

LINK

a letter from one international student to another | wanderlust: a look at all the places we wish we could go back to | BCIT and a social life; is it possible? | who is policing the police? | and much more!



Masking for a Friend

Years from now, when people ask us what the year 2020 was like, all I can say is that it was a time of disaster, unrest, and tragedy, all underneath the cloud of a global pandemic. But in its darkness, it also rang in a new era of solidarity, accountability, and transformation. During these months (excluding March, which felt like years), some saw it as a time of reflection, of resetting and recharging. Those who did not have the privilege or time to reflect, suffered from the financial ramifications of the epidemic, and will continue to in the aftermath as well.

When the editors and I were on a Zoom call discussing this issue, there was a moment of silence. So much has happened this year; we didn't know where to begin. Do we talk about the pandemic? Do we talk about Chadwick, Kobe, Breonna, George, and all the tragic losses at the hands of the police? Do we talk about the Australian bushfires? Do we mention when the CDC recommended alternative methods to face-to-face sexual activity, like glory holes?

At the beginning of lockdown, we saw businesses fall, one after another, or close some closing indefinitely. We saw grocery stores empty of toilet paper and hand sanitizer. We created new buzzwords like unprecedented and essential. There was a lot of misinformation being spread around and it got to the point where it was hard to read the news every day. Companies and schools transitioned to online learning and video calling. One thing I do know for sure is that, Skype completely dropped the ball on this one.

Also, COVID-19 comes with a mental strain and exhaustion that I don't think any of us were prepared for. Living in a time of uncertainty and with a constant air of cautiousness is anxiety-inducing. I applaud the people who overcome their obstacles and push through their fears to get through this time. Someone who takes care of their mental wellbeing can sometimes feel like they have a second job, and seeing "if you didn't start a business or learn a new skill in quarantine, you're doing it

wrong!" on social media was frustrating. If I rolled my eyes any harder at those posts, they would have popped out of my head.

And of course, it was also quite frustrating to see people call the pandemic a 'blessing,' or saying it's a good time to reflect. While the lack of human activity changing the environment was distinct (i.e. clear water canals in Italy and no the lack of flights sent carbon emissions amounts went way down), it did not equate to the number of lives lost and or the economic ruin due to from COVID-19.

This mentality showed up again in a recent roundtable talk with Janelle Monae, Zendaya, Helena Bonham Carter, Reese Witherspoon, Jennifer Aniston, and Rose Byrne in the seats.

Monae didn't hesitate to call out the rest on their privilege. "For me and my people, for the Black community, this is not an exciting time. This isn't a time that we get to really reflect. We're dealing with a lot of trauma. We were dealing with COVID-19, which affects us disproportionately—if America sneezes, the Black community gets pneumonia—and now we're having to deal with the very colour of our skin making us a target."

As for people who say they are allies, it cannot be in the form of a post or hashtag. "I'm not settling for lip service. If you want to show me that you're an ally, it's going to have to be rooted in acts of service," states Monae.

Before we went into lockdown, Associate Editor Chantel and I attended the IxL Impact by Leadership Conference held at the Burnaby campus. "Decolonizing Leadership – Systems, Stories, Relationships" taught by Outreach & Community Engagement Coordinator at SFU, Aslam Bulbulia, was the first workshop we attended. It was a great eye-opening experience from the POV of a white person, my biggest takeaway being people "stepping up/stepping down" to allow for diverse conversations and voices brought to the surface. The BLM

movement has amplified these conversations and will be a catalyst for change, just like how the #MeToo movement rippled through every industry, with vigour and an agenda to hold those accountable and make room at the table.

I grew up in a predominantly white town and was not exposed to much diversity until moving here. The most relatable example I read was that we will never fully understand the struggles within the black community, in the same way, a man will never fully understand the struggles women go through. So, those of us who stand by our friends, families, and communities suffering, we must make room at the table (and leave the table), be quiet, listen, continue to learn, amplify those voices, and change narratives.

In this issue, we touch on international news that was overshadowed by the pandemic, policing the police, preparing for the school year, and how we can help out our community. Also, as seen on the cover, we lust after where we could be if there wasn't a global pandemic going on.

Hopefully, the time for reflecting diminishes and the current action, awareness, and accountability taking place projects us forward into a year of transformation. That we stay on a trajectory that eases, quite frankly, the absolute clusterf*ck that has been the year 2020. Who knows, maybe the last few months of the year will be kinder, and bring us a little bit of glory.

—Lauren Edwards, Senior Editor



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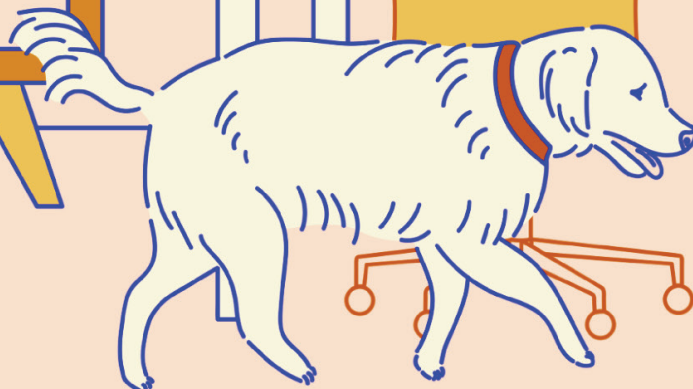


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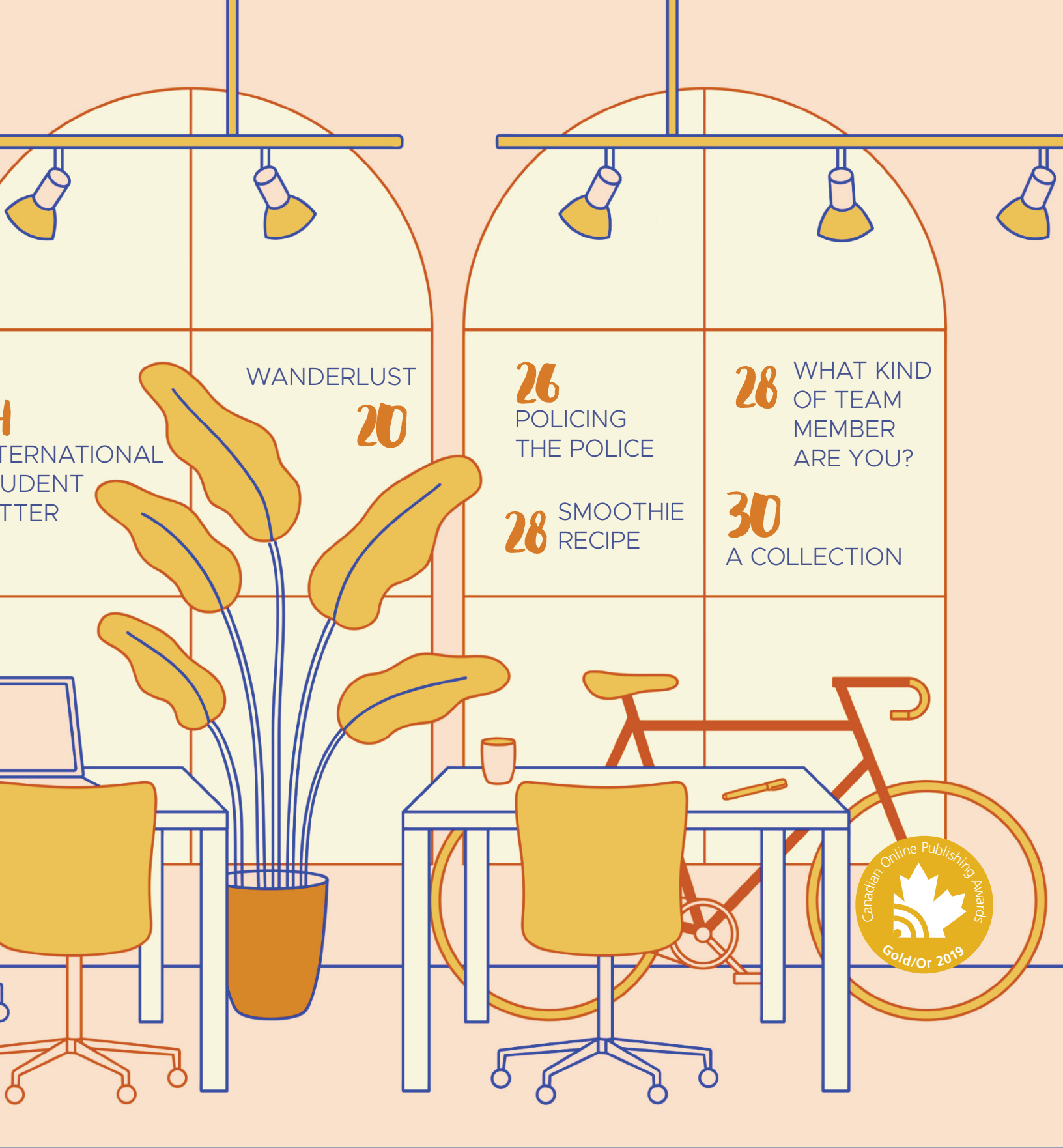
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We feature exceptional people in our community, big ideas in a changing world, and evolving social dialogue.

