

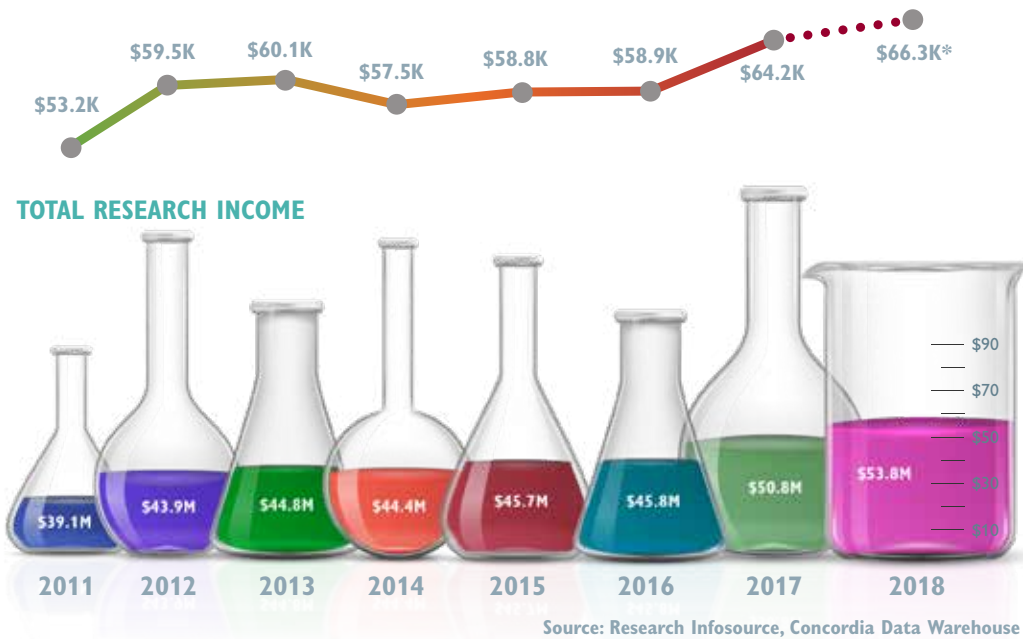
# Momentum



# ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE

One of Concordia's 9 strategic directions is to double our research. We've made remarkable gains over the past 10 years. In the years ahead, we'll attract higher levels of external funding, broaden and deepen our societal impact, and more thoroughly integrate research into all of our students' learning experiences. We're committed to pursuing bold goals in research that reflect our talents and our ambition to tackle society's biggest challenges.

