

A RESOURCE FOR BUSINESSES



**Business Link**  
Media Group

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OF 40 UNDER FORTY NEW LEADERS**

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# B

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of Business Link Media! In this issue, we are thrilled to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the recipients of the 21st Edition of the 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards. These individuals exemplify excellence and innovation in their respective fields, and we are proud to showcase their accomplishments.

Join us as we delve into the fascinating world of Winged Wonders with a special feature on the Monarch Butterfly's epic journey through Niagara. Discover the beauty and wonder of these majestic creatures as they navigate their way through nature's wonders.

Furthermore, we shine a spotlight on Leadership Niagara and their recent graduation ceremony honoring the next generation of community leaders. Their dedication and passion for making a difference in the community are truly inspiring.

Lastly, explore the intriguing world of sleep with insights from the Huberman Lab. Explore the science and secrets behind a good night's rest and learn valuable tips for improving your sleep quality.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Business Link publication filled with inspiring stories, insightful articles, and valuable information. Thank you for being a part of our journey as we continue to bring you engaging content that informs and inspires.

Warm regards,

Yours in Business  
Marilyn Tian, M.B.A  
President & Co-Publisher



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# CELEBRATING 21ST EDITION OF 40 UNDER FORTY BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Business Link Media Group celebrated Niagara's top talent at the 2024 Class 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards on May 29th at Club Italia in Niagara Falls. The 21st annual gala, attended by 350 people, recognized 40 outstanding entrepreneurs, business professionals, and non-profit leaders.

Masters of ceremony Jessica Potts and Zach Dadson introduced the award recipients. The event was attended by dignitaries such as Mayor Jim Diodati, Mayor Mat Siscoe, MP Tony Baldinelli's representative John Vujasic, and Niagara Region Councillor Bob Gale.

Mayor Siscoe welcomed guests, while Mayor Diodati introduced the 40 Under Forty Alumni Impact Award, which was presented to April Jeffs, class of 2012, by Jaye Toulouse, Vice President of RBC. The ceremony concluded with a reflection by Krystle Caputo, a 2021 alumna.

Marilyn Tian, President of Business Link Media Group, expressed heartfelt gratitude to sponsors, volunteers, and stakeholders. She emphasized the importance of the 40 Under Forty program in nurturing and supporting the local business community, highlighting the power of unity and collaboration.

Business Link Media Group extends congratulations to all the winners and thanks everyone involved for their continued commitment. Ana McKnight from Niagara College received the highly anticipated Best in Class honor for her exceptional achievements and contributions.

Since 2003, Business Link Media Group has been the proud sponsor of the 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards, which recognize 40 businesspeople under the age of 40 for their business success and contributions to the Niagara and Hamilton communities. Over the past 21 years, the awards have honored more than 840 of Niagara's and 400 of Hamilton's business leaders.

Business Link has served the Golden Horseshoe since 2003, evolving from a traditional publisher into a modernized marketing company. In addition to providing business solutions, the company now offers innovative blockchain and AI capabilities to support business success.



# 2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

## DR. RAYNOLD WONDER ALORSE

Dr. Raynold Wonder Alorse is a seasoned leader whose career has spanned pivotal roles within the Government of Canada, Government of Ontario, financial services, infotech, non-profits and international organizations. His scholarly achievements and community activities have garnered recognition through prestigious scholarships and awards, including the United Way Community Builder Award, the Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, and the Nelson Mandela Award. Dr. Alorse also contributes to the development of upcoming leaders at Canada's premier business school, the Smith School of Business (Queen's University). He is committed to raising purpose-inspired leaders to transform the world with their vision and actions.

**Company:** *Government of Ontario (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services)*



## STEFANIE VESCIANO ANELLO

Stefanie Vesciano Anello grew up in Niagara Falls and focused on academics and athletics from a young age. She earned a Hon. B.A. and M.A. from Wilfrid Laurier University while playing varsity soccer and a J.D. from the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law. Stefanie has over 10 years of experience in civil litigation at Downtown Toronto and Niagara firms. She is now an Associate Counsel in Regulatory Services at the Law Society of Ontario, which regulates Ontario's lawyers and paralegals. Stefanie is passionate about her community and eventually moved back home to start a family. She is often found coaching soccer, volunteering for her children's school, or supporting local charity events.

**Company:** *Law Society of Ontario*



## DIANA AQUINO

Diana Aquino, a Niagara resident since 2012, serves as Municipal Relations Manager at Walker Industries. In this role, she actively identifies and advances business opportunities, oversees critical processing contracts, and maintains strong client relationships. She plays a crucial role in securing both existing and new business ventures by implementing performance-enhancing strategies based on customer insights, comprehensive market analysis, and data-driven evidence. Her commitment to giving back and supporting the well-being of the region's community is evident through her personal volunteer efforts and participation in company-sponsored events, aligning perfectly with Walker's principle of contributing to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of our communities.

**Company:** *Walker Industries*



## ROBERT BARBER

Robert Barber is a licensed paralegal and the founder and CEO of Prevail Paralegal Services, a legal services firm with locations operating throughout southwestern Ontario. Robert serves as a Community Councilor with the Niagara Region Métis Council and is the Board Treasurer for ARCH Disability Law Centre. Robert volunteers as a Paralegal Coach with the Coach and Advisor Network of the Law Society of Ontario (LSO) and has been a presenter for professional development programs at the LSO and the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association. Robert resides in St. Catharines and enjoys spending time with his wife and their two children.

**Company:** *Prevail Paralegal Services Professional Corporation*



## JONATHAN BELGRAVE

Jonathan Belgrave is a marketing professional specializing in higher education. Jonathan, a Trinidadian native and second-generation Brock alumnus with a Bachelor of Accounting, has always had roots in Niagara. His passion for life-long learning and community involvement is reflected in his roles at Brock PCS and beyond. Jonathan has spent over a decade committed to community service through chairing several St. Catharines City Committees, supporting Pride Niagara (He's a 2023 Ed Eldridge Unity Award recipient), sitting as an executive of St. Catharines and Port-of-Spain Twinning Association, mentoring for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara and more.



**Company:** *Brock University*

## TAYLER BOOK

Tayler Book co-founded Beechwood Doughnuts in 2015, Niagara's first and only 100% vegan doughnut shop. Located in the heart of Downtown St. Catharines, Beechwood Doughnuts quickly gained popularity and a reputation for quality in the Niagara Region and beyond. Tayler approaches business with social good in mind by supporting initiatives that reduce waste, promote a living wage, and help community members in need. Beechwood is a proud partner of YWCA Niagara Region and an Ontario Living Wage Employer.



