

NEWSLETTER

LEA ROBACK FOUNDATION



Number 23, December 2021



A word from the President



What time is it?

Emerging out of the depths of my memory the other day, a song “What time is it?” that meandered in my head for a few days running: “To everything there is a season, and everything in its own time...”.



One thing is certain, one can't stop time marching forward. It ebbs and flows through our fingers like just so many grains of sand. Can you imagine that it's been nearly 30 years now that the Lea Roback Foundation exists? An anniversary that we'll talk about at a later date and that we'll commemorate in due course. Starting from nothing or just about, with only one scholarship awarded in our first year, the Foundation granted 38 of them this year. It's time to be proud of the path we've travelled.

It's always time for the duty to remember the individual who inspired the creation of the Foundation bearing her name.

Lea continues to be very present in our mind, and it's all the better, given that this woman was so remarkable. I'm still regularly solicited to present a formal talk about her at various forums. The Jewish Public Library has observed that Lea Roback's name always elicits a lot of interest. Every day, the Library receives requests for references about her, from students, of course, but also from university institutions, such as Queens University or UQÀM. In view of this interest and notwithstanding the lack of space on the premises, the Library has fitted up a display case, which contains some archival material and various exhibits on Lea Roback. We thank them for keeping the memory of this exceptional woman and her contribution to Quebec society alive and well.

It's also time for impatience and hope. So that a time may finally come where we'll

witness the eradication of poverty, the right to equality and a genuinely operative freedom for all women, as well as a time where there will be a guaranteed right to education for one and all, at all levels and in every possible training domain. All these causes that Lea Roback held so dear and for which, thanks to your donations and our partnerships, we're doing our very best to act upon.

As Jacques Michel sang:

"A time to advance - a time to act;

A time to struggle - a time to acquire

A time to demand - a time to achieve."

Yes, each thing comes in its own time, particularly when we are many who believe in it and when, with courage, as the theme of our annual fund raising campaign declares, we act in a way to make it come to pass.

As we near the end of this year, let's take the time to celebrate all those women that we've helped over the years by granting them scholarships to encourage and support them in their studies. And especially, let's also take the time to thank you for your unwavering support and wish you all a 2022, that is commensurate with your commitments and that will witness your wildest dreams come true.


Lorraine Pagé
Présidente

It's been a very long time since we've been able to hold an "in-person" meeting of our Board of Directors. What a joy to see each other "in the flesh" again, last October 21, around a table, everybody doubly vaccinated and happy to enjoy this long overdue reunion!

We took the opportunity to welcome aboard Nicole Ranger, Vice-President of the Pierre-Laurier-Baribeau Foundation and partner of the Lea Roback Foundation, the instigator of the partnership agreement that binds our two organizations over the next seven years. We celebrated this arrangement that will enable us to grant even more scholarships.

In the photo, Nicole Ranger and Lorraine Pagé surrounded by Rivka Augenfeld, Maroussia Kishka, Céline Charpentier, Céline Lamontagne, Danielle Casavant, Frances Ravensbergen and Nicole Cousineau. Absent from the photo: Danielle Casara and Guylaine Henri.



The Scholarships



The Lea Roback Foundation is steadfastly pursuing its mission.

Exceptionally successful years are being followed by even more exceptional ones. Scholarship applications are consistently around 100, but this year, thanks to a substantial donation from the Pierre- Laurier-Baribeau Foundation, we've increased the number of scholarships being granted, (to 25 from 19). In addition, the Foundation has awarded thirteen \$500 scholarships via our partner Maman va à l'école (*Mother goes to school*).

Special Scholarships

Some of the Foundation's scholarships are now being personalized and thus bear names that pay tribute to various people. Please allow me to explain.

An annual donation from the Pierre-Laurier-Baribeau Foundation enables our Foundation to award five or six scholarships called Pierre-Laurier-Baribeau scholarships. The donor asked us that one of these scholarships be granted to a student who seeks to work with young people in difficult situations and that all the scholarship recipients be 25 years old or younger.

Let's recall that the Board of Directors of the Lea Roback Foundation innovated this practice in 2012 by designating two of the Foundation's scholarships, one named after Madeleine Parent and the other after Hélène Pedneault, as scholarships to be granted to women studying in a specific area. The Board was seeking to pay tribute to these two activists who left us a substantial legacy when they passed away. Madeleine Parent, a dear friend of Lea, was one of our Foundation's pioneers.

