

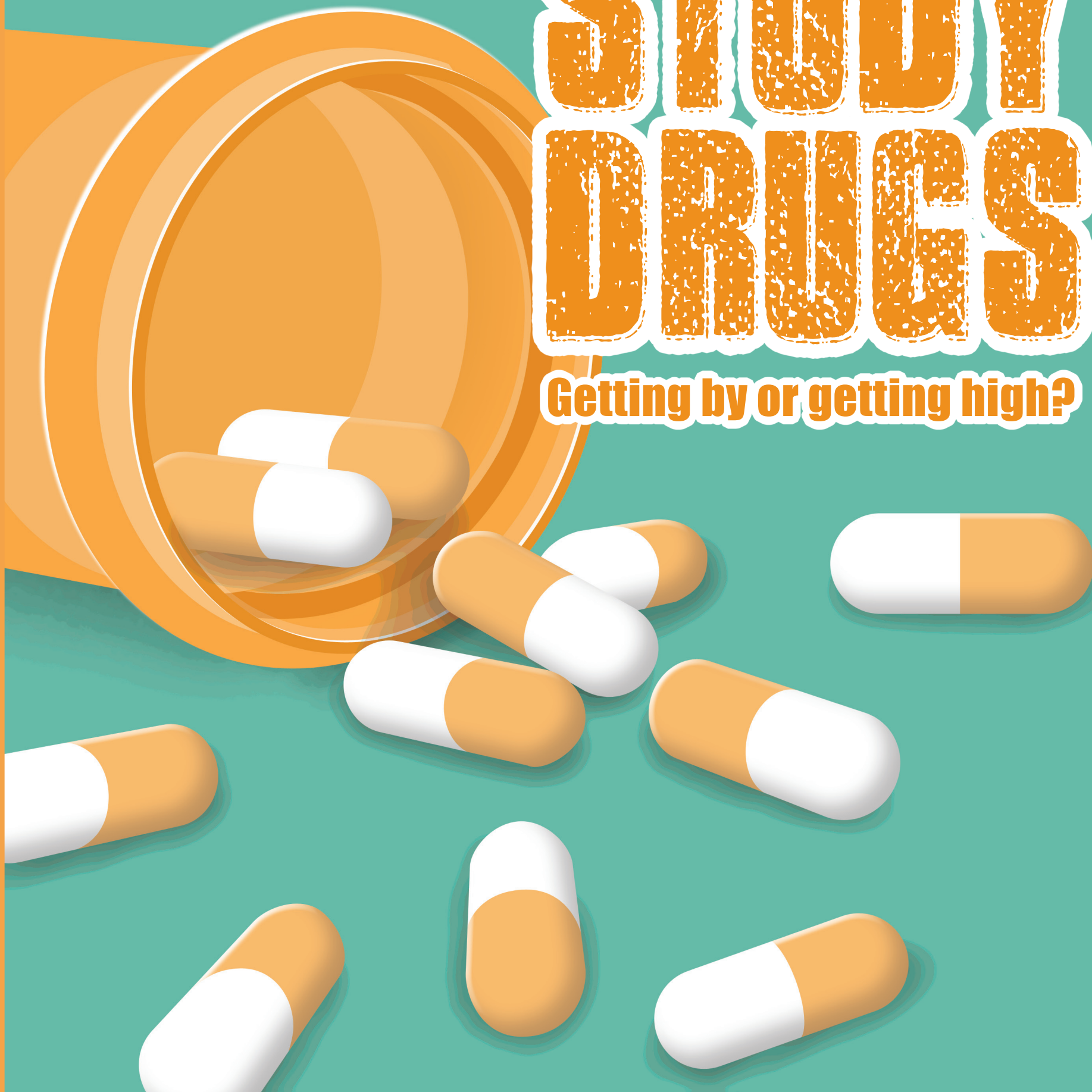
the *Link*

March 28, 2012
Volume 47 • Issue 13

STUDENT PUBLICATION OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

STUDY DRUGS

Getting by or getting high?



The Link

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ABOUT THE LINK

The Link is the British Columbia Institute of Technology's student newspaper. Published bi-weekly by the BCIT Student Association (BCITSA), The Link circulates 3,000 copies to over 45,000 students, faculty, and staff.

THE LINK

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PHOTO of the WEEK



The sun pours into the Gateway building on a particularly beautiful day.

Dawna Mackay

Hey shutterbugs! Want to make some cash?

The Link is seeking photos related to BCIT campus life for page two of each issue. We'll pay you \$10 for each one we publish. Send your shot to link@bcitsa.ca but make sure it's less than three megabytes in size. Please include your name and a description of what you shot.



CAMPUS QUERY

Do you think it's right that some students are taking prescription drugs to help them study?



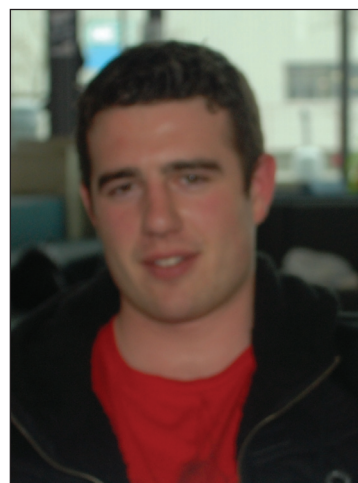
DOMINIC CHABOT
Construction Operation

"In the long term, isn't it going to affect you? Are you going to be able to get the same result when you're at work?"



SANJA NESKOVIC
Human Resources

"Absolutely not, studying should be something that's done naturally and you shouldn't get anything else to help you out except your brain."



AJ MACFARLENE
Entrepreneurship

"It's like taking steroids at the Olympics. It's cheating."



SANA RANGWALA
Broadcast Journalism

"I have a friend who takes the drug and he comes from a family where he's expected to be a doctor, he's expected to [take study drugs] as well. I can understand his predicament."

Required gym class discriminatory: comp-sci students



A CST student performs his mandatory weekly workout.

Nagin Rezaiean

Petition claims mandatory physical education classes for computing students is discriminatory

KEVIN WILLEMSE
Editor

Computer Science Technology (CST) students are speaking out in protest of the physical education component from their program, a requirement not asked of students in any program in all of BCIT. The unusual practice has some students complaining of discrimination.

Students enrolled in the CST program have to spend 45 minutes per week in the gym as part of their course, with little supervision or guidance, other than being expected to break enough of a sweat to convince the instructor to sign an attendance and participation sheet.

"It's ridiculous," says BCIT Student Association of School of Computing and Academic Studies Chair Marwan Marwan. "We're adults, we should be given the op-

tion of how best to look after our health and spend our time [at BCIT]. We're being lined up like schoolchildren with a piece of paper for our instructor to sign, so that we can be let out of [gym] class."

CST students can be held back from course graduation if their sheets are not signed off on by the end of the semester. For this reason, attendance is high though it has been reported that many students simply find a quiet spot to stay out of sight and catch up on schoolwork until handing their sheets in for signing.

"This sometimes forces students to lie to their instructors [about exercising] because they know they simply have more important things to do," continues Marwan.

A bigger area of concern amongst the affected students is the inherent discrimination they feel the mandatory course holds, which has led to a petition for its immediate abolishment from the CST program. Alex Lee, who acts as the BCIT Student As-

sociation's School of Computing councillor, believes that enforcing the class as a CST prerequisite is simply unfair.

"We feel that it's really important to bring fairness and equality across the board for all BCIT students, but currently that's not happening because we are forced to have mandatory gym," Lee told *The Link*. "It's something that's not forced upon

be similarly characterized as leading the sedentary lifestyle associated with information technology professionals.

"The idea actually came from the University of South Alberta a few years back, where it was very well received," says Associate Dean of CST Brian Pidcock.

According to Lee and Marwan, 90 per cent of petitioned students have signed against the class.

"The course will come under review at our upcoming executive meeting . . . and this would probably be considered a minor change," Pidcock told *The Link*.

