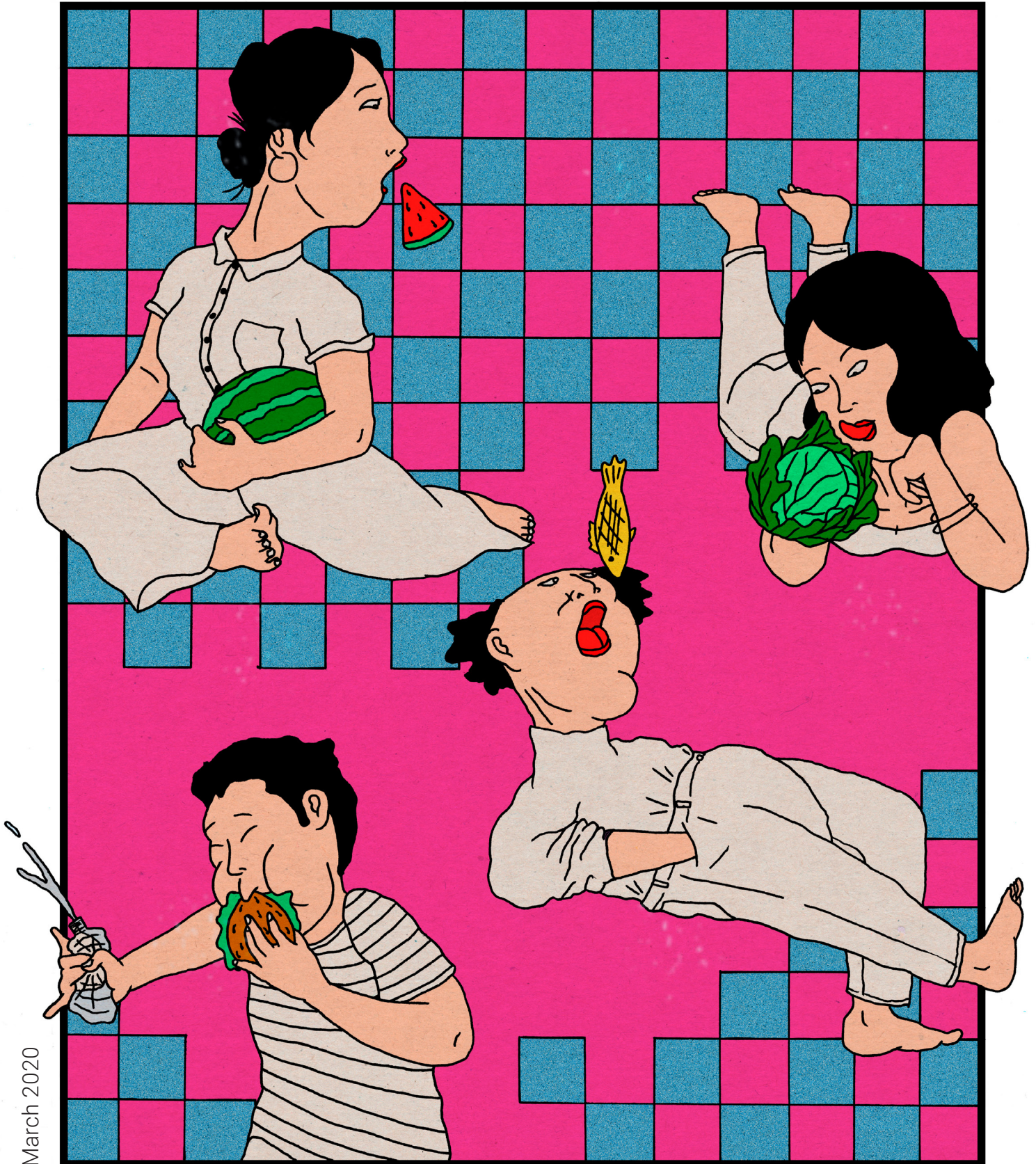


# LINK

What the Fork? Ali Penko dives into sustainability changes on campus | What happens with your instructor reviews? | Matcha waffles with coconut cream syrup | Shawn Grewal talks about his journey to graduation and beyond | And more!





THE BC GOVERNMENT JUST ANNOUNCED

**BC'S FIRST**

**UP-FRONT GRANTS**

**IN 15 YEARS**

In its 2020 Budget, the BC Government announced the creation of the BC Access Grant: an up-front, needs-based student grant program with \$41 million in funding annually.

## **WORKING TOGETHER GETS RESULTS!**

- 15 YEARS OF ACTIVISM
- DOZENS OF GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS
- 100+ GOVERNMENT MEETINGS
- HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS
- THOUSANDS OF POSTCARDS + PETITIONS

**ONE COMMITTED STUDENT MOVEMENT**

**STUDENTS NEED  
GRANTS  
NOT LOANS**





# Wanna Grab a bite To Eat?

There is something special about food that brings people together.

When two people follow a recipe together, it creates a little journey. Each person works together, adding in their personal flair, to make a dish that they can enjoy together. Cooking with someone is a great activity to practice teamwork and to possibly share a laugh together after someone burns the vegetables in the oven.

Sharing a meal with someone is something that is common across all cultures—who doesn't love to eat? You can go on an adventure and try something new together, or you can share one of your favourites with someone special. In this moment, you can share a part of your culture, a part of your identity, with someone who means a lot to you—something I really do believe is beautiful.

Our traditions and celebrations centre around the food that will be put on the table. When we think of Thanksgiving, we think of turkey. When we think of birthdays, we think of cake. When we think of Halloween, we think of candy. Food brings us together, regardless of the culture we were brought up with. Food gives us an opportunity to forget about all the stressors and responsibilities in our life; it allows us to just focus on what we have in front of us—the delicious food and the loved ones we are sharing it with.

I hope this issue gives you insight into the wonders of food and nutrition in our community. Food is a learning opportunity, not just about the food itself, but about the people you are sharing it with.

Bon Appétit!

—Daniella Pettenon, Associate Editor



# LINK

ISSN 0715-5247 (Print)  
ISSN 2562-3257 (Online)

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.

Printed editions are distributed to all five BCIT campuses & additional content is published online at [linkbcit.ca](http://linkbcit.ca)

## Have an idea? Contact us!

[editor@linkbcit.ca](mailto:editor@linkbcit.ca)  
[www.linkbcit.ca](http://www.linkbcit.ca)

*Link Magazine* would like to respectfully acknowledge that it is printed and distributed on the traditional & unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples.

3700 Willingdon Ave. SE2 Building, 3rd Floor  
Burnaby, BC V5G 3H2  
604. 451. 7191

March 2020

Cover Art by Vincent Lin

## STAFF

Ali Pitargue, Senior Editor  
Lauren Edwards, Associate Editor  
Daniella Pettenon, Associate Editor  
Chantel Tanaka, Associate Editor  
Shaleeta Harrison, Publications Manager

## CONTRIBUTORS

Andrew Williamson, Tiana Mohebi, Darren Piper, Ali Penko, Vincent Lin, Maria Diment, Rozali Telbis, Sydney Wong, Stephanie Bohn  
Roshan Parsi (designed pages 6-7)  
Gaeun Lee (designed pages 1-3)



# IN THIS ISSUE

## 04

## REVIEWS

Tiana Mohebi reviews a 2019 movie, and Darren Piper reviews a four-episode Netflix show.

## 06

## GOOGLE THIS

You probably knew that Trump was acquitted and the Coronavirus is a global concern—want to know what else happened in February?

## 08

## WHAT THE FORK?

Ali Penko looks into the cutlery changes coming to BCIT, the history of sustainability on campus and more!

## 10

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT SHAWN GREWAL

Recent graduate Shawn Grewal talks about returning to BCIT to finish what he started.





14

## VINCENT LIN

Artist Vincent Lin (cover) showcases some of his other work and discusses his artistic inspiration.

20

## MATCHA WAFFLES

Want to make some healthy green treats this St. Patrick's Day? Try matcha waffles with a coconut syrup. Seriously delish.

21

## GREEN BEER

Wonder where this weird tradition came from? Daniella Pettenon looks at the history of green beer.

22

## PLANT BASED DIETS: MORE ECO-FRIENDLY?

Did you know that several studies found plant-based diets more eco-friendly?

24

## WHAT DOES THE EXECUTIVE DO?

Student elections are coming up—do you know what the roles entail? We looked at the tasks, and asked some executives.

