



**Centraide**  
of Greater Montreal



→  
**Report to Our Community**  
**2023-2024**

March 31, 2024



**50 years**

**Solidarity**

**Generosity**

**Social impact**

## Mission

Taking action together for an inclusive Greater Montreal without poverty.

## Vision

For all people to live in dignity in communities where they can reach their full potential.

- **Being in a situation of poverty** means not having the resources to meet your essential needs. It generally means having to live one day at a time and always worrying about the future. It means experiencing constant stress and, in many cases, facing social isolation.
- **Experiencing social exclusion** means being left out or marginalized because of a specific trait (sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, ethnic or cultural origin, or a similar characteristic) or due to a specific situation (poverty, job loss, family trauma, mental health problem, complex immigration pathway, or other circumstance that trigger a series of hardships).

## Values

### Solidarity

We are committed to supporting and showing empathy to each other. Solidarity unites us through our belief in our collective responsibility to prioritize human dignity and equal opportunities.

### Collaboration

We are committed to collaboration and to fostering collective intelligence by harnessing each person's strengths. Working together and creating synergy let us transform challenges into opportunities.

### Excellence

We are committed to giving the best of ourselves to maximize our impact and fulfill our mission. Our effort and our curiosity allow us to be proactive and innovative.

### Integrity

We are committed to integrity so that we can make sound, fair and courageous choices. Our work ethic lets us build lasting relationships based on trust.

### Respect

We are committed to cultivating a respectful environment that contributes to equitable and fair relationships and in which each person feels listened to and valued for their diversity.





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Thank you to our invaluable volunteers!



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



For 50 years, we have never wavered in our belief in the collective strength of community action to create tangible changes in our society. Over the past year, this belief has driven every one of our decisions and actions. In a context of growing social challenges and persistent inequalities, our commitment to community engagement has never been stronger. This is what we do best.

We have highlighted the urgent need to act on pressing issues, such as the housing crisis, food insecurity, homelessness, and the challenge of welcoming asylum seekers. These issues require not only investments but also a concerted and determined response from all of our society's members, from governments and businesses to community agencies and individual citizens.

We kicked off the year with the **Together for Housing** event, which brought together over 430 people from diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas, reflect, and commit to a common cause. The many benefits of this engagement process will continue in the years to come, an example of which is Centraide's active contribution to the creation of the **Groupe d'accélération pour l'optimisation du projet de l'hippodrome (GALOPH)**. This partnership led to an announcement by the three levels of government for continued

work on an ambitious urban project to build thousands of social and community housing units.

Given the significant rise in the use of emergency food aid in Greater Montreal (+50%), we have increased our support to food security agencies. We have a dedicated fund that targets new investments to meet the challenges of welcoming and integrating asylum seekers.

Overall, we have invested \$73.2 million in 375 agencies to support their operations or involvement in collective projects and to strengthen their skills and leadership. These agencies help 800,000 people—or 1 in 5 individuals—in Greater Montreal every year. And all of society benefits!

Every day, we have witnessed the generosity and solidarity of our community through countless donations and acts of support and volunteering. Together, we have celebrated a half-century of generosity, solidarity and social impact. With a historic result of \$68.2 million, our 50th annual campaign was a resounding success. A huge thank you to our co-chairs, **Janie C. Béïque** and **Guy Cormier**, for leading this campaign with spirit and passion.

Thank you to the entire Centraide team and to our invaluable volunteers and contributors.

Thank you to all our partners and allies, without whom these conversations would not be possible. Finally, thank you to the entire community for your trust.

As we continue to face unprecedented challenges, we deeply believe that our understanding of the issues and our ability to mobilize civil society will remain our greatest strengths as we build an inclusive, poverty-free Greater Montreal.

We are all proud of what we have achieved and look to the future with determination.

Please enjoy reading this Report to Our Community!

*Caroline Bougie*  
**Caroline Bougie**  
 Chair of the Board

*Pinard*  
**Claude Pinard**  
 President and Executive Director





# 50 YEARS OF SOLIDARITY, GENEROSITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT

## A proud and rich tradition of community service



### In the beginning

On May 17, 1966, five federations joined forces to create the Federation Campaign of Greater Montreal. These federations, originating from different cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, shared the same goal: to unify the numerous fundraising efforts conducted in Greater Montreal into a single annual campaign.



### 1983

The worldwide recession that has been raging since the summer of 1981 hit Canada particularly hard. More than 100,000 jobs were lost in the Greater Montreal area, and poverty increased. Community agencies came under pressure.



### 1992

In 1992, Centraide Montreal was renamed Centraide of Greater Montreal to reflect its true territorial reach.



