# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020







#### **MISSION**

The Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre is a hub of urban services, a living environment and a cultural anchor for First Peoples, dedicated to the well-being, justice and social inclusion, it promotes harmonious coexistence in the community.

#### **VISION**

Leader of a committed Indigenous civil society, the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre actively contributes to the social, community, economic and cultural development of the community through innovative and proactive strategies.





#### VALUES

At the Friendship Centre, programming and service provision are based on human values of commitment, respect, integrity, solidarity.



#### OSCAR KISTABISH

The year 2019-2020 ended in great disruption. Adapting to change is very much what characterizes us at the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre and explains the flexible growth of our services! In order to meet our members' needs and their desire for justice and a good life, the Mino Pimatisi8in, our team is always looking to provide and improve services in the best possible way.

In the past year, we have managed together to chart the course of a reorganization that calls for the abandonment of old ways of doing things, with all the grief that this entails. Our team has been able to courageously pursue the process of change by putting all its heart into it for the common good.

Sadly too, other losses have befallen us, friends have left us. Madjacin Adrienne, Henry, Timmy, Judith, Ronnie, Daniel, Farrel Mathieu, Nathan, Shawn... Madjacin too and meegwetc to Jean Papatie, a founding member of our Friendship Centre.

Like everyone else, our year-end was upset by this crisis related to COVID-19. My hat goes off to the Friendship Centre's crisis management committee, which was able to navigate under changing winds to ensure that no one was abandoned. Our directors and managers have been "bush pilots" to provide essential services to our most vulnerable brothers and sisters, while being there for employees in uncertain times. Special thanks to my colleagues on the Board of Directors who made themselves available for weekly meetings in crisis management mode. The Centre's team and the community have benefited from your consistent and caring presence!

This year, we stood «proudly together», two words that define us as a team, as partners, and as an urban Indigenous community. These words remind us of our pride in our culture and our values of caring for one another.

Proudly united, it is also my wish for all of us for the future, we greatly need it!

Kitci Meegwetc!

Coed testalit



Kwe, Wachiya!

In this period of great uncertainty, the Vald'Or Native Friendship Centre is taking stock of the year 2019-2020 in a particular context that affects the entire planet.

Looking back on a year of rich and productive activities, disrupted by a pandemic, is a rather laborious exercise. But let's not let COVID-19 overshadow the exceptional work of our team, the effective mobilization of our community and the unwavering commitment of our Board members.

For nearly 5 decades, our Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre has been following an ascending line in terms of development and growth. The last year was particularly marked by the implementation of an organizational transformation process aimed at renewing the services offered to the community and redefining our team's work organization. As social and community realities evolve, our Centre must always offer a response that is up to the needs and ambitions of its community.

Inthesummerandfallof2019.theGovernment of Quebec received two important reports that shed light on the existence of systemic racism against Indigenous people: the report of the National Commission on Missing and Murdered Girls and Women and the report

of the Viens Commission. the latter having been created following denunciations the

Indigenous women in Vald'Or in 2015 involving police officers of the Sûreté du Québec. Many of the recommendations address the reality Indigenous people in cities. Many of the calls to action issued by Commissioner Viens refer

to the work of Native Friendship Centres and its impact on the quality of life of

First Nations people in cities.

Although an official response to recommendations is still awaited. Government of Quebec stated in December 2019 that it intends to «rely on Native Friendship Centres as a gateway to integrate the Quebec government services in the urban indigenous communities». government position finally recognizes the importance of the Friendship Centres' work and the importance of their mission in the lives of thousands of Indigenous people for the past 50 years. In Val-d'Or, our Centre has become an urban model of services for Indigenous people through the deployment of its initiatives, particularly in health and wellness, community housing, alternative justice, social economy, educational success and perseverance, skills development and employability. It is encouraging to see that our constant efforts and sustained work with the community are finally being recognized for what they are worth.

And when the health crisis hit us hard, we continued (and will continue) to do what we've always done: take care of each and everyone...

