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President's Message

Kathleen Perry

One year into my term as President, I continue to gain a deeper understanding of our Association and the ways in which it has evolved over time. Next year, CUPA/ARUC will mark its 40th anniversary. In this context, we are currently undertaking a review of the Constitution to ensure that it reflects contemporary realities. Any proposed amendments will be presented to the membership at a future meeting for discussion and approval by vote.

Following considerable effort, particularly by Mike Babin and the contributing members, I am pleased to report that CUPA/ARUC has launched a new website. I encourage all members to visit the site and share their feedback. We welcome suggestions for improvements and enhancements as we continue to develop it.

As we are all aware, the current economic climate has changed significantly, even over the past six months, with rising costs affecting many areas. In response, the Executive has decided to bring the printing of the newsletter back to Concordia and is also exploring ways to streamline its production. More broadly, we believe it is important to invest in Concordia whenever possible—whether through the newsletter, the EPIC Book Sale, the upcoming Concordia Shuffle in September, or the selection of service providers for our meetings. To this end, we are using Limone Catering at Concordia for the first time, in place of an external caterer. In addition, the Executive has decided to forego the complimentary lunch at the spring meeting. This measure will allow us to allocate additional resources in support of Concordia students who require and deserve our assistance.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that we welcome suggestions regarding how the Association can better serve its members. Please feel free to contact me at mkperry@sympatico.ca.



Message du président

Kathleen Perry

Un an après mon entrée en fonction à la présidence, je continue d'approfondir ma compréhension de notre association et de son évolution. L'an prochain, la CUPA/ARUC célébrera son 40e anniversaire. Dans ce contexte, nous procédons actuellement à une révision de nos statuts afin de nous assurer qu'ils reflètent les réalités actuelles. Toute proposition d'amendement sera soumise à l'assemblée générale lors d'une prochaine réunion pour discussion et approbation par vote.

Grâce aux efforts considérables déployés, notamment par Mike Babin et les membres contributeurs, j'ai le plaisir d'annoncer que la CUPA/ARUC a lancé un nouveau site web. J'invite tous les membres à le visiter et à nous faire part de leurs commentaires. Nous accueillons favorablement toute suggestion d'amélioration et de perfectionnement au fur et à mesure de son développement.

Comme vous le savez, le contexte économique actuel a considérablement changé, même au cours des six derniers mois, la hausse des coûts touchant de nombreux secteurs. En conséquence, le comité exécutif a décidé de rapatrier l'impression du bulletin à Concordia et étudie également des moyens d'en rationaliser la production. Plus largement, nous croyons qu'il est important d'investir à Concordia chaque fois que possible, que ce soit par le biais du bulletin d'information, de la vente de livres EPIC, du prochain Concordia Shuffle en septembre ou du choix des fournisseurs de services pour nos réunions. À cette fin, nous faisons appel à Limone Catering à Concordia pour la première fois, au lieu d'un traiteur externe. De plus, le comité exécutif a décidé de renoncer au déjeuner offert lors de la réunion de printemps. Cette mesure nous permettra d'allouer des ressources supplémentaires pour soutenir les étudiants de Concordia qui ont besoin de notre aide et la méritent.

Je tiens à souligner que nous sommes ouverts aux suggestions sur la façon dont l'Association peut mieux servir ses membres. Vous pouvez me contacter à l'adresse mkperry@sympatico.ca.

BENEFITS REPORT

Jamshid Etezadi & Amely Jurgenliemk

A revised Sun Life group insurance plan including a healthcare spending account (HCSA) was introduced in January 2025. We've seen the implementation over a full year now and things seem to have settled down. Plan members are growing accustomed to the changes and we're making use of the health care spending account.

The corrected Pensioners Handbook has been posted on the University's Pensioners' Corner site (<https://www.concordia.ca/hr/benefits/pensioners-corner.html>).

Note that the pensioners' benefits plan is overseen by the Concordia Employee Benefits Committee (CEBC), on which CUPA/ARUC has one voting member and one alternate member. CEBC normally meets twice annually, once in spring and once in autumn.

CUPA/ARUC is enthused about the recent launch of our fully revamped website. We are confident our members will be able to find out more, more easily. Especially, we hope you'll find improved access to benefits information. Still, we ask you to keep in mind that the CUPA/ARUC site is not authoritative; for guidance on any personal question, you must consult Human Resources, Sun Life, or your former bargaining unit. To determine if the plan covers a certain expense, verify with Sun Life by calling 1-800-361-6212. The insurer, not Concordia, is responsible for applying the terms of the insurance policy and is in the best position to answer your questions regarding health care coverage.

There is not a lot of news to report, so this update will focus on two elements of the plan that have been raised by members in recent months. The subjects we'll address here are survivor benefits and virtual care. Note that we would like to hear from you about your experience and your questions.

