



**KHALISTAN**



INDIA-WORLDS  
ARGEST   
DEMOCKRACY

**Diplomatic tensions between  
Canada and India  
(Pg. 4)**



# Geography and bumblebees

*MRU and Calgary researchers receive a \$120,000 grant for their community science program*

**Liam Rockliffe**

Contributor



**Students of the Community Science Liaison Program learn about bumblebees by making boxes for the bees. Photo courtesy of Katherine Boggs**

With the help of bees, a Mount Royal University (MRU) professor is changing the way elementary students and educators learn about climate change.

Katherine Boggs, a geology expert and professor at MRU, spearheads the Community Science Liaison Program (CSLP) out of MRU. Starting in the naval reserves, and then going to school, Boggs realized her lifelong passion for geology. Coming to Calgary to be closer to the mountains, a job opened up at Mount Royal, and Boggs began sharing her passion with students.

## Community Science Liaison Program

Through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and later on Geoscience Education and Outreach, the CSLP was born. This project, led by Boggs, reaches into communities and provides them with opportunities

to participate in science and provide learning opportunities otherwise unavailable. Kindergarten to grade 12 schools have the opportunity to work side by side with scientists and have the curriculum altered to include this student-sourced research.

“With the [CSLP], overall what it’s intended to do is to create the capacity for curriculum-based science projects parallel to scientists’ own projects,” said Boggs.

“It’s about promoting science into classrooms, supporting teachers who may not have a science background, and it’s about community building and creating connections between the outside world and universities.”

With two focuses currently in the CSLP—Resistance to Vaccine Misinformation and the Geological Bumblebee Program (GBB), Boggs and her team are hoping to

expand the program with the help of the \$120,000 grant.

## Geographical bumblebee

How do geography and bumblebees come together to provide a valuable experience for children?

Young students learn about the life cycles of insects and study rocks and minerals. Combining these courses into one scientific experience gives children the hands-on experience they need to not fear science as they grow.

In Calgary, the glacier till—rocks brought and dropped by receding glaciers—is very interesting as ice sheets from the west and east meet in the south of our city, and no one knows yet the exact line of where they met. The geological component of the GBB program involves the kids taking measurements of the rocks and relaying their findings, then discovering the year that the rocks were formed. The activity blows

the kids away. At this stage in the children’s learning, they have just begun to understand numbers, and a number such as 500 million years is completely mind-blowing—and yet only a little bit older than mom and dad.

For the bees, the kids build and install bumblebee boxes in the spring, and then collect the boxes in the fall. When the little scientists collect the boxes, the juvenile queen has left the colony to hibernate for the winter, and the rest of the colony dies off, completing the life cycle of bees. Meaning, there is no danger of the kids being stung.

Almost like Christmas morning, the kids get to open their boxes and see what is contained within. Boggs hopes to have the boxes linked to GPS on a website so the kids can follow the journey of their boxes years down the line. So far the GBB has had around 800 kids who have produced about 400 bee boxes.

A second-grade student says, “When researching, we found that bees are disappearing around the world and that scientists don’t know why. We want to help with the research.” The data produced by the kids’ bee boxes has helped scientists figure out which bees are endangered, as well as why and how they are disappearing.

## Expanding the program

Boggs will be expanding the program to B.C., Yukon, and N.W.T. until it is firmly established in Western

Canada. She plans to do this over the next three years, while also expanding the number of modules available.

The grant will largely be going towards extending the reach of the program and improving the quality and quantity of modules. Some other points that the funding will be going towards are hiring a full-time project manager, trips to expand the program, and building up the base so the program has room to grow.

Future projects include earthquake monitoring, GPS data, monitoring weather conditions, and studying the planet Venus.

Boggs is also hoping to get the 2028 International Geoscience Congress (IGC) to Calgary. Canada will present its bid in 2024 at the South Korean IGC conference.

This approach of including children in citizen science has been proven in Whitehorse, Yukon, to improve the reception of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and increase graduation rates. In Whitehorse, the school took three groups of kids – above average, underperforming, and at-risk kids. Every kid graduates and around 60 per cent pursue STEM disciplines. There’s no other program with that kind of success rate.

The CSLP intends to bring this citizen science approach to Canadians and younger grades, providing scientific expertise from scientist participation.

Having scientists travel to smaller communities, share their research, and include the children and community in their research and findings.

# Crisis for foreign students

**Matthew Hillier**

Contributor

Canada has recently announced that it is expected to be the temporary home to close to a million new students from abroad. These numbers are expected to increase to 900,000 according to an interview by *CBC's The House* with the Minister of Immigration,



Foreign students are being misled around job opportunities in Canada. Photo courtesy of Megan Creig

Refugees and Citizenship, Marc Miller.

According to a report by Sen. Ratna Omidvar, Sen. Hassan Yussuff and Sen. Yuen Pau Woo, there are not enough permanent residency spots for all of these students, despite them essentially being promised residency after graduation.

“The International Student Program has been a victim of its own success. International students have a strong desire to come to Canada, however they face many challenges including high tuition fees and abuse. In many cases, they do not receive the support they need to overcome these difficulties,” says Sen. Ratna Omidvar.

In addition to a misleading perspective on permanent residency, housing may also be a concern for these new students.

Canada is currently facing a housing shortage. These students may face housing insecurity in addition to the hurdles of studying in a new country and culture, and being misled on permanent residency.

The Canadian government in response is considering a cap on yearly admissions of international students to ease the strain on the housing market. However, some universities are pushing back against this.

Still, one big question remains: Why?

Why is our government introducing such a large number of students despite knowing that they will likely face residency, economic and housing insecurity?

Applyboard says it's because it makes the government approximately \$22.3 billion a year.

Hosting international students is a win-win for the Canadian government and its various postsecondary institutions. International students spend their money in Canada, work in Canada, owe student debt to Canada, and finally may continue to live and work here long after their student life is over.

The government, in comparison, shares this in a statement from its International Education Strategy report:

“International education is an essential pillar of Canada's long-term competitiveness. Canadians who study abroad gain exposure to new cultures and ideas, stimulating innovation and developing important cross-cultural competencies. Students from abroad who study in Canada bring those same benefits to our shores.”

# Worsening drought in Calgary

*A beautiful end to summer, but I drought it*

**Gurleen Jassal**

Contributor

A beautiful end to the summer brings an unfortunate note for Calgarians and their water usage as a water shortage in the city has led to restrictions being put in place.

As the weather warmed in late August, the rate of precipitation had dwindled leading the water levels for both the Elbow and Bow River to hit a low. This occurred due to the early melt of snow in spring, resulting in lower flows of water into the rivers.

