



p7

**THE STORY OF AMY SMOKE**

How do we make academic spaces safer for Indigenous people this Indigenous History Month and beyond?



**CONVOCATION 2022**

At the first in-person ceremony since 2019, UW celebrated three graduating classes. P2

**UW MEETS BOLLYWOOD P4**

Meet UW Dhamaka, the university's first Bollywood Dance club.

**JULY EVENTS P3**

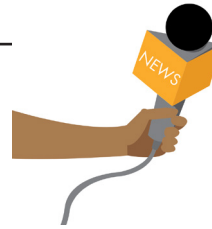
A guide to the events happening in Kitchener-Waterloo this month.

**CONCEPT SEMI-FINALS P5**

21 teams are competing for grant funding for their business ventures.

# Does UW have a Teaching Assistant problem? P10





# UW holds first in-person convocation since 2019

Alicia Wang  
News Editor

The University of Waterloo recently held its first in-person convocations since fall 2019.

From June 14 to June 18, graduating students received their degrees or diplomas in the repurposed Physical Activities Complex. “It was really lovely, I didn’t feel like there was anything other than wearing masks that changed from what it was before,” said Lyne Baaj, who graduated this spring with a bachelor of science in psychology. “They really did think about how they could make it safe for us and I was really thankful.”

This year’s ceremonies also included special ceremonies for the classes of ‘20 and ‘21, whose convocations were disrupted by the pandemic.

Kaitlyn Bergsma, who graduated from UW in 2021, initially attended a virtual convocation. “On what was supposed to be my convocation day in 2021, I was actually on a road trip, so I got wifi and watched it from inside a van where I was living,” she said. Bergsma appreciated the effort put into her convocation, stating, “I think the faculty of engineering did a really good job given the circumstances. From what I heard from some of my friends in other faculties, what we got was very good in comparison.”

Lyndsay Eberlin, who graduated in 2020, had a different take on the convocation she received. “We got some videos... that was kind of it,” she summed up. “They didn’t really have a lot of time to switch everything over cause everything was so up in the air, so they did the best they could given the circumstances and given the fact that they’d never done an online ceremony in the past, but I was definitely still looking forward to having an in person ceremony at some point in the future after that... It was a little bit weird because we didn’t necessarily have a lot of closure for undergrad and I think it was a really big, important chapter in my life.”

Josh Goldschmidt, who also graduated in 2020, felt similarly dissatisfied with how his undergrad ended. “I’d describe it as unprepared and very hastily done... some things that I felt the convocation were missing were first of all the appearances of students. I think there might’ve been Renison student leadership, [but no] alumni and teachers I recognized,” he said. “I also got the

distinct feeling that when they were preparing the Renison one, they had in mind that they were going to do a second one... ‘Give it a couple weeks and this’ll all blow over’, there was a lot of that feeling.”

Students of previous years also had differing opinions on whether or not they chose to attend the special in-person ceremonies held for the classes of ‘20 and ‘21.

Bergsma chose not to attend the in-person convocation, stating, “When I got the invite to come to in-person convocation, I decided not to go, mainly because I thought it was going to be a really long ceremony as they were combining a few faculties to-

gether. I knew a bunch of my close friends weren’t going either, so I opted not to go.”

Bergsma also felt as though she had achieved the objective of the in-person ceremonies.

“For me, I took pictures on campus at the end of my 4B term, with gowns and stuff, so I felt like I already had closure at that point. I know some of my friends who went to the ceremony, they really appreciated it, but I still think it was good on Waterloo to hold those in-person events even if I wasn’t one of the people to attend.”

Meanwhile, Eberlin felt as if the event fulfilled the role that her previous convocation had not. “[The special in-person convo-

cation] was really great, I think it was nice to finally walk across the stage, take some photos with family and friends; I think it helped with having some closure on my undergrad degree which was something I’d kinda missed having,” she said.

Goldschmidt also noted the lack of closure from his own convocation, and though he chose not to attend the special convocation, citing a lapse in communication as the main reason, Goldschmidt acknowledged the importance of the event. “[Though] even in the best of times, we don’t really care about school events, I know some of my friends went, and they really enjoyed it,” he said.

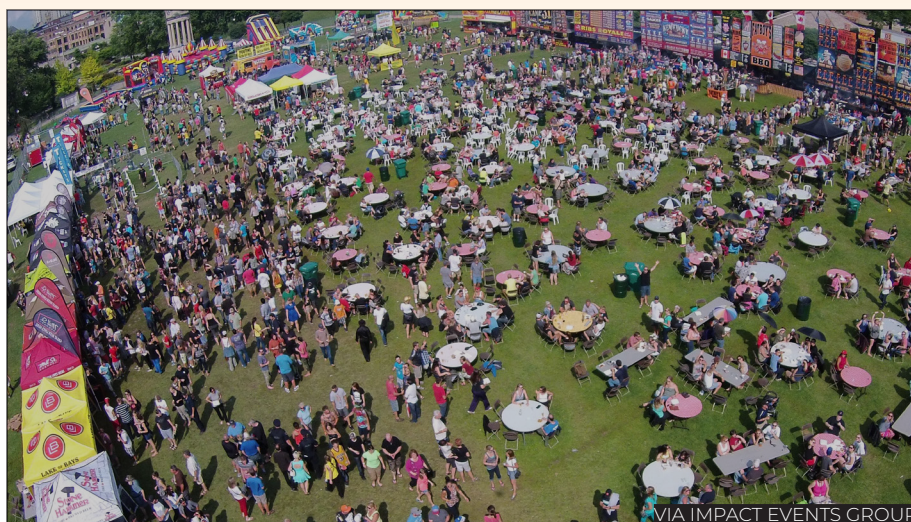


COURTESY NAVYA VIKRAMAN NAIR

PhD Candidate Navya Nair and her family at this year’s ceremony, which also included special ceremonies for the classes of ‘20 and ‘21



## What to do in Waterloo this July



CATS COVE MEDIA PRESENTS  
FRIDAY JULY 15TH 2022

### LOST IN JAPAN & EXCUSE ME.

MAXWELL'S CONCERTS & EVENTS  
35 UNIVERSITY AVE E, WATERLOO, ON N2J 2V9

WITH VERY SPECIAL GUESTS  
NO SERVICE  
LIVING ROOM FOR SMALL  
KING PARK

ADVANCED TICKETS ONLY

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.CATSCOVMEDIA.COM/LIVE](http://WWW.CATSCOVMEDIA.COM/LIVE)

**Erin Fround**  
Reporter

Between Canada Day, beautiful weather, and the realization that both the summer and the year are halfway over, July is a great time to take a break from studying and live a little. Whether you trek up to a family cottage, swim in a lake, or sip drinks on a patio, take some time this July to enjoy life. Luckily, if leisurely sitting in the sun isn't your speed and you're more event-oriented, there is plenty to do in Waterloo this coming month:

**Spring 2022 Social Impact Showcase**  
St. Paul's University College  
190 Westmount Rd N., Waterloo, ON  
July 14, 4–5:30 p.m.

