

MILE



*Clinique juridique*  
**MILE END**  
*Legal Clinic*

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021

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# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

## - M<sup>e</sup> Geeta Narang

(President and Founder)

\*Departure December 14, 2020

\*\*Appointment as Judge of the Superior Court of Québec

## - M<sup>e</sup> Aisha Topsakal

(Vice-President)

## - M<sup>e</sup> Allen Mendelsohn

(Treasurer)

## - M<sup>e</sup> Caroline Moreau

(Secretary) \*Départure July 15, 2021

## - M<sup>e</sup> Michèle Moreau \*Departure February 11, 2021

## - L'Honorable Danielle Grenier

## - Valérie Gascon

## - M<sup>e</sup> Marek Nitoslowski

## - M<sup>e</sup> Léa Charbonneau

## - M<sup>e</sup> Alexandre Ricci

## - Scott McNicoll, P. Eng.

*The past year has been one of both change and continuation. Whether faced with a momentous change at the Board of Directors or the ongoing pandemic which unfortunately did not change, the Clinic dealt with the challenges with the fierce determination to provide access to justice our Founder personified.*

*The momentous change at the Board was the departure of the Clinic's Founder and Board President Geeta Narang, though her departure was only for the best of reasons – being named a judge of Superior Court of Quebec! As judges must remain impartial and are unable to serve organizations like the Clinic, Geeta had to leave the Board. There is simply no way to express in this message what her departure means to us as a Board, and to the Clinic in general. Justice Narang was not just the Founder of the Clinic; she was its heart and soul.*

*On a personal level, Geeta and I have been friends ever since we were in law school together. When I was asked to serve on the Board more than a decade ago I leapt at the chance to help her. Justice Narang if you are reading this – I pledge to you that the Board and I will continue the incredible work you have accomplished with the Clinic, and in line with your vision of providing access to justice for all.*

*With the departure comes opportunity however, and the Board is pleased to welcome Scott McNicoll, only the second non-lawyer on the Board. It is important to have that different perspective and Scott also provides important management experience and skills which the Clinic can always use.*

*The Clinic and its staff once again over the past year rose to the challenge of ensuring access to justice through the pandemic. This challenge would not have been met without the tireless efforts of our Executive Director Sophie Lefebvre. Sophie's dedication to the Clinic and its mission is beyond compare, and we thank her for the incredible work she continues to do, day in day out.*

*The Clinic's expansion over the last few years has led to the addition of numerous other staff members no less dedicated to the Clinic's mission. We thank all the dedicated staff for their incredible work, as well as all the volunteer lawyers, other volunteers and students who enable the Clinic to do its work every day. Emmanuelle, Andréanne and Maxim have provided first-rate legal services and supervision of students, made all the more difficult by the pandemic. A word should also be said about our bookkeeper Anik, who not only manages to keep the books, but handles numerous other administrative duties and is a trusted advisor to both Sophie and myself in my role as Clinic Treasurer.*

*In my role as Treasurer, I am unfortunately all too aware of the precarious financial position the Clinic finds itself in year to year. The Clinic does benefit from recurring support from certain donors and foundations, to which we extend our most sincere thanks. You can find acknowledgements and thanks to our specific donors elsewhere in this Report. We also thank all the lawyers and others who contributed to another successful "One Hour of Your Time" Campaign. But it is never enough – access to justice is unfortunately a costly endeavour, and we need your continued support.*

*Do it for our departed Founder and President – let us all ensure her vision continues to be met.*

**Me Allen Mendelsohn, Treasurer**

*\*On behalf of the entire Board of Directors*

# MESSAGES FROM THE EXECUTIVE

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The year 2020-2021 was, once again, quite unique. On a global scale, it took so much creativity, courage and adaptation. The MELC was no exception and its team had to roll up their sleeves to face the music. Each and every one of us made the necessary efforts to maintain all our services and thus, we were able to continue to accomplish our mission of access to justice for the most vulnerable people in our society. The team at the office had to work hard throughout the year. Thanks to the mobilization and commitment of everyone, as soon as the health measures were relaxed, we were able to quickly welcome users in person at our service points. For many individuals, access to in-person services was crucial and allowed them to finally obtain answers and help for often-perilous legal problems.

During this year, several events shone light to the MELC. Chief among them, on December 14, 2020, we learned with great emotion and pride that Geeta Narang, founder and former Chair of the Board of Directors of the MELC, was appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Québec. The Honourable Geeta Narang dedicated her practice as a lawyer to representing the most vulnerable people. In 2002, when she decided to sit at a table at the Mile End Community Mission and offer free legal services to the less fortunate in her neighbourhood, she initiated a movement for access to justice and mobilized many like-minded lawyers to this project. As Executive Director, it is an honor to pursue this mission and to keep it alive, relevant and current.

In order to ensure our operations, during the summer of 2021 we conducted our fundraising campaign One Hour of Your Time! This fundraiser is essential to the MELC as it raises funds to support our activities. Given the pandemic, the campaign was conducted entirely in virtual mode, which presented an additional challenge for us. That said, once again, the generosity was

there and we raised \$22,000! These funds will be used to maintain our services at our three points of service, where our work is most important.

In addition, this particular year also saw the founding of our brand new Legal Clinic for Refugees (LCR) project. This project, funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario, responds to an important need identified since the opening of our Park Extension location. This two-year project will allow us to develop legal information services aimed specifically at refugees, newcomers seeking asylum or people without status in the territory. It is in this context that we welcome Me Maxime Gossin who joins our team and takes on the role of coordinator and supervisor for this new component of the MELC.

In closing, I would like to once again extend my warmest thanks to all of our supporters, donors, partners and grantors for their continued support and trust. Without you, we would not be able to accomplish so much and have such a positive impact in our communities. Thanks to you, many people have found solutions, accompaniment, listening, comfort and support at the MELC to overcome the obstacles they faced in their quest for justice.

Thank you very much!