The issue raises sensitive topics around the dangers of discrimination and segregation based on stereotypes, even when they are perhaps done with the best intentions, without consideration or consultation.

"CST students feel they should participate in physical activity on their own terms and in their own time, since that's the respect and courtesy given to students in BCIT in all other faculties,"

"We're being lined up like schoolchildren."

— Marwan Marwan,
BCIT Student Association
Computing & Academic
Studies chair

anyone else."

Marwan and Lee agree that the practice of isolating CST students for physical education is made based on stereotypes. They believe if it was in the best interests of students, those studying finance, business, or even the natural sciences could

NEWS BRIEFS

Province's donation to transcription program helps hard of hearing

BCIT's Disability Resource Centre held a mock presentation today in hopes of highlighting the Typewell Transcribing Project, a program that aims to remove barriers to education for those with hearing disabilities.

The transcribing system provides students with a fast and accurate text transcription of lectures and seminars. As demonstrated in the mock presentation, a transcriber listens to the instructor and types a condensed version of the lecture that appears almost immediately on the student's laptop.

"This program has made a world of difference and gives me a chance to interact," says Len Ziggante, a BCIT student with hearing difficulties, "and my marks and my GPA show it."

Although the TypeWell program is not new to BCIT, the Government of British Columbia demonstrated its commitment to speech-to-text services by donating \$150,000 to Post-Secondary Communication Access Services at BCIT.

"The government has enabled more students who are deaf and hard of hearing to access programs at BCIT," says Minister of Advanced Education Naomi Yamamoto. "[The program] offers access to students, who in the past haven't been able to take particular courses."

While this program is aimed at helping students with hearing disabilities, Yamamoto hopes the expansion of the program encourages people to take up transcribing as a possible profession. As part of this, a portion of the grant will be used to hire more transcribers for Student Aid services.

— Janella Hamilton

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link@bcitsa.ca

CAMPUS SHORTS

BCIT Student Association elections approaching

BCIT Student Association election nominations opened last week and officials already have high hopes for participation.

"It's going to be a really competitive year," Chief Returning Officer and VP, Student Life Tylan Fraser told *The Link*. Fraser also emphasized opportunities for potential candidates.

"There's a lot you can do with the Student Association," Fraser continued. "There's a lot of responsibility and there's a lot to learn. People are really starting to see the opportunity."

Nomination forms are available at the BCITSA website (www.bcitsa.ca) and in person at the SA General Office in SE2 at the Burnaby Campus. Nominations close on Friday, March 30 at noon. Voting takes place April 13 to 30.

— **Nagin Rezaiean**

Province pledges new Emily Carr campus

Despite recent cutbacks to university funding, the government of British Columbia has pledged \$1.7 million to assist in the building and moving of the Emily Carr University of Art and Design campus.

The university, which currently caters to approximately 2,000 students at its Granville Island campus, hopes to build a new facility on Great Northern Way in Vancouver, near UBC's department of art history and theory facility.

UBC cleared of animal cruelty allegations

An investigation in March found no evidence of animal cruelty at a University of British Columbia research facility. The allegations claimed that macaque monkeys were improperly treated and unnecessarily killed during the course of a Parkinson's study last year.

VCC bans bottled water sales

Vancouver Community College voted last week to ban the sale of bottled water on campus starting spring 2013. The college will be the first post-secondary institution in greater Vancouver to ban bottled water sales, citing sustainability as a primary reason for the move.

— **Ariane Madden**
(Simon Fraser University)

Post-secondary presidents oppose cuts

In a letter to the Minister of Advanced Education, university presidents oppose cuts

ARSHY MANN

CUP Western Bureau Chief

VANCOUVER (CUP) — B.C.'s university and college presidents believe that service cuts will come if the provincial government cuts funding to post-secondary education.

A letter signed by the presidents of the 25 publicly funded universities and colleges in B.C. argues that it is "unrealistic to assume that the [funding] reductions contemplated by Budget 2012 can be achieved without implications for service levels."

This contradicts the government's claim that the \$70 million funding gap can be overcome through administrative savings and that neither student services nor research would be affected.

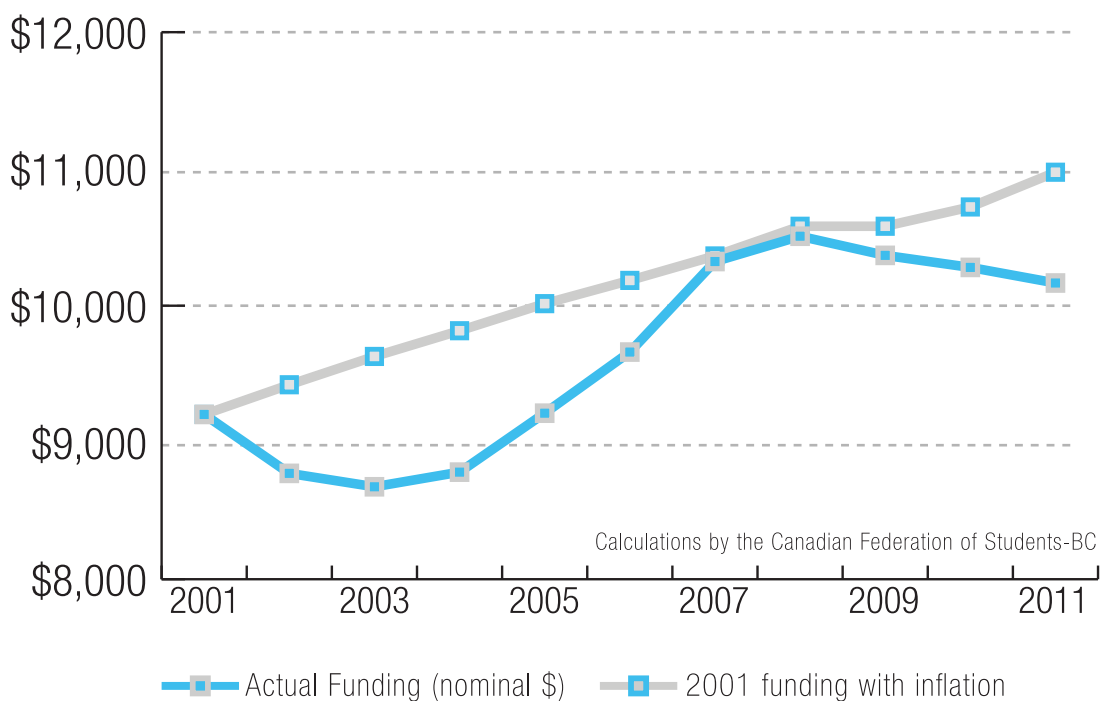
"It is critical for Government to understand that the \$70 million reduction to institutional grants over the last two years of the fiscal plan, combined with five years of unfunded inflationary pressures, creates a strain on the operations of post-secondary institutions," reads the letter addressed to Advanced Education Minister Naomi Yamamoto.

The letter also expressed worries that post-secondary was the only sector that received an overall funding reduction.

"We are very concerned that the Provincial Government is not aware of the measures the post-secondary sector has undertaken in the last number of years in response to significant cost pressures and no increases in institutional operating grants."

The presidents did, however, praise the government for providing more money for capital maintenance and that the overall funding would stay stable for the next year.

Provincial Operating Grants to Public Colleges and Universities 2001–2011 (per student)



Courtesy of CFS-BC

Michelle Mungall, the NDP's critic for advanced education, stressed the importance of the letter.

"This is unprecedented," she said. "This has never happened before in B.C.'s history, where all of the presidents of public post-secondary institutions come together in a unified voice to express their dismay and what I interpret as their lack of confidence in the Liberal government and the minister."

"This has never happened before in B.C.'s history."

— Michelle Mungall,
NDP advanced education critic

She also argued that because the letter was sent out on February 28, seven days after the budget announcement, it indicated a lack of consultation between the ministry and the institutions.

