

# FROM HARDSHIP TO AUTONOMY—BUILDING RESILIENCE

You never know when your life might be turned upside down. Challenges often arise without warning, and hardship can affect any woman, regardless of her background. This is a very real and ongoing struggle. That's why Chez Doris is such a vital organization: a welcoming, judgment-free space where every woman can get back on her feet, at her own pace, and with respect for her unique journey.

By fostering resilience, we help build pathways to independence, one step at a time. Again this year, we welcomed more than 1,700 women, offering them a listening ear, guidance, and tailored support to help them regain control of their lives.

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# FOR 50 YEARS, OUR MISSION AT CHEZ DORIS HAS BEEN TO WALK ALONGSIDE WOMEN ON THEIR JOURNEY FROM INSECURITY TO INDEPENDENCE

#### A brief history of Chez Doris

In the 1970s, a community worker set out to interview women living on the streets of Montreal to identify their most pressing needs. Among them was Doris, who was struggling to survive in harsh conditions.

When asked what help women in her situation most needed, her answer was clear: "A place to go without prying eyes or too many questions asked."

This simple but powerful request revealed the deep distress among these marginalized women. Tragically, shortly after this interview, on November 3, 1974, Doris was violently murdered.

#### The creation of Chez Doris

To honour her memory and respond to the various challenges of women seeking a safe haven, Chez Doris was founded in 1977. It has since become a symbol of compassion for all vulnerable women in Montreal. Its mission is to provide a safe, non-discriminatory space where women can receive support, regain their dignity and rebuild their lives.

#### 2024: 50 years later, the memory of Doris lives on

In 2024, we marked the 50th anniversary of Doris's death. Her image is now displayed at the entrance of our day shelter, a powerful reminder of the urgency of our mission and the persistent inequalities experienced by women. Her memory inspires us every day to do more, to do better, for those who do not always have a voice, but whose resilience commands admiration.

# From emergency assistance to support on the journey to independence

At its founding, Chez Doris offered basic essential services: hot meals, clothing, and occasional support. Today, our offerings have significantly diversified to improve our response to the complex needs of vulnerable women. Our services now include physical and mental health care, an overnight shelter, reintegration programs, transitional housing, and even permanent housing.



This year, more than 1,700 women have turned to Chez Doris. Whether they are fleeing violence, poverty, loneliness, or mental health challenges, they find here a compassionate and welcoming space, rooted in inclusion and respect.

#### An ongoing commitment

Chez Doris has become a beacon of solidarity for women facing hardship, offering shelter and support to help them get back on their feet.

Today more than ever, we continue to give voice to Doris—and to all women who, in the face of adversity, refuse to give up. Because as long as there are women in distress, there will always be a need for a place to welcome them. A place like Chez Doris.

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# THE VALUES THAT GUIDE EVERYTHING WE DO

# MISSION

To support and empower all women in precarious situations so that they can reach their full potential. We do this by offering safe spaces, a broad range of services where they can find non-judgmental help ranging from food, clothing, a day and night shelter, housing solutions, and personal comfort as well as practical assistance to address their changes and problems. We respect that success is different for every woman.



#### **INCLUSION**

We offer a welcoming, safe, inclusive, confidential, respectful, supportive and helpful environment for every woman who walks through our doors.



#### **EQUITY**

We equitably support all women and champion initiatives that reduce discrimination, while recognizing the lived experiences of poverty, violence, and homelessness and actively fostering relationships with Indigenous Peoples and diverse cultural communities.



#### **DIGNITY**

All women have the right to be safe, included, respected and accepted for who they are. We offer our services without judgement.



#### COMPASSION

Kindness and respect are at the heart of who we are, along with our belief that people grow and thrive when they know themselves, can be their authentic selves, and believe in themselves.



### VISION

That every person who identifies as a woman and who is vulnerable or experiencing homelessness in our city feels safe, is treated with dignity, and has the opportunity to thrive.

#### **INSPIRING SUCCESSES**

# THE BEST DAY IN MY LIFE: SEEING MY SON AFTER 9 YEARS

My name is **Marie-Claude.** I'm 42 years old and I'm coming back from a long way... very long. I spent 20 years on the street. Twenty long years running away, losing myself, using. I like to be helped, but not too much. I had a job, I had therapy, but fundamentally, I wasn't ready. The street became my reality.

The watershed moment was brutal. I gave birth on the street. My son was taken away by the DYP. That was the day I hit bottom. And also the place from which I began to recover.

Nine years later, I saw my son again for the first time. **The most beautiful day of my life.** I couldn't believe it. This year we spent Hallowe'en together for the first time. Just thinking about that brings tears to my eyes.

At first, I came to Chez Doris to eat, and to catch my breath. Today, I'm cooking for other women. Every plate I prepare is a token of love, gratitude and resilience.

Little things mean a lot: I'm about to pay my **first bill** for myself. It's crazy how proud that makes me.

Thanks to the team at Chez Doris, I finally feel stable. I'm taking care of myself. And mostly, I'm preparing to be there for my son, for good.



"Thanks to the team at Chez Doris, I finally feel stable. I'm taking care of myself. I'm taking back control of my life."

# A LIFE, A FAMILY... AND REBIRTH

My name is **Marie.** I'm 55 years old. Not so long ago, I was a teacher, a mother, and a writer. I published three novels; I had a full life. Then gradually, without realizing it, everything went off the rails.

I thought I could control my usage. Instead, I unraveled into a nomadic, unstable life, until I found myself on the street. I lost almost everything...including the connection with my children. Cruel irony: my son began to take care of me, whereas I should have been the one to protect him.

But one day I heard news that shook me to my core: my youngest daughter, my "baby", was about to become a mother herself. That was a **real shock**. I didn't want her to see her mother as an absent, broken shadow on the street.

That's when I said yes to help. Yes to real change. Today, I live at the Marcelle and Jean Coutu Residence, and I'm celebrating my second year of sobriety.

Nearly two years of rebuilding. Of pride. A year where I took back my place as a mother, a woman, an author...and most of all, as a human being.



"Today, I live at the Marcelle and Jean Coutu Residence, and I'm celebrating nearly two years of being sober."

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR 11 YEARS ON THE CHEZ DORIS BOARD!

The year 2024-2025 marked significant progress in strengthening Chez Doris to ensure its sustainability after a decade marked by strong growth.