ME SOPHIE LEFEB-

## A MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATING ATTORNEY

(Coordinator and supervisor of our three points of service)

While 2020 was marked by surprise and adjustment, 2021 was the year of consolidation and improvement of our now hybrid services! With a team of resilient and adaptable students, the MELC was able to offer information in all areas of law, both in person and remotely, by appointment.

The addition of Andréanne Martel and Maxime Gossin to the team has enhanced our ability to provide quality legal information in the complex areas of family and immigration law. The gradual return of in-person services has been beneficial for litigants who were in great need of the in-court accompaniment service offered by the MELC as well as the assistance in preparing for hearings before the Small Claims and Housing Administrative Tribunal.

I am also delighted that this step-by-step return to face-to-face meetings facilitates access to justice for people living on the street who have been able to come to our Mile End service point on a few occasions to learn about their rights. However, the demand for remote

legal meetings has not diminished, as the people who are subject to the law have themselves become accustomed to the world of distance! Me Martel and I have therefore adapted the training sessions in consultation techniques and in outreach given to students so that they have the best tools to understand this new way of meeting users.

I would like to salute the commitment and professionalism of our students, without whom the MELC could not serve its mission of access to justice.



M<sup>E</sup> EMMANUELLE MOUSSA

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERVISOR ATTORNEY

(Point of service Mile End)

I joined the Mile End Legal Clinic team in late August 2020. I quickly realized how much the users appreciated being back in person. The Clinic helps people who are often vulnerable, anxious or helpless when faced with a legal problem. Whether it's child custody, housing or immigration issues, I have seen the positive and calming effect of having another person there.

That being said, in the current circumstances, many do not have the means or the technological knowledge to receive information by email and we had to adapt in our modes of transmission (oral, sometimes even by mail). This proved to be an extremely formative experience for the law students who had to adapt their vocabulary and the way they transmitted information.

Although the pandemic has resulted in changes in the application of certain laws, nothing has been as significant for a self-represented user as the procedural changes at the Court.

This has been particularly noticeable in family law where we have seen people who have lost their jobs and have to represent themselves. However, since the guidelines are different in each judicial district, the majority of our users had difficulty finding their way through the procedural maze. The MELC did a great deal of work in these unusual times to quickly adjust the information and provide the appropriate and personalized support to our clients.



M<sup>E</sup> ANDRÉANNE MARTEL



# OUR

## EXECUTIVE

M<sup>e</sup> Sophie Lefebvre (Executive Director)  
M<sup>e</sup> Emmanuelle Moussa (Coordinating & Supervising Attorney)  
M<sup>e</sup> Andréanne Martel (Supervising Attorney)  
M<sup>e</sup> Maxime Gossin (Coordinating & Supervising Attorney, Legal Clinic for Refugees)

## ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Anik Isabelle, Administrative Coordinator

## INFOGRAPHICS

Guillaume Bussi res, Computer graphics expert  
Thierry Martinaud, Multimedia Integration Student

## STUDENT INTERNS

Fr d rique Beaudet  
Catherine B langer-Khoury  
Marie-No l Bigras  
Sophie Brat  
Katerina Cook  
Alice Dion-Landreville  
Olivier Drapeau  
Mathilde Ducharme  
Simon Gauthier  
Hadi Ghobril  
Claire Henderson-Hamilton  
Audrey Labrecque  
 mile-Jacques Lamothe-Laurin

Cezar Valentin Lliescu  
Cathy Nguyen  
Safi Nsiempba  
Audrey Popescu  
Bianca Romeo  
Jadeli Scott  
Flavy St-Pierre  
Florence Tardif  
Camille Winiarz Devault

# TEAM



## VOLUNTEER LAWYERS/NOTARIES

M <sup>e</sup> Aude Bastien	M <sup>e</sup> Camille Lachance Gaborry
M <sup>e</sup> Daniel Baum	M <sup>e</sup> Jean-Marc Lacoursière
M <sup>e</sup> Hugo Beaulieu	M <sup>e</sup> Jonathan Lafrance
M <sup>e</sup> Marie-Hélène Bélanger	M <sup>e</sup> Daniel Laine
M <sup>e</sup> Coline Bellefleur	M <sup>e</sup> Joanie Lapalme
M <sup>e</sup> Fernando Belton	M <sup>e</sup> Maryse Lapointe
M <sup>e</sup> Martin Bergeron	M <sup>e</sup> Félix Larose
M <sup>e</sup> Alex Boudreault Leclerc	M <sup>e</sup> Gabriela Machico
M <sup>e</sup> Annabel Busbridge	M <sup>e</sup> Alexandre McCormack
M <sup>e</sup> Natacha Calixte	M <sup>e</sup> Andres Miguel Pareja
M <sup>e</sup> Vincent Cérat Lagana	M <sup>e</sup> Vanessa Ntaganda
M <sup>e</sup> Frédéric Lussier Cardinal	M <sup>e</sup> Benjamin Prud'homme
M <sup>e</sup> Pierre-Richard Deshommes	M <sup>e</sup> Vincent Ranger
M <sup>e</sup> Hugo Collin-Desrosiers	M <sup>e</sup> Alexandre Ricci
M <sup>e</sup> Julien Delangie	M <sup>e</sup> Éva Richard
M <sup>e</sup> Stéphanie Delisle	M <sup>e</sup> Elsa Rizkallah
M <sup>e</sup> Julien Dion	M <sup>e</sup> Andrei Roman
M <sup>e</sup> Laurence Dubé-Proulx	M <sup>e</sup> Alexandre B. Romano
M <sup>e</sup> David Éthier	M <sup>e</sup> Farah Rousseau
M <sup>e</sup> Renaud Gauthier	M <sup>e</sup> Nicholas Scheib
M <sup>e</sup> Yoann Gauthier	M <sup>e</sup> Catherine Sénéchal
M <sup>e</sup> Magalie Gingras	M <sup>e</sup> Max Silverman
M <sup>e</sup> Jeanne Ollivier Gobeil	M <sup>e</sup> Natasha Sivret
M <sup>e</sup> Geneviève Griffin	M <sup>e</sup> Ari Sorek
M <sup>e</sup> Mike Grodinsky	M <sup>e</sup> Nicholas Teasdale
M <sup>e</sup> Laurent Gryner	M <sup>e</sup> Gretchen Timmins
M <sup>e</sup> Matthew Hamerman	M <sup>e</sup> Dominique Turcotte
M <sup>e</sup> Geoffroy Huet	M <sup>e</sup> Ariane Vanasse
M <sup>e</sup> Gene Kruger	M <sup>e</sup> Aude Vaugeois

