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**BASKETS FOR HOMELESS**

UW student gives essentials to homeless through his charitable initiative called the #TheBasketProject.

p3

**STUDENTS GET MONEY**

The federal government is giving \$1,250 per month to domestic students.

**UW'S COVID-19 THERAPY P6**

UW researchers are working on a DNA nasal spray to treat COVID-19.

**SPORTS GROUP GIVES BACK P8**

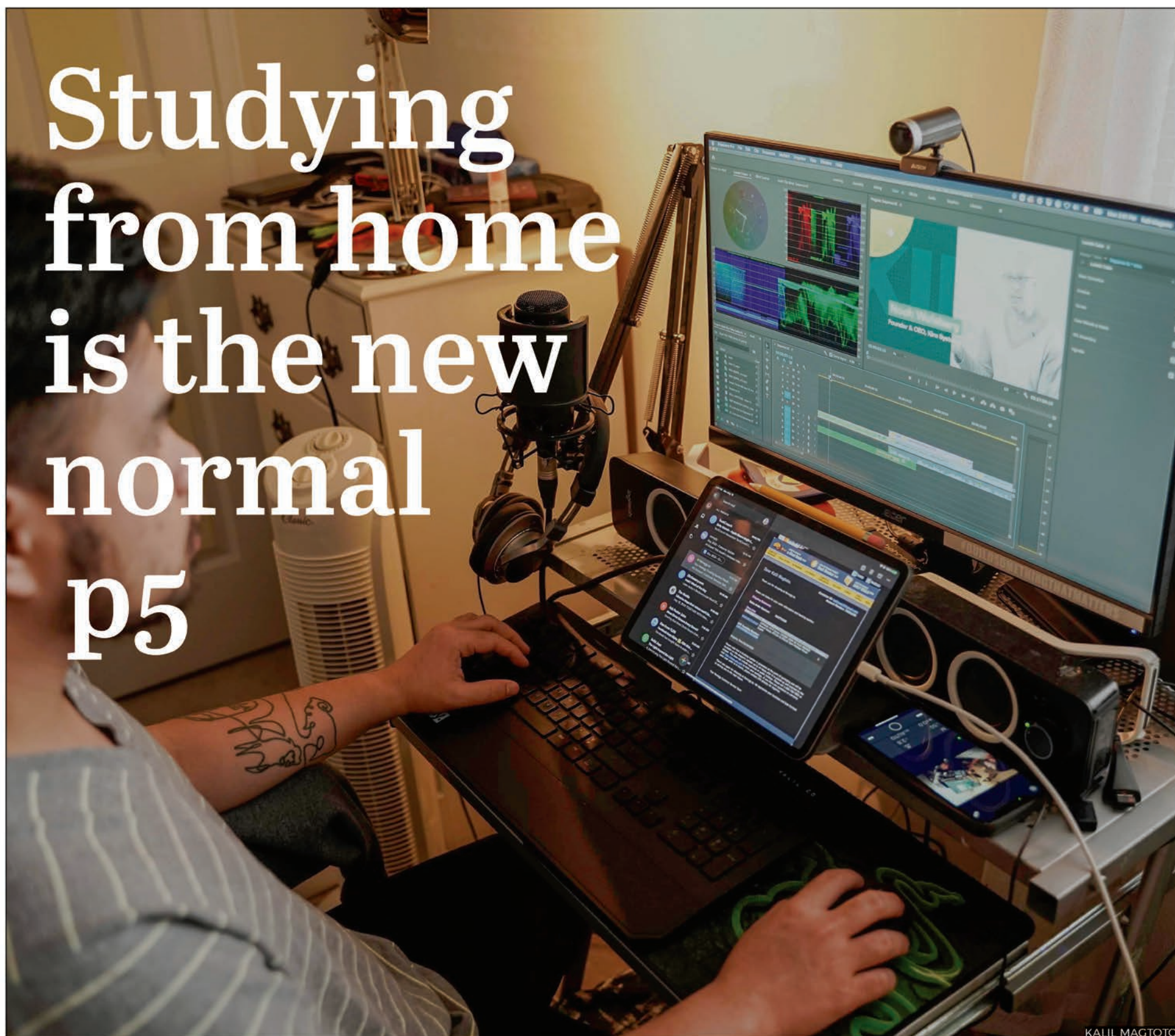
The Kitchener Sports Association donates \$100,000 to local charities.

**ALUMNI TEACH IMPROV P10**

They went to UW but they became SecondCity Improv teachers.

Studying  
from home  
is the new  
normal

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# Helping the homeless one basket at a time #thebasketproject

Heather Gillespie  
Reporter

With nowhere to isolate, the homeless population is at increased risk for contracting COVID-19.

Nathan Lee from UW, along with Jack Tomé, Alex Mastro-marini, Gabriel Mancuso, and James Neale from the University of Western Ontario, co-founded #TheBasketProject to help protect homeless youth in Toronto against the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"After [the] Canadian government [asked people to] 'stay home,' I realized that the homeless couldn't quarantine if they had no home," Lee said.

The students have taken it upon themselves to create and distribute baskets around the Toronto area, which contain necessities such as a surgical mask, latex gloves, sanitary wipes, soap, a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a pair of socks.

"For those that had none to begin with, nothing was done. In short, those that were neglected before were being neglected even more now," Lee said.

The causes of homelessness range from extreme poverty to mental illness to the inability to find affordable housing. Not only are those issues exacerbated during the COVID-19 crisis due to pre-existing conditions, but people experiencing homelessness are also at a higher risk of con-

tracting the virus.

Many social and community services are closed, and people experiencing homelessness are either left outside wholly exposed without somewhere to self-isolate, or are being forced to use shelters - an environment perfect for the spread of the virus.

Lee explained that the

that government-run assistance programs only benefited those with a source of income or permanent address, Lee and his friends from the University of Western

Ontario opted to create their own initiative to help some of the city's most vulnerable.

A GoFundMe page set up for the project raised \$4,500 within the first week and has surpassed the co-founders' expectations.

A basket costs just under \$10.

"When we first sat down as a team, we were deter-

mined to give back to our community in our own small way, so we set a very conservative goal. In less than 48 hours, we raised \$2,500, and the donations continued to pour in. Never in our wildest dreams did we think we could mobilize the community so quickly," Tomé said.

"We are so grateful for all the support and are inspired to raise additional funds in the next phase to continue our support of Toronto's homeless youth."

#TheBasketProject is hoping to distribute 1,000 baskets to 1,000 people by the end of the summer.

As of May 5, 2020, 100 baskets had already been donated to Good Shepherd Ministries, and 300 more were set to be delivered to Covenant House that week.

The group of student volunteers has put no money into advertising this project, and they have no corporate financial sponsorship.

The initiative is running solely on donations from their GoFundMe page, and any excess contributions will be donated to poverty relief at the end of summer.

#TheBasketProject is helping a group of individuals who are often overlooked and bring awareness to the issues surrounding homelessness.

The team are asking any readers who would like to help to take a few minutes to spread the message and consider making a small donation.

