

FIRST PEOPLES JUSTICE CENTER OF MONTREAL

ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 1, 2021 -
MARCH 31, 2022



WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR

During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the FPJCM's Interim Executive Director Catherine Irwin-Gibson gave her seat to an Indigenous leader. The Justice Center warmly welcomed me, Ellen Filippelli, as the new Executive Director to steer the organization with a good path forward. As an indigenous woman from the Kanesatake Mohawk Territory I came equipped with my life experiences as well as the knowledge and the skills necessary to work in the field of justice and to provide Indigenous Peoples guidance through the judicial system.

I began my journey at the First Peoples Justice center of Tiohtiá:ke / Montreal in September 2020 as the Transition Coordinator. I was hired to develop the Transition program which quickly grew into a program that within the first month had approximately thirty community members interested in accessing the services. Understanding that there were major gaps in the justice service and programs geared towards addressing the needs of indigenous peoples in Tiohtiá:ke, the Justice Team knew we needed to increase specific programming tailored to assist our people.

As we were strategizing to create a work plan to address the identified needs, Rachel Deutsch along with Catherine Irwin-Gibson who were an intricate part of this transition, and who have since left our organization, were also preparing their exit from their management positions from the center. We want to express our gratitude for their dedication to bringing public awareness to the needs of indigenous people and helping to provide solutions as our clients navigated through the justice system. They played a huge part in taking the center to the level that we are in today. They will be missed but the Justice Team respects their decision and wishes them the very best in their new endeavors.

During this same period of time the Justice Center received funding from the Ministry of Justice of Canada (under the IJP Capacity Building program) allowing us to develop a second management position. It was with great pleasure to announce that Demi Vettras was on boarded as the Justice Center's Manager of Funding Development and Administration. Some of her duties included to provide support with funder relations, reporting duties, payroll, and office management. With the Justice Team quickly growing we were fortunate to have received additional fundings to bring on an administrative assistant to support the Manager of Funding Development and Administration with administrative tasks and office management tasks. These positions have given the Executive Director more time to directly support the program staff, develop and expand partnerships, and advance the strategic plan in a more cohesive manner.


ELLEN FILIPPELLI
Executive Director



WHO WE ARE

The First Peoples Justice Centre of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal (Justice Center) is a registered charity that provides services for Indigenous community members living in the Greater Montreal Area who are involved with the justice and carceral systems. The Justice Center was incorporated in 2014 after being born in 2013 from the Cabot Square Project, a community initiative that was led by the Justice Working Committee of the Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK. A few years later, in early 2017, we opened our doors for service provision. Since then, the Justice Center continuously strives to provide culturally-adapted, holistic services.

Our work is directly informed by the realities of the community members we support. Throughout program development and delivery, our team strives to advocate for structural change within the justice and carceral systems to move towards initiatives led by and for Indigenous communities.

MISSION & VISION

The First Peoples Justice Center's vision is to have strong Indigenous communities that have access to Indigenous community-led justice processes rooted in decolonization, healing, respect, and Indigenous law.

Our mission is to support, inform, and empower Indigenous people navigating the justice system and to offer holistic and culturally appropriate justice services to the diverse Indigenous population living in Montreal. To create alternative Indigenous community-led justice processes rooted in Indigenous values in partnership with the Indigenous community in Montreal.

OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



As an organization working in the Greater Montreal Area, there are many communities that have been served by our programs and services. Tiohtià:ke's urban Indigenous community reflects the diversity of Turtle Island's First Peoples and their languages. The majority of our clients are Inuk and First Nations, with an almost equal amount between them. Among the First Nations, our most represented communities are Cree, Mohawk, Mi'kmaq, Algonquin Anishinaabeg, Atikamekw, Ojibwe, among others. Almost an equal number of men and women between the ages of nineteen (19) and seventy-five (75) have accessed our services daily, and we have served several people who identify as two-spirit. This year, the community members we served more than doubled from the previous year, having provided individual support to approximately one-hundred and fifty (150) community members.

Our services include support with Indigenous specific alternatives measures, services for those who have been harmed, help with reintegration post-incarceration and supervision of compensatory or community hours. We work closely with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community partners to offer cultural programs, sharing circles, land-based activities and workshops.