"Shouldn't [Minister Yama-

moto] have worked with the institutions on this very issue before the budget was developed rather than just telling them what's going to happen and leaving them feeling like they're out in the cold and not involved?"

Mungall has been calling for the minister's resignation for the past week in the wake of a private email from a reporter to the ministry about an education consortium leaking to the head of that organization. She said that this letter will simply add fuel to that fire.

"What both issues highlight is the inability for this minister to do her job. She has broken the relationship with public post-secondary [institutions]."

In the letter, the post-secondary presidents also state that the government's mandates around collective bargaining are going to place further pressures on university finances.

The provincial government has instructed university and colleges that are undergoing collective bargaining with any of their employees that they

can only raise wages or benefits if those increases are offset by savings found elsewhere in the institution.

Robert Clift, the executive director of the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C. (CUFA) said that the expectation that universities and colleges will be able to find savings for both the provincial government and for unions is going to create strife during negotiations.

"This is the flexibility you've given us, and then you remove all the flexibility," he said of the government's proposal. "Now I doubt we're going to see faculty at the research university marching the picket line over this, but what happens is that thing that just keeps eating away at the desirability of B.C. as a place to [work]."

The collective bargaining agreements for the faculty association at the five major B.C. research universities — the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University, the University of Northern British Columbia and Royal Roads University — all expire this year

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Still an 'uphill battle' for young people seeking jobs: study

Recent graduates must network, volunteer to start your career, say experts

SARAH DESHAIES

CUP Western Bureau Chief

MONTREAL (CUP) — With graduation fast approaching, future graduates are looking at a grim job market as young workers have been the worst affected by the past recession, according to a recent study by TD Economics.

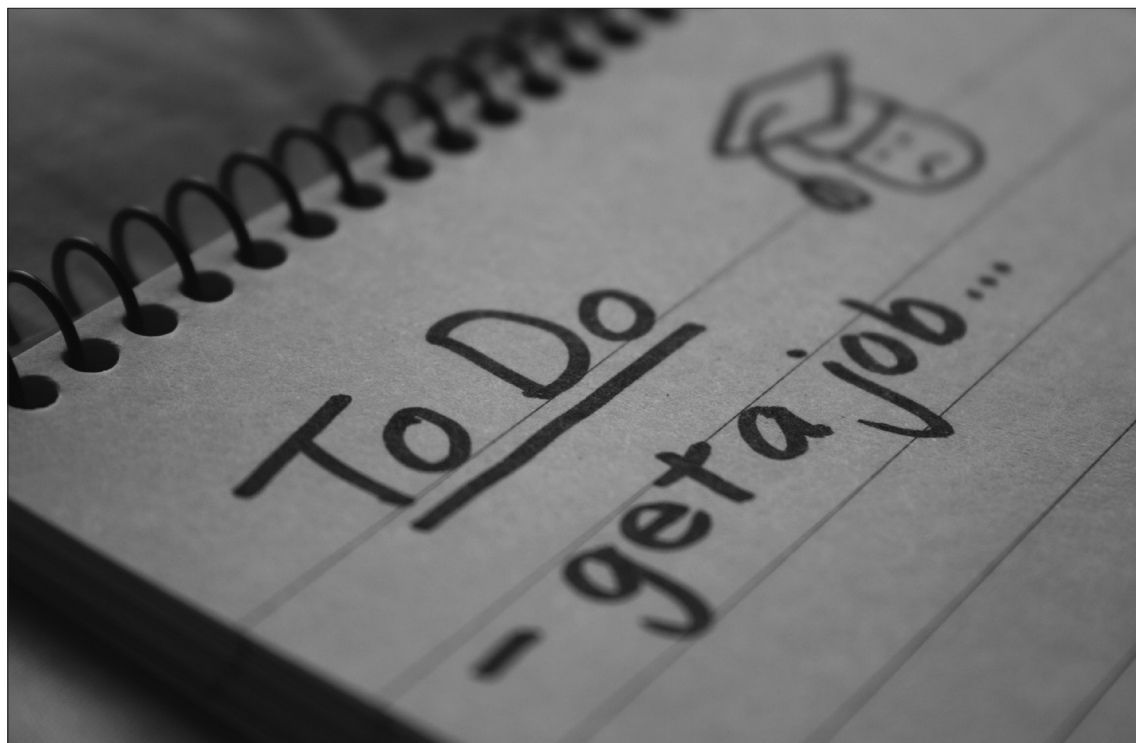
The 2008 recession hit young workers hard: workers under 25 held more than half of the 430,000 jobs that were lost over the recession, though they represent one-sixth of the labour force.

Those between the ages of 20 and 24 have fared better than those in the 15 to 19 bracket, but job recovery is still dismal for all young workers though the recession has ended. And 175,000 young workers have left the labour market since the start of the recession — meaning they just stopped looking. Youth unemployment now stands at 14.5 per cent, double that of the regular population.

This is a trend that accompanies economic slowdowns, said Francis Fong, economist and author of the study, pointing to similar situations in the '80s and '90s.

"Young people have always taken the brunt of these economic downturns," explained Fong.

"The challenges that this generation faces are unique in that ... not only are you facing competition from your own age cohort [and] people who lost their jobs during the recession ... you're facing competition from a lot of older workers



Sarah Deshaies/The Concordian

who are now retired."

Though Canada's baby boom generation has just started to hit 65, many older workers are either returning from or delaying retirement to remain in the workforce. There has even been a "surge" in job creation for older workers post-recession, as 400,000 new jobs overall have been created for workers over 25 since before the recession began.

Leanne Ashworth, coordinator of the Concordia Student Union Housing and Job Bank said many graduates return for help, desperately seeking work. "We ask them, 'What do you want to do?' And they'll say, 'Anything.'"

To Iris Unger, these dismal numbers also echo what she sees as executive director of Youth Employment Services (YES), a career and business resource centre in Montreal.

"There's a lot of young peo-

ple out of work, and we're seeing a lot more of them at the centre," said Unger, who says pressure to find a job post-graduation from family and friends can take a mental toll on job seekers. "We're seeing a big increase in young people getting stressed about the employment situation."

It will likely take a few more years before the labour market re-balances itself.

Recently, the federal government slashed \$6.5 million in funding for youth summer job programs, closing down job centres and moving many resources online. The office of Human Resources Minister Di-

ane Finley defended the decision, saying that young people they surveyed said they were seeking out information online rather than at centres.

Unger criticized this justification, saying that the government should have also consulted resources like YES, and not just students. Hunting online for jobs is not a sure-fire way to get hired, she said.

And it will likely take a few more years before the labour market re-balances itself. Past studies have shown that it can take up to 10 years for young workers to regain their footing in the economy after a recession, according to Fong. And those who graduate in a recession stand to earn less income, a gap that only closes several years on.

Overall, Z Fong conceded. So what does a young person with a newly-minted diploma do?

Having an online resume, like a LinkedIn account, is a good call, but don't job hunt exclusively online. Instead of emailing out dozens of faceless CVs, make yourself known to potential employers by using "hidden connections" like networking, volunteering and internships.

"People need to be trying as many different things as possible and having face-to-face connections with employers instead of just firing things off on the Internet and never talking to someone," Ashworth explained.

"The main way to get a job is through networking, which means getting out of the house," Unger agreed.

One option is to offer to volunteer a few hours a week to get your foot in the door and gain experience, while supporting yourself at another job.

Unger added that it's also crucial to find a supportive network of family and friends so you don't sink into a funk.

And if you don't find your dream job straight out of school? The report warns that not finding work after graduation "erodes a graduate's skills and competitive edge," and can lead to people taking "lesser" jobs, taking a hit to their income over the years.

Sometimes, it's okay to settle for what you can get, according to Ashworth, but it's also important to keep your eye on the prize.

"Find a survival job, keep your spirits up and try to focus on the long-term search, as well," said Ashworth. "Don't feel like you're stuck there forever, but get your needs met first."



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Sacrificing school spirit

Do we really need more school spirit?

