

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



WEST ISLAND
Citizen Advocacy
Parrainage Civique de la
BANLIEUE OUEST

WICA • PCBO

WWW.VOLUNTEERWICA.COM



WICA - Annual Report, 2024-25

Table of Contents

President Report	3
Director Report	4
Mission, Board of Directors, Staff.....	5
Matching Program.....	6
Community Apartments Program (CAP).....	9
Seniors Liaisons (ITMAV)	12
Rendez-Vous Arts.....	14
Income Tax Program.....	16
Tablets Program and Courses.....	17
Community Involvement.....	19
Publicity	21
Funding.....	24
Warren Wilfred Thomas Award Winner	26
Awards of Merit.....	27



Kay M. Heaton
President of the Board

2025 President's Report

Welcome, and thank you all for attending our Annual General Meeting today.

It has been an honour to serve as President of the Board of Directors over the past five years. During this time, we have navigated one of the most challenging periods the world has faced since World War II. Emerging from it strong and united is a tremendous achievement—one that speaks volumes about the resilience of the human spirit.

This year has been a successful one which you will see in our presentation, however we continue to struggle to attract long term volunteers for our matching program and to be able to pay our employees at a reasonable level given the cost-of-living increases everyone has experienced.

However, as we look ahead, the challenges of securing sustainable funding remain significant amid ongoing economic uncertainty and cuts to funding. To ensure the continuation of our vital programs—particularly those that support individuals who are isolated or disadvantaged—we must explore new avenues of financial support.

In that spirit, we're pleased to share that, with financial backing from Centraide, we will begin developing a new strategic plan this August. This plan will serve as a long-term roadmap to guide our mission in the years ahead.

After seven years on the Board, I will be stepping down from my role as President. I am delighted to announce that Natalie Chapman will be taking over this position in the coming year. With over 30 years of experience in the non-profit sector and a deep network within the community, I am confident that WICA is in excellent hands. Thank you, Natalie, for stepping into this role—I am deeply grateful, and I remain available to support you.

I would like to welcome two new Board members to the team, Pierre Beauséjour and Cherry Marshall. Thank you for stepping up to support the organization. Finally, my sincere thanks to the Board for your collaboration, dedication, and the incredible work you've done on behalf of our protégés, advocates, and the entire WICA team.

I wish you all happiness, peace and success in all your future initiatives.

Kay M. Heaton



Roya Jaffari
Executive Director

2025 Director's Report

As we reflect on the past year, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated volunteers, board members, staff, funders, and community partners. Your unwavering support and collaboration continue to be the driving force behind our work and our resilience in the face of challenges.

We sincerely thank the City of Pointe-Claire for generously accommodating our space needs during our office renovations. We also appreciate Mayor Tim Thomas, MP Francis Scarpaleggia, and Enrico Ciccone's office for their ongoing support and event attendance. Special gratitude goes to Ivan Dow and his wife Joelle for their long-standing generosity, especially with our annual Halloween fundraiser and year-round support

Throughout the year, our programs ran smoothly, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff. A particular highlight was the Income Tax Program Walk-in Clinic, which proved to be a valuable service for the West Island community. While many residents benefited from this initiative, it also posed operational challenges, as staff had to manage this additional responsibility alongside their regular duties. I am deeply grateful for their flexibility and commitment in making the program a success. Heartfelt thanks also go to the program's volunteers, whose invaluable support played a key role in its effectiveness and community impact.

While this year brought its share of challenges—particularly financial ones that affected our operations and contributed to staff turnover—we remained focused on maintaining stability within our team. We made meaningful strides in recruitment, and although the results didn't fully meet our expectations, these efforts have laid the groundwork for future progress.

Volunteer recruitment also remains an ongoing priority. We have seen some progress in this area, but we continue to face challenges—particularly in engaging the younger generation. We remain hopeful that with renewed outreach and stronger community engagement strategies, we will be able to build a more robust and diverse volunteer base.

As we look to the future, we are committed to addressing these challenges with transparency, creativity, and resilience. With the continued support of our partners and community, we are confident that we can move forward stronger than ever.

Thank you again to everyone who contributed to our mission over the past year. Together, we continue to build a more connected and compassionate community.

Roya Jaffari

WICA's Mission and Objectives

OUR MISSION

West Island Citizen Advocacy's purpose is to support and defend the rights of vulnerable or disadvantaged people in its community to improve their quality of life.

OUR VISION

We envision a connected, inclusive, and socially just community where individuals of all backgrounds are empowered through meaningful relationships, innovative support, and equitable access to opportunities.

Board of Directors

- 9 members
- Meet 10 times per year
- Responsible for the overall activities
- Make decisions about budgeting & policies, and plan the direction of the organization
- Members sit on various sub-committees
- Members represent various sectors such as: finance, business, municipal government, education, and community volunteers

Staff

15 staff members: 7 full-time, 8 part-time*

- Executive Director
- Accountant*
- Administrative Assistant*
- Receptionist
- Publicity Coordinator*
- Data Coordinator*
- Community Worker Coordinator
- Community worker in Seniors Liaisons (ITMAV)
- 3 Community workers in the CAP Program (1*)
- 3 Community workers in the Matching Program
- Community worker in the Tablet Program*
- Volunteer Coordinator*
- Coordinator/Instructor* of the RVA Program

Challenges and Achievements

One of the key **challenges** this year was our limited financial capacity, which allowed for only a modest salary increase for staff. As a result, we experienced a higher turnover rate, with some employees seeking better-paying opportunities elsewhere.