In all these cases, however, the Foundation's general eligibility criteria apply and the scholarship recipients are selected by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

Meanwhile, our partnership with Maman va à l'école (*Mother goes to school*) is a little different. This body awards \$500 scholarships to single-parent mothers who are studying towards earning an initial diploma. Our Foundation disburses a certain amount of money to Maman va à l'école and they then select the Lea Roback Foundation scholarship recipients, taking the social commitment criterion of the candidates into account.

This year, six candidates received a Pierre-Laurier-Baribeau scholarship..

Estelle* a young 19-year old woman, who is studying special education techniques at TAV college in Montreal, and who'd like to continue on to get a university degree in social work. Her goal is to work with young people in difficult situations, notably in youth centres. Currently, she's active in her college's Environmental Protection Club. Since her time in high school, Estelle has been active in the Jewish community.

Ginette* has shared custody of a one-year old child. Currently, she's a student at the Drummondville Adult Education Centre. Ginette is really determined to complete high school, because she's anxious to go on to CEGEP to enrol in a delinquency response techniques program. *"In 2019, I worked at "Ensoleillant" a group that provides assistance to people who live in precarious situations and living conditions. I loved working with people in need, which was what motivated me to get into this profession"*.



Katherine* wants to finish high school so that she can go on to College to get an Attestation of Collegial Studies (ACS) in early childhood. Katherine is a single-parent mother of a (4) year old child who's been diagnosed with ASD, (Autism Spectrum Disorder). She invests a lot of energy into being a "natural caregiver" for her child's development: various trainings, follow-ups with an educator, collaboration with the daycare centre and much, much more. She just manifests a boatload of courage in all this.

Mégane Charron, from Montreal, is currently studying at CEGEP Maisonneuve in the humanities, justice and society unit. She's active in her neighbourhood, in the Young Workers Centre, as well as the Récolterie, a group that encourages urban agriculture in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough. In the long run, Mégane would like to become an attorney.

Nicole* is very engaged in several CEGEPS advocating for the LGBTQ+ cause, in addition to being very active in her immediate community, for example, her municipality's leisure committee. She experienced violence during her childhood and in adult relationships. *"Indeed, I survived during childhood thanks to my studies."* She suspended her studies on a number of occasions, and now, her marks are high enough to enable her to go back into the program that really appeals to her, namely, special education techniques. *"I'd like to have a good profession, in order to adequately provide for the needs of my future children, to give them what I lacked. My parents didn't have the opportunity to get a higher education. I want to prove to them that anything is possible, even though our past was a difficult one."*

Eugénie* lives in the Chaudière-Appalaches region. She has a young child for whom she has sole custody. She finished high school in the spring 2021 and has been accepted into the social work techniques program at the CEGEP Lévis-Lauzon. She volunteers at Berceau, a support group for young mothers. She went through a "difficult situation" with her ex-spouse and is therefore living in a safe house today. Eugénie isn't giving up hope, because *"For now, I'm asking for help, but soon, I'll be helping others!"*

The Madeleine Parent scholarship.

Naila Gravel-Baazaoui is the 2021 recipient of the Madeleine-Parent scholarship. Naila is studying at the Université de Montréal, working towards a Bachelor of Political Science. She's a representative on the feminist committee of the political science and international studies student association, at the Université de Montréal, and volunteers at Collège Frontière, a literacy and francization group. Naila wants *"to do*



a Bachelors of Law degree at McGill University. My professional plan is to become a human rights lawyer, focusing primarily upon access to education for women in the Province of Quebec, but also women in the Middle East and North Africa.

