

MILE
END
CLINIC



Clinique juridique
MILE END
Legal Clinic

ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

- M^e Alexandre Ricci
(President)
- M^e Aisha Topsakal
(Vice-President)
- M^e Allen Mendelsohn
(Treasurer)
- M^e Yolaine Williams
(Secretary)

- Valérie Gascon
- M^e Lina Bensaidane
- M^e Léa Charbonneau
- Scott McNicoll, P. Eng.
- M^e Olga Redko
- Hon. Danielle Grenier (term ended on May 4, 2022)
- Me Marek Nitoslawski (term ended on June 30, 2022)



Me Alexandre Ricci, President

Another busy year at the MELC! In addition to the post-pandemic re-launch of our services, this year we began a strategic reflection process to refocus our organization's mission, vision and values in order to better plan for its future. We have been pleased to collaborate with the Minimal Agency in this exercise and have benefited from the participation, support and reflection of the MELC staff and its volunteer lawyers and notaries. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank all those who participated and contributed to this reflection. The many meetings and discussions held as part of this process have allowed us to pool the perspectives of the various stakeholders around a common vision: to provide equal access to justice for all and to inspire society and the legal community through our actions in the communities. This vision is in line with the MELC's mission to guide vulnerable people and provide them with the necessary tools to facilitate their access to and their journey through the justice system. With this renewed positioning, we enter our 21st year of existence with determination and important announcements for 2023 that will have a significant impact for the organization.

The MELC celebrated its 20th year of existence in 2022. We marked this anniversary at an event on September 29 where we were able to gather for the first time since 2019. We had the pleasure of celebrating in the presence of staff, lawyers, notaries and student volunteers, current and former Board members, as well as the presence of the many partners of the MELC and the Honourable Geeta Narang, founder of the organization. She gave an inspiring speech on the genesis of our

organization and on the ever important and glaring issue of access to justice. It was also at this event that my appointment as President of the MELC was announced. It is an honour for me to be in this position and to renew my commitment to the MELC to pursue the realization of its mission and vision.

In closing, I would like to extend several thanks. First, to all of our partners, without whom we would not be able to accompany so many people towards access to justice. However, I must point out that we are constantly looking for financial resources in order to perpetuate all of our actions, our services and our accompaniment with our users and I invite you, once again this year, to give generously to the MELC. Secondly, to Sophie, our Executive Director, who has been able to proactively, positively and professionally navigate through the various challenges that have arisen over the past few years; to Anik, our administrative coordinator, who has been unfailingly supportive, as well as to Emmanuelle, Andréanne, Maxime, Bérangère and Nathalie, who have done an incredible job on the ground. Finally, to Danielle and Marek who left the Board in 2022 after many years of involvement. I thank them, on behalf of the other members of the board, for their dedication and the relevance of their actions and interventions. These departures were followed by the arrival of Lina and Yolaine and the return of Olga, with whom we have already had the pleasure to collaborate on many fronts. We are starting this new year well-surrounded and we are eager to let you discover what we have in store for the future of our organization.

MESSAGES FROM THE EXECUTIVE

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Every year has its share of challenges, accomplishments, and emotions, and 2021-2022 was no exception.

Beginning in the fall of 2021, we experienced a strong resurgence in our face-to-face consultations and received a significant number of complex legal cases that require longer and more sustained follow-ups. Housing legal situations continue to grow. Tenants' rights are regularly violated and we work with them to try to restore a certain balance of power and allow them to find a sense of justice and security.

Similarly, we have been very busy with immigration issues, particularly those involving refugees and people with precarious status. The ambiguous situation at the Canada-US border has created a lot of uncertainty and complications for newcomers seeking security for their families. These already vulnerable people have to deal with changing formalities and short deadlines to complete them. In this context, we have not only intervened individually, but we have also set up targeted information workshops to help both frontline workers and act to prevent the immigration fraud that unfortunately plagues the communities of newcomers seeking legal status in Canada.

2022 was also the beginning of a new partnership with the *Chambre des notaires du Québec* (CNQ) in order to consolidate and perpetuate our socio-legal accompaniment services. This impact project is the result of numerous contributions from researchers, volunteer lawyers and law students, and we are pleased to be able to enrich this aspect of our services, which meets a need among our users. Through this funding, the CNQ allows us to turn this research into concrete action.

Finally, I cannot fail to mention the emotion that accompanied the celebration of our 20th anniversary in 2002! Since 2002, we have come

a long way: many accomplishments, challenges met, people helped, lawyers and notaries mobilized, social workers listening, future jurists sensitized, and innovative projects realized. The Honorable Geeta Narang, our founder and former president, was present on September 29, 2022 to mark this moment during an event and, in a way, officially pass the torch to our new president of the board, Me Alexandre Ricci. Alexandre has been involved as a volunteer with the MELC for over 5 years, particularly at our point of service located in the Tyndale St-George Centre in Little Burgundy where he has offered many legal consultations. He also participated in the creation of the first committee of volunteer lawyers and notaries at the Mile End Legal Clinic. Since 2018, he has contributed to the development of our organization by serving as an active member of the Board of Directors. It is a real pleasure to see him take on this role and work with him to achieve our mission of access to justice.

