

camosun's student voice since 1990

coronavirus

Camosun cancels in-person classes for rest of semester

GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

In an email sent out at 8:15 pm on Saturday, March 14, Camosun College announced it will be switching to alternative delivery for its classes for the rest of this semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the email, Camosun president Sherri Bell says that this is being done to assist with social distancing on campuses while still ensuring students get their education.

What "alternative delivery" means will vary from class to class and depends on the instructor. The college has given instructors until Friday, March 20 to determine how they will implement alternative delivery, with options such as email, D2L, video streaming, and web conferencing being mentioned in the email, which is also available on Camosun's website.

Switching to alternative delivery will also require instructors reassess the weighting of assignments or exams accordingly.

The alternative delivery will be in effect until April 24, the end of the winter exam period (the date is subject to review).

Instructors will be in contact with students regarding the transition, if they haven't already.

Student services will continue to be open on campus. *Nexus* will continue to publish print issues and post updates at nexusnewspaper.com.

Prior to that announcement, in an email sent out on Friday, March 13, Camosun announced it had introduced new measures in response to the provincial direction concerning COVID-19.

Students are not required to give the college a doctor's note if they are self-isolating due to the coronavirus. They do need to report their absences to their faculty.

The college has suspended all travel-related work trips outside of Canada; this includes travel to the United States.

If students or staff leave Canada for personal reasons, they are being asked to stay away from the college for 14 days upon returning to Canada.

Camosun has now cancelled all gatherings—taking place indoor or outdoor—that would have been larger than 250 people, including events happening on campus put on by organizations other than Camosun.

The college will continue to follow the advice of provincial and regional public health authorities such as Island Health, the provincial health officer, and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

As of press time, the college has no presumed or confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Camosun has created a COVID-19 Response Coordination Team, who are currently meeting daily.

The college advises students to wash their hands often, cover their mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, avoid people who are sick, and stay home if they are sick. Anyone with symptoms (cough, fever, difficulty breathing, aching muscles) who may have been exposed to COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider or 811.

This situation is changing daily; see camosun.ca/covid19 for updated information.

college

Camosun running Certified Medical Laboratory Assistant program without provincial accreditation

ADAM MARSH
STUDENT EDITOR

In September 2019, Camosun students in the Certified Medical Laboratory Assistant (CMLA) program showed up for class, unaware that the program was no longer provincially accredited. When the program was offered through the college's Continuing Education department, it was provincially accredited by the British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science (BCSLS). When the college moved the CMLA program from Continuing Education, changing its curriculum while doing so, the program had to be accredited again.

BCSLS executive director Malcolm Ashford says that his organization first advised Camosun of the consequences of running a CMLA program without BCSLS' provincial accreditation in August 2018—when the college contacted BCSLS saying it wanted to revamp the program—and that the new program wasn't approved because Camosun did not submit it in time.

"We informed Camosun on many occasions [since August 2018] that if you wanted your students to be deemed graduates of a BCSLS-approved program, then you need to have the program approved," says Ashford. "Period."

Ashford says it is very clear in BCSLS policies that programs need to be approved prior to the intake of students, which he says Camosun was made aware of many times.

"That's very clear in our policy documents; we don't approve programs retroactively. There's no such thing as sort of 'approval pending,'" says Ashford.

Camosun sent BCSLS an application for accreditation in late July 2019, according to Ashford. The approval process takes a minimum of two months, says Ashford, which means the earliest Camosun could have been granted approval was late September, but the program had already started by then.

"Both organizations are doing exactly what they believed they were supposed to do," says Camosun vice president of education John Boraas. "We're discovering that there are some communications that we are trying to rectify as we speak."

Boraas says Camosun moved forward with the program because it had "every assurance and every element of certainty" that accreditation would follow, but Ashford says that assurance "couldn't have" come from the BCSLS. (Boraas did

not confirm by press time who this assurance was from.)

Boraas—who oversees and is responsible for all programming at the college—says that deans bring forward all new programs for approval to the college's Education Council. According to Education Council meeting minutes available online, at the November 21, 2018 Education Council meeting, the Integrated Curriculum Committee—an Education Council sub-committee—had consensus to recommend approval of the program.

Boraas says that the college believes "with absolute certainty" that students will leave the program able to find work.

"When you get to a place where there's tension, certainly, part of what a person does is think back through all kinds of different ways that it can be provided and made clear," says Boraas, "but we certainly did go through a process of being sure that students knew that there would be parts of their journey that included accreditation processes."

Ashford, who says he received his first email from a concerned Camosun student on January 26, 2020, says that Camosun was forewarned of the consequences of not running a BCSLS-approved program. (There is no governing body saying Camosun can't run the program without BCSLS approval.)

"Camosun didn't do what they were supposed to do, quite frankly," says Ashford. "They didn't get their program approved... They chose to proceed without our approval at that point, even though they had been forewarned about the consequences of all this."

Ashford says that students currently in the program will be eligible for BCSLS certification by taking an alternative practicum, which he says the BCSLS is "bending over backwards" to do; he says it will not be done again.

"This is a one-time process," he says.

BCSLS charges \$89 for one-time certification; Boraas says the college will not pass this cost on to students.

"Our commitment in this is that there won't be a cost to students," says Boraas. "Our reason for making changes to the program was to serve students better."

According to workbc.ca, all certified medical lab assistants in British Columbia are required to be graduates of a BCSLS-approved

program; the certification that students can receive following completion of BCSLS-approved programs is voluntary on the part of the students.

According to Island Health job postings available online, a "recognized" program is required as part of an applicant's education. A spokesperson for Island Health was unavailable to be interviewed for this story but informed *Nexus* that Island Health is working with Camosun and BCSLS to implement the alternative practicum process, adding that students who successfully complete a practicum would be eligible to apply for appropriate job postings when they graduate.

LifeLabs, a major employer of CMLA graduates, did not respond to interview requests, but some job postings available online also indicate "recognized" programs ("or equivalent related experience") are required as part of an applicant's education.

Two CMLA students, who chose to remain anonymous, say that employers have said nothing to them yet about how this will impact employment, and that they have asked for assurance in writing several times. They say they shouldn't have to be the ones dealing with this stress. One student says they were "livid" and "apoplectic with rage" when they found out that it wasn't BCSLS-approved.

"Not only are we investing money for this, both [the other student] and I, we work 12-hour days seven days a week for this program."

The other student says they felt the same way.

"I felt betrayed," says the student. "I felt enraged. I felt afraid."

Boraas says Camosun is working to fix the situation.

"It's not uncommon when major programming changes are made that there are things to be fixed as we move through," says Boraas, "and we will fix them."

The student who says they were livid says that what Camosun is doing now doesn't change what's already happened.

"They are making many changes," says the student, "but that doesn't mitigate the damage that's already done."

Ashford confirmed to *Nexus* that BCSLS received a proposal from Camosun in early March 2020 for accreditation of the program for when the next cohort starts in September 2020.

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Camosun student balances studying with pro-cyclist duties page 4

A look at what's happening in Victoria's cosplay scene page 6

Victoria Beer Week: Nexus goes, Nexus drinks, Nexus writes about it page 9

NEXUS

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SEND A LETTER
 Nexus prints letters to the editor. Nexus reserves the right to refuse publication of letters. Letters must include full name and student number if a Camosun student (not printed). Nexus accepts all letters by email to editor@nexusnewspaper.com. We reserve the right to edit all letters.

OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "They said to me, 'You look like you know a lot about demons.'"

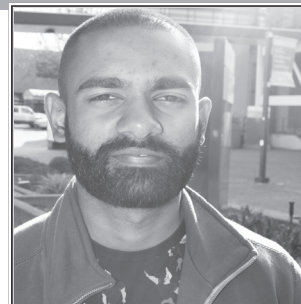
SPEAK UP | If you had to cosplay one character, who would it be and why?



CULLEN REILLY
 "Scott Pilgrim, so I don't have to dress up as much. Not really into the whole dressing-up thing."



MICHELLE BARRINGTON
 "In the past I've done Barbara Maitland from Beetlejuice—the scene where she stretches her face out. I'd probably go with that one again."



EDWIN ZATCHARIA
 "I'd be Deadpool. He's really cool. He has lots of skills, as well as he's that funny guy."



VICTORIA GRANDFIELD
 "I'm gonna go with Leeloo from *The Fifth Element*. She's a real bad-ass, and it's a costume that you wouldn't usually be able to get away with on Halloween, but you can put so much effort into [it] for a cosplay and people would respect it."



JULIAN LOPEZ-SAINZ
 "A Pokémon, because it would be a big costume, rather than just a simple outfit. I'm not necessarily a well-built person, so something that's very bulky."



ELY CERNY
 "Storm. She's strong, powerful—a good role model."

BY ADAM MARSH

student editor's letter Coping with COVID-19 hysteria

I was supposed to go to Italy in May. I'm not going now, for obvious reasons.

