

# NEW WAVES

new beginnings,  
new experiences,  
new faces



**SEPTEMBER**  
**CONVERGENCE**

# SHORT TAKES WITH THE PORTFOLIO STEWARDS

**RAHUL NANDA**  
MANAGING EDITOR

The beginning of the school year also signals the beginning of the reign of the 2022-23 Board of Stewards. To gain insight into who these students are as people and as leaders, we conducted short take interviews with the Portfolio Stewards and the Head Steward to gain a greater understanding of their plans for this year.

## **Head Steward: Randy Chang**



**What is your vision on how the Board of Stewards is going to run this year? What is something you want to accomplish that is different from previous Boards?**

The goal is for the Board to offer more leadership opportunities and space for younger grades -- the best exemplification in the council system. We're also explicitly focusing a large number of resources on the small, daily things (e.g assembly) because after COVID, many of those traditions are undefined and need to be done well this year.

**What teacher do you identify with most?**

Mr. Bauld. I really like literature.

**If you wanted to have a mentor dead-or alive—who would it be and why?**

I've had so many here at UCC! Dr. Power, Sevion, Ms. Marshall, Heff -- so many great people.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

My mom is a superhero. Dealing with me daily is an attribute I'd like the Stewards to hopefully get.

**What is your favorite part about UCC?**

The people.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year?**

Re-strengthening school spirit.

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Time with family.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

Plead the fifth.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

Plead the fifth.

**Academic Steward: Ian Ye**



**What teacher do you identify with most?**

Mr. Walker. Love how real he keeps it, and I think his sarcasm is funny.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

The Flash. I like to finish things quickly.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year in terms of academics?**

I think that a big change is a product of the right small ones, so that's my approach to this role. Nothing too 'new' I want to implement, but I want to iron out all the inconsistencies plaguing UCC's academics, introduce quality of life changes, like a centralized page for academic resources, and hopefully WIFI (although this is unlikely, I haven't forgotten what I said in my speech last year).

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Touring/performing in major Canadian cities with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

No. Sandwiches require two separate pieces of bread. If I take one slice of bread, put meat inside, and pinch its ends inward, is it a sandwich? No. When I describe a hot dog like that, suddenly it doesn't sound like a sandwich, does it? Case closed.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

I liked Inside Out a lot.

**Athletic Steward: Aaron Ratnave****What teacher do you identify with most?**

I identify with Mr. Holt. We both share a common interest in basketball, especially after we played mini hoop in Grade 8 art and he hit a three-pointer.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

Winnie the Pooh. He eats a lot of honey. He also brings wisdom. The more honey you eat, the wiser you get.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year in terms of athletics?**

I would like school spirit to be at an all-new high, especially after the pandemic, and I would like to bring new energy to the school in terms of athletics. I am most looking forward to reinstalling spirit through Tier 1B hockey.

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Time away from the IB relaxing.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

No.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

How to Train Your Dragon (if it was Pixar)

**Community Service Steward: John Voudouris****What teacher do you identify with most?**

I'd have to say Mr. Paschalidis, given our shared Greek heritage. He's also my comrade.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

Well, Thor has pretty sick hair... just saying. I'd want to bring his lightheartedness to the Board because there's always ways to find enjoyment, even in the most serious of work.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year in terms of community service (apart from Helping Hands)?**

First, that was a pointed question, but I guess I brought the Helping Hands slander upon myself. Regardless, I want to centralize service, ideally both here at the Upper School and at the Prep, into one calendar for all students to see what is coming up and plan their own events accordingly. I also want to create a centralized platform for volunteering opportunities, which is taking place alongside the work of Gordon from Year 11, who has founded Helpmap.ca for this purpose exactly.

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Working at Operation Smile (charity) and doing a pre-college program at a university in the USA for two weeks.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

No matter what I say, someone won't be

happy... but I'll go with yes.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

Can't believe nobody said Toy Story... Name a more iconic film. I'll wait.

**Sustainability and Well-Being Steward: Sufian Alawiye****What teacher do you identify with most?**

Callegaro, except they can do math and I cannot.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

Randy. That is all.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year in terms of sustainability and/or well-being?**

I really hope to be able to kickstart a spirit of appreciation for the natural world at UCC to compel people to care about protecting the environment.

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Hiking in Bruce Peninsula National Park.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

Hot dogs are not sandwiches. Will die on this hill.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

Finding Dory is quite literally the peak of modern filmmaking.

**Creativity Steward: Alan Cui****What teacher do you identify with most?**

Mr. Smith, because he's been a fantastic mentor for me and I hope to be just as good of a mentor for younger students.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

Iron Man. I'd like to bring his problem-solving spirit. Probably not his personality though.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year in terms of creativity and the arts?**

Two types: ongoing and at specific times. For ongoing, I want to build platforms for more showcases and new TV media

platforms. For specific, I would like to introduce creativity speakers and special events and enhance interdisciplinary communication.