To build a robust organization and improve employee recruitment, onboarding, and training, we appointed Diane Pilote as Executive Director. Through strategic hiring, better work organization, and the implementation of clear processes, Chez Doris can now optimize its resources and promote the agility necessary to face the many challenges ahead.

This year, as some members of the board will be moving on, I would like to thank Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Kathleen Weil, Manon Chevalier, and Sylvie Girard for their unwavering commitment to Chez Doris. Over the past eleven years, Board members have provided governance and expertise on numerous committees in support of our employees. Their involvement was crucial in the analysis and decision-making for major construction projects, as well as for hiring and outreach strategies.

The Nominating Committee has recommended the election of six new members to the Board of Directors: Katherine Chartrand, Marie-Pierre Habas, Camille Janvier-Langis, Ray Kazan, Laura Kennedy, and Kseniya Veretelnik. With this dynamic, competent, and diverse succession, Chez Doris is well-positioned to pursue our mission. After a decade of expansion, during which we opened two residences and an overnight shelter, the Board of Directors approved the purchase of the Fulford Residence this year. This acquisition will allow Chez Doris to consolidate its services in a single space and, among other preventive measures, facilitate temporary housing for women at risk of homelessness.

To finance the renovations necessary for its operations, we have launched a dedicated fundraising campaign.



As I take my leave, I would like to salute the commitment of Chez Doris's employees who carry out our mission with competence and kindness, day after day. I also offer my warmest thanks to all the generous donors who have continued to believe in and support our cause for years.

When you join an organization like Chez Doris, particularly when it is in financial difficulty, you dedicate all your experience and energy to ensure its sustainability. Then, very quickly, it is the cause that carries you.

Over the past eleven years, I have discovered the sad reality of women in precarious situations or experiencing homelessness. It is hard to imagine the abuse they are fleeing when they arrive at Chez Doris. I have heard testimonies of infinite sadness, and it has been an honour to be part of the growth of Chez Doris to relieve the burden of women in difficulty.

I am leaving Chez Doris in a stronger position than ever to fulfill its mission. The continuum of services that the organization has established over the years now allows us to serve our clients from their initial welcome during a difficult time to their permanent social reaffiliation.

I believe that a healthy society must take care of its most disadvantaged members, and I will continue to advocate for better social justice for vulnerable women who are too often forgotten.

Thank you all.

**Carole Croteau**, Chair of the Board Chez Doris

#### MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# A YEAR OF CHALLENGES AND MAJOR PROGRESS

What a year! Intense, marked by constant challenges, but also—and above all—by major advances that show our collective determination to make a real difference in the lives of Montreal's most vulnerable.

Since I took on the responsibility of leading Chez Doris in March 2024, I have been deeply touched—and inspired—by the resilience, courage, and dignity of the women we support every day. What began as a professional mission quickly transformed into a personal commitment. The overwhelming humanity of those who come through our doors, often driven by a simple dream—to live with dignity—has profoundly marked my journey.

#### Remarkable Achievements

And what journey we have taken together over the last year! Thanks to the unfailing support of our teams, we have made remarkable progress: the reopening of our day centre on the weekend, the resumption of our frontline services 24/7/365, the inauguration of the Marcelle and Jean Coutu Residence, offering 26 new studios and safe housing for women at risk of experiencing homelessness, the opening of our heat shelter—each step reinforces our position as a key agency providing intake and support to vulnerable women.

#### **Major Acquisition for Women**

One of the year's most important milestones was the acquisition of the majestic Fulford Residence, to transform it into a beacon of hope for so many women. This unique project, seeking to turn this iconic building into a place of shelter and support, was honoured with the across the county by the National Trust of Canada's Governors' Award. Since then, we have created the Friends of Fulford Committee, which has successfully raised \$4 million—an essential step to issue requests for proposals to begin construction as soon as possible, with the aim of opening the facility in 2028.

The next few months will be just as exciting. As we continue our major capital campaign to finance the Fulford Residence, we are moving heaven and earth to open the Saint-Hubert Residence before the winter



of 2025-2026. None of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors and partners. Their gifts, their commitment and their encouragement allow hope to take root.

#### **Raising our Voices for Female Homelessness**

This year, we raised our voices to draw attention to the invisibility of female homelessness. Too often hidden and little known, this is a reality that must be acknowledged for what it is: a unique and complex challenge, requiring a tailored response. Sleeping in a car with children, moving from one precarious housing situation to the next or enduring violence just to have a roof over one's—these are not acceptable options. This is a cry from the heart—and it's why we are here to respond.

#### In Memory of Doris

On November 3, 2024, we marked the 50th anniversary of Doris's death. She dreamt of a welcoming place without judgement, a peaceful place for women in need. She never saw it in her lifetime, but I think that today she would be proud to see where we are. Chez Doris, every day, we work to make her dream come true.

#### Salut Carole: A Fond Farewell!

In closing, I want to extend my warmest thanks to Carole Croteau, Chair of our Board, who is leaving after 11 years of exemplary engagement, six of them devoted to guiding Chez Doris with vision and determination. Her leadership has shaped an expertise that is unique in the area of female homelessness and laid a solid foundation for the future. Thanks to her, we will pursue our mission making forgotten women visible and offering them the support they deserve. On behalf of the whole team, thank you Carole for your devotion and your unwavering support.

**Diane Pilote**, Executive Director Chez Doris

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## 2024-2025 AT A GLANCE

We record statistics on the use of our services to guide us in improving operations, projecting needs, evaluating program success, etc. The day shelter hours are from 8am to 7pm, seven days a week.

Our emergency and night shelter services operate from 7:30 pm to 8:30 am all week. This winter we opened a shelter from the cold (heat shelter) which can welcome 31 additional women during extreme cold conditions. In the period ending March 31, 2025, the day shelter was open 24 hours a day. The statistics presented in this annual report cover the period from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025. It is important to remember that Chez Doris was forced to reduce its opening hours at the beginning of the year in order to focus on recruiting and training new employees, which was necessary to meet the growing complexity of its clientele's needs.



































