

# CONVERGENCE



NEW @ UCC

# → CONVERGENCE ←

## THE FALL MID-SEASON RECAP

**ALEX XIANG**  
STAFF REPORTER

Varsity Cross Country has gotten off to a great start so far, as the boys had a strong showing at the Annual Harrier Meet hosted by Trinity College, which resulted in the Midget team placing 5th out of 22 schools and the Senior team placing 4th out of 39 schools. Special recognition goes to Ethan Mistry, who won the Midget race with a blistering time of 15:15. Up next, the boys go the Durham Lynx-Tiger Invite on Wednesday, October 4th and are training hard for the CISAA meet at Trinity College, hoping to qualify all three teams to the OFSAA race at Petawawa on November 4th, 2017.

UI4 soccer has enjoyed a successful start to their 2017-2018 season, with a dominating 10-2 win against RSGC in their home opener game. On A-Day, they had a strong showing against St. Mike's, netting multiple goals and taking home a convincing 5-1 win. The boys are now 3-0 after a close 5-3 win over St. Andrews, and are gearing up for their next games against Crescent, St. Andrews, and Hillfield-Strathallan College.

UI6A soccer has had an extremely strong start to their 2017-2018 season, with a strong win against St. Mike's on A-Day and a convincing 3-1 showing against DeLaSalle. On September 30th, the boys travelled to SAC and enjoyed a nice win over SAC on their home turf, 3-1. Up next, the boys face matches against Appleby, Crescent School, and Ridley College.

UI6B soccer has had an up and down season so far, with an early bird tournament on Sept 16th, which resulted in a close tie against UTS and a tough 3-2 loss against a strong CDS team. The boys then took a tough loss against Lakefield College School on A-Day, and are looking forward to their next few games against BVG, Greenwood, and Crestwood.

JV soccer had their debut on A-Day, coming out with a tough win against a strong Lakefield team, 3-2. They then followed that up with a strong showing against BVG, 2-1 and a dominating win against St. Andrew's College with a 5-0 win. JV soccer will enjoy a 2 week break before taking on Greenwood College, TFS, and Crestwood.

Varsity Soccer made their debut on A-Day, taking on a tough St. Mike's team. The boys dominated play throughout the 90 minutes, only giving up a single goal on a well-timed free kick. They ended up taking home a comfortable 5-1 win, and followed that up with a close 3-2 win against a tough DeLaSalle team. The boys are gearing up for the CAIS National Tournament on October 16, as well as games against Ridley, Crescent, and RSGC.

JV football opened up their season with a hard-fought battle against rival St. Mike's on A-Day. The boys fought hard, but St. Mike's proved to be too much in the end, with a 0-39 loss. JV football then travelled to SAC, and played a hard, tough game for 4 quarters, but ended up falling short with a 7-40 loss. Up next, the boys have a rematch against a tough St. Mike's team on October 13th (Battle of the Blues), as well as games against Nichols and SAC.

Varsity football opened their season against A.B. Lucas High School, with a convincing 27-13 win. They then played their next game on A-Day against a tough St. Mike's opponent. The game was close, but the Blues ended up falling short with a 13-20 loss. Up next, Varsity football has games against Holy Trinity, as well as a rematch against St. Mike's on Battle of the Blues.

UI4 Volleyball has enjoyed an extremely strong start to the season, with their home opener against rival St. Mike's on A-Day. The Blues took a tough 3 sets to 2 loss, but rebounded effectively with dominating wins against Bayview Glen (3-0), and St. Andrews College (3-0). The boys have upcoming matches against RSGC, Hillfield, and Crescent before their first playoff game on October 25th.

UI6 Volleyball has had a tough start to the season, with a hard-fought game on A-Day against St. Mike's resulting in a 3-0 loss. The boys also had strong showings against Appleby and SAC, and are gearing up for their upcoming challenges against Crescent, Hillfield, RSGC, as well as a tournament in Uxbridge on October 20th.

Varsity Volleyball has had mixed success through their first games of the season, with a tough loss to SMCS in 4 sets on A-Day. The boys also faced tough matches against Appleby and in the Etobicoke CI Tournament, before taking a hard-fought 0-3 loss against St. Andrew's. They are preparing for games against Crescent and RSGC, as well as the St. Mike's Tournament from October 13-14.

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# WELCOMING NEW STAFF TO UCC

**SHAFIQ QAADRI**  
STAFF REPORTER

On a Monday morning, I recall applauding the introduction of new members to the UCC family. The year of 2017-2018 marked a new chapter for the College, welcoming over 34 new members of the faculty. At first, I was ecstatic at the breath of fresh air. Then I wondered, why did the school lose so many teachers? And, how were the new teachers selected? I interviewed those responsible for the hiring process, the Human Resources department, about what they searched for in new teachers.

Ms. Godor, the Human Resources Manager, and Mr. Lindell, the Vice-Principal, explained what factors are considered in the hiring of a prospective teacher. As soon as there is a vacancy, the almost 200-300 resumes for each position are individually reviewed by Ms. Godor and Mr. Lindell. From the initial pool, a shortlist is selected based on education, skills, resumé and relative experience. Then, interviews are conducted by a panel, usually consisting of HR staff, a faculty member and often Principal McKinney. Throughout the process, HR reviews input and advice from the Board of Governors, Old Boys and the current faculty. This rigorous process is essential, and Mr. Lindell explains: "Each position is different. Teachers are so involved within the community that a new prospect is often taking on a coaching, co-curricular, or advising position in ad-

dition to curriculum." Indeed they do, and I am often left to wonder: who has more on their plate, the teacher or student?

