

Sir John A. Macdonald  
 “We’ve Got You Covered.”

## Feeder School Concert

Saahithiya Sivakumaran

On Friday, January 11, the Music Department at Mac held a Feeder School Concert in which students from both JB Tyrrell Senior Public School and Pleasant View Middle School were invited. The purpose of the concert was to give prospective Blackscots an idea of what music at MAC has to offer. During the event, students witnessed the brilliance and talent of our music department through a variety of performances including band, strings, orchestra, keyboard, choir, and other small group and solo performances.

In addition, the members of the Music Council contributed greatly to make this event a success. They worked tirelessly before and during rehearsals for this concert, practicing the set ups backstage and preparing decorations.

Nancy Zou, a member of Music Council, said, “I was in operations, so I was working backstage for most of the concert to set up chairs and stands. It was really cool to experience being a stage hand, and working backstage was really fun.”

A student who attended JB Tyrrell was also asked about her thoughts on the concert. She said, “I think it went really well, and the effort that was put into the concert was surprising - it made me feel, as an outsider, part of a family that I had not known before.”

We would like to thank the Music Council for all their hard work to make this event a successful and memorable one!

## Kiwanis Music Festival

Leilani Xue and Ryan Huang

The Toronto Kiwanis Music Festival, a regional music competition, has been well-received for 76 years. In the week of February 19th, adjudicators and musicians from other schools came to Mac to participate in the Festival.

For over 40 years, Mac music students, teachers, and Music Council members established a winning legacy. This year was no exception - Mac Music received numerous recognitions again!

On Tuesday, the Mac Concert Band performed “Skydive” by Chris M. Bernotas, an exciting piece, and “Air for Band,” a slow legato piece. Under the conducting of Mr. Luck, the Concert Band received a score of 89 % and a gold award to add to their 8 other awards!

On Tuesday, the Junior Strings played “Dance of the Hours” and “Two English Folk Dances.” These are both songs that were well-received since the 1900s!

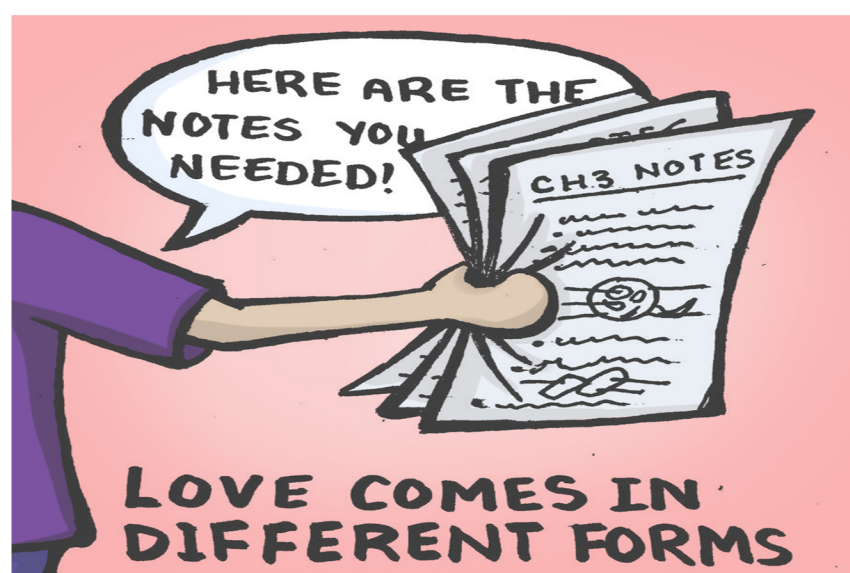
On Wednesday, the Combined String Orchestra performed “Waltz from The Sleeping Beauty” by Tchaikovsky. It is a well-known piece found in one of Tchaikovsky’s three ballets. The Orchestra received the gold award as well.

On Thursday morning, the Senior Orchestra (Grade 11-12 band and string classes) performed “Jupiter Symphony” by Mozart. Following the Senior Orchestra, the Senior String Orchestra performed “Viva Rossini” and “Shepherd’s Dance,” which marked the end of our school’s Kiwanis performance. These pieces not only had string instruments, but also include a piano accompaniment and percussion.

Our Mac Music students and teachers worked hard on these pieces, so it is no surprise that they won many golds! We look forward to their performances in the Spring Concert in May.

