

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23



SOCIAL JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY
OPENNESS
EQUITY
DIGNITY & RESPECT
CARE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



At The Depot, we believe that food is a basic human right and that food insecurity is directly linked to poverty and social inequality. In developing and delivering our multiple food-based programs, we recognize the diversity in our participants' experiences and the complexity of their individual needs.

This year, our biggest challenge has been to respond to the growing need for emergency food support while mobilizing to address the conditions that create barriers to food access. Despite these challenges, we continue to pursue our deeper and more long term work of sharing knowledge and skills that nourish healthy habits, fostering inclusive and supportive networks, and advocating for equitable public policy.

The Depot: Where healthy food fuels solidarity.

We envision a world where everyone has access to enough nutritious foods to feed themselves and their families, a world void of the systemic oppression that creates food insecurity. In our vision, we continue with our intentional focus on growing, cooking and sharing food as a means of community building, but without the urgency in responding to an immediate and increasing need. We have a long way to go.

1 in 6 households in Canada experience food insecurity, up from 1 in 8 households prior to the pandemic.

National numbers show that only 1 in 5 households struggling with food insecurity access food banks, mainly due to stigma and barriers to access. This is true at The Depot where we know that about 25% of NDG residents live below the poverty line. This means that over 16,000 of our neighbours are likely struggling with food insecurity.

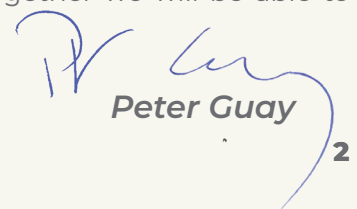
In order to minimize barriers to our programs and services we continue to critically assess our organization and learn to further embed anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices in our work.

In 2022 we provided **10,000 emergency food baskets** to over **2,000 households, 31,416 meals, and 40,516 snacks in afterschool programs**. Across all our programs, from gardens to cooking workshops, we reached over **5,200 individuals**. By the end of 2022 we were providing about **1,200 emergency food baskets** per month, with up to **144 new families** registering with us monthly.

None of this is possible without our incredible team at The Depot. Through every challenge, the team has rallied to ensure that service continues. I am truly grateful for the dedication, passion and innovation that the team brings to our organization day after day.

The board of directors met six times in the past year, and countless committee meetings took place between those, to ensure that the governance of the organization continues to improve, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of The Depot.

Thank you to everyone who is on this journey with us. It is only together we will be able to achieve the vision of a world where we can all thrive.


Peter Guay

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Increasing demand means increasing innovation as we strive to find the balance between responding to pressing community needs and mobilizing for long term solutions to food insecurity.

As we problem-solve and adapt, our core values guide us.

Social justice & solidarity are at the heart of our work – it is our deep desire to live in a more just world that drives us to action. It is critical that we collaborate with community members with lived experience of food insecurity and partner organizations to imagine ways we can drive change in our communities. This is why our Social Justice Group meets weekly to tackle issues such as housing in NDG, and why we play an active role with the Quebec Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food, advocating for a pan-Canadian universal school food program. This is why we invest time and resources in building local food systems, for example through our urban agriculture programs and by using our purchasing power to support local farmers across all programs.

Equity is critical and pushes us to continuously work to get to know our participants and their varying realities so we can target and tailor our programs to meet specific needs with low barriers to access and participation.

No decision at The Depot is made without considering how it affects the **dignity and respect** of our participants. It is easy to see this in the way our emergency food program ensures, as much as possible, that participants have choice in the food that they bring home, that they don't have to wait in long lines, and that they are welcomed into a bright and nourishing space.

We are committed to actively reflecting on our work, and remaining open to feedback from everyone involved. We strive to create an atmosphere of **openness**, exposing ourselves to new ideas, and challenging ourselves to approach our work in creative ways. We see this openness and reciprocity in our programming every day: participants become volunteers because they want to give back, and they practice languages and develop new skills and community along the way. Participants in the Resto and in our Community Kitchens are excited to try new foods, and to share their food traditions and knowledge with others.