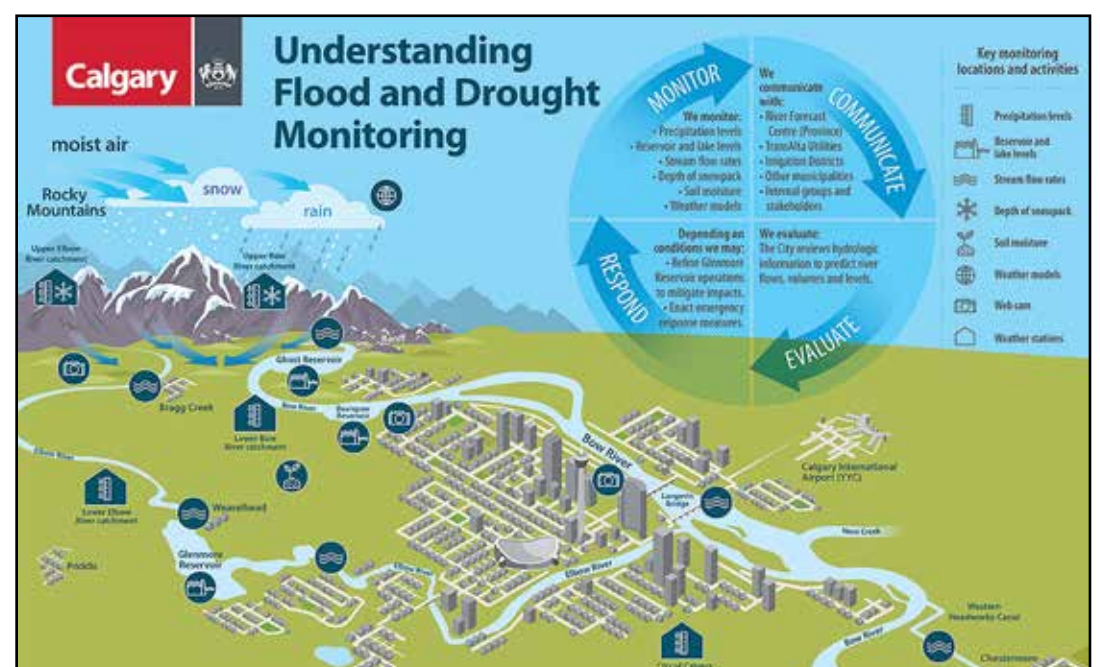
With these unexpected occurrences, the City of Calgary decided to put in water restrictions to ensure continued water access.

“To manage water use in times of shortage, the water

utility bylaw outlines outdoor water restrictions, which may be implemented by the director of water services,” said the City of Calgary. “The bylaw outlines four stages of mandatory restrictions based on the severity of the water shortage. The first stage is the least restrictive while the fourth is the most restrictive.”

Currently, the city is at stage one for restrictions, which means that Calgarians can have outdoor water usage twice a week on designated days according to house number.

“Outdoor water use is only restricted during a period of



An infographic by the City of Calgary explains how droughts are monitored. Photo courtesy of City of Calgary

**Continues on Pg.4**



## THE REFLECTOR

Issue 3, Volume 62

## EDITORIAL STAFF:

**Publishing Editor:** Mikaela Delos Santos**Managing Editor:** Ivar Bergs**News Editor:** Julie Patton**Features Editor:** Emma Duke**Arts Editor:** Isabella West**Sports Editor:** Matthew DeMille**Photo Editor:** Megan Creig**Layout Editor:** Emily Kirsch**Web Editor:** Jed Mabazza

## CONTRIBUTORS: Liam

Rockcliffe, Gurleen Jassal, Jazmin Kaur, James Windler, Zafir Nadjji, Jillian Zack, Matthew Hillier, Ethan Seaborn

## STAFF WRITERS: Arroy (AJ)

Jacob, Emma Marshall, Madison McClelland, Zack Payne

**Cover:** Photo courtesy of Jora Singh

The Reflector, with an on- and off-campus circulation of 5,000, is the independent voice of the students of Mount Royal University. It is published fortnightly during the academic year (Sept. to April).

The Reflector is editorially autonomous and financially independent from all other governing bodies at Mount Royal University.

The Reflector welcomes newsworthy submissions from all students and community members. While the right of editorial comment is reserved for editors of The Reflector, opinion pieces may be submitted as letters to the editor, and may be published on the editorial page as such. The Reflector reserves the right not to publish submissions deemed by the Publishing Editor to be offensive.

Complaints arising from the content of the paper should be directed to the Ombudsboard. This board has been established as a mediator between the Reflector Publications Society staff and its readership.

All decisions of the Ombudsboard are final and binding on both parties. Letters to the Ombudsboard must be sent in confidence, care of the Reflector Publications Society, to the Reflector Publications Society office.

Submissions and letters to the editor should be a maximum of 500 words, typed, double-spaced, and contain the writer's name and phone number. No unsigned letters will be published. Only in exceptional cases, at the discretion of the Publishing Editor, will writers' names be withheld. The Reflector reserves the right to edit submissions for brevity.

Contents are copyright © 2023. No material may be reproduced without express written consent.

All opinions contained within this paper are those of the individual authors, and not necessarily those of the Reflector Publications Society. For more information, contact The Reflector office at:

## the reflector

Wyckham House  
Mount Royal University  
4825 Mount Royal Gate SW  
Calgary, AB T3E 6K6

All depts.: 403.440.6268  
Fax: 403.440.6762  
TheReflector@TheReflector.ca

## Continued from Pg.3

water shortage to maximize water conservation to help balance demand with the available water supply so that water is available for the most essential uses," the City of Calgary explains.

With these restrictions being put in full effect through mid-to-end of August, the city has been able to save over 1.1

billion litres of water—which has sustained the city's water supply.

The city monitors the river year-round to determine when a drought declaration is necessary.

"City staff examine river flows—including if there is a fire risk in our watersheds that could affect the quality—what our current and projected water demand is in Calgary and amongst other

large water users on the Bow River, weather forecasts, and any construction and maintenance that is happening on our infrastructure," said the City of Calgary.

Restrictions will be held in place until further notice as the city periodically examines the state of the water levels in the Bow and Elbow River.

"We would remind everyone that restrictions are

still in effect as we continue to see regional dry conditions and record low natural flows on the Bow and Elbow River. We are continuing to monitor conditions and will escalate or remove restrictions accordingly."

As restrictions on water usage change according to river conditions, Calgarians will have to pay close attention to all alerts the city rolls out.

# Tensions between Canada and India

## continue

Jazmin Kaur

Contributor

Hardeep Singh Nijjar was a prominent Canadian-Sikh leader in Vancouver. For the Indian government, he was a criminal, but for Sikhs, he was a human rights activist.

He moved to Canada in 1997 and became a Canadian citizen in 2007. On June 18, 2023, he was shot dead outside a Sikh temple in Surrey, B.C. As to who the assassins were is still unknown, however, it is concluded that there were more than two people involved.

On Sept. 18, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused India's government of being behind the assassination of Nijjar. Even though Trudeau said there was credible evidence that the Indian government was involved in the assassination, no further details have come forward.

### Diplomatic tensions

Diplomatic relationships have been impacted by Trudeau's accusation.

The Indian government denied everything that the Prime Minister said, and claimed that the accusations were absurd, according to *AP News*.

According to *Al Jazeera*, Nijjar was the president of the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey where he advocated for Khalistan. However, the movement of an independent Sikh state, Khalistan, is banned in India according to *TIMES*.

The current government in India, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), under the leadership of Narendra Modi is pushing India to become a Hindu nationalist state.

The Indian government called Nijjar a terrorist. However, Nijjar advocated for Khalistan in Canada, not in India, and while Nijjar was advocating for the rights of the Sikh people, he never partook in any violent actions.

Additionally, many say the BJP government has oppressed minorities, and Indian journalists have even been arrested for criticizing Modi's majoritarian rule according to the *Atlantic*.

### A familiar story

Trudeau's narrative may not be far off, as a similar storyline has played out before in India's history.

