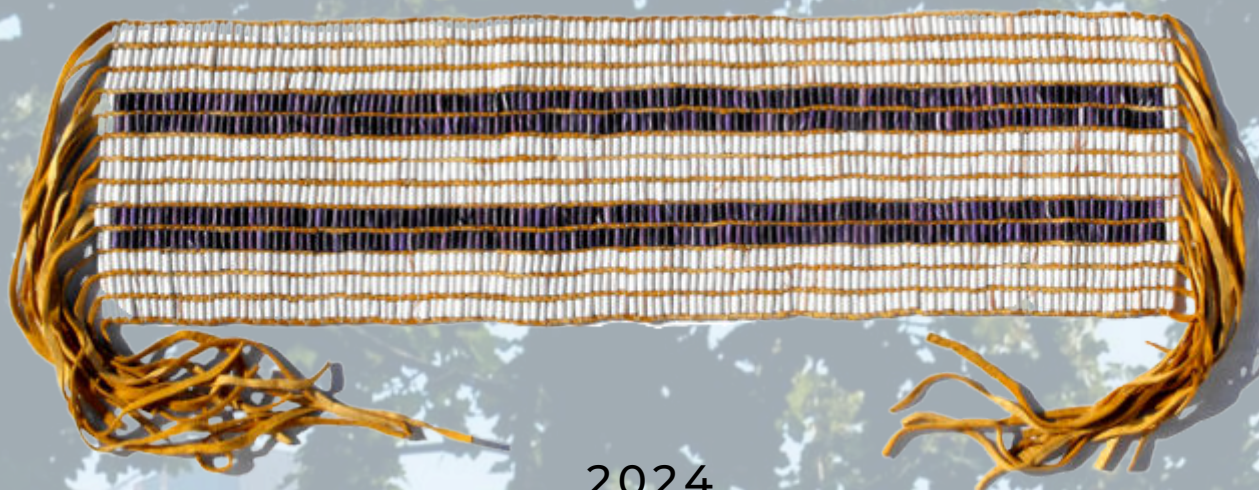




2024

Annual Report



prepared by

First Peoples Justice Center of Tiohtià:ke /Montréal

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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been an honour to serve as the President of the Board of Directors for the First Peoples Justice Center of Tiohtià:ke / Montreal over the past few years. This role has given me the profound opportunity to support the strategic direction of the organization, stand alongside our Executive Director, and uphold our commitment to Indigenous-led governance rooted in justice, healing, and empowerment. Together, we continue working with purpose and care to ensure the Center remains a trusted and responsive space for those navigating the justice system in Tiohtià:ke.

As a Board, our collective vision is to foster a community-centered model of justice that reflects the lived realities, strengths, and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples in Tiohtià:ke. Over the past year, we've deepened our resolve to provide culturally safe, trauma-informed services—meeting people where they are, and walking with them as they reclaim dignity and self-determination. Looking ahead, I remain humbled and inspired to be part of this transformative work. The path toward justice is rarely easy, but it is made possible by the unwavering dedication of the Justice Team, the wisdom of our leadership, and the resilience of the men and women we support. It is a privilege to stand with you in this journey, grounded in the knowledge that justice must be rooted in culture, healing, and community care. This coming year brings with it opportunities to build upon the momentum we've created—to expand our impact, to listen deeply, and to respond boldly.

The Board of Directors remains firmly committed to the vision of a justice system that does not punish but restores, that does not marginalize but reconnects. We will continue to advocate for a safe, inclusive, and empowering space—one that promotes healing, cultural pride, accountability, and meaningful reconnection to self and community.



Thank you for placing your trust in us. It is truly an honour to walk this path with you.

Daphne Desrochers



WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Shé:kon / Atelihai / Bonjour / Hello,

As we close another transformative year, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the continued growth, resilience, and commitment demonstrated by everyone connected to the Justice Center. This past year has been one of building—both physically and organizationally—as we continue to deepen our impact and expand our support for the community of Tiohtià:ke.