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Working at the Horizons summer program.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

No, a hotdog is a type of taco.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

Ratatouille

**Social Steward: A.J. Shulman****What teacher do you identify with most?**

Would have to go with Mr. Weekes. I'd love

to be able to tell a good story (and draw on a chalkboard) like him.

**Who is your favourite superhero and why? Which of their attributes do you want to bring to the Board of Stewards?**

Rocket Raccoon. Just a true beauty.

**What is something you want to introduce to the school this year in terms of social initiatives?**

A big focus of mine is increasing school spirit and fun. A-Day was fantastic, and building off of its success, making sure that everyone in the community feels proud to be here, is my top priority.

**To finish, what was the highlight of your summer?**

Falling off a twenty foot cliff into a swamp while portaging a canoe on my back.

**Controversial Take: Is a hot dog a sandwich? (Y/N)**

No. And neither is a sub, which is a soup, according to the scholarly work of Justin Banks.

**Favourite Pixar Movie:**

Finding Nemo. At age 10 I played Nemo's Dad in Finding Nemo: The Musical at my camp (Jaden Kerenyi played Crush).

# A NEW VISION FOR STUDENT LIFE AND WELL-BEING

**RAYMOND LIU  
EDITOR IN CHIEF**

Among the dozens of new faces in our faculty this year, Dr. Alejandro Adler stands out as our Dean of Student Life and Wellbeing. His role includes aspects such as engaging with students and staff on a daily basis, establishing school events to boost wellbeing, and integrating wellbeing strategies into daily learning. We interviewed Dr. Adler earlier this year to find out more about what brought him to UCC and what his goals are here.

Dr. Adler lived in Mexico City until the age of 18 when he moved to the US for education and subsequent work. Through his roles at the United Nations, the World Bank and the

Inter American Development Bank, he has done large scale research into two large research questions.

His first: can we actually increase well being at a large scale? He shared, "There was enough empirical evidence to know that whether it was through one on one clinical sessions with a psychotherapist or at most, at the size of a whole classroom, that it was possible to increase wellbeing. But the question is, can we do this at a large scale with hundreds or thousands of students?"

When he lived in Bhutan, a small Himalayan country between China and India, Dr. Adler states that Gross National Happiness rather than Gross Domestic Product drives

public policies and is used to gauge national progress since 1972. All policies were focused on maximizing the wellbeing of its citizens rather than merely economic growth. There, he was able to increase the wellbeing of over 8,000 adolescents in 18 Bhutanese secondary schools through various programs and initiatives. Since then, his team has replicated that in 18 different countries.

The second question was investigating whether increasing wellbeing enhances academic performance. In Bhutan, he found that not only were the students' wellbeing increased, but their performance compared to control schools on standardized exams went up significantly. After replicating this for the other 18 countries, he concluded that, "Wellbeing



can generally translate into better learning, and better teaching." When asked about how he defines wellbeing, he divided the concept into its four important components. First, wellbeing is an intrinsic, perennial human aspiration. As humans, we seek satisfaction and happiness to be productive in our daily lives.

Next, wellbeing has a wide net of impact. Increased wellbeing has been statistically shown to lead to enhanced academic performance and better physical health. Some studies have even shown that happier people live 10 years longer than compared to people who are low on life satisfaction.

Thirdly, wellbeing has been quantified through several scientific and medical studies. fMRI scans can show different parts of the brain associated to wellbeing. Self reporting surveys are also a reliable methodology to measure wellbeing along with more advanced methodologies such as natural language processing using machine learning and artificial intel-

ligence to comb through millions of tweets to measure wellbeing of entire populations.

The final and most important piece is that wellbeing is malleable and can be increased systematically. However, Dr. Adler warns against a dilution effect found when working with groups larger than a single school.

This is the main reason why he is here at UCC. Reflecting about his time at the UN, he said, "You're dealing with a lot of political, economic, complex components and variables that are outside your hand. So you might have the best of intentions, you might have all the funding. But then there's a change in government and there is a complete discontinuity to an effective program. And so UCC I strongly believe has the enabling conditions to really become a beacon of wellbeing in education, of what education can and should be at its best."

Since he's arrived in Canada, Dr. Adler has enjoyed adapting and involving himself in our community. "I'm even learn-

ing to pronounce Toronto properly," he said, "like Tron-no".

While he is still learning about our culture, his main goals for the next months are direct and intensive. The first is to resume all student life activities in person. Whether it's Athletics, Norval, Horizons, PAQS, or the health center, he is working hard to bring everything to their full function. With this, he hopes to rekindle the psychosocial fiber in the community that has been affected during the pandemic.

His second goal is to publish the UCC Wellbeing Framework, an online platform that he hinted at during his speech in September at assembly. This framework's goal is to enable multi-directional communication about wellbeing—to display events and skills that promote well-being while receiving what community members value most. He says, "Everything we do is not only fully transparent, but it's a truly participatory process so that all community members, especially students, have a sense of ownership and buy into the entire wellbeing process."