Jaswant Singh Khalra was a human rights activist in India who uncovered how the Punjab police were behind the killing of thousands of Sikhs between 1984 and 1995. When he brought his discoveries to light, it was reported that Ajit Sandhu, superintendent of police from Tarn Taran, had said "If 25,000 have disappeared, it will be easy to make one more disappear too."

On Sept. 6, 1995, he was abducted, tortured and abused. On Oct. 27, 1995, he was murdered. Khalra had come to Canada three months

before his abduction. Muslims and Christians also live with the fear of getting killed or abused by the Hindu majority. However, the BJP government has not stopped the riots and keeps encouraging a Hindu nationalist government. Muslim shrines are burned and Christian churches are vandalized, according to *NBC News*.

Despite being a modern democratic country, India's laws systematically discriminates against minorities.

Since partition, Sikhs have had a long history of grievances against the Indian government. When the BJP came into power, other minorities began feeling alienated in India.

Sikhs have sought redress and acknowledgment for the

past atrocities. Some have investigated these issues, like Khalra, and tried to work with the Indian state to come to a resolution. Others have advocated that they will never get their fair share in India and want to form their own country, Khalistan.

"Many journalists seem to have taken their eyes off the ball. Instead of interrogating the victim (Hardeep Singh Nijjar), it might be more helpful if more attention was to be given to the alleged foreign interference of the perpetrator or to providing the public with a more nuanced account of the complex history of India-Canada-Sikh relations," says Michael Hawley, Sikh studies professor at Mount Royal University.



On Oct. 1, Calgarians protested the Indian government and its worsening conditions. Photo by Jazmin Kaur

## How one woman is redefining Indigenous reconciliation

*Sandra Sutter is using business, music, and film to shape a new narrative*

**Emma Marshall**

Staff Writer

Through her impactful music and film, Sandra Sutter has become a voice of Indigenous resilience. However, her behind-the-scenes work in the corporate world is laying the foundation for a reality where Indigenous voices are equal and welcomed.

Growing up, Sutter was adopted into a white Christian family, and the truth about her heritage was a mystery to her for most of her life. But deep down, she knew she had Indigenous roots.

"In some ways, I feel that I was robbed of an identity for a period of time," said Sutter.

Later in life, she discovered that on one side of her family, she is Scottish and Irish, and on the other side, she is Métis – more specifically, Cree with some German. This discovery allowed for Sutter to truly connect with her culture after a lifetime of feeling displaced.

She made a commitment to help heal the world through understanding and kindness. This promise was partially because of the ancestral teachings of a course she was taking through the Indigenous Community-Industry Relations Certificate Program, and also because of her elders, Reg and Rose Crow Shoe, who told her that she had a duty to her people. Through these experiences, Sutter learned how to implement this responsibility to help the world into her everyday life in the way she knew best.

"That's why I'm an award-winning recording artist. Because I said I would do it through music," said Sutter.

At seven-years-old, Sutter began to take piano lessons. For her, there was an immediate connection to the instrument and to the music. She noted that music is all about love, and that there is beauty in how it can connect people.

"I don't think that there's a better way to express what we need to share with the world, and what the world needs to share with us," said the musician.

In 2017, Sutter went on to record her first full-length studio album with a grant she received from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. She worked alongside award-winning producers Vince Fontaine and Chris Burke-Gaffney to create her debut album *Cluster Stars*.

This album conceptualized her vision to bring understanding of Indigenous knowledge and values to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, as well as providing peace and acceptance through recognizing the strength of Indigenous nations.

"I can bring awareness to that," said Sutter. "I can bring healing to myself and others, and I do what I can because I have a voice raised in privilege."

By recognizing the privilege of her upbringing, Sutter is able to use her platform to spread these important messages of healing and peace. She even went on to make a short film, *A Woman's Voice*, as a COVID-19 lockdown project, in order to shine a light on challenges

that all women face at various points in their lives.

Her hope was to create something meaningful that everyone can relate to. She featured a diverse cast in order to showcase the obstacles of the real world. This film won gold at the New York International Film Festival for the categories of Best Female Filmmaker and Best First Time Filmmaker in 2022.

Sutter knew that through the arts, she was able to reach the largest demographic of people to spread her message. She was also invested in numerous other practices to work towards this cause, including the Circle for Aboriginal Relations (CFAR), a registered non-profit.

During her time at CFAR, she was involved in a pilot project to help improve job opportunities in Indigenous communities.

"The community that Indigenous peoples share is impacted by colonization by residential schools, and people who've experienced that. People [who] have experienced trauma react in ways that people who have experienced trauma react — in learned ways," said Sutter. "It's also continued by people who went to residential schools, and it's perpetrated on other students, it's perpetrated on family members, until someone breaks that cycle."

It was through this work that Sutter met Rob Hunt, a fellow advocate and developer of Indigenous partnerships. He got her a job at PTW Energy, where she still works now, 10 years later, building an ever-growing portfolio of Indigenous partnerships at the company.

This position supports her

continued involvement with non-profit organizations and government committees, such as The National Indigenous Economic Development Board and the Métis Women's Economic Security Council. She works towards providing equity for Indigenous people across Canada through economic development, and she is a pillar in communications between developmental companies and Indigenous communities.

Using her passion and talent, Sutter has been able to make strides in achieving her dream of reconciliation. She continues to make important connections with the corporate world, the government, and the people. Her devoted work is changing the way that Indigenous people are represented and treated in Canada, and it all comes back to her mission.



Through her art and corporate work, Cree Métis Sandra Sutter is making progress towards reconciliation. Photo courtesy of International Indigenous Speakers Bureau



# Leading by example: How to be a successful student leader

**Arroy (AJ) Jacobs**

Staff Writer

It's not always easy being the student others can turn towards, to confide in, to rely on, all while keeping up with school assignments and exams. It's not easy being a student leader, but, then again, no one ever said it was.

When I'm not punching out articles with *The Reflector*, I serve as the President of the Student Society of Science and Technology (SSST), a non-profit club at Mount Royal University (MRU). Although I consider myself a student leader, I will be transparent and admit I'm not sure I can call myself a good one—because I'm not always sure what a good student leader looks like.

To resolve this, I spoke to two mentors of mine, both successful student leaders who have inspired me in my position. We talked about what it means to be a student leader,

and what actions you can take when the role becomes challenging. Their advice certainly helped me, and will inspire anyone looking to up their undergraduate game.

## What does it take to become a student leader?

Good question. As someone who identifies as one, I can safely say that I have no clue. At least not until I spoke with Katelyn Oszust, MRU's Student Leadership Coordinator, alumnus, and one of the first presenters at MRU's inaugural Student Leadership Conference.

Over some coffee, I asked her, "What makes someone a good student leader?" Then I remembered I should be writing this stuff down.

"Leadership and integrity

are really synonymous to me," Oszust says as I scramble to open up my voice recorder app. "Student leaders need to have some form of integrity. If I can't trust a person's integrity, then I'm not going to trust them or respect them to lead me anywhere."

We agreed that student leaders should uphold a strong sense of morale and core values that keep them aligned and well adjusted—that is someone whom your team members will gravitate towards. That's what people look for.

"Because if you lack integrity, what that tells me is you can't even lead yourself. And if you can't lead yourself, then what the hell am I doing following you? Excuse my language."

After excusing Oszust's language, I jotted down what she said—what you stand for and how you can keep up your

own standards.

