



Word from the President

In 2018-2019, we “Rocked our Moccasins” at the Val-d’Or Native Friendship Centre! In keeping with the #rockyourmocs movement on social media, we celebrated and demonstrated our cultural pride as First Peoples. By taking another step towards the rediscovery and sharing of our culture, we prepared many of our members to transmit their knowledge as well.

We have proudly celebrated Neighbours’ Day at Kijaté as well as the official inauguration of our social housing units in good company. The traditional crafting by artist Karl Chevrier of a birchbark canoe has rocked our spirits. Many people were able to admire and even participate in this tremendous work. As usual, we took good care of our little ones and Elders through our cultural transmission activities. A Walking Out ceremony has warmed our hearts. A renewed collaboration with members of the Nishiyuu Miyupimaatisiun Department (a branch of the Cree Health Board), as part of the Home away from Home initiative, has allowed initiating the transmission of Cree traditional knowledge on birthing and newborn care for new moms during their stay in Val-d’Or before and after delivery. A first day of sharing with Cree Elders and families has strengthened our relationships.

The Friendship Centre is now hosting a Young Musicians of the World school that offers our children a variety of musical activities that support their development and learning in a joyful and pleasurable way. We also extended our service offer in the area of justice with the new Anwatan Legal Assistance and Community Intervention Program (PAJIC Val-d’Or) in close collaboration with the Town of Val-d’Or.

We were proud of our Director General Edith Cloutier as her courage and relentless fight for justice were recognised by the Lieutenant Governor of Québec’s Medal and Concordia University’s Honorary Doctorate. She was also honoured with 12 other great Indigenous women in a Sagabone ceremony organised by the Kina8at organisation in Montreal.

Forty-five years after its inception, our Friendship Centre is pursuing its growth, inspired by the courage of Anicinabe women that we continue to support and assist.

Meegwetc to all those who collaborated in achieving these great results in 2018-2019: employees, partners, Board members and more particularly our brothers and sisters from the urban Indigenous community who trustfully invite us to walk with them on their life path.

Whether we contemplate our past or our future, we proudly wear our moccasins and walk with you towards a new year!

Kitci Meegwetc!


Oscar Kistabish
PRÉSIDENT



2018-2019's favourite!

Building of a birchbark canoe at the Kinawit cultural site– Tciman Kedan

Building this birchbark canoe highlighted the genius of First Peoples’ traditional knowledge as well as their perseverance and mutual support.

Under the supervision of artist and skilled craftsman Karl Chevrier, building a birchbark canoe was the beacon activity at the cultural and tourism site in summer 2018. The effects were felt throughout the year as it triggered for many a connection or reconnection to their Indigenous culture, allowed them to advance on their healing path and, for some, to reduce or quit their substance abuse.

The men of the sobriety group, the participants of the skills enhancement cohorts and Elders helped crafting the canoe.

“My healing path goes through my culture and being able to live according to it.”
A participant