On survivor benefits: As retirees, our age cohort makes understanding survivor benefits particularly important. We recently learned that the HCSA is not available to survivors, even those who are covered under a family membership. Apart from the HCSA, health insurance coverage remains unchanged provided survivors continue to pay premiums. The premiums paid by survivors will be different, however, reflecting the fact that survivors won't have use of an HCSA and, so, the University contribution covers 50% of the premiums.

Let's consider the situation that a plan member has passed away, leaving an available balance in a family-plan HCSA. If the survivor has receipts for expenses incurred before the death of the plan member, these may be submitted to Sun Life and will be honoured. The spouse can sign on behalf of the member and add a note indicating that the member passed away. However, expenditures made after the death cannot be claimed.

We have been assured that a benefits summary specific to survivors will soon be added to the Pensioners' Corner for clarity.

On Lumino Virtual Care: Our members report good experience with the Lumino virtual care clinic. The coverage for virtual professional services depends entirely on the type of service provided and conforms with the percentages and maximums applicable to in-person services. You can access this information in your personal Sun Life account by selecting "Coverage Information" and then "View Coverage Information."

Lumino can also be used to identify an in-person practitioner in a location convenient to you. There is no cost for this service.

For more detail, consult the pamphlet: <https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/services/hr/docs/benefits/telemedicine-services-info-sheet-for-pensioners.pdf>

A final note: Recent news of pharmacies' dispensing errors reminds us that we should check our prescription medications before using them. We know that the wrong medication or wrong dosage can have serious health consequences. Critics say the rate of dispensing errors may be increasing due to look-alike/sound-alike names and packaging, as well as to a proliferation of medications' dosage options.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the original custodians of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal.



SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS FUND

Joanne Beaudoin

You can help Concordia students stay on track and reach their academic goals.

Why your gift to the Concordia University Retired Faculty and Staff Scholarships and Awards (CUPA) Endowment matters:

As a student supporting herself entirely—and after losing family support following her father’s passing —“Sarah” faced serious financial strain throughout her studies. The CUPA award was a lifeline: it eased tuition costs, reduced stress, and enabled her to focus on coursework and thesis research at a pivotal moment in her academic career. (anonymized for student’s privacy)

Funding student scholarships is one of the most direct ways to open doors and help our communities thrive. For students, a scholarship can lift a major burden—less financial stress, fewer hours working just to cover essentials, and more time to focus on classes. It can also mean choosing the program that truly fits, not simply the one that costs the least. Even at Concordia, some programs come with additional fees that add up quickly. Scholarships also help bring more voices into higher education, especially for first-generation students (a proud Concordia legacy), underrepresented groups, newcomers, and anyone dealing with an unexpected setback. And because your contribution supports an endowment, it helps the fund grow—allowing for larger annual payouts, year after year. Many recipients share updates and thank-you notes that show what your support made possible; our Association also receives an annual report from University Advancement featuring student stories. The impact continues: scholarship and bursary recipients often give back later, strengthening their communities for years to come. One recipient recently shared:

I realized that working full-time while maintaining good academic standing was not feasible. I was in a situation where I felt obligated to work full-time to cover my living expenses. Thanks to this award, I was able to focus on my studies, improve my grades, and move forward. I hope that one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals—just as you have helped me. Undergraduate bursary recipient (anonymized for student’s privacy)

Thanks to our members’ generosity, the CUPA Endowment has supported 263 undergraduate and graduate students since 2002.

Whether you give directly to the endowment or through our Pace Maker’s team Annual Shuffle fundraising blitz, your gift helps put much-needed support directly into a student’s hands.

It’s also worth noting that Concordia recently announced that endowment payouts to recipient departments (in our case, the Financial Aid and Awards Office and the School of Graduate Studies) will increase from 3.5% to 3.8%, effective for the 2026–2027 academic year. While that change may sound modest, it adds up: for every \$1M held in Concordia’s endowment, it means an additional \$3,000 is now available for student awards each year.

If you’re able to help a student fulfill their academic goals, please consider donating to the [Concordia University Retired Faculty and Staff Scholarships and Awards \(CUPA\) Endowment](#) today. Your gift matters!



CONDOLENCES - DECEASED MEMBERS

Since November 2025 Newsletter

- Sylvia Carter - Applied Social Science
- Barbara Fabian - Coop Education
- Margaret Ferley - Library
- Judith Garner - Chemistry and Biochemistry
- Allan Gingell - Mail Services
- Abdelkrim Hammi - Economics
- Marvin Hershorn - Political Science
- Margaret Hodges - Art History
- Susan Hudson - Design Art
- Franklin Jimenez - Custodial Services
- Pierrette Lucas - Rector’s Cabinet – Protocol & Events
- Garcia Moutinho - Facilities
- Michel-Andre Robillard - Electrical Engineering
- Sandra Robinson - Accountancy
- Tatiana Slivitsky - Library
- Bruce Smart - Registrar
- Joe Soric - Mathematics
- Gabor Szilasi - Studio Arts
- Doris Tooby
- Francois Ullmann - Etudes Francaises
- Roland Wills - Supply Chain and Business Technology Management

EPIC BOOK FAIR

Sandra Spina

The Monday morning volunteer book sorters were at it again. Over a period of 9 sorting sessions, well over 500 boxes containing an average of 25 donated books per box were processed. The fearless teams of pensioners and "mature" friends of Concordia handled well over 13,000 books that were individually looked at and categorized. At times a specific book would generate a lively discussion about the author or the topic and other times chuckles would be heard because of a title or topic that was shared.