She adds to this by saying, "I'm not a huge fan of the whole 'fake it till you make it,' but rather, 'show up till you make it,' because accountability and showing up [to meetings, to group bonding exercises, etc.] is going to have a tremendous impact on your personal growth."

## What if I'm having doubts?

This is another great question that I also didn't have the answer to. Not until I entered Diana Grant-Richmond's office in the Slate Innovation Lab. Another MRU alumnus, Grant-Richmond is an innovator, and a science-enthusiast who personally coached me on leading my executive board with SSST.

Imposter syndrome had been eating me up for a while,

so I asked her: "What advice do you have for a student leader who's trying to get rid of it?"

She sighed and faintly smiled, "Imposter syndrome never goes away. I'm very sad to tell you that. Every single person in government, every CEO, every celebrity deals with imposter syndrome."

I had forgotten how many times I felt like a fool when leading a team meeting for my club, but I had never heard this perspective before.

"Imposter syndrome is about making it your friend and managing it over time. It's actually a sign that you're growing. If you're dealing with imposter syndrome, it means that you've leaned into something that you don't feel like an expert at, and those are the places in which we grow."

Grant-Richmond continues as I listen intently, "You can never be an expert, you are always learning. Imposter syndrome will always be there, but you're still practicing. Whatever is causing it, you will overcome it." I jotted that advice down in my notebook too.

Don't let imposter syndrome call you a fool. Only your teammates can do that.

Walking out of Oszust and Grant-Richmond's interviews with their notes in my hands, I felt a shift in perspective, I started to perceive the term 'student leader' very differently. Yes, I can be the student others can turn towards, to confide in, to rely on, all while keeping up with school assignments and exams! I now know a little more of how to own my title as a leader. And, I felt the doubt of never becoming that version of myself slip out of me like a river running off my back. Suddenly, I felt a lot more prepared to run my next SSST meeting.



How are students prepared to lead their next team meeting? What does it take to be a successful student leader?

Photo by Arroy (AJ) Jacob

# Overcoming loneliness by being alone

*A reflective lesson from a girl who finally feels comfort in solitude*

**Mikaela Delos Santos**

Publishing Editor



Inspired by Miley Cyrus, you can show yourself love by buying yourself flowers. Photo by Mikaela Delos Santos

It feels like I've exhaled a great amount of my old self—the abandoned, the unloved, and the deprived parts of me, when I succumbed to the notion of being alone. It doesn't happen overnight, and you don't really notice it, until suddenly, your soul just feels lighter than before. This is how I felt when I finally realized that I wasn't lonely anymore. Instead, I was alone. And while the word 'alone' sounds sad, to me it is solitude.

Solitude in our early 20s may sound like such a privileged luxury. This stage in our lives is when we make lifelong connections, jump start our career and live the responsible adult life we've always dreamed of. And, in doing all of those things, we tend to assume that we need people around us to make it happen. But, when they don't end up in our lives, it feels as if our world just crumbled before us. I know I did.

Without dumping all of my childhood traumas and

experiences, I'm pretty sure that my fear of abandonment had something to do with how I grew up. Since my parents were often away at work, my sister and I had nannies that would take care of us. I've had my own nanny from the day I was born until I was about 10 years old. Over the years, our nannies would come and go—not because my sister and I were bad kids, but more so because they also had their own children and families to go back to. I didn't really think much of it until during one of my counseling sessions with a therapist. She told me that having different nannies and not having my parents around during the most essential years of being nurtured has affected the way I hold on to people and relationships.

She told me this after I cried and cried over my failed one-month and seven-day relationship with a man I met on Bumble. It changed the way I perceived my loneliness.

Yes, I was lonely. I realize that now looking back. Although from afar it didn't seem like it—I was around people a lot and was pretty social. Every time I made a friend though, there were times when I felt the need to force an immediate friendship. I think it was because I wanted everyone to know that I have lots of friends and that there are people who love me.

That was another thing—love. It's such a minuscule thing. It never really felt real to me in any way, shape or form, may it be romantic or platonic. I never really knew what it felt like or what it was supposed to evoke in me. And, it made me think, has anyone really loved me?

That was when I truly realized my loneliness. In the physical realm, I am blessed with people around me. But somehow, it also feels like I am on my own—alone.

I didn't want to be alone. I perceived companionship as a person I could be with

everyday. I knew my friends' boundaries, and I realized they had their own lives. And so, I found myself swiping through endless men on dating apps to avoid the feeling of loneliness. It was a cycle—swipe right, flirt, go on a date, slowly fade contact. If we both feel a spark and feel lucky, we'd probably end up becoming a 'thing'. But, after a bunch of dates and 'things', I realized I was going through this cycle mindlessly. I wasn't quite sure what snapped me into realization. Either way, I'm glad I did.

I hated the feeling of having to give time for myself. But, I knew I needed it to heal my soul. I made sure to spend some time looking for who I am and what I like. I took away distractions like social media. I made sure to make my 'wants' a priority alongside my 'needs.' I wanted a Nintendo Switch to play *Animal Crossing*, and so I got that. I wanted to make my own sweaters, so I got some yarn and crochet hooks.

I wanted to try training in martial arts, so I decided to sign up for jiu-jitsu classes. My wants started out small and shallow but it brought such a deeper fulfillment into my life.

As I slowly got myself five-stars on my *Animal Crossing* island, finished my first ever toque (I'm still working on a sweater), and earned my second white stripe on my white belt, I came to the conclusion that I did all of this with my companion—myself. I finally felt what love feels like, and it was quite nice knowing that I am my own first love.

In being comfortable with being on my own, I found friends through a video game and aggressive arm-locks. Heck, I even met the man of my dreams. All of this wouldn't have been possible if I didn't venture through the dark unknown of 'loneliness'. And, if you are also going through what I went through, know that you are not alone.



# YOUR STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



Visit us online for event dates & times  
[samru.ca/westgatesocial](https://samru.ca/westgatesocial)



## PRIDE & HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS 2023 / 2024 PROGRAMMING

PROGRAMS INCLUDE:  
WELLNESS WIND DOWN  
CRAFTERNOON  
... AND MORE!



**FULL SCHEDULE  
NOW ONLINE!**  
Scan QR code to see event  
dates & times or visit  
[samru.ca/pride](https://samru.ca/pride)



## CULTURAL INCLUSION 2023 / 2024 PROGRAMMING



BUILDING BRIDGES,  
TEA & BANNOCK TALKING CIRCLE

DRUM, DINE & DISCUSS

INDIGENOUS HANDICRAFTS

INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENT EAT & GREET

STUDENT BIPOC SUPPORT NETWORK

The Cultural Inclusion Centre provides a space for students to immerse themselves in the diverse campus community and safely share and explore their cultural identity with peers.



**FULL SCHEDULE  
NOW ONLINE!**  
Scan QR code to see event  
dates & times or visit  
[samru.ca/inclusion](https://samru.ca/inclusion)



@samrubuzz

[samru.ca](https://samru.ca)



# Unravelling the hidden complexities of clothing

**Madison McClelland**  
Staff Writer

Consider the outfit you're wearing right now. Whether it's conscious or not, each article is a reflection of you, your taste and your preferences. In its essence, that's what makes fashion so exciting. Yet rarely when you get dressed in the morning or pick up a new outfit at the mall you likely consider the significance behind these everyday decisions. Yes, your clothing is an exciting method of self-expression, but behind each stitch, there's always a deeper meaning to consider.