You can visit [www.thebasketproject.org](http://www.thebasketproject.org) and @thebasketproject.

team first looked within the community for opportunities to help. But after realizing

mined to give back to our community in our own small way, so we set a very conservative goal. In less



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# What you need to know about the Canadian Emergency Student Benefit

Suhani Segal  
News Editor

Postsecondary students who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents are getting a \$9 billion lift from the federal government.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the Canadian economy to take a hit and postsecondary students have found themselves unemployed and struggling with rent, tuition fees, and paying back loans.

The Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) will provide \$1,250 every month to eligible students and \$1,750 to eligible students with dependents or disabilities from May to August 2020.

The CESB is meant for those students who do not qualify to get assistance from the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). However, only Canadian citizens and permanent residents are eligible for the CESB.

"At this time, we believe that CESB and the Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG) do not include international students. CERB still allows international students to apply," Matthew Gerrits, VP education for WUSA and co-author of the report, said.

"WUSA recommended that actions cover as many students as possible, and going forward, we'll be asking government to address the needs of international students as well."

The Canada Student Service Grant will provide up to \$5,000 to students who engage in national service and serve their communities in order to help them move forward with their studies in the fall.

Furthermore, the government is working on creating up to 116,000 placements and training opportunities for students to gain experience and polish their skills over the summer.

For the 2020 - 21 school year Canada Student Grants will be doubled for eligible students to up to \$6,000 for those studying full-time and \$3,600 for those studying part-time.

Furthermore, the eligibility criteria for student financial assistance will be expanded by removing the expected student's and spouse's contributions.

Additionally, the maximum weekly amount that is provided to students under the Canada Student Loans Program will be raised from \$210 to \$350, while \$75.2 million will be provided as distinctions-based support to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation postsecondary students.

On Apr. 22, Trudeau announced a support fund of approximately \$9 billion to provide postsecondary students and recent graduates with financial assistance in this time of

crisis.

In addition to funding, the government has designed a plan that is meant to help students get through the summer, continue their studies in the fall, and find meaningful work to start their career.

On Apr. 17, the Undergraduates of Canadian Research-Intensive Universities (UCRU), a federal advocacy alliance of which WUSA is a part of, published a report making recommendations to the government. The announcement made by Trudeau reflects the recommendations made by the UCRU with some changes.

Out of the fund, \$291.6 million will be given to the federal granting councils to extend expiring federal graduate research scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships, and to supplement existing federal research grants.

"Our government has a long-standing interest and responsibility in supporting and sustaining research capacity at universities across the country. These institutions provide the foundation for innovation in the economy by training highly-skilled knowledge workers and building the intellectual capital needed to respond to key economic and societal challenges, including the

COVID-19 pandemic," Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, said.

"The funding announced today addresses Canadian research trainees' economic hardships due to pandemic-related closures and pressures, and will help maintain our ability to compete for, train, and retain highly skilled talent."

The government will also be working on expanding job opportunities for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows through the National Research Council of Canada.

"By providing immediate support, our investment will help ensure that the next generation of researchers and highly qualified personnel are able to weather this challenging period and quickly ramp up their activities during the recovery," Bains said.

"We clearly articulated student needs to the government and were heard," Gerrits said.

"Some days you get what you ask for, and I'm relieved for students that today is one of those days"

The Student Emergency Support Fund launched by UW and WUSA is currently accepting applications.

"At this point, we know that there might

still be expenses that exceed people's financial means. The program is going to remain in place for the students that need it most," Gerrits said.

"In addition, the government's announced support does not apply to international students, whereas the Student Emergency Support Fund from WUSA/UW applies to all students without respect to the program, domestic vs. international status, or undergraduate vs. graduate studies."

During this challenging time, Campus Wellness is providing physical and mental health support to students.

Health Services and Counselling Services will be open from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and an appointments can be booked by calling 519-888-4567 ext. 32655 for Counselling Services and 519-888-4096 for Health Services. Initial appointments will be conducted over the phone.

"We know this is a time of change and adjustment, and it is for me too as my term as VP Education finishes. What won't change is that WUSA is going to keep listening to students and trying to find out how to make their lives better," Gerrits said.

"I'm looking forward to how the new executives are going to make that happen."



# WUSA and UW launch support fund for students

Suhani Segal  
News Editor

Student housing advocates are endorsing an emergency fund for UW students.

The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) partnered with UW to launch the Student Emergency Support Fund for UW students who are affected by economic shockwaves from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students will be able to apply for the Student Emergency Support Fund before the end of April.

The fund has received over \$200,000 in donations since the alumni engagement campaign was kickstarted on Monday, Apr. 6.

“We are struggling to sublet our apartments, which inevitably leaves us to pay for places we are not even residing in,” Sylvia Skoruch, creator of the Waterloo Housing Crisis student activist group said.

“In addition to rent, students are struggling to pay for tuition

and other expenses. Some students cannot apply for government support because they don’t

WUSA’s Internal Funding Committee invested \$30,000 in initial capital from this fiscal year’s

“With this whole crisis going on, a lot of us students are facing significant challenges, most notably

social isolation outside of our student residences, typically with our families. University classes have also been switched to online, so the need for student housing and accommodations have decreased.”

Co-op placement cancellations have caused a major loss of income for students who already faced a competitive housing market.

UW Advancement has been working on getting more donors to expand the outreach of the fund. All donors will receive charitable tax receipts for making a contribution.

“WUSA announced a Student Emergency Support Fund and has successfully raised up to \$200,000 since its launching. I am so pleased with the actions being taken by WUSA and the University,” Skoruch said.

“I believe WUSA is doing an amazing job in advocating for students’ needs and helping to alleviate some of the stress. They continue to support students in every way that they can. Thank you WUSA,” Skoruch said.

“We are struggling to sublet our apartments, which inevitably leaves us to pay for places we are not even residing in”

SYLVIA SKORUCH, CREATOR OF THE WATERLOO HOUSING CRISIS STUDENT ACTIVIST GROUP

meet the standards qualified for unemployment, for example not working enough hours.”

expendable allowance from the Student Life Endowment Fund (SLEF).

financially and emotionally,” Skoruch said.

“Many of us are forced to live in

# No layoffs planned for the university

Nicola Rose  
Reporter

UW has made no decisions or announcements concerning layoffs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“There are still some essential workers on campus and other employees have been instructed to work from home,” Matthew Grant, UW’s director of media relations, said.

While campus is closed, cleaning and food services staff are receiving the same pay. Co-op students hired by the university have also transitioned to working from home.

“On campus employers have been encouraged to hire co-op students for the upcoming term and to have them work remotely, in line with public health guidance,” for the upcoming spring term, Grant said.