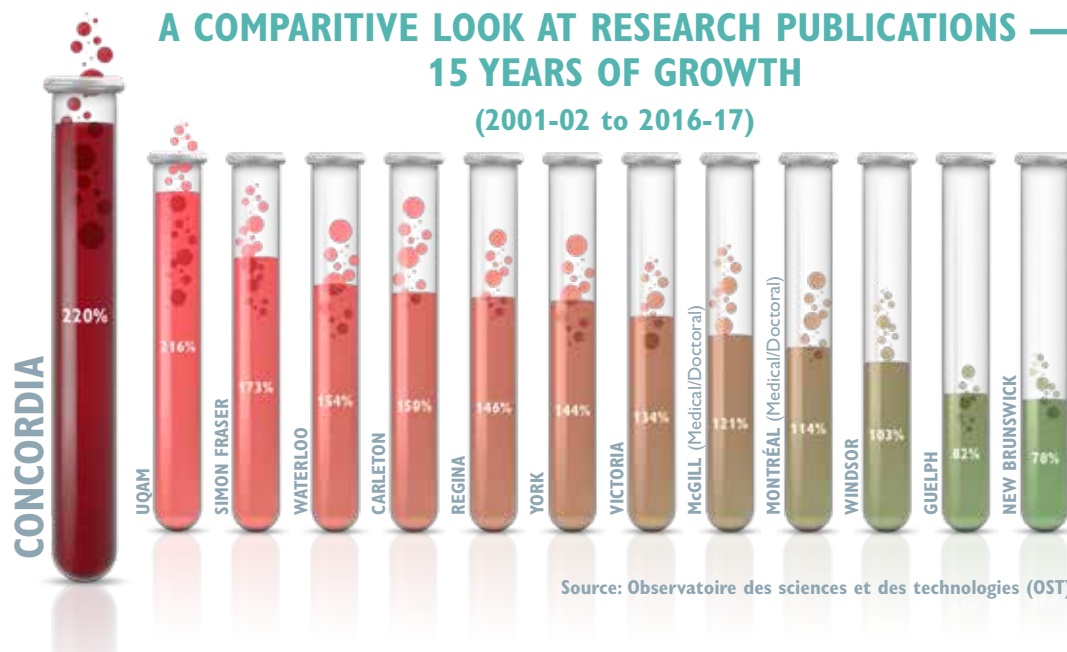
## RESEARCH INCOME PER FULL-TIME FACULTY AND TOTAL RESEARCH INCOME




Source: Research Infosource, Concordia Data Warehouse  
 \*FY 2016/17 based on figures submitted to CAUBO in January 2018

## A COMPARITIVE LOOK AT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS — 15 YEARS OF GROWTH

(2001-02 to 2016-17)



Source: Observatoire des sciences et des technologies (OST)



A message from Concordia  
President **Alan Shepard**

**Welcome to our annual newsletter about the talented students whose lives are transformed through scholarships and bursaries funded by donors like you.**

Private support is what moves our university from good to great. Thanks to the remarkable support of our alumni and friends, the university is progressing steadily in our most ambitious campaign ever, **The Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.** We've raised \$163 million — two thirds of our \$250-million goal — since our 2017 launch.

We're grateful for your generosity. Your support is critical in helping our students achieve their goals and become Canada's next-generation leaders and changemakers.



**Alan Shepard**  
President

# 9 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

**These orientations are a road map for Concordia to thrive** in a changing landscape, tethered to our core values and historic mission while eyeing a future in which the status quo is unlikely to be sufficient.



## DOUBLE OUR RESEARCH

Pursue bold goals in research that reflect our talents and our ambition to tackle big challenges.



## GROW SMARTLY

Add capacity where our strengths and emerging enrolment demand intersect.



## TEACH FOR TOMORROW

Deliver a next-generation education that's connected, transformative, and fit for the times.



## EMBRACE THE CITY, EMBRACE THE WORLD

Achieve public impact through research and learning.



## GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

Use rich experiences outside the classroom to deepen learning and effect change.



## GO BEYOND

Push past the status quo and go the extra mile for members of our community.



## MIX IT UP

Build agile structures that facilitate intellectual mixing and internal collaboration.



## TAKE PRIDE

Celebrate successes and be purposeful about building a legacy.



## EXPERIMENT BOLDLY

Be inventive and enterprising in creating tomorrow's university.

[concordia.ca/directions](https://concordia.ca/directions)

# NEXT-GEN. NOW.



**CONCORDIA HAS MOMENTUM.** We are rethinking the role of universities. We launched our university's most ambitious fundraising campaign to date: **The Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.**

We are advancing toward our \$250-million goal thanks to the generosity of our community. Chaired by business leaders and philanthropists Andrew Molson and Lino A. Saputo Jr., BA 89, our campaign supports Concordia's nine strategic directions that help us lead as Canada's next-generation university (see opposite page).

To address tomorrow's greatest challenges, we're developing new research centres, think tanks and academic programs. We are multiplying hands-on and work-integrated learning.

We are creating more donor-funded awards to attract top talent to Concordia. We are also increasing our impact-oriented activities through entrepreneurship centres, living labs and innovation hubs to build on our long history of community and industry engagement.

With the help of our faculty, staff, friends, donors and graduates, we'll support next-generation ideas, talent and impact — for the benefit of our more than 50,000 students and 215,000 alumni around the world.

Learn more at [concordia.ca/campaign](https://concordia.ca/campaign).

# 11

# HIGHLIGHTS that give Concordia momentum



## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



**01** **4TH SPACE launched:** The street-level vitrine 4TH SPACE provides a lens into the world of research at Concordia, serving as a living lab and an exhibition, science, design and performance showroom. It launched in January 2019.

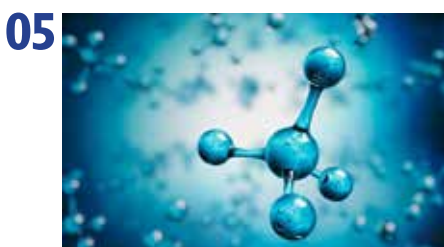
**Genome Foundry opens — the first of its kind in Canada:** Housed at the Centre for Applied Synthetic Biology, the Genome Foundry brings together robotics, automation and interdisciplinary research — and establishes Concordia as a leader in designing and building DNA and biological systems.