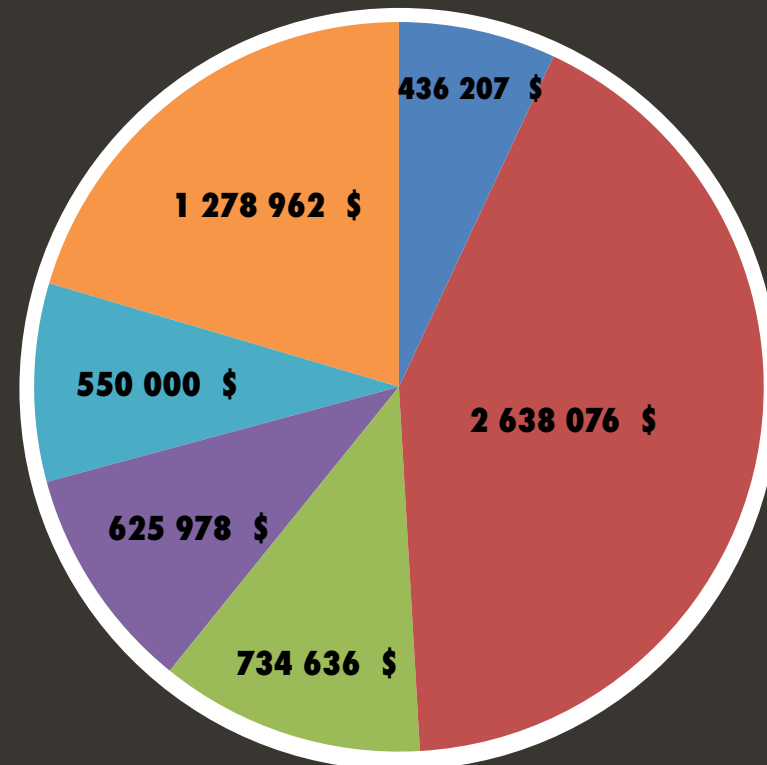


*85 employees, 49% of whom are Indigenous:
a team working together to serve
a moving community!*



Distribution of revenues 2018-2019

Total :
\$ 6.2M



- 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
- Own-source revenues



Two major accomplishments of the Justice Access Services

The Legal Assistance and Community Intervention Program (Anwatan - PAJIC) aims to offer homeless and/or vulnerable persons, Indigenous and non Indigenous, alternative means to regularise their record of offenses under municipal by-laws.

-The first Justice Forum, as part of the 19th Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, brought together close to 120 participants under the theme of Indigenous Justice, an opportunity to discuss the different Indigenous realities in the area of justice access and an Indigenous community justice model in an urban setting.



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Word from the Director General

The year 2019 marks the 45th anniversary of the foundation of the Val-d’Or Native Friendship Centre and the 50th year of existence of the Friendship Centres Movement in Quebec. The Movement’s spirit vibrates in 118 towns across Canada, including 12 in Quebec. Its heart is the people, those who animate these urban Indigenous communities and contribute to shape a living environment in their image: dynamic, modern and human.

For the past 45 years, the Val-d’Or Native Friendship Centre has made every effort to keep its focus on its community’s realities and emerging needs. Motivated by the desire to bring people together around a social, cultural and community ideal, encouraged by the quality of developed relationships and determined to design innovative responses, our Friendship Centre is pursuing its development goals with the ultimate purpose of achieving mino pimatzizi8in, the global well-being of its people.

In the Anicinape language, Mino pimatzizi8in refers to a global state of harmonious and balanced wellness, and more broadly, to the quality of life of Indigenous people in their relations with humans, nature and all living beings as well as with the universe. This quest for Mino pimatzizi8in guides our Centre in the organisation of its frontline services and the elaboration of a renewed provision of health, social, community, cultural and economic services.

As we read the VDNFC’s annual report 2019, we can appreciate the many and diverse services to the community, which demonstrates the bubbling of new initiatives offered to our community members. This effervescence is part of an organisational growth and transformation of our Friendship Centre: an opportunity to design a new identity in the image of our changing urban and contemporary Indigenous community.

It is with heartfelt pride and a spirit motivated by progress that I invite you to open a new chapter of the already 50 year-old history of the Native Friendship Centres Movement in Quebec. Long live the Friendship Centres!

“True progress can only be achieved in peace and with respect for living beings and their terrestrial and spiritual environment. Peace is a response to all the wounds inflicted to our dignity, day after day. Peace is the condition for our healing.”

Viginia Pésémapéo-Bordeleau,
Cree artist and poet




Edith Cloutier
DIRECTOR GENERAL

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.

The Kijaté social housing units welcomed their first tenants. This year of adjustment saw the implementation of psychosocial services as well as a social and cultural activity program that respond to the residents’ needs.

• 31 adults and 51 children reside at Kijaté.