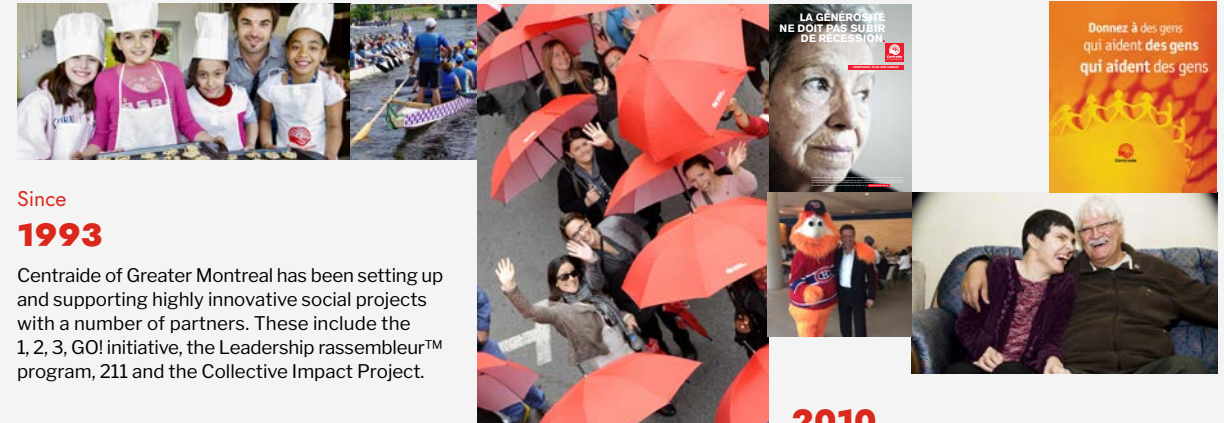
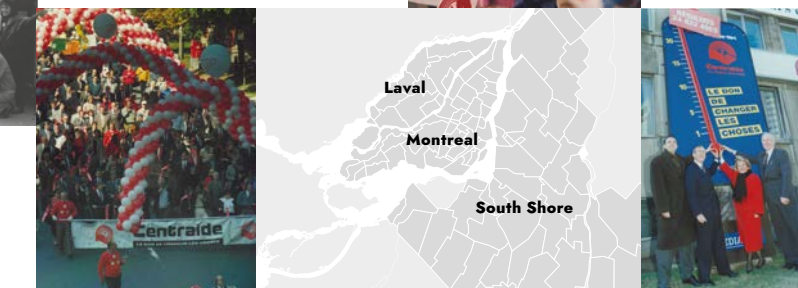
### 1974

On September 25, 1974, the federations transferred their responsibilities and powers for budgeting, planning and distributing funds. It was then that the organization that is now Centraide of Greater Montreal was born.



### 1991

1991 marked an important turning point in Centraide Montreal's history with the arrival of Michèle Thibodeau-DeGuire as CEO. A graduate engineer from Polytechnique Montreal, she says that in life, she builds bridges. And that's exactly what she'll be doing at Centraide for the next 20 years.



### Since 1993

Centraide of Greater Montreal has been setting up and supporting highly innovative social projects with a number of partners. These include the 1, 2, 3, GO! initiative, the Leadership rassembleur™ program, 211 and the Collective Impact Project.

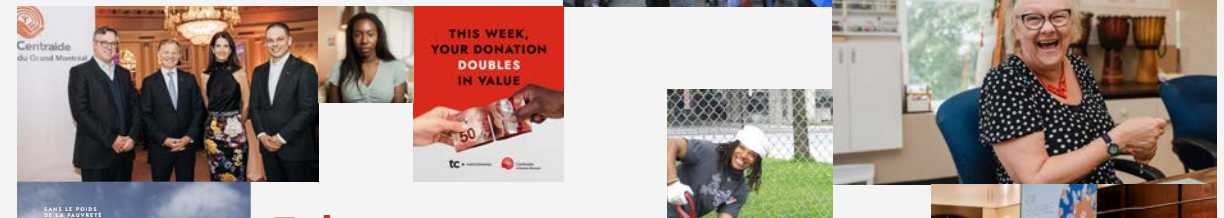


### 2010

With the rise of the Internet and the emergence of new technological platforms, the 2010s are bringing their share of challenges and changes to the organization, and to the philanthropic world in general.

### 2020

On March 13, 2020, Quebec goes into lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thousands of people temporarily lose their jobs. The Centraide of Greater Montreal team sets up an emergency fund to support the most vulnerable.



### Today

Centraide of Greater Montreal invests over \$70 million in communities. Despite all its efforts, poverty and social exclusion remain major social issues that change with the times. On the eve of its 50th campaign, Centraide is pursuing its mission to bring people together and take action for an inclusive Greater Montreal without poverty.





## From yesterday to today

### Generosity

Since 1974, Centraide's annual campaign has raised over

# \$1.7 billion

### Solidarity

	1975	2024
Amounts invested in communities	\$8.6M	\$73.2M

### Social impact

	1975	2024
A solid network of agencies	115	375

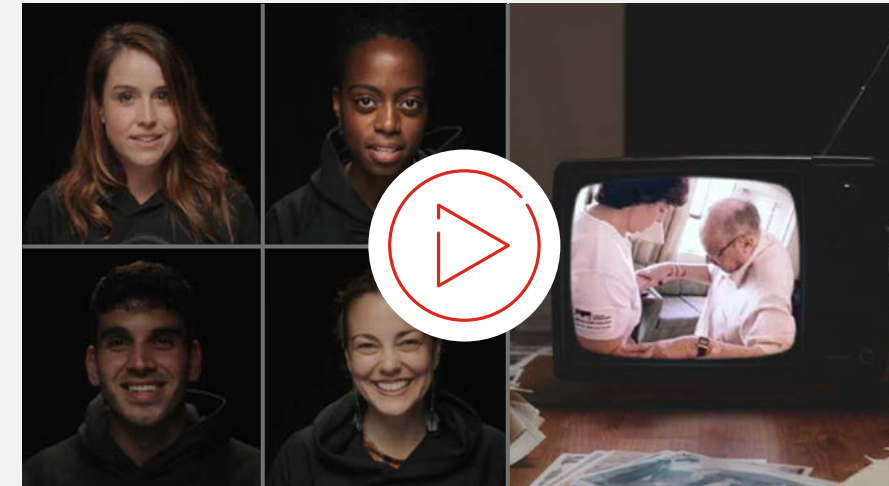
## Stories of solidarity

Hear thirteen representatives from community agencies talk about their unique partnership with Centraide over the years.



