

# DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST CAMPUS NEWSPAPER, *EST. 1868*

## Back to campus ... kind of



PHOTO BY GEOFFREY HOWARD, PHOTO OF HENRY HICKS BUILDING ON LAPTOP BY RYAN SHARPE

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

## We're here for you

Dear Reader,

I don't know how to start this letter. I can't put into 300 words how I feel about everything that's happened in the months leading up to September.

What I can say is, these are difficult times. It's important to acknowledge this. I'm feeling stressed and anxious about the school year to come, and you probably are too.

As courses at Dalhousie University transition to a virtual setting, so will the *Dalhousie Gazette*. For our first issue of 2020-2021, and likely for the next few issues to come, we won't be printing any physical papers. Instead we'll upload our issues online, which you can find at [dalgazette.com](http://dalgazette.com).

Amidst all the uncertainty in our current moment, there's one thing I can promise you: The *Gazette* is still here for Dal students. We have been since 1868. Though we may not be in print, there's a whole team of us working to publish the stories you want to read. We'll still put out an issue every other week during the school year. We're still doing the work to hold Dal administration and the Dal Student Union (DSU) accountable. We're still writing for you.

I wish I could give you a firm date on when the *Gazette* will start printing again. I wish I could tell you when things will go back to normal, but I don't know when either of those events will happen. If we've learned anything in the past few months (from dealing with a pandemic to watching protestors risk their lives to end police brutality against Black people), it's that there is no going back to normal, and maybe that's a good thing. Maybe as we're stuck inside over the months to come, we can think about creating a better future instead of going back to a dark past.



-Tarini Fernando, Editor-in-chief

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## THE FINE PRINT

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# Less university, more tuition

## Dalhousie increases tuition by three per cent while shifting classes online

BY STEPHEN WENTZELL

In the midst of a pandemic that's resulted in the suspension of most in-person classes and a spike in unemployment rates, Dalhousie University has decided to increase the cost of tuition.

For students who couldn't earn money over the summer for the upcoming school year, or others who were unable to travel home to be with their families, raising tuition this fall will give gatekeeping a whole new meaning.

"I think a lot of students are feeling cheated and exploited when they're paying the same or increasing amounts for an online education without the other elements of the post-secondary experience that are equally important," said Levi Clarkson, president of the King's Students' Union (KSU) at the University of King's College.

Dalhousie's Board of Governors decided in May to increase tuition by three per cent for the 2020-2021 school year. In an email to students, Dal President Deep Saini explained the increase as necessary to "maintain the high quality of our academic programming."

King's students are paying more this school year too. The journalism school's tuition is increasing by one per cent and the Foundation Year Program (FYP) tuition is increasing by three per cent.

Many students aren't on board. Some are taking a gap year. Others are reducing their course loads and struggling to find work after previously relying on campus employment for income.

### Why tuition's going up

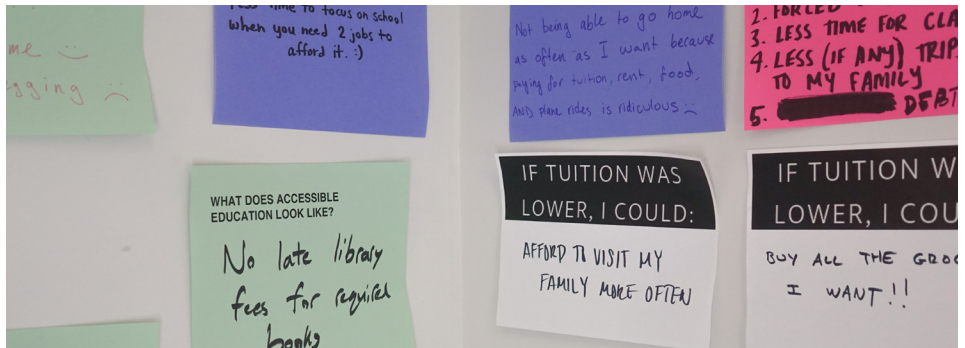
According to Bonnie Sands, a bursar at King's, both universities have undertaken additional costs to prepare for the fall semester.

"It sounds counterintuitive, but to go online, there are quite a few costs that we're incurring to be able to offer quality programming that students are used to receiving," Sands said.

Technology played a central role in King's spending. They paid to enhance the audio quality for streaming from Alumni Hall, as well as dedicated funding to provide mobile production kits for journalism students that include a tripod and a wireless mic set, which students regularly borrow from the school.

King's hired at least three additional senior fellows to accommodate the smaller tutorial sizes they'll be having.

"Those positions are two-to-three-year positions so even though it might be a one-year issue, it's going to affect our cost down the road for multiple



A STUDENT PROTEST AGAINST TUITION FEES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE IN THE FALL OF 2019. AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY AND KING'S HAVE DECIDED TO INCREASE TUITION BY THREE PER CENT. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

years," Sands said.

The expected decrease in student enrolment will have a similar long-term impact on King's bottom line, resulting in a loss of revenue over the next four years.

### How students are affected

The fall semester coincides with the end of the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), when many people will be cut back to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits – benefits full-time students are ineligible to receive. Students who didn't qualify for the CERB or EI had the option of applying for the Canadian Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), worth \$1,250 a month, which also ends at the end of September.

International students, who were ineligible to qualify for CERB, are facing the bulk of the tuition increase, receiving a \$1,473 spike in tuition, the second increase of more than \$1,000 in the past two years. These increases are slated to continue until at least the 2022-2023 school year.

"Some international students are back in their home countries," said Erica Seelemann, vice president (academic and external) of the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU). "They aren't going to be able to learn remotely properly. They also don't have the funds to pay for tuition, but if they don't continue, if they take a year off, they get immediately hit with their student loans, so they're very much stuck between a rock and a hard place."

Clarkson shares this sentiment.

"International students have the least amount of access to services and supports on and off-campus, and yet they're treated like cash cows so universities can run themselves like businesses," Clarkson said.

### Student unions fight the tuition increase

The KSU sent out surveys to King's students to

get their feedback on how the pandemic has affected their finances and to garner their thoughts on virtual learning. The surveys were filled out by 110 students – roughly 10 per cent of the King's student body.

"In one of our surveys regarding the transition to online learning, we found that students would miss things like face-to-face interaction with peers and professors, as well as access to study spaces," Clarkson said. "When asked about their enrolment plans for the upcoming year, over 65 per cent of [surveyed] students said they would take reduced course loads or completely defer."

Nearly 80 per cent of King's students surveyed said they were more likely to enrol in virtual learning if the cost of tuition decreased.

Clarkson believes Bill Lahey, president of King's, should be advocating for more government funding for students and universities in his role as chair of the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents.

Some campus jobs, such as conference services and hospitality positions at campus bars, won't exist in a virtual setting this school year. Over the summer, King's implemented several internship and fellowship opportunities for students.

Seelemann lobbied the Dalhousie Board of Directors to lower tuition rates, but feels the DSU's efforts "were largely ignored."