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Our Restorative Justice Coordinator, Amy Edward, has developed community-led measures for individuals who are involved in conflict or have caused harm. This program offers the opportunity for Indigenous people in the justice system to access a culturally-appropriate diversion program as an alternative to incarceration. Since February 2022, the FPJCM team has begun to integrate the General Alternatives Measures Program (GAMP) within the *Programme d'Accompagnement Justice Autochtone à la cour municipale de Montréal* (PAJA). Following several years of developing the GAMP protocol with the Ministry of Justice, Amy and the Justice Support Coordinator, Danielle Beaulieu, have worked diligently to create procedures and forms for the referral process. The establishment of a GAMP protocol required the Coordinators' attendance to on-going meetings with judicial partners and required the completion of infographics, guidelines and a pamphlet to explain the process.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The Restorative Justice Program also ran a week-long training conference at the end of March titled: *Peacemaking within Indigenous Spaces; A conference on Restorative Justice and Knowledge Building*. Fifty participants attended, including Justice Center staff, partner organizations, community members, judges, and socio-judicial actors. Community partners were trained to become Peacemakers in Indigenous-led Peacemaking Circles. Judicial actors, including Crown Attorneys and defense attorneys, were sensitized around sentencing circles, restorative justice practices and Indigenous specialized court models by our guest speakers, Justice Gethin Edward (Ontario) and Justice Karen Crownshoe (Alberta), among others.

Building a Justice Circle Model is a continuously on-going process with the support of Elders, Indigenous community members, and the feedback we receive from those accessing our services. We've successfully facilitated Justice Circles that were designed based on the needs and wants of the community members involved. Our program served upwards of thirty (30) community members, and we launched the Wellness group in partnership with Ashley Norton from Onen'tó:kon Healing Lodge.

MUNICIPAL COURT PROGRAM - PAJA



Since January 2021, the Municipal Court has fully endorsed the PAJA (Programme d'Accompagnement Justice Autochtone à la cour municipale de Montréal) and the appointed judge has increased holding court hearings from one to now two times a month. Both Danielle, the Justice Services Coordinator, and Amy, the Restorative Justice Coordinator, contributed to the development of the program and the establishment of an internal committee. We facilitated several internal committee meetings in order to create a purpose statement and eventually a Strategic Plan for the objectives set out by committee members, these include an assigned Judge, Crown attorneys, defense lawyers as well as SPAQ.

Throughout the year, the Justice Services Coordinator and the Restorative Justice Coordinator have been attending court sessions twice monthly to assist with coordination, Elder openings and providing culturally-adapted support for court sessions. The FPJCM, along with SPAQ, promote the in-court presence of key resources such as Plein Milieu, the Open Door, CLSC Metro and the Indigenous Street Workers Project.

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

In March 2021, Corey Thomas shifted from administrative tasks to taking on the goals elaborated in the Connection to Community Program. This program allows for creativity and culture with the goal of supporting individuals who have compensatory, community work hours or alternative measures to complete. Over the winter and spring of 2022, we sought to hire Corey's replacement while he moved towards replacing Ellen as she was phasing out of her role as the Transition Coordinator. However, following several months of working within both programs, Corey has primarily shifted back into the role of the Connection to Community program while continuing temporarily with case management for community members in the Transition Program.

The Connection to Community program has supported over thirty (30) community members in completing their agreed compensatory and community hours. Corey has organized a number of activities and workshops, including several community-led and culturally relevant activities such as a Beading Circle, a therapeutic art session, a community wellness BBQ, a traditional strawberry gathering, and attending the Kanesatake Pow Wow. Our program Caseworker continues to partner with the YMCA, and has been working closely with staff from Resilience Montreal, Open Door and the Native Friendship Center of Montreal Food Security Program to create volunteer opportunities for Indigenous community members.

TRANSITION SERVICES

In March 2021, Ellen Filippelli, the former Transition Program Coordinator, accepted to begin working with Rachel and Catherine to take on the leadership role. Ellen had been developing the program since October 2020. This year, our program assisted thirty (30) community members exiting the carceral system (of which five have completed the program) with life skills, release plans and how to meaningfully contribute to their family and community. Community members have access to culturally-adapted in-person supports, accompaniment to meet with parole officers, and group programming and referrals to services for housing, employment, healthcare, access to Elders, cultural activities and healing circles, among others.