It's been about three months since the novel coronavirus became common knowledge for most people. People are panicking, and it makes sense: as of press time, the mortality rate is still rising and the virus is spreading very fast. But it brings up questions around the motives and underlying realities behind the hysteria surrounding the virus.

The modern world, even moreso than western medicine, just can't stand not having an answer for what a disease is and an immediate cure or treatment for it.

I'm not saying people's gravestones need to have a list of four possibilities, but what's unfortunate is not the cliché answer of vaccines being able to solve everything (which I hate: they don't save lives, but how they're used, and by whom, sometimes can), but how unwilling the population—growing by about 81 million people per year—is to admit that we're disposable.

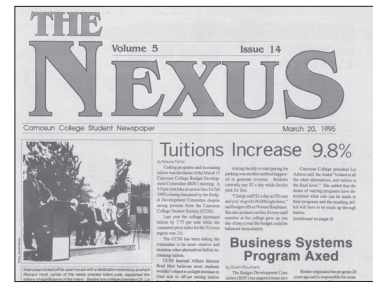
Of course disease is a killer. What's most unprecedented about this one in particular is not the virus itself, but the social circumstances surrounding it. I'm not saying this from a place of cynicism, nihilism, or being a downer; the videos of people panicking in stores say it all. It's 2020 in the fast lane.

Everyone needs to be safe, be careful, and take lots of precautions. Everyone also needs to stay calm. Don't buy up all the hygiene products; people who can't afford to stockpile should be able to buy them as well. Don't forget basic human decency. Help each other out, and we'll get through this.

But even if things get really ugly, looks like you're all pretty well prepared. After all, toilet paper has been known to save you life.

Adam Marsh, student editor
adam@nexusnewspaper.com

flashback 25 Years Ago in Nexus



GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

Now there's a quote: The story "Concerns raised over hiring of security manager" in our March 20, 1995 issue talked about concerns the Camosun College Student Society had over the role of the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) in monitoring student groups in post-secondary institutions across Canada; the college's new security manager at the time was Carter MacDonald (who would go on to have a lengthy career as the college ombudsman and just recently retired). MacDonald, who was with CSIS for 10 years, tried to put any fears that students had about ex-CSIS working at the college at rest: "I'm not a spy," he said, and even though we

interviewed him many more times over the years, his quotes never got as good as that one.

Creative thinking: The story "Tuition increase 9.8%" talked about how Camosun was considering a near-10-percent tuition fee raise. Budget officer Norene Bradshaw said that if every college staff member gave up one day of pay per year the budget could be balanced immediately, and the fee-raise avoided. I'm thinking we don't need to read the follow-up story to know that that didn't happen.

What a circus: Our *Shit Happens* column, written by Brett Gossman, was a classic slice of *Nexus* history due to Gossman's ongoing comments directed toward a certain Sunday-funny-pages institution. In this particular issue, Gossman was talking about ways to unwind. "The only thing you can do is take pleasure in the simple things in life," he wrote this issue. "Personally, I like to sit back and imagine my hands around the throat of Bil Keane (for those of you who don't know, he is the creator of the *Family Circus* comic strip), but to each their own."

open space Key to battling coronavirus is community

SAMARA OSCROFT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

COVID-19 anxiety is ubiquitous. Camosun College recently released a statement informing students that in-person classes have been cancelled for the rest of the semester (see page 1). The University of Victoria also cancelled classes. Glenlyon Norfolk has, as well, closed early as a precautionary measure.

This virus is dominating the news and our minds. But I think much of these fears are misplaced.

I don't wish to tell people they're wrong for addressing this issue pragmatically. Nor do I wish to dismiss the significant implications coronavirus presents for many in our community.

What I would like to do is draw attention to the very real effects an outbreak might have on our healthcare system. Let's talk about the people who are hoarding toilet paper yet are barely washing their hands. Think of the wildly individualistic ways people have been responding to this news.

A chemical and biomolecular engineer recently posted a thread on Twitter. She broke down the ways that viruses spread and how that might impact healthcare delivery.

She explained that viruses spread exponentially—especially the ones we might be able to carry without symptoms, or with less severe symptoms.

We have three acute-care hospitals in the Victoria area, with fewer than 1,000 beds total. There are approximately 367,770 people living in Greater Victoria, meaning there are approximately 2.4 beds for every 1,000 people.

This is comparable to the numbers that the engineer calculated for the United States. With about 10 percent of cases requiring hospitalization, it's estimated that the US could run out of hospital beds very early May.

However, we are not the United

States. We have access to healthcare, meaning people are more likely to treat their symptoms. We are preparing—Camosun has waived the requirement for doctor's notes for students and employees who are self-isolating, and it seems that schools are bracing to close. People are being cautious.

The nature of a lot of that caution, though, has been unreasonable and panic-driven. The reckless hoarding of toilet paper and hand sanitizer by those who can afford it, the obsession with masks despite the nature of the pathogen, the jaw-dropping racism I've been seeing online—these are symptoms of a culture that has become so self-interested it can no longer see the value in addressing this issue collectively.

Handwashing for more than 20 seconds (try the chorus to "Land-slide") is the most effective way to prevent transmission. And if you're so worried about quarantine, get a bidet attachment for your toilet! You'll spend the same amount as your stockpile, and, bonus—you'll have a cleaner butt.

Most facemasks aren't effective at preventing viral transmission. Viruses are far smaller than the particles they're designed for. Surgical masks can help you keep your germs to yourself, but best to just stay home.

Viruses are indiscriminate. Racism is garbage and so are people who think Asian people are more likely to have COVID-19.

While we have been, so far, lucky here on the island, with a low rate of infection and high degree of precaution from the institutions that serve us, it's important we realize that we must be in this together. Humans are inventive, resourceful, and resilient. As with every other outbreak of the last 20-plus years, we will eventually mitigate the risks and figure out how to keep people safe.

We can't do that alone.

Something on your mind? If you're a Camosun student, send *Open Space* submissions (up to 500 words) to editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

corrections

In "Provincial government announces new student grants" (March 4, 2020 issue), we had an incorrect breakdown of the grant money for full-time students in programs over two years, full-time students in programs under two years, and part-time students. The story has been corrected online. We apologize for the mistake.

sports

Chargers basketball teams wind down 2019-20 season

"It was a great season, and no matter what the outcome was, the team itself was just a great group of girls and we had a special bond."

SIERRA REISIG
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT



ALLAN SHOOK/CAMOSUN COLLEGE A/V SERVICES

The Camosun Chargers women's basketball team played their final game of the season recently.

Team All-Star this year and was one of the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA)'s players of the week. Maharaj says that the men's team stayed positive and driven throughout the season.

"We went in with a game plan, and we just stuck to it—whatever happens happens. We just said to the guys, leave it all out on the floor, this is our opportunity to go to nationals, so we just kind of gave it everything we had," he says.

"I thought the guys played with a lot of heart, and we didn't really give up, we just kept fighting, and I think that same kind of desire and heart that we showed in the semi-final carried over into the bronze medal game."

On the women's team, Thiessen

position and thinks he fits in well with the team.

"The system that was already in place has such an awesome group of young ladies," he says. "Even though I came in late, I was very fortunate to have an excellent group."

Reisig says that despite not knowing anyone, Thiessen created a strong environment and developed a play style that accentuated the team's strengths.

"He created a new culture and environment, and I thought he really benefited our team," she says. "And he cares a lot, which means a lot."

Working alongside Thiessen is men's team head coach Scot Cuachon, who feels that his athletes gave strong performances.

"We were on a five- or six-game winning streak to start the second semester, which always feels good," he says. "I thought the sustained effort and execution of the entire group through that run was quite exciting, and quite fun to be a part of."

Cuachon says some of the athletes who performed particularly well included forward Shaquille Maharaj, guard Takeshi Croke, and forward Atlas St. Paul-Butler. He says he appreciated working with the team.

"It was really just an enjoyable group of people to be around; it was a personal highlight to me, to be honest," he says.

Maharaj was selected as a 1st

produce musical performances. The first round of the series will begin on May 23. Applications are due by March 30 at 11 pm. Visit victoria.ca/openingact for more information.

CESAR and CFS intervene in Ryerson University conflict

On Sunday, January 24, Ryerson University terminated its 1986 Operating Agreement with the Ryerson Students' Union (RSU) following allegations of financial misconduct by members of the 2018-2019 RSU Executive. On Tuesday, March 2, the Continuing Education Students' Association of Ryerson (CESAR) and the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) initiated legal proceedings to intervene in the conflict between the two parties.