I would like to conclude once again by warmly thanking all of our supporters, donors, partners and grantors for their continued support and vision. These allies allow us to accomplish an impressive amount of work and to have a concrete and lasting impact in our communities. Thanks to you, many people find support, accompaniment, listening, comfort and the necessary guidance to get through the challenges they face in terms of justice. Thank you for your trust!



M^{re} SOPHIE LEFEBVRE

A MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATING ATTORNEY

(Coordinator and supervisor of our three points of service)

The year 2021-2022 has certainly been a busy year for the Clinic! The entire team, including our student interns, has shown great adaptability, which has allowed us to move from a 100% remote service to a hybrid service. The return to face-to-face contact has been beneficial both for the students, who have been able to rediscover human contact, and for the clients, who have been able to receive answers and legal information more quickly.

The year was also marked by demanding cases in the field of housing law. The housing crisis has hit Montreal residents hard and the demand for information has been, once again, very high. We had the opportunity to hold an information evening in collaboration with the Comité logement du plateau and the Comité des Citoyens du Mile End to inform its residents of their rights, particularly in matters of eviction for expansion and rent setting.

In the area of rental law, legal information is sometimes insufficient and the need for legal advice is great. We therefore welcome the adoption of Bill 34, which aims to authorize lawyers working in non-profits to offer legal advice (which was prohibited until now, thus greatly hindering access to justice for many users). While waiting for the *Barreau* to regulate this new practice, the Clinic decided this year to implement the project of accompaniment to the Administrative Housing Tribunal, subsidized

by the Quebec government's Financial Assistance Program to Foster Access to Justice. With the help of external volunteer lawyers, the Clinic will be able to offer legal advice including the drafting of procedures, the organization of evidence, the drafting of examinations and the pleading of the parties so that they are adequately equipped to represent themselves before the Administrative Housing Tribunal.

In addition, the Clinic was also solicited by the COMRADES research group, led by Professor Christine Vézina of LAVAL University, which works on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights in Quebec and Canada. It is therefore within the framework of this partnership that we will evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the project to accompany litigants in the judicialization of their case at the Administrative Housing Tribunal.

This year has been marked by concrete progress for a better access to justice, a mission that we are all proud to carry out every day!



M^E EMMANUELLE MOUSSA

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERVISING ATTORNEY

(Mile End Point of Service)

I completed my second term at the Clinic as a supervising attorney in August 2022. I was primarily affiliated with the Mile End location where face-to-face meetings were held by appointment.

The Clinic assists clients who are often vulnerable, anxious or helpless in the face of their legal problems. I have personally noticed how the pandemic has widened the pool of economically vulnerable people. In the area of family law, we have noticed a growing number of clients who have to represent themselves because they can no longer afford a lawyer.

More than ever, the work of the Clinic is essential, if only to help people navigate the legal system. Beyond the applicable law, the Mile End Legal Clinic also provides accurate and concise information to clients to help them navigate the administrative complexities of the courts to ensure that they are aware of the proper procedural vehicles for defending their rights. Our information services have been particularly helpful in publicizing new procedures for applying for safeguard orders, homologating consents and requesting remissions.

Popularizing the Code of Civil Procedure and the

directives of the various courts proved to be an extremely formative experience for the law students who had to adapt their vocabulary and the way they conveyed information. This was, for many of them, a first practical application of their academic notions. The Clinic also developed and adjusted its services to respond to a growing need for self-represented litigants, i.e. informative meetings for trial preparation. Students were called upon to explain to clients the difference between pleading and testifying. This service was particularly appreciated by many people who had to assert their rights in the family law field.

The Mile End Legal Clinic has an incredible resilience to adapt to its community and its needs. I loved having the opportunity to work with an organization that promotes access to justice by reinventing itself to better help.



M^E ANDRÉANNE MARTEL

OUR



EXECUTIVE

M^e Sophie Lefebvre (Executive Director)
M^e Emmanuelle Moussa (Coordinator, until July)
M^e Bérangère Desfonds (Coordinator, started July)
M^e Andréanne Martel (Supervising Attorney, until August)
M^e Nathalie Raymond (Coordinator, started August)
M^e Maxime Gossin (Coordinator, Legal Clinic for Refugees)

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Anik Isabelle, Administrative Coordinator

INFOGRAPHICS

Thierry Martinaud, Multimedia Integration Student

STUDENT INTERNS

Catherine Bélanger-Khoury
Meriem Beninal
Jean-François Bigras
Lina Boukrif
Emma Brayley
Katerina Cook
Mathilde Ducharme
Nour El-Hoda Ebrahim
Darcy Feagan
Rosalie Gagnon
Milo Hallak
Claire Henderson-Hamilton
Marie-Pier Joly

