

## Carleton Team Beats Gee Gee's Twice With Minimal Funding From the School

Carleton's Raven's Dance Pak placed higher than the Gee Gee's team in overall standing at two competitions while receiving under \$2000 from Carleton athletics each year. For three weekends in March, Raven's Dance Pak competed in the GTA against University dance teams across Canada. They competed in Guelph at Terpsichore's University Dance Challenge, Mississauga at Be U: Varsity Challenge, and Hamilton at View Varsity Dance Challenge.

The team was formed 13 years ago and has been developing its name in the varsity dance world without varsity status or financial recognition from Carleton itself. The Raven's Dance Pak has been performing at the same level, if not beating teams considered varsity. "We're beating the Gee Gee's which is a varsity team. We're pretty close behind very big schools," says Geniveve Rabbets the Dance Pak's fundraising and brand manager.

Carleton's team has struggled financially for years, carpooling to and from the GTA and having half the budget of other teams for essentials like costumes. "It's kind of like a cycle where we need money to afford better costumes. We need money to get more rehearsals and to do more practice time, to do more dancing, to have more members. Then that translates well onstage," Rabbets said. She explained that if the team wins at competitions, they are awarded cash prizes for future years. The lack of budget translates to major safety concerns regarding travel and accommodation.

The team is presently required to find their own means of travel to the GTA and find a safe place to stay with minimal support from Carleton. “Right now what we’re doing is we’re taking our cars and driving ourselves as students, and that takes a lot of gas and resources,” she explained. While competitive clubs are left to figure it out on their own, varsity teams are provided with transportation and accommodation. Kennedy Yates, the Raven’s Dance Pak’s team Treasurer summed it up simply. “It’s expensive and it’s dangerous. Just let us rehearse for free and get to competitions safely,” she said.

When contacted for an interview, Jeremy Whalen, Assistant Manager for Carleton’s Digital Marketing and Communications Recreation and Athletics, could not provide comment.

“Following recent changes to the competitive club structure, we are working to provide our clubs and stakeholders with an update to the funding parameters ahead of the start of the academic year,” he said via email.

Carleton’s competitive clubs represent the Raven’s name and build Carleton’s outreach across many athletic fields. They help promote Carleton as a university while receiving a lack of support from the school they are representing. Rabbets said, “As a club, we do very well. We represent our school very well, but we just don’t get the same recognition as the varsity teams do.”