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FOR WHAT  
YOU'VE  
GOT IN MIND.



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**McGill**

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## MESSAGE DE LA DOYENNE

# À L'APPUI DE NOTRE CLIENTÈLE D'APPRENANTS DIVERSIFIÉE

M<sup>ME</sup> JUDITH POTTER - DOYENNE DE L'ÉDUCATION PERMANENTE

Bienvenue à notre numéro sur la collation des grades du printemps. Tandis que le campus regorge de centaines de teintes de vert, nous célébrons les réalisations de nos apprenants et explorons de nouveaux programmes conçus pour enrichir votre expérience éducative globale. L'École d'éducation permanente a pour but de développer et d'offrir toute une gamme d'occasions d'apprentissage qui répondent aux besoins et aux intérêts de nos communautés. De plus, comme nous le soulignons dans ce numéro, l'École d'éducation permanente offre de nombreux services axés sur la réussite de nos étudiants.

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Gianna Giardino, chef principale, Services aux clients, a analysé à fond les souhaits et besoins des apprenants actuels et en devenir. Nous prodiguons des conseils aux étudiants internationaux qui arrivent à McGill de partout dans le monde, les orientant vers les cours de langue appropriés, alors que des professionnels actifs qui en sont à la croisée des chemins dans leur carrière profitent des compétences en consultation de notre personnel.

En somme, nous offrons une vaste gamme de services accessibles – allant des cours de langue aux activités de réseautage en passant par des ateliers sur les compétences essentielles, comme la rédaction et la gestion du temps.

Notre nouvelle salle de classe entièrement équipée au 688, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, contribue à faire avancer le processus d'apprentissage à pas de géant. Son succès manifeste auprès des étudiants et enseignants n'est une surprise pour personne. La configuration favorise l'apprentissage interactif et la connectivité, faisant tomber les barrières entre les quatre murs de la salle de classe et le vaste monde de l'acquisition du savoir.

La réputation de Montréal comme point central pour toutes sortes d'activités culturelles est bien méritée. Le programme PACE de l'École – Perfectionnement personnel et culturel – propose des expériences éducatives en arts et culture, engagement social et transitions de vie, de concert avec des partenaires locaux. Les thèmes vont du chevauchement croissant entre les arts et la technologie pour habiliter la génération sandwich – des sujets qui touchent le cœur et l'esprit de nos apprenants.

« McGill's Got Talent », une belle soirée de chanson et de danse, comprenant même une routine de kung-fu au son de la musique, a été un franc succès. Les organisateurs félicitent les étudiants – tous du programme intensif de langue anglaise et culture – d'avoir relevé de nombreux défis. La communication par les arts, la musique, la danse et la chanson sert de dénominateur commun et renforce l'appartenance aux communautés mcgilloise et montréalaise.

L'éducation permanente fait ressortir les talents (parfois insoupçonnés) de chacun d'entre nous. Nous vous invitons à entrer dans la danse tandis que nous explorons l'apprentissage dans la salle de classe et au-delà de celle-ci.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

# SUPPORTING OUR DIVERSE LEARNERS

DR. JUDITH POTTER - DEAN OF CONTINUING STUDIES

Welcome to our Spring Convocation issue. As the campus burgeons in a hundred shades of green, we celebrate our learners' achievements and explore fresh new programs designed to enrich your all-round educational experience. The School of Continuing Studies exists to develop and deliver a wide variety of learning opportunities that meet the needs and interests of our communities. In addition, as we highlight in this issue, the School offers many services designed to support the success of our students.

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Gianna Giardino, Senior Manager of Client Services, has done a lot of thinking about what learners and prospective learners want and need. We offer guidance to international students who flock to McGill from around the world, directing them to appropriate language courses, while working professionals who have come to a crossroads in their career path benefit from our staff's advisory skills. All in all, we offer a wide range of accessible services – everything from language courses to networking activities to workshops on skills everyone needs, such as writing and time management.

