all of Taigenz's music, head to [Taigenz.com](http://Taigenz.com).*

## No Space for the Press

Concordia's Only Francophone Magazine, *L'Organe*, Still Struggles to Exist

HÉLÈNE BAUER  
@HELENEVBAUER

In the basement of the Hall building is *L'Organe's* office space—locker number 47.

Concordia's bi-semester francophone magazine has been lacking an office space since they relaunched the publication in winter 2015. They officially requested an office space in February 2015 when they were told in an email from Andrew Woodall, Dean of Students, that they had been put on the waiting list.

Woodall assured *L'Organe* that they are a priority, he maintained that "nothing moves fast here."

*L'Organe* is asking for a space that will be open 24/7, ten desks, a couch and some storage. The Dean of Students office is responsible for administering student spaces for student groups, said Concordia facilities director Martine Lehoux in an email correspondence with Pierre Chauvin, president of *L'Organe's* board of the directors. Chauvin is the former office manager at *The Link*.

"I'm not sure if we are actually going to get an office space," said Charlotte Parent, editor-in-chief of

the magazine.

In a back-and-forth email exchange between Chauvin and Woodall, the Dean of Students said he was hopeful that they would find a space for *L'Organe* in January or February 2016, but this enthusiasm did not translate to concrete results. Woodall is currently working on finding a space with facilities management, said Cléa Desjardins from University Communications Services.

"The magazine is at a turning point right now," Chauvin said in an email. "Our staff—students who volunteer their time—are working hard, but the absence of space to meet and work on the magazine is starting to discourage people." That discouragement puts Concordia's only French language publication at risk, according to Chauvin.

In the past, *L'Organe* had stopped publishing for two years when editors graduated and could not find replacements. The magazine now has a full team, but the lack of an office is one thing keeping them from expanding.

After relaunching the project in 2014, *L'Organe* was not able to recuperate its old office space on top of

the co-op bookstore on Bishop St., as well as the computers and other office material that were at their disposal years prior.

"We really have to start thinking about next year's team, but it's hard without an office space, we don't have much to offer," Parent said.

Working at the library, at friends' houses and in the lobby of the Liberal Arts building, *L'Organe's* team of nine editors have published four magazines so far, and a fifth one is coming out in late March. They publish 3,000 copies of their magazines twice a semester.

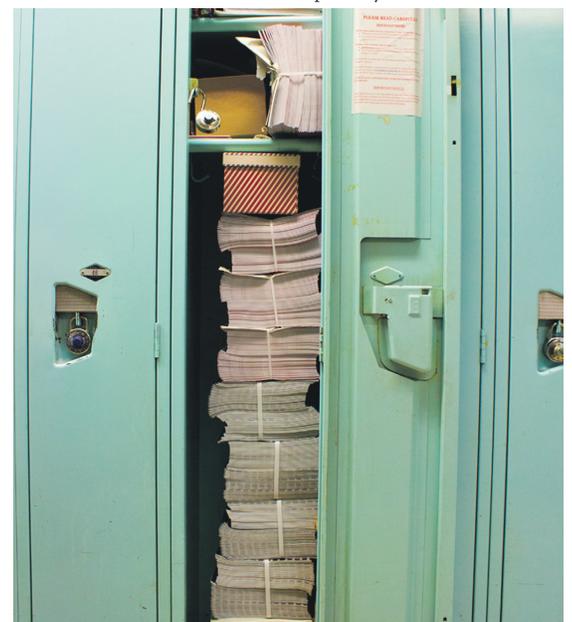
Parent has expressed the magazine's intention to start a petition for an office space.

"I understand that things need help to get moving," Parent said. The petition, which they hope will come out in the next week, is intended to gather students from different faculties to show the support behind the magazine. It will also emphasize the importance of showcasing talents from various programs, Chauvin said.

Parent is hoping for an office space so that they can start developing new projects and have

more events. They have already started expanding the team with a new *comité de lecture* set in place to edit the submissions.

If they don't receive an office space soon, Parent says she will probably have to rent another locker to put away their materials.