Julia Laflamme
Andrea Pavaluca
Leïla Rondeau
Samuelle-Dali Simard
Christophe Stril
Aymeric Tardif
Nadine Wanczycki

TEAM



VOLUNTEER LAWYERS/NOTARIES

M^e Aude Bastien
M^e Hugo Beaulieu
M^e Marie-Hélène Bélanger
M^e Coline Bellefleur
M^e Fernando Belton
M^e Martin Bergeron
M^e Audrey Berteau
M^e Alex Boudreault Leclerc
M^e Kimmyanne Brown
M^e Annabel Busbridge
M^e Natacha Calixte
M^e Vincent Cérat Lagana
M^e Frédéric Lussier Cardinal
M^e Hugo Collin-Desrosiers
M^e Daniel Crespo-Villarreal
M^e Julien Delangie
M^e Stéphanie Delisle
M^e Julien Dion
M^e Laurence Dubé-Proulx
M^e David Éthier
M^e Renaud Gauthier
M^e Yoann Gauthier
M^e Magalie Gingras
M^e Jeanne Ollivier Gobeil
M^e Geneviève Griffin
M^e Mike Grodinsky
M^e Matthew Hamerman
M^e Geoffroy Huet
M^e Gene Kruger

M^e Camille Lachance Gaboury
M^e Jean-Marc Lacoursière
M^e Jonathan Lafrance
M^e Daniel Laine
M^e Joanie Lapalme
M^e Maryse Lapointe
M^e Félix Larose
M^e Gabriela Machico
M^e Alexandre McCormack
M^e Andres Miguel Pareja
M^e Vanessa Ntaganda
M^e Benjamin Prud'homme
M^e Vincent Ranger
M^e Alexandre Ricci
M^e Éva Richard
M^e Elsa Rizkallah
M^e Andrei Roman
M^e Alexandre B. Romano
M^e Farah Rousseau
M^e Nicholas Scheib
M^e Catherine Sénéchal
M^e Max Silverman
M^e Natasha Sivret
M^e Ari Sorek
M^e Nicholas Teasdale
M^e Gretchen Timmins
M^e Dominique Turcotte
M^e Ariane Vanasse
M^e Aude Vaugeois

SOCIAL WORKERS

Sylvie Cameron, volunteer Social Worker
Sylvie Sarian, volunteer Social Worker
Camille Fortin, Social Work Intern UQAM

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Laurence Isabelle, law student UdeM, photographer for our 20th anniversary event

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 Clients

244

Remote
Consultations

150

In-Person
Consultations

167

◀◀ 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



Number of
New Clients

Logistics at the Tyndale St. George Community Centre did not allow for in-person consultations for the reporting period

Remote
Consultations

20

◀◀ PARC-EXTENSION LEGAL CLINIC

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

Since 2017, thanks to the support of the Québec Fond Accès Justice and 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 Clients

242

Remote
Consultations

162

In Person
Consultations

190

Legal Information Clinic for Refugees

INNOVATIVE PROJECT FINANCED BY:



M^{re} MAXIME GOSSIN,
coordinator

The year 2022 marks the second year of the Refugee Legal Clinic (RLC) project within the Mile End Legal Clinic. Initially, the RLC was intended to respond to a growing need for legal services in immigration law at our service points. Since the establishment of the RLC, we can only observe that this need goes far beyond what we could have anticipated. Access to justice for immigrant populations, particularly for asylum seekers, is particularly complex, the difficulty in finding a quality representative, fraud and abuse are common.

Within the Québec legal community, there are many who share this observation and who are mobilizing to preserve access to justice for immigrants. The Mile End Legal Clinic, through the RLC, is proud to participate in this effort.

Over the past two years, we have succeeded in offering an efficient, accessible and quality legal service in immigration law to all our clients. We have conducted hundreds of consultations and offered our services in French, English, Punjabi and a dozen other languages. We have informed and accompanied our clients through all types of immigration law requests.

We also managed to develop a community network and to assist our partners in Parc-Extension, in Montreal and in the region. We have dealt with the various crises that Parc-Extension is going through, alongside the Ressource Action-Alimentation and the Comité d'Action de Parc-Extension. We have supported the social workers of PRAIDA, we have offered our services directly in the shelters for asylum seekers and we have always been available to community organizations that requested our services for their users.



Me Gossin and student Meriem Beninal offer an immigration fraud awareness workshop to asylum seekers (PRAIDA)



I would like to salute the commitment and work of our students, our volunteer lawyers and all our partners who allow the Mile End Legal Clinic to play its part in defending the rights of immigrants in Québec, and I would like to thank the Law Foundation of Ontario for making this project possible through its financial support.

Me Maxime Gossin supervising law students at our Parc Extension service point

CONSOLIDATION AND PERPETUATION SOCIO-LEGAL SUPPORT



M^{re} NATHALIE RAYMOND
coordinator

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED BY:



This impact project, financed by the Chambre des notaires du Québec, aims to consolidate and perpetuate socio-legal support services within our organization. In short, to offer more support to vulnerable people who have to navigate through the justice system and/or within the framework of an alternative dispute resolution process and who face additional challenges. This consolidation and perpetuation project follows the completion of a first phase of study that took place in 2018-2019 thanks to the support of the Fonds Accès Justice du Québec.