Our new fully-equipped active-learning classroom at 688 Sherbrooke Street West advances the learning process by leaps and bounds. No wonder it's proven to be a huge hit with students and instructors alike. The set-up fosters interactive learning and connectivity, breaking down the barriers between the four walls of the classroom and the wide world of learning.

Montreal's reputation as a focal point for all sorts of cultural activities is well deserved. The School's PACE program – Personal and Cultural Enrichment – offers educational experiences in arts and culture, social engagement and life transitions in conjunction with local partners. Topics range from the growing overlap between arts and technology to empowering the sandwich generation – subjects that touch the hearts and minds of our learners.

“McGill's Got Talent,” an evening of superb singing and dancing, even a kung-fu routine set to music, brought the house down. Organizers credit the students – all from the Intensive English-Language and Culture program – with facing many challenges. Connecting through the arts, music, dance and song provided a common denominator, and fostered the feeling of belonging to the McGill and Montreal communities.

Lifelong learning brings out the (sometimes untapped) talents in each and every one of us. We invite you to join the dance as we explore learning in and beyond the classroom.



PHOTO: CLAUDIO CALIGARIS

# CHANGING THE WAY WE LEARN:

## CONTINUING STUDIES INTRODUCES A LEADING-EDGE CLASSROOM

The School of Continuing Studies has long prided itself on its progressive approach to all aspects of learning. And since last September, the School's learners have been able to take advantage of a classroom that offers a new range of cutting-edge educational opportunities.

Located at 688 Sherbrooke Street West, the leading-edge classroom is unlike anything learners at Continuing Studies have ever seen, says Jean-Paul Rémillieux, the School's Director of Instructor Services and Educational Technologies. And that's exactly what he had in mind when it was conceived more than two years ago with the help of McGill Teaching and Learning Services.

The idea behind the room, Rémillieux explains, was to create an environment that encourages active learning—that is, learning that is largely student-driven. Instead of rows of desks, the classroom has round tables, so students are in constant contact with one another.

But the learners aren't the only ones who don't have individual desks. In the active-learning classroom, the professor makes use of a rolling podium outfitted with a wireless mouse and a keyboard. "The idea is that we want the focus in the classroom to be on group activities in which learners are really engaged in the learning process, rather than a simple lecture room," he says.

And that's just the beginning. The room is also equipped with five projectors, along with a video camera. "These are all related to the collaborative aspect of the learning space," Rémillieux says. "The camera can zoom in and zoom out, and it can maneuver itself to film learners at any of the tables."

That means that the active-learning classroom is not confined to four walls. Learners who may not be able to attend a class can watch it later, or even as it happens, Rémillieux says. And, thanks to the room's connectivity, they can also take part in activities. The room boasts an interactive whiteboard configured with Adobe Connect, sophisticated conferencing software that enables learners to work on exercises from home.

Rémillieux made use of this technology in his course Networking Fundamentals, which draws on his own extensive professional experience. "I could be doing a configuration on a network switch, for example, and I could ask a student who's located at home to take over the simulation and to do the configuration instead of me," he says.



RYAN BLAU

"It's really about removing the limitations of the physical space and using the Internet for that purpose."

Like other Continuing Studies instructors, Rémillieux was excited at the prospect of teaching in such an advanced classroom setting. "I love the atmosphere," he says. "The set-up really changes the dynamic with the learners."

Kevin Parent, Area Coordinator of the School's Accounting, Finance and Taxation Programs, echoes Rémillieux's enthusiasm. "Having more active learning is something that I've always wanted to do," Parent says. "When I found out that there was going to be an active-learning classroom, I said, 'Oh, yes, I want to teach there.'"

The learners, he says, were able to do outside research during the class, looking up information online while they absorbed Parent's lessons—which positioned him as a facilitator rather than a conventional lecturer. Seated at the classroom's tables, they could easily use projectors to present their work to one another.