**Company:** *Company Name: Beechwood Doughnuts*

## MIKE BRITTON

Mike Britton, born and raised in St. Catharines, Niagara, has dedicated his career to improving our community. In 2014, at the age of 24, he was elected as the youngest City Councillor in St Catharines history and became a Niagara Regional Councillor in 2022. Mike serves on many not-for-profit volunteer boards – such as Crime Stoppers and Habitat for Humanity – and is a proud member of other community groups like Rotary, The Royal Canadian Legion, and Leadership Niagara. Mike is currently the Manager of Government Relations for ONpoint Strategy Group, using his political experience to advance both Niagara and his clients' interests



**Company:** *ONpoint Strategy Group*

## MANDY CAVASIN

Mandy Cavasin, Senior Development Officer at Niagara Children's Centre, began her career in fundraising at Brock University's Annual Fund and United Way Niagara. For the last two years, Mandy has played a vital role at Niagara Children's Centre and was an integral part of their most successful campaign. Beyond her professional roles, Mandy gives back as a Board Member for OUTniagara, supporting LGBTQ communities, and serves on the Board of Directors for AFP Golden Horseshoe, advocating for excellence in the charitable sector.



**Company:** *Niagara Children's Centre*

## 2024 NIAGARA RECIPIENTS

### BAILEY CHARLES

Bailey Charles is dedicated to supporting the growth and prosperity of businesses in Niagara. In her professional capacity as a Senior Account Manager with the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Niagara Industrial Association, she provides local businesses with strategic guidance, facilitates access to financial resources, and offers insightful perspectives to help entrepreneurs navigate challenges and seize opportunities. Bailey holds a Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) degree from Brock University, and carries the CPA, CMA designation.

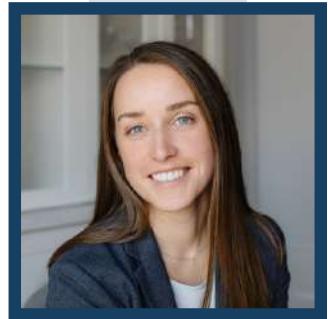
**Company:** TD Bank Financial Group



### LISA D'AMBOISE

Lisa D'Amboise, the Director of Financial Accounting & Controller at Brock University, has deep roots both in Niagara as a life-long resident, and Brock where she earned her Bachelor of Accounting. Following graduation, Lisa pursued her Chartered Professional Accountant designation and gained valuable experience in public accounting at KPMG. It was there that her passion for not-for-profit organizations flourished, leading her back to her alma mater. Throughout her decade-long journey at Brock, Lisa has demonstrated adaptability and commitment as she has successfully navigated through various roles. She has also served on community Boards and Committees, most recently Tourism Partnership of Niagara.

**Company:** Brock University



### BRITTANY DAVY

With over a decade of clinical behavioural services experience, Brittany Davy addresses complex care needs in youth and adults with mental illness and intellectual developmental delay. A Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst and Clinical Supervisor at Anchor Rehab, Brittany is a doctoral candidate at McMaster University and has received a national award for her research on Black women and breast cancer mortality. She has worked as a teaching assistant for 6 years at McMaster and Brock University's in their graduate and undergraduate courses. Brittany enriches her community through extensive volunteer work in breast cancer initiatives, the Black Student Mentorship Program, ONTABA, and foodbanks.

**Company:** Anchor Rehabilitation Support Services Inc.



### SAMANTHA FORBES

Samantha Forbes is a catalyst for change in the fight against gender-based violence. With her Professional Addiction Studies Diploma from McMaster University and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Brock University, Samantha blends education with a passion for social justice. Samantha serves as Birchway Niagara's Manager of Prevention and Public Education; responsible for the development of a prevention-based education program with aims to end gender-based violence. An energetic speaker and educator, Samantha shares her extensive knowledge to build a safer, equitable society. Supported by her family, she's proud to work toward Birchway Niagara's vision of a community without abuse.

**Company:** Birchway Niagara



## JAIME GILES

Jaime Giles is a proud lifelong Niagara resident who has always been passionate about community and an advocate for social justice and equity. She is currently Manager, Cash Management at TD Commercial Banking where she had led numerous community and charitable volunteer initiatives supporting local non-profit organizations including Community Crew, Shoebox Project, and the United Way. In 2023, she was recognized with the TD Community Showcase Award. As a member of the GNCC's Women in Niagara (WIN) Council and a TD Accredited Women in Enterprise Banker, Jaime is dedicated to facilitating the growth and success of women in business across Niagara.

**Company:** *TD Commercial Banking*



## ERIN HAGAR

Erin Hagar, HR expert at SunOpta Inc and owner of Human Resources Solutions Niagara, cultivates vibrant, inclusive work environments driving success. With a decade's experience in manufacturing, including food production and aerospace, Erin shapes comprehensive HR strategies and innovative methodologies. She extends expertise to part-time HR services in the Niagara Region. Erin champions community initiatives, supporting Women's Place of South Niagara, CMHA, Brain Injury Association of Fort Erie, Community Care, and local food banks. Committed to empowering women, she mentors future female leaders, emphasizing her dedication to fostering inclusivity and success.

**Company:** *SunOpta Inc.*



## RYAN HARRISON

Since its inception in 2011 as the Burlington Twins, Ryan Harrison has been integral to the Intercounty Baseball League franchise. Transitioning from a game day employee to Director of Operations under the Burlington Bandits, Ryan orchestrated the team's success both on and off the field. After a stint with the Hamilton Bulldogs Hockey Club, he, along with Jason and Dan, formed the Burlington Herd Baseball Club in 2017, later relocating to Welland as the Jackfish in 2019. Under Ryan's leadership, the Jackfish have shattered attendance records annually, contributing \$71,000 to local charities in 2023 alone and a total of \$114,000 since their relocation.

**Company:** *Welland Jackfish Baseball Club*



## ANDREW HARWOOD

Mandy Cavasin, Senior Development Officer at Niagara Children's Centre, began her career in fundraising at Brock University's Annual Fund and United Way Niagara. For the last two years, Mandy has played a vital role at Niagara Children's Centre and was an integral part of their most successful campaign. Beyond her professional roles, Mandy gives back as a Board Member for OUTniagara, supporting LGBTQ communities, and serves on the Board of Directors for AFP Golden Horseshoe, advocating for excellence in the charitable sector.

**Company:** *Niagara Children's Centre*

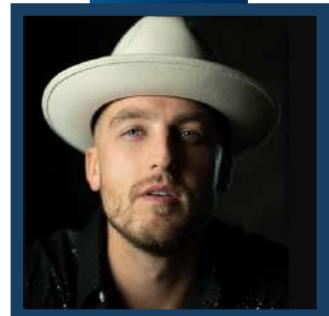


## 2024 NIAGARA RECIPIENTS

### WES KELLER

St. Catharines native Wes Keller, with a Sound Engineering degree from Recording Arts Canada, embarked on a dynamic journey in music and production. From aiding artists like Nelly on the Jay Leno Show to touring and opening for bands like USS & Sublime, Wes honed diverse skills and a passion for creativity. His talents earned a nomination for Best Canadian Music Video at the Canadian Independent Music Video Awards in 2020, securing 2nd place nationally. Transitioning to directing and producing, he founded Black Frame Cinema, achieving six-figure revenue and winning Best Videography and Photography Service in the Niagara Region. Expanding further, Wes established "Black Frame Studios," set for a grand opening in June 2024.

