

NEWSLETTER

LEA ROBACK FOUNDATION



Number 27, December 2024



A Word from the President

STANDING FIRM



As is our tradition, you're receiving our Newsletter, which features our scholarship recipients of the year. In it you'll find life stories that give meaning to the expression "Standing firm." These women, whether young or older, have had their share of difficulties and challenges. All have demonstrated courage, resilience and tenacity. In so doing, they have shown an exemplary determination, a reminder that in each and every one of us, there is an extraordinary strength that allows us to overcome adversity.

However, persisting and forging ahead despite all the constraints, without being able to count on support, mutual aid or solidarity, can seem like an impossible task. That's why we, too, must *stand firm*—to remain true to our values, maintain our commitments, and respond to requests for help and support. That's what you do, year after year, by participating in our annual fundraising campaign. More than a simple gesture of generosity, it's an expression of your support for the values of justice and equality that inspired Lea Roback's actions. Surely, she was someone one who throughout her life and in the midst of her struggles never stopped *standing firm*.

The world around us paints a picture of humanity in disarray. Wars and conflicts have bogged down; women's rights are in retreat; the growing poverty experienced by more and more people is the flip side of the indecent wealth belonging to others; democracy is weakening; governments, subject to powerful lobbies, are slow to show real leadership in the fight against climate change and pollution, as well as in the preservation of biodiversity. .

In these troubled and troubling times, could Hope be the expression of standing firm?

A hope that allows us to continue to believe that there is a means to change the way things are headed. A hope that fuels actions, both small and large, instead of passivity and cynicism.

A hope that forges solidarity and gives us a glimpse of freedom and equality.

Now, just a few weeks before the New Year, this is what I wish for you.



My wish for 2025 is that you keep the flame—flickering at times though always lit—of Hope alive. This is what will allow us to stand firm.

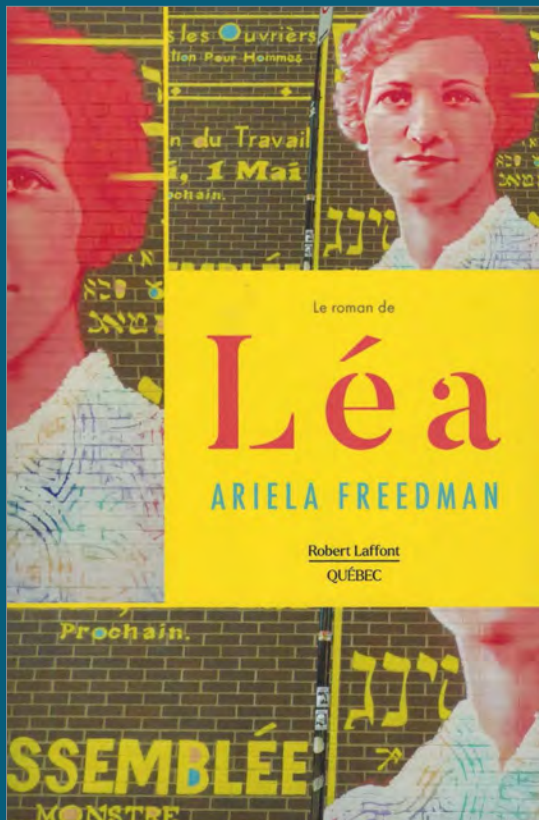

Lorraine Pagé
Président

Now in bookstores, the French translation of

LÉA

by Ariela Friedman.

Éditions Robert Laffont, Québec.



Comment fait-on pour changer le monde?

Voici Léa, polyglotte, militante syndicale, *farbrente* féministe. Née, en 1903, dans une famille juive nombreuse et élevée dans le village très francophone et catholique de Beauport, Léa passe naturellement d'une langue et d'une culture à l'autre. Sa quête de sens et de justice la place au cœur des grands bouleversements du xx^e siècle. Des bagarres de rue de Berlin aux manifs de Montréal, elle défie les attentes et les contraintes qui pèsent sur la vie des femmes, contribue aux victoires historiques du mouvement syndical et défend ses convictions.

Inspiré du parcours de la célèbre activiste Léa Roback, ce roman donne vie à une héroïne enhardie par des luttes politiques qui font toujours vibrer notre époque.



Ariela Friedman est née à Brooklyn et a vécu à Jérusalem, New York, Calgary, London et Montréal. Titulaire d'un doctorat de la New York University, elle enseigne la littérature au Liberal Arts College de l'Université Concordia, à Montréal, où elle vit avec sa famille.