"The whole class could be very interactive, meaning that they could have multiple discussions, see the rationale behind the methods they were learning and respond to one another's questions." I was just guiding them. The active-learning classroom also opens the door to new teaching paradigms. For example, in the future, students might watch lectures at home so that class time can be devoted to learning exercises.

Rémillieux would also like to see principles of active learning applied to classrooms throughout Continuing Studies. The seating arrangement, for example, is well suited to group activities. And web-conferencing technology could one day allow for increased enrolment without crowded classrooms.

Both Rémillieux and Parent knew by learners' response that the new active-learning classroom was a success. Normally, students remind an instructor to take a break in the middle of a three-hour class. But in the active-learning room, that's seldom the case. "They wouldn't think about taking a break or anything like that," Parent says. "They were so involved in their activities and their learning!"

A CLIENT-CENTRED APPROACH:

# CLIENT SERVICES TEAM SETS LEARNERS ON THE RIGHT PATH

Learners and prospective learners at McGill's School of Continuing Studies' come to Client Services with all manner of questions: Which of the School's programs is right for me? Are there pre-requisite courses? How can I be certain I'm prepared to graduate, and what's the best way to make sure that my studies will lead to a job?

Fortunately, Gianna Giardino and her team know where to find the answers. "Our clients want quick, efficient, no-hassle services," says Giardino, Senior Manager of Client Services. "So we have to be very client-centred and attentive to their needs."

Those needs, Giardino explains, vary widely. Most learners at the School are working professionals looking to get a leg up in their jobs or to change careers altogether. "Some of them come to Client Services and they don't know which program of study is best for them, so they need to see an advisor to help guide them, to see what courses and programs would be of most interesting and useful to them," Giardino says. "Our goal is to make sure that our learners are on the path they want to be on and offer them not only academic advising but also career guidance to meet their needs."

Each year, the School welcomes learners from a host of countries, including China, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Mexico. "Learners come to our School to learn English and French and to gain language proficiency," Giardino says. "There are language



*Members of the Client Services team*

RYAN BLAU

barriers, so our personnel's advising skills and ability to understand what the clients are looking for become very important factors in attracting and retaining learners, no matter which academic path they take at the School."

But ensuring learners are registered and ready to begin classes is only part of the Client Services team's job. Client Services has partnered with groups elsewhere at McGill, along with various experts, to offer workshops on the fundamentals of university-level course work, such as writing,

note-taking and time management, all tailored to the very specific needs of learners at the School.

"When they come back to school, we notice that many learners are concerned about balancing academic demands with the other realities in their lives," Giardino says. With that in mind, the School hosts sessions designed to teach students with jobs and families how to maximize the time they devote to their schoolwork.

Ultimately, Client Services aims to offer a range of services under one roof, accessible face to face, over the phone and online. "We're trying to build an educational business centre," Giardino says. "It's always great to see when students walk out of here that we've helped them continue with their studies or complete their diploma. Because in essence, we're helping them better their lives and achieve their goals."

# SETTING THE PACE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

McGill is nothing if not a Montreal institution. Since it was founded in 1821, hundreds of the world's foremost scholars have passed through its gates, contributing to McGill's reputation as an incubator of innovative ideas. And while its renown is indeed international, the University has long prided itself on giving the Montreal community access to the knowledge it generates.

With that end in mind, the School's PACE—or Personal and Cultural Enrichment—program offers learners from all walks of Montreal life valuable educational experiences in a range of academic and artistic fields. The upcoming spring and fall sessions promise diverse offerings.

"The thing that's really interesting about PACE, as I see it, is that it's situated at the intersection of McGill and the community at large," says Alex Megelas, PACE's coordinator.

PACE's programming consists of three parts, Megelas explains. "One is this idea of arts and culture; the second is connected to social engagement; and the third is about life transitions."



Alex Megelas

Each boasts an intriguing line-up of activities open to people of all ages and professional backgrounds. In June, fans of James Joyce and his seminal novel *Ulysses* will commemorate the writer during a three-day Bloomsday celebration. And featured this spring will be a series on the growing overlap between arts and technology. "Rather than host the sessions here at McGill in a classroom, we're going to be taking learners into art spaces around the city," Megelas says.