**03** **Institute for Investigative Journalism:** Led by Patti Sonntag, BA 00, a former managing editor at the *New York Times*, the newly launched institute connects major media outlets with journalism students and faculty from across Canada to investigate and report on large-scale public-interest stories.

## FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

**\$3M in federal funding for social sciences and humanities research:** From speech technology to the "Netflix effect," 69 faculty members, grad students and postdocs are tackling a range of topics in their research funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



**05** **\$9.5M for groundbreaking natural sciences and engineering research:** The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada distributed funding among 53 researchers and 19 graduate students based in the Faculty of Arts and Science and Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science.

## PHILANTHROPIC HIGHLIGHTS

06



**\$15M from Gina Cody, MEng 81, PhD 89:** A historic \$15-million gift from Gina Cody, Concordia's first woman PhD in building engineering, prompted the rechristening of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. Concordia became the first engineering school in Canada to be named after a woman.

**\$10M from Jonathan and Susan Wener:** Through their support, Concordia Chancellor Jonathan Wener, BComm 71, and his wife Susan will establish a Centre for Real Estate in the John Molson School of Business as well as student bursaries and scholarships.

07



08



**\$5.6M for Faculty of Fine Arts:** A \$5.6-million gift from the Peter N. Thomson Family Trust is the largest in the faculty's history — and the largest in Quebec history — towards a university-based fine arts program. It will support students in three key areas: graduate scholarships, field school awards and an art innovation fund.

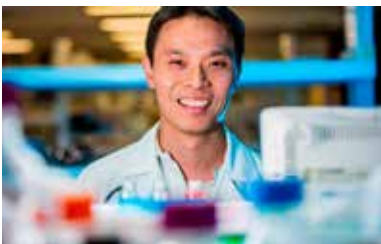
## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

**Using mushroom roots to reimagine public transport vehicles:** Théo Chauvirey, a master's student in Concordia's Department of Design and Computation Arts, researches how to incorporate biomaterials such as mycelium, or mushroom roots — a lightweight, strong, fire retardant, completely compostable material — into public transport design, as well as how to phase out oil-based, fiberglass-reinforced composites.

09



10



**Creating a miniaturized cancer killer:** Steve Shih, an assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering, and his team developed a method to fight cancer at the genetic level — automating complex biology experiments to find genes related to cancer and kill them before they develop into the disease.

**Third-age learners blossom in art classes, new research shows:** A Concordia collaboration reveals insights about pedagogy and learning in retirement, such as seniors' preferences for being asked what they think, rather than just doing. Coffee breaks during classes emerged as critical to learning since that's when discussions deepened.

11



## AN IMMIGRANT TAKES PRIDE AND GIVES BACK

Alumnus **Dominic D'Alessandro** gives over \$1 million toward fellowships to support young researchers.



## PROUD

“I want to make it easier for deserving students who have an appetite to learn. I believe in education — it makes better citizens and better human beings of us all by helping us to understand the world around us.”

Why don't you skate, Dad? Why don't you swim?' my children would ask me when they were young," says Dominic D'Alessandro, BSc 67, LLD 98. "When I was a little boy, we didn't have much. Life was tough, but everybody we knew was in the same situation."

Life changed radically for D'Alessandro after he graduated from Loyola College, one of Concordia's founding institutions. He has now given more than \$1 million toward the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.

His father died when he was seven, four years after the family immigrated to Canada from Italy. His 14-year-old brother went to work delivering bread to support the family. His mother raised four children by herself.

D'Alessandro beat the odds and went on to become one of Canada's most prominent business leaders. The recipient of numerous awards, he was named an officer of the Order of Canada in 2003 and Canada's Outstanding CEO of the Year in 2002. He received an honorary doctorate from Concordia in 1998 and the Loyola Medal in 2004.

The young D'Alessandro was a bright student with a natural ability in school. He skipped two grades and, at age 14, enrolled at Loyola, studying math and physics.

D'Alessandro is grateful to his alma mater for setting the course for his success. His degree opened doors. It was also during his Loyola years that he met Pearl, his wife of 51 years.

Through his giving to Concordia, he created the Dominic D'Alessandro Fellowship Fund to support master's and doctoral students in research-oriented programs.

"I want to make it easier for deserving students who have an appetite to learn. I believe in education — it makes better citizens and better human beings of us all by helping us to understand the world around us. Frankly, I think education is the best investment," he says.