GreenHouse, UW's social impact incubator working out of St. Paul's University

College, hosts its Social Impact Showcase each term. This event is designed to exhibit and celebrate the work of current Greenhouse Students. Funds will also be awarded from the Social Impact Fund for certain student-led ventures during the event. Previous winners from the Winter 2022 term include Pluriversity, an "online leadership program that empowers Indian Indigenous youth to be climate justice leaders," and ConnectMe, which "connects newcomers in Canada who are struggling with migration dilemmas with a diverse range of coaches of the same cultural background."

At the event, you will hear pitches for a wide variety of social-impact focused ventures and vote for your favourite pitch. The winner will receive the People's Choice Award and \$1,000. *The event is free to attend, but you must register for it on EventBrite.*

**Lost in Japan & Excuse Me. at Maxwell's**  
Maxwell's Concerts & Events, 35 University

Ave E., Waterloo, ON  
July 15, Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Presented by Cat's Cove Media, an artist development and live event company, this concert features local indie-pop band Lost in Japan, who are best known for their songs "Red Line" and "Lonely" and are currently introducing their new single "Before the Blink," as well as five-piece indie-alternative band Excuse Me, who recently released songs "Heavyweight" and "The Miser." Joining them will be other local bands King Park, No Service, and Living Room for Small.

*The event is 19+ and tickets will not be sold at the door — advanced tickets only. General admission is \$24.97 and can be purchased on the Cats Cove Media website.*

**Downtown Kitchener Ribfest and Craft Beer Show**  
Victoria Park, 32 Dill St, Kitchener, ON  
July 15–17, Friday and Saturday 12–10 p.m.;  
Sunday 12–6 p.m.

This annual community event offers a wide selection of barbecued ribs and chicken, as well as Ontario craft-brewed beer. Participating breweries include Bangarang, Four Fathers Brewing Co., Niagara Cider Company, and Waterloo Brewing Company. While you eat, you can also enjoy entertainment from participating bands The Lonely Hearts, Poverty's Arse, The Hot Karl's, The Test Icicles, 78 North, and The Killin Time Band. The band performance schedule can be found on the festival website. Kids are also welcome at the festival and can enjoy the GoGo squeeZ Kids Fun Zone, organized by Grand River Inflatables, which will provide inflatable activities, games, and food. Note, however, that people under the age of 19 must be accompanied by someone 19+.

*Admission to the festival is free, but donations to The Food Bank of Waterloo Region are appreciated and accepted at the gate. Tickets for the Kids Fun Zone can be purchased on-site.*



## When UW met Bollywood

“

*“With a large population of international students from India and even Canadian citizens with Indian ethnicities, this club aims to create a dance space that will teach traditional and fusion Bollywood dancing.”*

RISHITA PARUTHI,  
CO-FOUNDER OF  
UW DHAMAKA

”

Suhani Saigal  
Editorial Assistant

Two fourth-year students, Banat Khural and Rishita Paruthi, have started UW Dhamaka, the University of Waterloo's first Bollywood dance club.

“We're UW's first Bollywood dancing club created to bring together the community of South Asian dancers and fuse Bollywood music and dance culture into the community,” Paruthi said. “With a large population of international students from India and even Canadian citizens with Indian ethnicities, this club aims to create a dance space that will teach traditional and fusion Bollywood dancing and eventually compete with other similar university groups.”

Khural and Paruthi came up with the idea of starting this club after teaching a hip-hop routine on a Bollywood song at a session organized by the UW Hip Hop club in 2021.

“The response was amazing and sparked the idea of starting our own club which would be about Bollywood dancing and all its different elements,” Khural said. “Both of us have extensive training through Bollywood dance schools in our respective hometowns and we wanted to replicate that community within UW.”

UW Dhamaka offers a range of drop-in sessions, including beginner and intermediate classes. Sessions, which are taught by the club's choreographers, will cover a number of Bollywood fusion styles such as Bollywood-hop and Semi-classical.

“We also hope to partner with other cultural communities on campus to host events and performances,” Paruthi added.

Students are invited to attend drop-in sessions and weekend workshops organized throughout the rest of the term.

“We have an exciting weekend workshop in July with collaborations with existing cultural clubs on campus. This workshop will incorporate a diverse range of Indian dancing styles and allow us to showcase our professional training,” Khural said.

The club is open to all UW students, with no membership fee associated.

“With this being our first term and a new club idea in the UW community, we would like students to give our club a try whenever they can! Our club is completely free, financially and commitment-wise, so we encourage anyone in the community to try a new dance form, make some friends, and help us to grow our club,” Khural said.

*If you're interested in becoming a member or choreographer, you can sign up with the form found in their bio @uw.dhamaka on Instagram.*

“

*“Our club is completely free, financially and commitment-wise, so we encourage anyone in the community to try a new dance form, make some friends, and help us grow our club.”*

BANAT KHURAL,  
CO-FOUNDER OF  
UW DHAMAKA

”