The Hélène-Pedneault Scholarship

The Hélène-Pedneault scholarship was awarded to **Julie Bouchard** from Montreal. Julie is working towards a Feminism certificate at the Université du Québec à Montréal. In 2018, she participated in an international cooperation initiation project “Quebec without borders” in Rwanda. Currently, she’s involved in the World University Service of Canada committee at UQÀM. The committee sponsors student refugees. *“My plan is to validate a cumulative Bachelors degree, which would include the following areas: immigration, politics and feminism. My studies and my experiences will lead me, I hope, to being able to work with a group focusing upon special needs women in an intercultural context.”*



The ICEA Bernard-Normand Award

On June 15, we had the great pleasure to meet **Alimatu Sadia Olagboye**. Alimatu, a two-time award winner, was granted a scholarship in 2021 by the Foundation, and also received the ICEA Bernard-Normand Award to pay tribute to the perseverance she has shown in her studies. Alimatu, from the Ivory Coast, has been in the Province of Quebec since 2016. She’s the mother of three young children and is studying at the Université de Montréal in order to earn a Bachelor of Social Work. She currently has a U de M certificate in Arts and Science. *“By dint of much effort and perseverance, I was finally accepted thanks to my good grades. I’m very involved in this program, because I’m determined to become a practitioner in this field,”* she says. Notwithstanding her numerous responsibilities, Alimatu manages to find time to be active in her community.



The Lea Roback Foundation Scholarships

Vocational High School

Maryse Boutin from Montreal, is going back to school. She’s enrolled at the CFP Charlotte in health, assistance and nursing (SASI) and will soon become a nursing assistant. Maryse has two children that live with her and she still works in a hospital, while pursuing her studies. But her activities don’t stop there. She’s a member of a number of committees in her Housing Co-op, including the Board of Directors. She’s active in her school and co-founded an alternative teaching (Freinet) program at a regular elementary school. She’d like to go on to university to earn a nursing degree.

Nancy Lévesque will soon be fulfilling her childhood and adolescent dream of driving big trucks. Currently, she’s doing the requisite courses to earn a DPS in truck transportation. She has the custody of two adolescents and is active in her East Angus community, in the Eastern Townships. She’s involved in the Women’s Centre, the Haut St-François Adult Education Centre and in Moisson Haut-St-François. She already has a vocational diploma in



automobile mechanics, which enables her to give mechanics courses to women at the Centre, an admirable initiative. y a donné un cours de mécanique à des femmes du Centre; une belle initiative.

College Studies

“I’m just so happy and full of gratitude that you decided to chose me!!!” “Thank you from the bottom of my heart” **Sophie Adam** wrote to us recently. Having worked for 18 years in a CPE led Sophie to want to become a caregiver. She thus resumed her studies at the CEGEP de Joliette in special education techniques. She has sole custody of three young children and a niece who lives with her as well. Sophie has been very active in her Crabtree community. She has been a director of the Youth Centre, the Storefront Café and she participates regularly in her municipality’s events.



Patricia Coutu lives in the Upper Laurentians, more precisely, in Nominingue. Patricia has two children. She is the Vice-President of the daycare’s Board of Directors. In association with local firefighters, she works as a first respondent for the municipality. She fell in love with this work with people who were “ill”. This passion made her decide to pursue a DCS in Emergency Hospital Care (paramedic). In order to be admitted, she finished her high school courses at the Adult Education Centre in 2021.



Amièle Daigneault Desrosiers has shared custody of three children. She’s taken numerous courses and acquired work experience in the restaurant sector. She took advantage of the COVID-induced shutdown of the restaurant industry to reorient her career and thus went back to her initial passion, the health care sector. She’s currently studying at the CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal in Nursing. She’s active in her Villeray neighbourhood and has been a breast-feeding godmother at Nourrisource, a cause that she clearly takes to heart. Currently, she’s on the Villeray Scouts Management Board and is notably active at SM Mutual Aid, Support and Mentoring for alternative communities.

Arline* is also a student at CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal, in childhood education techniques. She has other vocational training diplomas, but working with children is what really appeals to her and inspires her. She’s gone back to school to develop new skills. She’s a single-parent mother of two children and participates regularly in her neighbourhood’s community centre and in school activities.

Geneviève Dubé decided to pursue her studies in retail management techniques at the CEGEP de Rimouski. She’s the young people’s representative on the inter-municipal youth policy committee of the Rimouski-Neigette MRC. Geneviève also participates in the entrepreneur’s club at her CEGEP. She chose retail management in order to *“be able to give back to my fellow human beings, to the community by way of entrepreneurship and running some future company”*.

