



FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

## In a year like no other, West Island Community Shares distributes a record \$1.4 Million

**West Island residents, local businesses, partners and foundations rally together in an unprecedented support of Community Shares' Solidarity Fund**

**West Island Community Shares adds four new groups to their recipient list and launches new environmental fund**

**Pointe-Claire, May 5, 2021:** Today, West Islanders celebrate their very own success. For the first time in its history, and thanks to a wave of generosity by friends, families, neighbors, and partners, West Island Community Shares announces a record-breaking **\$1.4 Million** being distributed to the community following their annual fundraising campaign, known as the **West Island Solidarity Fund**. The Solidarity Fund was set up not only to provide financial support to meet urgent needs of the community during what was a very difficult year, but also to give community organizations the financial support they need to provide crucial services during the recovery period.

The pandemic has shone the light on three areas of vulnerability in our region that needed additional support, such as at-risk families, vulnerable women and underrepresented cultural populations. Therefore, the fund distribution committee recommended to add **Maison Caracol**, the **West Island Women's Shelter**, the **West Island Women's Centre**, as well as the **West Island Black Community Association** to the list of recipients of these funds. In addition to providing financial support, all recipients benefit from a wide range of support provided by our vast network of volunteers.

In addition, new seed money has been generously awarded to Community Shares by the **Trottier Family Foundation**, **Targray**, as well as an anonymous donor to launch a new **West Island Environmental Fund**. This special fund will help support local green initiatives right here in the West Island. During the pandemic, the environment has taken a step back, understandably so, but it is time to bring it back to the forefront of priorities for all citizens.

While the pandemic took a significant toll on our vulnerable populations in the West Island, the community showed its true colours with unprecedented acts of kindness and generosity. While we will continue to feel the negative effects of the pandemic in the months to come, we are optimistic about the future of the community sector, thanks to the efforts of our generous donors and partners.

### QUOTES

"I am in awe that we started the year losing more than 30% of our revenues due the cancellation of our events, and yet we end the year announcing a record-breaking \$1.4M. Absolutely everyone was impacted by the pandemic, but not everyone was impacted financially. Those lucky enough stepped up in a way that no one could have anticipated. Not only have we kept all of our corporate partners, we have welcomed nine new ones, three new foundations, old donors have come back to us, and more than 600 new donors showed their empathy towards those in need. This is what solidarity looks like and we couldn't be more grateful."

**Sophie McCann**, Executive Director, West Island Community Shares

“We are amazed and grateful to everyone who contributed to this year’s record results. That achievement would not have been possible without the help of our dedicated Board of Directors, Community Shares’ incredible staff, and most of all, our generous West Island community, loyal donors and all partners.”

**Me Jean-René Paquette**, *President of the Board of Directors and Founding partner of Paquette & Associates Attorneys Inc.*

“It has been a very difficult year for our community organisations. Maintaining services during a pandemic has been challenging to say the least but they have been able to adapt and support the most vulnerable residents. The pandemic has also helped us identify critical services that needed our support. We are extremely proud to be able to add four groups to our family of recipients who are at the forefront of systemic changes in our society.”

**Chantal Carrier**, *President of the Fund Distribution Committee & Board Treasurer*

### **IMPACT AND HIGHLIGHTS:**

- West Island Solidarity Fund was set up to provide financial support to local community organizations during the COVID-19 crisis
- Thanks to the generosity of the community West Island Community Shares distributes a record-breaking **\$1.4 Million**
- The Solidarity Fund in numbers: **3,000 donations, 600 new donors and 41 partners**
- **New innovative initiatives:** [Solidarity Gardens](#), #GotYourBack, [“I buy local for Dorval”](#) and [“I shop in the Pointe-Claire Village” crowdfunding campaigns](#), [“iPads for Seniors’ Residences”](#), [COVID Fighting West Island Businesses and their employees](#), Solidarity Pizza Night, Solidarity Draw, and many more.
- **4 new community organizations** added: Maison Caracol, West Island Women’s Shelter, West Island Women’s Centre, and the West Island Black Community Association
- Launch of a new **West Island Environmental Fund**, thanks to the support of the **Trottier Family Foundation, Targray**, as well as an anonymous donor
- The record \$1.4 Million were raised by West Islanders who believe in helping their community, as well as **generous corporate partners** such as Pfizer Canada, National Bank, TENAQUIP Foundation, RBC Royal Bank, Hewitt Foundation, Merck Canada, Desjardins, Windsor Salt, TD, Bank of Montreal, Mirella & Lino Saputo Foundation, Trottier Family Foundation, TENAQUIP Ltd, Pharmaprix, Broccolini, Massi Family, TELUS and many more.

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### **About West Island Community Shares**

West Island Community Shares is a unique charitable organization dedicated to building a strong, inclusive, peaceful and healthy community. We do this by raising crucial funds for 40 local community groups which focus on developing strong and resilient children, creating bridges to support vulnerable populations, empowering women to reach their full potential for themselves and their families, and providing basic necessities to West Islanders in need. For more information: [CommunityShares.ca](http://CommunityShares.ca).

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FULL LIST OF CORPORATE PARTNERS 2020-2021