Son premier roman, *Arabic for Beginners* (2017), a fait partie de la présélection pour le QWF Concordia University First Book Prize (Prix du premier roman Université Concordia de la Québec Writers' Federation (QWF)) et a remporté le J. I. Segal Prize for Fiction (prix J. I. Segal en fiction) en 2018. Son deuxième roman, *A Joy to be Hidden* (2019), a été présélectionné pour l'édition 2020 de ce même prix et finaliste du QWF Paragraphe Hugh-MacLennan Prize for Fiction (prix Paragraphe Hugh-MacLennan en fiction de la QWF).

Le roman de Léa (2022) est son troisième roman.

Traduction : Johanne Tremblay
Mural « Hommage à Léa Roback » : Carlos Oliva (1918)
Photographie de la murale: Aron Finberg



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OUR MISSION

Mission accomplished, no doubt about it! In 2024, we awarded 34 scholarships, the highest number since the Foundation was established.

Of these 34 scholarship recipients, 12 are newcomers: permanent residents or refugees (protected persons).

What's more, the board of directors has increased the maximum scholarship amount to \$4,000, while the Madeleine Parent and Hélène Pedneault scholarships have also been increased.

The Fonds Baillargeon-Marleau has been added as a partner, contributing \$25,000 annually for a five-year period. It's important to note that the Foundation did not solicit these donors; they chose to award scholarships through our Foundation.

We'd like to highlight the dedication and collaboration of the workers and educators in the community organizations and adult education centres, in particular those that work in the field of literacy. They assist and support learners in filling out and following up on their scholarship applications.

Many thanks!

The Lea Roback Foundation's Scholarships

The LRF scholarships are funded by donations collected from individual and institutional friends of the Foundation.

Four women in literacy learning

Let's not forget that we are one of the few foundations to award scholarships to courageous women who, week after week, go to school to learn the basics in French and mathematics so as to become more independent in their daily lives.

Maryse Archambault

Maryse has been attending L'Ardoise groupe populaire en alphabétisation, in Sorel-Tracy, since 2011. Moreover, for several years she was a member of this community organization's board of directors. In addition to attending L'Ardoise's literacy courses three days a week, Maryse is the president of the Organisme de défense des droits sociaux du Richelieu (ODDS), an organization for the protection of social rights in the Richelieu region, and a volunteer at the Christ Church café. .

"She is a loyal and committed activist."



Lorraine Comeau



"I decided to come to La Maison des mots to improve my reading and writing. I want to be able to manage on my own, to read books, newspapers and documents. To write to my daughters, to my family, and to one day read books to my great grand-children."

In addition to 15 hours of literacy learning, Lorraine volunteers at the Maison des mots des Basses-Laurentides.

For close to 20 years, she worked at Atelier Altitude Inc. (a popular education organization for adults living with an intellectual disability). Lorraine is *"diligent, reliable and always available. She is appreciated by all of the organization's users and staff,"* says the director.

Sylvie

Very appreciative of the Foundation, Sylvie sent us her very first email using the laptop computer she purchased with her scholarship money.

Sylvie didn't have an easy childhood. She lived with a number of foster families, which she describes as such: *"At home, housework came before school."*

Even though she was able to get by, Sylvie enrolled in L'Ardoise groupe populaire en Alphabétisation de Sorel-Tracy where she takes classes three days a week. She would like to become more independent, to perfect her French so as to be able to write letters and documents, and to become tech savvy. Sylvie volunteers for the Organisme de défense des droits sociaux du Richelieu (ODDS), an organization for the protection of social rights.



Judith Morisson

Judith is also a member of the board of directors of the Organisme de défense des droits sociaux du Richelieu (ODDS).

She has been a student at L'Ardoise since 2011. *"My goal is to improve my written French, but also to break the isolation, see people, stop feeling ashamed, learn to gain confidence in myself, get involved in my community, take my place in society and fight against social exclusion."*

In addition to her involvement on the boards of directors of L'Ardoise and ODDS, for 11 years Judith sat on an association committee of the Groupes populaires en Alphabétisation, as well as on the boards of other housing

organizations in the region. Judith enjoys public speaking, and took part in a Télé-Québec program on literacy.

Francization

Maiia Togunkova

In Ukraine, Maiia earned an MBA in project management and worked in the tourism industry. She fled to Quebec with her two children—the start of a new life for her and her family.

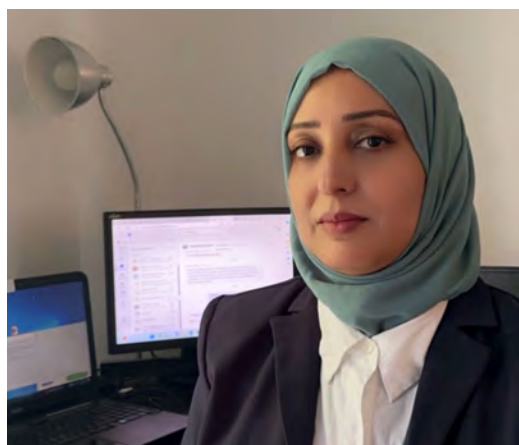
Maiia is eager to participate in Quebec society and to learn to speak French. She is taking intensive francization courses at the Centre d'éducation des adultes d'Outremont.

