

MY FAILED EXPERIMENT
WITH GENTLE PARENTING

*The Multi-Millionaire
Who Wants Higher Taxes*

THE LEGAL BATTLE
TEARING QUEBEC APART

MACLEAN'S

40



INNOVATION

MAKERS



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THE NATION MAKERS **P. 21**

A new generation of leaders are redefining Canada: thinkers, artists, politicians and entrepreneurs forging a stronger, more resilient country. We've rounded up 40 young powerhouses who are building new institutions and shaking up the old ones.



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AI scares the crap out of some Canadians. Evan Solomon, our first AI minister, is pretty jazzed about it.

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Look at your phone (again): it's full of precious minerals and metals just waiting to be mined

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Bill 21 dictates that teacher Bouchera Chelbi can't be promoted or change jobs if she keeps wearing the hijab



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My Misadventures in Gentle Parenting

Gentle parenting began as a response to the strict child-rearing of past generations. But at some point the method became a mandate—and for many parents, an impossible standard.

BY KAYLA HUSZAR

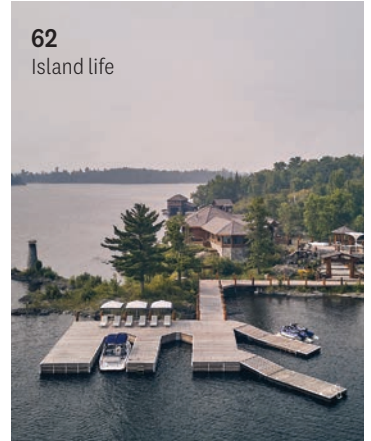
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Bill 21 started a vicious fight over religious symbols in the workplace. It's unearthed radically divergent ideas of what secularism and liberalism mean—and of what Quebec society will look like in the years to come.

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A Winnipeg couple remade a log cabin into a Canadiana-style summer camp

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Richard Johnson's new book captures Canada's handmade ice huts in all their variety



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CROSSWORD

The *Maclean's* crossword, only available in print

EDITOR'S NOTE

IN THIS ISSUE OF MACLEAN'S

As soon as Trump mused about Canada becoming the 51st state, I joined many Canadians in a quiet boycott of American products. I now make sure my grapes come from Chile or South Africa, not California. I switched to locally produced whisky. Lettuce has been tricky to source, but *Maclean's* did a story about an innovative agri-tech venture in Ontario that mass-produces lettuce year-round in an automated greenhouse. Now I buy from that company whenever I can.

Grocery store packaged goods are trickier. You never really know where they come from. Out shopping, I see a spectrum of labels emblazoned with maple leaves, appealing to my newfound patriotism. But is “Made in Canada” the same as “Processed in Canada”? And what am I supposed to do when a box or a can says it was “Packaged in Canada”? Over the last few months, a bunch of companies have been caught “maple-washing”—deceptively suggesting a product is Canadian when it's not.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford is not amused. He's admonished supermarket chains for shelving and promoting “sneaky companies” (his words) that market U.S.-made, or partially made, products as Canadian. As the most vocal leader of the anti-tariff coalition, Ford is especially pissed off when companies that have left Ontario brag about their Canadian bona fides. (His family made its fortune in the grocery-store-label business, so this particular form of trickery hits him close to home.)



Hair and makeup by Alanna Fennell/Plutino Group

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN LEYDON

To address the confusion we're all experiencing in the grocery aisles, a young Calgary comp-sci grad named Sasha Ivanov came up with a tech solution. Earlier this year, he developed an app called Maple Scan that assesses the Canadianness of any given product: shoppers scan a photo of their soup can or condiment jar, and the app generates a Canada Score Card with detailed origin info. The shopper can then decide if the product is Canadian enough—everyone will have their own metric—and, if it's not, the app suggests an alternative product, complete with nearby store suggestions.

Ivanov appears in this month's cover story, a cheerful roundup of 40 exceptional young people who we've selected for their creativity, ambition and early accomplishment. During this critical moment in our country's history, as Canada reinvents itself, we wanted to identify and spotlight the leaders of tomorrow. A new nationalism will need a bold new cast of characters to define the country for the next generation. That's why we've called our package—and the people featured—the Nation Makers.

When Ivanov launched his Maple Scan app, dozens of people reached out to help him—people he knew from the University of Calgary, friends, even strangers. Now he has an army of volunteer collaborators helping with marketing, engineering and food-regulation information. That's what nation makers do; if their project is cool and necessary, they inspire others to join them. They're the kind of people Canada needs now more than ever.

“A new nationalism will need a bold new cast of characters to define the country for the next generation”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Fulford".

SARAH FULFORD
Editor-in-chief, *Maclean's*

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Leading Innovation in Vision Restoration at Canada's Number One Hospital

For patients like Johanne Provost, UHN's Donald K. Johnson Eye Institute is restoring their vision—and their lives—unlike anywhere else in the country

DR. CLARA CHAN has always pursued high-impact, fast-paced opportunities. The former Goldman Sachs intern made the switch from Silicon Valley start-ups to corneal surgery following a summer at a Toronto cornea clinic with Dr. David Rootman, a world-renowned corneal surgeon at University Health Network's (UHN) Donald K. Johnson Eye Institute.

Originally from Toronto, Dr. Chan moved between Canada and the U.S. for her education, first attending Stanford University, then completing medical school in Ontario and returning to the States for a fellowship in corneal surgery. She eventually settled back in Toronto to develop the country's most comprehensive ocular stem cell transplant program with Dr. Allan Slomovic at UHN, Canada's top hospital and, currently, the third-highest ranked hospital in the world.

"It's nice to come full circle," says Dr. Chan. "I published my first research article in medical school with my mentor, Dr. David Rootman, and we now share our practice here."

As a world-leading institution in transplant and stem cell innovation, UHN handles some of the most complex medical challenges in the country. For Dr. Chan, there was no exception.

Johanne Provost, a patient from Quebec, had been struggling with swelling and pain in her eye—eventually losing her vision entirely. Johanne's ophthalmologist had been consulting with Dr. Chan on her case. Together, they delivered a diagnosis of lichen planus, an autoimmune condition, typically appearing on the skin. While they were working to bring Johanne's



*Dr. Clara Chan from UHN's
Donald K. Johnson Eye Institute*

immune system back under control, the stem cells in her eyes were permanently damaged. Her last and only hope to restore her vision was a corneal stem cell transplant.

Typically, stem cells would be transferred over from the patient's other healthy eye—however, this wasn't an option for Johanne, as her condition affected both of her eyes. Instead, Dr. Chan used corneal stem cells from a deceased donor, making UHN the first and only institution in Canada to offer ocular stem cell transplants from non-living donors.

A multidisciplinary team at UHN of world-class transplant specialists, care coordinators and nurses began to prepare Johanne for surgery with a combination of immunosuppressants to stabilize her immune system and to ensure a more successful outcome. Following her surgery and recovery period, Johanne was finally able to see her children—now teenagers—and her husband again, all three years older than when she last saw them.

"The surgery gave me my life back—my independence, my liberty," she said.

Through donor support, UHN's Donald K. Johnson Eye Institute currently provides international fellows with specialized training and access to one of the world's largest patient populations in need of corneal surgery. Donor support is also fuelling UHN's new *Canada Leads* initiative, aiming to recruit top clinician-scientists from around the world to help accelerate research for more Canadian-born discoveries, job creation and global influence.

"Corneal stem cell transplants are only possible through the incredible research that turns bold ideas into treatments for our patients, like Johanne," says Dr. Chan.



Johanne Provost can now see her family again thanks to a corneal stem cell transplant.

Learn more about how you can help UHN attract the world's best talent at UHNfoundation.ca/CanadaLeads.

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COMMENTS

READERS WEIGH IN

Confessions of the Working Poor

I work hard, buy quality clothes and know how to fake my way through dinner-party conversations. But behind the scenes, I'm part of a fast-growing Canadian underclass.

By Jeni Gunn
Photography By Alana Patterson

It's Saturday, just before dawn. As I ascend toward wakefulness, I hear a rhythmic thump-thumping from the floor beside my bed. It's my black Labrador retriever, Shelby, politely wagging her tail. I cross my bedroom and stub my toe on a wooden hexagonal end table that I found at the side of the road a few days earlier. A month ago, that spot was occupied by a free bookshelf. Before that, a free child's desk. When I can afford to buy paint, I'll sand the table, paint it and sell it for \$45.

I think about my garden project. My basement suite in Victoria, B.C., has a small outdoor space; the homeowners say I can do whatever I want with it. What I want is to grow beans, tomatoes and strawberries, but my collection of donated planters sits empty because I can't afford soil. Dirt is not in my budget.

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POOR THING

"Confessions of the Working Poor," Jeni Gunn's cost-of-living memoir in the August issue, drew universal praise for its humour, vulnerability and frankness about her financial situation. Many readers confessed they were also struggling.

Jeni's article was persuasive, effective and relatable. I have the highest-paying job I've ever had but, as a newly single person after 30 years of marriage, my financial situation has destabilized, and I now worry that I'll live too long in my retirement years, and the paltry amount of money I've socked away will run out. Jeni, please write more. Your tone, wisdom and humour is appreciated.

Dominique Lavigne
Thunder Bay

"As Jeni Gunn shows, being poor is a full-time job, and poverty reduces your mental bandwidth"

DAVID ESDAILE
Ottawa

As I sat in the Ottawa airport waiting for my flight west to Calgary, I was struck by the *Maclean's* cover story written by Jeni Gunn. I can relate to her struggles: I was a single parent who raised five children, one of whom is severely disabled. I was lucky enough to have an education—I'm a dental hygienist—and 10 to 15 years ago my salary went a lot further than most salaries do now. I worked 10-to-12-hour days, sometimes six or seven days a week. It was a struggle, and I'm fortunate that I was able to raise my children, pay rent, buy food and eventually purchase a home. If I were trying to do it all now, my story might be more like Jeni's.

I see my adult children struggling to make ends meet from month to month. They often feel discouraged and overwhelmed.

It's hard to know what to do other than take one day at a time and try hard to stay positive in a world full of too much negativity.

As I read Jeni's article, I found myself wrapped up in her writing style and injections of humour. I hope things work well for her, as well as my children and countless others who are struggling and working hard just to get by. Jeni should consider writing a novel. I'm sure I'm not the only one who was caught up in her memoir.

Allison Livesey

First of all, give this woman her own column. Her writing is honest, raw, insightful and funny. Her willingness to share her struggles with social isolation and underemployment while pursuing a life of meaning and intention is inspiring. Canada's working poor is a very real thing, and I applaud her raising our awareness of what is happening right in front of us.

*Marie Westby
Vancouver*

Jeni Gunn's exposé underlines the realities of poverty in Canada today. As she shows, being poor is a full-time job, and poverty reduces your mental bandwidth. At least 40 per cent of food bank users are children. Today's poor suffer from chronic insecurity.

A basic income guarantee, once proposed by Martin Luther King Jr., would decrease the number of people in poverty and offer the poor options for education and alternative employment. MLK commented that "The dignity of the individual will flourish when the decisions concerning his life are in his own hands, when he has the assurance that his income is stable and certain, and when he knows that he has the means to seek self-improvement."

The Conservative party has worked against a basic income guarantee, while employers use work precarity and poverty to keep the poor accepting low wages and dangerous work. Gunn deserves support, as do all those stuck in the mire of poverty. Basic income should come off the backburner. If we could make CERB work quickly and if we can aim for a five per cent defence budget, we can surely support the poor and strengthen the social structure of our country.

*David Esdaile
Ottawa*

Some readers took it upon themselves to propose how Gunn might save more money (the most popular suggestion by far: get fewer tattoos).

The first thing I notice when someone discusses their poverty is how many tattoos they have. If they had taken that money and invested in an index fund, they would have thousands of dollars. At 51, Gunn should be within the middle class. We all make unwise decisions, and the earlier you learn the better. I'm amazed at how many poor people have loads of tattoos on them. Kind of like a pack-a-day cigarette habit—costly in the long run.

Les Hopson

PRIVATE PRACTICE

Readers were split on Brian Day's argument that introducing private options into Canada's health-care system would reduce wait times. Some were sold on the idea, while others insisted we need to invest more money into medicare.

Why is Canada the only country in the free world to ban private care? I went to a GTA hospital four months ago and, after triage, I had to wait nine hours for a doctor. I would have paid for quicker service.

*D. Ouellet
Vaughan, Ontario*

Whether we want to admit it or not, Canada's health-care wait times are just dreadful. After reading Brian Day's informative article, I am more convinced than ever that a mix of public and private health care is the way to go. If it works in other Western countries, there is no reason why it won't work here.

*Dave Brown
Waterloo, Ontario*

Health care is extremely inelastic, both at demand and income levels, meaning laws of free market don't apply. No one shops around for their hospital. It's a public service that liberals and conservatives have taken turns shitting on in the past four decades. So how do we fix health care? We invest properly in it instead of paying more for the private sector like the market fundamentalists want. We should be expanding capacity, training way more doctors,

investing in digitization and covering more in the public system through pharmacare. Privatization is a joke and a scam.

yourfriendlysocdem1, Reddit

This article paints a pretty damning picture of a broken medical system. I am a 75-year-old walking medical disaster. Since 2008 I've been treated for prostate cancer, oral cancer, melanoma, two brain bleeds, AFIB, a broken jaw and cataracts across five hospitals. Through all of this, I have faced countless referrals, appointments, tests and treatments with dozens of doctors, but have experienced nothing but the highest level of professionalism and timely care. If the system is broken, I'm not seeing it.

*James J. Ruiter
Wainfleet, Ontario*

I'm tired of the argument that because Europe has good health care, and Europe allows private pay, private care is good. It's lazy—there are a thousand other differences between our systems. You can't just isolate one and say that's the reason they're better, particularly when there's an excellent counterpoint to the south of us that shows that private care is at a minimum not a surefire slam dunk. I would love to see a causal relationship between private health care and improved outcomes, but no one even attempts that, it's always just free-market dogma of "competition is good," even though health care is one of the most imperfect markets around.

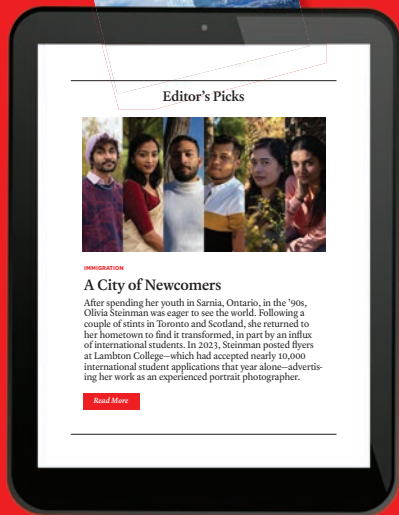
enki-42, Reddit

APOLOGY

In a July 2024 article titled "The War Over Safe Drug Supply in Vancouver," Maclean's published two illustrations that were based on photographs taken by Jackie Dives, used without her permission and in violation of her copyright. The editors at Maclean's regret using her photographs in this manner and apologize to Ms. Dives for the damage incurred.

We welcome readers to submit letters to either letters@macleans.ca or to **Maclean's, 15 Benton Road, Toronto, M6M 3G2**. Please supply your name, address and daytime telephone number. Letters should be fewer than 200 words, and may be edited for space, style and clarity.

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THE INTERVIEW

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE NATION'S NEWSMAKERS



Terrified of where ChatGPT could take us? Let **Evan Solomon**,
Canada's first-ever minister of AI, reassure you.

IT'S HARD TO KNOW how to feel about AI when its capabilities advance seemingly by the hour. One day, it's solving Canadians' online-banking snafus and patiently robo-splaining the origins of our anxious attachment styles, and the next, we're dating the chatbots themselves. AI monitors our real-time forest-fire emissions while its data centres furiously guzzle our water. It disrupts our jobs and, every once in a while, creates them: just ask Evan Solomon, Canada's very first minister of AI and digital innovation.

A few months in, Solomon—a veteran journalist whose previous political involvement was hosting CBC's *Power and Politics*—is still in the honeymoon phase of his portfolio. He's trumpeting the economic upsides of AI to the country's private sector and calling this our “Gutenberg moment,” a nod to the intellectual super-bloom brought on by the printing press. Whether it turns out to be more of a Pandora moment for the rest of us is, at least partly, on him.

You were based in New York before you announced your MP campaign on LinkedIn a few months ago. During the race, you lived out of two suitcases and crashed on couches. Are you back-back in Toronto now?

I was working as a publisher at GZero Media when Justin Trudeau stepped down. Mr. Carney called and said, “We’re in a crisis. I’m going to run. I’d like you to run if you can.” My wife looked at me and said, “The kids are in university. We should do it.” While campaigning, I stayed at my brother’s house, then my buddy’s—now we’re looking for a place. My family’s here, so I know the



city. But it's like: welcome to the real estate market in Toronto! We're renting and searching for a permanent home, like everybody else here.

AI has more or less become a race against Trump, who literally said he intends to “win the AI race.” How does technology factor into Canada's big nation-building push?

This isn't a race against one particular person. Two things are happening at the same time: a generational political realignment around the world and a technological disruption. I call AI our Gutenberg moment, similar to the way the printing press led to the Protestant Reformation.

How can AI secure our sovereignty, though? We're heavily reliant on Americans for social media alone.

You need the basis, and Canada has a strong one. Two of the three godfathers of AI, Geoffrey Hinton and Yoshua Bengio, are here. We have Cohere, which develops large language models and AI products for businesses. Of course, the U.S. has the big “hyperscaler” companies, but we're helping ours commercialize. Canada's also got the climate for data centres, because cooling is a huge issue. We just have to make sure they're sovereign—not like, “Take our power, foreign company! And here are your microchips!”

When recently asked to namecheck a few Canadian firms putting AI to cool uses, you mentioned Vancouver's GlüxKind. They're developing a self-driving baby carriage. I have mixed feelings about that!

I met the GlüxKind guys in Paris at Viva Tech, the largest startup and tech conference in Europe. Canada was country of the year, and about 170 of our companies were there. Emmanuel Macron comes in—it's mayhem, right? Four days, 180,000 people. It felt like a rock concert, like when I was back at *Shift* magazine doing internet conferences 20 years ago. Every booth had another idea: AI that maps malls, robotics, crazy things. Among them was the baby carriage. It has sensors that read where traffic is if you don't want to push it—the Europeans love it.

Sounds about right.

I know it's like, "Do I *need* an AI-powered baby carriage?" But I remember when my dad was alive and automatic car starters came out. He was like, "Oh, you're too lazy to turn a key?" In the winter? Who *doesn't* want those now? Dad also said, "Am I really buying things by putting my credit card information on the internet?" Yes! AI is just a tool. If you're a working carpenter and one day I said, "You can cut that with this electric saw much quicker," and you said, "I prefer the handsaw!"... Okay!

A big priority of yours is getting the private sector on board with AI. This year, BenchSci, a biomedical tech company in Toronto, laid off almost a quarter of its workforce because it found AI efficiencies. One "problem" companies seem to be solving with AI is paying wages. How are you planning to protect the average Canadian worker amid all the excitement around private profit?

I'm glad you raised that, but we've got to be careful about not just fighting the last war. Of course you're going to see moments where tech is used instead of workers, but mostly what you see is new opportunities. There are companies with valuations of over \$1 billion in lofts in downtown Toronto—and you've never heard of them. It's a real buccaneer's moment, of people betting the farm. We can tell that story, as opposed to "something new's here, and it's a eulogy, not a celebration."

I understand, but tech can generally be implemented faster than people can be upskilled. Nick Frosst, Cohere's co-founder, worries AI could create more precarious jobs and worsen income inequality. This is the guy making this technology.

First of all, let's be careful. There's no consensus that AI is going to displace mass numbers of jobs.

But it will, right? No matter which research you look at, something like half of all jobs are now at least disruptable by AI. It will.

What I don't want to do is play the game where you say, "Here's a CEO that laid someone off," and I say, "Here's a company that has just hired 300 employees because of AI." Why do some societies thrive during moments of innovation and others don't? How do we make sure ours does? We protect our education system, as well as citizens' privacy and data, so people trust the tools. They have to see that they're improving our system. Look at health care: Reveal Surgical, a Canadian company, developed an AI-powered detection system that can help surgeons identify cancerous tissue in real-time.

Your own education involved plenty of religious studies. What does our borderline-religious obsession with AI say about us?

This is a continuation of the human curiosity journey. How do you communicate better? The Sumerians invent cuneiform. How about building monuments? Egyptians engineer things to move big rocks. What we're doing isn't new: building better tools to accomplish bigger things. But better tools often have unanticipated consequences. Sometimes the club you use to kill a bear might become the club you use to kill your neighbour.

Or the neighbour picks up the club and hits you.

Right. Or your neighbour goes and gets a crossbow.

My personal relationship with AI is basically ChatGPT on occasion, Gemini when my finger slips in Gmail. What's your level of dependence in your free time?

I used AI today. I had to get a briefing on Bill C-27, a piece of legislation from a few years ago that has to do with privacy and data. I

uploaded it to Google NotebookLM, asked the software to create a podcast and listened to it on the 15-minute drive to my constituency office. No hallucinations, either.

A Harvard Business Review study recently showed that the No. 1 use for ChatGPT is therapy and companionship. Have you ever used it for that—or know anyone who has?

I just spoke to a doctor about this. If you ask a therapist if they've used a doll or a hand puppet, they'll go, "Yeah. It's a useful therapeutic tool."

Anything's better than a puppet.

Everyone's asking: how do we combat the loneliness epidemic? Social circles matter, and you're lucky if you have a partner and kids and friends. A lot of people don't. I had elderly family members whose only companion was a TV. If you had something to carry on a conversation with—and not just watch—that might be better. But there was also that Joaquin Phoenix movie, *Her*, where he was in love with an AI. Of course we have to be vigilant.

With two university-aged kids, you're clearly past the "should we just give them the iPad" issue. How do you talk to them about balancing the AI world with the real one?

Luckily, my kids haven't had a massive screen-to-nature imbalance. My son was a guide at canoe camp, and my daughter was a tree-planter. (So was I, actually.) I've told them to try to get comfortable with AI, so they're not swayed by three articles. Think about the billions of hours teachers have spent trying to make sure kids can scribble the alphabet. Spelling may be less important now because of spellcheck, but there will still be new things to learn.

RIP, essays.

If we're typing less and dictating more, the ability to speak clearly becomes more important. You don't want to have to go through a transcript of me being like, "Oh, like, hey Katie, like, this is a great interview, like—oh no. Go back. Oh god, like..." You want: "Thanks so much for this interview, Katie. If you have any more questions, let me know." ■

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

THE BIG IDEA

RADICAL SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS



Mine Canada's E-Waste for Metals

Urban mining can recover precious critical minerals from phones, flashlights, laptops and TVs—before they hit the landfill **By Gisele Azimi**

WHEN I TELL PEOPLE I WORK in urban mining, they sometimes (incorrectly) picture me sporting a hard hat and chipping away at old office towers with a pickaxe. In the past, the main way to obtain in-demand materials—like those precious critical minerals everyone's fighting over—was through primary mining, digging deep into the ground in remote locations to extract them. But since 2014, in my chemical engineering lab at the University of Toronto, I've been plumbing another abundant source in Canada's cities: e-waste, a term for the

discarded electronics and batteries rusting in our landfills.