We welcome writers, photographers and artists of all backgrounds and abilities. Our purpose is to provide a collaborative platform for student expression, and to connect you with one another's stories and experiences.

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THE MICHELLE OBAMA PODCAST

SPOTIFY

The Michelle Obama Podcast is an extension to her 2018 memoir *Becoming* that allows readers to peek into her life after the White House. In the podcast, she shares her aspirations for herself, her immediate community, and projects various calls to action (mainly for Americans) to see the humanity in each other. In a casual tone, free from the tension a public figure tends to have from being in an idealized position, Mrs. Obama acknowledges the struggle that comes with being in isolation and living distended from the norm. That acknowledgement has made the podcast more relatable across all spectrums of age, gender, and race.

Michelle Obama is a high-profile person with a range of popular and high-profile contacts. Instead of inviting them onto her podcast, she took a personal approach by inviting her close family and friends as guests on the show. Her headliner guest was her husband, but the most relatable guest has been her big brother, Craig. Mrs. Obama is her most unwound and humorous self with her brother as they honestly compare their upbringing from their different lenses.

I would describe Mrs. Obama's podcast as apolitical. Although so much of our cultural time is informed by politics and the invisible strings it holds, her podcast speaks to our cultural moment, in the way a mirror reflects the image in front of it. The podcast provides a refreshing and comforting outlook on socio-economic topics like mental health and the cost it bears, women's health, and the staggering importance immediate communities are facing.

In the episodes that have aired so far, *The Michelle Obama Podcast* illustrates how Mrs. Obama is reflected amongst her inner circle. As her guest and close friend Michele Norris noted, there is a need for listeners to not "reach for normal but reach for better" in these trying times—which was an acknowledgement to Mrs. Obama's famously quoted line "When they go low, we go high."

—Chantel Tanaka



CENTR FITNESS APP

GOOGLE PLAY, APP STORE

A workout app created by Chris Hemsworth and his trainer? Yes please! The man got ripped to play Thor, and I'm sure we're all curious how he got there.

For those suffering from a weight gain during lockdown—or the “COVID-15”—this fitness app could be one to incorporate into your new routine to help slim down or build muscle. I was a bit hesitant at first because it's not free and there are many ways to exercise outside, but I quickly realized that having a personal trainer telling you what to do creates quick, effective results. What sets this app apart from just watching Youtube videos is there are multiple top-tier trainers, variations like HIIT, boxing, and more. Also, it includes meal plans from world-class chefs, and wellness routines like meditations, yoga, and tips to stay motivated. When the BCIT grind gets tough, this could come in handy to help accomplish your personal goals.

The starting price is \$10/month and you get seven days free. Considering the BCIT campus gym still isn't open, this isn't a bad idea. You could even ask a friend or housemate to split the cost with you! If you can fit a Chris Hemsworth's workout app into your student budget, you should go for it.

—Lauren Edwards



google THIS

The world didn't stop turning while we were safely self-isolating and social distancing over the summer. Here are some highlights that may have gone under the radar in the COVID-19 buzz. The summer of '20 had some honourable mentions while we enjoyed staying local and having our little staycations.

may

1 Prime Minister Trudeau makes it illegal to make, sell, or purchase over 1,500 types of assault rifles following one of the country's worst mass shootings in Canadian history.

4 Asian giant hornets or "murder hornets" are spotted in the US for the first time.

7 Ahmaud Arbery's murderers are arrested. Arbery was jogging through his neighborhood in Georgia, when a father and son chased and killed him.

7 Elon Musk and Grimes name their first child "X Æ A-12 Musk" (pronounced "X Ash Archangel."

11 Nicholas Johnson (who grew up in Montreal) becomes Princeton's first black valedictorian in its 274-year history.

21 Samburu County, Kenya, experiences its worst invasion of desert locusts in 70 years, posing a new threat to more than 19 million people in East Africa suffering from food insecurity.

june

4 Russia declares state of emergency following an oil spill on May 29 near the Arctic Circle. The spill is said to have occurred because the arctic permafrost melted due to the warm weather.

6 The Amazon Rainforest is said to have lost 920km² of its flora in the height of the pandemic as anti-environmentalist policies continued to be implemented in Brazil.

24 Tanzanian small-scale miner discovered and sold record breaking Tanzanite rocks with a combined weight of 15kg at \$3.4 million. The precious stone is believed to be only found in Tanzania and is used for ornaments and jewellery.

26 A boat from Myanmar sank on the Mekong river in southwestern China, leaving one person dead and six missing.

29 Halifax Regional Police department accepts its first female officer on its K-9 unit.

july

1 BC coroner services announces that drug overdose in the province from June hit a record high of 177 due to a toxic drug supply that may be circulating as facilities were closed during the pandemic.

13 NFL Washington team confirmed that they would drop racist name and logo (Washington Redskins) and are yet to confirm an official logo and name. As of July they were temporarily called the Washington Football Team.

28 Emmy nominations announced with a record number of 33 black performers up for nomination.

31 First ever virtual battle of the bands was hosted in Vancouver this year to give local artists a global platform to perform on while social distancing was in place.

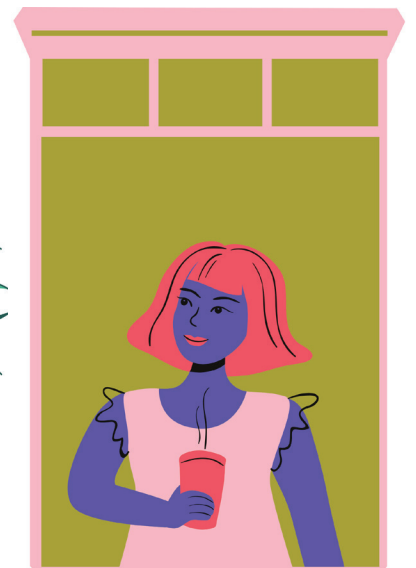
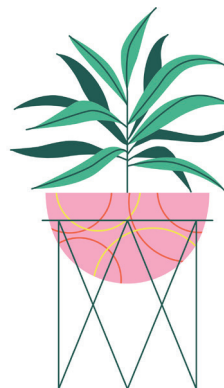
august

4 A deadly explosion in Lebanon's capital, Beirut, kills more than 200 people and injures thousands of others. The cause is nearly 3,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored for years in a warehouse near the city's port.

13 Mount Sinabung in North Sumatra, Indonesia, erupts in a string of blasts. plumes of ash into the sky, triggering a flight warning, and fears of possible lava flows.

15 After exams in the UK were cancelled due to the pandemic, university grades were awarded using a modelling system, resulting in some students receiving three grades lower than their averages.

23 Mexico airs classes on television, believing it is too dangerous for students to go back to school.



MYTH

BCIT KILLS YOUR SOCIAL LIFE

how to hold onto your social life as a BCIT student

Daniella Pettenon

I remember my first-day orientation at BCIT so vividly—so many new faces, lots of introductory chatter, and a slight sense of fear. One moment, in particular, stuck with me ever since, and I know many other students can relate.

"Say good-bye to your social life, your job, your boyfriend, maybe even your family! BCIT is tough, and it will take over your life. Grind now, have fun later."

I remember thinking, "Really? It's that absurd?" Honestly, going through my program wasn't as rough as they made it seem. I figured out a healthy social life/school balance, which allowed me to excel in school and go out on the weekends with friends outside my program. Here are some tips that I recommend trying so you can keep your friendships healthy while you're going through the BCIT grind.

FRIENDS AT BCIT

First, you need a foundation in your program. The BCIT cohort system allows you to naturally make a solid group of friends quickly, regardless of how introverted you are. Whether it be through the groups you are put in or who you get along with best, start some group chats on WhatsApp or Facebook. You can help each other out with homework, and share a meme or two. These people will be your rock throughout the program; try to help them as much as they help you.

