

NEWSLETTER

LEA ROBACK FOUNDATION



Number 3, April 2011



Madeleine Parent and Lea Roback, November 3, 1993, at a party to celebrate Lea's 90th birthday. In the course of this celebration, Lea's comrades and friends presented her with a very special birthday gift, namely, a foundation dedicated to helping women continue or resume their studies.

Major Partners of the Foundation:

The Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN);
the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ);
the Syndicat des fonctionnaires municipaux de Montréal (CUPE);
the Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ);
as well as a foundation and a friend who wish to remain anonymous.

Partners of the Foundation:

The Syndicat de la Fonction publique du Québec (SFPQ);
the Fédération nationale des enseignants et des enseignantes du Québec (FNEEQ CSN);
the CSQ Staff Union;
Ms. Lucille Panet-Raymond and
Ms. Annalee Yassi.

A Word from the President

A Watershed Year for the Lea Roback Foundation

As you well know, the Foundation doesn't sit around twiddling its thumbs, but last year was a particularly busy one. In addition to the meetings of the executive committee, the Board of Directors and various other committees, several special projects were added to our regular activities. You be the judge!

When H  l  ne Pedneault, a dear friend of the Foundation, passed away a little more than two years ago, she bequeathed her estate to the Foundation. Amongst the latter were several works of art from recognized artists that we auctioned off last December. In order to prepare for this auction, we had to have the works appraised and a fair amount of work went into organizing the event itself: invitations, transporting the works of art, fitting up the auction hall, etc. We would never have made it without the valuable assistance of the members of the Board and the remarkable contribution of three of them: Ir  ne Ellenberger, Ghislaine Patry-Buisson and C  line Lamontagne. We still have to dispose of the works that saw no takers at the event, an operation that will likely be completed over the coming weeks.

H  l  ne Pedneault's bequest, in addition to making a substantial financial contribution to our mission, also enabled us to raise many people's awareness about the Foundation's work in new networks, as well as to bolster our support overall. Thank you ever so much, H  l  ne!

The last few months have also witnessed a few important organizational developments. We have redesigned our Web site, where you will soon be able to see our activity report and our annual financial statements. We have also rented a small office at the Maison Parent-Roback in order to store some of Foundation's effects and we have hired a part-time secretary. Thanks to the work of Louise Lacroix, the Foundation is now able to respond more quickly to people's requests, more easily organize our annual fundraising campaign and more diligently issue tax receipts to our donors. Our main activity, awarding scholarships, is also greatly facilitated by the support she is providing to the Board of Directors. In addition, the production and distribution of our biannual newsletter to the many Friends of Lea Roback will be far smoother and more efficient.

Meanwhile, our administration expenses are low, given that most of the Foundation's work relies upon the volunteer work done by of our Board members. Without them and their unwavering commitment to finding partners, soliciting donations, organizing benefit events and the annual selection of our scholarship recipients, the Foundation would never be able to truly continue fulfilling its mission.

Your support of the Foundation is unfaltering, year after year. That's really what makes it all so worthwhile and makes us so proud after these 17 years of the Foundation's existence. It's genuinely owing to the many donors, friends of Lea and Partners of the Foundation that Lea Roback's memory and ideals remain so alive and our action to help women, still so valuable. A very big thank you!

Lorraine Pag  , President

Foundation News Flashes

Redesign of the Foundation's Web site: www.fondationlearoback.org

Our Web site has been entirely redesigned and brought up to date. There is now a separate French portal and a separate English portal, which will make the information more accessible. The Foundation's financial statements will soon be available on the site.

A page on Madeleine Parent and a page on H  l  ne Pedneault pay tribute to these special friends of the Foundation.

Anyone who'd like to make a donation can now do so directly on the site, by way of CanadaHelps.

It is likewise now possible to buy the DVD of Sophie Bissonnette's film on Lea Roback, "A Vision in the Darkness," as well as the lovely poster created by Vittorio to mark Lea's birthday. Payments can be made via PayPal.

The 2011-2012 scholarships

This year, more than 850 letters and scholarship application forms were sent out to various community and women's groups so that they could distribute them to anyone who might be interested. These forms are also available on our Web site. All scholarship applications have to be mailed to the Foundation no later than May 1, 2011.

The 2010 fundraising campaign



This year again, the fundraising campaign was a great success. We would like to sincerely thank all the individuals, partners and major partners, Unions and institutions that have made donations to our fundraising campaign, as well as Ariane   mond, the Foundation's fundraising campaign spokesperson.