# science & tech

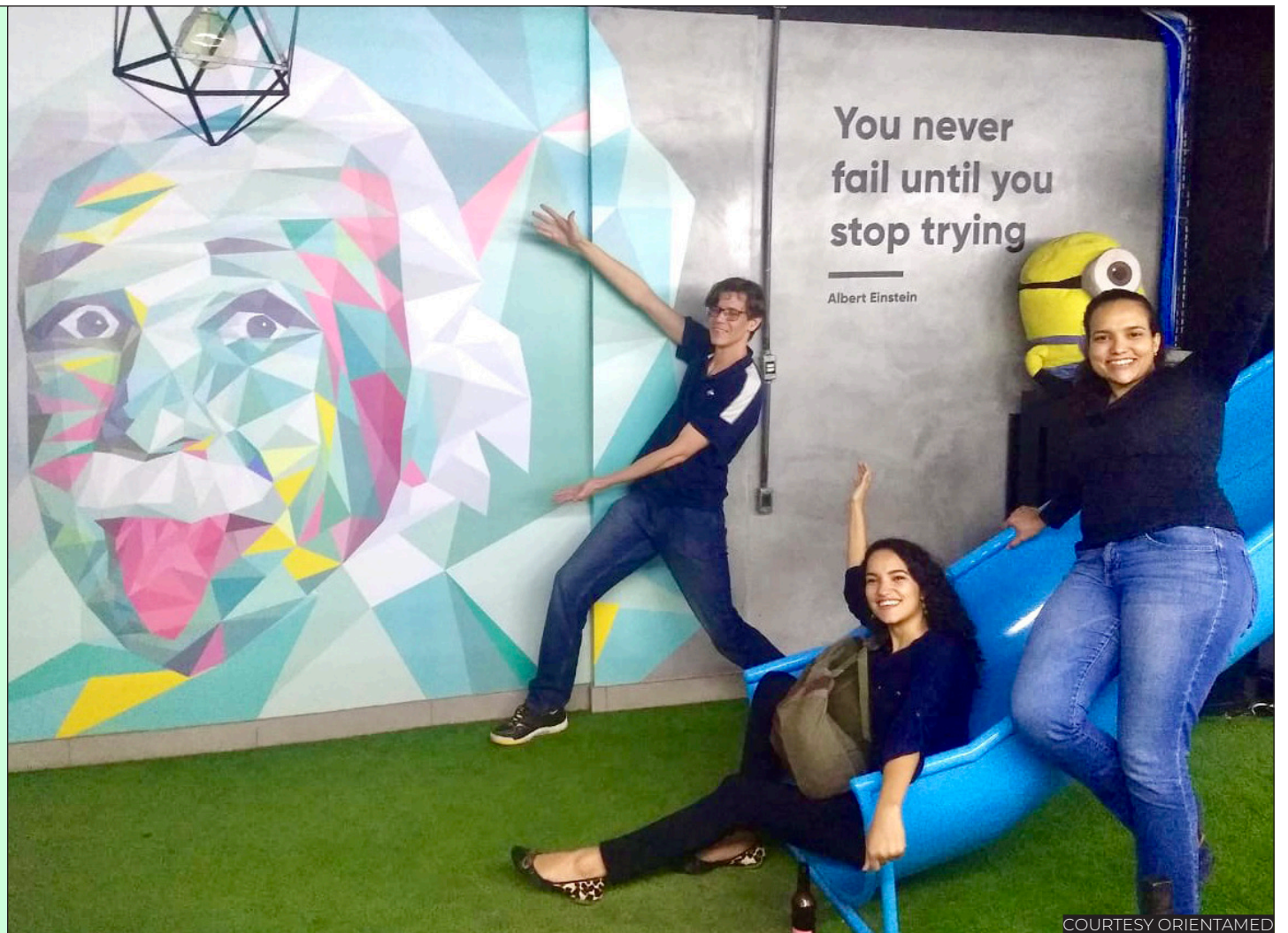


## WRITE FOR SCIENCE AND TECH

Got an interesting science or tech story you want to write about? Email [science@uwimprint.ca](mailto:science@uwimprint.ca)

### 21 teams pitching on June 28-29, 2022

Canada's First All-weather Autonomous Delivery Robot	Collox	One App	Novel Real-Time Sensing and Feedback for Clubfoot Brace Treatment
Daneshbaz	Dynamic Soft Robotic Knee Brace	EV123	From waste plastic to building material
Happy Reading!	Iqra's Art	Lawyer-ed	NEXT: Immigrant Services All-in-
			Okaya
			OriantaMED
			PV Parkway
			PWR Athletic Wear Inc.
			RÜF
			Symphonic
			Tako
			The President Braids
			Unlimited App
			VR Speech Therapy Kit



COURTESY ORIENTAMED

The OriantaMED core team from left to right: Rheyler Vargas, Júllia Nascimento, Nathalia Moraes do Nascimento

## UW Concept \$5K Semi-Finals are underway

The combination of funding with supportive and collaborative environments helps propel business ideas into reality

Katie Traynor  
Reporter

The Concept \$5K pitch competition is officially underway, with 21 teams in pursuit of grant funding for their business ventures.

The competition, which is hosted by Concept by Velocity at the University of Waterloo, provides students with opportunities to showcase their potentially innovative business ideas to a panel of judges and win \$5K in grant funding. Concept is Velocity's experiential innovation hub at the University of Waterloo that fosters entrepreneurship and innovation through online coaching resources, networking opportunity events,

and collaboration spaces. By participating in the Concept \$5K pitch competition, teams can gain valuable feedback from experienced entrepreneurs and earn pitching experience.

OriantaMed, one of the teams in the semi-finals, is a team of six people – three founders and three partners. The core team includes Júllia Nascimento, Rheyler Vargas and Nathalia Moraes do Nascimento as the main founders of the breath-based glucometer to replace blood tests. They are supported by a doctor, lawyer and businessman to further guide their research.

OriantaMed's journey to the \$5K pitch competition began with their original product development, which was intended to predict fruit spoilage but was later reimaged into a solution within healthcare.

The team began their preparation for the Concept \$5K pitch competition by researching the field of medical technology devices in Canada that are used for disease diagnosis and envisioned how their device could be implemented in medical diagnosis processes. Through collaboration and support from friends and colleagues, the OriantaMed team honed the future of their device.

"Someone gave me very good advice that I never forget - and that is if someone is nervous about what they are doing, it is an indication that they are doing something extraordinary," Moraes do Nascimento said.

Moraes do Nascimento provided some tips for students who wish to pursue their own business or entrepreneurship ideas through their experience as a startup and

the \$5K pitching competition. Top of mind for her was the importance of ethical considerations when starting a business, especially in the healthcare field. As a medical-based startup, the necessity to maintain integrity in developing a useful and beneficial product will be a salient pursuit for students who wish to develop a product that delivers value to the market.

Lastly, Moraes do Nascimento recounted that when their idea was first presented, it was not well-received. However, Moraes do Nascimento stated that "instead of being discouraged by the idea, we realised that we had something really different and valuable."

The Concept's \$5K pitch competition semi-final pitches will be hosted on Tuesday, June 28th and Wednesday, June 29th.

## WRITE FOR FEATURE

*Imprint* is looking for feature writers! For more information, email [managingeditor@uwimprint.ca](mailto:managingeditor@uwimprint.ca).



[WWW.UWIMPRINT.CA](http://WWW.UWIMPRINT.CA)

Check the web for all the latest campus and community news.

# Indigenous organizations in the Region of Waterloo

Suhani Saigal  
Editorial Assistant

The UW Office of Indigenous Relations works collaboratively on- and off-campus to advance the goals of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to

Action. During National Indigenous History Month, the office has organized a series of events and workshops to help people learn and connect. As National

Indigenous History Month continues through June, here are some Indigenous organizations in the KW Region that you can support.

## Anishnabeg Outreach

By creating a self-directed virtual healing system, Anishnabeg Outreach helps Indigenous peoples heal from the effects of intergenerational trauma. Its goals include rebuilding one's self and family, building community, and providing opportunities for healing and employment. The organization accepts donations on its website.

## The Healing of the Seven Generations

This organization helps First Peoples in the KW Region who are suffering from the intergenerational impacts of the residential school system. The Healing of the Seven Generations facilitates self-acceptance, self-help, therapeutic healing programs, and community training sessions. Ways to help the organization achieve its goals can be found on the website.

## KW Urban Native Wigwam Project (KWUNWP)

This organization's mission is to provide culturally safe and affordable housing for the Indigenous communities in the KW Region. With the goal of enhancing the quality of life, KWUNWP has served the community since 1987. The organization supports tenants wherever possible and helps them develop self-sufficiency. There are many ways to support KWUNWP that can be found on the website.