But what made this year special? Why did so many teachers leave? For an organization of our size, UCC has historically had a relatively low turnover rate, evident by the numerous names decorating the "Quarter Century Club." Teachers at the College often serve for decades, regularly educating multiple generations of a single family (as is my case). However, last year, there was a "perfect storm," with multiple maternity leaves, retirements and leaves of absence. Especially for younger teachers, UCC is an valuable opportunity for experience and guidance from our senior faculty members. A number of these contracts ended last year. Further, there is an incentive program at UCC called "Four over Five", where teachers may choose to work for four years, earn 80% of their salary, and take a paid leave on their fifth year. Ms. Godor explains that typically, teachers "travel, reconnect with family, or educate themselves, gaining experience that benefits students."

UCC is also currently undergoing the arduous process necessary to become an IB World School. The recent introduction of the Middle Year Program and Prep Years Program have led to the implementation of a number of completely new positions.

In the Senior Division, Ms. Colleen Ferguson is the new Diploma Program Coordinator. During the summer, a Summer Programs Advisor was hired to manage the Camps held at UCC, and to find new ways of utilizing the facilities UCC has to offer.

The teachers who left us this year graciously revealed what they had learnt over their time at UCC in their exit interviews. They all espoused the importance of design and technology in UCC's future, and the critical value of STEM education as pertaining to Canada's workforce. Many suggested an emphasis on inquiry-based learning, rather than the traditional learning environment of UCC.

UCC's core values have always been at the heart of the recruitment process, but this year, another the driving force was Principal McKinney's new Strategic Plan, labelled "Plurality." The influx of new teachers, positions and staff can largely be attributed to UCC's new strategic goals for improving the diversity of experiences, education and ideas among faculty. The twelve year horizon for Plurality will see an emphasis placed on the traditions and values which have made UCC thrive, but with an eye for forward thinking, innovation and progress. The proud history of the College continues...

# THE MUSIC PROGRAM AT UCC

**BEJAMIN LEE**  
STAFF REPORTER

Since early September, a visit to the music room on any given morning leads to the sight of a group of dedicated students rehearsing their repertoire for performances throughout the year. Jazz band or wind ensemble, it matters not to an equally diligent member of the music department who gets up earlier than the musicians themselves to ensure that the strictly timed rehearsals are as productive as can be. But that isn't all that goes down in the room at the end of the basement hall. Particularly eager students can be seen after school every single day, practicing the instrument of their choice, taking private lessons or even rehearsing with the school's award winning senior jazz ensemble. So, with the collective effort and strongly shown spirit that goes into the

making of good music at UCC, it never hurts to check in on what the school's musicians can offer.

For those less involved in the UCC music program, any student in the older years who didn't drop music after Year 8 will tell you that there are six major instrumental ensembles led by Mr. Gomes and Mr. Smith, these being the concert band and junior jazz for the Year 8s, symphonic band and intermediate jazz for years 9 to 10, and senior jazz and wind ensemble for years 11 and 12. On top of this, the school has its very own choir in the form of the Bluenotes who are led by Mr. Webb, our esteemed new organist. Before we delve any further however, it should be said that this article will be focussing pri-

marily on the two aforementioned senior ensembles.

To get a clear idea of what exactly these bands are offering this year, I reached out Rob Dean and Josh Neufeldt, (presidents of Jazz and Winds respectively) for their first impressions and expectations for the upcoming year. Both touched upon the fact that the bulk of the musicians are relatively young, but show strong dedication in their offerings of fresh talent and potential. Neufeldt was quick to heap praise with his statement that "this is the best wind ensemble I've seen in my time at the Upper School", and Dean quickly established that a particularly clear-cut goal of his was to see another double gold award attained at the Humber College Next Generation Jazz Festival.



The final major point of exploration within this area should look at the relatively recent introduction of the arts captains and resulting increased attention from the UCC community for favourable promotion of the arts. It seems that the music program should, and will only get more prominent as time goes on. The noticeable increase in younger musicianship at the upper school combined with an ever-excited Mr. McKinney attending even smaller musical performances speaks volumes about the likely future. The latter, who demonstrates nothing but enthusiasm for the program is a very positive figure in this journey to creat-

ing a stronger arts scene at the Upper School. However, it isn't enough, nor is it fair to leave this task entirely to our principal. We, as a community have to put in the effort to take the appreciation and participation in music and the arts in general to the next level. An increase in attendance at to key performances and events throughout the year would be a terrific start. If we can send busloads of students to other schools to cheer on our teams, we can surely stay for an hour or two after school to come watch a performance. Proposing coffee houses will not help anybody. The promotion of arts and music must happen from within the stu-

dent body. If students wouldn't attend a performance, they won't attend a coffee house. It's that simple. This movement of promotion must be driven by the showcasing of just what the arts have to offer. In the case of the music department, that means the students putting in the time and effort so they can make every performance count. Going back to the arts captain idea, the newly appointed JC Chung adds: "every year brings its own challenges, but this is one of the strongest years I have ever seen, and it's something we should all be proud of". So then UCC, let's be proud of it!

## DRAMA IN THE FALL TERM

### Introduction

Our drama program prides itself on its excellence, and this year won't be anything short of excellence. And for good reason. For many years, the drama program, and the arts program in general, has provided not only excellent performances, but also a space for students to learn about the arts and to create great social connections. Last year in the theatre program, we saw a wide range of productions, from the gripping *True West*, to the spectacle that was *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Audience's were left on the edge of their seats, unable to look away from the show. And that has continued to be the legacy of the UCC/BSS theatre program. And this year will be no different. Each year, UCC and BSS host six theatrical productions: a classical play, a musical, a Year 9/Year 10 play, the Fall play, the student-directed play, and the middle-school play. The first three plays have already been cast.