Week after week our volunteers showed up and made the whole process fun, energetic, and they always kept an eye on the prize - making the next Concordia EPIC Used Book Fair the best ever, with all proceeds going to students!

The next Fair is set for November 3-4. We'll be setting up on the 2nd and taking down on the 5th. We'll be reaching out for volunteers to help with the Fair closer to the date.

If you'd like more information on volunteering for sorting and/or helping with the Fair itself, please feel free to reach out to me at sandraspina@gmail.com.

NEW MEMBERS

2025-2026

Heather Adams-Robinette
Sylvie Bourassa
Janet Corrigan
Denis Cossette
Gene Gibbons
Javier Lee
Elena Marsillo
Ginette Morency
Jean-Paul Soucy
Rene Witte
Caole Zucker

Lorrie Blair
Alan Conter
Mark Corwin
Maria Fasciano
Lisa Graves
Jonathon Levinson
Vincent Martin
Stanley Schulman
Catherine Wild
Andrew Woodall



PENSION REPORT

Bryan Campbell & Garry Milton

To address the recent performance weaknesses of our Fund, the Pension Committee has engaged several new fund managers. These fall under the general category of multi-strategy platforms.

Each such platform employs multiple in-house fund managers (there may be as many as a hundred). Each works within a broadly pre-defined mandate that are generally uncorrelated with one another and competes for funds that are allocated by the platform. The managers are closely monitored for performance and risk exposure.

The investment fees for such funds are higher than for traditional funds. But our experience with *Millenium* – one such fund in our portfolio—has seen superior returns net of fees over the last decade. Moreover, the platforms are quick in dispatching underperforming managers.

We have recently hired two multi-strategy platforms in the capital preservation segment of the Portfolio. *Graham* is a platform that specializes in macro strategies; *Magnitude* is a fund of such platforms covering a spectrum of financial specialties.

The recent performance of the Growth segment of the Portfolio involving publicly traded equities has been sub-par. We have pivoted away from traditional equity managers and have adopted a two-pronged strategy: we will be using the liquidity inside the portfolio to leverage a strategy of buying the market directly (to obtain market beta efficiently) and are engaging the platform *North Rock* whose component managers use equity-based strategies to obtain returns that are uncorrelated with the market (ie, alpha).

The deliberations surrounding the onboarding of these managers along with the adoption of a new currency hedging strategy have dominated the work of the ISC (Investment Sub-Committee) this past year. These new approaches are admittedly complicated. If you are interested, further elaboration can be found on our new web site. AND, do attend the annual general meeting of the Pension Fund next fall.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Hal Proppe

This report is interim because the May 2026 data were not final at the time of publication. The final 2025-26 Financial Report will be in the Fall Newsletter and presented at the Fall General meeting.

Although our membership continues to increase, our financial situation is not as healthy as we would like. The balance at the end of the 2024-25 year was almost \$41,000, but the anticipated bottom line at the end of May this year will be approximately \$7,400 less. The main reason for this drop in our year-end balance is the high cost of our General Meetings and Events category, which this year is about \$16,500 compared with \$11,100 last year. The increased expenses are primarily due to the costs associated with the luncheon following our Fall General Meetings. These costs are significantly higher than the revenues we receive from our participating members. They include not only the food, but also rental costs and hospitality services, all of which have increased significantly in the last few years. The Executive Committee is considering ways to reduce some of our expenses in a way that will not affect our obligations to our members.

On a positive note, CUPARUC still has adequate operating funds to maintain our student awards program and current projects, and to work on new projects that will benefit our members.

The following items are of note:

1. Membership fee revenues are up almost \$1,500 from 2024-25, and more new members are expected to join for the 2026-27 year. Membership fees for a given year do not reflect the actual number of paid-up members for that year. The fees paid do not always correspond to the year for which they are intended, but they are recorded when they are received regardless of the year. The timing of payments, and the fact that some members pay for several years at once, cause revenue fluctuations. Regardless of these fluctuations, our paid membership numbers are continuing to increase.