Other programming speaks to broader social concerns. For instance, Empowering the Sandwich Generation, will explore the reality of a growing number of adults who are taking care of their children along with their own parents and older relatives at the same time.

These lines of programming, Megelas explains, expose the Montreal community to the research that takes place at the University. "It bridges the divide between the School and city," he says. "We've worked hard to build partnerships with all sorts of different cultural stakeholders in Montreal and to use this as a venue to showcase McGill research."

PACE sessions take place in a relaxed atmosphere. But, Megelas notes, unlike other programming, PACE is open to suggestions of all sorts from the learners and volunteers who make it possible.

This flexibility has led to offerings that are just as well suited to the casual learner as to those seeking more structured educational environments. "These are sessions that in many ways are high-profile and that offer very, strong content," Megelas says. "The fact that they're part of McGill lends them academic credibility and also makes them accessible to a public that's interested in connecting to the University and enjoying a truly fulfilling learning experience."

## A TALENT NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Last February, learners from the School of Continuing Studies' Intensive English-Language and Culture program staged a talent show spotlighting their increased proficiency in English.

"My idea was to have a truly international flavour to represent our diverse student body," says Devaki Groulx, a lecturer in the program and the coordinator of the event, aptly named McGill's Got Talent.

To that end, she and Louise Kyrtatas, a faculty lecturer and Assistant Program Coordinator in the Language and Intercultural Communication (L&IC) unit, put out a call to all learners interested in taking the stage. Shortly afterwards, with plenty of assistance from L&IC instructors and staff members, the preparations for the show got under way.

"It was clear that we had a group of talented performers," Groulx explains.

Among them were singers from a range of cultural backgrounds, singing in both English and their mother tongues; dancers of the hip-hop and modern jazz varieties; a magician; and even a student Kyrtatas calls a "kung-fu master"—Chun Yuan Wang, who hails from China.

"His performance was incredible," Kyrtatas recalls. "He's been studying kung-fu since he was three, and he did his routine to music."

There were also multilingual dramatic monologues and dialogues. Another highlight came when Igor Mostovoi, a learner from the Ukraine, performed an operatic Ukrainian folk song. "It brought the house down!" Groulx says.

The entire production—including the grand finale, a group rendition of Bill Withers's 1972 classic, *Lean On Me*—"was a big undertaking," Kyrtatas explains.



Performers at the event

But the event, was well worth the effort. "I think it really fostered a positive feeling about the students' experience here at McGill," Kyrtatas says. "When you connect through the arts, through music, through dance and song, it's kind of a common denominator right away," she adds. "The learners made fast friends."

Kyrtatas was proud to see her students take the stage after a semester of hard work. Not even the occasional linguistic slip-up in the performances could dampen the audience's enthusiasm for the event. "I think it's all about that sense of community and belonging to something at McGill," Kyrtatas says.

## ALUMNI PROFILE: LEBANESE TRANSLATOR JOCELYNE GERGES

GRAD'S PENCHANT FOR LANGUAGE TRANSLATES INTO GREAT JOB

After Jocelyne Gerges completed her studies at McGill, she returned to her native Lebanon, where she set out to find a job as a translator. Her résumé quickly earned her a nickname among prospective employers: “the McGill lady.”

“When I submitted my CV, they were pretty impressed by the fact that I was at McGill,” Gerges says. “McGill has an excellent reputation everywhere.”

Gerges’s fluency in Arabic, English and French helped her land a job as a translator and interpreter for the office of Lebanon’s president, Michel Suleiman. She also regularly delivers workshops and seminars on communications, and has delivered lectures on her craft to some of the country’s top firms. And she owes much of her success to her Canadian alma mater.

