



Word from the President

At the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre, the year 2015-2016 was marked by women who decided to speak up. Although sometimes a painful experience, we can only hope that their public exposure is a sign that women are reclaiming their vital role within our nations. Indeed, in the Anicinabe culture, women are the carriers of water in which life is born. They are the initiators of gatherings that keep the community united and alive. They carry the hope of our nations. They feed, educate, nurture and bring warmth. In all these accomplishments, they are supported by Kokom, our Grandmother Moon that influences the waters.

Our kokoms, our grandmothers, must take back their place in our communities because they have a lot to teach us. Women receive and transmit the stories and oral traditions and thus preserve the memory that keeps our nations alive in our minds. For all these reasons, men owe them respect and honour. Abuse against women is abuse against Mother Earth.

The Aboriginal women who broke the silence last fall in Val-d'Or regarding the violence they experienced did it for the sake of our children and community. I wish to thank them. Thanks to my sisters in spirit for the courage they had to speak out.

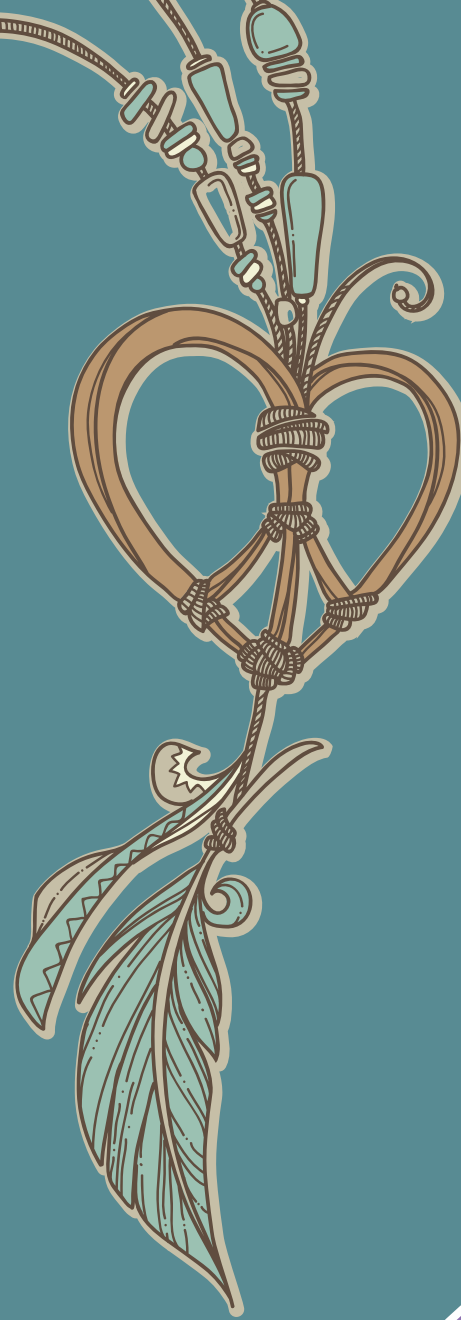
I also wish to thank those who assisted our sisters in the storm and who continue to do so. Thanks to the Friendship Centre's management and staff and to my colleagues of the Board of Directors for their sense of commitment. Thanks to our partners who showed support to these women and to the Centre's team, as well as to the many people from everywhere who took the time to send messages of support.

The wave of solidarity generated by the crisis creates great hope for the development of more harmonious and equitable relations between our nations.

Kitci Meegwetci!