D'Alessandro's commitment to Concordia extends beyond his philanthropy. He has served on the university's Board of Governors and now volunteers as honorary vice-chair for the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen. Now.

"I'm very proud of who I am and where I come from. I'm especially proud that I haven't lost my values. I remember what it's like to be disadvantaged. I had a hard time as a kid and today I believe that if you can help somebody, why wouldn't you?"





## NOT LOST IN TRANSLATION

For **Kirk Paradis**, the F.P. Higgins Memorial Bursary came at just the right time.

## HONORED

“I work at the bank full time so I don’t make a student salary, but I always need the little extra. Since my wife isn’t a permanent resident yet and can’t work, I support the family, work full time and go to school.”

When Kirk Paradis put his studies in translation on pause to accompany his wife back home to Japan to have their son last year, two things happened: their apartment was flooded and he was awarded the F.P. Higgins Memorial Bursary.

“It came at the right time in the sense that while we were in Japan our apartment here in Montreal was completely flooded. We had no insurance, so we lost everything,” explains Paradis.

“I work at the bank full time so I don’t make a student salary, but I always need the little extra. Since my wife isn’t a permanent resident yet and can’t work, I support the family, work full time and go to school.”

The new father works in project management at National Bank while pursuing a bachelor of arts with a specialization in translation.

He received the Governor General’s Academic Medal after returning to high school following three years of military service, and is a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society.

“My wife and son are still in Japan because we didn’t have a house to come back to. Receiving support gives us a reason to stay positive,” says Paradis, who’s originally from Val-d’Or, Que. “And at least school is going well, so that’s nice.”

Paradis’s interest in translation was piqued following a trip to Japan in between Cegep, which he attended in Quebec City, and university, when he started learning Japanese as a hobby before meeting a translator who inspired him to delve deeper.

“It got me interested in the career, which is why I chose the program at Concordia,” says Paradis. “Most of my previous studies were in French so I wanted to do it in English — and Japanese, of course. Those three languages are full-time jobs on their own.”

## HOW A SON'S LEGACY CAN HELP OTHERS

The **Michael Foldvari Foundation** sponsors students with passion for society and the world.



## PASSIONATE

“There’s a lot to be done to improve mental-health services for university-aged people. These concerns are important, and the Michael Foldvari Foundation wants to play a role in addressing them one by one.”

After her son Michael, a fourth-year Concordia honours anthropology student, died suddenly in September 2017, Marianna Foldvari and her family wanted to find a way to carry his spirit forward and help others dealing with some of the same issues her son faced. “Michael was working on his honours thesis, which looked at why people turn to virtual societies. He really wanted to understand people better, to discover reasons why they might be struggling,” she says.

In the wake of his death, Foldvari and her family created the Michael Foldvari Foundation. It works to address gaps in mental-health research and initiatives, especially where young adults are concerned. The foundation also established the Michael Foldvari Memorial Scholarship of Excellence in Humanities and Social Science at Concordia.

The annual award is intended to recognize extraordinary undergraduates who have a passion for anthropology, as well as the humanities and social sciences in general. “We’d like to support students who aren’t afraid to disagree with the status quo. We think this initiative will help motivate creativity in the next generation of change-makers,” Foldvari explains.

“Michael had incredible insight into the problems of the world. He valued kindness and understanding, acceptance and unconditional love,” his mother says.

Prior to launching the foundation, the Foldvari family was involved with various charitable organizations aimed at supporting the basic needs and education of people living in impoverished countries. Michael had spent time volunteering in Ecuador. But the work the Foldvari family is doing now strikes a special chord. “Never have we been more passionate about a cause than we are about the mission of the Michael Foldvari Foundation,” Kathleen Pauloff, Michael’s sister, says.

The Foldvaris have learned a lot about the state of the health-care and social-service systems in Canada in the past few years. “There’s a lot to be done to improve mental health services for university-aged people.” She lists ineffective hotline services, limited time with psychiatrists and other mental health-care professionals and long waiting lists as some of the major barriers she has discovered since establishing the foundation. “These concerns are important, and the Michael Foldvari Foundation wants to play a role in addressing them one by one.”

Living through your child’s death is a shattering experience. Instead of looking back, however, Foldvari is looking forward for the sake of others struggling with some of the problems Michael faced during his life. “This mission gives us a sense of empowerment over helplessness and hope that one day our system will be better equipped to support people struggling with their mental health.”