## Valentine’s Day

Cindy Liu



## The Black History Month

Sayilaja Kalaimohan and Bessa Fan

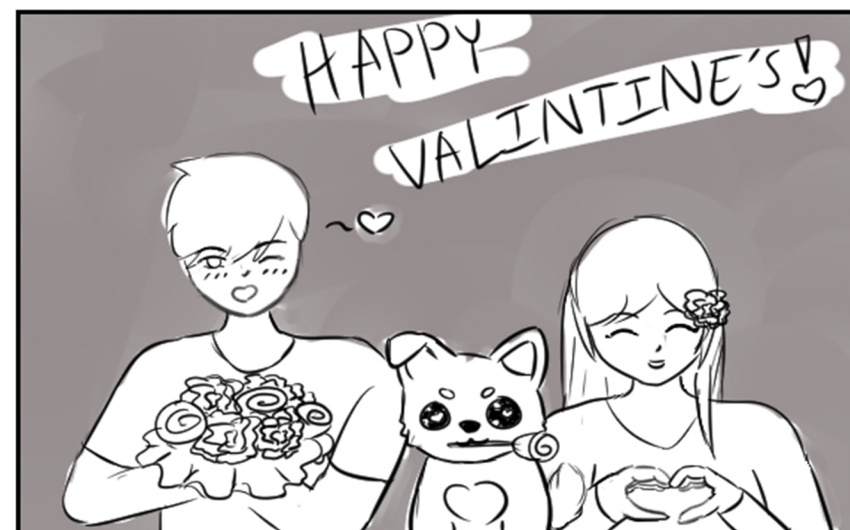
Hey Mac! February is Black History month. It is important for us to remember the accomplishments and the contributions of African Americans and African Canadians.

It all started with Carter G. Woodson, an African American historian, who proposed that the accomplishments of his fellow African Americans be recognized during a Black History week. The month of February was decided upon because it was the birth month of two remarkable men, Frederick Douglass, a former slave and an advocate for equal rights for women and slaves, and Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president who fought for the freedom of slaves. Although it began as a week-long commemoration, the United States officially extended it to a month. In 1995, the Canadian government also recognized February as Black History Month.

Mac celebrated Black History in a number of different ways. Firstly, the library displayed related books for students to explore more about the culture. Moreover, for every morning since the beginning of the month, Eunice Yan, a grade 12 student at Mac, lead us in the celebration of the Black Canadian culture through morning announcements. From learning about the advocacy of Muhammad Ali to hearing the story of the fashion model Winnie Harlow, we were fascinated by their journeys to break stereotypes and fight for equality.

## Happy Valentine’s Day

Cindy Liu



## PPL Indoor Rock Climbing

Saahithiya Sivakumaran

From February 5th to 14th, physical education classes offered various indoor activities for grade 9 students, including top-rope climbing, zip lining, and prusik climbing. In addition, three experts from the Climbing Academy came to assist students during the activities.

Students greatly enjoyed the event. Samantha Abellera said, "It's a new experience and everyone got to do something they may have never tried before and I think that's really cool. It was really fun for me and it's definitely something I look forward to throughout the week. I'm also really pleased that this opportunity was open to us."

A special thanks goes to the gym teachers, Ms. Hunnisett, Ms. Tanos-Johnson, Ms. Lewczuk, Mr. Mouratidis, Mr. D'Angelo, and Mr. Karellas and the New Heights Climbing Academy for providing students the opportunity to explore these activities.



Photo Credits : Darmiga Loganathan

## Sports Column

Molly Chen

During the month of January 2019, our junior girls volleyball team played two games. The first was against William Lyon Mackenzie CI. The girls won the game, winning two sets against Mackenzie. "For our first game on Wednesday versus Mackenzie, I was excited but nervous since our coach told us that they were usually the best in our pool," said Jolina Panganiban, a player on the junior girls volleyball team. The second game was against George Vanier Secondary School. "I was happy to play another game, but I wasn't too excited for it because I was tired from having volleyball [practice] all week," said Jolina. The girls also won two sets against Vanier, winning the entire game.

