

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



COMMUNITY SHARES TO INVEST A RECORD-BREAKING \$1.5M INTO THE WEST ISLAND COMMUNITY

West Island residents, local businesses, and partners rally together in support of those who need it the most

Pointe-Claire, April 20th, 2023 – Exactly 25 years ago today, West Island Community Shares was created by three visionaries who dared to imagine a community where individuals, businesses, local government, and community leaders would work together to address social issues. What better way to celebrate the organisation’s 25th anniversary than to announce the distribution of a record-breaking \$1.5 million to more than 40 local community organizations in the West Island of Montreal.

Price increases and inflation seen in the past year have had a significant impact on the most vulnerable populations. Those most affected had to make difficult choices this past year between competing needs such as paying rent or buying food. West Island residents, local businesses, local MNAs, foundations and other partners understand this difficult reality and showed their true colours with unprecedented acts of kindness and generosity.

Over the past 25 years, Community Shares has supported a wide range of local community organisations. This year, twelve members of the fund distribution committee analysed the needs in our community to ensure that all donations will be allocated where they will have the biggest impact. In all, more than 40 community organisations will receive substantial financial support to strengthen the West Island community and improve the quality of life for its residents.

QUOTES

"We are thrilled to have reached this fundraising milestone, especially in our 25th year of serving the community. It is a true testament to the generosity and dedication of our donors, volunteers, and staff, who have worked tirelessly to support our mission of creating a stronger, more inclusive and healthy West Island community. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Board of Directors who have demonstrated time and time again their commitment to this organisation, and who continue to make us stronger." **Frederica Jones, President, Board of Directors, West Island Community Shares & Regional VP, BMO Bank of Montreal**

"What a joy to be able to say that after 25 years, the vision of Community Shares’ founders continues. I am proud that Pfizer was a founding partner to the organisation, and that our support has been steadfast since day one. Equity is one of four values at Pfizer, and it is important for our company to create lasting social impact in the communities where we live and work. I strongly encourage other business leaders to join suit, because although we, as a community, have accomplished a lot, West Islanders still need our help." **Najah Sampson, President, Pfizer Canada & Campaign President for Community Shares’ 25th anniversary**

"I am so grateful for the outpouring of support from our community, which will enable us to continue providing critical funding to organizations that work to improve the lives of those in need in the West Island of Montreal. Although I am surrounded with an exceptional team, and a devoted Board of

Directors who rally behind our mission, their commitment would be fruitless without our donors who rally behind our community to help those less fortunate.” **Sophie McCann, Executive Director, West Island Community Shares**

IMPACT AND HIGHLIGHTS:

- Thanks to the generosity of the community West Island Community Shares is distributing a record- breaking **\$1.5 Million**;
- Since 1998, Community Shares has **invested more than \$20 million** to strengthen the West Island community;
- **More than 40 community organisations** will receive substantial funding ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000;
- **Investments will be made in 6 key areas:** support vulnerable populations, develop strong & resilient children and teens, foster healthy bodies & healthy minds, empower women, provide basic necessities such as food & shelter, and support green initiatives;
- The record \$1.5 Million was raised by West Islanders who believe in helping their community, as well as **generous partners**. In honour of our 25th anniversary, we have chosen to highlight the trust and generosity of a select few partners who make annual donations of \$25,000 or more:

<p>Hewitt Foundation Massi Family Pte-Claire Family Foundation Tenaquip Foundation Trottier Family Foundation</p> <p>Député de Nelligan, Monsef Derraji</p> <p>Députée de Robert-Baldwin Brigitte Garceau</p>	<p>AVON BNC, National Bank BMO, Bank of Montreal Broccolini CIENA Merck Canada Pfizer Canada PME-MTL, Ouest-de-l’Île RBC, Royal Bank Spinelli Tenaquip Ltd.</p>
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- Community Shares’ founders were Alan Bootes, President of Pfizer Canada, Russell Williams, MNA Robert-Baldwin, and Robert Vokey from the McConnell Foundation.

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 more than 40 local community groups which focus on developing strong and resilient children, creating bridges to support vulnerable populations, supporting healthy minds & healthy bodies, empowering women, and providing basic necessities such as food and shelter to West Islanders in need. For more information: CommunityShares.ca.

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