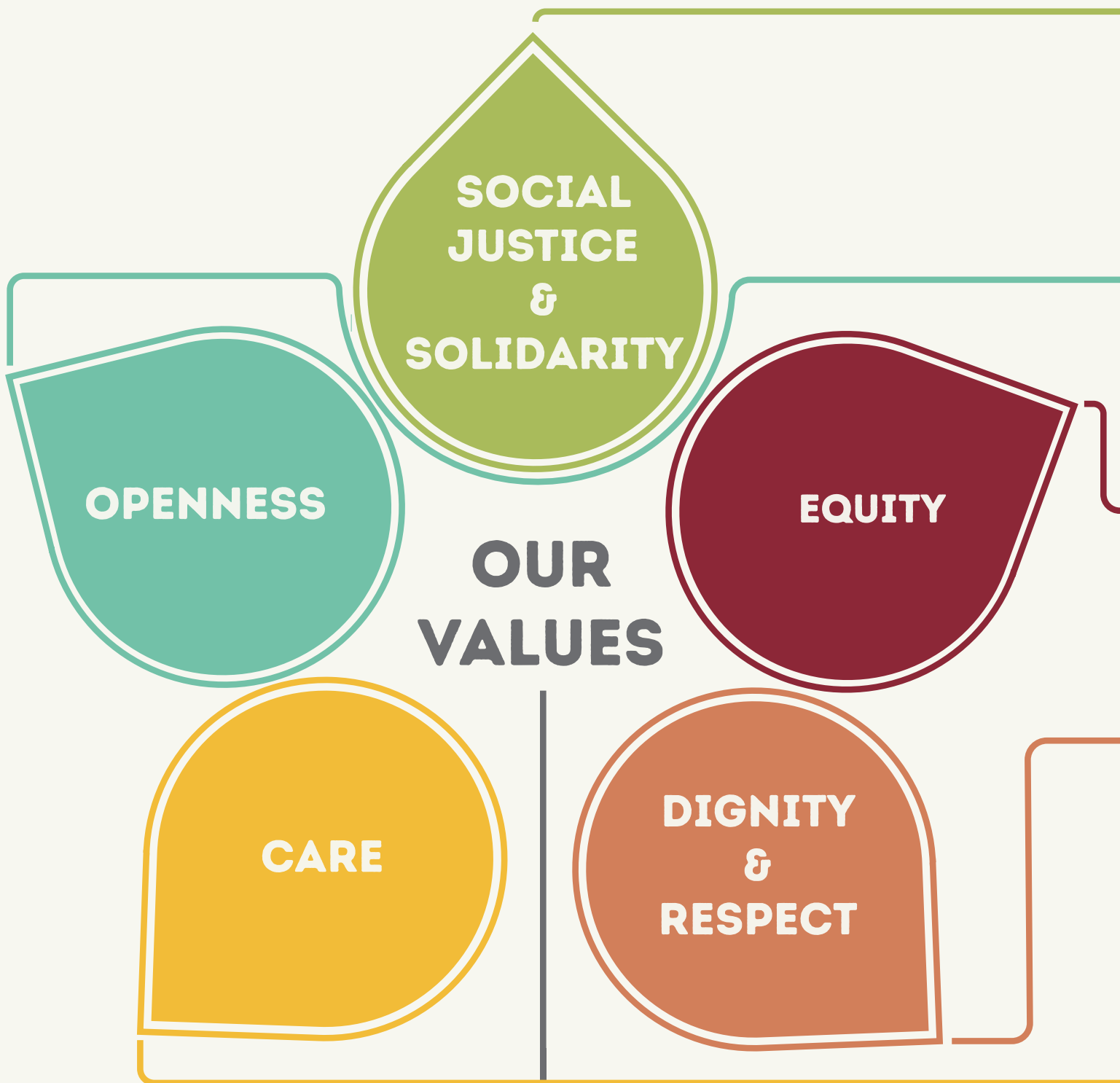
The long-term change work we are engaged in is hard, and can be all-consuming, especially as we are confronted with the day to day injustices that systems of oppression create for so many of our community members. That is why this year we have been centering **care**, which means not only caring for participants, but also for ourselves and each other in service of the community as together we create a new vision of the world we want to live in.