For students who ended their winter 2020 co-op work term early, new flexible options were

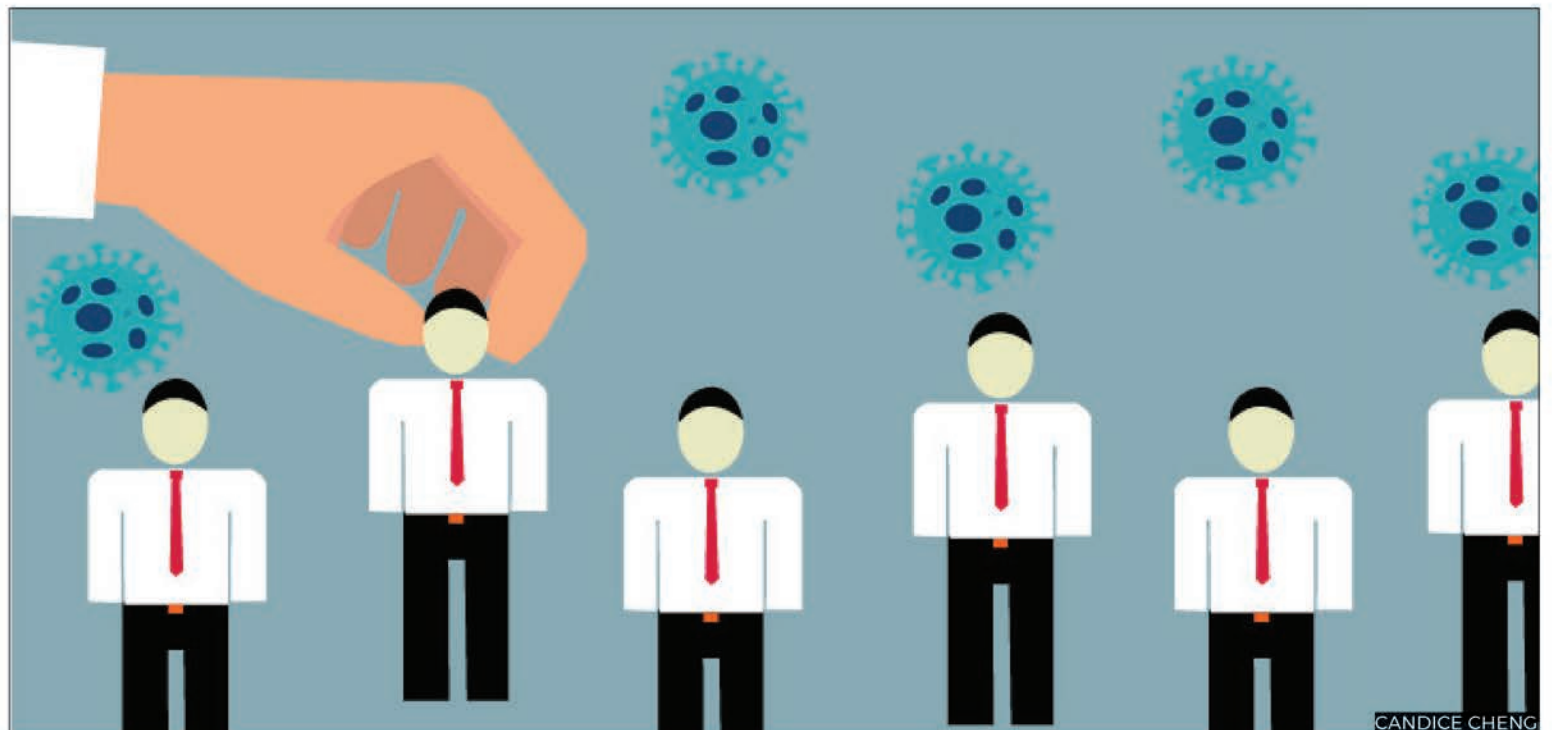
created for students to earn their work term credit, including shorter minimum requirements for a work term.

“Students may also have the option of working one less term without affecting their graduation requirements,” Grant said.

As the situation changes, UW will “continue to focus on ensuring campus safety through physical distancing and providing students

with a quality educational experience through alternative means.”

There is no official date for the campus to re-open.



CANDICE CHENG

# How are students adjusting to studying from home?

Sarah Mazen  
Reporter

Millions of students around the world have had their studies disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March, including students at UW.

The Winter 2020 term did not end as UW students had expected, when all in-person classes and exams were switched online on March 13th.

Due to this uncertain time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the university made the difficult decision to call off in person classes for the entire Spring 2020 term.

Co-op students have also been given some flexibility by reducing the minimum number of co-op terms required to three work terms.

Many courses are being taught online for the first time in years.

"I would normally run this course in-person during the Spring 2020 term... If you are new to an online course, well I am too,"

said BIOL 239 Instructor Christine Dupont to her students. She is teaching the course online for the first time in seven years.

Given the circumstances and campus closures, many students have decided to return home and are continuing their studies from there.

"Figuring out how to manage my time efficiently has been a bit of a struggle, but I'm in relief as I don't need to deal with commuting to school every day and worry less about possibly spreading the virus to my family," a second year Arts student said.

"My professors have also been very quick to respond to questions I may have as they spend a lot of time online."

Others recounted their personal challenges with scheduling and distraction while learning remotely.

Nilusha, a 2B Public Health student, found that online learning is allowing her to work on her time-management skills and she's trying to find a balance in her daily

routine.

"Online school so far is kind of a whirlwind! I suddenly must get used to organizing my day so precisely, since there are no set-in-stone lecture times to structure my day and study schedule around," Nilusha said.

"Also, I have to figure out how to properly balance my life between exercise, studying, family time, etc., since I'm finding it is so easy to simply stay in my room and study for 8 hours straight."

Sarah, a 2B Health Studies student, is learning to manage her time wisely while also fasting for the month of Ramadan.

"I genuinely miss being in a classroom. Managing my time for studying, exercising, being in class, and other daily tasks was easier when I had places to be at specific times," Sarah said.

"It has also been a challenge with Ramadan, as I am balancing religious rituals that happen throughout the night and time with my family while trying to stay on top of my work and waking up early

for live lectures. While adapting to school online has been tricky, I'm learning to study smarter at home which, I hope, will benefit me throughout my academic career, and I am able to manage my time based on what I have going on that day."

Students are learning to adapt to remote learning in their own unique ways. The COVID-19 pandemic will present challenges to both students and staff, however, the shift from online to in-person classes after the pandemic subsides may have some bene-

fits as students will have greater time-management and self-regulation skills to allow them to study smarter.

The university has also recently announced that large classes will continue to happen online during the Fall 2020 term, while some classes and supports will be available in-person.

The university has made it its mission to support student's academic progress no matter where they are.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO IS SITUATED ON THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE ATTAWANDARON (NEUTRAL), ANISHNAABEG, AND HAUDENOSAUNEE PEOPLES. THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO IS SITUATED ON THE HALDIMAND TRACT, LAND PROMISED TO SIX NATIONS, WHICH INCLUDES SIX MILES ON EACH SIDE OF THE GRAND RIVER. THEREFORE, IMPRINT RECOGNIZES AND RESPECTS THIS LAND THAT IT IS SITUATED UPON.

UW INDIGENOUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION



GINA HSU

University used to be a social experience, now students will be studying from home into next fall.



## Virtual Reality Oral Histories for Reconciliation education

Praveen Natarajan  
Reporter

Digital Oral History for Reconciliation (DOHR) is a project that leverages groundbreaking virtual reality technology to create a digitally rendered representation of the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children (NSHCC). The main goal of the project is to educate young people, particularly grade eleven students of Nova Scotia, on the history of the NSHCC. More importantly, the project is about showing the experience of former residents in a way that will help students foster enriching relationships with people from diverse backgrounds and propel them to lay a platform for more equitable and egalitarian societies.