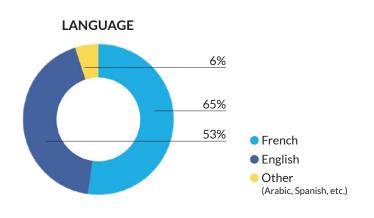


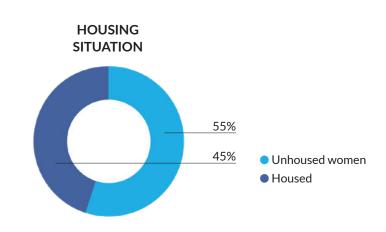


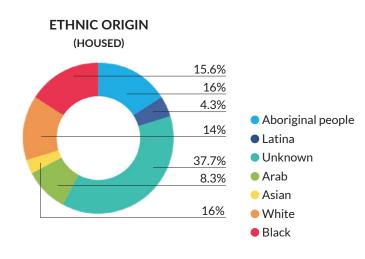


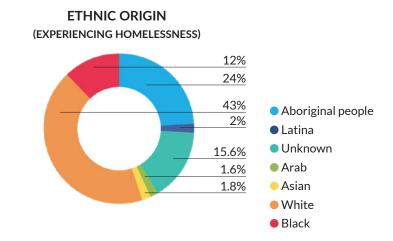
## PROFILE OF THOSE WE SERVE

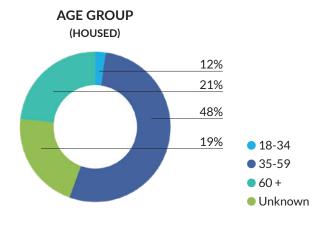
Based on all women using our services

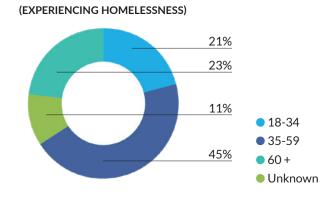












**AGE GROUP** 





+400 WOMEN **REGULARLY VISIT** THE NIGHT SHELTER

This year, we have witnessed a marked increase in the vulnerability of the women we support—including those who are already housed. Their income is no longer sufficient to meet their basic needs. On average, 40 new women walk through our doors each month, and this number continues to grow. Demand for our services is reaching record levels: at lunchtime, we sometimes serve up to 120 meals, nearing the shelter's full capacity.

Precarity is taking new forms, requiring us to adapt our programs constantly, and both at the day and night shelters.

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# CHEZ DORIS IS MUCH MORE THAN A SHELTER. IT'S FIVE SERVICE CENTRES, SOON TO BE SEVEN.

Since 1977, Chez Doris has offered a safe, warm and welcoming space for vulnerable women. Through the decades, the organization has evolved to meet growing community needs, broadening its services and its network of facilities with spirit and determination.

Today, Chez Doris is much more than a shelter: it's a space for listening, support and hope for hundreds of women every year. Depending on their circumstances, women find here a range of accommodation, from emergency shelter to more stable housing solutions.

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### MORE THAN A ROOF OVER THEIR HEADS

Chez Doris, our welcoming spaces are much more than real estate: they are safe spaces for human warmth and rebuilding. Every point of service has been designed to meet the complex needs of women experiencing homelessness or extreme vulnerability.

Whether it's the day or night shelter, permanent residences or transitional housing, each of our spaces offers more than a roof—respectful support, tailored services and a kind and caring presence.

Rebuilding a life starts not only with a bed or a meal, but also with the profound feeling of being welcomed, heard and supported. Chez Doris, we do much more than house women—we support them in their journey back to their agency and their independence.



# THE DAY SHELTER— CAROLE ET ANDREW HARPER 1430 CHOMEDEY STREET

Our Chez Doris day shelter is often the first door women walk through for access to our services.

We offer frontline essential services to all women in need, particularly food, clothing and a place to have a shower or access to laundry. But we also offer activities to create relationships and end isolation, as well as the invaluable support of our staff and volunteers.





# THE ELSPETH MCCONNELL NIGHT SHELTER 1437 CHOMEDEY STREET

Our night shelter, named posthumously for a generous donor, welcomes women in precarious situations on registration, nightly. Located just across the street from our day shelter, it offers a safe, warm and intimate space to rest with 24 beds. Each "cabin" is equipped with a separate ventilation system, a night light and WIFI access. There are showers, storage spaces, a kitchenette and a common area.

Once referred by our day shelter or a third-party organization, women can stay here for up to 30 nights—time to breathe, away from oversight and judgement.

# THE HEALTH AND SERVICES CENTRE 1445 LAMBERT-CLOSSE STREET

The Centre for Health and Services helps us support unhoused women or those who are precariously housed. We offer various programs, including a financial management program with tax clinics, food security with distribution of grocery gift cards and health care provided by our nurses, psychological and medical volunteers.

access the most essential services—whether because of discrimination, barriers including language, lack of resources or official documents. This space is our way of opening the door even wider.





#### THE BASH SHETTY RESIDENCE 1565, 1567, 1569, 1571, 1573 AND 1575, SAINT-ANDRÉ STREET

This centre is located in the Centre-Sud area of Montreal. With its 20 individual rooms and common spaces, it offers a safe home for women 18 and older who are vulnerable or experiencing homelessness. Rents are adjusted to their means and capped at 25% of their revenues—because a stable roof over a person's head is often the first step to rebuilding their life. Staff and volunteers support these clients in their daily activities, while 24-hour security ensures their safety and handles any emergencies that arise.

Our goal is to support their development towards a progressive reconnection and rejoining society in the medium to long term. This includes developing social skills, managing health issues, administrative tasks, meal preparation, management of external appointments and integration into community life. We are committed to support each resident in her journey towards an independent and fulfilling life.





# THE MARCELLE ET JEAN COUTU RESIDENCE 2233 CHAMPLAIN STREET

This permanent residence, established in collaboration with La Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal (SHDM), welcomes independent women who have experienced homelessness or are at risk of doing so.

Located near Parc La Fontaine, it offers 26 furnished studios, each with kitchen, bathroom and living space. Common facilities include a living room, a computer room, laundry and bicycle storage space, as well as a back terrace, to encourage socialization.

Residents also benefit from an individual support protocol and the presence of onsite staff.

Thanks to grants from the Montreal's city housing office, several residents are able to enjoy living here while spending a maximum of 25% of their income on rent. Chez Doris manages the facility and ensures that each woman finds stability, dignity and a true sense of belonging here.