### Vimy

Performing November 23 to 25 in the Lecture Theatre, *Vimy* is our fall play and will open this year's collection of performances. Written by Vern Thiessen, this memory play is set in France before the Canadian forces attacked the German army at Vimy Ridge, a battle that developed our Canadian identity and pride. *Vimy* tells the story of four soldiers and a nurse who represent different regions of Canada and develop our national uni-

ty. The play shifts back and forth in time between the different perspectives and provides us with a better understanding of the significance of these events shaping WWI. *Vimy* was designed to promote reflection amongst Canadians and encourage us to understand our national and individual identity internationally. Thiessen contends that *Vimy* is an exploration "of the small moments [that] define us as individuals, as communities, and as a nation." *Vimy* is a wonderfully written play that truly represents our Canadian spirit and identity. This is an ideal play for anyone wishing to learn more about our national culture and see amazing actors and actresses play characters who risked their lives to protect our safety and rights.

### The Addams Family

From February 7 to February 10, *The Addams Family* will perform in the new BSS Theatre. The fictional stories of *The Addams Family* have led to a 1960s TV series and the 1991 *The Addams Family* film. Portrayed as highly eccentric, *The Addams* are not your ordinary family. With a moon-loving Fester and a zombie butler Lurch, the musical takes a spin on your typical American family. The musical is about two families, the Addams and the Beinekes, whose chil-

AMAN RIZWAN & MICHAEL YOUNG  
STAFF REPORTERS

dren fall in love. However, these families do not share much in common: The Addams love death, torture, and black, while the Beinekes are your typical American family, normal in every way imaginable. Being part of the musical myself, I can confirm the musical, with its ghoulish Addams family, is perfect for the Halloween season.

### King Lear

Finally for this season, *King Lear* plays on February 23 and 24 in the David Chu Theatre. *King Lear* is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare. It depicts the gradual descent into madness of the King of Britain, Lear. This happens after he disposes of his kingdom, giving bequests to two of his three daughters based on their flattery of him. This soon leads to consequences for all.

*King Lear* is regarded as one of the best tragedies of all time, with an incredible dark and depressing tone, which often leaves audiences shocked. Our adaption will surely provide the same excellence as the play's many renditions have.

Each year, the UCC/BSS productions never fail to impress. We strongly recommend you see one production, if not all, this year. Break a leg, performers!

"AUDIENCE'S WERE  
LEFT ON THE EDGE OF  
THEIR SEAT"

# AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. MCKINNEY - STRATEGIC PLAN

**SHELDON STERN**  
STAFF REPORTER

Unbeknownst to many of you, Mr. McKinney will soon be unveiling a new school wide strategic plan. This will serve as the school's game plan for the next few years, and is replete with future school objectives, initiatives, and metrics to access success. Its current blueprint covers a wide range of topic, and include anything and everything from both diversity to renovations. The incumbent strategic plan was approved back in 2008, and was last updated in 2012. Adjusting to today's social climate and school priorities, it is safe to say that both the school as a whole and its constituents deserve a new vision. Nevertheless, since not many people knew there was an impending strategic plan, let alone what to expect from it, or its impacts, we hope this article will serve as your temporary guide to Mr. McKinney's Strategic Plan. Now, who better to guide you through the plan than the man spearheading the operation, Mr. McKinney himself? We were lucky enough to have had the opportunity to sit down with Mr. McKinney to score some more information, and this article is based off our notes from the discussion.

## HOW THE NEW PLAN CAME TO BE

First off, the Strategic Plan was not just brought about unilaterally by Mr. McKinney. It was far bigger and more extensive than any one member of the administration could have imagined. Indeed, it began with Mr. McKinney approaching the Board of Governors in September of the last year, hoping to develop a new vision for the school. However, after a consensus was reached that a new plan was due, the school quickly partnered with the consulting firm Berlin Eaton, and began to devise a framework for the plan. The school and Mr. McKinney were very clear that they wanted this to be a collaborative process. Data was collected from surveys in conjunction with Old Boys summits and myriad Town Hall conversations. Information was also gathered from 18 focus groups. Consequently, this sparked the formation of 7 discovery teams consisting of 77 people, respectively focusing on 7 different topics. Team members consisted of current and past parents, old boys, students, staff, and governors of the board. In lay-

man's terms, no one was underrepresented. At the end of this extensive process, it was estimated that over 1000 individuals were consulted. Subsequently, Mr. McKinney and the Board of Governors were able to begin their work, drafting proposals based off the findings of the data. This entailed the Board holding multiple all-day retreats to discuss the plan. Even as the plan came together there was still the problem of communication and information dissemination. How would the school advertise its new plan to the world? A special focus was put on communicating the new plan, and the school eventually even worked with an external communication organization.

## WHAT WE CAN EXPECT FROM THE NEW PLAN

Obviously, the plan and its explicit details won't be available until the plan is officially released sometime in the coming weeks. Nevertheless, Principal McKinney was able to reveal and elaborate on some of the broader ideas, as well as compare the plan to past plans so as to give us an idea of what changes we can expect. Mr. McKinney was very firm in conveying to us the importance of understanding -that from its introduction the plan is less of a "plan", and more of a direction the school is taking. As the world is constantly evolving, a "plan" may hinder the school's ability to adapt and serve the ever-emerging needs of the UCC community.

One major component of the plan does focus on the physical aspects of school itself, and that appropriate facilities are present to support our school as we head into the future. Thus, more renovations can be expected to keep the school looking its best. The plan calls for these renovations to be done in manageable portions, and allocates a yearly seven figure budget. This year, the project has been to install a new boiler, which boasts a price tag similar to that of the entire yearly budget.

The incumbent strategic plan had discussed a proposal to implement the IB middle years program. However, under the previous administration, this proposal was rejected. The decision to go forward with the middle years program was actually one of the first decisions

made by McKinney upon his arrival. This year, the program was implemented for grades 6 and 7. Next year, it will be implemented for year 8's, followed by year 9's and year 10's. Since UCC already offers the IB primary years programs in the prep as well as the diploma program for year 11's and 12's, in 3 years, when the middle year IB programs are fully integrated, UCC will officially become an IB continuum school, meaning students can participate in the IB from start to finish. UCC would also become the first all boys school in North America to offer an IB continuum.