26

## DIETING: SHOULD WE STOP TALKING ABOUT IT?

We understand that you're excited about your new diet, but consider the harmful effects of diet culture before you start.

28

## DO INSTRUCTOR REVIEWS MATTER?

Two *Link* editors teamed up to look into instructor reviews and other ways you can get your voice heard.







# WAVES

## PRIME VIDEO

*Waves* follows the story of 17-year-old black student and wrestler Tyler (Kelvin Harrison Jr.) living with his family in a beautiful home in sunny Florida. His father, played by Sterling K. Brown, constantly pushes him over his limits both physically and mentally. Tyler comes into conflict with himself, his girlfriend (Alexa Demie), and, most importantly, his family. He continually abuses his dad's painkillers as the tension slowly builds to one shocking event taking place halfway through the movie.

From there, Writer/Director Trey Edward Schults seamlessly switches the main character, allowing the viewer to see the family's struggles from a different and more innocent perspective.

To me, this is what made the movie so special. The movie-going experience felt new, and boy, was it ever emotional. The entire theatre was in tears for nearly the whole film. Just when I thought I'd finally stopped crying, more heart-wrenching dialogue would be said, and I found myself silently sobbing again. Luckily, I watched *Waves* while sitting alone with a large popcorn in the front row of the Rio Theatre.

In terms of cinematography, *Waves* was beautiful to look at. Visualize what a Frank Ocean song would look like—crashing waves, pastel skies, and talented black artists in their well-deserved spotlight. I recommend this movie to anyone with an appreciation for emotional narratives.

—Tiana Mohebi





## BREAKFAST, LUNCH, & DINNER

NETFLIX

Attention food, culture and comedy lovers! Chef and restaurateur David Chang is back with another tantalizing Netflix original series—*Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*. Fans of Chang know of his first Netflix creation—*Ugly Delicious*, which celebrates mouth-watering dishes in all their hideous glory. This new follow-up bears some resemblance; however, the focus of each episode is on the destination itself, rather than a particular dish or style of cuisine.

Chang upped his star power game in *Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner* with an impressive celebrity lineup. Vancouverites will particularly enjoy watching Chang and actor Seth Rogen visit local eateries and attractions like Lee's Donuts on Granville Island, and the famous hedge maze at VanDusen Garden.

Chang takes in the magic of Marrakesh with TV host and author Chrissy Teigen, who ensures no dull moments are had while you drool over the roasted saddle of lamb or chicken tagine.

In LA, Chang and actress Lena Waithe introduce each other to their favourite local food spots. They seem to consume more food in a day than is humanly possible. Their time together is also divided between mani-pedis, sneaker shopping, honestly discussing the challenges of being a lesbian, queer, black female on television.

Adventure-seekers with funny bones will take pleasure in watching Chang and SNL star Kate McKinnon navigate the historic Phnom Penh. They discuss food, humour, and Cambodia's rich (yet tragic) history, while sampling durian ice cream and deep-fried tarantulas (just kidding...sort of).

With only four episodes, *Breakfast Lunch and Dinner* is a light and easily digestible watch and yet promises to be a satisfying feast for the senses.

—Darren Piper

5

FEBRUARY

US President Donald Trump was acquitted of all charges laid against him for abuse of power in office while dealing with Ukraine and for obstructing Congress.

FEBRUARY

5

6

FEBRUARY

Wet'suwet'en Hereditary chiefs' protests over the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline BC started. Since they started, many solidarity protests all across Canada from Montreal to Ontario grew and caused significant disruptions in Canada's rail system.

FEBRUARY

6

16

FEBRUARY

Dominican Canadian legend of Toronto Blue Jays, Tony Fernandez, died at the age of 57 after a long battle with kidney problems.

FEBRUARY

16

20

FEBRUARY

Nine people killed in two shisha bars, in a suspected far-right attack in Germany. Chancellor Angela Merkel said the suspect appeared to have acted out of "right-wing extremist, racist motives" before also shooting himself in his home.

FEBRUARY

20

21

FEBRUARY

After more than 15 years, HBO Max announced that they will be reuniting the full cast of Friends for an unscripted special in May 2020.

FEBRUARY

21

25

FEBRUARY

Delhi broke out in violence during Trump's visit to India. The violence was sparked after a local leader from Indian Prime Minister Modi's party threatened to violently remove a group of peaceful Muslim protesters blocking a local road.

FEBRUARY

25

25

FEBRUARY

A man who was named the world's oldest living male person by the Guinness World Records died at the age of 112. Chitetsu Watanabe was the oldest of four siblings and he was born in 1907—meaning he lived through both World War I and II!

FEBRUARY


25



7  
FEBRUARY

A record-breaking 51,954 people attended the match in Africa between Tennis legends Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. This made it the highest attended tennis match in history. The legends played a doubles match alongside Bill Gates and Trevor Noah, respectively.

AFRICA



9  
FEBRUARY

Storm Ciara hit Northern Ireland parts of England, Scotland, and Belgium with hurricane-force winds close to 128 km/h. February 10, the New York Times reported that 5 people were dead in the first few hours of the storm and over 20,000 homes faced power disruptions.


EUROPE



24  
FEBRUARY

Harvey Weinstein found guilty of first- and third-degree rape, while all other charges against him were dismissed. His sentencing hearing was scheduled for March 11, almost two years after he was first charged with rape and several accounts of sexual assault.

USA



23  
FEBRUARY

A 5.7 magnitude earthquake struck the Turkey-Iran border, and 43 villages in Turkey were affected by it. Nine people were killed, and 37 others were injured.


TURKEY



25  
FEBRUARY

96 out of 113 law makers in Slovakia voted to reject an International women's rights treaty. It is currently unclear whether Slovakia's first female president, Zuzana Caputova, will approve the parliament's rejection of the treaty ramification.

SLOVAKIA



5  
6  
7  
9  
16  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

GOOGLE THIS



# what the Fork?

words **Ali Penko**

People gotta eat. At BCIT everyday, food-based articles are thrown in the trash.

Coffee cups, water bottles, plastic utensils, napkins, and take-out containers are all part of the eating experience.

BCIT has a goal to reduce landfill waste by 20 percent. Their food services—operated by the Student Association and Chartwells—are committed to making eating practices more sustainable.

Sustainable. We hear that word everyday, but really what does it mean? According to the Webster's dictionary, it is defined as 'of, relating to, or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.' How can we relate this to our food consumption, and what can we do about it?

The message around single use plastics is simple—they are bad and are killing the environment. Our oceans, our landfills, our animals are full of plastics.

There are people on campus who are committed to making and implementing changes to create a more sustainable environment around the food services at the Burnaby campus. Here's who they are and what they are doing:

David Pereira is the Sustainability Manager at BCIT. His role is to work with the students, faculty and food services providers to create awareness and improve education. His ultimate goal? "Empowering people to realize that they have an impact to improve the state of things."

Removing plastic utensils from food services is the most recent effort by BCIT to create awareness. According to Pereira, "The realities of the waste that we create based on our personal habits—this initiative (moving away from disposable plastic single-use utensils) is about creating the types of conversations to get people thinking about this connection."


Geoff Gauthier, Marketing Director for the Student Association, pulls a set of metal utensils from his desk drawer. "I've had these since the 1990s when I went to university." Gauthier is in charge of creating the communications for the changes. He said, "(The current utensils offered) still take years and years and years to break down. They're not good enough, so we're going to fiber-based utensils with the goal of having everyone bring their own utensils from home."

These changes will affect all of the campuses' food services operated by the Student Association (Pavilion, The Stand Stores) and Chartwells (Triple O's, Market Kitchen and Poke Pick). They are eliminating the current biodegradable utensils and replacing them with fiber-based ones. They will also now cost 15 cents for each item.

Pereira says of the change, "Shifting to a legitimately compostable utensil, paired with imploring customers to consider making a personal shift to use reusable utensils provides options, and encourages great dialogue around our culture of single-use items."

One of the challenges Gauthier faces before rolling out new utensils is the backlash that the front-line staff often





receive from changes like this. He says, "This is not a money making thing. This is [for] sustainability and future goal—no plastics, bring your own, change the mentality."

Shelley Fowler, unit manager at Chartwell's, has been working at BCIT since 1983 and says,

"Back in the day, we did use real cutlery, real plates, but they ended up in the garbage." Having reusable plates and cutlery is something Shelley would like to see brought back and she suggests charging for takeout containers.