#### THE TRANSITIONAL RESIDENCE 1617, 1619 AND 1621, SAINT-HUBERT STREET

The need to house women experiencing homelessness increases constantly—and society is not responding in a timely fashion. Acquired in February of 2023 thanks to a grant from Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Rapid Housing Initiative, this former hotel in the heart of the Ville-Marie borough will be turned into a transitional residence for 19 women, whether they are coming off the street or at risk of finding themselves there

The building offers room with en-suite or semi-private bathrooms, warm common spaces, onsite support services, as well as offices and a boardroom. Opening is scheduled for late 2025. This project is being made possible by CMHC's Rapid Housing Initiative.







# THE FULFORD RESIDENCE— MARCELLE ET JEAN COUTU BUILDING 1221 GUY STREET

The Fulford Residence has its own long tradition of solidarity toward the most vulnerable women.

Since 1854, this house in the heart of downtown Montreal has welcomed those in need of shelter, first under the leadership of Mary Fulford. Today, Chez Doris is taking up the torch. By bringing this iconic space back to life, we are carrying on its spirit of community support.

This major, \$21 million project will allow us to centralize our teams, bring together our frontline services and add transitional shelter—to offer more support, all under the same roof, to those who need it most. The Fulford Residence will open in 2028.

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# CHEZ DORIS, WE OFFER PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP OR PRESERVE INDEPENDENCE

Chez Doris, every woman who comes through our door finds more than a meal or clothing: she discovers a place where her basic needs will be taken seriously and where she can find her footing at her own speed. Whether it's for a shower, a bit of downtime or a moment to connect with others, our services are designed to offer humane, respectful and ongoing support.

Our activities, psychosocial check-ins, personalized services and programs are tailored to support each woman in developing her full potential. We support each one in rebuilding her life, reconnecting and seeing her future differently.

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### **TOOLS FOR REBUILDING LIVES**

#### **FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM**

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Because a full stomach is often the first step towards a more stable life, we do everything we can to meet the nutritional needs of the women we support.

In 2024-2025, Chez Doris resumed offering three complete, nutritious meals a day, a total of more than 55.000 meals and 12.000 snacks. Thanks to the invaluable involvement of our volunteers and our culinary team, we served:

+ 16,000 **BREAKFASTS** 

+ 28,000 **LUNCHES** 

+7,500 **DINNERS** 

+ 12,000 **SNACKS** 



We also prepared meals for special events such as Christmas, Easter, Eid or International Women's Day, as well as those in our urban program for Indigenous people.

Chez Doris, food preparation also provides a platform for learning. Thanks to our pre-employment skills education program, participants receive practical training in cooking. They learn a craft and develop the necessary skills to feed themselves properly and independently. We also offer cooking workshops tailored to Indigenous women, preparing meals with their traditional cultural foods.

Finally, for those women living in our shelters but who remain in situations of great vulnerability, our monthly grocery support makes a real difference. More than 250 women received a prepaid card for \$50, allowing them to make independent purchases that respect their tastes, their cultural needs and their dignity. This support represents much more than a helping hand: it has a real impact on the health, confidence and quality of life of the women we support.

We also offer cooking workshops specially designed for Indigenous women, using traditional foods from their own cultures.

#### PERSONAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

For a woman experiencing homelessness or great precarity, being able to shower, put on clean clothes or simply take care of herself is a gamechanger. At Chez Doris, we offer these basics with dignity and kindness.

In 2024-2025, our hygiene services allowed hundreds of women to find a bit of comfort and intimacy in their difficult daily lives. Thanks to our dressing rooms, sanitary and laundry facilities we were able to offer:



+ 7,000 SHOWERS



+ 500

+ 5,000 **EMERGENCY CLOTHING KITS** 

**DRESSING ROOM VISITS** 



+ 200 **LOADS OF LAUNDRY** 

Personal services such as manicures, pedicures, facials and haircuts are also available. These moments of well-being, often perceived as luxuries, are essential to rebuild self-esteem. For many women, these services represent more than aesthetics: they offer a break, a respite and a reminder that they deserve to be treated with kindness and respect.

#### **EMPLOYABLITY SKILLS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Chez Doris is much more than a welcoming space: it is also a launchpad to independence. For many of the women we support, obtaining an education or rejoining the labour market represents a decisive step towards a more stable life.

The journey is often littered with barriers: Lack of resources, family obligations, setbacks or low self-esteem. This is why, with the invaluable support of partners such as Sinclair and Peter McGill, we have set up practical programs to overcome these obstacles and offer women real development and professional opportunities. Whether it's going back to school, participating in meaningful community projects or acquiring cooking skills in a comforting environment, these initiatives provide women with the tools—and most importantly, the confidence—to build a better future.

#### The Sinclair Program: promoting independence

The Sinclair Program Sinclair, generously underwritten by private donors, continues to have a profound impact on women who want to regain their independence and rejoin the labour market or pursue their education. The program's mission is perfectly aligned with the Chez Doris vision, which seeks to help women build a better future through education and employment.



Thanks to this initiative, women who have faced various barriers to education and employment benefit from personalized support and financial aid. A part-time staff person works in close collaboration with each participant to evaluate her skills, her interests and objectives to explore the best education and training options for her. This process includes help in choosing the right institution or program, accompaniment in the admissions process and ensuring that decisions are viable over time.

In additional to the personalized support, the Sinclair Program eliminates financial barriers that often prevent women from returning to school or to the labour market. The program pays for tuition, educational materials, childcare and transportation costs. This holistic support allows women not only to register in programs, but also the stability to complete them.

#### Peter McGill Program: Reinforcing the community

In collaboration with Peter McGill, Chez Doris offers women enriching opportunities to get involved in community projects, to develop skills and to improve their financial well-being. A part-time facilitator coordinates these activities, which allows participants to acquire experience while earning compensation in the form of gift cards.

In the course of the last year, the women helped with neighbourhood beautification, notably through the clean-up and refreshment of Cabot Square and planting flowers in public spaces. This work strengthened their pride and sense of belonging, all while having a positive impact on the community as a whole.

#### Pre-employment kitchen program— Developing skills and confidence

The pre-employment kitchen program at Chez Doris helps women acquire practical cooking skills as well as building essential capabilities in teamwork, communications and problem-solving.

It supports professional integration and personal development in a supportive environment.

This year, the hiring of a program participant onto our kitchen team illustrated the program's success in offering more than skills: it also builds confidence and the support necessary to aim for a stable future.