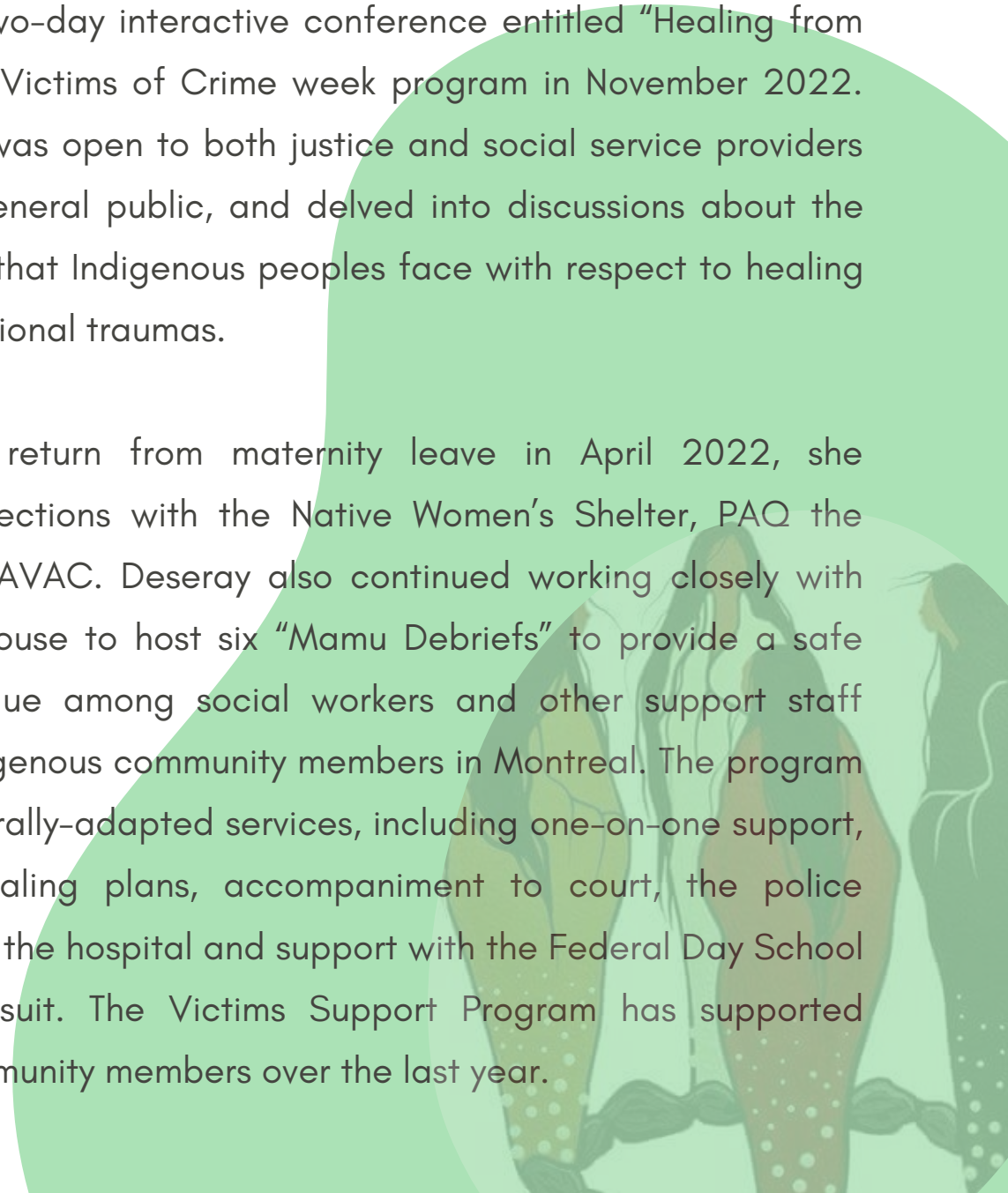
Corey Thomas worked with Ellen within the Transition Program in the spring of 2021. They both acted as a point-of-reference to help connect Indigenous community members seeking support to the various programs and services that can address their specific needs. They both worked as mediators between program participants and their parole officers. Our Transition program also collaborated with lawyers, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, and parole officers from the Correctional Service Canada Aboriginal Initiatives to develop a wellness plan for the Indigenous client to follow instead of re-incarcerating them.

VICTIM SERVICES

The Victim Services Coordinator, Deseray Rich, was on maternity leave between January 2021, and returned in early January 2022. Danielle Bigras was hired as Deseray's replacement to provide services during her leave.

We provided a two-day interactive conference entitled "Healing from Harm" under the Victims of Crime week program in November 2022. This conference was open to both justice and social service providers as well as the general public, and delved into discussions about the specific realities that Indigenous peoples face with respect to healing from intergenerational traumas.