*L'Organe magazine does not have any office space—other than a locker.*  
HÉLÈNE BAUER

**TU** 1

**Poetry Night**  
Listen to various artists as they reveal their innermost demons, desires and regrets through written and spoken words!  
Kafein • 1429A Bishop St. • 8 p.m. • \$4

**W** 2

**A Night of Skate Dancing**  
Art on ice at dark. There will be a performance and opportunity to meet on-ice-artists. Bring your skates and a friend!  
Parc La Fontaine • Sherbrooke St. E. • 6:30 p.m. • Free

**TH** 3

**Sexual Health Workshop**  
Part of the Be A Better Friend and Ally workshop series, this event is meant to foster dialogue on the varying sexual health issues people face.  
Centre For Gender Advocacy • 1500 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. (Suite 404) • 6:30 p.m. • Free

**F** 4

**Island Frequencies**  
IF is Montreal's resident Electronic Music show series. This time, immerse yourself with the island sounds of Montreal and Brooklyn sonic artisans, including G.S. Sultan, Sarah Davachi, and more.  
La Sala Rosso • 4848 St. Laurent Blvd. • 8 p.m. • Free

# THE LINK

We're restarting our weekly calendar of current affairs and cultural events in print and online. Want to see your event here? E-mail [calendar@thelinknewspaper.ca](mailto:calendar@thelinknewspaper.ca)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS MARCH 1-8

**SA** 5

**Verbindungen: Official Essaie Pas Launch After Party**  
Party down with a vicious all-night disco afterparty  
820 Plaza • 820 Marconi St. • 2 a.m. • \$10

**SU** 6

**Port Symphonies**  
An outdoor performance using "urban" instruments. Listen and enjoy as the sounds of Montreal's Old Port come together to form an unusual symphony.  
Outside Pointe-à-Callière • 350 Place Royale • 2 p.m. • Free

**M** 7

**Start-Up Career Fair**  
This event will serve to connect individuals interested in entrepreneurship and startups with those who have already penetrated the field.  
Student Society of McGill University Ballroom • 3600 McTavish St. • 10 a.m. • Free

**TU** 8

**Free City Radio Live Broadcast**  
Join CKUT and La Passe for a live broadcast of FREE CITY RADIO, featuring presentations by Mostafa Henaway and John Clarke.  
La Passe • 1214 de la Montagne St. • 4 p.m. • PWYC

**Sleepover Drone XV**  
A night of droning and sleeping at La Plante. Bring your brews, your bedding, and your beat masters.  
La Plante • [Message.fringeonline@thelinknewspaper.ca](mailto:Message.fringeonline@thelinknewspaper.ca) for the address • 8 p.m. • PWYC

# THE LINK

## WORKSHOP SERIES

Join us at *The Link's* office, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Suite H-649

### Internet Privacy

How do you protect your data and sources from government spies? Come learn about internet privacy at our encrypting workshop on **Friday, March 4 @ 5 p.m.** with *The Link's* tech saviour Cleve Higgins.

### News vs Current Affairs Writing

Join *The Link's* news team on Friday, **March 11 @ 5 p.m.** to discuss how to write ledes, cover panels and talks, report on protests and write a dope feature that'll have your readers weeping by its conclusion.

### Portraiture Draw Jam

Drawing isn't just for hoity-toity art students, everyone can be a graphics contributor! It's not scary, we promise. Come loosen up on Wednesday, **March 16 @ 3 p.m.** with a guided afternoon-live-model-jam featuring our graphics editor Madeleine Gendreau. Bring paper, (bring a model!), bring yourself.



14 teams participated at this year's Quidditch Canada Eastern Regional Championships at the Soccerplex Catalogna in Lachine.

PHOTOS NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

# The Gold Standard

## Following the Golden Snitches of the Eastern Regional Championships

CARL BINDMAN  
@CARLBINDMAN

Real live quidditch is just like the game in the Harry Potter books—sort of.

People fly, but it's not magic. There are brooms, but they're sticks held between players' legs. Yes, seekers relentlessly pursue the Golden Snitch, but in this game, the Snitch fights back.

This past weekend, the Quidditch Canada Eastern Regional Championships took place at Soccerplex Catalogna in Lachine. The event was part of the tournament circuit that culminates at nationals in April.

"It still follows the school calendar," said Clare Hutchinson, Communications Director for Quidditch Canada—the governing body of the sport in the country. The circuit follows the school year because quidditch play started at McGill in 2008.

Of the 14 teams at this weekend's tournament all but one were from universities—Valhalla, Canada's first community team of eastern Toronto, was the exception. The University of Ottawa Gee-Gees won this year's championship over Université de Montréal.

Don't think that its academic roots mean quidditch isn't a real sport. It's played full contact, and the athleticism required to pass and throw with one hand while holding a broom is, uh—well you try it. There's mandatory equipment, several referees per game, and the aforementioned governing body.

Plus, it's a blast to watch, complete with dodgeball throwing, broom-holding and scrummy pile-ons. It all gets cranked up at the 18-minute mark, when the Snitch enters play.