McGill entered Gerges’s life during her undergraduate studies at Beirut’s St. Joseph University. One of her classmates was considering pursuing a graduate diploma at the Canadian institution, which she knew ranked among the world’s finest. “And it just clicked in my mind,” Gerges says. “I started



Jocelyne Gerges

investigating the process with her, and we decided to go to McGill.”

When the pair arrived in Montreal, they discovered a campus with a distinctly international character. “I remember in my Translation course, at a certain point the teacher said, ‘I’m teaching in a United Nations class!’” Gerges recalls. “We had people from Brazil, Lebanon, Africa and Quebec. So it was very diverse, and very enriching.”

Equally enriching were the classes themselves. “We had a specialized course on medical translation. And then we had a course on technical translation that had to do with translation specific to cars, engines, etc.” Gerges says.

But her favourite course was Translation Studies taught by James Archibald. “It really led to a lot of reflection,” Gerges says. “It

taught us about the cultural components of language.”

Gerges says that Archibald “inspired me to explore new patterns, to conduct research, to think about what I translate.” She and her former professor remain in touch and make a point of meeting whenever he visits Lebanon. “When I saw him three or four years after I graduated, here in Beirut, I said, ‘I just want to go back and take your course again!’”

Now, though, Gerges’s hands are full. In addition to translating high-level documents like speeches and correspondence and preparing briefings for the Presidency of the Republic of Lebanon, she’s working toward a master’s degree in intercultural mediation at St. Joseph University. But Gerges has fond memories of her time in Canada, and she hopes to retain her ties to McGill for years to come. “I do believe that the McGill approach to professionalism gave me great confidence and really showed me the way of approaching any professional task.”

## INSTRUCTOR PROFILE: SHERRY ROMANADO

FOR THIS PUBLIC-RELATIONS PRO, THE GREATEST GIFT IS GIVING BACK

Sherry Romanado, a lecturer in the School of Continuing Studies’ Public Relations program, knows exactly what her students are going through—and what they expect from their education.

Before she began teaching at the School, Romanado was a learner there herself. She completed a Certificate in Public Relations Management in 2005—all while working full-time and raising a family.

“There are deadlines at work,” Romanado says. “There are things that happen. And so I know what it’s like to try to juggle all of those things. I try to go the extra mile for my students.”

Romanado started teaching at the School in January 2011. The prospect of moulding the next generation of business leaders drew her back to the classroom, she says. “I noticed in my work that often, people who were working alongside you were really missing some of the fundamentals.” Romanado resolved to remedy the situation by “intercepting them earlier and imparting to them a sound grasp of the basics of business and communications.”

Though textbooks outline these ideas, in the workplace they often play out differently than they do on paper. “I explain concepts in real terms,” Romanado says. “I think these are fundamentally learners who want practical information that they’re going to be able to use in their careers.”

With that in mind, Romanado makes a point of bringing real-world examples into the classroom. “When we had the issue of *News of the World*—the News Corp.-owned paper embroiled in a phone-hacking scandal—“we used it in the Ethics in Public Relations class and said: ‘If you are the PR person responsible, if you’re working with Rupert Murdoch, what do you say? What do you do?’”

On other occasions, Romanado has drawn on her own work for her lectures and exercises. “I volunteer as director of communications for the Canadian Grenadier Guards Cadet Corps, and they were looking for a communications plan,” she says. She let her class members propose their own strategies. “The plans they came up with were spectacular!”

No surprise, perhaps, given how quickly many learners take to the subject matter. “They understand that public relations isn’t just writing press releases,”

Romanado says. “You can use the skills that you’re going to gain in this program in everything that you do, whether it’s international relations or working in the corporate or non-profit sectors.”

Romanado, who now runs her own consulting firm, is pleased with the trajectory her career has taken. Two years ago, she says, she did not plan to teach courses at her alma mater. But she’s grateful for the opportunity. “It’s my way of giving back. For me to be able to come back and teach the next generation, I’m loving it. I don’t think I’ll ever want to stop.”



