



the **reflector**

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The city gathers to celebrate Pride

SAMRU's Pride Centre attended the parade but will continue to celebrate pride throughout the school year

Julie Patton
News Editor



SAMRU Pride Centre walks during Calgary Pride each year. Photo courtesy of SAMRU

Ten of thousands of Calgarians flooded downtown to celebrate the annual Pride Parade.

A joyful event, balloons and colour filled the street as attendees marched down 9th Ave toward Fort Calgary. Among the many organizations showing their support, the Students Association of MRU (SAMRU) joined the parade.

Hayl Balla is a student from Mount Royal University (MRU) who joined the parade.

"We have a good community on campus, but being able to have that stage where people are able to be proud of themselves and who they are was really, really awesome," they say.

Balla is one of the pride

ambassadors at the SAMRU Pride Centre. They have attended the Pride Parade in the past, but this was their second year walking with SAMRU.

"I love seeing students come together for the event and to see the staff on campus participate too, I just think it's really important to have community on campus and being able to be a part of that is a really big deal."

Balla was pleased with the turnout from MRU in the parade as they believe there was more in attendance than last year.

Pride continues

The Pride Centre at the SAMRU has been around for 10 years. It exists not only as

a support for the 2SLGBTQ+ community, but as a support for everyone.

Lisa Antichow, support services manager at SAMRU, says the Pride Centre has a broader mandate to make all students feel welcome at school.

"We're creating a safe space for people to come together," she says. "They can meet, they can connect, and they can build community."

The Pride Centre offers weekly programming for students so they can connect with each other as well as de-stress from the school day.

"We have a weekly program called 'Crafternoon,' so students can get together, make crafts, and again, build

community," Antichow says.

There is also the Wellness Wind Down where an MRU counsellor, Janet Miller, joins the students to help them work through any mental health problems that can affect their academics or personal life.

Importance of community

At university, students are in one giant community. However, it's easy to find yourself lost in the large group. The Pride Centre offers a different community. Welcome to all, it is a safe space to create strong social connections.

The weekly programming makes it easy to meet and connect with like minded individuals.

While Balla has strong connections to the Pride Centre, they advise students to join clubs with like minded people to build community on campus.

"Community is huge for me," they say. "Being able to find like minded people on campus is really important but also being able to foster my own identity in a safe space... and it really helps me with my studies as well."

At the Pride Centre, Balla was also able to garner some much needed support. When transitioning, Balla attended a clothing swap at the Pride Centre where they were able to get some gender affirming clothing.

"When I transitioned, that was a really big deal for me," they say, adding that it is not easy to build a wardrobe of

gender affirming clothes on a budget.

Upcoming pride

In addition to the Pride Centre and its weekly events, SAMRU also has other pride programming throughout the school year like the popular Sex Toy Bingo and Gender Bender.

SAMRU hosted over 200 students at its latest Sex Toy Bingo in February, 2023. First come, first serve only, the event filled the Wyckham Bowl and had to close its doors to many waiting students. As for the Gender Bender in March 2023, there were 70 in attendance.

"As the students association, our mandate is to represent and serve students to help them succeed," Antichow says. "We're not just focused specifically on one demographic... we are here to serve everybody."

Antichow hopes students feeling lost and looking for community utilizes SAMRU and the help they offer. She encourages new students to check out the Wyckham House at MRU and see what services SAMRU has to offer.

"We'll hear feedback from students when they're in their third or fourth year and it's always 'Oh, I didn't know you were here' and 'I wish I knew about this sooner,'" she says.

All students, new or returning, are welcome at SAMRU and the Pride Centre. SAMRU's main hubs and other programs can be found at Wyckham House, near the West Entrance of Campus.

What's going on with news on Meta?

Learn what the Online News Act is with an MRU journalism professor

Julie Patton

News Editor

Canadians are left with questions after being notified by Instagram and Facebook, social media platforms under Meta, that news content will no longer be available on the app. Many are attributing the action to government control as a tool to dampen the spread of misinformation.

However, Gabriela Perdomo, assistant professor of journalism at Mount Royal University (MRU) and editor-in-chief at J-Source, explains that that is not the case. It's something else entirely.

"Bill C-18, or the Online News Act, was signed into law on June 22 [2023]. The law seeks to help Canada's media industry by requiring that 'digital intermediaries,' or tech platforms that share content produced by domestic publishers, pay a fee for that content," she says.

"In response to the Act—or more like in protest against it—Google and Meta... have started blocking Canadian news content on their platforms."

Although it may seem like the government is pulling news content off the platforms, it's actually the platforms themselves because they do not want to abide by the new ruling that they share some of their ad profits with the companies that produce the content.

So, how's this supposed to work?

"The government's rationale is that, at a time when more and more people are accessing news through online platforms, Google and Meta have come to draw 80 per cent of all digital advertising revenue in Canada," Perdomo says.

"The *Online News Act*

is seeking to address that imbalance by making Google and Meta share some of their ad profits with the companies that produce the content."

In Canada, newsrooms have laid off hundreds of workers due to dwindling revenues, which had historically come from ads and classifieds. If the tech giants start paying for news content, the journalism industry in Canada would find a new stream of revenue.

Not the first

Canada is not the first country to do this as Australia actually proposed a similar law in 2021. *CBC* explains that in protest, Facebook blocked news on its platforms, however the matter was resolved a week later when Facebook and Google struck a deal with the Australian government.

But no deal has been struck in Canada despite the *Online News Act* being passed back in June.

Where the two situations differ is that in protest, Facebook banned news prior to the Australian law being passed. This gave the government time to negotiate the law and come to an agreement with Meta and Google.

Canada's law does not have that flexibility. The government did not give themselves the wiggle room the Australian government did and so the law is not having the same effect.

CBC reports that for "Meta and Google, it's not about the money but the principle of being regulated and the precedent it might set in other jurisdictions."

In Australia, Meta and Google struck separate deals with a series of media companies. This allowed them

to appease the government as well as stay undesignated.

Concern surrounding the law

While both Meta and Google continue to block news, Canadians wonder if it is still a bluff or if this change will be permanent.