In J.K. Rowling's quidditch, the Golden Snitch is basically the key to a win. Of all the rules, the Snitch keeps things simple: catch it, and you end the game and earn your team a bonus of 150 points. This is usually enough to grant the win to the team which has captured the Snitch—unless the opponents have a brutal lead.

In real-life quidditch, catching the Snitch isn't so simple, because the Snitch is a person—

always dressed in yellow, always determined to make the task as difficult as possible. When the human Snitch is caught, the game is done, and the catching team gets 30 points.

For example, take the performance of Cory Smithson, a Snitch from Valhalla. His quidditch name is Mr. TTC, and as the Snitch, he wore yellow pyjama pants with tight shiny golden shorts, and a dangling yellow tail that sort of looks like elongated testicles velcroed to his bum. The Snitch tail is what the players known as seekers have to grab to win.

Mr. TTC goes in 18 minutes into the game, as Snitches do. In the rules, there's one minute for Snitches to chill on the pitch before the seekers come on.

Mr. TTC lies down on the sidelines, doing the "paint me like one of your French girls" pose from Titanic.

The seekers enter, and he's up and running. They chase him, honing in. He stops and turns as the Gee-Gees's seeker ploughs into him. The Snitch sidesteps and the seeker rolls forward and around, but Mr. TTC is off and running, pursued by the other seeker from Royal City, one of University of Guelph's quidditch teams.

TTC wheels again, but the seekers have disappeared into the scrum of the game. Players are running back and forth and he cranes over them to see—nothing.

It goes on. Push. Dodge. Run. Stand. Look. Eventually, in what feels like ages but was actually just two minutes, the Gee-Gees's seeker gets his mark with a diving roll, and the game is over.

"It's good to see their face when they catch

it," Smithson says. "You see the relief and joy. Obviously on my part I lost, but seeing that they got what they were going for is cool."

For his part, Smithson was a huge fan of the Harry Potter books, but not all Snitches join the game that way, and bring their own sense of style to gameplay.

Bunny, whose real name is Matthew Bunn, studies at University of Ottawa and joined because he didn't want to run competitively anymore—that, and quidditch seemed fun.

"[As a Snitch] your best friends out there are your team beaters, 'cause they're the ones who are going to be keeping the seekers off you," he said.

Duchess, from McGill's Snitch team, is the only one with a Snitch Mother, or coach. Her actual name is Grace Kudlack, and watching her play is like watching a Toreador at work, flourishes and all.

She's wearing a bright yellow skirt and a yellow shirt and golden face paint. She lets the bigger players charge her, and then deftly dodges them while pushing them down.

"It's a lot of dancing around because I'm not strong enough to wrestle with a lot of seekers," she says. "I also do fencing, so it's very similar in knowing how far away people can be."

The appeal for her is the fact that when she's on, she's on for good. There's no subbing, no break for a Snitch.

"It's just a lot of fun. I get to be a lot sillier than people do," she says.

Silliness holds a broad appeal among Snitches at the event. Martial arts and running backgrounds are extremely common too. But

Snitching—and quidditch—is changing.

There used to be "off pitch" Snitching, more similar to the books, where the Snitch is always in play, but isn't always on the field. It was eliminated to make the rules simpler, and to balance game play—games can't end in the first five minutes anymore.

Brendan "Two-Face" Gordon, whose face is half-painted in gold, and wears the requisite absurd yellow, is a Snitch for McGill. He has played every position in the game, but didn't really do any sports in high school. Quidditch drew him in as a fan and a "fantasy nerd."

He doesn't see the rule changes ending here, with introduction of the 18-minute-mark entrance of Snitches, the on-pitch Snitching, or the elimination of some odder rules (Bunny told her he once rode a scooter for a whole game).

"I think it's a shame that seeking and Snitching are being pushed out of the sport," Two-Face says. "Now, seekers are a glorified way of getting 30 points at the end of the game. You might as well just make it a rugby-soccer hybrid."

It raises an important question about the soul of the sport. How much, if any, loyalty does it owe to J.K. Rowling's vision?

"Why not remove the brooms?" Two-Face asks. "They just obstruct players from throwing and catching. It's not a thing I'm looking forward to."

But now, quidditch is played internationally. Quidditch Canada is making efforts to spread to demographics outside of universities—according to Hutchinson—that may not be familiar with the game's fantasy roots. The appeal is proven to exist separate from the books, since so many of the players don't count themselves as fans, after all.

Hutchinson doesn't even mention the books as one of the appeals.

"It's a challenge, athletically," she says. "It's also great socially; you're all in this new sport together. The other really great thing that I love about it is that it's one of the few gender-integrated full-contact sports. It's great to have that space."