## SOCIAL WORKERS

Alma Marin, Social worker (Intern 2020-2021)  
Stefany-Elizabeth Berrios, Social worker (Intern 2020-2021)  
Sylvie Cameron, Social worker, volunteer  
Sylvie Sarian, Social worker, volunteer

# Service Points

## ◀◀ MILE END LEGAL CLINIC

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MILE END COMMUNITY MISSION

\*SINCE 2002\*

**Population:** 103 995  
**Single-Parent Families:** 33.1%  
**Immigrants:** 24%  
**Visible Minorities:** 17.4%  
**Low-income individuals:** 25.3%  
**People 15 & older without diploma or degree:** 7.8%

Source : Statistics Canada, 2016



Number of  
New Cli-  
ents

307

Remote  
Consultations

421

In-Person  
Consultations

37

## ◀◀ LITTLE BURGUNDY LEGAL CLINIC

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TYNDALE ST-GEORGES COMMUNITY CENTRE

*Founded 2008 by the late Colin Irving Ad.E.*

**Population:** 15 650  
**Single-Parent Families:** 45.3%  
**Immigrants:** 34.4%  
**Visible Minorities:** 52.5%  
**Low-income individuals:** 31%  
**People 15 & older without diploma or degree:** 12.1%

Source : Statistics Canada, 2016



\*The logistics of the Tyndale St. George Community Centre did not allow for in-person consultations during the reporting period

Number of  
New Cli-

10

## ◀◀ PARK-EXTENSION LEGAL CLINIC

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMITÉ D'ACTION DE PARC-EXTENSION

Since 2017, thanks to the support of the Law Foundation of Ontario

**Population:** 29 425  
**Single-Parent Families:** 31.6 %  
**Immigrants:** 56.5 %  
**Visible Minorities:** 63.5 %  
**Low-income individuals:** 38.4 %  
**People 15 & older without diploma or degree:** 33.5 %  
**People who have moved in the last 5 years:** 43 %

Source : Statistics Canada, 2016



Number of  
New Cli-  
ents

181

Remote  
Consultations

208

In-Person  
Consultations

22



# Legal Clinic for Refugees

AN INNOVATIVE PROJECT FINANCED BY



M<sup>E</sup> MAXIME GOSSIN, Coordinator

*I joined the Mile End Legal Clinic in the summer of 2021 to coordinate the creation and development of a new entity within the MELC to address the specific legal information needs of refugees. The Legal Clinic for Refugees (LCR) is designed to provide immigration law information services to refugees and vulnerable migrants.*

*This need has been heightened by the COVID-19 crisis, as issues related to the immigration status of immigrants have been added to the range of issues already faced by all Canadian citizens since the beginning of the pandemic.*

*While the need for legal information has increased, public resources have been reduced. It has become more complex to reach the various provincial and federal ministries related to immigration, the processing time of applications has been considerably lengthened, and the entire Canadian and Québec immigration process has been strongly impacted.*

*Therefore, it is now more necessary than ever to provide this front-line legal assistance to refugees and immigrants; it is an essential issue for our society in order to promote the successful settlement of newcomers to Canada.*

*The Mile End Legal Clinic's team of students and lawyers has been fully engaged in this new challenge. We have assisted a considerable number of refugees and immigrants in their efforts to assert their rights. Whether it be administrative, social or immigration status issues, we have been able to provide quality front-line legal assistance to our clients.*

*The Legal Clinic for Refugees' objective is to develop and perpetuate our services offered to refugees and immigrants. We are confident that this project will continue to bear fruit and allow us to help our clients in a timely, free and efficient manner. This project is made possible thanks to the financial support of the Law Foundation of Ontario.*

# ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME!

## FUNDRAISING



The MELC held its fundraising campaign in the summer of 2021 entitled  
**ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME!**

The first entirely virtual campaign, considering the pandemic. Quite a challenge!

This fundraising campaign, which we have been holding since 2016, consists of calling on the support of members of the legal community by inviting them to make a donation equal to their billable hourly rate (or more!)

Thanks to the generosity of many people, a true mobilization of the legal community for better access to justice and recognition of the work done in the field by the MELC team, we were able to raise \$22,000!!! This amount will be used to ensure the maintenance of our three service points by allowing us to hire a full-time coordinating-supervisory lawyer.

## Our next campaign will take place in October 2022 !

## Thank you for your generosity!

# Testimonials

## Volunteer Lawyers /Notaries

WHAT DOES ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME REPRESENT AT THE MELC?



“BUILDING INNOVATIVE AND INCLUSIVE PROJECTS TO BETTER SERVE THE LEGAL NEEDS OF MY COMMUNITY.”

ME VANESSA NTAGANDA



“AS A NOTARY AND COMMUNITY LAWYER, I AM HAPPY TO HELP THE COMMUNITY. THE MILE END LEGAL CLINIC ALLOWS ME TO DO THIS WITH AN EQUALLY DEDICATED TEAM”

ME ANDREI ROMAN  
VOLUNTEER NOTARY



“THIS IS AN HOUR DEDICATED TO EQUIPPING PEOPLE AND EMPOWERING THEM TO CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS.”