DAVID SWANSON
Assistant Editor

Most people enter post-secondary education with a mental Rolodex itemized with every mainstream American student life cliché. Sure, most of us probably know our experience won't mirror that of our favourite 1990s coming-of-age college movie, and we don't expect an endless choice of frat house parties every Friday night.

However, I think it's safe to say most expect their school to have some amount of spirit, be it athletically, socially, or academically focused, which will give them enough material to regale their co-workers by the water cooler in 10 years' time.

Well, if you were hoping to wow your future colleagues with tall tales about your BCIT experience, your anecdotes will probably be devoid of any memories outside of late nights in the ehPod and long lines at Tim Hortons.

BCIT has no school spirit. When it comes to being a cohesive unit, the BCIT campus community rivals that of the Toronto Maple Leafs' defense. But unlike that of Canada's most mismanaged NHL club, I'm not so sure BCIT's lack of school spirit has to do with effort, or even if it is something that can be fixed without altering BCIT's primary function, which is of churning out B.C.'s most employable graduates.

Let's look at the situation. Firstly, programs and facul-

ties are isolated from each other. Most programs at BCIT are pre-packaged courses that don't require students to take electives outside of their faculty, as is mandatory at most other post-secondary institutions — and why should they?

When it comes to being a cohesive unit, the BCIT campus community rivals that of the Toronto Maple Leafs' defense.

People come to BCIT to specialize in one area, taking pre-destined courses designed and vacuum-packed to turn them into focused, job-ready worker bees. It wouldn't make practical sense for a student in, say, the School of Transport, to take an introductory poetry class. This ensures courses are practical and industry aligned, but also means a student's potential to meet people outside of their program is limited. It becomes almost impossible to build relationships with those in different areas of study, which ironically makes people build loyalties to their program peers, rather than BCIT as a whole.

This social gap is intensified by the fact that BCIT is a commuter campus. There are fewer than 400 students living in residence at the Burnaby campus and no residences at any of the other four satellite locations. People aren't staying on campus to hang out because at the end of their day,

there is still a rush hour commute home to conquer.

Okay, people go to Professor Mugs for beers often enough, but this, too, is totally segregated. You can tell with once glance which table is for marketing students, which is for tradesmen, and which is for programmers.

Furthermore, most programs at BCIT are accelerated, highly intense, and career focused. People who enrol here have decided to shelve their social life for a couple years in exchange for the near guarantee of post-graduation employment. Not to mention, because most programs are so specific and have such a rigidly structured curriculum, it is likely students are committed to their career choice, which means dedicated to earning good grades because they actually all do matter, and there is no easy 'Plan B'.

Students view BCIT as a training centre more so than an institute of higher education. We're told to build our network as opposed to friendships. Yeah, it would be great if we had more community engagement, but the very qualities that differentiate BCIT from other schools is what hinders our ability to build a campus community in the first place.

You came here to gain a marketable skill set and it is unlikely you'll leave to start a program at a party school like UBC. If you value BCIT's education strategy, a low level of school spirit followed by a job shortly after graduation sure beats a lot of school spirit followed by another three years working at Starbucks.



You won't see this at BCIT.

Courtesy of Fire At Will Photography

Click to share, or more will perish!

How 'slacktivism' changed my life and little else

BRADY TIGHE

Vancouver Island University

NANAIMO, B.C. (CUP) — 'Slacktivism' is now a threat to my sanity. It's probably the first time those who take part in it have ever affected anything, so I guess some congratulations are in order. Who knows? If they keep up their annoying online snobbish trash, I might organize a counter-activism group to protest the shitty, lazy activism that's driving me up the wall.

So, what is slacktivism?

It's the behaviour of those who act involved in the protest or championing of a certain issue, but do little or nothing to actually change said issue. Here's a step-by-step guide to

being a slacktivist.

Think of any kind of tragedy gripping the world right now; it can be starving children, ethnic genocide, financial ruin in other countries, or a domestic issue that is somehow comparable to those foreign tragedies.

Post to Facebook about the issue. Write that everyone should rally together and do more about it, and act all pissed off and offended that everyone isn't aware of this issue.

You've now done fuck-all to fix the world, but feel like you're a tried and true activist, and that you've done your part to raise awareness — Ghandi with an Internet connection. Congrats! You've just participated in slacktivism.

Do me a favour: go to Africa, find a starving child, then take that kid's picture with your cellphone and say, "Dude, don't worry. I'm tweeting the

shit out of this." See if he feels any better. Sure, you'll feel better, confident that you've done "what you could," but you've really done nothing.

It seems like I'm stating the obvious, but this is what is happening all over the Internet. One glance at Facebook shows an outpouring of can-do attitude for any number of global problems; however, all those people had to do to act like they were participating was string together a sentence beginning with, "This is really serious, guys," and then click the share button.

This is bullshit. Sharing a YouTube video, putting a sticker on the back of your car, making a poster, tweeting, telling your friends or writing long diatribes on your blog will do nothing to save anyone. It only succeeds in making you feel better about yourself, knowing

that you somehow contributed to something that needs real solutions.

You've now done fuck-all to fix the world, but feel like you're a tried and true activist.

Even if you go and talk to your local politicians, you're still doing nothing. Of course these government officials say, "Something like this cannot go on," and "We the government will do everything in our power to make sure that we do what we can."

What do you expect them to say? "No, we're going to do nothing, because we're busy

doing other things, and we don't really give a shit."

People have donated billions of dollars to help solve certain problems, and those problems still exist. Your Facebook status/online campaign is ineffective, and it's a Western idea of how to fix problems people in the developed world can't begin to understand with their fancy Internet machines and bullshit self-righteousness.

Chances are, sharing and viewing the living hell out of the YouTube videos these campaigns fire out does nothing but stuff advertising dollars into the pockets of those who made the videos. That goes beyond slacktivism — that's profiting off tragedy, and all you needed to do was edit sad images to sad music and occasionally flash the words, "We can make a difference" on the screen.

Scarlet Letters A biweekly sex column by BCIT's own Scarlet de Sade

Dear Scarlet,

So I'm casually sleeping with this guy, but then he started asking around about a friend of mine. I am really confused, what do I do?

— Friend Without Benefits

Dear FWB,

You're casually having sex, meaning he does not owe you any explanation. He's free to ask about, sleep with, or flirt with anyone he chooses. That being said, it's kind of a jerk move on his part to lack the subtlety to ask around discreetly about said friend. My advice, FWB, is to push him to the wayside. I sense that you want respect, and that he's just not giving what you consider to be a satisfactory amount. If the sex is great, all the power to you, but obviously there's something lacking in your 'friends with benefits' relationship, or you wouldn't be talking to me. It's a big campus FWB, go ye forth and sow your proverbial oats!

— Scarlet

Hey Scarlet,

I recently found out that I have genital warts and I'm afraid to tell my girlfriend. I love her,

and I'm afraid she'll leave if I tell her. Any advice?

— Bullfrog Jones

Dear BJ,

Tell her. Not only does she have the right to know, but there is no getting out of this one. If you truly love her, you'll care enough about her health and well being to give her the choice to stand by you.

I understand that this is a difficult time for you, and you need all the support you can get, but consider this: You can still get genital warts even if you use a condom. How comfortable a conversation will it be if you have to tell her she got warts from you? At the end of the day, we all have responsibilities to the ones we love, and truth without possibility simply doesn't exist.

— Scarlet

Hi Scarlet,

I am Christian lesbian. I know what you're going to say, but I stand by my beliefs. Do you know where I can find a mate who shares my interest in God AND pussy?

— Good Girl Gone Gay

Dear 4G,

There are many support groups for women just like you (gay and Christian, that is) to be found online. So roll up the sleeves on your plaid shirt and do some finger exercises 4G, you have a lot of typing ahead of you!

In this day and age there are a plethora of gay Christian dating sites that may just help you find the perfect date with a God-fearing lesbo!