To measure the success of this change, Pereira says, "I believe this particular initiative will be successful if it becomes second nature for people to use reusable cutlery while shopping for meals on campus."

Sustainable items such as reusable cutlery, metal straws, coffee cups and water bottles can all be purchased at Geared Up and the Stand. Discounts of 15 percent are given for reusable coffee cups at the Stand and Pavilion.

Ultimately, it is the consumer that drives these changes. Gauthier says "We understand that that's a pain, but we also understand that if you want the world to be a better place for the future, then we have to start this now and we have to start this here."



Student Spotlight

# FAITH & HUMILITY

## Accounting Graduate Shawn Grewal's Winding Journey to Success

---

words Lauren Edwards  
photography Sydney Wong





Shawn Grewal spent his young teen years playing right defence on the BC Soccer team. As a student at the Roman Tulis European Soccer School of Excellence, he got to compete against some of the best in the world in England, Scotland, Wales, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Belgium. He was sure he would be moving down south on an athletic scholarship. That changed when he was abruptly cut from the BC Men's Metro Under-17 team.

The shock and what he deemed as a failure sent him down a lifestyle of partying. His grades plummeted, and he tried multiple post-secondary institutions before landing in the marketing management program at BCIT when he was 22. He didn't finish his education then, and instead got a job as a labourer at a construction firm, where he received crucial mentorship and advice.

The most prominent advice he was given was to work for his dad's trucking company—which goes back 33 years—instead of trying to forge a new path. "That started to find a purpose in my life a little bit. I [felt] stabilized a little bit, but I still was still in that dark side of partying lots in that scene I was using sort of alcohol and other things to kind of fill this hole in my soul. It came to a headway in 2010, when God entered my life and changed it. I was able to walk away from that lifestyle. I've been sober for 10 years [as of] February," says Grewal.

After five years of working at his dad's company, a newly hired accountant took Grewal under his wing. The accountant assigned lots of work to his apprentice, which tapped into Grewal's natural problem-solving, business strategy, and intrapersonal skills. According to Grewal, mitigating professional and personal relationships is vital in a family business.

Fast forward to ten years later, and Grewal had successfully worked his way up in the company and helped elevate his family business. It was around that time he felt he wanted to do different things, with the idea of not finishing his formal education still at the back of his mind.

Falling back on his professional and life experiences, he knew he enjoyed the business and the technical aspects of his work. When he decided to come back to BCIT, he knew exactly what he wanted to do.

With an accounting degree in his sights, he knew he had to weigh in the implications of pursuing his education in his mid-thirties (i.e. financial security). Still, he saw his window of opportunity and took it.

Having the experiences of problem solving and exposure to different kinds of things benefitted him going back to school, and ultimately in the future.

After his efforts and talents were recognized by one of the big four accounting firms, PwC, Grewal is headed there this

May to realize his dream he's worked hard for. He describes going back to school as daunting. "I purposely chose to come back to BCIT because this is where my education ended. I wanted to come back in and do my best to create a different story," says Grewal.

Although he doesn't associate his success with his own earnings, rather that they were gifts from God, I have no doubt it was his own determination that amplified those gifts into successes.

If I were to summarize Shawn Grewal in one quote, it would be Isaac Newton: "if I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

### *Can you tell me more about how pursuing accounting impacted your life?*

The main goal of accounting is trying to get everything to balance. Once it balances, it's okay. After streamlining everything and getting all that stuff put together, I was like, now I sort of know who I am and what I want to do. After having some stability in my life and addressing those other things, I decided to go back to school.

I was 34 when I started back part-time. At the same time, that's when my health condition came into play. It's IBS, a stomach condition where they don't really have a cure for it.

It started to impact my life on a daily basis. Even though I wasn't playing soccer at the time, I was running and going to the gym regularly. I [was] a part of some running clubs, marathons with a friend and things like that.

Financially, I didn't see how that was going to be feasible for me to go back full-time. On top of that, I was learning to deal with this physical condition.

I knew at that point wanted to go do other things because it was myself, my brother, and my dad running the company. The company was not big enough for all three of us to manage it.

Initially, I was going to work part-time for a company and then still continue to go to school part-time. And then it was wild. I remember sitting in an interview with a business owner in his office downtown.

He said, "why do you want to suffer and do part-time? You're older, just go full time, get it done, do whatever you need to do." In my mind, I didn't see how that was financially feasible. Then after hearing the same advice from an older cousin of mine, who's an accountant, I decided to put everything on the line.

Because I had other assets, I didn't qualify for student loans. I went to school and, and that's really where my test of faith

happened. On a day to day basis, I was dealing with my physical condition and sometimes having flare-ups, especially during the first year because it was so intense. Despite those things, faith and perseverance carried me through that.

It's hard for me to put to words; a big challenge for me was always comparing myself to other people. Especially when you go into school, and you're around colleagues.

I had to make a personal choice to adjust my schedule. I mean, everyone's taking on a full schedule at the end of the day. With my physical condition, I decided to take one extra semester to finish my degree, which at the end of the day, it's not the be-all-end-all.

Especially going through the wringer of the degree program, not very many people finish right on time. They end up maybe going to do an internship, or they have to upgrade classes. I just focused on doing the best that I could and with working within those constraints that I had. Then I ended up graduating and getting some job offers from some big firms. I just never felt good enough for that, and it was kind of wild to kind of see that all come to fruition.

I always dreamed of going to school, and it's a blessing and it same time it's funny because I'm so much older than most [students]. Even when I was doing interviews with some of these big firms, it was like your interview with managers, and I'm like usually older than them. I can't say enough good things about just how faith and God worked in my life and the people at BCIT that supported me through that process too.

### ***When you became part of your religious community, did you become a mentor?***

The thing is we all face different challenges in life. One of the key things I learned about being a part of a sports team is that you're part of a community. Like your friends and you build this camaraderie.

The main thing that sticks out for me is you're contributing to something that's bigger than yourself. I played defense and [I wasn't] scoring goals, it was more like [filling] in the gaps to help the team win.

The people usually playing midfield get more of the accolades because they're scoring goals and I was always comparing my strengths to other people's strengths. I wasn't

able to see that some of those strengths were things made me different. I got back to that when I got involved in a church and in other communities where it's about being of service—about getting outside of yourself.

*"I purposely chose to come back to BCIT because this is where my education ended. I wanted to come back in and do my best to create a different story"*

That's where I feel like I'm a part of the team and part of something that's bigger than myself. I have one mentor that's pretty much walked alongside with me for the last nine and a half years. That's been the key. He shared his experiences of going through school, through similar challenges and contributing to a community. It doesn't have to be the biggest thing. It can be serving coffee, cleaning up a little bit, or taking

time out to talk to somebody. Helping somebody in need is the most fulfilling thing.

### ***How will your experience at BCIT translate into your CPA?***

I think the next step is going to be challenging in itself. The CPA designation is another three years of work and study. If you don't learn these skills now, it's not going to help you later on.

Obviously, each situation seems more scary and overwhelming at first because it's something new. I think after having the experience of going through school, you realize, if I do my process, if I study, if I study the way that I study, like exams are going to be fine, I'm going to be okay. I might not get straight A's, but I'll get what I need to get in order to move forward.

### ***What would you like to be the biggest take away from sharing your story?***

My story is that it's never too late to go back to school. One of the challenges is sometimes it's very difficult to figure out what you want to do at the beginning, and it was very scary for me to come back to school full time at this stage in my life.