2. Student Support/Awards. For each \$30 fee for the annual membership an amount of \$5 is automatically assigned to our student awards program, as well as donations from members. A transfer of \$4,000 was made to the Friends of Concordia Women's Hockey fund, which provides financial support to members of the Stingers Women's Hockey Team. The transfer was originally planned to be done in the 2024-25 fiscal year but was officially made in the current 2025-26 year. The source of this money is the \$5 from the \$30 annual membership fee that goes automatically to our student awards program, as well as individual donations from members. The member donations to the Student Support/Award fund so far this year add up to \$1,810 – significantly more than last year's total donations of \$1,570. The current balance of that fund is \$5,040, taking into account the transfer of the \$4,000. It is important to note that this fund is separate from our Retired Faculty and Staff Endowment, which supports our graduate and undergraduate scholarships and bursaries.
3. Receipts-Events. The Annual General Meeting will take place on June 3, 2026. This year there is a fee of \$35 for the luncheon, and some members have already submitted their payments. It is expected that the total attendance will be similar to the luncheon in December last year. There was also a guided tour of the Torlonia Collection in the Musée des Beaux Arts de Montréal on April 15.
4. CURAC. The expenses include our annual membership fees in the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada as well as registration fees for the CURAC National Conference.
5. Website - The main expenses are due to the renewal of our domain name and site hosting, plus a major development of our new website which should be almost ready by the date of our June 3 meeting.
6. Postage, Printing and Copy Centre – these are other expenses that have been increasing over time and will be looked at carefully by the Executive Committee.

Hal Proppe

FINANCIAL SUMMARY	2024-25	2025-26
June 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026	Final	Interim
Opening Balance June 1, 2024 & 25	\$40185.11	\$40881.02
<u>INCOME</u>		
Membership fees	\$7,595.00	\$9085.00
Donations to Student Support / Awards Fund	\$1,570.00	\$1805.00
Receipts - Events	\$4,575.00	\$4465.00
CURAC Affinity	\$16.85	\$64.87
Concordia contribution	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INCOME:	\$13,756.85	\$15419.87
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
General Meetings & Events	\$11,080.61	16464.11
Student Support/ Awards	\$0.00	\$4,000.00
CURAC	\$630.00	\$300.00
Website	\$795.27	\$782.93
Bank Fees	\$0.00	\$10.50
Postage	\$198.48	\$317.39
Printing & Copy Centre	\$65.00	\$559.30
Stationery and Supplies	\$139.10	\$207.51
Voicemail line	\$152.48	\$155.49
Gifts	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$13060.94	\$22797.23
NET INCOME	\$695.91	-\$7377.36
Closing balance as of May 31, 2025 & (2026 Interim)	\$40881.02	\$33503.66

CUPA Student Awards & Support Balance: \$5040



PERFORM Centre - hidden gem for retirees

Howard Bokser

Do you regularly visit a gym — or, at least, *think* of doing so? Do you occasionally need physiotherapy or related forms of athletic therapy (like I do)? Are you interested in professional dietary advice, or enjoy taking advantage of massage therapy?

If you answered yes to any of these queries, you'd be interested to learn that these and more services are all available, at reduced prices and are often covered by our health insurer, Sun Life, at Concordia's PERFORM Centre on the Loyola Campus.

Lynn Roy, director of Concordia's School of Health, will explain these and the many other PERFORM Centre opportunities accessible to



university retirees when she speaks at CUPA's Annual General Meeting on June 3.

Roy joined the School of Health as its director when it officially began operations in January 2023, and helped with its transition. She had previously been with the PERFORM Centre, which opened in 2011, and in other university roles.

The School of Health is an interdisciplinary academic hub that brings together researchers, students and community partners to address health and wellness issues. The interim dean, Veronique Pepin, and two associate deans lead the school. "I help ensure the School of Health and its management of the PERFORM Centre run effectively day to day, overseeing people and resources and supporting the dean and leadership team in advancing key strategic initiatives," Roy says.

The school is now rapidly growing, she reports. "We now have 107 members, all Concordia researchers who are

focusing on health, and over 120 student members as well. We've launched research funding opportunities, and we're funding and supporting very strong health-research programming. In 2025, we gave out 31 graduate student awards to recognize outstanding research and community service within the health field, and we are in the process of reviewing this year's applications," she adds.

"Veronique Pepin has frequently mentioned that people often say to her, 'Oh, Concordia is doing health now.' But we've been doing health for decades, it's just that people didn't know it."

PERFORM programs' variety

Concordia's health researchers can tap into the PERFORM Centre's modern facilities. "The centre houses a series of platforms, including a sleep laboratory, a physiology suite and functional assessment suite," Roy explains.

These resources also make the centre an ideal one-stop destination for a variety of health-related activities for Concordia retirees. "I think that a lot of people don't realize what's open to the public at the PERFORM Centre," Roy says. That starts with the gym. "Our gym has some 1,800 active members. We have reduced rates for Concordia faculty and staff and those 60 and over — and now for all retirees, even those not yet 60. So they too can benefit from a reduced rate."

Roy points out that from the start the centre focused on offerings, like its nutrition suite or physical activity programs, aimed at an older demographic. "In the early days we received a generous grant from the R. Howard Webster Foundation, over \$1 million, to develop programming for seniors through the Healthy Living for Seniors program," she says.

"Now we have group classes that are tailored for an older audience. We have 40-plus lifting. We have boot camps for seniors. We have stretching and mobility."