Starting Oct. 5th, 2023, Calgary's Swallow-A-Bicycle Theatre presents *Clothing*—an interactive opportunity to explore the excitement of self-expression while considering our consumerist tendencies. While the event has held privatized presentations along the same lines, this will be the first time the event is open to the public, marking it as the official premiere of this interactive experience.

Bianca Guimarães de Manuel, one of the show's creators, explained the duality of this fun, yet insightful experience.

"*Clothing* and the impacts of the clothing industry is something that implicates all people, even if we don't think about it," she said.

There's a lot that goes into the products that allow for our own self-expression and as such, this event seeks to shed light on these importances, while still staying true to the fun that fashion can be.

The experience starts right when you sign up. Prior to your arrival, you'll be required to fill out a form indicating your different clothing-related preferences. Ensuring that the experience has a strong aspect of customization was important for the creators and as such, these personal details set your experience up for success. As the event commences, each guest will then receive 50 "presents" curated to their personal style based on what they provided on the survey. You then open the presents and choose to either keep or discard what you receive - but choose wisely because these decisions will influence the rest of your journey.

"I think the whole thing is just to reflect about your relationship with items of clothing, and then as the experience evolves, maybe you get to think through things in a way that you wouldn't have," said Guimarães de Manuel.

With so many different brands and options at our fingertips, it's hard to stay

on top of making conscious decisions as consumers. Thus, what *Clothing* aims to do isn't intended to shed a negative light on your consumption, but rather instill a deeper relationship between you and the clothing you wear.

"I think it's complex," Guimarães de Manuel explained. "We're inviting you into a more profound relationship with the hidden complexities of clothing, while also trying to balance the aspect that it is important to express yourself with textiles".

This sort of balance seems to be key in this equation. The "contradictions of consumerism" as Guimarães de Manuel would put it, force buyers into hard positions at times, making it difficult to navigate both sustainability and self-expression.

"You know, certain brands are bad, but then at the same time you want it and then there's a little bit of that guilty pleasure," said Guimarães de Manuel.

Another one of *Clothing's* co-creators, Mark Hopkins, explained that their curiosity with this show was to explore "all the hidden and invisible aspects of clothing."

"If I buy this shirt," Hopkins explains, "I might buy it because I like the style." What

you may not think about, he continues, are details such as "where that material was harvested — how many places did this shirt travel before it got to me— what labour was attached and what environmental impacts were there." Just when you think there can't be more, Hopkins goes even further with considerations such as, "if I donate it, what happens to it then?" On paper, it may all seem so simple, yet rarely are these considerations made when we purchase new additions for our wardrobes.

Clearly, this event approaches awareness around the fashion industry in a fun and thrifty way. Yet in its

essence, the goal of the show isn't to overwhelm viewers with the stress of seemingly insignificant decisions, but rather to combine the pleasures of textiles with an appreciation for why we can have what we have.

"Hopefully by the end of it, they'll have a deeper relationship with the clothing that they already have, and maybe as they go forward in the world, might think differently about clothing," said Hopkins.

Tickets are available at a sliding scale rate with a suggested \$20 price and can be purchased on the Swallow-A-Bicycle Theatre website at [www.swallowabicycle.com](http://www.swallowabicycle.com).



During this interactive experience, audience members have to choose what "gifts" they want to keep or discard. Photo courtesy of Isabella West

## OUT'N ABOUT

### Karen's Diner on Tour

Have you been wanting to check out this TikTok viral dining experience? Well, now is your chance because they're coming to Calgary! Tickets are available on [explorehidden.com](http://explorehidden.com)

### Spooky Studio

The immersive Halloween experience features original art installations intended for all to enjoy. No jumpscares and no blood or guts, just imagination and a good time. Get tickets on the Patrick Art Production website.

### The Burton Bar

Become a Tim Burton character yourself at this immersive Halloween pop-up bar! Tickets are on sale Oct. 5 and this experience is only in town until Oct. 29 so grab yours today! Tickets can be found on [explorehidden.com](http://explorehidden.com)

### Pumpkin Fest

Blue Grass Pumpkin Fest hosts activities like face-painting, carriage rides, straw maze, a hot pepper contest, pumpkin carving and the main event - the giant pumpkin drop! Held on Oct. 7 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Blue Grass Nursery

# *Tales From The Rez* contributes to the thriving Indigenous film scene

**James Windler**

Contributor

Indigenous writer and director Trevor Solway is riding a high wave of emotions after his horror-comedy anthology web series *Tales From The Rez* premiered to a booming success on Sept. 24.

Calgarians packed into the Globe Cinema, which is located in the heart of Calgary's downtown area to check out *Tales From The Rez*, which is set to be released on *ATPN* later this fall.

The series' success is just another example of the thriving Indigenous film scene in Alberta, which has seen recent projects like the critically acclaimed prequel to the *Predator* series, *Prey*, which features a cast made up of 95 per cent Indigenous actors and was filmed at Stoney Nakoda Nation west of Calgary. After the successful weekend, Solway was overwhelmed by the love and support his series received.

"It was hard to find a seat. There was a lot of my community there, a lot of native people there, which was really good to see, not just colleagues but friends and family and people I've known over the years and even people who I don't know," said Solway.

"There's so many emotions for me, it was hard for me to sit there and be present, I just had to remember to take it all in and enjoy it."

Solway, who is from Siksika Nation, which is located approximately one hour east of Calgary, started developing *Tales From The Rez* years ago through The Napi Collective, which is a grassroots filmmaking society in Siksika Nation.

The project was only

meant to be a lighthearted, fun project about stories that had been passed down from family and friends, but it began to pick up steam after Solway and co-director Telly James used the first episode to get funding for a full-blown series.

After years of getting everything sorted and meeting with producers, Solway and James got the green light for their project.

Production for the series took 17 long grueling 12-hour days, but for Solway, it was all worth it.

"To make films on this level, it's complex and intricate, but it's really fascinating to be a part of and it's a lot of fun," said Solway.

Solway's path to making *Tales From The Rez* had a couple of twists and turns. After going to film school, Solway pivoted into the Journalism program at Mount Royal University.

After graduating, Solway went right back into film, as it was always his dream to create Indigenous films.

"I've always been a really creative kid and person, and film was my way of making sense of the world around me as a young Indigenous kid growing on the reserve, but also, I didn't see anybody that looked like me making films," said Solway.

"I didn't see myself, little brown kids, represented in television or movies and so I've always had that goal or mission in my mind to make films for us and by us."

The series is set to be fully released on Oct. 20 on *ATPN lumi*, a subscription-based streaming service where you can find other Indigenous-based media.



*Tales from the Rez* features Blackfoot traditional tales and twisted Indigenous urban legends. Photo courtesy of Trevor Solway



The six-part horror-comedy features Blackfoot traditional tales and twisted Indigenous urban legends. Photo courtesy of Trevor Solway



# Exploring the depths of human connection

*Content warning: themes of suicide*

**Isabella West**

Arts Editor

When Sasha's birthday present is killed by her family, she quickly closes herself off to accepting her own nature—until her parents leave her no choice.

*Humanist Vampire Seeking Consenting Suicidal Person* is a coming-of-age romantic comedy that explores the need for connection in a nocturnal comedic sense.