Upon Deseray's return from maternity leave in April 2022, she maintained connections with the Native Women's Shelter, PAQ the NETWORK and CAVAC. Deseray also continued working closely with Elder Tom Dearhouse to host six "Mamu Debriefs" to provide a safe space for dialogue among social workers and other support staff working with Indigenous community members in Montreal. The program led multiple culturally-adapted services, including one-on-one support, individualized healing plans, accompaniment to court, the police station as well as the hospital and support with the Federal Day School class action lawsuit. The Victims Support Program has supported around forty community members over the last year.

A large, light green circular graphic on the right side of the page contains a stylized illustration of three Indigenous women standing and facing each other. They are wearing traditional beaded dresses and have long braided hair. The illustration is rendered in a soft, painterly style with muted colors.

CULTURE & HEALING

The FPJCM has facilitated a number of activities and events promoting culture and healing within the community. These include weekly Pualik making, a beading circle, a therapeutic art session, a community wellness BBQ, a traditional strawberry gathering, and attending the Kahnawake and Kanesatake Powwows. Weekly Medicine Bundle Workshops were incorporated into three of our programs in which approximately 200 medicine bundles were handed out to community members, partners, and Elders. Knowledge Keeper, Tealey Normandin provided healing circles for survivors of the 60s scoop. Eleven Sharing Circles with Elder support took place in which a total of forty-five individuals participated in the programming.



**A CONFERENCE ON RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE AND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING**

PEACEMAKING WITHIN INDIGENOUS SPACES

**MARCH 28-APRIL 1, 2022, 9-5PM
MONTREAL ARTS CENTRE
1844 WILLIAM ST.
MONTREAL, QUÉBEC**

Please register at: [https://www.montrealartscentre.ca/peacemaking](#) For further inquiries, email: info@montrealartscentre.ca

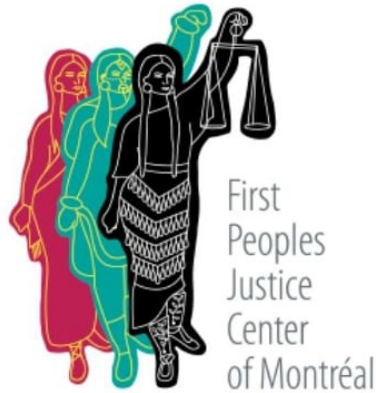


**FIRST PEOPLES JUSTICE CENTER
MONTREAL**

CANVAS PAINTING WITH JASON SIKOAK

We'll be having an evening of creativity with Jason Sikoak. If you want to paint a canvas with us or just come to enjoy being around others in a creative space, come join us. This event will take place at the Montreal Friendship Center, 2001 St. Laurent Boul. Montreal, Qc.

Wednesday, the 16th of June 1:00 - 4:00 PM



WEEKLY PUALUUK MAKING

WE HAVE SPACES AVAILABLE FOR 10 PEOPLE,

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR
SESSIONS CALL 514-499-1854 X 2227 OR
EMAIL COREY@JUSTICEMONTREAL.CA

WE'LL RESERVE YOU A SPOT. WE HAVE SPACE
FOR 10 PEOPLE

FIRST CLASS IS NOVEMBER 16TH 1-4 PM
MATERIALS WILL BE PROVIDED



Centre de justice
des Premiers Peuples de Montréal
First Peoples Justice Center
of Montréal

MMIW SUPPORT GROUP

For Families and
Survivors

**FEBRUARY 15, 2022
2-4PM**

Meeting will take place on Zoom. Please email
deseray@justicemontreal.ca for link

Hosted by
Elder Tom Dearhouse and Deseray Rich



Indigenous Adoptees

Reaching out, finding each other

Virtual gathering

I am offering a time and space to gather over ZOOM.



Come and join the circle.