For a culture that's constantly tapping on technology, we rarely think about the untapped resources inside it. Critical elements power many of our modern machines: for example, smartphone and computer circuit boards are rich in copper, gold, silver, indium and tin. Electric motors and wind turbines use magnets with high concentrations of rare-earth elements, like neodymium. And EV batteries are chock full of cobalt, manganese

and nickel. Regular miners might be able to extract one or two per cent of a desired element from a small chunk of ore, but in a similarly sized chunk of e-waste—where the rocky impurities are already removed—that concentration can shoot up to 30 per cent.

If only we weren't throwing away the very materials we desperately need. Less than a quarter of global e-waste is properly recycled, making it one of the world's fastest-growing waste streams. According to the United Nations, humans produced 62 million tonnes of it

in 2022 alone, an increase of 82 per cent since 2010. By 2030, that number is expected to hit 82 million tonnes. In Canada alone, we're projected to generate 1.2 million tonnes annually by then. When e-waste is recycled, it's often at dangerous processing sites in poorer countries. Before the Agbogbloshie scrapyard in Ghana officially closed in 2021, child workers were melting wires over open flames to extract scraps of copper and prying apart plastic casings with makeshift tools to reach the metals inside—without protective gear. Sites like these are still operating elsewhere in Africa, as well as in China and India.

At U of T, my team is developing more efficient, environmentally friendly extraction methods, with the goal of making exploitative sites like Agbogbloshie relics

fluorescent lamps and lithium-ion and nickel–metal hydride batteries.

Canada has the scientific talent to be a global leader in urban mining but, right now, we're not at the front of the pack. In the 2010s, for instance, the Chinese government and several private recyclers invested roughly \$13 billion to build 49 sites for collecting and recycling urban waste, with a combined capacity to process more than 40 million tonnes each year.

Japan also offers a solid model for turning high-volume e-waste recovery into national policy. In 2022, the country passed its Economic Security Promotion Act, which allowed the Japan Organization for Metals and Energy Security, a government-owned entity, to fund critical-mineral projects. One is a pilot program to build a fully independent supply

practice. In my lab, we're performing it with small, 200-millilitre reactors, supported by an array of pumps, vessels and carbon dioxide delivery and control systems. At an industrial scale, however, supercritical fluid extraction requires entire plants built around high-pressure reactors that are sometimes thousands of litres in size.

Everyday Canadians have a role to play at the start of the urban mining supply chain: collection. Many people still don't know what to do with their old phones or broken appliances and, as a result, a measly 20 per cent of e-waste in Canada is properly collected and recycled. Some tech companies, like Apple and Dell, offer buy-back programs and handle material recycling internally, but that isn't happening widely enough. And many technologies, like wind turbines and EV batteries, are still so new that we haven't yet figured out what happens at the end of their life cycles.

To prevent these objects from languishing in landfills or catch-all kitchen drawers, we'll need to build large, warehouse-style facilities all across the country where they can be sorted, cleaned and shipped to the right processing places. Each facility would easily need to employ dozens of urban miners, thus creating thousands of jobs—and a brand-new Canadian workforce. (Plucking metals from our own phones in addition to the Arctic would give us a leg up against China and the U.S. in the Great Critical Mineral Race, too.)

Urban mining won't outright replace Canada's traditional mining industry, but it can complement it, reducing our reliance on imported materials and moving us toward a more circular economy. I'm in the process of incorporating a startup to commercialize our lab's urban mining method in partnership with U of T. If even a third of recyclers incorporated this technology around the world—making use of billions of dead devices—it could drastically clean up our cities. Innovating isn't just about what we throw away; it's also about what we choose to keep. ■

GISELE AZIMI is the Canada Research Chair in Urban Mining Innovations and a professor at the University of Toronto.

“According to the United Nations, humans produced 62 million tonnes of e-waste in 2022 alone, an increase of 82 per cent since 2010”

of the past. Two of the most commonly used techniques are pyrometallurgy (i.e. smelting) and hydrometallurgy (my Ph.D. focus), which has a relatively small carbon footprint and uses acid or alkaline solutions to dissolve metals at lower temperatures.

Another approach with a lot of promise is supercritical fluid extraction. The technique isn't new: it's already used in coffee decaffeination and the production of medical-grade cannabis. But my lab is the first in the world to adapt it for metal recycling. We capture carbon dioxide—either from the air or from industrial sources, like cement production—to be used as a solvent. Once pressurized and heated, the CO₂ can extract metal without needing acids or creating hazardous byproducts. That CO₂ can also be reused repeatedly, making the process even cleaner. We're still in the pilot phase, but our process already has demonstrated success in extracting metals from magnets,

chain for lithium-ion batteries via recycling. The potential for Japan, a historically resource-poor country, to scale its efforts is massive: its domestic urban mines now account for more than 10 per cent of the world's metal reserves, including materials like tin, indium and tantalum.

The good news is Canada isn't starting from scratch. Through the National Research Council's Critical Battery Materials Initiative, researchers are collaborating on R&D with Canadian and German universities and businesses to commercialize better lithium-ion battery-recycling processes. Natural Resources Canada is also exploring ways to recycle magnets and improve metal extraction from both ores and e-waste. Still, it's going to take hundreds of millions of dollars of investment in infrastructure and training to make methods like supercritical fluid extraction standard



I'm A Millionaire. Tax Me More.

Wealthy Canadians like me can afford to pay extra for the greater good

By Avi Bryant

Tech entrepreneur

EARLIER THIS YEAR, I was in the plush boardroom of the wealth-management division of a major Canadian bank. My investment manager wasn't happy. The strategy I'd recommended, she explained, could lead me to pay quite a bit more money to the CRA. "That's okay," I responded. "I'm comfortable paying more in taxes." She laughed nervously: "Well, this is the first time I've ever heard that."

I'm rich. At 30, I sold my small Canadian tech company, Dabble DB—an early online database tool—to Twitter. For the next decade, I worked in senior technical roles at Silicon Valley startups, sometimes in person but mostly remotely from Galiano Island in B.C. I retired at 40 with enough wealth to do pretty much anything I wanted for the rest of my life. When I confided my financial status to a friend from high school, she looked puzzled. "I'm sure you're good at what you do," she

said, "but why would they pay you that much? It's not like you're a basketball star." The truth is, I got lucky. After leaving Twitter, I was an early hire at Stripe—at that time, a small, unknown payment-processing company. It's common for startups to pay their employees partly in stock options, so when Stripe unexpectedly grew to hundreds of times its initial size, my equity grew in value along with it.

I'd lucked out from the start, though: I was born in Canada. People in my situation often talk about being self-made, but I don't see it that way. I think about my parents, who moved here from the U.S. in the 1970s and lived in a Vancouver housing co-op built by the city and the federal government. I think about their stable jobs at the University of British Columbia and the education I got in Vancouver's public schools—and later, at UBC myself, with the help of a government-funded scholarship. I started Dabble DB with investment capital from a public pension plan, along with Canadian R&D tax credits that reimbursed large parts of our payroll. In Canada, I could take entrepreneurial risks fearlessly, knowing that, whatever happened, I had universal health care and a social safety net to fall back on. Given all that Canada invested in me, I wonder: is it getting what it deserves in return?

As a tech entrepreneur, I'm intimately familiar with the venture-capital model. The vast majority of companies a VC firm invests in will lose every cent of the investors' money. But every once in a while there's a big hit, like Stripe, that returns so much money that it pays for all of the fund's other investments and more. The same should be true for Canada. We invest in all of our people, but the vast majority of tax revenues should come from those fortunate enough to accumulate great wealth. I'm not alone in this opinion: my wife and I are members of the newly formed Canadian chapter of Patriotic Millionaires, an

organization whose members have more than \$5 million in assets and advocate for higher taxes to lower inequality.

The problem is that, after supporting us on the way up, Canada coddles us once we've become rich. Progressive taxation *should* mean that those who make more money pay a higher tax rate than those with more modest incomes. The reality is that the effective tax rate of many of Canada's highest earners can be lower than members of its middle class, because. Much of the money I made from Dabble and Stripe came from cashing in my shares and stock options, so it was taxed at roughly half the rate it would've been if I'd earned that money through my salary. That doesn't feel fair.

The Trudeau government came close to increasing the capital gains inclusion rate, a move I supported and still do. I'd go even further to close loopholes abused by the wealthy—for example, borrowing against company shares instead of selling them to avoid paying taxes indefinitely. I'd like to see a cap on the exemption of primary residences from capital gains taxes. It's intended to protect middle- and working-class homeowners, but also allows holders of luxury real estate to make millions of dollars without paying a cent. Those same property owners should be paying land value taxes even if their homes never sell; that would help to bring real estate prices back down from the stratosphere. Finally, we should be heavily taxing the fuel used by private jets and yachts in order to offset their negative effects on the environment. We need to reimburse society for their impact.

I'll admit these are difficult positions to take publicly: I'm outing myself as different from my friends and neighbours in lower income brackets. I also risk making myself unpopular among my peers in the tech world, some of whom have been the loudest opponents of changes to Canada's capital gains policies. They'll tell you we need these tax breaks

to keep entrepreneurs from going abroad to start their companies; they use this threat because it works. At Twitter, I saw this firsthand, when the company threatened to move outside of San Francisco if it didn't get a break on payroll taxes. The city caved and cut them a deal. Canada shouldn't fall for this. Why do so many tech workers live in California, the state with the highest taxes in the U.S.? Because entrepreneurs start businesses in places people want to live: where schools are good, infrastructure is reliable, health care is accessible and where their employees will be happy and productive. Wealthy Canadians who'd rather see this country make cuts to vital services than pay more in taxes are just not thinking about the long term.

One country that is considering the big picture is Denmark. There, top income tax rates are 52 per cent and capital gains are taxed only slightly less at 42 per cent. Their overall taxes are higher than Canada's, with a tax-to-GDP ratio of roughly 46 per cent compared to our 35.

As a result, Denmark has an unmatched social welfare system and lower income inequality than almost anywhere. It is consistently ranked among the happiest two or three countries in the world. Depending on the poll, Canada hovers around 15th place or lower. Boosting Canada's mood up to Denmark levels will require more money in our coffers.

With those extra resources, I'd like to see Canada go back to creating non-profit housing, the way we did in the 1970s. We could invest much more in scientific research, particularly given the huge recent drop in government funding from the U.S., which affects our researchers as much as it does theirs. In the face of a major trade war, we could support our workers the same way we did during COVID, with a permanent CERB-like basic income, along with more federal capital investment in Canadian industry (prioritizing climate, not pipelines). I'd also like to see us put more money into child care and education at every level.

Charity has its place. Private initiatives can take risks in ways the government's fiscal controls and political concerns don't allow. For example, I'm donating to marine electrification—funding research, engineering and infrastructure to shift ships away from fossil fuels. (This is a new, niche part of the climate fight, where private efforts can actually move the needle.)

A lot of wealthy families believe philanthropy should fill the gaps in Canada's social safety net, but that won't cut it. At the end of the day, only the government has the scale to lift all Canadians up to a better standard of living. Just as importantly, it's accountable to us for its spending. A democratically elected government that demands the wealthy reinvest in this country—instead of waiting for them to pick their own spending priorities—is the only fix for our biggest economic issues. Rich Canadians don't have to choose between charity and paying our fair share. Trust me, a member of the 0.1 per cent: we can afford to do both. ■

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Bring Your Business to Beaumont: Join Us by Building Tomorrow, Today

Beaumont is growing fast—and we're inviting visionary businesses to grow with us. Discover opportunities to build, invest, and thrive in one of Alberta's most dynamic and welcoming communities.

Just a short drive from Edmonton is the idyllic city of Beaumont, Alberta. With its sustained residential growth, business-friendly environment and proximity to Edmonton's innovation economy, Beaumont offers tremendous promise for businesses and commercial investors on the lookout for untapped potential. Here are the top reasons why this gem of a city is a prime destination for commercial and business expansion.

Sustained population growth

Beaumont is the fastest-growing municipality in the Edmonton Metro Region and the third fastest in Alberta. Over the past two decades, its population has tripled, reaching an estimated 24,688 residents in 2024—a 5.85 per cent increase over the previous year. It's also a primary trade area that extends to 66,937 people. Its thriving downtown, excellent amenities, health care services and infrastructure create a welcoming environment for residents and businesses alike, including French-speaking Albertans—Beaumont is only one of four officially bilingual cities in the province.

Above-average household spending

With an annual household income of \$162,000, Beaumont residents earn above the provincial and national averages, and

dole out an average of \$116,000 annually on consumer goods. In 2023 alone, residents spent \$663 million on commercial goods, with \$150 million spent locally, highlighting a meaningful gap for retail businesses to fill, given residents have voiced their desire for more, and better, local shopping options.

Burgeoning innovation economy

Beaumont is part of Canada's fastest-growing economic region, which generates \$110.85 billion in GDP and boasts export growth more than double the national average. Sustainable, forward-looking investment is central to Beaumont's growth strategy, with a focus on renewable energy and clean technology, agri-tech and life sciences. In collaboration with Edmonton's efforts to become Canada's hydrogen hub, Beaumont is positioned to be integral to its production, transportation, end use, and carbon capture and storage initiatives. In the agri-tech sector, rapid innovation has fuelled investment opportunities across the region, with food manufacturing sales up 15 per cent.

Strategically located

Beaumont offers direct access to the CANAMEX trade corridor and Queen Elizabeth II Highway, offering converging routes of air, rail, pipelines and roadways with the benefits of a Foreign Trade Zone. Only 15 minutes away is the

Edmonton International Airport—the fifth largest in Canada—where its multi-modal distribution is being expanded throughout Canada, the United States and Mexico to strengthen supply chains.

Favourable business environment

The city of Beaumont offers one of the most competitive tax environments in the region. The non-residential tax rate of 9.59 per cent makes it the third-lowest in the Edmonton Metro Region and roughly 50 per cent lower than Edmonton's. Additionally, Beaumont's Innovation Park is in development to help businesses invent cutting-edge technologies, spur additional investment and grow employment opportunities.

Educated workforce

Beaumont is home to an educated workforce, thanks in part to its proximity to Edmonton's world-class post-secondary institutions providing more than 170 programs to roughly 130,000 students. The University of Alberta is among the top four research universities in Canada, and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology is the largest technology and apprenticeship trainer in Canada. Among Beaumont's residents, 40 per cent are employed in a natural resources, sciences, trades, manufacturing or utilities related career. And more than 64 per cent have attained high-demand skills through apprenticeships, trades and college certificates.

Commercial real estate opportunities

Beaumont offers a wide selection of green-field sites and land packages for light industrial expansion tailored to developers' needs, along with flexible leasing and purchasing arrangements. Compared to other major Canadian centres, Beaumont and the Edmonton Region offer significantly lower real estate costs. Word is certainly getting out: in 2024, the city issued 43 commercial and commercial improvement permits worth \$37.5 million—a 17 per cent increase over 2023.



To learn more about Beaumont's opportunities, reach out to 780-242-8786, email invest@beaumont.ab.ca or scan the QR code.



A new generation of leaders are redefining Canada: thinkers, artists, politicians and entrepreneurs forging a stronger, more resilient country. Here, in collaboration with our sister publication Canadian Business, we present 40 young powerhouses who are building new institutions and shaking up the old ones.



*Profiles by Rosemary Counter
and Alex Cyr*



↓
The big personalities putting Canada first on the world stage—both in and out of the PMO



ANNA WEYANT

ARTIST

The renaissance woman with powerful connections

Anna Weyant paints like a 17th-century master—but with a touch of millennial malaise. The Calgary-born, New York-based artist blends old-world technique with eerie surrealism. In 2022, she became the youngest artist represented by the powerhouse Gagosian gallery (she also dated gallerist Larry Gagosian for a few years). Now, at just 30, she's landed her first museum exhibit at Madrid's Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza: an opus on the vulnerability and theatrics of female adolescence (with no shortage of wilting flowers and dangling ribbons). Her prices speak to her staying power, often reaching hundreds of thousands of dollars (and at least one, *Falling Woman*, sold for US\$1.6 million). She's also finding fame in the fashion world: Marc Jacobs, who has one of her paintings hanging in his Frank Lloyd Wright home, used one as a print in a recent collection and asked her to paint Kaia Gerber for the cover of *Vogue* when he guest-edited last year.

OLIVIA SMITH

SOCCER PLAYER

For getting Arsenal FC to shell out the big bucks

At just 21, Olivia Smith has already redefined what's possible for a Canadian soccer prodigy. Born in North York, Ontario, and raised in Whitby, she made her senior debut for Canada at 15—the youngest player to ever do so. After a brief stint at Penn State, Smith turned pro in 2023 with Sporting CP, a team in Portugal's top women's circuit, where she was named the league's best young player thanks to her menacing dribbling and clutch goal scoring. Her next stop? Liverpool, where she scored nine goals in 25 games and was crowned young player of the year. In 2025, Arsenal signed her for £1 million—the biggest deal in women's football history—making her one of the most valuable female Canadian athletes of all time. As if killing it on the pitch isn't enough, she currently sits on a special development committee for League1 Ontario, a semi-pro soccer league right here at home.



BROCKERS



JADEN BRAVES

CEO, YOUNG POLITICIANS OF CANADA

The teen dynamo giving Gen Z a seat at the political table

At 16, Jaden Braves has more political clout than most adults twice his age—and he's just getting started. He founded the Young Politicians of Canada, a non-partisan juggernaut with youth-led chapters in nearly every province and a placement program that matches teens with volunteer jobs in government offices. He's chaired youth delegations at the Biden White House, is executive VP of YATA-NATO Canada and somehow still finds time to research AI and public trust at Cambridge. Whether it's climate change, Arctic security or getting Gen Z to the polls, Braves leads the charge, armed with a Coronation Medal, a blazer and a no-nonsense belief that teens deserve a seat at every table. His latest gambit? Lower Canada's voting age to 16. He may be onto something: Senator Marilou McPhedran introduced a bill proposing the same thing in May, and it's currently moving through Parliament.



MANINDER SIDHU

MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The dealmaker finding Canada new friends

As Canada faces the fallout of losing its most reliable economic partner, Maninder Sidhu is on a mission to rewrite the country's trade playbook. A Brampton East MP with a background in customs brokerage and a knack for small-business savvy, Sidhu is in hot pursuit of fresh markets and new allies. His focus is clear: secure Canada's foothold in critical sectors like minerals, clean technology and agriculture, while navigating the rising tide of American protectionism by building partnerships that don't hinge on Washington's goodwill. So far, he's revived stalled talks in South America, rekindled ties in Africa and raised Canada's standing in the global critical-minerals race. With a portfolio that spans diplomacy to logistics—and a charm offensive to match—Sidhu is quickly establishing himself as one of Ottawa's indispensable dealmakers.



AUDREY CHAMPOUX

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, PMO

For crafting Carney's message

When Mark Carney needed a press secretary, he didn't stray far from the campaign trail. He tapped Audrey Champoux, a rising star who served as Carney's spokesperson during his Liberal leadership bid and who was previously press secretary for Liberal minister Marco

Mendicino and communications director for François-Philippe Champagne. Whether clarifying the Prime Minister's assets-in-blind-trust snafu or handling trade turbulence with polish, Champoux has so far been the steady voice of the PMO. Already, she has helped shape Carney's messaging around a clear non-negotiable: Canada will only engage with the U.S. if treated as a sovereign nation. And while Carney doesn't require Trump-level PR management, it doesn't hurt that his comms chief knows how to dress a headline.



MAGDA GRACE

HEAD OF PRIME VIDEO FOR CANADA, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

For taking Canadian streaming to the next level

Running the Canadian arm of a major streaming service in 2025 is like walking through a digital minefield. Competition is unrelenting, social media eats away at the attention pie, and streaming services are forced to dig into a well of Canadian content made shallow by brain drain, inflation and an industry that just cannot compete with Hollywood. Despite it all, Magda Grace, who leads Prime Canada, Australia and New Zealand, is recording stellar numbers in the north. Canadian subscribers have ballooned to 7.5 million, and monthly views in the country have risen since the pandemic, regularly clocking in at over 12 million. Grace, a Montreal native with a UCLA law degree and field experience at Warner Bros., used a few savvy moves—like nabbing Monday-night NHL and NBA rights and commissioning a few instant Canadian classics like *All or Nothing: Maple Leafs* and maple-syrup opus *The Sticky*—to keep moving forward.



CINDY WOODHOUSE NEPINAK

NATIONAL CHIEF, ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

The chief putting Indigenous Canadians first

Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak isn't just making history as the youngest woman—and first mom of three—to lead the Assembly of First Nations. She's also making sure no one forgets whose land Canada is built on. The Pinaymootang First Nation leader is closely watching Mark Carney's economic agenda. As the PM eyes new international deals, critical minerals and supply-chain fortification, Woodhouse Nepinak's upcoming national economic statement will reaffirm her insistence on First Nations leadership in shaping Canada's future and remind Ottawa that growth starts with reconciliation. Trade wars and tariffs may dominate headlines, but she insists: no prosperity without partnership, and no extraction without consent. Consider the gauntlet dropped—respectfully.



BRAEDEN CALEY

DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, PMO

The Ivy League brains behind Carney's premiership

As Mark Carney rocketed up the polls this year, political watchers wondered: who's rising with him? One answer is Braeden Caley, a policy brain and political lifer with Ivy League polish, deep Liberal party ties and campaign savvy beyond his years. Before stepping into the PMO, Caley ran the think tank Canada 2020 (where Carney sat on the advisory board) and hosted round-tables on Canada's AI opportunities. He also helped steer the Liberal Party through three victorious campaigns as senior director of communications and national campaign co-director. Not yet 40, he's already done time as director of policy and communications at Vancouver City Hall and earned his public policy credentials at Harvard's Kennedy School. Now, he's quietly shaping the federal agenda from Parliament Hill. Carney may be the face, but Caley is crucial in sending the message.



IVAN ZHANG, AIDAN GOMEZ AND NICK FROSST

CO-FOUNDERS, COHERE

For masterminding Canada's biggest AI juggernaut

Cohere's trailblazing trio launched their startup in 2019 with a singular mission: to bring world-class, transformer-powered AI into real-world business use. Six years later, Cohere is everywhere. It recently surpassed US\$100 million in annual recurring revenue and launched innovative products like Command A (large language models for enterprise use) and Aya Vision (an image-understanding and translating tool). It also expanded its automated workflow platform, North, into the finance and health-care sectors by partnering with RBC and Dell. In August, a new funding round of US\$500 million raised the company's valuation to US\$6.8 billion. Now Cohere is focused on sovereign data solutions: it's scaled up with a new office in Montreal and recently teamed up with Bell to provide Canadian-built AI for business and government.

REBECCA ALTY

MINISTER OF CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

For bringing the far North to Ottawa

Rebecca Alty is the youngest member of Mark Carney's cabinet—and the first federal minister from the Northwest Territories in nearly two decades. A lifelong Yellowknifer and former mayor of the capital, Alty now holds the weighty Crown-Indigenous relations file, where she's pushing to accelerate stalled land-claim and self-government negotiations. Alty is urging the federal government to expand its team of negotiators and meet more frequently. By pushing for more consistent talks, she aims to empower Indigenous communities with greater control over their land, language and governance. Before winning a seat as MP in 2025, she spent over a decade in municipal politics, passing zoning reforms to ease the North's housing crisis and championing transitional housing for people struggling with addiction.