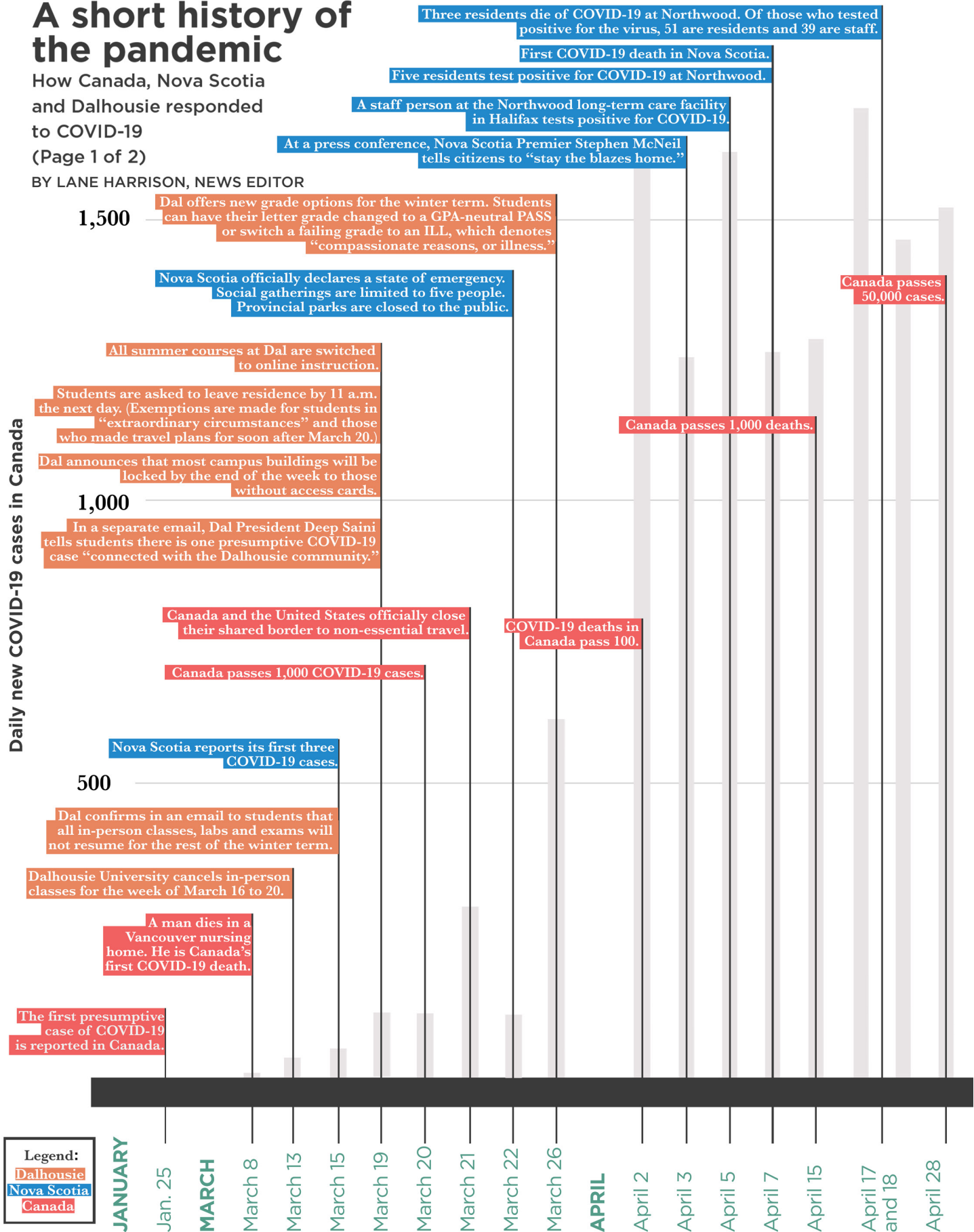
"We think if there's any year to not increase tuition, it would be this year. We understand they have a four-year plan to increase tuition every year by three per cent, but again, the entire world has had to adapt to this pandemic," Seelemann said. "It doesn't seem like the right decision to follow through with a plan that continues to harm students that are very much being harmed by the current situation."

The Dal administration budgeted additional bursaries for students struggling to keep up with the cost of education during the pandemic. Bursary applications are available on the university's website.

# A short history of the pandemic

How Canada, Nova Scotia and Dalhousie responded to COVID-19  
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BY LANE HARRISON, NEWS EDITOR



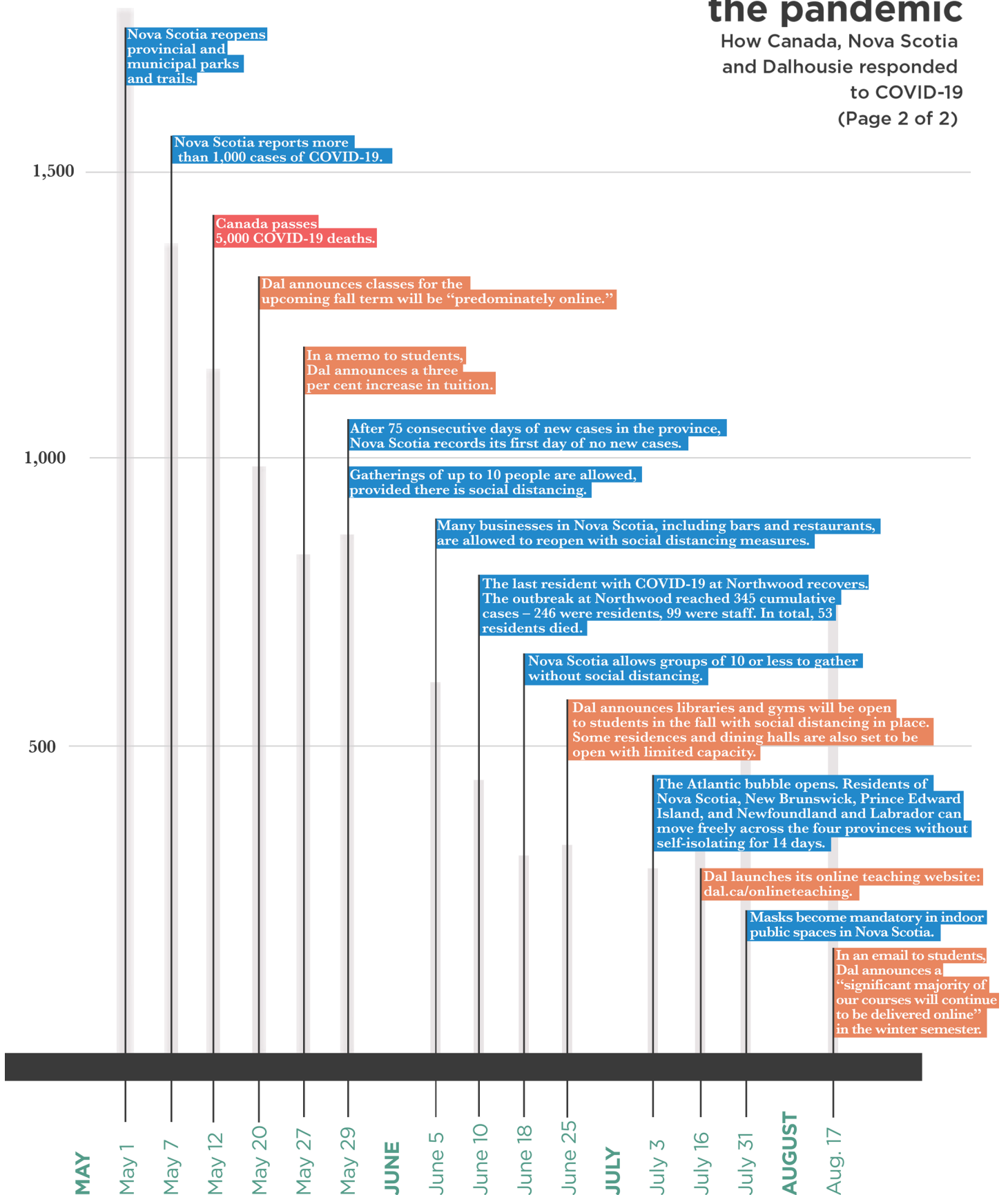
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Nova Scotia  
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# A short history of the pandemic

How Canada, Nova Scotia and Dalhousie responded to COVID-19

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# Navigating university in the time of remote learning

A guide for first-generation students

BY TOM ZHAI



UNIVERSITY CAN BE A COLD AND UNFAMILIAR PLACE FOR NEWCOMERS, ESPECIALLY FIRST-GENERATION FRESHMEN. (PHOTO BY ELEMENTS DIGITAL ON UNSPLASH)

You're alone in a new city, furiously typing a term paper due in an hour when your boss calls and asks you to work an extra shift. Caffeine runs through your veins and bloodshot eyes. A half-eaten cold sandwich sits on the table. Tackling university isn't easy, and being the first in your family to do so makes it even harder.

Feelings of stress, anxiety and frustration are bound to affect first-generation university students. (The definition can vary, but generally speaking first-generation students are individuals whose parents did not attend or graduate from university.)

As Dalhousie University prepares for an unprecedented online fall semester, here are some tips for first-generation students to make their lives a little easier.