## From the early days to major social projects

Dive into 50 years of generosity, solidarity and social impact, as told by Centraide employees.



## New ad campaign

The powerful message of this campaign with a moving slogan is that every single person who benefits from Centraide becomes an agent of change who in turn contributes to the well-being of all of society.



[WATCH THE AD](#)

## Coming up

To celebrate the milestone of our 50th anniversary, we have organized a series of vibrant activities to reflect our history, our legacy, and our commitment in the Greater Montreal community!

- Open houses at Centraide-supported agencies
- Concerts by the Orchestre métropolitain in three Montreal parks
- Murals in Greater Montreal neighbourhoods

[DISCOVER THE PROGRAM](#)



# A HISTORIC CAMPAIGN WITH UNPRECEDENTED RESULTS



→  
**\$68.2  
million\***  
raised

- 98,000 donors
- 800 Major Donors of \$10,000 or more
- 600 partner companies and organizations
- 160 members of the Generations' Circle

\*Projected campaign results (February 2024)

## Launch of our 50th campaign

We began a new chapter in our history with the launch of our 50th campaign, which marks five decades of ongoing commitment to support young people's current and future success, develop decent living conditions, build inclusive communities, and create a strong and cohesive social fabric.



## The 2023 Co-Chairs



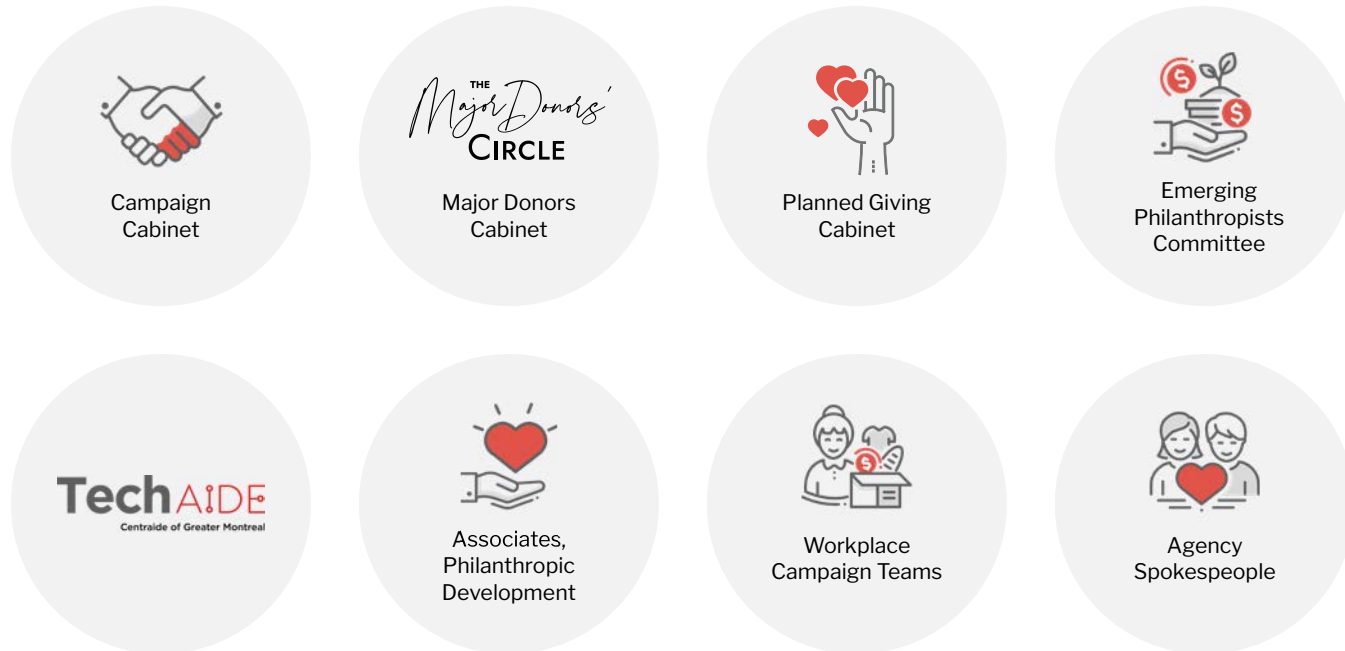
**Janie C. Béïque**, President and CEO, Fonds de solidarité FTQ, and **Guy Cormier**, President and CEO, Desjardins Group.

Thank you for having been such incredible partners in this adventure.

[MORE ABOUT OUR CO-CHAIRS](#)



## Teams taking action to spur generosity



## Bridges between workplaces and community agencies



**METRO** employees take part in a caring activity at the collective gardens of **La Maison de Quartier Villeray**.

- 291** Group support activities
- 
- 236** Testimonials from agency spokespeople
- 
- 39** Visits to agencies and neighbourhoods

## 10th Centraide Cup

500 employees from 20 companies played on CF Montreal's fields and raised \$381,000 for Centraide and the Montreal Impact Foundation.



