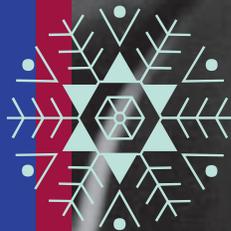
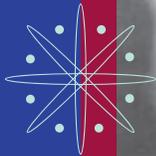
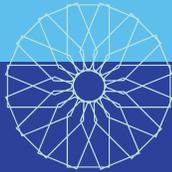


# NEWSLETTER

## LEA ROBACK FOUNDATION



Number 10, December 2014



# A Word from the President

## Moral Anchors

Everyone says so: "Life goes by so fast, ever more fleetingly!" We're often swept up in a whirlwind of events, undertakings and emotions and often feel that life is passing us by. That is surely why we need to have a number of moral anchors. They are different from one person to the next, but some are rather obvious for just about everybody.

These moral anchors remind us about what really counts in life; they bring us back down to earth, back to the basics; they may even help us deal with more difficult moments or better take advantage of the good times that come our way.

Number one, the need to have people who are dear to us close by and to nurture and cultivate significant human relationships. With the members of our family and our friends, we can share our happiness and we're able to count upon their affection when life sometimes puts us to the test.

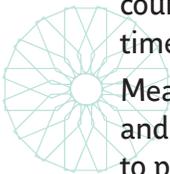
Meanwhile, certain rituals bring us serenity and confidence; they represent a moment to pause, a break, a rest or they may provide us, for a certain period of time, the opportunity to change the rhythm. They are genuine markers in the days and weeks that pass us by.

The Holiday Season or vacations thus provide us with opportunities to reconnect with others, to discover new things, to indulge ourselves, which all thus becomes nice new memories.

Finally, there's our attachment to certain core values, to our beliefs. Convictions that motivate us to give shape to our commitments, to consistency and solidarity. I'd like to believe that your loyalty to the Foundation, that you support year after year, is one of many moral anchors that gives meaning to your life.

One thing is certain, the Foundation's action, as that of Lea Roback in the past, provides women with the possibility to pick up momentum and move forward, to make progress. For all these women that we have collectively helped, the Foundation's financial support has represented, in this regard, a genuine moral anchor. Of this we can all be proud, because of what we have made possible through our solidarity and our generosity.

**For that, we sincerely thank each and every one of you.**



# *This years scholarship recipients*

## *2014-2015 scholarships*

The Lea Roback Foundation is pleased once again this year to award scholarships to 11 candidates who have stood out in their milieu and in their studies, through their hard work, perseverance and social commitment.

In the following paragraphs, we will sketch a brief portrait of each of these scholarship recipients to pay tribute to them and to illustrate the exemplary courage of these women who, despite challenging living conditions, remain hopeful and find a way to give shape to their dreams.

Each of them, notwithstanding adversity, is working to build a better society.

### *General High School*

**Annick Lacharité**, a single-parent mother of four children, two of whom are still living with her, has been a member of numerous boards of directors since the late 1990s. This was how she translated her desire to be involved socially and to try to improve her living conditions and those of her children.

Although as an adolescent she was unable to continue with her education, she now hopes to finish high school and then go on to college.

Annick Lacharité likes a good challenge; volunteer work has opened up many doors for her and enabled her to better define her interests ever since she started to conduct kitchen workshop groups with the *Les Tabliers en folie* collective. She has developed her skills and has focused her aspirations upon using her experiences to help her peers.

Her return back to school will enable her to achieve her goals: *“I’m dedicated to understanding people (...) to truly listening to them, to really being there for them.”*

**France Richard** est is a resourceful woman who, after raising her spouse’s children, ended up alone in a state of considerable poverty. But she is determined to achieve financial autonomy.

Over 50 years old, and despite health problems that limit her mobility, France Richard registered in the PAAS-Action program run by the Alpha Montmagny Group. Her initial goal is to finish her third year of high school, then to complete a training program so as to find a job.

She quickly integrated herself into the group and is perceived as a “positive leader”, attentive to others, generous and considerate, she’s actively interested in the ways that one can combat poverty and gladly shares her own experiences.

Her scholarship will enable her to meet her basic needs.

## *Vocational High School*

**Tania Sousa** est is a determined, perseverant, young woman, who is very attached to her family, who she assists and supports with devotion and courage.