We are fortunate at The Depot to have incredible community support. Thank you to all of our participants, volunteers, donors and partners. None of this would be possible without each of you and the contributions you make in your unique ways.



Tasha Lackman
Tasha Lackman

These values work together as a whole. They guide our decision making and are woven into all our programs, from design to delivery. We hope that all members of The Depot community uphold these values with us.



As an organization situated in Tiohtià:ke(Montreal), The Depot recognizes that it functions on unceded Indigenous territory. We aim to place social justice at the heart of our work, as a result, we feel it is crucial to be informed about the past and ongoing consequences of colonialism and its policies of attempted assimilation, which have a detrimental impact on the Indigenous heritage that valued healthy food access and culture. We are working on how to support and co-resist with Indigenous community members, advocate for Indigenous Sovereignty, and the recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights. Although we function out of Tiohtià:ke, we realize that this is a global fight. This is a living and changing statement, a first step in carrying informed commitments that support Indigenous communities. We encourage all our partners and community members to work on and think about what we all can do to educate ourselves on these issues and foster a relationship with Indigenous communities that is based on facts, truth, and respect, and how it links with the goals of The Depot.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY

We stand shoulder to shoulder with community members and partners, working alongside people experiencing poverty and food insecurity, with the common goal of improving all of our lives as we work towards social justice.

OPENNESS

We invite all members of the community to share and exchange their knowledge, ideas and resources to create mutually beneficial cycles of learning.

EQUITY

We continuously strive to identify and dismantle barriers to access, participation and opportunity throughout our organization and beyond.

DIGNITY & RESPECT

We embody respect by upholding spaces and services that are dignified, safe, and inclusive.

CARE

With empathy, we create a culture of care, engaging with and supporting our community, while caring for ourselves and each other by setting and upholding healthy boundaries.

GROW

COLLECTIVE GARDENS

COLLECTIVE GARDENS

In these **open** and **caring** spaces, friendships were made, skills and knowledge were developed, and physical and mental health were improved.

We grew food and community with **137** gardeners and cultivated **26,764 sq. ft** across 6 gardens, increasing access to green spaces.

"I loved planting seeds for the first time and learning about the method. But most of all, I loved the harvesting activity and the feeling of satisfaction when walking home with a bag full of fresh vegetables that I helped grow!"

- Collective Garden Participant



1,709 kg of food
having an estimated value of
\$30,000
were harvested increasing
access to fresh produce

85%

of gardeners reported
their mental health
improved

89%

of gardeners reported
feeling welcome in shar-
ing their gardening and
cooking knowledge and
ideas

GROW

COMMUNITY & SCHOOL GARDENS AND PUBLIC EVENTS

COMMUNITY GARDENS

In partnership with the City of Montreal, we coordinated **3 community gardens with a total of 109 members** who each cultivate their own plots. It is an honour to support passionate gardeners while ensuring that vibrant green spaces in our community thrive.

EQUITY - SCHOOL GARDENS

By partnering with schools and community members we increase equitable access to green spaces in our urban environment.

Ça pousse! is our school garden program. In 2022, we developed a partnership with École Secondaire Saint-Luc, connecting with high school aged students to build their first learning garden. We also partnered with Judith Jasmin primary school in creating a collective garden space.

During the school year we provided **77 inspiring educational gardening workshops in 5 elementary schools and 1 secondary school.**

The gardens developed through this program become community spaces in the summer, where the students, their families, and neighbourhood community members work to care for the gardens from the end of the school year into the end of the growing season.

OPENNESS - PUBLIC WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

We create opportunities for knowledge and skill sharing.