Finally, we asked him for some habits for students to implement to improve their wellbeing. He mentioned a host of things: to get more sleep, to eat better, to exercise and to practice gratitude. He also talked about the mental benefits of the "flow state" when working on things that you not only are good at, but that you're passionate about. Some examples of this are: if you are a musician, it is when you completely lose yourself in the music; if you love writing, when you completely lose track of time; if you love a specific topic, when you're talking to someone, and before you know it, two hours have passed.

He stressed the cruciality of maintaining the quality of interpersonal relationships and engaging with people who want to have a sense that they belong, and are contributing to something larger than themselves.

Dr. Adler's substantial experience and his specific goals at UCC are very exciting for the school. Focusing on the essential pillars of Wellbeing and Community at the college will lead to far-reaching impacts on our academics, health and experiences at the school. We thank him for doing an interview and look forward to his progress!

# UCC MILITARY TRIP: AN ADVENTURE TO REMEMBER

**DEVLIN MONIZ**  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

June may have marked the end of a great school year for UCC students but it was also the start of a European adventure for participants in UCC's last Military History Immersion Program. Eleven UCC students bicycled through Belgium and France visiting important First World War historical sites. Generously sponsored by UCC donor, John Cleghorn, and family, the program was led by Mr. Greg McDonald and Mr. Jim Laplante. Professor Eric McGeer, a noted author on the history of World War I, also accompanied the boys providing insights at each location into significant historical events relating to the Great War. The boys also discussed important contributions by Old Boys during the Great War at the cemeteries, where many of them lie.



However, not only did this trip provoke many thoughts and emotions, but it was also a challenging physical experience. The group bicycled from location to location, reaching totals of around fifty kilometres daily. They visited remnants of large craters caused by exploded mines, underground bunkers from which brave Canadian soldiers fought, and impressive monuments scarred by profound memorial thoughts and the names of the thousands that were lost. For this article, we reached out to trip-goer, Harry Patel, to learn more about this unique experience.

The boys left Toronto early in the morning and arrived in Belgium in the afternoon. It is fair to say the boys were very jet-lagged on arrival due to the six-hour time difference. Nevertheless, powered by exhilaration and the joy of being with companions, they made a few stops at different Belgian World War One cemeteries before retiring to their slumber,

looking forward to the many more memories to come.

The first full day followed a similar blueprint for the rest of the ten-day trip. With a bright blue sky and a few clouds, the boys had what Harry considered to be a "light" day of biking, totaling approximately forty-five kilometres.

The group started their trip off in Passchendaele and learned about the Third Battle of Ypres. Bicycling from cemetery to cemetery, the boys enriched their knowledge of the Great War. Visiting cemeteries with totals of nearly 5,000 graves, Harry and the boys were emotionally impacted by the scale of the sites.

"Reading about the World War is one thing, but it's not until you actually go to the places where it happened and actually see the number of casualties that you realize the difference. It sort of really hits home to you," Harry remarked.



They then visited the Passchendaele Museum and, among other exhibits, what interested Harry the most was seeing old German Defensive trenches maintained by the Museum. They also smelled different chemical gases like chlorine and phosphorus. He affirmed the sentiment given by the museum, that the chlorine gas smelled like an unusual concoction of "pepper and pineapple".

Dr. McGeer offered the students an interesting piece of information about the important role "sappers" played in the war. Sappers were soldiers who dug underground with the intention of planting mines to blow up a section of the enemy's trench. However, if a British sapper (for example) found out a German sapper

was digging underneath the British sapper's tunnel, they would instead blow up the hole the German sapper made, forcing them to suffocate. As a result, there were likely many deceased sappers under the very ground that the students were standing on.

Although the main part of the trip was to be engrossed in the history of the Great War, there were also several added benefits. The highlight for Harry was spending time with his fellow trip-goers and really getting to know them outside of a school setting.

They also savoured many delicious, unique meals including but not limited to burgers, mussels, and fries with mayonnaise. The group faced long distances and routes filled with countless hills. Harry remarked on an especially tough day where everyone was struggling.

"By the end, all of our legs were burning. We could barely move. Most of us were going two kilometres an hour trying to almost reset our legs after that experience". The boys learned a lot about themselves during this intense experience. Harry realized the importance of seeing the human aspects of historical events.

"When you see the statistic of forty million casualties, it doesn't mean anything to you. It's just a number. It's not until you actually go and see all those individual graves that it hits you. Reading numbers and letters does not allow you to understand that the soldiers used to be home with their families, and that many were around my age. They didn't know if they would live or die the next day."

After the trip, the boys were tasked with making a creative piece about a UCC Old Boy who fought in the war. Harry chose to write a letter from a soldier to loved ones back home, detailing the horrors of the war. Even though the conditions were so bad, the soldier stated that he would continue fighting for his country. If he did not, the sacrifice of his friends who died would have been in vain.

All in all, the UCC boys and teachers had a great educational experience. Engrossing themselves in the deep history of the first World War allowed them to gain new perspectives, create new bonds, and learn more about themselves.

# MILITARY TRIP

JUNE



# NEW BOY ORIENTATION

SEPTEMBER 6



# A-DAY

SEPTEMBER 24

