

## Tips to get through college (and life)



**Jude Bialik (left) and Elizabeth Eremenko (right), academic strategists from the Learning Cafe, offered some tips for college students along with Delaine Kubik (unpictured), an on-campus therapist. When visiting the Learning Cafe for appointments or a quiet space to work, expect to be greeted by Glenna Fowler (middle). Photo by Rachel Gelowitz. Read the story on page 8.**



**Lori Harasem places scannable QR codes onto many of the cups that were used for the first week of the Recovery on Campus Alberta campaign, Feb. 10, 2023. Photo by Daniel Ward.**

# Big ups for Recovery on Campus Alberta

**Story by Daniel Ward**

Wellness Services at Lethbridge College has teamed up with Recovery on Campus Alberta to raise awareness about the organization and its mission to grow recovery support on campuses throughout the province. The group offers virtual weekly recovery meetings for students, staff, faculty and their loved ones.

Lori Harasem is the Health Promotion Coordinator at Lethbridge College, she hopes the program will provide a low-challenge entry into recovery for those in need.

“It’s hard sometimes to reach out for help when dealing with addiction and there’s a lot of stigma surrounding it. We want to raise awareness about the resources available through Recovery on Campus Alberta and help break down that stigma.”

According to a research article published to the National Library of Medicine on Nov. 23, 2018 by Sarvenaz Esmaeelzadeh, more than 30 per cent of students develop anxiety or depression. Consump-

tion of cannabis and tobacco are most often used by those experiencing depression. Alcohol is more often in use by those with anxiety.

To raise awareness, the college is taking a unique approach by offering a “Hot Chocolate Stroll” from Feb. 13 to 17, where they will be distributing 500 packages of hot chocolate to students, faculty, and staff. Each cup will have a label with a QR code that directs people to the Recovery on Campus Alberta website, where they can learn more about the organization and its services.

Rey Jan Jaudines is a second year nursing student at Lethbridge College and endorsed the program’s initiative. “I think this is the right way to do it, people won’t feel the pressure as much and might try to get help.” She said, supporting the campaign’s direction and tone.

The Hot Chocolate Stroll will also be taking place in the weeks of March and April, and those interested in learning more about Recovery on Campus Alberta can visit the website at [www.recoveryoncampusalberta.ca](http://www.recoveryoncampusalberta.ca) for more information.

# LCSA election vote starts Feb. 28

Story by Rochelle Sciortino

The Lethbridge College Students' Association election will be underway at the end of February with new candidates and a chance for students to practice their right to vote.

Three executive student council positions will be open for students to vote on during this election period that runs Feb. 28 to March 2. The positions students are voting for are president, vice president of operations and finance and vice president of student life.

Angela Waters, LCSA Services Coordinator, says the LCSA is important for students on campus because the student council advocates for students.

"The student association is made up of a few different parts. We are a separate entity from the college, so we run under our own bylaws and constitution," she says.

Waters adds how some students coming to the college in their late teens and early 20s may have never voted before.

Joanne (JoJo) Kariuki, Vice President Student Life, mentions some people may see the election as a popularity contest and expresses how this shouldn't be the case.

"We want to look for someone who's competent to advocate for your student rights," says Kariuki.

She says it's a democratic right for students to take part in the voting process and without students there wouldn't be a college.

"When it comes to things happening within the institution, a voice is important because this institution cannot run without students," says Kariuki.

Students will be able to vote online. An email will be sent out to students in the near future with a link to cast votes for different candidates.

Waters thinks the online voting system has helped with student engagement compared to going to a physical voting station. The average turnout for the LCSA election is about 10 per cent of the student body population.



**JoJo Kariuki is encouraging students to come and vote in this year's LCSA executive election. Voting is from Feb. 28 to March 2. Photo by Rochelle Sciortino.**

She adds the LCSA will have candidate photos and write ups about each student on their Facebook and Instagram accounts for the student body to review. There will also be video speeches of each nominee available for students to watch and be better informed.

"Don't just vote because you saw someone. Make an informed vote because these are the people that are going to be there for you during your academic career," says Waters.

Voting will take place from Feb. 28 to March 2. For more information about the election, visit the LCSA office in room CE1350 or visit [lcsa.com](http://lcsa.com).



**Stephan Graham is an instructor and researcher at Lethbridge College and has been involved in software development for more than 35 years. He is pursuing a PhD in Artificial Intelligence and applying machine-learning knowledge to a variety of applied research projects. Graham could spend hours talking about his work teaching machines to appreciate humour. Photo by Jesse Wikdahl**

# The potential of AI in education: challenges and opportunities

**Story by Jesse Wikdahl**

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Artificial Intelligence will reshape how we learn and how we are taught. AI is already everywhere from automated voice calls to predictive text. We use it every day in a multitude of ways and generally don't give it much thought.

Despite this, adoption of AI in academics is still facing numerous challenges.