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D'PHAROAH WOON-A-TAI

ACTOR

The stylish newcomer with a stacked IMDb page

Last year's Emmy Awards set a monumental record: *Reservation Dogs* star D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai became the first Indigenous person to be nominated for best lead actor. To mark the occasion, the Toronto actor, who's of Oji-Cree and Guyanese descent, donned a show-stopping accessory with his Armani suit: a red handprint stamped over his mouth in solidarity with missing and murdered Indigenous women. He didn't win that night but, at just 24, Woon-A-Tai has already amassed an impressive IMDb profile. Among the highlights: his 2020 feature film debut, *Beans*, which won best picture at the Canadian Screen Awards; *Reservation Dogs*, historically significant as America's first all-Indigenous production (writers, cast and crew); and, this year, a role in Darren Aronofsky's latest film, *Caught Stealing*, alongside Austin Butler and Zoë Kravitz. Somehow, he also found time to attend the most recent Paris Fashion Week: he was front row at Louis Vuitton.

MICHAEL KATCHEN

CEO, WEALTHSIMPLE

For inventing the banks of the future

If Michael Katchen has his way, traditional banks will soon be a relic of the past. The CEO of Wealthsimple, the online-service provider with more than three million users and \$70 billion in assets under management, believes financial services should be easy, transparent and accessible—on your phone and at your fingertips, which is exactly how millennials and Gen Zers like to do it. After graduating from the Ivey school, Katchen spent a few years in Silicon Valley before returning to Toronto. In just 11 years, he has transformed Wealthsimple into the country's largest financial institution built in the last quarter-century. This year, he ramped up his rivalry with the Big 5 by launching Wealthsimple loans and credit cards, and he's eyeing an IPO in the not-too-distant future.



Michael Katchen by Patrick Hyder/Wealthsimple; Rahul Goel by Andrew Francis Wallace/Getty Images; Teresa Resch by Erin Leydon



RAHUL GOEL

CEO, NORDSPACE

The aerospace engineer sending Canadian rockets into orbit

The commercial space race is on, and Canada is losing: until now, no Canadian company has sent a rocket into orbit. Rahul Goel, a 33-year-old aerospace engineering graduate and current Ph.D. candidate at the University of Toronto, plans to change that. Goel, founder of the space startup NordSpace, has designed a rocket called Taiga, with plans to launch from the shores of the St. Lawrence into the atmosphere—though it won't go to space until a later date. Taiga runs partly on carbon-neutral e-fuels and can operate for a full year with less gas than a single transatlantic commercial flight; NordSpace's next rocket, Tundra, will be ready in 2027. To fund his lofty goal, Goel runs two additional companies (SaaS provider PheedLoop and genetic technology firm Genepika) with the express purpose of funnelling cash into NordSpace—so far, he's invested \$5 mil-



TERESA RESCH

PRESIDENT, TORONTO TEMPO

For bringing the WNBA—and Serena Williams—to Toronto

The much-anticipated 2026 debut of the Toronto Tempo, the first non-American team in the WNBA, hinges largely on Teresa Resch. There's little doubt it will be a slam dunk: Resch, who's originally from Minnesota, has 11 years of experience as the Raptors' VP of operations, and she was part of the team that developed the team's ubiquitous "We the North" merch. When she's not busy calling the shots at the Coca-Cola Coliseum, Resch sits on both the Canadian Olympic Committee and on the board of Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. No word on her choice for head coach just yet, but she's stacked her leadership circle with Lyft's Whitney Bell as CMO, MLSE's Patrick Lee as CFO and former WNBA champion Monica Rogers as GM, while the Tempo's ownership team got some star power with talk-show host Lilly Singh and tennis GOAT Serena Williams.



HARRISON AMIT

CEO, HOVR

For giving rideshare drivers a better deal

Harrison Amit, a science grad from Mount Saint Vincent University in Nova Scotia, was inspired to start Hovr when he moved to Toronto and began chatting with unhappy Uber drivers. That's how he learned that rideshare drivers make little money, shoulder high expenses, and lack benefits or job security.

To help them, he launched his ride-sharing app last year with a new and better model. At Hovr, drivers pay a monthly membership fee upfront and, in turn, keep 100 per cent of fares, which are calculated to reflect both time and distance. Hovr gets a mere dollar per ride, paid by the customer—and it all still costs less than your average Uber trip.



VÉRONIQUE LECAULT

CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER, ABCELLERA

The brainpower behind Canada's vaccine-discovery pipeline

As part of her Ph.D. in chemical and biological engineering from the University of British Columbia, Véronique Lecault worked with the team at B.C.-based biotech company AbCellera to invent a multidisciplinary antibody-discovery platform that finds new drug candidates for vaccines. The tech was essential during the pandemic, when Lecault's team developed the first COVID antibody treatment, produced in partnership with Eli Lilly. As skilled at entrepreneurship as she is in science, Lecault was recently promoted to CTO at AbCellera, which is now valued at \$1 billion and plans to develop drugs for cancer and immune diseases. It's also expanding rapidly: a new \$700-million, 400,000-square-foot campus will open in Vancouver to house its manufacturing plant and R&D facilities.



DIANA MATHESON

FOUNDER, NORTHERN SUPER LEAGUE

The Olympian making women's sports must-see TV

This past April, the Northern Super League held its inaugural match between the Vancouver Rise and Calgary Wild in a full stadium of soccer fans. The brains behind the operation? Diana Matheson, the two-time Olympic bronze medallist best known for scoring the winning goal at London 2012. Just two years after retiring from the game in 2020, and with an economics degree from Princeton in her pocket, the Mississauga-born midfielder launched the Northern Super League in 2022—part of a bonanza of Canadian women's sports that also includes the new Toronto WNBA team and the Professional Women's Hockey League. Thanks to Matheson's brokerage of multi-year television deals, the 25-game season now appears on CBC, TSN and ESPN, including select playoff games and the November final at Toronto's BMO field.

SIMON POULIN

CEO, UPSIDE DRINKS

For bringing boozeless beverages to the masses

Canadians are drinking eight per cent less than they used to—and younger generations aren't drinking much at all. Luckily there's never been an easier time to be sober, sober-curious, dry or just not drinking tonight, thanks to Upside Drinks, the country's biggest online store for boozeless beverages. Simon Poulin co-founded the company when he noticed a serious lack of non-alcoholic drink options for customers looking for something better than boring near-beer. Since its launch in 2022, Upside Drinks has been catering to the growing number of Canadians—especially millennials and Gen Zers—thirsting for mocktails, sparkling wines, infused waters and energy drinks, plus faux rum, gin, vodka and whisky. Turns out sobriety pays: sales have grown tenfold in the past two years.



Simon Poulin courtesy of Upside Drinks; Matt Johnson by Luis Mora



MATT JOHNSON

FILMMAKER

The Hollywood hitmaker who's staying in Canada

Behind the camera of *Tony*, the much-anticipated Anthony Bourdain biopic? Buzzy Canadian filmmaker Matt Johnson, who first appeared on mainstream moviegoers' radars with 2023's *BlackBerry*. But where other directors find commercial success and immediately pack their bags for Los Angeles, the 39-year-old Torontonian is staying put, largely driven by his quest to highlight Canadian filmmaking on the international movie scene. This fall, Johnson's gonzo mockumentary, *Nirvanna the Band the Show the Movie*, opened the Midnight Madness program at TIFF. He's also doing his part to help local filmmakers: last year he starred in *Matt and Mara*, a romcom from Kazik Radwanski, one of Johnson's favourite local directors.



PETER LU AND KEVIN WANG

CO-FOUNDERS, UNIUNI

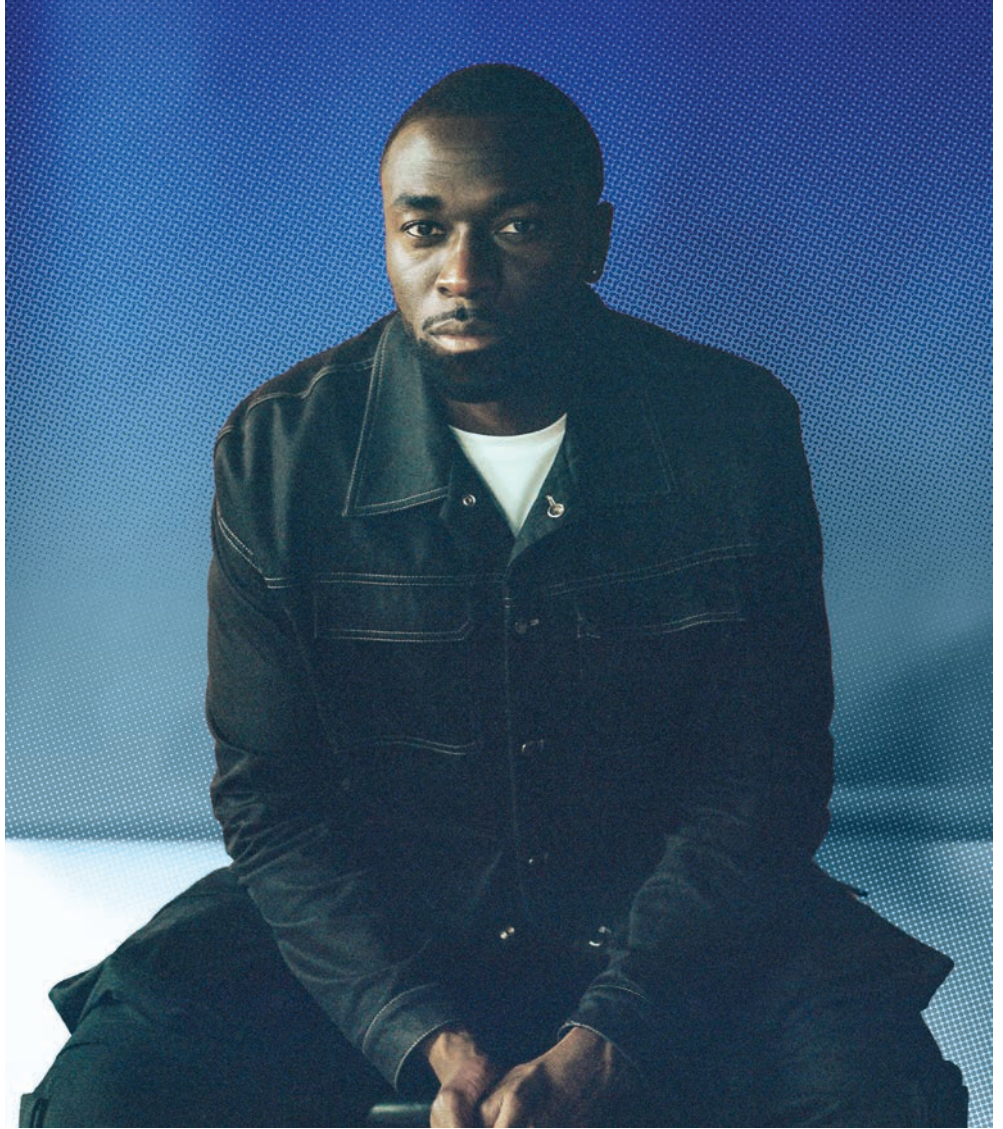
For creating Canada's FedEx

Canada Post is in crisis—and a startup food-delivery service has stepped in to fill the gap. Peter Lu and Kevin Wang founded UniUni in 2019 to deliver take-out. But when the pandemic hit and online shopping went wild, UniUni quickly pivoted to e-commerce,

landing contracts with Chinese companies Shein and Temu. Lu and Wang, who were early adopters of AI-powered route-optimization algorithms, streamlined the often-inefficient last mile of each delivery. In 2025, UniUni's three-year growth rate hit an astronomical 13,000 per cent. Not surprising, considering its ever-expanding network—835 employees, 50,000 drivers, 100 warehouses—currently processes over 50,000 parcels per week. UniUni claims it has the capacity to process millions per week across North America. Investors are convinced: the company recently raised US\$70 million in a funding round led by San Francisco-based equity firm Bessemer Venture Partners.

THE
NEXT
GENERATION

The next generation of Canadians revolutionizing sports, fashion, movies and music



SPENCER BADU

FASHION DESIGNER

The style star creating haute couture for men, women and everyone in between

Along with designers like Thom Browne, Harris Reed and Stella McCartney, Toronto-based Spencer Badu is revolutionizing post-gender high fashion. Badu founded his unisex, ready-to-wear label during his first year at university in 2015, specializing in avant-garde colour-blocked tees and wide-legged ripped denim that are as much art as they are fashion. He made his name through innovative brand partnerships: he's created capsule collections for the Toronto Raptors and collaborated with Hoka on a redesign of the all-gender Elevation X sneaker. He describes his clothing as semi-autobiographical, borrowing influences from his own life, his Ghanaian culture and historical military uniforms. And he's earned some celebrity fans: Kendrick Lamar wore his cropped denim jacket on an episode of *Saturday Night Live*, and he's made custom pieces for A\$AP Rocky. This year, he joined *Project Runway Canada* as a judge and was named menswear designer of the year by the Canadian Arts and Fashion Awards.



CELINE SONG

FILMMAKER

For pioneering the romcom renaissance

This year, director Celine Song revived the romantic comedy with *Materialists*, which delighted audiences and critics with both its sensitive point of view (on class, capitalism and dating) and its painfully gorgeous love triangle (Dakota Johnson plus Pedro Pascal plus

Chris Evans). She has a unique talent for elevating seemingly played-out plots into existential masterpieces: her 2023 debut feature, *Past Lives*, was an aching, tender reflection on childhood love and cultural alienation, and it earned her Oscar nods for both best original screenplay and best picture (she was the first Asian woman nominated in that category). Next up, she's developing a sports drama series with HBO and continuing her romcom trajectory by writing the 28-years-later sequel to one of the all-time greats: *My Best Friend's Wedding*.



MAE MARTIN

ACTOR, COMEDIAN AND PODCASTER

The stand-up who's conquering Netflix and beyond

Everyone's crushing on Toronto-born non-binary comedian Mae Martin, and in just about every medium. On Netflix, they've released both the sardonic stand-up special *SAP* and the coming-of-age drama *Feel Good*. On shelves, their YA book *Can Everyone Please Calm Down* is a guide to fluid 21st-century sexuality. And on Spotify, a search for "Mae Martin" serves up both their debut indie album, *I'm a TV*, and the *Handsome* podcast—which Martin hosts with fellow comics Tig Notaro and Fortune Feimster, and which just snagged Just For Laughs' highest honour as Podcast of the Year. In their comedy, Martin draws on their Second City roots and inspiration from *Kids in the Hall* to endearingly overshare about their conventional upbringing and unconventional relationships. This month, they pull triple duty as star, showrunner and writer of Netflix's *Wayward*, a comedic thriller about the troubled-teen industry, with a stacked cast that includes Toni Collette and *Suits* actor Patrick J. Adams.



VICTORIA MBOKO

TENNIS PLAYER

The teenage phenom who bested Naomi Osaka

Canada's top singles tennis player is 18-year-old Victoria Mboko, who kicked off the year winning 22 successive matches without dropping a set. Mboko, whose parents immigrated to Toronto from the Democratic Republic of the Congo via North Carolina, rocketed up the tennis charts on a wild-card entry to the 2025 National Bank Open in Montreal. There, with an injured wrist, she won the title, defeating four Grand Slam champions, including Coco Gauff and Naomi Osaka (who was so shocked she accidentally snubbed the champion post-match and later apologized). She's the second-youngest player to knock off this many champions to secure the title. (The first? Serena Williams.) After her victory, Mboko was ranked 24th globally—up from 333rd in January—and secured one of 32 seeds at the U.S. Open in August.



RUTH B.

MUSICIAN

The TikTok sensation with a sense of social justice

Ruth B.—the stage name of Edmonton-born Ruth Behre—started out a decade ago posting on Vine between shifts of her part-time job at a local Marshalls. When one six-second clip got lots of digital attention, the aspiring songstress expanded it into the first song she ever wrote, the soulful earworm “Lost Boy,” which earned her two million YouTube views and a record deal with Columbia. In the decade since, Ruth B. has matured into a political force, using her platform to raise money for COVID relief and awareness for anti-Black racism via “If I Have a Son,” her song about racial injustice. More recently, her track “Dandelions” went viral on TikTok, and she ranked among the most popular Canadian artists on Spotify’s 2024 Wrapped, with an eye-popping 2.5 billion streams.



FRANÇOIS-EMMANUEL NICOL

CHEF, TANIÈRE³

The avant-garde restaurateur raking in Michelin stars

Last year, when the Michelin guide came to Quebec—arguably Canada’s dining capital—only one restaurant received two elusive stars: Tanière³, hidden in the subterranean vaults of Quebec City that were built to fortify New France from attack in 1693. The immersive dining experience features a top-secret menu of 12 to 18 creations from chef-owner François-Emmanuel Nicol, who also happens to be the guy who campaigned for Michelin to cover Quebec. The 35-year-old chef spent a year in restaurants in France, Spain and Australia before returning to his home province. Nicol’s background is in science—the *Michelin Guide* described his kitchen as a “gastronomic restaurant laboratory”—and he applies his avant-garde techniques to sustainable, local ingredients like Gaspé tuna, Mi’kmaq-sourced scallops and sturgeon caviar.



ANNA LAMBE

ACTOR

For bringing Hollywood North way north

Hollywood North took on new meaning in 2025 with the arrival of *North of North*, Netflix’s new comedy filmed in Nunavut. Playing the lead role is Anna Lambe, the 24-year-old Inuk actress who, after a few short years and smaller roles in *True Detective*, *Trickster* and *Three Pines*, stepped into the spotlight as Canada’s biggest up-and-coming Inuk star. Lambe moves easily between dark, gritty dramas and lighthearted, Lucille Ball-esque physical comedy, then back again. Next year, her artistic pendulum swings again to the sombre with *Heart of the Beast*, where she stars alongside Brad Pitt.

Ruth B. by Kevin Winter/Getty Images; François-Emmanuel Nicol by Alma Klein; Anna Lambe by Sasy + Pritha



SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER

BASKETBALL PLAYER

The MVP as comfortable on the court as he is at the Met Gala

This year's NBA Most Valuable Player? That would be the Canadian all-star known as SGA. In 2018, at the age of 20, he began his NBA career with the L.A. Clippers. The following year he was traded to the Oklahoma City Thunder, where he later signed a five-year, \$172-million contract. This year, the six-foot-six point guard—with a six-foot-eleven wingspan—shot to superstardom: he took the Thunder to their first championship, led the league in scoring and signed a four-year, \$285-million contract extension. He's only the second Canadian in NBA history, after Steve Nash, to be named MVP. Like all the greats, SGA's got the swagger and star appeal to secure celebrity status off-court. He was voted *GQ*'s most stylish man in 2022 and, the following year, showed up at the Met Gala in an oversized Thom Browne tweed suit, accessorized with a rope of pearls and black shades.



SUMMER MCINTOSH

SWIMMER

For splashing her way to glory

At 14, Summer McIntosh was the youngest member of Team Canada. Four years later, the Toronto-born swimming star holds world records for the 400-metre freestyle, 200-metre butterfly and the 400-metre individual medley—and a whole bunch more.

McIntosh comes from an impressive family of athletes; her mother is a former Canadian Olympic swimmer, and her elder sister is a competitive figure skater. (Summer wanted to be one too, but she grew too tall.) After dominating the Paris Olympics, she recently nabbed four golds and a bronze at the world championships (making a grand total of 13 medals—the most of any Canadian in history). Now she's training in Sarasota, Florida, while she finishes up (virtual) high school and swims toward Los Angeles 2028.



MAISY STELLA

ACTOR AND MUSICIAN

The child star turned indie ingenue

Maisy Stella was already flirting with fame at eight years old, when she and her 12-year-old sister, Lennon, filmed a YouTube video covering Robyn's "Call Your

Girlfriend." The clip went viral in 2012, landing both sisters starring roles on *Nashville* alongside Connie Britton. Unlike many child actors, however, the smaller Stella took a big step back to attend high school like a normal teenager. The choice paid off: it was her authenticity that impressed filmmaker Megan Park and earned her the lead in *My Old Ass*. For performance as Elliot, who conjures her 39-year-old self into reality during a mushroom trip in Muskoka, Stella won an Independent Spirit Award for Best Breakthrough Performance and kickstarted a robust film career. At this year's TIFF, she appeared in Maude Apatow's directorial debut, *Poetic License*, and up next is *Flowervale Street*, a horror movie with Anne Hathaway, Ewan McGregor and dinosaurs.

STARTUPS



DAX DASILVA

CEO, LIGHTSPEED

For dreaming up one of Canada's billion-dollar businesses

Dax Dasilva has a flair for reinvention. Born in Vancouver, he taught himself to code at 12, founded point-of-sale company Lightspeed Commerce at 29, took it public in 2019 and grew it into a billion-dollar enterprise. Lightspeed provides small and medium-sized businesses with powerful, cloud-based e-commerce tools (like inventory management and customer data and insights) once reserved for large enterprises like Walmart and Amazon. In 2022, Dasilva vacated the CEO chair to get in touch with his creative side—and wasted no time. He founded an arts non-profit in Montreal, produced the Emmy-winning film *Wildcat* and partnered with Jane Goodall for an environmental activism project to preserve ancestral lands in the Brazilian Amazon. In 2024, he returned to the CEO chair at Lightspeed. His first move: betting on himself by announcing a \$400-million share buyback.



ALEX DESLAURIERS

CEO AND CO-FOUNDER, FIRESWARM

The aerospace engineer fighting fire with drones

When Alex Deslauriers lost his home to the 2023 Gun Lake fire in B.C., he didn't just rebuild—he went on the offensive. A veteran aerospace engineer and certified pilot who worked on F-18 programs with the U.S. Navy, Deslauriers founded FireSwarm, a Squamish-based startup building autonomous drones to fight wildfires; think *Top Gun* meets

Smokey Bear. His drones, which are currently in testing, will douse flames, protect homes and save governments a fortune in damage control with AI-driven logistics. Already, they can collect water from nearby sources, carry up to 400 kilograms of fire retardants and deploy them in concert with other drones to coordinate firefighting efforts. Even while hastily redesigning disaster response from the sky, Deslauriers still carves out time to volunteer with search and rescue. The wildfires may be unrelenting, but so is the guy fighting them.

*The scientists,
inventors and
entrepreneurs
transforming
Canada's future*





SHIRLEY ZHONG, DIANA VIRGOVICOVA AND KEREM TOPALISMAOGLU

FOUNDERS, XATOMS

For tapping AI to clean the world's water supply, not deplete it

It started with a chance meeting in Tokyo. Shirley Zhong and Kerem Topalismaoglu were Cansbridge Fellows interning abroad when they encountered another student, Diana Virgovicova. The trio clicked, tapped into their engineering and chemistry backgrounds and, in 2024, formed Xatoms, a company geared toward cleaning the world's water supply. Their startup uses a sun-powered "photocatalyst," plus a splash of quantum chemistry and AI, to break down bacteria, chemicals and even viruses. The tech is now being piloted in Kenya and South Africa. Their win streak so far: \$750,000 in prize money at Startupfest 2024, \$1.1 million in funding and an annual projected revenue of \$1.8 million. They even secured a grant from Reddit's Alexis Ohanian—all before any of them turned 25.