-LANE CHEVRIER

NEWS BRIEFS

College will accommodate students who stay home because of coronavirus

Responding to the continued spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, Camosun College urges students returning from Iran and China to stay home for 14 days upon returning to Canada. Newly arriving international students from these areas should arrive at least 14 days prior to the start of their program so they can stay at home for that two-week period. The college said in a recent email to students that students needing to stay home due to coronavirus concerns will be accommodated with changes to their exam and assignment schedule, if necessary. On a March 10 update on its website, the college said that effective immediately it is waiving the requirement for a doctor's note for students and employees who are

Saanich launches financial plan draft

On Saturday, February 27, Saanich launched the draft for its 2020-2024 Financial Plan. Alongside this, the public can also access a new online budget education tool, enabling citizens to keep up to date and involved with the new plan, which includes the annual budgets for Saanich, Saanich Police, and the Greater Victoria Public Library system. Budget meetings are open to the public to share their feedback with the council, in person, or via email. The tool and other related resources are available at saanich.ca/budget until April 3.

Victoria approves new housing proposal

On Saturday, February 27, Victoria council approved a plan to

build 580 new homes in Victoria. 369 of these will be in Vic West's Docks Green community, and the remaining 211 will be on Cook Street between Yates and Johnson. Some of these buildings are designated as below-market-cost housing with specific spaces for childcare. Three more projects have also been proposed and are open for public input—these projects will increase the number of homes in James Bay, Burnside-Gorge, and Fairfield.

Victoria community-building grants available

The City of Victoria has recently launched its My Great Neighbourhood program. The program avails \$136,955 in non-repayable grants to support community-building initiatives. Funding is available to individuals and community groups, with some restrictions. Application deadline is April 15. Visit victoria.ca/neighbourhoodgrants for more details.

New Victoria music survey open

A public survey that assesses the economic and social impacts of Victoria's music scene has been launched. The results will be used to develop the newest iteration of the Victoria Music Strategy, which aims to increase the presence of music in the public culture of Victoria. The survey is aimed at musicians, industry professionals, and music lovers; it can be found at bit.ly/victoria-music-survey until April 13.

Youth music production workshops upcoming

Submissions are open for youth aged 14-24 living in the Capital Regional District to be involved in a new series of workshops hosted by Victoria musician and songwriter—and member of The New Pornographers—Kathryn Calder. The program, called Opening Act, teaches youth how to compose and

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sports Camosun student manages her time as a professional cyclist

“The community in Victoria has been awesome—they’ve provided advice and mentorship; it’s really a good community to be involved with.”

CALLIE SWAN
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun Sports Management student Callie Swan is also a professional cyclist.

EMILY WELCH
STAFF WRITER

Third-year Camosun Sports Management student Callie Swan recently signed a deal with Macogep Tornatech Girodins de Bordeaux, an all-women pro cycling team from Quebec. Swan is living and training in Tucson, Arizona, while taking her Camosun classes online.

“Last year I applied to the team I am on, and they accepted,” says Swan. “Camosun had revamped their bachelor of Sport Management program. The first year of the new ministry-approved program, it is a lot more business oriented, which is why I am able to do my schooling online and still cycle.”

Swan is able to continue her studies online while she runs a diligent training program.

“I cycle, train every day. I train in the mornings; I am usually done by 1 or 2,” she says. “I just break up my day with training, school, and then recovery. It makes it very easy with exams or quizzes and

assignments. I did some exams last year in the [Pima Community College] in Tucson—Camosun just sent them my material and I did the exam here. They make it very easy, straightforward, and they are very accommodating.”

Swan has to balance her schooling with her cycling, which often means travel. She just returned back to Tucson after a trip to Dubai last year, where she was racing.

“Last year I was in Dubai; it was an exhibition of the Dubai women’s tour,” says Swan. “They did a UCI 2.2 four-stage race that my team was invited to. It was only the continental teams—we came in fifth overall. It was a really awesome experience.”

Swan has been travelling and racing for a year, and although she appreciates the opportunities the experience has given her, she’s still excited to eventually get to where she can enjoy schooling with other people.

“I’ve been away for almost a

year,” she says. “My family has been very supportive right from the beginning. They try to get me to adapt as quickly as possible in this brand-new sport that I have never done before. The community in Victoria has been awesome—they’ve provided advice and mentorship; it’s really a good community to be involved with.”

Swan says that she wasn’t sure she could be a college student and a pro cyclist travelling the world, but the college has been helping every step of the way.

“Camosun has been very open to this... The professors, they’ve all been so supportive,” she says. “It’s been a school that I’ve been very happy with. Every day I’m

really excited. With a lot of these races, I’m still kind of new, I hadn’t done them before, so it’s already very exciting. It will definitely be a learning experience, but that’s what this whole year has been about. The whole year, it’s just about learning and experiencing and getting the most out of everything that I can. I’m just seeing what happens.”

know your profs

Camosun Indigenous Studies instructor Hjalmer Wenstob gets creative

EMILY WELCH
STAFF WRITER

Know Your Profs is an ongoing series of profiles on the instructors at Camosun College. Every issue we ask a different instructor at Camosun the same 10 questions in an attempt to get to know them a little better.

Do you have an instructor that you want to see interviewed in the paper? Maybe you want to know more about one of your teachers, but you’re too busy, or shy, to ask? Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com and we’ll add your instructor to our never-ending list of teachers to talk to.

This issue we talked to Indigenous Studies instructor Hjalmer Wenstob about the importance of creativity, five-hour drives, and the risky business of wearing your heart on your sleeve.

1. What do you teach and how long have you been at Camosun?

I began teaching at Camosun in September 2018. I first started teaching in Arts and Science, for the Indigenous arts course, and in January 2019 began teaching in the Indigenous Studies program [IST].

2. What do you personally get out of teaching?

I love teaching. Education, in its many forms, has always been



EMILY WELCH/NEXUS

Camosun College Indigenous Studies instructor Hjalmer Wenstob.

important to me. I love working with such amazing students from so many diverse and unique backgrounds all coming together to learn and grow.

3. What’s one thing you wish your students knew about you?

Outside of teaching, my biggest passion is art. I actually run an art gallery in Ucluelet with my family,

and was one of the [Hnatyshyn Foundation’s] 2018 emerging artists of Canada, alongside Camosun alumnus Audie Maury.

4. What is one thing you wish they didn’t know about you?

I think I wear my heart out on my sleeve—I’d say that there isn’t much that my students don’t know about me.

5. What’s the best thing that’s ever happened to you as a teacher here?

While teaching in the Indigenous Studies program, my students and I spent a semester carving a traditional Nuu-chah-nulth log drum, which we gifted to the college. The following year another one of my classes hosted a beautiful event and feast where we unveiled

the drum and honoured a late student from the IST cohort. Both of these were really student-led and an honour to be involved in.

6. What’s the worst thing that’s ever happened to you as a teacher here?

I have been blessed with two amazing years. While at Camosun, I really don’t have any complaints... except for the five-hour drive to get down, since I live close to Tofino.

7. What do you see in the future of post-secondary education?

I see the definitions of formal education transforming. Being able to teach in a balance of hands-on experiential learning and the traditional Western Europe style creates a whole new world of education.

8. What do you do to relax on the weekends?

I spend time making art and hanging out with my two beautiful children.

9. What’s your favourite meal?

I guess roast beef with Yorkshire puddings. This is one of the harder questions [laughs].

10. What is your biggest pet peeve?

When my kid brother says “kiddo.”

sports Chargers alumni create community through basketball

“There is such a wide variety of ages at these clinics, so we try to make it really fun and inviting, really inclusive.”

ASHLEY MCGINNIS
CAMOSUN COLLEGE ALUMNUS

EMILY WELCH
STAFF WRITER

Two Camosun alumni are really taking to heart the meaning of paying it forward. After Jade Montgomery-Waardenburg and Ashley McGinnis graduated from Camosun’s Early Childhood Education and Community, Family and Child Studies programs, respectively, and hung up their Camosun Chargers women’s basketball uniforms, they were sponsored by the Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity & Recreation Council (ISPARC), an organization that promotes active and healthy lifestyle choices for Indigenous people. Montgomery and McGinnis have been running basketball clinics in schools in rural BC towns; they are currently in Oliver.

“Well, Jade and I were two interior people who were able to run the clinic,” says McGinnis. “We were able to help out, and it is definitely beneficial to run the clinics. Now, we are just getting into coaching.”

Both Montgomery and McGinnis were new to coaching, and they took the training course for coaching together.

“I have wanted for a long time to give back to my community,” says Montgomery. “I know how important my coaches are to me, giving up their time and wanting the best for us, seeing potential in us, helping grow our confidence as Indigenous people, just trying new things. I really want to implement that sort of thing on other kids in my community. This camp was really important for that.”

The basketball clinics received very positive responses from the community.

“We just ended up going with it and it turned out to be really positive for the youth. They really ended up enjoying it,” says McGinnis. “I had a little girl come up to me and say, ‘I don’t really like basketball but I had so much fun!’ That was a really good time for us as coaches.”

One thing that both women are

adamant about is the importance of learning how to play basketball for fun.

“There is such a wide variety of ages at these clinics, so we try to make it really fun and inviting, really inclusive,” says McGinnis.

Montgomery says that creating fun in sports is important.