According to Stephen Graham, a Lethbridge College Computer Information Technology instructor pursuing a PhD in Artificial Intelligence and working with machine-learning on various research proj-

ects, one of the largest hurdles is the perception of AI as a "bad" technology, which stems from a lack of real knowledge and a resistance to change in the education sector.

"We have a body of science fiction tells us that AI is bad," says Graham.

Another challenge facing the adoption of AI in education is the lack of specific rules and guidelines surrounding its use.

According to Marko Hilgersom, registrar at Lethbridge College, his office will be working with the college's Centre for Teaching Learning and Innovation over the summer to develop a new module

on the ethical use of AI for the student academic integrity course.

The CTLI team is a group of educators, researchers, designers, developers, technologists and writers dedicated to helping unlock the potential of great learning experiences.

They employ design tools, agile processes and flexible strategies to assist instructors and students in creating and exploring their own learning pathways.

Their human-centered and collaborative system provides learners with the tools they need to achieve their educational goals.

This is necessary due to the increasing concerns surrounding AI's potential as a cheat tool and its widespread use in the media.

"It'll be interesting to see what comes to my desk," Hilgersom says. "We're going to have to sort through what is permissible."

Despite the challenges the potential of AI in education is very exciting. AI could personalize learning by modifying the curriculum according to the individual student's needs and providing intelligent tutoring systems and assistive technologies.

"AI can be used as a tool to aid learning and critical thinking," says Graham.

According to a report developed by the University of San Diego's Master of Science in Applied Artificial Intelligence program on their official blog titled Artificial Intelligence in Education, "though there continues to be widespread debate over the pros and cons of deploying AI technology in the field of education, including the concerns about depersonalization and the ethical considerations cited above, there is an emerging consensus that the extraordinary range of current and future benefits will carry the day."

They compile a list of over 43 ways AI is already benefiting education including things like facilities management, data and learning analytics and scheduling.

It's important to keep in mind that AI, while in-

credibly useful, is not capable of making intuitive leaps or connecting the dots on its own.

"It's up to programmers to connect the dots," Graham explains.

AI is still in its early stages as an article by Karin Kelley titled What is Artificial Intelligence: Types, History and Future on [simplilearn.com](https://simplilearn.com) updated Feb. 2, 2023 outlines the four levels of artificial intelligence.

The first level is "Purely Reactive" where machines make decisions solely based on the input.

The second level is "Limited Memory" where machines store and use data to make better decisions.

The third level, which has yet to be created is "Theory of Mind" where machines can understand emotions, thoughts and social interactions. The final level is "Self-Aware" where machines will be intelligent, sentient and conscious.

When are we likely to see self-aware machines?

According to Graham it will be, "100 to 500 years before we see that."

While the adoption of AI in education faces challenges including negative perceptions and a lack of specific guidelines. Its potential to greatly enhance the learning experience is undeniable. AI will personalize learning. Provide intelligent tutoring systems and be used as a tool to aid learning and critical thinking.

As we move forward, it will be important for educators, administrators and policymakers to work together to develop ethical guidelines for the use of AI in education and help students harness its full potential. AI tools are available for a multitude of uses from simple automation to complex computational problems. New tools are constantly being developed as the field of AI continues to evolve.

Anyone looking for more information can visit [simplilearn.com](https://simplilearn.com) or [learninginnovation.ca/emerging-ai/](https://learninginnovation.ca/emerging-ai/) for up-to date articles on many aspects of AI and machine learning.

## AI can be used as a tool to aid learning and critical thinking.

**Stephen Graham**

# RBC Student Success Series improves employment skills

Story by Hayden Siemens

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For many students, finding time to build up their career, whether through their resume or job searching, can be an extremely difficult task.

But for Indigenous students at Lethbridge College, getting proper help with their career search and resume building can be even harder to balance.

Luckily, Indigenous services at the college has started up their RBC Student Success Series.

This series of events aims to teach Indigenous students how to better their career search through helpful tips and presentations that can offer many insights into what goes into making a good resume.

As the name suggests, RBC has been a main contributor in this event to help Indigenous services benefit with career building skills.

These events are held at the Niitsitapi Gathering Place (AN1501) from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Wednesdays on a bi-weekly manner at the college.

Marni Hope, event coordinator of Indigenous services, says the events are a great way for students to get help in an easy way that reduces the stress that can be caused when dealing with these problems.

"One of the big takeaways from the program is that it allows students to see that there's lots of supports on campus that they may not normally know about.

It gives them that opportunity to see that you know if they're struggling in, say, academics. There's somebody here on campus who strictly focuses on the academics."

The student success series has already taught participants the tips and importance of writing a resume, cover letter and important information to prepare for an interview.

These tips include researching the business you are applying for to get a better understanding on what to share with your interviewer.

Alongside these tips, the success series offers students attending a free lunch.

For these past meetings, Seanna Uglem, the



**Marni Hope, event coordinator of Indigenous Services. Photo by Hayden Siemens**

career development coordinator, has been teaching the participants insight to those who may have questions regarding the information they may be learning.

Uglem believes getting access to this type of information for free and having a safe space to learn in is key to incorporating it into their daily lives.

