



Photo by Vanessa Tignaneli

Election reaction

Hany Alexander is overcome with despair as she watches Donald Trump take the lead in the 2016 presidential election in Times Square on Tuesday. “What will happen now?” she cried. After two years of watching the Trump versus Clinton campaigns, many New Yorkers were stunned at the outcome of the election. Although New York State voted in favour of the Democrats, the country has decided to put its faith in the Republican party’s leader, Donald Trump. For Clinton supporters, the fear of the future bore across their faces as the poll numbers rose. For more election photos, see page 3.

Experiencing indigenous culture

By Curtis O’Connor

It was a feast for the senses in Loyalist College’s cafeteria this past weekend. Now in its 21st year, the Native Arts Festival, hosted by the aboriginal resource centre, was a resounding success. Festival-

goers experienced traditional indigenous food and music while browsing rows of handmade art, crafts, clothes, and leather goods, and everything in between.

For event organizer Paul Latchford, manager of aboriginal services at Loyalist, the day was all about experiencing the

breadth of indigenous culture in Canada.

“It’s designed to provide an opportunity for the native and non-native communities to share the richness of the indigenous cultures. The song and dance, storytelling, history, culture, traditions, practices, medicine, spirituality, every-

thing you can think of. It’s an opportunity to step into the culture, and share and learn from each other.”

That culture of community and storytelling was on the mind of David Finkle Saturday afternoon. Born in Belleville, but now living in Ottawa, Finkle makes

and sells traditional native frame drums. Joined by his wife Laura Leonard, Finkle performed traditional indigenous music for onlookers, among other performers.

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First female breaks barrier at Mercedes Benz

By Aman Parhar

Kasey Waterman, 28, will become the first female technician at Mercedes Benz in Ontario, when she gets her licence in January 2017.

“I was so surprised by that. I know that there aren’t a lot of people in the trade, but I was surprised that there was no one in this particular company,” says Waterman, a Loyalist College automotive student. She has been at Mercedes Benz for a year and a half as an apprentice.

As a licenced technician with Mercedes in Peterborough, Ont. the work that Waterman will do ranges from changing tires and oil to changing out engines and transmissions, brake jobs, suspension component replacement and alignments, diagnosing electrical malfunctions, replacing interior components and some body and frame work, to name a few.

Waterman says she believes a lot of social stigma is placed on women from a really young age where even the toys that are used by children can be gender specific.

“When I was a kid, I loved doing puzzles, and building things; building just models,” says Waterman, who grew up in St. Thomas, Ont.

Waterman developed the love for creating, fixing and finding out how things work at an early age and feels that is the foundation of mechanics – to learn how to fix things. She believes that if more women were given the opportunity to develop these skills and told that they can do this, then there would be more women in the field.

A student in the Loyalist automotive service technician level 3 apprenticeship program, Waterman is part of the W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship. The foundation has helped her not only financially but with peer mentorship support, which is something she finds the most valuable. Part of the mentorship program is being a mentor and mentee to others in the industry and receiving mentorship as well.

“You are learning from people who have gone before you so that portion is so



Photo by Aman Parhar

Kasey Waterman, 28, is the first woman mechanic in Ontario to be hired by Mercedes Benz. She will be licensed in January 2017.

crucial in the foundation overall, which helps in getting that emotional and interpersonal support, along with the financial support,” says Waterman.

Even though we are moving into 2017, the automotive industry is still largely dominated by men and a large number of people still don’t like getting their cars fixed by women. Waterman has had the experience a couple of times when someone didn’t want her to change the oil in her car because she was a woman.

“I think people just don’t know. It’s just people’s stereotypes and their perception that a woman is supposed to be in a caring

environment, not a mechanical environment, so therefore she should not be able to do these jobs,” says Waterman.

In her first and second year at Loyalist, Waterman was the only woman in her class, and being the only woman in an environment dominated by men can be challenging. People tend to generalize and stereotype what a typical mechanic is like and when a woman comes into such an environment, it challenges the notion of what a mechanic is.

“It is challenging at first, to get acceptance from your peers and co-workers that you know what you are doing, and

that you can do a good job.

“I was fearful initially, but as I demonstrated my skills and abilities, I was able to show that yes, I can do this just as good, if not better than any other male apprentice,” says Waterman.

After graduating from high school in St. Thomas, Waterman steered towards aviation mechanics. The industry, however, bottomed out and she was laid off and was unable to find employment without having to move to Northern Canada or really far away from home. Waterman then decided to pursue her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Trent University,

but she still wanted to get back into skilled trades. During that time she was unable to find any aviation apprenticeships, so she decided to look for automotive apprenticeships and started working at Walmart changing oil and tires.

“At that point, there was an opening at the Chrysler dealership in Peterborough, and I applied for the job and got it after which I worked there for a year and that was also when I got into Mercedes, when one of my co-workers who had recently started working there gave my name to the manager when they were looking for apprentices. So they called me in for an interview,” says Waterman.

Her biggest support system are her peers and co-workers from whom she learns, and believes that without them she would not have a leg to stand on. Her mentor at Loyalist, Jeremy Braithwaite, as a part of the Weston Foundation has been a big support for her. She feels comfortable in having interpersonal discussions with him, and can discuss the challenges that she faces.

“There is an open door policy in our office. We are here to provide as much support as we can to help that person be successful. It could be academic, interpersonal or social support,” says Braithwaite.

One piece of advice that Waterman wishes to give every female mechanic who is struggling with the decision to choose this career path is to not give up.

“Don’t give up, no matter how tough it gets, no matter how you think you can’t do it or how sometimes you know you don’t get the motivation or the emotional support that you need,” says Waterman.

Gender roles are entrenched into different professions. The idea of having a man study nursing or early childhood education, or a woman pursuing mechanics or construction, is still something that we as a society struggle with, to accept. There are many more aspiring young adults who are faced with the question of doing what they like to do, and sometimes such gender stereotypes end up overwhelming them. Why is there still such stigma associated to gender and professions?