From Indigenous growing methods, led by an elder from Kahnawake, to a botanical drawing workshop led by a participant, to zine making, to seed sharing, we meet a wide variety of interests and experiences with our **open** and dynamic approach.



COOK

BOÎTE À LUNCH

Through cooking skills, nutrition knowledge, and an understanding of food systems, Boîte à Lunch cultivates astute and responsible consumers who have a positive relationship with food, and who cook with their families. This program engages primary and secondary school aged youths - particularly those from families experiencing food insecurity. The Depot runs programming in NDC and helps to coordinate the programming run by partner organizations in 5 other organizations throughout Montreal.



1,391
6 participants from neighborhoods

82%
of children say they know how to make healthy food choices after the workshops, versus 69% before the workshop

SOCIAL JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY: TOWARDS A UNIVERSAL HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM IN CANADA

The ongoing success of Boîte à Lunch and the stories we hear from teachers and families highlights the need for more food programming in schools. This is one of the reasons that The Depot sits on the steering committee of the **Quebec Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Foods**. The Coalition works to advocate for a nationwide Universal Healthy School Food Program, which beyond providing nourishing and culturally appropriate food to all kids, would drive community economic development, strengthen local food systems and increase the food literacy of the next generation. The Depot brings 20 years of experience in food literacy programming to the work of the Coalition, and is proud to be working in solidarity with so many other organizations who recognize the huge impact a Universal School Food program could have on our communities.



COOK

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

Community Kitchens use food to bring community members together to cook, share, and increase food and nutrition literacy. They build community and play an important role in breaking social isolation. Our programs reach a broad number of groups, including kids and teens, seniors, dads, families, and newcomers.



"These workshops let me to know some different food from different region, let us to love Montreal city, NDG community, it's really made of mixed cultures, like a small world." - Community Kitchens participant

94%

of participants in our "Collective Creations" series report having learned new cooking skills

76%

of participants report that they participate in Community Kitchens to meet people in their neighborhood



"This was just wonderful. My kids learned about new cultures and flavors and how to prepare new delicious foods." - Cultural Cooking participant

SHARE

MARCHÉ DEPOT & RESTO DEPOT

1 in 5 people living with food insecurity don't access food banks. That is why our grocery store model for offering emergency food prioritizes the **dignity** of our participants in an effort to reduce stigma.

10,000 PEOPLE SERVED AT THE MARCHÉ



"I'm fully satisfied with the service at The Dépôt. The variety of foods, the amazing quality of foods, the friendly staff are beyond my expectations. I would like to thank each of you for providing such great service for people like me who live with disability and have a hard time to buy quality foods." - Marché Depot participant

31,416 MEALS SERVED

90% of participants say that coming to the Resto Depot has improved their connection with their community



OPENNESS: TA'MIYYA - SMALL TASTY THINGS

Participants, volunteers, and everyone involved have loved our Guest Chef Series in which participants 'take over' the Resto. In October Ikram joined us to prepare Sudanese Ta'miyya - which translates to 'small tasty thing'. With the support of our chef, she led the kitchen volunteers in cooking a delicious meal for all participants to enjoy. This was just 1 of 8 Guest Chef days that took place in 2022, with talented participants from various cultural backgrounds preparing their favourite dish to share with the community. This has been a great opportunity to learn from the vast knowledge and skills of our participants and to diversify our food offerings at the Resto.

"I enjoy trying out, or getting acquainted with international or intercultural meals/dishes that I would never have the chance to sample on my own." - Resto Participant

SHARE

GOOD FOOD MARKETS & SNACK PROGRAM

Good Food Markets (GFM) provide an access point for fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables at subsidized prices in three underserved areas of NDG. They are held weekly from early June to the end of October.



75%

of market-goers say that coming to the GFM increases their intake of fruits and vegetables.