She is attending Félix Antoine School, a school for young adults with learning difficulties. Thanks to her tenacious perseverance and hard work, she is overcoming her difficulties; and can henceforth bring her projects to fruition and ensure her autonomy.

Her work experiences, her volunteer undertakings and her insight into how things are in the real world have enabled her to reach a decision to enrol in a general building maintenance career-training program. All on her own to take care of her needs, Tania doesn't shy away from hard work and recognizes that the scholarship that she is receiving this year will be of valuable assistance to help her succeed in school.

## *Technical training*

**Audrey Gobeil** is raising her young son on her own; it is moreover the birth of her son that aroused her desire to find a trade that could provide them both with some stability and comfort. Without a diploma, without really knowing what possibilities might be out there for her, Audrey Gobeil consulted, did some research and ultimately identified her professional goal, which would henceforth enable her to think about the future with more serenity. Registered in Land Use and Urban Planning Techniques, she affirms: "It's a trade that is tailor made for me."

While going to school, she is however remaining active at the Carrefour Communautaire Saint-Paul in Chicoutimi, where her sense of responsibility, her diligence and sense of organization are very much appreciated. Her scholarship will help her focus upon her studies.

## *Bachelors Degree, University*

### Five scholarship recipients

**Noémie Bernier** is an ambitious, hard working and very involved young woman. Committed to her studies, active in her community, she is recognized for her maturity, insight and discretion. Enrolled in a Bachelor of History program, she wants to become a teacher so that she can share her passion to better understand the world and to participate, through her reflections, in the examination and advancement of the major social issues and challenges facing society, such as "the environmental debate, accessibility to education for everyone, accessibility to community services outside of the major metropolitan areas..."

In addition to her studies, Noémie works part-time and volunteers to assist a number of cultural organizations, as well as at the L'Aid'Elle shelter to assist women in the Gaspé. The scholarship that we are awarding to her will help her continue her university education in Montreal.

**Noémie N’Zafio Bastien** is a young single-parent mother who has custody for her three children. From a childhood spent under the guardianship of the Youth Protection Agency to attending university, Noémie is living proof that determination and self-discovery are qualities that can change one’s life.

She wants to improve her quality of life, take proper care of her children and exercise a profession that would enable her to play a social role and make use of her many experiences.

This explains why she enrolled in the Université Laval Law Faculty and hopes to offer her services to clients who are amongst the most vulnerable. Noémie n’Zafio Bastien is a meticulous learner and generous towards her fellow students, volunteering to assist them when her support is necessary.

Her scholarship will certainly help her fulfil her many family, school and volunteer commitments.

**Miya Kagan Cassidy**, qui who lives with her mother, is committed to sharing with the latter the onerous responsibilities related to caring for her brother.

She demonstrates the same fervour to be present with others and to succeed in her efforts at school. She is a high-performing conscientious young woman. A sportswoman, she is on the College’s basketball team and volunteered to help develop the tutoring program set up by the Trevor Williams Kids Foundation. Miya is enrolled in the Psychology and Social Sciences program at Dawson College and has shown impressive talent in conducting research.

She wants to earn a Doctorate in psychology in order to work with adolescents.

“I believe that the teenage years can be the most difficult and life changing, which is why it is important to help young people through their tough times.”

**Vicky Cloutier** est is one of the first girls in her family to finish high school. While doing an internship at the Centre des femmes de Laval she met several women committed to social justice and equality. These contacts were a life-changing eye opener for Vicky. She now knows where and what she wants to do with her life. From the foregoing, her social commitment has bloomed, and shows no signs of wavering.

Her ambitions are clear. The first woman in her family to go to university, she wants to study, to be socially involved, to be an activist and to be “ a motor for social change amongst women”.

Receiving a scholarship to continue her studies will be of precious assistance, because as she declares loud and clear:

*“Debt is not a choice for the enfranchization of women.”*

**Mandana Kasiri** is Iranian; she arrived in Quebec in 2012 with her husband and young son. Holding a graduate degree in statistics from the University of Tabriz in Iran, she worked in accounting in her native country. However, her diplomas are not recognized in Quebec, so she, like her husband, has to go back to school in order to secure the right to work in her new adoptive country.

To be able to fit in and to enrol in accounting at UQÀM, Mandana wasted no time in learning to speak and write French.