Montreal native Kyriakos Selaidopoulos has been appointed Canada's men's national futsal team head coach.

COURTESY RICHARD SCOTT

## Up for the Task

Newly Appointed Futsal Coach Opens Up About Sport's Rapid Growth in Canada

ALEXANDER PEREZ  
@DASALEXPerez

The ball is just as round, but it doesn't roll on grass, it rolls on hardwood floor. Many of today's soccer players owe their success to the little-known sport of futsal.

Household names such as Andrés Iniesta of FC Barcelona and Brazilian legend Ronaldinho were able to develop their unique and captivating style in the confined space of a futsal court.

On Monday, Feb. 8, Soccer Canada appointed Montreal native, futsal expert and former national team player Kyriakos Selaidopoulos the men's national futsal team head coach.

Futsal is a branch of soccer that differs from the traditional 11-a-side game. It's five-a-side soccer (including the goalie) and is played on a smaller pitch, compared to its more well known 11-a-side counterpart. The game is separated into two 20-minute halves and unlimited substitutions. As opposed to 11-a-side, futsal has no offside rule, so an attacking player can stand by the opposing goal and never be penalized.

Over the past two years, structured futsal leagues have been picking up in Quebec. The

leagues are run by the Quebec Soccer Federation, with FIFA rules. Selaidopoulos has seen himself become one of the leading roles in futsal's expansion within the province, although with the announcement, his attentions are sure to become national.

During the early stages of futsal's development in Quebec, the Quebec Soccer Federation hired Selaidopoulos as their expert on the sport.

Mike Vitulano, an employee of the QSF, works closely with Selaidopoulos and is another one of the prominent figures in futsal's rapid rise to popularity.

"Quebec is thrilled that Kyt [Selaidopoulos] is going to be representing the country. Being a Quebec coach, it's great for the province," Vitulano said. "The idea here is to build something long term, and hopefully it's well accepted."

Last year saw both Vitulano and Selaidopoulos introduce the first season of the Première Ligue de Futsal du Québec, a high-standards league, to recruit futsal players—both men and women. From there, they were able to create the first-ever Quebec teams. With futsal developing, and more funding being put into the sport, the future looks positive.

"Futsal is getting bigger," Selaidopoulos

said. "It's getting bigger by the moment. The thing is everybody needs to come together."

With futsal rapidly increasing in popularity, Selaidopoulos's appointment as head coach can only have positive effects. Vitulano believes that Selaidopoulos, a former player for the Montreal Impact, as well a representative of Canada in both futsal and beach soccer, will bring a direct experience to the national team.

"He'll bring that player/coach type of approach, you know, having lived it," Vitulano said.

With the Coupe Futsal du Québec that took place on Feb. 26 and 27, Selaidopoulos has a keen look at the talent present. Despite being involved with Quebec futsal, he said that it isn't about provinces, but about Canada.

"I'll put a team where the best are from, and if they're [not] from Quebec, then they're not from Quebec," Selaidopoulos said.

Despite Selaidopoulos's involvement on a provincial level, he's done his homework. The European Championships were also held this past month, and Selaidopoulos used that to look at how other continents across the globe function.

Canadian soccer recently revealed that the national futsal team's training camp

is set to take place in Vaughan, Ont. from March 18 to 20, ahead of the 2016 CONCACAF—the soccer federation representing North and Central America—Championships. Selaidopoulos will set out to find profile players to fit into team Canada. With such a short period of time to prepare, he said he will seek out players that catch on fast.

"It's stressful, for sure. It's a big job," Selaidopoulos said. "I will take profile players that understand and that believe in the program for the future."

"I might leave behind players that are better, but since we have a short time of preparation, I'm going to have to go with players that understand the game plan very quick," he continued.

Selaidopoulos enjoys uniting players into a team. That concept of togetherness is what he and Vitulano started in Quebec, and what he wants to bring to the national team. It's the idea of provinces and players working together, to achieve their objective to qualify.

Canada is set to face the United States in May. The winner of the two-match series will qualify for the CONCACAF Futsal Championship, which runs from May 8 to 15 in Costa Rica.

thelinknewspaper.ca  
Busy Bee

Coaching one game, then having a three-point game as a player, women's hockey head coach, Julie Chu, can do it all in one day.



SAM JONES

## Protests and Perceptions

### Reflections on the 2012 Quebec Student Protests

JON MILTON

Four years ago, the largest and longest student strike in the history of Quebec was just getting started. The strike, which began as a student movement against former Quebec premier Jean Charest's proposed 75 per cent tuition increase, would later metastasize into one of the largest social revolts this province has ever seen. It would eventually bring down the Charest government—an idea that was unthinkable in the beginning. It was a reminder of the power people can exert when we work together.