She continues to take part in demonstrations in support of the Ukrainian people. In her homeland, Maiia was active in an organization that helps people in cities affected by the war.



Secondary education

Sonia Klii



In 2021, Sonia fled to Quebec with her son to escape domestic violence. Her husband had confiscated her papers and diploma.

Despite these very difficult circumstances, Sonia quickly found a job soon after her arrival, took francization classes and obtained permanent resident status. She's currently studying toward a DEP in accounting at the Centre de formation professionnelle Pierre Dupuy. She's involved in her community, volunteering at La croisée de Longueuil.

Technical college

Stéphanie

Stéphanie is a single parent of a five-year-old child. An early childhood educator for nearly eight years, she was forced to change careers due to an occupational illness.

In 2025, she will complete a course in bioecology at the Cégep de Sainte-Foy. She hopes to work in a field linking the environment and children.

At CEGEP, she is very involved in a committee made of up students who are also parents. This committee organizes activities for these parents, as well as for parents and their children. These get-togethers, she says, are beneficial in that they give one a fresh outlook on things and promote better mental health, which leads to academic success.

Régine

Originally from Cameroon, Régine is a 2nd-year nursing student at Cégep de La Pocatière. She also works as a beneficiary attendant in a seniors' residence

Régine is a dedicated person who *“devotes her time and talent to helping others.”* In Cameroon, she was very involved in Minfide Cameroun and the Fondation Coeur de mère Bonaberi, whose mission is to

support “*rural women who are head of their household.*” She also has a project in mind; along with a friend who is studying to be a social worker, she would like to set up a centre to help immigrant minorities in Canada.

Bachelor's degree

Rania El Guayour

Rania, a young woman from the Montérégie, is pursuing her bachelor's degree in biochemistry and molecular medicine at the Université de Montréal.

Rania has been involved and active in organizations and activities related to pediatric cancer, having faced the disease herself. She participated in the Fondation Lucie-Bruneau's fundraising efforts and kayaking challenge, as well as several other projects. She also took part in the Radio-Canada documentary “*La vie devant moi*” (2022).

She's received scholarships and awards for her perseverance and social activism.

After completing her studies, she plans to do research in oncology.



Kassandra Gervasi



This year, Kassandra received the Madeleine Parent scholarship, from the Lea Roback Foundation. Since 2022, she has been a student in the bachelor's program in political science at the Université de Montréal.

Kassandra is very active in social causes, including a number of fundraising campaigns: Relay for Life, Girl Guides, and the Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation, as well as activities to support people experiencing housing insecurity and individuals with intellectual disabilities.

She is also a member of the Club Action ÉduPol Campus, a club attached to the Université de Montréal that provides political education for people who have little knowledge of the subject.

Myriam

From Quebec City, Myriam is another young person who is very active in her community. She would like to become involved with the Grands Frères Grandes Sœurs de Québec organization. She's been a tutor for youngsters who have difficulty with schoolwork, tutoring French in particular. For five years, she participated in the international education program (IEP) at École secondaire De Rochebelle. She also organized an Amnesty International conference.

Myriam is an undergraduate student in pharmacy at the Université de Laval. One of her professors has praised “*her excellent academic and community record.*” Moreover, Myriam hopes to reach out to the community even more through her work as a pharmacist, which she sees as being the most accessible healthcare professional.

Juliette Léger

Juliette is a young woman from the Montérégie who is studying at the Université de Sherbrooke. She aspires to obtain her bachelor's degree in ecology. In pursuing her studies, she hopes to *“expand her knowledge of the natural world to determine how to best protect and ‘help’ the environment.”*

She is involved in a number of volunteer activities: raising environmental awareness, helping to organize a Christmas party at a seniors' residence, and at sports events.



Olinka Marleau



Recipient of the 2024 Hélène Pedneault scholarship from the Lea Roback Foundation, Olinka is enrolled at UQAM in the bachelor's program in communications, with a specialization in creative media and film. She lives in Gatineau. In 2024, she directed a short film to raise awareness about preventing sexual assault in public places. Both in high school and at the Cégep de l'Outaouais, she was an active player on improv teams and organized two improv tournaments. In high school, she sat on the student council, was involved in student radio and volunteered at the school library.

As she explains, *“Film is a very competitive and demanding field. Film studies require an investment, both on a personal and a financial level.”* And that's why her scholarship is much appreciated.