**“As first-generation university students, our family members may have good intentions to help us in difficult times, but they sometimes don't know how best to support us.”**

only providing phone appointments.) You can also visit your program's website to find contact information for advisors from specific departments.

## Visit a career counsellor

Talking with a career counsellor at Dal could be your first step towards finding employment opportunities. They can help you create or improve your resume and cover letter, a necessary skill for the modern graduate. Career counsellors can provide resources and referrals, and help you discover your own skills and strengths. It wouldn't hurt to ask what resources you will have access to after you graduate.

Due to COVID-19, Dal is providing more financial and scholarship support than usual to students. There are also some bursaries given to Dal students by the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) under certain conditions.

Search all scholarships, bursaries and financial aid resources you may be eligible for. Email or chat with university administrators to find more opportunities. When it comes to applying to financial aid you qualify for, don't say no to yourself. You'll never know what you can get if you don't apply.

## Casual networking

Keep in touch with people whether they are professors, classmates or colleagues. It is important to be genuine and open-minded in maintaining relationships with people. I never expected to find part-time jobs in undergrad through recommendations from colleagues and friends. Know that networking does not have to be super formal. It can happen in a casual setting, too!

## Go to your academic advisor

No really, go to your academic advisor. As a first-generation student starting university, I naively believed I could randomly take whatever courses I was interested in for four years. Turns out, there's a certain number of course credits and specific requirements to earn a degree.

Your academic advisor is your go-to person to plan out the courses you need to satisfy your degree requirements. Chances are they also have insights and information you can't determine from the school's website (e.g. how light or heavy specific courses are and whether you can delay or reschedule certain courses to accommodate your job schedule). During times of stress – and there will be many – your advisor can be a shining light in the darkness.

Contact the Bissett Student Success Centre for general academic advising. (They're currently

Book a phone appointment online to talk to a career counsellor at the Bissett Centre.

## Let social media help you

There are many helpful and informative groups on social media that help students find jobs, internships, housing, roommates, textbooks, furniture, clothing and more. Back in undergrad, I found two part-time jobs through postings on Facebook and absolutely enjoyed them both.

On Facebook, check out the Dalhousie Book Exchange and the private groups made for every graduating class.

## Apply to scholarships, bursaries and loans

Many first-generation students may experience some extent of financial burden in university.

## Ask for help

Students face ups and downs; that's just the reality of university life. It's OK to struggle. Personally, I could have done a better job acknowledging and embracing my hard times.

As first-generation university students, our family members may have good intentions to help us in difficult times, but they sometimes don't know how best to support us. If you lack the support you need, ask for help from university staff and student groups. Whether the help you need is academic, social, occupational or mental health related, there are institutions set up to support you, from students societies to the Student Health and Wellness Centre.

Seeking support when needed is an empowering decision to make and will certainly benefit you in the long run.

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# Productivity in a pandemic

## Have we abandoned the concept of productivity or are we simply redefining it?

BY ANAHIT KONDYAN



IN LIGHT OF COVID-19, MANY ARE QUESTIONING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PRODUCTIVE DURING A PANDEMIC. (PHOTO BY CHRISTIN HUME ON UNSPLASH)

The impact of COVID-19 on productivity is one that will long outlive the virus itself.

The pandemic is redefining our understanding of what it means to be goal oriented. Since lockdown began back in March, we've found interesting ways to occupy the time, from learning a new language to spending some much-needed time off with family.

But while some of us have been keeping busy during self-isolation, others have experienced an incredibly hard time trying to feel productive.

### The science of productivity

Dopamine, the happy hormone as I like to call it, is a neurotransmitter secreted in our brains during various everyday functions (e.g. moving and eating).

Dopamine is also released when we're anticipating a reward, like waiting for the pizza delivery guy to show up. Dopamine is therefore linked with pleasure, and when we accomplish a goal we've set for ourselves, we often feel happy and productive. But getting that dopamine productivity hit may be difficult for many living through the pandemic. Early research on the psychological impact of COVID-19 suggests individuals have felt high lev-

els of anxiety and feelings of worthlessness throughout the last few months.

In a paper published in the journal *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, psychology researcher Lauren Leotti and her colleagues describe the human need to have a sense of choice and control over our environment.

It's difficult to feel you have any choice or control when a virus is forcing you to stay inside. But what if even a small daily routine could help us gain a sense of control amidst the chaos around us?

Of course, creating a routine is easier said than done. While productivity and a sense of direction can do wonders in establishing a little piece of mind, there are those of us whose version of coping is doing absolutely nothing, which is perfectly fine! Nobody should feel pressure to be productive when they are not feeling up to it. However, there are small tasks we can accomplish throughout the day in order to make ourselves feel more productive.

### Redefining productivity

In my opinion, simply making the bed in the morning, going for a walk or cooking dinner instead of ordering takeout can make a huge difference in our mindset. These small life changes could program our brains to feel more motivated to accomplish larger tasks at hand. This is especially important for students who are wary of going back to school online in the fall and feel a lack of motivation in the face of the pandemic.

The sad truth is life does not slow down when we need it to. While there is no button we can press to pause things, we can still take steps to make things more manageable. Redefining what productivity looks like is a step in the right direction.

### Getting into a routine

When lockdown was first announced back in March, I knew if I remained idle, the reality of what was happening would become too overwhelming. I began to fill my day with activities I always wanted to do, but never had time for: practicing German, writing and drawing, and finally reading a fiction book for the first time in a while.

By slowly falling into a routine, I felt less anxious and more in control. Of course, I could not change

the reality of what was happening, but I could enact change in my life, which seemed like a fair trade. By making to-do lists with neat little checkboxes, we return to the days when life was less unpredictable and

we were not victim to the whims of a nasty little virus.

As a society, we have not moved beyond the need for productivity. If anything, the emergence of COVID-19 has only cemented that humans need routines in times of stress in order to feel grounded. Living through a global pandemic is scary, and while nobody should feel pressured to become the pinnacle of productivity, setting small goals for ourselves is a good way to alleviate stress and anxiety.

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**“The sad truth is life does not slow down when we need it to.”**

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# Five podcasts about climate justice

## Meet the people making real change

BY KRISTEN TYMOSHUK



SIGNS FROM THE HALIFAX CLIMATE STRIKE ON SEPT. 27, 2019. (PHOTO BY KRISTEN TYMOSHUK)

The politics of climate change and social justice are intricately linked and impossible to untangle. The following podcasts take an intersectional approach to covering climate change and inequality by amplifying unheard voices and discussing climate solutions that leave nobody behind.

### ***Mothers of Invention***

*Mothers of Invention* highlights powerful women from around the world and showcases their solutions to the climate crisis. It features the voices of scientists, farmers, activists, lawyers, community leaders and so many more.

Hosts Mary Robinson (the former president of Ireland), Maeve Higgins (an Irish comic) and Thimale Kodikara (the series producer) balance witty banter and serious discussions on the critical climate issues we face today. They talk immigration, agriculture, biodiversity, policy and more. Season three kicked off on Aug. 5 with new episodes every other week.

*Suggested episode:* “The Lungs of the North.” The hosts talk to Dalee Sambo Dorrough, chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council. The group talks about the melting Arctic and the Inuit communities who

are fighting against corporations that want to exploit their territories for commercial mining, shipping and fishing.

### ***The YIKES Podcast***

Climate change and social justice are polarising issues. That’s why Mikaela Loach and Jo Becker, intersectional climate justice activists from Scotland, created *The YIKES Podcast*. They wanted to provide a safe space to dissect tough issues like the refugee crisis, eco-fascism, environmental racism and fast fashion. Season one wrapped up at the end of July after completing 11 episodes.

*Suggested episode:* “Black Lives Matter Is More Than A Trend.” This episode features environmental activists Leah Thomas and Marie Beecham who discuss how the Black Lives Matter movement has brought new and long overdue attention to Black women in the environmental field. They discuss tokenism in the workplace and urge companies to adopt intersectional policies.

### ***Change Everything***

Hosts Avi Lewis and Maya Menezes are part of The Leap team, a Canadian organization with a

mission to fight climate change and advocate for a Green New Deal in Canada. The Green New Deal is an economic plan to address climate change and inequality in the United States.