Oscar Kistabish
President

Oscar Kistabish



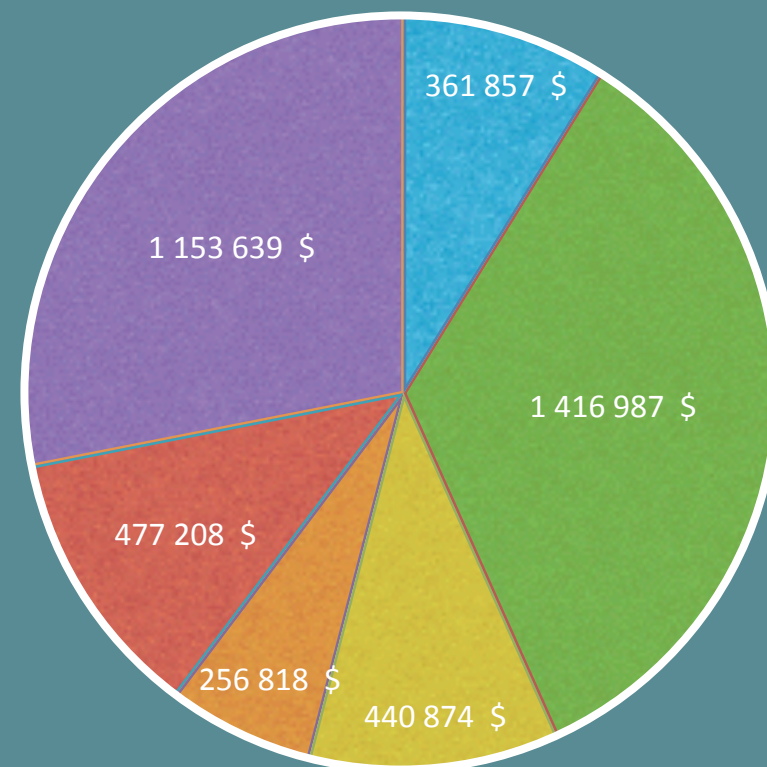
Kijaté "in full sun"

After 7 years of tireless work, the Kijaté project received the conditional commitment from the Société d'Habitation du Québec, a crucial step before going ahead with the construction of the 24 social housing units in Val-d'Or.



Some 40 members attended the special general assembly in support of Kijaté.

Distribution of revenues 2015-2016



- 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

Night for the Homeless



VIP Christmas



Children's Christmas

MISSION

The Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre is a hub of urban services, a living environment and a cultural anchor for the 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 is based on human values of commitment, respect, integrity, solidarity.

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Word from the Director General

Kwe, Wachiya,

The year 2015-2016 was a landmark moment in the history of our Friendship Centre. It is through history that we can grasp the extent of words spoken, actions taken, intentions formulated and desires expressed in times of significant social and political disruption.

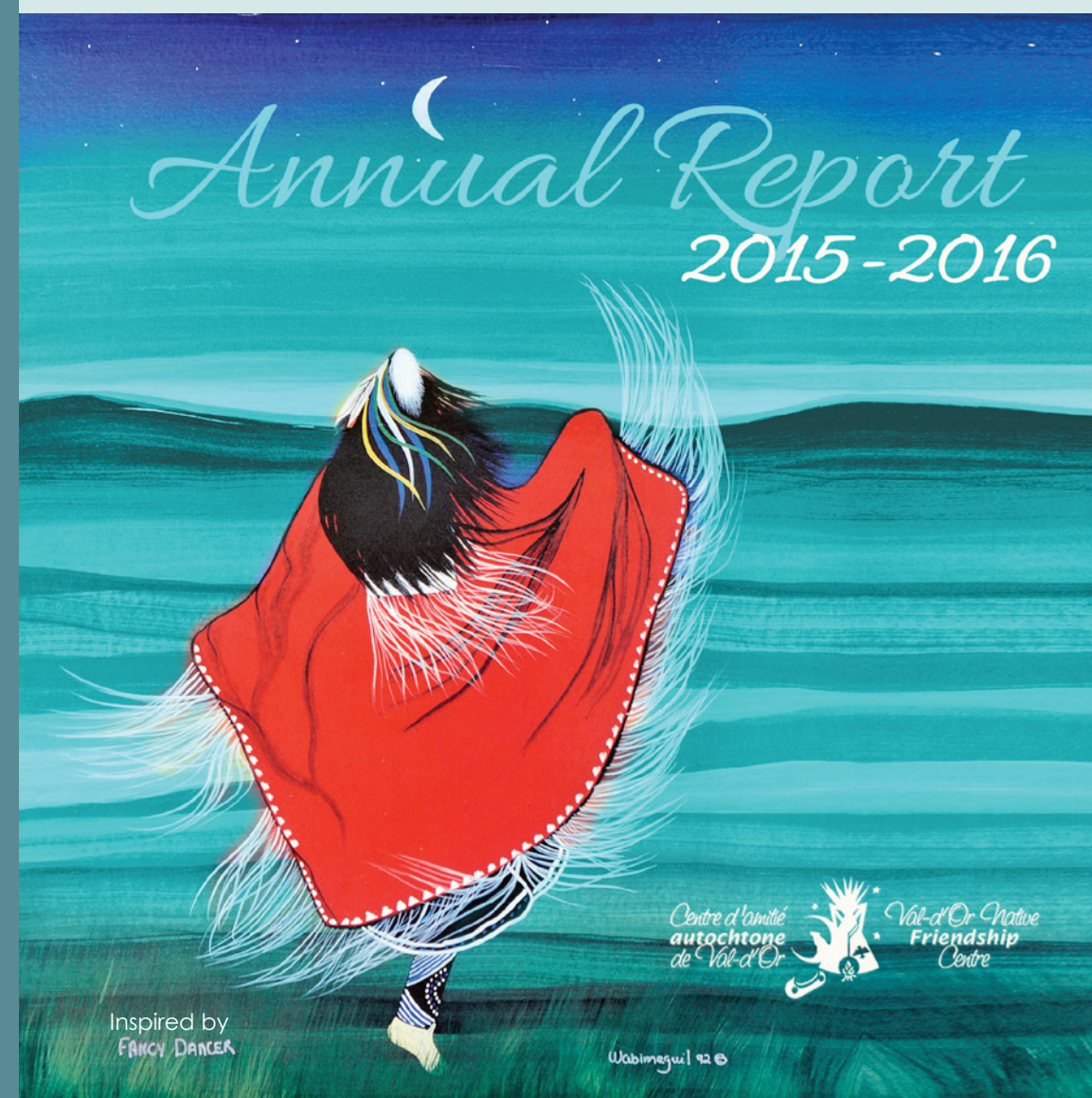
Last October, Québec was shaken following revelations by Aboriginal women from Val-d'Or made public by Radio-Canada's Enquête program. These women exposed abusive behaviours against them by certain Sûreté du Québec officers. The Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre was literally the "Ground Zero" of an unprecedented event, largely publicised across Québec, Canada and even worldwide. The Val-d'Or crisis – as called by the media – sent a shock wave across the population and government authorities. This tragedy's epicentre also generated important seismic disturbances that dislocated relations between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people. Since then, at the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre, there is a "before" and an "after" October 2015...