Thursday September 2, 2021

Thursday September 16, 2021

4:30 EST

Email me for more information and the zoom link:

Tealey Ka'senni:saks

Mohawk/Kahnawake

60s scoop adoptee

destinyliveshere@gmail.com



Centre de justice
des Premiers Peuples de Montréal
First Peoples Justice Center
of Montréal

**The First Peoples Justice Centre of Montreal (FPJCM)
presents**

STRAWBERRY CEREMONY

June 9th from 10 AM- 4PM

**Meet at the NFCM at 9 AM
(boul 2001 Saint-Laurent)
for departure.**

**Come harvest and learn about the significance
of strawberries during our one day land base
outing. Travel and lunch will be provided.**

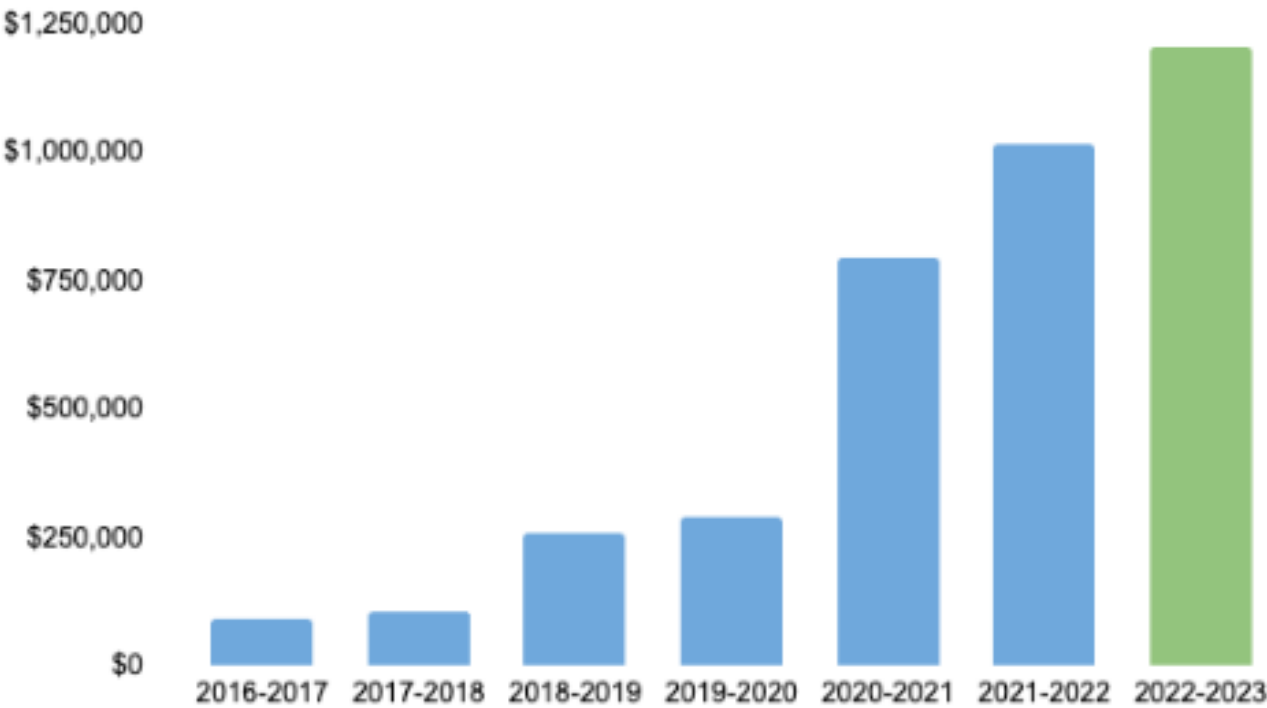
**Mandatory registration before June 4th by calling
the FPJCM or registering in person with a FPJCM staff
at our office. Priority given to Indigenous peoples
who access FPJCM services. First come first serve**



FINANCES

The Justice Center's finances continue to grow in the 2022-2023 fiscal. Our funders include Indigenous Services Canada, Justice Canada, Justice Quebec, Secrétariat aux Affaires Autochtones, Heritage Canada, Makivik Corporation, Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK, the McConnell Foundation, and the United Church Foundation. Many of these funders have been funding the FPJCM for many years now and some have renewed their funding agreements with us. We appreciate their continued support and look forward to continuing to develop our programming. As a registered Charity, the Justice Center also received donations through our partnership with CanadaHelps.org. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all those who have donated. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support!

Financial growth since 2016





LP^éΛ^é

Société Makivik
Makivik Corporation

La fondation

McConnell
Foundation



ISC INDIGENOUS
SERVICES
CANADA

Justice
Québec



Secrétariat
aux affaires
autochtones

Québec



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
FOUNDATION

Canada



Department of Justice
Canada

Ministère de la Justice
Canada



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

NIAWENKO:WA

NAKURMIIK

MIIGWECH

THANK YOU

MERCI