

Summary 2020 – 2021



Photo: Valérie Mazataud

It is a proud moment for us at Auberge Madeleine, having gotten through a pandemic and escape the brunt of it while standing in the frontlines. And hear me now, when we say we are at the frontlines, we were then, and we're still there now! Day after day. We are waging war against the virus to prevent a potential outbreak: to ensure that the most vulnerable women can have a safe place to stay, to help them avoid the street.

We took up the challenge to maintain our capacity and our services as is during the pandemic. As usual, we were fully operational and were at full capacity for the entire year.

We saw some new faces. Women who had lived in the streets for years but were not used to using our services suddenly found themselves unable to panhandle or even wander in their usual public places. 70-year-old women who have been thrown in the street for

renovictions, or because they had a cat that wasn't allowed on the lease. For a cat...sometimes their only companion in life.

During these unusual times, we lengthened the duration of stays at the Auberge, since the help resources for those in need were scarce. Statistics have proved this: 22% of women left Auberge Madeleine for an unknown destination. Last year, that number was at 10%...The emergency measures the government put in place during the sanitary crisis were poorly adapted to the needs of isolated women, which made the number for accommodation requests go down, which is the opposite of what we expected. Despite all that, we still had to refuse 3000 accommodation requests due to the fact that we were fully booked.

This pandemic has been very hard on women. Its impacts are far from being over. The financial year ended with a major increase in financing towards our mission. We intend to continue our work with women in difficult situations.

Thank you to the entire team, words do not suffice in translating the gratitude and admiration I have for you. Thank you for being so loyal to the job. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Mélanie Walsh
General Director



Since May 2021, I am the Services Coordinator at Auberge Madeleine. It is an honour for me to join the team and to be able to contribute to the mission of this vibrant and inspiring environment.

Since 2012, I have been working with marginalized populations (injectable drug users, sex workers, HIV, Hepatitis C, homelessness). Community work went straight to my heart and is very near to my personal values: social justice, tolerance, openness and humanism. By being in contact with such incredible people, I was able to evolve both as a professional and as a human.

As Coordinator, I aspire to offer a welcoming, warm and open environment in which the residents and workers can evolve and develop their abilities. This is why I am at the Auberge 5 days a week, with varying schedules, so that I can come into contact with every member of the team, be they part-time or full-time workers.

I have been able to apply my knowledge in social work to support the workers in their day to day, while also adapting to each of their specific needs.

To me, it is essential that Auberge Madeleine continues to exist as a safe and inclusive space for all women. Taking a wider perspective, I aspire to growing the importance of Auberge Madeleine's voice in defending the rights of women. There are still too many inequalities due to gender, if only when looking at the services offered to people living in situations of homelessness. It is fundamental that female homelessness is adequately considered and that the services offered reflect the issues specifically experienced by women.

Thank you for giving to Auberge Madeleine every year. Your donations make a difference.

Josée-Anne Kozel, Services Coordinator

“ My attachment to Auberge Madeleine developed during my internship as part of my college degree in social work. Apart from the team of workers whom I would come to know, the approach they took in their interventions immediately connected with my values of egalitarianism and social justice. They have a feminist intervention model that values the power to act in the women we shelter all while respecting their individual speed.

These are a few of the reasons why I chose to join the Auberge, first as a part-time worker, then full-time, and now in the new role I have held since last year as the counsellor responsible for the accompaniments of residents. That long job title means that I am there to support the women we shelter in the different steps they want to take during their stay at the Auberge. I help with getting them some form of revenue (social benefits, unemployment benefits, taxes, etc.), with accompanying them in their search for housing (on the private market or by helping them find social housing), with dealing with the healthcare system (applying for a health insurance card, getting medical and psychosocial care, etc.) and much more!

For many residents, these steps can become very complicated and are often the result of bureaucratization that can confuse the best of

us! Additionally, these women are in vulnerable situations and have often previously had negative experiences with bureaucracy. Not to mention the barriers they have met in trying to access services that are essential to them! This means my role at the Auberge has to be flexible, whether I have to accompany a resident to a very stressful doctor's appointment, or act as an intermediary in order to facilitate understanding, or help residents in recognizing their rights. Obviously, the support we offer is tailored and adapted to each resident's expressed needs.

Accompanying the residents can make me go through many different emotions, from being angry at the injustices endured by these women, to the joy and pride in seeing them taking power back for themselves in various enterprises and even eventually seeing them succeed, like when someone finally gets their hand on a revenue they have been waiting for months! It is truly a roller coaster of emotions, emotions that aren't even comparable to what our residents have experienced. Still today, I admire the immense strength and courage of all these women, who are constantly facing barriers and getting back up on their feet to assert their undeniable rights and values!

Vanessa, Counsellor responsible for the accompaniment of residents



TESTIMONY

Thank you, all of you
 You helped me
 Find the path
 Apprehensions and healing
 Teaching me to walk
 Teaching me to run
 To fly with my own wings
 To become a better person
 A better woman
 More beautiful on the inside
 With ongoing support
 Ring, ring
 I will call you

I must
 Will and courage
 You understand me
 Your shoulder is there for me
 Active and listening
 You were there
 I am deeply touched
 I am now happy
 For now
 Forever
 I appreciate your help
 Talk to you soon

Gabrielle,
 former resident

Last June, Auberge Madeleine won the ESTim trophy for SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR!!! This trophy is given out by the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Montreal, and it is a rewarding acknowledgement for the colossal work that we did despite the pandemic. ▶ [Watch the video.](#)



♥ **Thank you, to all our faithful donors!**

We encourage you to keep supporting us through donations, [via CanaDon](#) or by cheque, at our mailing address: **Auberge Madeleine, P.O. Box 83593 CP Garnier Montréal H2J 4E9**

Credits

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