The podcast discusses aspects of the Green New Deal with a focus on Canadian politics and how they intersect with climate, racism and inequality. *Change Everything* records a new episode every few months.

*Suggested episode:* “Naomi Klein, Coronavirus Capitalism, and a People’s Bailout Now!” This episode features guest Naomi Klein, a Canadian author and co-founder of The Leap, to talk about how the coronavirus pandemic brings new possibilities and problems for a Green New Deal in Canada, and why billionaires are benefiting from the pandemic.

### ***Green Dreamer***

Kamea Chayne created the *Green Dreamer* podcast to share stories of authors, activists, artists and others tackling intersectional climate problems in unique ways. The show explores topics such as spirituality, regenerative agriculture, the power of storytelling and community resilience. Presently there are more than 250 episodes with a new one coming out twice a week.

*Suggested episode:* “Kevin Wilhelm: Finding common ground in the age of a global pandemic and climate change.” Kevin Wilhelm, author and CEO of Sustainable Business Consulting, discusses how our common desire for healthy communities can help us effectively talk to people who don’t seem to care about climate in a way that can create long-lasting positive change.

### ***How to Save a Planet***

*How to Save a Planet* is a new podcast that just premiered on Aug. 20. It’s hosted by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, a marine biologist, and Alex Blumberg, CEO of Gimlet Media. The hosts interview experts and regular people about climate solutions, and focus on how individual people can engage their communities and push governments to make real change.

The podcast brings science, policy and justice together. In an interview with the online magazine *E&E News*, Kendra Pierre-Louis, a climate reporter working on the podcast, described the show as “climate journalism meets *Schoolhouse Rock!*”



# An evening at a cilingir sofrasi

Dal student reflects on the Turkish tradition of drinking raki

BY GOKCE ON



A TOAST TO FRIENDSHIP, HEALTH AND GOOD THINGS TO COME (LEFT). CALAMARI AND OTHER ESSENTIAL APPETIZERS AT A CILINGIR SOFRASI (RIGHT). (PHOTOS BY GOKCE ON)

The sounds of distant voices fade away as the conversation at our table gets deeper. Sitting with my friends I momentarily look around, eyes gazing over empty glasses of raki, and see everyone else has left the restaurant. We're the only table left.

## A Turkish tradition

Raki is a traditional Turkish drink. Although it can be made using different fruits, the main ingredient is usually grapes and it's generally flavoured with anise. Variations of raki can be found in different countries such as Greece and throughout the Middle East.

For Turks, raki isn't just an evening's choice of alcohol. Drinking raki is an event. The proper way to consume it is at a *cilingir sofrasi*: a modestly arranged table with light meals and appetizers.

In Turkish, *cilingir* means locksmith and *sofrasi* means table. Some say the term refers to how the more people drink, the more they tend to speak freely and in a less filtered fashion; mouths become unlocked just as a locksmith unlocks a door. Drinking at the table emphasizes both the importance of food in Turkish culture and the fact raki is a remarkably strong spirit with high alcohol content.

No experience drinking raki or sitting at a cilingir sofrasi is ever the same. Who one sits with makes a large difference.

If one drinks with their elders, the conversation

likely drifts toward reminiscing about the old days when everything was better and yet so much worse at the same time. The night might end with someone knee-deep in life advice. A large number of unrelated stories are either completed or left unfinished as the storyteller shifts to start another one. Drinking with friends leads to vastly different conversations with just as many, if not more, unfinished stories.

## The night begins

Last summer, craving fewer life lessons and more weirdly interlaced conversation about random topics, I took my friends out for raki.

As we enter the restaurant, the conversation about who'll go and order the appetizers begins. This is an opportunity for people to show who's going to call the shots that night, since other than the raki itself, this is the most essential element of the table.

Once that's settled, and the appetizers (a yogurt dip with mint and cucumber called *haydari*, Russian salad, hummus and various seafood) start arriving, the second topic of discussion is about who will serve the raki. Typically this task falls on the youngest person at the table, but people also want someone with a steady hand. (No one wants to get too drunk, too fast.) Then, the conversation shifts away from the table and back in time to the start of the summer.

We talk about how things were and what hap-

pened in the last three months: what has happened in our little friend group, what's been happening in our country and the world. All bases are covered, from whether we'll be able to return to our universities due to COVID-19 to the financial crisis in Turkey. Every two or three sentences, someone stops to trail off into song.

## Considering every possibility

Even though we're outside, the atmosphere feels like home. With the constant accompaniment of pouring, clinking glasses and silverware, the more we drink, the deeper the conversation becomes.

After a while, we hit a point where we completely forget about the past and the present. We start talking about our futures: what each of us will do for a job, whether or not we'll be healthy, if we'll become rich at some point. Not all these daydreams are positive though. We think about all the possibilities, even sickness and death.

We start talking about the different cities we live in. At one point, the server joins the conversation and talks about how different Istanbul was when he was a student. He tells us about his life and the memories he made in the city. With such a mess of topics of conversation, we talk the night away.

There really is no science on how to drink raki, but whichever way you do it, you shouldn't leave the table until you feel truly loved by the people you're sitting with.



# How to survive social isolation

## Advice on beating the quarantine blues

BY LEAH SIMONOT



LILA BERRYMAN TALKS QUARANTINE HOBBIES IN HER HALIFAX BACKYARD. SHE TRIES TO BEGIN EACH MORNING HERE WITH MEDITATION AND TEA. (PHOTO BY LEAH SIMONOT)

Fall will pass like summer did before it: distanced, uncertain and offering good reason (if not an order) to stay home. While stuck in quarantine, why not cut yourself some slack and give one of these hobby hacks a whirl?

Halifax-based art therapist Evie Dunville says thinking outside the box is vital, “whether it’s the box on the back of the pasta or the box that school put you into.”

Though no substitute for professional help, Dunville says creativity and exploration can buoy spirits during low or anxious spells. She encourages people to “just stop and zoom in a little bit.”

In other words, appreciate the little things around you: the bumble bee going about its splendored work, the ingredients you cook with, and your own body and mind. This shift in thinking opens the door to brighter days.

Through creativity, Dunville says, “you actually start trying to reframe your focus and reframe your life.”

### Mindfulness and meditation

Lila Berryman, a fourth-year international development studies and French major at Dalhousie University, readily offers book, podcast and video game recommendations. She also dabbles in guitar and woodworking, tends a garden, cross-stitches and weaves friendship bracelets from embroidery thread. She once painted a handful of landscaping rocks entirely brown because she had just the one colour on hand.

Like most people, Berryman’s motivation waxes and wanes.

She tries to begin each day with meditation, either streaming from an app or sitting outside with eyes closed taking in birdsong and the occasional bagpipe serenade.

“Doing that makes me feel like I’ve accomplished something and that kind of sets the tone for the rest of the day,” Berryman says.

Meditation encourages Berryman to notice thoughts and emotions as they surface, which helps her accept mistakes and keep insecurities at bay.

“[Meditation] would definitely help with starting new hobbies

and it would also help with lots of other things,” Berryman says.

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**“Doing [meditation] makes me feel like I’ve accomplished something and that kind of sets the tone for the rest of the day.”**

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## Get creative

From sourdough starters to candle-making, it seems the most popular quarantine trends have people getting creative. But what if creativity isn't your strong suit?

Dunville recommends switching off critic mode to focus on play and experimentation.

"I do believe that some art can be sacred," Dunville says, "but creating this kind of mythos around art . . . makes it challenging for people to actually enjoy the creation."

For Nicole Keeping, a student at the University of King's College, moving in with her partner in May and being laid off meant she had time to tune into chef's vlogs (and had someone to share the results with). While Uber Eats and fast food were relentlessly attractive heading into lockdown a few months ago, Keeping is glad to no longer rely on them.

"When you're tired, I don't know, you think the world is ending, you don't have the energy to make your own meal," says Keeping, who is in her fourth year of a music major.

Since paying attention to how food works and investing a bit of each pay cheque into better equipment, Keeping's kitchen has become a place of expression and self-care.