This French-Canadian film screened at the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF) on Sept. 28, and has had much success at other film festivals around Canada.

Ariane Louis-Seize, director and co-screenwriter of *Humanist Vampire Seeking Consenting Suicidal Person* said that she has always loved vampire and supernatural storylines—but more in the sense of coming-of-age, indie films rather than box office films.

Louis-Seize further explained that she likes to mix tones and thinks that there is a lot of creative

freedom in playing with the lightness of mumblecore films while mixing in her own take on vampire storylines.

"In tragedy, you can find some humor in it and in fun situations, sometimes there's sadness," said Louis-Seize.

Sasha, the main character in the film, is a vampire who refuses to kill after experiencing a traumatic event at a young age. But, as the years go on, Sasha's parents grow frustrated with her inability to accept her nature and cut off her blood supply—forcing her to either accept who she is or suffer the consequences of not having her life-giving sustenance.

Once Sasha ventures out on her own, she meets a boy, Paul, who has been experiencing suicidal tendencies. Sasha and Paul make an agreement that would benefit both of them, but before Sasha can go through with it, she decides that Paul needs to complete

his dying wish—leading to a full-blown night-time adventure.

This film truly encompassed the awkward teen experience while never ceasing to make the audience laugh.

Louis-Seize said that although this film is primarily a comedy about death—it's also a pretext to talk about life and to convey that we all need love and crave human connection.

"I wanted people to walk out from the theatre and feel more full," said Louis-Seize.

Leaving the theatre, the audience members were left with a refreshed perspective of the teen experience and the awareness that sometimes, all we need is a little bit of connection to overcome our burdens.

Unfortunately, the film will only be released in Quebec for the time being. However, Louis-Seize is in the process of getting it released throughout Canada.



Sasha, the compassionate vampire refuses to hunt for her own, leaving her parents frustrated by carrying the extra weight. Photo courtesy of Ariane Louis-Seize



The Irish solo artist released his third album, produced by Hozier himself. *Unreal Unearth* is an indie-folk sound with soul and blues.

"Eat Your Young" and "Unknown/Nth" are beautifully written songs in the album that really showcases his talent. His vocals are powerful and soar to heights unseen with a delicate falsetto, dancing one minute and tearing up the next.

Hozier went deeper with each song, mentioning heaven, angels and mythological figures while a gospel choir sings in the background. Each song is filled with creative metaphors, imagery and well-

thought-out lyrics. *Unreal Unearth* seems to follow the impending creative death with intimations of mortality.

Hozier succeeds in exploring that dark emotional world while his painful descent makes listeners immediately want to climb down with him. It brings a sense of heavy-hearted remorse, hopeful anticipation and the joys and sorrows of the human experience.

—Jillian Zack

## Never Enough

Daniel Caesar  
Republic  
Records

Score: A++



The Canadian R&B singer's third album starts off slow and melancholy with "Ocho Rios" and builds continuously with each song. This is Caesar's most intimate and personal album yet; the songs dive into themes like death, love, heartbreak and maturity.

Two honorable mentions would be "Always" which leans into the R&B love songs, leaving the listener pondering on old lost loves. "Disillusioned (with serpentwithfeet)" talks about the fears of growing up but finding what you're passionate about in life.

This album is a portrait of our most guarded experiences as humans, tearing and

pulling at your heartstrings with one song and soothing your soul with another.

His angelic harmonies invite listeners to wander into Caesar's minimalist and "Unstoppable" production skills. Daniel is currently on tour for this album and had performed at the Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary on Oct. 3rd.

—Jillian Zack

# Lantern-Fest celebrates cultural diversity

**Ethan Seaborn**

Contributor

With Calgary being home to a variety of different cultures, this year's Lantern-Fest paid tribute to the many different lantern festivals that take place around the globe.

On Sept. 30, people gathered together at the Southview Community Association to decorate lanterns, learn about different cultures, and bring the community together.

Executive director of International Avenue Arts and Culture Community, Kaylynn Miller, said that the event is a great way to learn about others while working together and enjoying the experience.

"It's exciting," she said. "Watching everybody work together and have fun. Enjoying each other's company, the various

cultures and learning about each other's cultures is just fantastic."

Miller said the idea was spearheaded by the German Lantern Festival. As a way to represent the many cultures that hold lantern festivals, they wanted to merge them together to create one event full of diversity and inclusion.

After sunset, participants gathered their lanterns and went on a lantern walk through the community, leading to Unity Park. Throughout the walk, people were able to look at a number of art displays while also listening to cultural stories.

"Lantern-Fest is a celebration of the unique cultural lantern festivals around the world," said Miller. "Bringing the community together to be creative, learn about

lantern diversity and build community."

With the event falling on the same day as Truth and Reconciliation Day, the lantern festival held

activities to honour the day and allowed participants an opportunity to reflect.

"We wanted to make sure that we are honoring that culture," Miller said. "People

can make the floating lanterns and put their well wishes or drawings, reflecting on Truth and Reconciliation Day and what it means to them, or what they've learned



Lantern-Fest 2022 shows people celebrating cultural diversity. Photo courtesy of International Avenue Arts and Culture Community Facebook page



@samrubuzz

samru.ca

## YOU COULD WIN \$500!



SAMRU is looking for feedback to improve your student experience! Take our brief survey and enter to win!

samru



students' association  
of mount royal university



# Red Bull Racing's F1 team wins World Constructors' Championship

*How two vastly different weekends on Asian circuits led to Red Bull capturing their second-straight Constructors' Championship*

**Zafir Nadji**  
 Contributor

For a record-shattering 15 races in a row, including the first 13 of this Formula One (F1) season, Red Bull Racing had put together an impressive streak of first-place finishes. So when the automotive circus known as F1 landed in Singapore for the 14th race of the 2023 season, fans expected Red Bull to continue their streak of dominance. There was even an expectation for Red Bull's Sergio Perez to take home the top spot at Singapore's Marina Bay Circuit — a feat he's accomplished in his previous two visits to the track.

However, the racing team and its fans were in for a shocking result, as lead driver and two-time World Champion, Max Verstappen, qualified in 10th place (P10) ahead of the race, while his teammate Perez qualified 13th fastest (P13). The two drivers finished the Singapore Grand Prix in fifth and eighth place, respectively. Thus, snapping their win streak at 15 straight.

Verstappen, who entered Singapore on an unprecedented 10-race win streak, found it difficult to keep traction in his car, the RB19, as the extreme temperatures and humidity on the track caused

his rear tires to overheat. This was also a problem for city-circuit specialist and teammate, Perez, who has historically been great at managing his tires. This left the race wide open for the other nine teams and 18 drivers — and produced an excellent Sunday of racing.

Ferrari's F1 team secured their first win of the season — thanks to a first-place finish from Spaniard Carlos Sainz — moving them closer to Mercedes-AMG in the battle for second place in the Constructors' Championship. Their efforts have led to a hot streak that's seen the Ferrari drivers make three podium appearances in the last four races, including an impressive and drama-filled third and fourth-place finish at their home grand prix in Monza, Italy.

McLaren's Lando Norris finished second for the third time this season in his newly upgraded car, while seven-time Driver's Champion Lewis Hamilton put his Mercedes-AMG across the line in third. Hamilton's placement ended up saving Mercedes' race after teammate George Russell put his car into the barrier trying to chase down Norris for second

place on the final lap.