For Roy, one of the centre's most interesting of these opportunities is the one-on-one individual assessments by kinesiologists. "We work closely with Concordia's Department of Health, Kinesiology and Applied Physiology. Their students do their internships here, and we have three certified kinesiologists who supervise them. So, you can work with internship students, which allows us to offer programming at reduced rates. And our Sun Life plan covers these health assessments," she says.



concordia.ca/schoolofhealth or send an email to perform-community@concordia.ca.

Editor's note: Lynn Roy will be our guest speaker at CUPA's Annual General Meeting on June 3 on the 9th floor of the John Molson Building. Doors will open at 9:30 and the meeting begins at 10:15.

"You can also work with a personal trainer. We have programs that can be tailored to individuals, as well as group classes and different workshops. In our athletic therapy clinic, we also work with interns from health, kinesiology and applied physiology," Roy says.

And there's more. "We have a fall prevention and injury program. We have an aqua therapy pool — which is unheard of for this type of facility— so we can offer aqua therapy sessions as well and post-surgical sessions for knee surgeries and so forth. And we've recently brought on a massage therapist, also an intern, so it's at a reduced price," she says.

"It's the same for our nutrition services," Roy adds. "We have a nutrition suite with a registered dietitian. Concordia doesn't have a school of dietetics, but we work with McGill University and Université de Montréal interns. We offer one-on-one consultation, meal planning and a variety of different workshops on themes and special topics."

So, what should people do they if they need an assessment or treatment, such as for a torn rotator cuff or pain from jogging or some other activity? "You can absolutely just reach out to us and make an appointment — it's as simple as that," Roy says. "And usually you don't even need a referral, although we may ask you to get a scan or an X-ray after the assessment. And I know because I was the in-house guinea pig — I made appointments everywhere without referrals and submitted my invoices to Sun Life, and everything was refunded."

For more information or to book an appointment at the PERFORM Centre, call 514-848-4544, visit our website at

Did you know that CURAC, the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada, has an affinity program that includes travel, home and auto insurance as well as travel planning services? You are a member and can take advantage of these programs just by being a member of CUPARUC. For more information just go to curac.ca

MEMBERSHIP

Kathleen Perry

As part of our usual spring practice, we will be sending out membership renewal notices shortly.

Last year, we introduced a new option to pay your dues for two years. Annual dues remain \$30, with \$5 going directly to our student support/awards fund. Members can renew for 2026-2027 by e-transfer to cupa.fees@concordia.ca or by cheque.

This past year, we had 362 paid members, and we offered 92 recent retirees a free membership. This high number of retirees is likely due to the retirement package that was offered by Concordia this past year. I hope to meet with

the Pensions office in HR to review the process and the package that is offered to potential members.

We continue to offer one year of free membership to new pensioners. Why are membership levels important? The more active members we have, the greater our influence when discussing matters with Concordia. A larger membership also supports the possibility of a wider range of activities and reinforces our place in the larger Concordia community.

If you know Concordia pensioners/retirees who are not members and may be interested in CUPARUC, please let me know (mkperry@sympatico.ca). I would be happy to get in touch.

Membership and renewal forms (with payment instructions) are available on the Association website: cuparucconcordia.ca.

If your email or postal address has changed recently, please notify the Association by emailing cuparuc@concordia.ca or leaving a voice mail message at 438-722-9119.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Garry Milton

Call for CUPA/ARUC Executive Committee Members

CUPA/ARUC is currently seeking members who may be interested in joining the CUPA Executive Committee or participating in the work of one of the portfolios.

A new Executive slate will be elected at the upcoming Annual General Meeting (June 3, 2026). You can take an active role in helping plan future directions for your organization. There is much interesting work to do, whether it be within one of the existing portfolios, expanding our membership base, planning/coordinating events or developing new ideas and approaches.

If you are interested in participating in the work of CUPA/ARUC but don't wish to join the Executive team, there are still many opportunities. The Executive can always use the help of members in carrying out and expanding the work within the various portfolios.

If you are interested in joining the Executive Committee or participating in the work of one of the portfolios, please email us at cuparuc@concordia.ca. We will contact you to provide more information about the Executive Committee.

Based on the expressions of interest received, a Nominating Committee Report will be prepared, and recommendations will be made to members at the Annual General Meeting. Following the presentation of the Nominating Committee report, the election/appointment of the Executive Committee takes place. Although nominations can be accepted at the meeting, it is preferable if you advise us in advance in order that a full list of nominees can be prepared and circulated beforehand to all meeting registrants.

If you cannot attend our Annual General Meeting on June 3, a Zoom option will be available for members who have renewed their membership for 2026-2027. Email cuparuc@Concordia.ca for Zoom link details and send your \$30 membership renewal to cupa.fees@concordia.ca

CONVERGENCE

Sandra Spina

Over the past few years, CUPA has actively participated in the bi-annual meetings of Convergence, a group comprising 47 pensioner associations from Quebec universities, along with some bilingual associations from Ontario and the Maritimes.