**Company:** *Black Frame Cinema Inc.*



### BRENT KING

Brent King founded and currently operates RORE Real Estate, an independent brokerage, as well as Royal Oak Property Developments, a residential and commercial development firm. In 2023 Brent was elected as a Board of Director at RECO, Ontario's Real Estate Regulator. Brent is also a volunteer Board of Director with the Greater Fort Erie Youth Soccer Club, as well as a soccer coach for the past few years. Brent hosts an annual summer festival called RORE FEST in Fort Erie where he brings together the community to enjoy free fun activities, live music/performances, and a movie under the stars.

**Company:** *RORE Real Estate*



### ANDREW KORCHOK

For over a decade, Andrew Korchok has honed his public relations skills in Niagara. Starting at Niagara Region, he later joined Niagara College, securing media coverage for innovative programs. Since 2022, he's led Niagara Region Public Health's Communications and Engagement team, shaping their message during the pandemic and beyond. Andrew holds a BA in Liberal Arts from Brock University and a Graduate Certificate in Public Relations from Niagara College. He obtained his Accreditation in Public Relations from the Canadian Public Relations Society in 2022 and volunteers to help PR professionals advance their careers.

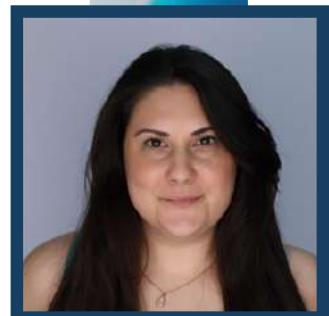
**Company:** *Niagara Region*



### ELYSE LAPPANO

Elyse Lappano is a disability services professional with more than 15 years of experience working directly with disabled populations; and training support personnel across North America using an embodied perspective and applied approach. Her passion for informing systemic change led to the launch of Lappano Howe Consulting; advocating for dignified, authentic engagement of disabled groups in their communities, and helping organizations move beyond tokenistic engagement to create more inclusive spaces. Elyse's background in disability service provision allows her to approach her role as Manager, Student Information & Services at Brock University in a way that is equitable and ensures policies and operations are accessible.

**Company:** *Niagara Children's Centre*



## MATTHEW LEASK

Matt Leask, a partner at LCW Lawyers in St. Catharines, offers a comprehensive range of legal services, specializing in corporate, commercial, real estate, and estate law, as well as intellectual property advice. With an undergraduate degree from the University of Waterloo and a graduate certificate in international business management from Niagara College, he earned his Juris Doctor (J.D.) from Osgoode Hall Law School and was called to the Ontario Bar in 2016. Matt is also a registered trademark agent. Beyond law, he volunteers on the Board of Directors for CAA Niagara and the Workforce Collective, dedicating his time to community service.

**Company:** *Lancaster Chown & Welch LLP*



## ANGELICA MASTERSON

Angelica Masterson opened the doors at The Vintage Venture in December 2022. Her passion for vintage treasures and community connection drove her to create a space for vintage enthusiasts and local artisans alike. In 2023, The Vintage Venture was recognized with multiple awards in the Niagara Falls Readers Choice awards, including best antique store, best consignment/thrift store, and best overall service-shopping. The Vintage Venture thrives as a collective effort, boasting over 50 local antique dealers and artisans, each contributing to its eclectic charm. Angelica's vision extends beyond business success; she fosters a vibrant space with a focus on the sustainability of second hand and supporting local artists and small business owners.

**Company:** *The Vintage Venture*



## PETA-ANN MCCAULSKY

Peta-Ann McCaulsky began her banking career with Royal Bank of Canada on January 8, 2018, as a Client Advisor. In 2019, she completed her Investment Certification and was promoted to Banking Advisor, where she excelled in the role. Currently, Branch Manager at RBC Ridgeway, Peta-Ann is the lead for the Black Professional Network (ERG): Niagara Chapter, cabinet member of RBC's My Community Employee Giving, RBC Newcomer Council member, and volunteers teaching youth at her local church. Peta-Ann recently performed Negro Spirituals in the Celebration of Harriet Tubman Day held at the Salem Chapel BME Church in St. Catharines, honoring Harriet's legacy.

**Company:** *Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)*



## ANA MCKNIGHT

Ana McKnight is an award-winning communications professional with 17-years of experience bringing dynamic storytelling to life. Trained in graphic design, she creates multimedia content at Niagara College that conveys concepts, informs audiences, shares experiences, and solves problems. As a trilingual individual, Ana is passionate about linguistics and writing, and recently upgraded her skills to become a certified English as a Second Language instructor to support international students and newcomers to Canada. In her spare time, Ana volunteers regularly to support local food banks and community outreach services. Ana holds post-secondary degrees from the University of Toronto, York University, and Niagara College.

**Company:** *Niagara College*



## 2024 NIAGARA RECIPIENTS

### MEGAN MCRAE

Megan McRae is the Community Relations Specialist at the City of Thorold, where she leads all communications, marketing and community relations efforts for the City. With a Masters Degree and Graduate Certificate in Public Relations, Megan has grown her career in Niagara, having worked at Niagara Health and Walker Industries prior to joining the City of Thorold team in 2022. An alumnus of Leadership Niagara, Megan is a dedicated community volunteer and has proudly served on the Niagara Falls Soup Kitchen's Board of Directors. Megan calls Welland home where she lives with her partner, Kyle and son, Wesley.

**Company:** *City of Thorold*



### CALISSA NGOZI

Calissa Ngozi is an award-winning inspirational speaker, a professor, and a distinguished professional with a wealth of experience in the fields of mental health, education, hospital care, and acquired brain injury, spanning over two decades. Calissa has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to providing exceptional mental health behavior support services through her private practice in collaboration with Bartimaeus Inc., and as a Resilience Mentor to youth struggling with life transitions.

Her contributions to the mental health and education communities have been instrumental in shaping the future of social services and inspiring positive change.

**Company:** *Hunter-Sawyer Enterprises Inc.*



### YVONNE NIWAHEREZA

Yvonne Niwahereza, founder of Breathe88, transitioned from finance to her true calling in April 2023, focusing on Transformative Art. She believes in its potential to revolutionize human and business interactions by restoring genuine connections. Additionally, Yvonne volunteers at Pathstone and Community Crew, demonstrating her commitment to community and positive change. Through her work and volunteer efforts, she embodies the principles of transformative art, aiming to create balance and authenticity in every aspect of life.