"There are different ways to be successful when it comes to your resume and just so that people are spending the most amount of time doing the right things when it comes to preparing for their resume instead of not getting that help."

Having resources is an important thing to have when trying to build up your own resources for your career search, and resources like resume building and career help can be the difference between a future or one that is not aligned with your interests. For more information, visit the Niitsitapi Gathering place at AN1501.

# College ornithology students can now track robin flight patterns

Story by Scott Holman

The system Lethbridge College now has access to is called Motus and was developed by Birds Canada. Motus is an avian tracking system which allows Birds Canada to track migratory paths and light patterns among certain species.

The species being tracked are tagged and followed using the Motus program which will now be possible within the environmental sciences program at the college. Access to this system will help students in the ornithology class, which is the study of birds, under Shane Roersma, environmental sciences instructor where they will be tracking American robins to understand their light patterns.

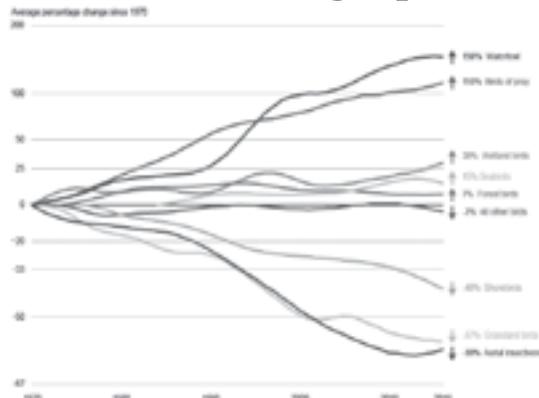
Roersma says the Motus system offers more than simply understanding light patterns in certain species.

"There's have been major declines globally in bird populations for a wide array of different reasons. Right? North America since the 1970s, we've lost over 30 per cent of our bird species. We don't know exactly why all those bird species have declined," says Roersma.

According to statistics from BirdLife International, a company that works for the conservation of birds and their habitats, approximately 223 bird species are critically endangered, 447 are endangered and 773 are vulnerable to population decline. Currently the largest threats to bird populations are agriculture and logging.

Birds Canada has Motus stations across the nation and now Lethbridge College has its own station on campus atop the Cousins building where ornithology students will be assisting in recording the data collected. While studying the migratory routes of birds offer insights for researchers, the information Motus collects is readily available to the public and bird watchers to access. Local birder David Scott says the more we understand the birds, the more we can help their populations.

"For some species, they're pretty scarce and understanding their migration patterns could be



**From 1970 to 2016, of the 342 bird species studied had increasing populations, had little change or decreasing populations. Graph credit [www.canada.ca/environmental-indicators](http://www.canada.ca/environmental-indicators)**

helpful for knowing where and when to observe the birds themselves," says Scott.

Not only does Motus help provide information regarding flight paths in birds, but it also provides other data that is crucial to specific species.

"What are the vectors of immediate mortality in some of these populations? Why are these populations declining right? So good portion of that answer probably lies in their migratory routes, right? So, we can figure out where they migrate when they come back. Where do they die? What are the pinch points for mortality," says Roersma.

Birding and the information found with the Motus system can tie in together, as both works to achieve the same goal: understand where the birds are and what changes in their migrations. As Scott says birding is more than a hobby, it's a social activity but it also contributes to citizen science as well.

Roersma says he is looking forward to developments with the Motus system and the college is hoping to initiate its own projects using the technology. For now, Lethbridge College environmental sciences is using Motus to track American robins but look to expand to other species that have noticeable changes in their migratory paths in the future.

# Tips to get through college (and life)

Story by Rachel Gelowitz

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Being a college student is hard. Existing in general is hard.

Elizabeth Eremenko and Jude Bialik from the Lethbridge College Learning Cafe shared some tips to make it easier. Dalaine Kubik, a therapist at the college, weighed in on these tips.

## Know how you learn

Knowing your learning style can help lower frustration and feelings of inadequacy.

Bialik recommended reaching out to your teachers for alternate resources like books or videos.

"You don't have to learn how people are telling you you have to be taught," Bialik said.

Kubik said knowing your learning style allows you to work with your brain instead of against it.

Bialik agreed, saying "just because something doesn't work doesn't mean that [you're] stupid."

## Have self-compassion

Being compassionate to yourself can be very difficult but extremely rewarding.

Kubik said many of us use self-criticism as motivation to succeed, but it often increases our stress levels, making it more difficult to achieve our goals.

"When we choose to incorporate self-compassion, we choose to approach ourselves with the same kindness we would offer to a friend or loved one," she said.

Eremenko said we get hyper-fixated in academics, mistakenly thinking we have to get really good grades or have to be studying all the time.

"It's really important for students to step back and realize that a whole part of the process, being in college and learning, is the soft skills, the social skills, and the social experience beyond what you're learning in the classroom."