"Now when I go into my kitchen and see all these great things to cook with, it will seem like a waste if I'm not using them," says Keeping. "Even if it is busy, I've learned how to make quick, easy meals."

## This too shall pass

Hannah Whaley, a fourth-year English and theatre studies major at Dal, gravitated toward escapism during her two rounds of self-isolation.

"I will sing the praises of OverDrive forever," Whaley says of the free ebook website.

Whaley also spent time listening to podcasts and enjoying her new Nintendo Switch (which she happened to get on sale). For Whaley, being in solitude granted space for processing the winter term as it wrapped up. Later on, she kept busy balancing summer school with a full-time job. But being in isolation can even get introverts feeling down.

Whaley's advice is to let yourself miss people: notice that it sucks, but try not to dwell on it.

"You're not going to feel this intense about [self-isolation] every day," she says, adding that putting people at risk would be more stressful than not seeing them.

If you're left with nothing else to do in quarantine, consider following Whaley's lead: with the impossibility of getting a haircut, she decided to shave her head. Like Whaley, you can sit back and enjoy people's reactions on Zoom.

*Disclosure: Hannah Whaley is the member-at-large on the Dalhousie Gazette's publishing board.*



BERRYMAN'S HOBBIES INCLUDE CROSS-STITCHING AND DRAWING. (PHOTOS BY LEAH SIMONOT)



# Snapshots of 2020

Life during the pandemic from Halifax to Ecuador

BY NATALIA TOLA



JANUARY: STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE IN HALIFAX TAKE A STAND AGAINST THEIR INSTITUTION. POSTERS IN THE ARTS AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PROTEST THE RISE IN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' TUITION FEES.



MARCH: DONATIONS FROM THE BIN OUTSIDE DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY'S SHIRREFF HALL ARE SCATTERED ACROSS A TABLE. CONTRIBUTIONS SURGED AS STUDENTS VACATED RESIDENCE, DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, LEAVING A DISPENSARY OF GOODS UP FOR GRABS.

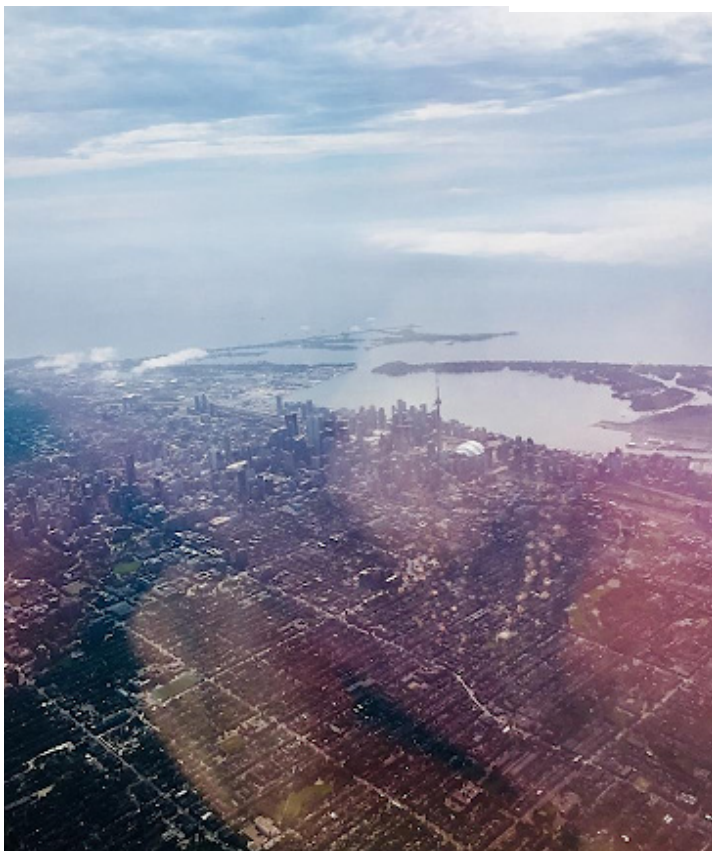


APRIL: PILES OF TAKEOUT BOXES FILL THE TRASH CANS OUTSIDE HOWE DINING HALL DURING QUARANTINE. TAKEOUT HAS BECOME THE POPULAR CHOICE AS STUDENTS CARRY FOOD TO THEIR ROOMS TO PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING.

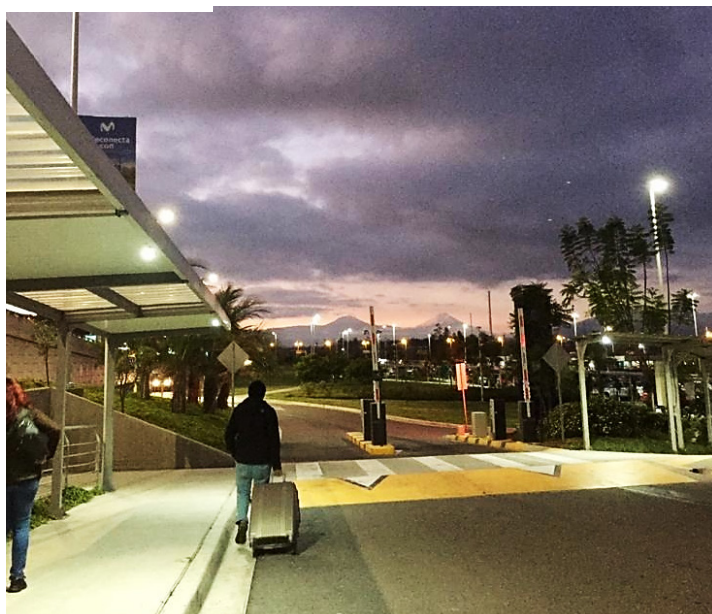


MAY: MONTRÉAL-PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS ALMOST ENTIRELY EMPTY AFTER EMERGENCY REPATRIATION FLIGHTS REOPEN. THESE FREE FLIGHTS WERE ORGANIZED BY GOVERNMENTS TO RETURN CITIZENS TO THEIR HOME COUNTRIES.





MAY: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF TORONTO. THE SKY IS CLEAR; FLIGHT ACTIVITY HAS GREATLY REDUCED DUE TO THE PANDEMIC.



MAY: DAWN BREAKS OUTSIDE AEROPUERTO INTERNACIONAL MARISCAL SUCRE DE QUITO IN ECUADOR.



MAY: STRANDED DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, A FAMILY FINALLY ARRIVES BACK IN ECUADOR AFTER A THREE-MONTH DELAY IN CANADA.



MARCH: GONZALO AND NICOLAS MALDONADO WATCH THE NEWS IN QUITO, ECUADOR, AS NEW PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR THE VIRUS ARE ANNOUNCED.



JULY: A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD ECUADORIAN BOY IS READY TO ATTEND A DENTIST APPOINTMENT FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR. AS BUSINESSES REOPEN, SAFETY MEASURES SUCH AS MASK-WEARING ARE PUT IN PLACE.





MARCH: THE VIEW FROM A BALCONY OVERLOOKING AVENIDA INTEROCEÁNICA, THE ONCE BUSY HIGHWAY IN QUITO, ECUADOR.



JUNE: A MASK-CLAD WOMAN WALKS HER DOG IN A PARK IN QUITO, ECUADOR.



JUNE: A WOMAN WALKS AROUND A CLOSED MALL IN DOWNTOWN QUITO, ECUADOR. THIS ONCE POPULAR AREA IS NOW DESERTED.



JULY: A WOMAN RECEIVES GROCERIES FROM A DELIVERY SERVICE IN QUITO, ECUADOR. AS THE CLOSEST SUPERMARKET HAS CLOSED DUE TO THE NUMBER OF CORONAVIRUS CASES IN THE AREA, DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICES ARE NOW WIDELY USED.



JUNE: MANUEL MALDONADO FROM BERMUDA BEGINS ONLINE SUMMER CLASSES. HIS PARENTS HAVE BUILT A SPECIAL CLASSROOM FOR HIM TO WORK IN FOR THE UPCOMING FALL SEMESTER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.