## WORTH MORE THAN WORDS

The Lande Award in Photography helped **Kinga Michalska** recognize the value of her work.

## CREATIVE

“The award gave me a sense of security that I never had as a young, immigrant artist, allowed me to focus fully on my personal work and create projects of larger scale.”

The saying goes that a picture is worth a thousand words — yet in Kinga Michalska’s case, it was worth much more, earning her the \$20,000 Lande Award in Photography.

“I asked my friends to read the email that announced my scholarship, to see if it said what I thought it said — because I couldn’t believe it. I was honestly broke and hustling a million small gigs for a long time. I had never had that much money at once,” she says.

“More than anything, it felt like I actually deserve a space here at Concordia. The award gave me a sense of security that I never had as a young, immigrant artist, allowed me to focus fully on my personal work and create projects of larger scale.”

A Polish photographer based in Montreal, Michalska addresses themes of identity, gender and marginalized communities in her work. She also holds a degree in cultural studies from the University of Warsaw and a diploma in photography from the Warsaw School of Photography and Graphic Design.

“I’m really connected to Poland and to my cultural identity. Even though the political situation is very difficult and the government is ultra-Catholic, it is important to me to keep making work in Poland,” she says. “It’s a challenging political climate to create and be queer in. That was part of why I left — back then, there wasn’t much of a queer community. Now that I have more stability, it is time for me to give back to younger generations.”

### Building bridges between people

Michalska, who’s currently in the second year of her master of fine arts in photography, aims to create an original and poetic body of work that talks about queerness through lived experience and builds bridges between people.

“Portrait photography to me is about building connections so people can feel seen and received for who they are,” she explains. “It’s a very intimate thing to hold space for another person to be vulnerable in front of the camera. I love the emotional space that this situation creates between myself and another person and how that can be translated into a photograph.”

Kinga decided to attend Concordia after finding out one of her favourite Montreal-based photographers, Raymonde April, teaches at the university.

“I knew about her photography even when I lived in Poland. I really related to her work, so I created a long-term plan to apply for permanent residency, wait two years, then apply for school,” says Michalska. “Not only was I accepted but I was also being offered this scholarship, which was extremely encouraging.”

## SUPPORTING GENDER BALANCE

Alumnus **Tommy Petrogiannis** funds women who have passion for science and technology.



## SUPPORTIVE

“Great ideas come about when people from different backgrounds, cultures and social experiences interact.”

When Tommy Petrogiannis, BEng 88, joined the advisory board of Concordia’s Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science in 2017, he was confronted with the statistics measuring the number of women entering science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. “It’s improved since I was at university, but it hasn’t improved nearly enough.”

Following the sale of his company, Silanis Technology, to an American firm in 2015, the father of two daughters decided it was time to do his part to improve these statistics.

The Petrogiannis Family Award for Women in Engineering is his way of assisting women to enter STEM fields. Over the next five years, it will provide one female candidate with \$20,000 annually to support her in her studies.

“We wanted to make sure to invest in the city, and obviously higher education is a critical part of making sure people are a productive part of that ecosystem,” says Petrogiannis, who also sits on the board of the Just for Kids Foundation, which benefits the Montreal Children’s Hospital.

Petrogiannis, who spent his career in tech, witnessed firsthand the gender imbalance in departments like research and development. And getting more women to pursue education and careers in STEM is as important for the women themselves as it is for their future workplaces.

“I’m a big believer that you need to have as diverse a workforce as possible. Great ideas come about when people from different backgrounds, cultures and social experiences interact. We wanted to try and promote that,” he explains.

Instead of seeking candidates with top marks, Petrogiannis is looking to assist women entering the Gina Cody School who have demonstrated a passion in a STEM-related field through community, social or student club involvement.

“I think a school’s main purpose is to teach you how to learn. If you’re passionate about something, the grades are secondary in my book,” he says.

Technology is a fast-moving field where you need to constantly learn in order to succeed. “Every day is a school day. The bachelor of engineering taught me how to learn well.”



## IT'S ALL IN THE NUMBERS

**Chelsea Okankwu**, the recipient of the Richard Lapointe Entrance Bursary, is aiming for work with a firm that respects gender quotas and diversity.

## EMPOWERED

“The bursary really helped me with my rent and food. It gave me some wiggle room to pursue my studies and not worry so much about the monetary issue.”

A natural-born problem solver with a love for numbers, Chelsea Okankwu has always excelled in mathematics.

