



CHEZ DORIS NEWS

COURRIER

For Our Donors and Partners

SPRING 2025 EDITION



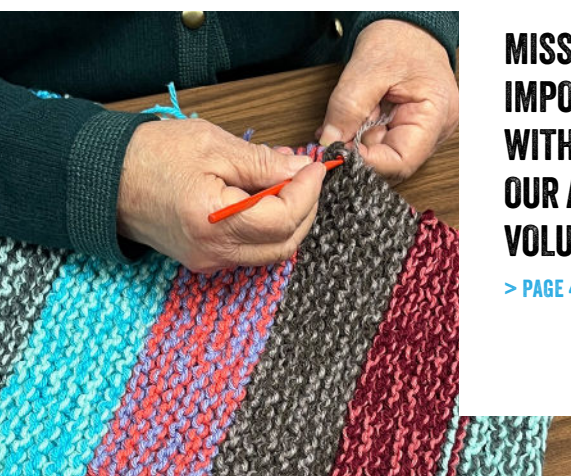
MIRACLES IN THE KITCHEN: A PRE-EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAM THAT CHANGES LIVES

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Alejandra C.
Reintegration Worker -
Kitchen Program

Béatrice R.
Day Centre and Night
Shelter Manager

« Jackie » Kathleen D.
Cook



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE - WITHOUT OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

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THANKS TO TWO KEY WOMEN BEHIND CHEZ DORIS' GROWTH

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Carole Croteau
President of the Board

TOGETHER, FIGHTING THE INVISIBILITY OF HOMELESS WOMEN

As Montreal's homeless census takes place this spring, I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone that women experiencing homelessness or vulnerability have specific needs that are often misunderstood and frequently overlooked. This census won't give us a complete picture of their situation. **Unlike men experiencing homelessness, who are often visible in public spaces, women are more prone to hiding: sleeping in cars, cycling through temporary shelters, couch-surfing with friends, or submitting to abusive relationships to keep a roof over their heads.**

These women don't show up in official statistics, and yet, their numbers are growing.

This invisibility perpetuates their marginalization and impedes any response tailored to their needs. Without adequate support, we can't properly fulfill our mission. Each donation allows us not only to provide immediate shelter and services, but also to fund initiatives that help bring these invisible women into the light and prevent them from spiralling downward into chronic homelessness.

It's urgent to develop new methodology that takes hidden female homelessness into account, and to create more women-only shelters with ongoing funding for organizations that truly support and officially recognize female homelessness as a distinct problem requiring tailored solutions.



Diane Pilote
Executive Director

Since I took on the role of Executive Director at Chez Doris a year ago, my vision of homelessness among women has been profoundly transformed. What began as a professional mission has become a personal commitment to these courageous women who walk through our doors with a simple dream: to live with dignity.

In closing, I want to thank our partners, our generous donors, and our dedicated teams for their immense accomplishments over the past year. The coming months will be just as busy. In addition to funding our activities and the Fulford project, we're working hard to open the transitional residence on rue Saint-Hubert before winter 2025-2026.

Together, we continue our mission for a more just and dignified future!



KITCHEN MIRACLES

Alejandra

The program's fairy godmother—a passionate reintegration worker, Alejandra ensures that each woman gets the most out of this experience. She's also the first to remind them of their worth and their abilities.

Jackie

The kitchen boss, chef and mentor—Jackie chose to trade the high pressure of restaurant kitchens for a much more valuable role—sharing her knowledge with patience and humanity.

Who would have thought a simple cake recipe could rebuild a life, a spoonful of sugar at a time? Yet, that's exactly what happens at Chez Doris, thanks to our culinary pre-employment program.

Here, the kitchen isn't just a workplace; it's a space for healing and community. This program, which we started two years ago, offers much more than cooking skills. It rebuilds these women's self-confidence and self-esteem—and most importantly, it instills immense pride in them. They are responsible for preparing meals for clients, a crucial task where they can see the tangible impact of their work.

As the saying goes, the secret is in the sauce, but the real magic ingredient in this program is made up of two exceptional women: Jackie and Alejandra. A close and collaborative duo whose complementary strengths contribute to each participant's success.

THANK YOU TO TWO KEY WOMEN BEHIND THE GROWTH OF CHEZ DORIS

The past few years have been marked by significant growth for Chez Doris. I want to pay tribute to two remarkable women who left our board this quarter, without whom this growth would not have been possible.

Manon Chevalier, founding president of Communications Chevalier, had chaired our board's communications committee since 2020. With her expertise and extensive professional network, she greatly helped to raise our organization's profile. Chez Doris was fortunate to be able to rely on such a seasoned communicator!

For four years, she also oversaw our communications at Chez Doris, ensuring our messages were spread far and wide. She strengthened the organization's image and enhanced its visibility. Communication is crucial for a non-profit like ours and requires a delicate touch. Manon approached this task with enthusiasm, helping us avoid the trap of self-pity and highlighting our concrete actions to help women in need. Manon's contribution significantly increased our visibility among Montrealers.