MARIA BOLOVIS

SENIOR VP, ESTRUXTURE DATA CENTERS

The executive securing Canada's AI future

The world is running out of space to store its data. With global demand expected to double by 2030, the race is on to build new data centres—and Maria Bolovis is making sure Canada keeps up. As senior VP of engineering at eStruxture, Canada's largest homegrown data-centre operator, she's helping companies train the world's next large language models and providing tech giants with the data storage they need. Before that, she held senior roles at Amazon, Bell and IBM, and now she's helping eStruxture grow alongside society's insatiable appetite for AI. The company has expanded from Bolovis's hometown of Montreal to construct facilities in Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary—where it just announced the creation of the 90MW CAL-3 data centre, built to power the technology of the moment (major cloud providers) and the future (next-gen uses like AI).

OLIVER DAVID KRIEG

PRESIDENT AND CTO, INTELLIGENT CITY

For sending in robots to fix the housing crisis

In Oliver David Krieg's version of the future, robots aren't taking over the world—they're building your house. His Vancouver-based company, Intelligent City, uses robotics and AI automation to construct highrises out of timber. His process involves robots assembling building components on production lines in the company's mass-timber plant in Delta, B.C.; it's designed to boost urban density by enabling greener and faster construction. Krieg represents a new kind of builder: he holds a Ph.D. in computational design from the University of Stuttgart and travels the world to deliver workshops on how to construct the future. In his spare time, he runs his own design firm, exploring the intersection of manufacturing technology and wood fabrication.



SASHA IVANOV

FOUNDER, MAPLE SCAN

The app designer helping us buy Canadian

With every new round of U.S. tariffs, the need to buy Canadian burns hotter. One savvy developer has channelled that feeling into code. Sasha Ivanov, a computer science researcher with a flair for UX and AI, whipped up the aptly named Maple Scan in just a week. The app, which has racked up over 100,000 downloads since its February launch, helps shoppers snap a product with their phone to see if it's Canadian-made, Canadian-owned or caught in the tariff crossfire. It then generates a "Canada Score Card" with origin facts and company info. Not Canadian enough? The app proudly offers local alternatives, complete with shopping links and nearby store suggestions. It's even bilingual. Maple Scan is just one of more than 100 glossy interfaces in Ivanov's app portfolio, all of which aim to make AI useful for the average Canadian.





STEPHANIE SIMMONS

FOUNDER AND CHIEF QUANTUM OFFICER, PHOTONIC

For bringing quantum into the everyday world

With a Ph.D. in physics from Oxford and a research focus on silicon qubits, Stephanie Simmons is one of the only people in the world who truly understands quantum physics. Now she's the chief quantum officer of Photonic, a Microsoft-backed company developing silicon-based qubits for scalable quantum computers. The technology could revolutionize drug discovery, financial modelling and encryption. And it could happen soon: in 2024, Photonic demonstrated quantum entanglement between two quantum modules connected by a 40-metre fibre-optic cable, marking a key step toward creating a global network of quantum computers. Simmons also co-chairs Canada's national Quantum Strategy Advisory Council, which is tasked with deploying the country's \$360-million quantum initiative—partly to help drag the rest of the world into the future with her.



MARCELO CORTES

CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF ARCHITECT, FAIRE

The entrepreneur challenging Amazon for e-commerce supremacy

When Marcelo Cortes launched Faire in 2016, he wasn't just building a wholesale marketplace—he was aiming a slingshot at Amazon's Goliath. Faire helps small businesses find the items they need so they can compete with the big-box retailers. And Cortes wins his clients over in wholesome ways. After COVID battered his customers, he and his team built a financial “lifespan calculator” that helps retailers spot inefficiencies and plan for the long haul. Faire has since ballooned to 700,000 retailers, more than 300 engineers and a US\$12-billion valuation. Its business may be small shops, but Cortes is thinking big. The company is quietly becoming an advertising powerhouse, with more than 7,000 businesses paying to use the site's new promoted listings feature, and it recently published a guide to help retailers shop on the platform.



SANJA FIDLER

VICE-PRESIDENT OF AI RESEARCH, NVIDIA

The superchip superhero pioneering AI for the world's biggest company

Superchips—those tiny yet incredibly powerful computer processors—were originally designed for video games. Now they're set to turbocharge the technology that shapes our daily lives. By unleashing unprecedented computing power, they will enable real-time language translation, personalized health care, faster data analysis and seamless virtual experiences. At the forefront of this revolution is Sanja Fidler, a computer scientist and associate professor at the University of Toronto who was handpicked by Jensen Huang, CEO of the multi-trillion-dollar chip manufacturer Nvidia, to run the company's Toronto lab. Fidler is also committed to fighting the ongoing brain drain—she's one of the co-founders of the Vector Institute, designed to keep Canadian geniuses on Canadian soil.



SHAYAAN HAIDER, AYAAN HAIDER, ALEXANDRA MCCALLA AND BASHIR KHAN

CO-FOUNDERS, AIRMATRIX

For creating a network of roads in the sky

Okay, so flying cars aren't as big a part of the future as Marty McFly led us to believe. Drones, however, are taking over our skies—nearly 100,000 were registered in Canada last year, and not one has a clear lane to fly in. Drone-on-drone crashes, collisions with manned aircraft and even spying become more frequent every year. That's where AirMatrix comes in. Founded in 2018 by University of Toronto students Shayaan Haider, Ayaan Haider, Alexandra McCalla and Bashir Khan, the startup uses AI to build real-time aerial streets for drones with 100 times the precision of Google Maps. The group are the darlings of aviation regulators, sitting on Transport Canada's drone action team, NASA working groups and the Standards Council of Canada. Their pitch? Drones are here, and now we have to build the infrastructure. ■



A SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION BY MEDIAPLANET

Understanding Neurological Conditions



How Brain Cancer Canada Is Changing the Outlook for Patients

A brain cancer diagnosis can be scary — Brain Cancer Canada provides hope, research funding, and resources across Canada.

A brain cancer diagnosis is a devastating new reality for approximately nine Canadians each day.

Patients, families, and neuro-oncology experts are scrambling and deserve better. Brain cancer, pediatric or adult, remains incurable. The physical, logistical, emotional, and financial burden is profound.

Funding levels for brain cancer research fall short against the disease complexity. Additionally,

access to neuro-oncological care in a patient's community and access to therapies approved in Canada is not guaranteed in every province and territory.

Brain Cancer Canada is the only 100 per cent volunteer-led national charity solely dedicated to funding brain cancer research. To-date, we have invested more than \$3,500,000 in Canadian-led research and technologies pursuing CAR-T cells, cancer vaccines, drug discovery, new diagnosis tools, and more.



Visit braincancer.ca for patient and caregiver resources, to donate, launch a community fundraiser, pay tribute to a loved one, and learn about the research we support.

How Families Are Leading the Fight Against Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Duchenne muscular dystrophy takes its toll on muscles and reaches into the lives of every family member. This fall, their stories are helping change the narrative.

Defeat Duchenne Canada

A diagnosis of Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) changes everything. It's a rare genetic condition that causes muscles to weaken, leading to mobility loss, life-threatening complications, and, ultimately, premature death.

More than a diagnosis:

This September, Defeat Duchenne Canada is launching a national awareness campaign around the theme "Family: The Heart of Care." As part of Duchenne Awareness Month and World Duchenne Awareness Day (September 7), they are spotlighting the stories of families navigating the DMD journey.

Defeat Duchenne Canada is the country's only national charity dedicated to ending Duchenne, funding research, advocating for timely access to care, and supporting families.

Here's how you can make a difference:

- Requesting that local landmarks illuminate in red on September 7
- Spread awareness on social media
- Support the cause by donating

"No one should take this on alone, together, we can turn that strength into change," says Nicola Worsfold at Defeat Duchenne Canada.



Visit defeatduchenne.ca to learn more.

This article is sponsored by **Defeat Duchenne Canada.**



Breaking Down Barriers in Neuromuscular Care: Why Now Matters

Patient voices, groundbreaking research, and tireless advocacy are changing the future of neuromuscular care in Canada.

Stacey Lintern, CEO, Muscular Dystrophy Canada

When you hear “muscular dystrophy,” you might picture a single disease. In reality, it’s part of a much larger group of neuromuscular disorders (NMDs) — rare, often progressive conditions that weaken the muscles we rely on to move, breathe, speak, swallow, and live independently.

September is NMD Awareness Month, recognizing conditions like Duchenne muscular dystrophy, myotonic dystrophy, limb-girdle muscular dystrophy, and Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease.

For Danielle Campo McLeod, awareness and advocacy are deeply personal.



Danielle Campo McLeod
National Ambassador,
Muscular Dystrophy Canada

She has a form of spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) and waited 35 years for an accurate diagnosis. “This September marks one year since newborn screening for SMA became available across Canada,” she says. “**Now, babies are tested at birth and can start treatment within their first month. This is a game-changer.** For decades, families like mine faced long delays, misdiagnoses, and irreversible health changes.”

Breaking down barriers

For Alfred Breton-Paré, whose son lives with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, research and advocacy have improved care, brought promising clinical trials to Canada, and improved qual-



Alfred Breton-Paré
Board Member,
Muscular Dystrophy Canada

ity of life. “A trial gave us hope, but life with Duchenne still brings heavy costs,” he says. “**Too often, what you receive depends on your postal code, not your need.**”

For 70 years, alongside the neuromuscular community, Muscular Dystrophy Canada, a volunteer-driven organization fuelled by generous donors, partners, and Canadian Fire Fighters, has funded groundbreaking research, provided mobility devices, delivered vital support programs, and driven meaningful policy change. **We’ve seen breakthroughs once thought impossible. But our work is far from over — now is the time to transform the future of neuromuscular care.**



To learn more, visit muscle.ca.

This article was sponsored by **Muscular Dystrophy Canada.**



Innovative Treatment for SOD1-ALS, a Genetic Form of ALS, Brings Hope to Community

ALS Canada-supported research helped pave the way for the first Health Canada-approved treatment for a genetic form of ALS.

Tania Amardeil

Amiotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive neurological disease that causes motor neuron degeneration, leading to paralysis and, ultimately, death. An estimated 4,000 Canadians are currently living with ALS, and 80 per cent of patients die within two to five years of diagnosis.

Fortunately, the first signs of significant progress in ALS treatment are here. Donor-funded research through ALS Canada is advancing understanding of the disease and driving major

advances. For many years, the ALS Canada national Research Program has supported research that contributed to the discovery of the SOD1 gene — one of the genetic causes of ALS — and continued to fund work that deepened our understanding of SOD1 biology. This foundational research helped pave the way for the development of Qalsody, the first Health Canada-approved treatment for SOD1-ALS.

“This is a huge advancement,” says David Taylor, Chief Scientific Officer at ALS Canada. “For the first time, we’ve seen that if we



We finally have hope that if we start treatment early enough, there’s a chance this drug can stop the disease from progressing.

hit the right target in the right people at the right time, we can treat ALS.”

Qalsody is already making a difference for people living with ALS, including Paula Trefiak, an ALS Canada Community Ambassador. “We finally have hope that if we get diagnosed and start treatment early enough, there’s a chance this drug can stop the disease from progressing,” she says.

This is why research funding is vital — it unlocks our understanding of the disease and paves the way for future treatments.



David Taylor
Chief Scientific Officer,
ALS Canada



Donate today to support ALS Canada’s research efforts at als.ca.

This article was sponsored by the **ALS Society of Canada.**



Children With SMA Are Achieving More Than Ever Thanks to Medical Advancements

The positive, long-term impacts of scientific research on the lives of young SMA patients are becoming clear.

Anne Pappmehl

Even as an infant, Zoe Koontz of Victoria, B.C., showed remarkable drive and determination. “She was one of those high-spirited babies, always trying to communicate and engage,” says her mother, Vivienne Damatan.

But when Zoe reached 15 months, her parents observed an abrupt change in the way she moved. “She was falling quite a bit and refusing to go up stairs,” says Vivienne. “A few months later, we started looking into day-care for her, and the owner of one of the centres we visited noticed Zoe’s atypical gait and suggested we get it checked out.”

Vivienne and her husband, Tensley Koontz, brought Zoe to a local pediatric neurologist who referred them to BC Children’s Hospital for testing. Two days after Zoe’s second birthday in January 2018, they got the devastating diagnosis of type 3 spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). A rare and serious genetic neuromuscular disease, SMA affects motor nerve cells in a patient’s spinal cord, resulting in progressive muscle wasting and continuous declines in mobility, function and independence. The disease also causes patients to lose the strength necessary to achieve common developmental milestones and even impedes their ability to breathe and eat.

From grief and helplessness to hope and optimism

The diagnosis left Vivienne and Tensley with a feeling of deep grief about their daughter’s future and a sense of helplessness

as they watched her decline. “We knew it was progressive, we knew it was rare, and we could see her abilities degrading.”

Fortunately, Zoe’s diagnosis came when key advances were occurring in SMA research that led to promising new therapeutic approaches. Filled with hope, Vivienne and Tensley worked with Zoe’s neurologist to incorporate the novel approaches into Zoe’s treatment plan within three months of her diagnosis. “The improvements were noticeable almost immediately; not only did the deterioration stop but Zoe got stronger. That wasn’t something we thought could be possible,” says Vivienne. She continued to strengthen and meet her motor and development milestones.

Today, at age nine, Zoe excels in school and leads a full and active life. Although she occasionally needs support for mobility, her passions include diverse extracurricular activities



Zoe’s passions include horseback riding, swimming, and dance.



Nine-year-old Zoe Koontz (middle) with her mother Vivienne and father Tensley. Despite SMA, Zoe leads a full and active lifestyle.

like dance, horseback riding, and swimming. “Zoe is excited and driven to find her own way to participate in lots of activities, which is huge for her mental and physical health. She also has amazing friends,” says Vivienne.

A positive outlook for SMA patients

Not long ago, the outlook for young SMA patients was very different. “We were looking at progressive disability and, in the more severe cases, shorter life expectancy,” says Dr. Megan Crone, a pediatric neurologist and neuromuscular specialist at Alberta Children’s Hospital in Calgary, Alta. “With available therapies, coupled with newborn screening now being done across Canada, we can diagnose SMA early and start treating it as soon as possible so they can maintain the function and skills they have.”


According to Dr. Crone, the SMA patients she treats today have gained stamina, which can have a positive influence on their development. “Increased energy levels are common, which probably makes patients inclined to want to do more things, which in turn helps them regain muscle strength,” she says.

Seeing Zoe continue to meet her milestones and become more independent has eased much of

the physical and mental stress on her family. “Zoe’s therapy has allowed her to choose what she wants to do, set goals, and explore her interests,” she says. “As a mom, the SMA is always on my mind, but the positive results from therapy have allowed me space to become a whole person again.”

The “now time” for the SMA community

Milestones and achievements that would have been considered unimaginable for SMA patients a decade ago are becoming a concrete reality today, and Zoe is a living testament to the positive impact of scientific research. Vivienne believes Zoe’s diagnosis happened at a very significant moment. “We were very lucky to become part of the SMA community when we did,” she says. “There’s what I call the ‘before time,’ when SMA kids had a progressive disease for which there was no treatment; we feel so lucky to live in the ‘now time,’ which means that while there are still challenges, there is also more hope, options, and more possibilities than ever before for them to live a full and beautiful life.”

 Sponsored by Biogen Canada.



No Timeouts. No Limits. Total Chaos.

My misguided adventures in
gentle parenting

BY KAYLA HUSZAR

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALLISON SETO

IT STARTED THE WAY IT ALWAYS DID: “Can we just look?”

My four-year-old son and I were in a toy store near our home in Regina. It was the summer of 2019, and I was pregnant, exhausted and overwhelmed, trying to keep a thousand tabs open in my brain: groceries, laundry, walking the dog, scheduling doctor’s appointments. If I’m being honest, I hoped browsing in the store would buy a few moments of peace during yet another hot, chaotic day.

So I said yes, he could look, temporarily indulging in the fiction that we could browse and walk out empty-handed. Moments after stepping inside, I realized I’d made a tactical error. Sure enough, my son was soon dragging me to a specific aisle, where he grabbed a box containing a plastic dinosaur with sound effects and fins and a retractable tail—a must-have for our growing collection of reptilian toys. The price tag? Nearly \$50 for something that would collect dust in the toy bin in a month. “I really, really want this,” he said, eyes wide, voice pleading. I knew if I said no, a fight was inevitable. He asked again, almost desperate. I opened my mouth.

This is where the gentle-parenting approach I’d spent four years practising was supposed to come into play. Gentle parenting is all about empathy and emotional support, and it comes with scripts and steps. So I dutifully followed them, in spite of my fatigue and my suspicion that my son was going to have a meltdown regardless. I narrated his feelings back to him so he felt heard (“I know you really want this toy”). I gave him a hug and suggested

Too often, gentle parenting becomes permissive parenting: the child's whims dictate family life, and adults tiptoe around their volatile moods

an alternative (“Do you want me to take a photo of it for your wish list?”). I used non-judgmental language.

In the end, it didn’t matter. He insisted that this was the toy he needed above all others. He begged. He pleaded. He refused to leave and started to get loud. To defuse the growing tantrum, which was drawing stares from employees and other moms, I caved. I bought the toy. Crisis averted. But I knew another was coming, if not that day or the next, then soon.

I’d always tried to be the perfect model of the enlightened, progressive gentle parent. When I became a mom at 28, I vowed that my son would feel safe and secure expressing his feelings, so he could grow up confident in himself, in his relationships and in the world around him.

In the past decade, this has become the defining philosophy of millennial parents. It’s everywhere: mom blogs, parenting groups, playgrounds and especially on social media, where viral posts from an army of momfluencers have made it a movement. The hashtag #gentleparenting has racked up countless views on TikTok and appears in more than one million Instagram posts. One of the most prominent voices is @biglittlefeelings, which promotes gentle-parenting strategies to 3.5 million Instagram followers. I followed these kinds of accounts, soothed by their calming language and success-story testimonials. I performed my role perfectly—until it broke me.

As my son got older, and my husband and I had another child, gentle parenting became harder: the constant negotiation

over every conflict, the mental strain of always trying to say the right thing in the heat of the moment, the endless suppression of frustration. In that toy store, faced with another brewing meltdown and the certainty that I would be the bad guy no matter how I handled the situation, my scripts seemed worthless. I felt powerless and guilty. I thought I was failing.

I know today that my experience was a common one. As a social worker and a therapist focused on parenting, I see exhausted mothers all the time in my practice, overwhelmed by the pressures of gentle parenting. An American study recently found that a third of surveyed parents who identified as “gentle” reported feelings of burnout and uncertainty. And, all too often, parents cope with that exhaustion by giving in. When that happens, gentle parenting becomes what critics call permissive parenting, in which the child’s whims dictate family life and adults tiptoe around their volatile moods.

That’s what happened to us. I softened every no and negotiated every boundary until my son learned he could wear me down. He pushed, I bent. I began to worry what it meant for a generation of kids never to hear “no” in a meaningful way, to grow up expecting the world to adjust to their desires at every turn.

That was never what gentle parenting was supposed to be. It began as a response to the strict, often emotionally distant parenting styles many people my age grew up with—myself included—which discouraged self-expression. It was meant to break the toxic parenting cycles passed down from



older generations. But at some point, the method became a mandate—and for me, at least, an impossible standard to meet.

I WAS BORN IN 1987 in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, and raised by a single mother who had to be both nurturing and strict. Growing up, I noticed unspoken rules about what was proper, what was too much and what might get me in trouble. The style of parenting I experienced was what childcare



experts now call authoritarian—the because-I-said-so approach, common in so many homes at the time. Kids were expected to follow rules, no questions asked.

In that environment, emotions often felt inconvenient, or even a little embarrassing. I remember once when I was seven years old, alone and singing and dancing to a song I loved: “Daddy’s Money” by the country band Ricochet. I was happy and playful—until my mom suddenly interrupted: “What

are you doing?” I froze. In that instant, it felt like maybe I wasn’t supposed to be that version of myself.

So I became good at being good. I learned to present the version of me I thought others wanted, especially in public. I believed my behaviour reflected on the adults around me, so I softened or shrank my feelings when they felt too big. By the time I left home, I had internalized the idea that women—including my mom—were

GOING SOFT Kayla Huszar, her husband and their two sons spent years struggling with gentle parenting. Huszar championed it, while her husband was skeptical of its usefulness and its demands on their time.

constantly scrutinized for their behaviour, appearance and temperament. She probably felt the same way I do now: “Just don’t screw them up.”

It was the only parenting blueprint I had until I went to university to study for

a degree in social work. There, I began learning about the long, conflicted history of parenting philosophies. In the first half of the 20th century, the kind of authoritarian parenting I grew up with was the standard—and it was often much more severe than I ever experienced. Some childcare experts warned against spoiling kids with hugs and kisses. Pediatricians suggested tying infants' hands to their cribs to prevent thumb-sucking.

Then, in 1946, Benjamin Spock published *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* and put a torch to all that. In some ways, today's gentle parenting is a logical extrapolation of Spock's ideas. He still believed in the importance of boundaries and rules, but he prescribed emotional warmth and attentiveness to kids' needs. He encouraged parents to trust their intuition rather than blindly follow expert advice, famously writing, "You know more than you think you do." The approach was radical—and, like all new parenting philosophies that followed, it was attacked by critics for creating a generation of spoiled brats. Spock was even blamed for fuelling the youth counter-culture movement of the 1960s.

In the '80s, intensive parenting took over. This called for parents (usually mothers) to become deeply involved in every aspect of their kids' lives. Critics dubbed it "helicopter parenting," marked by over-protectiveness and sky-high expectations. This segued naturally into attachment parenting, popularized by pediatrician William Sears and his wife, a nurse named Martha Sears. They raised eight children and published a series of bestselling books promoting bed-sharing, breastfeeding on demand and baby-wearing as ways to

foster a parent-child bond. The idea was that emotionally supported children will grow into kind, resilient adults.

By the time I had my first son in 2015, I'd read all the books and spent countless hours poring over internet forums, Pinterest boards and parenting blogs. The advice I encountered was a patchwork of all the major parenting philosophies, from Dr. Spock on down. But one emerging philosophy dominated them all: gentle parenting. The term is usually credited to British author Sarah Ockwell-Smith. A mother of four, she began holding parenting workshops in her home in 2007. She's written 13 parenting books, including *The Gentle Parenting Book*, published in 2016. The core of her philosophy was prioritizing empathy: helping children regulate their own emotions by understanding why they feel they way they do.