## Ahwenhaode Indigenous Justice Program

Founded in 2016, this initiative aims to improve access to justice for Indigenous communities by collaborating and coordinating with social agencies and providing culturally respectful legal aid and services. More information about the initiative can be found on the Waterloo Region Community Legal Services website.



VIA FACEBOOK

# Land and Territorial Acknowledgements

Nicola Rose  
Managing Editor

Over the past few years, it has become increasingly common to include an acknowledgement of the Indigenous people who have a historical and ongoing relationship with the land on which we now live.

These acknowledgements, land and

territorial, recognize the “unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories,” explains the Know The Land Territories Campaign. They are an important step toward reconciliation — a way to recognize and honour the history of the land and the Indigenous people who live and work here.

However, while the terms land acknowledgement and territorial acknowledgement

are often used interchangeably, they are different. The University of Waterloo website explains the specific purpose of each type of statement:

*Land acknowledgments are statements focused on physical land, land use, spiritual connection to the land. They often express thanks and/or a connectedness of the event, workplace, meeting, and/or ceremony to the land on which these happenings are taking place.*

*Territorial acknowledgements recognize and*

*pay respect to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people and their traditional and/or current geographical territories on which we live and work upon. They often include mention of the associated treaty or treaties to the geographic location.*

UW's Territorial Acknowledgement highlights three First Nations who have a documented presence in the territory: the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee people.

# Nothing about us without us: The story of Amy Smoke

Ridham Chadha  
Reporter

**H**ow much do you know? How much do you know about your system, your culture, everything came from? How many people do you know with whom you can talk, build a connection that was there centuries ago and feel at home? How much do you know?

This story is about Amy Smoke, who is Mohawk Nation, Turtle Clan from the Six Nations of the Grand River. They are Indigiqueer, two-spirit parent, teacher, and community organizer. They are a founding member of the local First Nations Drum Group and sit on various advisory circles in the region.

***“Come to our spaces and invite us to yours. We are already healing ourselves and our families and are expected to educate you too about us. Read about us, do your research, and meet us halfway. Make some meaningful connections. Nothing about us without us.”***

AMY SMOKE

Amy attended a local school while growing up in Kitchener, unlike their grandfather who attended the Mohawk Institute Residential School. Growing up among non-Indigenous classmates they experienced bullying and not-so-subtle comments from their peers telling them to “go back to where they came from.”

They were not around any ceremonies or traditions and neither part of any organized religion. They never had a chance to learn about their own identity, their own people, and the feeling of belonging. What followed came in like a storm and swept them through substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and frequently running away from the house they could not call home.

After a couple of years of partying through this feeling, a few days before their 22nd birthday, Amy found themselves in an Indigenous-only healing lodge in Toronto. The drums, the sage, the teachings — they all made sense and came to them naturally. During the four-month live-in program, they felt connected to their culture and heritage for the first time. “I knew that I had come home.”

When Amy first returned to Kitchener, after a series of bad decisions and abusive relationships, they did not seek help from local Indigenous organizations — a decision they now consider to be a big mistake.

Amy had their first daughter at that time and found purpose in raising the little girl, seeking to be the perfect parent.

When they lost their daughter and their house a few years later, they once again became engulfed in the cycle of substance abuse and mistakes. “I did everything I never thought I would growing up, getting in trouble with the law, couch surfing, waking up in crack houses, exploiting not only myself but also other women, everything unimaginable,” they admitted.

Amy was tired of this vicious circle and wanted to build everything from the ground up. Starting from subsidized housing and getting up every day and not wanting drugs, they applied to college.

“I met the most wonderful people and one of the teachers who helped me with getting my funding said that we were in this together, and for the second time I felt like I was home, all because of the generosity of a total stranger,” they said.

“Suddenly, I was talking in classes about being a First Nations student and was on the college’s banners, website, commercials and all marketing materials. What you do here, counts out there.” The acknowledgement of the importance of representation gave Amy the confidence boost they needed to continue.

University was yet another culture shock, because it was so different from the institution they had been at before, where there were students from their own community. Not one to back down from a challenge, they reactivated the Indigenous student association and made the organization’s presence known.

“Two dozen Indigenous students started using our facility regularly, and we feed over a hundred campus communities during our weekly lunches,” they said.

How do we make academic spaces safer for Indigenous people? How do we move from rows of desks to circles where meaningful conversation can occur?

When Amy first started questioning how to make the system more accommodating

for Indigenous people, and they were met with rolling eyes. “We learnt so little about anti-oppressive theory, Indigenous knowledge, queer, and feminist theories, like whom did we think we were going to be out there in the world with? With our little degrees in our hands?”

Amy suggests other ways of learning and teaching, such as including laureates and professionals from the Indigenous communities and letting them talk and share their stories. “Come to our spaces and invite us to yours. We are already healing ourselves and our families and are expected to educate you too about us. Read about us, do your research, and meet us halfway. Make some meaningful connections. Nothing about us without us.”

Amy was often asked to share their story, and talk about colonization, all while they were being colonized at that very moment. The systemic racism and discrimination faced by Indigenous students is not history, it is current and their everyday lived reality.

“I talk so much about myself and my history because I want people to know that when I walk through those doors — the

beauty, the pain and the intergenerational trauma and healing, all of it. As a stronger and healthier First Nation[s] person it is my responsibility to bring that sense of belonging and identity to other Indigenous people, and I want them to have the same sense of home which I did when I went through all those experiences of healing.”

This article does not do justice to the millions of emotions, experiences and learning of Amy Smoke, but I am hopeful it gives the reader a sense of what it does to an individual when they are apart from their identity.

This is a story about Amy Smoke. This is a story about finding your home.



SHARANYA KARKERA

**imprint**

Wednesday, June 29, 2022 | Vol. 45, No. 4  
Student Life Centre, Rm 0137  
University of Waterloo  
Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1  
P: 519.888.4048 | F: 519.884.7800  
uwimprint.ca

Publisher: Andres Fuentes  
Executive Editor: Vacant  
Editorial Assistant: Suhani Sehgal  
Sales Rep: Vacant  
Distribution: Vacant  
Volunteer Co-ordinator: Vacant

**Editorial Staff**  
Managing Editor: Nicola Rose  
Creative Director: Sharanya Karkera

News Editor: Alicia Wang  
Assistant News Editor: Saihaj Dadhra  
Arts & Life Editor: Abhiraj Lamba  
Assistant Arts & Life Editor: Remy Leigh  
Science & Technology Editor: Nicole Howes  
Assistant Science & Tech Editor: Felicia Rose  
Sports Editor: Safia Ahmed  
Satellite Campus Editor: Vacant  
Opinions Editor: Nicola Rose  
Distractions Editor: Annie Zhang  
Head Designer: Jia Chen  
Assistant Head Designer: Mahnoor Irfan  
Photo Editor: Andrew Yang  
Assistant Photo Editor: Vacant  
Graphics Editor: Jia Chen  
Assistant Graphics Editor: Vacant  
Copy Editor: Eduardo Matzumiya  
Assistant Copy Editor: Vacant  
Video Editor: Andrew Yang  
Intern: Vacant