Rebecca Joyal is enrolled in Physiotherapy Techniques at the Collège Montmorency. Notwithstanding her very young age, Rebecca has been involved in numerous community and social groups. At her college, she participates in her student association’s committees and is also a member of the institution’s Board of Directors. She’s



a delegate from the Papineau riding to the Heiress Equal Voice Suffrage Program, a body that fights for the greater participation of women in the political arena. In addition, she's involved in a Food Bank, Amnesty International and participates regularly in demonstrations on climate and justice matters.



Sopharyka Touch, from Montreal, is a mother with sole custody of two children. They live in a subsidized housing project, Mères avec Pouvoir, that provides housing and childcare to single-parent mothers. Sopharyka is a member of the residents committee and is very appreciated by her community, because she's always available to help others. She participated in the chez Émilie community group, that distributes foodstuffs, as well as the Caraa committee (Carrefour alimentaire du Centre-Sud). She's a student at CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal in Special Education Techniques.



Marlene Voskorian, Lebanese in origin, lived in Syria until 2015, a country that she had to flee due to war. After spending time in Lebanon, she arrived in the Province of Quebec with her family, but not without having to make enormous sacrifices. Marlene is the mother of three children, two of whom, young adults, are in their parents custody. Upon her arrival in the Province of Quebec, she enrolled in a program to complete her high school, which she succeeded in doing. *"Which wasn't easy in the beginning, because many years had gone by since I had last sat on a school bench and had to study. Throughout the process, I had to deal with several difficulties and I had to remain motivated and balance my responsibilities between my family, my volunteer work in the shelter and my studies"*. Currently, Marlene is a student at CEGEP Montmorency in Special Education Techniques. She's active in the Hay Doun community, a group that provides support to senior citizens.

University Studies

Miriam Abadi is involved in various Jewish community groups: the Chai Centre, that works with sick children, the MADA Community Centre, a Food Bank and the Friendship Circle that helps children with disabilities. A 2020 Foundation scholarship recipient, Miriam is at Concordia University studying towards a Bachelor of Health, Kinesiology and Applied Physiology. The choice of this discipline arises from her keen interest in health and physical fitness. Miriam wants to help people improve their health.



Réjeanne* is also studying at Concordia University, in electrical engineering. She's planning to graduate in 2022; and wants to help advance electrical engineering technology and research. When she was growing up, she lived with a foster family. She currently participates actively in the activities of her synagogue and community.

Kana Daïna Donchi, originally from Cameroon, is a first year law student at the Université de Montréal. She's been a remarkable community activist given her young age. At 16 years old, she organized a feminist event at her school to specifically address the situation of black women. She's a Board member of Destination Travail, a youth delegate at the Liberal association in the Marguerite-Bourgeoys riding and she participates in the Welcome to Immigrants group, amongst other activist activities. Her motivation to study law arises directly from her community involvement.



She's determined to make a real difference in people's lives. .

Francesca Robinson lives in Montreal with her two children and spouse, who is also a student. Francesca, notwithstanding some financial difficulties linked to the pandemic, decided to continue her Nursing studies at McGill University. Francesca is a very appreciated volunteer at Suicide Montréal. She's also worked with homeless people in Chabot Square and volunteered at the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, in a dementia detection and prevention program. After her studies, she'd like to help vulnerable and poorly served populations, and thereby work to re-establish a certain degree of justice in our society.



Stéphanie Toutant-Paradis, a citizen of Sherbrooke in the Eastern Townships, has a 3 year old daughter. She's a member of the Board of Frontiers Foundation: whose mission is to organize introductory internships in international cooperation. Stéphanie's commitment to international solidarity began when she was in high school, where she participated in the PeruChe project and an immigrant assistance service. She has a DCS in Childhood Education Techniques, and has been studying since September towards a Bachelor of Social Service at the Université de Sherbrooke. She told us that her studies have confirmed: *"that I'm passionate about child development, but to the point where I wanted to do even more with them and accordingly have an impact upon their social environment. I also became aware of my desire to work with a wide variety of clients, particularly, families and immigrants."*

Rachelle Chachai lives in La Tuque. She's in her 3rd mandate as President of the La Tuque Aboriginal Friendship Centre. This association provides an assortment of programs and services in an urban milieu to First Nations members. She's also active in other groups in her region. A mother of three children, Rachelle will have to temporarily take leave of her family in order to study some 150 kilometres outside of La Tuque. She wants to acquire an accounting certificate at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières. Rachelle is receiving support for her project from her family, her community and the Lea Roback Foundation. The inscription in atikamekw on the photo, translates as *"I've succeeded"*. In 2021, Rachelle completed her high school studies at the Forestière Adult Education School.