Despite these constraints, we remain committed to supporting and retaining our team. Staff continue to benefit from strong health insurance coverage, flexible remote work options at least two days per week, and a newly introduced half-day on Fridays during the summer months. These efforts reflect our ongoing dedication to fostering a supportive and balanced work environment.

The **achievements** of our employees are reflected throughout the program descriptions in this report, showcasing their continued commitment and impact.



Matching Program



**Aameera Kabbir and Annum Siddiqui,
Community Workers in the Matching Program**

Matching Program

The Matching Program is built on two essential components: the volunteers and the protégés (our clients).

WICA's Matching Program recruits, screens, and pairs trained dedicated volunteers with individuals (referred to as protégés) in the West Island community. These individuals live in vulnerable or disadvantaged situations and/or may also be facing social isolation, abuse, or other social barriers such as language barriers.

Protégés Referrals

We receive weekly referrals for new protégés from a variety of trusted sources, including CLSC Pierrefonds, CLSC Lac-St-Louis, community organizations, hospitals, families and self-referred individuals.

Volunteer recruitment

Volunteer recruitment is a continuous effort supported by outreach activities such as info sessions and media interviews. Each advocate is thoughtfully recruited, screened, and trained to ensure a strong, supportive match with their protégé.

Matching and Follow-up Process

- Upon receiving a referral, a Community Worker conducts an initial home visit to assess the protégé's needs.
- A careful matching process is then carried out to find the most suitable advocate.
- The first introductory meeting between the protégé and advocate takes place with the Community Worker present to ensure a comfortable and positive connection.
- Regular follow-up phone calls are made by the Community Worker to both the volunteer and the protégé:
 - o Initially weekly
 - o Transitioning to monthly
- Adjustments are made as needed to maintain a positive and trusting relationship.

Improving quality of life

The goal of the program is to create meaningful connections that offer practical, emotional, and social support to individuals who face a variety of challenges—with the ultimate aim of improving their overall quality of life. By fostering personalized one-on-one relationships, the program also builds a sense of trust, inclusion, and community belonging.

Volunteer Recognition Initiatives

- **WICA Monthly Afternoon Tea** is part of our volunteer recognition program. Launched in February 2024, it aims at bringing together Advocates and Protégés to share stories, connect, and build friendships over tea or coffee in a cozy café setting.
- **The Volunteer of the month** initiative highlights one outstanding volunteer and presents them with a gift card as a token of appreciation for their time and dedication.

Matching Program (cont.)



Monthly Afternoon Tea: Volunteers and protégés enjoying Quality Time at a Local Café

Testimonials

Family of a protégé: *“We’re truly grateful for the thoughtful match and support our loved one received. The experience exceeded our expectations, and we couldn’t be more pleased with the support and kindness our loved one received.”*

Protégée that has been matched this month: *“It’s great work that you do, you don’t realize how lonely life can be until you get much older.”*

Impact of the Matching Program

Matches are made based on each protégé’s specific needs, ensuring that volunteers can offer meaningful and personalized support to improve the protégé’s quality of life. This support may be emotional or social—for example, going for a walk, playing a board game, or watching a movie together. It can also be practical, such as helping the protégé navigate available resources or occasionally accompanying them to appointments.

Challenges

Attracting and retaining volunteers—especially younger individuals—remains a challenge.



WICA Director and Team leader giving a presentation at the CLSC of Lac-St. Louis

Steps to Address the Challenges

- Actively expanding outreach efforts to increase visibility and engagement.
- Connecting with universities, CEGEPs, municipalities, and government representatives.
- Building new partnerships to inspire and recruit the next generation of dedicated volunteers.

Volunteer Coordinator

The position of **Volunteer Coordinator** was created in November 2021, in accordance with WICA’s Strategic Plan. The coordinator’s role is to build and maintain a team of volunteers that can meet the needs of the Matching Program’s growing clientele.



Breanna Cave, WICA’s Volunteer Coordinator at DDO Info Night, March 19, 2025

Matching Program (cont.)

Support for individuals on our Waiting List

1. General Support and Referrals

- Although not yet matched with a volunteer, protégés continue to receive support from WICA.
- Referrals are made to programs both within and outside the organization.

2. Program Participation Opportunities

Protégés on the waiting list are encouraged to participate in the following WICA programs:

- Educational Courses (offered twice a year)
- Income Tax Program
- Rendez-Vous Arts Program
- Tablet Program
- Senior Liaison Program