**Production Staff**  
Tanya Leung and Briana Cheah

Imprint is the official student newspaper of the University of Waterloo. It is an editorially independent newspaper published by the Federation of Students, University of Waterloo, carrying on business as the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association ("WUSA"), a corporation without share capital. Imprint is a member of the Ontario Community Newspaper Association (OCNA). Content is provided for general information, education and entertainment purposes only, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Committee, WUSA, staff or advertisers. We welcome editorial submissions, articles, letters, photos and graphics ("Submissions") for publication in any edition of Imprint, subject to terms and conditions for Submissions, which are available upon request. Imprint does not guarantee that Submissions will be published. Imprint reserves the right to approve and edit any Submissions to be published. A Submission will not be published if it is determined to be libelous or in contravention of Imprint's policies, code of ethics and journalistic standards. Imprint may reproduce content, including Submissions, commercially in any format or medium. Imprint disclaims direct and indirect liability for reliance on or use of its content. Imprint is published every Friday during fall and winter terms, and every second Friday during the spring term. Imprint reserves the right to screen, edit and refuse advertising. One copy per customer. Imprint ISSN 0706-7380. Imprint CDN Pub Mail Product Sales Agreement no. 40065122.

**Next scheduled post-mortem meeting:**  
Virtual due to COVID-19

**Next scheduled board of directors meeting:**  
Virtual due to COVID-19

Imprint acknowledges 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.

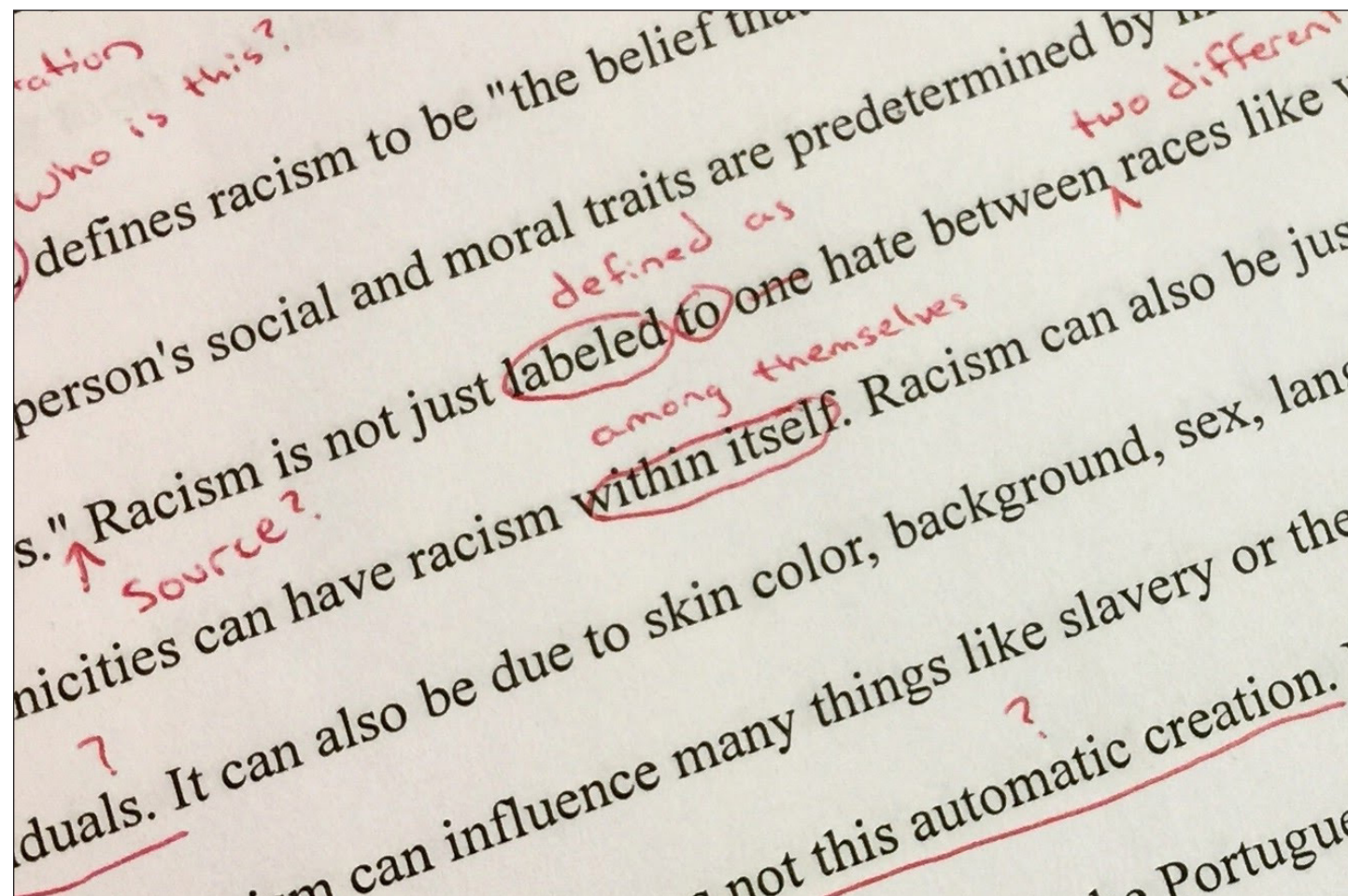


#### HAVE YOUR SAY

Submit your letter to the editor or your community editorial to [managingeditor@uwimprint.ca](mailto:managingeditor@uwimprint.ca).  
Find more opinions at [uwimprint.ca](http://uwimprint.ca)

# opinions

## I'm a TA



The University of Waterloo has a Teaching Assistantship problem: TAs and their labour are not taken seriously. Currently, UW is the only university in Ontario without a union for its graduate student workers.

TAs fill a unique professional position. They are both students and educators. No other academic role falls victim to such unclear power dynamics and work expectations as much as graduate student workers. The problem with this duality can be summarised as follows: if TAs are just students, then TA work should prepare a graduate student for a career in academia. Conversely, if TAs are just workers, then they should have complete access to the benefits of any reasonable job: training, contracts, and transferable skills. Graduate student workers sit at the intersection of these two roles and suffer the worst of both worlds.

There are many issues. First, a lack of training and support undermines how effective TAs are as markers and educators and thus the legitimacy of a university's accreditation. Second, TA work is often integral to graduate student funding, rather than supplemental, meaning students can

be vulnerable to sudden changes in pay, hiring, or responsibilities. Finally, TA work is not fully respected as legitimate work.