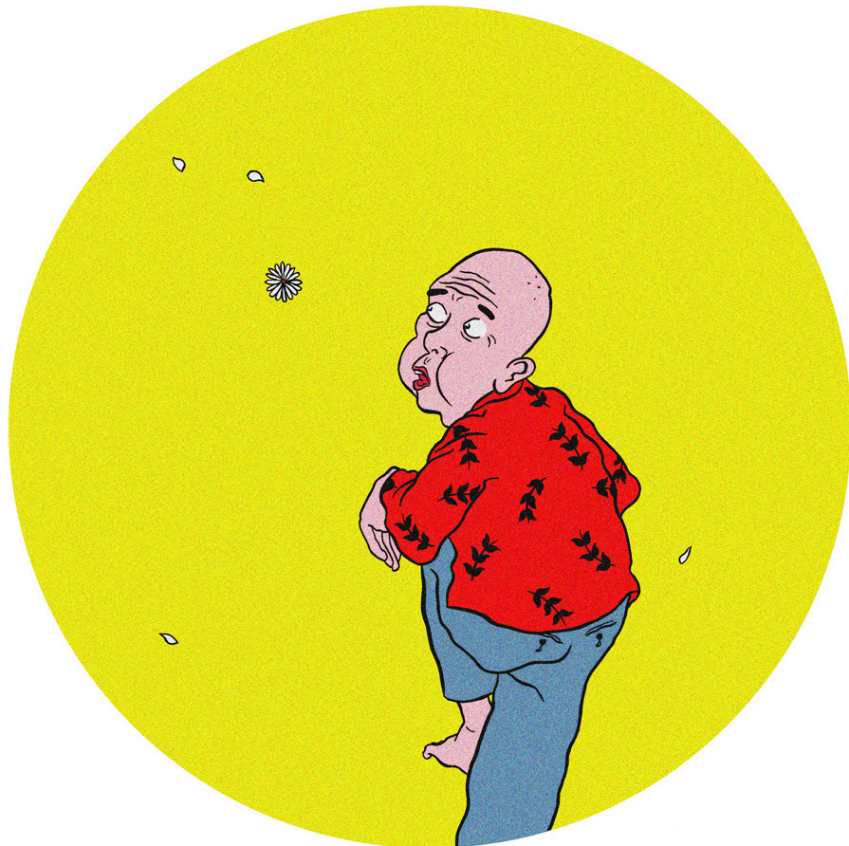
It's never late to, to educate yourself. If it takes a little while to figure out what you want to do, that's kind of normal. It's very difficult to sort of see what you want to do for your career when you're still young and figuring this stuff out.

I know that a lot of people change their area of study as they go through the process too. I guess in my experience, the one thing that never sat well for me was I just never finished it. I just feel very blessed to be able to go back to school full-time.









art feature

# VINCENT LIN

At his core, Vincent Lin is just a shy little guy that likes to draw. He especially loves drawing people. The bulk of his inspiration comes from going for walks around the city to observe the mannerisms and habits of everyday people. He grew up with a healthy diet of classic cartoons that left a lasting impression on him, including Cow and Chicken, Johnny Bravo, and Bugs Bunny. These were some of his earliest influences, where he often applies their finite lines and bright colours in his illustrations.

Watching so much TV as a kid led to a lifetime of compulsive doodling and drawing lots of crazy characters in the margins of his schoolwork. As time went on, he began to appreciate the work of master illustrators such as Aubrey Beardsley, Hokusai, and Alphonse Mucha. He used to borrow book after book from the library to help bring more sophistication into his work.

Vincent inks all of his drawings by hand before scanning them into photoshop and adding colours and textures. Although working this way is much more time consuming, Vincent believes that this adds more organic warmth to the characters, which you wouldn't necessarily get if the entire piece was done digitally. Hand-drawing his pieces first also brings Vincent back to his doodling childhood; he enjoys the calm state of mind that working this way brings. He hopes to do more illustration work in the future and hopes he never runs out of ideas.