In addition, a goal set by the previous plan had called for 20% of the student body to be able to access some form of meaningful financial aid. Since, this goal has been surpassed, and the new plan will continue to focus on improving student accessibility. The plan uses the term *thrivability* to describe this goal, and the Board will seek to continue to keep costs low, utilizes funds efficiently, and inaugurate more fundraising projects.

Frequently used in the previous plan was also the phrase "small school environment", explicating the idea that despite being a large school, UCC should still feel cozy, small and individualized to every student. Programs like advising were thus created to bolster a small school environment. The new plan will continue this quest under a revamped name, or "The Individual Awareness of Each Boy." With the goal of strengthening services for mental health and well-being. Mr. McKinney particularly wants to stress the importance of bringing awareness to issues like depression and anxiety, and creating new programs and innovations which will alleviate stress. The plan calls for the school to strive to be better equipped to face these problems, and improve and adapt its structure to optimizing student physical as well as mental well-being. Consequently, we should expect student well-being to become a predominant focal point of the school in the coming years.

Overall, we found this interview to be an exceptionally eye-opening one. The plan has seen a lot of work put into it, and is a true testament of both Mr. McKinney and the Board's determination to continue to find ways to better serve students and the broader UCC community.



# INTRODUCING THE MYP

**WILLIAM BLAIR AND STEFAN ATELJEVIC**  
STAFF REPORTERS

The 2017-2018 school year marks the introduction of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) at Upper Canada College. With the first year of the program already underway, we decided to learn some more about the program and understand the rationale of the school to introduce the program.

## WHAT IS IT?

The MYP is an international program for students aged 11-16. It is an engaging and well-rounded program that encourages students to form practical connections between studies and the real world, and serves as preparation for the IB Diploma Programme. The MYP places a value on learning how to learn and, as such, serves as excellent preparation for the rigor of the IB Diploma program. In fact, the program is a student-centred approach to learning, meaning that students - rather than teachers - drive their learning. The program develops skills for communication, collaboration, organization, self-management and creative and critical thinking. It also fosters intercultural understanding and global engagement - qualities which have begun to take on even greater value in our world today. The program equips students to understand how to make a positive difference in the world, no matter their interests or passions. In addition to the academic requirements of the course, action and service are essential components of the MYP and they set out clear learning outcomes from "service learning" in local and global communities. This provides key stepping stones toward the core requirements of the Diploma Program in Creativity, Action and Service (CAS).

This year at UCC the MYP curriculum will be studied in Years 6,7 and 8 during what the IB refers to as the MYP "candidacy phase." The full MYP program will not actually be introduced until the 2018-2019 school year, when Years 6 to 10 will study the curriculum during the "authorization phase." Once we reach this phase, UCC will have completed the IB continuum, consisting of the Primary Years Program (PYP) for students in Se-

nior Kindergarten to Year 5, the MYP for students in Years 6 to 10 and the Diploma Program (DP) for students in Years 11 and 12. The Diploma Program was first adopted by UCC more than 20 years ago in 1995, followed by the Primary Years Programme in 2004 and now, the final piece of the IB program falls into place with the introduction of the MYP in 2017.

## OP-ED BY STEFAN ATELJEVIC

I think that the MYP is a great system to help students grow more over time, rather than in the course of a week. The old marking system would assess students based on how they do on tests, and homework and overall work ethic would not be taken into account. Those who had good marks on homework but bad marks on tests would end up with lower marks. However, the MYP is designed to help those who start studying more, and doing more homework over the course of the year. If students are having an off day, their marks, work ethic and homework will be looked at and the final mark will come from that information. There are a few mixed feelings about this system, one being how a student who has high marks the entire year might get the same average as a student who started getting high marks at the end of the year. Some students think that this is beneficial to the students take longer to get used to this new system, others think that this is unfair, and that all marks should be treated fairly from the beginning of the year to the end.

To learn some more about the MYP program in the context of our school, Convergence decided to interview Joe Smith, the MYP coordinator for UCC. Below are his responses to our questions regarding his role in the MYP and the adoption of the program at Upper Canada College:

**JOE SMITH**  
MYP COORDINATOR

## WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN REGARDS TO THE MYP?

The role of the MYP Coordinator is to work closely with teachers, staff and students to help guide the successful implementation and growth of the Pro-

gramme. The program itself is currently taught by year 6, 7 & 8 teachers and will continue to grow over the next two years to include years 6 through 10. I also teach grade 8 design which involves digital and product design via video editing and 3D printing.

## WHY DID UCC DECIDE TO INCORPORATE THE MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME?

As a Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Diploma Programme (DP) school for well over a decade, UCC made the decision to launch the Middle Years Programme (MYP) to form what is known as the IB Diploma Continuum (K-12). The MYP is a natural progression from the PYP and is an excellent framework, preparing our students for the Diploma Programme. Once UCC becomes a fully authorized MYP school in 2019 - 2020 we will have the distinction of being the only all boys K-12 IB Continuum school in North America.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK THE GREATEST BENEFIT OF THE PROGRAM IS FOR STUDENTS?

To quote directly from the IB, the IB learner profile describes a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success. They imply a commitment to help all members of the school community learn to respect themselves, others and the world around them. Each of the three programs (PYP, MYP, DP) is committed to the development of students according to the IB learner profile. The program aims to develop learners who are inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective. Encompassing the learner profile along with excellent academics is the greatest benefit for students and the community.

## HOW LONG HAS UCC BEEN WORKING ON INTRODUCING THIS PROGRAM?

Although we officially became an MYP candidate school this year with the aim of being fully authorized in the 2019 - 2020, UCC has been exploring the MYP for several years. Attending MYP conferences, meeting with other MYP schools, teachers attending workshops, as well as rolling out the framework in year 6 are just a few of the steps we've taken in recent years to prepare for the launch of the programme.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDS

## ADAM ROTHMAN HEAD STEWARD

The question “What do the Stewards actually do?” is as old as time. I have wondered the same thing myself, many times. Reflecting on the past few months, I am able to put that question in perspective and offer some answers.