ME ANDRÉANNE THIBAUT  
VOLUNTEER LAWYER

**To all our volunteer Lawyers and Notaries:  
a BIG thank you!!!**

# 2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER  
2020

**September 3: Student interns return and training of the 2020-2021 team!**

NOVEMBER  
2020

**November 19: Me Sophie Lefebvre is elected as a director on the CSCM Board of Directors (2-year term). She is elected as a representative of the college of occupying members.**

DECEMBER  
2020

**December 2: Me Lefebvre participates in the consultations of the Commission des institutions in relation to Bill 75, which provides for law students to be able to offer advice in the context of university legal clinics.**

**December 14, 2020: Geeta Narang, founder and president of the MELC, is appointed Judge of the Superior Court of Québec, District of Montréal. Tremendous pride for the whole team! Congratulations to the Honorable Geeta Narang for this important role in the justice system.**

JANUARY  
2021

January 4: Articling students return to school and distance learning consultations resume

January 26: Meeting of the members of the Legal Education Network

January 28: Sophie Lefebvre participates in the career night organized by the Perspectives Committee of the Université de Montréal, the Professional Development Centre of the Faculty of Law of the UdeM, in collaboration with the Young Bar Association of Montreal (JBM)

FEBRUARY  
2021

February 1: Me Emmanuelle Moussa participates as a panelist in an online event organized by the Black Law Students Association, the Women and the Law Committee and the national student network ProBono entitled "Dialogue on Unconscious Bias: Towards Deconstructing Prejudice".

February 18: The Honorable Louise Arbour gives an interview to the MELC on the issue of migrants and human rights. This discussion is conducted by Me Vanessa Ntaganda, a volunteer lawyer at the MELC.

MARCH  
2021

March 19: Me Sophie Lefebvre, participates in the Great Assembly of Law and Justice, in order to vote to validate the reform proposals identified during the Citizen and thematic Forums. These proposals will inspire the work of the Institute in the coming years.

APRIL  
2021

April 21: Social media launch of our 4th edition of the One Hour of Your Time!

MAY  
2021

May 3: The 2021 summer law students team returns!

May 20: In collaboration with the Parc-Extension library, a virtual legal education workshop presented by Me Emmanuelle Moussa, coordinator of the MELC, on the theme of labour standards. More than 50 people from the francization classes attended this workshop.

Mid-May: Our Legal Information Clinic for Refugees project funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario begins.

JUNE  
2021

June 11: Me Lefebvre participates as a panelist in a roundtable organized by the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice (CIAJ) on the theme "the forgotten of the system". This panel, moderated by Professor Laverne Jacobs (Faculty of Law, University of Windsor), brought together jurists who were able to share/discuss/exchange on the reality on the ground of the most vulnerable people facing the justice system: Me Lefebvre, Me Anita Szigeti (Anita Szigeti Advocates, Toronto), Me Selwyn A. Pieters, (Pieters Law Office, Ontario).

JULY  
2021

June 28 to July 3: Housing Crisis Unit partnership with the CDC du Plateau Mont-Royal

July 5: Me Maxime Gossin joins the MELC team as Coordinator of our Legal Information Clinic for Refugees.

SEPTEMBER  
2021

September 8: Resumption of our remote and in-person consultations.

September 21: Ms. Lefebvre is invited to speak at a conference organized by the Centre de développement professionnel of the Université de Montréal's Faculty of Law on the theme "Alternative careers as lawyers".



# Testimonials

## Volunteer Lawyers /Notaries

WHAT DOES ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME REPRESENT AT THE MELC?



“TO EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT CITIZENS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO NAVIGATE THE MAZE OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM SO THAT THEY CAN IDENTIFY THE RIGHT STEPS TO TAKE AND HOW TO GET THERE.”

ME MARYSE LAPOINTE  
VOLUNTEER LAWYER



“ONE HOUR OF MY TIME TO HELP THE NEEDS OF MY COMMUNITY.”

ME ALEXANDRE RICCI  
VOLUNTEER LAWYER



“IT’S A NIGHT OF ANXIETY-FREE SLEEP FOR SOMEONE ELSE. ONE HOUR OF MY TIME IS WHAT IT TAKES TO KNOW SOMEONE CARES.”

ME CAROLINE BELLEFLEUR  
VOLUNTEER LAWYER



“IT’S HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO EQUIP THE COMMUNITY WITH THE TOOLS AND RESOURCES IT NEEDS, PROVIDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ITS MOST EFFECTIVE AND NOBLE FORM.”

ME DOMINIQUE TURCOTTE,  
VOLUNTEER LAWYER

**To all our volunteer Lawyers and Notaries:  
a BIG THANK YOU!!!**



# GUIDE PRATIQUE ACCOMPAGNEMENT SOCIOJURIDIQUE



Project for a Guide to Best Practices in Socio-Legal Accompaniments has been funded by the Access to Justice Fund  
June 2020 to June 2021

## THE GUIDE PROJECT:

The project to implement best practices for accompanying self-represented persons and to develop a guide for interveners (hereinafter “the project”) took place between the beginning of June 2020 and August 30, 2021 and is a continuation of the socio-legal accompaniment project financed by the Access to Justice Fund in 2019-2020.

More specifically, the objective of this project was to prepare a guide for people who provide socio-legal accompaniment in order to better equip them and thereby ensure adequate support for people who benefit from this service. This guide deals with the following subjects:

- The distinction between information and legal advice;
- The legislative and regulatory framework surrounding socio-legal support in Quebec and in common law jurisdictions (as of June 2021);
- The preparation of litigants for their hearings;
- The apprehensions of the people doing the accompaniment;
- The difficulties encountered by companions and how to overcome them (tips and tricks)



## **GUIDE** **des meilleures pratiques** **d'accompagnement** **SOCIOJURIDIQUE**

[www.justicemontreal.org](http://www.justicemontreal.org)



\*Soon available on our website!

# SUMMER 2021

The MELC expanded its operations and gradually resumed in-person service offerings!  
More accessible, free and quality legal information.

A team that's ready to go! Enthusiastic, motivated, committed and professional!



Mes Emmanuelle Moussa and Andréanne Martel, Supervising Attorneys

New clients

184

Number of  
consultation

15

Number of  
remote consultations

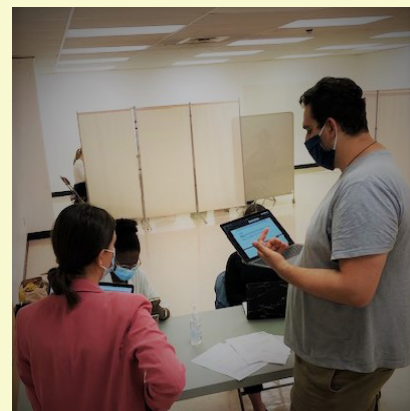
216

Number of  
In-person consulta-

59

TOTAL  
number of  
consultations

275



Our in-person consultation sessions resume in Parc-Extension. Students discuss with the supervising lawyers the follow-up to be done in a file.