SEND OUT A WARNING

Giving out a warning to your non-BCIT friends would also be a good idea. This may sound odd, but it's respectful to give your friends a heads up that BCIT will change the way you organize your schedule and that you will be a little MIA. When you talk to them, set up a time every week that you

can save for socializing and that you can be fully present for. I used to keep Saturday nights open for my friends. We would rotate between playing board games, going to local breweries, or trying a new restaurant downtown—this was something that I always looked forward to. It kept me motivated throughout my program.

GET INVOLVED

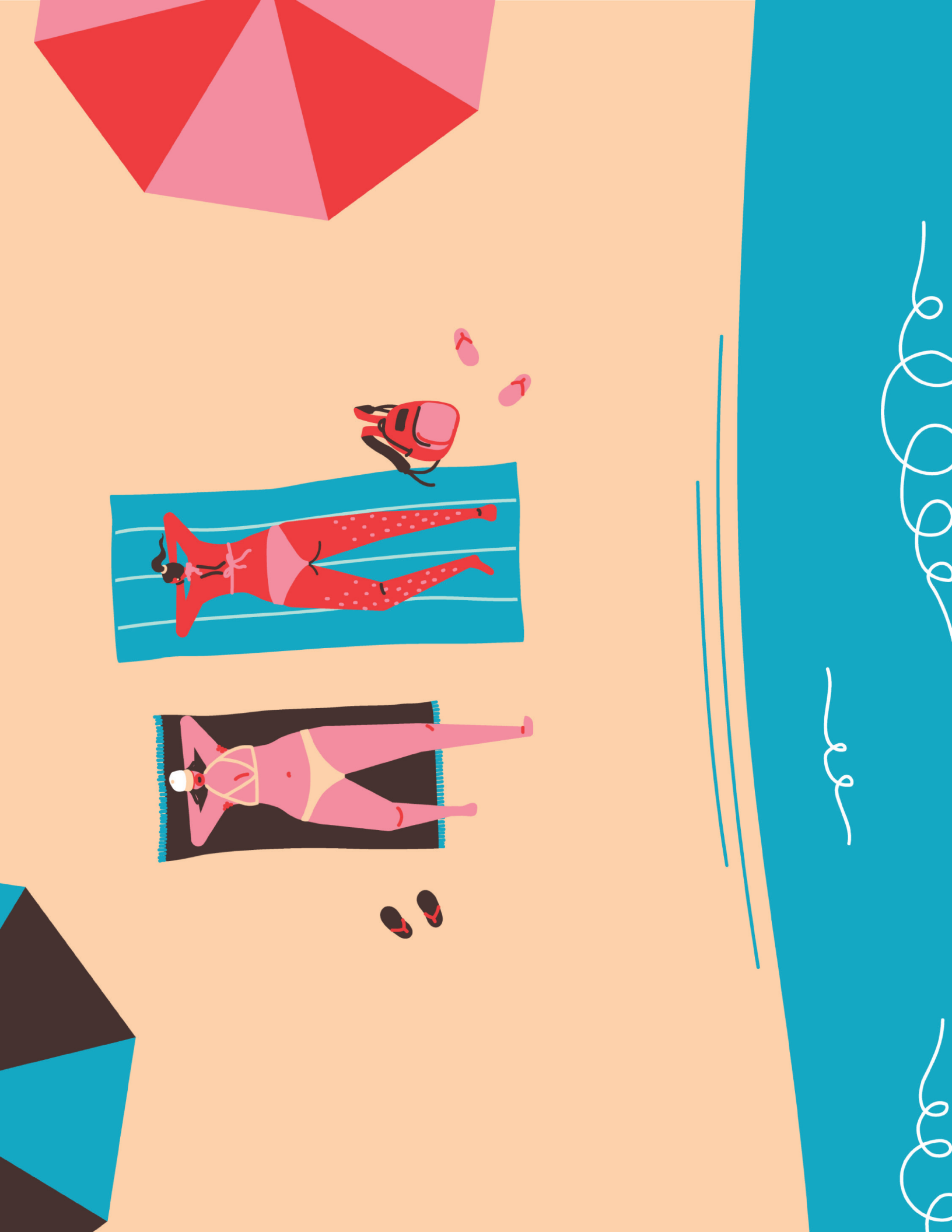
If most of your non-BCIT friends aren't local, consider joining a club or running as a representative in the student association. I like to be busy, so throughout my post-secondary journey, I've joined various clubs and communities. This helps me meet new people and have something productive to work on when homework is the last thing on my mind. Check out club's day on September 22 to learn more about the opportunities at BCIT.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR TIME

Next, you have to choose a time management system that best suits your organizational style. Some examples include a planner, a bullet journal, Google Calendar, and iCal. I personally like to use iCal because it syncs up all my calendars on all my Apple devices. Separate your calendars into categories such as School, Personal, Clubs, and Exercise so you can visually see how you are distributing your time throughout the day. To ensure you have social time, physically block it in! This will keep you accountable and show you that it is possible to fit this in your schedule. Also, are you really doing schoolwork after 8 PM on a Saturday?

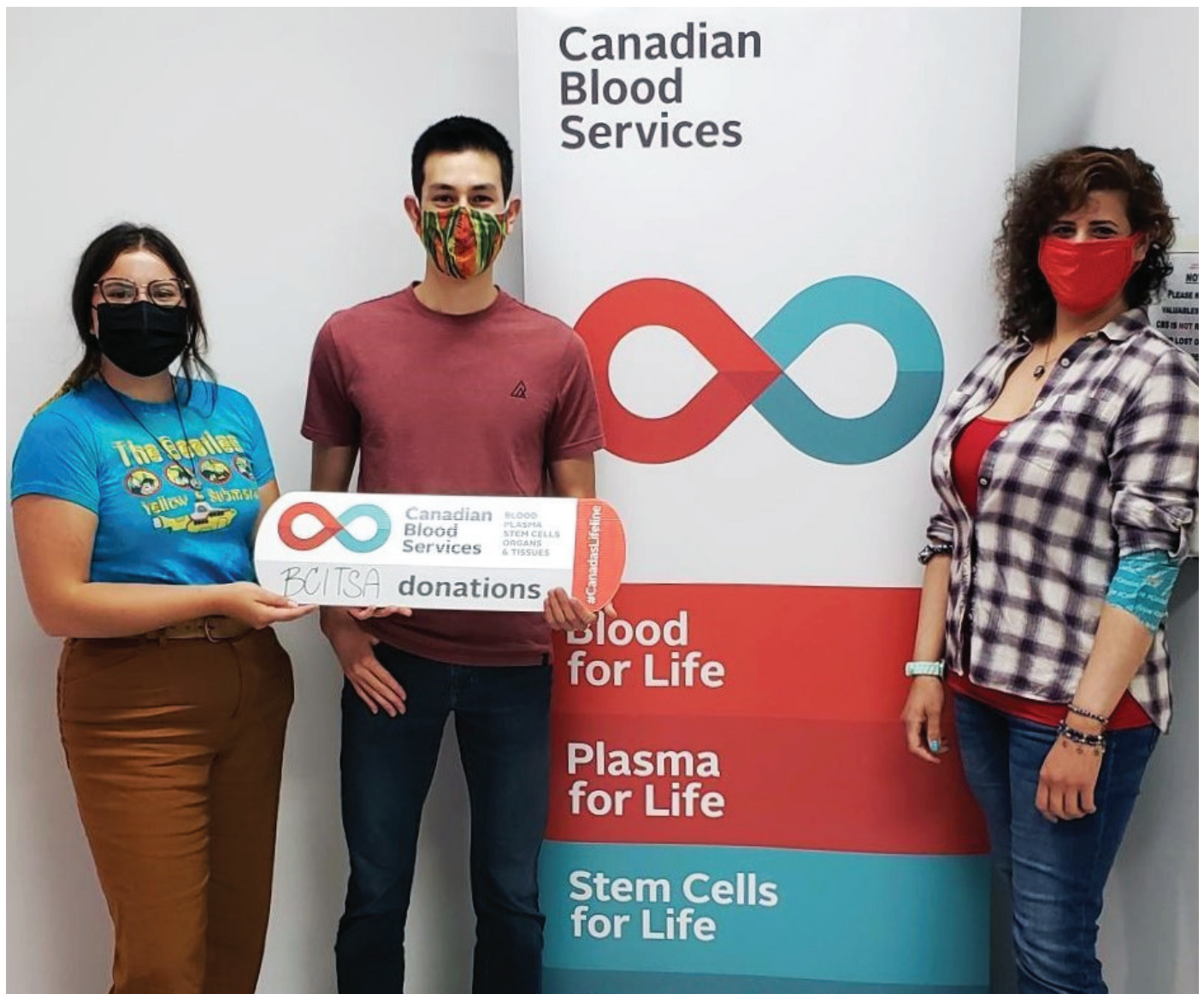
Understand your priorities and treat social time like booking an appointment or pencilling in study blocks. A social life at BCIT is possible if you organize yourself accordingly.