I will be the first to admit that the Board of Stewards is a fairly unproductive body, and over the past few years has not been a major presence in the school. The first barrier to significant progress is the demands of IB2/Y12, which make it difficult for Stewards to commit enough time towards what could be a full-time job. There are an endless number of ‘committees’ at the school, and though that bureaucracy can be a platform for important discussions, they are inefficient in actual implementation of ideas. This is a consequence of the size and diversity of our school, making change difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, I don’t want to provide excuses for the inefficiency of the Stewards, but instead offer some possible solutions.

As reported in the previous issue of Convergence, the change we were able to achieve on the WIFI issue was possible because of our direct communication with Principal McKinney. The best solution usually wins out, and top-down change is the most attainable. When school administration is seen as a reasonable partner, and not the enemy, compromise and progress is possible. As Stewards, a key responsibility of ours is to facilitate that communication between students and the senior leadership team which we have realized is a powerful tool for change.

However, we have quickly understood that student voices are not particularly sought out on most issues. So, we’ve made it a goal to make our ideas heard. The huge changes in food services over the past few years did not sufficiently engage students, which has impeded real progress and buy-in regarding nutrition. Lead by our Sustainability Steward, Kohilan, we were recently able to express that concern to the nutrition committee and are now in the process of updating LDH food options to reflect the hopes of both students and nutrition experts.

Another area of communication that has historically been lacking is between the Stewards and the rest of the student body. I think Sevon and last year’s board made progress with their use of student-steward drop-ins, which we plan bring back but with a focus on specific issues. Our transparency initiative, publishing the notes from all of our

weekly meetings (which has been regularly updated), intends to further promote dialogue and the transfer of knowledge between students and the board.

For the rest of the year, our key goals are running an exciting and engaging spirit week, and implementing improved mental health programming. Many students feel that advising time is becoming obsolete, and we want to hear your ideas on how to change that.

The Board of Stewards as a body has limitless potential. Its role and impact is constantly evolving within our community, molded by the ambition of each year’s elected group. It’s a learning process; how can we use our limited time to have the greatest impact? This is a question I grapple with every day.

Perhaps the most valuable resource the board has is the passion and dedication of each of our stewards. Read what our portfolio stewards have been working on so far this year:

## MAXIME BARBEAU-DI MEO COMMUNITY SERVICE STEWARD

Ever since last year’s election, I have been working closely with Mrs. Timusk to achieve my goals. We started by creating a community service council which is named the CAS committee. With this committee, we managed to create and host the first community service fair at UCC, work with BSS on the Halloween-O-Grams, as well as creating relationships with organizations across Toronto that will last in perpetuity. For the rest of the year, our goals are to create new ways to encourage community service in the school. We have already convinced Mrs. Timusk to send fewer emails (no problem) and create the weekly newsletter containing volunteering opportunities. We will continue to work hard to try and create a community service oriented mentality here at UCC.

## KOHILAN PARAMAANANTHAM SUSTAINABILITY STEWARD

Currently, I am working alongside administration, the nutritional committee, physical education department, and Aramark, to evaluate the current food options available in the LD. We have taken notice of the displeasure expressed towards some of the current options and have begun working diligently to usher in new products that provide the nutritional value of concern to the UCC communi-

ty while still maintaining the once forgotten “taste” component. Additionally, I am working with the facilities department, to bring multi-tier streaming waste receptacles to the outside of the school, to ensure we are fulfilling our potential as a sustainably active community.

## RASHEED TUCKER ATHLETIC STEWARD

I believe we’re off to a great start in the 2017-2018 school year and athletic year at UCC. Thus far, as Athletic Steward, I’ve begun to implement the promises made in my campaign for Athletic Steward, beginning with ending each month with an Athletic Council Presentation from myself and the Blue Army Generals, where we hand out the newly designed Athlete of the Month T-Shirts to one iDiv and sDiv student, as well as compile and show a “top plays of the month” highlight reel. A big thank you goes to General Calvin Jeffrey for taking the lead on the highlight reels! As well, I have just put a system in place to have members of school teams report summaries of the previous week’s matches to me in order to compile and throw into the UCC Athletic Journal which will soon be sent out every Monday morning and posted online in the TBAW Facebook group.

## DAVID NIDDAM-DENT ACADEMIC STEWARD

It’s been a great year so far, with a mix of encouraging progress, and unfortunate setbacks. In early meetings of the newly-formed academic council, members brought forward a range of issues. These have guided my efforts thus far, and I’ve been working with the administration on some concrete proposals to improve the student academic experience. There’s definitely been some hurdles in making these changes, and as I write this I am still working to push through some exciting proposals. I’ve also been working very closely with our IB Diploma Program Coordinator Ms. Ferguson, attempting to improve the ability of the administration to see the day-to-day life of the students. I hope to be able to make some exciting announcements very soon, but until then, please shoot me an email at david.niddam-dent@ucc.on.ca, or attend any of our Academic Council meetings, to give your input. All suggestions are welcome.

## ALEX OSIPOV SOCIAL STEWARD

The Stewards dance was lit.

## JOSEPH HILL CREATIVITY STEWARD

On many occasions this year I have been approached by a number of parents and students, wondering “what I really do?” as the creativity steward. Immediately, I light up with Joy, and relish the opportunity to share what exactly I do as a key member of the UCC board of stewards. However, more often than not I find myself struggling to convert my excitement into words, and simply allow the mundane sentence “I run

friday assemblies” to fall out of my mouth, as if it is some debilitating obligation that offers no benefit. After consistently repeating this lackluster catch-phrase to the swarm of new parents that entered our school this past week, at our annual open house. I began to think, what do I actually do for the students at UCC?