“I’m finally at home now.” A Kijaté tenant



Kijaté

A voice for Indigenous people in the city

The VDNFC is recognised as a voice for urban Indigenous people; its expertise is sought at both provincial and national levels:

- Participation in the National Council for Reconciliation created by the Canadian government to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls for action.
- Participation in the Executive Committee of the National Association of Friendship Centres.
- Co-chair of the Local Urban Service Access Table for Aboriginal People of the Vallée-de-l'Or RCM and member of the Central Coordination Table.
- Testimonies before the provincial Inquiry Commission on the relations between Indigenous people and certain public services.

Women's well-being, a driving force for change for a whole community

- Particular attention is paid to the development of projects aimed to improve Indigenous women and girls' life. Individual and group assistance, arts & crafts and artistic projects, discussion and sharing circles, and the involvement of partners such as Assaut Sexuel Secours or the women's shelter Le Nid are but a few of the means we use.

"The heart of the project was the women's well-being. This was the core theme that connected us." Quote by a partner during a common activity at Willie's Place/Nigan



Change, a vehicle for growth

With four distinct intervention places – Friendship Centre on 7th Street, Willie's Place respite drop-in and Nigan, Kijaté social housing and the Kinawit cultural and tourism facility – the Friendship Centre's team develops new services and approaches.



A millennia-old culture at the heart of our major events

Mëmëgwashi Gala
228 awardees

Four young girls from Kitchisakik and attending the Polyvalente Le Carrefour received the Mëmëgwashi 2018 Mention of Honour for their involvement as volunteers and their commitment in contributing to building bridges between peoples.



National Aboriginal Day

A cultural day celebrates Indigenous pride and fosters knowledge sharing between peoples with a rich programming: traditional food tasting, demonstrations on drum crafting, traditional dances and birch bark canoe building, walks in the forest, kids makeup and Indigenous crafts sales charm the participants. The launching of the book "KA PI ICITABATC'", written by Bruno Siou, Marguerite Mowatt-Gaudreau and Julie Mowatt, which tells the story of 17 former students of the Indian Residential School in Saint-Marc-de-Figuery considered as perseverance models, triggered a discussion loaded with emotion and pride.

Over 600 people attended this celebration.




19th Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The Friendship Centre and its partners worked hand in hand to develop a rich programming. The organising committee members conveyed the campaign's message to the regional enterprises, inviting them to follow suit and organise small actions in their workplaces that will have positive impacts in the community. **The Gabriel-Commanda Walk brought together 900 supportive participants to fight against racial discrimination**



A remarkable presence on social medias

 6500 views for the video announcing the Gabriel-Commanda Walk
21,500 users reached during the campaign

Community Development Sector

The Community Development sector contributes to the community's active participation and involvement in the social, community, political and economic life through the recognition of potentials, capacity building and cultural and identity affirmation.

Community Services

Community Services aim to engage the Indigenous community members in a citizenship and united process allowing them to become the main actors of their community's development.

The activities have more particularly allowed the majority of participants to develop relationships, enhance their self-confidence and discover new things about themselves, others and the urban life.

Over 1000 regular activities have reached 462 different persons.

Community Services in numbers

6-12 year-olds : 102 children
13-17 year-olds : 63 teenagers
18-24 year-olds : 50 youth
25-49 year-olds : 171 adults
50 + : 76 adults and Elders

Family Services in numbers

Mohiganech extracurricular activities: 45 children
Mohiganech activities during school breaks: 29 children
Mohiganech family activities: 60 families
Summer Day Camp: 56 children
Youth Club (13-18 year-olds): 22 teenagers



Educational activities and outings develop knowledge transferable to school.

Involved parents!

43% of surveyed parents in winter 2019 come to the Friendship Centre every day (18%) or a few times a week (25%).

Ceremonies at Kinawit bring together families living in the urban centre and their families living in neighbouring communities.