## Avoid burnout

In our society, many of us tie our self-worth to



**Peer tutors like Marise Tolman (right) are available for appointments in the Learning Cafe in CE1380. Photo by Rachel Gelowitz.**

our productivity which can easily lead to burnout.

"Taking care of yourself is productive in a sense. It avoids burnout, you're keeping your brain sharp, you're doing something that you like so you can be more effective and happier and more willing to learn and engage," Eremenko said.

Kubik mentioned scheduling larger self-care as Eremenko did, but also acknowledged "it's just as important to incorporate small doses of self-care throughout the day, such as making yourself a cup of tea or coffee, opening a window, listening to music, or moving around the room."

## Set boundaries

Setting and upholding boundaries is something that most of us probably need practice with.

"You set boundaries with other people, but you have to set boundaries with yourself too like with what your limits are. Unfortunately, a lot of it is trial and error," Eremenko said.

Kubik offered some practical advice on how to set and uphold your boundaries.

"Examine why it is important to you to establish these boundaries and come back to these reasons when setting or maintaining them becomes challenging," she said.

See the full story on [LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca](http://LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca)

# The fight for free nipples

Story by Julia Fletcher

Meta, after a long run of fighting the “Free the Nipple” campaign with many artists and feminist accounts, this massive corporation might unban female nipples.

According to WionNews, in a report on topic from January 2023 by author, the Meta board said “the [old] policy is based on a binary view of gender and a distinction between male and female bodies.” These rules on exposed nipples are “unclear” for those who don’t identify as women.

Some argued the old policy for banning female nipples hindered inclusivity on the platforms, especially for women, inter-sex, non-binary and transgender people.

Maddie Haney, a General Sciences student at the University of Lethbridge, says it’s a good idea Meta is freeing the nipple especially if it means more non-binary and transgender stories can be told.

“Though I believe this is a good idea. I think the timing is a little bit suspicious and tells us [Meta knows] they’ve done something wrong. It could be a good or bad thing but also gives them free reign to come up with new excuses and ways to hide trans and non-binary stories and their experiences.”

In an interview in 2018, Facebook executive Monika Bickert said its policies around bare female chests on its platforms were generally about “safety.”

Now with transgender and non-binary stories coming more into the light every day, the definition of a female’s bare chest changes.

Shaylene Wall, a sexuality, business, science and art instructor at Lethbridge College, believes it’s important to express yourself in a safe manner.

“Pursuing one’s identity and sexuality is an important thing for people to question. Unfortunately, there is always a chance that people can be taken advantage of. There are certain perpetrators online that will always be there and we should try to mon-



**After doing research about the potential unbanning of nipples, student prepares for a peaceful march. Photo by Julia Fletcher.**

itor that and know where they are. There’s an element of honourability there that could be censored or may need to be censored to protect people.”

On reflection, users were confused as to why female nipples were blurred or banned whereas hate speech on Instagram and Facebook posts were not being taken down.

CEO Mark Zuckerberg tried to justify this in 2018 saying, “it’s easier to build an AI system to detect a nipple than hate speech.”

As of Feb. 10, Meta has 41 days to respond to the public about the board’s recommendations on unbanning female nipples.

# Students get crafty at first-ever Niitsitapipaitapiissin: Culture Craft Series

Story and photo by Mackenzie Jarvin

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Lethbridge College students learned more about Blackfoot culture through hands-on crafting workshops at the Niitsitapipaitapiissin: Culture Craft Series earlier this month.

Students learned how to make ribbon skirts, drums and three different styles of earrings at the drop-in workshops.

Marni Hope, Lethbridge College's Indigenous student support and events coordinator, said this event is the first of its kind on campus.

"This is the first year we've ever brought this craft series to Lethbridge College. It came to Indigenous Services because we've had students who have wanted to learn how to do beading and make ribbon skirts," Hope said.

The Indigenous student support and events coordinator said students have been curious about different aspects of Blackfoot culture – one of them being ribbon skirts.

"Students have seen us wearing ribbon skirts around campus and wanted to know more about why people wear them and how one would go about making one for themselves. We thought, what a better way to share that knowledge than through a craft series," she said.

Hope said the event's name was also a learning opportunity for students.

"Niitsitapipaitapiissin is a Blackfoot word meaning 'Blackfoot ways.' So, we tried to keep the crafts specific to how we do things in our Blackfoot culture. Because we're on traditional Blackfoot territory, we thought giving the series a Blackfoot name was appropriate. We want to encourage students to learn a little bit about the language as well as crafting," she said.

Over 80 students participated in the drop-in workshops from Feb. 6 to 9.

Chelsea Onyia, a first-year nursing student at



**First-year nursing student Chelsea Onyia sews a ribbon skirt at the college's craft series on Feb. 8. Onyia believes it is important to have an Indigenous cultural presence on campus.**

the college, said she decided to join to learn more about Indigenous culture and participate in a creative activity.

"I wanted to attend an Indigenous event and I like creating things – I paint and draw. I thought this seemed like an event that would be perfect for me," Onyia said.