ON BEHALF OF THE MELC TEAM AND ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BENEFITED FROM OUR SERVICES DURING THE SUMMER OF 2021, WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE GEORGE HOGG FAMILY FOUNDATION FOR THEIR EMERGENCY FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

LA FONDATION DE LA FAMILLE  
GEORGE HOGG  
FAMILY FOUNDATION

# A conversation with the Honourable Louise Arbour

\*TO WATCH THE INTERVIEW, GO TO THE MILE END LEGAL CLINIC YOUTUBE CHANNEL

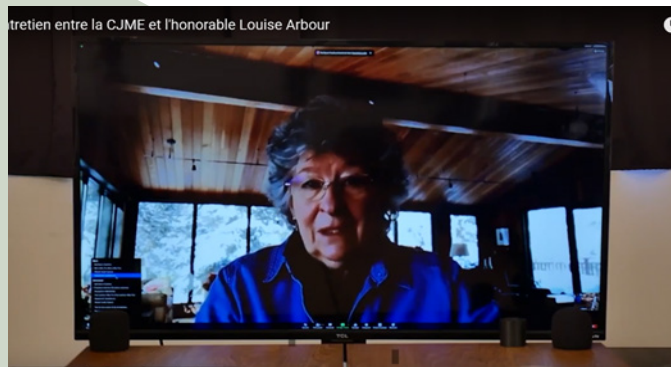
Since the opening of our service point in Parc-Extension, access to justice and social services for newcomers, refugees and non-status persons has become an important concern for the MELC.

Our reflections are numerous and each opportunity to learn more about the reality experienced by these people is another tool to improve/adjust our legal information services.

With this in mind, we had the privilege of speaking with the Honourable Louise Arbour and discussing the issue of immigrants to Canada and around the world. An inspiring discussion! This interview was conducted by Me Vanessa Ntaganda, a volunteer lawyer at the MELC and involved in the development of our immigration services.



Me Vanessa Ntaganda, Volunteer Lawyer MELC



the Honourable Louise Arbour

We share with you here some translated quotes from the Honourable Louise Arbour, taken from this interview which was conducted in French:

*"THE HISTORY OF HUMAN MOBILITY IS THE HISTORY OF TRANSFORMATION"*

*"PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY ARE NOT INVISIBLE: WE SEE THEM ON THE STREET EVERY DAY AND IT IS ONLY RECENTLY THAT WE HAVE BECOME AWARE NOT ONLY OF THEIR EXISTENCE, BUT ALSO OF THEIR CONTRIBUTION AND THEIR PRECARIOUSNESS"*

*"IN CANADA THERE COULD BE AS MANY AS HALF A MILLION INDIVIDUALS WHOSE MIGRATION STATUS IS IRREGULAR"*

*"IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE BETTER INFORMED DISCOURSES, THAT WE EVACUATE THE STEREOTYPES THAT REMAIN AND THAT CULTIVATE NEGATIVE PREJUDICES TOWARDS FOREIGNERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHOSE STATUS IS IRREGULAR"*



# Psychosocial Support



Stefany-Elizabeth Berrios  
Social work intern  
École de travail social  
UQAM, 2020-2021

I was fortunate enough to complete my undergraduate internship at the Mile End Legal Clinic and it was a great experience. The MELC and social work both share a desire to help vulnerable people find solutions to their problematic situations and that is exactly why I fell in love with this community organization. The psychosocial component adds a whole new dimension to the understanding of people, in order to support them in the various spheres of their situation.

I loved meeting the users, even though it was virtual. Having lived this experience in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, it was totally necessary for me to think about the impacts of the isolation of the people I met. In this sense, we allowed the people we met to feel listened to and to validate

their experiences and emotions. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to contribute to the development of psychosocial services at the MELC and it was a very formative experience. It allowed me to develop as a future professional.

Lastly, I was fortunate enough to experience my internship with a great team. I was supported by the volunteer social workers as well as the MELC lawyers. I also greatly appreciated the interdisciplinary work between the teams. I will never forget this wonderful experience and I am very happy to have had the opportunity to offer services for this organization.

The MELC fulfills a mandate of social justice and advocacy for the most vulnerable people and these are values that resonate with me. During my internship, I was able to witness the strength and resilience of the users I had the chance to meet. They are very courageous people who come to us with all their baggage and all their history.

The plurality of situations and problems I have encountered in the course of my work has only served to remind me of the uniqueness of each person and to avoid the trap of considering them according to a common problem as might have been the case in other settings. Although the MSYC is a somewhat atypical setting for social work practice, it is also a place that has allowed me to create and experiment, something that is not always easy to do at the beginning of a career. The internship

also allowed me to understand my profession and the roles I had to fulfill in relation to other professionals and to really take ownership of them.

In short, this internship certainly made me aware of the benefits of psychosocial support in the legal field and allowed me to touch and contribute to this field of practice, which I hope will continue to develop in the coming years.



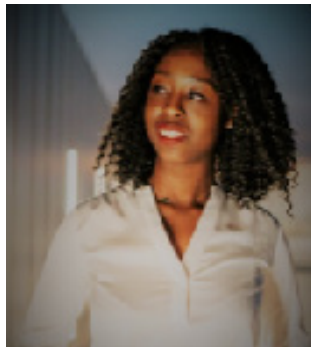
Alma Mari  
Social work intern École  
de travail social  
UQAM, 2020-2021

# ◀ TESTIMONIALS ▶

## FROM LAW INTERNS

“One of the many things I learned at the Clinic is to be in control of my cases and my time. There is a strong emphasis on trainee empowerment, which has stimulated me to want to constantly grow. I came out extremely stimulated, filled with knowledge and was able to accumulate great memories. I was particularly touched by the many cases of eviction. I made it my duty to go into these cases in depth and to make sure that I provided complete and understandable information. What I wanted most of all was for people who came to us for help to leave with answers and resources. I’m so grateful to have been at the heart of making access to justice work for everyone: the main draw of interning at the Mile End Legal Clinic.”