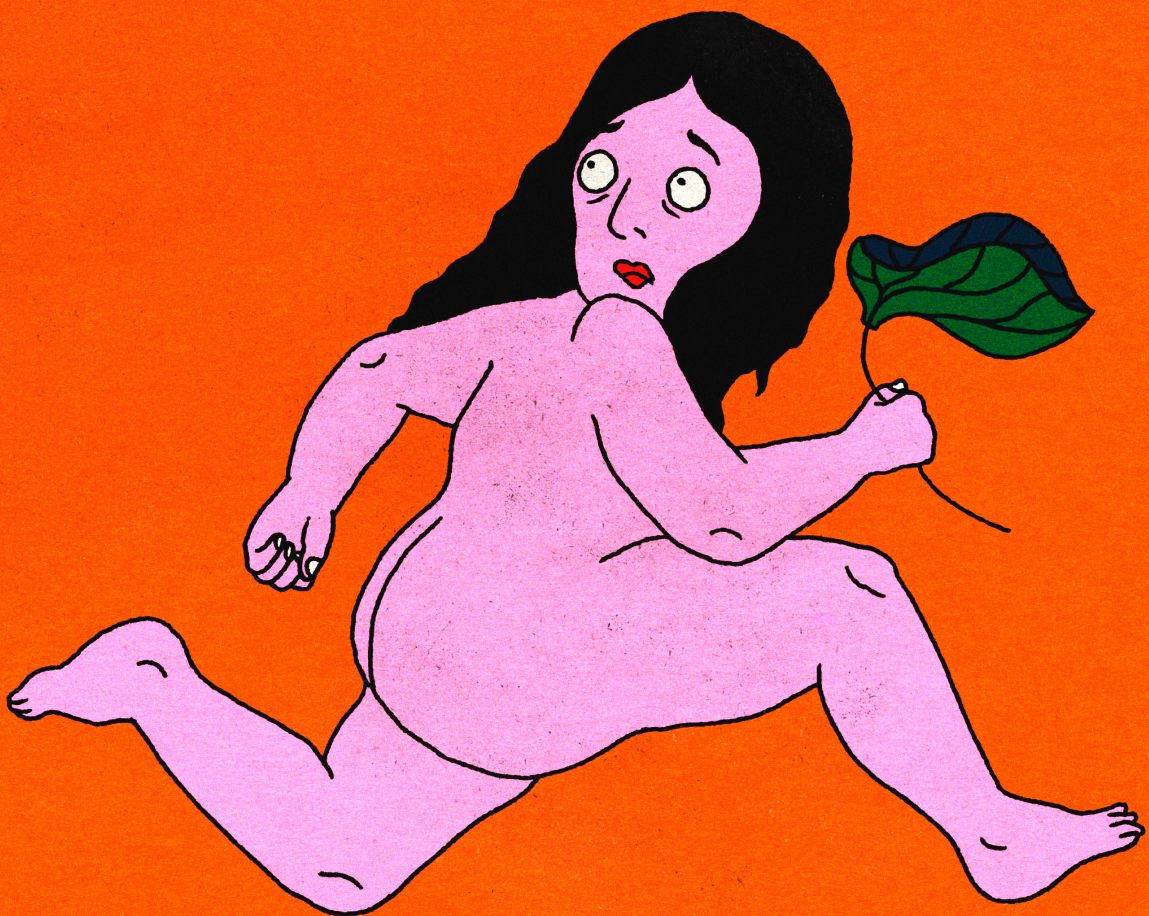
Follow him on Instagram @vincentlins







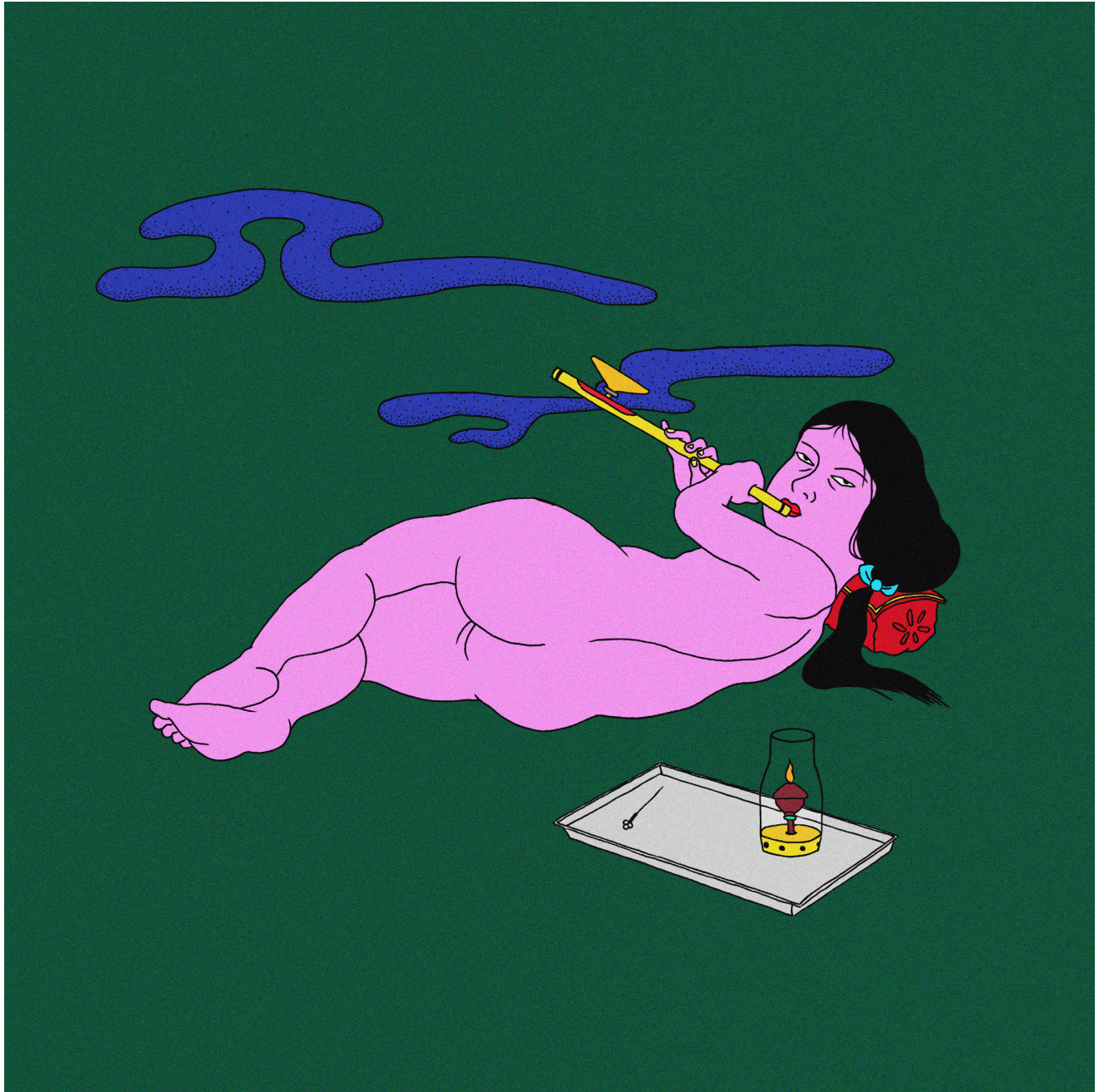














# Matcha Waffles

## *with coconut syrup*

Andrew Williamson

It's March, and spring break is on the horizon. With St Patrick's day (March 17) and International Waffle day (March 20) falling so close together, I decided to experiment and make some green waffles. They are just a subtle green with the matcha powder, so you may want to add a bit of green food coloring to make a brighter shade. I've included a quick and easy coconut syrup recipe to accompany the matcha waffles and to add a different texture of sweetness. This recipe makes around a dozen square waffles, which can be frozen and popped in the toaster later!



10 mins



10 mins

### Waffles

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1  $\frac{2}{3}$  cups of all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp white sugar
- 2 tbsp matcha powder
- 2 large eggs (room temperature)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of canola oil
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup of 2% milk

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Sift flour, baking powder and matcha powder together in a large mixing bowl. Add sugar and salt to the sifted ingredients.
2. In a separate mixing bowl, combine the wet ingredients. Whisk until everything is just mixed.
3. Pour the wet ingredients into the mixing bowl with the dry ingredients and mix it together, making sure to avoid forming lumps. The waffle batter should be light and fluffy, so be sure not to overmix.
4. Spoon the mixture onto a hot greased waffle iron and cook until golden brown.

### Syrup

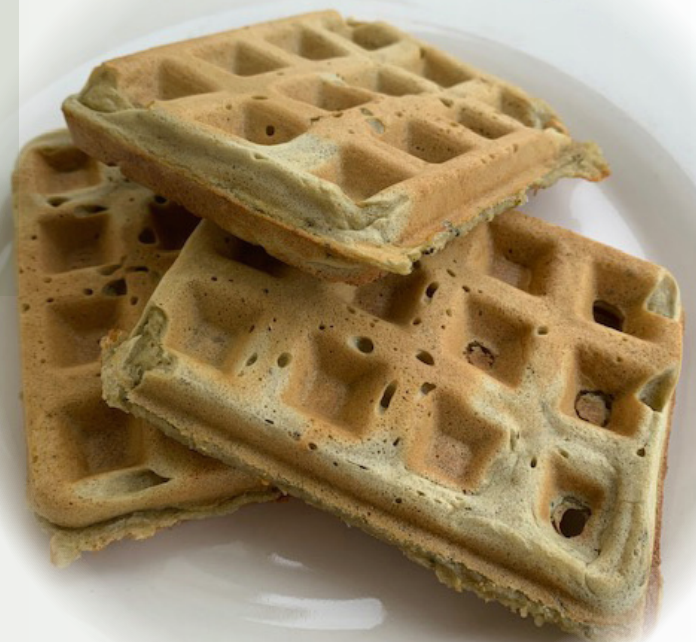
#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp corn starch
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup white sugar
- 1 can coconut milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shredded sweetened coconut (optional)

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Stir the coconut milk, corn starch, and sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat.
2. Continue stirring the mixture until the syrup has reached boiling point.
3. Once the syrup has reached a boiling point, remove from heat and allow to cool.
4. Add the coconut flakes to the syrup once the mixture has cooled.

*The recipe can be made vegan by substituting the milk with a plant-based milk alternative, and the eggs with flax eggs. To make flax eggs, mix 2 tbsp of ground flaxseed with 6 tbsp of water. Let sit to thicken, and then mix with wet ingredients.*



# The History of Green Beer

Daniella Pettenon



St. Patrick's Day—a day where every Irish pub in town is filled to the brim with drunken laughs, bagpipes, and green beer. This clover-coloured beverage has been a symbol of the holiday for nearly 100 years. There's irony in how the term "green beer" has turned into something positive. It hasn't always been the case.

Historically, "green beer" was a term to describe pre-mature beer—a beverage that would get you sick but not necessarily after a "fun" night out. This was an issue in the 1800's as fermentation was an expensive process. It got to the point where beer companies explicitly marketed their products as "old beer" to reassure their customers that the only headache they'd get is from 10 pints and a hangover.

As Irish as this holiday is, this festive drink did not originate from Ireland. Founded by Dr. Thomas Curtin in the Bronx in 1914, this coroner's physician and eye surgeon was responsible for introducing a food-coloured drink to the festivities of St. Patrick's Day in America. Why? There's a myth that Dr. Curtin was inspired by the Irish tradition of "downing a shamrock" where green shamrocks are simply put into beer on this special day. The green beer tradition never really made its way to Ireland, but adding blue food-colouring (yes, blue + yellow beer = green) has been a symbol of St. Patrick's Day for over 100 years in North America.

On March 17, find yourself a cold glass of green (or is it blue?) beer, and drink responsibly.

*\*Link Magazine does not condone excessive drinking, be responsible*



# Plant Based Diets: More Eco-Friendly?

words **Rozali Telbis**

Our diets are more politicized than ever. While there is more information available to us, we are still confused and misguided. Yet, when prompted, we dole out advice as if we are all doctors, nutritionists, or experts. To compound the confusion, we are judged endlessly on the foods we consume—or don't consume. Diets are constantly repackaged and sold as the new elixir—until the next one rears its head months, even weeks later, promoted by shameless influencers looking to make a quick buck.

Fortunately, more people are looking to modify their diets not only for their health but for the environment. More studies are confirming that a plant-based diet is the most eco-friendly of all diets. Worldwide interest in plant-based diets increased nine-fold between 2015 and 2020, according to Google trends.

The shift towards plant-based diets has spurred even the most ardent meat and dairy companies to invest in plants. Companies worldwide are taking advantage of the lucrative business opportunity to make money: Tyson Foods, the largest meat producer in the US, has invested in plant-based proteins; Danone, one of the world's largest dairy companies, acquired plant-based dairy producer WhiteWave Foods; Nestlé, the world's largest food and beverage company, recently announced it will launch a plant-based burger in the US.

Even fast-food chains and restaurants are churning out plant-based options. Subway has a meatless meatball marinara sandwich; Domino's released its first ever vegan pizza; KFC launched its Beyond Meat chicken nuggets—the list goes on.

In the past several months, we have seen what the effects of animal agriculture have done to our planet: hundreds of

thousands of acres of the Amazon Rainforest are routinely cleared for cattle ranching (though this event has only recently garnered worldwide attention). The Australian bushfires burned over ten million hectares of land and killed over a billion animals due to climate change (long-term dry conditions and exceptionally low rainfall). The coronavirus allegedly originated from a market in China where the sale of live animals are illegally sold for human consumption—more than 70% of infections in humans are estimated to have come from wild animals.