Kristina Llewellyn, a member of the Games Institute and Social Development Studies professor at UW, founded the DOHR project with support from Smith and other survivors, in partnership with the NSHCC Restorative Inquiry and the organizational Victims of Infant and Child Exploitation Services (VOICES). Their efforts to implement the project at a much larger scale are ongoing, but given the size of the project its timeline could be impacted owing to the current COVID-19 situation.

"The primary objective is to meet the requirements of the project's framework

rather than directing attention to technological determinism. In other words, the role of virtual reality is not the sum and substance of the project but should be thought as more along the lines of 'means to accomplish a goal', which in this context is revealing a historically recreated version of the story," Llewellyn said.

The project, which was introduced to a few students during its pilot phase, had a two-week curriculum designed to encourage students to delve into the root causes of the verbal slurs they witness and contemplate possible ways to eradicate them. Students are assessed based on their performance during in-class activities, the outcome of assignments, and interviews. These parameters capture whether or not a student's historical thinking skills have been augmented after listening to the oral histories.

Since then the research team has continued to focus on sharing knowledge pertaining to virtual reality-based learning within the academic community and the logistics of designing community-based projects. The team is also planning to incorporate a student-teacher feedback system which will become accessible as part of the final curriculum for broader applications in schools.

Llewellyn highlights the importance of effective collaboration with people from different disciplines such as history, law, design, gaming, and theatre arts to ensure



A student trials the VR technology offered by DOHR in a Halifax school.

the success of the DOHR. She believes that profound comprehension of each other's disciplinary perspectives and frameworks is of paramount importance.

Llewellyn emphasized how virtual reality technology helps researchers design place-

based oral history. While the visual aspect of the project brings out a wholly new technological experience, it is also important to keep in mind that the success of this project mainly depends on how effectively students grasp the information, which Llewellyn terms as the "pedagogy of listening."

Llewellyn believes that an interactive experience results from students actively listening to stories, which is often overlooked in the education system. "Acute attention to details creates a sense of relationality, meaning wanting to understand the narrator's experiences in ways that [have a lasting] impact on the students and makes them feel they have a responsibility to act upon the story they heard," Llewellyn said.

This could lead to restorative action plans, where working groups and students taking part in the project are motivated to create reconciliation education programs such as sharing the story with their family members or writing children's stories to communicate with younger students in age-appropriate ways, thereby raising awareness.

The DOHR project is expected to revolutionize the way we communicate oral stories. The results from the pilot phase roll out were positive, as students engaged in meaningful discussions during restorative circles and other group activities.



COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

The Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children was the site of multiple abuses against Black orphans, beginning in 1921.

# UW researchers working on DNA therapy for COVID-19



RILEY STEVENS

Melissa Gatti  
Reporter

The COVID-19 pandemic may have cut plans short for many across campus, but for researchers looking for a vaccine here at UW the work has just begun.

"It started about a month ago when closures began across campus," Dr. Roderick Slavcev, professor at the UW School of Pharmacy, said.

"There's a rise to the occasion which is really amazing to see."

Theraphage, a biotechnology research group from UW's Velocity program, is spearheading UW's vaccine efforts.

The researchers' goals include designing globally accessible immunotherapies and allowing students to gain exposure to the industry.

Dr. Slavcev, co-founder and CEO of Theraphage, along with Dr. Emmanuel Ho from UW's School of Pharmacy and Dr. Marc

Aucoin from UW's School of Chemical Engineering are combining their efforts and working with student scientists to develop a DNA-based nasal spray vaccine.

"As we started putting down the ideas, we came to a conclusion that what we have here is a really stellar advancement not only for COVID-19 but even as a new platform for how vaccines could be looked at," Dr. Slavcev said.

Together with postdocs Shirley Wong and Jesse St. Jean, alongside masters student Harika Nagireddy, their work showcases the vital role students and researchers can have in tackling a crisis.

These are the students who, according to Slavcev, work seven days a week in the lab to move as quickly as possible towards in vitro testing before clinical trials.

According to Dr. Slavcev, UW has been very active in addressing the crisis despite the tendency for any large body institution to move slowly in time-sensitive events, showcasing the benefits of collaboration between students and professors across de-

partments.

"I love the multi-disciplinary components. For students, this is a highly rewarding experience, and very motivating," Dr. Slavcev said.

"If there's a call to action and we can do something about it, that's where the reward comes from."

According to Dr. Slavcev, this experience reveals that there is room for improvement within academia, suggesting possibilities for a more collaborative approach to teaching at the university level.

"I think we need to realize that we're all the learners here," Dr. Slavcev said.

"This sort of multidisciplinary approach, I would hope, and I think I do see already, is going to start being the norm of how we do things."

Regardless of faculty or academic background, whether working inside a lab looking for a vaccine, or looking out from inside your home, COVID-19 affects everyone.

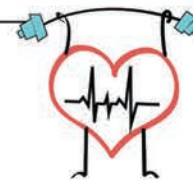
As Dr. Slavcev puts it, "there are no boundaries to what can be done."

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# sports & health



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## Local sports association combats COVID-19

### KSA donates \$100,000 to support essential workers and members in its community

Grace Xie  
Editorial Assistant

The Kitchener Sports Association responded to the COVID-19 pandemic armed with donations and support for KW's essential workers and the most vulnerable.

On May 6, 2020 the Kitchener Sports Association (KSA) launched a COVID-19 health initiative to assist the community in response to the pandemic. That included donating \$100,000 to support essential workers and organizations that help the vulnerable population, as well as supporting the long term care homes in Kitchener-Waterloo.

In addition to the donations, KSA collaborated with several other local organizations such as the Kitchener Rotary Club of Westmount, Kitchener Knights of Columbus, and the Canadian Albanian Association, to organize events in support of frontline workers like the KW Cares Caravan and the provision of free lunches to 150 staff members at the AR Goudie Long Term Care home.

John Thompson, President of the KSA, emphasized the importance of supporting our community and essential workers during these difficult times.

"Our motto back from 1944... True sportspeople make good citizens and so we're trying to lead by example that it's appropriate

to help when help is needed. Our members work hard and they enjoy raising funds and there's that nice satisfaction that by raising funds we are able to make a positive difference in our community," John said.

Thompson said that the KSA had the financial resources to help aid the community during these challenging times, making the decision to step up and help those in need an easy one.

"Instead of putting it into the minor

sports...we thought it was appropriate to put it [into] the other organizations. We had funds available and it should be put to work," John said.

In a meeting that lasted about four hours, the KSA board of directors decided – along with the input of 62 out of its 65 members – to invest in services that help meet the basic needs of citizens such as food and accommodations. The KSA then embarked on dividing their \$100,000.

The Food Bank of Waterloo Region and House of Friendship & Nutrition for Learning were sent three cheques of \$10,000. Furthermore, six cheques of \$5,000 were donated to Anselma House, also known as Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, OneROOF Youth Services, Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Woolwich Community Services, YMCA of Kitchener-Waterloo and YW Kitchener-Waterloo. John continues to encourage others to rise to the occasion and help support essential workers and those in need in the community.

"Our community is very caring and generous so when our community's back was against the wall with all these needs, I think the community rallies around it," John said.