This accompaniment can take various forms: transmitting personalized legal information, making legal texts accessible by popularizing them, summarizing the law and jurisprudence on a specific subject, helping the person prepare for a meeting to settle their conflict (explaining how the legal system works or accompaniment towards mediation or another amicable settlement method), offering psychosocial support and physical accompaniment during the various steps to be taken to resolve their conflict.

The socio-legal accompaniment is also an opportunity to educate people and raise their awareness on alternative methods of conflict resolution. This aspect of the project is one of the important aspects that we wish to develop.

As coordinator of this impact project, my role is to put in place the processes and tools necessary to allow this deployment. In particular, to define a clear basket of services, to make the link with the various community organizations likely to become resources for our clients, to develop a training for the accompaniers.

This service meets a desperate need and I am excited about the idea of making it more accessible and developing best practices with our team. Thanks to this financial support, the socio-legal accompaniment will be able to become a structured service. This project to perpetuate this service is a concrete opportunity to better understand one's rights, to be able to exercise them with clarity and to feel supported to better navigate the justice system.

20th Anniversary Event

On September 29, 2022, we gathered for an event to celebrate 20 years of our organization!

20 years of providing free legal services to people in precarious situations
20 years of commitment, involvement, resilience and dedication
20 years of mobilizing the legal community
20 years of training and raising awareness of future jurists to the importance of access to justice

The event was a joyful reunion for many. The Honourable Geeta Narang, Superior Court Judge and founder of the Mile End Legal Clinic, was present to share this important moment.



Me Marek Nitoslowski (Board member until July 2022) and Me Allen Mendelsohn (Treasurer and Board member)



Speech from the Honourable Geeta Narang, Founder of the MELC (Me Alexandre Ricci, President of the Board, in the background)



Me Sophie Lefebvre (Executive Director) along with Board members, left to right: Me Alexandre Ricci (President), Valérie Gascon, Me Allen Mendelsohn (Treasurer), Me Yolaine Williams (Secretary), Scott McNicoll, Me Olga Redko.



L to R: Pierre Noreau (partner ADAJ), Me Olivier Aldama (former coordinator Parc Extension service point), Me Julien Delangie (volunteer lawyer)



Me Sophie Lefebvre talks with former law students of the MELC, L to R: Me Anabel Semerdzhieva, Me Pamela Ewert, Me Audrey Berteau

Strategic Planning 2022-2025

The year 2022 coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Mile End Legal Clinic (MELC).

To achieve its mission, the MELC has, throughout the years, adjusted to provide services that meet the needs of its clients and the reality of the ever-changing legal environment.

As the MELC enters its 21st year of existence, the team has embarked on its first ever strategic planning process. In the course of gathering information for this exercise, the team focused on revising the organization's mission, vision and values to reflect the current context and its work.

At the end of this process, we were able to outline the major strategic orientations, the objectives related to these orientations and the means to achieve them in order to guide us in our actions for the next three (3) years.

Mission

GUIDE VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND GIVE THEM THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO FACILITATE THEIR ACCESS AND PROGRESS THROUGH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

Vision

PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL. INSPIRE SOCIETY AND THE LEGAL COMMUNITY THROUGH OUR ACTIONS IN THE COMMUNITY.

Values

ALTRUISM

SOLIDARITY

DETERMINATION

COMMITMENT

Pilote project

Development of a new service point

ROSEMONT-PETITE PATRIE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ACCÈS BÉNÉVOLAT
Summer 2022



For the past few years, our statistics show an increase in the number of people who call upon our services that happen to reside in the Rosemont-Petite Patrie neighborhood.

In light of this, and considering our mission of access to justice, we have explored the possibility of offering proximity services in this neighborhood.

During the summer of 2022, thanks to the support of the provincial deputy Vincent Marissal (support for volunteer action) and the federal deputy Alexandre Boulerice (Canada Summer Job), we were able to set up a pilot project for the operation of a service point in this neighbourhood. Our expertise in the management of legal services in community settings and the structure already in place at the MELC played a central role in the successful deployment of this project.

From May to July 2022, we offered individual legal consultations and legal information workshops at the organization Accès bénévolat, located at the heart of Rosemont-Petite Patrie.

This new partnership allows us to consider the continuity of our services in this borough, thus allowing residents to have access to free legal services in the vicinity.

SUPPORT TO SELF-REPRESENTED INDIVIDUALS AT THE TRIBUNAL ADMINISTRATIF DU LOGEMENT



M^E BÉRANGÈRE DESFONDS
coordinator

Project to develop multidisciplinary legal services for self-represented individuals at the Tribunal administratif du logement

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED BY: **Justice**



Exacerbated by the pandemic, the current unprecedented housing crisis has highlighted several gaps in access to justice and their impact on the essential and primary need for affordable, safe and clean housing.