## Solidaire Awards

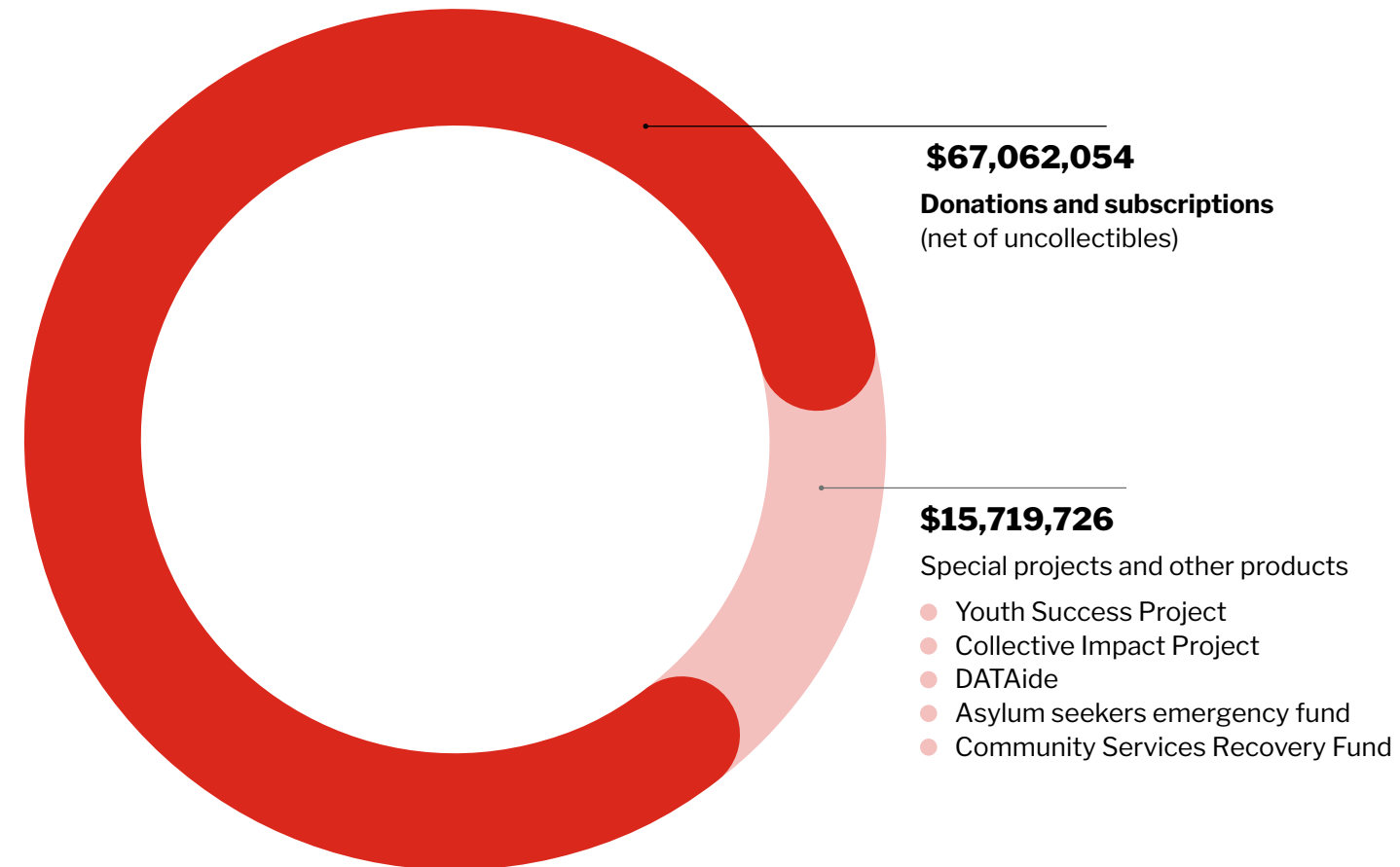
See the winners of the 18 Solidaire Awards handed out in four categories (Corporate Commitment, Mobilization, Citizen Commitment and Collaboration) to companies, agencies and unions that led outstanding campaigns.





## AMOUNT RAISED

\$82,781,780



## AMOUNT INVESTED

\$73,198,057

Or 88% of the money raised that goes back to the community.



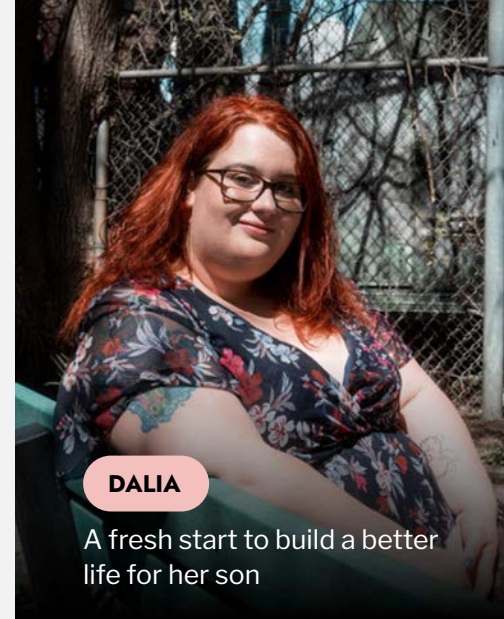


# A FOCUS ON PEOPLE



## Courage. Humanity. Authenticity.

These values are what emerged from the powerful testimonials of the people who generously opened up about the help they received from Centraide-supported agencies. Dalia, Marie, Naïma, Max, Gustavo, Potisa and Natacha agreed to talk about issues that affected their living conditions, mental health, well-being and more.