It was a time that fundamentally changed the way I see the world. I wasn't a student at the time. I took some years off after high school and was working at a dingy call centre in downtown Montreal.

Every day was a grind. My job sucked, and I knew it. I felt like I was stuck there, as if I just had to accept that this was what people did with their lives: work, spend, repeat. Maybe I could get a somewhat better job eventually, but that was the pattern, and there was no escaping it.

But then, something shook that mould. When I would get off work, sometimes I would see demonstrations going by, or police rushing on bikes or in cars to the scene of the latest protest.

It was exciting. I couldn't put my finger on it at the time, but it felt like something was changing. I didn't even really know what the protests were about, but I liked the fact that something was happening.

I started reading the news more often, something I hadn't done in a long time. I followed

the strike with reports from the *Montreal Gazette* and CTV. I saw lots of stories that either implied, or explicitly stated, that the students in the streets were spoiled brats, that they were violent, that they should go back to class. I took this commentary at face value. The reporters were surely being objective, right? I knew I liked what was going on in the streets, but maybe I was wrong. I was conflicted.

As time went on, my curiosity started to get the better of me. Sometimes, as I walked to the bus station, I would see protests happening. One day I decided to join in. I remember being nervous, I remember being excited. I remember the feeling of being inside a seemingly endless sea of people, the feeling that we were actually doing something. We were breaking out of the predetermined roles that we were brought up to play in the world. What we were doing mattered.

I started attending demonstrations whenever I got the chance. In my broken French, I started learning—and butchering—the slogans that people were chanting. I loved it. I met people, I learned about the movement. I learned about other movements that were happening all over the world—in Greece, Chile, Spain and more. I learned about the Arab Spring and the Occupy movement. I placed what we were doing into a global context, into a story about people all over the world rising up against the systems that dominated their lives, trying to change their worlds.

The way I saw police changed over those months. For the first time, I saw police violence unfold right before my eyes.

I remember one night, sometime over the

summer, when the police attacked and scattered a demonstration. Downtown turned into a war zone, with heavily armed riot police chasing demonstrators around and attacking people—including pepper spraying a random tourist who was leaving a restaurant. Protesters were beaten down and left in the street. Only other demonstrators provided support for the wounded. Police laughed and went on their way.

My impression of the media began to change as well. I began to see biases in much of the media that I had previously been blind to. When I turned on the news later that summer night, the report was much of the same media spin on events—violent students attacking helpless police, the reporter said. I had seen otherwise. The contradiction between what I saw and what was reported was too large to ignore.

Many things changed over the months of that strike. For me, and countless others, when the mundanity that froze over the world began to crack and thaw. It was a time when we remembered that, with struggle and collective action, we could change the world around us. It was a cathartic moment where horizons widened and anything seemed possible. It was a moment where we reclaimed our futures, in the streets.

As things calmed down following the strike, it was easy to think of it as a one-off event. But the underlying causes of the unrest were never fixed, even though the tuition increase was cancelled. As austerity accelerates, the population is increasingly restless. The next Maple Spring may not be so far away.

All it takes is a spark.

## Letter

### GSA Needs More Accountability

Directors and officers of corporations are expected to adhere to high standards of ethical conduct. A conflict of interest policy is an important governing document, which can help ensure that directors perform their duty of loyalty. Directors are supposed to avoid conflicts of interest, and should place the interest of the organization they represent above their personal interests. Directors are not supposed to abuse their positions for personal gain.

Keroles Riad, who was disqualified from the 2015 Graduate Students Association elections, previously complained about conflicts of interest and abuse of power in the GSA. Riad, who was appointed as a GSA director during the first council meeting of the 2015-2016 year, has also been involved in conflicts of interest situations.

Riad, who is a member of the GSA appointments committee, disregarded the GSA conflict of interest policy when recommendations were made for appointments to university committees, which strongly favoured Riad.

Riad also ignored the GSA conflict of interest policy during the Nov. 1, 2015 council meeting, by motivating for immediate allocation of funds to a group, which is controlled by Riad. The motion Riad proposed disregarded the existing GSA allocation funding policy.

Directors breach their fiduciary duty when they disregard conflicts of interest. Student representation involves advocating for students rights, helping to improve the quality of education and supporting the provision of services to students. Student representation should not be seen as a means for personal gain and oppression.

Graduate students should derive benefits from their membership of the GSA because they pay membership fees. Besides covering operating costs, member fees should be used to provide services to members.