“Less of that stigmatism of ‘winning is everything,’” she says. “In my course, we learned that 70 percent of kids age 13 drop out of sports because they are not having fun or there was too much pressure. I found that just crazy. It was really eye-opening, for sure. I really try to make it my goal to make some kids laugh, make some kids have fun.”

For the two Camosun grads, coaching basketball has been a way to promote a healthy lifestyle, to get to know more people, and to bring communities together.

“A lot of Indigenous kids grow up in trauma and hardships, and basketball—or, actually, all sports—have been a huge outlet for kids,” says Montgomery. “A lot of kids get their self-esteem, their self-confidence, from just getting out there. I think it is important for our nations to get together and meet each other, and make those connections—find those people that we can relate to.”

McGinnis says it can be hard for Indigenous students to go to clinics in the city, so it might help to see Indigenous people running the clinics.

“It’s more familiar for them to see someone like me and Jade running it,” she says. “It is just that commonality, you know?”



CAMOSUN CHARGERS ATHLETICS

Camosun alumna Ashley McGinnis is promoting health through sport.

Montgomery and McGinnis found that basketball coaching brought positivity and promise to the communities that they played in, and also to each other.

“I think Ashley and I are like yin

and yang when it comes to coaching,” says Montgomery. “She definitely steps up when it is the older kids; I do with the younger kids. We just bring that balance, you know, together, and with each other.”

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Character development

A look inside Victoria's cosplay culture

Story by Jéssica Navarro, features writer



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun College student Richelle Clapp.

Taking inspiration from comic books, movies, TV shows, novels, and video games, fans of pop culture worldwide share a passion for dressing up as their favourite characters—a passion for cosplaying. And the passion is alive and well here in Victoria.

It's exciting for those who go ahead with the thrill of dressing up in cosplay gear and for those who attend conventions in their regular daily attire to see the costumes and perhaps pose for a photo beside the cosplayers who bring characters to life.

The first comic convention was held in New York in 1964, gathering a community of comic enthusiasts. The phenomenon grew immensely throughout the decades to include a wide range of art genres and formats, and comic cons are now held in various cities around the globe.

In Victoria, this year's Capital City Comic Con was going to be held from March 20 to 22 at the Victoria Conference Centre; just before this issue went to press, the organizers announced it has been postponed due to the coronavirus. One of the event partners, Candice Woodward, has been working hard with the team of organizers to get everything ready. Woodward's passion for pop culture and her personal involvement with everything that gets featured in an event such as Comic Con comes from her childhood, when toys and cartoons were really a big part of her life. Woodward delights in seeing the colourfulness of the convention with so many people dressing up.

"People are so creative; it amazes me when I see everybody's outfits and they're having a good time," says Woodward. "That puts a big smile on my face."

First-year Camosun Business student Richelle Clapp is passionate about cosplay and costume-making. It was only a couple of years ago that Clapp dressed up for the first time at Tsukino-Con at UVic. But before that, and for about eight years now, Clapp has been cosplaying her original characters inspired by her experience at an electronic music festival.

"I went to Shambhala and that was my first big exposure to steampunk and seeing people dressed up in those sort of costumes, and I just fell in love with the freedom that it had," says Clapp. "Because steampunk is kind of this creation... It has a few guidelines but it's pretty open to your own interpretation."

When at events, Clapp enjoys both cosplaying and appreciating what others are dressing up as.

"That's one thing I love taking pictures of, is everybody's creativity," says Clapp. "Most people make their own costumes, which to me as an artist makes it 100 times better, just to see what people create and come up with."

Cosplayers come from all walks of life: for example, there's early childhood educator and photographer Maddy Scott, who lives in Courtenay. When friends introduced Scott to cosplay culture in 2014, she found it an incredible match with the cartoons and animations she already enjoyed, as well as a great match with her love for dressing up.

"It was an experience like no other," says Scott. "I was brought into an environment where I was immediately accepted for the things that I liked."

Cosplayers inevitably have attention put on themselves when they dress up. With that in mind, Woodward understands that some people don't want to be in the spotlight but can still admire the culture and participate in events.

"I find that a lot of people love to even see people in cosplay," says Woodward. "Even if they don't dress up themselves, they like to come and check out all of everybody else's costumes."

Clapp acknowledges that a lot of people may not go to conventions because they get scared by the thought that they're expected to dress up, but she supports the idea of going just to see the costumes. For Clapp, cosplay has a certain freeing element to it.

"For me, it's bringing characters to life, like people's favourite characters

"For me, it's bringing characters to life, like people's favourite characters from comics or movies or animes. They get to embody them for a day and take on these different characteristics, and there's a freedom in that. Maybe the character you chose is someone that you aspire to be more like and that helps you kind of break out of your shell."

RICHELLE CLAPP
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

from comics or movies or animes," says Clapp. "They get to embody them for a day and take on these different characteristics, and there's a freedom in that. Maybe the character you chose is someone that you aspire to be more like and that helps you kind of break out of your shell."

In this sense, Woodward points out that cosplay culture doesn't need to be intimidating.

"You can still dress up with something that is homemade, something that is bought in a store; you can absolutely put hours and hours and hours of effort into it, as well," says Woodward. "So it's a little bit of something for everyone."

Scott says it feels good as a cosplayer to have people asking to take pictures of the costumes; she says that even for people who aren't sure if they want to dress up themselves, it's a welcoming community.

"My best friend, she doesn't cosplay, she doesn't dress up, but she comes with me to conventions, she follows me around," says Scott. "And sometimes having that one friend in a group who isn't dressed up, they're incredibly helpful as far as, 'Oh, I'll hold your guys' bags,' or, 'Here, I'll grab that shot.'"

Support and appreciation for one another are two aspects that have led Scott to perceive the cosplay community as a safe space to be.

"A lot of the time in day-to-day life people are, I'm gonna say, shamed for some of their likes—'Oh, you're watching a children's show; you're watching a cartoon.' But within the cosplay community there's so much more love and acceptance, I find," says Scott.

That's also how Woodward describes her memories of when, years ago, she went all the way to Salt Lake City for the FanX convention.

"I think it was my first convention, and I loved the culture and the community," says Woodward. "It's just such a wonderfully supportive and creative community."

Once Clapp had attended both Shambhala and Tsukino-Con, she noticed a lot of similarities between the two kinds of events.

"Music festivals and conventions give people the chance to be their true selves—they are not worried about being judged or laughed at," says Clapp. "You can just be who you wanna be and I think it's very freeing, and everybody, at both events, they are so happy, and they are just ready to meet new people and have an amazing experience."



PHOTO PROVIDED

A creation from Richelle Clapp's Raygun Designs.

In terms of costume making, Scott says it may require hours of work to get a costume ready.

"I will sew things, but I will also [use] thrift store items," says Scott. "So I will scavenge their stores to find items that are similar enough

to what I'm looking for, and then with my sewing skills I will alter them to fit my needs."

For Clapp, making costumes and props also involves a sustainable approach that has actually got her father to pay attention to her art.

"He thinks it's super cool. I use a lot of recycled material, so he got to see the beginning stages, where it just looks like a pile of junk that I found off the street," says Clapp. "But then when you put it all together and do the paint and the details, it turns into this really interesting piece, so it's cool to see the process."

Scott—who has a separate closet at home where she keeps all her costumes—sometimes benefits from an alternative to sewing and thrift shopping.

"Some of my costumes are second-hand from other cosplayers where they were no longer in use for that costume and I was someone who wanted it," says Scott. "So you can sell them off to other cosplayers, or I'll lend things out to friends, and there's a huge sharing and supporting community amongst cosplayers for the costumes."

Clapp says that one of the best costumes she's ever seen was that of an outer-worldly creature crawling around with long legs; it was a young boy who was wearing it, and he had made the costume together with his family. Clapp can relate to this, as she has worked on a couple of costumes with her dad.

"We built a treehouse together, so he always loved building things and creating things, so I guess that bridged the gap and we could both work on it together and share our skills that we have," says Clapp. "And he's always been into sci-fi and that kind of thing, so it definitely appeals to him in that sense."

Scott—who says that cosplay is a hobby that "requires a lot of skills and takes up your world"—admits that cosplay was a strange thing to introduce to her family, and she laughs at a memory of how her mom looked at her when picking her up from a convention for the first time.

"A lot of the time in day-to-day life people are, I'm gonna say, shamed for some of their likes—'Oh, you're watching a children's show; you're watching a cartoon.' But within the cosplay community there's so much more love and acceptance, I find."

MADDY SCOTT
COSPLAYER

"There's definitely some people that don't understand it," says Scott, "but now my family is quite accepting of it, and very excited, like, 'Oh, you're gonna show me what you wore this weekend,' and then, 'Oh, what are you making? What are you working on?'"

There are often attendees spanning different generations at conventions; Woodward says that a family focus is very important at Capital City Comic Con.

"I think people are creative at any age and love to show their creativity," says Woodward. "And then it's really fun to see the families too, and when they do a group cosplay it's really fun."