My hope is that the 20 minutes that you spend each friday morning, sitting in our ultra-comfortable soft wooden pews, are 20 minutes of

your week that you don't spend stressing about the math test, that you have coming up, or the “L” that you just took in your TOK presentation. My job as Creativity Steward is unlike any other portfolio, whereas they continue to shine light on the competitive atmosphere that seems to run this school, I will attempt to draw focus towards the more important things in life, such as how many marshmallows our principal can fit in his mouth during a dance competition against our head steward.

# POLITICAL APATHY AT UCC

COOPER MENDELSON-GRASSE, CHARLIE HUGHES  
STAFF REPORTERS

Winston Churchill once said “the best argument against democracy is a five minute conversation with the average voter.” Perhaps he's right... If the government were to pick a random person from the public by lot, and announce that they were to lead your country for the next 4 years, would you feel particularly confident in the state's future? I'm not a betting man, but my money's on you not feeling particularly excited at the prospect of John Doe running your government for an entire term. Moreover, your revulsion at having Mr. Doe running the country probably wouldn't even extend to his political stances, rather, you don't want someone without a lick of government experience being suddenly and decisively catapulted to the highest office in the land (rare exceptions aside). If we don't trust the everyman to run the country, why do we trust them to chose who runs the country? Of course, we have to realize that each individual's vote gets diluted into the millions of votes cast. But there are two problems with that: 1) A vote is a vote is a vote; it's still an expression of the everyman deciding the country's future. 2) Diluted into what? The votes of other John Does?

This stance may be an undemocratic and belittling to the average voter, but an important point had to be made. We don't trust each other with our country's future, and if poll numbers in the US and the UK are to be believed, we “stable western democracies” don't really trust our politicians either. But then who are we to trust? If not each other, if not our politicians, than who? Unfortunately, there's not good answer. The lifeblood of democracy rests on an informed citizenry.

A survey was recently sent out to UCC asking the students three questions. Which political party do you support, why do you

support this political party, and where do you get most of your political information? The answers to the survey were largely what would be expected. The political party with the most support was the Conservative Party, with 40% of respondents selecting it. Trailing this was the Liberal party, with 37% of respondents selecting it as the political party that they support. The next statistic of note was 11.1% of respondents selecting ‘none’. The remaining 11.9% was split between the NDP, Green Party, Rhinoceros Party, and a whole slew of other answers. In regards to why respondents supported their political party of choice, the responses were more varied. An overwhelming 69.3% of respondents stated that one of the primary reasons behind their support was due to their own views and research. Unsurprisingly, 40.4% of respondents stated that the views of their parents impacted their political views. The other statistic of note was that 19.6% of respondents stated that their socio-economic status impacted their political views. Beyond this, 5.6% of respondents replied that the views of their friends impacted their views, 8.9% stated that their religious or cultural affiliations impacted their political beliefs, and finally, a disturbing 9.6% of respondents answered that they had no reason for supporting their political party of choice. In regards to where students got their political information, results were largely more concentrated. The most chosen news source was major cable news, with 59.8% of students choosing it as one of their primary news sources. The next source of note was social media, with 45% of respondents selecting it as one of their primary news sources. The next three figures were fairly close to each other 38.4%, 35.1%, and 34.3% of students selected local news, journalistic publications, and newspapers as their primary news sources respectively. The final statistic of note, saw 5.9% of stu-

dents select the none category, as their primary source of political information.

However, what do all these figures mean? Well, first and foremost, a majority of students have, at minimum partially, crafted their own political opinions. This personal ownership of one's political views has both a largely positive aspect to it. It would seem, at least amongst the survey's respondents, that students attempt to inform themselves, and thus arrive at their own conclusions, instead of simply grafting someone else's views into their own political consciousness. Unfortunately, this survey also reveals certain negative things about the student body. For instance, a significant portion of respondents (45%) reported that social media was one of their primary sources of political information. Hearteningly this is lower than the percentage of americans (67%) who use social media to provide at least a noteworthy portion of their political information. However, 45% is still to significant of a figure to simply brush under the rug. Many people who use social media stay current often only read headlines, even if the content of the article directly contradicts the title, or are victims of deliberately misleading political videos, intended to forward a narrative rather than inform the viewer. A noteworthy example of this is “NowThis”. The videos produced on the aforementioned channel usually only present half of the facts, or they present facts in a vacuum without any context, in an effort to forward their ideology. In addition to this, the internet also serves to act as a platform for celebrities and other entertainment personalities to present their opinions on issues. Though these individuals possess every right to share and possess their own political views, they don't necessarily have informed opinions on the issues they speak on.



# THE ALGONQUIN CANOE TRIP

KEVIN LIU  
STAFF REPORTER

I canoed and camped many times before, but my first experience of a portage trip in the wilderness just took place a few weeks ago, and that was an experience that will surely be inscribed in my memory for the rest of my life. As a member of the UCC Outdoor Club, I left on Friday, September 29 for a 4-day canoe trip away from all connection with the rest of the world except for an emergency satellite phone, returning on Monday, October 2. I went with 16 other people, including 13 students and 3 teachers - Mr. Borden, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Williams, and I am one of the two youngest boys. We travelled to Algonquin Provincial Park and embarked on our journey on the first day from Kawawaymog Lake, to North Tea Lake, Manitou Lake, Three Mile Lake, Biggar Lake, and then eventually came back on the fourth day to North Tea Lake and Kawawaymog Lake.

## The Rain and the Shine

Our first day was completely rained out. It rained for the whole afternoon, from when we got on the bus until after I fell asleep in our tent that night. At the outfitters as we waited for our canoes, we were already wet. As we canoed across the lake, the rain soaked everything outside the dry bag including our shoes, our clothes, and even our raincoats. The one thing separating me and sheer discomfort was a toque covering my head. As we canoed on, especially during our crossing of North Tea Lake to reach our first campsite, the waves grew to the point where they were noticeably rocking the canoe. At the campsite, we set up our tents and we all made our futile efforts to dry out some of our piles of wet clothes.