“With a small child, I don't eat as much fruit/veg because I need to save the good & healthy stuff for them. The Good food Market has made it possible for me to eat more fruit/veg.”
- GFM participant

SOCIAL JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY: STRENGTHENING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

More than simply sharing food, the quality of the food we share and where it comes from is important to us, which is why we have established 11 partnerships with local small-scale farmers. Supporting local farmers means decreasing carbon emissions related to transportation, increased food freshness, and supporting our local economy and ecologically-sound growing methods. The GFM procured more than 25% of their total produce from small-scale local farms, and for the Resto, 29% of the food budget was used towards local and sustainable ingredients in 2022. We will continue to harness our purchasing power to strengthen our local food economy.



Snacks fuel kids so that they can participate fully in their learning, sports and other activities. Through The Depot Snack Program they also learn how fun and easy it can be to prepare simple healthy foods themselves.

40,516

SNACKS DELIVERED

7

 partners

12

 months a year in after-school programs and summer camps

MOBILIZE

SOCIAL JUSTICE CLUB & RESOURCE AND REFERRALS

The **Social Justice Club** gathers weekly to mobilize around issues of poverty reduction. In summer 2022, through sharing stories of lived realities, the group collectively took action in advocating around the worsening housing crisis. Together the group created banners illustrating lived experiences of extreme rent increases, unsanitary conditions, overcrowding caused in part by unaffordable rents, and renoventions by landlords. The banners were proudly hung outside of The Depot and caught the attention of local media.



SOCIAL JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY: STORY OF SOLIDARITY

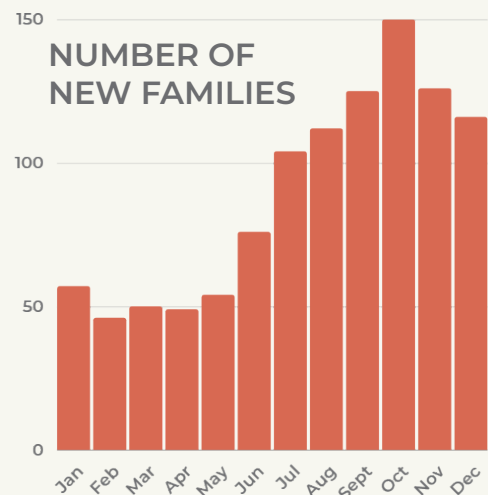


We see so many examples of neighbours coming together to support and lift one another up. One participant, Amani, came and chatted with our support and referrals team and pursued the suggested services. She went on to bring several friends and neighbours to The Depot, supporting them in accessing services, and has gone on to volunteer at some of our partner organizations, connecting more and more people with the resources they

need. Amani is an example of the community builders and connectors that make our community strong.

Resources and Referrals

As the demand for our services skyrocketed over the last year, our front line team has been busy welcoming new individuals and families, assessing their needs, and connecting them to the services they need, all while continuing to serve our existing participants.



MOBILIZE

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

We are constantly impressed by the dedication of our volunteers who show a commitment to our values, including **dignity**, **care** and **openness**. They build on their understanding of the complex issues facing other community members, share and learn with people from a diversity of cultures, practice new language skills and contribute to their community.



257 active
volunteers

"I am very proud to be part of The Depot team and hope to continue to be able to help out."
- Volunteer

16,300 volunteer
hours valued at close to
\$300,000

"The staff are always expressing their gratitude. I love my [volunteer] work here and they make me feel that I am a member of the team." - Volunteer

70%

of The Depot's volunteers say that their involvement with the community has positively impacted their sense of connection to the community