Myth busted.



BE PART OF CANADA'S LIFELINE

Matthew Miller



Odds are, you're a student at BCIT with a workload that requires a huge time commitment. It can often feel like you need to spend every minute to focus on your program, while excluding time for social outings and helping out your community.

Since the onset of COVID-19, blood donations have been considerably reduced but the need for blood remains, and, in many cases, it's actually increased. Blood, plasma, and platelets are a critical part of many medical treatments commonly taken for granted. Without an adequate supply sourced from blood donors, most major surgeries and cancer treatments would not even be possible, and every donation makes a lifesaving difference.

Canadian Blood Services implemented safety measures, robust cleaning, and screening protocols to ensure a comfortable environment where recipients would feel protected from COVID-19. So over the summer, three BCIT student council executives (Matthew Miller, Yasmin Gardy, and Claire McCallum) donated blood together at the Oak Street clinic in Vancouver.

"The gift of donating blood benefits one person's life, and the lives they share with others. It is an act that means the world to more than just one individual, you are giving life [and more time] to their families and loved ones," says Gardy.

"I've donated blood on my own for the past few years, but it was my first time with a group donation. The Canadian Blood Service made the entire experience more convenient for us by booking a taxi for to and from transportation. Their staff were friendly and the procedures in the clinic created a very safe atmosphere with COVID-19 screening upon entry. Everyone wore their masks, and juice and salty snacks were provided to us after donating. Overall, it only took one hour from start to finish, and we left knowing that our donation made a difference in someone's life," says Miller.

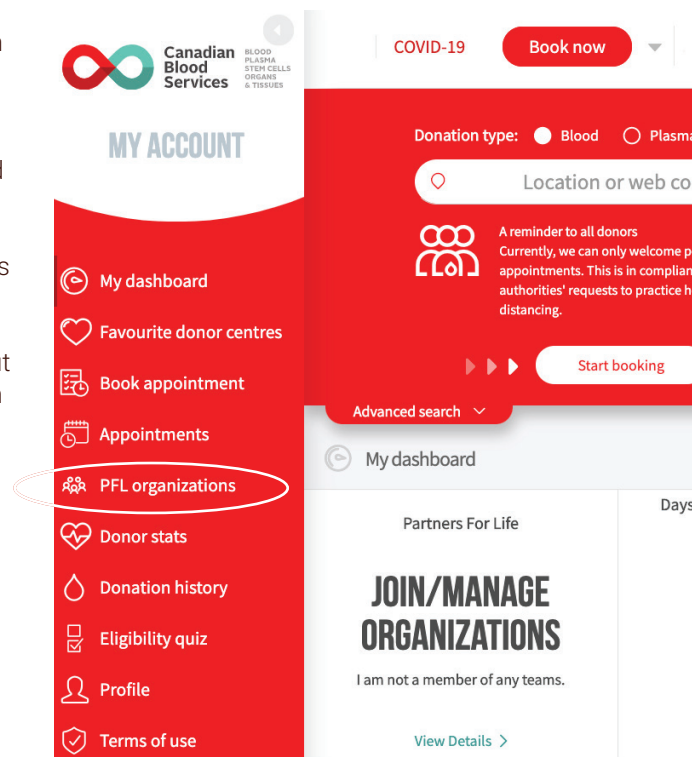
"Donating blood is a selfless act of helping others in a meaningful way that can improve someone's life by offering the gift of time," says McCallum. She hopes the group's contributions inspire the BCIT community to continue helping others in times of need.

"We students have more power than we realize, and when it's focused on giving back to help our community, that's true leadership," says Miller.

Every minute of every day, someone in Canada needs blood. Blood donors give people access to lifesaving treatments, and they are an essential part of Canada's Lifeline. We are all incredibly busy students, but by donating blood and a few minutes of your day, you are helping someone make it to their tomorrow.

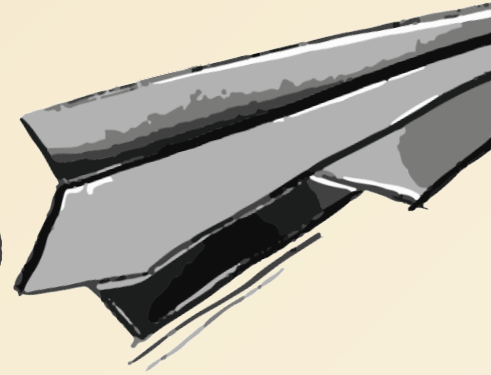
It's easy to sign up for the BCIT Student Association team!

1. Go to **blood.ca**
2. Create an account
3. Click on the PLF organizations tab



4. Add yourself to the SA team, using the code: BCIT0089862
5. Confirm that you want to join the team
6. Book an Appointment
7. Donate blood, and join Canada's Lifeline
8. Send a photo to marketing@bcitsa.ca

a letter



from one international student to another

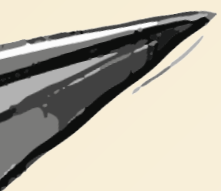
Chantel Tanaka

Dear international student,

Congrats on making it into BCIT! Consider yourself lucky; there is no place quite like it. I say that with the most heartfelt understanding and fondness of how BCIT grows on you. It's not an exaggeration to say that the BCIT path is not for the faint-hearted. Your experience here will be an intriguing mix of fatigue, exhilaration, and pride.

Your first couple of weeks might have you wondering why you even applied here in the first place. You might feel like you bit off more than you can chew by applying into an accelerated program while trying to acclimate to a new country and culture. That's an understandable feeling. You might even look at your classmates who are local students with a hint of envy because they seem to adjust to the pressure of school more easily since they don't have to try to navigate a cultural divide. That feeling is hard to get over.

The most vital lesson you could take from that out-of-place feeling in the first few weeks is that you are growing out of your comfort zone. You might have a hard time understanding how being out of your comfort zone might help you. It gets even harder to cope with when homesickness kicks in. I'll let you in on a secret, though—it is one of the most gratifying and character-building experiences you will ever go through. Learning to stand on your own two feet and exploring your independence feels scary at first, but once you get the hang of balancing school and your wellbeing, you will be glad you took the leap of faith to study abroad.



BCIT's international student orientation is a great opportunity for you to meet other bewildered people, and if you can make friends from that brief session, you're off to a great start. I say this because the hectic schedule of being a fulltime student here makes it difficult to keep up a social life at first. The friends you make in the few campus coordinated events are ones you make because you want them. Most class projects leave you with acquaintances that you have to put up with because you are stuck together. Making friends in a new environment will certainly be an intentional process, because often you will experience a cultural divide or language barrier with the local students. The trick to navigating those awkward first encounters is reminding yourself that the next day is a new day to build from the hiccups.

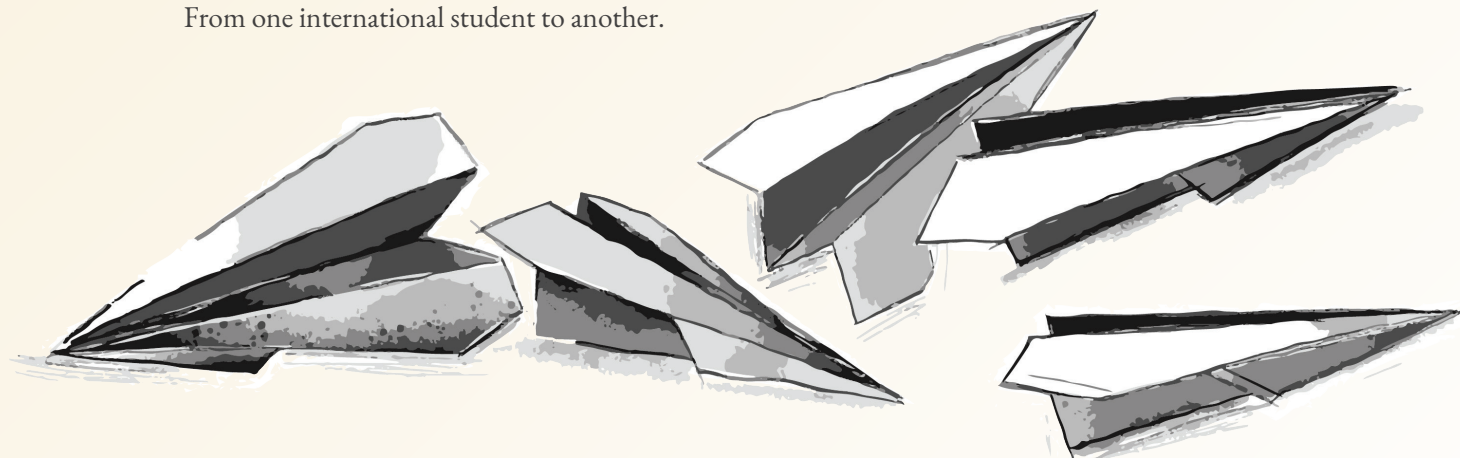
While everyone around you in your program is interacting, don't feel shy, bring yourself forward too. No-one is eager to make friends with people they don't know, so make the effort to be known by your peers. Try asking questions about what people do for fun here, or what people's experience was like growing up here. At BCIT, the onus will probably fall on you when it comes to making friends with local students, because it's natural for people to lean towards what they know. For you, that might look like finding a local community here in Metro-Vancouver that shares your heritage. Still, a handful of campus friends wouldn't hurt.