Convergence's purpose is to share best practices and discuss various topics related to pensioners, including services, relations with the institution's administration, and more.

For the Spring 2026 meeting, a questionnaire was distributed to all member associations of Convergence, and the results were thoroughly discussed. We anticipate that some of these valuable ideas will be incorporated into our own Association. Stay tuned!

CUPA's recent outing to see the Torlonia Exhibit at the MMFA with Barbara Black as tour guide



Pictures from our Holiday Luncheon last December. If you missed it then you can catch the next edition this December.

Check out our new website at cupaconcordia.ca. It is still being worked on, so expect changes.

NOTICE

This will be the last time that the minutes from our general meetings will appear in the printed version of this newsletter that is mailed out to members. The minutes of all general meetings will continue to be available on our website accessible for all members.

For those receiving correspondence by the postal service, if you would prefer to use email, simply provide us with your email address.

**The Fall General Meeting of the Association held on
Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at 10:15 a.m.
9th floor Conference Centre,
John Molson School of Business Building,
Sir George Williams Campus**

Minutes

1. **Call to Order and President's Remarks (Kathleen Perry)**

Meeting called to order at 10:22 AM.

Kathleen read a Land Acknowledgement statement. She explained that Garry Milton is not attending this meeting due to illness.

Kathleen welcomed everyone in attendance and on Zoom and informed everyone that the meeting is being recorded. Anyone interested in viewing the recording will be given access upon request.

Kathleen apologized for the absence of the representatives from HR as they could not attend due to a department wide function. People who have questions that they wanted to ask the representatives should leave their name, telephone number (or e-mail) and somebody from that unit will respond.

a. **Welcome to New Members**

A special welcome was offered to the new members in attendance.

b. **Remembering Colleagues**

Kathleen read out a list of retired Concordia University who had passed away since the AGM

in June and asked for a moment of silence from everyone.

2. **Approval of the Agenda (Kathleen Perry)**

Danielle Carter motioned for the approval of the agenda. Tim Lapin seconded the motion. Motion was approved with no objections.

3. **Minutes of the June 18, 2025, Annual General Meeting (Kathleen Perry)**

Danielle Carter motioned for the approval of the minutes of the June 18, 2025 AGM. Craig Buchanan seconded the motion. Motion was approved with no objections or amendments.

a. **Business Arising from the June 18, 2025, Minutes**

None

4. **Reports:**

a. **Student Scholarship and Bursary Program (Joanne Beaudoin)**

Joanne explained that this was her first report and thanked Joanne Locke (her predecessor) for all the work she did over the last few years to increase the money allocated to scholarships and awards.

Since the inception of these awards, 263 awards totalling \$1.43 M have been distributed to undergraduate and graduate students. These were paid out of a fund that has been growing every year (individual donations, funds raised by the Shuffle, etc.).

This past year, a total of \$42,000 was distributed: \$20,000 (4 X \$10,000) in graduate fellowships \$12,000 (6 X \$2,000) in undergraduate scholarships.

We're still waiting to hear from Financial Aid office as to how these scholarships were distributed by faculty because the objective of these awards is to spread them out as much as possible among all the faculties.

b. Concordia Shuffle 2025 (Mike Babin)

Mike informed the membership that CUPA members raised approximately \$29,000 (almost \$6,000 more than the previous year). The Gina Cody team edged out the Pace Makers (The CUPARUC team) by just a couple hundred dollars. It appears they were keeping track of our progress and kept adding funds to maintain their lead as our totals increased. A win-win situation in that the result was an overall increase in funds to help students.

A special word of thanks was offered to Kevin Austin whose very generous donation of \$4,000 was the largest donation by a single donor.

Kathleen Perry, CUPA/ARUC president, ranked fourth in individual shuffle fundraising. Twenty-eight CUPA/ARUC members participated as part of the Pace Makers team, raising a total of \$29,000 from 236 donations. To put things into perspective it was pointed out that the third-place team raised nearly \$10,000 less. The Pace Makers won a prize for having the most donations over \$50. Our efforts were well-recognized by Advancement staff.

Congratulations to everyone—this is excellent news. Mike promised to nag people earlier next year.

Mike was awarded the Shuffler of the Year award for having issued more than 170 fundraising emails. Garry Milton ranked 6th of the funds raised by individuals.

Mike mentioned that we were taking care to not send too many messages because we are acutely aware that this might rub some people the wrong way.

On the other hand, we are looking at lobbying our members just enough to encourage their participation and or giving.

Mike asked people to let us know if they haven't been receiving our messages.

One member suggested that the Pace Makers get special Shuffle T-shirts to distinguish themselves and perhaps encourage greater participation. It was pointed out that this might be too costly and that we would be forced to order a minimum quantity of 50 or so.

Another suggestion made was to create a Pace Makers logo.