These women, with their courage and their desire for freedom, have blazed a trail of hope for others, and our Centre's role is to provide support, comfort and solidarity. In town, the Friendship Centre is a great urban white pine acting as a landmark. For over four decades, our Centre has taken roots in the heart of the city like a great white pine. The roots of this majestic tree, designated as the Great Tree of Peace, point to the four directions so that all the roads lead to this tree. Like the white pine bark and sap, the Friendship Centre is a good medicine that soothes, comforts and heals.

Only time will tell what history will remember from the past year. However, just like the community, we can proudly continue moving on our way to reconciliation with dignity and respect.

Édith Cloutier
Director General

Édith Cloutier



Congratulations Édith Cloutier!

Last December, Édith Cloutier was honoured by the Commission des Droits de la Personne et des Droits de la Jeunesse on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms for her contribution as a defender of Aboriginal rights in urban areas.



Gabriel-Commanda Walk

Photos: PAUL BRINDAMOUR AND VAL-D'OR NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE
Graphic design: PEGGY TRUDEL

A Gathering Place and a Voice

A Voice for Women

The reflections and aspirations of the girls and women of the Ikwésis Circle, the Anicinabe word for girl, are reflected in the **Ikwésis Moon Lodge Declaration** drafted collectively.

As part of the second **Sisters in Spirit Vigil** honouring missing and murdered Aboriginal women, **200 persons** walked to the Gabriel Spring for a ceremony marked by emotion in which the women read and sowed their aspirations as listed in the Ikwésis Declaration.

Last October in Trois-Rivières, participation in the great gathering of the **World March of Women (WMW)** under the theme of "Our Bodies, Our Territories, Our Communities".



Support to Aboriginal women who publicly exposed abuses by police officers in Val-d'Or translated into many actions in terms of individual and collective assistance as well as in the media and at the political level.

The **Ikwé Fund** campaign, created to assist women, has raised \$ 6,545, which is used to support women's legal procedures, therapies and support groups.



Unifying Events

Participation in the 39th **Salon du Livre de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue**, an opportunity for visitors to discover our rich Aboriginal culture.

academic achievement of Val-d'Or's Aboriginal students.

The last edition honoured **179** **awardees**. The Mémégwashî

Honourable Mention was awarded to Martin Gunn, a great volunteer and a true model of generosity.

Samian, Guy Bélanger and Florent Volant offered a great performance before a record audience of **3000 persons** on the occasion of **National Aboriginal Day**.

The 2nd edition of the 2016 **"Catch your Dreams"** calendar features the **179 students** honoured at the Mémégwashî Gala and presents 12 role models of perseverance.