After spending our first day in the rain, I was somehow anticipating the same harsh weather for the rest of the trip even though I knew the weather was going to get better according to the forecast. I thought the whole trip would be just a challenge to get through various adversities. That night, I tried to fall asleep to the sound of rain outside the tent in my damp fleece sweater. I recalled that the last time I camped and ca-



noed in the Algonquin Park was when I was in Grade 4 and the temperature was well below zero at night. And ever since that experience, I know that the weather makes or breaks any outdoor trip. With that in mind, I did fall asleep, a bit worried and totally exhausted. And when I woke up the next morning, I was cold and I was still damp.

I stepped outside the tent as quietly as I could, as everyone else was still sleeping. I immediately noticed three things: it was no longer raining, the sky was a clear blue, and there was a touch of orange on one side. I walked around the campsite to the tip of the island. I stood there freezing as I admired the mesmerizing surface of the water. The waves drifted inwards toward me. The blue sky and the clouds floating around the rising sun created a nice blend of blues, pinks, reds, and whites almost as if someone accidentally dripped red, orange and white paint on a palette of blues. In the water, the same colours were mixed together, more blurry and almost forming a pattern in the waves. On the crests of the waves there were sparkles of sunlight, orange, yellow, and bright white, creating sharp contrast to the blue water. Farther away, a layer of mist shrouded the lake, rising like smoke from the "burning" water into the air, almost blending with the clouds above. Looking right, I saw the bear canoe in the middle of the mist, floating peacefully, and behind it was the dark green and dark orange trees on the land behind, a reminder that it was already early autumn. Back toward the island, there was a nice orange glow on the tents, the trees, and the rocky bay on the small island. I was alone: no one else had gotten up yet. This was a sight only I had seen.

For me, this was one of the most placid yet sentimental moments of the whole trip. Sure, there was a similar sight every morning for the three days during the trip. However, this moment became printed in my head rather than the next two sunrises, as it had just rained hard for a whole day, and I had not seen such a magnificent blue sky for the trip yet. The sunrise itself was one of the best I've ever seen. The mist on the lake was something completely unexpected. The whole thing looked like a work of art, or something in the middle of a dream. It looked just like the work of impressionist painters - no wonder it had inspired the Group of Seven! All in all, it was quite overwhelming. The beauty of nature was so striking, so simple yet so complex, and so mesmerising. I realized the truth in the statement "the weather makes or breaks the trip", the sheer power of nature, and how powerless we were compared to nature.

## The Voyage and the Portage

For the remainder of the trip, canoeing felt so relaxing in the nice, warm sun, under the clear, blue skies, and on the placid, wavy water. We passed by lots of rocky islands and lots of rolling hills in display of early autumn colors, and we even saw 2 mooses along the way, drinking water on the side of the lake (before they ran away, I guess). On the surface of the water, there were mixed colours of sparkling light from the sun, different shades of blue, and the reflections from the trees towering over us. The water looked as if it was painted on with brush strokes from Tom Thompson's artwork. I stared out into the distance or on the hyp-

notizing water surface, and my paddle creating two tiny whirlpools on the water with every stroke.

During the trip, I was in the 3-person canoe with Mr. Borden who is a veteran trip leader. Therefore, we were almost always at the front (except sometimes when Shaan Hooey and Skylar Kim suddenly decided to race our boat). So we usually had to wait for the other canoers and during that time, I took a lot of beautiful pictures of the scenery. Even though canoeing can be considered extremely monotonous and tiring, I enjoyed every bit of it, even the canoeing during the first day in the heavy rain. As my dad always says: every experience is a good experience if you look at it that way. Sometimes, the most monotonous thing feels great as it clears your mind and calms your mood in general. The vivid and picturesque scenery made floating on the vast lake in a small canoe feel even more surreal.

During the trip, in between the canoeing, we also portaged quite a bit to get from one lake to another or to bypass the rapids of a river. Our longest portage was 2.8 km, taking us from Manitou Lake to Three Mile Lake. We all carried some combination of packs, food barrels, or canoes. As I was one of the smallest and youngest members of the trip, I only had to carry one pack, but it was heavy enough for me. It was so heavy that I could not lift it onto my back unassisted, and it not only felt extremely tiring but also hurt my shoulder blades no matter which position it was strapped on. In fact, the portages made my back sore for a few days afterward.

Even though the portages seemed like a huge hassle interrupting our pleasant canoeing, they were an invaluable part of the full experience. Looking back, I would much rather have done the trip the way it was than to have done it without portaging. As the cliché says, no pain no gain, and the pain makes the gain feels more gratifying. This was especially true when we share the burden/pain together - during the portages and during the rest of the trip, I always felt well taken care of by other members and teachers of the trip.

## The Laughter at the Campfire

The other members of this trip were all very friendly and helpful to each other



during the trip, like during the portages. However, what made them truly amazing companions was that they all loved socializing around the campfire in the morning or evening.

We would sit by the warm fires that gave us respite from the cold night, roast marshmallows, joke around, and chat with each other. Whether joking about invading a girl school's campsite, voting on who to be kicked off the island, or chatting about school, the time we spent together around campfires was the most pleasant and memorable during the whole trip. At the fires, we'd also had our share of simply stupid ideas, some of which actually turned out quite entertaining. For example, in the cold morning on the second day, we decided to take a small "christmas tree" and stick it in the fire, creating a giant blazing inferno more than a meter high. We also successfully dried some of our clothing by holding it near the fire without any major casualties.

Personally, as a new student in the Upper School, I gained a lot socially from this trip, as I now had some relationships with people in higher grades as well. Now back in the dining halls or in the Student Center, those people on this trip from higher grades have gone from complete (and sometimes a little scary) strangers to some friendly, familiar faces in the crowd. And that means a lot.

