



Word from the President

While last year was marked by the implementation of major projects, including soliciting a call for tenders for the construction of the Kijaté social housing and the completion of renovations at the Kinawit cultural and tourism site, 2017-2018 has been a year of building on all levels. Employees and board members have needed to appropriate new knowledge and grasp new areas of expertise such as social housing and tourism. After almost a decade of struggles and hard work, Kijaté has gone from project to a proud standing three-storey 30,360 sq.ft. building that welcomed 23 of its 24 families on March 1st!

I raise my hat to my colleagues on the Board of Directors; these 9 hard-working and committed volunteers generously offering time so precious in an ever-demanding world. They give direction to the Native Friendship Centre's actions, a Centre that now includes 4 buildings, a fleet of 9 vehicles, 23 projects, and most of all, 85 employees. They are the backbone that supports our transformations and growth, ensuring an adaptation to the aspirations of community members and, foremost, a contribution to a greater and much needed social justice for all.

We have broadened our horizons and have learned new ways of doing new things. The management of social housing requires that we follow regulations, that we create tools to provide comfortable and well-adapted dwellings, but also a harmonious and safe living environment for families with great needs. Once renovations are completed at Kinawit, we need to harness the world of the tourism industry and move towards innovation to ensure a mutually enriching cohabitation between visitors and the community. We have also expanded our services in skills enhancement and development and are welcoming a continuous flow of participants, all with different dreams and personal challenges, in learning paths adapted to the directions they wish to head in.

Despite its ongoing transformations, its stages of growth, its innovations and the contributions of partners increasingly involved in its development and its provision of services, our Centre remains a true marker for the urban Aboriginal community, a life environment where we can enjoy each other, speak our language, live our culture and where everyone is part of a big family whose hard work takes on its true meaning: the day after day contribution to the improvement of living conditions of our First Peoples brothers and sisters.

Colleagues of the Board of Directors, staff members and management, partners and community members, all of you that bring life to our friendship centre, you have my heartfelt gratitude and admiration.

Kitci Mik8etcl

Oscar Kistabish

Oscar Kistabish
PRESIDENT



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.

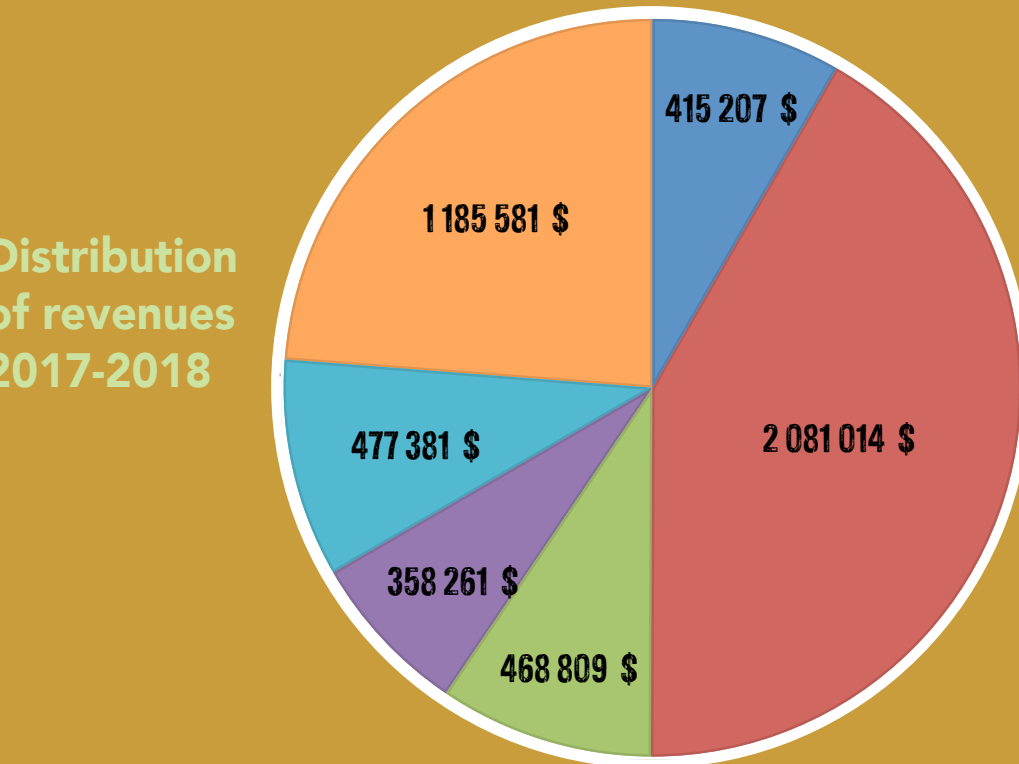
VALUES

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

*A big-hearted team made up
of 85 people, of which 51% are members
of the Aboriginal community,
dedicated to the well-being
of the community and social justice!*



Distribution of revenues 2017-2018



- 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



Prix de la Justice award

Executive Director, Édith Cloutier, was presented with Québec's 2016 Prix de la Justice award for her commitment to the defence of Aboriginal rights. She shared this tribute with the "courageous Indigenous women of Val-d'Or who have spoken out and publicly denounced the abuse they suffered at the hands of police authorities" during a dinner held in their honour.