We spoke with an international student and PhD Candidate from the faculty of health, who articulated some of these problems:

"To be a Teaching Assistant at UW is often touted as a learning and skill-building experience that will benefit students when they enter a career in [either] academia or industry. Unfortunately, this often does not come to fruition for graduate students. As a TA, we are expected to manage, facilitate, and evaluate undergraduate students as they progress through their degrees. However, the skills needed to do this successfully are not provided to graduate students by UW."

TA work has provided little development of their managerial, leadership or instructional skills. Instead, this student relies on skills developed from years of industry experience.

#### TRAINING

UW inadequately supports TA skill-building. Training is often unpaid, hasty, and poorly scoped. It can range in quality across campus, because individual faculties and departments are made responsible for training.

TA work promises to prepare graduate students for the competitive academic industry, requiring skills in teaching, communication, student mentorship, and course development. However, little ensures that TAs receive proper training and experience. Instead, UW treats TA labour as a way to outsource undergraduate education to "experts-in-training" at a much lower pay grade.

Mandatory TA training at UW only consists of basic safety and accessibility training, workplace violence, and mental health awareness. A student explained to us that the mandatory TA training was unpaid and failed to teach them anything they hadn't already learned outside of the university, except how to handle an undergraduate mental health crisis. This highlights two issues. Graduate student workers are left under-prepared for the TA role, and we are also forced into taking a frontline role in undergraduate student mental health. TAs are gravely unqualified to fill this role. The university has a responsibility to provide adequate mental health resources for students, rather than once again offloading these responsibilities onto their TAs.

While many skill-building workshops are

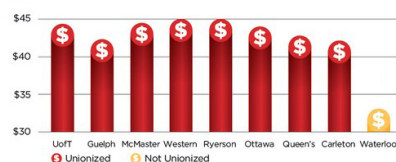
UW INDIGENOUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION





**#DIDYOUKNOW?**

Graduate teaching assistants at almost every Ontario university earn at least \$8 more per hour than TAs do at Waterloo

**#DIDYOUKNOW?**

At \$33.89, UW's rate is the second-lowest hourly rate in the entire province

## so what?

2018 find that nearly three quarters of instructors hold non-tenure track positions. Working as a TA also does little to improve a student's application for positions in academia, since research is disproportionately valued by hiring committees. UW does nothing to educate its incoming students on these facts, nor does it adapt its training and TA experience accordingly.

Students who have no desire to be academics are also poorly served by working as a TA. The economic return for a PhD has decreased. The CCA report found that post-PhD earnings fell across the board over the past 16 years. The report also found that non-academic sectors are not significantly increasing their uptake of PhD graduates. In fact, the per capita number of researchers employed in Canada has been shrinking since 2010. Rather than being sold on the benefits that TA experience provides for future job prospects, it is important that TA work be treated as legitimate in the immediate term — with equitable compensation.

**SO, NOW WHAT?**

TAs deserve to have their labour respected, to have their time and training well compensated and to be prepared with practical experience for the job market—academic or otherwise. Without such support, the undergraduate students and course instructors that rely on TA work will also suffer.

Unionisation is a tried-and-true way to legitimise TAs as workers. As one of our fellow TAs put it, “[I wish they would] stop saying I’m ‘only’ a student who TAs. I’m an employee, and I deserve protection and respect. I deserve a union.”

UW is the last university in Ontario without a TA or RA union. Graduate students saw no change to their financial situation in 2021 in the midst of the pandemic despite UW walking away with a \$117 million in surplus revenue. A union would give graduate students a vehicle to fight for better working conditions, with legally enforceable mechanisms to support and enhance the TA experience to best suit graduate students.

*If you're interested in working to achieve a union for TAs at UW, check out the unionisation efforts of OrganizeUW at [organizeuw.org](http://organizeuw.org).*

**Sophia Sanniti**

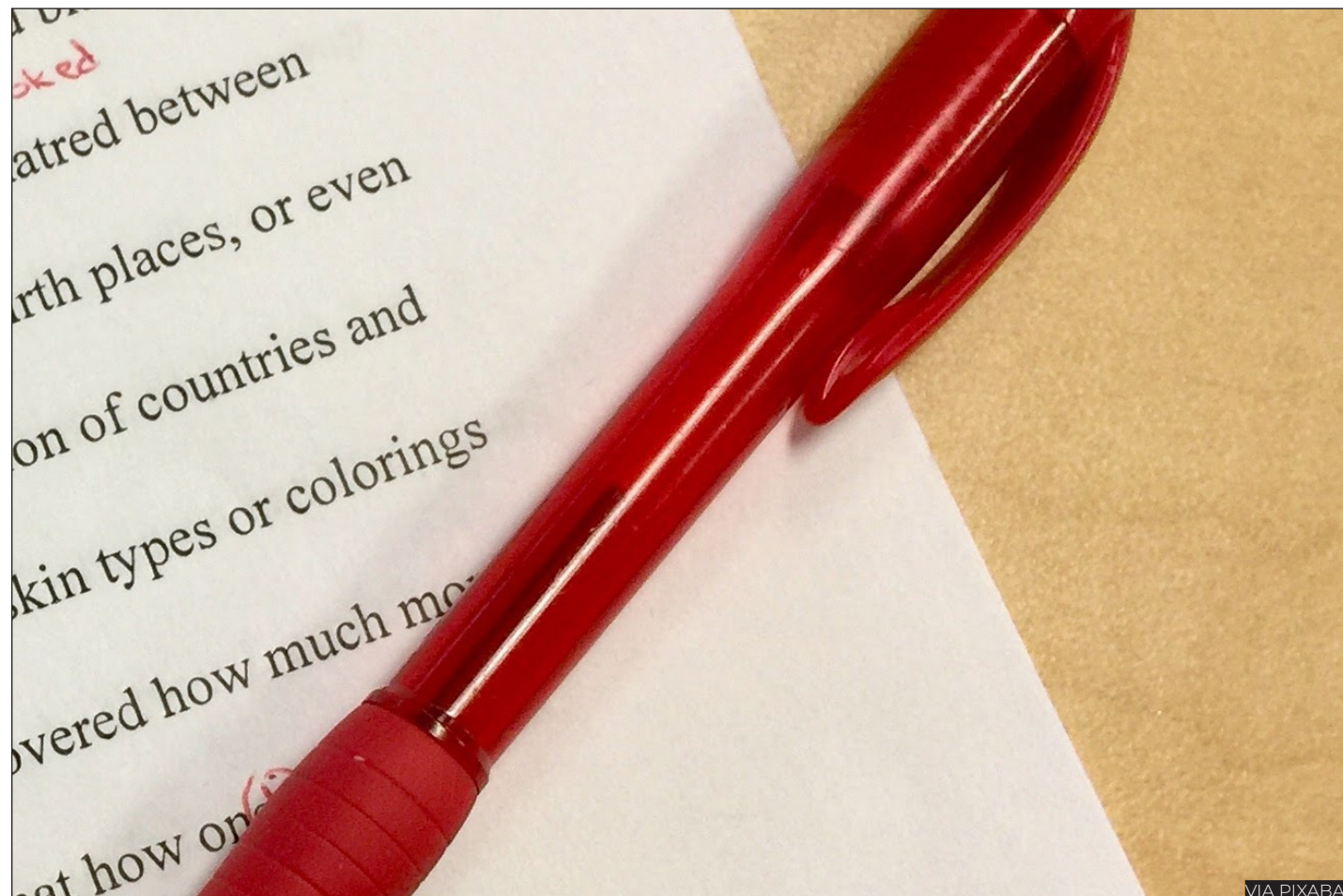
*PhD Candidate, Social & Ecological Sustainability*