Gentle parenting wasn't about ripping down boundaries or letting kids run riot or never saying "no." It was about allowing kids to experience their big feelings—even if it meant a tantrum—and helping them work through those feelings rather than stifle them. That, of course, dictates tremendous patience from parents. If your kid screams and cries about going to school, gentle parenting means that you don't give them a timeout, or shove them into their shoes and cart them off. You narrate their feelings back to them and validate them until they've calmed down, no matter how long it takes. If they refuse to go to bed, you don't get angry. You tell them you know they're having fun, and it's too bad for it to end, but they need to get their rest.

It all made great sense to me. It seemed like everything I wanted for my son. I devoured Facebook videos from influencers,

read the blogs and committed to gentle parenting in philosophy and practice. My husband was more hesitant. The idea felt foreign to him. And, frankly, it seemed impractical to spend 20 minutes coaxing a child through every meal or bedtime refusal. But I was so gung-ho that he went along with it.

And, in the beginning, it was easy. When my son was a toddler, I had little conversations with him about his feelings. "You're feeling sad because of X, Y or Z," I would say to him. Sometimes just naming the emotion was enough to calm him. The tears would dry and he would move on. These experiences were validating. He felt his disappointment, worked through it and came out the other side, better equipped to deal with the feeling in the future. This was what it was all about!

But as he got older, and the situations we faced grew more complex, the scripts stopped working. One day, when my son was two, I picked him up from daycare after a long and draining day at work. He refused to leave. I crouched down, trying everything I'd learned: stating his feelings, calmly empathizing, narrating his emotions. None of it worked. He just got more defiant and more upset—and a lot louder. I knew he was tired, but so was I. Mortified as he kicked and screamed, I gave up on the gentle-parenting handbook and decided to take him home whether he liked it or not. I wrestled him into his snowsuit and boots, burning with shame as the other parents and daycare workers looked on. I couldn't shake the feeling that they thought I was a terrible mother. My own son didn't want to go home with me.

As I tried to follow the gentle-parenting guidelines to the letter, my husband became, by default, the disciplinarian. If I spent 20 minutes trying to coax my son to put on his shoes, careful not to sound too demanding, my exasperated husband would eventually step in with "Put your shoes on right *now*." He became the bad cop to my pushover. The dynamic put us both on edge and the sense of constant failure fed into my own spiral. I wasn't ready to admit it, of course. I spent evenings online, googling about how to handle every little thing, reading the forums and blogs to correct what went wrong.

Eventually it didn't matter if I was calm or if I raised my voice. My son wouldn't listen, because "no" didn't mean anything.

In 2019, I gave birth to our second son. Months later, the pandemic hit. My oldest was already not responding to the gentle-parenting scripts, and being stuck indoors all day made everything worse. Like many parents stuck in lockdown, with routines and schedules in limbo, I let more things slide, then more, then more. Eventually, he wouldn't do anything we asked. It didn't matter whether I was calm, or if I raised my voice. He wouldn't listen. And why should he? "No" didn't mean anything.

IN THE SUMMER OF 2021, the lockdowns lifted. I planned to take the kids out to a public pool for the first time in more than a year. But as we got ready, my oldest became overwhelmed. He was trying to open a combination lock for the pool locker, but he couldn't figure it out. In his frustration, he threw it straight at me. He missed, but I was shaken. I know he didn't really understand the consequences of whipping a heavy hunk of metal at me. But the fact that my own child had tried to hurt me was disturbing.

Still, I collected myself and calmly warned him that if he did it again, we wouldn't go to the pool. And then he threw it again anyway. I gave the script a second try, but he was too worked up and I was too drained. So again, I caved. We went to the pool. We'd all been waiting so long in pandemic isolation, and it seemed cruel to deprive the kids of something they'd anticipated for so long.

In retrospect, the pool incident was the moment I knew, deep down, that gentle parenting wasn't working. But I still wasn't able to admit it. I felt like I was failing at something that worked for everyone else, especially those experts, bloggers and posters on parenting forums. It turns out I wasn't alone, though. In 2024, a study published in the peer-reviewed journal *PLOS One* found that while some gentle-parenting adherents in the U.S. were satisfied with the approach, many felt exactly as I did. "The pressures to fulfill exacting parenting standards," wrote the authors, "coupled with the information overload on social media about the right or wrong ways to care for children, has left many parents questioning their moment-to-moment interactions with their family."



FINDING BALANCE Today, Huszar and her family are seeking equilibrium in parenting styles, blending some of the benefits of gentle parenting with a more traditional, authoritative approach

The study also noted that there is no science or empirical evidence behind gentle parenting, nor any systematic study to determine if those who follow the gentle-parenting philosophy actually fare better than anyone else—or whether their kids do. What it did say was that many parents were burning out.

As time went by, my husband stopped going along with the gentle-parenting approach altogether. When the children

threw tantrums, or refused to get in the car, he fell back on his instincts: firm boundaries, timeouts, consequences without negotiation. But it was a year after the pool incident that I finally reached my limit. In the summer of 2022, my mother-in-law was visiting us and we decided to take the kids to a nearby park. My eldest wanted to ride his bike, but we said no; we were planning a relaxed family walk. As usual, I tried to reason with him,

to no avail. My husband stepped into his now-familiar bad-cop role. When I turned to my mother-in-law, sheepishly trying to explain how difficult it all was, she shrugged. “You’re trying too hard,” she said. “Try less.”

In that moment, all the doubts about gentle parenting that I’d had over the past seven years coalesced. Had all my validation and empathy truly helped my kids manage their emotions, or had it taught them that every impulse should be up for negotiation? Had my refusal to impose firmer boundaries deepened our connection, or eroded their ability to handle limits? And had I become a better parent—or simply invisible in my own family?

I realized I was worn out from doing what didn’t come naturally. I didn’t need to work through every tiny decision and disappointment with my children. Kids are fundamentally irrational creatures, after all. Affirming their feelings is important, but preschoolers aren’t exactly known for making evidence-based decisions. I realized I’d given the kids too much control, which created a different sort of instability. There is a large body of research showing that too much autonomy can make kids anxious. They want boundaries, and they want them enforced. One memory sticks out for me: I once told my eldest son “no” repeatedly after he asked for something, only to eventually give in to his nagging. To my complete surprise, he looked at me, almost with disappointment, and said, “But you said no.” He wasn’t being bratty. He’d been testing whether the limit was real. The most loving thing I could have done was stick to the boundary I’d imposed.

Things changed after the bike-ride fight. My husband and I still incorporated some gentle-parenting techniques, especially over low-stakes issues—a tantrum over ice cream, for example. But when it came to recurring key battles, we got tougher: brushing teeth, staying at the table during meals, understanding which parts of the house can be used as a jungle gym and which can’t. We aligned on what mattered most and supported each other in holding the line. The strategy I eventually came to was this: kind but firm. If the kids keep jumping on the furniture after I ask

I realized I didn’t need to work through every tiny decision and disappointment with my children. I’d given them too much control.

them to stop, for example, there will be a consequence: not because I’m angry, but because I care. We found balance, somewhere between chaos and control.

TWO YEARS AGO, my family moved to Edmonton, where I now work as an expressive arts therapist. I use creative tools like art, music and poetry to help women explore their emotions. Like me, a good number of my clients are mothers, ranging from their twenties to their forties, and a big part of my work has become correcting misconceptions about gentle parenting. Many of my clients, often unintentionally or unconsciously, have allowed their kids to run the show.

Even some of gentle parenting’s early champions are backtracking. Clinical psychologist Rebecca Kennedy, dubbed the “millennial parenting whisperer” by *Time* magazine, rose to prominence during the pandemic for her gentle-parenting advice. But in a 2024 interview with *Forbes*, she acknowledged that many parents are facing difficulties in maintaining boundaries after being instructed to empathize with their kids at all costs. She now prefers the word “sturdy” to “gentle.”

For me, the greatest insight of gentle parenting is that it treats children not as the automatons of the pre-Dr. Spock era but as full, complicated people. These days, I think of my parenting style as a pendulum. On one side, there’s parent-centred parenting, where the adult’s needs and authority come first. On the other, there’s child-centred parenting, where the child’s emotions and preferences take precedence. That’s what gentle parenting too often becomes. In between is family-centred parenting, in which no person’s needs are

elevated, and decisions are made based on what’s best for everyone. That means discussion and compromise, and taking everyone’s wishes seriously. Sometimes my own kids surprise me with their insights. One of them might make a convincing case about screen time, for example, or changing our plans for the day. But my husband and I still hold veto power—if we need it. That’s the tricky part of the pendulum: knowing when to be flexible and when to stand firm.

I hope, when my sons are older, that they’ll remember how I changed gears: from intensive gentle parenting to something more improvised and spontaneous. I want them to remember that we had fun, that we rested, that we didn’t worry all the time about the right way to do things. Most of all I hope they feel safe and loved, especially in the moments that matter most.

Recently, I asked my mother about my childhood. “How did you know what to do?” I asked. She told me she didn’t read parenting books or listen to experts. She did what was considered normal at the time, pulling from what felt good in her own childhood and trying to change what didn’t. It didn’t always land the way she hoped. But I know her approach always came from love and care.

I also know I’ve probably hurt my own kids in little ways that won’t be obvious until they’re grown. That’s the thing with any parenting philosophy—it might seem like a fit for the moment, but its real test won’t come until years down the road. So I’ve stopped trying to parent from a script and, instead, I’m learning to trust myself. In the words of Dr. Spock: “You know more than you think you do.” ■



A SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION BY MEDIAPLANET

Canada's Nuclear Future

Tracy Primeau

Member Board of Directors OPG & WiN Canada, and found & Principal, Agile Bear Consulting



There is no path to net zero without nuclear and that path goes through someone's traditional territory. Having those rights holders as partners from the beginning of the journey will move us along that path in the best way possible as we address the greatest crisis the globe has faced in our lifetime.

We entered the Nuclear market 20 years ago to avoid the downturn from 100% exposure to Automotive. Today, we are widely diversified—supplying permanent reactor systems for CANDU and SMRs, decontamination Process Skids, and nuclear waste retrieval systems. Now embedded in the global Medical Isotope industry, PROMATION is proud to support the growing global shift toward essential Nuclear technologies.

Shane Chegahno

Executive Vice President, Makwa Development Corporation



Indigenous-led partnerships in the energy industry are not just possible – they're essential. By empowering communities to lead, we ensure that development is rooted in respect, reconciliation, and real opportunity. As the original keepers of the land, we are committed to walking the good path in all aspects of energy development on Turtle Island. Makwa Development is proud to be at the forefront, building bridges between Indigenous talent and Canada's nuclear future.

Darryl Spector

President, PROMATION



Lisa McBride

Canada Country Leader, GE Vernova Hitachi



Canada is setting the pace for the world's nuclear future. With the Darlington New Nuclear Project, we're proving what's possible, delivering clean, reliable power, creating thousands of jobs, and building the expertise and supply chain that will fuel small modular reactor deployment here at home and in global markets. We're proud to be showing the way for the future of nuclear energy.

Melody Greaves

Executive Director, Canadian Nuclear Isotope Council



Canada's isotope industry is truly unique and represents our proud commitment to helping patients around the world. By advancing this field, we're helping doctors diagnose and treat patients more effectively. As demand continues to grow, Canada's innovation, infrastructure, and expertise ensure we stay at the forefront, delivering vital tools that save lives and improve health every day.

Leigh Curyer,
President & CEO,
NexGen Energy



A few years ago, the idea of nuclear energy powering Big Tech, winning back global financing support, and informing the cornerstone of national energy policy might have seemed optimistic. Today, it's happening.

Ontario is leading the next generation of clean energy. We're building the first SMR in the G7, developing the largest nuclear generator on Earth to meet soaring demand, and exporting life-saving medical isotopes worldwide. We are championing Canadian energy independence and a future where Ontario powers prosperity at home and supports our allies abroad.



Stephen Lecce
Minister of Energy and Mines, Ontario


 Read the full interviews on [innovatingcanada.ca](https://www.innovatingcanada.ca).



NexGen Energy's Rook I Project is a generational opportunity for Saskatchewan, and poised to establish Canada as the top uranium producer in the world

Building Canada's Uranium Supply: Nation Building in Action

Jobs for Saskatchewan, benefits for First Nations, and clean energy sovereignty for Canada — Rook I is ready.

D.F. McCourt

The Building Canada Act is now the law of the land, but it remains to be seen exactly what shape this decisive new course for Canada will take. We've been told the goal is to fast-track large projects that will strengthen Canada's autonomy, security, and economy in a time of international uncertainty. In the context of an ongoing climate emergency and a looming global energy crisis, when we talk about "Building Canada," we must talk uranium.

Over a decade ago in Saskatchewan's Athabasca Basin, NexGen Energy discovered Arrow - one of the largest, highest grade uranium deposits on the planet. It has gained global notoriety

amidst the rapidly growing and unprecedented demand for clean, reliable and affordable baseload energy. Once federally approved and in production, NexGen's Rook I Project will account for approximately 20 per cent of the world's current total uranium production, firmly establishing Canada as the world's largest supplier of uranium fuel.

The world looks to Canada for clean energy leadership

This new golden age of Canadian uranium mining is highly material to the world's nuclear fleet, especially at a time when global energy demands are skyrocketing with urgency and purpose. We're in a burgeoning energy crisis already, and it will

“
Having adequate power infrastructure in place underpins standard of living, especially in parts of the world where large populations are being modernized. The world needs more electricity, and it needs to be clean, reliable, and affordable.”

only become starker as the developing world modernizes. And that was true even before electricity-hungry AI technologies started spreading like wildfire through all industries and all facets of life.

“New power has to be produced in order to meet this exponential demand growth,” says Leigh Curyer, NexGen Founder and CEO. “For the health of the world, the supply of clean, safe, cost-effective power is absolutely primary. Having adequate power infrastructure in place underpins standard of living, especially in parts of the world where large populations are being modernized. The world needs more electricity, and it needs to be clean, reliable, and affordable.”



And while nuclear power has moved from the sidelines to the centre of the global energy preference, its large-scale development however, is dependent on a parallel growth in the world's uranium supply, much of which remains under

Russian influence. There's a growing uranium gap, and the diplomatic and sovereignty implications couldn't be clearer. Developing a robust domestic supply will safeguard Canada's economy and autonomy while also positioning us as a global energy leader. But developing these resources takes time, and the clock is ticking.

Shovels poised and ready

NexGen's Rook I Project received full sign-off from Saskatchewan's provincial government in November 2023, after passing a comprehensive environmental review. Premier Scott Moe has identified the project as shovel-ready with community approval and clear economic benefit, calling it a "generational opportunity for Saskatchewan." Rook I over the construction and production period is projected to create 1,400 total jobs, with a forecasted total economic impact to Canada and Saskatchewan of \$37 billion.

Furthermore, the Project has received full Indigenous support through the signing of collaboratively developed benefit agreements with all four identified First Nations communities with an interest in the project area. These Indigenous communities are ready and waiting for development to begin.

"Mark Carney has told Canada he wants to make the country a new economic superpower through the development of resources projects, and the introduction of Bill C-5 and the Building Canada Act is an excellent initiative to expedite that," says Curyer. "I don't know of another project that meets the definition of Building Canada better than NexGen's Rook I."

“
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Leigh Curyer
NexGen
Founder
and CEO

Finish line in sight for Rook I, but the global energy race is just beginning

On November 19th, NexGen will go before the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) for a

hearing addressing the environmental impact of Rook I as well as other technical and social aspects of the project, reviewing material already examined at the provincial level. There will then be a second hearing in February 2026, with a final federal decision to follow within 60 days. On this timetable, shovels may finally break the ground in April, more than 12 years after the initial discovery of the Arrow deposit.

"We're very respectful of regulatory oversight," says Curyer, noting he is encouraged by Carney's desire to remove federal duplication in situations where a province has already approved a project, and where there is already First Nations support. "The process from an environmental, technical, and social perspective is incredibly rigorous at the provincial level. As it should be. But then that whole process gets re-reviewed by the federal government. In Rook I's case, those First Nations communities have expressed very clearly and publicly that they're ready for Rook I to move forward."

The rigor with which Canada oversees marquis nation building projects like Rook I — ensuring their safety, environmental stewardship, economic benefit, and Indigenous buy-in — should be a point of pride. We must ensure that nothing ever undermines it. But it's essential that this strong and sound globally recognized regulatory framework become more agile in order for Canada to realize its potential as the world's energy super power.

The challenges Canada faces today cannot wait a dozen years for a solution. The ones we face tomorrow will be less patient still.



To learn more,
visit [nexgenenergy.ca](https://www.nexgenenergy.ca)

This article was sponsored
by **NexGen Energy**.



More than 500 local community members have taken part in NexGen-initiated and funded training programs- building essential skills for careers in uranium mining and at Rook I.



Pickering's Nuclear Legacy Continues with an Exciting New Upgrade

The City of Pickering's nuclear refurbishment project is set to generate clean, reliable energy for millions while creating thousands of skilled jobs.

Tania Amardeil

Nuclear energy is a zero-emission source that supplies about 15 per cent of Canada's electricity, and 50 per cent of Ontario's.

Owned and operated by Ontario Power Generation (OPG), the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station (PNGS) has been active since 1971. Now, it's preparing for a major refurbishment.

A part of Canada's clean energy capital

Four of Pickering's eight reactor units — units 5 to 8 — are currently licensed to operate through Decem-

ber 2026. OPG has submitted a license renewal, which includes approval to refurbish these units and extend their operation.

"Pickering plays a vital role in Durham Region's leadership as the clean energy capital of Canada," says Mayor Kevin Ashe. "The PNGS refurbishment will create thousands of skilled jobs, strengthen energy resilience, and support the electrification of our economy while helping to build a cleaner and more sustainable future."

Once complete, the PNGS will produce over 2,100 megawatts of

electricity — enough to power two million homes. The project is expected to generate billions in economic impact, benefiting companies all across the nuclear supply chain.

The exciting initiative helps cement Canada's role as a clean energy innovation leader.

i To learn more, visit pickering.ca.

This article was sponsored by the **City of Pickering**.

INVEST PICKERING



How GE Vernova Hitachi Is Helping Canada Lead the Global SMR Market

GE Vernova Hitachi is leading the way in SMR technology at Darlington.

Tania Amardeil

As Canada works toward net-zero emissions, small modular reactors (SMRs) will play a key role as they are more cost-effective, faster to deploy, and better-equipped to power remote or off-grid locations.

GE Vernova Hitachi Nuclear Energy (GVH) is delivering the world's first commercial, grid-scale SMR at the Darlington New Nuclear Project (DNNP) in Bowmanville, Ontario, along with Ontario Power Generation, Aecon and AtkinsRéalis.

Delivering the Western World's first SMR

GVH's SMR technology, the BWRX-300, made history when it was approved for construction by the Province of Ontario and Ontario Power Generation. "The BWRX-300 is the only shovel-in-the-ground project of its kind in the western world," says Lisa McBride, Canada Country Leader at GVH.

"This project is really laying the groundwork for the future. People want to learn from what we're doing here in Ontario," says McBride.

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Lisa McBride
Canada Country
Leader, GE
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Canada's leading polytechnic, Humber, has launched its School of Clean Energy to train talent, advance research, and drive the clean energy economy.

Dr. Ann Marie Vaughan, President & CEO, Humber Polytechnic

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Dr. Ann Marie Vaughan
President & CEO,
Humber Polytechnic



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Quebec's War on Religion

Is it constitutional to ban public employees from wearing kippahs, hijabs, crosses and turbans? **The Supreme Court will soon decide.**

BY LINDA BESNER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHMOND LAM

IT WAS 2019, AND BOUCHERA CHELBI was afraid of being fired. Rumours were rippling through the Montreal public elementary school where she taught English as a second language. Quebec's new right-of-centre ruling party, the Coalition Avenir Québec, or CAQ, had recently won its first term in office, and one of Premier François Legault's key election promises was to pass legislation banning certain public employees from wearing religious symbols, like the Jewish kippah, Sikh turban, Christian cross or Muslim hijab. In the 11 years she'd been teaching in Quebec, she'd never heard a comment in school about her hijab. But suddenly, as the CAQ readied a bill banning her from wearing it at work, her colleagues were both angry on her behalf and a little bemused. "I don't get it," one told her. "What's the point of this law?"

There were two, from the government's perspective: first, it allowed the CAQ to position itself as a defender of Québécois identity without leaning into separatism, which was increasingly

unpopular in Quebec. Secondly, it let the party take decisive action on a long-simmering public debate. On the surface, the bill was a reincarnation of a 2013 effort by the Parti Québécois, known informally, and infamously, as the *charte des valeurs*—the Quebec Charter of Values. It would have banned government employees from wearing most religious symbols. (That bill died when the province's Liberal Party won the 2014 provincial election.) But the new legislation drew on a much longer history. For decades, Quebec has been on a spiritual quest for a public life devoid of spirituality.

Since Quebecers threw off the stifling hold of the Catholic Church during the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, secularism—or, in French, *laïcité*—has become a core state value. Banning hijabs and other religious garb might seem extreme to Canadians

AGAINST THE LAW Teacher Bouchera Chelbi is among those challenging Bill 21 at the Supreme Court. If the law stands, she can't be promoted or change jobs within her school board so long as she wears a hijab.





outside Quebec, but globally, the practice is not unique. Bill 21 takes its cue from legislation in France, Belgium, Austria and Denmark. Countries with Muslim majorities, including Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, have also limited citizens' rights to wear religious clothing in public spaces, ostensibly to enhance social integration.

In the spring of 2019, the government held six days of consultations on the bill, during which dozens of people and organizations testified. Chelbi was among them. In a flowered blue headscarf, she sat in the stately Red Room of Quebec City's National Assembly opposite a provincial commission. Also present were Gregory Bordan, a Jewish lawyer who wore a kippah, and Taran Singh, a representative for the province's Sikh community. All three were members of the Coalition Inclusion Québec, or CIQ, a citizens' group that had formed to oppose the bill.

Chelbi told the commission that the proposed law made her feel like a criminal. One member of the commission asked why she couldn't just remove her headscarf during work hours. She said that would be like practising veganism at dinner but eating meat at lunch.

A SECULAR WARRIOR Daniel Baril is president of *Mouvement laïque québécois*, a group supporting Bill 21. He has fought against the influence of religion in Quebec society for decades.

In June, Bill 21 passed, prohibiting public employees in positions of authority—police officers, judges, prosecutors and teachers, among others—from wearing religious symbols. Protests in Montreal drew enormous crowds rallying in opposition. I attended the protests as well. But the majority of Quebecers, particularly outside its largest city, supported the measure—some 64 per cent, according to polling at the time. There's no way to know how many people are directly affected by the legislation, but in a sense it touches nearly all Quebecers. With good fortune, most of us will never come before a judge. But most will send their children to a public school, or attend one.

In the end, it turned out Chelbi's position was safe. A grandfather clause allowed employees who already wore religious symbols to keep their jobs. But there was a big caveat: she could not receive a promotion, and she couldn't switch school boards, which meant she could never move. She had hoped to become a principal; now, her career was stalled.

“We never had a complaint from a parent about a teacher wearing a religious symbol,” says Joe Ortona, chair of the English Montreal School Board. He says the law is an attempt to solve a problem that doesn’t exist.