MARIE-NOËL BIGRAS  
UDM-2020-2021



Thanks to the support of the lawyers and their supervision, I was able to develop my patience, my listening skills, my compassion, but also I learned to recognize my limits. During my internship, I had mandates in various areas of law that I carried out independently or as part of a team and was able to have a very human and concrete experience.

The internship constantly reminded me of the extent to which the judicial system is disconnected from the litigants. There is therefore a general education and awareness work that must be done beforehand and as a law student we can do a lot at that level.

YAFI NSIEMPBA  
UDM LL.B. '21

The Mile End Legal Clinic was for me an unforgettable journey where I was able to walk the path from learning the theory of law to its practical application in the community. It was in this place of mutual aid and support that I realized the challenges of accessibility and equality that animate our legal and justice systems, challenges that our professional and dedicated team faces week after week and to which it responds brilliantly.

I therefore feel that being involved with the MELC as a law student and articling student was an unparalleled opportunity to learn from dedicated and knowledgeable lawyers, as well as to work closely with my fellow Montrealers to assist them in navigating Quebec law and its frankly quite complex justice system! “

OLIVIER DRAPEAU  
UDM LLB'21, JD CANDIDATE



“The Clinic has allowed me to become familiar with a multitude of areas of law and to develop my research skills, my ability to explain the law in simple terms and my ability to synthesize. We are guided and equipped in our research, but their mandate also includes an important educational component which is revealed, among other things, during our weekly team meetings during which we are called upon to collectively discuss the legal situations submitted to the Clinic and to formulate our hypotheses as to the follow-up to be offered to citizens. Moreover, since the human aspect is at the heart of our consultations, we are called upon to show empathy, active listening and sensitivity towards individuals, while learning to take the necessary distance. One of the strengths of the MELC experience is the work environment, the dynamism of the team, the intellectual challenges offered and the quality of the supervision provided. Joining the team has been something of a revelation for me and has given me a new and accurate perspective on the practice of law.”

FREDERIQUE BEAUDET  
UDM LLB'21, JD CANDIDATE



# ◀ TESTIMONIALS ▶

## CLIENTS

I am very grateful for all the services provided by the Mile End Legal Clinic. Me Moussa, the coordinator, has been a constant legal guide, confidant and support. She has been my rock against all odds, supporting me at every turn in a very brutal and unusual legal matter. The Clinic offers not only legal information and face-to-face appointments, but also help in untangling our ideas and seeing things clearly, as was the case for me.

Thank you to Me Moussa and the CJME

**J. M.**  
**(MILE END SERVICE POINT)**

When I first came to the Mile End Legal Clinic, I was at a loss. The team welcomed me and helped me with the many documents I needed to do for my work permit. For my last work permit in the middle of a pandemic, it was more complicated. With tears in my eyes, the envelope in my hand, I thought how would I do without my work permit? How will I pay my rent, my daughter's daycare, the bills...It's been long, hard nights of sleeplessness, stress. But the CJME, stayed up for me. They fought for me as an immigrant. They lifted me up with dignity when I no longer believed. She dried my tears. She supported me and my little girl in every way. Thanks to the Mile End Legal Clinic I got my work permit. Without you, it was mission impossible. I thank you very much from the bottom of my heart.

**K.T.**  
**(PARC-EXTENSION SERVICE POINT)**

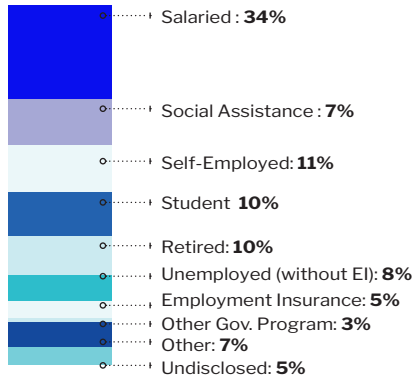
I cannot praise the work of the Mile End Legal Clinic enough. They are resourceful, reliable and totally professional. For people like me who are caught in tricky legal situations (I can't afford a lawyer so I have no choice but to represent myself), the Clinic has been a legal safety net! They always respond quickly and are organized, attentive and informative. They have been invaluable in supporting me. I am very grateful. Thank you.