“Ever since I was a kid I always loved doing math problems and I was always good at them,” she says. “I loved doing puzzles, too, and the feeling I have when all the pieces are in place is the same way I feel about math problems: I like critical thinking and finding solutions.”

Currently in the second year of her bachelor of commerce with a major in accountancy at the John Molson School of Business, Okankwu is aiming for a job with one of the Big Four accounting firms after graduating.

“I would like to end up at one of the big firms, like Deloitte or PwC — they seem to be the most diverse,” she says. “Hitting gender quotas is important to them, as is including diversity among their core values, and I want to be somewhere like that.”

An active member of John Molson Women in Leadership, a student group whose goal is to engage, educate and empower Concordians, Okankwu is dedicated to helping give students the tools they need to rise through the ranks of the corporate world.

“Our events, workshops and mentoring are mostly about spreading the word about how equality in the workplace is still an issue,” explains Okankwu. “We get executives from large companies to come in and talk about how we can effect change in our workplace, as men or women.”

### Welcome help during a difficult time

During Okankwu’s first year, she underwent a successful bone marrow transplant for sickle cell anemia, which meant she couldn’t work. Thanks to the Richard Lapointe Entrance Bursary, she was able to pursue her studies nonetheless.

Grateful to the donor who funded her award, she says, “The bursary really helped me with my rent and food. It gave me some wiggle room to pursue my studies and not worry so much about the monetary issue.”

Now that she’s fully recovered and back at her job at Concordia’s Financial Services, Okankwu is thinking about her next steps, including pursuing her master’s degree.

“The big reason I chose Concordia is for the culture and I’m so glad I did,” she says. “I love working for the university because they understand that I’m a student first, and they’ve been extremely flexible with me, very accommodating.”

## ADDING IT UP FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Business school grad **Anna Martini** provides bursaries to students with interest in accounting.



## THANKFUL

“I wanted to give back to the university where I received a great education. And I wanted to support the profession and students who follow the same accounting path I did.”

It was thanks to a Concordia career day that Anna Martini, BComm 85, GrDipl 86, landed her first internship at Deloitte, one of the world’s largest accounting firms. “That basically launched my career,” says the executive vice-president and chief financial officer of the Club de Hockey Canadien. A fellow of the Order of Chartered Professional Accountants, Martini spent almost 20 years at the professional services organization before landing at global retailer Dynamite, where she stayed for 13 years before taking up the mantle at the storied hockey and entertainment organization in 2017.

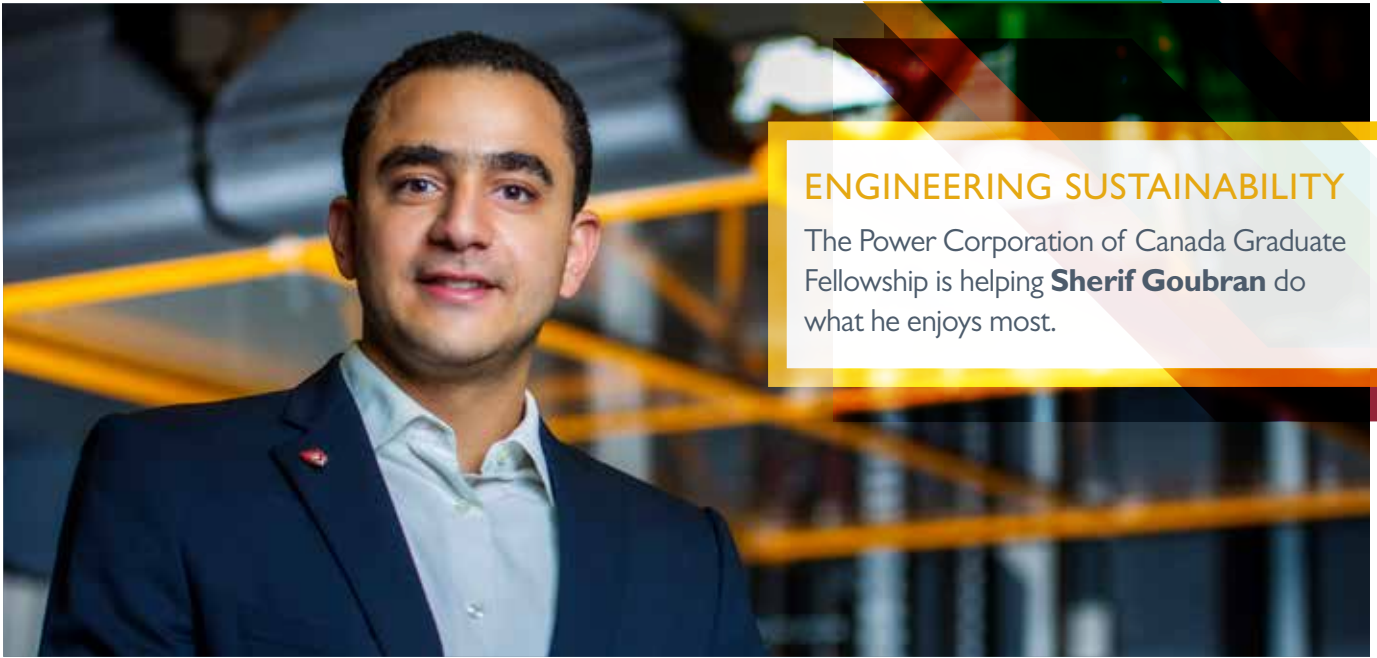
A born-and-bred Montrealer who, like many of the city’s residents, grew up in a hockey household — her dad was the biggest hockey fan ever, she declares — Martini was drawn to the strength of the Canadiens brand, which explains her leap from retail to sports and entertainment. “It’s a completely different business. There are certain similarities [with retail], but the world of sports and entertainment is highly complex with different risk profiles. I was very attracted to the strength of the hockey club and what the brand means in consumer and retail markets,” she explains.