3. Follow-Up and Emergency Support

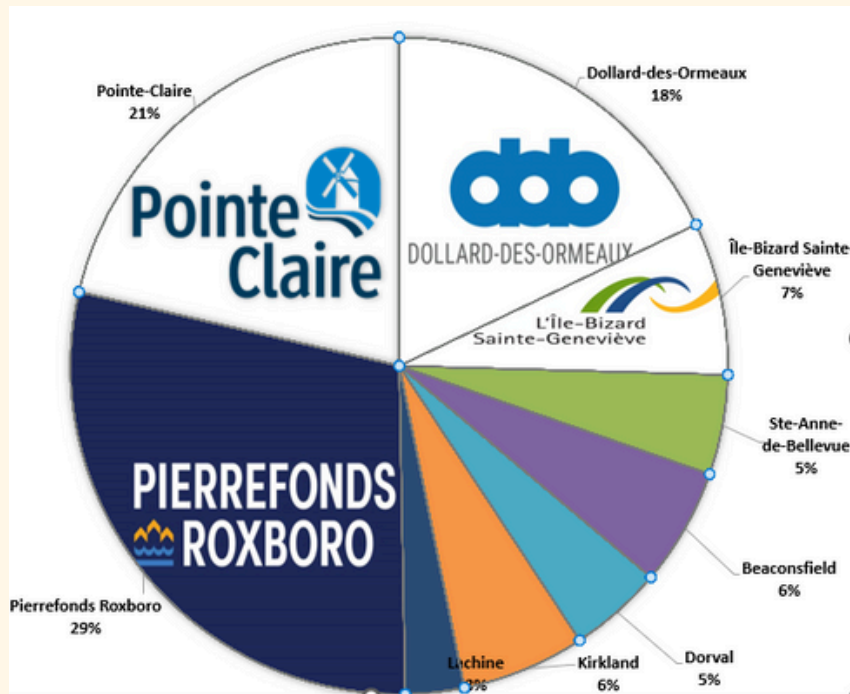
- Community workers provide regular follow-ups.
- Immediate action is taken to address urgent or emergency needs.

4. Social Inclusion & Community Engagement

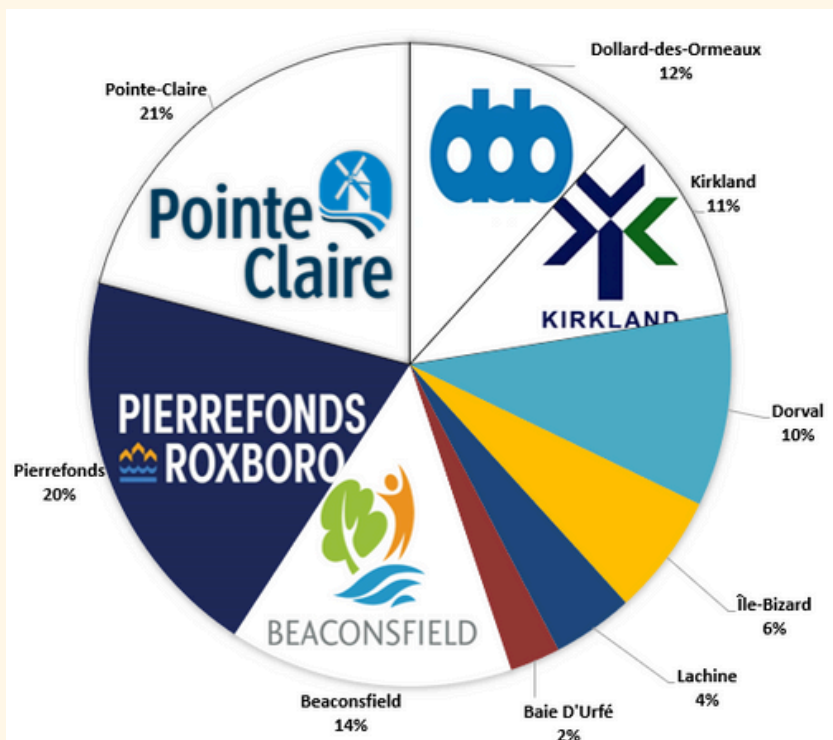
All protégés, including those on the waiting list, are:

- Invited to participate in WICA's events
- Given free access to special activities, such as the Garden Tour (including garden visits, scavenger hunts, snacks, and prize draws).

Active Protégés by City/Borough: April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025



Active Advocates by City/Borough: April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025



Matching Statistics: April 1, 2024-March 31, 2025

	Advocates	Protégés	Matched
New	45	77	76
Active	229	352	300
Matched	193	214	
% Matched	84%	61%	

Community Apartment Program



Khrystyna Tipakova, Maryam El Hebri, and Gabrielle Cave, Community Workers in the CAP Program

Community Apartment Program

The **CAP** Program provides housing solutions for autonomous adult men living with mental illness in the West Island. Since 1986, it has offered a range of options, including semi-supervised, transitional, and permanent residences. The program consists of five apartments and two houses, collectively housing 27 residents in a safe and stable environment. As with other WICA initiatives, the CAP Program is actively promoted through outreach events and informational kiosks to increase community awareness and understanding.

Benefits:

- Provides a safe, affordable, and supportive living environment.
- Reduces stress and anxiety.
- Promotes independence and daily functioning.
- Fosters a sense of security, stability, and belonging.
- Improves access to healthcare and social support services.
- Decreases hospitalizations and emergency room visits.
- Supports long-term recovery by allowing individuals to focus on treatment and personal goals.

The CAP Team

Two full-time staff members and one part-time staff member are dedicated to this program.

Eligibility Criteria for acceptance into the CAP Program

- Male aged 18+.
- Must have received a mental health diagnosis from a physician.
- Must be followed by at least one healthcare or social services professional (e.g., family doctor, psychiatrist, social worker).
- Must demonstrate sufficient autonomy to live independently.
- Must not have any active substance use issues (e.g., alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs).

Steps to apply:

- While referrals are most often submitted by health and social service professionals familiar with the program, self-referrals and those made by family members are also accepted, as long as the candidate meets the program's eligibility requirements
- Community workers review each file to assess eligibility based on program criteria. If the candidate is deemed eligible, an interview is held with the candidate, the referring professional, a family member (if applicable), and two WICA staff members—typically the Executive Director or Team Leader, and a CAP Community Worker.
- If the candidate is accepted, a visit is scheduled to view the assigned apartment or room.
- CAP community workers assist with the move-in process.
- Basic necessities are provided upon arrival.