However, if the online route doesn't appeal to you, try your local LGBT-friendly church that can support you in your search — if nothing else, maybe you can meet a few more gay Christians who can share their dating experiences with you.

Keep your chin up 4G, you may be pleasantly surprised with what you find!

— Scarlet

Do you have a question you would like to ask Scarlet Letters' Scarlet de Sade?

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MC115869

Getting by or getting high?

Psychotropic drugs such as ADHD meds are becoming a common crutch for the academic overachiever – but at what risk?

Written by **Shannon Palus** (McGill University)

Illustrated by **Ion Oprea**

The tale of the student who takes ADD/ADHD medication without a prescription is, to the modern day university student, a familiar one. Alex, our anonymous character, is a great student, but needs more time for studying, the soccer team, and partying. Alex finds there are meds that improve concentration and keep you up all night.

Alex buys the medication, probably the short-acting Ritalin or Dexodrin, from a friend who has ADHD and a prescription that provides them with more pills than they need. So, Alex has a few sweaty, red-eyed nights, but has plans to work at Goldman Sachs and live in a nice flat downtown. The drug will wash in and out of Alex's system and leave not a trace.



We know this story by now. If you don't take concentration meds, you know how to get them, and if you don't know how to get them, you go ask your friends. A recent editorial in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* estimates 5 to 35 per cent of students abuse prescrip-

tion stimulants, and calls for the de-normalization of their use. 'Legitimate' ADHD drug users find the practice abhorrent. "It's a hardcore drug," says one user of Concerta, Ritalin's longer-lasting cousin. She feels that people who take "study drugs" to try to get ahead in academics don't understand that. When she goes across the border to the U.S., she can only take so much of the drug — one pill for every day she is traveling — with her, and she has to be carrying a doctor's note. Further, she feels that people taking the medications casually trivializes her illness, which is part of her everyday life.

Concerta, like caffeine, or cocaine, is a stimulant. It increases the amount of dopamine in the brain. Concerta users experience many of the physiological aspects of an addiction. Skip your daily dose, and expect headaches, nausea, and slight depression, much like a cocaine user coming off a high. Many academic users try reducing or eliminating its use during school closures, leading to these symptoms, much like a narcotic detox. "Detox is hell," she adds. She's going to start taking Concerta again next week, once classes start gearing up. "I'll basically

be high for a couple of days."

Concerta produces the same effect in people with ADD/ADHD that it does for people without, although scientists aren't exactly sure how it works. The literature is littered with the words "might" and "probably", but the thinking goes that upping the amount of dopamine and norepinephrine in the brain — which ADD/ADHD medication does — improves concentration.



All stimulants have the effect of improving concentration to some degree. Robert Franck, Clinical Director of McGill Mental Health Service, says that he's had patients come in with concentration problems that turn out to be ADD/ADHD, and has realized that they have been unconsciously self-medicating by drinking tons of coffee. He doesn't like the fact that students take medication for concentration without a prescription. Though the drugs are relatively safe, they come with a suite of risks and side effects, and their use should be carefully monitored by a health professional who knows what other drugs you're on, too.

Hypertension, arrhythmias, and psychotic episodes can happen from taking ADD/ADHD medication. The CMAJ editorial rattles these off, and adds that, though rare, overdoses are "potentially lethal." These are all true and valid reasons not to abuse ADD/ADHD medication, explains Franck. "But scare tactics don't really work." Not only this, He feels that taking drugs as a Band-Aid solution to, say, anxiety about not being able to complete all your assignments, is to ignore other problems and to potentially mask clinical anxiety or depression. Franck's motto is, "medication when necessary, but not necessarily medication."

"A recent editorial in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* estimates 5 to 35 per cent of students abuse prescription stimulants.

It's almost as if drugs such as Ritalin or Concerta have been niched as acceptable academic aids, used specifically

for the purpose of achieving better grades. Little consideration is given to its actual effect, or even the fact that it is actually a powerful, brain-altering drug. Perhaps surprisingly, it is hardly ever treated like a recreational drug — it's not done for fun — it's done to achieve.

Alan Desantis at the University of Kentucky has spent the past handful of years facilitating interviews with hundreds of students, and has found that taking the medication without a prescription was less of a concern than drinking beer or smoking cigarettes. For some, ADD/ADHD medication doesn't carry the same weight as party drugs. Students use a number of arguments to justify their lax use of the medication, including that they only take it during finals, that they are self-medicating for concentration problems, and other "I'm-doing-it-for-the-right-reasons" arguments.

"No, they're definitely a drug!" says a McGill student without ADHD who took Concerta about eight times last year — a number corresponding with his number of major assignments. This is coming from someone who has also done cocaine, pot, and MDMA. He believes

study drugs are a tool to be used during long nights of work, free of particular health or moral concerns. Scare tactics referencing potential death do not work on him.

Concerta is long release, so it allows him to work overnight. After two or three cups of coffee, simply settle in and get to work on a paper. Around two A.M., when the coffee stops being enough, he'll pop a pill. Shortly afterwards he'll feel jittery and sweaty, but his mind will feel clear.

"You don't lose track of time. You're really aware of the next step. And you don't want to be doing the work. You just are."

He'll continue in that robotic haze, one task, and then the next, and then the next. By four a.m., there are only a couple students left. "It's so fucking bleak in that room, with those fluorescent lights." The janitor comes in at seven, signalling that the rest of the world has moved on to the next day.

Last semester he got a 4.0, started a journal, edited a section of a campus newspaper, had a part-time job, and, though he insists his social life was cut in half, still went out every Saturday or so.

"What, how to you do all that?" I ask him. "The drugs!" he says, his hands flying into the air. What is it that I thought I was interviewing him about?

The drugs are a prop he hopes he will cast aside when he's finished hopping along the stepping stones to a successful future, but he can't say when that will be. "When you're in grad school? When you're working an entry-level

position?" He's not sure, he just sort of knows that there will be a time in the future when the work will pay off, a spot in life where the things on his to-do list can be accomplished without him breaking out in a chemically induced sweat, accomplished with room left over for seven hours of sleep and a substantial social life.



"I would say, to those people, why do you feel you have to study so hard?" Dr. Franck says. Wanting to get ahead in life does not necessitate medication – you can be organized and reasonable about what you take on.

Franck thinks doing drugs to wend one's way through undergrad amounts to cheating yourself out of the things that you actually enjoy in life. These are the things — whether coding, reading, playing soccer — at which you might end up being successful, the activities you love so much you can sit and do them for hours and lose track of time. But this may be a somewhat utopian naïveté, given that for some, studying hard is the whole point of attending a university.



This brings up a much larger reality: that it's a dream world, of sorts, a strange pocket of society filled with bright people, 24-hour study facilities, 24-hour coffee shops, and an endless tunnel of hoops to jump through. There are small,

flickering lights dotting the tunnel — if I can just pass this midterm, just make it through finals, just get my diploma — that make it seem like ad hoc solutions, like one more all-nighter, or two, or eight, could be enough. We're judged by our peers, by the numbers that stare back at us from our transcripts, by the test score requirements on grad school information pamphlets. Perhaps most importantly for many of us, we're here because of reasons that are genuine and innocent: because we love academia, because we want to grow up and be happy and prosperous. Doing well in academia can bring us those things, and drinking coffee and popping pills can bring us success in academia. It seems like such a simple transaction, like magic.

But we have to learn to live within the constraints of the real world. Franck explains "university is a wonderful opportunity to develop understanding — not just academ-

ic, but how to feel good about yourself, how to manage time, and to develop coping strategies." By popping study drugs, Franck believes, you set yourself up in a lifestyle that is unsustainable and po-

"It's almost as if drugs such as Ritalin or Concerta have been niched as acceptable academic aids."

tentially soul-sucking, one that's not based on doing the things that make you happy, but on the things that you feel society — or the job market, or your parents, or your peers — want out of you. Still, he sympathizes with the plight

of the "addicts." He knows the heat of the floodlights turned on students these days. That's why he thinks parents, teachers and MDs need to work harder to educate students about the perils of study drugs, and about ways to cope without them.