As Martini climbed the corporate ladder, she never forgot her alma mater. She’s been an advisor for the John Molson Undergraduate Case Competition for more than a decade and recently joined the business school’s advisory board.

In 2018, she took her involvement to the next level with a gift to JMSB that established the Anna Martini Endowment, which funds an annual in-course bursary for accounting undergrads. “I wanted to give back to the university where I received a great education. And I wanted to support the profession and students who follow the same accounting path I did,” Martini says.

Martini sees the bursary as a way to motivate hard workers. “What I’m looking for in a candidate is someone who’s focused and dedicated to having a career in accounting; someone who is in above-average standing academically.”

Education is one of society’s pillars that Martini supports. The other is health. She recently wrapped up an almost decade-long stint as board chair of the McGill University Health Centre Foundation and continues to back the hospital’s research efforts, as well as the annual non-profit Centraide fundraising effort. “I think it’s really important to support our community in Montreal,” she says.



## ENGINEERING SUSTAINABILITY

The Power Corporation of Canada Graduate Fellowship is helping **Sherif Goubran** do what he enjoys most.

## COMMITTED

“The fellowship was an assurance that I was on the right track — doing a lot of research and academic work, but also a lot of community work and student activities. It was a boost to focus further on these activities.”

A PhD student in Concordia’s Individualized Program, Sherif Goubran wants to bridge the fields of design, engineering and finance to explore sustainable buildings beyond their certifications. He wants to answer questions like: “how can buildings contribute to helping with issues such as poverty and equality?”

His research will examine award-winning Canadian architectural projects using the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

Goubran was born and raised in Egypt by two architects and received a bachelor of science in architecture in 2014. He moved to Montreal shortly thereafter to join the Centre for Zero Energy Building Studies (CZEBS) at Concordia and pursue his master of applied science degree.

“I joined the CZEBS to learn about the engineering of sustainability. I felt it was important to understand the technical aspect of it,” says Goubran. “It’s quite unique in Canada and one of the most advanced in terms of equipment.”

After starting work with his current supervisor, Carmella Cucuzzella, Goubran decided to pursue his PhD.

### Committed to helping others

“I love to teach and I’d love to teach in areas where it’s needed the most, in under-developed or developing countries,” Goubran says. “I want to continue my research and to help others.”

In the meantime, Goubran is using the funds he received from the Power Corporation of Canada Graduate Fellowship to free up some of his teaching and research assistant time to volunteer with Season Jars, a project he co-founded at Concordia in 2016.

“Season Jars aims to promote year-round consumption of local, organic and seasonal produce through public education and collective food preservation. Each workshop includes a collective kitchen, where participants collaboratively apply their theoretical knowledge to transform produce into delicious recipes to take home,” explains Goubran.

“The fellowship was an assurance that I was on the right track — doing a lot of research and academic work, but also a lot of community work and student activities. It was a boost to focus further on these activities.”

# momentum

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with momentum!**

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