Scott says that different generations of TV shows help attract cosplayers of all ages, giving the example of *Doctor Who*. She says that parents with young kids sometimes dress up together, even as characters that have kids.

"At Tsukino-Con there was a group of elderly—I wanna say 50 years plus—all dressed up as *Harry Potter* professors, Hogwarts professors, from the movies," says Scott. "And it was beautiful to see because cosplay is not for one specific person, it is for all ages, all genders, and all skin colours. There is no restriction as in, 'If you don't look like the character you can't be the character.'"

People dress up as a wide range of characters, and that can result in a lot of different situations. Woodward is appreciative of the various interactions that cosplay can foster.

"I think it's really neat when you see someone and you're like, 'Hey, what is your costume?' and they're like, 'Oh, that's from a series that was done in, you know, years ago,' that you wouldn't have heard of, and then maybe you become interested in that comic series as well, which is really neat."

Scott agrees that the interactions that cosplayers have around their costumes allow people to share their favourite series and learn from one another.

"Sometimes you really like somebody's costume and you'll say, 'Oh my goodness, where is this from?' Then from there you'll be like, 'Oh, it's from *Lord of the Rings*;' 'Okay, cool, what is it about?' and you find new things to get into, a new guide," says Scott. "You can share interests of shows or movies with people and kind of grow your knowledge of, oh, the nerdy world, so to say."

The excitement of seeing cosplayers is shared by novices and veterans, but Scott highlights the need for understanding about consent, especially amongst those taking the first steps into cosplay culture and conventions.

"Cosplay is not consent. People have to definitely check in and [ask], 'Hey, can I hug you? I love your character, may I take a photo of you?' And that's a huge thing that my specific cosplay family is working on getting in



ADDI DAVIS

Courtenay-based cosplayer Maddy Scott.

the environment, that you have to have that connection of yes-or-no-answer questions before anything further," says Scott.

An unfortunate experience for Scott at one convention was when a male photographer at Tsukino-Con was asking especially young females to pose in sexual manners; that was when the importance of consent with cosplayers was brought to Scott's attention even more prominently.

"We got in over 35 different complaints from young girls saying that he touched them inappropriately or separated them from their groups," says Scott. "And so he was actually now banned from [Tsukino-Con], and it's horrifying the things that I've heard through that and keeping the cosplay community safe."

Clapp says that cosplaying has always been a positive experience but, on the negative side, she recalls a bad approach of someone who once interviewed her for a local newspaper at a convention.

"They were just very strange questions—he asked me if I turned to cosplay because I had had a bad childhood," says Clapp. "Or a lot of them seemed targeted to paint cosplayers like a sad, broken group of people trying to escape reality, which I think is quite the opposite of what it is."

Despite some negative media coverage, Clapp believes that the way cosplay culture is portrayed is changing as more people try it. "I think it's definitely becoming more and more popular, and things that may have seemed nerdy or uncool in the past have now got this, like, second wind, like, 'Oh, they're actually extremely fun and freeing and awesome,'" says Clapp. "So I think people are losing the stigmas that a lot of these things have."

"I find that a lot of people love to even see people in cosplay. Even if they don't dress up themselves, they like to come and check out all of everybody else's costumes."

CANDICE WOODWARD
CAPITAL CITY COMIC CON

Clapp believes that social media has a huge impact on cosplay culture and says that a lot of her favourite people to follow online are cosplayers, including some who post tutorials to show how much work actually goes into a costume.

"I follow some people that make a full suit of armour of foam and plastic and they use unsuspecting materials that get turned into, you know, movie-quality pieces, which is very cool to me," says Clapp. "And I think it helps it gain popularity and gain momentum—it makes it more mainstream."

Woodward agrees that social media helps cosplay culture to grow. "I find that Instagram is really popular with cosplayers; you can really take some beautiful photos," says Woodward. "There's people that edit special effects into their photos and make them look amazing, and all those get shared and then everyone gets following, really."

Scott's online presence comes from her belief that social media is one of the main outlets of cosplay culture.

"We don't always get to go to conventions and some people can't afford them because they're halfway across the States and X amount of dollars in plane tickets," says Scott. "So social media is incredibly positive as far as sharing our experience as cosplayers."

Clapp has been going to a lot of conventions lately; she was pleasantly surprised to find out that there were multiple conventions nearby.

"I guess I just didn't look into [conventions]. I dressed up a lot at different music events that I would go to, so I was cosplaying a lot," says Clapp. "But, yeah, I think it was a friend of mine that said, you know, they were baffled that I had never been to a convention yet."

The hustle of getting off the island to attend this kind of convention elsewhere is something that motivated organizers to hold Capital City Comic Con in Victoria, but Woodward explains that the reasons go far beyond practicality.

"I think one of the reasons would be we have such a creative community here and we have so many talented artists and creators just on the island

alone and locally," says Woodward. "We really wanted to bring something to Victoria that we could grow and build, and become a really nice community for people on the island."

Woodward claims that the beauty of Victoria and the nerd culture that exists here are a perfect match and a growing trend.

"People have been trying to get conventions going in the past year and we also have Phenomacon, a new one that just started out in Langford," says Woodward. "So there's such a vibrant culture here, [Capital City Comic Con] was something that we felt was needed."

Woodward acknowledges that since the first Capital City Comic Con in 2018, there have been some challenges getting everything up and going, but she praises the team behind it all.

"We like to improve every year—that's our main goal," says Woodward. "It's to make every year a little bit bigger, a little bit better, a little bit more organized, so that's something that we strive for every year."

The inspiration that pushes Woodward to move forward promoting pop culture and supporting cosplay through Capital City Comic Con comes from the support received from locals.

"We do this for the community—we do all the hard work for the community, because we are a non-profit," says Woodward. "I would say just the supportive comments from people, getting those really fuels you to keep going."

Besides her position in the Capital City Comic Con Enthusiasts Society—the local non-profit organization that puts Comic Con together in Victoria—Woodward owns Cherry Bomb Toys, a vintage toy store downtown.

"I've always been involved in anything pop culture—toys, obviously, collectibles—and, of course, the cosplay goes along with a lot of characters in the realms that I love," says Woodward. "So I find cosplay just a wonderful creative outlet for people, which is great."

Scott wears many hats; she was able to make a mini-documentary about cosplay when she was in a short film class. She also often takes photographs of cosplayers.



COLIN SMITH

A cosplaying scene from last year's Capital City Comic Con.

"When I go to conventions I dress up, but also to a lot of conventions I hold a media pass," says Scott. "I go around and take photos of the other cosplayers, helping them boost their confidence in their costumes and then giving them memories to hold on to from that convention."

Raygun Designs is Clapp's costume business, through which she gets custom orders online and then gets to exercise her creativity.

"I'm still getting into the sewing side of things, but my passion is making props and these kind of crazy pieces that you wouldn't find in other places," says Clapp. "So I do a lot of steampunk costumes; my favourite thing is making large jet packs and ray guns and that kind of thing, but I also do a lot of cosplay and that's really fun."

Thinking about her future, Clapp wishes to do what she loves for a career, which would involve expanding her costume business.

"A lot of my projects end up being quite big and time-consuming," says Clapp, "so if I were to gain momentum that would be so big for me."

In this sense, Clapp's main motivation to pursue post-secondary studies comes from her artistic entrepreneurial spirit.

"I'm taking some art courses as well because that is where my heart is," says Clapp. "I have a few businesses myself, and I've always been bad at the business side of things; I'm good at the art part."

The interactions within the cosplay world seem to play a key role in fostering pop culture, and, as such, they offer a clear message about the importance of a community mindset to the events in this industry. In parallel, the idea of consent certainly comes as a ground rule of understanding that allows for respectful entertainment and ethical media coverage.

Either as a hobby or as part of an industry, the fact is that cosplay boosts creativity and artistic expression. A lot of dedication goes into making the costumes and props, or at least scavenging to find them.

Most of all, every cosplay fan—and everyone, period—can benefit from the sense of multi-generational community that prevails when people get together and dress up like their favourite characters.

music Vox Humana play silent-movie score for new production



PHOTO PROVIDED

Vox Humana is performing the soundtrack for *The Passion of Joan of Arc*.

SAMARA OSCROFT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The newest project from Vox Humana is unlike anything the local choir have ever done before. They're performing the 1994 soundtrack for the 1928 classic silent movie *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, an intimate oratorio aptly named *Voices of Light*. Since viewing the film with the music at their first rehearsal for

this project, the choir have been fully committed to the unique challenge of presenting a work like this.

"This is a group of highly talented people who don't necessarily sit through a 90-minute film without talking a little bit—and they were dead silent the entire time," says Vox Humana artistic director Brian Wismath.

Wismath has known about this

work for years and has been waiting for the proper time to perform it. The project is expensive, and he needed to be certain the organization was equipped to handle the logistical and artistic challenge of it.