**MK Stinson**

*PhD Candidate, Recreation & Leisure Studies*

**Nolan Shaw**

*PhD Candidate, Computer Science*



offered by UW, they are poorly advertised and hosted on a variety of decentralised platforms. For the majority of graduate students, the time to complete these workshops is unpaid. Thus, graduate students are not incentivised to pursue these professional development opportunities, nor are they widely recognised outside of the university itself. Furthermore, the responsibility and time to identify and pursue these opportunities is placed solely on graduate students, as many supervisors do not know they exist – or would prefer their students spend their time doing research.

**CONTRACTS**

Work contracts protect the rights of workers and detail their responsibilities. TAs receive work contracts on an inconsistent basis across campus. Often, the closest thing to a contract is the graduate student admission letter. This letter usually includes some funding information, but does not include the cost of tuition or other administrative fees.

Additionally, the lack of a contract means there is no guarantee what subject – or responsibilities – may be assigned to a graduate student. Graduate students are often

expected to teach undergraduates material they may not even know themselves. This creates an additional unpaid burden to quickly enhance their own understanding of the material to assist the undergrads paying to take the course. Furthermore, this lack of consistency creates a serious disadvantage when it comes time to seek employment, since most TAs will not have a specific area of teaching expertise. Thus, there remains a significant mismatch between work assignment expectations and the career objectives of the graduate student worker.

The lack of contracts also means TAs do not have protected overtime pay. If a course requires more marking than is budgeted, TAs are not paid for this extra time. The only real recourse is refusing to work past your allotted hours, which directly hurts undergrads. This can also cause tenuous relationships within the department and impact a student's future TA assignments or research milestones.

UW is using graduate students as human lubricant between the institutional cogs of undergrad needs and an exploitative administration. Some departments have tried to address this with the TA Hours Allocation Form, intended to facilitate an “open

dialogue” about expectations for the term. However, this form is not a required step in the TA assignment process and is not considered a formal contract between the course instructor and the worker.

**EMPLOYABILITY**

Most graduate students begin their studies to either work in academia or advance their career in industry. Working as a TA provides diminishing benefits to both these ends.

For those who want to work in academia, there simply are not enough positions. The number of people completing PhDs is increasing, while available professorships remain stagnant. A recent report from the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA) estimates that there is one assistant professor position for every five PhD graduates in Canada.

Furthermore, job security is atrocious for those who pursue non-tenure track positions. According to a CBC article from 2021, the number of courses taught by part-time faculty in Ontario has doubled since 2000 and now accounts for about half of the province's university teaching workforce. Estimates in the United States by the American Association of University Professors from

# sports & health



**WRITE FOR SPORTS**  
 Imprint is looking for sports writers! For more information, email [sports@uwimprint.ca](mailto:sports@uwimprint.ca)

## Recipe: Sesame & Spice

By Ingrid Au

We have finally entered a point during summer where a hot bowl of noodle soup simply would not suffice. But this shall not stop us from consuming the strands of deliciousness. This is where our recipe comes in – a cool bowl of noodles filled with flavour in every bite. Sesame & Spice is exactly what it is, a nutty and fatty sauce with a kick of spice from the chili oil and freshness from the vegetables.

Yields: 1 serving of noodles

### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ tbsp of peanut butter
- 1 ½ tbsp of Chinese chili oil
- 1-2 pieces of finely grated garlic
- 1 tbsp of light soy sauce
- 2 tbsp of black vinegar
- 1-2 tbsp of hot water
- Sesame seeds and green onions for garnish
- Cucumber shreds
- Bean sprouts
- A protein of your choice eg: pork, chicken, shrimp, etc.

### Instructions:

- For those who want a trick on grating garlic, dice your garlic into small pieces, sprinkle a

bit of salt, and use the flat side of your knife to scrape and mix the salt and garlic until it becomes a paste.

- Combine the peanut butter, chili oil, grated garlic, light soy sauce and black vinegar in a bowl. Gradually add in hot water until it reaches your desired consistency – I usually go for a semi-thick consistency which takes 1 to 1 ½ tbsp of hot water. Avoid over-thinning the sauce as we want some thickness for the noodles to hold on to.
- Cook the bean sprouts and the noodles of your choice (e.g. flat noodles, egg noodles, udon). Combine everything together and add your sesame seeds, sliced green onions and cucumbers for garnish.

This is my go-to recipe for those hot days when I am craving some noodles. It is satiating and delicious in every way. You can add a protein like shrimp, chicken or pork or more vegetables like carrots, bok choy or radish to increase the nutrient value. If you'd like more of a spice, add in more chili oil. If you desire a nuttier kick, add more peanut butter or sesame seeds. I hope you enjoy it and add as many twists as you like. It's your world, enjoy!



INGRID AU

**imprint**  
**THIS WEEK IN ATHLETICS**  
 GO BLACK GO GOLD  
 WATERLOO WARRIORS  
 GO GOLD GO BLACK



**WARRIOR RECREATION**  
**PERSONAL TRAINING**  
**3/5/10 SESSION PACKAGES AVAILABLE**  
 VISIT [WARRIOR.UWATERLOO.CA](http://WARRIOR.UWATERLOO.CA) TO REGISTER

**WARRIORS INSIDER**



Stay up to date with Warrior Rec programs, events, job opportunities, tips and tricks on how to stay well, facility information and more.

Visit [gowarriorsgo.ca/warriorsinsider](http://gowarriorsgo.ca/warriorsinsider) to sign up for our newsletter.



It's WUSA election time.