On Friday, January 11th, the senior girls volleyball team had their first tournament of the new year at Northern Secondary School. The schools in their pool were Northern S.S, West Humber CI, and Agincourt CI. The girls won against Agincourt CI and West Humber. Later they played against Northern S.S. Manager Cindy Er of the team said, "I felt a little nervous for the girls, it was really early in the morning and we had never played them before." During playoffs against Danforth CI, their win was spectacular. Their final loss, however, was at semifinals against North Toronto CI.

Also on Friday, January 11th, the senior boys indoor soccer team played against Westview Centennial Secondary School. Unfortunately, the boys lost 3-1. The junior boys indoor soccer team, however, won their game 5-1 against Victoria Park CI.

Athletic Council also hosted co-ed basketball intramurals every Tuesday at lunch. Sign-ups occurred back in December, however, the president of the Athletic Council, Sarah Aballera, mentioned that sign-ups for the next intramurals season will begin in March or April. The sport being played will most likely be soccer.

Remember to listen to the announcements in the morning to learn about tryouts for new sports and upcoming athletic events. Make sure to also check the athletic bulletin board located outside the Athletic office. Lastly, feel free to follow Athletic Council's Instagram page, @macdonaldathletics, for more updates regarding sports at Mac.

## Looking back on grades 9 and 10

Enosh Chen

Hello grade 9s and 10s. Have you ever wondered how you could optimize your school years? In this article, your fellow grade 11 students will provide you with some tips on choosing the courses and extracurriculars that suit you best.

### #1 Course selection

As senior year students, we understand that choosing courses in grades 9 and 10 can be difficult. We know that it is overwhelming, especially because there are many options to choose from! It is in your best interest to pick courses based on your interests rather than basing your decision off the teacher instructing the course, the level of difficulty of the course, or the choices of your friends. Because there could be multiple sections of that course, the chances of you being in the same class as your friends is low. For instance, there were 4 sections of grade 11 accounting last year. Here are some tips from grade 11 medallion and honours students.

Max Lei: "Choosing courses in grades 9 and 10 can seem overwhelming because it's the first time that YOU get to choose because YOU want to learn. Don't panic, because this is the perfect time for you to explore your options, to see what you are interested in, and to plan for the future."

Jennifer Do: "Don't be afraid to choose a course that none of your friends have chosen or a course that may appear challenging. At the end of the day, you will encounter activities that pertain to your future career that you like and dislike! I think that choosing a variety of courses that interest you helps you to get an idea of what you would like to do in your future even if you aren't quite sure of your future plans yet!"

### #2 Extracurricular

Believe it or not, extracurricular activities play a big role in shaping your experiences at MAC, and thus enhance your university application. For those who want to attend any university, you will have a better chance of getting in if you are active in your school and in your community and if you challenge yourself with different contests and competitions. Below, two grade 11 students share their experiences and words of encouragement on extracurricular activities.

Molly Chen: "As a current grade 11 student at Mac, I speak from experience when I say that my freshman and sophomore years truly played a vital role in shaping me into the person I am today. Despite feeling content about where I am now, I still have several tips and recommendations for younger grade students regarding extracurriculars, some of which reflect my personal misdemeanours. To begin, in terms of extracurriculars, I wouldn't recommend joining as many as possible. Following the concept of "not biting off more than you can chew" is crucial, but there are also other rules to keep in mind. Join clubs you are actually passionate about and are willing to dedicate your time to. Try to obtain a leadership position on the council later in high school! Don't join for the mere purpose of obtaining volunteer hours, writing it on a resume, or any other external factors. If you're only in grade 9 or 10, you can experiment with different clubs or councils and see which ones you like best. I remember being extremely lost back in grade 9. A year later, I was ecstatic to discover my enormous passion for business and DECA (a business club at Mac)! Also, remember that you are not restricted to solely joining extracurriculars within the school, so try to get involved in the community as well. Hopefully, you'll spend the next two or three years pursuing your passions. For instance, you can start your own company, join a local youth council, or participate in upcoming political elections, all of which I've done before. You can also find more volunteer opportunities by contacting the Mac in Action council (their office is situated next to the main office!). The key to becoming your best self is to spend more time indulging in your own interests and passions."

Jennifer Do: "I would definitely take risks when it comes to choosing extracurricular activities. Looking back at the last two years of high school, there were so many different opportunities and I was able to meet new people easily! One can develop new interests, hobbies, and skills. If something sounds intriguing to you, there is no harm in checking it out, and you will soon learn what you like and dislike."