The complexity of the applicable legal framework, combined with difficulties in accessing affordable legal services, places a heavy burden on self-represented tenants to educate themselves and to make appropriate use of the information available to them.

In addition to these constraints on obtaining the relevant support to represent themselves, there are socio-economic barriers such as language, mental health issues and literacy levels that jeopardize the legal process, adding further distress.

The current project of the MELC aims to develop a multidisciplinary legal intervention model for self-represented tenants at the *Tribunal administratif du logement* (TAL).

Specifically, multi-disciplinary teams consisting of a law student, a volunteer social worker, and a volunteer lawyer are formed to provide strategic advice, procedural drafting, preparation and accompaniment to TAL hearings, as well as emotional and psychosocial support throughout the process.

This is a collaborative project with the group of researchers of the Community of Research-Action on Economic and Social Rights (COMRADES). This partnership will allow for the collection of quantitative data and the development of analytical tools, providing a fertile ground for action research that will impact the development and dissemination of best practices in the field.

Since the pilot project was launched in September 2022, we have noticed a growing sense of control and empowerment amongst project participants. The support of volunteer lawyers has enabled these participants to feel greater ownership over the TAL judicial process, allowing for the strengthening and enforcement of their rights.

Once changes are made to the current legislative framework regarding the legal profession within a non-profit corporation, the MELC will be able to offer this multidisciplinary legal intervention service internally and share this model with various legal and community stakeholders.

SUMMER 2022

Service
Canada

RESUMPTION OF IN-PERSON MEETINGS



L to R: Emma Brayley, Flavie St-Pierre, Lina Boukrif, Julia Laflamme, Me Sophie Lefebvre, Me Maxime Gossin, Meriem Beninal, Marie-Pier Joly, Milo Hallak, Katerina Cook



L to: Meriem Beninal and Katerina Cook, Law Student

New clients

154

Number of weeks of
consultation

13

Number of
remote consultations

103

Number of
In-person consultations

119

TOTAL number
of consultations

198



L to R: Aymeric Tardif and Catherine Bélanger-Khoury in consultation at Mile-End service point

ON BEHALF OF THE MELC TEAM AND ALL THOSE WHO BENEFITED FROM OUR SERVICES DURING SERVICES DURING THE SUMMER OF 2022, WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE GEORGE HOGG FAMILY FOUNDATION FOR THEIR DEDICATED FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR SERVICES DURING THIS PERIOD

**LA FONDATION DE LA FAMILLE
GEORGE HOGG
FAMILY FOUNDATION**

PODCAST



HOSTED BY EMMANUELLE MOUSSA AND ANDRÉANNE MARTEL
PRODUCED BY THE MILE END LEGAL CLINIC

A priori was born from the realization that we did not necessarily fit into the classic profile and career path of the big firm lawyer and that the practice of the profession was quite different from what television and books would have us believe.

It was while mentoring students at the Mile End Legal Clinic that we realized that we were far from being the only ones looking for a practice of the profession that we could identify with and that suited us.

The purpose of this podcast is to demystify the legal world by showing, through various exchanges, the 1001 facets of the practice of law and to help young lawyers shape a practice that corresponds to their image, their values and their needs.

To listen to their reflections, learn more about the field, dispel certain myths or share your experiences, go to the Mile End Legal Clinic's Youtube channel.

Episodes - In French:

- The underbelly of self-employed practice when starting out - Discussion with Me Aïcha Tohry
- How to "survive" Bar School!
- Work/life balance, a myth for lawyers? - Discussion with Me Adèle Pilote-Babin
- How to find your articling position at the Bar
- Why do we become lawyers? - Discussion with Me Rafik Bentabbel
- How to find your area of practice
- How to bounce back after failing the bar exam?
- Trusting yourself and overcoming the imposter syndrome - Discussion with Me Sophie Rondeau
- Stress and Anxiety in the Legal Profession - Discussion with Jadel Scott and Safi Nsiempba, former articling students of the MELC

Psychosocial support



A message from our volunteer social workers

We have six years of volunteer experience as social workers at the Mile End Legal Clinic. We are committed to participating in the development of psychosocial intervention because we believe in the complementarity of legal and social work expertise, with the ultimate goal of improving the services offered to our clients.

Indeed, since the clients of the Legal Clinic are affected by stressful legal situations and psychosocial problems, it is clear that the social work interns and the two volunteer social workers contribute to the well-being of the clients. In this sense, our role is different from that of lawyers and law students, namely, we:

- Identify the psychological needs of the clients in collaboration with law students and social work students by proceeding with an analysis of their needs. We then refer them to the appropriate organizations or arrange meetings for a psychosocial follow-up, as the case may be;
- Develop training and tools in social work;
- Participate in the supervision of social work interns;
- Participate in the development of trainings on active listening for law students and offering such trainings so that students are aware of the importance of systematically using active learning with clients;
- Supporting social work interns to work collaboratively with law students.