I read and reread the dossiers of these scholarship recipients, twice, even three times in order to write the foregoing paragraphs, and each time, I'm moved by the experiences, sometimes difficult, of these women, by their courage, their tremendous determination, and their resilience. Bravo to each and every one of you.

**fictitious first name*

Céline Lamontagne

PASSING OF ONE OF LEA'S COMRADES IN ARMS

At the age of 100 years old, Rose Alper, a feminist and one of Lea Roback's comrades in arms passed away last December 2020. Rose Alper never stopped admiring Lea Roback, who she befriended in her youth. At the time, Lea was a union organizer, notably instigating the 1937 strike of 5,000 young Montreal seamstresses. A historic and game-changing strike that generated significant improvements of the working conditions in Montreal's garment sweatshops.

Following Lea's example, Rose became a union organizer in the shop where she was working during World War II. This was also the time that Lea and other women joined forces with Thérèse Casgrain to fight for the recognition of a woman's right to vote in Quebec.

In 1993, at the launch of the Lea Roback Foundation, Rose was 73 years old and attended the launch with her son, both very happy to participate in the event.

Following her death, her son David and her daughter Theresa each made a donation of \$3,600 to the Foundation, in memory of their mother. As the President of the Foundation wrote to David and Thérèse Adler, "it's with lots of emotion and gratitude that we received this substantial donation and we will posthumously make Rose Alper, a Major Partner of the Foundation over the next seven years. "We know that she would be very proud that her memory be honoured in such a fashion," David Alper replied to us in a recent letter.



Maroussia Kishka

A TEXT BY MARIE-CLAIRE BLAIS



A few days ago, we learned that Marie-Claire Blais, the renowned writer, had passed away. The passing of this great admirer of Lea Roback also represented the loss of a dear friend and staunch donor to the Foundation.

On the occasion of Lea Roback's centenary, in 2003, the Foundation published a little brochure on our scholarship recipients, entitled "What's become of them?"

We asked Marie-Claire Blais to write a preface to the foregoing, and she sent us this lovely text.

It's as relevant as ever...

This year, 15 recipients of scholarships from the Lea Roback Foundation will be continuing their studies in a variety of areas, including completing their high school diplomas, earning university degrees, or vocational school certificates. For each one of these women, these endeavours will undoubtedly translate into self-realization and happiness, an extraordinary opening up to the world around them, as well as the acquisition of a fundamental right, the right to learn and to discover. And this, in a prosperous society where still far too many women, and men, are deprived of exercising this inalienable right.

The Lea Roback Foundation bears the name of a woman who inspired, by the life she led struggling for human rights, just such a humanitarian ideal. Lea Roback's exemplary struggle against social injustice, her life as an activist with unwavering determination and strength, brings to mind the great writer and philosopher Simone Weil. These two revolutionary souls share a similar commitment to the working class, an analogous compassion and empathy for others, as well. Lea Roback's working class experiences begin at the tender age of 15 years old: 'I've always been with the workers, she says, I never sought to escape the rank and file, I've always wanted to say 'we' and that it perpetually remain 'us. Simone Weil worked on a factory floor at Renault, in France, from 1934 to 1935, and later became an agricultural worker. Both these women were marked by their harsh experiences and would never let up in the struggle for the rights of the underprivileged. If Simone Weil is a larger-than-life unfettered mystic, who wrote *La connaissance surnaturelle*, *L'engracement*, she was above all, like Lea Roback, a humanist who worked in the very real world, a suffering world peopled with oppressors and oppressed. We're well aware of how much the relentless struggle engaged by Lea Roback and Simone Weil for the rights of women, for peace –when humanity is always at war– for social equity, or simply for access to education, is both current and unending. Indeed, it's our duty to pool our efforts in this struggle that is both collective and individual, so that these fifteen 2003-2004 scholarship recipients will be even more numerous in the future. The knowledge that these women will acquire and their empowerment will surely enable other women to enjoy the benefits. This endeavour for greater justice, about which Lea Roback dreamed, will and must continue for many years to come.