The nursing student said the Indigenous cultural presence on campus is powerful.

"I like seeing different cultures represented here. You can be proud of who you are, and we can all learn from each other."

See the full story at [LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca](http://LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca).

# Crafting Culture at the College

By Rhett Ripplinger

Students were getting crafty the week of Feb 6th with the First Annual Niits- itapipaitapiissin Culture Craft Series at Lethbridge College. The event put together by Indigenous services was a huge success with around 80-100 people showing up to make crafts during the four-day period. Students, faculty and anyone interested was invited to attend the Indigenous craft session for free to learn how to make Indigenous crafts such as drums, ribbon skirts, beaded earrings and leather earrings.

The event was mainly hosted by Marni Hope the Indigenous support/event director at the college who said she had the idea of starting a culture craft series after students would stop her in the hallways to ask about her earrings, "Where do I get a pair? How hard is it to bead my own pair and where do I even begin if I want to make my own?" So, Hope ultimately settled on a workshop type event to help people learn the skills of the craft.

One person who was learning more about



*Kariza Manychief helping Jojo Kariuki sew a ribbon skirt*

the creation process was Kariza Manychief. She made a ribbon skirt and explained why she chose specific colours of ribbon, **"I chose red, yellow and blue because it's the colours my family use and it's a way to identify certain tribes and families by their bead work and ribbon colours they use."** Manychief explained.

Hope also wanted to help educate people on the history and significance these crafts have to the Cree people and why its so important the knowledge of the craft stays alive. "Next time I hope to have more cultural teachings to better explain how items such as the drum came to our people," said Hope. She also hopes that next year she can focus on one item per day of the week instead of all at once to help focus a history lesson into each craft and help people really understand what they're making.

# Toxic aspects of cosplay ruin it for some

Story by Noreve Belarmino

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The term cosplay or costume and play began in 1984 by Nobuyuki Takahashi, the founder of Studio Hard. After Takahashi coined this term, people started using it in conventions and cosplaying has been popular ever since.

In Lethbridge, Bunka Hashi, a local organization helps facilitate events that caters to fans of anime and pop culture. According to Jonathan Neilson, the chairperson of Bunka Hashi, the lack of venue is one of a few reasons why people of the same interest can't get together on a regular basis. But based on the conventions and events they organize, they have seen plenty of cosplayers and pop culture fans from across the city. According to Neilson, they are trying to plan more events so people can interact with others who share the same interests.

With cosplay's popularity boom in recent years because of Comic-Con events across Canada and the United States, the community has grown into a larger and more inclusive community. Some people do it for fun, some do it for art and some people do it as a coping mechanism.

Maiya "Zero" Hanson, a local cosplayer said she enjoys the escapism aspect. "When I put on a costume and look at myself in the mirror, I feel like, 'that's not me,' I'm someone else today."

Cosplaying is a creative self-expression and a way to get a sense of escapism. While that sounds therapeutic, the cosplay fandom also has its downside.

Some of the toxic aspect from the cosplay community negatively affects female cosplayers. According to Zero, the leering and judgmental stares they get from people in Lethbridge have made her more apprehensive of where she chooses to show up in public. While going out in cosplays, they have been catcalled plenty of times by young men and have been looked upon with judgmental eyes mostly from the older



**Maiya "Zero" Hanson (left) and Makaila "Arzen" Pocock (right), are local cosplayers cosplaying Ningguang and Beidou from Genshin Impact. Photo by Noreve Belarmino.**

demographic in Lethbridge.

Makaila "Arzen" Pocock, a Lethbridge-based cosplayer said she has had a lot of people judging her just for having fun.

"I was up with one of my other friends who was cosplaying and this old lady approached us. She looked us up and down and asked us, 'So what are you representing?' in a very judgmental tone. There were also more catcalls and whistles when we cosplayed female characters."

Both cosplayers also experienced getting attacked with hate online for not being "canon enough" and for not having the same ethnicity of the character they cosplay.

According to Zero and Arzen, some people in the cosplay community are way too caught up with pre-conceived notions a cosplayer must only act the way the character behaves. "Cosplay is meant to be fun and to express yourself and I feel like that's something that is way overlooked a lot within the community," said Arzen.

# The Japanese storyteller

Story by Kevin Castro

One 91- year-old Lethbridge resident was recently recognized for the incredible amount of volunteer work he does in the community.

Tad Mitsui, who is part of the board of directors at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden received the Queen's Medal on Jan 31, 2023, in the Bunka Cen-tre, at the gardens.

"It was a big surprise a nice surprise, I didn't know that people knew what I was doing," he joked.

Mitsui moved to Lethbridge and retired working as a religion professor in Africa. Since then, he has been a storyteller at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden.

The Queen Medal or Platinum Jubilee Medal as it's also known, was created on the 70th anniversary of the Majesty's accession to the throne as Queen of Canada. This medal recognizes the services from Albertan's that are dedicated to their family, community, and country.

Eric Granson, marketing manager at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden expressed his admiration from Mitsui.