Our 2010 scholarship

Since 1994, the Foundation has granted 162 scholarships to women seeking to pursue their education.

The Board of Directors is happy to present the 2010 scholarship recipients.

Lucie Bilodeau, 41 years old, Longueuil

The mother of three children, two of whom are minors, Lucie Bilodeau has been very active in her housing cooperative for over 10 years and she also volunteers in an elementary school. In September 2010, she began a DCS in special education at the Cégep du Vieux-Montréal, returning to the classroom after a nearly 10-year absence.

Donna Brathwaite-Edwards, 19 years old, Montreal

In September 2010, Donna Brathwaite-Edwards enrolled in a full-time program in aesthetics (Diploma of Vocational Studies) at the Laurier Macdonald Career Centre. She is active in DESTA, a group that works with young people in the black community.

Martine Danjou, 36 years old, Quebec City

Martine Danjou is the mother of four children including two charming six-year old twins. She is active in various community groups: Moisson Québec, the Société Saint-Vincent de Paul, and the Lower Town Women's Centre. She is resuming her studies after a more than 15-year hiatus, and is enrolled in a Bachelor of Social Service program at the Université Laval.

Cynthia Duclos-Lapointe, 26 years old, Longueuil

A single-parent mother of two children, one who is three years old and the other 21 months old, Cynthia Duclos-Lapointe is active in the community organization L'Envol, a program geared towards providing support to young mothers. Since September 2010, she is studying full-time to complete her last year of high school so as to become community worker with young offenders.

Jessica Gingras, 26 years old, Montreal

Very involved in MAP Montreal, an organization dedicated to women who head single-parent families, Jessica Gingras plans to finish high school in the fall 2010. Then, she'd like to go to university to study human resources management. Jessica is the mother of a three-year old child.

Mélanie Hébert, 31 years old, Longueuil

A Foundation scholarship recipient in 1999, she has since continued her studies. Now the mother of three children, she is active in her housing cooperative, but also teaches, on a volunteer basis, at the *maison de Jonathan*, a home for young people with special needs. She likes teaching and the arts, which is why she enrolled in a Bachelor of Visual and Media Arts program, teaching stream, in September 2010.

The road I've travelled so far has sometimes been gruelling, but I'm proud to have travelled it and your support is helping me to realize a dream.

Mélanie Hébert (Longueuil)

Marie- Claude Lafond, 20 years old, Montreal

A young woman, Marie-Claude is already very involved not only in her student association, but also with various feminist groups, including La Marie Debout and women's committees. Since September 2010, she is working towards a Certificate in Feminist Studies at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM).

Jessica Lemus-Coto, 26 years old, Montreal

The mother of a one-year old girl, Jessica Lemus-Coto is currently completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Art Education-Visual Arts Major at Concordia University. She wants to become an artist and teacher in order to help motivate young women to succeed. She is involved in the student movement and does volunteer work with senior citizens and sick people leaning heavily on an artistic approach.

Kimberly McDowell, 26 years old, Montreal

Currently an activist at DESTA, she has also been in charge of various sporting activities and done homework tutoring. The Foundation's scholarship helped her complete her certificate in Early Childhood

Education at Vanier CEGEP. She lives with her mother and helps out her family financially.

On my own behalf and on behalf of my children, who shared the good news with me when we all opened up the envelope together, I'd like to thank you once again for this unexpected assistance.

Marie-Claude Saindon (Rimouski)

Lavena Munroe, 24 years old, Montreal

Lavena Munroe really wants to finish high school, because her illness has prevented her from pursuing a normal path. She has been enrolled as a student since September 2010, in the adult education program at the Lion Wolf School, a school run by DESTA. She has participated in numerous volunteer activities at DESTA and elsewhere.

Isabelle Ouellet, 32 years old, Alma

Isabelle Ouellet is the mother of four children two of whom are trisomic that she adopted. She has been doing volunteer work since 1999, particularly with regard to family-oriented activities and the rights of disabled people, as well as being active in her non-profit community housing complex. She completed her DCS in special education in spring 2010 and is now studying music at the Cégep d'Alma.

Any Pleau, 38 years old, Trois-Rivières

Any Pleau is the mother of three children and the youngest –10 years old– lives with her. She completed a DCS in social work in 2010 and is now continuing along this path working towards a Bachelor of Social Work at Université Laval. She has done a lot of volunteer work in groups that help out families, notably the Réseau d'aide des familles en transition, a Food Bank and Maison Habit-Action.