We remain committed to create opportunities that allow women to fulfil their true potential.



From spring of 2025 on, kitchen workshop programs, food security services and community gardens are being implemented in the residences.

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Our financial management program offers financial services and psychosocial support to our clients.

Chez Doris receives the benefits (disability, social, old age pensions, etc.) for each woman voluntarily registered in this program, designed to help them manage their finances. A staff member works closely with each woman to establish a monthly budget, settle her bills and manage the balance of her money.

The program offers the services of four staff members; last year they managed the finances of 97 clients, with a total combined revenue of \$1.2 million.

#### Our services include:

- Budget management in voluntary trust
- Management of current bill payments (rent, services, etc.)
- Redistribution of funds according to a personalized agreement
- Psychosocial check-ups with a dedicated staff person, who remains the principal contact throughout the process
- Workshops in personal finance
- Educational sessions to learn budget management, improved decision-making and expense planning

- Annual income tax clinics
- Free assistance to file income taxes, offered yearly, to ensure access to credits and government benefits
- Sources of income among women registered in the program:
- ▶ Social benefits: 69
- Disability benefits: 1
- ▶ Old Age Security (OAS) Canada: 13 4
- ▶ Régie des rentes du Québec (Quebec pension plan): 14

#### Program achievements this year:

- ▶ 664 submissions (Emploi-Québec, Revenue Canada)
- ▶ 625 funding disbursements
- ▶ 340 hours of active listening
- ▶ 76 accompaniments (medical appointments, etc.)
- ▶ 35 crisis interventions de 434 housing searches
- ▶ 32 home visits
- ▶ 21 external references
- ▶ 12 internal references

#### **HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM**

Chez Doris firmly believes that stability begins with housing. For the woman we support, it's not just about having a roof over their heads—it's about a feeling of safety, dignity and independence.

In response to the housing crisis and the complexity of the issues our clients face—mental health, substance dependencies, isolation—we have deployed all our efforts to offer concrete solutions. Thanks to a dedicated team of six staff, a team leader and an assistant manager, we have reinforced our ability to support women through each stage: a search for housing, administrative enquiries, resettlement, psychosocial support and follow-up.

#### **Private Housing Program**

This program, launched in 2022, is entirely financed by private partners: the Azrieli Foundation, the Léger Family Foundation, the Jacques and Michel Auger Foundation and CDPQ—and offers intensive support to women who do not qualify for mainstream social programs.

Every year, the program welcomes 15 women, including at least five mothers. They receive support to find housing, an amount to furnish their apartment, purchase housekeeping products and buy their first groceries.





"Considering the housing crisis and the challenges faced by all citizens, our various housing support programs are crucial in helping the women we serve."

#### Rent Supplement Program (PSL)

Under a partnership with OMHM, Chez Doris obtained 30 PSL placements, allowing women experiencing homelessness to access private or community housing at a rent geared to income (maximum 25% of their annual revenues).

Each woman also receives financial support to set herself up in her new environment with dignity.

In 2024–2025, through these programs, the Chez Doris teams provided over 1,100 hours of support in various forms, including psychosocial intervention, personalized assistance, housing searches, and general support.

# INDIGENOUS SUPPORT PROGRAM— HONORING CULTURE BY EMPOWERING WOMEN

Chez Doris is proud to offer services for Indigenous women through its Indigenous Program, which features a range of initiatives designed to honour cultural traditions while providing concrete support and pathways to empowerment.

This program's goal is to create a safe and reassuring environment for Indigenous women to overcome barriers and reinforce their community ties. We are deeply committed to offering opportunities to heal, to grow and to take pride in their culture.

#### Indigenous Women's Housing Program

In partnership with the federal government, our Indigenous Women's Housing Program seeks to guarantee stable housing. It helps women find appropriate housing, and to furnish their apartments with the basics. Financial support and accompaniment are also provided to ensure good management of expenses and bills, bringing security and stability. In responding to the essential need for housing, the program makes a meaningful contribution to the well-being and independence of Indigenous women.

#### **Indigenous Collective Kitchens**

Since food is a pillar of cultural identity, our Indigenous collective kitchens offer a unique space where women can gather, share meals and showcase their culinary traditions. Every week features a different Indigenous culture—including Inuit, Métis and Mohawk—through the preparation and tasting of traditional dishes such as bannock, Arctic char or caribou stew. This initiative reinforces community and cultural ties, while nurturing a strong sense of pride and belonging.

#### **Cultural Activities**

To promote well-being and cultural ties, we also offer weekly sociocultural activities focused on the arts and traditional crafts. Among these: soapstone carving, beading, sewing and other practices.

These manual activities allow women to reconnect with their heritage while developing useful skills. They offer a creative and therapeutic space that nurtures solidary and cohesion among participants, while promoting the transmission of cultural traditions. In offering these culturally adapted services, the Indigenous Program at Chez Doris Indigenous women the support and sense of belonging they need to thrive. We recognize the importance of promoting their cultural heritage pursue our mission of supporting Indigenous women on their journey to independence, so that they can lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

This community's reality is complex and requires a different approach, aligned with their culture. It is difficult to gain these women's confidence. It requires specific training and careful nurturing of credible links to the communities and organizations that serve them.



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# HEALTHCARE ACCESS PROGRAM (PHYSICAL AND MENTAL)

# Chez Doris Medical Clinic: Accessible Care

At the heart of the Chez Doris Medical Clinic is our partnership with McGill University, which has allowed the assignment of a dedicated part-time nurse, who plays a central role in the triage of medical appointments.

She makes sure that women with urgent medical needs are taken care of quickly and efficiently. She also supervises interns from McGill's Masters Program in Nursing Science, accompanying them in the development of their skills and offering them practical experience in a clinical environment. Under her supervision, the interns work directly with patients, treating infected wounds, skin rashes, respiratory infections, diagnosis of sexually transmitted diseases, prescription renewals, evaluations and follow-ups.

This collaborative approach allows us to meet the healthcare needs of the women we serve, and also to offer the nursing students a valuable opportunity to apply their knowledge in a real clinical context. The clinic has become an essential resource, both for the women we accompany and for the future health professionals who obtaining training through this partnership.