"Assiduity and engagement in a handicraft project are beneficial for the community members." A partner

Two Spirit Group: More and more youth assert their difference.

Cross-fit

"I like to keep in shape, and it refreshes my mind" A participant



"He lost 27 lbs [...] Proud of you my son. I know he will beat diabetes." A mother practicing Cross-fit with her son



Young Musicians of the World

Nursery rhymes and farandoles (3 to 4 year-olds): 19 children

Extracurricular musical activities: 28 children

Musical activities for teens: 22 youth



Skills Enhancement Services in numbers

The Skills Enhancement Services aim to reduce obstacles to Indigenous participation in the socioeconomic life by enhancing skills and employability, valuing Indigenous labour and developing partnerships.

Tciman Path: 21 participants and 3 cohorts

Madjimakwin Path: 25 participants

Odabi Path: 18 participants

Wabididjan Path: 10 participants

Tailored Path: 20 participants

81 different participants enhanced their employability.

27 participated in a trainee placement.

8 participated in a training to obtain a vocational studies diploma in catering/restaurant.



Social Development Sector

The Social Development Sector contributes to the development and well-being of the Aboriginal community members by offering psycho-educational, psycho-social and health services that help create a balance in the soul, body, mind and heart, while encouraging the recognition and the development of skills, abilities and competencies.

Psychosocial Intervention Services

The Psychosocial Intervention Services aim to improve the individual's wellness by offering a culturally relevant and safe support which enables the person to improve his/her quality of life, to strengthen his/her interpersonal relationships and to live in harmony with his/her environment

13,885 interventions performed with **730** community members

388 women (53%) and **342** men (47 %)

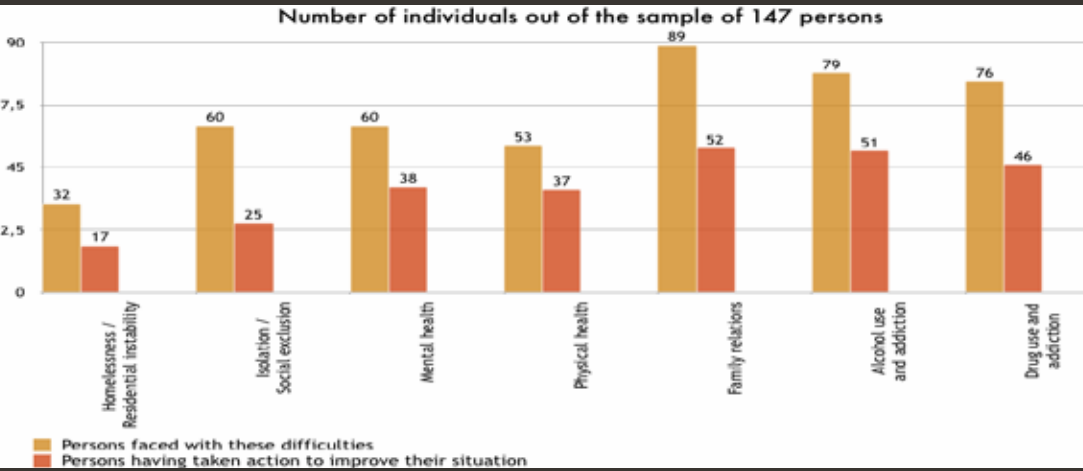
1,173 interventions with the 117 participants of the Skills Enhancement program: **65** women and **52** men

Willie's Place/Nigan respite drop-in

The respite drop-in is a gathering place with a high acceptability threshold for men and women in social, family and community breakdown in a situation of homelessness or residential vulnerability.

21,866 attendances (61% Indigenous and 39% non Indigenous) and **962** different persons. An average of 60 attendances recorded every day.

An evaluation conducted with 147 Psychosocial Intervention Service users gave the following results:



Psychoeducational Services

The Psychoeducational Services aim to support the development of the full potential of the child and family through the appropriation of new knowledge and the transmission of knowledge, allowing the child to evolve in a culturally appropriate and safe community environment.