On that note, I'd like to point out that making connections with other international students will likely feel much easier. You're instantaneously bound by your acclimating experience and it's always interesting to hear how other international students are coping with living away from home. The people you meet from this pool are in the same boat as you and are as eager as you to make new friends. Knowing that is heartwarming because the people you meet within the international student community could end up being the friends you never imagined you could have.

In a way, BCIT is reflective of the larger cosmopolitan Vancouver environment. With the transition to mostly online learning you may feel alone, but it's important to remember that you are a part of a larger network. You will meet people from all walks of life and that will open you up to different perspectives on not only school and work ethic, but belief systems, interests, and so much more. Be open to it. I feel you only get to experience all that BCIT has to offer if you open yourself up to being around people that challenge you and help you see things in a different light.

Best of luck,

From one international student to another.



WHO IS BCIT?

MINI STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Link couldn't choose just one spotlight this issue, and decided to speak to several notable students, and share their unique experiences. We're always looking for students to spotlight in *Link*, so if you have someone in mind, let us know!

Cody Pallin

by Chantel Tanaka

Where does the time go? For part-time civil engineering student Cody Pallin, the transition to online learning is somewhat of a blessing in disguise. Staying home has allowed him to fully explore the different student services and clubs that can be accessed remotely. In the last two years of attending BCIT, he says he hardly had time for anything else other than his assignments, tests, and exams. He compared learning at BCIT to being on a highway, driving full speed ahead with no time to stop and appreciate the hidden gems along the way. Like most students that go through the rigorous and hands on practical experience at the institute, he constantly found himself wondering where the time goes.

He hopes that in his capacity as a student life ambassador he will be able to engage with the bigger BCIT network, all the while maintaining the high expectations in his program. He jokingly muses that he has put a lot of time into BCIT and because of it he has no other choice but to go through with completing his studies. From the conversation we had, it was evident that he had a love for engineering. It was also clear that understanding the inner workings of a building and, metaphorically, BCIT's inner workings, really fuels his focus. Pallin says that when you are at BCIT, "you are here to learn. If you want anything else, you really have to fight for it."

In appreciating how BCIT models its curriculum close to the industry, Pallin shares his worry that some students may go the whole semester without seeing and interacting



with their peers in person. While it is important to note how the measures put in place are there to keep the wider BCIT community safe, the measures do slightly deny a lot of students the opportunity to come out of their comfort zone when it comes to interacting with other people. It's with this in mind that he urges students at BCIT to take on interacting opportunities or chances to connect with people as often as they can because now these opportunities are a couple of clicks away at the tip of their fingers.

Stephanie Dekker

by Lauren Edwards

After Stephanie Dekker worked in the veterinary industry for a decade, she decided it was time for a change. She wanted to work directly with people and explore different opportunities in the medical field. Dekker is currently in her second year of the three-year-long Registered Nursing program at BCIT, where they are working in the hospitals and learning about pandemic responses day-by-day. If there are any outbreaks in the hospital unit they're working in, the students will transition to online learning during the 14-day waiting period.

During a four-month school break due to COVID-19, Dekker worked as a Resident Care Aide. There, she gained insight into coping mechanisms and navigating the medical field in this unknown time from other seasoned healthcare workers. "[I] remind myself that I have not entered the nursing world for my own comfort. I entered this profession to help others knowing there is a risk to myself. I find it very empowering and helpful thinking in this way because it takes my eyes off of my own worries and helps me focus on something bigger," says Dekker.

As for her goals this year, she looks forward to mastering new skills, and gain confidence as a nurse, including critical thinking through patient scenarios. Understanding exercise can fall through the cracks of a busy schedule at BCIT, she also hopes to maintain her healthy workout routine that developed during the summer break.

The BCIT Nursing program is keeping the students on their toes according to Dekker, with constant schedule changes, clinical rotations, and the exhaustion that comes with it.



With so many adjustments to navigate in school, Dekker notes simply getting through this term is an achievement in itself. All students have been affected by COVID-19 in some way, and Dekker empathizes with medical students worrying about working during a pandemic.

"A lot has changed, and probably a lot more will change. I would just encourage anyone anxious, you are a lot more resilient and capable of getting through this than you give yourself credit for," says Dekker. Although stressful, she says she has no regrets about her educational path and career change. During this chaotic time, Dekker finds solace in her religion and knowing her cuddly dog, Tucker, is waiting for her at home.

Matthew Miller

by Lauren Edwards

When Matthew Miller ran for student council as Vice President of Student Experience, he wanted to be in a position to advocate for better student access to mental health services, like counselling. COVID-19 causing a transition to online learning made the need for mental health services more apparent and made Miller more determined to accomplish this goal.

What does the role of a VP of Student Experience entail? The newly-appointed student executive sits as a voting student representative on BCIT's Education Council and Decision Review Board, as well as representing BCIT students—voicing their issues and concerns. He works directly with the Housing Councillor and the Marine and Annacis Island Satellite Campus Councillors.

Although the majority of on-campus businesses are closed (except for Pavillion in NE1 and Geared Up in SE2), making it hard to engage with other students, Miller wants students to know there are still ways to stay involved and social despite being physically distant. Students can partake in BCIT Facebook Hangout sessions, featuring a variety of guest speakers and opportunities to connect with other students. "I'd also recommend dropping into a few online exercise classes hosted by Recreation Services if that's your style," says Miller.

He also oversees the 50 student-run clubs as Chair of the Clubs Committee, distributes Student Association funds to clubs, reviews club sanctioning applications, and discusses the pros and cons of a new club to the council. Miller enjoys his role (so much so in fact, he forgets about his looming academic deadlines), and notes dozens of clubs are tackling the issue of virtual clubs head-on through great leadership.

While we add a lot of extracurricular activities on our to-do lists, remember it's important to check-in and take care of your mental well-being as well. Also, "it's important that before you can support others you need to be in a calm place yourself. Once I've grounded myself, I can reach out to someone in my life who is in that moment struggling with all the stressors life has put them under," says Miller.



"I remember a trusted friend telling me that everyone has their own personal limit of how much support they can provide, and sometimes the best thing you can do is compassionately direct the person to a professional."

Miller hopes students take advantage of the accessible services for students, regardless of campus or area of studies, such as Student Advocacy, Career and Entrepreneurship support, and Health & Wellness. But most importantly, BCIT's Counselling and Student Development department, which offers phone and virtual counselling appointments.

To receive a free and confidential BCIT counselling appointment, please call (604) 432-8608.