11 women and their children attended the dinner.

1272, 7th Street, Val-d'Or (Québec) J9P 6W6
Tel.: 819 825-6857 • Fax: 819 825-7515
info@caavd.ca - www.caavd.ca



Word from the Director General

Kwe, Wachiya,

Last July, the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre was designated as "Friendship Centre of Excellence 2017" in Canada by the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC). This honour is a credit to our members, personnel, the Board of Directors volunteers as well as to the entire Val-d'Or community. To be awarded this top rating by its peers, a Friendship Centre of Excellence must stand out in several

areas: community services, sound governance and management, exemplary practices, quality of partnerships, innovative initiatives, leadership and influential role in the community.

As British economist Ernst Schumacher once said, "Excellence is doing ordinary things extraordinarily well". At the Friendship Centre, an ordinary day is made up of a thousand little things all aimed to enhance First Peoples' community wellness, social justice and Indigenous pride in Val-d'Or. Ordinary things translate, among others, into academic support to a young child, a home visit to a new mother, sharing a good meal at the Centre's cafeteria, assisting vulnerable persons in court, driving a grandmother to her medical appointment, providing skills enhancement opportunities to workers, organising traditional activities for teenagers, events promoting dialogue between Indigenous and non Indigenous people, and various opportunities for Elders to meet in order to break down isolation.

At the Friendship Centre, excellence is rooted in the human values of commitment, respect, integrity and solidarity. The Centre's employees are not content with praising these values; they experience them on a daily basis and apply them day after day in everything they do. Talents, skills and knowledge are rich assets for the Centre. These riches contribute to challenge personal limitations as well as to innovation and social change for harmonious coexistence.

Excellence is not perfection. Excellence is a combination of success and failure, accomplishments and hardships, experiences and projects that have marked the 44 years of our Friendship Centre's history. Achieving excellence is having the courage to do things differently, to row upstream and to go down new trails.

Finally, excellence is perhaps doing not-so-ordinary things with extraordinary people...



Edith Cloutier
DIRECTOR GENERAL



«Listen to the Elders
to learn their teachings»



«We are all connected to one another.
It's important to remember that and
to support one another»



«Nature is life»



One from
the heart

Kijaté

The Kijaté social housing project, over a decade in the making, has become a reality this past year. The completion of the 24 housing units and the selection of families has been timely and efficient, and tenants have unpacked their belongings in March 2018.

The arrival of 23 families at Kijaté in March was a mix of laughter and tears, feverishness and uncertainties. For some, leaving memories behind was a difficult and heartbreaking task. For others, Kijaté represents a giant step towards a new life, a step requiring a leap into the unknown. For some families, the move meant a long-hoped-for safe and healthy living environment for their children. The smiles on the faces of flocks of children running back to their new homes and those of visitors, happy for their families, are priceless.

Emotion is also clearly visible on the faces of the Centre's staff, all of them aware of all that Kijaté represents for the new tenants, of the challenges and commitment of those involved in this community housing endeavour.

Always striving for improvement

Many capacity-building tools have been developed to sustain our growth management. The management team is reinforced and benefits from specific training and coaching support. The strategic planning process gives the Centre the opportunity of increasing its ability to implement its overall mission and the general management team is better equipped and organised to sustain the Centre's development sectors.

A first seminar for the employees "Mino Madjiwin: for the well-being of the community – a shared understanding of VDNFC collective action" showed the multifaceted abilities of a team committed to offering quality services to the community and led to touching exchanges. The teams took a critical look at their work, celebrated their achievements and are planning for ways to make improvements.



Noteworthy partnerships

The Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre and the **Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue** have joined forces and share their expertise to increase access to health care and social services, promote the well-being and improve the health and living conditions of the urban Aboriginal community.

Increasing the employability of Aboriginal people on the territory of the MRC de la Vallée-de-l'Or through the delivery of training paths and workshops to enhance their skills: a mandate that the Friendship Centre and its **partners from education and employment organisations** have given themselves for 2017-2018 by joining forces to implement the far-reaching Mikimo Strategy for an active Aboriginal contribution to society and to the workforce.