**DALIA**

A fresh start to build a better life for her son



**NAÏMA**

Fighting to keep her home



**MAX**

Growing the hope of a better life



**MARIE**

Surviving everyday life



**NATACHA**

Getting involved in her community to feel less isolated



**POTISA**

Finding a new purpose in life



**GUSTAVO**

Overcoming a path full of obstacles



# OUR INVESTMENTS BY AREA OF ACTION

## For young people's present and future success

Our investments support:

- A good start in life for all children
- Academic and social success
- Family environments that foster development
- Help at every stage on the road to adulthood

Amount invested	\$20.4M
Percentage of overall investment	28%
Number of agencies and projects supported	129



Dalia moved out of her family's home and headed for Montreal when she was still a teen. "I was 17 when I came to Montreal. I had quit working as an escort, so I had no social network or support network around me. At the time, I was very unstable and had problems with substance use."

That's when **Mères avec pouvoir** came into her life.

[DISCOVER DALIA'S STORY](#)







## For decent living conditions

Our investments support:

- Access to decent and affordable housing
- Food security
- Budgeting and financial literacy
- Support for people in a situation of homelessness

Amount invested	\$19.2M
Percentage of overall investment	26%
Number of agencies and projects supported	136



Marie's story could be anyone's. At age 41, this mother of three decided to take a chance and start her own business. But fate had other plans in store. A stroke turned her life upside down at the worst possible time, as Marie had no insurance. A separation from her spouse added to her hardship. All Marie had left was uncertainty.

That was when **Association coopérative d'économie familiale (ACEF) Rive-Sud** came into her life.

[DISCOVER MARIE'S STORY](#)



## Inclusive Communities

Our investments support:

- Caring communities that let everyone realize their full potential
- The recognition of a plurality of voices within communities
- Equitable access to resources and support to help people balance their mental health and overcome social isolation

Amount invested	\$16.7M
Percentage of overall investment	23%
Number of agencies and projects supported	144



Gustavo was working as a Biology teacher in Colombia when he started getting threatening letters about remarks he supposedly made. With his family's safety at risk, he had to make the hardest decision of his life: to leave his home country. Their journey lasted months and took them through New York, Plattsburgh, and finally to Montreal, where they spent a month and a half in emergency housing before moving into an apartment in Longueuil.

That's when **Carrefour le Moutier** came into his life.

[DISCOVER GUSTAVO'S STORY](#)







## For a strong and cohesive social fabric

Our investments support:

- Resilient communities that can rise up to challenges
- People's engagement in their communities
- Access to resources that community stakeholders need

Amount invested	\$16.9M
Percentage of overall investment	23%
Number of agencies and projects supported	122



As the mother of a young adult, Natacha didn't resonate with the activities at the family agency in her new neighbourhood. However, she came to realize that she would indeed be welcome at La Maison des Familles de Mercier-Est, as the agency works with all kinds of families and not just those with young children.

That's when Johanna, a staff member with the **Citoyen-Relais** project, came into Natacha's life.

[DISCOVER NATACHA'S STORY](#)



# A LOOK BACK AT 2023-2024

Speaking up about issues of poverty and social exclusion



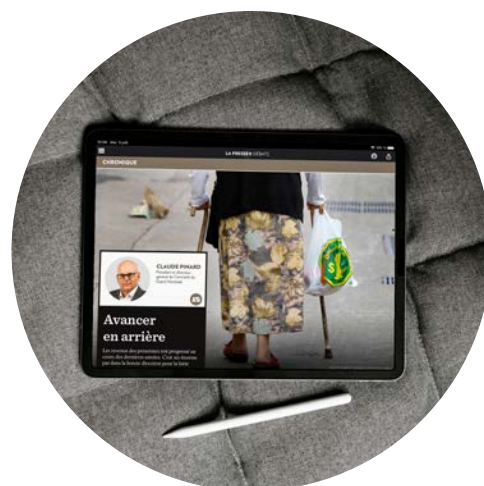
Centraide submitted its recommendations as part of the public consultation for the government's fourth action plan to combat poverty and social exclusion. These recommendations aim to strengthen initiatives to tackle these crucial issues.

**READ THE SUBMISSION**

Available in French only



Two new surveys revealed the concerns of Quebecers, and particularly vulnerable Quebecers, about their financial situation and the impact on their mental health. [The financial anxiety index](#) was developed in collaboration with Leger.



**Claude Pinard**, President and Executive Director of Centraide, wrote [16 opinion letters](#) in *La Presse* to encourage people to reflect on issues that affect the community sector and about the challenges of poverty and social exclusion.