## Back to "Civilization"

On the fourth day of our trip at around noon, we touched down at the point where we launched from the outfitters on the first day. It felt so different to see the out-

fitters again. For one, we had just been in a whole other dream-world for 4 days and even though I was very much expecting it, coming back to the "real" world really threw me off for a second. It felt nice to be safely back to "civilization", yet it felt quite melancholy that the trip was now over.

As our bus ventured farther back into society, there was one particularly meaningful moment. Yes, there were the magical moments where our cell phones picked up the first scraps of signals and received all of our notifications from the past few days - the moments we reconnected with the rest of the world. But the actually meaningful moment was not pleasant. When we entered Harvey's, ordered our huge meals, and waited, we stared at the TV on the wall showing a whole lot of breaking news. It was showing the terror attacks in Las Vegas. The deadliest mass shooting in the U.S. had just taken place the night we were laughing around the campfire. It also showed footage of a truck ramming attack in Edmonton, Canada. I realized that unfortunately, hatred and ideological fights and crazy politics are a growing part our society. Yet I also realized that the world should be beyond that. During the trip, I realized the true power of the mother nature, something hidden away from most people today by our big cities, our competition for jobs, our constant battle for monetary resources to support our families, and our ideological, political, racial and religious differences. The true power and the beauty of the wilderness, of the orange and blue sunrise above the misty lake, of nature, lies far above all of that. And the love for our nature and our world should hold the power to heal the wounds from hatred and guide us towards harmony, eventually.



# BLAZER

| UCC's Humour Publication Written By People Who Think They're Way Funnier Than They Actually Are |

## Halloween Edition... In November

If you still dress up and go door to door on Halloween, you should probably take a stroll down the Avenue and head back to the Prep. However, please do not confuse trick or treating for TRT, because one is actually recommended for all ages. Nonetheless, if you are looking for an excuse to get out of the house this October 31st, there is nothing your teacher's would appreciate more than having their evenings interrupted by their favourite students ringing their doorbell and asking for candy (or if you are Cole Meretsky, asking for extra marks). For your benefit, The Blazer has created a list of homes to avoid in anticipation for this upcoming Halloween.



On October 31st, we recommend to avoid:

Mr. Verboom - This one is obvious if you have read his meal plan, but if you show up anyway, the only thing you're leaving with are sore quads (or he will be giving out your severed limbs to the next kid).

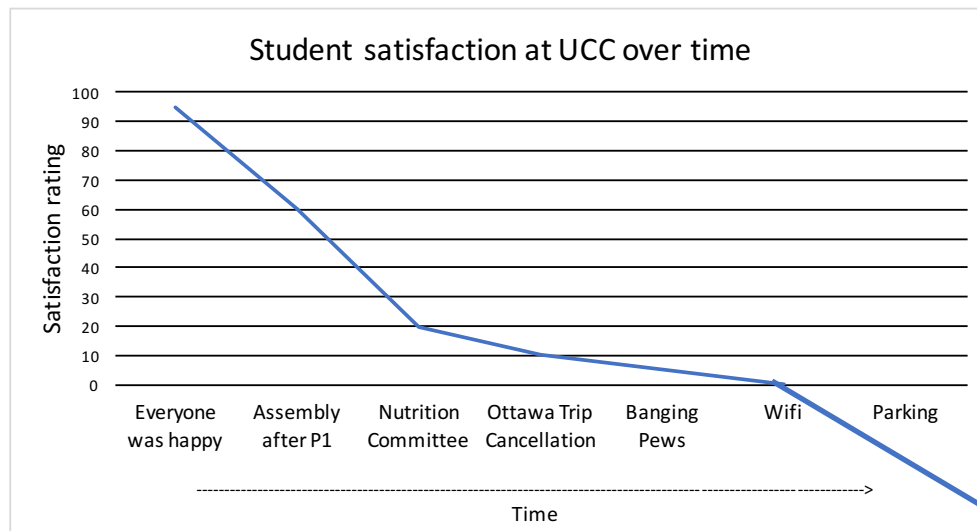
Mr. Chan - Feel free to stop by his house, but instead of giving treats, Mr. Chan opts for trickery. While the lights might be off, he is actually inside playing video games, and you are being duped into thinking he is not home.

Mr. MacDougall - Although he'll be out with the boys, he still leaves a bowl of candy unattended for the kids on the porch. So if you don't think you'll get there first, don't go at all.

Mrs. Timusk - Don't let her kindness fool you. If Carson Lau and Sabian Velji aren't there handing out candy for her, then you can guarantee that the only way the candy gets into your bag is through an email.

Mr. Sharpe - You'll be invited in and before you know it it'll be 10:30 and still going on about weekend plans. If your mission was for candy, you'll have failed, however, if you're trying to secure your spot on the JV rugby team, great tactic.





## Photo Booth!

One of the perennial attractions of any UCC dance is the photo booth. While Adam Sayani could not repeat his fantastic pic from last year's Batt Ball, there were no shortage of great moments. Here are a couple of the Blazer staff's favourites!



## Headlines

- Drug and Alcohol policy altered; students may now consume "a few sips of beer"
- Just days after big win in "Battle of the Blues", Varsity Hockey kicks off season with 6-1 victory against Blythe Academy in "Battle of the Boosts"
- On his recent appearance on MasterChef, Jack Prince eliminated for not allowing his pork-links to age properly
- HL Film cancelled, students will attend Varsity Football lunch meetings to fulfill course requirements
- Jackson Purchas extends first quarter touchdown dance throughout entire match; given game misconduct by refs Poon and Cowie
- [Click here](#) to sign up for your Boarding Suspension
- The Happy Unicorn banned from assembly indefinitely
- "I got rear ended" is top excuse for extensions this term; overtakes long-time number one, "I didn't have time to meet with my tutor"

**Spoiler: Official publishing dates for Convergence are unreliable**