Student representatives are accountable to the members they represent. Transparency and accountability are required for the effective governance of associations, where the trust of members is important. Several steps have been taken to improve the transparency of the GSA. Improved transparency leads to greater accountability. We do not need to turn back the clock.

— Alex Ocheoha, president of the GSA

The Link publishes letters to the editor. If there's an article, event, issue or general happening you want to comment on, send us a letter under 400 words before 4 p.m. on Friday at [letters@the-linknewspaper.ca](mailto:letters@the-linknewspaper.ca).



## the gender & sexuality special issue

### HEY YOU!

Have you been arguing a lot lately?  
Noticing that you can't seem to escape your gender roles?  
Finding your friends to be in desperate need of education?  
Feeling angry over the fact that people expect you to educate them?  
Do you see injustice everywhere?  
You gotta act, my friend.

### MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

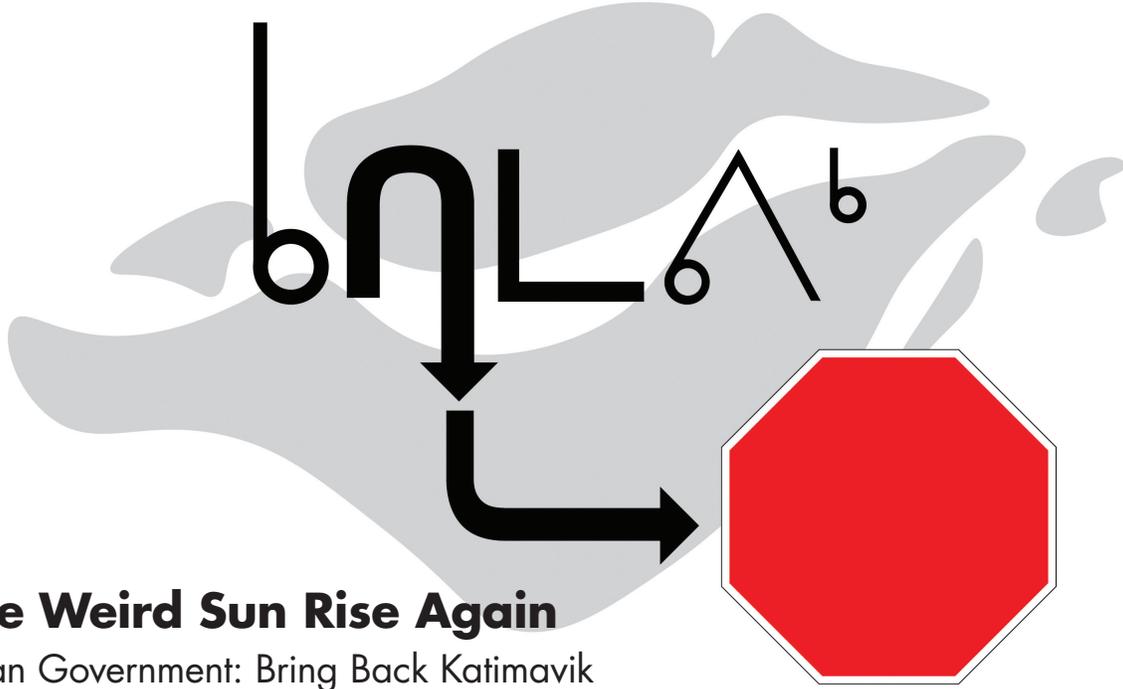
Join the folks over at The Link, March 2 to brainstorm  
material for our upcoming GENDER AND SEXUALITY special issue.  
Do the world a favour: voice yourself.

**Gender and Sexuality Special Issue Brainstorm, Wednesday March 2 at 6 p.m.  
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. Room H-649**

**Deadline for submission: March 11, 2016**

Contact:

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creative@thelinknewspaper.ca  
fringeonline@thelinknewspaper.ca  
graphics@thelinknewspaper.ca



## Let the Weird Sun Rise Again

### Canadian Government: Bring Back Katimavik

ALEXEY LAZAREV

GRAEME SHORTEN-ADAMS  
@FORESHORTENING

At the end of 2010, while cleaning moose blood off an air mattress in a basement in Quebec City, I realized I had entered a parallel universe.

I realized it again inside a grain silo at dawn, and then again cleaning out a bin of rotten potatoes for my 11 roommates. It happened several more times in the absolute isolation of the boreal forest that winter.

You probably know someone who “did” it, and now you know one more: I “did” Katimavik, and with a little help from Justin Trudeau, more people might soon be able to say the same.