"He's definitely a huge part of our organization. As part of our board, as well as contributing the number of hours that he's been volunteering, and being part of the board is tremendous," Granson said.

Granson also says what the Queen's Medal means lot to their organization.

"It's wonderful to have that exprlink to use and really, ultimately it's all Tad's" Granson said.

Mitsui has been telling stories at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden for 17 years.

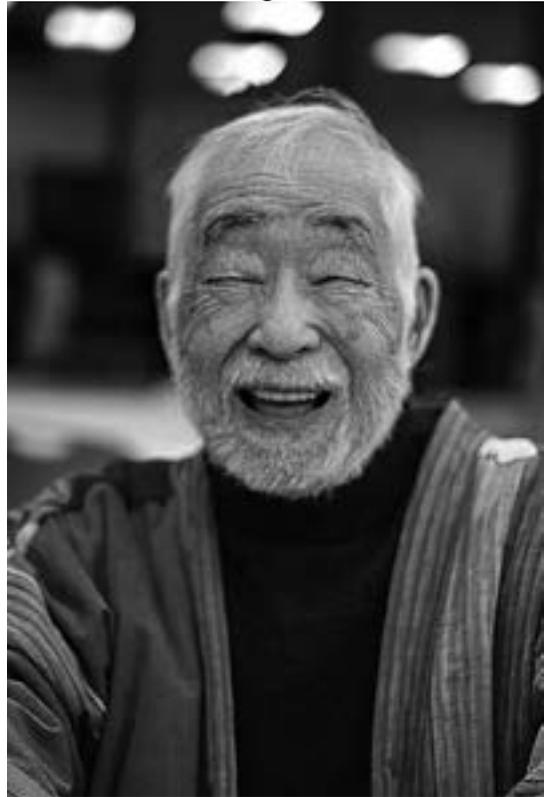
During his work in Africa, working with immigrants from South Africa.

Mitsui was kicked out of the country for being out-spoken against the government at that time.

Mitsui also expressed how happy he is about the growth of interested from the youngest ages about Japanese culture.

"I'm happy, but I hope they get it right, because there is so much non-sense going on like Judo, Ka-rate, Kendo and Japanese martial art, they are de-fending art," Mitsui said.

When he was on Africa, some of Mitsui's students found out he was Japanese and they came to him and asking him and asked if he could teach



Tad Mitsui, Japanese story teller at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden Photo by Kevin Castro Guillin them Karate.

"I said no, why you want to learn Karate? They said I want to fight people who are oppressing me, I said no that's not the spirit." Mitsui said.

His goal now is to make people learn about martial arts and Japanese culture in the right way.

"There is so many mistakes understanding about Japanese culture, that's why I believe in doing the right thing here, teaching people the right way Jap-anese culture that it's a peaceful culture," Mitsui added.

Mitsui's volunteering work at the Japanese gardens includes telling Japanese stories to kids and adults every Saturday at the new attraction the Dome experience, where people can enjoy the company of Mitsui's stories with a beautiful presentation of the Northern lights and Sakura trees above the visi-tor, thanks to the high-definition projectors that are part of this new experience.



**Karaoke host, Mark Kalegaric, kicks off the night to get people excited to get up and sing. Photo by Kyleigh Tytula**

# Westside bar gets students singing

**Story by Kyleigh Tytula**

Many post secondary students in Lethbridge often find Monday nights pretty quiet for any exciting things to do in the evenings.

Local business Pogo Bros Entertainment has created the perfect solution to that problem with The Duke Pub giving them a venue.

Pogo Bros hosts many different events during the course of a week but their weekly karaoke is a favourite among patrons at the westside bar.

Mark Kalegaric, karaoke host, likes to show patrons karaoke is fun and not something they should be nervous or scared to try.

"Karaoke is a good way to step outside of your comfort zone and try something really fun," said Kalegaric.

Ryan Proctor, a karaoke regular, is one person who loves to step up to the microphone and sing along to his favourite songs.

"It's really fun to get up there and sing but I also love the social aspect of it. You can come in and meet new people or bring friends along and it really makes it better," said Proctor.

Over the course of many Monday nights, Kalegaric has managed to get people up and participating by working the crowd and showing them it can be fun if they make it.

"I love seeing people come up here and give it their all. Even if they don't sound good, they're having fun and that's really all that matters," said Kalegaric.

Kalegaric and Proctor both suggest attending karaoke if students are feeling stressed and need to take a break.

The Duke is typically popular among university students but karaoke attracts people of all ages.

Karaoke starts at 8 p.m. every Monday night with thousands of songs to choose from.

Read full story on [LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca](http://LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca)



**A study done by Microsoft says 84 per cent of respondents agreed gaming has positively impacted their mental health over the past year. Seventy-one per cent said gaming helped them feel less isolated. Photo by Zach Lalin.**

# How video games affect mental health

**Story by Zach Lalin**

As they treat their wounds, a timer pops up counting down from 10 seconds. Nearly getting eliminated by the kill circle, there is only one other player with them in the battlefield as the circle narrows in on their general vicinity of their current location.