# Nominations are **OPEN!**

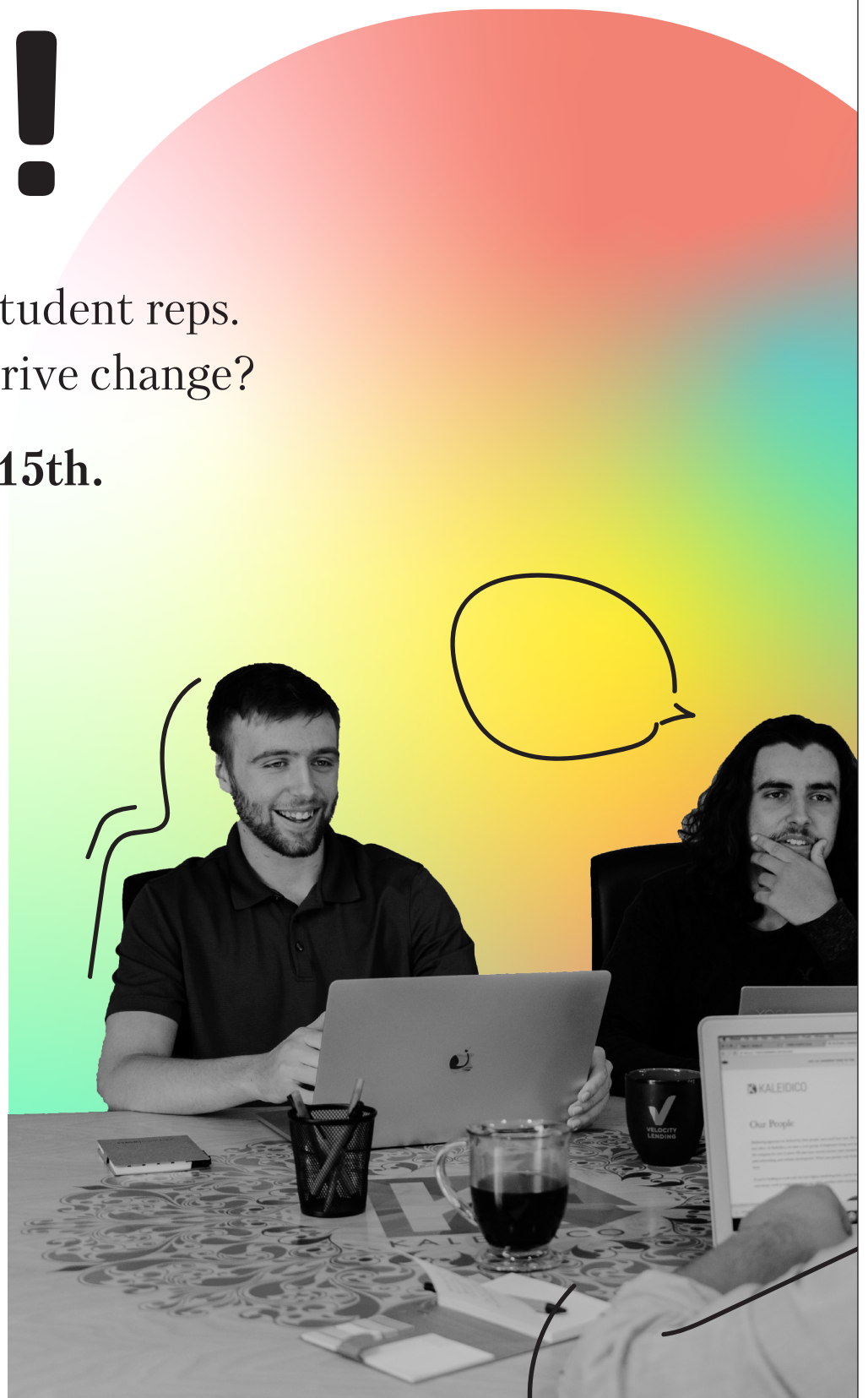
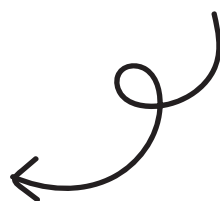
WUSA needs 13 new elected student reps.  
Do you have what it takes to drive change?

**Nomination period ends July 15th.**

Learn how to be nominated, open positions, and important dates here:



[vote.wusa.ca](https://vote.wusa.ca)



# distractions



**Q: HOW DO YOU SECURE YOURSELF A KISS ON CANADA DAY?**

**A: TELL SOMEONE TO PUCK-ER UP!**

## Imprint Crosswords

### Touring Canada



CALVIN LUO

#### Down

#### Across

- 2. Contains the largest lake entirely within Canada
  - 4. Canada's highest mountains are located here
  - 6. Named after Queen Victoria's fourth daughter
  - 8. Accessible polar bears can be found here
  - 10. Key characteristics/features of this province is a lot of flat land and prairies
  - 12. Land mass totals more than three times the area of Canada's Maritime Provinces
- 1. Name originates from the Latin word "New Scotland"
  - 3. Tim Horton's originated here
  - 5. The capital city is Fredericton
  - 7. Biggest territory in Canada
  - 9. Official tree is the Douglas fir
  - 11. Originates and traces back to a French explorer who colonized this region
  - 13. Canada's smallest province

#### LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

T	R	R	S	H	N	A	H	E	U	O	I	E	E	H	R	A	S	V	C	I
Y	Q	A	R	T	S	C	Z	U	Y	I	U	H	D	R	Y	N	V	F	F	B
T	U	S	N	D	A	B	W	A	T	E	R	L	O	O	J	S	M	A	C	Z
A	P	O	S	T	D	O	C	T	O	R	A	T	E	N	Z	X	E	C	M	V
D	F	I	Q	O	E	E	Y	Q	O	W	K	R	V	F	G	F	J	U	A	T
D	S	C	O	S	Y	P	C	H	A	N	C	E	L	L	O	R	S	L	T	W
F	I	O	O	R	N	M	R	V	N	D	G	Q	U	U	O	H	C	T	H	I
O	S	P	E	N	V	I	R	O	N	M	E	N	T	A	S	F	Q	Y	E	E
G	Q	C	M	D	V	S	G	Q	E	T	A	S	C	X	E	V	B	K	M	Q
R	A	D	I	P	L	O	M	A	X	D	L	N	U	M	X	A	U	T	A	R
A	K	A	L	E	A	A	C	P	C	V	N	V	F	D	C	Z	I	G	T	N
D	U	C	F	H	N	S	C	A	M	C	B	D	G	H	U	M	W	V	I	S
U	G	S	D	B	Q	C	B	B	T	X	M	G	E	M	E	U	X	R	C	B
A	F	D	E	G	R	E	E	N	M	I	Y	L	Y	W	N	O	I	H	S	Z
T	S	X	Z	A	N	F	I	O	D	T	O	R	T	Q	C	T	R	E	Q	Y
I	J	R	E	N	G	I	N	E	E	R	I	N	G	C	M	N	E	A	E	U
O	R	H	R	U	E	S	U	Q	Y	U	Q	R	E	Y	S	X	N	L	P	I
N	L	F	T	O	F	O	U	N	D	E	R	G	R	A	D	U	A	T	E	D
D	I	P	A	R	T	Y	W	T	Y	A	T	R	K	A	C	S	Y	H	G	B
A	U	T	I	H	A	D	O	U	O	U	I	E	L	S	B	D				

ANNIE ZHANG

## HAPPY CANADA DAY



## WARRIORS

ANNIE ZHANG