First and foremost, I want to extend sincere nia:wen / thank you to our Board of Directors for their steady guidance and support, and to our community partners for walking this path alongside us. Your trust and collaboration continue to be the foundation of our collective progress.

Over the last year, our team has not only met challenges head-on—they've embraced them with creativity, heart, and an unwavering focus on our mission. I am endlessly inspired by their dedication. Amidst change and growth, they remained grounded in our shared commitment to delivering culturally grounded, compassionate justice services. It's their passion that ensures our clients are seen, heard, and supported every step of the way.

A major challenge we faced in 2024 was the office fire. In the early morning hours of June 15th, we received the devastating call that our heritage building had succumbed to a fire, nearly destroying the entire north side. Although we do not yet own the building, it holds deep meaning for us and represents our long-term vision—so the loss struck us hard... but it did not break us. In true community spirit, we quickly rallied. With the strength and support of our staff, partners, and community members from across Tiohtià:ke, we rebuilt the Justice Center—stronger, more unified, and more determined than ever.

As we look to the future, we remain focused on expanding our programming, strengthening our team, and adapting our services to reflect the evolving needs of our community. We are not only building capacity—we are breaking the proverbial glass ceilings and re-shaping a model of justice that is responsive, inclusive, and reflective of who we are as Indigenous Peoples.

At the heart of it all is our unwavering commitment to client wellness. The Justice Center will continue to lead with compassion and cultural integrity, ensuring that every service we offer is encompassed, rooted in holistic, Indigenous approaches to justice and healing. It is truly a privilege to do this work alongside such a passionate and visionary team. Together, we move upward and outward—innovating, advocating, and reimagining what justice can and should look like for our Peoples in Tiohtià:ke / Montréal and across Turtle Island.

Respectfully in all my relations,

Ellen Filippelli



OUR HISTORY

The First Peoples Justice Centre of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal (FPJCTM) is a registered non-profit that provides services for Indigenous community members living in Montreal who are involved with the justice and carceral systems. The FPJCTM was incorporated in 2014 after being born in 2013 from the Cabot Square Project, a community initiative that was led by the Justice Working Committee of the Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK. A few years later, in early 2017, we opened our doors for service provision. Since then, the FPJCTM continuously strives to provide culturally-adapted, holistic services.

Our work is directly informed by the realities of the community members we support. Throughout program development and delivery, our team strives to advocate for structural change within the justice and carceral systems to move towards initiatives led by and for Indigenous communities.

VISION

The First Peoples Justice Center of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal vision is to have strong Indigenous communities that have access to community-led justice processes rooted in decolonization, healing, respect, and Indigenous law.

MISSION

Our mission is to support, inform, and empower Indigenous people navigating the justice system and to offer holistic, culturally appropriate justice services to the diverse First Peoples living in Montreal. To create alternative community-led justice processes rooted in Indigenous values in partnership with the Indigenous community in Montreal.

Restorative Justice

This program supports alternatives to court processes by helping individuals engage in restorative and Indigenous approaches to resolving conflict, with a focus on wellness, building healthier relationships and contributing to stronger, more safer communities.

Following several years of growth, the Restorative Justice program operated at full capacity over the course 2024-2025. Between April and March 31st 2025, the Restorative Justice Coordinator received forty-six referrals for diversion, both from the municipal and provincial courts. By March 2025, twenty-three files were successfully completed while others remain ongoing.

We were present for Programme d'Accompagnement Justice Autochtone (PAJA) sessions to support the program and be available for new referrals. Our Center also ensures consistent openings for every court date with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

The Restorative Justice Coordinator, in collaboration with Onen'token, facilitated the Working on Wellness support group in April and in October, both series running over the course of 6 weeks. They covered topics such as early addictions recovery, conflict resolution, addressing anger and learning to let go. Each group saw 6-12 participants in attendance.