These events come and go until it directly impacts us. Like clockwork, people express their outrage, though very little foresight and introspection ensues until the next warning signal arrives and we decide to ignore that event, too. When the Amazon was #burning, very few media outlets addressed the connection between cattle ranching and our diets. The Australian bushfires triggered a larger conversation about wildlife and biodiversity, though unfortunately, many were still unable to make the connection between the loss of wildlife from natural disasters and the loss of farm animals for human consumption.

These catastrophic events, while seemingly disparate, still haven't been enough to alert us to the connection between our own lives and the climate.

A five-year study conducted by the University of Oxford (with data taken from nearly 40,000 farms in 119 countries, and 40 different food products), concluded that the single biggest way to reduce your environmental impact is to avoid animal products.

If everyone were to stop eating animal products, global

farmland could be reduced by 75 percent, an area equivalent to the size of the US, China, Australia, and the EU combined. This is largely because more than 80 percent of farmland is dedicated to livestock raised for meat and dairy production. The lead author of the study, Joseph Poore, stated<sup>5</sup>, “A vegan diet is probably the single biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth... [a] voiding consumption of animal products delivers far better environmental benefits than trying to purchase sustainable meat and dairy.”

Research conducted by Our World in Data<sup>6</sup>, a non-partisan research group, revealed that half of habitable land is used for agriculture globally. Of that 50 percent, 77 percent is “used for livestock, either as land for grazing or land to grow animal feed.” Additionally, animal agriculture is responsible for mass habitat destruction, including rainforests, pollution, mass-dying animals, and insects. It remains one of the most significant contributors to human-caused climate change. Animal agriculture is environmentally destructive, unsustainable, and unhealthy. In the years to come, animal agriculture will compound

issues of poverty, health, species extinction, and environmental degradation. Not only is a plant-based diet more sustainable, but it is a necessary step to save the world from starvation, as reported by the United Nations in 2010. The USDA reports that agriculture accounts for 80-90 percent of US water consumption, and more than half of it is relegated to feeding livestock for human consumption.

It's impossible to be perfect—it's unreasonable to ask people to completely offset their consumption. But, it's not unreasonable for everyone to reduce their impact, to collectively shift the way we think about the way we consume.

To say that individual action cannot make a difference is to ignore the incredible shifts we've seen in dairy and meat industries towards offering plant-based options. All of these successes are because of individual action, spurring a larger movement. Now more than ever, we have a responsibility to ourselves—and each other—and the planet to do more while reducing our consumption. Collectively, we can.

<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</sup> sources available online, [linkbcit.ca](http://linkbcit.ca)





# WHAT DOES THE

*Link spoke to several BCITSA student executives,*



## VP External

Currently: Steven Palfrey

- Promotes and maintains good public relations with surrounding communities
- Liaises with the Ministry and Government regarding issues that affect BCIT
- Chairs the Advocacy & Policy Committee
- Represents BCITSA on the BCIT Alumni Board and any lobbying efforts

### **What does a day as VP External look like?**

Like any other day for a student, you still have an inordinate amount of courses that you have to perform in. You will need to go to meetings in the evenings, and book time off to go lobby when it comes up. You also need to write follow up reports among other things to ensure that everyone is up to speed.

### **What is one task or opportunity that you didn't expect in your role?**

I didn't expect to be working on policy development. I feel like I'm taking a minor in political science! There isn't an established lobbying objective, and there is no material to be used for lobbying. We have been developing that material and creating policies to be voted on so that we have continuity in what the SA believes the government should be doing to help students. As of right now, we implemented some policies regarding supporting front end student grants, reducing and eliminating interest rates on student loans, and funding for post-secondary institutions.

### **Your role mentions maintaining good public relations with surrounding communities—what does this entail?**

This is mostly done by going to meet with government and other external groups to discuss student issues. Government and external groups are often interested in what ways they can contribute to student success and establishing ways for them to support students is key to good public relations.

### **In your role, you must liaise with the Government—how often do tasks like this come up?**

There is ongoing emails communication, and there have been local meetings along with meetings in Victoria. Every few months there are major trips while online communication is weekly.

### **From the list of tasks online, which is the most challenging? Why?**

Going to Victoria and having meetings back to back has been one of the most challenging experiences. This is mostly because the expectations are high in terms of the dialogue and pitch you need to have prepared for the particular government member. This can become stressful and the amount of breaks that you get is limited. Overall it's an incredibly rewarding as an experience!

### **What is something you wanted to do, but didn't quite get a chance to yet? (maybe the next person can champion the cause!)**

Part-time students having a UPass!

### **Any final comments?**

It's been incredibly rewarding to work in this role—I look forward to see BCIT external advocacy continue to flourish under the next VP External!

# EXECUTIVE *DO*?

*and asked them a day in their roles was like.*



## The President

Currently: Justin Cervantes

- Presides over Council and Executive meetings
- Is the official BCITSA spokesperson
- Ensures that the Executive Members are fulfilling their duties
- Presents the Interim Report at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and tables the Annual Report
- A non-voting student representative on the Education Council
- A voting student representative on the Board of Governors

### **What does a day as the President look like?**

A typical day as the President is a series of compromises. Every day is carefully scheduled in advance to balance the hours required for managing school, Student Association duties, and personal wellness. The role typically ranges from 10-20 hours per week. As a full-time student in the later portion of their diploma, the workload alone from the academics can be a real trial. Finding time to spend with family or to eat something that isn't convenience food becomes a small luxury. On the flip side, your mind is often sparked throughout the week with ideas you never thought you'd have. Finding operational efficiencies, engaging with community leaders on initiatives which cover the citizen journey well before and well beyond their time in post-secondary, coming up with ways to benchmark intangible services and understanding and executing what a diverse group of students needs in their post-secondary journey are all pick-me ups throughout a typical week which will make the busy schedule more than worth it.

### **What is one task or opportunity that you didn't expect in your role?**

As a member of the Board of Governors, you meet awe inspiring people. I've met my new personal heroes who serve the community from the shadows, and I've rubbed shoulders with c-suite executives from companies across British Columbia and Canada. The amount of wisdom and experience that you can get from the people you have the opportunity to associate with are rare, and I personally wouldn't have expected to have the connections I do for at least another 15-20 years.

### **From the list of tasks online, which is the most challenging? Why?**

Ensures that the executive members are fulfilling their duties. My background before coming to BCIT was very strict—learning how to uphold executive performance in a way which balanced my personal learning/disciplinary style with the broad range of communication needs of a board from every archetype of human was really difficult for me. Having the opportunity to deal with developing your leadership style among those outside of your typical community, though difficult, was definitely one of the things that I'll walk away with as being the best aspects of being in this particular role.

### **Any other comments?**

You come to BCIT to become a technical person (be it in trades, transportation, business, engineering, health sciences, computing, etc.), and the work down that path is hard enough without adding on this very large responsibility of community engagement and stewardship. However, if you don't step up to the plate to ensure that the systems which funnel people from school to the workforce are effective and comprehensive, no one will. It's not an easy path, but it is definitely worth it from a career and community perspective.

*For interviews with executives regarding other positions, please go to [linkbcit.ca](http://linkbcit.ca)!*



OP-ED

# DIETING

## SHOULD WE STOP TALKING ABOUT IT?

*“It’s not about getting to a number on the scale—It’s about creating a vision for how you want your life to look.” —Oprah Winfrey*

words Stephanie Bohn

People have been obsessed with dieting for decades. We are constantly in pursuit of the hottest new fad, one that will magically change us into an image that belongs on the cover of our favourite magazine. I’ve personally tried Keto, Atkins, Paleo, Whole30, the military diet, intermittent fasting, and alternated between cutting sugars, dairy, and carbs out of my life forever. I’ve guilted and shamed myself into tears countless times over my food choices. So, why am I still obsessed with dieting?

Advertisements for different diets follow us everywhere; popular culture portrays the idea that skinny is healthy. However, health is shown in every size. A reduction in body weight doesn’t equate to an increase in happiness. If we were to compare two hypothetical people—one size zero, diet of microwaveable treats and vodka, and the other size sixteen, home-cooked meals, regular hikes—we could assess who was healthier. Yet, if we walked by these two people on the street, many of us might automatically assume that the size zero was healthier simply because our society glorifies smaller bodies. We need to be aware of any societal and personal ideals present to us so that we can actively prevent projecting these ideals onto others. Just because society is obsessed with dropping pounds, does not mean that everyone is. Body preferences are personal, and value is not derived from weight.