Community Apartment Program (Cont.)

Financial and Material Support

Residents receive **monthly food baskets**, generously **donated by Moisson Montréal**. These baskets are prepared by the WICA team along with a dedicated group of volunteers and delivered directly to the residents at their apartments. Over the past year, a total of 13 baskets were distributed to each apartment.

During the holiday season, residents also receive a special **Christmas basket** filled with various essential items in addition to food.

WICA also helps meet residents' specific needs by sharing donation requests through social media and community publications, allowing the public to contribute directly.

CAP Activities 2024-25

*Fine Arts Museum (guided tour and a clay masterclass) *Pool and Pizza Day *3 BBQs throughout the summer *Dairy Queen Outing *Safari ice-cream and walk *Christmas lunch *Thanksgiving lunch *27 Birthdays celebrations *Bowling and billiards *Picnic in Millenium Park *Picnic in Centennial Park *Apple picking, tractor ride and picnic *5 cooking activities *Ice skating in Jean Drapeau Parc *Sugar Shack themed brunch *Movie and Popcorn *Bingo Fun *Day at Ikea *Guided tour and painting activity at Stewart Hall Art Gallery.



Parc Jean Drapeau, January 2025

All activities organized throughout the year are fully funded by WICA.

Ongoing Challenges and Proposed Strategies

Shortage of Mental Health Professionals

There is a significant lack of specialists, social workers, and mental health professionals, which results in delays in obtaining timely assessments, diagnoses, and essential support services.

Proposed Strategies

- Lobby for increased public funding dedicated to community mental health initiatives.
- Partner with academic institutions offering programs in social work, psychology, and nursing to welcome interns and supervised students into the program.
- Expand the use of telehealth solutions to help bridge service gaps and improve timely access to care.

Administrative and Systemic Barriers

Navigating the public healthcare system remains a challenge, often requiring the CAP team to advocate extensively for clients to receive the care they need.

Proposed Strategies

- Strengthen relationships with key individuals in the healthcare network to expedite referrals and access to services.
- Work alongside other community-based organizations to collectively advocate for more efficient and responsive systems of care.

Referral Transparency Challenge

Lack of full disclosure from referring professionals sometimes leads to undisclosed substance use issues being discovered after admission, causing delays as the program must transition the resident out and restart the intake process.

Proposed Strategy:

Referring professionals are required to provide complete transparency and honesty about the candidate's situation.

Community Apartment Program (cont.)

CAP Residents in each Residence, April 1, 2024 - Mars 31, 2025

Number of residents per CAP Residence	
Sunshine Bungalow	7
Lakeshore Trinity Apt	3
St- Michael / St Thomas House	5
CAP Beau-Ced Apt	3
CAP WICA 2 Apt	3
CAP-WICA 1 Apt	3
St- Veronica Apt	3
Total	27

CAP/WICA's IMPACT

By combining transitional and permanent housing with personalized support, community engagement, and practical aid such as food distribution and budget guidance, the program not only fosters recovery and autonomy but also strengthens social bonds across the West Island, including active partnerships with residents and organizations. *This approach aligns with the Housing First model, as outlined in the At Home/Chez Soi Montreal Site Report, which emphasizes that housing is a fundamental human right and a critical foundation for recovery* *(Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2017).

CAP residents Testimonials

- "Thank you for my birthday lunch!"
- "I like the activities. Thank you!"
- "Thank you guys for the activity. I really like it. Thank you for all the things you guys do for us."
- "Thank you for taking me to my medical appointments".
- "Thank you for organizing a movie day. I enjoyed the movie".

Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2017). At Home/Chez Soi sustainability report – Montreal site. https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/2017-02/montreal_at_home_sustainability_report_eng.pdf



CAP residents, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, May 2, 2024

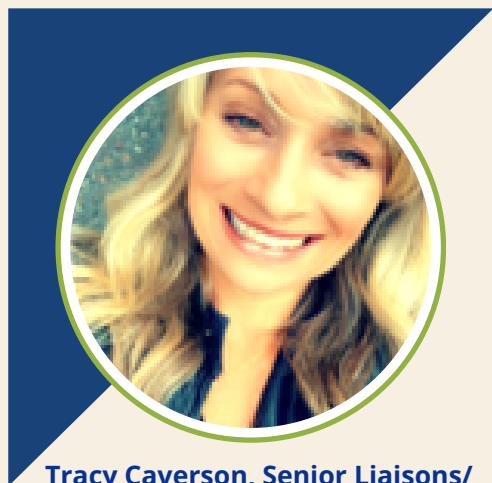


Apple Picking, September 2024



Christmas Party at WICA's Office, December 2024

Senior Liaisons/ITMAV



**Tracy Caverson, Senior Liaisons/
ITMAV Community Worker**

Seniors Liaisons/ITMAV

This initiative offers assistance and guidance to seniors facing social crises or abuse, whether financial, physical, or psychological. It also focuses on reaching isolated and vulnerable seniors in underserved multicultural communities, who are at increased risk of abuse, fraud, and additional challenges due to language and cultural differences.

Funded by the *Ministère de la Famille* under the *Initiatives de travail de milieu auprès des aînés vulnérables* (ITMAV), the program provides free, confidential support to seniors in need.

Outreach Efforts

This program collaborates with the SPVM and various community organizations to connect with seniors by visiting senior residences and conducting presentations at churches and senior centers in the West Island. It also raises awareness by distributing informational pamphlets at pharmacies, health clinics, senior housing, libraries, city halls, and other community venues.