The bill was a magnet for lawsuits. Chelbi helped mount a legal challenge as part of the CIQ and, the following year, the Superior Court of Quebec heard its case. It was accompanied by others from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association as well as a host of Jewish, Sikh, Christian and Muslim individuals. Amnesty International and the Canadian Human Rights Commission also joined as intervenors. One organization stood out for its unique stance: the English Montreal School Board, or EMSB. It argued that because English speakers in Quebec have protected language rights under the Charter, the EMSB is guaranteed the right to govern its schools as it sees fit. Board chair Joe Ortona told me that it is a secular institution, with one important caveat: “We just don’t have the same definition of secularism as the government.” In effect, he and the EMSB, which represents 35,000 students in 73 schools, believe that an exposure to multiculturalism is fundamental to anglophone education in Quebec.

Lined up on the other side, defending the bill along with the provincial government, were a cluster of civil society organizations dedicated to upholding *la laïcité*. They included a feminist group, Pour les droits des femmes du Québec, and an atheist group, Libres penseurs athées. Foremost among them was the Mouvement laïque québécois, or MLQ, which has played a decisive role in advancing secularism in Quebec over the years, both in and out of court. For MLQ president Daniel Baril, Bill 21 is an important step toward fulfilling Quebec’s destiny as a secular, liberal-minded state, united by common values. To some supporters of Bill 21, pluralism and multiculturalism in the Canadian mode—two official languages, but no official culture—is almost nihilistic.

The battle has worked its way through the courts for the past six years. Sometime in the next few months, it will go to the Supreme Court of Canada. There, the Quebec government and its supporters will square off once more against their opponents, which this time will include not only individuals and organizations, but the federal government. When Bill 21 passed in 2019, Justin Trudeau expressed the Liberals’ distaste for it, though the feds didn’t interfere in Quebec’s lower-court challenges. Today, the provincial government insists that Ottawa should continue to stay out of it.

Fundamentally, the two sides are arguing for radically differing ideas of what secularism means—and of what Quebec society ought to look like in the years to come. It’s possible to frame Quebec’s roiling culture wars as the tale of two irreconcilable visions of liberalism. In one version, people who are free to make their own choices will make those that improve their lives, whatever that means to them. In the version espoused by Bill 21’s proponents, the state prioritizes communal values. Quebec has long had a more socialist flavour than the rest of Canada, and is more comfortable creating a framework that nudges citizens toward the government’s collective goals—sometimes gently, sometimes forcefully.

Daniel Baril grew up in the 1950s and ’60s in the tiny town of Black Lake, about 100 kilometres southwest of Quebec City. At the time, the province was at the tail end of *la Grande Noirceur*—the long era of religious repression that ended with the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s. Before then, the Catholic Church dominated life in rural communities like Baril’s. Many Catholics still felt social pressure to tithe to the church. Parishes were essentially local governments, and health care and education were delivered by Catholic or Protestant institutions.

Baril was the youngest in a family of eight children. Though he learned the sacraments in school and attended mass, he drifted away from faith around 13 or 14. After high school, he moved to Montreal for university and got caught up in the rebelliousness that defined his generation—including a rejection of church power. He became a dedicated opponent of any religious influence in public life. The more he reflected on the dogma he’d been raised with, the more it dissipated, as if his mind were being cleared of a noxious fog.

In 1974, at age 21, Baril had a son. When it came time to send him to school, he found an alternative institution within the Catholic system that quietly avoided religious content. Baril was a teacher, and he also joined an association that helped parents get exemptions from religious instruction in schools. In 1981 he co-founded the MLQ. The organization eventually helped form a coalition of teachers’ unions aimed at dismantling religious school

Daniel Baril believes that wearing a kippah, a cross or a hijab is not a passive act but an active expression of faith and unsuitable for public servants. “It’s a prayer you wear.”

boards and, in 1998, the province did so, replacing denominational school boards with ones organized along linguistic lines.

The MLQ took its activism beyond schools. In 2015, it won a Supreme Court Case against the small city of Saguenay, after learning that the mayor had been opening council meetings with a Christian prayer. The MLQ said this breached citizens’ right to religious neutrality.

Today, Baril is 73 years old, with a thin sprinkling of white hair and watery blue eyes. He is still determined to make his vision of Quebec a reality. Like Bouchera Chelbi, he testified during public consultations for the legislation that would become Bill 21. The panel mostly comprised CAQ members but, even though he was preaching to the choir, Baril took a querulous tone. The new law, he said, should take its cues from the Supreme Court’s Saguenay decision. Brandishing a printout, Baril highlighted two points in that judgment: first, that citizens should not be able to perceive any religious influence in state services, and second, that when a government representative is exercising their function, they are no longer a private citizen. Their first duty is to state neutrality, not their private beliefs.

When I spoke to Baril, he suggested a key difference between francophone Quebec and the rest of Canada: in the republicanism of the French model, religion is similar to a political conviction. You can change it, modify it, and put it on or take it off. The multicultural Canadian model, he says, makes religion something more like an ethnicity—an unchanging attribute that’s essential to a person’s identity. To Baril, signalling your religious convictions at work is like wearing a button announcing your political affiliations. A kippah, a cross or a hijab is an active expression of faith. “It’s a prayer you wear,” he says.

Joe Ortona, the chair of the English Montreal School Board, says this is backwards thinking. Religious neutrality is not about what teachers wear, but what they teach. He thinks that by targeting religious symbols, the government, the MLQ and other advocates of *la laïcité* are trying to solve a problem that doesn’t exist. “We never had a complaint from a parent about a teacher wearing a religious symbol,” he told me.

Ortona is bald and pugnacious, with the distinctive accent of an Italian Montrealer. In addition to his ESMB position, he is

president of the Quebec English School Boards Association, but these are part-time roles. By day he’s a criminal lawyer. Like Baril, Ortona grew up Catholic. But he is 30 years younger, and his family are relative newcomers to Quebec—he’s the son of Italian immigrants who settled in Montreal’s Saint-Leonard neighbourhood in the 1950s. As a child, he went to mass every Sunday with his grandmother, and he was devout in the simple and unquestioning way that children often are. “I believed in miracles and all that stuff,” he says.

Today he is a non-believer, and the EMSB is a strictly secular organization. Ortona agrees that church and state need to be kept separate. But, he says, English-speaking communities in Quebec subscribe, like the rest of Canada, to a version of tolerant secularism that goes hand in hand with multiculturalism. He believes that children of all backgrounds need to see themselves and their families reflected, and that having visibly diverse staff is a benefit for all kids: “It exposes them to the undeniable fact that there are people in the world who look different than they do.”

In 2020, 18 months after Bill 21 passed, the Superior Court of Quebec heard the first arguments against it from the EMSB and other challengers. But the complainants faced a major barrier. When passing the law, the Quebec government took the then-unusual step of pre-emptively invoking the notwithstanding clause, the section of Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms that allows provincial legislatures to override parts of the Charter—including rights to freedom of religion and freedom from discrimination. Because the notwithstanding clause shielded Bill 21 from legal challenges on the basis of these rights, it didn’t matter if the bill was discriminatory or not.

Instead, the plaintiffs were forced to put together a battering ram of technical arguments attacking the law’s constitutionality. Chelbi’s lawyers argued that Bill 21 violated the right to freedom of religion, as laid out in the Quebec Act of 1774. Ichak Nourel Hak, a newly minted teacher who wore a hijab, described being suddenly unable to apply for jobs, despite teacher shortages that left hundreds of positions unfilled across the province. Her lawyers argued that Bill 21 violates fundamental constitutional principles.



The hearings took nearly a month and a half. When Judge Marc-André Blanchard finally rendered his judgment in April of 2021, most plaintiffs' hopes were dashed: because the government had used the notwithstanding clause, the law remained valid. But his judgment nonetheless contained harsh words for the government. "The use by the legislator of the notwithstanding clause appears excessive because it is too broad," he wrote, "although legally unassailable in the current state of the law."

The decision wasn't a total defeat for Bill 21's opponents, however. Blanchard upheld one argument against it, which came from the English Montreal School Board. This rested on section 23 of the Charter, which, unlike others, isn't covered by the notwithstanding clause. It guarantees official language minorities—anglophones in Quebec and francophones in the rest of Canada—the right to establish and govern their own schools. Essentially, the EMSB argued that being an English-speaking Quebecer means embracing diversity and difference, and so should an English-language education. Blanchard agreed.

IN DEFENCE OF DIVERSITY Joe Ortona is chair of the English Montreal School Board, one of the groups fighting Bill 21 in court. The board's argument is rooted in the idea that multiculturalism is fundamental to an English education.

Ortona was thrilled. His team had succeeded with what some people had thought was a long-shot argument. He did, however, wish Blanchard had also upheld the EMSB's claim that Bill 21 infringed on the right to equal treatment for men and women. Since the law affects Muslim women more than any other group, this argument could have paved the way to striking down Bill 21 for everyone. Blanchard did recognize in his judgment that the law disproportionately affected Muslim women, rather than men. And he wrote that forcing people to choose between their faith and their profession was cruel.

Before the day was over, the CAQ announced it would appeal the judgment in favour of the EMSB. "There are not two Quebecs," said Simon Jolin-Barrette, the government's justice minister, to reporters. "The laws must apply uniformly on Quebec territory." Chelbi and other plaintiffs also found grounds to appeal. There had to be a way around the notwithstanding clause.



The initial effects of Bill 21 were subtle. In 2021, researchers from McGill and Concordia found that 52 per cent of education and law students surveyed planned to leave Quebec due to the legislation. Even those who didn't wear religious symbols felt other provinces might offer friendlier environments. But few teachers were actually fired—the grandfather clause staved off any dramatic exodus from affected professions. This is why the story of Fatemeh Anvari created a national sensation. Anvari was hired in 2021 to teach Grade 3 at Chelsea Elementary, in the Outaouais region. School administrators thought that the EMSB's victory in court meant that, for the time being, English schools were exempt from Bill 21. They were wrong. While the case was making its way through the courts, school boards had to uphold the law. So, in December, Anvari's principal reluctantly told her that the board had to let her go if she continued to wear the hijab. She later took on a non-teaching position, which wasn't covered by Bill 21, but Anvari's resolve to wear the hijab actually grew after she lost her job. She told me she no longer wears it primarily out of religious devotion but to

MODUS VIVENDI Nadia El-Mabrouk, originally from Tunisia, feels that opposition to secularism paints immigrants in a negative light. “We didn't come here to prevent Quebec from evolving in its secularism project.”

remind herself not to let others dictate her choices. “For me,” she said, “it represents empowerment.”

To Nadia El-Mabrouk, this is nonsense. She's a professor of computer science at the Université de Montréal and president of the civil society group *Rassemblement pour la laïcité*, a pro-Bill 21 group. Growing up in the '70s and '80s in Tunisia, she saw a shift in the culture after the Iranian Revolution and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The festive, casual Islam of her childhood took on a fundamentalist character. When she was a teenager, her cousins would come home from university saying that prayer and the hijab were obligations of Islam. Her aunts began donning hijabs and praying daily.

El-Mabrouk wanted to believe too, but she couldn't overcome her skepticism. In 1988, she went to France for university and eventually moved to Quebec. When she arrived during the ice storm of 1997, she found the cityscape of tree branches encased in glassy sheathes exotic and magical. In 2013, when many other Muslims

Whatever the Supreme Court decides on Bill 21, it is unlikely to end tensions over secularism. Quebec historian Lucia Ferretti has even asked why Quebec should submit to the decision of a Canadian court.

denounced the *charte des valeurs* as racist, she felt compelled as an immigrant herself to speak in its defence. “We didn’t come here to prevent Quebec from evolving its secularism project.” El-Mabrouk no longer actively practises Islam, but she identifies as culturally Muslim.

Quebec’s efforts to entrench secularism seem to El-Mabrouk like a refutation of the oppressive religious culture she’d seen in her youth—which is the same argument I heard from Daniel Baril. She also echoed his points when I asked what she’d say to women, like Bouchera Chelbi or Fatemeh Anvari, who felt the law discriminates against them. Teaching requires a professional demeanour, she said, and that means not betraying an outward sign of one’s religious or political affiliations. She doesn’t sport a button advertising her support of Bill 21. When we spoke in her office, she pointed out that she had closed the door so no one could hear. She supervises a graduate student who wears a hijab, but they never discuss Bill 21.

And it is the hijab, more than any other religious symbol, that has become a lightning rod in Quebec’s secularism discourse. During the bitter *charte des valeurs* debates, disagreements about the hijab tore apart a prominent feminist group, the Fédération des femmes du Québec. The organization defended a woman’s right to wear what she chose, sparking the creation of a splinter group that called itself Pour les droits des femmes. El-Mabrouk is a member of the latter. It fights for secularism and against the hijab in public institutions. Just as the debate exposes two conflicting forms of liberalism, it has revealed two competing strains of feminism. Many women who are against the hijab still value their freedom to choose over legislating what women can and can’t do. And for a law that trumpets its feminism so loudly, Bill 21 has more male supporters than female. A Léger poll conducted in 2022 found that the law was more popular among men than women in every age group under 75.

The same poll asked Quebecers how they felt about major religions. Respondents expressed the most positive views of Christianity, followed by Judaism, Sikhism and, in last place, Islam. More than half of respondents had a negative view of the faith. The poll also found that 66 per cent of female Muslim respondents had received hateful remarks and sometimes physical threats. In May of 2019, while consultations on Bill 21 were underway, CBC News

interviewed Fatima Ahmad, a woman who had been approached near a Montreal metro station by a strange man who pushed her and tried to rip off her green niqab. More extreme instances of anti-Muslim violence had also occurred: in 2017, a shooter murdered six Muslim men at a Quebec city mosque, in one of the worst mass killings in Canadian history.

I asked El-Mabrouk about violence against Muslims wearing the hijab, and she responded defensively. “I get a lot of harassment too for defending secularism” she told me. “I’m a poor girl too, no?” She said that stories of women allegedly being harassed are not credible. “This is part of an Islamist strategy aimed at demonizing Quebec and its secularism project.”

When I mentioned these reports of harassment to Baril, he didn’t doubt their veracity. But he suggested the mistreatment of hijab-wearing women was also because, in his words, “they’re signalling that they refuse to integrate into society.”

Fears that Islamists were infiltrating Quebec reached a new pitch on the afternoon of May 23, 2023. Montrealers tuned to 98.5 FM heard *Le Québec maintenant*, one of the province’s most popular drive-home shows. The broadcast that day featured the digitally distorted voices of teachers describing Bedford Elementary, a school in Montreal’s Côte-des-Neiges neighbourhood, as if it were mafia turf, with warring groups of teachers battling for supremacy. Anonymous witnesses suggested that a “majority clan” of Muslim teachers from the Arabic-speaking African region known as the Maghreb—Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco—were creating a sinister atmosphere at the school. These teachers allegedly terrorized children, bullied colleagues, imposed harsh rules, barred special-education workers from classrooms and spoke in Arabic, so outsiders couldn’t understand them.

The reports were anonymous, but they exploded in the public imagination. The specifics of the story eventually faded, but the overall impression persisted, about a Quebec under siege from mass immigration, about foreign influence and about a school that had become something like a fundamentalist institute. “Islamist Infiltration at Bedford and in Quebec: It’s Time to Say No,” read a headline in the *Journal de Montréal*.

The real story was less sensational. A report by auditors from the ministry of education turned up some genuinely concerning findings: the sex-ed curriculum was quietly soft-pedalled due to discomfort from the predominantly Muslim parent committee, and there were instances of teachers yelling at and pushing children. It was also true that the school had essentially been hijacked by a group of teachers who created a toxic atmosphere. But this was due not to religious differences—many of the combatants on both sides were of Maghrebi origin—but pedagogical disagreements. Ultimately, the province suspended 11 teachers' licences.

Still, the idea that Islamic extremism had seeped its way into classrooms was new fuel for proponents of Bill 21. After the province's report came out, Premier François Legault, Education Minister Bernard Drainville and Secularism Minister Jean-François Roberge pledged to toughen secularism laws even further. Then, this March, the province introduced all-new legislation instead: Bill 94, a logical extension of the state-sponsored secularism of Bill 21.

The legislation is still being drafted, but ideas under discussion include prohibiting religious symbols on parent volunteers, barring prayer in any space on school premises and refusing speech therapy or other educational supports for homeschooled children who wear the niqab (a long garment that entirely covers the body and face, leaving only the eyes exposed) or whose parent does. Bill 94 is certain to extend the ban on religious symbols to all school staff, including janitors, cafeteria workers, playground supervisors and educators delivering after-school programs. It will impose on school administrators the additional duty of carrying out annual assessments to make sure staff respect the new strictures. The bill will also ban employees of French-language schools from speaking any other language, even on their breaks. And, as with Bill 21, the government will almost certainly invoke the notwithstanding clause to protect Bill 94 from challenges. Louis-Philippe Lampron, a law professor at the Université Laval, has pointed out that it has to, since the new bill extends the ban on religious symbols to more people.

That means Bill 94 will also be on trial when Bill 21 is debated at the Supreme Court in the coming months. If the CAQ succeeds in defending its use of the notwithstanding clause, there's little to stop it from enlarging the sphere of *la laïcité* as widely as it wants.

Last February, the three-judge panel of Quebec's Court of Appeal released a unanimous verdict, upholding Judge Blanchard's previous decision declaring Bill 21 constitutional. It also overturned the EMSB's exemption from the law. "Nothing in the act has any impact whatsoever on the use of the English language in schools," the judges wrote.

Bill 21's proponents celebrated. Premier François Legault said that the province would continue to use the notwithstanding clause "as long as it is necessary for Canada to recognize the societal choice of the Quebec nation." (The clause must be renewed every five years; the province did so in 2024.)

The EMSB appealed the Court of Appeal's decision—as did Bouchera Chelbi, Ichak Nourel Hak and virtually every other plaintiff. Their next and final stop is now the Supreme Court.

Today, the plaintiffs are sharpening their cases. The EMSB will argue that a ban on religious symbols will impede its ability to hire and promote Muslim women, which it is arguing is its constitutionally protected right. Lawyers representing Chelbi will insist that prohibiting a religious practice is not within provincial jurisdiction. The Lord Reading Law Society, an association of Jewish jurists, will claim that Canada's commitment to religious pluralism for representatives of the state predates the Charter, citing an 1832 law that granted Jews permission to hold public office. Another, more ephemeral argument is that, even if Bill 21 is technically in line with the written Constitution, it goes against the spirit of the "unwritten constitution"—the norms that sustain the document.

A key question will be whether the Supreme Court should reconsider an established precedent governing the notwithstanding clause: the 1988 case of *Ford v. Quebec*. That case involved a challenge to Bill 101, which regulates the use of French on business signage. The provincial legislature had invoked the notwithstanding clause, and the Supreme Court decided that as long as the legislature's application of the clause respected formal procedures, the court couldn't weigh in on whether the law violated the right to freedom of expression.

Some people believe it's time to revisit this *carte blanche* approach. In August, the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal ruled that a law requiring parental consent for kids under 16 who request new pronouns at school is subject to judicial declarations regarding Charter rights. Even though the Saskatchewan legislature invoked the notwithstanding clause to protect the law, the decision means that citizens will hear the court's analysis of whether it violates Charter rights. (It does not mean the law can be overturned, however.) Polling has suggested that, should Quebecers hear that the Supreme Court finds Bill 21 discriminatory, support for it would drop by 18 points.

The Bill 21 challenge might seem unique to Quebec, but the questions it raises about the power of the judiciary versus the legislature concern every province. That's why the federal government, as well as several provincial governments, will also be arguing against the bill at the Supreme Court.

How the Court decides on Bill 21 will have far-reaching consequences but, even if it's overturned, the schism in Quebec society won't be easily repaired. Back in 2020, when the first intimations that Bill 21 would end up at the Supreme Court emerged, secularist Quebec historian Lucia Ferretti described the full-court press that its legal challengers employed. "One cannot help but see this artillery barrage as a sign that English Canada and those Quebecers who follow the Canadian model are determined to put Quebec in its place as an internal colony," she wrote. Why, she asked, should Quebec even submit to the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada?

Despite the pressure of the legal fracas, Chelbi thinks she's lucky. Her school's administration, her colleagues and her students' parents have all been supportive. But she hasn't quite gotten over her initial surprise that her hijab is such an issue in the first place. She tells me she once worked at a school for a year before a colleague told her that she realized Chelbi was "just like us." Once, a man yelled at her in a supermarket parking lot to go back to her own country. "This is my country," she told him. ■

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LOVE ISLAND

A Winnipeg couple transformed a lake cabin into a Canadiana-inspired retreat

By Iris Benaroya

EVERY VICTORIA DAY long weekend, when the ice has finally melted, Jeff and Chris Fettes hop in their boats and head for their island cottage in Kenora, Ontario. Getting there requires navigating the sprawling Lake of the Woods, an expanse dotted with tens of thousands of islands that stretches from Ontario to Minnesota. But the effort is part of the fun: “Even a mundane task, like going to the grocery store by boat, is an excursion,” says Chris.

Like the lake, Jeff and Chris’s love affair crosses borders. They met 28 years ago at a Gold’s Gym in Orlando, Florida, where Jeff, originally from Regina, was studying audio recording and engineering, while Chris, a vocal performance student, was working as a dancer at Disney. The couple wanted to live closer to Jeff’s family so, in 2009, they moved to Winnipeg, where they now work as tech entrepreneurs. Seven years later, on a whim one weekend, they drove almost three hours east to Lake of the Woods to visit a new cottage that Jeff’s brother had recently bought.

“We saw the Whiteshell Provincial Park with its tall pine trees, rocky cliffs and ledges,” says Chris. “It was this pristine area of Canada—we fell in love.” An octagonal log cabin on the private Shragges

← **DOCK DAYS** Each summer, Canadian tech entrepreneurs Jeff and Chris Fettes leave their Winnipeg home for weekends at their island cottage in Lake of the Woods

HABITAT



↩ **RETURN TRIP** When designer Meredith Heron spotted a 1960s chestnut canoe on Kijiji, she had no idea it once belonged to a man who used to paddle by the island as a boy. Today, it hangs upside-down in the living room.

← **LOG LINES** One of the cottage's bedrooms highlights the log walls and layered textures that Jeff and Chris envisioned for their retreat

Island caught their eye. Inside, the hand-peeled logs of the home fit together with the precision of medieval joinery. “Jeff and I are not cottage people; we’ve never had experience with them,” says Chris. “But if we were going to have one, then that cabin was for us.” The following Monday they submitted an offer. Four days later, they bought a boat, moved into the two-bedroom cabin and kick-started renovations.

Chris and Jeff wanted the space to be deeply rooted in Canadiana—an homage



↑ **SCREEN TIME** The grounds have a movie theatre, whisky bar, fire pit and private beaches. On Canada Day weekend, the Fettes hosted friends and family from Winnipeg, Florida and Las Vegas for movie nights under the stars.



↑ **GRAND ENTRANCE** A towering reclaimed wooden arch from the Vancouver Winter Olympics frames the entry to the island estate

to Lake of the Woods and its history in mining, fishing, camping and the railroad. To help install historical touchstones, they recruited Toronto-based interior designer Meredith Heron. An upside-down vintage canoe dangles from the ceiling—their version of a chandelier. There's a hefty, deep-carved soapstone sink in the powder room, while the granite countertop slabs were quarried from the defunct Sultana gold mine on Lake of the Woods. The walls are bedecked with vintage life preservers, hand-painted paddles, nautical knot artwork and Chris and Jeff's monogrammed sailing flags (and semaphore flags), along with camping and travel badges, meant to fake a life's worth of cottaging.