Kathleen also wanted to thank Garry for his challenge donation - he donated \$5 for every member of our association who donated. This also made a great difference.

c. Benefits (Jamshid Etezadi)

Jamshid recounted how the health insurance plan underwent a major restructuring which came into effect as of January 1, 2025.

There was an increase in premiums which were partially offset by the introduction of a Health Care Spending Account (HCSA), which is an allowance that can be used for healthcare costs not covered by the plan. It can also be used to pay for the premium costs.

Some other changes include costs for therapies not previously covered and increased coverage for other therapies that were only partially covered under the old plan. The Pensioners Corner on the Concordia University web site has a comprehensive list of all the changes and is available to everyone.

Additionally, CUPA/ARUC is developing a new and improved website that will summarize the new plan which will be available soon. Please note that the website is not authoritative and it is best to consult Human Resources for any guidance regarding specific questions.

Another change is the removal of the annual deductions for prescription drugs. Instead, there is a \$3 charge for each prescription. To minimize costs and dispensing fees for repeating prescriptions it is advised that members ask their pharmacist to renew prescriptions for three months at a time.

It was noted that some prescription claims were not being handled properly when the new plan was first implemented. All issues were eventually resolved thanks to Ms. Tania Lacroix's (Manager, Benefits and Pension, Human Resources) assistance.

Finally, Sun Life has updated their mobile app, which is very useful. It simplifies claim processing and provides a detailed list of your coverage, your HCSA balance, and eligible expenses for your HCSA.

Jamshid informed the members present that he and Amely will be happy to answer anyone's questions.

Question: What is the Lumino program offered through the Sun Life web site and app?

Response: Lumino is a virtual medical care application which gives advice for how to deal with a medical situation. Kathleen recounted her positive experience. Others recounted mostly positive experiences with this app.

There followed some discussion on the politics surrounding the question of whether a service like Lumino should be needed/supported.

Question: How does one go about using the HCSA to get reimbursed?

Response: There is a form on the Sunlife website.

Question: when is the deadline for submitting this year's claims?

Response: Tentatively April 30th of the following year.

The HCSA will be honoured for one year beyond the year in which it is granted, which means that you have 24 months rather than 12 for the use of the allocation of one year. Those funds are gone after that.

d. Member Activities and Community Outreach (Lina Uberti)

Lina reported on the successful initiatives over this past year: the June AGM, the Shuffle headed up by Mike (including the tailgate party at the Home Coming football game), book sorting and general support of the Epic Used Book Fair, and today's reception.

Events planned for the upcoming year are:

- January: a Concordia women's hockey game championed by Les Lawton
- February: activities to promote a Black History Month (part of our mandate for community outreach)
- Springtime: potentially do a virtual gardening club or a botanical garden tour (championed by Nancy Helms)
- March to April: book sorting and support for the spring edition of the Epic Used Book Fair championed by Sandra Spina.
- April: a guided group tour at the Museum of Fine Arts for the private Torlonia Collection which is a collection of Roman sculptures championed by Perla Mural.
- June: the CUPA/ARUC AGM on June the 3rd. There will be a guest speaker and a 50/50 draw which will go to a foundation that requires our funds so that they can better serve their clients.

Lina also stated that planning for 2027 is beginning and that she will welcome any new ideas for activities from the membership. She would welcome anyone interested in volunteering to help.

People will be able to read about these activities on the old web site until further notice.

e. Membership (Kathleen Perry)

Kathleen stated to the membership goal is to have 400 paid members. We are a little over 360 at this time. She explained that she is open to suggestions on how to grow the membership.

f. Web & Electronic Media (Mike Babin)

Mike informed the members that the main tool we use to communicate is an email List Server. From time to time there have been reports that people aren't receiving our emails. Anyone suspecting this is the case should reach out to Mike Babin directly – his email is at the bottom of each web page on the CUPA/ARUC site.

As discussed at the last AGM, we are working on a new web site. We are continually refining the new site, deciding what should be public and what should be accessible after a login. How the content is displayed is being adjusted as we go with an eye towards making some things easier for our members (e.g. membership renewal), protecting information that should be private, making it easier for members to find things.

We've established a timeline:

Content is to be finalized by January 1st (how it is displayed will be decided after). We will have a preliminary/1st draft of the site ready for March 1st after which we will start having members and others provide feedback.

The goal is to go live by June 1st, acknowledging it won't be perfect, but aiming for consensus on readiness. After launch, we'll implement logins to restrict certain content and make event management easier, including registration and payment through the integrated system. The new website offers tools that simplify these processes compared to the old one.

Sandra Spina offered encouragement for implementing a login which would give CUPA/ARUC the opportunity to grow membership by making information exclusive to members only

and more clearly highlighting CUPA/ARUC's activities on behalf of Concordia retirees. More discussion ensued giving examples of subject matter that might be held in reserved for members only vs information that should be public.

Mike encouraged members to offer their suggestions and ideas.

g. Pension (Bryan Campbell)

The Pension Report reviews the key differences between pensions and benefits. Your **Pension income** is stable and predictable (up to indexation) because our Plan is fully funded based on ongoing member contributions and investments. The **Benefits Plan** operates on a "pay-as-you-go" principle based on member contributions that are regularly reviewed.