84%

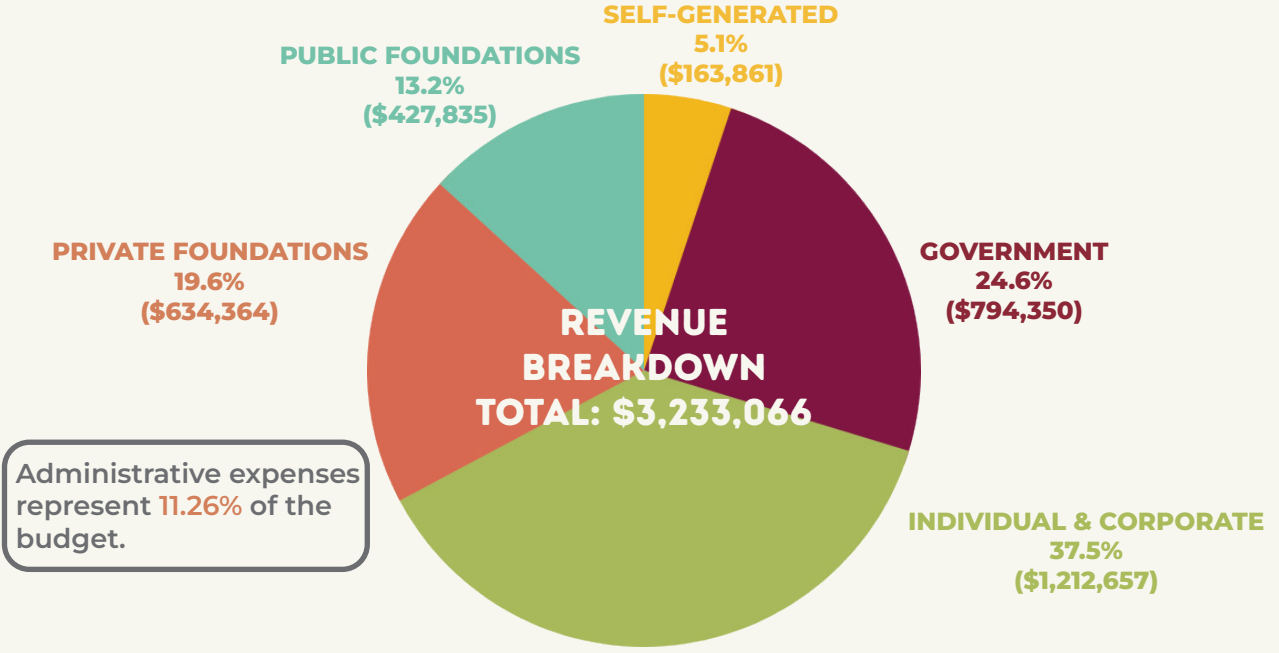
of The Depot's volunteers expressed feeling like a valued member of the organization