The fact is, students who take these drugs are using them as a coping mechanism, believing it will give them a leg up or at least put them on par against whatever benchmark they have identified — much like a pot user smokes pot to cope with their mortgage, or a cocaine user snorts lines to be the life of the party. It's temporary, it's dangerous, and it dulls your ability to develop the mechanisms which will help you deal with real problems you may face every day for the rest of your life — even on days when a pill is not within reach.



21 Jump Street doesn't jump the shark

Directed by: Phil Lord and Chris Miller
Stars: Jonah Hill, Channing Tatum, Brie Larson
Running time: 109 minutes

THORSTAN GERLACH
Culture Editor

21 Jump Street may seem like a bad idea on paper — first off, it's a remake of a cheesy 1980s television series, that no one really seems to remember. Second, Jonah Hill, 28, and Channing Tatum, 31, seem too old to play the teenagers they masquerade as for most of the movie. Still, one thing I could say after watching this movie was that I laughed really hard, and that's the point.

Credit must be given to Jonah Hill, who is a big reason why the film works so well. As the film's producer, he has too much love for the original series to reduce the movie to a mere spoof, and he and Tatum



Jonah Hill (left) and Channing Tatum (right) star in *21 Jump Street*.

Courtesy of Columbia Pictures

are comedy gold as the original series' Schmidt and Jenko.

Schmidt and Jenko are two newbie cops who, after a failed arrest attempt, are sent to the *Jump Street* unit, which has been recently revived after being cut in the eighties. The two

are sent undercover back to high school by R-rated hardass Captain Dickson (Ice Cube), who has no time for the young-looking "Justin Bieber/Miley Cyrus muthafuckas" that populate his undercover unit. There, Hill and Tatum must

find the supplier of a dangerous new drug that has become popular in local high schools. But high school has a certain way of changing people, and the two soon find themselves at odds with each other.

Channing Tatum, who was

the lone sliver of light in the recent limp and insipid *The Vow*, is a revelation as Jenko. We all know Hill has a gift for comedy, but Tatum proves he has the chops to make us laugh as well.

Directors Phil Lord and Chris Miller, who are best known for the wonderful animation movie *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, don't let the explosive action scenes get in the way of the plot, and allow Hill and Tatum to shine in their individual portrayals of the inept but self-redeeming characters of Schmidt and Jenko.

21 Jump Street can also boast to having the best cameo of the year, but I'll reveal nothing more.

For some of us, high school may seem like a lifetime ago, but there are certain aspects of it that never leave us, and Hill and Tatum are just the crazy-ass pair to prove it.

OVERALL GRADE: B



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It's your career.
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Fred Penner still has a place in our hearts

CBC star Fred Penner is still actively pursuing his children's education and entertainment career

DAVID SWANSON
Assistant Editor

Everyone has a few childhood idols from television that, to this day, bring a peaceful smile to their face. For many of us, they were fictional, masked super-heroes who knew martial arts. They were probably physically fit specimens with supernatural powers, high moral character, and majestic origins.

However, for many of us, the characters who were most influential were not animated. They were children's television hosts like Mr. Dressup, the Friendly Giant, Mr. Rogers, and, my personal favourite, Fred Penner.

Fred Penner, born Frederick Ralph Cornelius Penner, learned about the therapeutic value of music at an early age. His younger sister Suzy suffers from Down syndrome and, during his teen years he would entertain her by playing songs on his guitar. He studied her behaviour while she played and discovered that children with Down syndrome are particularly sensitive to music.

"After listening to me play a song or two, she would flop down and begin to sob," Penner told *The Link*, in a phone interview from his home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. "I thought, 'My goodness! Music has the power to bring her to tears.' That is a very powerful image for a young impressionable teenager."

After graduating from Kelvin Secondary, the halls of which he shared with Canadian music legend Neil Young, Fred went on to pursue a degree at the University of Winnipeg. Here he volunteered with physically and mentally challenged children in residential treatment centres while earning a degree in economics and psychology. While doing so, he began to understand music's innate ability to make a difference in a child's life.

In the 1970s, Penner played in the comedic folk rock band, Kornstalk. The quartet extensively toured all over Canada and was well known for incorporating audience participation into their performance.

"I think for a bar act, it caught people by surprise," Penner says. "We demanded some level of participation with the audience. It was very interactive."

After the band retired, Penner's wife convinced him (with little dispute) to revisit his passion for kids' education. Together, they opened a children's dance theatre company which eventually landed Mr. Penner his now famous CBC television series *Fred Penner's Place*, which aired from 1985 to 1997.

Penner always thought the show had major benefits for children, but has only come to realize its profound impact in recent years. The majority of his audience is now in their 20s and is giving him extremely supportive feedback.

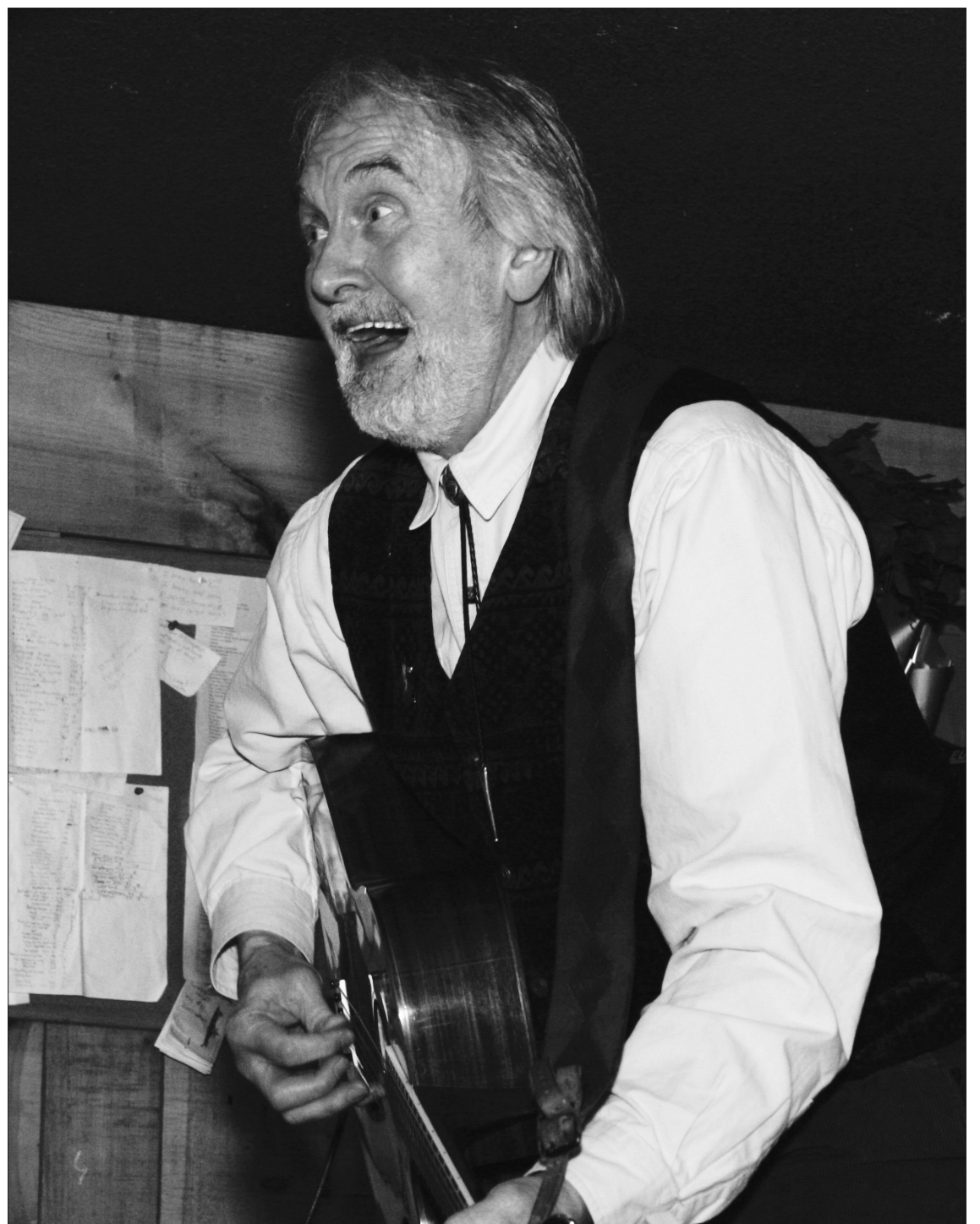
"I often have young adults coming up to me and saying they are getting into education or teaching because of me," Penner says. "That is what is keeping me energized and excited about what I am doing."