The pair also enlisted B.C.-based Pioneer Log Homes to build a bunkie on the property to serve as guest quarters for their family and friends. The guesthouse was constructed out west, each log carefully numbered before the entire structure was disassembled, loaded onto semi-trucks, driven across the country and boated to the island. Once it arrived, it was rebuilt in a single day.

The Fettes also wanted to create an outdoor entertainment zone. Today, the island features an outdoor movie theatre, a whisky bar, a fire pit and several private beaches. As a landmark, Jeff and Chris installed a working 30-foot-tall lighthouse. When visitors pull up to the cottage, they see a large wooden arch from the Vancouver Winter Olympics—repurposed as the estate's gateway.

If passing under the arch feels like you're entering a restorative summer camp, it's not by happenstance. "Like Disney, there's a storyline. Everything matches, from the log structures to the focus on natural design," says Chris. This past Canada Day weekend, the pair welcomed a group of "campers" (family and friends) from Winnipeg, Florida and Las Vegas. They hosted multiple movie nights (*Top Gun: Maverick* was the favourite) and did cookouts, boat cruises, fishing and piano recitals. Their nephew Jarret visited from Florida. "As a rite of passage, he took his first plunge in the lake with some promises from me that it wasn't 'that cold.' He begged to differ," says Chris, ever the camp counsellor. ■

Culture

WHAT TO SEE, HEAR AND READ THIS MONTH



SNOWBOUND

A new book documents Canada's quirky fishing shacks

By Rosemary Counter

Photography by Richard Johnson



Richard Johnson photographed more than a thousand ice huts across all 10 provinces

EVERY WINTER, tiny shelters pop up on frozen lakes across the country. Their purpose is quaint and simple: to provide a warm room where fishers sit around a hole drilled into the ice, their lines dangling into the dark. These are ice huts—portable, make-shift structures built by anglers during the fishing season.

For the record, ice huts are not made of ice. They're pieced together from whatever the builder has in the garage, be it plywood, lumber or tarps. They date back to Indigenous fishers who chipped holes through the ice with bone or stone tools and speared fish through the opening. To better see into the water below, they built simple coverings to block the light.

Over the centuries, as ice fishing drifted from necessity to pastime, the huts evolved, too. Some are now fitted with heaters, chimneys, windows and chairs for all-day comfort. Others are nothing more than posts and plastic. In the Maritimes, where the temperatures are warmer and the ice conditions less predictable, fishers often use tarpaulin-based structures that can be quickly

disassembled. In parts of the country where ice fishing is a social activity, the ice huts are larger, more elaborate and sometimes even equipped for overnight stays. Each is built by hand, and no two are the same: some are painted in bright colours, others plastered with posters.

The late photographer Richard Johnson saw his first ice hut by chance in 1992, on a family trip to New Liskeard, Ontario, recalls his wife, Lucie Bergeron-Johnson. "When he learned that people build them by hand for fishing, Richard was hooked," she says. "They're unpolished and unfinished, which I think is partly why Richard liked them." Around the house, her handy husband had a habit of starting construction projects without finishing them. He loved winter and froze his hands once or twice building outdoor forts for his daughters. Ice huts appealed to his inner child and outer adult alike.

What began as a roadside curiosity became a fascination. That same year, Johnson opened the Toronto-based gallery Interior Images (now Richard Johnson Photography) with himself as the artist and Bergeron-Johnson as studio manager. "He fired me many times over the years," she says, "but he'd apologize and hire me back the next day." Graphic design and commissioned photography paid the bills, but ice huts were his strongest passion.

For more than a decade, the Johnsons sometimes skipped the highways in favour of backroad travel, chasing new scenery and the chance to spot an ice hut in action. Johnson, who died in 2021, ultimately photographed more than a thousand structures in every province, some 200 of which appear in his forthcoming book from Figure 1 Publishing, *Resilience—Ice Huts and Root Cellars*, out October 7.

Here, Bergeron-Johnson shares the stories behind some of her late husband's favourite images. ■



↑ **Saguenay River, Quebec, 2014**

“Richard first visited this ice village in 2010. It was far sparser and more haphazard then. When he returned four years later, there were so many ice huts—at least 200—that people organized them like a town with roads going through. The fun part was that by then fishers could get food delivered; if they wanted to order some pizza or Chinese food while they fished, they could.”

← **Saguenay River, Quebec, 2010**

“Many ice huts are simple; some, like this one, are not. This looks almost like a tiny home or a winter cottage. People sometimes sleep in their ice huts, so this could’ve easily had a sleeping loft in what you might call the upstairs.”



← **Lake Simcoe, Ontario, 2007**

“Richard preferred to shoot his photos on weekdays, when the huts were usually empty and there were no people to distract him. This is a rare photo with people in it. It’s interesting because you can see right through the hut—it’s just a frame surrounded with plastic. You can see how people ice-fish, just sitting on buckets on either side of the fishing hole.”

↓ **Oyster Pond, Nova Scotia, 2015**

“This pond is connected to the Atlantic, so the weather is warmer and changes constantly. The top layer of the ice here is melting, which made a fabulous reflective surface. The huts were empty, so Richard begged a storeowner to open his shop and sell him four flashlights. He knew the huts lit up would look magnificent.”





↑ **Saint-Laurent, Quebec, 2015** “Since these angler’s lures are very colourful and fun, the owner has hung them outside—handy for later use, but also great as decoration. He will have no problem finding his hut.”



↑ **Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta, 2011** “Ice huts are deliberately colourful, because if you’re walking out there in a storm or the fog, you want to be able to instantly find your hut. There are no house numbers in an ice village, so you want yours to stand out.”



↑ **Dragon Lake, B.C., 2015** “Here, you see some houses in the background, which makes the ice hut feel like an escape, a bit like a man cave.”



↑ **Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2010** “This one is an old converted trailer. It’s very cold in Winnipeg, so you can see what’s likely a tank of propane for the heater. The background is almost invisible, as Richard chose days when the sun wasn’t out and the weather was yucky. He wanted the ice hut to stand out from the sky and snow.”

MUSIC
**A NIGHT AT
 THE BEACHES**

THE BEACHES
 Various locations
October 24 to November 15

TORONTO INDIE ROCKERS the Beaches just released their third studio album, *No Hard Feelings*, led by the indisputable standout song “Last Girls at the Party,” which has already been a staple of their wild late-night summer sets across Europe and North America, from Coachella to Osheaga. Now, the Juno-winning girl group are taking the slow route home: the Canadian leg of their No Hard Feelings tour kicks off in Victoria and heads east to Moncton, with a hometown stop at the Scotiabank Arena.



ART
A REBEL'S RETROSPECTIVE

ENEMY ALIEN: TAMIO WAKAYAMA
 Vancouver Art Gallery
October 3 to February 22, 2026

NAMED AN “ENEMY ALIEN” by the Canadian government during the Second World War, Japanese-Canadian Tamio Wakayama (left) spent years with his family at an internment camp, where he developed an unstoppable sense of social justice. Over five decades as a photojournalist, Wakayama documented the civil rights movement in the deep American South, anti-Vietnam War protests in Washington, and Indigenous-rights rallies across Saskatchewan and B.C. Wakayama, who died in 2018, never received the recognition he deserved in his lifetime, but around 300 of his rousing images are now getting their flowers in the VAG’s exhibition, curated by Wakayama’s long-time friend, artist Paul Wong. Accompanying the show is a 70-minute documentary by emerging filmmaker Cindy Mochizuki about Wakayama’s legacy.

BOOKS
A POWERFUL MEMOIR

WE SURVIVED THE NIGHT
Julian Brave NoiseCat
October 14

THIS YEAR, *Sugarcane* became the first film directed by an Indigenous North American to be nominated for an Oscar. Behind the camera was 32-year-old Canadian-American journalist and filmmaker Julian Brave NoiseCat, a member of B.C.'s Canim Lake Band. He's following up the success of his first documentary with his literary debut. Part memoir and part journalistic investigation, *We Survived the Night* charts NoiseCat's nomadic childhood with an absent father, his imposter syndrome at Columbia University and his journey to sobriety. With grace and humour, NoiseCat weaves these personal threads into a larger story about the erasure of Indigenous peoples.



THEATRE
A PROVOCATIVE
DRAMA

SLAVE PLAY
Berkeley Street Theatre, Toronto
September 27 to October 19

SEVEN YEARS after its off-Broadway premiere, Jeremy O. Harris's *Slave Play* has finally arrived in Canada. Over the years, it's earned the Rosa Parks, Lorraine Hansberry and Paula Vogel playwriting awards, along with a record 12 Tony nominations. For Canadian Stage, Jordan Laffrenier assembles an all-Canadian cast to play three interracial couples at a contentious therapeutic retreat—a program for antebellum sexual performance therapy, if you must know—held at a former plantation. Tensions mount as their personal histories and lingering traumas are slowly revealed, making for a voyeuristic theatre experience that's both uncomfortable to watch and impossible to look away from.



FILM
A FREAKY SWITCH

GOOD FORTUNE
Lionsgate
October 17

AZIZ ANSARI looked largely to Canada when casting his directorial feature debut: *Good Fortune* stars Keanu Reeves, Seth Rogen and Sandra Oh. It's a familiar take on the *Freaky Friday* formula, with Ansari as a down-on-his-luck gig worker who swaps lives with Rogen's ayahuasca-taking tech bro, all thanks to help from Reeves as a "budget guardian angel," who himself has a guardian angel in Oh. The twist? While Ansari's character is supposed to learn that wealth and power won't fix all his problems, it turns out they absolutely do.

—Rosemary Counter

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FALL 2025

The Private and Independent School Guide



A World of Difference

Four unique types of private schools for parents to consider

In Canada, the term “private school” is a broad umbrella, and the choices for parents considering sending their child to a private school are vast.

All private schools have the same core ingredients—small class sizes, a strong focus on academic achievement, a rigorous curriculum, and exceptional teachers—but different types of schools have their own unique features and benefits.

Boarding schools

At boarding schools, students and staff live on campus, creating an immersive, all-encompassing education experience. “Boarding school isn’t just where students go to school, it’s where they live their lives,” says Davide D’Alessandro, director and founding family member of Canadian College Italy, a private boarding high school located in Lanciano, Italy. “Learning extends into every part of the day: academics, yes, but also how students manage their time, solve problems, build relationships, and navigate independence.” Maggie Houston-White, executive director of strategic enrolment management at Toronto’s Havergal College, agrees. “It helps them gain independence and provides them with valuable experiences that will set them up for success at university and beyond,” she says.

Canadian boarding schools also attract international students. “Having peers from all over the world allows them to learn from one another, broadening their perspectives and deepening their understanding of different cultures, experiences, and identities,” says Suzanne Ranson, director of enrolment at the Bishop Strachan School in Toronto. Anne-Marie Kee, head of school and foundation at Lakefield College School just north of Peterborough, Ont., says the results are lifelong friendships and a true sense of belonging. “Students live, learn, and grow in a close-knit, intentionally diverse community,” she notes. “The experience builds independence, confidence, and a stronger sense of responsibility.”

Montessori schools

Created by Dr. Maria Montessori in the early 1900s, these schools offer an alternative approach to education—one focused on student autonomy, discovery, exploration, multigrade classes, and hands-on learning, rather than standardized, structured lesson plans. “In a Montessori setting, the teacher is a facilitator, who guides each individual student based on their educational needs,” explains Atiya Husain, principal of the Maplehurst campus of Central Montessori School, which operates various locations in the Greater Toronto area. “Students work at their own pace, choosing activities and projects based on their interests and needs. And classrooms are designed to promote independence, allowing children to choose their activities and manage their own work.”

Jacqueline Richman, head of school at Toronto’s Bannockburn School, says the Montessori approach fosters a lifelong love of learning in students, promotes collaboration, and encourages independence and self-expression. “The curriculum nurtures confident, academically enriched students who



are naturally inquisitive, skilled in time management and public speaking, knowledgeable about global issues and advocacy, and grounded in self-respect,” she says. “Programs are purposefully designed to treat each child as an individual, encouraging them to explore deeply in areas of personal interest and academic learning, which results in engaged, self-motivated learners.”

Single-gender schools

Whether all-boys or all-girls, these private schools offer a tailored education that also fosters improved self-expression and growth. “Single-gender schools provide space to explore identity, build confidence, and learn to form healthy relationships,” says Jennifer Colleran, vice-principal at the Sterling Hall School, an all-boys school in North York, Ont. “[They] have a purpose-built approach that focuses all resources on students’ intellectual, physical, social and emotional development.”

Catherine Hant, head of school at St. Mildred’s-Lightbourn School, an all-girls school in Oakville, Ont., says students at single-gender schools are “freed from the social math of mixed-gender dynamics.” Hant continues, “Students aren’t performing



for the room or managing how they come across,” she says. “They don’t apologize for being ambitious. Or quiet. Or both. They channel their mental energy into bigger ideas, harder questions, and daring to try.” And Richard Vissers, director of enrolment at Toronto’s all-boys Crescent School cites the value in understanding and celebrating the different ways boys and girls learn, and employing different teaching methods catered to their unique strengths and needs. “Boys develop and learn at a different pace,” Vissers says. “Boys’ schools understand and celebrate these differences.”

Specialized schools

Sometimes called a “specialty” or “special-emphasis” private school, these types of schools offer a particular focus, learning environment or teaching modality, with a curriculum and facilities tailored to support their specialty, and to help students hone distinct skills. Specialized private schools in Canada include: faith-based schools; military academies; special-needs schools; schools of the arts; schools centred on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math); and those that offer language immersion.

Faith-based private schools are one of the most common types of specialized private schools in Canada. In fact, a 2016 study revealed that nearly 50 per cent of all private/independent schools in the country have a religious orientation. These schools focus on a particular religion or belief system, which is then woven into the fabric of the education experience, from the mission statement and curriculum to everyday student life, and may include dedicated time for prayer or religious celebrations. Often preferred by parents who want to instill specific values and beliefs in their children, faith-based private schools can also help students connect more deeply with their family’s culture.

French immersion schools are also becoming increasingly popular among Canadian parents. “There are well-known cognitive and social benefits to learning a second language,” says Ronan Le Guern, director of communications and strategic planning at TFS: Canada’s International School in Toronto, “especially when that language is the medium of instruction.” In addition to cultivating fluency, French immersion schools offer students a number of benefits. “The advantages of a multilingual education are almost too numerous to mention,” says Amy Murray, assistant head of school: community & early learning at Calgary French & International School. “Language learning—leading to strong language proficiency—enhances brain development, and supports problem-solving and critical thinking in unique ways. Language is a key that opens so many doors over a student’s entire lifetime.”



Admit One

Helpful dos and don'ts to ace the private school admissions process

Between interviews, transcripts, personal essays, reference letters, entrance exams and more, the admission process at private schools in Canada is typically comprehensive and competitive. “Admission decisions are made, often, over the period of a few weeks, with countless data points and factors being considered by a committee of individuals,” explains Hilary Riley, director of admissions and enrolment management at the York School in Toronto. “We do not come to these decisions quickly or easily.”

It can be a stressful time for parents and prospective students alike, but following a few simple dos and don'ts can help you impress admissions officers and improve the chances of earning an offer of acceptance.

DO

Start early

Amber Way, head of school at Linbrook School in Oakville, Ont., says there's no such thing as applying too early. “If a family is interested in attending a school, it's important for them to engage in the application process in a timely manner,” she says. “Waiting until the spring or summer [for the following school year] will reduce the likelihood of a space being available.”

Learn about the school

Do your homework before your child meets with the admissions team. “While the websites and glossy brochures can tell you a lot,” Riley notes, “the only way you get a true feeling about the school and its community is by visiting. Book a private campus tour, ask questions of students and faculty, and see the school in action.”

Involve your child

Since they'll be the one actually attending the school, your child should be an integral part of the admissions process. “When visiting schools, bring your child,” says Way. “Providing this opportunity can increase their comfort level prior to coming for a classroom visit. Witnessing your child's initial response to an environment can also help you narrow down schools.”

DON'T

Miss any deadlines

Adhere to all deadlines set by the school. No exceptions. “Deadlines and requirements are clearly outlined—please take these things seriously!” Riley says. Gather and submit all the necessary materials, and show up for all appointments, on time. Early is even better.

Over-prepare

Be careful not to send your child into the admissions interview with overly rehearsed answers. “Schools want to get to know your child and your family as authentically as possible,” Riley says. “It's much more fun—and memorable—talking to a student who gets excited sharing about their latest Lego masterpiece than an over-scripted student who tries desperately to memorize an introductory monologue.”

Lose hope

If your child doesn't receive an acceptance letter, try to take it in stride...then try again. “Consider asking the school for feedback about your child's application,” Riley suggests. “Often, schools will encourage a re-application.” Way agrees. “When a student doesn't receive an offer of admission, take note of the suggestions you are given and follow through on everything you can,” she says. “Then be sure to apply again after following those suggestions.”



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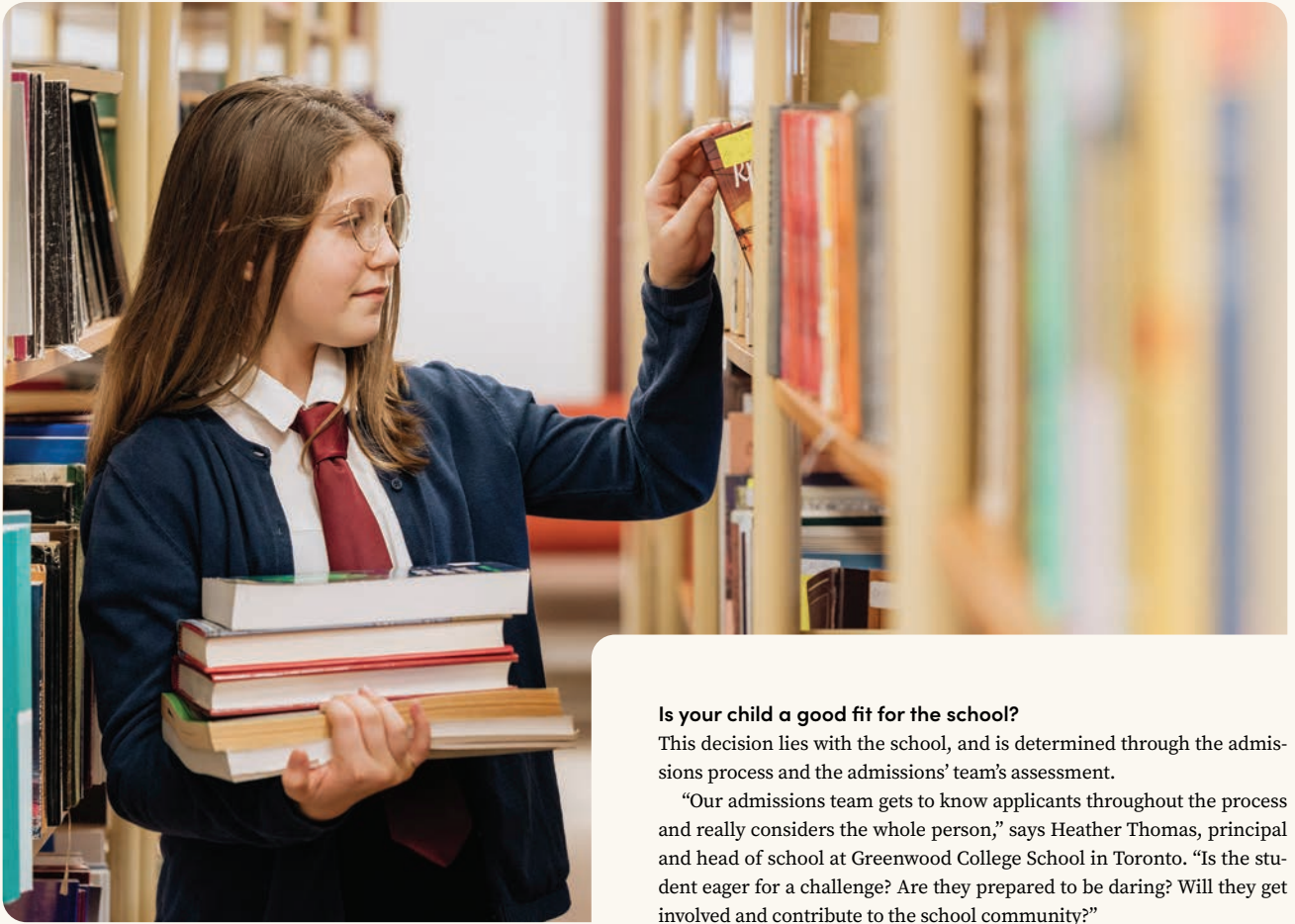
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The Perfect Match

What does it mean for a private school to be a “good fit” for a student?

Many private school admissions teams in Canada cite the importance of ensuring a school is a “good fit” for a prospective student, and vice-versa—but what does that actually mean? Is it just about academics, and being able to meet the demands of the school’s rigorous curriculum, or are there other criteria that come into play? Ultimately, it’s not one or the other—it’s both.

“The school should have the resources, culture and programming to support that student’s academic growth, emotional well-being and personal interests,” says Michelle Gow, director of enrolment at Toronto’s Hudson College. “Beyond that, does the school feel right? Were the staff and students welcoming? Did every interaction with the school build your confidence that this is a place where your child will thrive?”

Is your child a good fit for the school?

This decision lies with the school, and is determined through the admissions process and the admissions’ team’s assessment.

“Our admissions team gets to know applicants throughout the process and really considers the whole person,” says Heather Thomas, principal and head of school at Greenwood College School in Toronto. “Is the student eager for a challenge? Are they prepared to be daring? Will they get involved and contribute to the school community?”

Elena Holeton, director of admissions at St. Clement’s School in Toronto, says, “Students who are genuinely motivated to engage in, and contribute to, the school’s fabric and community really stand out.”

How will you know if your student will thrive at a particular school?

This decision lies with you, and requires thought and introspection. “It’s important to seek out a school that will meet your individual needs,” Thomas says. Does the school align with your values and priorities? Does it possess the resources your child needs to flourish? And, perhaps most importantly, does your child actually want to attend that school?

“We love to see students who are engaged in the process, walking side by side with their parents, not being led from behind,” says Rebecca De Silva, associate director of admissions at Trinity College School in Port Hope, Ont. She notes the best matches happen not as a result of a school’s ranking or reputation, but because of shared goals, values and interests. “What stands out is when a student has done their homework: they’ve reflected on who they are, what matters to them, and how a school might help them grow.”

Improving the odds

So, what can parents do to boost their chances of making the perfect match? Homework. Thomas, Holeton and De Silva all agree that researching prospective schools, attending school events and connecting with parents of current students are all invaluable tools. And Holeton cites the importance of following your gut. “We sometimes doubt our instincts and keep looking for more and more reassurance and evidence from outside,” she explains. “Often, you and your child have a pretty good sense of things, and you should trust yourselves.”