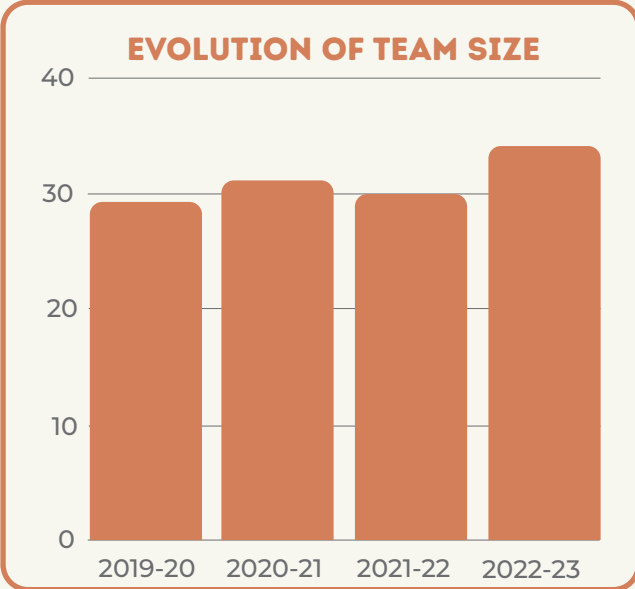
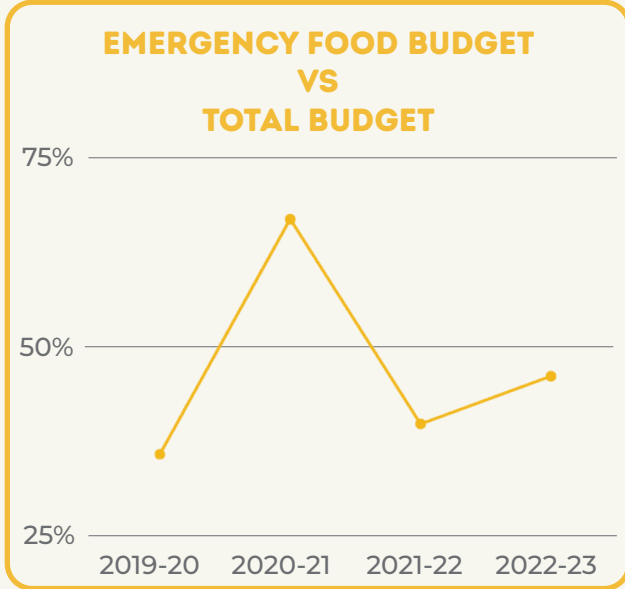
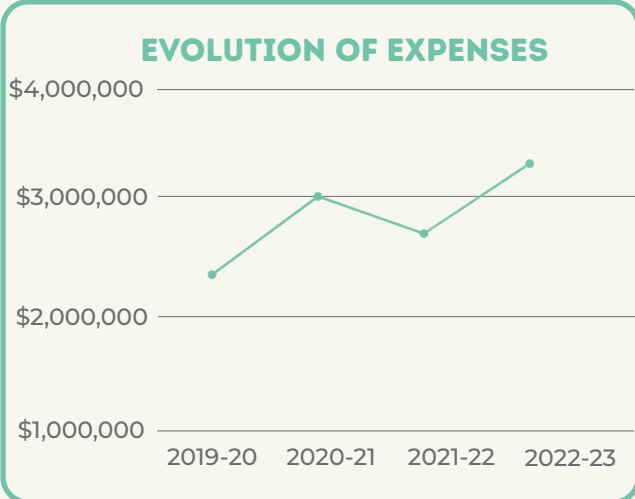
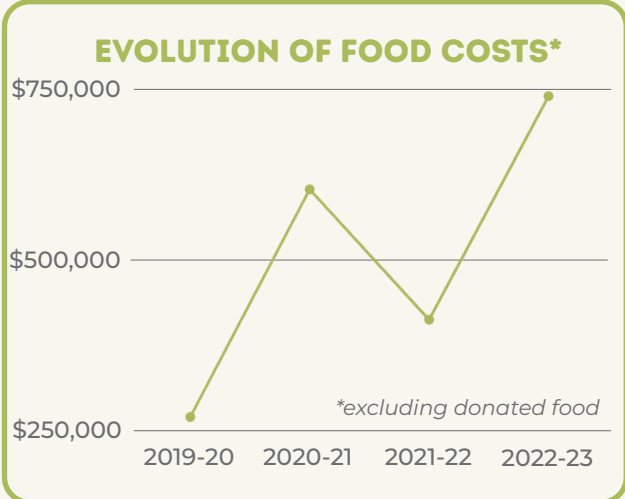
Our community partnerships make it possible to support the diverse needs of the vulnerable populations we serve. Thank you to:

Black Community Resource Centre (BCRC), Benny Library, Bienvenue à NDG, Bread and Beyond, Carrefour Solidaire CFC, CIUSSS Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, Centre Culturel de NDG (Monkland Cultural Centre), Comité Jeunesse N.D.G, Les Cuisines Collectives du Grand Plateau, Eva Marsden Centre for Social Justice and Aging, Fondation de la Visite, Head & Hands, Jeunesse Loyola, LogisAction NDG, Médecins du Monde, Mon Resto Saint Michel, MultiCaf, NDG Community Council, PAAL, PRAIDA, Prevention CDN-NDG, PROMIS, Share the Warmth, The South Asian Women's Community Centre, St. Raymond Centre, The Refugee Centre of Concordia, Walkley Centre, Welcome Collective, Westhaven Elmhurst Community Recreation Association, Women on the Rise, YMCA, our neighbourhood schools, and so many more.

FINANCIAL REPORT



Administrative expenses represent **11.26%** of the budget.