The activist who declared: 'I'm going to act, because my gut demands that I do so', who began the struggle before many others for a women's right to vote, this trade union activist who remained in and of the working class, Lea Roback, a feminist and a pacifist, would be comforted today to see her Mission alive and well, her Action that remains indispensable, in a world that is still warped by war and injustice.



Marie-Claire Blais
November 2003

MAMAN VA À L'ÉCOLE



In 2020, Mother goes to school made the decision to cancel their scholarship program due to COVID. It should be recalled that “*Mother goes to school is a Quebec nonprofit organization whose mission is to help single-parent mothers acquire an initial diploma and thereby integrate the job market, while still developing their parenting skills.*” * The scholarships granted generally amount to \$500 each and are funded by institutional donors, Trade Unions and community organizations. This year, thirteen scholarships were funded by our Foundation.

The Lea Roback Foundation laureates



Élyse Gravel is a mother of two children, 11 and nine years old. Élyse is resolutely pursuing her studies at the St-Jean-sur-Richelieu Vocational Trades School in order to complete a DPS in health care and assistance. This mother doesn't hesitate to help out in the school that her children attend for various activities, including reading events. In 2021, she continues to act as an Ambassador for the annual Centraide fund raising campaign in the company where she worked prior to going back to school.

Tania Slater is a 24 year old young mother who is studying at the des Maskoutains Training Centre to finish high school and then go on to a DPS in Pharmacy Assistance Techniques. A mother of a two-year old child, she returned to school after her separation, and has manifested a tremendous amount of perseverance and character. She's described as a citizen who's committed to her community. For example, last December, she invested a lot of time in the Christmas Baskets initiative.

Chantal Mainville is from Roquemaure in Abitibi. This single-parent mother has sole custody of two children, 16 and 19 years old. She was compelled to reorient her career. After experiencing an accidental fall, she could no longer continue working as a bus driver for minors. She thus enrolled in a secretarial DPS at the Lac Abitibi Career Training Centre. Chantal is known for her formidable social and community commitment. She's been a municipal councillor for four years and was re-elected in 2021. She sits on the first respondents committee and has been a churchwarden for nine years. She's also responsible for the funeral meal committee, a community practice that is organized when someone passes away, given that her village only counts 450 inhabitants and there are no restaurants there.



The trajectory of **Cynthia Lacourse**. Lacourse's life has been a difficult one, but her discovery of L'école de la rue (an alternative school for young people) really opened up her eyes. Finally, she'd found a place that enabled her to receive the support necessary to move forward and to make plans for a better future. In addition to her parental responsibilities, and her high school studies, Cynthia is very involved in her school, notably in directing videos for the Méritas gala and helping others to edit and arrange their own videos. Likewise, she gives the

chef a hand for noontime meals when special activities are taking place. She wants to get a vocational studies diploma in secretarial skills. Her perseverance and rigour will assuredly ensure her success in this endeavour.

Tracy Albert-Michel left school after Grade 9, in 2003. Now 33 years old, and a single-parent mother of a 13-year old adolescent, she's more than ever motivated to finish her high school diploma. She's enrolled in the Chandler-Bonaventure Adult Education Centre and is thinking about going on to college. Meanwhile, Tracy is active in various activities in her community, in Newport: the Food Drive, church clean up, Food Bank, and the Volunteer Action Centre.

Olive Nyirasuku. arrived in Rimouski with her two young children and a Nursing diploma in hand from her country of origin. Seeing as the latter was not recognized here, she decided to go back to school to be able to exercise a trade that she loves and to enjoy a better life for herself and her two sons. Her people

skills and her strength of character led her to volunteer within Reception and Integration BSL (Bas-Saint-Laurent). She also sits on the Board of Directors of the La Débrouille group. In short, Olive participates actively in the life of her community, because she wants to grow and to fully participate in her own integration into Quebec society.