The **16th Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** was held under the theme of "Val-d'Or, a city united against racism". The **Gabriel-Commanda Walk** officially launched the activities with a little over **1000 participants**. Also on the program were a luncheon conference under the theme of "From the crisis to reconciliation with Aboriginal people in Val-d'Or", a round table discussion and a presentation of the future documentation centre by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, following the 5-year proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The **Open Doors Day** allowed some 50 community members and 12 partners to celebrate the return of the fall season and to obtain information on the Friendship Centre's activities.

Democracy

The Board of Directors held 11 meetings and convened two general assemblies attended by **70 members**.

Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS)

The Friendship Centre is developing a number of initiatives aimed at elaborating reference frameworks and action plans in the areas of health, social services and skills development for urban Aboriginal people.

Research

The Friendship Centre collaborates with the DIALOG Network in the research project called "The Aboriginal World and the Challenges of Living Together: Governance, Multiculturalism and Citizenship".



Medical Transportation Service

The team responded to about **2400** requests for medical transportation services.

A great team, represented by the totem, that draws its strength from diversity and complementarity.

79 employees at the Friendship Centre as of March 31, 2016
43 Aboriginal employees
54% are Aboriginal employees

Training The **Pewaseha** training – Aboriginal Culture and Realities, and the **Wedokodadowin** training, both delivered by UQAT's continuing education service, were offered to the staff.

Community Development

The **Community Development** sector contributes to the Aboriginal community's active participation and involvement in the social, community, political and economic life by recognising individuals' potential and assisting them in strengthening their capacities and asserting their culture and identity.

The community sector's activities are carried out in the following service areas:

Associative Life and Democracy

Miskwa Mikana "Red Trail"

Prevention of illegal drug use and medication abuse.
Holistic health activities and collective projects helping to make better informed decisions, behave positively and promote healthy lifestyles.
66 activities held
401 attendances
Average of **6** participants per activity



Ikwésis "girls and young women"

Group activities for full participation in civic, political and community life
13 girls and women reached
16 activities held
53 attendances



Kitci Mikinak "the great sea turtle"

Prevention of violence against girls and women
38 activities held
386 attendances

Anicinabe Mackiki "Algonquin medicine"

Activities promoting cultural expression and transmission of the Elders' tradition knowledge.
This project is currently developing and will include the creation and maintenance of a medicine plant garden at the Kinawit cultural site.



Inter-generational Activities

Cultural and social activities

Do8dei8in Elders Group, café-meetings and community days
61 days of activities held
520 attendances

Summer days

10 activities held
Over **352** attendances

Traditional days

Summer: **101** attendances
Winter: **44** attendances

Arts & crafts workshops

23 evenings offered
187 attendances

Family community cooking:

12 days of activities held
123 attendances including apprentice cooks

Val-d'Or s'embellit

56 members present

Learning Support

Mohiganech Club "Little wolves"

Activities and workshops including 3 components: support to academic learning, family relationships and socialisation.
60 families reached, **74** children and **67** parents

Primary level homework support

37 children reached
Attendance rate in francophone and anglophone groups was **82%** for **177** hours of homework support.

Social Club

74 children reached
Average of **25** attendances per PE day

Summer Day Camp

47 children reached
Attendance rate of **71%** for 6 weeks of activities

Kabadu "Portage"

Secondary level homework support and preparation for exams
24 youths reached
348 attendances for **138** hours of homework support

Careers and Professions

Madjimákwin "Hang on"

Support and assistance to young Aboriginal persons aged 18 to 24 to elaborate a life project
9 participants including 6 new inscriptions in the course of the year

Wabidijan "Show me"

Hotel and restaurant skills development
7 youths followed the Wabidijan training process.

Social Development

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

Intervention Services

The psychosocial intervention service aims to improve an individual's wellness by offering a culturally relevant and secure support which enables him/her to improve his/her quality of life, to strengthen his/hers interpersonal relationships and to live in harmony with his/her environment.

In the past year, our team made **12,246 interventions** with **1,115 different persons**, a **35 %** increase as compared to 2014-2015.



The Intervention Services reception is an important gateway to our services.

1415 encounters with **182** new clients.

Our Intervention Services include the following service areas:

Poverty and exclusion

The Eagle's Nest

Fighting homelessness and residential instability.
4430 interventions with **333** different persons.

Santé et mieux-être

Pibamadzi "Walking to the pace of the environment"

Fighting HIV/AIDS as part of the outreach work.
923 outreach encounters, **1353** interventions in the streets, parks and hospital, Pikatemp... where people hang out.

Miskwā Sinibān "Red ribbon"

Fighting HIV/AIDS and other STBBI, using a support group formula.
691 interventions with **92** different persons.