ITMAV outreach & Presentations, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Door to door with the SPVM

June 3, 2024	SPVM Kirkland, door to door
June 4, 2024	SPVM Pointe-Claire, door to door
June 10, 2024	SPVM Lachine, door to door
June 14, 2024	SPVM, Pierrefonds, door to door

Presentations

June 15, 2024	Pierrefonds, Senior's Awareness Day
June 15, 2024	Pointe-Claire, Senior's Awareness Day
Sep 17, 2024	CRC Senior Tea/Café rencontre
Sep 30, 2024	Men's Shed Outreach
Oct 7, 2024	Beaconsfield Women's Club
Nov 4, 2024	CLSC Pierrefonds workers
Nov 20, 2024	CLSC Lac St. Louis Workers

Reaching and Referring Clients to the Program

Clients in this program are primarily referred by CLSCs, hospitals, other community organizations, or family members. Additionally, some participants are identified through outreach efforts led by the community worker, who distributes informational pamphlets and conducts door-to-door visits to connect with vulnerable individuals. Some clients also come from other programs within the organization—mainly the Matching Program—where advocates highlight their protégé's crisis situations and refer them for further support.

Role and Impact of the ITMAV Community Worker

The ITMAV community worker supports clients—particularly vulnerable seniors—by helping them navigate government systems, access healthcare, manage housing concerns, and address financial, legal, and emotional challenges. Services include assistance with paperwork, tax preparation, fraud prevention, and crisis intervention, while also bridging language gaps and offering ongoing emotional support.

Senior Liaisons/ITMAV (Cont.)

Role and Impact of the ITMAV Community Worker (cont.)

These services have a significant impact on the well-being and quality of life of vulnerable seniors. By helping them navigate complex systems, access essential healthcare, and manage critical financial and legal matters, the ITMAV community worker empowers clients to maintain their independence and stability. Bridging language barriers and providing emotional support also fosters trust and reduces feelings of isolation, ensuring that seniors feel heard, respected, and supported during times of need. This holistic approach promotes dignity, safety, and improved overall mental and physical health.

Testimonials

During a hospital visit to one of her protégées, the community worker overheard her say to the nurse: *“She’s my advocate – she cares about me more than anyone in my family.”*

WICA’s community worker assisted a protégée by translating the discussions during a Zoom conference with the TAL (*Tribunal Administratif du Logement*). In the protégée’s words: *“You were kind enough to help me understand everything that was being said during the meeting. I felt less alone and received all the assistance I needed. I thank you and your organization for all the support you give to the community.”*



WICA Director, Roya and ITMAV/Senior Liaisons Community Worker, Tracy, at the Centraide Campaign, December 2024.

Senior Liaisons/ITMAV Statistics, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Number of ITMAV cases by type	
Housing	30
Documents	16
Financial	5
Taxes	1
Fraud	1
Emotional Support	11
Legal	5
H & SSS (Health)	20
Immigration	1
Information	2
Accompaniment	8
Total	100

Senior Liaisons/ITMAV Protégés, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Senior Liaisons/ITMAV
100 Cases
46 New Protégés
70 Active Protégés



WICA Director, Roya and ITMAV/Senior Liaisons Community Worker, Tracy, at the Beaconsfield Women Club.

Program Rendez-Vous Arts



Ramez Rabbat, Painting Instructor

After two years of teaching my class, I've come to truly appreciate the positive impact it has on my students' daily lives. Watching them grow and develop their own artistic styles is a deeply rewarding experience – for them and for me.

Rendez-Vous Arts Program

The RVA Program offers painting classes for adults facing physical or mental health challenges, using creativity as a tool to support well-being and personal growth. Led by an experienced instructor in a warm, inclusive, and non-judgmental environment, the classes encourage self-expression for individuals of all skill levels.

Class Schedule and Frequency

Two-hour classes are offered three times per week by **Painting Instructor Ramez** at the Kinsmen Chalet (Pointe-Claire), on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

In addition, two other classes are offered by **Art Coach Jaki**: a 2-hour group session for 6 participants at Foyer Dorval and an individual 2-hour session for 1 participant at Bayview.



Jaki Vaughan, Volunteer Art Coach

My volunteer service of Art Coaching continues to give me great pleasure and reward. The clients' appreciation of this weekly opportunity to practise techniques of composition, perspectives and color mixing is a joy to watch.

Program Accessibility and Community Engagement

In line with other WICA programs, the RVA is actively promoted to enhance community awareness and ensure broad access to its benefits. While most participants are already familiar with WICA, the program welcomes all types of referrals, provided the individual is experiencing physical and/or mental health challenges.

Annual Art Exhibition and Celebration of Talent

Each year, the program concludes with a public art exhibition highlighting the talents and accomplishments of its participants. The latest exhibit showcased over 60 paintings by 30 Protégés, drawing a strong turnout—including the Pointe-Claire Mayor—and fostering a deep sense of pride among the artists.

Studies have long highlighted the therapeutic value of the creative arts, showing that they can improve emotional expression and help alleviate both physical and psychological stress (Barnett & Vasiu, 2024).

Barnett, K. S., & Vasiu, F. (2024). How the arts heal: A review of the neural mechanisms behind the therapeutic effects of creative arts on mental and physical health. *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, 18, 1422361. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnbeh.2024.1422361>

Rendez-Vous Arts (Cont.)