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Supporting Student Success

How private schools foster academic excellence

Private schools in Canada are renowned for providing a world-class education by creating the perfect environment for academic excellence—one that combines rigorous course work with abundant resources to support learning, and promoting intellectual and social growth. “We set high expectations and encourage independent thinking and a lifelong love of learning,” says Jennifer Baldassare, director of admissions at Lynn-Rose School in Mississauga, Ont. “Students are consistently supported and challenged in a nurturing academic environment.”

Academic excellence is achieved at Canadian private schools through a combination of three core factors:



1. Challenging curriculum

Every top-notch private school education begins with the curriculum, which is designed to help students excel. Independently funded, private schools in Canada have much greater autonomy and flexibility when it comes to what they teach and how, allowing lessons and learning modalities to be tailored to fit each student's unique strengths, talents and abilities. Most private schools also offer an array of specialized classes—including languages, gifted programs, arts, robotics and STEM—that help students broaden their horizons and expand their scope of knowledge. “We integrate STEAM [science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics] into daily learning to build critical thinking and problem-solving skills,” says Shalousha Gracian, admissions manager for Rowntree Montessori Schools in Brampton, Ont. “Our strong academic foundation prepares students for long-term success in school and beyond.”

2. Exceptional educators

Top-tier teaching is a hallmark of private schools. Faculty are often subject-matter experts in addition to being certified teachers—think: an artist leading an art class, a mathematician instructing students in calculus, or a biologist taking students on a field study to a nearby marsh. “Our experienced and passionate educators provide personalized instruction, supported by small class sizes and a student-centred approach,” Baldassare says.

Small class sizes facilitate greater one-on-one instruction for students too. “Our small class sizes are at the heart of our academic model,” says Kathy Young, chief academic officer at Blyth Academy, a network of private schools across Canada. “They allow our teachers to build strong, meaningful relationships with students, offering personalized guidance and support that helps each learner thrive.” She adds that their commitment to personalized support also extends outside the classroom. “With a guidance-counsellor-to-student ratio of 1 to 70, our students also receive tailored advice when it comes to selecting the right post-secondary programs and schools.”

3. Amazing amenities

Tour any private school in Canada, and you'll undoubtedly be wowed by the physical environment in which learning takes place. From sprawling manicured grounds to on-campus theatres, fully outfitted residences, and sports arenas worthy of elite athletes, the grade-A facilities at private schools provide unrivalled opportunities to foster A+ grades. The Rowntree campuses, says Gracian, are set up for technology-integrated learning, complete with smart boards and Chromebooks. And Baldassare notes the importance of enhanced facilities when it comes to academic success. “Our facilities include science labs, a library, and media spaces that foster hands-on learning,” she says. “These resources help students deepen their understanding and apply their knowledge in meaningful ways.”



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Helping Hands

How peer-support programs at private schools benefit students

Attending a private school in Canada can be challenging. Between school work, interpersonal dynamics and navigating new social situations, some students may find themselves overwhelmed. To better foster a community environment and prioritize students' mental health, many private schools offer peer-support programs to help students adjust, manage and thrive.

"It's about belonging...Students are at a critical point of their development and want reliable, relevant, and honest knowledge," says Andy Hall, principal of Toronto's WillowWood School, "the kind that cannot be found in a chat room or via a search engine. Students need to feel heard and supported; otherwise, they lose confidence in their environment and the sense of belonging can be eroded or lost altogether."

Michelle Barchuk, director of admissions and communications at the Mabin School in Toronto, agrees. "A child must feel comfortable and included before they are able to take risks, both social and academic, as they build their foundational skills as learners," she says.

What are peer-support programs?

Whether it's after-class tutoring, semester-long mentoring, or just having a "buddy" with whom to talk through problems over lunch in the cafeteria, peer-to-peer support at private schools involves students helping their fellow students. These initiatives are student-led, often with a faculty adviser or professional oversight, and are designed to help with managing academic, social and mental health challenges. "Formal mentoring occurs in both individual and group settings across all age groups at our school," Hall says. "High School students, specifically, have access to our Student Support Counsellor, who provides a safe, comfortable and welcoming environment in which to process an issue they may have."



How do they work?

Private school peer-support programs have many permutations: some are one-on-one and others are in group settings; they can be informal and flexible, or structured; they might be extracurricular or take place during class; and some require student leaders to undergo formal training, especially for initiatives related to mental health. Frequently, they involve older students assisting their peers in younger grades. "Our peer-focused programming is just one of the ways we help students in all grades develop empathy, leadership and problem-solving skills right from the start," says Barchuk. "Classes pair up as reading buddies, we offer student-led clubs, and classes will often partner with each other on field trips."

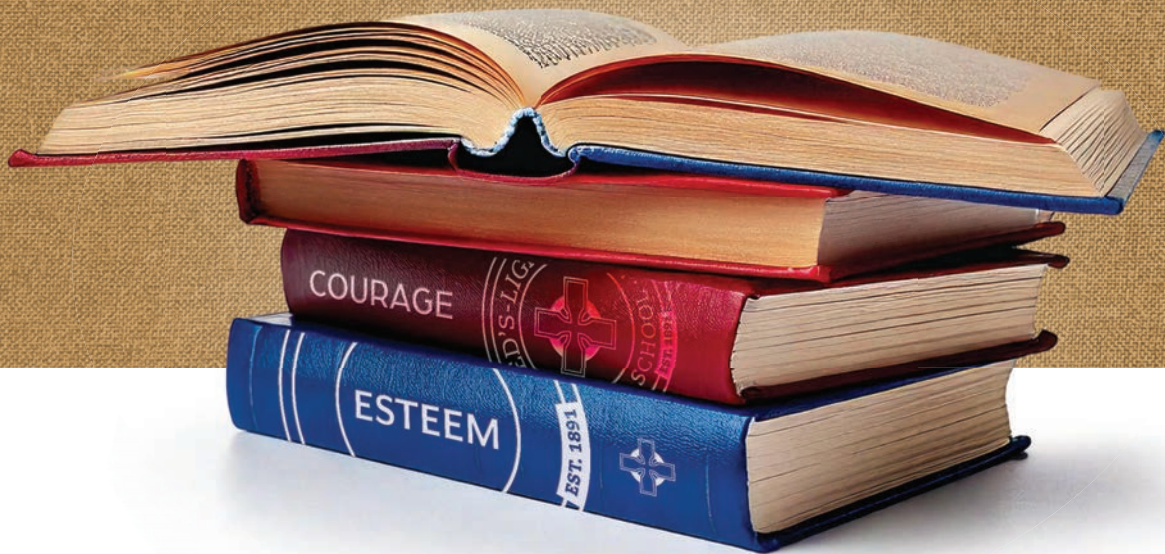
What are the benefits?

These programs boost connection, reduce isolation, and aid in students' personal growth. They can help combat loneliness or homesickness at boarding schools, improve grades, facilitate social integration, and enhance a private school student's overall sense of well-being. A 2022 study by the *Canadian Journal of Health Technologies* also found that peer-based support programs for youths can provide valuable coping strategies, and can help reduce the stigma that might be associated with seeking help for mental health issues.

Barchuk believes the skills students acquire are invaluable. "They're vital, both inside and outside the classroom," she says, "as we prepare our students for an unpredictable world where they can shine as original thinkers, adaptive leaders and, perhaps most importantly, caring citizens."

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For more information visit sjr.mb.ca

St. John's-Ravenscourt School
RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Small Class Sizes | Before and After School Care K-6 | 100% University Acceptance

FALL 2025

The Private and Independent School Directory

Browse through our list of Canada's top private schools to find the right fit for your child



The Bishop Strachan School

298 Lonsdale Rd., Toronto
bss.on.ca

The Bishop Strachan School is a leading independent JK to Grade 12 day and boarding school for girls. Through the school's challenging inquiry-based program, students are equipped with core academic knowledge and skills, and empowered to become confident change makers. The campus includes STEAM-focused learning spaces, and arts, design and athletics facilities, including a turf field. For more than 150 years, BSS has inspired students to be fearless and educated them to be leaders.

Grades: Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12

Type/Curriculum: All girls, boarding school, day school, STEM, inquiry-based learning

Average Class Size: 22

Total Enrolment: 970

Tuition: Day: \$41,800; boarding (Canadian student): \$78,500; boarding (international student): \$82,100

Financial Assistance Available: Yes

Open House Dates: Junior School: October 16: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Middle and Senior School: October 23: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.; Boarding (virtual): November 5: 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

Calgary French & International School

700 77 St. SW, Calgary
cfis.com

Calgary French & International School, ranked as the top French school in Alberta by the Fraser Institute, nurtures curiosity, builds confidence and develops multilingual minds. Our curriculum, guided by the International Baccalaureate Primary Years, Middle Years (candidate school) and Diploma Programmes, fosters success at every level. From early childhood to Grade 12, CFIS offers immersive French learning and global experiences that broaden perspectives and inspire lifelong learning.

Grades: Junior Preschool to Grade 12

Type/Curriculum: Co-educational, experiential learning, inquiry-based learning, International Baccalaureate, multilingual

Average Class Size: 12 (Junior Preschool), 16 (Preschool and Junior Kindergarten), 20 (Kindergarten to Grade 12)

Total Enrolment: 850

Tuition: \$17,570 to \$22,430

Financial Assistance Available: No

Open House Dates: *Personal tour dates are available at cfis.com.*



Canadian College Italy

Lanciano, Italy
canadiancollegeitaly.com

For 30 years, Canadian College Italy has been a place where students discover themselves and their potential. On a breathtaking campus between sea and mountains, small classes offer personalized academics while extracurriculars like sports, arts, leadership and more, build confidence and independence. Educational travel across Italy deepens resilience and connection. Students don't just learn here, they grow into who they're meant to be.

Grades: Grade 9 to Grade 12, plus a gap year

Type/Curriculum: Abroad, boarding school, co-educational, experiential learning, university prep

Average Class Size: 10

Total Enrolment: 100

Tuition: €44,600

Financial Assistance Available: Yes

Open House Dates:

Book a virtual or in-person tour by appointment.



Collingwood School

**70 Morven Dr., 2605 Wentworth Ave.,
West Vancouver, British Columbia
collingwood.org**

Collingwood's personalized approach fosters academic excellence and well-being as students pursue their passions across academics, athletics, arts and service learning. With an emphasis on belonging, the school values authentic, real-world educational experiences, collaboration, character development and problem-solving. Graduates receive offers to global post-secondary institutions and are ready to enter the world as resilient critical thinkers.

Grades: Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12
Type/Curriculum: Academic, day school, gender inclusive
Average Class Size: 20
Total Enrolment: 1,256
Tuition: \$28,550 to \$31,900
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates:
 Grade 8 to Grade 11: October 15;
 Junior Kindergarten to Grade 7: October 21

Greenwood College School

**443 Mount Pleasant Rd., Toronto
greenwoodcollege.org**

Greenwood College School empowers students to develop the knowledge, skills and character they need to reach their full potential. The school's personalized approach to learning is coupled with an innovative Adviser Program to provide each student with the right combination of challenge and support as they grow academically and as people. Its welcoming, gender-inclusive community fosters open-mindedness and engagement, and it offers an array of high-calibre athletics, arts and co-curricular programs.

Grades: Grade 7 to Grade 12
Type/Curriculum: Academic, co-educational, experiential learning
Average Class Size: 7-to-1 Student to teacher ratio
Total enrolment: 500
Tuition: \$47,170
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates: *Tours available weekly on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Learn more at greenwoodcollege.org/visitus.*



Lakefield College School

**4391 County Rd. 29, Lakefield, Ontario
lcs.on.ca**

At LCS, immersive, hands-on learning and strong academics—including AP, interdisciplinary courses, and Harkness discussions—empower teenagers with the skills, mindsets, and experiences to confidently navigate an ever-changing world. The school's community helps each student discover their strengths and passions, supported by caring mentors and friends from around the world. Through real-world experiences on Canada's largest waterfront campus, students build confidence, curiosity and resilience for life beyond school.

Grades: Grade 9 to Grade 12
Type/Curriculum: Boarding school, high school, day school, university prep, experiential learning
Average Class Size: 14
Total Enrolment: 445
Tuition: \$42,100 to \$77,200
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates: October 18: 10 a.m.

St. Clement's School

**21 St. Clements Ave., Toronto
scs.on.ca**

As a leading independent girls' school with nearly 125 years of history in Toronto, St. Clement's School is recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic rigour and excellence in a small, nurturing environment. The school provides a close-knit community that celebrates creativity, diversity and innovation, where 470 students from Grades 1 to 12 live, learn and grow together under one roof.

Grades: Grade 1 to Grade 12
Type/Curriculum: All girls, day school, experiential learning, inquiry-based learning
Average Class Size: 14
Total Enrolment: 470
Tuition: \$39,900
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates:
 October 17: 9 to 11:15 a.m.;
 November 14: 9 to 11:15 a.m.



The Sterling Hall School

99 Cartright Ave., Toronto
sterlinghall.com

The Sterling Hall School (SHS) delivers innovative academic practices and boy-focused programming that inspires growth, curiosity and a passion for learning. The school specializes in educating boys from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8, providing foundational learning and leading-edge curriculum taught by dedicated faculty. SHS boys are challenged to develop new interests, build character strengths and foster leadership skills, in a welcoming and nurturing community. Visit SHS to learn more about the school where boys belong.



Grades: Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8
Type/Curriculum: All boys, day school, elementary, experiential learning, inquiry-based learning
Average Class Size: 16 to 20
Total Enrolment: 320
Tuition: \$39,500
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates: Reach out to admissions@sterlinghall.com to learn about personalized information sessions and tours.



St. John's–Ravenscourt School

400 South Dr., Winnipeg
sjr.mb.ca

Nestled within an oxbow of the Red River lies Western Canada's oldest independent school, St. John's–Ravenscourt. As a co-educational Kindergarten to Grade 12 school, students are engaged in an inspiring environment. The school's strong educational offerings provide a balance of academic excellence, social responsibility, creative expression and active healthy living. With exceptional debate and public speaking programs, the school prepares students for their future.

Grades: Kindergarten to Grade 12
Type/Curriculum: Co-educational, day school, STEM, university prep
Average Class Size: 22
Total Enrolment: 906
Tuition: \$26,390 to \$31,467
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates: Visit sjr.mb.ca/admissions/important-dates for a list of open house dates.

St. Mildred's–Lightbourn School

1080 Linbrook Rd., Oakville, Ontario
smls.on.ca

St. Mildred's–Lightbourn School challenges young women to think expansively and engage fearlessly with a personalized, real-world learning experience that teaches them to see the future as a gift. Anchored in a nurturing community of exceptional educators and supportive peers, SMLS is where girls from JK to Grade 12 go to create the best version of themselves. SMLS is where the new, the unfamiliar, even the seemingly impossible, becomes "I got this."



Grades: Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12
Type/Curriculum: All girls, day school, elementary, high school, inquiry-based learning
Average Class Size: 15
Total Enrolment: 540
Tuition: \$26,000 to \$35,200
Financial Assistance Available: Yes
Open House Dates: October 16: 9 to 11 a.m.;
 October 25: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.;
 October 28: 9 to 11 a.m.
Families may also book private tours by emailing admissions@smls.on.ca.



Walden International School

2035 Upper Middle Rd. E., Oakville, Ontario
waldeninternationalschool.com

As an authorized IB World School, Walden delivers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) to students in JK through Grade 5 and the Middle Years Programme (MYP) to students Grades 6 through 8. Walden's dedication to wellness, service learning, environmental stewardship and international mindedness ensures that students are well-prepared for secondary school studies and beyond. Walden is committed to nurturing students who will become globally responsible citizens.

Grades: Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8
Type/Curriculum: Day school, elementary, inquiry-based learning, International Baccalaureate, liberal arts
Average Class Size: 16
Total Enrolment: 225
Tuition: \$23,500 to \$25,000
Financial Assistance Available: No
Open House Dates: October 25: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

FIND YOUR OWN PATH



Your education should be driven by curiosity, courage, and a sense of purpose. At Lakefield College School, students embrace hands-on, real-world learning through outdoor education, interdisciplinary studies, AP Courses, Harkness discussions, and thoughtful integration of AI. We empower students to use emerging tools while preserving their voice, fostering independent thinking, and preparing them to lead with insight in a rapidly changing world.

○ **155-acre** lakeside campus and **160-acre** regenerative learning farm—where students are inspired by nature every day

○ **\$2.9 million** in total annual tuition assistance

○ **14** Advanced Placement courses + **1** AP Capstone Program

○ **14 students** – average class size

○ **1-on-1** post-secondary guidance and support

○ **Endless** opportunities to explore and expand your horizons

○ **BeInspiredByLakefield.ca**

Explore real stories of growth, purpose, and connection.

○ **Be part** of a warm, caring, and globally-minded community that supports every student's wellbeing and potential

○ **Join** a diverse group of students and teachers, drawn from over 40 countries, committed to learning with purpose and contributing to a better world

○ **Discover** who you are; through challenge, reflection, and shared experiences in nature and in the classroom

○ **Gain** confidence, character, and the skills to lead with purpose in your life and community

LIKE NO OTHER
LAKEFIELD
COLLEGE SCHOOL

THE CROSSWORD

CLUES FROM ACROSS CANADA

HOLD MUSIC

By Will Nediger

ACROSS

- 1 Crater creators
- 8 Person defaming in print
- 15 Cooking ingredient with a high smoke point
- 16 One expelled from the Maritimes in the Great Upheaval
- 17 1983 film about Guatemalans fleeing to the United States
- 18 Ministers of finance traditionally wear new shoes to present these
- 19 Saxophonist Cannonball, or his brother Nat (continued at 23-across)
- 20 BCE part
- 22 Piano virtuoso Oscar (continued at 25-across)
- 23 (Continued from 19-across)
- 24 Downward dog surface
- 25 (Continued from 22-across)
- 26 Kenojuak Ashevak's field
- 27 Consumer protection org.
- 30 People to keep up with, metaphorically
- 34 Durham's region, for short
- 37 Defoe protagonist
- 39 Musclemán's bounce
- 41 Way to learn things without trying
- 45 *Enigma Variations* composer Edward
- 46 Pianist who inspired Thelonious Monk's "In Walked Bud" (continued at 49-across)
- 47 "Go me!"
- 48 Honey
- 49 (Continued from 46-across)
- 50 Your, more formally
- 51 Lake near St. Clair
- 53 Response from an eager subordinate
- 54 Like a jazz musician who's really feeling a song's groove... and like three jazz musicians in this puzzle

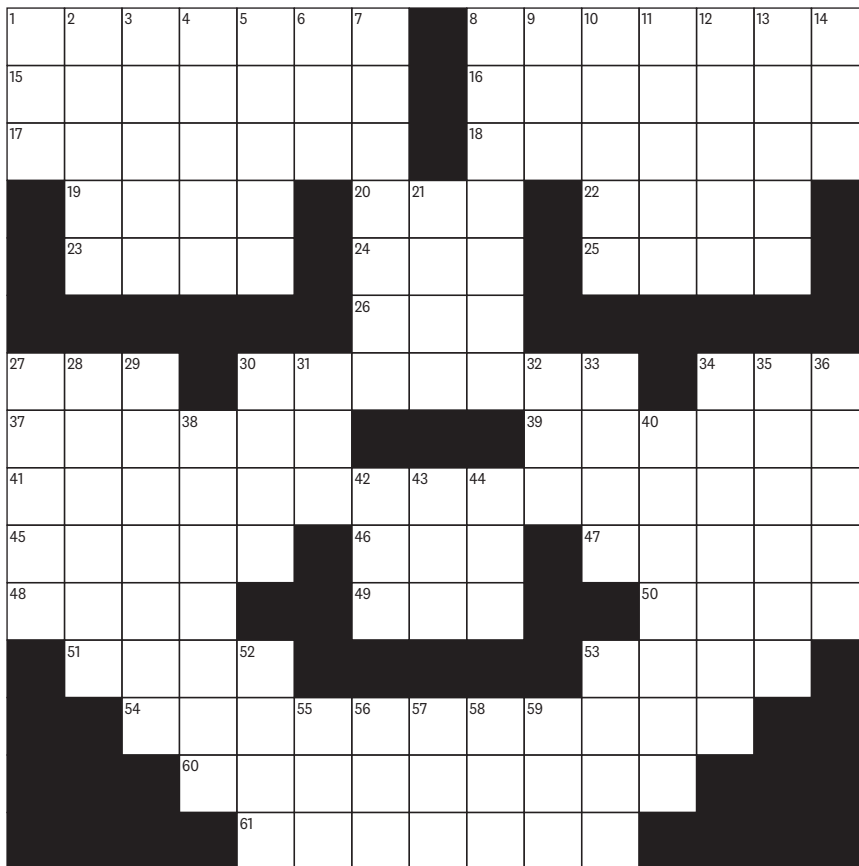
- 60 Gradually lost touch
- 61 Title for a retiree

DOWN

- 1 Drink chiller
- 2 Relative of a canine
- 3 Transmission letters that London Tipton pronounces "prindle" on *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody*
- 4 Battery end
- 5 "Sunglasses at Night" singer Hart
- 6 Palindromic bird
- 7 Honey Brown Lager brewery
- 8 Blues and others
- 9 Hospital area that sounds like a full sentence

- 10 Fallout of a controversy
- 11 Seat sections sat on during suspenseful scenes
- 12 Gaslight, e.g.
- 13 Gone from the plate
- 14 9-down staff
- 21 Valuable to a collector
- 27 Secretly kept in the loop
- 28 Crème ___
- 29 Luxury watch brand
- 30 Nice day?
- 31 "Jingle Bells" contraction
- 32 Debut releases, often
- 33 Penultimate match
- 34 It might tell you to take turns
- 35 ___ training (parent's endeavour)
- 36 Basilica areas

- 38 Competing in an eye-watering contest
- 40 Noble headgear
- 42 Do an impression of
- 43 Texting abbreviation that's rarely meant literally
- 44 Bird depicted by Kenojuak Ashevak
- 52 ___ *humain* (human being)
- 53 Vegetable in gumbo
- 55 Line of clothing?
- 56 Many a *Babe* character
- 57 Golf course number
- 58 "Dreamsicle" nail polish company
- 59 Animal that serves as a natural mousetrap



WILL NEDIGER published his first crossword in the *New York Times* when he was 16 years old. Nearly two decades later, he has a Ph.D. in linguistics, and his puzzles appear regularly in *The New Yorker*, *The Walrus*, *Vox* and many other places. Nediger lives in London, Ontario, with his two children. When he's not constructing crosswords, he watches old movies and writes and plays trivia.



MaRS



Where breakthroughs happen

Canada is a research powerhouse in life sciences. But even the best ideas won't make it out of the lab without the right infrastructure, funding and support. That's where MaRS comes in.

We provide access to expert advice, lab space and capital strategy to help the next wave of health innovators transform research into real-world impact. MaRS supports more than 300 health companies, including Noa Therapeutics, a biotech startup unlocking the power of the immune system to transform the treatment of chronic inflammatory diseases.

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Serena Mandla (M.A.Sc., P.Eng.) and Carla Spina (Ph.D.) are the co-founders of Noa Therapeutics.



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something.**

ucalgary.ca/startsomething