"Critics have noted for a long time that the bill that was signed into law was largely the product of lobbying by a group of what we call 'legacy media,' such as *The Globe and Mail*, *Postmedia*, *Torstar*, and others," Perdomo says.

"Several small news organizations, especially independent and digital-first publications, have been wary of the bill all along in part because they think, and rightly so, it will disproportionately help the more established and

vbigger players."

While media outlets question the law, so are Canadians as they adjust their practice of media intake. However, Perdomo notes that this could be a wake up call for citizens to take a look at the news they consume, and the way tech giants may have been dictating it.

"This is a good time to seek out other ways to connect with news producers: subscribe to newsletters, download more podcasts, attend events organized by community news organizations and other local groups," she says.

"Those who can may even consider supporting good quality news operations by becoming paid subscribers or offering a donation."

Now we wait

At present time, news is still being blocked on Meta and

Google in Canada. The hope is that they will eventually cave and pay media outlets for the content.

"We don't know if the Act will be effective or not in accomplishing what the government set out to do, simply because we don't have the details of how it will be implemented. That will become more apparent in the next few months," Perdomo says.

Regardless, she says everyone across Canada will be affected by the restrictions whether we notice it or not. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram have become intertwined in the way we consume news.

"Many Canadians will likely get used to simply not seeing relevant news on their social media feeds, and that is a major problem for us as a society," she says.



People in Canada can't see this content

In response to Canadian government legislation, news content can't be viewed in Canada. [Learn more](#)

Users in Canada are unable to see content posted on news organization's social media accounts. Photo courtesy of Instagram

Support for financially struggling students

Julie Patton
News Editor



The SAMRU reception is located on the second floor of Wyckham House. Photo by Megan Creig

It's no secret that today's students are struggling. Between the housing crisis, cost of groceries, and increasing tuition, students are barely making ends meet.

This was evident in the fight to find affordable housing as Mount Royal University's (MRU) Residences had to waitlist students for the first time in 10 years. Students who typically live off campus were opting to live in residence as it provided a cheaper alternative to renting elsewhere in the city.

However, housing isn't the only crisis students are facing as groceries, gas, and even tuition has inflated. For the 2023-24 academic year, MRU's domestic tuition increased by 5.5 per cent and international tuition increased by five per cent.

With the weight of so many costs on students' shoulders, some may be struggling to stay afloat. Thankfully for students, there are numerous supports at campus to help them make it through these

unprecedented times.

SAMRU

The Students Association of MRU (SAMRU) has many supports to help students make it through the school year. Lisa Antichow, support services manager at SAMRU, says the purpose of the student's association is to help students succeed and they do that through a number of ways.

For emergency situations, SAMRU has an emergency student loan program. Students can get up to \$300 in an interest free loan to help them get by in times of crisis. Relatively easy to access, students just need to set up a meeting with staff in the Peer Support Centre (Z210) and explain what the current circumstance is as to why they need the loan.

"The meeting might take 15 minutes, it could take a half hour, and then in most cases, things can get approved relatively easily," Antichow says.

In addition to this, they also have bursaries that they give away to students every year. Although it's a smaller program, it's worth looking into for students who need some extra support.

Free food for students

Not only does SAMRU help students financially, but they also have a few food support programs. Antichow says the most popular is the free breakfast program.

On weekdays from 8:45am to 11 A.M., students can stop by the Peer Support Centre for free breakfast items like toast, fruit, yogurt, coffee, and tea. Open to all, Antichow encourages students to take advantage of the program, so they don't miss the most important meal of the day.

SAMRU also has free bread and buns to take in the Peer Support Centre. Thanks to COBS Bread, every Tuesday they get a delivery of the baked goods.

Additionally, there is SAMRU's main care cupboard which is a campus food bank. Students can fill out an intake form online and the student's association will create a food package for them. These packages will give them food for the next two to three days. If needed, SAMRU can also make referrals to the Calgary Food Bank for students.

Lastly, SAMRU has also placed satellite pantries around campus labelled as the 'Care Cupboards' for students to access. With five locations around campus, the pantries provide snacks and other goods to students. The student's association restocks the pantries twice a week.

"We do ask though, that students just take with moderation," Antichow says. "Don't take the whole bin of stuff, right? Just take what you need and leave the rest for other people."

Why help?

Antichow says that intrinsically, she wants to help students. However, as an organization it is their duty.

"That's why we exist, we are here to help support students through their university experience. And if someone hasn't eaten for two days, how can they succeed in what they're doing at school?"

She says the free breakfast program has been running for over 10 years and remains one of the more popular features at SAMRU. Additionally, the Care Cupboards throughout campus are almost always empty when they're restocked.

Although not every student takes advantage of the support SAMRU offers, Antichow is happy to know that some students are utilizing the programs and are better off because of it.

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Three tips for surviving your first year of university

Emma Duke
Features Editor



The Riddell Library near East Residence is a prime study hub spot for many Mount Royal students. Photo by Megan Creig

The weeks leading up to your first day of university are both utterly exciting and completely nerve-wracking. Back-to-school shopping, fun! Registering for various Gen Eds and clusters and...wha?

The first time you step into the halls of Mount Royal University (MRU) is equally as thrilling and confusing an experience. We've all been there, but that thought isn't necessarily comforting when you are lost in the halls and can't find your first class, you wore the wrong outfit, and everyone appears to be a lot older and cooler than you. You feel like a baby, and NOT the kind that Taylor Swift refers to in Anti-Hero.

Okay, maybe I'm being a little dramatic.

I was homeschooled, so I

imagined my time in university would mirror Cady's high-school experience in the *Mean Girls* movie (surprise, university is nothing like *Mean Girls*). Now, in my fourth-year, I can say with confidence that university can be rich, fulfilling, and fun...if you know how to make the most of it.

Here are three practical tips for your university journey.

1. Don't put yourself in a box

You might be coming into university knowing precisely what career you want to pursue and how you're going to get there. It's good to have a focus, but it's great to keep your options open. For example, maybe you're a

Communications major who loves astrology— don't let the fact that your field isn't science related stop you from taking a class you think you'd find enjoyable. I'm a Broadcast student who took on a research assistant role, and it expanded my horizons and brought me into a totally different, and fascinating world! An added bonus is that it can also diversify your resume.