**Company:** *Breathe88*



### JEREMY PHILLIPS

Jeremy Phillips, born and raised in Niagara Falls, has a profound passion for construction and home building. As a Project Manager at Centennial Homes Niagara Inc., his role has been instrumental in expanding community development initiatives. Committed to creating vibrant communities, Centennial, with Jeremy on board, actively engages in local initiatives and supports vital charities like Project S.H.A.R.E, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Niagara Children's Centre. Recognized as the Company of the Year in 2023 by the Niagara Home Builders Association, Centennial takes pride in its community involvement. Jeremy is thrilled about Centennial's recent partnership with Habitat for Humanity to construct affordable townhouses in Thorold, reinforcing their commitment to enhancing lives in the region.

**Company:** *Centennial Homes Niagara Inc.*



## ANDREA SACCO

Andrea Sacco, the Owner of You Empower Tomorrow has a passion towards empowering individuals to take control over their lives and helps people and teams with following their dreams and achieving success.

With a background in health promotion, social media marketing, strategic planning & wellness Andrea has combined her unique skills to support people, businesses and communities with discovering and pursuing their purpose. She offers business & social media consulting, programs, and workshops to help businesses and people THRIVE professionally and personally.

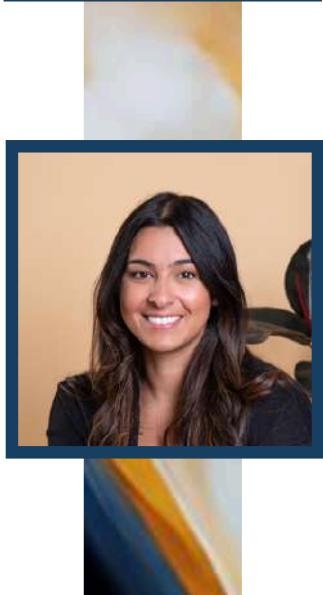
**Company:** *You Empower Tomorrow*



## MAYA SAGGAR

Maya Saggar is the Owner and Learning Experience Designer at Impact Learning. Impact Learning was founded in 2021 as a first-of-its-kind learning development agency that supports businesses in the creation and implementation of learning experiences. Maya is currently working towards completing her Doctor of Education in Educational Research, leveraging her academic pursuits to inform and enhance learning strategies for clients. With a passion for innovative learning solutions, Maya brings expertise in instructional design, technology integration, and learner engagement to every project. Beyond the office, Maya creates an Impact in the Niagara Region through her role as a youth dance teacher and choreographer.

**Company:** *Impact Learning*



## BECKY SCILIBERTO

A strong believer in lifelong learning and community service, Becky Sciliberto's journey through Niagara College's financial landscape is marked by thoughtful innovation and steadfast compliance. A rule follower by nature, Becky has taken a lighthearted approach to finance and compliance, where her dedication to process efficiencies and innovative solutions has led to significant advancements in student and operational finance systems. Becky's leadership implemented landmark initiatives like the CIBC International Student Pay system, Salesforce, Niagara College - Toronto, and the Essential Services Audit Framework. Becky's passion extends beyond her role, notably as Co-Chair for the United Way Niagara workplace campaign, where she drove unprecedented fundraising and engagement.

**Company:** *Niagara College*



## BRILEE SEARS

Brilee Sears joined the Town of Pelham in 2023 in the newly formed role of grant specialist after immigrating to Canada in 2022. Since that time, she has submitted over \$40 million in grant applications to support projects, ranging from infrastructure improvements to recreational activities. Within her role, Brilee also enjoys getting to support the work of local non-profit organizations as she assists them in applying for grants. Outside of work, Brilee remains an active volunteer, working with the 10th Welland Scouting Group as a Cub Scout Leader and with Rotary Youth Exchange students as they participate in year-long international exchanges.

**Company:** *Town of Pelham*



## 2024 NIAGARA RECIPIENTS

### DINA SENIOR

Dina Senior is 1 of 3 founders of Improv Niagara, a performing arts company specializing in Improv comedy classes, performances and team building. With 27 years of experience in Improv and dramatic arts, Dina has a passion for teaching specifically to youth, beginners and people in the IBPOC community. Dina has been involved in various community arts festivals throughout the Niagara Region, such as Culture Days, In the Soil Festival, The River Arts Festival, Niagara Falls Night of Art and Garden City Comedy Festival. Dina is from Welland and is a member of The Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nations.

**Company:** *Improv Niagara*



### TEEGAN SIRIANNI

Teegan Sirianni is a dedicated community organizer, leading the TELUS team and community members in volunteer events in the Niagara region for the last 7 years. They champion causes like Heartland Forest, Niagara Dog Rescue and Gillian's Place, and promote digital literacy through TELUS Wise programs. In 2018, Teegan received a Community Champion Award from TELUS, and in 2022, accepted the Corporate Sponsor Award from the City of Niagara Falls on behalf of TELUS. As a parent, Teegan involves their son in volunteerism, fostering a spirit of giving back and inspiring the next generation.

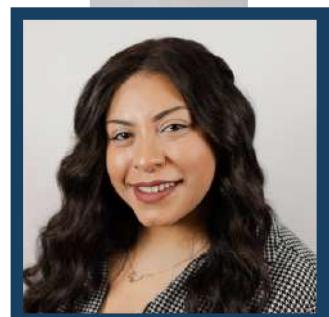
**Company:** *TELUS*



### ALLYESA STEWART

Allyesa Stewart has worked for Autism Ontario since 2015. She has demonstrated a commitment to developing and executing a diverse range of programs tailored to meet the needs of autistic individuals across all age groups. These initiatives have been instrumental in fostering social integration and providing inclusive environments within Niagara and beyond. Allyesa's dedication extends beyond program implementation; she actively promotes advocacy for inclusivity, ensuring that self-advocates play a pivotal role in shaping the support frameworks offered.

**Company:** *Autism Ontario*



### KIARA THEODOSOPOULOS

Kiara Theodosopoulos, a Niagara resident for 15 years, graduated from Niagara College in 2015 with a diploma in Business Administration - Human Resource Management. With 9 years of HR leadership across various industries, Kiara is known for her empathy and innovation. Recently appointed Human Resource Manager at Airbus Helicopters Canada, she's also an active volunteer and United Way Niagara ambassador. Chairing the GenNext young professionals committee and serving on the 2023 Campaign Cabinet, Kiara champions community leadership. Joining the Board of Directors for Leadership Niagara, she advocates for trade skills development and community empowerment. Residing in Welland with her husband and two sons, they explore Niagara's rich community spaces.