The KSA was formed in 1944 with the objective of building a new arena in Kitchener – the result was the building and opening of the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium in 1950. Subsequently, KSA evolved through various stages from a social sports club to a minor funder of sports, and more recently it has become a significant component of the community's sports fabric. Most of their funds come from their annual 50/50 draws from the Kitchener Rangers Hockey Club and KW Titans Basketball games, as well as bingos.

In addition to funding sports teams, KSA actively acknowledges their volunteers by holding Volunteer Recognition Ceremonies, as well as providing scholarships for post-secondary students.

*“True sportspeople make good citizens and so we’re trying to lead by example that it’s appropriate to help when help is needed.”*

JOHN THOMPSON, PRESIDENT OF THE KSA



The Kitchener Sports Association giving supplies to front line workers.



The Kitchener Sports Association donating \$100,000 to local charities.



# UW student brings mental health to the forefront with “Behind My Mind”

Shruti Bagmar  
Reporter

A campaign called “Behind My Mind” founded by Mia Chan in 2019 aims to provide a platform for individuals to share their mental health issues and their journey in dealing with them.

Chan, a pharmacy student at UW, was deeply disturbed by the increased suicide rate in 2017 and started discussing mental health with the people around her, soon realizing that even her own mental health had



been down for years.

She took the initiative by confiding in her friends and saw a positive change in her life as a result.

She has been spreading mental health awareness since then and participates in Mental Illness Awareness Week every year.

“Behind my Mind” also contributes to the Canada Mental Health Association in support of all Canadians to continue spreading mental health awareness and resources.

It was in October 2019 that she felt the need to start her own campaign in order to encourage everyone to open up about their mental health.

“Behind My Mind” aims to bring together many individuals who have suffered or still suffer from some form of mental illness, and motivates them to share their experiences and how they cope with their individual issues.

She said believes that every story is worth sharing because there are many people who could relate to you and you could make a difference by just being open

about your own struggles.

Lauren, a contributor to the campaign, described the state of her own mental health by saying,

“This doesn’t mean every day is perfect or that I don’t have days where I feel like I can’t do it anymore. I now know my worth and that I deserve to be here.” She shared her own journey to help guide others who may be facing the same obstacles.

Chan said anyone can contribute to the campaign, with many students at UW sharing their stories and reliving their lives in a way they’d never done before. The objective

of sharing stories is not only to normalize the prevalence of mental illness, but also to remind the affected that they are not alone.

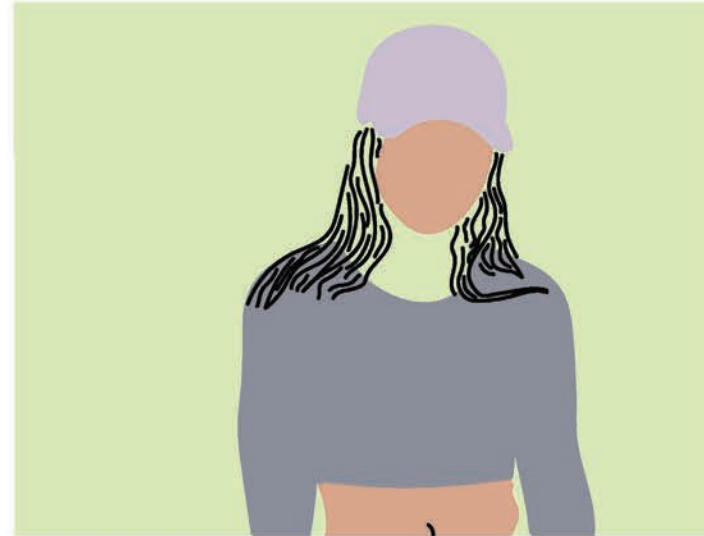
Every individual’s story is its own unique journey — a pleasurable form of self-discovery following a confrontation with their own issues.

They each describe why they felt the need to change their approach to life, along with the measures and steps they followed to

maintain mental wellness. A support platform like this is beneficial not only to those going through a rough phase in their lives, but also to those who have robust mental health. It helps everyone understand how people suffering from mental illnesses feel and think, and what they should do to help these individuals.

The name “Behind My Mind” is thoughtful and clearly conveys the objective of the campaign.

Every person is faced with challenges but



learns to hide their problems by putting on a strong and happy face mask. Chan says that its common for someone to be battling something devastating on the inside but appear strong on the outside.

As part of the campaign, participants post a picture of themselves along with their stories — portraying that they are more than their physical appearances and that a book cannot be judged by its cover.

She has expanded her team with the inclusion of other Pharmacy students and is delighted with the support and diversity of ideas they each provide.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that mental health problems do occur and are very common.

According to the World Health Organization, one in four people meet the criteria to be diagnosed

with a mental health disorder. Mental health issues can occur due to a variety of reasons which many might not have even thought about — a difficult year at university, social isolation, family problems, substance abuse, a sense of inferiority, etc.

Chan said she wants others to understand that mental health is just as important as physical health and should not be compromised, and anyone who seeks therapy is not crazy.

Therapy aims to help affected people to solve their problems in effective and

healthy ways, and any negative labeling associated with the practice should be frowned upon. Chan also emphasizes that it is wrong to tell individuals who are suffering to just “get over it,” adding that “it creates an unsupportive environment and pushes them deeper into social isolation, making matters worse. If it were that easy, there wouldn’t be professional thera-

pists, there wouldn’t exist medications that alter the chemicals in your brain, and suicide wouldn’t be the second leading cause of death among youth and young adults.”

The slogan for the campaign — “shining a light on the realities of mental health and illnesses, one mind at a time” — encourages



TAYANYA MIRANDA

everyone to share their journey and to show others that they are not alone. Better mental health means better progression and a better quality of life.

Chan was overwhelmed with the huge response to her campaign and states that “even if we positively influenced just one person, I would be content.”

Chan says that her long-term goal is to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, especially in marginalized communities, and hopes that one day discussing our mental health becomes as normal as discussing our physical health. More information about the campaign can be found at [www.behindmymind.com](http://www.behindmymind.com)



## UW alumni teaching at 'The Second City'

Vishal Lilman  
 Reporter

What do you get when you cross strict orders to stay at home, UW alumni, and one of the largest comedy institutions in the world?

The answer — online classes offered by The Second City!

This is no joke — you can now learn the basics of comedy in the areas of improv, stand-up, writing, and acting, all from the comfort of your own home with virtual classes and workshops offered by The Second City in Toronto.

Rob Michaels, a UW alumni who completed a double degree in Business and Mathematics, states that learning improv from a young age develops and strengthens core principles such as working in a team, thinking on the spot, collaborating with others, and sharing ideas — all skills that he found very useful and dominant in his business career.

After taking some improv classes during his free time at The Second City, Michaels decided to commit fully to his passion for comedy by becoming a course instructor and teaching improv for kids, aged four to seventeen.

"It's a good way to work with others, get your ideas out there, and be vocal! What I find is that some kids are very energetic and outgoing, while some kids are not so much. These classes are a great way to break out of their shell and have a good time, while still learning about improv at different levels, and then have those skills that you can apply in school, life, and work, whether it's trying to be the life of the party, or doing a presentation," Michaels said.