In the same vein, you'll hear a lot of vague and fluffy talk about stepping outside of your comfort zone, but I think the most practical tip is this: don't always do what you're good at. You might be a great writer, but less good at speaking in front of a class. Maybe in one of your classes, you give up the writing role, and take on the presentation role. University

is a place to learn, and while doing what you're good at is extremely comfortable, trying new things might lead you to find something else that you're passionate about! If you're not necessarily passionate about the new role you just tried, you will at the very least be slightly more comfortable and knowledgeable if you find yourself in that position again.

2. Use the resources available to you

You pay a ton to be here, so make use of the resources available to you as a university student. This doesn't just include MRU's resources, including the library's very useful citation guides, Student Learning Services' (SLS) academic success workshops, and student counseling, but it also includes resources outside of the University.

Money is a struggle for many students, and there are many great student discounts that you can take advantage of. UniDays is a free discount website that hooks students up with deals from meal kit companies like HelloFresh, to discounts on Dropbox, as well as fashion, travel, entertainment, and tech deals. Local to Calgary, independent cinema The Plaza Theatre is a place that offers students a reduced price for movie tickets, as does the Telus Spark Science Centre for single-tickets and memberships. These are just a few, among many examples, of where Calgarian-students can get a deal. Before you go

somewhere, it's good practice to check if a student discount is up for grabs!

One of my favorite resources in university has been the book *How to Win at College: Surprising Secrets for Success from the Country's Top Students* in which Cal Newport, an associate professor at Georgetown University, shares proven strategies to get the most out of your post-secondary experience. His book is full of actually useful, unique, and practical tips for becoming the most successful student possible. Newport's other book, *How to Become a Straight-A Student* has also gotten quite a bit of buzz and is likely worth checking out at your nearest library.

3. Take a public speaking class

Whether you're in a program where public speaking is considered a necessary skill or not, this class will make you more confident in your speaking abilities, whether you are giving a presentation, a toast at a wedding, speaking up in a meeting, or simply looking for a way to express yourself more confidently. *Intro to Speech* (SPCH2001) is a beginner class, so more likely than not, everyone else will be a little nervous too. I absolutely recommend this class as a way to build confidence at the start of your post-secondary journey.

Most importantly, take care of yourself, ask for help when you need it, and have a killer year!

Crafting a university essay: tips & tricks

Advice on planning and organizing an A+ essay

Darian MacDonald

Contributor

I remember getting my very first essay assignment in my first year of university and feeling incredibly underprepared. The kind of essay my professor was asking for was nothing like what I wrote in high school. What was APA? What was a peer reviewed article? I remember, after finishing the essay, writing an email to my high school English teacher asking if she could proof it because I was so unsure of what I was about to hand in. I'll complain to anyone who will listen about how frustrating our school system is, that we learn to write essays in high school but not in a way that is applicable to university. For example, I don't think I'm alone in saying that in high school, I didn't learn to cite my sources, nor did I learn how to research - two necessary skills for writing most essays in university. Eventually, over the next four years or so, these things would come naturally to me, but at the beginning it was very discouraging to feel like I knew nothing about something seemingly so simple. So whether you're a first year student about to write your first university essay, or a seasoned student looking for some new strategies, here's my advice to make essays a little more manageable.

Write around quotes

I put this one at the top

because it's one of the strategies I learned the latest, but find the most helpful. Based on how most essay assignments are worded and some previous experience from high school, you probably are expecting to write your essay, then hunt down quotes to support your main points. Instead, it's way easier to find quotes you like, THEN write around those quotes. As you're doing research you'll probably spark some new ideas for your essay. Collecting quotes before you start writing will help you integrate all your ideas into your paper smoothly. An added bonus, collecting all your quotes first also helps to create a sort of roadmap for your essay since you can simply write to connect quotes.

You don't have to make it good

At least at first. When you first read your essay assignment question, you'll probably start thinking of some ideas for your paper. Write all your thoughts down, allow yourself to ramble, regardless of relevance or organization. If you're having trouble thinking of an essay topic right off the bat, for example, don't be afraid to wait a couple days for ideas to spark (but don't wait too long). As you're researching, more ideas might come up,— jot them down somewhere.

Additionally, as you begin to find quotes during your



Mount Royal University (MRU) mainly uses APA and MLA style of writing for academic papers. Photo courtesy of Katerina Holmes/Pexels

research, make note of how you plan on crafting your essay around these quotes when it comes time to write. It can also be helpful to make note of what themes each of your quotes explore. From there, you can take all your ideas and rants and use them to start building your essay. You don't even have to have a particular order, so long as you reorder them and transition between them with connecting sentences. Clean your essay up and you're good to go.

Keep your purpose in mind

All essay assignments are,

at their core, written proof that you understand the concepts from your class. Essay assignments always have at least one question to answer but most of them will also have further 'prompting' questions. ANSWER THEM. Your professor might not make them mandatory, but answering them will show your professor exactly what they want to see and beef up your essay. Also, don't be afraid to use in-class powerpoint presentations or your professor's lectures as evidence for your essay.

In doing so, you're proving that you've been paying attention and that you can link the essay prompts to

class content. Essays often aren't necessarily testing your writing ability or your ability to do research, rather, they're often testing your ability to apply what you've learned. While writing, keep in mind that you're trying to prove your understanding of class material to your professor.

Hopefully some of these tips are helpful or sparked some new ideas for you. If you're still looking for help, ask your classmates, the librarians, or your professor. Mount Royal University has lots of great resources so don't be afraid to utilize them. Happy writing!

Tapping into the “delusional student”

Can it get you that 4.0 GPA?

Arroy (AJ) Jacob

Staff Writer



Can fantasies and light “denial” help you do well in your courses? Photo of Sujata Limbu, by Arroy (AJ) Jacob

The semester has begun and you’ve received your first grade on D2L, the infamous orange dot looming over the bell icon. Before you click on it, you recite the mantra you’ve been repeating in the past week for the final time: *I did well. I know I did well. Of course, I did well!* Your cursor hovers over the bell, you hold your breath, and click.