**Company:** *Airbus Helicopters*



## CHRIS VENTURA

Chris Ventura is a long-time community builder. With over 10 years of experience in not-for-profit Board leadership, Chris brings his time and talents in governance and advocacy to support organizations he strongly believes in such as the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Brock University Alumni Association, where he serves as Vice-President and President respectively. Chris' dedication to building bridges in communities is cultivated through his work as the Senior Experiential Education Coordinator for the Goodman School of Business. Through this role, Chris connects industry to academics by creating opportunities for students to make meaningful impacts solving local business challenges.

**Company:** *Brock University, Co-op, Career and Experiential Education*



## ALYSSA WALDES

Alyssa Waldes' passion for events, tourism and hospitality shines in her role as a Conference Sales Manager at White Oaks Resort & Spa. With her positive and adaptable mindset, she has proven her tenacity and resilience throughout her career. Committed to education, Alyssa has a BBA from the Goodman School of Business at Brock University, a Certificate in Event and Meeting Planning from Canadian Tourism College, and designations as a Certified Meeting Professional and Digital Event Strategist. She is an active volunteer in the community and beyond, including at Canada's largest events such as the CFL Grey Cup, and the Juno Awards.

**Company:** *White Oaks Resort & Spa*



## ASHLEY AVIS WASILEWICZ

Ashley Avis Wasilewicz, Founder and CEO of Ashley Avis Marketing Inc., spearheads a boutique marketing agency focused on authentic online marketing strategies that deliver results. Beginning with personalized client interactions, Ashley's visionary leadership has cultivated her agency into a team of four. Known for her expertise, she fosters enduring connections throughout Niagara, offering invaluable marketing insights through her acclaimed podcast, The Ashley Avis Podcast, and her impactful keynote talks at local business events. With an unwavering commitment to authenticity and simplicity, Ashley continues to revolutionize the marketing landscape, empowering small business owners with innovative strategies that resonate and drive success.

**Company:** *Ashley Avis Marketing Inc.*



## MICHAEL ZAPPITELLI

Michael Zappitelli, Executive Chef at BarrelHead Wine Pizza Patio at Pillitteri Estates Winery, has made significant strides in the culinary world over 19 years. Most recently, He founded and created BarrelHead in 2020, swiftly establishing it as a top dining and entertainment spot in Niagara. His menus showcase local ingredients, and his vision of showcasing local musicians daily, reflects his deep commitment to community and culinary excellence. Through innovative leadership, Michael's efforts have propelled BarrelHead's growth, enhancing Pillitteri's hospitality reputation and affirming his standout role in food and beverage service.

**Company:** *BarrelHead at Pillitteri Estates*





11TH ANNUAL

A large, bold, blue number '40'. Inside the zero of the '40', there is a white circle with a dark blue border. Inside this circle, the year '2024' is written in a dark blue serif font, and 'Hamilton' is written in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font directly below it.

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# WINGED WONDERS: THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY'S EPIC JOURNEY THROUGH NIAGARA

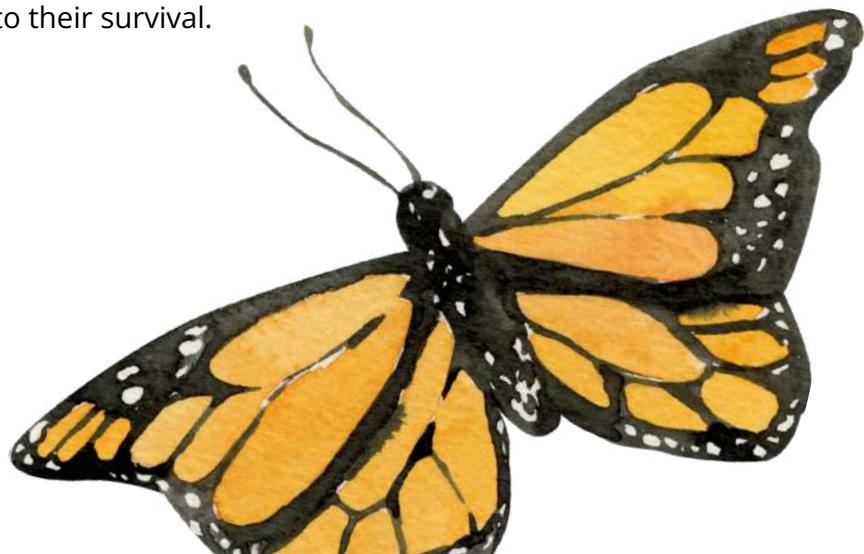
The Niagara Region, known for its natural beauty, is also a sanctuary for an equally captivating natural wonder: butterflies. These delicate insects not only add a burst of color to the landscape but also participate in remarkable migratory journeys, with the Niagara region being a major stop along their annual journey. In fact, if you visit a local park during the summer, you are almost sure to see at least a few butterflies in the area – if you look closely.

Butterfly migration is a phenomenon driven by survival. While they populate the skies of Southern Canada and the Northern USA during the summer, the winters are too cold for monarch butterflies, and as such, they must migrate to find more suitable conditions for feeding and breeding.

Monarchs embark on a long-distance migration that is one of nature's most awe-inspiring feats. Each fall, monarchs from the Niagara region and other parts of North America fly thousands of kilometers to the winter forests of central Mexico. Their journey is prompted by the colder weather and the scarcity of milkweed plants, which they use to feed and birth their offspring.

Interestingly, the butterflies making the migration to Mexico are not the same individuals that will return to Niagara the following spring. Monarchs typically have a relatively short lifespan, ranging from two to six weeks, meaning that this migration is more of a relay race than a standard vacation flight. This biological design makes monarchs critically vulnerable during migration.

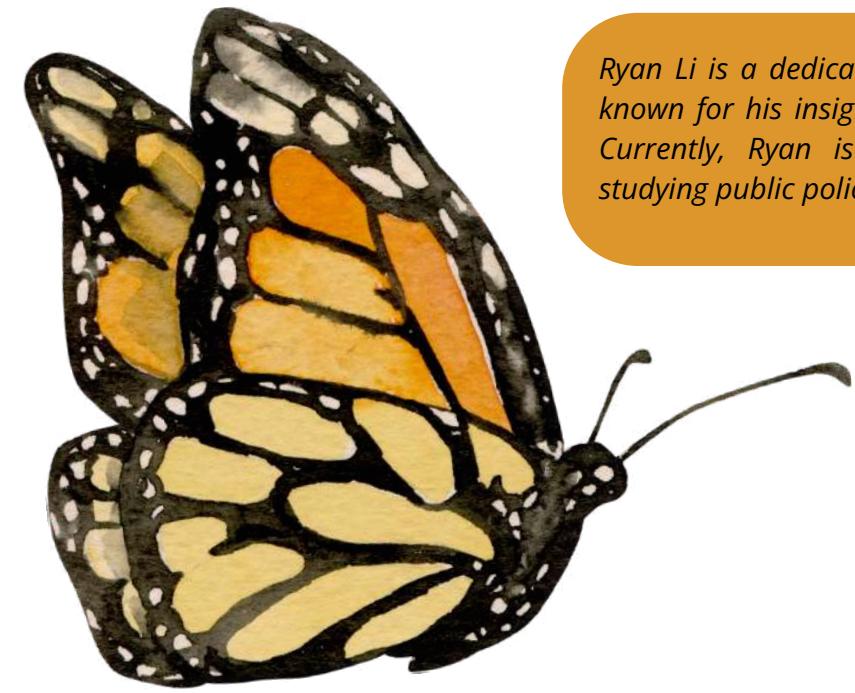
Butterfly populations are under threat from habitat loss, climate change, and pesticide use, with rising temperatures and an uneven growing season throwing off butterflies' departure dates, sometimes encouraging monarchs to begin migrating too early or too late. The precision of their migration is guided by environmental cues like temperature changes and daylight hours, but as these factors fluctuate more wildly, many more butterflies are going off track during their long migration. Pesticides further compound the problem by contaminating their food sources and breeding grounds, posing significant risks to their survival.