Like many musicians, Penner is upset with the political climate surrounding Canadian arts and is unsatisfied with the current level of government funding. He believes that the Harper government doesn't understand the cultural importance of the Canadian arts community and ignores the role it plays in human development, simply because it does not generate large amounts of money.

"[In the arts] you are not going to make big money," he explained. "They need to support the arts communities across the country because they are raising children to be full well-rounded people."

Regardless of funding, Penner is still very involved in the arts community. On March 25, he played a benefit concert in North Vancouver to help raise money for the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre. He has also recently written and is starring in a stage adaptation of his famous 1980 single *The Cat Came Back*, which he has performed all over Canada.

It is clear Fred still loves to entertain and isn't planning to retire anytime soon. "Every performance I go to, something happens that gives me excitement and joy. I do this and will continue to do this as long as I possibly can."



Penner performs to a capacity crowd in a Waterloo, ON pub.

Elli Gardin/The Cord



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Jennifer Lawrence stars as Katniss Everdeen.

Courtesy of Lionsgate

Hunger Games leaves audience hungry for more

Directed by: Gary Ross
Stars: Jennifer Lawrence,
Woody Harrelson, Elizabeth Banks
Running time: 142 minutes

THORSTAN GERLACH
Culture Editor

There were a lot of ways film-makers could have gone with the movie adaptation of Suzanne Collins' hit novel *The Hunger Games*. After the mess that turned out to be the *Twilight* movies, it's understandable why some audiences may be feeling a little uneasy and skeptical. Well, set those worries aside, because Hollywood got it right with *The Hunger Games*.

Suzanne Collins says the inspiration for the novel came after she was flipping through the channels and saw nothing but images from the Iraq war and reality television shows, so she decided to combine the two and wrote the *Hunger*

Games book series.

The film is set in a dystopian future where 24 teenagers from 12 districts must battle to the death. The winner is treated like royalty, while the 23 others get sent home in body bags. Meanwhile, the games are also being broadcast throughout the 12 districts, so the kids must ham it up for the cameras in order to get sponsors to watch, and keep them alive.

16-year-old Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) is chosen for the Games after she volunteers in tribute after her younger sister has her name chosen (think Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery*) at the reaping. Along with her chosen male counterpart, Peeta Mallark (Josh Hutcherson), Katniss must represent her district in the 75th Hunger Games.

The true star of the *Hunger Games* is Jennifer Lawrence, who is spectacular as the bow and arrow-wielding Katniss. She plays the role with sincerity and depth, while kicking

butt at the same time. Lawrence, 21, has proven she's an acting heavyweight, and if you thought her Academy Award performance in last year's *Winter's Bone* was a fluke, you're dead wrong! There is something very raw and emotional in her performance that is astonishing.

A complex love triangle also unfolds between Katniss and two other boys during the games: Peeta and Gale Hawthorne (Liam Hemsworth). Peeta, her fellow chosen games partner, is a baker's son who has secretly always longed for Katniss, while Gale is Katniss' closest friend, who hunts with her illegally in the woods of their district. Both actors do a fine job and create an appealing presence on-screen.

One of the biggest problems with the *Twilight* series was they didn't have real actors; but here, Woody Harrelson, Elizabeth Banks, and Donald Sutherland all play supporting roles, and help elevate the film to heights

Twilight never sniffed. Stanley Tucci is dynamite as Cesar Flickerman, the TV host of the Games, who can show a thing or two to Ryan Seacrest.

I must warn however: don't go into the movie expecting Quentin Tarantino -like violence; there isn't a lot of blood splattering. The violence in the movie is tame, and rightly so because the movie is geared toward a younger audience.

At 142 minutes long, the film is often in danger of feeling both too slow or too rushed at parts, but director Gary Ross (*Pleasantville*, *Seabiscuit*) handles the film just right. He uses the violence of the games to highlight the characters and define them.

It will be interesting to see how a mainstream audience will receive the emotional dilemmas and moral challenges of the *Hunger Games*, but what is clear, is that the film has a winner in Jennifer Lawrence.

OVERALL GRADE: B

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EVOLVING 20

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1. **Born Gold** - Lawn Knives
2. **King Khan & The Shrines** - I Got Love
3. **Philoceraptor** - PYT
4. **The Shins** - Simple Song
5. **Surfer Blood** - Miranda
6. **Arkells** - Michigan Left
7. **Justice** - New Lands
8. **Oh No! Yoko** - Boyhood
9. **Diamond Rings** - Mellow Doubt
10. **Au Palais** - Tender Mercy

11. **Lana Del Rey** - Born To Die
12. **M83** - Reunion
13. **Said The Whale** - Lines
14. **King Khan & The Shrines** - I Got Love
15. **Braigs** - Peach Wedding
16. **The Big Pink** - Stay Gold
17. **Grimes** - Genesis
18. **Joel Plaskett** - On The Railies
19. **Miike Snow** - Devils Work
20. **Sleigh Bells** - Born To Lose





BCITSA STUDENT ELECTIONS



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BCITSA Info & News



BCITSA ELECTION

The BCIT Student Association (BCITSA) general election is taking place soon. Election packages are available at the BCITSA General Office as well as online. Completed nomination forms are due on March 30 at noon.

Positions available:

- President
- VP Finance & Administration
- VP External
- VP Student Affairs
- VP Campus Life

Chairs:

- School of Business
- School of Health Sciences
- School of Energy
- School of Computing Science and Academic Studies
- School of Transportation, Construction, and the Environment
- School of Aerospace Technology

Contact your BCITSA representative, set rep, or watch this space for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 29 **Professor Mugs Karaoke**
Come sing your heart out or just watch some friends! Either way, it's sure to be a good time, so don't miss karaoke at Professor Mugs!
- March 30 **BCITSA election nomination forms due**
Submit your completed nomination forms to the BCITSA General Office in the Great Hall in the Burnaby campus by noon.
- April 6 - April 9 **Easter long weekend**
Stay home, it's a four-day weekend!

Go to facebook.com/BCITSA for more details!

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- have major investments, RRSPs, stock, mutual funds, or RESPs have filed for bankruptcy
- are renting property to others

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PROVIDED BY



Executive Weigh-In



A message from BCITSA School of Transportation, Construction and The Environment Chair Brian Harvey

Those involved with the BCIT Student Association have been very busy over the past 12 months. Everyone has been working hard to get all their initiatives completed before the end of the school year.

Our next big event that we have coming up is Speak Up, Speak Out; an initiative to promote mental wellness, held the week of April 16 to 20. Throughout the week there will be plenty of activities held in the Great Hall meant to promote mental wellness, including the return of the Zen Lounge on the Burnaby campus.

We also are ramping up our preparations for the Student Association elections that are fast approaching. Election packages need to be in by March 30, so do not delay if you're considering running for office.

Voting starts soon on April 13 and continue to April 20. Keep your eyes peeled for the "Vote Now" link on the right of your myBCIT home page. There are 11 positions available and every student is eligible to vote for at least six of those positions so let your voice be heard.