Jessica Lussier. lives in Ste-Agathe-des-Monts, and is the mother of a little eight-year girl. Her perseverance and mettle enabled her to cope and resist, notwithstanding this pandemic year. Upon arriving at her new residence, Cap Jem (a home for young single-parent mothers), she got involved in the institution's committee. Prior to COVID-19, she was also involved in her Centre. She had to put a hold on her studies, howe-

ver, to lend a hand to her daughter's father, who had developed a generalized cancer, and accompany him until the end. Perseverant and strong, she's just completed her prerequisites for a DPS in secretarial skills, but she still wants to become a nursing assistant, one day.

Catherine Beauchamp. During the pandemic, Catherine thought long and hard about her situation and decided to realign her aspirations for the future. A mother of two adolescents, she took the plunge: going back to a vocational school to get a diploma in industrial design. She's very proud to have the support of her children, notably her daughter, who helps her a lot in mathematics. In addition, Catherine spends a good deal of time volunteering in her son's school, just like she did for her older daughter in the past. Meanwhile, she's applying to move into a housing coop, because she believes strongly in social involvement and the importance of community.

Cynthia Boivin, a mother of three children, recently welcomed her 18-month old nephew into her home. Last spring, she completed her last year of high school, and is now in CEGEP in order to earn a ACS (Attestation of Collegial Studies) in Office Automation, Accounting and Bilingual Coordination. She's being supported in her endeavours by Services Québec. She's eager to proclaim that a return to school is possible at 35 years old, and that anyone can make their dreams come true!



Mélissa Primeau. Notwithstanding the balance that she has to strike between her studies and parental responsibilities vis-à-vis her five-year old daughter, Mélissa is involved in her community. Indeed, as a member of the Student Council at her centre, and this, since her arrival there, she actively promotes the notion of perseverance in school vis-à-vis her peers. In 2019-2020 and again in 2020-2021, they moreover awarded her the Méritas award as “the most involved pupil”. In addition, she participated, with a few colleagues, in a conference dinner in the youth sector, to encourage perseverance, notably by recounting the difficulties and obstacles one encounters if one “drops out”. She knows what she’s talking about, as she left school after grade 7. She’s a veritable model of perseverance, since she’s on the cusp of receiving her high school diploma and is heading towards college, to undertake a program in management and accounting.



Anne-Marie Gagné is the mother of a little two-year old girl, Léonie. Since January 2021, she is completing her high school diploma at the Saint-Michel de Sherbrooke Centre. She wants to become a horticulturist. The Eastern Townships committee on the status of women selected Anne-Marie pursuant to a number of letters of recommendation. She’s demonstrated courage, determination and strength of character that enabled her to turn things around in her life. Let’s

notably mention her social commitment to the Collectif Aide Radicale de l’Estrie (C.A.R.E.) that provides assistance to homeless people..

Moa-Kym Bérubé had a very difficult adolescence. The challenges she faced, especially with the arrival of her daughter, who’s now four years old, motivated her to change her life around and take her destiny squarely in her own hands. She’s now almost finished high school and plans to continue her studies in medical biology. Despite the sometimes difficult challenges of balancing her family and school work, she belongs to the School Board of her Education Centre.

Nadya Léonard-Turgeon experienced substantial hardship before returning to school. She had to flee her home and go to court to get custody of her children. She’s now successfully completing her first session in CEGEP, in retail management techniques. In addition to having to balance her family and school work, she volunteers to do community work. After participating in several committees at Mères et monde, she became the President of their Board of Directors. She’s also an occasional speaker on behalf of the Centre where she recounts her own life experiences and the assistance that the latter provided to her.



* Mother goes to School web site

Céline Lamontagne
, based upon the biographical notes that were provided by Mother goes to school.

FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN

The Foundation's fund raising campaign began in mid-October drawing attention to the crucial importance of financially supporting the studies that women undertake in order to turn things around, to make a commitment and to contribute to our society. Being able to study is an indispensable passport these days.

We've received nearly \$12,000 from numerous individuals and trade unions during the first month of the campaign. A big thank you to all of you. And for those of you who have not yet made their donation, please don't hesitate. All the money we collect is used to fund our scholarships.

Before launching our annual campaign, the Foundation had collected some \$23,637 in donations, primarily during the first half of the year. Indeed, the pandemic compelled several organizations to make their 2020 donation during the first half of the current year. Let's also take note that over time, many donors have opted to make monthly contributions, rather than one single annual donation during the campaign. Their contributions are thus primarily reported in this pre-campaign amount..