IOC Foundation Scholarships

Literacy learning

Rawan Sawas Abdulmonaem

What a journey, so many kilometres travelled, but above all, such courage! Because of ongoing wars, Rawan left school at age 8. Her family moved from Syria to Lebanon, but she couldn't return to school because it was too costly for her family. Instead, she went to work—at age 9. Her family eventually left Lebanon for Canada, where Rawan obtained citizenship.

When she landed in Quebec, she thought she was dreaming; there were so many things she could experience that she hadn't been able to do when she was younger. However, there was also the challenge of learning a new language; Rawan spent three years in a reception class.

Since 2020, she has been taking literacy classes at the Centre d'éducation des adultes d'Outremont. According to her teacher, she's made a great deal of progress since arriving in Canada, and is integrating into the community.

In addition to her studies, Rawan helps her mother who is not in the best of health. She also volunteers with children at the mosque as well as at a clothing thrift shop.



Vocational school

Dila



Dila and the members of the board of La maison Pauline-Bonin

Dila is a young single mother of an 11-year-old child. Originally from South America, she took francization classes for two years.

She is currently studying health, assistance and nursing at the Centre multiservices des Samares in Lanaudière. In Ecuador, she studied nursing.

Dila sits on the board of directors of the Maison Pauline Bonin, in Joliette. This community organization provides shelter for single mothers and helps them return to school and to work. As Dila points out, *“The facilitators’ support is essential.”*

Technical college

Amber

After studying to be a cook and working for several top chefs Amber decided to make a career change. Now she is enrolled in agricultural business management and technology/organic vegetable production, a technical program at the Cégep de Victoriaville. She would like to cultivate the land and eventually own her own farm.

Amber helped organize and run the 2023 Salon des modes d’établissement alternatifs en agriculture. She helps out with a cooking class for single-parent families in St-Valérien-de-Milton (Cercle des fermières) and is active in the CEGEP’s student association.

Elizabeta

Elizabeta has held jobs in social intervention and as a security guard, and is currently pursuing a DEC (CEGEP diploma) in respiratory therapy at Cégep de Rosemont. She hopes to pursue a career in healthcare, and enjoys teamwork. Her studies are important to her and she is determined to complete them.

Along with some other students, she helps elementary school students who are having difficulties with math and French. She acts as a student representative at departmental meetings and organizes non-academic activities.

Nicole Ranger Scholarship

Céline

Céline is pursuing a bachelor's degree in career development (honours track) and later on, wants to do a master's in career counselling. *"The therapeutic relationship and the focus on career are important values for her. Counselling allows her to support clients who are engaged in serious reflection."*

Céline volunteers for UQAM's Allô program, which aims to inform and orient foreign students regarding the university's services, housing and other matters, and to introduce them to Quebec culture through activities and outings.

Fonds Marleau-Baillargeon Scholarships

Pre-university CEGEP program

Sarah-Rose

Unfortunately, due to illness Sarah-Rose had to interrupt her studies for fairly long periods, and on at least two occasions. Resilient and determined, she is currently completing a DEC in social sciences, psychology profile, at Dawson College. She has to take remedial math and science, but she'd like to start a bachelor's degree at Concordia University in January 2025, studying neuroscience/neuropsychology.

Sarah-Rose is involved in several committees at Dawson College, in particular the Psychology Profile Students' Committee. Through this committee, she initiated a fundraising campaign for AMI-Québec (helping families manage the effects of mental illness), as well as student meet and greets. She was also involved in Dawson College's Sustainable Development Committee, Peace Week and International Women's Day.

University studies

Amélie Berger

A resident of the Bas-Saint-Laurent region, Amélie *"has always wanted to pursue studies in education, as she loves sharing knowledge and enjoys helping others."*

She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in preschool education and elementary-level teacher training at the Université du Québec à Rimouski.

She's been president of the Association préscolaire primaire (Preschool/Elementary Association) since January 2023, as well as her program's representative on the board of directors of the Association générale étudiante du campus de Rimouski de l'UQAR, and the UQAR delegate to the Jeux de l'éducation.



Nour

Nour's social commitment is exceptional considering her young age. Since 2023, at CALACS, she has coordinated therapy sessions for victims of sexual assault and organized workshops on the law with sexologists and social workers.



Also an activist with the Fédération des femmes du Québec, she has organized discussions and fund-raising events. In the summer of 2022, as part of the El Khawi program in Abu Dhabi, she hosted deaf-mute orphan girls. Since 2019, she has taken part in various Amnesty International activities. She also tutors at the Centre d’action bénévole St-Laurent and has participated in the Aidant program at the Centre Tendresse Marraine ABC.