Some students will breathe a sigh of relief, and others may shut their eyes and feel like crying (been there, done that). One thing is certain however; after it’s all over, you reconsider whether or not it was worth all of that believing.

On social media platforms, student influencers jokingly coin this method of believing

they are more successful than they actually are as “delusion,” or “being delusional.” But every joke is just a twisted version of the truth, and the truth is, every student has been “delusional” at one point or another.

The question on our minds, however, is whether or not being “delusional” promises getting better grades. As the Fall 2023 semester begins, let’s briefly examine the potential behind this “study strategy” by discussing both its perks, and its qualms.

Its perks

“I feel like there’s a lot of positives about being a ‘delusional’ student,” says Shadia Bol Barach, a Bachelor of Science student at Mount

Royal University (MRU). “For starters, it really helps me calm down.”

Barach refers to the wonders of “self-affirmations,” phrases one can repeat out loud until they believe they are true: *I am a great student. I know what I’m doing. It’s not weird to study to atmospheric classical music and pretend I’m in Hogwarts.*

In an article for *Vogue India*, journalist Nina Mjaaset delves into the science and popularity of self-affirmations. “Individuals all across the globe are jumping on the affirmation bandwagon, and the hashtag ‘#affirmations’ has garnered over [seven] billion views on TikTok alone.”

Mjaaset remarks that self-

affirmations are popular for a reason, — they have a real impact on our brains. “Essentially, MRI evidence suggests that activity in neural regions involved in self-processing and positive valuation increases when repeating self-affirmations, physically altering our brains’ evaluation of the self.”

We trick ourselves into believing the fantasy that we are the great students we (literally) say we are. These fantasies are what helps students like Barach tackle her classes.

“And most of the time, I do well! Because I believe that I will do well.”

Its qualms

“The bad thing I would say about being delusional is knowing that sometimes, I don’t actually put in the work for that exam,” Barach continues.

I can personally relate to this one. Students need to recognize when positive affirmations are actually helping them— yes, they alleviate short-term stress, but they can also contribute to creating a false-sense of security.

Delusion is ultimately a form of denial. *Cleveland Clinic Health Essentials* acknowledges that “denial isn’t a healthy coping strategy. If you simply proceed through hard times as though your feelings don’t exist, they’ll still lurk beneath the surface.”

When last-minute studying for an exam the next morning starts turning into “The

material already seems simple, I’ll be okay,” we are denying the responsibility of enduring hardship and would rather slip into a fantasy where we believe our dream already exists. Then, we click on the orange dot over the bell icon and our dream suddenly shatters.

It is more effective when our mantras drive us towards action, rather than simply believing we will be successful, even though we haven’t put in the work. We can start by addressing the hardship first, then follow it with positive and attainable goals: “Studying feels scary right now, but I’m brave and smart and cool enough to keep reading for at least the next half-hour.”

Fantasies are fun, but becoming too deluded is dangerously easy. It is essential for students to recognize both the “strategy’s” faults and opportunities. Everyone’s brains are unique, so what may be helpful for one person might not work for another. But when it comes to getting that 4.0 GPA, becoming “delusional” might be worth a try.

I asked Barach if she has any advice for any students looking to try out this “study strategy” for Fall 2023: “The trick to being in your true delusional era is knowing when you should be believing and when you should be realistic. If you strike a balance between the two, studying at MRU should become a little more enjoyable.”

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*With you, with **Pride** offers local artists the opportunity to showcase their talents*

Isabella West
Arts Editor



Kat Simmers 'Love and Liberty' mural adds a splash of colour to a Calgary park just in time for Calgary Pride. Photo courtesy of Rogers

The Calgary park that was the site of the first-ever Pride protest over 30 years ago is now engulfed with art that celebrates acceptance, belonging, self-identity and much more.

With you, with Pride is an artistic initiative that

commissioned four local 2SLGBTQ+, BIPOC and ally artists to paint murals that honour the 2SLGBTQ+ community and to kick off celebrations for Calgary Pride.

The initiative was presented by Rogers together

with Shaw in partnership with the City of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development and Calgary Pride. The murals were revealed two weeks before Calgary Pride and are available for viewing at Central Memorial Park until October 4, 2023.

Kat Simmers, an artist, author and muralist painted the mural titled Love and Liberty. Simmers said that Calgary has had a very politically charged year with an increase in the frequency and intensity of protests that are calling the 2SLGBTQ+ community to respond.

“Our community has been called out to the streets week after week sometimes to support things like Drag Storytime in libraries, gender inclusive policies in schools and Pride celebrations in schools,” said Simmers.

Simmers wanted to respond and talk about the challenges she herself as well as her community has faced this past year while also reflecting on the bonds that have come from the communities resiliency. It was for this reason that Simmers named their mural, Love and Liberty because, at the end of the day, she believes that that’s what she and the 2SLGBTQ+ community are striving for.

“It’s been a long year and

our community is feeling tired, we’re worn down and exhausted by having to justify our very existence,” said Simmers. “We as queer, trans and non-conforming folks have a place here as much as anyone.”

Simmers has participated in *With you, With Pride* once before and said that they believe it is important to give local queer artists a space to share their stories through art.

“It’s so important to have queer artists particularly local queer artists who are living the experience of being here and understand how bizarre, beautiful and sometimes painful it is,” said Simmers.

Simmers said how wonderful it is to be a part of a community that celebrates her for her but how jarring it is to walk down the street and to be called slurs. Because of this, Simmers hoped that their mural and Calgary Pride could help solidify the fact that she and her community belong here just as much as anyone else.

OUT'N ABOUT

Beakerhead: BODY

BODY is an outdoor night-time installation that uses cutting-edge technology to portray human biology. Catch this event from Sept. 14 to 17 at Shaw Millennium Park.

Beakerhead: The Alien Talk Show

On Sept. 16, hosts will discuss what aliens might look like and if they exist while a sketch artist brings to life the very things that lurk only in your imagination... or do they?

Wycked House Party

To celebrate the start of a new semester, SAMRU is hosting another Wycked House Party! On Sept. 21, Wyckham House will become the place to dance your troubles away.