Key Benefits

- **Emotional Expression:** Provides a safe, creative outlet for processing emotions and reducing stress.
- **Mental Health Support:** Helps improve mood, focus, and self-esteem through artistic engagement.
- **Social Connection:** Reduces isolation by fostering a sense of community and shared experience.
- **Sense of Purpose:** Encourages routine and personal achievement, contributing to a more stable daily life.

Testimonials from RVA participants

"The RVA have been a meaningful source of joy, connection, and structure in my life. They help me break isolation, connect with others who share similar interests and challenges, and pursue my passion for art in a supportive, friendly environment. Thanks to WICA, I receive free classes, materials, and even the chance to exhibit my work—something I couldn't otherwise afford."

"I'm deeply grateful to WICA, my wonderful teacher, and all the donors who make this possible. The RVA have opened my mind to possibilities I never thought of. What I love most is the inspiring, relaxing, warm, and welcoming atmosphere. RVA is is very much "My Happy Place!"

Total Number of RVA participants, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

	Location	Number of participants
Painting Instructor	Kismen Chalet (Pointe-Claire)	34
Volunteer Art Coach	Foyer Dorval/Bayview	7
Total		41



Creativity in Action: RVA Participants



Income Tax Service

The **Income Tax service** is a year-round program that provides free tax preparation support to the community. While eligibility requirements may apply, the service is primarily aimed at individuals with low income or those in vulnerable situations who may face challenges completing their tax returns on their own.

Launched in 2023, the Walk-In Tax Clinic operates annually during the months of March and April and has continued to grow in popularity among West Island residents. In alignment with WICA's mission, the clinic aims to reduce financial barriers and ensure individuals access to the government benefits and credits they are entitled to.

2025 Walk-In Clinic Highlights

- Ran from March 1st to April 30th
- Operated weekly on three designated drop-in days
- Took place at the WICA office
- Was staffed by dedicated volunteers and community workers

Benefits

- Free of Charge: No-cost tax preparation service for eligible individuals.
- Accessible Year-Round: Support available throughout the year, not just during tax season.
- Walk-In Convenience: The March-April Walk-In Tax Clinic offers easy access without the need for appointments.
- Support for Vulnerable Populations: Designed to assist low-income individuals, seniors, newcomers, and others in need.
- Maximizes Benefits and Credits: Ensures all eligible government benefits, credits, and refunds are claimed.
- Reduces Financial Stress: Helps prevent costly filing errors and alleviates the burden of tax preparation.
- Community-Based Approach: Strengthens community well-being by promoting financial literacy and inclusion.

Testimonials from our tax clients

"I initially came to have my taxes done, but one volunteer suggested that I have a questionnaire completed by my husband's doctor to better explain his situation. This helped me maximize my tax return.

On top of that, I was referred to another program within the organization (Senior Liaisons) and was assisted by the community worker to apply for the new dental plan. I'm truly grateful to this organization, and to the dedicated community workers and volunteers who make such a difference."

Total Number of Tax Returns Filed, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Tax Year Filed	
Taxes (2013-2022)	55
2023	255
2024	175
Total	485

Total Number of clients by age-group, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Protégés by age	# of Protégés
0-19 years	9
20-64	233
65+	148
Total	390

Total Number of volunteers by role, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Volunteer Tax Handlers	13
Volunteer Tax Preparers	13

"I'm truly grateful for organizations like yours that help people like me who can't afford to get their taxes done. I used to be able to do them myself, but not anymore. You're all such kind people, and you do wonderful work."

Income Tax Service^(Cont.)

Challenges Encountered

Due to financial limitations, we were unable to hire a tax coordinator and had to rely on our existing staff—whose workload increased—as well as expand our team of volunteers. This was not an easy task, but it was made possible thanks to everyone's dedication.

The Tablet Program

The **Tablet Program** was launched in 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help reduce social isolation among seniors. It was designed to provide easy-to-use tablets to socially isolated older adults, enabling them to stay connected with their advocates, caregivers, and loved ones. Recognizing that technology can be a barrier, the program also includes regular technical support and hands-on training sessions to ensure seniors feel confident using their devices.

The program began modestly, with several tablets generously donated by local citizens. As demand increased, it expanded thanks to financial support from the City of Pointe-Claire, which enabled the purchase of additional devices. Today, the program is sustained through our general operating budget and ongoing donations from community members.

The Tablet Program: Schedule and Support

A **weekly 2-hour class** is held at WICA's office to help seniors develop their digital skills and become more comfortable using their tablets. The sessions cover basic functions such as navigating the internet, sending emails, using video calls, and accessing essential services online .

For individuals who are unable to come to the office due to physical limitations, the tablet coordinator offers **personalized support** either through home visits or by guiding them via Zoom calls.

Tablet Management, April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Tablets assigned to protégés	24
Tablet Program follow-ups	51
Tablet Return	1
Tablet Tech Support	14
Tablet Training	110
Tablet Advocates	7
Active Tablet Protégés	42
In person Tablet Classes have been held since January 15th	10

The Tablet Program (Cont.)

Key Benefits

- Improves Social Connection: Helps isolated seniors stay in touch with family, friends, and community supports.
- Hands-On Technical Support: Ongoing help sessions ensure seniors can comfortably operate their tablets.
- Facilitates Access to Services: Enables seniors to connect with health professionals, advocates, and resources online.
- Empowers Digital Literacy: Encourages skill-building and confidence in using everyday technology.
- Free of Charge: The service is provided at no cost to eligible participants, removing financial barriers to digital access.