Sherry Romanado

## A FRUITFUL TRIP

Last fall, Kevin Callahan, Program Coordinator of the Intensive English Language and Culture unit, travelled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he took part in the ICEF Latin America Workshop and promoted the School of Continuing Studies' English- and French-language programs, as well as special projects like the Intensive Professional Development for English Language Teachers, to universities from across the country.

The Brazilian schools, he says, mirror McGill in their serious approach to the cultural aspects of language. "I met over 30 recruitment agents in two days and got a good sense of where we can recruit students," Callahan says "There is tremendous potential in the country's educational market, and it is very important for McGill to have a presence there because Canada is the first choice of Brazilians as a place to study abroad." ▼

## ATTRACTING A STRONG AND DIVERSE STUDENT BODY

This April for a third straight year, the School of Continuing Studies took part in ICEF's North American workshop, an event designed to introduce educational institutions to first-rate recruiters from around the world.

"We're interested in recruiting more students from Latin America, the Middle East, the Asia-Pacific region and India,

not just for our language programs, but for our management programs as well," says Verena Waterstadt, Program Manager for Language and Intercultural Communication. "Recruitment agents facilitate the process of drawing and enrolling students significantly."

The event also offered the School an opportunity to showcase its campus and professors to the recruitment agents during a Familiarization Tour. "We welcomed the world here, to McGill," Waterstradt says. "It's very important to visit the agents, but also to have them visit us." ▼

## TAKING TRANSLATION SERIOUSLY

This winter, the School's Translation & Written Communication unit partnered with France's Institut de management et de communication interculturels (ISIT) to host its annual Translation Colloquium, an event that investigates, via a series of talks, some of the most pressing issues professional translators face today.

"The idea behind the colloquium was to look at the basic question of translation policy in both Canada and France," says James Archibald, T&WC's Director. To that end, the four-day event, held February 15-16 at ISIT and March 12-13 at McGill, featured presentations from representatives of several organizations, including the Canadian Depository for Securities and TD Canada Trust.

Among the key concepts explored, Archibald explains, was the reality that outsourcing translation – an increasingly common practice among large firms – is a costly and occasionally risky proposition. "If you lose control of translation," Archibald says, "you lose control of quality and the security of sensitive information." ▼

## CONTINUING STUDIES GOES GLOBAL

The School of Continuing Studies may be located in Montreal, but it's exporting its high quality second-language training expertise to locales around the world, including Saudi Arabia.

Last fall, the School launched an exciting new initiative with the Royal Commission of Jubail and Yanbu, in Jubail Industrial City, that will see it provide quality control for the instruction of approximately 1,000 recent high-school graduates in English as they prepare for careers in the petrochemical industry.

"We have 44 instructors that we've recruited and trained to live and teach onsite," says Hervé De Fontenay, Director of the Language and Intercultural Communication unit.

Thus far, De Fontenay, who has visited Jubail twice in the past year, says the program's progress has met both McGill's and the Royal Commission's high expectations. "We hope to continue with this interesting project for the next few years, which allows us not only to expand our exper-

tise but also to learn more about the challenges linked to language instruction in a totally different cultural environment." ▼

## NEW ASSOCIATE DEAN AT THE SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES

In Spring 2012, Alfred Jaeger stepped down as Associate Dean (Academic) of the School of Continuing Studies. Taking his place is James Archibald, the School's current Director of Translation and Written Communication.

Jaeger joined McGill's School of Continuing Studies in 2006. As a result of his position at the Faculty of Management, he helped strengthen the Faculty's link with Continuing Studies. Dr. Jaeger played a key role in refocusing Continuing Studies' Career and Professional Development unit. Throughout his mandate at the School, Alfred has ensured that key issues for the School's growth such as the quality and recognition of excellence in teaching, an increased openness to internationalization and the need for enhanced student and client services remain in the forefront.

But above all, Archibald says, "Jaeger taught us to be sensitive to students' needs, to listen and to understand their role, as well as ours, in building a stronger institution." ▼

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## YOUR INPUT IS ALWAYS WELCOME!

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