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# Proudly united in the context of a pandemic

The directives issued by the Quebec government in March 2020 forced the temporary closure of premises and the adjustment of services to create a social safety net for the most vulnerable. Willie's Place was temporarily relocated to facilitate compliance with health regulations. Psychosocial intervention, justice and health services were maintained and a food security service was set up.



#### **961** different people use the Friendship Centre's services on a regular basis.

Anicinabe: 60%

Eeyou : **24%** 

Other: 16%



# The team is growing and gaining experience

## 99 employees 50 Indigenous employees

The temporary relocation of part of the administrative services became necessary due to a lack of space. In October, the employees gathered to inaugurate the new administrative offices and to recognize the commitment and years of service of colleagues.

20 years for Michael Daigle and Yvonne Lacoursière 15 years for Mélanie Bowen 10 years for Stéphane Laroche 5 to 10 years for Patrice Kenney, Jessica Daigle-Bourdon, Marie-Louise Nastasiak, Jerry Diamond, Odette Morin and Peggy Trudel

Kitci Meegwetc!



#### **Accessibility to services**

The Local Table for Accessibility to Urban Services for Indigenous People in the MRC de la Vallée-de-l'Or held a first retreat that allowed some fifty partners to work on concrete actions to improve accessibility to urban services and to set up projects that are in line with the calls for action of the Inquiry Commission on the Relations between Indigenous People and Certain Public Services (CERP).

#### Mino Pimatisi8in

Implementation of a renewed offer of health care, health and social services as part of the Mino Pimatisi8in - Well-being and overall health of Indigenous people initiative, thanks to financial support from the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services:

- Front-line care, health and social services
- Traditional healing services



The Friendship Centre and the **Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation** are engaged in a fruitful partnership that allows for organizational strengthening and strategic positioning, for the community and social prosperity of Indigenous people of Val-d'Or and Quebec.

This partnership allows for the hiring of human resources dedicated to organizational transformation, the addition of external professional services and support for costs related to organizational transition.



#### Mëmëgwashi Gala

The Circus invited itself to the Mëmëgwashi Gala! A renewed and fun formula, much to the delight of children and parents alike, honoured **150** students and celebrated their academic success and perseverance.



The Mëmëgwashi Honourable Mention recognized the academic achievements of two sisters, Alanah and Wabigoni Papatie, two graduates who are beginning a career in nursing. They pose here with Sharon Hunter, Vice-President and Oscar Kistabish, President of the Friendship Centre.



# 20th Campaign for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Well started with a great mobilization of partners and original initiatives such as social media filters under the theme Show your Colours, the  $20^{\rm th}$  campaign came to an abrupt halt in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



#### 1974-2019

The members gathered for the 45th Annual General Assembly marking the deep-rooted presence in the city of the great white pine that is the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre.



The provincial Native Friendship Centre movement celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a major convention organized by the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ), which brought together employees, Board members and members of all the Friendship Centres in Quebec City.

A great delegation represented Val-d'Or!

The movement includes f 11 Friendship Gentres in Quebec and f 119 in Canada.

# Implementation of the Anwatan pilot project - calm waters

In response to the growing needs of people experiencing homelessness or social exclusion, the Friendship Centre is deploying a first multidisciplinary team for a renewed offer of front-line services in social inclusion.

1629 interventions

were made with

192 community members



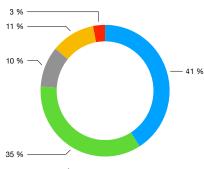
#### Willie's Place Nigan

Willie's Place-Nigan with high social acceptability is first and foremost a safe place where people can go and rest.

- "Seeing the smile, the greeting and comfort of welcome."-
- A community member when asked how he feels at Willie's Place

45
activities
to build
relationships:
collective
artwork,
talking circles,
outings to the
Kinawit cultural
site, snaring,
movies, bingo
and thematic
activities.

Answers to the question: What do you like at Willie's Place/Nigan?



- General atmosphere
- Basic needs: resting, eating, drinking
- Mutual assistance, support, interventions
- Socializing
- Involvement and pride

35 169 attendances



About 400 different people



#### Psychosocial Intervention Service

Psychosocial intervention services are aimed at the well-being of the individual through culturally relevant assistance to improve his/her quality of life, strengthen interpersonal relationships and live in harmony with his/her environment.