The benefits of digital literacy for older adults are manyfold. Increased digital literacy may directly improve older adults' quality of life through greater access to information including health care, and by enhancing social connections through greater communication avenues resulting in increased mental and emotional health.

Source: Marcotte, A.-A. (2024). Digital literacy interventions for older adults in Canada. AGE-WELL. Retrieved from <https://corealberta.ca/index.php/resources/policy-report-digital-literacy-interventions-for-older-adults-in-canada-1>

Courses 2024-2025

Courses Fall 2024/Spring 2025

In 2024, we introduced a 5-week course to help seniors “Become Tech-Savvy”. They learned to navigate technology on their phones, laptops and ipads. By popular demand, we continued this course in our Spring 2025 session.



Community Involvement

Moisson Montréal

Moisson Montreal's mission is to ensure an optimal food supply to community organizations serving people in need on the island of Montreal.



The CAP Residents receive monthly food baskets, generously donated by Moisson Montréal.

We work closely with the CLSCs, making mutual referrals to provide coordinated support for the individuals we serve.

CLSCs



Regroupement québécois du Parrainage Civique

This movement aspires to a more just, equitable and democratic society. Every person with a disability must have a full place in our society.



Community Partners

Comité de la bientraitance des aînés de l'Ouest-de-l'Île - Elder Abuse

The ITMAV's community worker participates in this committee, as the Program primarily supports seniors at risk. This table focuses on raising awareness within the senior community about the definition of abuse and maltreatment, as well as informing them of the resources available to help prevent and address such situations.

Mental Health Table

This table fosters collaboration among community and public sector organizations to improve local mental health services. Our participation enables us to offer better support to the CAP Program that helps men living with mental health challenges.

Table des 50 ans et plus de Dorval-Lachine (T50+) - Table of 50 years and older in Dorval-Lachine

WICA's community workers take part in the Lachine Table 50+, a collaborative network focused on improving services and outreach for individuals aged 50 and over. This participation helps us strengthen connections with local partners who can support our protégés in Lachine.

TCAOI Table de concertation des aînés de l'Ouest-de-l'Île - Coordination Table for Seniors of the West Island

This table supports our mission by strengthening connections with West Island partners who can assist our protégés in the area. It also reinforces our commitment to advocating for seniors and reducing social isolation among older adults.

TCAOI sub-committee - Health Committee/Comité Santé

The Health Committee is a valuable resource for information on available health services for our clients. It keeps us up to date on changes within the healthcare system and better equips us to support our clients in navigating public health services.

Community Involvement (cont.)

TQNOIM Table du Quartier Nord de l'Ouest-de-l'Île - Northern West Island Intersectoral Table

This collaborative table promotes social development and inclusion by addressing key issues such as housing, food security, cultural diversity, and more. It keeps us connected with community initiatives and enhances our ability to support clients across all programs.

TQSOI sub-committee - Tenant's Housing Rights CALODI

The CALODI table aims to equip tenants with the information, tools, and support they need to understand and defend their rights. This is particularly relevant to two of our programs: the CAP Program, which provides affordable housing to men living with mental illness, and ITMAV through which many of our protégés seek housing-related support.

Comité d'apprentissage ITMAV - Learning Committee

Our ITMAV community worker participates in this table, specifically designed to support professionals involved in the ITMAV Program. Attendance is mandatory, as it helps build stronger ties within the ITMAV community. The table also offers valuable guidance and real-life case examples, enhancing our ability to support seniors in our territory.

Population Well-being Seniors subcommittee

The Seniors Subcommittee provides us with valuable insights and resources on how to enhance the quality of life for the elderly clients we serve.

TQSOI Food Security Table

As we serve a vulnerable population, participation in this table complements our mission. For example, through our collaboration with Moisson Montréal, we've been able to deliver food to WICA protégés who are experiencing food insecurity due to low income or other hardships.

TQSOI Table du Quartier Sud de l'Ouest-de-l'Île - Southern West Island Intersectoral Table

This table fosters collaboration among local organizations and keeps us informed about regional initiatives. Our participation supports WICA's mission to improve quality of life and promote social development rooted in equity, sustainability, and community engagement.

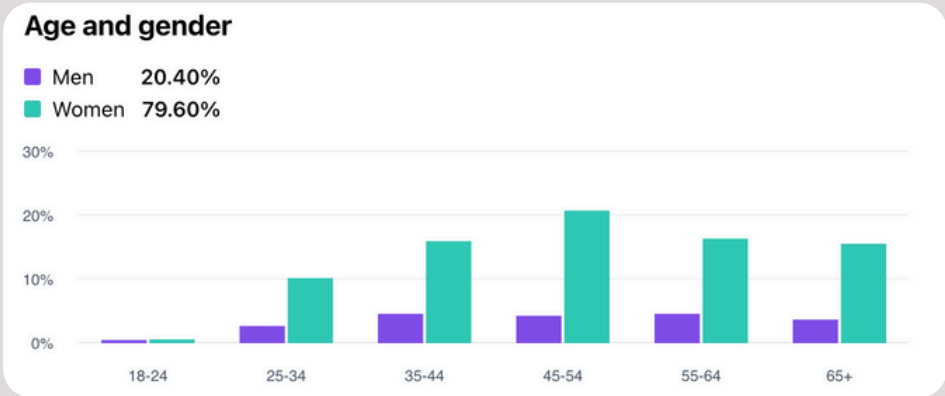
PUBLICITY REPORT

2024-2025 Statistics



Facebook Posts
412

Volunteer Blurbs



Views	Reach	3-second views	Watch time
41.9K	28.2K ↓ 19.3%	176 ↑ 128.6%	1h 16m ↑ 346.9

Although our reach has slightly decreased, the quality time spent on our page has seen a large increase. Recent studies indicate an overall decrease in reach on Facebook due to algorithm changes, increased competition, and user behaviour.