In short, it is a matter of identifying and putting into practice concrete means of action to establish a welcoming, caring and respectful context in spite of the complex life situations experienced by people (social isolation, domestic violence, abuse, difficult living conditions, poverty, precarious immigration status, homelessness, stigmatization, etc.) and the emotional reactions inherent to these situations (grief, sadness, anger, high stress level, depressive episode, etc.). Therefore, the contribution of experienced social workers is essential to creating a protective emotional and psychosocial space for both clients and trainees.

Sylvie Cameron, volunteer Social worker

Sylvie Sarian, volunteer Social worker

TESTIMONIALS

FROM LAW INTERNS

I had the opportunity to intern with the MELC and to work there for two consecutive summers. To put it succinctly, this internship is where I felt I belonged the most since the beginning of my law studies; I felt that my contributions were recognized, needed and appreciated. In addition to being useful and helping people, this internship, with its human dimension, allowed me to meet people who share my vision and values, that is to say, making justice accessible. The work that the team at the Clinic does is considerable; they provide the community with invaluable tools and resources.

I am proud to be part of this team.

CATHERINE BÉLANGER-KHOURY
UDM-2021-2022



My experience at the Mile End Legal Clinic was by far the most rewarding of my law degree. The passion of the team is evident. It is impossible, after talking to the lawyers at the Clinic, not to want to practice in their field and continue to be involved afterwards. My internship also gave me the opportunity to interact with the various communities served by the Clinic and to develop my cultural competence, communication skills and empathy. Without a doubt, the Clinic is important to the community and to the students. I hope to always have a real passion for access to justice, developed through this unforgettable training.

KATERINA COOK
MCGILL 2021-2022

My two-session internship at the Mile End Legal Clinic was definitely one of the most memorable experiences of my legal career. To help users understand their rights and recourses, we must first understand them ourselves. This is why doing a community internship is such a great learning experience, forcing us to explore in a concrete way areas of law that may be new to us. Moreover, it is a truly motivating experience, the idea that the legal answer we are working on may make a difference in someone's life being a source of motivation that is more difficult to find in a purely academic context. Thus, my internship allowed me to gain practical experience and knowledge that cannot be obtained in a university course. I strongly advise all law students to seize this opportunity if it presents itself to them.

AYMERIC TARDIF
MCGILL 2021-2022



I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to be involved with the MELC. The Clinic has allowed me to develop new skills, but most of all it has allowed me to get involved in my community and give back. I deeply believe that simply lending a hand to someone in a difficult situation can make a difference and allow them to exercise their rights. Being able to participate in the Refugee Legal Clinic project was an unforgettable and enriching experience that allowed me to better understand immigration law, its issues, and today's social realities. It is essential for all newcomers to understand that they are not left to their own devices, and that there are ways for them to settle in a stable manner.

MERIEB BENINAL
UDM ÉTÉ 2022-2023

◀ TESTIMONIALS ▶

CLIENTS



I take this time to congratulate you and your wonderful team. My wife has received her permanent resident papers and will soon be seeking entry to Canada, it is your professional expertise and patience that makes this possible and I thank your team for this. As soon as she arrives, I will contact your office for a coffee celebration.

T.M.
(MILE END SERVICE POINT)

After several months of preparation with the support of the Mile End Clinic team, the trial went well and I received a reduction in my rent. I am relieved and above all I have a feeling of justice. The judge even congratulated me for my organization.

All credit to the Mile End Clinic!

D.M.K.
(MILE END SERVICE POINT)

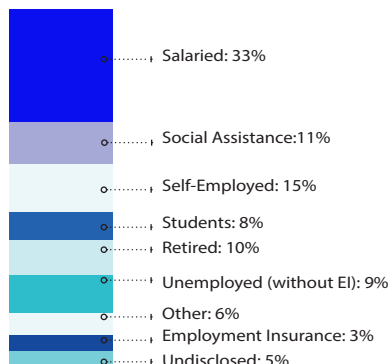
Faced with the possibility of being thrown out on the street, I was desperate for help to defend myself and my rights. I was not eligible for legal aid and the thought of representing myself alone gave me great anxiety. I often thought about giving up. The Mile End Legal Clinic gave me hope during this dark time in my life. They listened to me and taught me to understand the process and helped me believe in myself. I am proud of what I accomplished in my case in front of the judge and also in my head for my confidence. Thank you to the whole team.