The Second City also has classes in stand-up, taught by UW alumni Lianne Mauladin

and Todd Van Allen, who completed their degrees in Mathematics and Teaching respectively. Participants can do a stand-up 'Escape,' drop-in session or learn stand-up 'head on' with 'Stand-Up I' and 'Stand-Up II' classes.

Differentiating between the two classes, Van Allen said, "Stand-Up I is kind of like 'Level A Improv' at The Second City in that it's the very beginning."

"It's where you go to sort of learn about the craft. It's a seven-week course, and at the beginning of the course they come in with basically nothing, just a desire to see what stand-up is and how to do it. Over the course of seven weeks we teach them [the] tricks [of] the trade, and we collaborate and help each other out with jokes, joke writing, stage presence, and that sort of thing." Van Allen said that by the end of the course, participants should have five minutes of original stand-up material.

In 'Stand-Up II', participants will have the opportunity to perform a new stand-up routine every week in an open-mic fashion. As Van Allen puts it, "It's also different styles of writing. You go through different exercises and themes such as observational material, storytelling, current events, etc. Whatever the exercise is that week that's what they are going to have to write about and come up with new jokes based on that subject and style."

Speaking about his career switch, Van Allen said he did stand-up as a UW student, but then he took a break from it after he graduated. "I just felt icky. I wanted to go back into doing stand-up, but I didn't know how," Van Allen recalls. He then took courses at The Second City, starting with improv and eventually getting back into stand-up. "There was a stand-up program created at The Second City, it has been going for a while and is quite successful. Over that time Kevin Frank, who is the director of training, reached out to me and asked if I wanted to teach stand-up."

Mauladin, who graduated from UW with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, described the stand-up program as a great mix of people with different professional backgrounds, coming together with the common theme of humor. "There are a lot of funny people, but they don't get the opportunity to perform their jokes in front of an audience, so that is something we hone," Mauladin said.

The program is also a great way to build confidence and stage presence. "People come in and they want to work on building their confidence and incorporating humor in their presentations, or lectures even. I recently had a UoT professor in my class

because he wanted to incorporate humour in his lectures." Mauladin explains.

Introduced in Toronto in the 70s, The Second City has launched the careers of names such as Amy Poehler, Tina Fey, Steve Carrell, Lauren Ash, and Bob Odenkirk. "This is the place to get your start," Julie Dumais Osborne, The Second City's artistic director, said.

Predominantly known for improvised sketch comedy, The Second City has stuck with its theme of improv and "scrappy beginnings" by switching from an in-person class, to a virtual training experience — one that is unique and "once in a lifetime," as Dumais Osborne describes it. While most participants at the in-class workshops are living around Toronto and surrounding areas, this is not the case with the online classes.

When asked about her experience teaching online, Mauladin states, "I had a student in one of my online classes taking the class from Germany! And I had another student taking the class from LA. For students, it's a unique experience for feedback. For example, a student might put forth a joke she said in LA, and the LA audience reacted in this way, but what would be the reaction of a Canadian audience? Audiences do change from place to place, so this is an asset to learning to have people coming from different perspectives."

As we all get adjusted to our new reality, now is a better time than ever to let loose and have a laugh. "Comedy is so essential as there is so much uncertainty," Dumais

Osborne remarks. "It's just a scary time with variables nobody can control. We're just coming together to do something that is joyful, collaborative, and feels social in a time where everyone is feeling isolated. [Comedy is] an incredible outlet and in some ways very therapeutic. And it's a nice little escape for what is a non-stop news cycle."



COURTESY CAREY ANN PHOTOGRAPHY

UW Math alumni Lianne Mauladin.



COURTESY TODD VAN ALLEN

UW Teaching alumni Todd Van Allen.



COURTESY HIDETAKA ISHII

UW Business and Mathematics alumni, Rob Michaels, teaches improv for kids.

# Through our Waterloo Windows

Lifting spirits and keeping communities together throughout this pandemic

Melissa Gatti  
Reporter

While people across the world are physically distancing, Create Waterloo's Through our Waterloo Windows project is keeping the city connected.

"The project allows people to show their appreciation and support for all the front-line workers but also to share moments of happiness or glee" said Sonya Poweska, Culture Program specialist for the City of Waterloo.

Launched in April by the arts and culture wing of the city, Create Waterloo, the project invites everyone in and out of the city's borders to submit images of their art, stories and hopeful messages with the community.

Accepting submissions through the City of Waterloo Public Art page, pieces have been shared across Create Waterloo's social media channels. Once the community can gather in person, all submissions will be assembled into a temporary public art piece at the Visitor and Heritage Information Centre in Waterloo.

"We are really lucky to live in a city that

supports and makes space for professional, emerging, and hobbyist artists, or even those who don't identify as artists" said Poweska.

With the goal of this project being to spread and encourage positivity amidst an otherwise lonely and difficult time, the community is responding with art in all forms from all ages, spreading joy throughout social media and the community.

From children's encouraging messages hung in the windows of their homes, to an artist's mandala art completed to bring themselves peace during stressful times, these are just some examples already featured in the project.

Brie Pointer, graphic artist in the Waterloo region, also took part in the project.

With the help of her 5-year-old daughter Ellie, Pointer designed a chalk mural on the side of her own house.

"At a time of stress and loneliness, it's nice to give people that sort of joy, just by looking at a colourful wall" said Pointer.

Showcasing the success of the project thus far in bringing joy and positivity to communities during isolation, what started as something fun to do with her daughter quickly brought the community together.

"I ran out of chalk for the side of my

house, so I put a call out on my Facebook to see if anyone had anything to donate, and I was inundated with chalk donations" Brie said.

At an otherwise isolating time, sometimes a rainbow wall chalk mural is just what the community needs.

Whether you live in Waterloo or not, identify as an artist yourself or just want to share something beautiful for your community's feeds, check out the the City of Waterloo Public Art page. There, you too can submit your work, encouraging and embracing the community from a distance.



COURTESY ELLIE POINTER

Artist Bre Pointer paints a Waterloo home to show support to the community.

## One-on-one with Zilverbacks

Vishal Lilman  
Reporter

Chris Harris, also known by his up-and-coming stage name Zilverbacks, released his debut album on Apr. 8, 2020. Titled "The Dark Hores: At a Time When Time Was Irrelevant," this eight-track album is a hybrid between grunge and indie rock. With tracks like "Real Lies," "Kamikaze of Lullabies" and my personal favourites, "Breakthrough" and "Ultimatum," I couldn't help but give this album a second, third and fourth listen.

Zilverbacks was also kind enough to sit down with Imprint (while respecting self-isolation, of course) to talk a little bit about himself and his debut album.

**What makes this album unique and different from what's out there already?**

I suppose what makes it unique is the fact that I had no prior experience, so I wasn't "moulded" by these musical institutions, the status quo, the recipe to success, etc. I had a lot of emotions, and this was my vent, my catharsis. I also didn't listen to any other music, to not be wrongly influenced and equally disheartened.

**When did you start working on this project?**

I started working on the album seriously at the start of 2019. This was when I said to myself, "this is it, I need to do this" and waking up early to do a job I didn't care about added fuel to the fire. So I went for it, and haven't looked back since. I quit my job and wrote the album in a dilapidated old barrack building on an ex-army base- in a dead-end town- converted to residential use.