The pension fund currently holds about **\$1.5 billion** and is managed with a long-term benchmark return of **5.9%** (the "discount rate"), based on economic and actuarial assumptions.

Our recent short-term performance has been below target the target objective:

- o ~4% return (year-to-date and 1-year)
- o ~5% over 3 years (still below 5.9%)

Long-term performance is stronger:

- o ~7% over 5- and 10-year periods

Emphasis should focus on evaluating performance over long horizons rather than single years.

Our current challenges include (1) market volatility and global economic uncertainty; (2) currency hedging losses in recent years (leading to a shift to a simpler 50/50 hedging strategy); and (3) the impact, of AI-driven markets which are highly volatile and driven by massive data and investment flows.

The portfolio is divided into three "buckets": (1) Capital Preservation (2) Growth and (3) Diversification. The committee is reviewing all areas, starting with capital preservation due to excess volatility. They are also increasing the use of large multi-strategy investment platforms (funds with many internal managers) to improve diversification and decision-making.

The committee benefits from experienced professionals and strong leadership. Marc

Gautier, the treasurer, has won awards over the past three months. Canadian awards for contributions to the pension fund management industry. He has a very good team. Patricia Saputo (chair of the Investment Subcommittee and the Pension Committee) played a big role in shepherding Concordia from a simpler time in 2020 to now when things are much more complicated. Pierre Collins and Bill Haley who have experience in the investment industry in Montreal. Effective collaboration and commitment have improved what was once a dysfunctional committee. CUPA/ARUC committee members (Bryan Campbell, Hal Proppe, Garry Milton) have played an important role in oversight, communication, and accountability.

The pension plan is long-term, disciplined, and relatively stable, but facing short-term headwinds. Active management and strategic adjustments are ongoing to address market complexity. Member engagement and strong governance are essential to maintaining a healthy pension system.

h. Newsletter (Craig Buchanan)

The newsletter was sent out electronically around November 20th. It is also available on the website. The newsletter contains articles written by CUPA/ARUC members. A lot of the reports are from members of the executive committee reporting on their areas of responsibility.

Craig asked members to consider contributing to future newsletters. Suggestions can be sent directly to Craig whose email address is printed at the end of the Newsletter.

i. Treasurer's Report (Hal Proppe)

The account balance for the association was about \$36,500 at the end of October keeping in mind that \$4,000 was donated to the women's hockey team. Things look good overall. The biggest expense was the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Other expenses include postage, printing, stationery, etc. The smallest expense is a \$9 banking fee which allows e-transfers and cheques. Since CUPA/ARUC's bank account is a business account, not a personal account and

there will be a fee every time we do one of those.

As was reported earlier there are about 360 paid members. Cheques for another 30 plus members are being processed so Hal was very confident that the membership count is approaching 400. Another point made was that the non-endowment fund set up for other student awards currently stands at close to \$4,000 which will be growing as well.

Question: How does the non-endowment fund grow?

Response: Each CUPA/ARUC member pays \$30 per year. The membership fee is \$25. The remaining \$5 is an optional donation which is added to the non-endowment fund.

j. Relations with Other Associations (Kathleen Perry)

We are members of two associations of university retiree associations. Convergence is an informal provincial association. Sandra Spina is representing CUPA/ARUC on that organization . It's called Convergence. It also includes a few other francophone universities outside of Quebec. One of the things that Sandra has been asked to raise is the membership issue and how to attract more members.

Another organization is CURAC which is a national organization to which we have belonged for several years. If you look at the newsletter, you'll see that CURAC has several interesting affinity programs. CUPA/ARUC gets a little kickback from those affinity programs.

Unfortunately, not all the affinity programs are available in Quebec (e.g. Specsavers).

Kathy Tweedy and Chris Ross then recounted their positive experiences with the travel insurance offering (MeDoc). Fabiola Cacciatore recounted her positive experience with Sun Life dealing with a serious family illness while in the USA.

k. Concordia University Relations (Kathleen Perry)

Even though the University has been experiencing major difficulties (budget, governmental regulation) the CUPA/ARUC star is pretty shiny with the university right now

because of the book sale and the shuffle. They are very supportive of what we're doing to support students. Kathleen then encouraged the membership to continue to participate in these activities.

5. Other Business: (Kathleen Perry)

- a. Kathleen thanked Nancy Helms, Joanna Baldwin and Craig Buchanan for their help at the registration desk.
- b. Kathleen thanked Lina Uberti for all her work organizing the fall event and working with the caterers.
- c. Kathleen also thanked Daniel Nicolosi from IITS for setting up and running the audio-visual equipment.

6. Next Meeting - 10:00 a.m. Location to be determined – May/June 2026

**7. Adjournment (Kathleen Perry)
Meeting Adjourned at 12:05 PM.**

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