V.T.
(PARC EX SERVICE POINT)

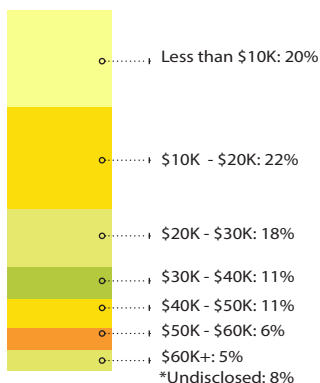
CLIENT STATISTICS

Périod: October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022

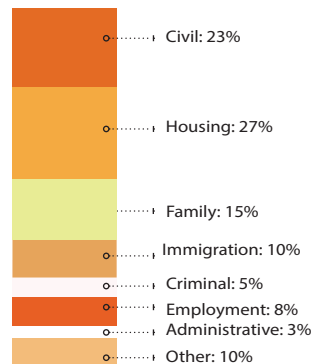
OCCUPATION



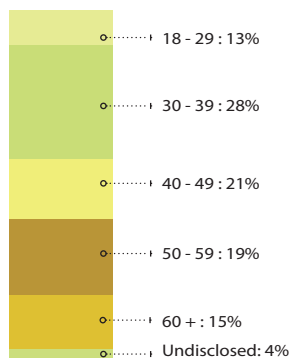
INCOME



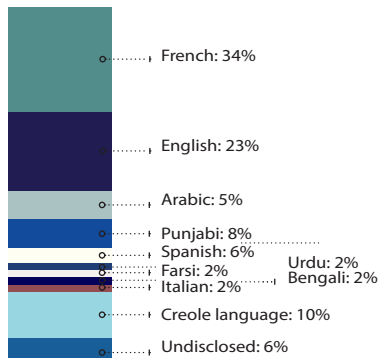
AERA OF LAW



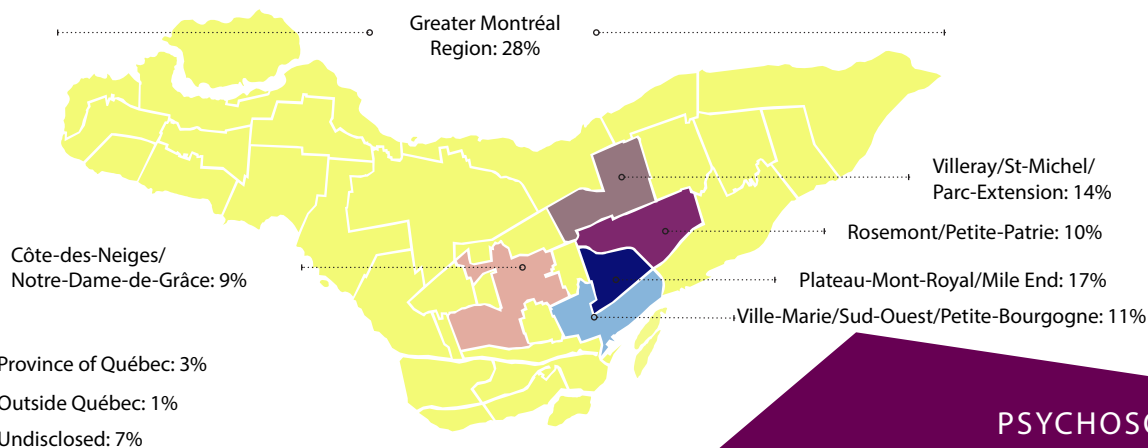
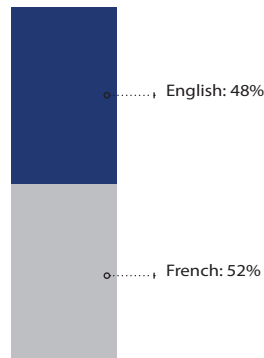
AGE