Wander



THE PLACES YOU'VE BEEN

TRUST



Sarah Sarmadi,
Wadi Rum, Jordan
2019

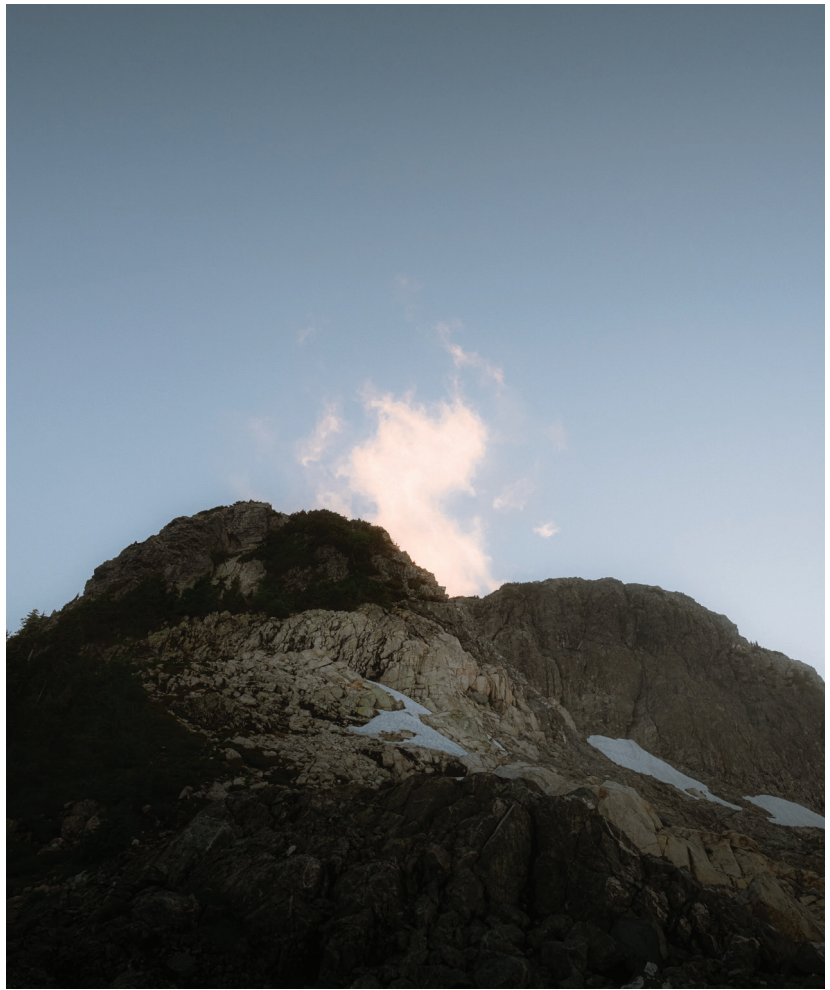
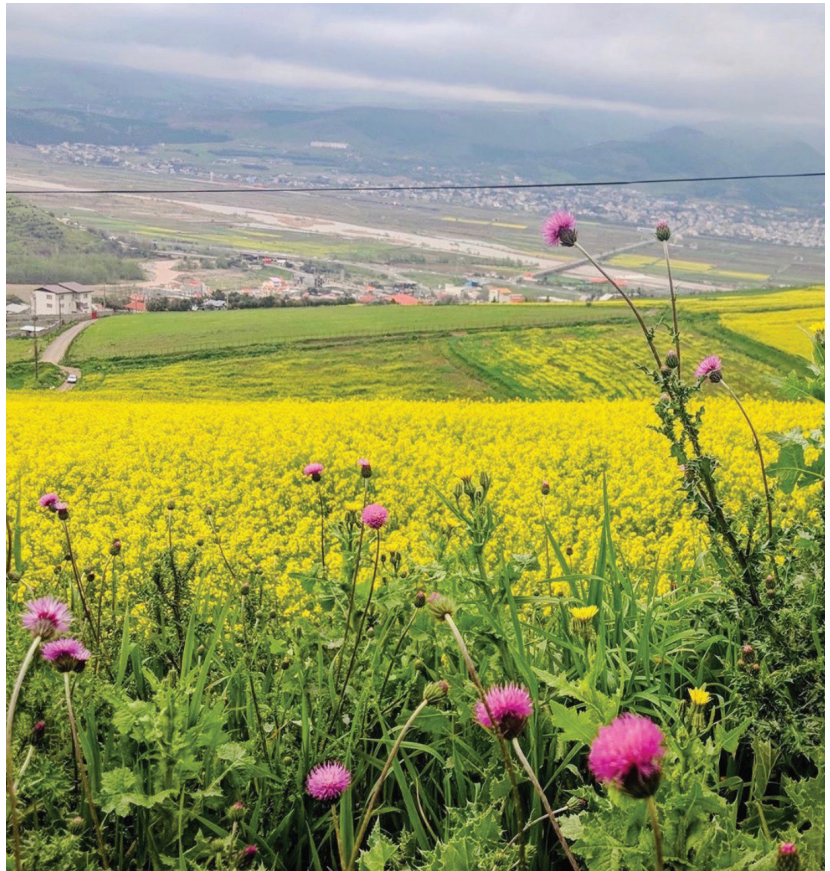
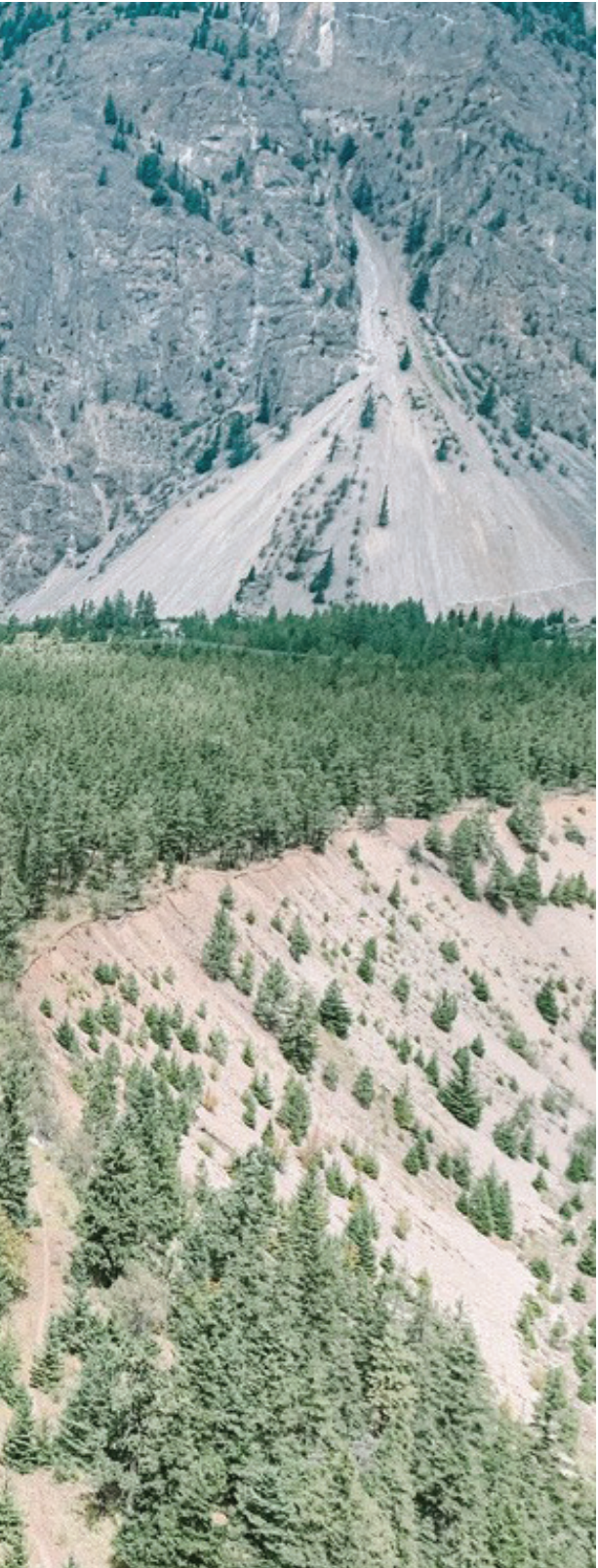
THE PLACES YOU'LL GO AGAIN