In October 2025, the Restorative Justice Coordinator, Manager of Community Programs and a board member were invited to present for provincial judges during their yearly colloque in Wendake. The presentation, titled "Indigenous-led justice processes, beyond adaptations and towards revitalization" focused on the realities of Indigenous community members in an urban context navigating colonial legal systems. The presentation was well-received with over twenty judges in attendance.



Transition program

The Transition Program is for Indigenous community members being released from detention who are looking for support with their objectives and reconnecting with their community in a culturally safe environment.

Between April and March 2024, transition services expanded considerably with a newly established Escorted Temporary absences program (ETA) with Correction Services Canada. While at the Center, the ETA Program participants gave back to the community by assisting with tasks, ranging from maintenance work to preparing meals for events, such as the gathering to commemorate Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirited. The second component of the ETA program is focused on culture and healing, the program participants had access to one-on-one sessions with Elders, sharing circles and workshops. Their presence has been appreciated by the FPJCTM team, the ETA program participants have brought positivity to our organization.



Last year, the Men's Circle, facilitated by the Transition Coordinator and Elder Delbert were particularly popular amongst program participants. By fostering a sense of respect and honesty, sharing circles promote healthy communication within the group. Last year, the bi-weekly Men's Circle was so well attended, it eventually became offered weekly to accommodate the needs. Approximately eighteen Men's Circles have been offered since July 2023.

Overall, the Transition Program supported thirty-eight (38) individuals involved in the carceral systems, six of which received the housing subsidy to move into a new residence. The Coordinator acts as a liaison between program participants and their Correction's worker, assisting with release plans and referrals to meaningful services. As Transition Services grow, the Justice Center continues to advocate for a Parole Board Hearing room to welcome Indigenous Parolees, an initiative that has taken shape over several months.

Reintegration support

Our Reintegration Coordinator not only facilitates the completion of community service and compensatory hour agreements, he also assists individuals with life skills, employment referrals and housing when they are reintegrating Tiohtià:ke's urban community.

Community and compensatory hours services were previously referred to as the Connection to Community Program, however, since winter 2023, services have grown to include reintegration support. As the needs of community members exiting long judicial processes, prison or treatment increased, we adjusted the position accordingly.

The Reintegration Coordinator works in direct collaboration with the Transition Program, supporting mainly individuals requiring longer follow ups to attain stability after a period of incarceration. In continuation with the FPJCTM approach, he continues to allow for creativity and culture with the goal of supporting community members who have compensatory, community work hours or alternative measures to complete.

The Community Service program served twenty-three (23) community members during the reporting period. Six (6) individuals completed their community hours successfully. Since April 2023, the Reintegration Coordinator has created opportunities for community members by facilitating several drum making and drum painting sessions over the reporting period.

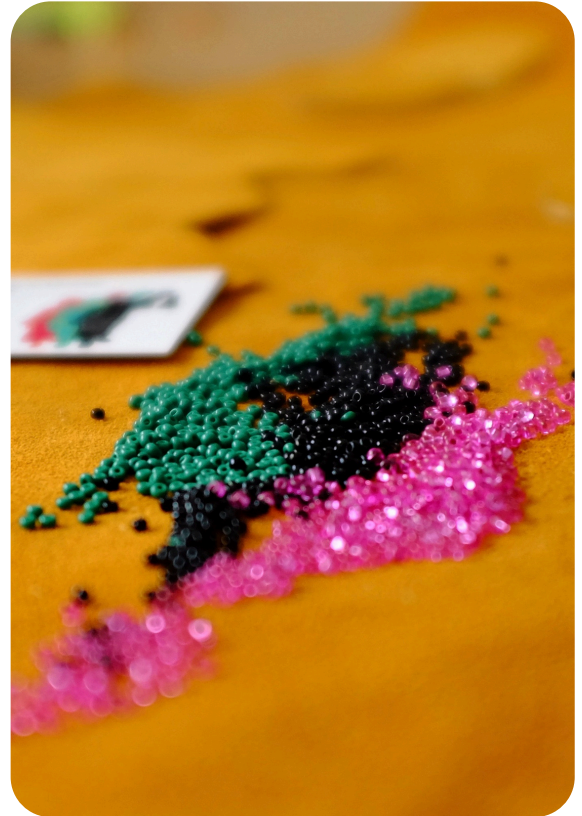
Our organization has taken steps towards becoming a referral agency equivalent to the YMCA for Indigenous community in Tiohtià:ke. In January 2024, we met with the representatives from the Ministry of Justice Quebec responsible to elaborate a plan. This would allow for efficient and culturally relevant service when it comes to the establishment of compensatory hours agreements. The next steps involve the approval from the Board of Directors, training and completing the process with the Ministry of Justice.