"It requires a lot of synchronization. The movie is essentially a series of scenes and the music matches those scenes," says Wismath. "The music needs to be moving at just the right tempo... The key is in synchronizing everything."

Considered one of the most innovative and significant films of all time, Carl Theodor Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* has a storied past. Dreyer used surviving transcripts from Joan's trial as the basis for the script and refused the use of makeup or flattering lighting in order to properly capture the intensity of the story. Film used in early cinema was especially susceptible to flame; both the original negative and Dreyer's replacement cut were destroyed in fires. But the original cut has survived, and was found decades ago by sheer luck.

"In the 1980s, [the original cut] was discovered in Oslo, Norway in a mental-health institution, just by chance," says Wismath.

Wismath has been in contact with composer Richard Einhorn as he's been preparing the chorus.

"He was in a video store looking for something to watch in New York, and he came across the film," Wismath says. "And then he travelled—he essentially followed Joan's life in

"There's intensity throughout almost the entire thing. A few moments of sort of comic relief, but for the most part, for the singers, it's a very intense experience. It's non-stop."

BRIAN WISMATH
VOX HUMANA

Europe. He went to the town she grew up in; he followed the path she would have taken as part of the army and the church she prayed at."

It's this attention to detail that makes this score a perfect complement to the film. As part of the score, this production features a sample of the actual bells from Joan's church played on keyboard. The whole performance is emotionally and musically intense for the 26 auditioned voices making up this ensemble. The score requires precision and passion.

"There's intensity throughout almost the entire thing. A few moments of sort of comic relief, but for the most part, for the singers, it's a very intense experience. It's non-stop," says Wismath.

Representing the voice of Joan are four soloists, with the chorus representing an outside point of view.

"I've chosen four soloists, three

of whom are part of the ensemble and one we hired separate," says Wismath. "They have strong soloistic voices that blend perfectly together and they're able to really help communicate the intensity of the Joan character."

The group of singers that make up Vox Humana are flexible with their sound and ability, typically performing commissioned or recent compositions, although also accomplished with standard choral repertoire, like Handel's *Messiah*.

"That's one thing I really appreciate about working with this group of singers—we can really approach any type of music of any difficulty level and find real enjoyment and purpose in that," says Wismath.



music Toronto indie rock band Mute Choir's conversations get louder

"In the music industry, trying to find your sound, a lot of it has to do with really knowing yourself."

SAM ARION
MUTE CHOIR

NICOLAS IHMELS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Good music is more than the music you hear on your radio. It's the thing that inspires artists to express themselves; in some cases, it helps to elevate their work. Toronto-based indie-rock band Mute Choir not only produce great music on their new album, *Silent Conversations*, but their music will help blaze a trail for younger generations.

"I say it's a healthy blend of some traditional songwriter types, but also, on the other end of the spectrum, bands and musicians and artists that put out music that pushes a lot of boundaries and have that mentality," says vocalist Sam Arion about his inspirations. "I listen to it and I'm like, wow, I have never heard anything like that before. Sometimes you hear artists out there that are so inventive that I find that inspiring a lot, but then at the same time I also have a great appreciation for somebody who can strum three chords and, you know,

make your heart melt just with that and some lyrics."

Arion says that for musicians, finding their sound means finding themselves.

"I just never slipped into a particular type of niche," he says. "In the music industry, trying to find your sound, a lot of it has to do with really knowing yourself, and I felt confused in that way and how I fit into the world around me."

Arion says he was dealing with this "back and forth" in his head about where he fit in life, and the creation of *Silent Conversations* really helped him answer those questions.

"The making of this album was very much like, not only was it a great musical experience, but I was able to kind of answer a lot of those questions in myself through the songs and the self-reflection that can sometimes be required to write them if you make introverted music like I do," he says.

In regard to the band's writ-



ALEX BONENFANT

Toronto indie rockers Mute Choir are finding themselves through their music.

ing process, Arion says that their process "is kind of not to have a process."

"We are always trying to sort of surprise ourselves, and just try to chase that eureka moment," he says. "A lot of times it will start with a drumbeat. Like, one of us by a computer, just making some kind of cool drumbeat and riffing off of that."

Arion says this project in particular is therapeutic; he's not just

sitting down to make music because he feels it's time to write another song.

"They kind of all come from a somewhat personal place. Sometimes I'll even start something and not finish it for a long time, and sometimes you don't even have the necessary experience to finish that... I might not be actually past the point of the thing I'm writing about."

Arion—who says he has a soft spot for Victoria and could see him-

self living here—says that as far as the future goes for Mute Choir, he doesn't want to say too much, but fans can rest assured the band is keeping busy.

"Let's just say our shared band Dropbox is far from empty," he says.



music The Blue Stones get ready to continue hot streak with second album



SAM SHAPIRO

Windsor's The Blue Stones are releasing their second album soon.

RHEA GEORGE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Music found The Blue Stones guitarist/vocalist Tarek Jafar at a young age. The Windsor-based duo—who are nominated for a 2020 Juno for Breakthrough Artist of the

Year—catapulted into the Canadian rock scene after the release of their debut full-length album *Black Holes* in 2018. Their single "Shakin' Off the Rust" reached the top of the Billboard Canada Rock Chart and their second full-length is now looming

"These new singles leading up to the next album are a representation of us knowing exactly who we are now and who we stand for as musicians. If anybody wants to jump on board the train of being unashamed of who you are, then this is the music for you."

TAREK JAFAR
THE BLUE STONES

on the horizon. But Jafar hasn't lost sight of where it all began—his earliest musical memory is sitting at the piano with his mother as she taught him how to play.

"She was a stay-at-home mom for a very long time, but she would teach piano students out of the house, and at night time I remember sitting on the piano bench with my mom... That's a very fond memory of mine," says Jafar. "I think around 11 or 12 I was this little hot-shot kid who just wanted to play electric guitar. I stopped caring so much about piano; I shifted my focus to the electric guitar."

Jafar says he used to be shy about sharing his songs and singing in front of an audience. The first time he sang in front of anyone was during a practice session with Blue Stones drummer Justin Tessier providing an audience of one.

"It would be a very vulnerable thing for me," says Jafar. "I was at rehearsal and about to sing but I couldn't do it. He looks at me and he says, 'Listen, if you can't sing in front of me, how are you going to

sing in front of an audience?' And I was like, 'You know, that makes sense,' so I just did... We never really imagined it to get this far. We always wanted to push for more. We never really had an end goal in sight; it was always like, what's the next big thing that we can do."

Jafar says he still loves to let loose and put on an explosive show, finding balance between the intensity of working in the studio and the freedom of being on stage.

"I think it comes between recording music, writing music, and then finally performing it," says Jafar. "I try to take it seriously in the sense where I build a song that I really am proud of. In the recording process, we've got our heads down, just working really hard to make music that we enjoy listening to—I mean, that's always been our motto. When we get to let loose is when we get to go up onstage and perform it for everybody."

Jafar says he's let go of the need to be perfect when playing live shows. As a performing artist he believes you can afford to play with

flair and attitude even if it means not playing 100-percent perfectly. Both musically and on a personal level, Jafar has grown in abundance since the release of *Black Holes*. Its success catapulted him into a new, unashamed, and confident direction—the forthcoming album is a projection of this confidence.

"I think... I've matured as a person, and as an artist," he says. "*Black Holes* was written at a time when I was very unsure of what was going to happen in my career, and in my life, and we didn't really know which path to choose. These new singles leading up to the next album are a representation of us knowing exactly who we are now and who we stand for as musicians. If anybody wants to jump on board the train of being unashamed of who you are, then this is the music for you."



drinks Victoria Beer Week delivers barrel-aged ales, crisp IPAs, and more

LANE CHEVRIER
NEWS WRITER

The idea of being released into an arena of fine craft beer and fresh food is a recurring fantasy of mine, so I leaped at the opportunity to attend the seventh annual Victoria Beer Week. Opening night on Friday, March 6 launched with Lift Off! at the Victoria Public Market, featuring 16 beers from local breweries, accompanied by food vendors serving appetizers.

First into my glass was Longwood Brewery's Pinot Noir Wild Ale (5.5%). This beer really embodies its vinous title. Clean and crisp, with a dark pink hue, its flavour resembles a combination of red wine and mild ale that you may think would be off-putting, but it's really quite nice.

The Small Block Brewing Mako Gold (5%) is a golden oatmeal stout with a deep, rich, malty flavour in the body and a tart foretaste from its Brambling Cross hops.

From Russell Brewing came the Belgian Dubbel Ale (7.5%). This is a tasty mid/strong dark beer, with a heavy taste of deep, smoky caramel flavours but a crisp mouthfeel that isn't oppressive.

By far, the star of the show for me was Howl Brewing. Their Fungus and Flowers Spring Gruit Ale (6%) is a medieval-style ale with a bright herbal and floral flavour most prominently arising from its chamomile and rose petals, and earthy tones from its reishi and chaga mushrooms. Also from

use of white grapes is evident in a flavour profile reminiscent of a dry white wine.