The Native Centre and its partners in **health, social services, education, employment, public security and justice** are actively engaged in a process aiming at increasing access to urban public services for Aboriginal people.

The **Centre d'exposition de Val-d'Or** is coordinating **Aki Odehi – Scars of Mother-Earth**, a project bringing together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal artists in a collective endeavour of creation and reconciliation calling upon the mobilisation of all communities. This artistic and poetic action project invites to reconciliation from within the territory, providing an opportunity for meeting, sharing and coming together.

A community of solidarity and pride

The **Mëmëgwashi Gala** celebrates **204 laureates!**

June 21st: National Aboriginal Day

The sun shines on an activity-filled National Aboriginal Day: sunrise ceremony, traditional ceremony celebrating Kijaté, official inauguration of the Kinawit site and a festive afternoon with stands, food tasting and traditional activities on the enchanting Kinawit site! Hundreds of people participated and the population's response to this new formula of celebration is very positive.

Standing together at the 4th Sisters in Spirit Vigil

In the magical surroundings of parc Albert-Dumais, **154 persons** gathered to honour the lives of murdered and missing Indigenous girls and women in a candlelight vigil with songs and drums, jingle dance and poetry readings.

18th Awareness Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Sébastien Goupil, Secretary General of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, was at the Gabriel-Commanda Walk attended by nearly **1,200 people!** The Mayor of Val-d'Or handed him the official membership of the City of Val-d'Or to the **Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination**.

A promotional blitz in the region's primary and secondary schools creates a buzz around the **Gabriel-Commanda Educational Kit**, a fabulous tool to discover more about the First Nations and raise awareness about racial discrimination.

Medical Transportation Services

The team responded to **2,400 requests** for medical transportation.

Community Development Sector

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

Community Services

The **Community Services** aim to involve Aboriginal community members in a citizen and solidarity initiative allowing them to be the main actors in the development of their collectivity.

The regular activities of the Community Services have reached 411 different persons in 2017-2018.

6 to 12 years old: **80** children

13 to 24 years old: **106** youth

25 à 49 years old: **162**

50 years old and over: **63**

Our Youth Services in numbers

Primary level homework support: **34** children

Secondary level homework support: **18** youth

Mohiganech Club "Little Wolves": **48** children

Families of 6 to 12 years old: **62** families

Summer Day Camp: **48** children

Youth Centre (13 to 18 years old): **40** youth



Our Services in Skills Development in numbers

The **Skills Development Services** seek to reduce the obstacles to Aboriginal involvement in the socioeconomic life through skills development increasing employability, the promotion of Aboriginal workforce and the development of partnerships.

Tciman Path: **24** participants and **4** cohorts

Madjimakwin Path: **27** participants

Odabi Path: **17** participants

Wabididjan Path: **7** participants

Over 1,000 activities offered in 2017-2018.

Learning or well-being activities are rooted in cultural or spiritual, educational, sports and health/food related activities.

Kitci Mik8etc to the Elders or cultural trainers who keep the culture alive and contribute to the transmission of knowledge!

Day Camp 2017:

"It's always fun to make new friends."

11-year-old girl – Day camp, summer 2017.

97% of children surveyed at the day camp say that this summer's activities gave them self-confidence and motivation.

97% of children surveyed at the day camp say that this summer's activities gave them the opportunity of learning more about Aboriginal knowledge.

Homework Support, Fall 2017: 19 out of 19 children say they loved going to homework support for many reasons, including the explanations they received (58%), encouragement by educators (69%) and getting to see their friends (74%).



Christmas VIP and interview by the Fabrique Culturelle:

Examples of commitment, pride and self-confidence. Many young people had the courage to stand up and speak in front of others.

Kigi Mădjigimin group: Group activities lead to positive changes between families and community members. The strength of the group is equal to the importance of the circle in Aboriginal culture and the importance of the collectivity for community members.

Intergenerational Days - hide tanning and scraping: Community members take ownership of all stages of a crafts project. Preparing the hide raises awareness about the artisans' work and helps people reconnect with traditional values and practices.

"It's important to learn how to make our own things."

Community member, March 2018.

"We have to forgive our parents for not being able to teach us because of the residential schools."

Community member, March 2018.



"Let's speak Algonquin" workshop:

"We need to speak our language and pass it down to future generations. It's all we have left to define our identity."

Community member, March 2018.



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

The **Community Services** aim to involve Aboriginal community members in a citizen and solidarity initiative allowing them to be the main actors in the development of their collectivity.

17,935 interventions were made with **715** community members, including **427** women (60%) and **288** men (40%).