**What does 'The Dark Hores: At a Time When Time Was Irrelevant' mean?**

I'm a fan of ambiguity and leaving multiple direct messages at once amongst the lyricism. So "The Dark Hores: At a Time When Time Was Irrelevant" actually means many things that in themselves create a single conceptual message. Firstly, "Hores" refers to "whores," secondly, it's a play on the word "horse," thirdly, it means "hours" in Catalan (referring to dark times) and lastly, "Höre" means "to hear" in German.

**One of my favourite songs on the album is "Ultimatum." Can you do a breakdown of the story and inspiration behind that track?**

I'd become completely infatuated after

a perfectly wild night out with this beautiful Lithuanian woman. She had to disappear that morning, and looking back, I was longing for her constantly for the next two months. "Ultimatum" was written during that phase of irrational, unjustifiable desire, the romantic fantasy, so detached from reality - pure lust. I met her again, and we continued the great times, with coastal getaways and city breaks, which only amplified the emotions. I mean, looking back, she had to move back to Lithuania for f\*\*\*s sake, but still, there was a subsequent month of distancing and distractions despite how great it all was. The true, core expression behind "Ultimatum" stems from the situation I found myself in, not knowing how she felt, wanting to know but not wanting to end the flirting and everything else by raising [an] ultimatum she would resent.

**Obviously, touring and live performances are not the best idea at this time, can fans expect online performances from you via the internet?**

The current state of the world isn't ideal for a musician, but it isn't for most people. Even so, it has been a good opportunity to write and release more online content to fans. Listeners can visit the Zilverbacks You-

Tube page to listen to the album, and there are bonus tracks on there too. I actually just released a new song called "Anaemic Iron Heart," which you can listen to on there. [My] Instagram page is also pretty active, my handle is @zilverbacks.

You can stream Zilverbacks debut album "Dark Hores: At A Time When Time Was Irrelevant" right now on YouTube and Soundcloud.



Album for Zilverbacks "The Dark Hores: At a Time When Time Was Irrelevant."

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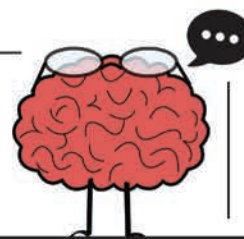
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Next scheduled post-mortem meeting:  
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# opinions



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## UW's tuition increase during a pandemic is inappropriate

### Especially for UW's International Masters students



RILEY STEVENS

Like every year, all the current undergraduate and graduate University of Waterloo students will see a tuition hike in 2020-21.

For a Master's student, the hike translates to about \$1,550 in extra costs per term as they see a 15 per cent hike in their tuition. New students will generally face higher tuition increases than those currently enrolled in programs at the university.

These dramatic increases came at a particularly inappropriate time. As international student fees are almost three times the domestic rate. A five per cent increase would impose extra financial stress on Master's students, many of whom are already under the poverty line.

The university has chosen to hike tuition during this pandemic, as if life were business as usual. Now that classes are online and all buildings are closed, students won't be using the campus infrastructure. Tuition doesn't go towards just the direct costs of teaching but also to non-academic purposes. With the campus building closed, students won't be using the university's world class infrastructure, like labs, for which they are paying for with their tuition.

Why should students pay for the maintenance when they do not use it? You don't keep paying for gas if your car is out of commission.

Students chose UW because of its repu-

tation and decided to pay a premium price for a world class experience, student interaction and use of world class facilities and industry exposure.

The university claims that 1. transitioning to remote delivery does not change academic integrity and quality learning experience and 2. Online medium does not affect the standard to which that education is held.

Most of the students have had a chance of

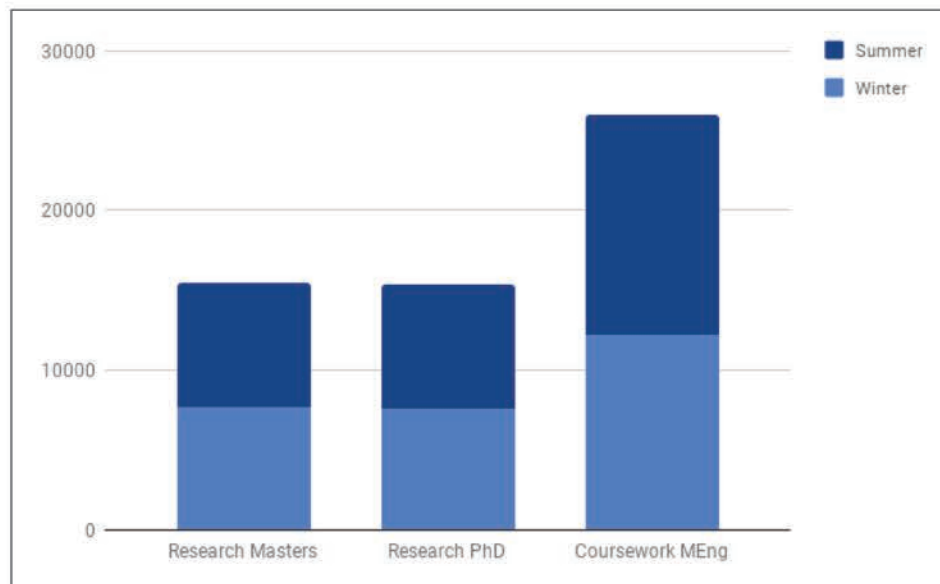
experiencing online classes for a month and they can already see that the experience is nowhere near the same as the in class experience. They have seen professors cancelling the classes because of technical difficulties or the professors are ill prepared.

The increase in financial aid is mostly directed towards undergrads and research-based students while most of the high tuition fee is contributed by course-based masters who are skipped from the aid.

International Master's students will be disproportionately affected by UW's tuition increase. They might be happy with their life today with the education they are receiving, but it's unfortunate that they will be paying for it many years after graduation.

What we have seen is a lack of meaningful consultation with students by the university. The GSA stated that they are trying to advocate the student tuition fee but university decision-makers seemingly ignored student leaders' feedback at the meetings with university administration.

Chanakya Jetti



International Master's students are seeing their tuition rise by \$1,550 this spring.

# Why women have it worse: Explaining gender bias in STEM

Women in STEM fields should have the same privileges as their male counterparts because women have been known to be more resilient and intellectually capable than men. Yet women's underrepresentation and the continued perception of women's inferiority is pervasive in a number of STEM fields.

But where did this ridiculous notion that men are superior to women originate from? According to anthropologist Sally Scolum, the role of women has historically been ignored by scientific studies of the human species. Most studies in human evolution have largely focused on the origins of aggressive and competitive behaviour – hunting, war and the struggle for resources.

In her 1975 book “Woman the Gatherer: Male Bias in Anthropology,” Scolum addressed how our modern understanding of anthropology was developed mostly by white men, and the work of other anthropologists, from different backgrounds, was ignored by the field at large.

Scolum also suggested that the questions these white men asked pertaining to the evolution of the human race were formed by historical events they were part of, and by uninformed assumptions about the cultural diversity of humans.