**M.B.Y.**  
**(MILE END SERVICE POINT)**

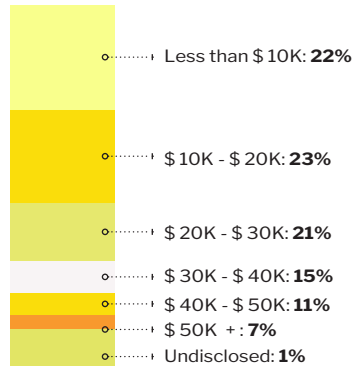
# CLIENT STATISTICS

Period : October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021

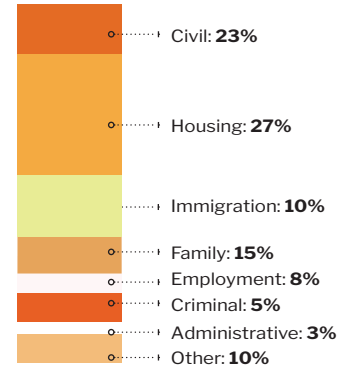
## OCCUPATION



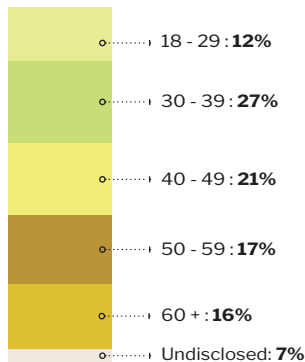
## INCOME



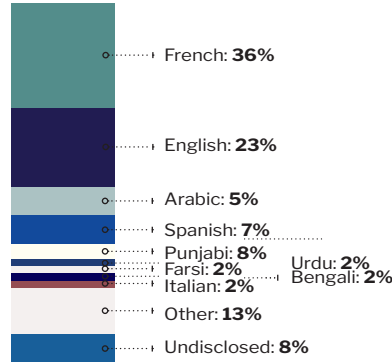
## AREA OF LAW



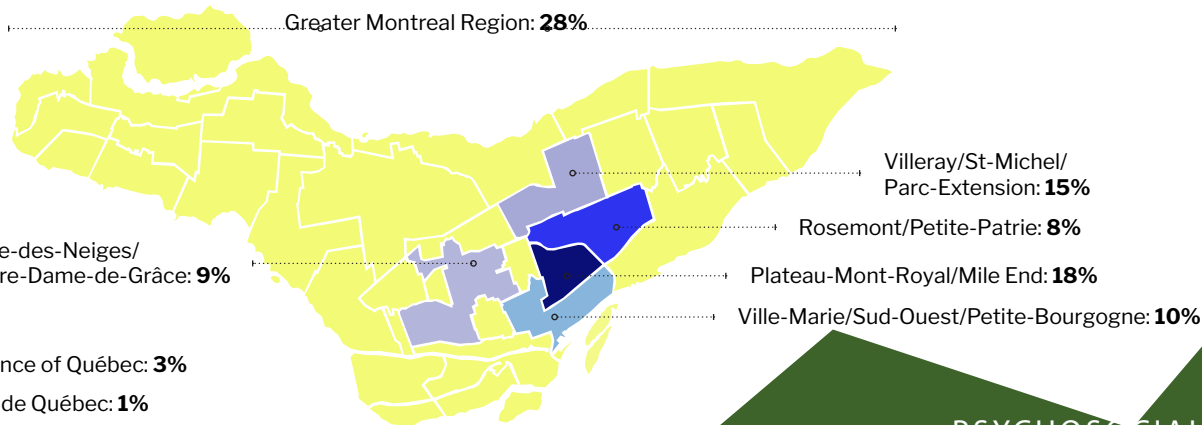
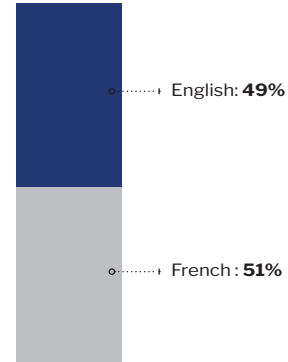
## AGE



## MOTHER TONGUE



## CONSULTATION LANGUAGE



## NEW CLIENTS

This figure represents the total number of people who received services from the Clinic for the first time this year

498

## PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

This figure represents the number of files opened in psychosocial follow-up. This service is offered as a complement to our legal services