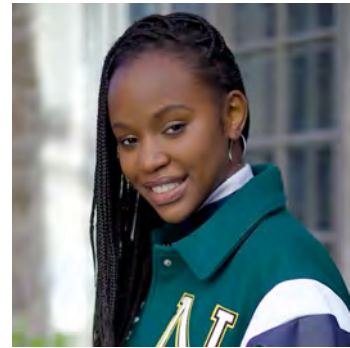
But, she says, “my tenure at the White House, between 2017 and 2019, is my greatest concrete achievement for women’s rights: fighting childhood obesity, addressing the disproportionate rate of femicide and combatting systemic racism. As a result ...of my presentation of the results to Congress, the federal government decided to renew funding for the Let’s Move initiative for \$4.3 billion.”

Nour is a student at the Université du Québec (UQÀM), studying humanitarian and aboriginal law. She wants to work on reforming the justice system, because she believes that women who are victims of sexual assault are over-judged.

Manuelitha Darlie Jean

Originally from Haiti, Manuelitha has devoted a great deal of energy to supporting migrants, including those from the LGBTQIA+ community. She’s been a resource person and advocate for AGIR (Action LGBTQIA+ avec les ImmigrantsEs et Réfugiés). During the pandemic, her role was to help them break their isolation and integrate into their new community. In particular, she set up a support group for Black LGBTQIA+ women.

Manuelitha is studying at the Université de Montréal, with a view to obtaining a bachelor’s in social work. While studying, she continues her work in social intervention, particularly with women and their children who are victims of domestic violence.



Zion Axelle Fabro

Zion Axelle lives with her mother, an immigrant single mother from the Philippines. Her brothers are still living in the Philippines, and she helps them financially. Zion Axelle is involved with Centre Kapwa, a non-profit organization that provides mental health support to young people in the Filipino community (Decolonizing Filipinx-Canadian diaspora mental health through *Art, Movement, and Conversations*). A member of the Ka Collective, she participates in projects, workshops and artistic initiatives to promote art as a mental health tool. She is also a facilitator at the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce YMCA. Zion Axelle is studying at Concordia University for a bachelor of fine arts, with a minor in women’s studies



Shirin Hinojosa Violante

Shirin arrived from Mexico at the age of 8, and later had a health problem that necessitated an operation. As a result, she had to interrupt her studies temporarily, on two occasions. She is now in her 2nd year of the bachelor of business administration program at HEC (Université de Montréal).

Her many commitments earned her a Lieutenant Governor’s Medal, in Quebec, in 2022.

The list is indeed long. Among others, Shirin has held the position of vice-president in a number of organizations: student services and sustainable development at Dawson College, external relations with the Association des technologies de l'information, the Comité AGIR and Groupe HumaniTerre. She has been involved as an administrator and person in charge of integration activities for young newcomers with the CAPFEM organization, as an ambassador for the Fées Marrassines group, and in other activities such as food distribution at numerous food banks. She is also an ambassador for the HEC.

Stéphanie Leclerc



Stéphanie is probably never bored! She's a full-time student, involved in her community, in Sherbrooke, and a mother. She and her partner have two children, and every other week they care for his three children as well.

Stéphanie is a bachelor's student in psychology at the Université de Sherbrooke. She is co-leader of the Urgence climatique Sherbrooke movement, and was instigator of Sherbrooke's first self-managed bulletin board, as well as organizer and coordinator of a collective artwork donated to the city.

Stéphanie and her family are very concerned about the environment

Marie-Laurence

Marie-Laurence received a scholarship from the Foundation in 2022, and tells us that it has made all the difference in her education. This year, she will complete a bachelor's degree in preschool and elementary education at the Université de Sherbrooke. She lives in Thetford Mines.

Marie-Laurence has tutored students with learning difficulties, works as a supply teacher in schools, and has created teaching materials.

N'da Adjoua Marie-France Koffi

Originally from Côte d'Ivoire, Marie-France is a single mother of an 11-year-old child. She is returning to school after eight years on the job market in her native country. She is currently completing her fourth year of a bachelor's degree in preschool and elementary education. She is convinced that education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty.

Marie-France is very involved as a volunteer in her Christian community, Étoile du Matin. She teaches children at the Sunday School, where she *"helps keep our church clean and operating smoothly."*

At La Maisonnée, a community centre, she supervises children at day camps and helps with homework.



Pierre-Laurier-Baribeau Scholarship

Pre-university CEGEP program

Léa Malhaire



Léa would like to go into humanitarian aid or the field of immigration, so it's not surprising that she chose a pre-university CEGEP program in the humanities (Humanities and International Issues), at the Cégep de Granby.

Léa is involved with Séry (Solidarité Ethnique Régionale de la Yamaska), a centre for welcoming new immigrants, intercultural twinning and francization. She is also involved with the Centre d'action bénévole aux quatre vents, in Shefford, and the CEGEP's intercultural committee. She was also very active when she was in high school.