The motorsport spectacle travelled to Japan next, where, in 2022, Verstappen sealed his first driver's championship in the pouring rain. However, he had never led a single lap in dry conditions at the Japanese Grand Prix before.

So, when the forecast appeared clear, fans of dramatic races remained optimistic that the other teams could keep Red Bull at bay again. This was not the case, as Verstappen, cleverly nicknamed 'The Flying Dutchman,' topped all three practice sessions, qualified on pole and cruised his way to a win under the Japanese sun. Verstappen's 13th win of the season also gave Red Bull Racing the 2023 Formula One World Constructors' Championship — their second-consecutive title and sixth overall.

In Japan, McLaren celebrated another brilliant weekend as Norris started in third and crossed the line in second, while rookie pilot Oscar Piastri secured 'Driver of the Day' honours after qualifying first and securing third in the race. The Japanese Grand Prix was also the site of his first F1 podium finish.

Ferrari edged closer

to Mercedes-AMG for second in the Constructors' Championship standings, following a fourth-place finish from Sainz and sixth spot for Charles LeClerc.

Meanwhile, Hamilton and Russell, who battled each other at three separate points in the race and in the absence of team CEO Toto Wolff, finished fifth and seventh, respectively.

The last two races proved to be those of attrition, as Singapore ended with four retirements and Japan ended with five. Next up is the Qatar Grand Prix, a track which has only been run once before — during the 2021 season and was won by Lewis Hamilton.

The Qatar Grand Prix will take place at 11 a.m. MT on Sunday, Oct. 8.



**Belgian-Dutch racing driver, Max Verstappen, was the 2021 and 2022 Formula One World Champion. Photo courtesy of Morio/Wikimedia Commons**

# #S

**8:50**, time left in the overtime period when MRU'S womens program won the 2023 U SPORTS National Championship

**78**, days Mike Babcock spent as the Columbus Blue Jackets head coach

**127**, points scored by Canada in the bronze medal game of the 2023 FIBA World Cup

**48**, Formula One races won by Red Bull Racing's, Max Verstappen

# Bab-walked: Why Blue Jackets' coach resigned

**Zack Payne**

Staff Writer

On July 1, 2023, the Columbus Blue Jackets officially hired Mike Babcock to be their new head coach. It was a move that had long been rumoured, but Columbus had to wait until July 1, when Babcock's contract with the Toronto Maple Leafs officially expired. It had been over three and a half years since the Leafs let Babcock go, but he was still being paid the remainder of an eight-year, \$50 million deal.

During Babcock's extended absence from the National Hockey League (NHL), there was never much of a thought that a team shouldn't give him another chance. Despite his resumé, he had proven to be a coach with an outdated approach. Yet, the Blue Jackets decided to take a chance on him, making him the highest-paid bench boss in franchise history that proved to be a sizable error in judgment.

On Sept. 17, not even three months after officially being hired, Babcock resigned from his post following the NHL Players Association's (NHLPA) investigation into allegations that the coach was using his authority to look through his players' phones.

After he was fired by the

Leafs, back in November 2019, it came to light that Babcock had used his power as head coach to create a toxic environment for his players. There were multiple allegations directed at Babcock, claiming that he had mistreated players during his time with the Leafs as well as his time with the Detroit Red Wings. Former Red Wings forward, Johan Franzen, alleged that Babcock verbally abused him.

Another incident that came to light involved Leafs' star forward, Mitch Marner.

During the 2016-17 season — Marner's rookie year — Babcock allegedly brought Marner into his office and convinced him to rank every skater on the roster from hardest-working to least-hard-working. After Marner reluctantly handed in a list, Babcock showed the entire team during a meeting. This incident reportedly brought a young Marner to tears.

These incidents, amongst others, have resulted in many people in the NHL and the NHLPA dismissing Babcock as a head coaching candidate throughout the past several cycles.

Yet Columbus ignored the

risks.

On Sept. 12, the worst case scenario happened. During an episode of the *Spittin' Chiclets* podcast, former NHL forward, Paul Bissonnette, revealed that an anonymous player reached out to him. The player broke the news to Bissonnette that Babcock allegedly asked to see the photos on each

player's phones so he could determine the kinds of people they are.

Five days later, after a brief investigation by the NHLPA, Babcock resigned, ending his reign as head coach for the Columbus Blue Jackets.

While many believe that this is the final straw in Babcock's polarizing coaching

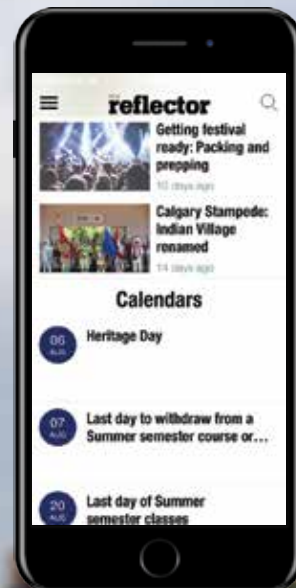
career, it wouldn't come as a shock to see the old-school coach find a coaching gig with some professional hockey team. After all, many thought Babcock's last 'hurrah' was his tenure with the Toronto Maple Leafs in 2019.

Yet, somehow, he keeps crawling back into the limelight.



Mike Babcock has been accused by players and has resigned as head coach of the Blue Jackets. Photo courtesy of Tom Gromak/Wikimedia Commons

## The Reflector Newspaper app available now in your favourite app store



**Get The Reflector Newspaper app available in the App Store and in Google Play. It has all of the up-to-date news and information to enhance your Mount Royal University experience**



View QR code in photo app



Download on the  
**App Store**



GET IT ON  
**Google Play**

Phone graphic by Rafael Fernandez - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=51218006



# Team Canada wins bronze at the 2023 FIBA World Cup

*What does Canada's performance at the FIBA World Cup mean for their Olympic aspirations*

**Zafir Nandji**

Contributor

Canada Basketball has always played second fiddle to their American counterparts when it comes to world basketball competitions, whether it be at The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) World Cups or Olympic basketball games. But, after finishing the 2023 FIBA World Cup as bronze medalists with a win over their continental neighbours, is it time to anoint Team Canada as gold medal contenders for the upcoming 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris?

This year's FIBA World Cup had some notable absences across the competing nations. Absences like Nikola Jokić, a two-time Most Valuable Player (MVP) and reigning Finals MVP for the NBA, who decided to take rest after winning the 2023 NBA Championship with the Denver Nuggets. Team USA also had to field a 'B-team' composed of 'almost' stars after their own biggest NBA names decided not to compete. Even Jokic's Canadian teammate, Jamal Murray, couldn't make it, as he needed to rehabilitate his lingering knee issues.

Despite all that, Canada Basketball was still able to field a lineup of seven NBA players, third most only to Australia, with nine, and the United States, with 12.

The Canadian roster included the likes of NBA All-Star, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, NBA All-Defensive Team member, Dillon Brooks, and world competition veteran, Kelly Olynyk, among many others. The team was coached by Associate Head Coach of the Sacramento Kings, Jordi Fernandez,

who was competing in his first FIBA World Cup as the Canadian head coach. Not that anyone would notice, though, as his team posted a 3-1 record in qualifiers and went 4-1 in the group stage. This included a win against Spain, a historic superpower in international basketball competitions, eliminating the European team before the quarter-final rounds.