JULY: A FAMILY MEETS OVER ZOOM FROM FOUR DIFFERENT COUNTRIES (THE UNITED STATES, ECUADOR, FRANCE AND MEXICO) FOR A CHILD'S EIGHTH BIRTHDAY.



# A new normal in theatre at Dalhousie

## How the pandemic has affected the university's performing arts

BY RACHEL COOKE



THE FOUNTAIN SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS'S MARCH 2020 PRODUCTION OF *LA CALANDRA*. UNFORTUNATELY, SOCIAL DISTANCING RESTRICTIONS PREVENTED THE CAST FROM EVER PERFORMING THE SHOW IN PUBLIC. (PHOTO BY NICK PEARCE)

COVID-19 has had a massive impact on the theatre community, and the Dalhousie Theatre Society (DTS) is no exception.

### A switch to digital

The DTS is adapting their plan for the 2020-2021 academic year to ensure safety and compliance with COVID-19 regulations. Sarah Nearing, the outgoing DTS president, says Dalhousie University's plan for distance learning will not be able to make up for the in-person experiences the theatre program and society will lose this year.

"We have to adapt, but there's no question that your education is impacted by this," Nearing says.

Nearing says the entire Fountain School of Performing Arts (FSPA) at Dal has been affected by the pandemic. From vocalists to technical theatre to costume design, each department has taken a hit. FSPA relies on the power of live performance, personal connection and hands-on experience.

According to Nearing, the incoming DTS president has many great ideas about creating digital theatre in lieu of in-person performances. But it just won't be the same.

"The whole purpose of theatre is to be in the same room and share a story with your fellow actors and with the audience," says Nearing. "The audience makes or breaks a show."

Many theatre actors like Nearing thrive on the back-and-forth participation between audience and cast. It's why Nearing pursues acting.

"That's why I do it, that sense of connection with other people that you don't get when you watch a movie or a

TV show or even a recorded version of a play," says Nearing.

### The importance of space

The upcoming fall semester will require many adaptations to the Dal theatre program. Emma Brown, a fourth-year FSPA student, said some of the course requirements for acting students are

shifting. For example, a mandatory acting class normally taken in third year is changing to a puppetry course. Brown says she experienced a lot of growth during her time in the third-year acting class, and the idea this year's group of students will not experience it is a sad one.

Brown calls attention to another huge issue facing the theatre program this year: finding the adequate space to rehearse.

"The biggest thing is having space where you can comfortably create and explore," Brown says.

Brown explains how the ability to rehearse in a comfortable, free environment is dependent on a student's particular living situation. Factors such as whether or not the student is able to make noise in their space and if there is enough room can make or break a student's ability to rehearse and perform well. Brown says the theatre department is in the process of finding rehearsal spaces in Halifax. But that won't help the students studying from outside of Nova Scotia this year.

### A silver lining

Despite the many challenges facing the theatre department this school year, there have been positive sides to the situation. In Brown's opinion, theatre has historically been an ableist profession, and the emergence of digital theatre opens up opportunities for a wider range of people to become involved in theatre.

"I'm really excited to see how this age of digital theatre continues to grow and what Dal does with it," Brown says.

While there have been bright sides to the idea of digital theatre, theatre is fundamentally meant to be a live performance. COVID-19 has shaken the foundations of theatre and forced a reworking of the principles and necessities of the profession. But as Brown points out, "constraints can make you more creative."

Although the pandemic has seemingly made theatre acting impossible, Nearing says actors are resilient. They face a difficult industry every day, yet continue to pursue their love of theatre regardless.

**"From vocalists to technical theatre to costume design, each department has taken a hit."**



# From shutdown to action

As athletes and coaches return to Halifax, questions about next steps linger

BY LUKE DYMENT, SPORTS EDITOR



THE BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL COURTS AT DALPLEX'S FIELDHOUSE. AS OF AUG. 17, STUDENTS AND MEMBERS ONCE AGAIN HAVE ACCESS TO THESE COURTS. (PHOTO OF DALPLEX BY INDRID\_\_COLD ON FLICKR, PHOTO OF BASKETBALL COURT BY PDPICS ON PIXABAY)

Aug. 17. This date marked the beginning of phase three in Dalhousie University's re-opening plan for its athletic facilities. The Dalplex's pool, basketball court and volleyball court reopened. This is in addition to facilities like the fitness hall, which reopened on Aug. 4.

Some Dalhousie Tigers athletes, like swimmer Isabel Sarty, had Aug. 17 circled on their calendars all summer.

"[Coach] Lance [Cansdale] sent us a plan moving forward with schedules and plans for COVID protocols," Sarty said. "For

those able to be in Nova Scotia, we should be in [the pool] Aug. 17."

Quinton Dowling, who's on the Tigers men's volleyball team, said while players in Halifax can start practicing Aug. 17, most of his team won't be back until the end of August.

"We'll start practicing with a limit of 10 people at a time on the court," Dowling said. "By mid-September, we expect that the full team will be back and ready to go."

Some players have been back even earlier to train with teammates, like Chloe Wilson

from the women's basketball team.

"Six of us that live locally got into the gym [the week of Aug. 5] to work with coaches," Wilson said. "Three or four more will arrive by the end of August. Gradually more people will join sessions. Then by October, we should have most of our players back."

## Learning opportunities over the break

It's been five months since Dal's teams have been together, but most of that timeframe is the off-season in a regular year. Of course, this isn't a regular year, and the off-season is still an essential time for athletes and coaches. Technically, the off-season will continue until January due to the suspension of fall sports.

**"It was difficult to figure out how to work out the way I did during the season, but it turned into working out to keep myself happy."**

For athletes and coaches, the past few months were essential time for learning and adjustments, especially in April and May when stay-at-home orders were in place.

"It was quite busy," women's soccer head coach Cindy Tye said about her schedule during the shutdown. "Dal coaches did a lot of professional development, finding new ways to work with our student-athletes. We communicated a lot this way."

Sarty, without an available pool to practice in, adjusted her exercise routines and learned something about herself along the way.

"It was difficult to figure out how to work out the way I did during the season, but it turned into working out to keep myself happy. I found out how therapeutic exercise was. You don't realize it as much when you're so used to doing it multiple times a day," Sarty said, comparing her routines at home to her more intensive ones in the swimming program. Once summer arrived, Sarty began swimming again at a lake near her home with local swimmers.

Tye said coaches and players have remained in touch despite isolation from one another.

"There have been more team meetings over Zoom and online platforms, training over Zoom," Tye said. "[We're] getting creative to connect everyone virtually."

### Changes due to COVID-19 precautions

Adjustments for student athletes don't end at online team meetings. New challenges, such as online classes, await them over the next few weeks. Their sports will look different too, as social distancing and sanitation guidelines will almost certainly be implemented.

"I would assume we won't have fans [once games resume]. The balls will probably be cleaned after each point, use of masks, no handshakes after the game," Dowling said about what his next volleyball games might look like. "Generally, there are about 18 players on a team, but I can see them cutting it down to 12, 14 to promote social distancing. Having limits on coaches on the bench. Something we wouldn't be used to."

Even with all these changes, Dowling is cautiously optimistic that Atlantic University Sport (AUS) volleyball will be underway come January. Wilson agreed and mentioned similar precautions for basketball as Dowling did for volleyball, plus one point that could impact student-athletes' off-court lives:

"Looking at the NBA [and their bubble-style restart], we could get similar treat-

ment, like being careful where we go after games," Wilson said. "Dal's such a big school and we'll be playing teams from [three other provinces], so Dal and the AUS might want us as isolated as possible."

While there won't be any road trips to other schools any time soon, Sarty said "virtual swim meets" are in the works to allow competition to resume this fall.

"These will include two separate time trials in each competition. I'm not sure of other details yet," Sarty said. "Our team will hold races against each other, then compare times with other teams."

Tye and her team are less fortunate in

terms of playing this year. Soccer is a fall-exclusive sport. However, she said some players around Halifax have been training together since July, and winter soccer is "not off the table."

"With the uncertainty of everything, we're keeping our options open. We must consider travel, facilities and costs. It's still far away," Tye said.

Although an AUS return to play is still months away, teams getting back together has sparked the drive to compete again.