Taste of Italy

Experience authentic Italian without having to leave the country! Taste of Italy is hosting its 2nd annual festival with contests, food, vendors and more on Sept. 10.

Barbie: Empowering women to be anything they want to be

The 2023 Barbie film offers so much more than just the opportunity to time travel back into your childhood

Maddy McClelland

Contributor

When it comes to the name “Barbie”, hardly any real introduction is needed. Since 1959, the doll revolutionized the toy industry and continued on to become an international symbol of girlhood. However,

controversy surrounded Barbie as she was the only doll at the time to have an adult figure.

As such, the concept of Barbie has been equally sexualized as it has been embraced; and equally as rejected as it has been

supported. Yet originally intended as a source of inspiration, Barbie’s purpose was to serve as an example that you can be anything you want to be, even in a world where the odds are stacked against you.

Flash forward to the

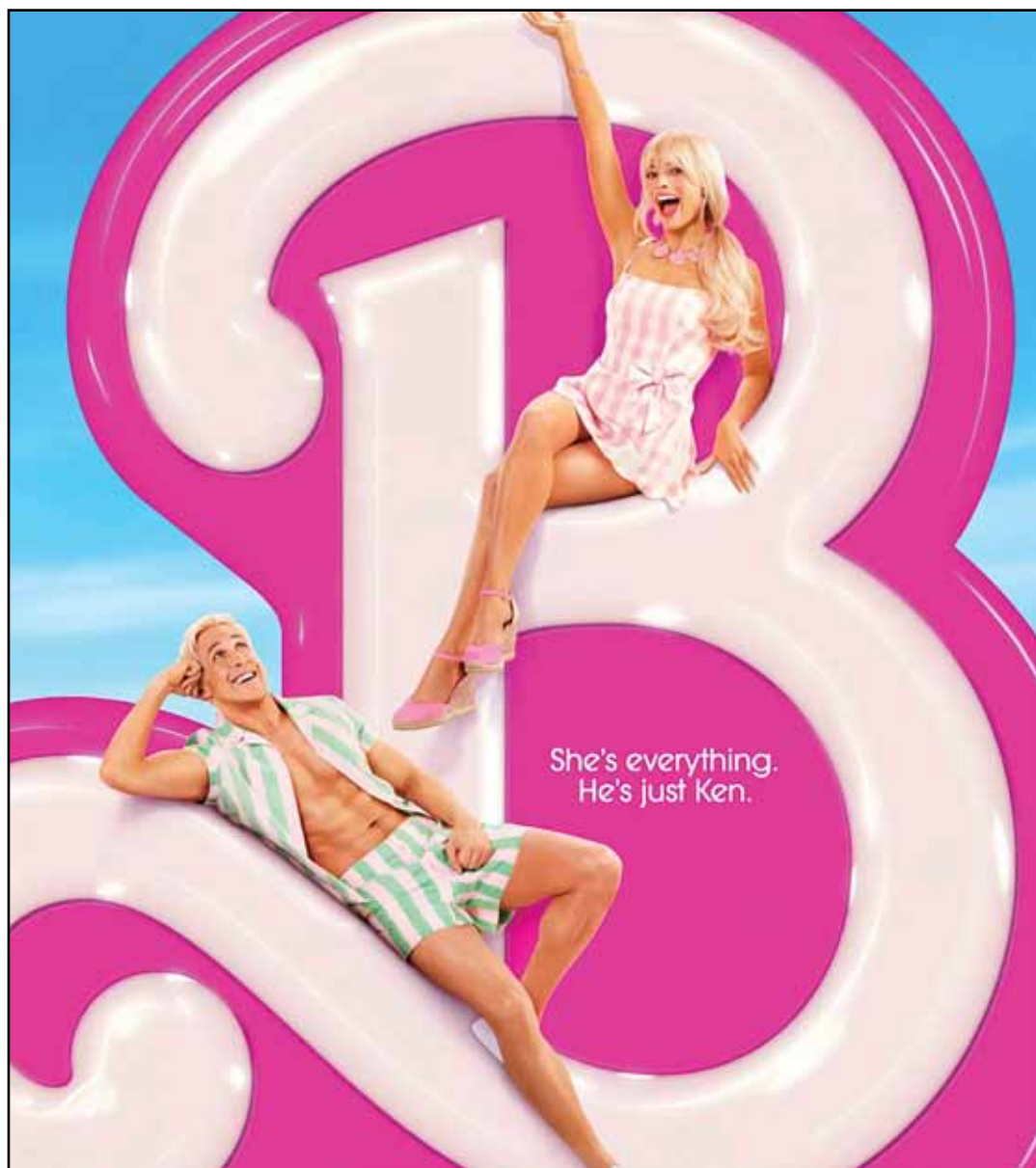
present, *Barbie* 2023 exemplifies this concept and more. Highly anticipated, the *Barbie* film that features Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling commences with an introduction to the doll’s home in Barbieland, where viewers are subjected to the film’s collective concept of “Barbie”.

The notion is that this one, picture-perfect stereotypical version of the doll isn’t actually “Barbie” herself, but that all the women are, and together they share a title that furthermore unifies them, and supports the concept that the way you look has nothing to do with your significance in this world. A refreshing take, that then leads us to the concept that here in Barbieland, all problems are solved. Women have been empowered, and they as the inspirational figures of “Barbie” are responsible for these victories. What a shock it then was for Barbie, when she went to the real world to discover that life as a woman

in our modern world is far from perfect... or fair.

For the remainder of the film, Director Greta Gerwig uses *Barbie* as a lens to explore concepts of patriarchal oppression, personal existentialism experienced by Barbie herself, and girlhood. More impressively, the way in which the film was executed managed to combine these concepts in the perfect way, encompassing so much of the female experience, and therefore resonating strongly with women everywhere.

While so many expected a fun film full of laughs, Gerwig delivered not only that but also a product that seems to have in many ways, healed so much for so many. Hilarious and entertaining, yet heartwarming and inspiring, this modern take on such an iconic figure has certainly helped to reinforce the original importance of Barbie; women are strong, beautiful, and can be absolutely anything they want to be.



Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling star in *Barbie* as Barbie and Ken. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros



Fans online have found Margot Robbie to be a perfect fit for Barbie. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros

Exploring more than just landscapes

What opportunities for personal growth that international educational environments offer

Emma Marshall
Contributor



The view of the Andes from Machu Picchu, Peru. Photo by Emma Marshall

In May 2023, a group of 18 students and two professors from Mount Royal University (MRU) embarked on a month-long field school through Peru, me being one of them. There were a few main themes that this trip revolved around, including sustainability, resilience, and politics. I walked into the experience expecting to leave with a deeper knowledge of Peru, but I failed to consider what happens when you put 20 strangers on a plane together and send them across the world.

This trip would not have been the same if I had done it alone. The lessons I learned, both in and out of the classroom, have permanently helped me grow as a person. I relied on the friendships I made to support me through it, and it also came in handy to have people to hang out with through long days of travel.

Halfway through the field

school, we embarked on a 13-hour bus ride into the Amazon rainforest. This was a travel day that everyone was dreading, me specifically. Though I consider myself a positive person, my patience was being tested with how long the drive was taking.

Consequently, some people in my group were elated about the frequent stops, exclaiming that they were being given an opportunity to witness the tropical ecosystem firsthand. While everyone went through moments of discomfort and fatigue, there was always someone who could see the positive of our situation.

Over the month of travel, encounters like this altered how I thought about struggles. The narrative in my head eventually made room for the voices and opinions of those who I was traveling with. By allowing myself to participate in other people's experiences of the trip, I was

able to develop a catalogue of thought patterns that I wished to bring into my life.

I did not realize it at the time, but I was using the positive qualities of everyone surrounding me to create a change within myself. It changed my whole perspective, and in times of personal struggle, I could hear them whispering gentle reminders to support me through it.

This lesson of perspective has played a part in my academics too.

My roommate in Lima came to me with an idea for a story. She pitched that we write about how important love and affection is in Peru, which I was entirely on board for. As we progressed the story together, we discovered an unexplored side.

We dived into the

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**with love,
the other
side**

Stirling Trig
Independent

Score: A

Stirling Trig released his third official album on August 25th bringing us *with love, the other side*, a project he claims “is the most important project [he’s] ever released”. Consisting of 10 tracks, the artist expressed his connection to this piece of music, and the dedication it’s taken “sinking [his] soul into this record” for the past several years. Clearly, this exact authenticity and passion shone through, as “*with love, the other side*” is quickly becoming one of his most popular releases.

Working as a completely independent artist, the music this album holds is a product of Trig and Trig alone. From start to finish, he worked independently on writing, performing, recording and releasing this album. Like something from a memory, the

album carries you through a series of nostalgic symphonies, with sounds resembling those of the Lumineers or Noah Kahan.

Stirling prides himself on his independence with the production of this record, claiming that at times “not a single other person hears the music until it’s released”. Additional tracks on the album often feature your classic indie-inspired guitar riffs, and slow vocal builds that lead to the music’s glorious peaks. Whatever the undertone may be, the versatility in this album alone was impressive, making it nearly impossible to find a flaw in the final product.

—Maddy McClelland

LOVE + POP

Current Joys
Danger Collective
Records

Score: B-



Current Joys is a popular alternative/indie band commonly associated with their melancholic tunes. With previous hits such as “*Blondie*”, “*New Flesh*” and “*Kids*”, Current Joys has made a name for themselves by musically capturing the pain of the human experience. Listening to their music sounds like how it feels to be intertwined in the emotional ups and downs of life, and fans have always admired the creative touches that help create this musical environment.

Commencing with “*walk away as the door slams*” and “*LOVE + POP*”, the first two tracks aren’t too out of the ordinary. However, from there, things take a turn from the band’s conventional sound. “*Gatsby*” opens with a Current Joys staple - a dark,

slightly gloomy and repetitive guitar riff riddled with reverb. Yet moments into a track that seemingly resembles “*Blondie*”, all of a sudden Lil Yachty appears? Staying on the track of shock factor, “*CIGARETTES*”, “*Rock n Roll Dreams*” and “*Dr Satan*” may catch you off guard with their incorporation of death metal-like screams. Not feeling confused yet? Maybe tracks such as “*3lephant*” featuring EDM sections will finally push you over the edge. What’s interesting about this album is that it’s not necessarily unenjoyable, it’s just so wildly out of character for a band like Current Joys that you can’t help but feel caught off guard.

—Maddy McClelland

"Exploring..." Continued from Pg. 11

consequences that this level of interconnectedness can have on Peruvian society. We each wrote about one-half of the issue to create a cohesive piece that included both the good and bad, but this would not have been possible if we were not working together.

Moving forward, I feel more equipped to ask for help, look at issues from a different perspective, and overall broaden my capacity to learn.

The growth of oneself through classroom learning is directly facilitated by learning through others. This applies to any level of education. In pre-school, I learned the basics of the alphabet, and I also learned how to listen and respect other people's space. In middle school, I was taught algebra. I was also exposed to the social hierarchy of teenage girls, and how to cope with negativity.

While in Peru, I was educated on the process of coffee farming and how to think critically about

sustainable development. I met those on the ground who showed immense resilience to issues such as political instability, climate change, and poverty, and I also met organizations who were helping to fight against it.

Some lessons can be taught, such as knowing how to spell or how to calculate the length of the hypotenuse. But some things must be practiced through experience. Some lessons just pop up, and it is up to the individual to understand them. How can a teacher hold a class on developing empathy? On the importance of forgiveness when responding to failure? On how to step out of your comfort zone?

To be fully immersed in an international and educational environment heralds a great opportunity to understand deeper concepts, ones that cannot be taught. Through this experience and the people I was with, I learned how to employ these skills in

everyday life and academics.

I was able to introspect on the long flights and boat rides about who I actually am, what I want to take from this experience, and what I want to create with this experience. Simultaneously, I was also learning about each person who I was traveling with.

By the end of the trip, I had seen the most raw spectrum of who each person was at their core. Going from being strangers one day, to seeing the intricacy of how individuals respond to discomfort, confusion, and excitement was extremely connecting. I was able to learn all about people's inner workings, which allowed me to better empathize and understand them.