To what seems like forever, the timer reaches zero, indicating they can finally move around. They quickly scan their surroundings and decide to move to high ground to get a vantage point.

As they run to the top, they see the other player hiding in a corner.

The enemy quickly realizes their presence and without a doubt immediately shoots each other to try and secure the victory.

After a couple shots, one of them finally gets eliminated. The party chat is silent. A victory message appears on their screen, their squad screams as they get their win for the night.

Just another late night gaming session with Jayden Goulet and his group of friends, an individual who has

used video games to cope with his mental health. This get together is just one of many reasons why video games aren't just for entertainment and that can be used as an escape or a coping tool from depression or any kind of mental suffering.

Video games also have that anonymity when playing in different types of worlds and settings, no one can judge you for who you are because of it.

"I went through a time of contemplation where I didn't feel anything and felt numb. Video games helped me go through that stage by giving me a chance to escape the real world and enter one where no one knows who you are," Goulet said.

Of course, not all communities within video games are necessarily kind to others. There are always those who are toxic. But if you find yourself surrounded by other like-minded gamers who are also facing similar hardships, you can help build and be part of a community to help others who are out there facing similar situations who have come to seek help or to escape from it.

Full story on [LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca](http://LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca)

# College Kodiaks looking to Level up

Story by Keiran Emard

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Since its creation, esports has been gaining traction in the post secondary scene, with many institutions now having varsity teams for those who love competitive gaming.

These teams even come with benefits that sports like volleyball and basketball get, including scholarships, coaching and even their own equipment.

Here at Lethbridge College, Kodiaks athletics initially started the program as a way for gamers to connect during the pandemic.

It has since grown to include intramurals, community connections with high schools and the varsity program where they compete with other institutions across the country.

With the program being so new, it also comes with some challenges.

Justin Garrick, Kodiaks eSports coach, says changing a player's mindset is the most difficult part of coaching.

"Just this year's competitive atmosphere that some players aren't really used to, they're used to playing online with friends. When we step here into the Esports room and have a practice or very focus intensive practice then the view of how they see gaming changes and the attitudes and perceptions get a lot more serious."

Even though the program is relatively new, the Kodiaks eSports team has already had some success with their Valorant squad making playoffs in the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC).

Allyson Cikor, Kodiaks esports coordinator, says while the program had a bit of a rough start, they are hoping to become more competitive down the road.

"Now that we've kind of found our footing, we're really hoping to be more competitive."

Cikor estimates with the current rate of development in the esports industry, it will be around three to four years before Canada catches up to the level



**Allyson Cikor, Kodiaks Athletics Esports coordinator, says the team likes to brag that the eSports games they stream on Twitch get more attendance than in-house games. Photo by Keiran Emard.**

of competition in the United States.

"There are schools that are competing at the international level and winning and there are schools who are even fresher than us, where they're kind of just clubs at the moment and they're feeling it out. So there's a range all the way from club to semi-professional. We're kind of in the early end, but somewhere in the middle." With the Esports team recruiting six new players at their tryouts to create a full roster, it is very likely the Kodiaks eSports team will have a very strong season.

# Kodiaks futsal teams prepare for new season

Story by Kathleen Bernal

The Lethbridge College Kodiaks futsal teams are getting ready to get back in the game.

Sean Carey, men's and women's futsal head coach, said he's expecting both teams to have a highly successful season, adding the expectations for them this season are high.

"I think they both have a very legit shot of bringing home the banner this year," said Carey.

Both the men's and women's futsal teams brought home the bronze medal from last year's ACAC Futsal Championships at The King's University. Carey said their main goal this year is to make it to the championship game and win the gold medal.

"These guys and girls, their skill levels that they've got this year are at a high level. So I'm just excited to see how they can showcase their skills and hopefully get rewarded for it," he said.

Malorie Hanson, a third-year Kodiaks futsal midfielder, said she is coming off a big injury so she is looking forward to playing and working with her team again this season. Hanson adds the team is getting along well.

"Our goal ultimately is to go to championships and be very competitive. We'd love to walk away with the gold medal," said Hanson.

The Kodiaks have played a series of exhibition games against the Medicine Hat College Rattlers and the Olds College Broncos. The midfielder believes their Kodiaks team is strong, but one improvement she would like to make is to implement more structure in their formation.

One of the biggest challenges the Kodiaks have had in the past has been the SAIT Trojans in the south division and the Keyano Huskies in the north division.

"We've come across [SAIT] a couple times in the last few years and we haven't beaten them. They're a very strong team and they're very technical," said Hanson.

Carey echoes Hanson's words, stating SAIT plays



**Ethan McClelland (left), Lethbridge College Kodiaks futsal player and teammate, Daniel Montoya (right), practice on Feb. 6 in the Val Matteotti Gym. The team begins their season mid-February. Photo by Kathleen Bernal.**

all year in a winter league in Calgary while the Kodiaks don't often get the luxury of being able to play futsal year-round.