Butterflies are more than just a picturesque addition to the landscape; they are vital indicators of environmental health. As a critical part of the food chain, they support other species up and down the continent. As pollinators, they fertilize a multitude of plants, supporting the food and habitat for a wide array of wildlife across North America. Protecting the monarch butterfly is a top priority.

However, many local parties, such as the Niagara Butterfly Conservatory, are doing their part to help these endangered species by running education programs, protecting natural areas, and planting milkweed plants in open spaces. These initiatives not only provide critical resources for butterflies but also inspire a deeper appreciation and understanding of their ecological roles among residents and visitors.

Local community engagement is equally vital. Schools, community groups, and individual gardeners contribute by creating butterfly-friendly habitats and minimizing pesticide use. These collective efforts help ensure that butterflies will keep calling Niagara their summer home.



*Ryan Li is a dedicated Youth Journalist from Vancouver. He is known for his insightful reporting and passion for journalism. Currently, Ryan is preparing to further his education by studying public policy at Georgetown University in the U.S.*



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# LEADERSHIP NIAGARA CELEBRATES THE GRADUATION OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

*By Sheldon King*

## Program Journey Review

The final day of the Community Leadership Development Program (CLDP) began with a review of the program journey from a content and leadership style perspective. The participants reflected on the key learnings and insights they gained from the various workshops, activities, and guest speakers that covered topics such as communication, collaboration, systems mindset, diversity, emotional intelligence, and change management. They also shared their personal growth on their journey to becoming a leader, identifying their strengths and areas for improvement.

## Reflective Walk

After the review session, the participants engaged in a reflective review, where they discussed their positive and constructive feedback on the program design, delivery, and facilitation. They also expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the program staff, instructors, mentors, and sponsors who supported them throughout the program. The reflective walk was an opportunity for the participants to celebrate their achievements, acknowledge their challenges, and share their hopes and plans for the future.





## Community Project Presentations

The participants were divided into groups and worked with six community organizations in this cohort on specific Community Projects.

They include: ATTCH Niagara, Kristen French Child Advocacy Niagara, Heartland Forest Nature Experience, Community Living Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, BIAFE Fort Erie, and the Rotary Club of Fort Erie.

The highlight of the day was the community project presentations, where the participants showcased their work with the community not-for-profit organizations that they partnered with for the program. The participants presented their project goals, objectives, strategies, outcomes, and impacts to the Program Advisory Committee and Board of Directors of Leadership Niagara, as well as the representatives of the community organizations. The presentations demonstrated the participants' creativity, innovation, and collaboration skills, as well as their commitment to social responsibility and community development. The presentations were followed by a Q&A session, where the participants received constructive feedback and praise from the audience through two stars and a wish activity.

## Graduation Ceremony

The day concluded with a graduation ceremony, where each of the participants received their certificate. The ceremony was a celebration of the participants' personal and professional growth, as well as their contribution to the community. The ceremony also marked the beginning of their journey as alumni of Leadership Niagara, joining a network of over 500 community leaders who have graduated from the program since 2007.

# Upcoming Events in Niagara

June 2024

16  
JUNE

## Niagara Falls Concert Band at The Exchange

Sunday, June 16, 2024 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
The Exchange, 5943 Sylvia Place

22  
JUNE

## Farmers' Market at The Exchange

Saturday, June 22, 2024 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
The Exchange, 5943 Sylvia Place

25  
JUNE

## History of Pride in Canada: Proud Niagara Voices Workshop

Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM  
University of Niagara Falls Campus 4342  
Queen St, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 7J7

13  
JULY

## NIKOLA TESLA DAY F2

Saturday, July 13, 2024 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM  
Queen Victoria Park



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### ● St.CatherinesShowroom

195 St. Paul Street West, St Catherines ON L2S 2C9  
Phone number: 647-395-9669

# PRIDE FLAG RAISED ON PARLIAMENT HILL AMID RISING INTOLERANCE

OTTAWA – The Pride flag was hoisted on Parliament Hill on Wednesday, marking the beginning of Pride Month, as politicians emphasized the critical juncture at which Canada stands regarding LGBTQ2S+ rights and inclusion.

The ceremony, attended by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, his wife Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, and several Liberal MPs, underscored a strong message of unity and resilience. Trudeau, dressed in a pink blazer, expressed his unwavering support for the LGBTQ2S+ community, despite the rise in anti-LGBTQ2S+ sentiments both domestically and internationally.

"Transphobia, biphobia, homophobia, they're all on the rise," Trudeau stated. "We're seeing them in schools, we're seeing them in our communities. We have to continue to stand together in defense of all rights and freedoms for everyone."





He drew attention to global trends where LGBTQ2S+ rights are under assault, highlighting alarming developments in Uganda and certain U.S. states. The Prime Minister vowed that Canada would remain a sanctuary for those fleeing persecution based on their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Liberal MP Seamus O'Regan, who publicly came out in 2019, also addressed the gathering, reminiscing about his first Pride celebration and reflecting on the long journey of advocacy and struggle. "Every time I see that flag rise, I see the sacrifices people have made," he said, acknowledging the progress made while warning against complacency.

Advocates at the ceremony echoed the sentiment, emphasizing the importance of visibility and solidarity. Jennifer Boyce, a dedicated advocate for trans rights, remarked on the challenges faced by the community. "People need to know we exist," Boyce stated, underscoring the importance of recognizing and supporting the trans community.

The event wasn't without its share of controversy. Conservative MPs opted not to attend, drawing criticism from some quarters. In response, a spokesperson for Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre noted the absence was due to their participation in a scheduled caucus meeting and reiterated the party's support for Pride events in their constituencies.

NDP MP Randall Garrison stressed the importance of confronting the rise in anti-LGBTQ2S+ rhetoric and violence. He condemned recent hate crimes, including the burning of Pride flags in Ottawa and Toronto, and underscored the need for a collective response to protect marginalized communities.