We were on the same trip, and whether it may or may not have been for the same reasons, it is undeniable that we all showed up to the airport and got on the plane together.

I still see pieces of these



Members of the 2023 field school make their way back to the boats after a quick security stop at the ranger's cabin. Photo by Emma Marshall

people everywhere, and that is to say, I see Peru everywhere. When I step outside onto my balcony to admire the night sky, my eyes draw outlines of the Andes over Alberta's badlands. Those mountains, and the

lessons that came with them, follow me in my everyday life.

While this was my experience, it is something that can only truly be understood by the 19 others who were right there with me.



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Cougars soccer program's opening weekend

Matt DeMille
 Sports Editor

It was a weekend of mixed emotions for Mount Royal University's (MRU) soccer programs as they wrapped up their season-opening matches, held between August 25-27.

For the men's program, their weekend was filled with success and celebration as they knocked off their local rivals and neighbouring school, the University of Calgary Dinos, on Aug. 27.

While the end result was inevitably snatched up by the Cougars, the season-opening game between the two Calgary-based universities was a highly contested one.

For much of the game, the two teams were stuck in a scoreless limbo before midfielder and third-year business student, Abel Nesibu, struck for Cougars. The game-winning goal from Nesibu came with just three minutes remaining in regulation time.

Despite it still being early in the new season, the win over the Dinos was still an essential one for the Cougars. This year, the men's team, led by head coach Ryan Gyaki, will be looking to build off their second consecutive, third-place finish at the Canada West Playoffs.

And, if past seasons are to show anything, the team is already on the right track.

After winning their opening game against the MacEwan

University Griffins last year, the men's program finished the 2022 regular season atop Canada West's Prairie Division with a record of 8-0-6.

Carrying their regular season success into the playoffs, the men's program took home the Canada West Bronze Medal in back-to-back seasons following a 2-1 triumph over the University of Alberta Golden Bears.

While proud of their third-place accomplishments, a first-place finish paired with a Canada West Gold Medal is the shared goal among the program's players and staff as they dive into the upcoming regular season.

Opening weekend was a different story for MRU's women's program as they started their regular season as visitors in British Columbia, scheduled with a two-game slate against out-of-province opponents, Thompson Rivers University's (TRU) Wolfpack and UBC Okanagan Heat.

In their first game of the season — and with revenge on the mind — the women's team faced off against TRU, the team who eliminated the Cougars in the quarterfinals of the Canada West Playoffs last October.

Their chance at getting even with the Wolfpack got off to a rocky start, as the Cougars found themselves



Cougar stands await a fresh season of soccer fans. Photo by Megan Creig

trailing by two goals in the first 25 minutes of the first half.

But, before the opening half came to a close, returning forward for MRU, Sydney Danielwicz, got the Cougars on the board.

The hope for a Cougars comeback was cut short following Danielwicz' goal, however, TRU would tack on another goal in the second half.

Just one day after they fell to the TRU Wolfpack, the Cougars took to the field for their second game of the weekend. This taking on the UBC Okanagan Heat.

Their second game of the regular season propelled the Cougars back in the right direction as they tied the Heat, 1-1.

In a similar fashion as the men's program, the women's team also hopes to return to the Canada West Playoffs come October.

And, while the opening two matches of the regular season was not the start the team had hoped for, there's strong reason to believe the club can still bounce back — and with ease.

The team is backed up by head coach, Tino Fusco. Last season, Fusco was named

Canada West's Women's Soccer Coach of the Year after he led the Cougars to top spot in the Prairie Division with a regular season record of 10-3-1. Along with Fusco, nineteen players from last year's roster have returned for the upcoming season.

Both programs will return to the Mount Royal Stadium Field for their home-opening game in early September.

The women's team will host the University of Fraser Valley on Friday, Sept. 8 at 5 p.m. MT, while the men's team will welcome MacEwan University on Saturday, Sept. 9 at 1 p.m. MT.

#S

2, straight seasons Mount Royal's men's soccer team won bronze at the Canada West Playoffs.

203, days between the end and start of the NFL season.

313, points scored by the Calgary Surge's leading scorer, Stefan Smith, during the 2023 CEBL Season.

4, sports Mount Royal's men's and women's athletics are involved in.

Don't sleep on 'em: Three NFL teams that could be playoff bound this season

Zach Payne

Contributor

Parity in sports is crucial. The idea that different teams rise and fall in the standings, year after year, is what makes sports entertaining. This concept gives new and different teams the chance to challenge for championships each year, and thus, keeping fans of the league engaged.

When it comes to each season in the National Football League (NFL), there is plenty of parity.

This gives fans the chance to look ahead to the future and predict what teams are due for a good season and which teams are not.

With the 2023 NFL season just around the corner, here are three teams that could

make the jump to the playoffs after missing out last year.

In Rogers they trust

The New York Jets are a very popular pick to make the jump to the playoffs this season. And it's mostly because they made the biggest splash of the offseason.

After battling a mediocre and at times, downright awful quality in their quarterbacks, the Jets took a swing at the hottest name on the market: Aaron Rodgers.

While the former back-to-back Most Valuable Player and Green Bay Packers quarterback may not be at the top of his game anymore—

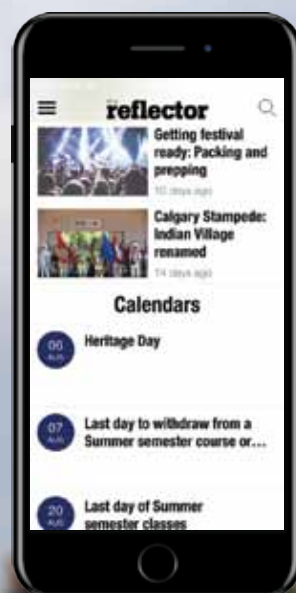
having just come off a season in which he threw the second most interceptions of his career (12) and the

lowest quarterback rating of his career since becoming a starter (91.8)—Rodgers still provides a significant boost

on paper to the Jets offense. To go along with Rodgers,

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Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner is the New York Jets' star defensive lineman. Photo courtesy of Mark Getman/Wikimedia Commons

"Don't sleep..." Continued from Pg. 14

the Jets have explosive weaponry surrounding their new quarterback.