## The Vow of Silence

Mariana Zapounidis

For those whose voices are not heard, should we lend them our silence to show that we care? We live in a society where we often take freedom for granted, but there are still many people across the globe that do not have the opportunity to freely express their thoughts and beliefs for personal and political reasons.

In partnership with Me2We, Mac In Action hosted their first event of the New Year: the Vow of Silence, and raised more than \$2000 for the We organization. In this annual event, students at Mac vowed to remain silent for twelve hours on behalf of those whose voices go unheard. In addition, participants received a maximum of thirteen volunteer hours!

The Vow of silence took place on Friday, February 22, from 9 am to 9 pm with many after-school activities including the Escape Rooms, the Amazing Race, sports, movies, and a pizza dinner. The rule for the event was simple. To best remain silent, students could not use any form of communication, including social media, throughout the duration of their pledge.

Being a grade nine student, this was my first time participating in this event. When I first heard about it, I thought remaining silent for half a day would be easy. I soon realized that I was oblivious to the importance of communication. I learned that I cannot do anything without talking to someone and the struggle and frustration of not being able to express my thoughts were unimaginably difficult. Nonetheless, the Vow of Silence was a fun yet meaning challenge and I was so glad that I participated in it.

## Candy Grams

Jenny Yu



## Lollipop Sales



Photo Credits: Darmiga Loganathan

## Chinese Cultural Café

Tazeen Atif

On Monday, February 4th, MACC (Macdonald's Association of Canadian Cultures) hosted its Chinese Cultural Café to celebrate the Lunar New Year - the festival that celebrates the beginning of the New Year on the traditional Chinese calendar. This year, we are celebrating the year of the Pig.

To celebrate this important holiday, MACC worked to bring about the fun traditions and activities of the Chinese culture. The council hosted activities such as picking marbles out of a bowl using chopsticks, Chinese calligraphy, and a spring roll sale.

With so many people eager to learn about the culture, the day was a fun-filled success. I asked some of the students at Mac about their thoughts on the event.

Jenny Ng stated, "I think it was great how our school was invested in showing a part of the traditional Chinese culture."

"The Chinese Café gave me the opportunity to learn a lot about the Chinese culture through delicious food and fun activities. It's comforting to know that many people appreciate my culture in an open and accepting environment," commented Christine Saljay.

The president of MACC, Mia Zhu, told us, "In my opinion, [the Chinese Cultural Café] went very well. Students from a Chinese background enjoyed the activities and the game very much. We encouraged everyone to participate in our event to learn more about Chinese culture."

The monthly cultural cafés that MACC holds allow various cultures/countries to be represented through food, music, games, and more. Be sure to come to the upcoming cultural cafés! Next month, we will be celebrating the Greek culture.



Photo Credits : Tazeen Atif and Anny Luo

# Courses

## The Benefits of Taking Medallion Courses

Sharika Khan

You have probably heard about the medallion program in Mac by now. In the agenda, the medallion program is described as a “focused program aimed at meeting the needs of highly-motivated and high-achieving students.” Students presume, somewhat mistakenly, that their marks will drop by taking medallion courses. When thinking about whether one should take a medallion course, many students wonder: why should I add unnecessary pressures to my life?

As someone who has taken medallion courses at Mac, I truly believe that they are not as daunting as they may appear. I loved all the medallion courses I took and regretted not taking other available medallion courses. The reason that I did not take all medallions was the same as most people’s reason: I did not want my average to drop. However, my marks were not notably lower than what I would expect my marks to be in an academic class, and the medallion courses were definitely worthwhile. To me, the best part of medallion classes is my classmates. Medallion courses almost always promise a class-full of people with similar mindsets who are eager to learn. Most people in my classes are incredible to collaborate with. And, since medallion classes are often smaller, I know almost everyone in my class.

Kathy Zhou, a grade 11 student who has taken all the medallion courses offered in grades 9,10, and 11, commented that “taking a medallion course obviously means that the course work would be more intense, but I personally found them helpful for the extra knowledge I obtained. Medallion courses provide great opportunities for improvement as they are an advanced version of the academic courses.”