Angela Saini, a science journalist and author of the 2017 book “Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong and the New Research That's Rewriting the Story,” explains how for years anthropologists believed that hunting activities carried out by men were what eventually led to collaboration, language and the stability of our species.

This idea was a deliberate attempt at removing women from the story of human evolution, and gives the impression that only males were evolving. However, women played an equal, if not more, important part in human evolution.

Scolum posits that although males provided animal protein to their family through hunting, the availability of crops, produced by females, could have decreased the demand of male hunting efforts, as crops provide carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and can be used as a source of vegetable protein.

Dr. Hillard Kaplan, an anthropologist and professor at Chapman University, sheds much needed light on the topic in his 2009 article “The evolutionary and ecological roots of human social organization.”

Here he lists the fundamental necessities for the viability of a species, including the importance of the female role in human evolution, therefore, avoiding the male bias that is present in most historical documents.

Dr. Adrienne Zihlman, an anthropologist and professor at UCSC explains, in her 2012 article “The Real Females of Evolution,” how the evolution of our species was primari-

ly contingent on mothers' involvement in their infants- social, emotional and physical development. Although males contributed to the safety of the social group, they had little interaction with the young.

Fast forward to the 20th century – women are increasing their participation in the workforce and are pursuing fields that were once reserved only for men. Some of these

fields include business, engineering, law and medicine. Studies have shown how women, on average, achieve higher grades and test scores than males.

As of 2018, women represented 57 per cent of college graduates and graduated with higher grades and at a higher rate.

While these patterns imply that women are proficient and more than capable

in terms of academic performance, these achievements don't translate into workplace gender equality.

In 2018, Canadian women on average earned \$4.13 less per hour than men working in a similar field — \$0.87 for every dollar earned by men, according to Statistics Canada.

Although women today face fewer barriers to pursue STEM careers, their representation in these fields remains low. A study from Cornell University, published in 2013, showed that women who major in STEM fields are less likely than their male associates to actually work in STEM professions or remain in them following graduation, as they may have lower expectations for their future remuneration.

Another study from Cornell University, published in 2016, showed that even though women account for approximately 50 per cent of all STEM degrees earned, their working share in STEM fields is only around 20 per cent.

Furthermore, women who choose to pursue careers in STEM are expected to earn around 18 per cent less in hourly wages than men working in the same field.

While the existence of a gender wage gap has been proven by multiple studies, further research has continued in search of the root cause behind the issue. Previous studies from the mid and late 2000s had reached a variety of conclusions — from a woman's inevitable need for maternity leave, to their perceived lack of ambition from within the workforce.

Both assumptions are bogus and misleading, with a recent study, published by the American Sociological Review in 2020, proposing that women's underrepresentation in STEM fields derives from conscious exclusion and unconscious gender biases.

Nonetheless, women should not be expected to earn lower wages than their male counterparts nor should they be denied opportunities just because they might want children of their own some day or because of sexist perceptions of inferiority.

Increasing the presence of women in STEM occupations is the key to reducing the gap — the more women who succeed in STEM, the more women will see there exists opportunity to do so. This will also allow women to feel more comfortable pursuing STEM fields that were once thought of as exclusively male spaces.

Women have the right to seek and succeed in any position regardless of gender. They have the right to be treated with the same respect as their male counterparts and they shouldn't be denied equality due to bias, unconscious or otherwise, nor due to the opinions of male chauvinists.

Marcy Adjei



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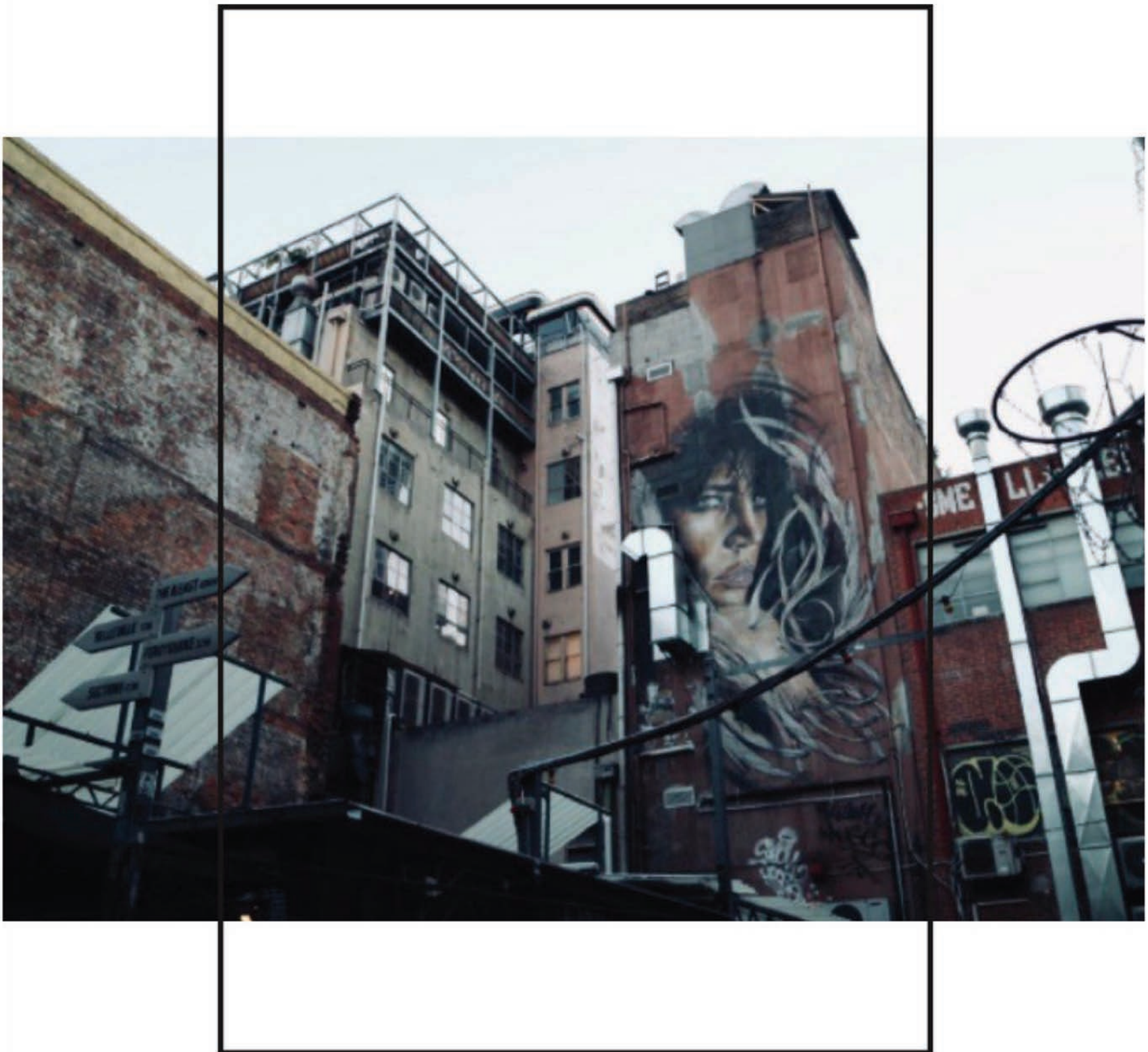
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