THANK YOU!

Your generosity helps people in our community **access healthy, affordable food**; **gather safely with others**; **share a good meal**; and **find resources** to help them move forward.

\$100,000+



Québec Montréal



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada
Canada



Prêvenir aujourd'hui, mieux vivre demain
Directeur de santé publique de Montréal



community food centres
CANADA good food is just the beginning

\$50,000+

Estate of Charles Slater • George Hogg Family Foundation
The Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited

\$25,000+

Gerald Hnatchuk • Gift Funds Canada • Gustav Levinschi Foundation • Merle Wertheimer and Sam Hornstein • Simply PHP • Gustav Levinschi Foundation • The Marchab Foundation • The Peacock Family Foundation • Trustees of Mount-Royal United Church • Zeller Family Foundation

\$10,000+

Carol Sector & Gerry Goodfriend • Depotium Mini Entrepôt • ECO Canada
Laurent Ferreira and Leslie Silver • Lindsay Memorial Foundation
MacDonald Stewart Foundation • The Malouf Family Fund at the Foundation of Greater Montreal • Norwegian Church Association • RBC
Samijo Investments Inc. • Stephen DiTommaso • The Tenaquip Foundation

\$5,000+

Aust & Hachmann (Canada) Ltd/Ltee • Charles Kaplan • Colin Hardie
Donald Olds • Douglas MacDonald • ERFA Canada 2012 • Philip Shean
Ian Stronach and Rosemary Mailas • Julie Shugarman & Ilan Gewurz
Kevin Austin • Marret Asset Management Inc. • Roasters Foundation
Rod Hayes • Selwyn House School • Strategic Charitable Giving Foundation
TD Bank • The Canadian Pacific Railway Company
The Michael Novak Fund at the Foundation of Greater Montréal
Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada

*A heartfelt thanks to the **1,875** individual donors who collectively supported The Depot in the amount of **\$703,104**. This community mobilization makes everything we do possible!*

Registered Charity Number: 891328007 RR0001

OUR TEAM



PART-TIME STAFF

Monica Ayluardo
Tabinda Mirza
Rachel Takasaki

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Debra Brind'amour
Janet Burtch
Bernicy Fong
Peter Guay
Momen Hassan
Alexi Katsanis
Susan Kessler
Samuel Oslund
Rachel Renaud
Peter Ridell
Pierre Zariffa

FULL-TIME STAFF

James Barrington • Em Bellinger
Natalie Berghuis • Renate Betts
Yanni Bouziotas • Nicolas Braesch
Jennifer Brennan* • Sebastian Britton
Dahlia ChanTang • Marie-Lise Chicoine
Karima Dajani • Abdoukarime Diallo
Kim Fox • Tyler Haughton
Caitlin Hayward • Houda Kerkadi
Marguerite Kinpack
Jonathan Kourakos • Julie Kourakos
Tasha Lackman • Shamara Mcleod
Jennifer Moran • Paula Alejandra Perez
Kristen Kiyomi Perry
Gabriel Robert • Melanie Romer
Daniel Roy • Rachel Schleifer

ALSO WORKED AT THE DEPOT IN 2022-23

Mélanie Auger-Zivic
Erika Beausoleil • Cassandra Belliveau
Wynanne Bindon • Virginie Combet
Armelle Dumas • Makéda Ékoué
Jacob Flexer • Paula Gruber
Chaitanya Hébert • Janina Hojczyk
Khayden Cesar-Mohammed
Hilary King • Jacqueline Lee
Vera Leskover • Thomas Liu
Anna Lyon • Nancy Mainville
Jessica Marden • Susan Munro
Gavin Musgrave • Kris Orlando
Cara Orsini • Lawin Pascua
Lydia Robb • Gage Russell
Boris Ruvet-Thebia • Zaiz Saad
Sheryl Shore • Bonnie Soutar
Caitlin Spence • Luna Valente
Kim Yeonsoo • Kelly Yuan

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**on maternity leave*