Bottom Left,
Brittany Roffel,
2019



Top Right
Sarah Sarmadi,
Iran, 2019

Bottom Right
Elin Molenaar
Golden Ears, 2020





Lauren Edwards
Cinque Terre, Italy
2019



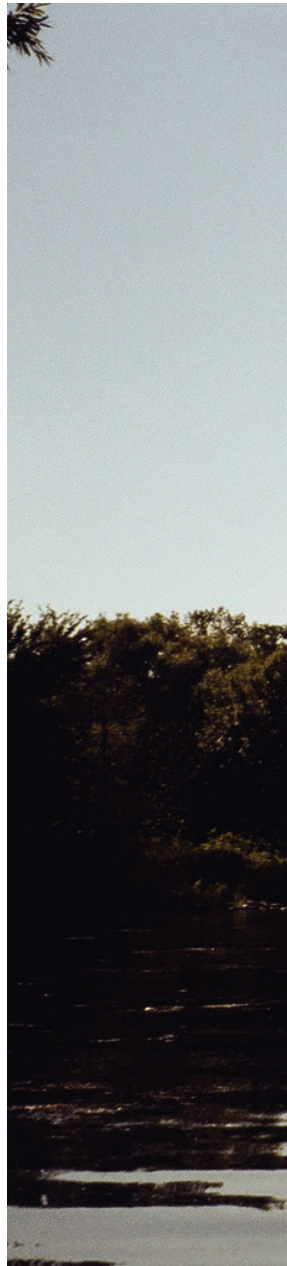
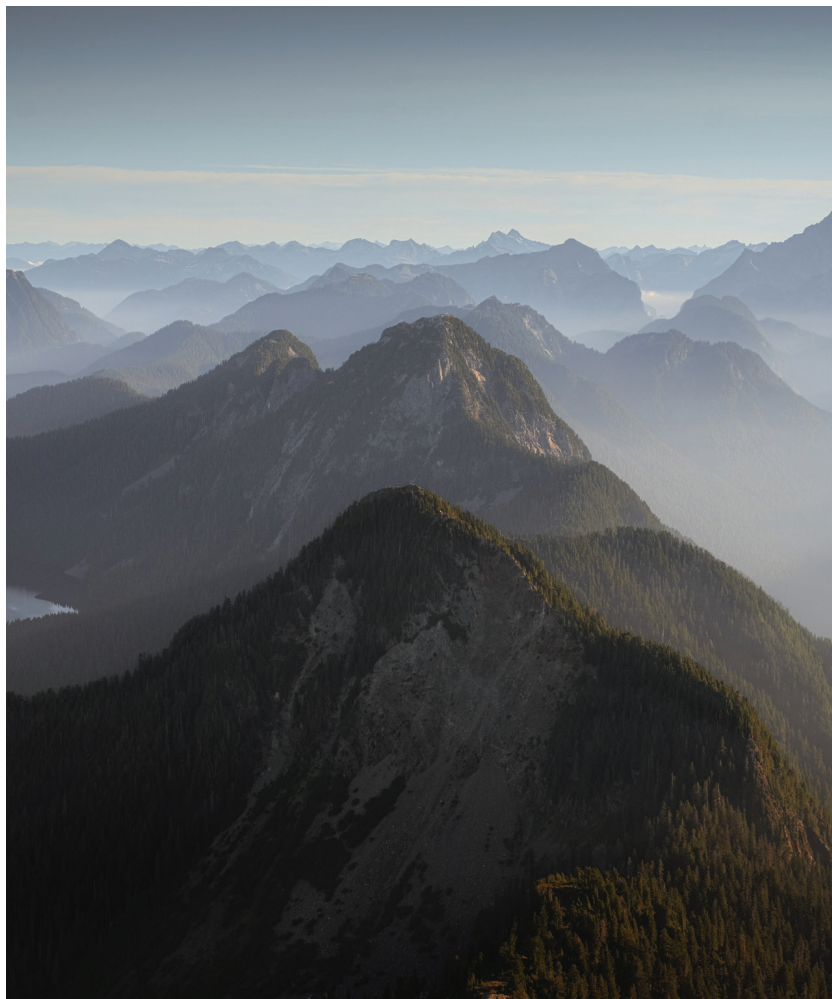
Top Right
Zach Kiedaish
Vancouver Island,
2019

Bottom Right
Justin Park
Toronto, 2019

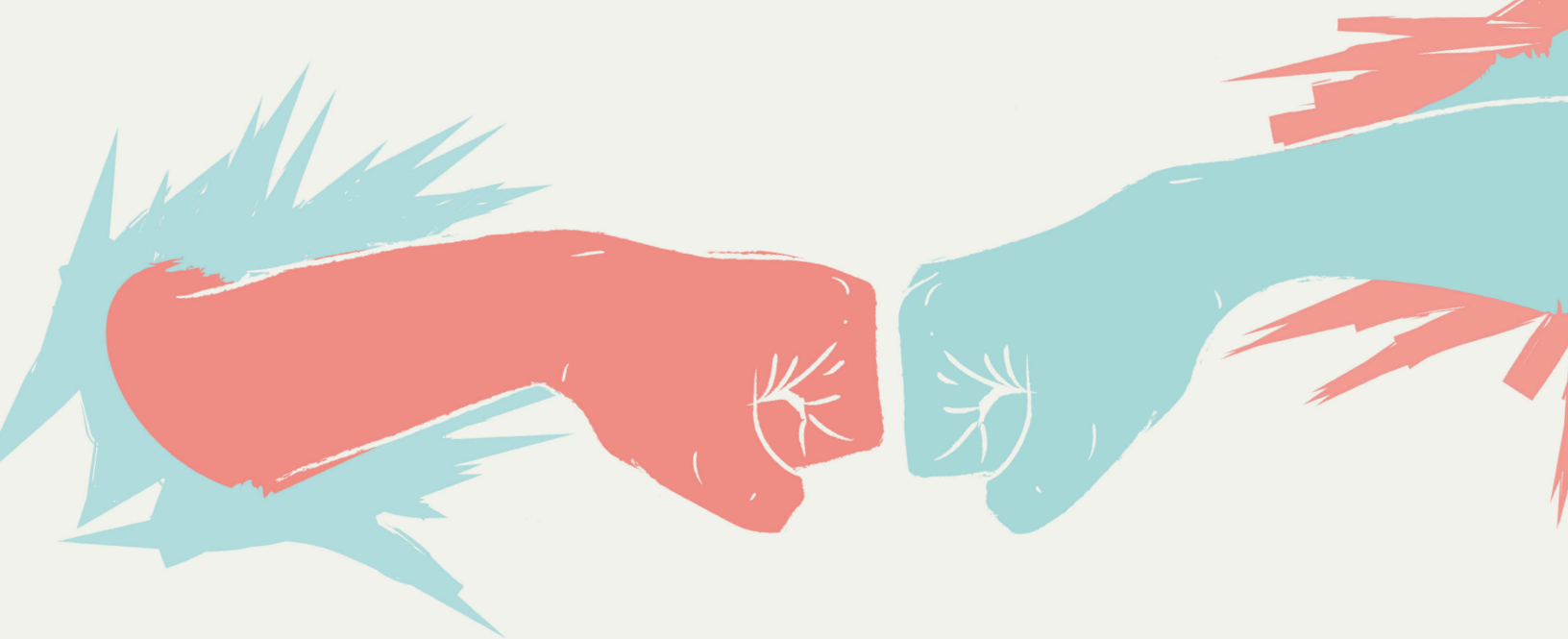
Top Middle,
Sarah Sarmadi,
Iran, 2019

Top Left,
Elin Molenaar
Golden Ears, 2020

Bottom Left
Zach Kiedaish,
Vancouver Island,
2019







POLICING THE POLICE

a look at excessive force in Canada and the USA

Darren Piper

Amid a slew of news reports involving violent (and lethal) police incidents in the USA, many Canadians have pondered why these events seem to happen more down south, compared to here at home. On the other hand, some have suggested that the disparity is not as deep as it appears, and that some over-sensationalized USA news media outlets are to blame. So, what happens to be the reality behind the numbers?


According to a report¹ by Public Safety Canada, the use of (non-lethal) force in the context of Canadian public policing is rare, occurring in less than 2% of encounters. In the USA, a survey² conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2015 found that 1.8% of respondents experienced non-lethal threats or use of force during encounters with police. Exact figures in both countries are unknown because both countries do not have a centralized database. In light of the information available, it's safe to say police in both countries employ non-lethal use of force tactics in comparable numbers.

When it comes to fatal police shootings, however, the picture becomes much different. An analysis³ by the CBC showed there have been 461 fatal police encounters in Canada between 2000 and 2017, and that 71% of these deaths were the result of gunshot wounds. In contrast, 999 Americans died

from police shooting just last year, and over 5,000 have died since 2015, according to a Washington Post database. These are just two of many reputable databases⁴ showing similar stark numbers. Which begs the question; why does the United States have a fatal police shooting rate almost three and a half times higher on average?⁵

The USA has a long history of celebrating gun culture with many state residents who take their second amendment rights very seriously. In the USA, there are 120.5 firearms for every 100 people (the highest in any country), compared to 34.7 firearms for every 100 people in Canada.⁶ The very existence of so many civilian-owned guns directly contributes to a high number of police incidents, and in turn, to a high likelihood of a police officer possibly discharging their firearm. The scenario is worsened by a lack of stringent gun legislation in many USA states. A study by the US National Library of Medicine,⁷ cites that legislative restrictions on firearms are linked to reductions in fatal police shootings.