Through her participation in various activities organized by community groups in South Central Montreal, she got involved in the Femmes-Relais project, that trains women from various cultural communities in order that they facilitate the integration of immigrant families.

Mandana invested herself in this project with both professionalism and empathy, while demonstrating a wonderful capacity to adapt. Her dearest wish is to earn the diploma that would give her autonomy and the ability to actively participate in Quebec society.

**Marie Josée Roy** is not afraid of a challenge. Perseverant and determined to continue her education, she lives in Joliette, is studying in Montreal and doesn't hesitate a second to commute back and forth every day between the two cities.

After dealing with some trying family-related ordeals, Marie Josée found the courage to get her life back on track, to get her priorities straight and to view her life with optimism. Marie Josée Roy was given accommodation at the Maison La Traverse in Joliette before moving into the Maison Pauline Bonin with her 5-year old daughter. The Maison Pauline Bonin helps women who are heads of a household to go back to school or return to the labour market.

As a resident-participant at the Maison Pauline Bonin, and thanks to her personality, Marie Josée helps the residents get along with one another and participates in managing the group. She is studying in the field of social work and once she gets her Bachelors Degree, she will be able to work professionally to help others and be proud of the example that she is setting for her daughter.

**Kabisha Velauthapillai** was a 2013-2014 scholarship recipient.

*"I thank you immensely (...) I was able to pay my tuition for two semesters, as well as for the books that were required for my classes."*

We shared in her joy and pride when she announced to us that she had been accepted to McGill University, where she will be enrolled in an environmental studies program.

*« With a B.Sc. in Environmental Science or Biology, I intend on helping the world on a greater level. »*

Kabisha is a young woman who doesn't let obstacles prevent her from moving forward. On the contrary, she reflects upon them and tries to learn from them, as a catalyst and inspiration. Her family situation is difficult. Amongst other things, her father's health problems prevent him from meeting the family's needs and undermine the overall well-being of the family members.

While still lending a hand to her parents and her sister, Kabisha is studying and engaged in her volunteer social commitments, in particular with DESTA-NATION and Canada World Youth.

The Madeleine-Parent and Hélène-Pedneault Scholarships are not being awarded this year.

# Lea Roback in our community

## In Lea's name

Lea Roback's name is not only dear to the people who had the good fortune and pleasure to know her personally, or people active in the trade union movement, peace groups or even in the feminist movement. Remembering Lea and the commemoration of her name appear around us in various forms.

There is, first of all, **Lea Roback Street**, in Montreal, a rather small street for a huge activist, located in the south-western corner of the city, bordering on the Lachine Canal, to the south of Saint-Ambroise Street. This street is located at few short minutes walk from the old RCA Victor plant in Saint-Henri, where Lea worked in 1942 to organize a Union. The Beauport borough, just outside of Quebec City, also named a street in honour of Lea Roback, in 2006. It should be recalled that Beauport is where Lea spent her childhood, and where her family ran a general store.

Opened in 1997, the **Maison Parent-Roback** houses various women's groups, Les Éditions du remue-ménage and the CDÉACF (Centre de documentation sur l'éducation des adultes et la condition féminine - *Adult Education and Status of Women Documentation Centre*). Named to commemorate the memory of Lea Roback and of Madeleine Parent, the MPR is located in Old-Montreal, on Sainte-Thérèse Street.

In the lobby of the building, one can admire the work of Armand Vaillancourt, **For the memory of Lea Roback to live on**, created in 2003, at the Foundation's request. Sculpted thanks to the generosity of the artist, a great admirer of Lea, and with the financial assistance of the CSN's financial instruments, Fondation, Bâtirente and the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins, this sculpture commemorates the 100th anniversary of Lea Roback's birth.

Built in 2011 in the Rosemont–La-Petite-Patrie district in Montreal, the **Lea Roback Housing Complex** consists of 24 affordable dwellings under the aegis of the Montreal Municipal Housing Bureau.