**5 180** interventions were made with

490 community members

Decrease of 51% due to organizational transformation and changes in statistical methods

The sobriety maintenance anonymous group reached **117** people in 24 meetings.

56% () () 44%

"Through this healing activity, I learned that I'm stronger emotionally and that I'm wearing beautiful spiritual colours."

- A woman participating in a healing activity at the Kinawit cultural site



#### Birth, growth and parenthood

Based on the community members' needs and interests, healing activities, including a sharing circle with Cree women, brought together women and mothers of all ages to discuss topics related to pregnancy, birth, the arrival of babies in the family, traditional knowledge and the perinatal services offered by the Centre.

The perinatal counsellor also responds to the needs of pregnant women and their families through individual follow-ups, home visits, but also group activities such as coffee meetings.

Childhood and Family



Mohiganech program

#### 242 community members

(parents, children, extended family or foster family) received early childhood and perinatal or psycho-educational services.

**76** children 0-5 years old

28 children aged 6-17

104 mothers

**34** fathers

**44** families participated in stimulation/ socialization groups

#### Parental experience

The activity program is renewed to further promote learning, discovery and exploration. The day camp is divided into three blocks: musical activities, with our partner **Young Musicians of the World**, sports and cultural activities, and outdoor and nature activities.

Every day, parents take action towards their personal and collective well-being, and the Centre's group activities, community and staff support help to nurture the parenting experience.

A grateful child draws a picture of his father with whom he enjoyed kayaking







# Grass-root mobilization/youth

### Youth consultation

A youth consultation carried out with our partner Exeko generated significant and meaningful participation and interest from young people.

Youth consultation and leadership camps helped to reach and mobilize youth, analyze and understand their needs and realities and to organize services for them. Youth leaders want to mobilize other youth and ensure a caring presence with them.



# 16

## Civic participation

Young adults get involved in the community. They took part in the citizen's chore Val-d'Or s'embellit, lent a hand to the organizers of the Walk for Sexual and Gender Diversity or volunteered by maintaining the Centre's vehicles, washing the toys in the Little Wolves' room or doing housework at Willie's Place.



# Contribution to society and the workforce

Skill enhancement services are aimed at reducing barriers to Indigenous participation in socio-economic life by enhancing employability skills, valuing the Indigenous workforce and developing partnerships.

Skills Development has refocused its services to better meet the community members' needs. In particular, a learning path open year-round has been created to accommodate participants throughout the year.

**63** different participants have enhanced their employability

57% 0 43%

6 different paths offered, two of which are completely renewed

Number of participants in traineeship: 17

Number of participants back to school: 10

Number of employed participants: 7

Number of participants with a diploma (ISP, DEP) : 4

Traineeships allow a better representation of the Indigenous workforce in Vald'Or's businesses and industries.

«I got a lot out of that. I went through withdrawal in there.

I did my therapy in there. [...] I was at the bottom

of the ladder. I'm at the top of the ladder now.»

- A participant in the Wabididjan learning path



#### Nika Clinical and Social Intervention Project

The Centre initiated work on the conceptualization, definition and implementation of the Friendship Centre's new clinical intervention framework with, as a first phase, the development and adoption of a scenario for the reconfiguration of services and interdisciplinary, culturally and socially safe intervention practices that describe the organizational resources required to better respond to the current and emerging needs of the Centre's members.

Partnership with CISSSAT for the presence of a nurse three days a week and the presence of a doctor once a month;

Routine health services are provided in the various intervention sites of the Friendship Centre and at home.

#### **Justice Access Services**

209 people reached

**340** individual or group legal information meetings.

355 meetings on family law and youth protection

A dozen justice bingos on various justice-related topics (health legislation, women's rights, housing rights, etc.) reached 100 different people

On-going work
on the
development and
implementation of
an urban Indigenous
community-based
justice model.

Within this model, the legal assistance and community intervention program, Anwatan-PAJIC, allowed for the first time four judicialized persons to have their personal life path recognized by the judicial system.