Dan Okpala, Kodiaks men's team captain, said he's looking forward to returning to futsal's fast-paced gameplay.

"Soccer for some of us is to get away and just [use it as] a stress reliever, all of us enjoy the sport a lot. So, just playing the game alone is top up there for us," said Okpala.

The captain said this year they have more hands-on coaches compared to last year, meaning they'll have more practices. Okpala believes the team will put in more work going into the season this year.

The teams will officially begin their season against Medicine Hat College on Feb. 21 in the Val Matteotti Gym.

# Kodiaks indoor track team continues battle for top spot

Story by Chase Chambers

The Lethbridge College Kodiaks men's track team is training hard to ensure they can hold onto their first-place spot in the ACAC competition. To prepare for track meets, the Kodiaks practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the University of Lethbridge. The team also meets Mondays and Wednesdays for strength training.

Track team member Cole Guilbert says, at these practices, the team has been training hard which makes him excited for the rest of the meets this season. He says coaches including assistant coach Aaron Hernandez are pushing the team. Thanks to a strong roster of healthy bodies, the team is responding positively.

"Aaron's got guys going pretty hard. I think the practice has been going pretty well. I think with the team's depth this year, we've got a good team to compete both long distance and then the relays as well," says Guilbert.

Hernandez says the team has built a solid athletic base and is now working on technical skills and power.

"We're out of the phase where we're trying to build up a lot of cardio and now, we're working on more technical work out of the blocks and then a lot of work in the relay making sure our exchanges are right when it comes to getting the baton around," says Hernandez.

Clean form and quick use of starting blocks and batons are crucial for short-distance events. The faster a racer can launch themselves out of a starting block or how smoothly a racer can shift the baton from one teammate to another is important as both allow the runner to get up to top speed quickly. In races that last seconds, the speed at which athletes can do these skills is almost as crucial as athletes' abilities to run at high speeds and generate large bursts of power, which the Kodiaks are also focusing on. This speed work seems to be paying off for the Kodiaks who had a record-breaking first meet of the season.



**Orin May prepares to receive the baton from Jonah Henning at a Tuesday morning relay practise at the University of Lethbridge. Photo by Chase Chambers.**

Rookie Cooper Williams broke the school record in the 3,000 metre race with a time of 8:56.15. Another rookie, Owen Stewart, broke the 1,000 metre record with a time of 2:38.63.

The team's relay work has also paid off for the Kodiaks, especially in the 4 x 200 metre race where Gunnar Gibb, Jack Bentley, Jonah Henning and Orin May broke not only the Lethbridge College record but the ACAC division record. The team clocked in with a collective time of 1:37.84. Bentley feels the team did a good job passing the baton which enabled them to go for this record.

These three record-breaking races contributed to the Kodiaks taking an 11-point lead over the second-place Red Deer Polytechnic Kings. Guilbert feels keeping the team's level of fitness up throughout the season is important in order to keep the team fresh to compete. The team also does non-running related exercises to elevate their heart rate and put less stress on muscles. The Kodiak's indoor track season continues when the team returns to Edmonton on March 18 and 19 for ACAC championships.



**Anton Astashevich blows past a teammate and gets creative as he dekes around goaltender Bryan Thomson. The Hurricanes forward from Belarus has 16 points in 47 games this season.**

# Local junior hockey coach grateful for international experience

**Story and photo by Nicholas Rabl**

Seven games and six wins later, Lethbridge Hurricanes head coach Brent Kisio is golden.

Earlier this season, Kisio was asked to join Team Canada as an assistant coach at the World Junior Hockey Championship in Halifax.

Now in his eighth year with the Hurricanes, Kisio has proven himself as one of the top bench bosses in the WHL. Throughout his tenure, he's only posted one non-winning season.

When asked to describe the feeling of winning gold, Kisio hesitated then smiled.

"It's pretty special. Every game was a battle. Winning the gold medal in overtime—I don't think there's a better way to win it."

Team Canada's path to gold wasn't an easy one. An early upset versus Czechia had hockey fans across the nation calling for answers. That is, except Kisio.

"It was probably the best thing for us," said Kisio. "It's never fun to lose in that tournament—you're

always trying to win every game. But I think it was a teaching experience for us and it set us up to face some adversity in later games and find ways to battle back."

Lethbridge Hurricanes forward Miguel Marques expressed it was fun to watch his coach help lead the Canadians to glory.

"All of us were super excited for Canada to win gold. We got together to watch the final and it was really special to watch them bring it home," said Marques.

At the World Juniors, the spotlight was on one kid from North Vancouver: Connor Bedard. For viewers, it might have been easy to assume some envy among teammates who think they deserved more attention. But for the team, it wasn't the case at all.

"I think it's almost the opposite," said Kisio. "The level of excitement he brings when he plays and the crowds he draws in, it kind of benefits everybody. He put up some incredible numbers in that tournament and did a lot for our team."

See full story on [LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca](http://LethbridgeCampusMedia.ca).