

# MISSION MONTREAL

February 2013

## Mission Montreal Board

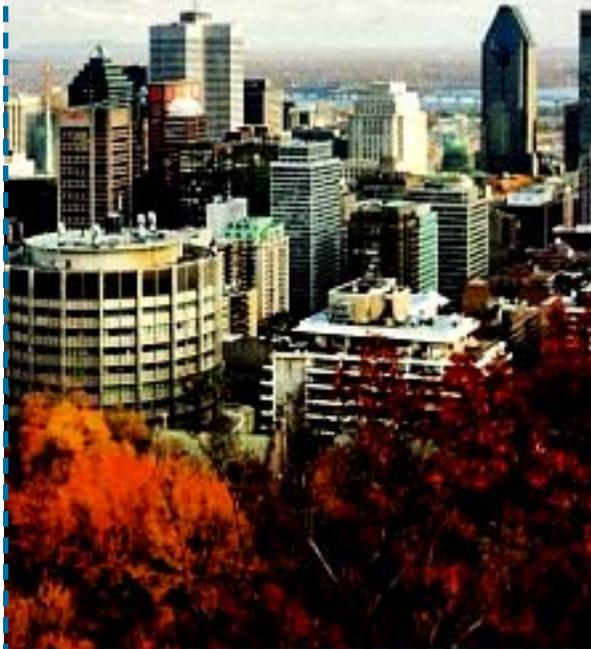
The Board for Mission Montreal met for its first official board meeting Monday February 4, 2013. The board consists of Adrian Van Giessen (Home Missions), Joel Huyser (World Missions), Hans Kater (Diaconal Ministries Canada), Renada Hotton (First CRC Montreal), Glenn Smith (Christian Direction) and Sheila Murphy (Outreach Ministry Developer CEC).

## Why Montreal?

Montreal and by extension Quebec has the highest percentage of unreached people in North America. However, even though less than 3% of people worship in a Christian church on a weekly basis, 80% of people strongly identify with their spiritual roots

The CRC's commitment to holistic ministry and the expertise gained from working overseas with French speaking populations including Muslims will be a welcomed contribution to those doing ministry in Montreal.

Montreal is an opportunity for the CRC to learn about and practice cross cultural ministry skills, to learn about new forms of church expression that can potentially be applied to other Canadian cities and to provide internship opportunities for young adults from various parts of Canada.



## Christian Direction

In speaking with on the ground ministry practitioners, it became very clear to us that Christian Direction would be our main on the ground partner. Christian Direction's vision is: To see God transform urban communities by the concerted actions of committed Christians. Christian Direction operates Accroche Youth Centres in three disadvantaged areas of Montreal. [www.direction.ca](http://www.direction.ca)

Innovation Youth is situated downtown Montreal, in the heart of Concordia University's campus district. They work with teens 12 and up and their families, offering a high school diploma program for kids who have dropped out, family mediation and youth intervention, a food security program through cooking workshops and a collective kitchen for young parents and neighbours. This is a difficult area - the frenzy of downtown life isolates residents one from another, and 40 percent of our population lives under the poverty line. Many newly landed immigrants arrive in this neighbourhood and must face the challenges of making a new life for themselves alone. This is why Innovation Youth seeks to create a harmonious and community oriented space for all who walk through our doors, seeking to tear down the barriers of loneliness and isolation.

In St. Laurent –Christian Direction launched the Centre Accroche in 1993 in an effort to combat the increasing high school drop-out rates in Montreal. In a friendly and community-oriented atmosphere, the Centre Accroche offers academic tutoring as well as a number of interactive workshops, all designed to help youth graduate from high-school and achieve their post-secondary educational objectives.

In 2006, Christian Direction carried out and published a 45-page study of the east end of Montréal—Hochelaga/Maisonneuve. This is one of the continuously poorest boroughs in Canada, dating back to the first census in 1871! Together, in conjunction with Roman Catholic parishes and Protestant congregations, we created a church network called the *Regroupement œcuménique de Hochelaga/Maisonneuve*. Numerous initiatives have been launched as a result of that study. For example, to address the relational poverty, we sponsor four events each year to penetrate the deep solitude people experience. To counter the 53% high school drop-out in the neighbourhood, in collaboration with another social service agency, we started a centre in 2009 to work with adolescents, their families and the local schools to promote success in school. Together with others in the borough, we advocate with local businesses so they do not employ kids during the school day. To break the cycle of intergenerational poverty, three Financial Capability projects were launched (2010, 2011, 2012) for young people and mothers. In a short time, all three were generating income. At the heart of the vision are the key indicators of a transformed community.

## Vision of Mission Montreal

To work with the three Accroche Youth centre teams of Christian Direction for the social and spiritual transformation of these boroughs of Montreal.

### **This will be done:**

As an extension of the existing holistic community-based ministries with a special focus on Muslims.

By beginning a network of reproducible missional communities

By raising up mature indigenous leaders

## *Next Steps*

### **February 2013**

– Advertising for the position begins

### **April 30, 2013**

– deadline for applications

### **May 2013**

– Interviews begin

### **June 2013**

– decision is made on who to hire

### **July 2013**

– Mission Montreal begins

**MISSION  
MONTREAL**

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