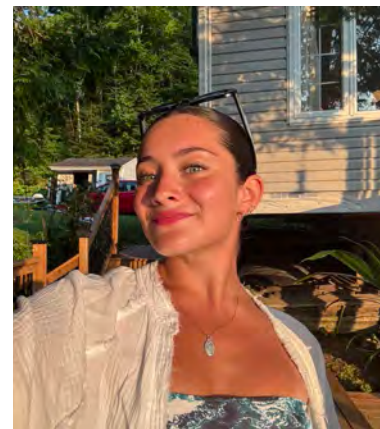
"Her studies are very important to her ... she has a great desire to help people."

Technical college

Aurélia Arandi-Longpré

Aurélia is a young student at Cégep Marie-Victorin studying social work. She will do an internship in a high school, and plans to work with young people.

She is active in organizations in her neighbourhood, Rivières-des-Prairies, in Montreal. The coordinator of 1 2 3 Go Rivières-des-Prairies tells us that Aurelia has been volunteering with the organization since the age of 8. 12 3 Go organizes activities and assists people in the neighbourhood. Aurelia is also involved with the Club Optimiste Colombo in Montreal.



Lamar Fakeh

Lamer, a paralegal student at the Cégep de l'Outaouais, is deeply involved in the student community. She was the representative for first-year students with the Association des étudiants.e.s en techniques juridiques au Cégep de l'Outaouais (AÉTJCO), as well as the representative for students in paralegal studies at the Cégep de l'Outaouais with the Association Générale des étudiantes et étudiants au Cégep de l'Outaouais (AGÉÉCO).

Lamer would like to become a prosecutor, because she believes in justice.



Sarah Kijanja

"Having spent 5 years in a refugee camp (in Uganda) without attending school, I'm motivated by this opportunity to finally go to school, and am convinced that at the end of my studies, I'll be able to help my family leave the refugee camp and also give my sisters the opportunity to continue their studies."

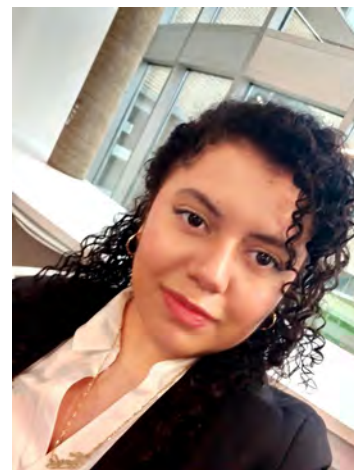
Sarah is now studying nursing at Cégep de Rosemont. Her teachers are full of praise not only for her academic performance, but also for her adaptability, resilience and ability to become actively involved in her host community.

Sarah is an active member of the CEGEP's intercultural committee, the entrepreneurial club and the PER committee, which prepares to receive new students who are refugees. Sarah also works part-time.

Karla Marisol Linares Ortiz

Karla is a student at Collège Ahuntsic in paralegal studies. She is the organizer and events delegate for the paralegal students' committee, and helps out on the college's environment committee, in addition to being Chief Mentor/Tutor for elementary school students who need help with homework.

Karla tells us that in CEGEP, she changed programs several times, but now thinks she's found her calling because she's passionate about the law. She hopes to go to university to pursue studies in the law.



Ariane

A student in a physiotherapy program at Cégep Marie-Victorin, Ariane has more than one string to her bow. As a violinist with the Orchestre symphonique des jeunes de Montréal, she has taken part in numerous concerts in Quebec and France. In addition, she is continuing her training in circus arts: *“Circus has played a central role in my personal development, following a number of difficulties I experienced in my life. As well as being a high-level technical sport with an artistic aspect that resonates with me, it has proved to be an incredible therapeutic tool. I couldn't imagine life without it”.*

She is also involved in Montréal Scientifique, facilitating science workshops for a class in a disadvantaged area. She created an Instagram site to raise awareness of Rett's disease (a severe disorder of the central nervous system). She is *“interested in special-needs youth,”* and has been a tutor for special needs students.

Undergraduate degree

Andréanne Dussureault

Andréanne, a resident of Montérégie, has worked as a special educator with children, and would like to acquire additional skills, which is why she's pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières.

Andréanne gives a great deal of her time to events in the region, such as Nez Rouge, the elf hunt in Venise en Québec, the Centre d'entraide régional, the Festival du Bœuf de St-Clément and many others. Also active with Les Petits Frères, she makes visits to isolated and frail seniors.



*Text: Céline Lamontagne
Revision: Nicole Cousineau*

MAMAN VA À L'ÉCOLE

“Maman va à l'école would like ALL mothers from single-parent families to obtain a recognized training qualification.” *

In 2024, Maman va à l'école awarded 152 scholarships worth \$500 each, including 16 funded by the Lea Ro-back Foundation.