Weight loss is a negatively stated goal, driven by fear and focused on keeping us from falling into a worse state. The problem with negatively-stated goals is that they fail to value our current state. Instead, they shift our mindsets and devalue our self-worth. Negative goals teach our minds to be fearful of the future; a pint of ice cream and an episode of *The Office* becomes enough to break us into tears. If we are unable to recognize that this is the effect of our negatively stated goal, this cycle repeats—building stress and stealing happiness at an exponential rate. To avoid this, we need to recognize weight loss as an unhealthy goal and shift our focus to something more positively stated. Let’s start by acknowledging and accepting that weight is not an indicator of health or happiness.

If weight isn’t an indicator of health, how do we determine what healthy looks like? Dr. Dean Ornish is an American physician and researcher, has determined that there are four categories to improving personal wellness:

- What you eat
- How much you move
- How you manage stress
- How much love and support you have

Ornish’s research encourages people to be mindful of what they are eating instead of how much they are eating. Switching focus from weight loss to body nourishment may motivate one to consume more of the fruits, vegetables and whole grains need to fuel themselves. Move more by taking a quick walk between classes, getting off one bus stop early, or parking further at the grocery store, library or school. To decrease daily stress, try reducing your caffeine intake, downloading a meditation app, keeping a stress journal, or giving yourself extra travel time (if you arrive early, listen to a positive podcast). Happiness is significantly impacted by how much love we are able to give and receive. There are so many ways to give love to others, including sharing meals with friends, volunteering, donating, and smiling at others on the street. Be mindful of how you are giving and reflect on whether the actions you exert are bringing you joy. Stay aware of your true self and your emotions. Regularly step back to recharge and take care of yourself to avoid overexertion.

Surrounded by popular culture concentrated on weight loss, it is easily forgotten that weight is not an indicator of health or happiness. Weight loss is a negatively stated goal that is driven by fear. It may increase stress and decrease self-confidence. Instead of focusing on losing weight, we recommend focusing on pursuing a positive goal. Invest in yourself by learning self-acceptance and increasing your long term health.





---

# DO INSTRUCTOR REVIEWS MATTER?

Lauren Edwards & Ali Pitargue

STUDENTS FILL OUT EVALUATIONS FOR EVERY COURSE, BUT IS THIS THE BEST WAY FOR THEM TO VOICE THEIR FEEDBACK? **LINK** INVESTIGATES HOW MUCH WEIGHT INSTRUCTOR REVIEWS HAVE ON IMPROVING **BCIT** PROGRAMS, AND IF THERE ARE WAYS TO ENHANCE HOW STUDENTS EVALUATE THEIR EDUCATION.

Near the tail-end of every semester, the tables turn between teachers and students when it's time to fill out course evaluations. Instructors pass around scantron forms and a box of ground wooden pencils before exiting the room; they are not allowed to see or hear anything before the results are gathered and revealed to them formally.

In this short period, students get to assign their teachers a grade and write out their feedback about the course. The forms contain two sections for students to fill out—the scantron portion and the written questionnaire. In the scantron section, students get asked about various aspects of the course, then they bubble in whether they are very unsatisfied, very satisfied, or anything in-between. Answering the written questionnaire allows students to individually express and specify which aspects of the course need improvement.

Financial management instructor Vnit Nath says, “It provides students an opportunity to give confidential feedback and faculty an opportunity to hear what students find useful and not useful.”

“They keep instructors accountable, and students can voice their concerns in a formal matter,” says carpentry instructor Robert Johnston. “Some-

times it's hard to know the quality of teaching in classes and lectures, but students have a good gauge."

Some students genuinely want to enhance the program and help instructors improve. Whether or not they get to see their feedback realized is another matter. Depending on the instructor, how the reviews affect the program's efforts to improve vary. Some instructors have built up years' worth of job security. If students have major gripes with their teaching, it would take immense pressure for instructors with senior positions to make large changes to the curriculum, or to give up their posts.

As a result, plenty of students are at a loss for what to do when they have issues with their instructors. BCIT assures students that their feedback is valuable, but the Student Advocacy office often hears differently.

BCIT Student Advocacy Manager, Robyn Lougheed, says that instructor dissatisfaction is the number one matter that gets brought up in her office. "I hear students say that they really don't feel heard. They fill out these evaluations, and nothing seems to happen," explains Lougheed.

Course evaluations are merely one part of the instructor appraisal process. It's up to the instructors to value their students' feedback and adjust their teaching styles accordingly. If not, they're mostly ineffective. There is minimal opportunity for sizable results to come out of the way reviews are

managed, where the forms circulate in a loop of inaction.

It starts with students submitting evaluations at the end of the semester. The instructor receives the results, but they aren't required to make changes. Then new students come in, they complain to Student Advocacy about the same issues, and again, instructors can elect to pay these issues little mind. Rinse and repeat.

"Unfortunately, it's one of those things where there's not a whole lot that students can really do about [certain instructors taking feedback in stride]. The students just need to keep talking. They need to keep using their voice," says Lougheed.

According to Lougheed, students are capable of substantially impacting the improvement of the program, but it would take more than filling out a form. If students want to enact change, it would be more effective for them to shed confidentiality and talk to instructors directly. Instructor reviews are only one avenue of communication that students can use to improve their education.

*"Just because a student has just come out of high school, doesn't mean they don't have a right to an opinion on how the teaching is going."*





# How it Works

## What exactly happens to those evaluation forms after students fill them out?

For paper forms, the students' responses are typed out verbatim at the Learning and Teaching Centre, and then handed back to the instructor (to prevent any recognition of handwriting). Scores are unveiled after courses have finished.

From here, the evaluations are administered differently depending on the instructor's union.

For those under the Instructional Government Employees' Union (GEU), both the quantitative summaries and questionnaire answers are distributed to the faculty member and their supervising Chief Instructor or Associate Dean.

If the instructor is part of the Faculty and Staff Association (FSA), only the scantron portion is given to the Associate Dean. The instructor can choose to discuss the written suggestions with the dean, but they are not required to. According to the BCIT FSA Collective Bargaining Agreement, "In no case shall any student questionnaire forms be placed on the employee's personnel file except at the request of the employee." (Section 13.2.8, pg. 80)

BCIT's Associate VP of Implementation and Integration, Jennifer Figner, says hand-written comments are taken into close consideration. "It is a very valuable portion of the feedback and is considered in the same way as the quantitative data."

According to Loughheed, teachers can utilize the student questionnaires. "There are certainly some fabulous instructors here who say they need that information. They want [to] make changes based on what their students are saying," she assures.

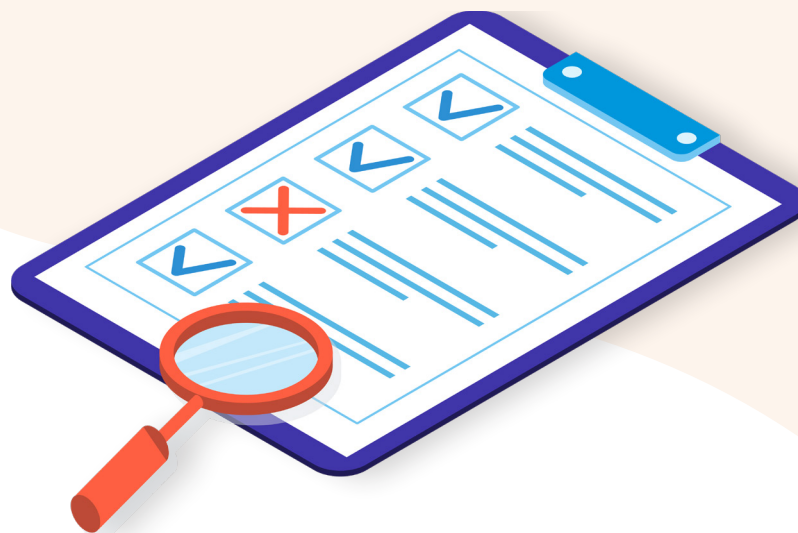
Unfortunately, some students think that the flip side also happens, where teachers do not take students' answers into consideration.

When students fill out those reviews, the amount of thought they put in varies. This can be due to how much they assume their individual feedback is worth, or due to whether or not the input would work to their benefit. It could even be related to how tired they happened to be on the day evaluations were handed out.

Yasmin, a first-year accounting student, says it depends on how strongly she feels about the course. "It's based on my experience with the instructor and how they've been in the class."