Maroussia Kishka

THE COMMITMENTS OF THE QUEBEC FOUNDATIONS FIGHTING INEQUALITY

The Lea-Roback Foundation has been a member of the Quebec Foundations Against Inequality Collective since its beginnings in 2014-2015. 18 foundations make up this Collective. I represent the Foundation at the Collective's various activities.

The orientations of this Collective, in our opinion, are at one with our mission and the values that we defend. In addition, our participation in the Collective provides us with an opportunity to build collaborative relationships and ties with other foundations and to advance a joint vision in the public debate concerning the struggle against inequality and the role of philanthropy.

From the Collective's perspective, the State is and must remain a leading actor in reducing social and economic inequality in our society. The double socio-health and economic crisis that we've been going through demonstrates that only our Governments have the levers at their disposal that enable them to take action expeditiously and on a large scale to protect the population's health and to help their citizens make it through the period of economic stagnation, imposed upon us by the pandemic. In previous statements and positions, the Collective has come out in favour of an equitable tax system, arguing that it constitutes one of the most powerful redistribution instruments that Governments can make use of.

The Collective recently made public a statement of commitment *To Fight Inequality, A Commitment to Philanthropy* that is rooted in two fundamental principles: 1) reasserting the State's role; and 2) the conviction that philanthropy has a special responsibility to help shrink the rise of inequality, to cushion the social crisis and to rebuild more resilient systems.

What our foundations do is of public interest. Although our financial resources come from private donors, the fiscal advantages that we enjoy represent a form of indirect public support for our activities. In view of these privileges, the foundations are bound by an implicit social compact. Our declaration of commitment thus proposes certain basic rules to be followed in view of this compact and to thereby act responsibly.

This social compact rests upon two basic premises. First of all, philanthropic foundations are actors who are part of civil society. They seek to contribute to the common good, that are both distinct and complementary to the role played by the State. Secondly, the foundations wish to inform the society in which they operate about what they do and to commit themselves to working continuously towards improving the impact and coherence of what they do.

To find out more about the Collective and the Statement of Commitment, please visit the Collective's Web site at:
www.collectifdesfondations.org/

Céline Lamontagne



EXCEPTIONNEL PARTNERS

the Fondation Pierre-Laurier Baribeau;
the Sœurs de Saint-Joseph de Saint-Hyacinthe
(comité solidarité SJSH).

GREAT PARTNERS OF THE FOUNDATION

the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ);
the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN);
the Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ);
the Fondation Solstice;
the Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS);
Mr André Joffe;
Ms Louise Potvin;
Ms Nicole Ranger;
Ms Donna Mergler;
Ms Rose Alper;
and a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

PARTNERS OF THE FOUNDATION

the ICEA;
the Bâtirente;
the Fédération autonome de l'enseignement (FAE);
the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ);
the Fédération nationale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ-CSN);
the Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement (FSE-CSQ);
the Maison générale des Ursulines de Québec;
the Syndicat de l'enseignement de l'Ouest de Montréal (FAE);
the Syndicat des professionnelles et des professionnels du milieu de l'éducation de Montréal (CSQ);
Ms Laura Alper;
Ms Jacqueline Bassini;
Ms Lorraine Pagé;
Ms Katherine Roback;
Ms Rivka Augenfeld;
Mr. Danielle Casara;
Ms. Mathilde Baisez;
Ms. Céline Lamontagne;
Ms. Marie Leahey;
Maroussia Kishka;
and a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Newsletter Lea Roback Foundation
Postal Box 431, Succ. Boucherville
Boucherville (Québec) J4B 5W2

Editorial collaborators: Maroussia Kishka, Céline Lamontagne, Lorraine Pagé.
Revision: Jeanette Biondi, Pierre Duclos, Céline Lamontagne et Lorraine Pagé
Traduction vers l'anglais: Allen Gottheil.
Co-ordination: Lorraine Pagé.
Design and illustration: Irène Ellenberger
Photos: Lea Roback Foundation, the Scholarship Recipients.

www.fondationlearoback.org
facebook.com/fondationlearobackboursesdetude