Finally, on Monday, March 30, the BCITSA is holding a Special General Meeting in the Council Chambers (building SE2, second floor) to vote on bylaw changes. The proposed changes are up on the BCITSA web page (www.bcit.ca/wordpress/?p=1971). We invite anybody and everybody to be present to make their opinions heard. There will be pizza for all those in attendance.

That's what is happening in the near future in the Student Association. Look for the next Executive Weigh-In on April 11!

BCITSA Annual Sponsors



Starbucks unveils new beverage size

GARY LIM

Caffiene high for three days now

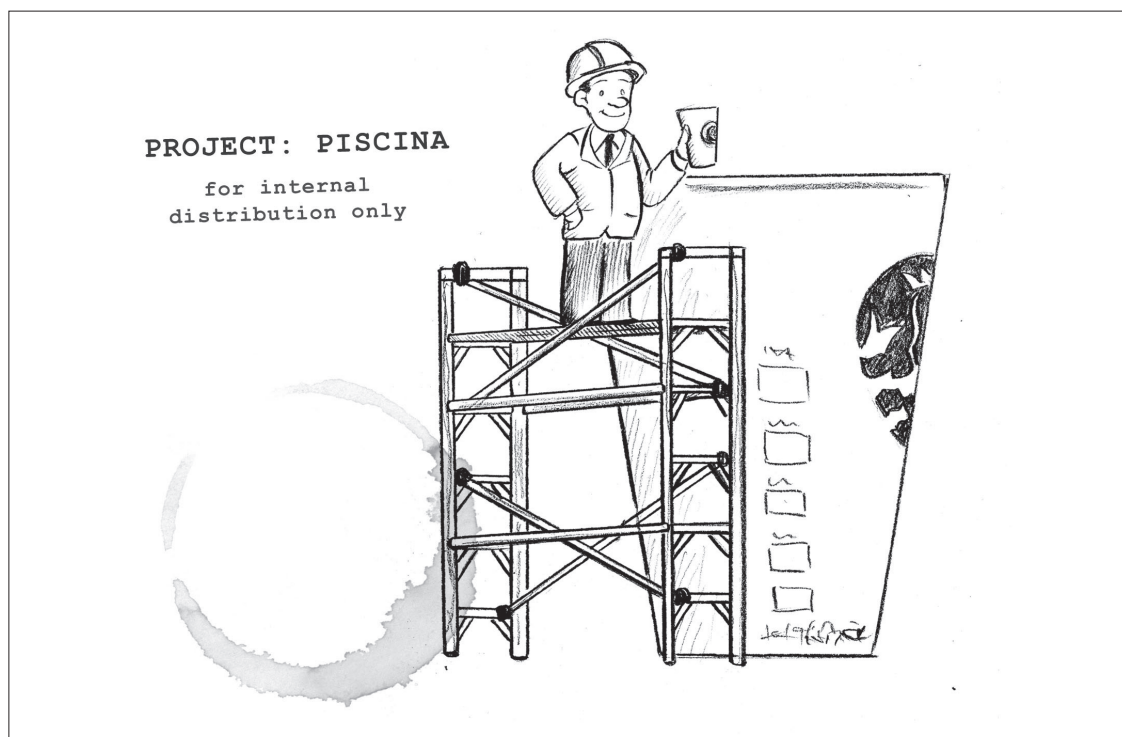
SEATTLE, Wa. (CUP) — Starbucks announced today that the company will be unveiling yet another beverage size in their ever-expanding menu, the "Piscina," in early May.

The announcement was made following the success of their most recent beverage size, the "Trenta," which already holds an astonishing 31 fluid ounces.

Mary Campbell, a spokesperson for the multi-national coffee giant, told The Peak that "although the Trenta has tested very well in several markets, a common complaint Starbucks received was that the new size still wasn't big enough."

"Where's the drink for the person who wants to have to get up and pee every 20 minutes?" continued Campbell. "Where's the drink for the person who needs to stay awake for the next 87 consecutive hours? Where's the drink that's so unwieldy you need both hands and a small pulley system to hold it? This is what we've heard from our consumers, and it is what we aim to fix in the new Piscina."

Although Campbell was unable to disclose any further details on the actual volume of the Piscina, she was excited to announce that the Starbucks engineers were currently working closely with the Iowa Corn Growers Association in an attempt to retrofit their old grain silos into Piscina prototypes.



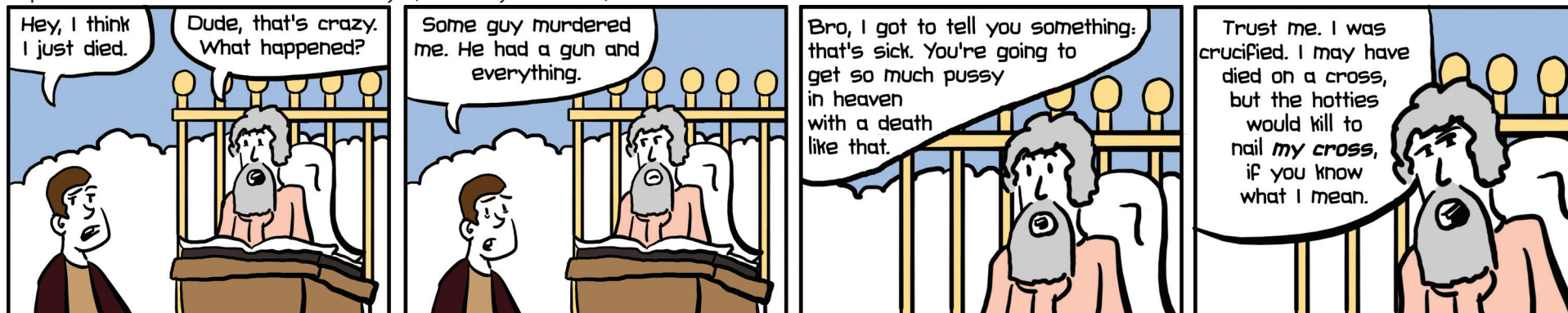
Leaked documents reveal new cup size.

Rachel Hughes/The Peak

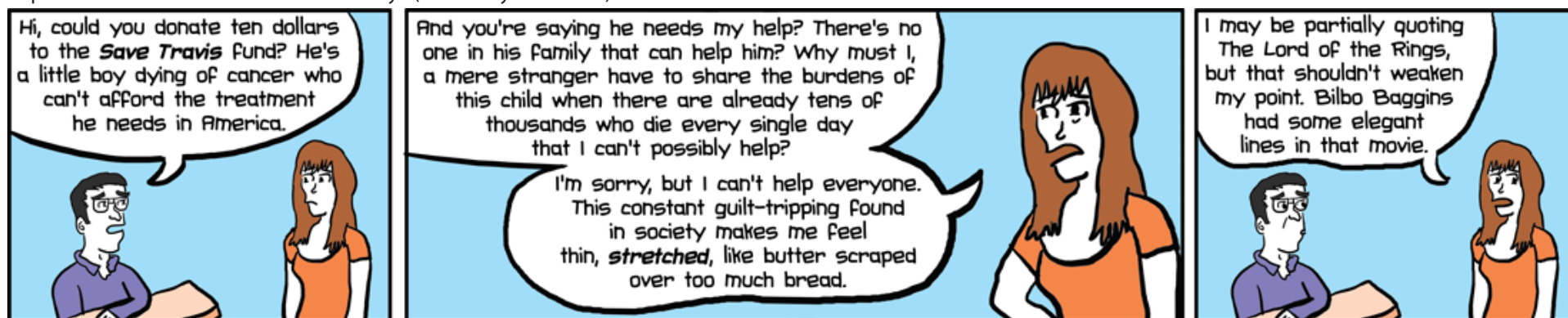
Renfrew's Roommates - Tulga Od (Simon Fraser University)



Pop and Ice Cream - Lance and Evan Mudryk (University of Alberta)



Pop and Ice Cream - Lance and Evan Mudryk (University of Alberta)



♥♥♥ The Link's sex column, *Scarlet Letters*, is now on page 7! ♥♥♥