During the last year, the Chez Doris Medical Clinic has been able to offer more than 900 medical consultations, thanks to our partnership and the engagement of many volunteer health professionals. Women have obtained access to a broad range of services, including those of an internist, nurses, a specialist in foot care, a dental hygienist, an optometrist, a physiotherapist, a massage therapist, a psychiatrist, a gynecologist, an acupuncturist and more.

Chez Doris is committed to meet the varied health needs of the women we support. We are equally proud of our collaboration with an audiologist, which allows us to offer essential audiology services.

The partnership began when she approached us to offer hearing tests for women otherwise unable to access them.



"The Chez Doris Medical Clinic has been able to offer more than 900 medical consultations, thanks to our partnership and the engagement of many volunteer health professionals."

Thanks to this collaboration, 66 women were able to complete a questionnaire. Ten of them subsequently received comprehensive audiological exams and the necessary support, including hearing aids. This service greatly improved their quality of life, ensuring that untreated hearing problems would not become a barrier to their well-being.

Our partnership with the CIUSSS West-Central Montreal allowed us to offer vaccine clinics throughout the year to our employees and clients.

#### SOCIO-RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

#### Breaking isolation through enriching experiences s

Our sociocultural activities program seeks to offer women, particularly those with little or no income, the opportunity for positive and enriching experiences. Through a variety of outings and activities, we help them out of isolation to discover new places and to create durable relationships

In the course of the last year, participants have enjoyed apple picking, sugar shacks, museum visits and more. These adventures offer them a welcome respite from their daily difficulties, a sense of normality, as well as the enjoyment of shared experiences.

In addition to these outings, the program includes many recreational activities organized by our volunteers, students and our in-house animator. Art lessons, exercise sessions, social games and creative workshops are among the opportunities for women to develop new skills, improve their physical and mental well-being and engage in an inclusive and supportive environment.

The impact of these activities goes well beyond simple entertainment: they nurture a strong sense of belonging, develop friendships and create a community of women who feel validated and supported. In breaking the cycle of isolation, the program offers them a space to feel connected, independent and valued.

#### Special events and holidays: Celebrating diversity and reinforcing community

At Chez Doris, we believe that celebrating the spiritual and cultural traditions of the women we serve is essential to build an inclusive and comforting community. All year long, we make a point of recognizing the various statutory holidays, significant religious days and other meaningful occasions.

These include International Women's Day, Black History Month, National Indigenous Peoples Day, traditional religious holidays such as Easter, Christmas and Valentine's Day. These special events allow women to come together, to recognize their differences and their commonalities, and to reinforce community ties.

Our celebrations go beyond the simple event: they embody respect, understanding and connection. Each activity is organized with care so that whatever their origins, the women feel seen, respected and validated. The celebrations include a shared meal, activities and thoughtful touches such as gifts which add joy, comfort and a sense of belonging. Whether it's a festive dinner, a religious celebration, or a cultural event, these gatherings offer a safe space to share traditions, stories and laughter.

For many of the women at Chez Doris, these festive moments are among the most meaningful of the year. They create a strong feeling of community, of receiving support and experiencing the joy of celebration with people who understand their unique journeys. The gift exchanges bring an additional touch of attention and affection, so that each person feels appreciated.





# OUR NETWORK: AN ESSENTIAL FORCE FOR SOLIDARITY

At the heart of the evolution of Chez Doris, there is a discreet but determining force: our network of volunteers, our donors, our community and institutional partners. Thanks to their unwavering support, what started out as a single day shelter has become, over the years, a network of five, soon seven points of service, offering support and hope to more than 1,700 women every year.

Their engagement, their generosity and their trust are the fuel that allows us to dream bigger, to act more powerfully and to move forward together towards a fairer future for vulnerable women.

In this spirit, we also firmly intend to maintain and strengthen our links with the key players in the area of female homelessness in Montreal—those who, like us, work every day to eliminate barriers, improve living conditions for women and build lasting solutions.

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### A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SOLIDARITY NETWORKS

In a context where female homelessness is growing and raises complex issues, Chez Doris wants to play an even more active and strategic role alongside the key players in this area.

To achieve this, the organization has created a new liaison position, dedicated to reinforcing our links with community, institutional and municipal partners. This initiative is focused on anchoring our efforts, sharing expertise and supporting more coherent and concerted efforts. Together, we are building a stronger, more coherent safety net, and in particular, more respectful of the lived reality of the women we serve.

As an active member of several key groups, Chez Doris contributes in elevating the voices of vulnerable women to defend their specific needs.

We also participate in various round tables and local committees (mental health, housing, urban safety, Indigenous homelessness, etc.), where our experience on the ground contributes to the collective thinking and to practical solutions. This presence also extends to the academic sphere, through participation on panels (McGill, Concordia), student projects and client workshops on rights, technology and social issues.

#### Relevant institutional and educational partnerships

Our collaborations with a number of colleges and universities are very valuable. Through these partnerships, we are able to welcome some 20 interns to Chez Doris. This project allows us to contribute to their professional development while increasing our service offerings to our women. We benefit from their energy, their dynamism and their fresh eyes to help us improve our practices. These internships are made possible by:

- McGill University's departments and faculties of Social Services, Human Nutrition, Nursing Sciences, Psychology and Law
- The Nutrition and Optometry departments of l'Université de Montréal
- ▶ The Arts and Humanities department at Concordia, University, Social Services at Dawson College, and the special education students from Cégep Marie-Victorin

Finally, Chez Doris intervenes in public consultations, notably those of the City of Montreal's public consultation office (OCPM), in order to contribute actively to the creation of inclusive and appropriate policies.



Alexandre Desjardins, Coordinator of Community Development and Partnerships

#### **NETWORKS AND COALITIONS**

Movement to End Homelessness (MMFIM): Its mission is to collaborate with all stakeholders aiming to improve conditions for people experiencing homelessness and to prevent and end homelessness in Montreal

Partnership to Prevent and Fight Female Homelessness (PPLIF): Aims to highlight the specific issues and needs of women in difficulty

Montreal Network for Assistance to Single and Homeless Individuals (RAPSIM)

Coalition of Humanitarian and Community Organizations for Emergency Measures in Montreal (ROHCMUM)

Montreal Indigenous Community Network (RESEAU)

#### **ROUND TABLES AND COMMITTEES**

Côte-des-Neiges Homelessness Round Table: Brings together several organizations from Côte-des-Neiges et the CIUSSS Centre Ouest. Chez Doris was invited to participate because of our expertise in homelessness and our location in the neighbourhood.