This scholarship will be a major source of support to enable me to pursue my studies. Please rest assured that I will make judicious use of it and I hope that one day I will be able to give back to the Foundation a part of what has been given to me.

Any Pleau (Québec)

Marie-Claude Saindon, 39 years old, Rimouski

The mother of four children, including nine-year old twins, Marie-Claude Saindon is active in her community and was even elected as a city councillor. She previously studied to become a social work technician and is currently working towards a Certificate in Social Work at the Université du Québec à Rimouski.

Andrea Paola Higuera Silva, 30 years old, Montreal

This scholarship recipient was trained as an architect at the University of Colombia, but is required to supplement her studies in the Province of Quebec. Since January 2011, she is enrolled at the Université de Montréal in project management.

Josiane Tsagui, 31 years old, Baie St-Paul

A permanent resident for one year now, in order to get involved in her community, Josiane decided to participate in the activities of the Charlevoix Women's Centre. She is the mother of two young children (6 years old and 4 months old). Since the fall 2010, she is pursuing studies in secretarial work and accounting at the Charlevoix adult education and career training centre.

J'ai très bien débuté ma formation en secrétariat et si tout va bien, dans deux ans, j'aurai mon diplôme d'études professionnelles.

Josianne Tsagui (La Malbaie)

Marjorie Esther Valsaint, 27 years old, Montreal

A native of Haiti and now a permanent resident, Marjorie Esther Valsaint has been very actively involved in the Quebec Association of Family Workers. She feels it's very important to have a profession and this explains why she is studying full-time at the Cégep du Vieux-Montreal in the "Integration into the nursing profession in Québec" program. She already has a Bachelor of Nursing from a university in the Philippines.

Kavi Velauthapillai, 18 years old, Montreal

Kavi has attracted the admiration of her community owing to her single-minded enthusiasm and social commitment. She has volunteered in several hospitals and rehabilitation centres. In September 2010, she began pre-med training at McGill University.

Claudia Villalobos, 39 years old, Brossard

A single-parent mother (of a six year-old child), a native of Colombia, Claudia Villalobos has been very active in Carrefour le Moutier, a social integration group, as well as in the student committee at the Cégep du Vieux-Montreal. She is currently in her second year of studies towards a Diploma of Collegial Studies (DCS) in social work.

Fund raising committee news

2010 fund raising campaign

We wish to warmly thank all the donors who sent us their donations during the fall 2010 fundraising campaign.

Your generosity enabled us to collect \$16,826. Of this amount, \$7,500 came from our Partners and Major Partners, while the remaining \$9,326 came from individuals and non-partner associations.

It should be recalled that this annual fundraising campaign is the major source of the Foundation's funds.

Other fundraising activities

In addition to the annual campaign, the fundraising committee occasionally organizes benefit events so as to try to increase the number and amount of scholarships awarded annually. The Tribute to Hélène Pedneault evening, held in March 2010, reaped \$8,000. The silent auction of the works of art bequeathed to the Foundation by Hélène Pedneault, which took place on December 4, 2010, also enabled us to collect some \$4,000.

2010 thus recorded total proceeds of more than \$28,000, which have been put to work to support the Foundation's mission. Thanks to your generosity, Lea Roback's dream is alive and well: helping economically disadvantaged and socially active women to realize their educational aspirations so as to improve their situation, as well as that of their families.

International Women's Day for the benefit of our scholarship recipients

For its annual International Women's Day activity, the status of women committee of the Syndicat des fonctionnaires municipaux de Montréal (CUPE) invited representatives from the Lea Roback Foundation to inform their members and explain to them the Foundation's mission. Irène Ellenberger and Ghislaine Patry-Buisson represented the Foundation at the evening, where nearly 200 people were in attendance. Following the presentation made by Irène, the committee members, according to custom, passed the hat around the room. The Union matched the amount collected and a total of \$1,110 was thus donated to the Foundation.

Our most heartfelt thanks to the SFMM (CUPE) status of women committee.

Special Donations

In January 2011, the foundation received a \$2,500 bequest upon the passing of Rose Mergler, a cousin and comrade-in arms of Lea Roback. Two activist cousins whose solidarity continues onwards and beyond. This kind of donation, which we occasionally receive, provides an enduring way to give concrete shape to acts of generosity and solidarity towards women who care about improving their situation and that of their children.