The annual raising of the Pride flag on Parliament Hill, initiated by the Liberal government in 2016, serves as a powerful reminder of Canada's commitment to diversity and inclusion. As Pride Month unfolds, the messages delivered at the ceremony resonate deeply, urging continued vigilance and advocacy to ensure the rights and freedoms of the LGBTQ2S+ community are upheld.

### Canada at a Crossroads

The event on Parliament Hill was more than a ceremonial gesture; it was a call to action. Politicians and advocates alike stressed that the nation is at a crossroads, where the decisions made today will shape the future of LGBTQ2S+ rights in Canada. The collective message was clear: the fight for equality is ongoing, and unity and support are crucial in the face of rising challenges.

As the Pride flag waves over the nation's capital, it symbolizes not just a celebration of identity and love but also a beacon of hope and resilience in an increasingly polarized world.

Article source:

<https://www.cp24.com/news/pride-flag-raised-on-parliament-hill-as-politicians-warn-canada-is-at-a-crossroads-1.6912340>

# FOURPLEXES: THE CONTROVERSIAL SOLUTION TO CANADA'S HOUSING CRISIS



A new type of home called a fourplex is being hailed as a potential solution to Canada's acute housing shortage. But why is there so much opposition?

Proponents, including the Canadian government, believe fourplexes could provide the "missing middle" between large apartment buildings and single-family homes. This housing model made headlines when Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced \$CAN 6 billion in new funding to help provinces tackle the national housing crisis.

Federal Housing Minister Sean Fraser requires municipalities to allow fourplexes to access this funding. British Columbia has embraced this, passing legislation to permit fourplexes and larger units in cities with over 5,000 people. However, Ontario and Alberta oppose mandating fourplexes, arguing that local municipalities should decide what works best for their communities.

Critics fear that introducing fourplexes will change the character of established suburbs. Toronto, which banned new-build fourplexes from 1929 to 2023, is now moving forward with them under federal pressure. In contrast, Montreal has always had a mix of fourplexes and small apartment buildings.

"Toronto had specific regulations to defend single-family neighbourhoods, driven by classism and a desire to segregate housing types," explains Alex Bozikovic, author of *House Divided: How the Missing Middle Will Solve Toronto's Affordability Crisis*. "Minister Fraser is using funding to push municipalities to make necessary changes because the government sees fourplexes as a solution to the affordable housing crisis."

Developers, however, may not be eager to build fourplexes. "Experienced developers have strong incentives to pursue larger projects," says Brandon Donnelly, managing director at Slate Asset Management. "Why focus on a four-unit project when you can do a 150-unit project?"

Financing is another hurdle. Banks are not accustomed to fourplexes, and new financial products will be needed to support this type of development.

Despite the challenges, some believe in the potential of fourplexes. Toronto architect Tom Knezic, co-founder of Solares Architecture, has designed several fourplexes and believes they can be creatively designed to meet diverse needs. He hopes Toronto will follow Vancouver's model of converting large single-family houses into separate apartments.

While the interest in fourplexes is growing, the boom has yet to take off. As of last month, Toronto and Vancouver had only received about 100 applications to build fourplexes. The future of this housing model remains to be seen, but it could be a crucial tool in addressing Canada's housing crisis.

Article source:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjjjvnq4665o>

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TECHNOLOGIES



# THE SCIENCE AND SECRETS OF SLEEP

*By Huberman Lab Neural Network*

Thank you for joining the Huberman Lab Neural Network—a once-a-month newsletter with science and science-related tools for everyday life. This newsletter aims to provide you with actionable information in a condensed form.

Our recent guest series with Dr. Matt Walker offered a comprehensive look into the biology of sleep, strategies for improving sleep quality, and the impact of factors like caffeine, alcohol, and naps. The final episode featured a Q&A session addressing the top 10 audience questions about sleep.

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**Managing Negative Thoughts Before Sleep** For racing thoughts or sleep-onset insomnia related to anxiety, Dr. Walker recommends:

- Meditation: Guided breathing or relaxation exercises.
- Body Scans: Focus on moving progressively from one body part to another.
- Breathing Techniques: Emphasizing long exhale breaths.
- Mental Walks: Visualizing a familiar route in great detail.

## **Optimal Sleep Position**

Avoid sleeping on your back to reduce the likelihood of snoring and airway collapse. Dr. Walker suggests using apps like SnoreLab to monitor snoring. If confirmed, consult with a doctor, as untreated sleep apnea can severely impact health.

## **Waking Up at 3:30 a.m.**

This could be due to the end of a sleep cycle or a learned habit. To break this pattern, avoid checking the time when you wake up. Remove visible clocks from your bedroom to disrupt the association with waking at that time.

## **Banking Sleep and Catching Up**

While you can't fully make up for lost sleep, banking sleep ahead of anticipated sleep loss can help mitigate its impact. This is particularly useful for those with irregular hours like doctors or emergency responders.

## Best Practices for Returning to Sleep

Instead of trying too hard, which can be counterproductive, embrace the concept of rest. NSDR (Non-Sleep Deep Rest) scripts can also help you fall back asleep.

## Sleep Changes with Age

Sleep becomes more fragmented and less efficient with age. Older adults should consider delaying bedtime and exploring cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBTI). Consulting a physician about sleep issues is also recommended.

## Sleep Techniques for Menopause

Menopause can disrupt sleep due to hot flashes and hormonal changes. Keeping the bedroom cool and considering hormone replacement therapy (HRT) can help improve sleep quality.



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Email [energyservices@enbridge.com](mailto:energyservices@enbridge.com)  
for program details and to confirm that you qualify.

## Remembering Dreams

Not recalling dreams is normal and doesn't indicate poor sleep quality. While lucid dreaming might not be conducive to restorative sleep, forgotten dreams might still influence behavior.

## Key Supplements for Sleep

Before considering supplements, focus on behavioral adjustments. If needed, try these supplements 30-60 minutes before bed:

- Magnesium Threonate or Bisglycinate: Induces mild drowsiness and increases deep sleep.
- Apigenin (50 mg): Reduces anxiety.
- Theanine (100-400 mg): Helps with relaxation.
- Inositol (900 mg): Helps if you wake up during the night.
- Glycine (1.5-2 g): Reliable sleep benefits.
- Phosphatidylserine (100 mg): Decreases cortisol response.
- Always consult a healthcare provider before starting new supplements.

### One Key Tip for Better Sleep

Maintain regular sleep schedules by keeping consistent sleep and wake times, even on weekends. This helps anchor your body's circadian clock, improving overall sleep quality.

For more detailed insights, listen to the complete guest series with Dr. Matt Walker, covering various aspects of sleep from biology to practical tools and the impact on mental health.