Victim Services

This program is for community members who have experienced a harmful situation, whether they are traversing the judicial system or not

This includes systemic harms resulting from policies of assimilation - with this in mind, Victim Services can also include assistance in applying for class actions or other legal processes aimed at repair. The program serviced a total of twenty-nine (29) victims. The support received covered a range of services, including accompaniments to file police reports or to the hospital, victim impact statements and class action related follow ups. The Victim Services Coordinator along with Elder Jean held bi-weekly Women's Circles at the Center. A total of eleven circles were organized, from participation ranging from no participants to five. One on one sessions were provided on days when Women's Circle was not held.



Our Victim Services are an important part of Montreal's court programs at both the municipal and provincial level, through the Programme d'Accompagnement Justice Autochtone a la cour municipale de Montréal (PAJA) and the General Alternatives Measures Program for Indigenous adults (GAMP-MU-A/GAMP-A). Parallel to the Restorative Justice Program, this program also worked alongside the CAVAC, DPCP, MJQ and Corrections to finalize launching the diversion program at the Palais de Justice. This year, several survivors of conjugal violence received assistance, of which five referrals were made by the Quebec courthouse's Côté Cour program.

On February 14th 2024, the Victim Services Coordinator and the Wellness counselor organized an event to honor the lives and families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirited. A ceremonial feast was attended by seventy community members, organizational and institutional partners throughout the day. We opened with a prayer, prepared a spirit plate and the group shared words over a meal. Afterwards, participants were invited to write down the names of their missing loved ones on drums to memorialize them and the event.

Gladue reports

Our Gladue report program is a vital part of our work toward a more just and equitable legal system for Indigenous peoples.

By providing the courts with detailed reports that highlight the individual's life experiences and the broader systemic factors—such as the impacts of colonialism and intergenerational trauma— Gladue reports promote more informed and compassionate sentencing decisions. We are uniquely positioned to deliver this service with cultural sensitivity and trust, ensuring that the voices and histories of Indigenous community members are meaningfully reflected in the justice process.

The Gladue Coordinator received eight referrals of which four were accepted and completed. Clients, both those who were detained or awaiting their sentencing completed intake, participated in interviews and had Gladue-type follow ups with the Coordinator.



In 2024, the FPJCTM joined the Ministry of Justice's "Working Group on Adapted Justice" with the theme of Divert, Repair, Heal. The committee members gathered several times to discuss improving the Guide for writing Gladue reports in Quebec, gathering statistics on reports province-wide and other related topics. Our organization participated regularly, including in a subcommittee regarding Gladue writer qualifications.

In terms of aftercare, our Wellness Counselor and Knowledge Keeper remains available to meet with community members having had a report completed by our writer. She also ensures the presence of Elders on a weekly basis as well as access to cultural activities, including outings on the land and ceremonies. In line with Indigenous values, our organization's understanding of aftercare is large in scope, recognizing both a one-on-one approach along with a collective vision of healing.

Cultural programming

The cultural and community components to our programs play a vital role in the well-being of community members accessing services at the Justice Center. They help individuals connect with their cultural roots, traditions, and history.