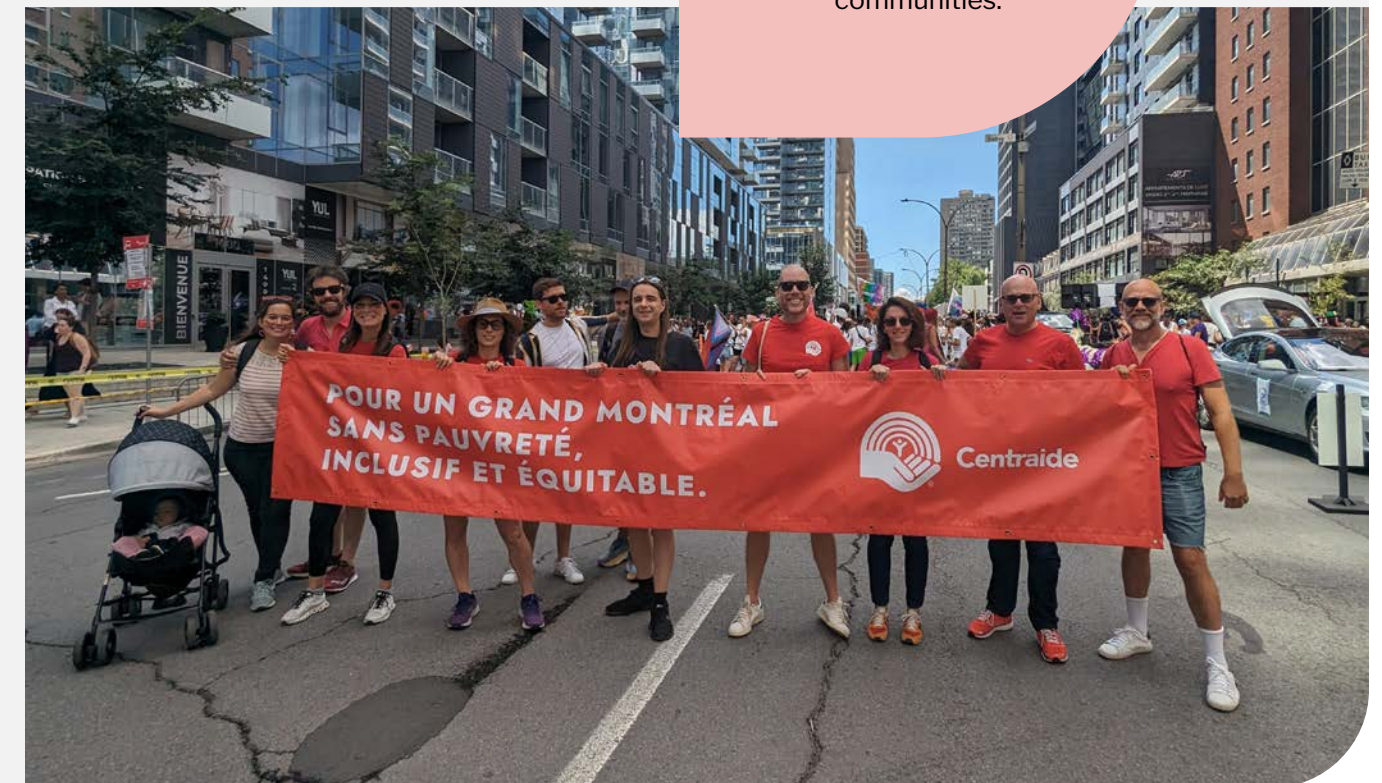


Centraide also organized a hard-hitting experiment to raise awareness about the challenges faced by people living in poverty.



**Claude Pinard**, President and Executive Director of Centraide, spoke about new forms of philanthropy at the 2023 Summit on Philanthropic Culture organized by the Institut Mallet.

Centraide celebrated diversity at the 2023 Pride Parade with Fierté Montréal to show its support for agencies serving members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.





## Together for Housing

Housing has become a dire issue for many households in Greater Montreal. Demand is exceeding supply and putting upward pressure on the cost of available housing. Finding a place to live has become a problem for more and more individuals and families in Greater Montreal.

In June 2022, Centraide launched the Speaking Truths on Housing to find sustainable solutions to the crisis.

The culmination of this major mobilization effort was the Together for Housing event on May 15, 2023, which was attended by 430 people from a variety of backgrounds. This unique gathering let stakeholders exchange ideas, reflect together, and join forces for a common cause.

### Actions taken since then:

- Proposal of a master indicator (residual income) to measure the scope and evolution of the housing situation in Greater Montreal.
- Publication of the “[Engagé.es pour le logement](#)” report, a comprehensive and in-depth overview of the Together for Housing event.
- Publication of an open letter in *La Presse* about the commitment of over 80 co-signatories to work together to tackle housing issues.
- Support for the creation of the Groupe des 21 (a group of private, municipal and social stakeholders working on a concerted action plan for housing in Quebec) and participation in its meetings.
- Increase of 24% in financial support for housing committees that help thousands of tenants enact their rights when dealing with housing issues (unjustified rent increases, evictions, substandard conditions, etc.).
- Political advocacy to develop a government action plan on housing to meet the needs of people in vulnerable situations.
- Participation in consultations on the city’s housing policy.
- Active contribution to the GALOPH and support for participation on the Corporation de développement communautaire de Côte-des-Neiges for this project.
- Support for an experiment to create a rent registry, in partnership with Vivre en Ville.
- Sale of the Centraide parking lot to the Unité de travail pour l’implantation de logement étudiant (UTILE).



### Residual income: a master indicator

Residual income refers to the money that households have left after paying for their rent and essential needs. In 2022, it was estimated that 292,000 households did not have enough income to cover both their housing and everything else they need to live.