Women's Groups Round Table of Montréal (TGFM): Brings together various groups in the city with a mission to promote and defend the interests of women in a perspective of feminist gender equality.

Chez Doris also participates on the Health Sub-committee, exchanges on the Action Plan for the Health and Wellbeing of Women, and on the health issues that women face in the City of Montreal.

Round Table on Mental Health, CIUSSS of West Central Montreal: Chez Doris participates as a local network agency offering different services to women in precarious situations:

- in the sub-committee on different clinical issues the members and partners face and on potential solutions,
- in the sub-committee on housing, charged with the creation of useful tools for partners and local organizations offering housing or other types of shelter to respond to the housing crisis in the neighbourhood.

**Together North and South Committee:** This committee works on issues affecting Indigenous/Inuit persons, bringing together organizations from Montreal and from the North.

Cabot Square Urban Safety Committee: Bringing together various stakeholders from the Cabot Square area, it provides updates on the current situation, initiatives, and upcoming events.

**Centre-Sud Homelessness Committee:** Chez Doris is directly involved due to its residences located in the area.

Consultation Committee on the Implementation of the "Individual Placement and Support" (IPS) Model for People Experiencing Homelessness in Quebec, organized by the Douglas Research Centre: Provides comments, suggestions, and feedback to ensure that the approach and tools are adapted to the clientele.

#### STUDENT OUTREACH

McGill University: Chez Doris participates in the Social Innovation & Entrepreneurship Course, in which we inform students about the homeless and housing issues in Montreal, our success and impact indicators, our principal partners and the challenges our clients face.

Concordia University: Chez
Doris participated on a panel for
a course in the Art and Design
Department on climate justice
and inequalities in housing, which
particularly affect women and
Indigenous and Inuit women
arriving from the North.

#### **STUDENT PARTNERSHIPS**

**Students from McGill's Faculty of Law:** Offering our clients workshops on laws, human rights, e.g. housing, immigration, and official documents (wills/estates).

McGill students participating in the Care Through Tech Initiative: Offering our clients technology workshops (cell phones, computers, internet).

#### **PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS**

Participation in the consultations on homelessness conducted by the city's Public Consultation Office (OCPM).

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# **OUR VOLUNTEERS: COMMITTED IN SPIRIT AND ACTION**

Our hundred-odd volunteers are present at service locations. They are the true pillars of our mission.

Whether they are assembling furniture, setting up our premises, serving meals at the day shelter, leading dance, relaxation or art therapy workshops, or supporting low-income women during tax season, their contribution is both tangible and deeply human.

Many have been with us for years, always ready to answer the call. Their loyal commitment eases our logistics, reduces our operating costs, and allows us to focus our resources where they matter most: on the essential needs and well-being of the women we support. Thanks to them, every action becomes an opportunity to make a difference.



















## PARTNERSHIPS THAT CHANGE LIVES

Our community and institutional partners play a key role in our success at Chez Doris.

Through their services, their in-kind gifts and their invaluable collaboration, they strengthen our ability to respond to the multiple needs of the women we serve. Thanks to them, our impact is larger, more human and always with greater solidarity. Thank you!

Agence JLG

Alcôve Hair

Apple Fairview Pointe-Claire

Ausira Apparel

Bota Bota

Boulangerie St-Donat

Caffe Bertoni

Catherine Benny

Centric Canada Apparel &

Accessories ULC

Clément

Codet

Distribution alimentaire Aubut

Domino's Pizza of Canada

**Energy Transportation Group** 

Ernestine - Les Chocolats

Expedia Group

Fabricville

Fédération interprofessionnelle de la

santé du Québec (FIQ)

Fondation Sénégal Santé Mobile

Fondation St-Hubert

Foxtrot-Tundra Film Productions

Canada

**ILCO Transit** 

Jennifer Cukier

La Bobineuse

La Canadienne Entreprises

La Vie en Rose

Le Taj

Les Canadiens de Montréal

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

Manhattan Concepts

Montreal West United Church

NAOS North America

Pépinière Jasmin

Pizzéria No.900 Griffintown

Resto Darbar

Salle Bourgie

Soja&Co

Tennis Canada

**Tonitex** 

TP Holiday Group

Wacoal Canada

Wienstein & Gavino's

West End Quilters

## **OUR MAJOR DONORS: VALUED AND ESSENTIAL**

In a world with so many competing and equally urgent needs and causes, our donors choose to support us, year after year.

These extraordinary decisions touch us deeply. Their constant generosity allows us to offer women in situations of great vulnerability a true launchpad towards stability, independence and dignity. Thanks to them, our points of service are spaces for hope and for healing. Every gift, small or large, is an act of faith in our mission. For that, we thank them.

Altru Foundation

André Gervais

Azrieli Foundation

Brian Bronfman Family Foundation

Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec

Canserve Foundation

Carole and Andy Harper Foundation

**Choquette-Legault Foundation** 

City of Montréal

CIUSSS Centre-South of Montreal

Congrégation de Notre-Dame

du Québec

Doggone Foundation

**Echo Foundation** 

Elizabeth Wirth Ethel Groffier

Estate of Margaret Tuite Green Eric T. Webster Foundation

George Hogg Family Foundation

Government of Canada / Service Canada

**Hewitt Foundation** 

Jacques and Michel Auger Foundation

J. Armand Bombardier Foundation

John Patrick Colfer Family Foundation

J.W. McConnell Foundation

Léger Family Foundation

L'Église de Jésus-Christ des Saints

des Derniers Jours Le Hockey Aide les Sans-Abri

Marcelle et Jean Coutu Foundation

Michael Sinclair

Mongeau Family Foundation

National Bank of Canada Scotiabank

Phyllis Lambert Foundation

Power Corporation of Canada

R. Howard Webster Foundation

**Rossy Foundation** 

Rose Goldstein and Mark Hardy Foundation

Sharon Azrieli

Suzanne Laberge

Tony & Betty Infilise Family

Foundation

Trottier Family Foundation

Zeller Family Foundation







### **OUR TEAM**

At Chez Doris, close to one hundred dedicated individuals welcome women every day with compassion and without judgment.