Spring 2023 marked the beginning of a full season of programming. The first was the Moon Gathering, which was held every season last year, for a total of four ceremonies where women came together at the Longhouse to receive teachings from Elders. The Moon Gathering in April was followed by our annual Strawberry Ceremony. During the spring, Elder Delbert, who had begun working regularly at the Justice Center, facilitated a Pipe Ceremony. The summer months were welcomed with two carving workshops in the park across the street. The Knowledge Keeper organized community outings both to the Kahnawake Pow Wow in July and the Kanesatake Pow Wow in August.



Winter months programming included a holiday feast as well as pualik and parka making workshops. More than half of the clients accessing our services (65%) have also attended the in-house activities mentioned above.

On September 28th, the Justice Center hosted a special community barbecue for Reconciliation day. Many speakers were invited to share their stories, including Elder Jean, Elder Delbert, Elder Thelma and Nina Segalowitz performed Inuit throat singing with her daughter. Over one-hundred (100+) guests attended, including community members accessing our services, the community at large, judicial partners and the Chief of Kanesatake.

Niá:wen Miigwetch Nakurmiik Wela'lin Kinanâsko mitin



We would like to take a moment to acknowledge the Knowledge Keepers and Elders who work with us, with a special thank you to Elder Jean and to Elder Delbert for their meaningful work at the Justice Center.

Year in Review

FINANCES

The Justice Center's finances have stabilized after several years of carrying over funds from previous fiscal years. While revenues and expenses are slightly lower than last year, they more accurately reflect the true cost of operations. The 2023–2024 budget was unusually high due to our move to a new building and one-time project expenses funded by past carry-overs.

A major challenge arose in June 2024 when a fire damaged half our offices. Thanks to our insurer and our landlord, we were able to cover rent during the displacement and recover furniture and materials lost to the fire.

We are grateful for a new funding stream from the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations, which helps support front-line staff salaries not fully covered by other funders. Additional top-up funding from the Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK, through Infrastructure Canada—Reaching Home, ensured we could close the fiscal year after other funding was not renewed. Both partners were vital to maintaining operations.

We remain committed to working with our financial and community partners —Justice Canada, Justice Québec, Correctional Service Canada, Indigenous Services Canada—continue to play an essential role in advancing our mission. We also thank Bell Canada, McGill law students, the Royal Bank of Canada, the MakeWay Foundation, and all donors through CanadaHelps.org. Every contribution strengthens our work and demonstrates trust in our vision.

CENTRE DE JUSTICE DES PREMIERS PEUPLES
DE MONTRÉAL
FIRST PEOPLES JUSTICE CENTER OF MONTREAL
OPERATIONS
year ended March 31, 2025

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REVENUES		
Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK	\$ 437,939	\$ 314,335
Justice Québec	189,331	472,858
Justice Canada	147,500	44,280
Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)	157,644	131,823
Correctional Service Canada	149,900	150,000
Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit	131,756	34,637
Canadian Heritage	12,567	10,000
Makivik	-	242,699
Service agreements	70,631	4,397
Donations	45,956	72,141
Insurance recoveries	54,715	-
Amortization of deferred contributions related to capital assets	42,031	22,570
Rental income	20,800	13,000
Interest and other income	<u>5,466</u>	<u>3,982</u>
	<u>1,466,236</u>	<u>1,516,722</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries and fringe benefits - Staff	570,246	-
Salaries and fringe benefits - Admin	316,369	866,279
Rent and public services	147,215	134,057
Travel, accomodations and conferences	69,274	75,665
Professional fees	64,725	33,935
Program materials and supplies	54,063	133,778
Amortization of capital assets	42,874	22,857
Office and administrative fees	37,642	32,534
Rent and utilities for clients	31,774	27,905
Food security	28,001	34,108
Program fees	26,047	77,780
Renovations and maintenance costs	19,486	18,052
Interest and bank charges	4,647	2,071
Insurance	2,952	2,815
Other	1,050	-
Professional development	<u>375</u>	<u>31,952</u>
	<u>1,416,740</u>	<u>1,493,788</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$ 49,496</u>	<u>\$ 22,934</u>

The accompanying notes form an integral part of the financial statements.