Sylvie Girard, architect and founding partner of Archi, had chaired our board's real estate committee since 2016. She was instrumental in our shift towards site acquisitions to



Carole Croteau, accompanied by Manon Chevalier, Jill Hugessen, Mélanie Allaire, and Sylvie Girard, at the inauguration of the Elspeth McConnell Night Shelter.

Carole Croteau, with Sylvie Girard, Bruce Drummond McNiven of the Drummond Foundation, and Diane Pilote, Executive Director of Chez Doris, at the time of the purchase of the Fulford Residence.



ensure the continuity of our services. To undertake such projects, the expertise of an architect of Sylvie's calibre was invaluable to support our board members in the crucial decisions they had to make for the organization's long-term stability.

Her determined expertise in our site acquisition phase also ensured the sustainability of our services. Under Sylvie's direction, we were able to open essential residences: the Elspeth McConnell Emergency Shelter, the Bash Shetty Residence, the Marcelle et Jean Coutu Residence, as well as the purchase of a small hotel on Saint-Hubert Street and the Fulford Residence, ensuring the continuous development of Chez Doris.

Sylvie also put together a committee of real estate experts, whose invaluable advice greatly benefited our organization.

I extend my profound thanks to Manon and Sylvie for their dedication and their immense contributions!

With gratitude and enthusiasm, I also welcome **Annie Gagnon-Larocque**, partner and team leader of McCarthy Tétrault's real estate group, and **Mark Shalhoub**, a well-known media and communications personality as they will now chair, respectively, our board's real estate and communications committees.

Thanks to the expertise of passionate people like you, Chez Doris can continue to grow and support women in need.

Carole Croteau
President of the Board, Chez Doris

A future built one recipe at a time

This program goes beyond the transformation of the six participants in each cohort; it also changes the way they see themselves. They discover patience, discipline, collaboration, and the joy of creating something with their own hands. Some complete the program and then pursue further professional culinary training, finding jobs in the restaurant industry or related fields with newfound confidence. Today, one graduate works in our kitchen and another, who works elsewhere, returns to volunteer as a token of her appreciation for the support Chez Doris brought into her life.

Who would have thought a cake recipe could rebuild a life? Chez Doris knows: every ingredient counts, and so does every woman.

**Chez Doris
help women
in need**

PLEASE DONATE NOW !
chezdoris.org

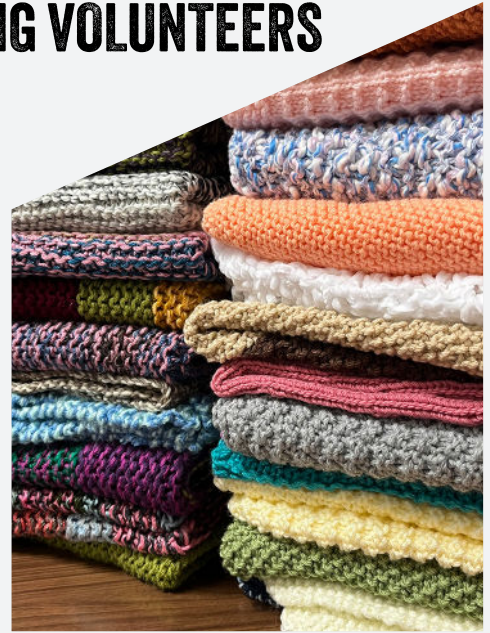
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE - WITHOUT OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

Every act of solidarity makes a difference, and we want to express our gratitude to our amazing volunteers who so generously give their time.

Whether you're involved in the *Craft for Courage* project, come to sew with dedication, serve meals, or contribute in other ways, your commitment brightens the lives of the women we support. Thanks to you, bonds are formed, comfort is provided, and hope grows. Thank you for your generosity and kindness—you are an invaluable source of inspiration!

We're always looking for qualified volunteers:

- ⬆ Dietitians
- ⬆ Foot care nurses
- ⬆ Psychiatric nurses with mental health experience
- ⬆ Doctors
- ⬆ Psychologists
- ⬆ Psychiatrists
- ⬆ Self-care services (hairdressers, manicurists, etc.)



For more information:
email Audree.lavigne@chezdoris.org
or call **438 223-5951** to reach the volunteer coordinator at Chez Doris.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025 YOU'RE INVITED! MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2025.

This event is very important to us, as it provides the opportunity to share our financial results, activity reports, our recent initiatives, as well as highlighting some of the progress we've made.

We will also present some plans for the coming year, including our expansion and development projects, as well as strategies to increase our impact.

We hope to see many of our supporters at this important AGM!

📍 St. Andrew and St. Paul Church
3415, Redpath Street, Montreal
(Quebec) H3G 2G2

🕒 Monday, June 16, 2025, 6:00 PM
(Doors open at 5:00 PM)

To confirm your attendance:
call **514-937-2341 ext. 245**,
email administration@chezdoris.org
or visit our website, chezdoris.org



Annual benefit COCKTAIL



Thursday, May 22, 2025
starting at 6 pm

Salon Richmond 1861
550, Richmond Street
Montreal