Maman va à l'École Scholarships

Jamésie Abitibi Témiscamingue Chapter

Cassandra Labranche

To realize her dream of becoming a social worker, Cassandra decided to go back to school and complete her high school studies at Le Retour, in La Sarre. She has been studying there since February 2023. This will enable her to pursue her studies at the college level and make her dream come true. An attentive mother, she is a committed member of her school community, while also volunteering her time at the local women's centre. Cassandra Labranche is making a difference in her community.

Victoriaville Chapter

Kélyane Clavet-Bolduc

Kélyane is the mother of two children aged 3 and 4, was a caregiver for her father, now deceased, and is a fundraiser for the Fondation de la maison de soins palliatifs Marie-Pagé. She decided to return to school to obtain her DEP (Diploma of Vocational Studies) and then a DEC (Diploma of College Studies) in health. Dynamic and determined, she is motivated by her desire to give to others, and manages to combine her studies with family life.

Mitis Chapter

Sylvie Héon

A difficult childhood led Sylvie to drop out of school at age 15. A busy and active life, with three children—the youngest of whom has ASD and has to be accompanied by a service dog—and a divorce have not dampened her desire for knowledge or her wish to have greater self-confidence. At 53, she decided to enroll in pre-high school (in math and French) and hopes to be admitted to a psychology program, with recognition of her skills and experience.

Even though daily life and her studies keep her very busy, Sylvie takes the time to be actively involved with the residents of La Débrouille, a shelter for women and trans people who are victims of intimate partner violence.

Sylvie is sure to have a brighter future.

Jeannet Tshamaka Kayembe

A widow with sole responsibility for her five children, Jeannet is enrolled in a social and occupational integration program. She successfully completed the francization program after arriving from South Africa in 2021. She takes part in exploratory internships in retirement homes and would like to find a job in this field or in a laundry. A volunteer with Moisson Rimouski-Neigette, she is appreciated for her thoroughness, determination and cheerfulness.

Eastern Townships Chapter

Mujinka Riziki

Mujinka, who has sole responsibility for five children aged 2 to 10, was born in the Congo and later became a refugee in Zambia. She has been living in Sherbrooke for nine years. Now enrolled in school, diligent and hard-working, she has done internships in retirement homes.

Her goal is to take a secretarial course or train to work with young children. She is generous with her time, persevering and tenacious.

This mother will achieve her goals with pride.

Lanaudière Chapter

Lise Tellier

Lise left school at sixteen, worked odd jobs, gave birth to two daughters and did volunteer work. When her youngest daughter started school, she decided to do the same. With courage, to set an example for her daughters, she returned to school and prepared to become a beneficiary attendant. Generous, attentive and devoted, she has her daughters' future in mind.

"I'm going to keep going and follow my dreams to the end... for myself and for my two daughters."

National Chapter

Natacha Damas

A mother of two, a nursing assistant and an active volunteer in a number of self-help organizations, Natacha has had health problems and must also take into account the learning difficulties of one of her sons. As a result, she is looking for a job that is more compatible with her single-parent obligations, which has motivated her to undertake paralegal studies.

Natacha is always looking for—and finding—solutions to help her continue to make progress.

Ladiger Nazlioglu Unal

In her country of origin, Ladiger was an educator specializing in early childhood education, and she would like to return to this work that she loves. She must therefore perfect her French, something she is doing with great discipline.

Since she had to leave a violent husband, and with no family to support her, she has assumed her family responsibilities alone, taking care of her two daughters, aged 8 and 4. A young woman known for her empathy and generosity, she is a volunteer with the Turkish Women's Association.

Johanny Fortin

After a trip with a friend in a "53-footer," Johanny was completely seduced by this lifestyle and decided to become a truck driver, work she undertook with great enthusiasm. But when she became pregnant, considering her job too dangerous for her "little tot," she opted for training in a field with fewer risks. Drawn to information technology, she soon discovered that her new skills could help her develop a sense of mutual aid and sharing, important values in her life, which subsequently led her to volunteer with the Parents branchés organization.

Pamela Cherubini

Pamela had to drop out of school at 15 years of age to care for her ailing father. Pregnant at 19, she waited until her daughter was in kindergarten to consider returning to school.

With an interest in welding, she wants to give her daughter a better life and set an example of resilience and determination. Pamela also volunteers in a creative writing workshop at her daughter's school.

Montréal Chapter

Nicole Yasmin Rodriguez Uribe

Nicole came to Canada in 2022. She is the mother and sole carer of a seven-year-old boy. She is at level four of her francization program at the Centre d'éducation des adultes Champlain de Montréal, in Verdun. A yoga and meditation teacher, she regularly gives classes to both students and employees as a volunteer at the Centre Champlain, as well as at Verdun Park.