Katimavik, a federally-funded volunteer program for Canadians aged 17 to 21 that had existed in various forms since 1977, was eliminated in 2012 due to the Harper government’s budget cuts. Though my year suffered a few cuts in advance, I doubt my experience was different from anyone else who signed up: exhausting, sublime, a part TED Talk personal development seminar and part Big-Brother-as-directed-by-the-Coen-Brothers

portrait of a country’s heartland.

Katimavik was—and remains, in its current, weakened form—pretty explicit about its ideology. It’s not hard to see why a federally-funded program getting youth to live communally and do unpaid work for social service centres wouldn’t sit well with the Conservatives. In fact, Katimavik had been cancelled once before, in 1986 by Brian Mulroney’s Conservative government. This led Katimavik’s founder, former Senator Jacques Hébert, to go on a 21-day hunger strike. A sort of scrappy left-leaning spirit is written into Katimavik’s DNA, and indeed, the program was eventually restored to its former glory (after a stint as an outdoor training camp) in the ‘90s under Liberal PM Jean Chrétien.

But I don’t think it’s unfair to point out that there’s something nationalistic and even militaristic about Katimavik. I often heard it compared to the army (Katimavik actually did have a military option in the ‘80s), and after a few months I understood the comparison. Our hours were regimented, our energy was constantly tested and thinking in groups rather than individual units became

inevitable. We even had our equivalent of a furlough—48 hours of total freedom every three months, then back to service.

Add to this that Katimavik is not a program that will encourage people to critically reflect on the nation-state, politics of identity or class or indigeneity with much intensity. Though it was only axed a few years ago, its chipper “we’re-all-in-this-together” attitude might seem a little outdated to people in its target age group today. And anyone who’s done Katimavik probably still remembers the “competencies” the program sought to instill, most of which would likely have sounded great to the Conservatives with a little tweaking.

The thing about Katimavik is that its mission is actually impossible. It’s good that it’s impossible. There is no way those competencies can be successfully instilled, no way the military or nationalist dimensions of the program can completely encroach on its participants, no way the structure of the thing won’t fall apart, because Canada is too big and the undertaking is too huge for it not to fall apart.

My group-mates and I knew which moments were corny and which were genu-

ine. We understood, on one level or another, that the reality of the people we were working with or for was a concrete one that you couldn’t abstract from some feel-good principle.

What separated Katimavik from charity-tourism programs was how close to the ground the whole edifice was; being federally-funded and totally ramshackle, kids from any background could enter this parallel world and have some meaningful, self-directed give-and-take with the community they ended up in. I saw what a delight we were to the places we diffidently showed up to. We got more clam chowder and moose steaks than even 12 of us could eat.

Everybody deserves to experience something that’s so good for such murky, complicated reasons. Petitions calling for Katimavik’s return are full of inspiring stories of how it changed participants’ lives. I don’t doubt it for a second. But I also don’t think that’s the whole story; I don’t think that changes the final outcome. What matters is that, for a while, there was an opportunity in Canada for any young adult to have a genuinely confusing, powerful experience. I hope Trudeau will bring it back for them.

## Nah’msayin’?

Why Your Doors So Heavy Tho, Concordia?

CLAIRE LOEWEN  
@CLAIRELWN

It’s a typical Monday afternoon. I cross de Maisonneuve Blvd. at Bishop St. after a long, snowy walk up the hill from Griffintown—I’m ready to face the day of class ahead.

Before I get in line for the shuttle to take me to my class at Loyola, I decide to go inside the Hall building to warm my toesies a little.

I approach the door. Suddenly, three people whip past me on the other side. I dodge all of them, with fox-like reflexes. Feeling relieved, I reach out my hand, grabbing hold of the door handle. Using the strength of one woman successfully cow-tipping an Easter Island head, I pull the door open enough to squeeze myself

inside, milliseconds from being clamped by its cold, grey fangs.

If I’m not mistaken, every door at Concordia is heavy as shit. As a journalism student, who has to take a plethora of electives and general knowledge credits, I have had classes in many, many of our institution’s wonderful buildings—MB, Hall, CJ, SP, EV buildings, even the Faubourg (if you’ve had class there, you know). The commonality? They all have heavy-ass front doors.