#### Kijaté

Kijaté is a 24-unit social housing building for Indigenous people in Val-d'Or where 31 adults and 48 children reside. It provides access to affordable, adequate and stable housing. The past year allowed to structure services that will be offered to families to make it a welcoming and stimulating living environment.

#### Social economy

Indigenous social economy contributes to the democratic, sustainable and solidarity-based participation of community members and to social, cultural and economic vitality through the production of goods and services, access to quality jobs, recognition of the Indigenous workforce and economic diversification.

Self-financing revenues of \$1.28 M

A welcoming team made up of 26 employees,

**81%** of whom are from **First Peoples**.

#### Food services

29 565 meals served in the cafeteria

16 100 meals and 32 200 snacks served at the

Abinodjic-Miguam daycare centre

**843** meals served by our catering and accommodation service in tourism

#### Lodging services

The lodging service staff was trained in new ways of doing business with the implementation of a brand new, more efficient and more user-friendly system for reservations, the NIBA software.

#### **Boutique**

In order to provide a favourable venue for Indigenous artists and artisans and to showcase authentic products, the arts & crafts outlet has been relocated to the Kinawit cultural site for the benefit of tourists and visitors.





The KINAWIT cultural site welcomed **3 469 visitors**. The strategy that was implemented between Kinawit and the Native Friendship Centre's skills development service made it possible to develop a qualified and competent Indigenous workforce in tourism services.

Activities	Number of people reached*
Overnight stays	330
Guided tours	475
Cultural workshops (introduction and cu	ltural immersion) 662
Traditional workshops (ceremonies and s	haring circles) 44
Traditional food tasting	296
Water activities	53

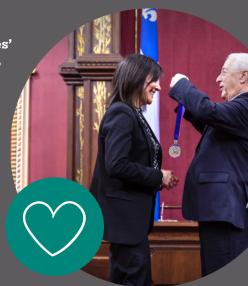
<sup>\*</sup>The same person can be accounted for in more than one activity.



#### For social justice!

Edith Cloutier was awarded the First Peoples' Medal by the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, Michel Doyon, for her remarkable career and commitment, as well as her contribution to the development of her community. Congratulations Édith!

Along with 9 other international Indigenous women leaders, Édith Cloutier was featured in a touching portrait presented on the Native Women Voices virtual platform at https://femmesautochtones.com/en/.

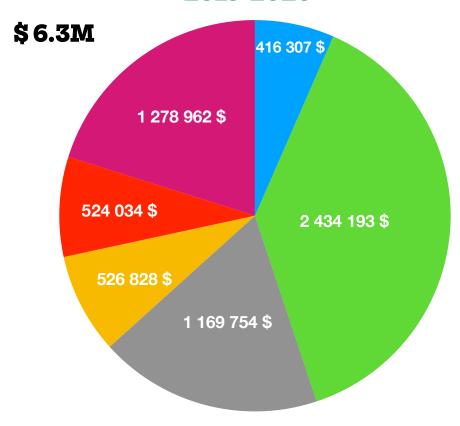


#### For the love of the children!

Congratulations to Martine Rodrigue and Yvonne Lacoursière, who combine more than **35 years of experience** together with our little ones and who have received the Prime Minister of Canada's Award.



# Distribution of revenues 2019-2020



- Support to the mission federal, provincial and Cree gov. grants
- Programs and services federal grants
- Programs and services provincial grants
- Programs and services other grants
- Service contracts
- Self-financing revenues



#### «They were brave!» - KIKISOKITE8EK8AK

Designed by artist Chantal Nattaway Simard, a monument honouring the courage of Indigenous women who have denounced police abuse was unveiled at Kinawit during a sober and emotional ceremony.

The gathering «From Denunciation to Reconciliation» held on October 4 in the presence of some 200 people, including many dignitaries, media representatives and especially women who have denounced abuse, was also an opportunity to heal wounds that are still painful, to honour the memory of murdered or missing Indigenous women and to mark the tabling of the report of the Inquiry Commission of the relations between Indigenous people and certain public services in Quebec.