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

475

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

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

51

CONSULTATIONS

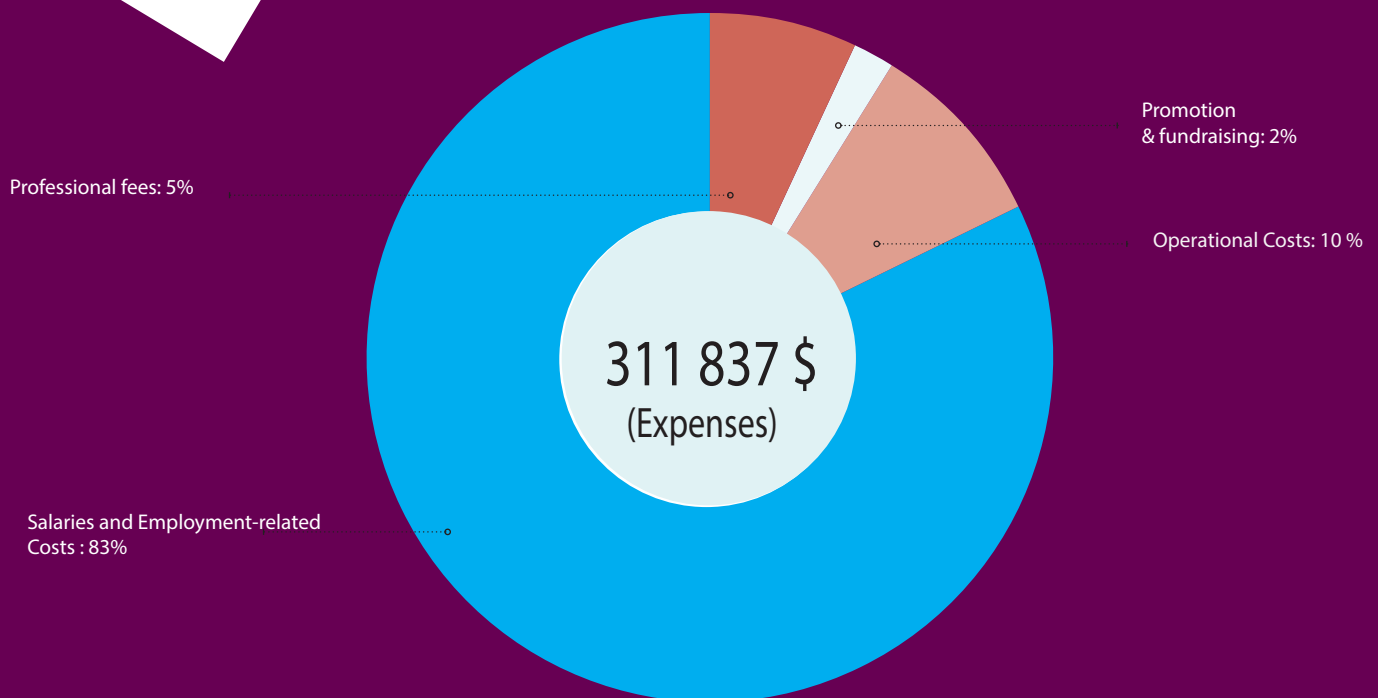
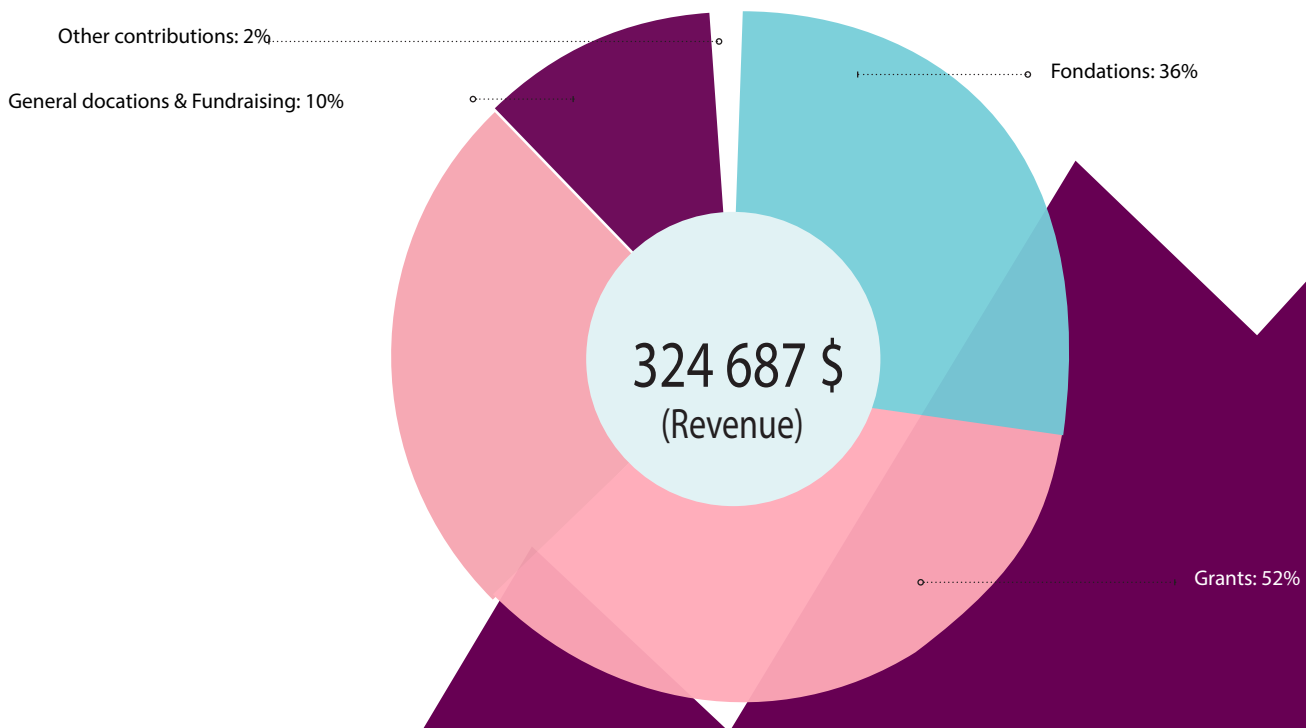
This number represents the number of individual consultations between a client and a student, staff or volunteer jurist of the Clinic (one client may receive multiple consultations)

*including remote

687

FINANCES

Based on audited financial statements as of
September 30, 2022.



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justicemontreal.org/donate

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4450 Saint-Hubert, suite 424

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The MELC is a registered charity. Tax receipts available for donation 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