Field House Brewing brought the anniversary edition of their Flanders Red (7%), a dark ale with strong raspberry overtones well-balanced with a good, thick port wine.

Four Winds Brewing Company poured a beautiful glass of Bramble tart rye ale with blackberries (6.8%). The flavour of this deep-rouge-purple ale is surprisingly aggressive, with a punchy, dry, sour foretaste. The flavour of its chamomile infusion is distinctly herbal, reminding me less of flowers and more of the scent of certain incenses.

My second-favourite drink was Field House's Plum Foeder Sour (7%). Below its citrus foretaste, this tart golden ale has an incredibly solid flavour base arising from six months' aging in white oak with Italian plums. This brought me right back to the memory of my mother's freshly stewed plums.

Finally, Twa Dogs took a bite out of me with their Parting Kiss bourbon barrel ale (7%). Dark and rich, it radiates strong, smooth, oak-barrel flavours with echoes of unsweetened chocolate. The faintest hint of berries lingers in the aftertaste, which you might miss if not finely attuned to your gustatory senses.

Move over, beer! Tacos shared the spotlight at Victoria Beer Week's Taco Tuesday night, which took place on Tuesday, March 10.



LANE CHEVRIER/NEXUS

Crowds enjoying one of the many events at Victoria Beer Week this year.

The evening began with the Czechmate Pilsner (5.2%) from Off the Rail Brewing. Crisp, clear, and mild, it doesn't forge any new paths, but would be perfect for a day at the beach.

Very Good Butchers are a completely vegan operation that, as they put it, "butchers beans." Their jackfruit-roasted corn taco with pickled red onions had a strange texture, but its sweet-spicy chipotle mayo and fresh corn tortilla made for a tasty, satisfying nosh.

From Hoyle Brewing came the Down Easy Pale Ale (5%). Less hoppy than most pales, and mildly fragrant, this refreshing beer lives up to its name.

Next up was a vegetarian braised mushroom soft taco from Taco Stand #2. The mushrooms were juicy and spicy, the apple slaw was crisp but could have used a bit of fresh lemon juice, and the crumbled queso fresca on top was a nice touch.

Canoe Brewpub's Charred Pineapple and Mango IPA's (6%) fruit flavours synergized surprisingly

well with its hops. These flavours were added separately, however, rather than being an integral part of the brewing process, resulting in it tasting somewhat like a beer punch. Still, it was my favourite of the night for its unique flavour.

Roast Meat and Sandwich Shop dished up a taco consisting of two chicken nuggets on a tortilla, a squirt of Sriracha aioli, and a spoonful of salsa. Meagre and sloppy, it lacked any sense of care in both design and presentation. At least the salsa was fresh.

The Escape Artist Mango Guava Sour (6.4%) from Twin City Brewing tastes literally like sour worm candies, and if I were an alcoholic as a small child, this would have been my go-to. Slightly sweet with hints of grapefruit.

Taco Stand #1 provided the best snack of the night with their tantalizing popcorn shrimp taco with avocado crema and salsa fresca. The deep-fried shrimp had the perfect crispiness, and it was definitely gone too soon.



By Jayden Grieve



NEXUS Camosun's student voice since 1989

Week of March 8, 2020, top five most read stories:

1. "The Real McKenzie's bring their real Scottish punk to town," March 4, 2020
2. "News Briefs: March 4, 2020 issue," March 4, 2020
3. "New Music Review: Insect Ark get bold, original on new album," March 4, 2020
4. "Frazey Ford decides to keep it simple, jammy on new album," March 4, 2020
5. "Victoria Beer Week review: All About the Wood," March 8, 2020

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ian thriller of the same...
the audience from the...

How a Liberal-NDP minority government will impact students

Patrick Ferreira, contributing writer
October 23, 2019

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CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY CLUB COLUMN
MYWELLNESS CAMOSUN

Five tips for affordable, healthy cooking

Every college student knows the struggle of trying to juggle time, money, and energy. Cooking healthy meals in the midst of it all can be a challenge. So, the MyWellness program wants to bring you easy, affordable tips that you can incorporate into your time in the kitchen this week.

1. Cook soups, chilis, and curries
These kinds of one-pot, freezable meals are perfect for a student. If you use canned beans, simple veggies, and a few spices, these meals can last you throughout the week and take some stress out of the equation. Just come home and pop it in the microwave—no fuss! Try using coconut milk in a curry or putting some avocado on top for some extra taste.
2. Try to have one salad a day
Salads are a quick and easy base to get all your nutrients and vitamins. If you try this for a few weeks we promise you'll start to miss your salad on the days you don't make it. Try starting with spinach or lettuce, and add whatever you like: grated carrots, beets, dried cranberries, apples, peppers, maybe feta cheese or chicken if you'd like some protein. We'll give you some easy dressings in tip 3.
3. Master a few sauces and dressings
If you have a simple, widely applicable dressing, you'll be able to make a whole bunch of meals without starting from scratch. Try a simple vinaigrette: olive oil, lemon juice, mustard, salt, and pepper—great on salads and bowls. Or a tahini dressing—a couple scoops of tahini paste, lemon juice (or apple cider vinegar), salt, and water. These will take your everyday dishes to the next level.
4. Don't buy pre-made meals
If you only buy fresh and bulk ingredients, you won't be tempted to grab something easy when you get home. Cooking dinner can be as easy as roasting some sweet potatoes (with olive oil and salt) and baking some chicken and broccoli. It doesn't have to be complicated, but removing the temptation of convenience can help push you to get started.
5. Have fun and get creative
When you have an extra hour or so, look up a recipe on Pinterest and try something new. Everyone we talk to agrees that learning to cook isn't complicated, and it's actually fun. Try inviting some friends over for dinner—make spaghetti or a rice noodle bowl with tahini dressing and fresh veggies. Once you get started, you'll wonder what you were so afraid of. Let us know if you try any of this or if you want us to talk about something specific next time (related to health and mental health). Email Jordan at mywellnesscamosun@gmail.com with questions and comments.

Freedom from Addiction

Facing vulnerability

by Katie Mandey

We are shaped into the person we are going to be when we are very young. Addicts are no exception. An addict is formed in the primary years of their life, as far as I have experienced, witnessed, and read. When we are young we are vulnerable, and if we are not carefully nurtured, we come to associate vulnerability with danger, to a greater or lesser extent depending on our childhood experiences. As a recovering sex and love addict, I am beginning to navigate intimate relationships from a more sober and healthy place than I previously ever have, and the most challenging aspect of this is the necessity to be vulnerable and open. All of my tendencies in close relationships are in an effort to avoid feeling vulnerable. For example, I tend to move quickly, seeking security before getting to know someone; I tend to also step back quickly or to even end the relationship abruptly if I sense uncertainty in the other, or if the circumstances of life might cause our paths to move in opposite directions. It is a tremendous effort to remain open, and to simply allow things to unfold as they will, especially before a relationship is relatively stable and committed. Even knowing when and how things ought to unfold in a healthy way is something I am learning, gradually. Fortunately, the plasticity of our brains makes it possible for us to change how we think and behave. Even our deepest feelings and most strongly held beliefs can change, and indeed they must if we are to recover from addiction. But this work is not easy. It is, however, quite simple, from my perspective. As long as I am willing to focus on myself—my own needs, insecurities, and all the things in me and in my life that need tending to—I am on the path of recovery. The key for me has been to address both relatively superficial problems—such as issues with work or money—as well as, and perhaps more importantly, looking at what is beneath such problems. The crux of the problems in my life, when looking inward, almost always comes down to fear of being vulnerable and hurt, alone, or abandoned. Addressing these issues has begun to make every area of my life better, including financially, in my relationships, and in my quality of life in general. To open up these old wounds requires vulnerability. And to have a healthy, loving, close, and connected relationship requires vulnerability. Vulnerability is a key to healing and wellbeing. Though it feels intensely uncomfortable for many of us, without it we cannot be close to others.

The Examined Life

Finding freedom from technology

by Ethan Badr

At your school, in your car, in your home, in your bed: it follows you, begging for attention. How much time does it spend in your hand, or in your pocket? When was the last time you were away from it? How often does it vibrate to let you know it's time to check it again? How often do you check it even when it doesn't vibrate? We should strive to achieve a higher level of control, and to treat our devices like tools rather than accessories. That is, treat them with respect and use them responsibly. Lately I've been renegotiating the relationship I have with my phone. The smartphone itself is not designed to obstruct our productivity; it's the software we choose to put on it that encumbers us. Social media has become so entrenched in our daily lives that it can feel impossible to simply cut it out. We can, however, change the way we engage with it. The biggest distractor is notifications. They keep you coming back again and again. We should try to limit the number of notifications that come into our devices. Start by restricting your usage to one or two social media apps. For example, I try to only use Snapchat. Another thing you can do to limit notifications is eliminate users that you don't need or want to be talking to. I try to only add people I know from real life. If you still feel overwhelmed by notifications, turn them off and only check your social media during leisure time, and never when you are trying to be productive. In addition to these changes, keep productive apps (email, camera, calculator, calendar) on your home screen, and everything else in folders on another page. This makes it harder to open superfluous apps on autopilot. I keep music and podcasts on my home screen, as I use them frequently and don't consider them to be distractors. Personal technology has developed too quickly. It's up to us to use it responsibly and show developers that we will not be slaves to technology. Smartphones are exceedingly powerful devices that give us access to a near-infinite amount of information; it's up to us to turn that information into knowledge. If used correctly, our devices can help us to be happier, smarter, and more productive people. Make the change.

obsolete words word search

Say what you will about *Nexus*, but never, ever forget this: in the year 2020, we printed the word "quockerwoder" as part of a word search. Find the words on the left in the puzzle on the right; as always, stop by the *Nexus* office (Richmond House 201, Lansdowne campus) if you complete this puzzle to pick up something from our pile o' prizes (one prize per student per issue). Good luck!