"People are coming back," Wilson said. "By the time everyone's here, we'll be full steam ahead."



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**



## Reopening Schedule

### PHASE 1: July 6, 2020

- Wickwire Field and the Dalhousie Outdoor Tennis Courts will reopen.
- Phone lines at Dalplex will be open between 8am-8pm Monday to Friday.

### PHASE 2: August 4, 2020

- Dalplex will reopen with modifications.
- Services available will include the Fitness Hall (with reservations required), Fitness Studios (for classes only & reservations are required), and varsity athlete access to the High Performance Room.

### PHASE 3: August 17, 2020

- The Pool will reopen with appointments required.
- Additional facilities and services within Dalplex will become available (pending a successful PHASE 2).
- Langille Athletic Centre will reopen with modifications and appointments will be required.

THE THREE PHASES THAT FORM DAL ATHLETICS' REOPENING PLAN AS OUTLINED ON THEIR WEBSITE.



# Through thick and thin

In his fourth year at Dal, Keevan Veinot is taking the lead

BY ILYAS KURBANOV



COMING INTO HIS FOURTH YEAR, IT'S KEEVAN VEINOT'S TURN TO TAKE THE LEAD FOR THE MEN'S BASKETBALL TIGERS. (PHOTO BY ANTWON CHRISTIAN / @LIPHEFOTOS)

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced Atlantic University Sport (AUS) and U Sports to cancel all fall activities, and jeopardizes upcoming winter ones.

At the moment, winter competition is set to start in early January 2021. This remains subject to change. All the updates on sports action later this year will correspond with the presence of the virus.

However, preparation for the Dalhousie University Tigers men's basketball team's upcoming season has begun.

A successful 2019-2020 season saw the Tigers once again triumph in the AUS championship and bring home a silver medal from the U Sports Final 8 basketball championships. All players are set to return except graduates Sascha Kappos, Jordan Wilson, Brent Martindale and Matt McVeigh.

One of the returning players is Keevan

Veinot who will be one of the leaders of this year's Tigers squad.

"This year, we lost Sascha [Kappos] who was a leader on our team for the last few years, at least since I've been at Dalhousie," Veinot said. "What guys can expect from me is vocal leadership, leadership both on and off the floor by setting good examples, bringing the effort every day and holding each other accountable to what we should do as a team."

## A season for the ages

The fourth-year guard had a tremendous year with the Tigers in the 2019-2020 season. With the AUS banner and a national silver medal, Veinot was named AUS men's basketball's Most Valuable Player, AUS Male Athlete of the Year and a finalist for U

Sports' Lieutenant Governor Award as U Sports' athlete of the year.

He was also on U Sports' All-Canadian and Academic All-Canadian teams, and exemplifies what a true student-athlete looks like.

## Looking to the future by remembering the past

Veinot credits former and current teammates with helping him succeed throughout his Dal tenure. One former teammate that comes to mind is Sven Stammberger.

**"I'm kind of the guy that I hope rookies will look up to."**

"When I came to Dalhousie as a rookie, [Stammberger] was a fifth year and the leader that I looked up to," said Veinot. "He was a great player on and off the court. He embodied what it meant to be a Dalhousie Tiger. Time has gone on, and now my role is reversed. I'm kind of the guy that I hope rookies will look up to."

Now, in his fourth year, Veinot has the same goal in mind: to inspire the upcoming rookie class to achieve great things.

"I'm really excited because I hope I can help them achieve within the Dalhousie Tigers basketball culture and show them what it means to excel both on and off the floor," Veinot said.

## COVID-19 and competition

There are a lot of uncertainties with the basketball season, but the goal to win remains, whether the season tips off or not.

"Something that we can do is stay focused," Veinot said. "AUS is such a competitive league. You have to bring it every night. The fact that this season is shortened or condensed is not going to change that fact because anyone can beat anyone on any given night."

Players are currently allowed to use training facilities on campus including the Dalplex and Studley Gym. The team has a chance to work out, practice together and work toward their goals.



# An elite eight of recruits

## Men's hockey rookies boast strong resumes and tons of promise

BY DYLAN ALECK

The Dalhousie University Tigers men's hockey team has announced eight new recruits for the upcoming Atlantic University Sport (AUS) season, which is delayed until January 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This rookie class may be one of the best in recent memory with eight players boasting a total of more than 1,500 games of Canadian major junior experience.



(PHOTO BY JEREMY FRASER/CAPE BRETON POST)

### Derek Gentile

**Position:** Right Wing

**Hometown:** Sydney, N.S.

**Height:** 5'8"

**Weight:** 161 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** Cape Breton Eagles (QMJHL)

Derek Gentile finished his impressive major junior career last season as he captained his hometown team, the Cape Breton Eagles. He scored 228 career points in 310 Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL) games with the Quebec Remparts, Charlottetown Islanders and Cape Breton Eagles.

"He's a big asset for our program," men's hockey head coach Chris Donnelly said. "There are lots of good things that come with him, the intangibles outside of his hockey ability as well."



(PHOTO BY QUEBEC REMPARTS)

### Darien Kielb

**Position:** Defence

**Hometown:** Hamilton, Ont.

**Height:** 6'3"

**Weight:** 181 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** Quebec Remparts (QMJHL)

A former teammate of Gentile with the Quebec Remparts, Kielb spent four seasons in the QMJHL with Quebec and Gatineau, and was an assistant captain for the Remparts last season.

"Darien is a good-sized defenceman, a very good skater with very good offensive ability," said Donnelly.



(PHOTO BY QUEBEC REMPARTS)

## Christian Huntley

**Position:** Defence

**Hometown:** Halifax, N.S.

**Height:** 5'10"

**Weight:** 163 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** Moncton Wildcats (QMJHL)

Huntley, a Haligonian, split his career between Quebec where he played with Gentile and Kielb, and the Moncton Wildcats. Huntley played with the major U15 Halifax ACCEL Hawks and the major U18 Halifax McDonald's before his major junior career.

"Christian was a captain in Quebec and was traded to Moncton to beef up their [playoff] run, so we're getting another guy with some great leadership abilities," said Donnelly.



(PHOTO BY MARY ANN MASSEY)

## Scott Gaetz

**Position:** Defence

**Hometown:** Oakville, Ont.

**Height:** 5'9"

**Weight:** 172 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** South Shore Lumberjacks (MHL)

The lone recruit of the class without major junior experience, Gaetz comes to Dal after spending three seasons at the Junior A level in the Ontario Junior Hockey League and the Maritime Hockey League. He played in 150 games between the leagues.

Donnelly said Gaetz is "a great skater and tough competitor. We're looking forward to getting him into our lineup and giving us some quality minutes defensively."



(PHOTO BY JEREMY FRASER/CAPE BRETON POST)

## Shaun Miller

**Position:** Right Wing

**Hometown:** Cole Harbour, N.S.

**Height:** 5'11"

**Weight:** 190 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** Cape Breton Eagles/Rouyn-Noranda Huskies (QMJHL)

Another Nova Scotian talent, Miller spent five seasons in the QMJHL playing in 248 games with three teams. He was Team Nova Scotia's leading scorer at the 2015 Canada Winter Games where he played alongside Gentile, Huntley and Logan O'Neil.

Donnelly described Miller as another promising addition to the squad: "He brings a lot of speed to our lineup, a heavy shot and good work ethic."



(PHOTO BY OHL IMAGES)

## Josh Wainman

**Position:** Defence

**Hometown:** Peterborough, Ont.

**Height:** 6'0"

**Weight:** 170 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** Guelph Storm (OHL)

The only member of the class to play in the Ontario Hockey League (OHL), Wainman split his 254 OHL games between the Erie Otters, Hamilton Bulldogs and Guelph Storm. In 2017, he won an OHL championship with the Otters. Donnelly described Wainman as "a veteran presence."

"We're looking for him to come in and be a shutdown guy," said Donnelly.