“

This ability to come together and take action to fight poverty and social exclusion is the superpower that has guided the work of the Groupe d’accélération pour l’optimisation du projet de l’hippodrome (GALOPH). This group has worked to define what a neighbourhood would look like at the site of the former Montreal Hippodrome, with over 10,000 housing units protected from real estate speculation, including 4,800 social or community housing units, 60% of which would have three or four bedrooms.”



— Claude Pinard,  
President and Executive  
Director of Centraide

From his column on how GALOPH is helping citizens take action (“[GALOPH - La société civile passe à l'action](#)”), *La Presse*, April 24, 2024.





## Fighting food insecurity

Food insecurity has been on the rise in recent years. The high cost of housing and groceries has forced many people to turn to emergency food assistance, which has put significant strain on community agencies. Greater Montreal now sees 450,000 emergency food requests every month, which is 50% more than last year. Throughout the year, Centraide supported a continuum of programs, from food aid to initiatives to foster food self-sufficiency and develop local food systems.



### What's ahead in 2024-2025

Centraide will focus on reinforcing agencies that work to take care of essential needs, such as food security. To better understand needs and enhance its investment, Centraide will work with different partners to create a financial portrait of food security in Greater Montreal.

## Supporting people in a situation of homelessness

The percentage of people experiencing visible homelessness in the Greater Montreal area increased by 33% on the Island of Montreal and by 98% in Montérégie. Indigenous people, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, and young people who have been in contact with youth protection services are overrepresented on the street. Community relations are a major concern in many neighbourhoods where homelessness is emerging as a new challenge.

### What's ahead in 2024-2025

Centraide will continue to build on the momentum it started in 2021 with its staunch commitment to provide solutions by establishing new partnerships and significantly increasing its investments in this area. These investments support agencies that provide prevention services, day and night intake, psychosocial intervention, street and community outreach, and community relations intervention. Some agencies target specific populations, such as seniors, women with children, and Indigenous people.





## Focusing on young people's struggles

Despite the improvement in Quebec's overall graduation rate in recent years, young people from well-off areas still graduate at a higher rate compared to those from disadvantaged backgrounds (87% vs. 77%). In Montreal, one in five young people still drop out before getting their high school diploma.

Centraide is fully committed to a continuum of initiatives that comprehensively support young people throughout their social lives and school careers. This approach takes shape through a variety of supported agencies: youth centres, agencies dedicated to the academic and social success of young people, housing centres for youth in a situation of homelessness, and agencies that serve youth at a greater risk of vulnerability, such as Indigenous youth and youth who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+.



### What's ahead in 2024-2025

Thanks to the financial envelope for the **Youth Success Project**, which was renewed by the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation for a fourth year, Centraide will continue to support upcoming generations with their individual, social and academic goals. Particular attention will be paid to their mental health and any risk of social alienation that could lead them to the streets.



## Supporting people with precarious status<sup>1</sup>

Non-permanent residents, and particularly asylum seekers, are one of the groups most at risk of poverty. The number of these individuals has risen dramatically in recent years, particularly in Greater Montreal. Community agencies, which are at the front line to welcome and support them, are struggling to respond to this increase, which is generating urgent needs.

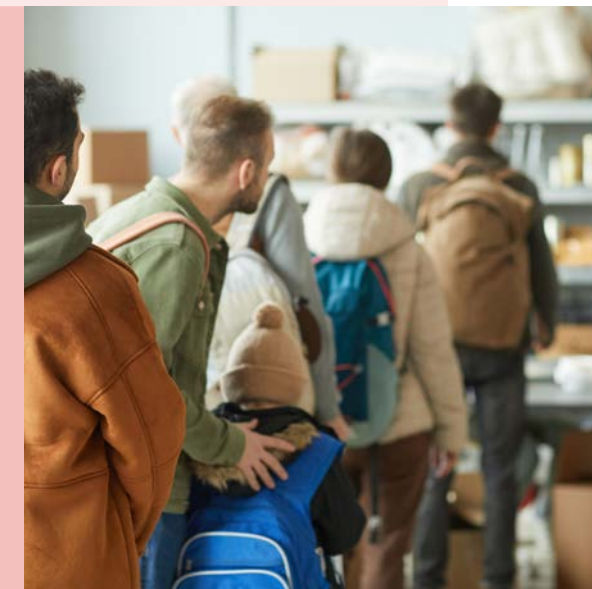
At the start of 2023, the Quebec government injected \$3 million in emergency aid to help asylum seekers, to which Centraide added \$333,000. Centraide of Greater Montreal was entrusted with managing these funds thanks to its knowledge of and relationships with agencies in the field. In collaboration with the Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes (TCRI), Centraide allocated these funds to 48 agencies.

<sup>1</sup>People here on a work or study permit, asylum seekers waiting to get refugee status, or migrants with precarious status.



### What's ahead in 2024-2025

In April 2024, the **asylum seekers emergency fund** received additional funding of \$5.5 million thanks to a joint contribution from the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (\$4 million), the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration (\$665,000), Centraide of Greater Montreal (\$650,000) and Centraide Québec et Chaudière-Appalaches (\$150,000). This fund will increase the capacity of agencies to meet growing needs.





## Working with Indigenous communities

Centraide has worked with Indigenous communities to support Indigenous agencies both in urban areas and in the territory of Kahnawà:ke.

