

Profile of the NETWORK

At the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in October 2006 in Mashteuiatsh, the *Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec* requested the collaboration of the Canadian government and the Quebec government to determine the specific situation of Aboriginals living away from the communities. The Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy NETWORK was created on November 5th, 2008 in response to the priorities identified at the socioeconomic forum and outlined in the needs assessment conducted by the Organizational Development Services (ODS).

As Montreal has the 8th largest urban Aboriginal population totalling 17,870, the NETWORK'S vision is to "improve the quality of life of Aboriginals in the greater Montreal area through a coordinated and concerted approach that will align our collective interests in supporting locally-driven initiatives." Transparency, accountability, partnership, inclusiveness, open mindedness, respect and cultural responsibility are the principles of the NETWORK while being sensitive to cultural differences and encouraging diversity values of Aboriginals in the greater Montreal area. The NETWORK acts as the decisional structure and provides opportunities for organizations serving Aboriginal people in the greater Montreal area to broaden their achievements, through measurable and sustainable improvements, as follows:

- Sharing information and transferring knowledge about Aboriginal people's needs;
- Prioritizing the needs;
- Developing joint projects that address gaps and reduce duplication of services;
- Creating and strengthening partnerships.

The NETWORK is composed of the following six Working Committees: ART•CULTURE, Communications, Employability-Training-Education, Youth, Health and Social Services, each Working Committee uses a strategic plan to find local solutions to local issues.

NETWORK transversal Priorities 2012-2017
Upgrade the efficiency of the NETWORK's coordination
Create a community, cultural and artistic venue
Create a holistic health centre
To develop Cabot Square into an initial Aboriginal orientation point for resources
Develop common reference tools and networking activities
Commit to the presence of an Elder and assure the integration of Aboriginal protocols in all NETWORK activities

The NETWORK's transversal priorities 2012-2017

The NETWORK also established a Steering Committee composed of one representative of each Working Committee; governmental partners of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the City of Montreal, Quebec government's *Secretariat aux affaires autochtones*, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador and the Makivik Corporation; as well as an Elder.

With more than 600 members, which include 120 organizations, the NETWORK is open to all Aboriginals of the greater Montreal area and to representatives of organizations and various levels of government that serve them. The objective now is to maintain, strengthen and increase the number of partnerships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations, community groups, the private sector and government partners. Therefore, the NETWORK aims to improve the quality of life of Aboriginals in the greater Montreal area and the quality of services offered to the community.