Canada on the other hand has restrictive gun legislation in place.⁸ As of May 2020 the federal government introduced a prohibition on over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms. Although further research on this correlation is needed, it seems Canada's tougher stance on gun



ownership is related to its relatively low number of police shootings.

Another aspect to consider is the quality and consistency of training protocols. Training protocols in Canada are consistent on a federal level. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is the country's federal police service and all RCMP recruits complete 820 hours or 26 weeks of training,⁹ in the same facility (known as Depot) located in Regina, SK. Separate municipal training requirements are slightly different in each province, but to give an idea, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) requires 40-44 weeks of training.¹⁰ Although the training itself is comprehensive and rigorous at both at the federal and municipal level there is certainly room for streamlining.

Conversely, many police departments in the USA have vastly different training programs in place. According to the FBI, there are more than 18,000 local police departments in the USA, each being subject to different state, county, and city laws and codes, and having different policies, practices, and officer training programs.¹¹ Additionally, police recruits in the USA are required to complete around 700 hours or 19 weeks of training. However, these hours can vary widely by jurisdiction and academy.¹² Some USA law enforcement experts have said that uniformity among local police force training may not be a cure in and of itself, but that it could be a step in the right direction.¹³

In the wake of recent events such as the killing of George Floyd and others in the USA, and the violent arrest of Chief Allan Adam (of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation) in Northern Alberta, a spotlight has been cast on police in both countries. There have been calls to defund the police albeit without consensus on the definition of 'defund.' While looking at the present data many wonder what extent racial bias contributes to excessive force and shootings by police both countries?

In short, it's too soon to tell. In the USA, data and studies around police use of force have only materialized after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014.¹⁴ The majority of this data has been compiled by journalists and human rights groups. Although (most of) these databases are highly reputable, there is still a shortage of reliable race-based data today, particularly from the police. Regardless, these police shootings have garnered widespread condemnation, and countless Americans (and Canadians) are demanding that action be taken.

Although the issue of implicit bias may not seem as severe here in Canada, it remains an issue, nonetheless. Recent incidents involving indigenous victims of excessive force and fatal shooting by police have sparked our own protests. In a June statement, Federal Public Safety Minister, Bill Blair,

said that 'discrimination within Canada's criminal justice system is abhorrent, unacceptable and unlawful and related police misconduct is indefensible and must be addressed'. A few days later, RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki said 'I do know that systemic racism is part of every institution, the RCMP included.'

Excessive force and fatal shootings by police are weighty and complex issues which demand an examination far more robust than the one presented in this article. However, time will tell whether sentiments like these will result in actual policy changes.

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Green Energy Smoothie

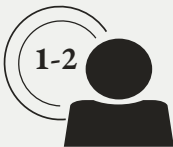
Lauren Edwards

Great for students on the go, this jam-packed mix has electrolytes, vitamins, and lots of greens. You'll feel energized like you just drank a coffee and may feel full until lunchtime. This is a twist on Reese Witherspoon's recipe, who says it helps with her skin and energy for the day.

Her version calls for two heads of romaine lettuce, a whole lemon (peel and all), and optional celery, banana or almond butter. After trying the recipe out for the first time, I found the celery and banana a bit of a weird taste, so I swapped that out for some berries and pear instead. It does seem like a gross amount of leaves before having it, but the fruit overpowers any bitter taste there.



10 mins



INGREDIENTS

- ½ head romaine lettuce
- ½ cup spinach
- 1 handful kale
- 1 cup coconut water
- 1 whole lemon
- 1 cup strawberries or blueberries
- 2 tsp flax seeds
- 2 tsp chia seeds
- 1 whole pear (optional)
- 1 tbsp protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut lemon (and pear, if need be) into small pieces with the seeds taken out.
2. Place romaine lettuce and spinach and kale, coconut water, and lemon into a blender. Pulse for about one minute, or until smooth.
3. Add fresh or frozen fruit, chia seeds, and flax seeds. If using frozen fruit, add an extra ¼ cup of coconut water.



What Type of Team Member are You?

Asha Pratt-Johnson

Orientation for first-year students is always a whirlwind of information. My BCIT orientation experience last year was a busy, bustling day with an overload of student energy. Hundreds of students in the School of Business were welcomed to the program in the Telus Theatre. My nerves had me sitting at the edge of my seat intently listening. We were told of the attendance expectations, academic performance, extra-curricular participation and heavy course-load. From all that was shared, the statement I found most poignant was the acronym for BCIT.

BCIT: Being Crammed into Teams.



Cool. Teamwork: spread the workload and make some friends. I think? I soon found out that being crammed into teams was not just a quippy little joke, rather, an academic reality that was going to rock my expectations of school and the industry. Working together is great for spreading the course load and fostering creativity and problem-solving. However, the biggest challenge that comes from it takes form when it's time to balance everyone's different personalities for a class project.

Having been in many group projects, I've considered the different roles people take on in teams. Here's my simplified list:

The Keen Leader who is a hardworking, confident, teammate. They're not afraid to speak their mind and blaze a path for completing tasks. With any luck, this person is organized and understands the project, so they can help the group succeed. Having one leader is the best-case scenario. When there are two or more leaders butting heads, it can be hard to get things done efficiently.

The Agreeable Task-Doer who wants to be led. They're a good sport. Attending all meetings, offering ideas, and completing individual tasks. To me, the equation for a perfect team is multiple Agreeable Task-Doers + one Keen Leader.

You'll not always be crammed into a dream team. There will likely be a challenging personality on your team. Sometimes they're hard to spot, other times, not so much.

The Apathetic Loafer who doesn't seem to care about the major task at hand. They are easy to spot. Sometimes they don't want to be there, and they don't show up for team meetings. Hopefully, they muster the effort to contribute something to the team but they tend to get through the class by riding on the coattails of the teams' efforts.

Finally, there is the Productivity Illusionist. They are the most surprising. They are the team member who will have your blood boiling. This person appears to be engaged in projects from the get-go, demonstrating the chutzpah of a leader. They bring your hopes up and have them slowly avalanche down. Their methods depend on whining over how they are sooo busy and overwhelmed (really, who isn't?). They never seem to get anything done, yet they come across as a contributor. This is what I find the most difficult to accept. You'll have to keep an eye out for them.

I was curious to hear an instructor's view on team roles. So, I went to Geoffrey Bird, Faculty of the School of Business + Media, and asked him if he's noticed any typical roles people take in a team. He said, "The roles that students assume in a team depend on the personality of the individuals and the combination of the personality types in the team. As in industry, there will be leaders and there will be loafers and everyone in between."

Geoffrey's comment touching on industry acknowledges that teamwork at BCIT is simulated industry experience. What's a better practice space than a post-secondary institution before going into the workforce? Bird continues, "Businesses operate in teams. Working in teams helps organizations grow and prosper. By practising team skills at BCIT, students develop the highly valued ability to work collaboratively with others so that when they are hired, they can quickly begin contributing to an organization's success."

I understand the value of teamwork but have also experienced the challenge. So, I asked him for advice on how to succeed in a team. He gave three points of advice that all students can benefit from:

1. More than ever, especially during these challenging times, communicate. Update team members regularly and often.
2. Embrace feedback and don't take it personally.
3. Do everything you can to maintain trust amongst team members. Get your work done on time. Submit quality work. Be a contributor to the process.

With COVID-19 impacting how we are being educated, changes are expected in the way teams work. Since we're predominantly studying online, I asked Geoffrey if there would be changes regarding group work. Will we be experiencing less? He responded, "This may vary from one instructor to another. The industry hasn't stopped working in teams during the pandemic. They just work in teams differently. Students should be prepared to adapt like the industry has had to do."

When it comes down to it, everyone at BCIT—students, faculty, tutors, administration, janitorial staff—are all part of teams. Welcome to BCIT. You will be crammed into teams. Get ready for it, do your best, and enjoy the ride.



KATARINA PETROVIC

a collection of avocado pits

I'd seen avocado pits with toothpicks poked in them in passing but had never had thought much of it. At the end of March this year my boyfriend was about to go back to Australia due to COVID-19. While he was still in Vancouver I half-joking asked him to "do the toothpick thing on this avocado pit."

I didn't expect anything to grow, but lo' and behold a root started to break through the bottom of the seed. Shortly after, a little stem on top started to peek through. Nearly five months have passed, and the first avocado pit has grown to be over 30cm tall.

I have five other avocado pits hoping to grow as big and strong as the first one. They started at the beginning of COVID. I wonder how tall they'll be at the end.



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