55

## CONSULTATIONS

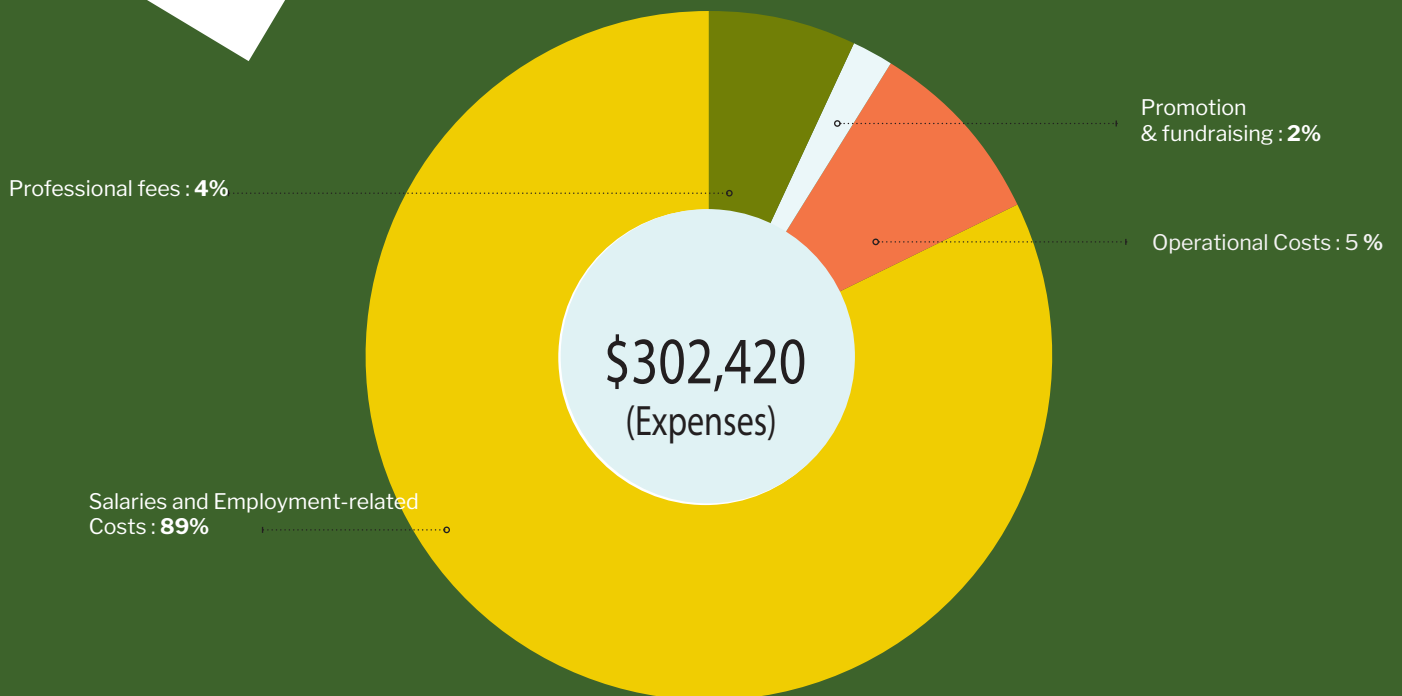
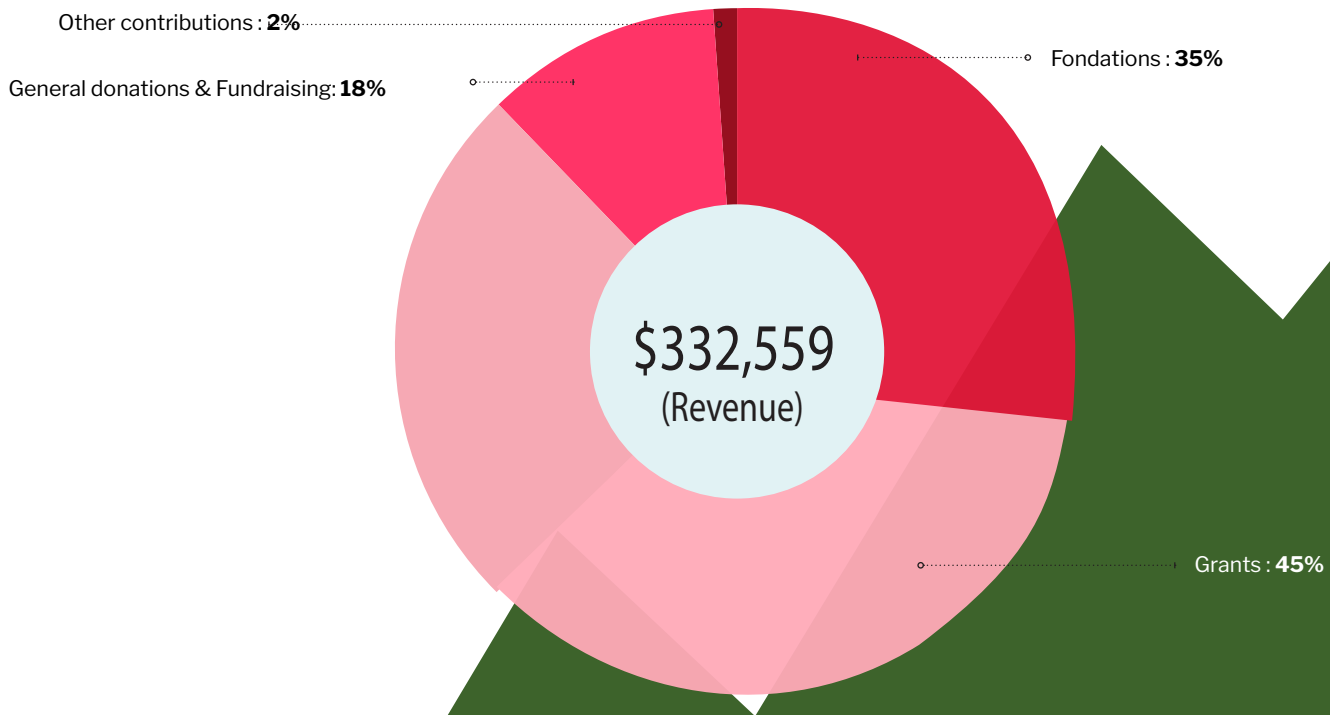
This number represents the number of individual consultations between a client and a student, staff or volunteer lawyer of the Clinic (one client may receive multiple consultations).

\*Including distance

688

# FINANCES

Based on audited financial statements as of  
September 30, 2021.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

## Grants



## Major Donors (\$10 000 +)

George Hogg Family  
Foundation



Fondation ECHO



The Bannerman Family  
Foundation

## Donors and Supporters (less than \$10,000)



Trudel Johnston & Lespérance

We would like to extend a warm thank you to all those who made a donation during the year, including anonymous donors, and especially for their generosity in our fundraising campaign  
**ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME!**

Raphaelle Alimi-Lacroix  
Martin Bernard  
L'honorable Pepita G. Capriolo, avocate  
Sean Cohen  
L'Honorable Jean-François de Granpré  
Julie Desrosiers, associée chez Fasken  
Julien Dion  
Me Eliane Ellbogen  
Hershie Frankel, avocate  
Johann Gest, associé chez Fasken  
L'Honorable Danielle Grenier  
Me Dara Jospé

Katalin Kemeny  
Me A. Sasha Mandy  
Luca Manfredi (étudiant)  
Larry Markowitz  
Me Allen Mendelsohn  
Judy Mendelsohn  
Michèle Moreau  
Marek Nitoslawski, associé chez Fasken  
Émilie Paquin-Holmstead  
Alexandre Ricci, avocat  
Jacob Saltiel  
L'Honorable Jean-Pierre Senécal

Damion K. L. Stodola  
Robert Timper  
Dr. Stephanie Yorke  
Dunsky Énergie + Climat / Dunsky Energy + Climate  
Advisors

\*multiple anonymous donors

## Our partners:

CAIJ, Université de Montréal, McGill University, Université du Québec à Montréal  
Université d'Ottawa, ADAJ



## ◀ SUPPORT US ▶

Donate online at:  
**[justicemontreal.org/donate](http://justicemontreal.org/donate)**

Cheques payable to "Mile End Legal Clinic":  
4450 Saint-Hubert, room 424  
Montréal, Québec, H2J 2W9

The MELC is a registered charity. Tax receipts available for donations over \$25. Please include your email and full mailing address with your donation so that we can send you a receipt.

## ◀ FREE LEGAL INFORMATION SESSIONS ▶

### PARC-EXTENSION LEGAL CLINIC

**Mondays 3pm-6pm**  
at the *Comité d'action de Parc-Extension (CAPE)*  
419 rue St-Roch, room SS.04

### MILE END LEGAL CLINIC

**Wenesdays 4pm-7pm**  
at the Mile ENd Community Mission  
99 Bernard Street West

### LITTLE BURGUNDY LEGAL CLINIC

**MOndays 7pm-8pm**  
at the Tyndale St-Georges  
Community Centre  
870 Richmond Square

For eligibilty criteria for our services, visit our website for more details:  
**[www.justicemontreal.org](http://www.justicemontreal.org)**