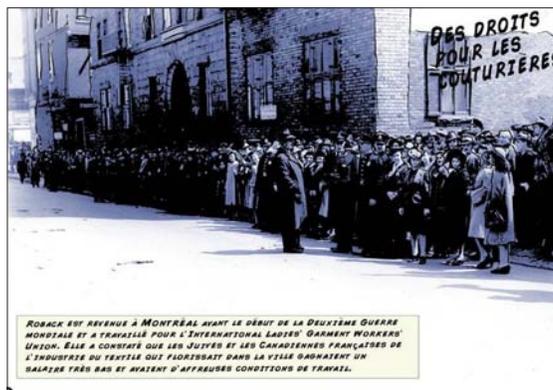
In the field of scientific research, the **Lea Roback Centre**, a centre conducting research on social inequalities in health care in Montreal, pursues its mission to better understand the link between one's social milieu and one's health. The centre fosters the development of research, creates alliances between researchers, stakeholders and decision-makers in various disciplines and engages in the dissemination of knowledge and training.

In Quebec City, the regional branch of the Quebec Federation of Women chose the name "**Collectif Léa-Roback de Québec**". Every year, this collective awards the "Fleurons féministes québécois" to women who are active in the feminist movement.

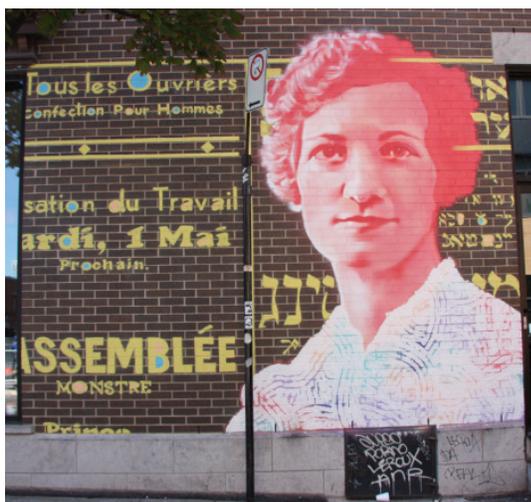
In the area of arts and culture, two recent works have been added to Sophie Bissonnette's film, **A Vision in the Darkness**, and Nicole Lacelle's book **Entretiens avec Madeleine Parent et Léa Roback**.

To celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of International Women’s Day, the Archives at the Jewish Public Library published in 2011 a very nice comic strip *The Adventures of Lea Roback/Les aventures de Léa Roback*, written by Dr. Jessica Van Horsen and illustrated by Graham Wood. This comic strip is available in pdf format on the library’s Web site.

<http://www.jewishpubliclibrary.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Les-Aventures-de-Lea-Roback.pdf>



Lea’s image is also present in the public space. After Toronto, where the **Wall of femmes** collective painted portraits of inspirational women at the pedestrian overpass at Roncesvalles & Queensway, including Lea Roback and Madeleine Parent, it is now Montreal’s turn to acknowledge Lea in the street.



This summer, representatives from the Foundation had the pleasure to attend the inauguration of a **mural** created by the artist Carlo Oliva as a **tribute to Lea Roback**. Well located at the corner of Saint-Dominique Street and Mont-Royal Avenue, near the historical site of the 1937 garment industry workers strike, the mural depicts a portrait of Lea Roback with a flyer as a background that announces in three languages, French, English and Yiddish, a meeting to celebrate May 1, 1930. Created thanks to an initiative of the UQÀM Socialist Students Committee, this mural received the financial support of the Plateau-Mont-Royal borough.

# 2014 Fundraising Campaign

The 2014 annual fundraising campaign is currently under way. Contributions to the Lea Roback Foundation are an indispensable means for furthering the Foundation's mission. The awarding of scholarships is an essential catalyst that helps women who seek to improve their precarious economic situation.

You can make a donation by way of CanadaHelps: [www.canadahelps.org/dn/9310](http://www.canadahelps.org/dn/9310)

**Thank you for your support.**

## Great Partners of the Foundation

The Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ);  
the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN);  
the Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ);  
the Sœurs Saint-Joseph de Saint-Hyacinthe;  
and a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

## Partners of the Foundation

Bâtirente;  
The Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS);  
the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins;  
the Fédération autonome de l'enseignement (FAE);  
the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ);  
the Fédération nationale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ);  
the Syndicat des conseillères et conseillers de la CSQ, Fonds de solidarité;  
the Syndicat de l'enseignement du Haut-Richelieu (CSQ);  
the Syndicat de l'enseignement de l'Ouest de Montréal;  
the Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels du milieu de l'éducation (SPPMÉM);  
Ms Laura Alper;  
Ms Lucille Panet-Raymond;  
as well as one foundation who wishes to remain anonymous.

News Bulletin, Lea Roback Foundation

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