Social Media : Facebook, Instagram, Website, Mailchimp, Zeffy

Other media : Suburban, Global, CTV, CRC, News & Views, City Electronic Boards, City Newsletters/Journals and target specific advertising.

Newsletter : Distributed in the Spring and Fall

Number of Recipients : 1620
Average open rate: 50.8%
Total Campaigns : 14

Total sends
18,840
↑ 6,180%

Open rate
50.6%
↑ 26.6%

EVENTS



Garden Tour June 8, 2024

The 31st annual Garden Tour took place in June 2024, including beautiful gardens from Dorval and Pointe-Claire, a scavenger hunt and tea party to finish off the day. We raised \$2186 on this day in ticket sales!

Halloween October 2024

We enjoyed another fabulous Halloween at the Ivan Dow house this year! This very scary outdoor haunted house raised \$1900



Giving Tuesday November 2024

In 2024 for Giving Tuesday, we asked the community to help us provide resources for CAP (community apartment program). For the holidays, their wish list was very simple: just everyday basic needs. We raised \$1640 for this cause.



EVENTS

Christmas Baskets December 2024

Christmas baskets were delivered to over 42 recipients by our own Community Workers. We added extra items to the baskets that were generously provided by Moisson Montréal to provide extra support to those in need.



Website 2024-2025

The website is updated on a regular basis to promote upcoming events and to offer opportunities to volunteer and/or donate to our organization.



WICA Newsletter 2024-2025

A newsletter is distributed to over 1600 subscribers on mailchimp and across social media in the Spring and Fall.

WICA is grateful for the continued financial support from the following agencies, foundations, clubs and service groups, churches, municipalities, community groups and corporations.

FUNDING

\$ 10,000+

- Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires (PSOC)
- Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés
- Centraide
- Emploi Québec
- West Island Community Shares
- Fondation Jeanne-Esther
- Tenaquip Foundation
- Red Cross
- Echo Foundation



Red Cross

\$ 2,000 - \$9,999

- City of Dollard-des-Ormeaux
- City of Pointe-Claire
- Pointe-Claire Oldtimers Hockey Club
- Government of Canada
- Gregory Kelley



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada



FUNDING (cont.)

\$ 1,000 - \$ 1,999



- St. Michael & All Angels Anglican Church
- Dorval Oldtimers
- City of Kirkland
- Lakeshore Civitan Club



- City of Beaconsfield
- Lachine Borough



- Brigitte Garceau, National Assembly of Québec, (Robert-Baldwin)
- St. Thomas à Becket Parish

\$ 200 - \$ 999



- Enrico Ciccone, National Assembly of Québec (Marquette)
- City of Baie d'Urfé
- Merging Waters United Church
- Maison L'Échelon
- Pierrefonds-Roxboro Borough
- West Island Nursery



Private Donors

\$ 1,000 - \$ 1,999

Iris Partington

\$ 200 - \$ 999

- Céline Grenier
- Eugène Busque
- Irma Paul
- Kathryn Hejnar
- Margo Heron
- Peter Murphy
- Philip Morgan
- Sœur Lise Venne
- Stephanie Lyman
- William Humes



MARGOT HERON



Recipient of the Warren Wilfred
Thomas Award 2024/2025



Warren W. Thomas was WICA's
Treasurer for more than 5 years.

In honor of his memory and the values he embodied, we established the Warren Wilfred Thomas Award for Extraordinary Service to the Community in 2024. We are proud to continue celebrating his legacy through this meaningful recognition.



This year, we are delighted to present the Warren Wilfred Thomas Award to Margot Hurtubise Heron at our upcoming Annual General Meeting on June 17, 2025 at Valois Bay Nautical Center. Margot was nominated by Marla Newhook, previous Director of WICA, for this award in recognition of her outstanding and long-standing contributions to the West Island community over the past 45 years.

She has dedicated 36 years to serving on the Board of WICA, including 3 years as President, 39 years with St-Veronica's Parish, 29 years on the Dorval Book Club, 21 years at Maison Donalda Boyer, 10 years with the Committee for the Integration of People with Disabilities, and much more—including her pivotal role as a councillor for the City of Dorval.

Margot truly embodies the spirit of this award through her enduring kindness, humility, collaborative nature, unwavering ethical standards, deep compassion, and—at the heart of it all—her steadfast commitment to social justice.

Margot
Congratulations



Awards of Merit

To All Our Advocates for their Years of dedication
and their Volunteering!

5 Years

Adamo Ghezso
Alfredo Diodati
Bonnie Chazan Ornstein
Chantal Boivert
Huw William Griffiths
James (Jim) Pole
Magali Genevieve Lapointe
Nadia Hanson
Ronald (Ron) Rudin
Sonia Klebanskyj (Wirtanen)

10 Years

Linda Holtzman
Peng Yu
Rebecca Michaelle Daniel
Safaa Saad
Vimmie Kulasegaram

15 Years

Andrew Hall
Lorraine Salicco
Lynne Prevost
Michel Bourque
Tony Zeepvat

30 Years

Pauline Birks
Scott Birks
Yolanda Ghirotto

35 Years

Salve Desprez

45 Years

Dennis Partington
Iris Partington