Board members

Daphnee Drouin

Daphnée Drouin is a Mi'kmaw woman from the Micmac community of Gespeg and also a lawyer who practices Indigenous and Constitutional Law, focusing on cases related to the self-government of Indigenous communities in matters of youth protection and child and family services. She is also involved in cases addressing First Nations governance, agreement, negotiations, consultations, and litigation in an Indigenous setting. Daphnée's journey into the legal profession was preceded by her work as a youth protection worker as of 2012. For four years, she worked in Nunavik. The experience allowed her to deepen her understanding of the different youth protection systems and their consequences in Indigenous context. She currently sits on the Board of Directors of the First Peoples Justice Centre of Montreal as the president and is a member of the Groupe d'expert en droit autochtone du Barreau du Québec.

Nicolas Welt

Nicolas Welt, attorney at law, is currently acting as director of the Criminal Law and Health Law Office of the Legal Aid of Montreal. A member of the bar since 2009, he has practiced in criminal law at the Montreal and Kuujuaq Legal Aid offices before joining the management team of the Centre Communautaire juridique de Montréal in 2022. He is an ethics arbitrator within the Comité éthique de la recherche pour les projets étudiants de l'UQAM since the fall 2019 and member of the CJPPM Board of Directors since 2017."

Lynette Black

Lyn Black is a board member of the First Peoples Justice Centre of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal. Currently pursuing a Master of Social Work at McGill University, Lyn focuses on Indigenous rights-based harm reduction with people who experience homelessness and is the Director of Indigenous Support Work Project (ISWP/PTSW). In their undergrad, Lyn worked in Vancouver as a Native Court Worker and brings insight to the relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadian law.

Philippe Boucher

Philippe Boucher acts as a justice advisor for the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach at Atmacinta. As a Gladue Report writer, he also works with Inuit men awaiting sentencing to present their life stories and alternatives to incarceration in criminal courts. He is also a doctoral candidate in Legal Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa. He holds a Master's degree in Criminology from Université de Montréal, which focused on Indigenous men's stories of ending domestic violence. His undergraduate degree at Concordia University combines Indigenous Studies and Sociology, and he completed a student exchange in Arctic Studies at the University of Lapland in Finland.

Shazie Kanatiostha Phillips

Shazie Kanatiostha Phillips is from Kahnawà:ke, she is a member of the Mohawk Nation and wolf clan. For the past six years Shazie has worked in various frontline roles that supported and empowered Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. Currently, Shazie works in Kahnawake as the Assistant Alternative Justice Coordinator at Sken:nen A'onsonton (To Become Peaceful Again), the Alternative Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice program. Shazie's given Mohawk name, "Kanatiostha" translates to "she makes a beautiful community. Her name represents what she strives to accomplish in all aspects of her life. It's the community members that inspire Shazie each day to continue working toward decolonization in any role that advocates for the rights and wellbeing of Indigenous people.

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Sophia Kahentinéhshon Dupont

Sophia Kahentinéhshon Dupont est une femme Kanien'kehá:ka qui a occupé pendant plus de 35 ans des postes clés dans le domaine administratif, notamment dans les secteurs de la santé et de la justice. Elle s'est également beaucoup impliquée dans la gouvernance des conseils d'administration autochtones et a rejoint le conseil d'administration du Centre de justice des Premiers Peuples de Montréal (CJPPM) en novembre 2024.

The team

Administration

Ellen Filippelli - Executive Director

Rene Florence - Administrative Coordinator

Danielle Beaulieu - Manager of Community Programs

Alex Huard - Manager of Funding Development & Administration

Community Programs

Corey Thomas - Transition program Coordinator

Amy Edward - Restorative justice Coordinator

Norman Riel - Reintegration Coordinator

Sheri Pranteau - Victim Services Coordinator

Tealey Ka'senni:saks - Knowledge keeper/Wellness Counselor

Jocelyne Couture - Gladue Coordinator

Support staff

Gabriel Daoust Mooney

The First Peoples Justice Centre of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal



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