

June 2020

To the Concordia community and members of The Link Publication Society,

I'm Savannah Stewart, soon-to-be Concordia alum and a member of *The Link's* Board of Directors. Before joining the Board, I was Opinions and then Coordinating Editor from 2017 to 2019.

Throughout the last academic year, our masthead, staff and contributors continued to cover stories that are important to the community at Concordia and in Montreal. We informed students on the impeachment proceedings of former Concordia Student Union general coordinator Christopher Kalafatidis, the issues brought about by referendum questions on online opt-out and CSU council restructuring, and ongoing controversies surrounding both the university and the CSU council's consent trainings. We covered protests in Montreal extensively, sometimes the only media outlet on the story. We kept putting the "fringe" in Fringe Arts, covering the city's alternative arts community: the disappearance of small music venues, decolonizing art, or the difficulties gentrification poses on art spaces. We created a new column in our Sports section looking at the intersection of sports and politics, "Shut up and Dribble," and we featured stories of the difficulties facing people of colour in the world of hockey. And of course, we ended the year with our multifaceted coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic and what it entailed for students at Concordia.

We also won the JHM award for Best Cover for the second consecutive year, and our reporting was nominated in the categories of Indigenous Reporting and Sports Reporting. Congratulations to Emanuele Barbier and Paulina Dominguez for the win, and to Ireland Compton and Alexander Perez for their nominations.

*The Link* continued our launch party tradition for the launch of our Orientation Issue in September last year. We thank artists Backxwash and Bea Di Vinci for providing the lively soundtrack to the evening. And for *The Link's* 40th anniversary, we hosted a moving, well-attended party saying goodbye to H649, the office space we held since our very beginning. The Link Publication Society thanks Laura Beeston and Rachel Boucher for the time and effort they put into organizing the event.

In our continued spirit of providing a space for our community to learn from each other and expand our industry knowledge, several editors hosted workshops throughout the year to share skills in photography, videography, radio, translation in journalism, and more. We thank our guest workshop host and *Link* alum Adam Kovac for his talk on Feature Writing, and we also thank Colin Harris and Alex Manley, who were both scheduled to give workshops that were cancelled due to the pandemic.

On the Board's end, we looked closely at our masthead structure and production cycle for ways to maximise our budget and our product, and with the help and perspectives of our editors, we

made significant changes, downsizing our masthead and reimagining the role of the business manager, creating an office manager position that incorporates the duties of the now defunct managing editor. We also modified our Grievance Policy to fix inconsistencies in its application, and with the Board's input I created a reference book for Grievance Committee members to provide guidance and support to the Committee when faced with the difficult task of resolving a Grievance.

COVID-19 brought a rocky end to a trying year, and it paves our upcoming volume with uncertainty. But to see how our community came together to face the challenges it brought and continue to provide important content to our audience about the pandemic, and most recently our editors' diligent coverage of the May 31st protest denouncing anti-Black racism while we are still living through a pandemic, I am convinced we will come out the other end wiser, closer and stronger.

*The Link* has a reputation of producing talented journalists and media makers at the forefront of their fields. Our recent history shows that times of collective struggle, like the 2012 and 2015 protests, have provided an opportunity for *Link* reporters to cut their teeth on big stories, find new and innovative ways to report and reach audiences, and make a name for themselves in the competitive world of media and journalism. And so I encourage our community to look at the difficulties we are facing not as barriers to your future, but as challenges to hone your skills and better yourselves as journalists, photographers, videographers, artists, editors, and as human beings.

Sincerely, with love and in solidarity,

Savannah Stewart