Mino Pimadiziwin "Living in peace with life: past, present and future"

Health support to former residential school students and their families.
337 interventions with **60** different persons.



Willie's Place/Nigan:

A small project doing great things

Opened in October 2015, Willie's Place/Nigan was officially inaugurated on March 1, 2016. The ground floor is a communal room, a rallying point for men and women with ruptured social, family and community ties. The basement houses Nigan, a place for women. Willie's Place/Nigan responds to a crucial need for vulnerable and marginalised community members. This day respite centre allows reducing distress related to homelessness and vagrancy in Val-d'Or, developing public awareness and educating people on this reality. Willie's Place/Nigan is a resource managed by and for people with a good heart.



4020 interventions with **448** different persons.

Early Childhood and Family Services

The Early childhood and family service aims 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.

In the past year, our team has served **59 children** aged 0 to 5 and their family in Val-d'Or and **17 children** and their family in Senneterre.

A process is underway to offer improved services on an extended territory to **children with special needs** and to their families.

Social Perinatality

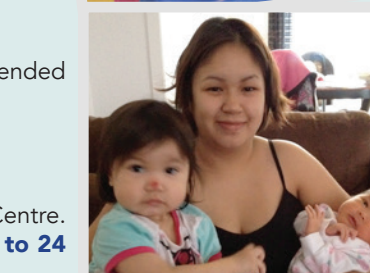
Perinatal services are being fully developed at the Friendship Centre. This service has reached **54** women and **48 children aged 0 to 24 months**.

The creation of a community safety and protection net for 0-5 years old children and expectant mothers is taking roots in the cross-generational ties that are weaved within the extended family and the community.

Minowé Initiative 2.0

The Minowé Initiative 2.0 is aimed at updating the existing approaches by implementing a **cultural safety** process throughout the health and social services continuum in addition to maintaining the Clinic's acquired experience, i.e. pre- and postnatal follow-up, contraception, 0-5 year-olds and influenza vaccination, diabetes follow-up and social intervention.

Children's well-being and parental involvement are core to the interventions of the Early Childhood and Family Services.



Social Economy

Aboriginal social economy, with its culturally relevant approach and social innovation initiatives, contributes to the collective wealth, development and skills recognition as well as to the inclusion and promotion of Aboriginal labour for a full participation in the economy and civic life.

Contribution of the Social Economy Sector

In 2015-2016, the activities of the Social Economy sector have slightly increased as compared to the previous year. These services have notably responded to the specific needs of our members from the Cree communities coming to Val-d'Or to receive health care by offering them and their escorts **78%** of the **11,893** bednights and **18,119** meals at the cafeteria.

Services responding to Aboriginal people's needs and supporting the activities of the Friendship Centre and its partners



Reception and lodging

24 rooms that can accommodate up to **54** guests
16,940 meals served to the Abinodjic-Miguam daycare centre
37,158 snacks served to the Abinodjic-Miguam daycare children and to children participating in the Friendship Centre's activities and programs.



Food services

35,892 meals served at the cafeteria
16,940 meals served to the Abinodjic-Miguam daycare centre
37,158 snacks served to the Abinodjic-Miguam daycare children and to children participating in the Friendship Centre's activities and programs.

Arts & crafts sales outlet

An attraction for visitors
Support to artists and artisans and promotion of their artistic creations

Meeting room rental

The Friendship Centre renewed its meeting room rental offer to Val-d'Or's community groups and organisations.
www.caavd.ca/location-de-salles.html



- Services available 7 days a week
- Own-source revenues of **\$ 975,829**
- Total payroll of **\$ 466,048**
- **22** quality jobs
- **73%** Aboriginal employees
- On-the-job training site

Development of the Kinawit Cultural Site

The Friendship Centre's team has been actively working at the implementation of its development plan for the cultural site.

Important works were carried out in the past year, including more than 2 km of forest trails, traditional facilities, a large parking lot for visitors and the beginning of the renovations to the main building. This community infrastructure will allow the urban Aboriginal community members to fully practice their culture in an inspiring and regenerating environment. It will also allow for the implementation of an important cultural tourism initiative that will contribute to the community's social, economic and community development. The tourism component will also serve as a bridge-building means between peoples.

This development project represents a new investment of over 1.1 million dollars, thanks to the contributions of several partners. Kinawit's tourism activities are planned to start in June 2016 and will create new quality jobs for Aboriginal people, while promoting and transmitting traditional knowledge.