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BRABBLE	T	M	U	R	O	L	A	K	C	O	C	N	P	S	E
COCKALORUM	S	L	U	B	E	R	D	E	G	U	L	L	I	O	N
CRAPULOUS	C	T	I	T	T	Y	N	O	P	E	K	L	W	H	F
ELFLOCK	V	C	C	Y	X	B	Q	S	G	W	A	M	T	G	U
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FUDGEL	S	D	A	I	K	G	U	Q	T	O	R	R	Y	R	Z
FUZZLE	O	Q	U	O	C	K	E	R	W	O	D	G	E	R	E
GORGONIZE	U	Z	L	E	V	T	M	O	N	N	Z	Y	L	B	D
GROAK	T	E	O	D	S	F	N	I	A	M	Y	X	W	E	K
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SLUBERDEGULLION															
SNOUTFAIR															
SNOWBROTH															
TITTYNOPE															
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Politics and Other Nonsense

Free tuition means a better Canada

by Carla Marginean

Free tuition has been a hotly debated topic for some time now in many countries, including Canada. It's in the best interest of millions of people to provide free tuition, as it means equal access to education for all. Free tuition also promotes education and fixes a broken system that focuses more on research than it does on producing well-rounded alumni. Free tuition promotes education by ensuring everyone can have equal access to opportunities that were previously accessible only to the privileged. Charging tuition fees perpetuates the divide between the rich and the poor by creating the barrier of student debt. Families with lower household incomes automatically spend more of their household incomes on tuition than rich families do because the cost of tuition is the same for both, but their household income is not. Removing this barrier for low-income families would mean that the next generations of children from this background would have a better chance at lifting themselves up over the poverty line. If all students had to worry about were living expenses, that would take a lot of the stress and deterrence out of getting a post-secondary education. Generally speaking, people who get a higher education can also contribute more to the economy. One argument against free tuition is that we would be supporting a broken system instead of fixing it. This is based on the premise that universities were created for the purpose of research instead of teaching, which means that many universities allocate a lot more of their money and resources toward research than toward teaching. While this is true, the system tends to fix itself when we introduce free tuition. German universities, for example, used to be some of the top universities in the world. However, they have dropped in their ranking significantly since they have been offering free tuition. This is because there has been a shift in focus from research to teaching, and the ranking system is based on research and does not take into account other factors, such as teaching. So, by providing free tuition, the system starts to repair itself. Universities begin to shift their priorities from producing quality research to producing quality alumni.

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what's going on

by emily welch

NOTE: ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS SITUATION. PLEASE SEE THE EVENT WEBSITES FOR UP-TO-DATE INFO.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

52 creative ways to say "I quit"

The Camosun College Co-op Education and Career Services department is presenting a talk from Sean Aiken from 4:30 to 5:30 pm on the Social Stairs at the Alex and Jo Campbell Centre for Health and Wellness at Interurban. Aiken is behind the One-Week Job Project, where he spent a year documenting working a different job every week to try to figure out what to do with his life. The talk is free; see oneweekjob.com for more details on Aiken.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Hear me roar

If you have an adoration for that amazing decade of intellectualism and great fashion which was nicknamed "the roaring '20s," this March may be the only time you ever get to experience it and support your college at the same time. Camosun College's Hospitality Management students are hosting The Roaring 20's Cocktail Party, which will raise money for the very worthy cause of campus childcare. So get your fedora, cigarette holder, and flapper dress out and join the party at the White Eagle Polish Hall, located at 90 Dock Street. You'll be met with other finely dressed folk, a large



TREVOR HATTER

Woodhawk are coming to town and bringing their loud riffs with them; the band are playing Upstairs on March 27.

number of beverages from local distilleries, tasty appies, and a silent auction. The event runs from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm, and tickets are \$65 in advance; see roaring20scocktailparty.eventbrite.com for info.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

Make me disappear

There is a certain magic in the air on this night, especially when it's The Masters of Illusion performing their incredible mind-bending masterpieces. This night of magic is the real thing, and it's happening at The

Royal Theatre; doors open at 7 pm and the show starts at 8 pm. Tickets are \$49.50; see rmts.bc.ca for info.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

Six-string wizards

Here's one for those who love metal (a sacred and special kind of love, indeed): riff wizards Woodhawk are on the road on their Violent Nature Canadian Tour and will be showing their best selves in the Upstairs Cabaret, along with Dead Quiet and Crimson Witch. The doors open at 6 pm, and tickets are \$15; see upstairscabaret.com

for more information on this and other shows.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Get Ziggy with it

"A Night of Bowie" is a collection of the legendary David Bowie's hits played by Victoria based musician Syl Thompson and his band Ground Control. Since the early '80s, Ground Control have been paying tribute to Bowie, and they will be performing to impress at Alix Gooden Hall at 7 pm. Tickets are \$42.50; see anightofbowie.com for info.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Day tripping

If you are ever stuck on what to do on a Saturday afternoon, and if you haven't already started the process of day drinking, then why not check out the live music at the public market? Featuring some of Victoria's great local musicians and fantastic food from 12 to 2, things in the market are going to be lively and loud. Victoria Public Market is located at 1701 Douglas Street; see victoriapublicmarket.com for details.

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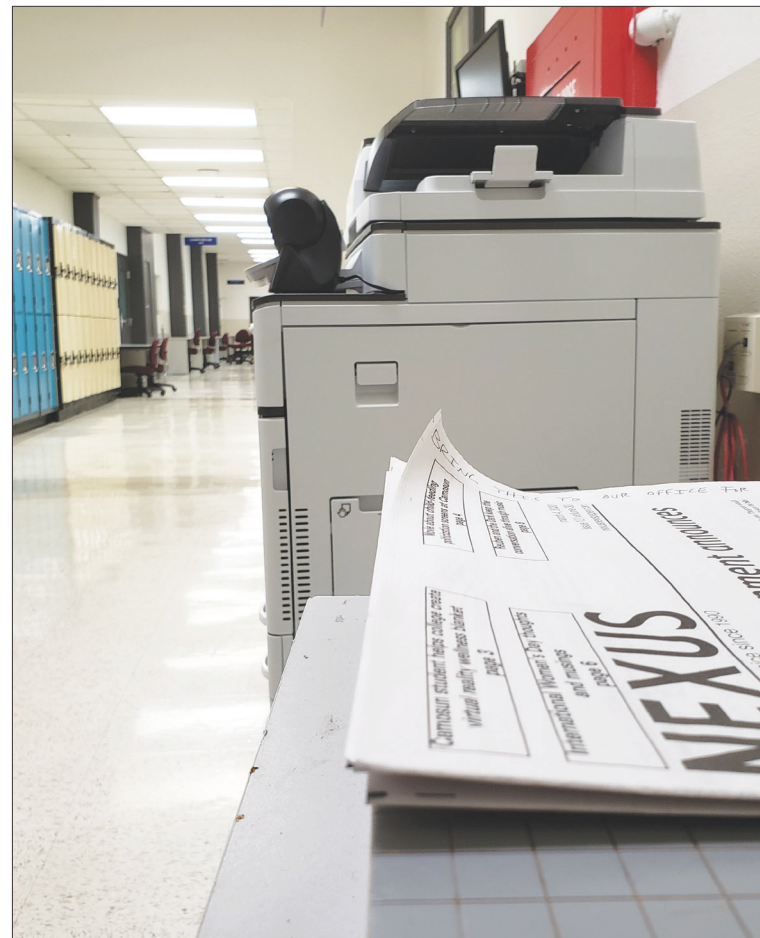
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GREG PRATT/NEXUS

Let's see if you can find this copy of a previous issue of *Nexus* that we hid somewhere at Camosun College's Lansdowne campus.

The first person to find this copy and bring it in to our office (201 Richmond House) wins a free prize!

We hid the last copy on a countertop in the far corner of a hallway on the first floor of the Fisher building.

Bring this copy of *Nexus* to us if you find it; we've got gift cards, shirts, and more for the winner!

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