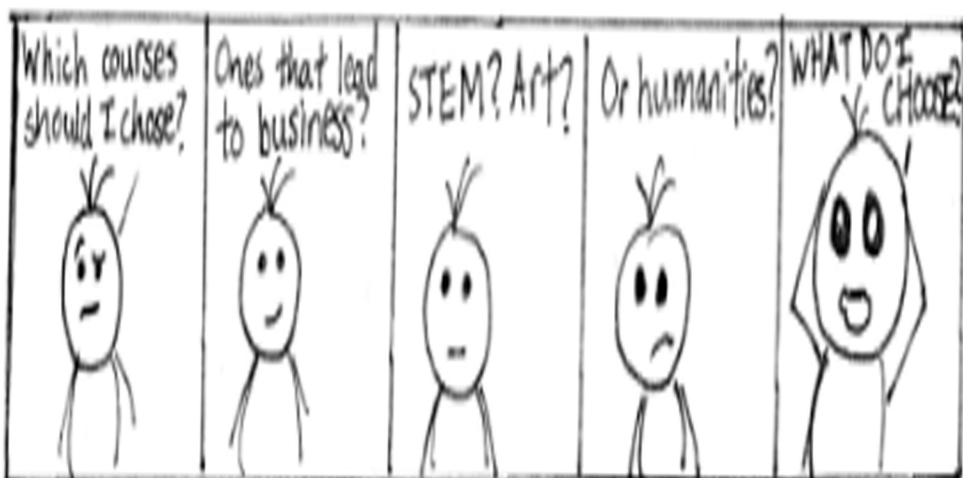
Angela Gao is an 11th grader who is now taking her first medallion course. She commented, “I didn’t take any medallion courses before because I was unfamiliar with the medallion program and I was unsure to how difficult it would be. I like the medallion course I’m taking now, and the material isn’t too difficult. I think a medallion program could be helpful for those who are interested in a subject and want an elevated understanding of that subject.”

Medallion courses offer students the opportunity to challenge themselves. Medallion courses follow the same curriculum as their academic equivalent but have more assignments, presentations, labs, and field trips. Most importantly, medallion courses prepare students well for their future studies.

Despite the benefits of medallion courses, they may not be for everyone. If you are considering taking a medallion course, look into the requirements! You can always ask teachers if you are not sure about whether medallion courses are right for you. Alternatively, you could talk to students who have previously taken the course for more insights.

## Course Selection

Jenny Phung



## Ways To Spend The March Break

Nelosha Suganthan

A long weekend is the perfect opportunity to go out and about, but an entire week off is the golden opportunity. So, to spend it binge-watching a new Netflix series is most certainly unacceptable. The key to having a productive and fun long break is to have balance. Here are some fascinating ideas to make the most out of your March Break.

### 1. Volunteer

Volunteering is a great way to engage with the community and to learn new skills with a diverse range of people while earning volunteer hours. Some volunteering options include volunteering at a food bank, a hospital, a homeless shelter, or a senior’s center. What better way is there to help those in need and improve yourself and your own happiness? Still not convinced? Well, why fear when Mac In Action is here! For more information on places to volunteer, visit the Mac In Action (MIA) office at the end of the office hallway or follow them on Instagram @macinaction. Make this March Break special for you and your community!

### 2. Attend Community Events

Whether you are making plans with your family or heading out with your friends, the City of Toronto never fails to be amusing. Some activities include skating at the Nathan Phillips Square, ice fishing at Northern Pike, and tasting delicious treats at the Sugar Bush Maple Syrup Festival. The GTA also provides programs for teens to expand their knowledge in their interesting fields of work and prepares them for the future. Some programs include photography classes, robotics programs, fashion designing classes, and many more! These are a few examples of great ways to enjoy this March Break while expanding your knowledge. For more information on exciting events happening throughout the year visit [www.camps.ca](http://www.camps.ca).

### 3. Organize and Donate

Tired of those old jeans or the ugly Christmas sweater? The break is the perfect time to create more space in your wardrobe. Tossing out old clothes not only creates space for the latest trends, but it also helps you to be more organized and tidy. Once you have your pile of unwanted clothing, select only the clothes that are in proper condition and pack them in a bag to donate. Clothing donations can be made to places such as Goodwill, Value Village, Salvation Army, and even the donation bins around the city. In the end, donating is beneficial for the environment and for children around the world in need. Besides, it makes you feel good, too! Now, that is a great afternoon spent!

## Ooodles of Noodles

Gaty Kazimi