Whether it's offering women a moment of respite, supporting them at their own pace toward autonomy, or helping them rebuild their lives, our team is at the heart of every intervention. Under the leadership of our Executive Director, our staff manages day-to-day operations, optimizes processes, and ensures that our mission comes to life in tangible ways on the ground. Whether they are working to ensure women's safety, developing better-adapted programs, leading activities to break isolation, or driving philanthropic development to ensure the sustainability of Chez Doris — every action matters.





# MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Diane Pilote
Executive Director

Noémie Alt Director of Facilities and Information Technology

Jean-Raphael Aspirot
Director of Human Resources

**Véronic Bouchard**Director of Finance

**Tania Filippone**Director of Programs and Services

Nancy Girard
Director of Operations—Service
Centres

Marie-Pierre Grenier
Director of Communications,
Events and Media Relations

**Elise Monaghan Joubert** Director of Philanthropy

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES**



#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Carole Croteau

Chair

Jill Hugessen

Vice President

**Annie Gagnon-Larocque** Secretary

**Eric Thauvette** Treasurer

Diane Pilote

Executive Director

Mary Larson

**Thierry Ledoux-Demers** 

Sylvia Martin-Laforge

André Morris

**Mark Shalhoub** 

Kathleen Weil

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Carole Croteau

Chair

Jill Hugessen

Vice President

**Annie Gagnon-Larocque** 

Secretary

**Eric Thauvette** 

Treasurer

**Diane Pilote** 

**Executive Director** 

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Eric Thauvette** 

Chair of the committee

**André Morris** 

**Annie Gagnon-Larocque** 

# HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Mary Larson

Chair of the committee

Sylvia Martin-Laforge

Maria Kyres (external)

#### REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE

**Annie Gagnon-Larocque**Chair of the committee

Mike Lisi (external)

Robert Manningham (external)

Roger Plamondon (external)

Ryan Zamestrieus (external)

#### **NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

Sylvia Martin-Laforge

Chair of the committee

Jill Hugessen

**Thierry Leroux-Demers** 

#### **COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Mark Shalhoub

Chair of the committee

Jill Hugessen

#### PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE

Kathleen Weil

Chair of the committee

The Executive Director and the Chair of the Board are ex officio members of all committees. To simplify reading, their names are not repeated in the list below.



# **SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Operating results for the fiscal period ended March 31, 2025, with comparative numbers for 2024

DEVENUE	2025	2024
REVENUE	\$	\$
Federal Grants		
Housing for Indigenous persons	209,506	178,125
Enhancement to housing for Indigenous persons	-	-
Urban program for Indigenous persons	44,951	59,947
Summer employment	17,687	12,221
Community volunteer income tax program	2,785	-
	274,929	250,293
Provincial Grants		
Integrated University Health and Social Services Centre of Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal (CCSMTL): Intermediate Action Plan for Homelessness (PAII) Measure 6.1 Support and consolidation	4.450.000	400,000
of the continuum from emergency shelter to transition	1,150,000	400,000
Community Organization Support Program (PSOC), Global Mission	389,210	378,978
Measure 5.3 Residential Stability Program with Guidance (SRA)	264,675	105,503
Warming Center	233,962	-
Supporting women experiencing homelessness	189,041	184,071
Reinforcing support for women experiencing homelessness in winter	111,550	-
PSOC PAII Measure 6.2 Consolidation of shelter services	100,000	100,000
PSOC Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI)	74,083	72,599
PAII Measure 5.3 Support for transitional and/or permanent social and community housing	52,938	52,938
PAII Measure 5.3 Top-up	20,977	· -
Reaching Home: Support for Social Housing	37,785	-
Operationalization of a transitional resource	10,741	-
Réflexe Montréal fund for homelessness (FRMI)	-	360,000
Vers un chez-soi Emergency Fund	-	67,431
Secrétariat à la condition féminine	-	92,238
	2,634,962	1,813,758
Municipal Grants		
City of Montreal Pre-employability Program	102,385	57,842
City of Montreal Food Security Program	<u>-</u>	10,000
	102,385	67,842

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# SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D)

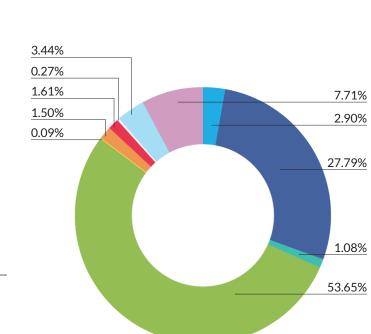
	2025	2024
REVENUE	\$	\$
Donations, bequests, events and gala		
Donations and bequests	5,086,588	4,800,771
Events and gala	8,143	283,153
In-kind donations	141,992	5,142
Rental Revenue		
Rent	152,502	114,019
Special contribution OMHM (Montreal City Housing Bureau)	-	51,480
Management - De Champlain - SHDM (Montreal Housing and Development Corporation)		
Management fees	25,428	12,062
Interest and dividends	326,404	387,264
(Loss) Gain on fair value of investments	(3,022)	19,925
Amortization of deferred capital contributionss	730,959	504,298
	9,481,270	8,310,007
Expenses		
Programs and services	5,463,303	4,264,114
Occupation costs	1,694,782	1,713,902
Fundraising and communications	1,117,902	1,090,125
Operations and administration	1,178,449	1,236,500
	9,454,436	8,304,641
Excess of revenue over expenses	26,834	5 366

# **NOTES ON REAL ESTATE ACQUISITIONS**As at March 31, 2025

	Cost as at March 2024 \$			Discharge	Cost as at March 31, 2025
		\$	\$	\$	
Land and buildings	19,491,242	10,060,251		29,653,166	
Furnishings and other	669,125	70,890		740,015	
IT equipment	203,552	-		203,552	
	20,363,918	10,131,141	-	30,596,733	

#### **SOURCE OF OUR FUNDING**

	\$	%	
Federal grants	274,929	2.90	
Provincial grants	2,634,962	27.79	
Municipal grants	102,385	1.08	
Donations and bequests	5,086,588	53.65	
Events and gala	8,143	0.09	
In-kind donations	141,992	1.50	
Rent	152,502	1.61	
Management fees	25,428	0.27	
Interest and dividends	326,404	3.44	
(Loss) Gain on fair value of investments	(3,022)	-0.03	
Amortization of deferred capital			
contributions	730,959	7.71	
	9,481,270	100	



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#### **Chez Doris**

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Visit us at: chezdoris.org

Charitable Number: 101835841RR0001