Fight against homelessness and residential instability: **36** persons benefited from assistance in searching for housing, **41** persons benefited from assistance on placement in housing units and **72** persons benefit from assistance on maintenance in housing units.

Support measures for residential school survivors: **162** interventions with **33** different persons



Willie's Place/Nigan day respite centre

Respite centre, place of sharing with a high level of acceptability for men and women disconnected from their society, their family and their community. Willie's Place offers assistance in an environment of dignity and respect.

17,676 attendances during the year with **867** different persons.

Nigan is a safe and culturally relevant respite resource for vulnerable women, with a focus on well-being on their path towards healing.

The men's sobriety support group participated in a trapping activity at the Kinawit Cultural Site. The men suggested this activity as a way of working on the many teachings of the medicine wheel. **5 men** attended.



Early Childhood and Family Services

The **Early Childhood and Family 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.

158 children aged 0 to 12 served, including **134** in Val-d'Or and **24** in Senneterre, and their parents, including **120 mothers** (73 %) and **45 fathers** (27%).

Social perinatal services provide support to expectant mothers and parents during the child's first years by offering assistance and approaches adapted to each family's specific needs: prenatal courses, assistance for breastfeeding, postnatal activities, family organisation, home support.

Community members have been consulted on Aboriginal knowledge and know-how relating to pregnancy, childbirth and childhood. These consultations are at the heart of the preparation of a practical guide in Aboriginal social perinatality.



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.

The services are designed more specifically for Aboriginal women vulnerable to the justice and public safety institutions, for homeless people who are penalized or criminalized, for young people facing possible legal proceedings and for people facing housing discrimination.

85 persons benefited from legal information on rights and recourses, and assistance on access to justice.

44 persons attended workshops on justice-related issues, rights and recourses.

3 community mediations on housing issues attended by landlords and tenants through the Wanaki project

Partnership with the **City of Val-d'Or** for the implementation of the Programme d'accompagnement justice (PAJIC), a legal support program for people in social disconnect who wish to normalize their situation and reduce the impact of their judicial record.



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.

With a fresh new decor and enhanced offer of goods and services to the community, the social economy sector has consolidated its activities in hotel and catering services, tourism, room rental and arts and crafts boutique. Renovations to the dining room, reception area and rooms and the major development work carried out at the Kinawit Cultural Site allow Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members to enjoy a warm and comforting stay in an environment dedicated to well-being, healing and reconciliation. The official start of tourism activities gave the opportunity to the some **887** people visiting Kinawit to discover the authenticity of the Anicinabe adventure. Own-source revenues of **\$ 1 185 581**



A welcoming team!

A team of 25 employees, of which 91% are members of the First Nations, are on hand to receive clients, provide assistance, clean and cook meals. Everyone is committed to offering our clientele a courteous welcome, a most pleasant stay, and an enjoyable Aboriginal experience, seven days a week.

Social economy services team members have offered a dozen or so Aboriginal participants of the skills development training paths or students their first steps towards workplace integration in an essential practicum and training environment.

LODGING SERVICES	FOOD SERVICES	TOURISM SERVICES	ROOM RENTAL SERVICES
24 rooms that can accommodate up to 52 guests <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3,298 clients• 11,414 bed-nights• 63% occupancy rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 35,241 meals served by the cafeteria• 16,940 meals served to the Abinodjic Miguam Day care Centre• 36,441 snacks served• 1,241 catered meals served throughout our room rental services and Aboriginal tourism accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 154 persons went on guided walks through our trails during the summer• 194 persons slept in our cabins and tepees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 43 room rentals to groups and organisations either in the enchanting surroundings of the Kinawit site or directly at the Friendship Centre.

Arts and crafts boutique

With sales revenues of **\$ 8,285**, over forty artisans benefited from the showcase offered by the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre's arts and crafts counter promoting the artisans' work and Aboriginal arts and crafts.



The Anicinabe adventure at Kinawit

The 2 km of boreal forest trails, rustic accommodations in our 8 cabins and 5 tepees, our permanent exhibition in the main pavilion as well as our traditional facilities and our guides have allowed us to share the Anicinabe adventure with our visitors in this first year of operation. Combining authenticity and the meeting of peoples in a natural environment allow the Kinawit site to occupy an important place in Aboriginal tourism and to shine a light on the First Peoples. Kinawit is also a work environment for members of the urban Aboriginal community, one where living their culture also means keeping it alive. The site, with its double calling, has offered its community a place for healing and reconciliation through many social and community activities.

The 2017 National Aboriginal Day was a perfect occasion for the inauguration of the Kinawit cultural and tourism site, located in a natural environment on the shore of Lake Lemoyne.