(PHOTO BY CHRIS MAST)

### Ethan O'Rourke

**Position:** Centre/Right Wing

**Hometown:** Penticton, B.C.

**Height:** 6'5"

**Weight:** 214 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** Coquitlam Express (BCHL)/Swift Current Broncos (WHL)

O'Rourke is the team's only Western Canada recruit. The towering forward played 159 games in the Western Hockey League before moving down to play Junior A with the British Columbia Hockey League's Coquitlam Express. Coquitlam finished the year ranked as the fifth-best team in Canadian Junior A hockey.

"He's a big guy with a ton of speed and plays a real physical, gritty game. His leadership is going to be something we value as we move along," Donnelly said.



(PHOTO BY MARY ANN MASSEY)

### Logan O'Neil

**Position:** Forward

**Hometown:** Mira, N.S.

**Height:** 6'1"

**Weight:** 187 lbs.

**Team(s) last season:** South Shore Lumberjacks (MHL)

Another Canada Games alumnus, O'Neil spent the last four years primarily with the South Shore Lumberjacks where he scored 205 points in 108 games. He also played 17 games for QMJHL Cape Breton in 2016-2017.

"We look forward to having him join our program and adding his skill level to our team," said Donnelly in the Tigers' press release regarding O'Neil's commitment.

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# Representing Canada away from the court

## Tigers volleyball players attend online national program

BY LUKE DYMENT, SPORTS EDITOR



TALIA VYDYKHAN IS TRADING THE COURT FOR THE COMPUTER SCREEN AS A PARTICIPANT OF VOLLEYBALL CANADA'S VIRTUAL TRAINING CAMPS. (PHOTO PROVIDED BY TALIA VYDYKHAN)

Dalhousie University Tigers volleyballers Michael Donovan and Talia Vydykhan are no strangers to provincial and Team Canada volleyball camps. Yet while attending Volleyball Canada's virtual camps this year, the two are in less familiar waters.

"It's very different from what I'm used to. Sessions are only once a week. Last summer, I would be at camp every day for two weeks,"

said Vydykhan, who's attending Tigers team practices at Dal while completing the online Volleyball Canada program.

"It's a change. There isn't really a usual day at the camp. I'd call the camp a series of video sessions, which keeps it interesting," Donovan said. "It's the most we can do right now because we're not on the court."

Due to COVID-19 and the resulting precau-

tions, Volleyball Canada decided to shift junior-age national team camps to a virtual setting this summer. They announced rosters for the U19 and U21 men's and U20 women's teams on July 2. Vydykhan, who played with Canada's U18 team, is with the lone women's group, while Donovan is a part of the U21 men's roster. Back in 2018, Donovan was chosen for Volleyball Canada's youth men's team.



## Unique learning experiences

The July 2 announcement states the goal of this year's virtual training is "to further connect, educate, and continue the development of the selected athletes."

Donovan has enjoyed learning through guest calls during his camp's virtual meetings, including a meeting with Canada's senior men's national volleyball team coach Glenn Hoag.

"Since we're together virtually, people can join calls from all over the world," Donovan said. "I don't think we would have ever had this chance [to speak with Hoag] in an in-person camp. He's normally busy around this time of year with the senior team's training, and he coaches in Europe too."

Guests in Vidykhan's virtual sessions included Olympian Sarah Pavan, who won a gold medal in the 2019 Beach Volleyball World Championships for Canada. Vidykhan said a common theme unique to these virtual sessions is the focus on mental skill development and preparation.

"[The sessions] focus on mental training. Since we can't be on the court and around one another, the approach has become more mental prep than physical prep," Vidykhan said.

What about Volleyball Canada's pledge to further connect athletes? Surely this is trickier to achieve with players scattered across the country. But Vidykhan said there's a strong social connection between players and staff in the virtual setting.

"You still get to speak your opinion. You still talk within different groups and to the girls on the team," she said. "We discuss amongst each other what we're learning. It's a good way to stay in touch."

"I think we've done a good job to keep things team-oriented, always staying in touch with other guys on the team and looking out for one another," Donovan said about team bonding from a distance. "This year, it's harder to get that team interaction part of the camp, where you meet guys from around the country and make friends. But Volleyball Canada has done a great job here, connecting us even when we're off the court."

## A valuable opportunity no matter the circumstances

Rick Scott, the head coach of Dal's women's volleyball squad, said experiences like these are valuable regardless of the format.

"Any time that you get to be part of a national program, whether on the court or virtually, is a learning opportunity," Scott



MICHAEL DONOVAN WAS SELECTED FOR VOLLEYBALL CANADA'S U21 MEN'S VIRTUAL TRAINING CAMP. (PHOTO PROVIDED BY MICHAEL DONOVAN)

said. "Obviously, the competing and playing part of the camp didn't happen this summer, but the camps let you see what's out there. How good the best players in Canada are."

Vidykhan and Donovan said no team will be picked this year; a separate selection camp is supposed to happen next summer. International competition isn't expected to resume this year, and its return depends on COVID-19's impact.

"I'm hoping by next year [COVID-19] will die down and I'll be able to try out for the team again," Vidykhan said.

Donovan gave Volleyball Canada kudos for creating a successful virtual camp despite not being sure what to expect at first. He said the next few months will also be uncertain.

"We won't know much [about team selection] until next summer," Donovan said. "Right now in the world, it's so hard to know what will happen."

**"Since we can't be on the court and around one another, the approach has become more mental prep than physical prep."**

# Rallying to keep students active

## Dal athletic department engages with online platforms through contests and challenges

BY LUKE DYMENT, SPORTS EDITOR



DAL ATHLETICS MOVE MORE @ HOME CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES PARTICIPANTS TO REMAIN ACTIVE DURING SHUTDOWN (PHOTO BY DALHOUSIE ATHLETICS)

According to Kathie Wheadon, Dalhousie University's director of facility and business services, the closure of athletic facilities on March 15 was only supposed to be for about two weeks.

This obviously didn't turn out to be the case. However, virtual fitness campaigns created in mere weeks kept the Dalhousie Tigers and the athletic department present on social media feeds throughout the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal: to keep students active at home.

"We were hopeful, at first, that we wouldn't be closed long. We anticipated reopening," said Wheadon. "But as each month passed and we were further delayed, [executive director, athletics and recreation] Tim [Maloney] organized a team to see

what we could do online."

### Move More @ Home and Tigers Training Tips

The closures resulted in a virtual campaign called Move More @ Home announced on April 13.

In the program, participants take part in a weekly fitness challenge. For instance, one week participants were challenged to walk, run or travel 2.2 kilometres for as many days as possible in the week, or to complete 30 minutes of a chosen exercise. After each challenge, there is a draw amongst participants for two \$50 gift cards from local businesses.

Maloney said it was important to encourage Dal students to stay active when most people were still subject to stay-at-home orders.

**"We're doing our best to provide resources to students to support them during the isolation period."**

"It's clear to most people that physical health impacts our mental and social well-being. We're doing our best to provide resources to students to support them during the isolation period," Maloney said.

Online e-sports tournaments and Tigers Training Tips also began mid-April. Tigers Training Tips is a video series the Dal Tigers made that introduced more challenges with an emphasis on skills and tricks in several sports. Dal athletes videotaped themselves performing the challenges for others to watch and learn from.

### A team effort

On top of these campaigns, fitness and training programs continued virtually on the Dalplex's website. Wheadon named several people vital to getting everything online.

"The fitness coordinator [Anne Falconer] found some staff to run programs from home, some who filmed themselves doing programs and sending them in. We sent these to our coordination and marketing team so the programs could go online. They help us figure out what went on our [social media] so we could reach out to as many people as we could," Wheadon said.

On the Dal Tigers YouTube channel, a few virtual workouts earned roughly 250 views while some Training Tips videos had more than 100. On Facebook, one Training Tips video gathered 365 views. Maloney said across all platforms, Training Tips videos received more than 600 views each and workout videos exceeded 1,000.

"I think we did a decent job. With so many gyms and fitness apps out there that students use providing competition, we still had decent uptake," Maloney said.

What will happen this fall, with school about to begin and many students not expected to return to Halifax for online classes?

"We are still filming [fitness] classes to put online. We'll continue that for now," Wheadon said. "The times have been difficult, but we are committed to playing a role in our student's lives and giving them a vehicle that they can tap into to maintain their activity."