She doubts reviews make a difference, because different students can have diverse takeaways. "I think it's personal opinion, so if I were to give an opinion on an instructor and somebody else were to read it, then I think they would have their own thoughts."

Darren, a first-year broadcast and online journalism student, says he would like to think the reviews make an impact, but he is unsure how effective it will be. He implies honesty is key. "I'll do my best to describe how I felt about the class, so hopefully the instructors can put it towards good use."



For senior students, their time and observations at BCIT could influence how they provide feedback. William, a second-year student in CST (Computer Science Technology), says he never believed the evaluations made a difference, nor was he able to witness any improvements with individual teachers. “We’ve gotten different instructors for each semester,” he laughs.

If anything, these varying perceptions show that the evaluation process could use more transparency.

Figner also agrees with Lougheed’s suggestion. “Students can and should voice their concerns directly to their instructor,” suggests Figner. “If students don’t feel that they receive appropriate resolution, we encourage them to speak to someone in the Student Advocates’ office.” Alternatively, students can also approach their Set Reps who can relay their concerns to their program heads. There are many other optional review methods that instructors can implement.

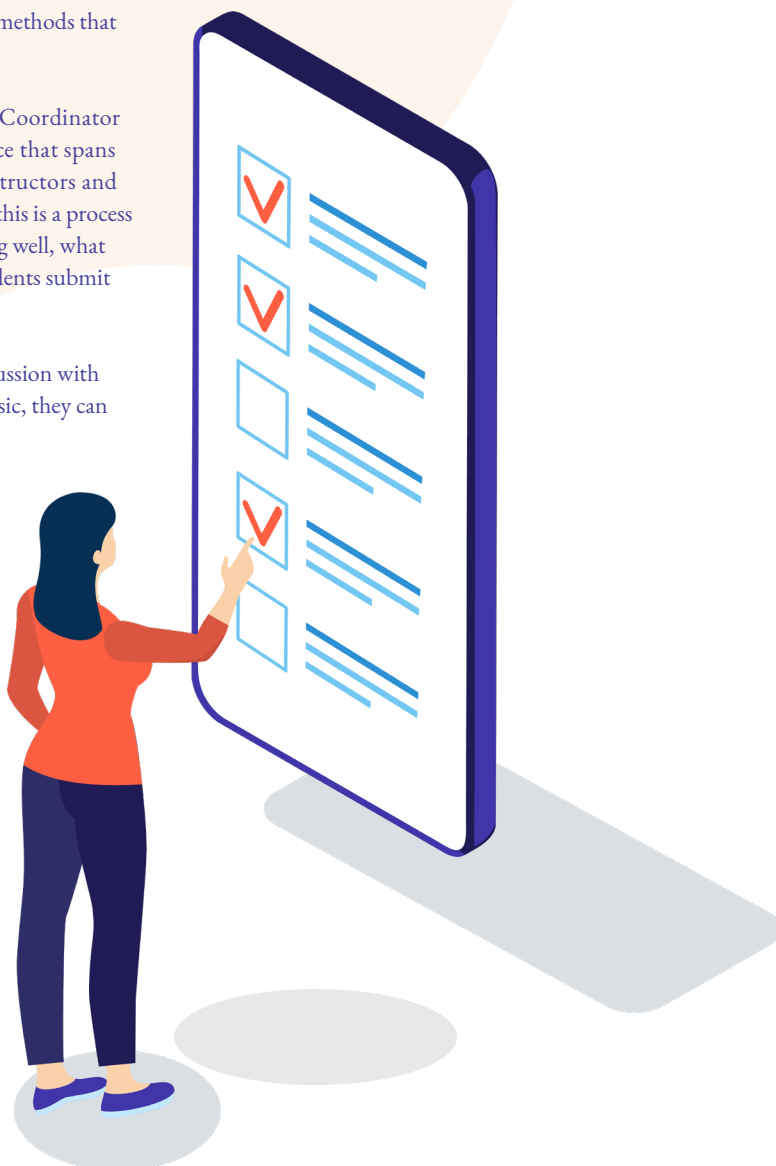
Judy Shandler is the Performance Development Systems Coordinator for the ITS department at BCIT. With teaching experience that spans 30 years, Shandler writes and promotes evaluations to instructors and their deans. Shandler especially praises formative reviews—this is a process where an instructor reaches out to a class to ask what is going well, what isn’t going well, and what students would like changed. Students submit answers anonymously on paper.

Shandler says that she would review answers and have a discussion with her students in the next class. Although the questions are basic, they can

have impactful solutions. However, there are some things that cannot be changed and it’s important that it is communicated. “[Concerns] have to be discussed with the students. It can’t just be quietly stuffed somewhere,” says Shandler.

The BCIT student body is diverse in age, and Shandler particularly stresses that younger students are just as capable of providing substantial feedback as mature students. “Just because a student has just come out of high school, doesn’t mean they don’t have a right to an opinion on how the teaching is going.”

Evaluations are able to gather student concerns en masse and are probably the most feasible way for instructors to get a holistic picture. We should then ask: how could we make instructor surveys more effective?





---

# What Else Could be Done?

In 2019, Robyn Lougheed sat in a Student Evaluation of Teaching Committee, which consisted of the Learning and Teaching Centre, and representatives from the Instructors' unions. They discussed what are the best questions to ask in course surveys. They workshopped questions that could possibly generate the best student responses, so instructors would be better able to pinpoint what measures they should take to improve their classes.

Lougheed thought that the committee discussions were helpful, but she intends on proposing some other major changes in how evaluations are administered. First, she highly recommends surveys be done mid-term instead of at the end of the semester.

"I don't know if this is something that's going to happen," she says, "I know that it's suggested to instructors that an evaluation be done at mid-term, so that if there is something that it could be discussed or looked at or amended if needed."

If evaluations are handed out in October and February instead, students possibly have a chance to see their suggestions come to fruition. It would be a precautionary step, which could prevent students from coming out of the course feeling like it was a waste of time. This would benefit current students as well as the next batch, or any prospective enrollers.

Another effort is taking the evaluations online. Lougheed says, "Right now, the students are getting evaluations before a final exam. [If they miss it], they could pick it up after the final exam. This doesn't always work in their favour."

Currently, there is an initiative at BCIT for Paperless Course Evaluations (an option for students to fill out the forms on the Learning Hub), set out as an environmental conservation effort. Evaluation results are

amalgamated more conveniently and with more confidentiality in mind. Online surveys eliminate a few steps in the process, like transcribing, and can be printed on PDFs for instructors to review. This year BCIT has transitioned almost completely to online evaluations. The trades departments are still kickin' it old school, though.

According to Shandler, the response rates have dropped since moving the surveys online. The emails could be going to their junk mail, instructors are unsure how to personalize their surveys, or the new system could have bugs in the works. She says, "One thing that I remind instructors of is that they still need to allow ten minutes during the last day of class to complete the survey."

Lougheed, however, is still hopeful. "I liked the anonymity. I just cross my fingers that students are respectful."

In other words, don't write *you suck*.

A couple of ways to be respectful are professionalism, tone and purposeful suggestions (i.e. asking teachers to upload slides on the Learning Hub or to speak slower). Going about it disrespectfully is counterproductive, which devalues the concept of being 'job-ready' after graduating.

"Generally, [teacher-student conflicts] come down to miscommunication. Something wasn't understood, something was misconstrued or there just wasn't enough information given," adds Lougheed.

So, do instructor reviews matter? Yes, but they could use some updates. Changes to the teacher evaluation format could be in the works, but for now, students have a voice and can make a difference.

**MARCH 31**

12:00 - 4:00 | SE2, Great Hall

CAREER  
SERVICES

# The HIRING FAIR

## ALL EMPLOYERS ARE HIRING

Whether you're an alumnus, getting ready to graduate, or are just starting your program, meet one-to-one with hiring managers and industry professionals.

View attending employers and positions:

[bcitsa.ca/careerservices/hiring-fair](https://bcitsa.ca/careerservices/hiring-fair)

Brought to you by your BCIT Student Association



**AXIOM**  
BUILDERS

**BOSA**  
CONSTRUCTION

**Mainland**  
GROUP OF COMPANIES



BCIT Student Association  
**Elections 2020**

# VOOTE

March 26th at 9:00 am | Closing: April 3rd at 12:00 pm

MEET THE CANDIDATES

MAKE A CHOICE



[bcitsa.ca/elections](https://bcitsa.ca/elections)



[#bcitsaelections](https://twitter.com/bcitsaelections)