## Stay Connected

New Huberman Lab episodes are released every Monday on YouTube and all major podcast platforms, including Apple Podcasts and Spotify. Please subscribe on YouTube and follow the podcast on Apple Podcasts and Spotify. I regularly post additional science and science-based tools on Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Threads, and LinkedIn.

We're always interested in feedback and encourage you to reply directly to this newsletter with your thoughts. While we can't always respond to each message, we do read each one.

Thank you for your interest in science™!

Best wishes,  
Andrew

Article source: <https://www.hubermanlab.com/episode/master-your-sleep-and-be-more-alert-when-aware>

# NEWS

## WORLD

World's leaders meet today to discuss global warming and terrorism issues. Among other things will also discuss new measures on global security. Last time this meeting was very productive and has brought major changes on Earth. We will visit several places of strategic interest and will discuss possible collaborations nationally.

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## BUSINESS NEWS

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### Economic Growth

The economic situation is growing after the most recent changes are tax system. Last time this meeting was very productive and has brought major changes on Earth. We will visit several places of strategic interest and will discuss possible collaborations nationally.

Will also discuss new measures on global security. Last time this meeting was very productive and has brought major changes on Earth. We will visit several places of strategic interest and will discuss possible collaborations nationally.



# JUNE GLOBAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



## **Spotify Announces Second Price Hike in a Year for US Premium Subscribers**

Spotify announced another price hike for its U.S. Premium subscriptions, the second increase within a year. The audio streamer said it's raising the prices to "invest in and innovate on our product features and bring users the best experience."

More:

- The Premium plan will rise by \$1 to \$11.99, the Duo plan by \$2 to \$16.99, and the Family plan by \$3 to \$19.99.
- The prices for its ad-supported tier and \$5.99 student plan will remain the same.
- Subscribers will be emailed and given a one-month grace period before the increases take effect.
- Spotify has raised U.S. prices only once before, in July 2023. The company announced price hikes for some international markets in April.

## **Tribeca to Premiere "Sora Shorts" Created with OpenAI's SoraAI Video Generator**

This year's Tribeca Festival will premiere five short films made with OpenAI's SoraAI video generator. "Sora Shorts" will be screened at Tribeca on June 15.

More:

- OpenAI trained Tribeca alumni on its tools and granted them early access to Sora, its text-to-video generator.
- The filmmakers are Bonnie Discepolo, Ellie Fouumbi, Nikyatu Jusu, Reza Sixo Safai, and Michaela Ternasky-Holland.
- To participate, they agreed to AI contract terms reached by the movie industry, directors, actors, and writers last year.
- OpenAI said the filmmaker feedback will help the company improve Sora, which is due out to the public later this year.



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## Leaked Documents Expose Google's Hidden Search Ranking Algorithms

Google confirmed the authenticity of 2,500 leaked documents detailing the ranking algorithms in its search engine. The leak suggests Google uses data like clicks for rankings that it previously claimed it did not.

More:

- Google may have inadvertently revealed the search engine secrets after an internal bot accidentally published them on a public repository.
- The documents reveal the types of data Google tracks and uses for its search algorithm, including how it prioritizes sites for sensitive topics.
- The documents appear to contradict Google's public statements about how it calculates rankings.
- For example, a Google engineer in 2016 said using clicks for rankings would be wrong, yet the leak suggests Google using click metrics in its NavBoost system for rankings.
- The documents also indicate Google uses Chrome data, website size, and "domain authority" to influence rankings.

## Nvidia Surpasses Apple, Reaches \$3 Trillion Market Cap

Nvidia's market cap topped \$3 trillion for the first time today, surpassing Apple to become the world's second most valuable company. Nvidia, with a market cap of \$3.01 trillion, now only trails Microsoft's \$3.15 trillion.

More:

- Nvidia hit \$1 trillion last May and \$2 trillion in February, surpassing both Amazon and Alphabet.
- Its shares have surged around 147% this year, adding \$1.8 trillion to its market cap amid soaring demand for its AI chips.
- On Wednesday, Nvidia's stock rose 5.2% to \$1,224.40, valuing it at \$3.012 trillion, just above Apple's \$3.003 trillion.
- Nvidia plans a 10-for-one stock split on June 7 to attract more individual investors.

# TIKTOK TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENT US ALGORITHM AMID POLITICAL PRESSURE



TikTok is developing a version of its core recommendation algorithm specifically for its 170 million US users. This move aims to create a version that operates independently of its Chinese parent company, ByteDance, and appease American lawmakers who have threatened to ban the app, according to sources with direct knowledge of the efforts.

The decision to separate the source code was initiated by ByteDance late last year, preceding a congressional bill that mandates the sale of TikTok's US operations. This bill, which gained traction this year, was signed into law in April.

Sources, speaking anonymously, revealed that this code separation could pave the way for a divestiture of TikTok's US assets, though there are currently no plans to do so. TikTok has previously stated that selling its US assets would be impractical.

Initially declining to comment, TikTok later responded via X, calling the Reuters story "misleading and factually inaccurate" without specifying details. A Reuters spokesperson defended the report.

TikTok and ByteDance have sued in US federal court to block the law requiring a sale or ban of the app by January 19. A US appeals court has set a fast-track schedule to consider legal challenges to this new law.

In recent months, hundreds of ByteDance and TikTok engineers in the US and China have been tasked with separating millions of lines of code. Their mission is to create an independent code base for TikTok's recommendation algorithm, ensuring it no longer links to Chinese users, according to two sources.

This initiative sheds light on the extent TikTok is willing to go to mitigate the political risk it faces in the US. President Biden and other supporters of the law argue that TikTok gives Beijing too much access to data, posing a threat to US users' privacy.



Previously, Reuters reported that a sale of TikTok with its algorithm is unlikely due to China's 2020 export-control list, which includes content recommendation algorithms.

TikTok's recommendation engine, originally developed by ByteDance engineers in China, is central to its popularity. The algorithm customizes content feeds based on user interactions.

Separating the underlying code, described by sources as tedious "dirty work," is expected to take over a year. Despite legal battles, engineers continue working to disentangle TikTok's US recommendation engine from ByteDance's network.

An earlier plan, Project Texas, aimed to silo US user data but failed to satisfy US regulators. Now, TikTok is escalating efforts to prove its US operations' independence from ByteDance.

At one point, executives considered open sourcing some of the algorithms to demonstrate transparency. Internal updates on the code-splitting project have been communicated during team meetings and via the internal system, Lark.

Compliance and legal challenges complicate the process, requiring a review of each line of code to determine its suitability for the new base. The goal is to create a separate code repository for a recommendation algorithm serving only TikTok US. However, this move risks reducing TikTok US's performance, as it currently relies on ByteDance's engineers in China to maintain and update the code base for maximum user engagement.

Article source:

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/tiktok-preparing-us-copy-apps-core-algorithm-sources-say-2024-05-30/>

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