In 2023-2024, new collaborations were launched while existing partnerships were reinforced. Our investments in this area have supported Indigenous agencies that help youth, families, and people in a situation of homelessness or that work in the area of cultural pride.

Centraide has also supported non-Indigenous agencies that serve Indigenous people, particularly to support women and to uphold food security.

In Kahnawà:ke, Centraide contributes to an agency that provides healing by using the experience and knowledge of the community's seniors and by revitalizing the Kanien'keha language.

## Helping community agencies fulfill their missions

Centraide is a financial partner of LÉO, a psychological support service for people involved in cooperatives and NPOs in Quebec. LÉO offers comprehensive support with a helpline for individuals, workshops for groups, and research to optimize the program.

Centraide has also set up multiple initiatives for its skills and leadership development strategy to help community agencies meet current challenges.



### Spotlight on key investments

- In 2023, 29 agencies received support and coaching to develop their strategic planning, improve their governance, or participate in consultation processes.
- The [results of a research project](#) carried out with the **SHERPA** University Institute were presented at a webinar in winter 2024. This study identified ways to support and strengthen EDI skills at community agencies. The webinar explored key competencies, approaches to integrate them, and strategies to sustain them within community agencies.
- In February 2024, an important event for the Greater Montreal community was held at UQAM's Agora du Cœur des sciences. Organized jointly by Dynamo and Centraide, this two-day event brought together many stakeholders to discuss and find solutions to the **labour shortage in the community sector**. The event also strengthened ties within the community and laid the groundwork for continued collaboration to meet this challenge.



### What's ahead in 2024-2025

New collaborative opportunities are emerging to meet needs identified by Indigenous people themselves. These include food security, housing and cultural expression for groups such as women, young people, and people in a situation of homelessness.





## Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Since adopting its formalized EDI policy in 2017, Centraide of Greater Montreal has committed to applying these core values to every aspect of its mission. In addition to an internal organizational approach, this initiative has two other key pillars:

1. Actively support agencies to adopt inclusive practices.
2. Integrate EDI into Centraide's social investment practices and relations with the community.

For example, territorial equity aims to guarantee fair access to resources for everyone in vulnerable situations, no matter where they live.



# STEERING LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS

## DATAide

As it approaches its third anniversary, the DATAide program has produced some very compelling results. The DATAide initiative received \$5.4 million over three years from the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale to support the digital transformation of community agencies across Quebec. Investments to provide these grants to agencies to support their projects has been made possible thanks to the financial contribution of the Fonds québécois d'initiatives sociales.



12

webinars to raise awareness about digital transformation

→  
Given to 1367 agencies

500

hours of professional support

→  
78 agencies have received guidance



2

cohorts that took the digital transformation

→  
281 participants from 184 agencies have finished this component

2

cohorts that took the Leadership Support Lab

→  
Over 20 agencies have finished this component

332

grants given out to agencies

→  
Learn more about

DATAide



With the financial participation of:  
Québec



# Collective Impact Project (CIP)

This year, the CIP ramped up its efforts and supported no fewer than 25 Montreal neighbourhoods with their implementation of remarkable initiatives, despite the housing crisis and food insecurity that continue to challenge the community sector. The topics that neighbourhoods are tackling include food security, community infrastructure, housing, social inclusion, and community relations.

In addition to its role as operator, Centraide joined the CIP as a financial partner for the first time this year by injecting an additional \$1.2 million into the overall envelope of \$24 million over five years (2022-2027). These funds are from the annual campaign in 2023, which had a remarkable result.

Another highlight from the year was the production and distribution of the Phase 1 report, which showed how the CIP led to the considerable development of new collaborations within neighbourhoods. All initiatives involved stakeholders from different sectors and created innovative partnerships that have transcended traditional boundaries.

A wide range of stakeholders—community agencies, institutions, the municipal and health care sectors, and private companies—have been actively working together on these large-scale projects. Flexible funding has let neighbourhoods prioritize local issues, which has led to a variety of diverse initiatives in areas from food to education. Neighbourhoods have experimented with new collaborative practices that have generated concrete results, such as an urban agriculture program at a high school in Saint-Michel and the Learning Citizenship project in Ahuntsic to strengthen citizen participation.

Some initiatives have also influenced local policies, particularly in the West Island, where the goal has been to make poverty issues (specifically food insecurity and the housing crisis) visible in an area that is generally thought of as well-off. One result of these efforts has been the creation of an affordable housing fund in Pierrefonds.



Photo: Festival des saveurs, Saint-Michel neighbourhood

→  
Learn more  
about the  
**CIP**

**Philanthropic partners**



**Institutional partners**



**Community partner**





# THANK YOU TO OUR INVALUABLE VOLUNTEERS!

## Michèle Thibodeau-Deguire Award

This annual award recognizes an exceptional volunteer's outstanding contribution to Centraide of Greater Montreal's mission. This award was created in honour of Michèle Thibodeau-Deguire, who served as our President and Executive Director for over 20 years (1991-2012).

### 2024 recipient: Marc Gagnon

- Member of the Board of Directors of Centraide of Greater Montreal (2013-2021)
- Member of the Executive Committee
- Member of the Human Resources Committee
- Jury Member for the Solidaires Awards
- He also contributed to Centraide's thinking on sustainable development and acted as a volunteer representative with Centraide United Way Canada and the Centraides of Quebec



## Board of Directors

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\*Executive Committee Member

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