

## Research, Advocacy and Student Leadership

Research is usually associated with academia and not front line services. It nevertheless constitutes an essential component, both in our work with individuals as well as allowing us to advocate for social change.

### Primo

In order to prevent deportation to dangerous situations, in-depth research is done into the country of origin to corroborate the claimant's story and produce objective facts for Immigration Canada. Typical areas we investigate include the status of sexual minority rights, best interest of the child, access to health care, and gender based discrimination.

Humanitarian and Compassionate applications that occupy a significant portion of our time require on average 30 to 40 hours to complete and are made possible by the tireless efforts of our inter-disciplinary team of law, social work, theology and medical student interns.

*I was surprised at the number of different disciplines that we need to research while compiling an H & C application: psychology to know the effects of family separation, current events & politics as it relates to questions of security and of course we need to stay on top of recent immigration case law in order to submit as complete an application as possible.*

Peter Butler, McGill BSW



### Segundo

MCM also organizes its own research projects and participates in those of partner organizations to determine access to government programs and improve conditions for the people we serve here in Canada.



### Two studies completed in 2017:

**Access to Justice for Humanitarian Immigration Applicants in Quebec** spearheaded by MCM in collaboration with the McGill School of Social Work and funded by the Canadian Bar Association.

**Access to Health Care for Migrants Without Medical Coverage** spearheaded by Doctors of the World and the University of Montreal Public Health Institute.

### In 2018:

**Exploring belonging: Experiences of refugee children and families in a Montreal recreational setting**, spearheaded by MCM and the McGill University School of Social Work, focusing on mental health challenges of Syrian children who attended Camp Cosmos last summer as well as of their parents. This study funded by the 'Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition Resilience Research Centre' of Dalhousie University will allow us to develop tools to deal with PTSD as experienced by our campers.

## MCM NEWS

**Before I Die** is an urban art event appearing in public spaces around the Globe. It came to Montreal last summer through a partnership with St. James United, the West Island ORA Loss & Living Bereavement Centre and MCM. During a week in August we set up our chalkboards on St James Square, inviting passers-by to stop and take time to think about what is important, to contemplate death and reflect on their lives. Hundreds of Monteurs as well as tourists left funny, poignant and inspirational messages.



**Watch Ta Trans!** theatre group delights Monteurs with their art while raising money for good causes. Many thanks to former MCM staffer Aude Lacouturière and her fellow thespians for a wonderful performance and for donating the proceeds from their recent play to Montreal City Mission!



MCM staffers presented at the **Health Care Equity Symposium**, sponsored by the McGill University Health Centre. It was an exciting opportunity to bring our message of inter-cultural community building through concrete projects to a diverse audience from Quebec and abroad.



Welcome aboard to new clinic caseworker Louise Oliver! Louise brings with her considerable experience in the field of refugee rights as well as insight and compassion. Bienvenue Louise!



Another great **Ride for Refuge** this fall raising \$9,000 for MCM and Camp Cosmos. Our community of friends came out in full colours for a day of exercise and fun. Many thanks to the riders and walkers AND to those who pledged. See you next year!



La Mission communautaire de Montréal  
Montreal City Mission

A United Church of Canada  
Community Ministry



**TRANSMISSION  
2017**



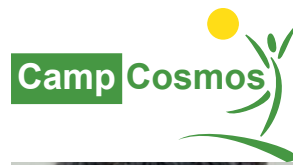
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Camp Cosmos offers six weeks of exploration, learning and fun to children from diverse backgrounds, as well as job training/experience for adolescents and young adults.



### Look How We've Grown!

Between our Roxboro and downtown locations we welcomed a **record number of 121 campers** last summer. Our outreach to refugee families continued, enabling us to integrate 28 children at camp as well as 12 children who recently crossed the American / Canadian border with their parents. Camp Cosmos is unlike any other summer day camp. Our accessibility, athletics, intercultural and environmental programs reflect our unique philosophy and approach. We also continue to build on our mission of incorporating education on and solidarity with Indigenous peoples.

### New at Camp Cosmos

**Kid Zone** prolongs the summer fun of Camp Cosmos into the fall and winter with bi-weekly outings to explore Montreal's cultural hot spots and discover outdoor sports while connecting newcomers with local youth



What most impressed us is the quality of the counsellors and the programs, the diversity of the activities, energy of the team and modern sensibility to current topics (environment, health etc)... the perfect formula to give each child a unique summer camp experience with great values and peace of mind for hard working parents.

### Maa'n / Ensemble

...facilitates integration and builds community through concrete projects and inter-cultural partnerships



### Blue Metropolis Literary Festival

3 workshops held at MCM and Hotel 10 featuring refugee rappers, poets and dancers

### Women Weaving their Dreams

Bi-weekly workshops for refugee women on grief and healing as well as job training and employment opportunities launched with an apple picking outing!

### Every Kid Jam

Provides the space and instruments for musical expression

### Inter-faith/cultural gatherings

Brings together Jewish, Muslim, Christian, First Nations and secular neighbours to get to know each other and celebrate our different traditions

### Zone Ado

Organizes workshops in Montreal schools on break dancing, beat boxing and rapping with new arrivals



### Just Solutions Legal Clinic

...providing access to justice for refugees and vulnerable migrants since 2004

In 2017 Victorien, (fictitious name) received a deportation order to return to his country of origin where his life was in danger. Our legal team submitted a petition to the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva to stop the deportation. The petition was successful and the deportation was halted. Now that Victorien can safely remain in Canada, we are working on a Humanitarian and Compassionate Application so that he can become a permanent resident. This engaging and intelligent young man is full of dreams for his future... we are working hard to ensure they become reality.



with clinic associate lawyer Mylène Barrière

### Roger Snelling Clinic

Mobile legal service & programs for refugee, immigrant and Canadian born seniors

Kateryna and her granddaughter Valeriia fled violence in their native Ukraine to seek asylum in Canada. Their original request for asylum was rejected so they appealed - Valeriia succeeded but Kateryna did not despite their identical context. Unable to find a lawyer at an affordable cost, the two women turned to MCM. Time was of the essence. Our legal clinic staff submitted a Humanitarian and Compassionate Application and after an exceptionally short but anxious period of 2 months, the application was accepted. The next step is permanent residency for Kateryna. Needless to say she is thrilled beyond words to start a new and safe life in Montreal with her only living relative - her beloved granddaughter.



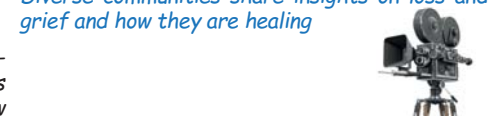
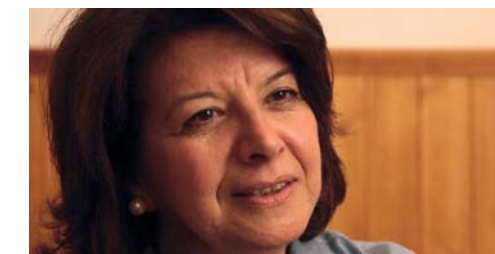
with clinic coordinator Olga Houde

### Sharing Wisdom Video Series

Diverse communities share insights on loss and grief and how they are healing

Nora Taji, vice-chair of the Canadian / Palestinian Foundation recalls stories from her parents on the loss of their homeland, and explains how she finds hope for the future though focussing on education for the next generations, social assistance to children in need and relying on her faith.

Nora Taji YouTube



Robert Verrall, retired film maker, reflects on the death of his wife Marion and how St. James United helped him on the path to healing.

Robert Verrall YouTube