Reigning Offensive Rookie of the Year, Garrett Wilson, is primed for a breakout season with his ability to create separation and win routes deep down the field. Running back, Breece Hall, is bouncing back from a torn ACL but was electric on the field during his shortened rookie campaign. Joining Hall in the backfield is Dalvin Cook, who joins the Jets

after being released from the Minnesota Vikings.

The newly-formed duo should offer a lot of splash plays from the backfield, which will ease the load on Rodgers' shoulders.

On the other side of the ball, The Jets have one of the better defensive units in the NFL. Led by Defensive Rookie of the Year, Sauce Gardner, star defensive lineman, Quinnen Williams, and plenty of depth to go around, the Jets defence

should once again be top-10 in the NFL.

If their offence clicks the way it is anticipated to, the Jets should contend for not just a playoff spot, but an American Football Conference (AFC) East Division title.

Pittsburgh, Picketts, playoffs?

Certainly not a 'sexy' pick, but the Pittsburgh Steelers

remain in the playoff picture after missing out on the 'dance,' last season. With stellar defence, led by arguably the best edge defender in the League, T.J. Watt, Pittsburgh is always tough to play against.

What held them back last season was the offence, led by rookie quarterback, Kenny Pickett. After taking the starting job from Mitch Trubisky, Pickett had an up-and-down year.

Heading into his second year in Pittsburgh, there's no competition.

With a nice supporting cast of Najee Harris, Dionte Johnson, and popular breakout pick George Pickens, this is Pickett's team and they will go as far as he takes them.

Underdogs turned Lions

After many years of futility, the Detroit Lions have become the NFL's favourite underdog over the offseason.

After starting last season with a record of 1-6, the Lions went 8-2 down the stretch and nearly made the playoffs. With another offseason and draft class to add to the young core, both fans and media agree; this could be the year the Lions get back in the playoffs.

The foundation of the

excitement stems from the offence.

Thanks to a resurgent Jared Goff in the quarterback slot and budding superstar in Amon-Ra St. Brown, Detroit boasted a top-five offence last season. This year, after running backs, D'Andre Swift and Jamaal Williams, found new homes elsewhere, the Lions aimed to give their 'run game' a boost by bringing in former Chicago Bear, David Montgomery, and rookie, Jahmyr Gibbs. With offensive coordinator, Ben Johnson, returning for another season, many believe the Lions offence will be top-10 once again.

The question mark for Detroit is whether or not their defence can take a step in the right direction. Defensive end, Aidan Hutchinson had a phenomenal rookie season, notching 9.5 sacks.

But, he was the only consistent contributor.

To try and fix that issue, the Lions invested big in the draft and free agency, spending a first-round pick on linebacker, Jack Campbell, and a second-round selection on safety Brian Branch. In free agency, the Lions landed C.J. Gardner-Johnson, who will surely infuse some snarl into the secondary.

If Detroit's defence can keep up with the offence, anything is possible in a wide-open NFC North.



Pittsburgh Steelers' offense faces the Kansas City Chiefs. Photo courtesy of Con-man33/Wikimedia Commons



Detroit Lions enter onto Ford Field, led by Jared Goff. Photo courtesy of All-Pro Reels/Wikimedia Commons

Looking back at the Calgary Surge's inaugural CEBL season

It was a season of firsts for Calgary's newest sports franchise

Matt DeMille

Sports Editor



Calgary is starting to earn more and more basketball fans as a result of the formation of Calgary's newest team, the Calgary Surge. The Surge's home court is located at Calgary's WinSport Centre. Photo courtesy of Calgary Surge/X

Making it to the championship game of an elite basketball league is no small feat for any organization.

And, it's even more challenging to do it during a team's inaugural season.

Yet, that's what the Calgary Surge did in their first season in the Canadian Elite Basketball League (CEBL).

The Surge, which was the latest sports franchise to make Calgary its home, first announced its involvement in the CEBL following the relocation of its former club, the Guelph Nighthawks, in August 2022.

Starting in May 2023, the Calgary Surge would be

an active participant in the Canadian league.

Their move to southern Alberta marked the first time a professional basketball team was representing Calgary in nearly 30 years. Prior to the Surge, the Calgary 88's took to the court from 1988 to 1992, followed by the Calgary Outlaws in 1994.

While excited to play in front of their new city and fanbase, it became clear that the Surge wanted to be more than just a member of the League. Their goals were more ambitious and more centered around winning titles than accepting participation ribbons.

In just their first game

of the season, the Surge would record their first win in franchise history. A 74-70 thriller against their provincial rivals, the Edmonton Stingers.

The Surge's blistering start to their inaugural season kept burning past their opening game, as the club went undefeated through their first three games.

Following the CEBL's 20-game regular season, the Surge found themselves tied for first in the Western Conference, alongside the Winnipeg Sea Bears. Their 12-8 record was enough to catapult the club from Cowtown to the Western Conference Semifinals of the

2023 CEBL Playoffs.

The Surge wouldn't be stopped at the semis, however.

Their debut season saw the team punch their ticket to Langley, B.C.; the host city for the CEBL's Championship Weekend after eliminating the Edmonton Stingers in the semifinals.

In the next stage — the Western Conference Final — the Surge found themselves trailing the host team, the Vancouver Bandits, 75-74, late in the fourth quarter.

With a spot in the CEBL's Championship Game on the line, Surge guard and Ajax, Ont., local Stefan Smith sunk a three-point shot to

give Calgary the lead and, eventually, the win.

Unfortunately, Calgary's historic run at a CEBL title was ultimately dashed in the championship game. No more magic in hand, the Surge fell to the Eastern Conference's Scarborough Shooting Stars, 82-70.

While the end result of the Surge's inaugural season could be chalked up as heartbreaking, it's still very rare to see a team find the same level of success that the Surge found in 2023. So, by building on the instant progress the team set in their maiden voyage, there is a lot to be excited for in the Surge's second season in the CEBL.