Lamis Elsayed

As a single mother of two teenagers, aged 14 and 16, Lamis pursued her studies in francization at the Centre Champlain de Verdun, in Montreal, with the aim of finding a job in human resources. She studies full-time, works part-time and volunteers at a centre for abused women. She is also a member of the parents' committee of the Air Cadets of Canada, which her children attend.

Stéphanie Harnois

When you are a single mother of six, it takes courage and determination to hold onto the dream of going back to school to study French. Stéphanie is one of those women who manages to overcome all difficulties. Well-organized, she puts her children first and sets an example for them, demonstrating the hard work and humility it takes to achieve one's goals.

Val-Maska Chapter

Diana Cristina Palascios Nova

Cristina is the mother of two children aged 7 and 9. A hard-working student determined to give her children a good life and participate actively with them in Quebec society, Cristina is proud to have just completed her francization program. She aspires to work in immigration or real estate.

Cristina volunteers her time with the Scouts, with the aim of assisting immigrant children's integration into Quebec culture, and is also a volunteer with the Association culturelle et communautaire des Mascoutains.

Laurentian Chapter

Annie Pelletier

Annie, a single mother, is experiencing a situation that requires great inner strength and creativity. An administrative assistant in the healthcare field for over 20 years, a chronic illness has turned her life and plans upside down.

She needed to change the pace at which she works without penalizing her children, for whom she is solely responsible. As a result, Annie turned to one of her passions: cooking. She set about learning, starting her own business while taking into account her abilities, and organizing her schedule. She was able to enlist the help of the people around her, find support and build trust. This scholarship will help her keep going. Her children have every reason to be proud of their mother and to follow her example.

Note : One scholarship recipient chose to remain anonymous

*Maman va à l'école website

Text: Jeanette Biondi

based on information from Maman va à l'école

MAMAN VA À L'ÉCOLE THANK YOU, PAULA

The Lea Roback Foundation enjoys a fruitful partnership with the Maman va à l'école organization. In responding positively to the appeal launched by its founder, Paula Duguay, and in combining our efforts, we have enabled young single mothers to return to school and obtain their first diploma.

After 15 years of sustained commitment, Paula has decided to step down as president of Maman va à l'école, and it is with a twinge of sadness that we see her go. As of January, she will be replaced



by co-presidents Jacques Tondreau and Sylvie Théberge. The organization remains in good hands.

Many thanks for establishing this organization, which has given wings to women who, without a diploma, found themselves unable to take flight and fulfill their dreams. Many thanks for the strong ties that have been forged between our two organizations, which have enabled us to do more and do better.

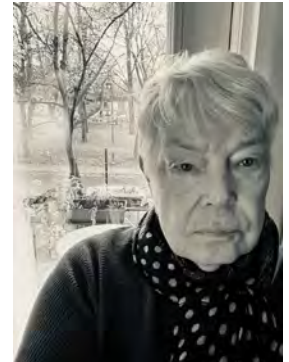
A DEAR FRIEND OF THE FOUNDATION

TURNING THE PAGE

This is the last Bulletin for which Irène Ellenberger will be responsible for graphic design. With her professional retirement, we might say that a page in the history of the Lea Roback Foundation is being turned.

Irène is a friend, a great friend of the Foundation. A friend at heart, you might say. For some fifteen years, she was a member of the board of directors and the executive committee, and secretary to the board. Throughout these many years, she was responsible for the graphic design of all our publications, a commitment she maintained after stepping down from her position with the Foundation in 2018.

Irène was also keen to keep alive in our memories Lea Roback's struggles and life story. In so doing, she has always succeeded in unearthing the most striking photographs and retracing lesser-known episodes of Lea Roback's life, sharing them with those who were interested, as well as in our Bulletin. There are only two words to express our gratitude, and they are THANK YOU. Yes, a page is being turned, but we know that great friendships endure, and that Irène will never be very far away.



LUCILLE PANET-RAYMOND (1934-2024)

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Lucille Panet-Raymond (1934-2024), who was a member of the Foundation's board of directors.

During these years, we were able to count on the enlightening and wise counsel of this fundraising consultant for non-profit organizations as we considered sources of financing in support of our mission.

Our deepest condolences to her family and friends.



Lea Roback Foundation,
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David Roback
An anonymous donor

Honorary Friends

Honorary friends are individuals who have made
exceptional contributions to the Foundation and
whose memory we wish to honour.

Jeannine Chenard;
Margaret K. Howes;
Thérèse Laliberté;
Madeleine Parent;
Hélène Pedneault.

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