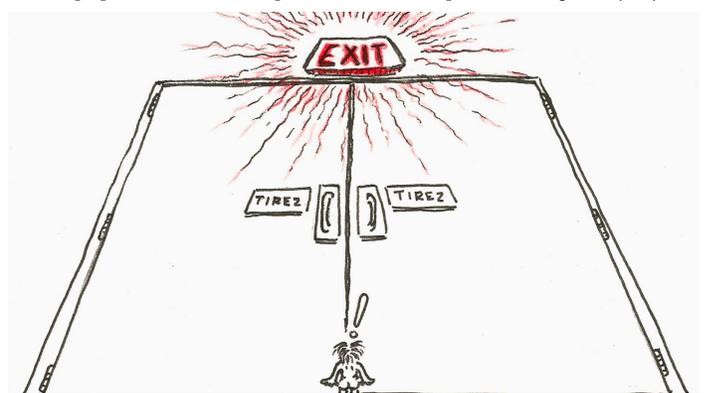
So, being a rational human being, I googled why these doors need to be so heavy, and gave up after five minutes of finding nothing but similar questions to mine without answers.

One conclusion I came to was that the doors are so heavy to keep out the cold. And

that’s great! Because I get super cold at Concordia all the time, even though the doors are heavy AF. Another reason could be to slow down intruders from getting inside, but I’m just spewing bullshit at this point.

I can’t propose a solution to this problem.

There is no way Concordia administration will respond to, or even notice, my plea for doors I can open with ease. All I know is, when I’m carrying my backpack, a video camera, a tripod and it’s -30 C with freezing rain, I don’t need a 400-pound door to get in my way.



MORAG RAHN-CAMPBELL





MADELEINE GENDREAU

## EDITORIAL

### TRAC and Concordia: Move Forward on Sufficient Pay-Rate

It's been an eagerly anticipated year for teaching assistants waiting on a wage-rate agreement between Concordia and TRAC.

While the TA union grapples with the university for higher pay, thousands of student teaching assistants have been left in the dirt—forced to work for meager pay as the powers-that-be struggle indefinitely to come to an agreement.

The two parties failed to agree on pay-rates for the 2015-2016 year—something that was supposed to be completed by May 2015—leaving student TAs with the same rate that they received in the 2014-2015 year.

TRAC would like to alter the wage-distribution system. Instead of pay being determined by the students' level of education, the union would like employees to be paid based solely on the job they are doing. All 'markers' would receive the same pay regardless of education level. The same would apply to 'tutorial leaders.'

As it stands, wages are based on the education levels of the prospective assistants, and are broken down into two levels. For Grade 2 teaching assistantships—who have less

responsibilities than Grade 1 TAs—the wage breakdown is as follows: doctoral students receive \$20.01 per hour, master's students receive \$17.79 per hour, and undergraduate students receive \$14.47 per hour.

This education-level based system is in place for four faculties: Arts and Science, Fine Arts, John Molson School of Business and the School of Graduate Studies.

Teaching assistants in the Engineering and Computer Science faculty operate on a different, less discriminatory system.

Essentially, TRAC is asking that people be paid the same wage for the same job, regardless of education level—a sentiment *The Link* agrees with.

The current wage-rate system marginalizes undergraduate TAs by offering them the lowest pay and not giving them the opportunity to become Grade 1 teaching assistants. Only graduate students are eligible to become Grade 1 TAs, who receive a wage of \$24.68 per hour.

The job descriptions are vague. Grade 2 TAs are expected to perform a "subset" of Grade 1

duties. But sometimes employees in the lower bracket perform all the same duties as Grade 1 TAs—this means undergrads ineligible for official Grade 1 status sometimes receive lower pay than they should.

*The Link* strongly believes that all teaching assistants—regardless of education level—be afforded the same financial compensation across the board.

Discrimination against undergraduate TAs aside, the wider issue of the de-prioritization of student workers by the university must be addressed. Wages for master's and doctoral teaching assistants also remain insufficient.

Teaching assistants at all levels earn above the minimum wage, however they don't work many hours—some work as little as two hours weekly. The total income for student TAs, regardless of education level, is below that of a minimum-wage part-time employee.

The university should prioritize their student-employees more than they do now—they should be able to sympathize with the

financial struggles of young students in an urban setting, and provide them with adequate compensation for their work.

Living on what is effectively below part-time minimum-wage earnings is nearly impossible. We urge Concordia to better understand and accommodate the financial situations of its students.

The university needs to be held accountable for who it chooses to prioritize in its yearly budget. In light of former CFO Sonia Trudel's obscenely large severance pay of \$235,000, the university administration may need to rethink their priorities.

Having said that, *The Link* would like to see more action from TRAC to put pressure on the university to come to an agreement. Once this year's agreement expires, stronger collective action should be taken in order to push for a finalized—and sufficient—pay-rate.

The team at TRAC has one job—to represent their members. In recent months, they have organized mini-demonstrations to get attention, but now we all need to say that enough is enough.

## THE LINK

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