125 children from 0 to 5 years old and their family served, **113** in Val-d'Or and **12** in Senneterre.

In Val-d'Or, **24** children from 0 to 24 months and **89** children from 2 to 5 years old participated in the group and benefited from individuals follow-up by the team. **115** moms and **44** dads benefited from parental services.



Justice Access Services

The Justice Access Services aim to involve Aboriginal community members in the full exercise of their rights by promoting the acquisition of skills and knowledge facilitating the understanding of the legal system, laws and regulations as well as legal recourse.

106 persons reached by the coordinator and the lawyer of the Justice Access Services, **292 information meetings** on laws and regulations and **1,108 interventions** performed in an outreach setting.



Health Services

The Health Services aim to engage the Indigenous community members as the first actors in their health improvement.

Since February 2019, a nurse is back at the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre as part of a partnership with the CISSSAT. She provides outreach and frontline health care and services.

Social Economy Sector

The Aboriginal Social Economy Sector contributes to the democratic, long-lasting and supportive participation of the community as well as its social, cultural and economic vitality through the production of goods and services, access to quality jobs, recognition of Aboriginal workforce and economic diversification.

Throughout the past year, the Social Economy sector has built upon continuous improvement and capacity building of its personnel as well as the upgrading of its technological tools. An on-the-job training for the food services staff allowed everyone to acknowledge their experience, upgrade their knowledge and move towards the obtaining of a vocational studies diploma in catering/restaurant services.

The Kinawit cultural and tourism facility and the Anicinabe culture have spread out from the local to the international level thanks to significant media coverage, including reports in the prestigious National Geographic Traveler in Germany, England and France. Kinawit stands out as an important actor in tourism and is becoming a must for experiencing, sharing and reconciling with a proud, authentic and millennia-old culture.

Own-source revenues of **\$1,2M**



A dedicated team!

Our lodging and tourism services benefit from a large team of **26 employees**, 75% of whom are Indigenous, who devote themselves to provide a quality welcome and a most pleasant stay in an Indigenous setting, 7 days a week.

An excellent internship and training environment, the Social Economy services offered a labour market integration and skills upgrading program to some 10 Indigenous participants.

LODGING SERVICES	FOOD SERVICES	TOURISM SERVICES	ROOM RENTAL SERVICES
24 rooms that can accommodate up to 52 guests	35,575 meals served at the cafeteria	263 persons participated in guided visits	52 room rentals at the enchanting Kinawit site.
3 793 clients 13,855 bed nights 75.5% occupancy rate, a 20% increase from the previous year	17,150 meals and 34,300 snacks served to the Abinodjic Miguam Day Care	358 persons slept in our cabins and tipis	
	1 931 meals served by our catering service and tourism facility		

Arts & Crafts retail outlet

The **\$11,795** in sales allowed promoting the craftsmanship of our regional Indigenous artisans through the showcases offered by the Friendship Centre and Kinawit's retail outlets.



The Anicinabe adventure at Kinawit

Kinawit is a healing and reconciliation place that promotes interaction, sharing, cultural expression and transmission of First Peoples' knowledge with a view to enhancing their culture and identity as well as peaceful coexistence.

A first cultural and artistic programming was successful with **4 665 visitors**! Kinawit charms all its visitors, whether they be members of the Val-d'Or Indigenous community, groups of visitors from Québec (students, teachers, employers, Indigenous communities, convention attendees, etc.), or international tourists. The magic happens with:

- Our arts & crafts museum-shop;
- Our permanent exhibition on urban Indigenous realities;
- Our invitation to share through land art, learning and healing through arts. The crafting of a beautiful traditional canoe, a subject of much talk!
- Our friendly guides and facilitators;
- Our rental of the main hall or the entire site to different groups;
- Our accommodation in tipis and cabins.