Canada, on the other hand, advanced to the quarterfinals to face Slovenia, a team led by 24-year-old NBA superstar and fan-favourite, Luka Dončić. The game itself was a heated one, as Dončić complained about bad officiating all game, as did his team following the game. But this was ultimately a sign of frustration after Canada's Gilgeous-Alexander outscored him 31-26 en route to a 100-89 victory for Canada.

The Canadians then prepared to face off in the semi-finals against the Serbian team, who, despite the absence of Nikola Jokić, had only one less win than Canada up until that point. Taking on a team, whose core roster had barely changed for the last 10 years and included NBA players like Nemanja Bjelica, Nikola Jović, Bojan Bogdanović, and his unrelated name-twin, Bogdan Bogdanović, Canada was immediately the underdog in the matchup. As was expected, Serbia's decade-long chemistry helped them advance to the championship game with a 95-86 win over Canada.

Following their loss to the Serbians, Canada Basketball's best-case scenario was now a

bronze medal. To do so, they would have to get through the team with the most NBA players in the tournament, the United States. Even though it was their secondary team, the Americans still brought a roster that featured NBA All-Stars, Anthony Edwards, Tyrese Haliburton, Brandon Ingram, and Defensive Player of the Year, Jaren Jackson Jr., giving the Canadians their tallest task under the brightest lights they'd faced all tournament long.

And boy, did the Canadians shine.

Houston Rockets guard, Dillon Brooks, played like a man possessed, dropping a game-high 39 points while breaking a Canada Basketball single-game scoring record that hadn't been reached since 1954. Shai Gilgeous-

Alexander chipped in a cool 31 points and even RJ Barrett had himself a game, scoring his tournament-high of 23 points.

The game went into overtime after American, Mikal Bridges, rebounded his own missed free throw and hit a three-point shot with under a second left.

Canada opened up the extra period with a 10-4 run that saw Brooks bully the opposition and back-to-back buckets from the smooth, Gilgeous-Alexander. After forcing a USA backcourt violation, Barrett laced a three-point dagger to put the Canadians up 124-115 with just 44 seconds left. This was enough to officially give Canada the bronze medal—their first medal since 2015.

The big takeaways: without

their second-best player, Jamal Murray, the Canadians managed to beat teams that, going into the tournament, were considered better than them. Slovenia's Dončić was considered the best player going into the tournament until Gilgeous-Alexander outplayed him, and, even though Team USA had the most NBA players attending the tournament, they couldn't outscore the Canadians.

Overall, the 2023 FIBA World Cup proved that Canadian basketball fans should cheer for their team to not just win a medal, but take home gold in the 2024 Summer Olympics.

Or, if the rumours of an American 'dream team' reuniting for a "Last Dance" style run are true, at least silver.



Daniel Theis (left) and Dillon Brooks (right) head to head. Photo courtesy of Sandro Halank/Wikimedia Commons

# Expectations set for MRU's hockey programs ahead of 2023-24 season

*Mount Royal's mens and womens hockey programs will be looking to build off their past successes as they gear up for their latest season campaign*

**Matthew DeMille**

Sports Editor

Their claws are unsheathed. And, their teeth are bared. Beware Canada West opponents, Mount Royal University's (MRU) hockey programs are licking their chops as they get ready for a six-month-long, regular season battle that started last Sept. 29.

Ahead of their season-opening games, the two programs have already filled their vision boards with ambitious yet distinguished expectations.

For the women's program, their bar is already set to the max. As reigning U SPORTS National Champions—a legendary feat that was achieved last March in Montreal—the Cougars are expected to perform to the highest of their abilities for the duration of the season. That is, if they want a chance to defend their national title.

While a tough task in and of itself, fifth-year forward Mackenzie Loupelle believes this year's team is more than capable of living up to expectations.

"Last year we were really good, [had] a lot of skilled girls but it's looking like we're going to be the same this year. All the rookies bring a lot of speed to the team, so I think we are going to be really fast and dominate in the league that way," she said.

Loupelle isn't wrong.

For the last handful of seasons, Mount Royal's women's program has made a frequently visited den in the top few spots of the Canada West standings. Most recently, snatching up a third-place finish at the end of the 2022-23 regular season.

The pattern continues as they

head into their latest season. In the annual pre-season poll conducted by Canada West coaches, the Cougars were ranked the second-best club in the division, only falling behind back-to-back Canada West champions, the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds.

While being U SPORTS National Champions is a title the team holds with the utmost of pride, their trophy case is missing one piece that will tie the whole cabinet together.

A Canada West title.

"Obviously [we're] aiming for Nationals [Championships] again, but we don't have a Canada West title, so that would be pretty cool," Loupelle said.

The Cougars are not feeding into the pre-season predictions, however. Instead, the women's program plans on taking their season one stride at a time.

"Obviously we just got to take it day-by-day and focus on the process rather than the end goal," Loupelle said.

"As a collective, we all have a bunch of smart hockey players and I think that's always a skill—just being able to read the ice well and know our structure."

Mount Royal's men's program also shares the same level of intensity and ambition as their women counterparts.

While the men's team took an early fall in last year's Canada West playoffs—a quarter final exit at the hands of the University of Saskatchewan—there was lots to like about their regular season performance. The team recorded a program high in wins, with 19, and also finished fourth in the Canada



**Mount Royal's mens program are looking to build off their 19 win season, recorded during the 2022-23 regular season. Photo courtesy of Matthew DeMille**

West season standings.

But, in the eyes of the men's team captain, Connor Blake, there is always room to grow.

"Our standards are still really high. Last year was disappointing for the group because we had a great group and we finished with a new program record in wins. This year, it's kind of more of the same. We want to make sure that we are the hardest working team, obviously that's a cliché, but our practices and just trusting our process, then the outcomes will kind of take care of themselves," said Blake.

With a younger and quicker roster this time around, Blake also feels that his team may pose a sneaky challenge for their Canada West rivals.

"We are a really fast team. We might not be the biggest but that's not stopping us from working really hard in the tough areas. Grinding along the walls, getting to the net, but we just want to play with a high pace this year and just

out work our opponents," said Blake.

"We have a great bunch of guys that have bought in and so, again, it's just sticking to our process and controlling what we can control and not worrying about anything else."

In the 2023-24 pre-season coaching poll, Blake and his MRU teammates were ranked fifth out of the nine Canada West participants.

On a more personal level, this season will be a special one for both Loupelle and Blake, as the two fifth-year veterans are entering their final year in their academic programs. Meaning, with graduation on the horizon, this season marks the last time either of them will don their Cougars uniforms.

While still sharing the same collective goals as their teammates, the two soon-to-be graduates also plan on making the most of their final year at MRU—which includes enjoying even the smallest aspects of their playing and academic life.

"My biggest thing has just been being present and taking it all in and enjoying it, because I've played hockey a majority of my life so it's kind of scary that this is the last season. But, at the same time, just take in every second of it—including the 6:30 a.m. practices," joked Loupelle.

A similar message was uttered by Blake.

"On the personal level, just enjoying every moment knowing that it is going to be my last... I kind of want to end on a good note."

That, and, leaving a lasting impact on his younger teammates and the next wave of up-and-coming Cougars athletes.

"Trying to lead by example as best I can so that in the future years for our younger guys... they can help out others when they come into the program."

MRU's hockey programs will be back in action on Friday, Oct. 6, when they take on the University of Alberta.