Annual Report 2023





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Acknowledgements

A community center such as Centre du Sablon can achieve its mission thanks to the involvement of many people who rub shoulders and share moments of fulfillment and laughter. Members of all ages, our large team of friendly employees, our generous volunteers and our Board of Directors all contribute their knowledge, skills and joie de vivre to the realization of our mission. They deserve our highest esteem and most sincere thanks.

Our members occupy an important place within our center and in the hearts of our team. You give life to Centre du Sablon. Your presence and your essence motivate our team to serve you better and make your time with us an opportunity to share. Thank you for your continued trust.

Thank you to all our employees, who give their very best to our toddlers, children, teenagers, adults and seniors. Your work is at the heart of Centre du Sablon's culture.

We would like to thank the management team for the masterful work they do day after day to ensure the continuity of services, innovation and sustainability of the Centre. Without your daily contribution, the center would not be able to operate and develop further.

Our appreciation extends to the volunteer members of the Board of Directors, who invest their time to ensure the governance of the center. Your involvement gives us the perspective we need to ensure the organization's longevity for generations to come.

We would also like to thank all our volunteers, who give generously of their time and open their hearts for the well-being of others.

Finally, we would like to thank Ville de Laval and all its employees, who play an important role in the smooth running of our center.





Mission

Centre du Sablon has been a central landmark for the Chomedey community. Transferred to the City of Laval in 1993, which chose to entrust its management to the Corporation du Centre du Sablon (CDS), its mission is to serve the local and regional population by offering sports, community, and cultural recreational activities. It is an autonomous community action organization that favors community recreation as a means of intervention to create a living environment that favors empowerment by and for all citizens.



CDS Guidelines

- Promote the integral development of the person, support of families, and the empowerment of citizens in their local community by means of community recreation, community action, and cultural and popular education.
- Act in collaboration with citizens, organizations, and associations in the area.
- Bring people together in leisure time, creating a living environment in a physical setting.
- Participate in the development of the family by encouraging its openness and autonomy.
- Allow its population, grouped by age sector and field of activity, access to the main forms of recreation, community action, and cultural and popular education in order to maintain healthy lifestyle habits.

President's note

Many thanks to all our members,

What a year 2023 was! One of Centre du Sablon's greatest guiding strengths is its ability to face adversity. The impact of the events of recent years has not slowed the mission or development of our community center.

I would like to thank all those who have ensured the success of Sablon in 2023. To the members who take part in our many activities, to our employees who work hard every day, to our partners, Ville de Laval and the Governments of Quebec and Canada. Thanks to everyone's unfailing support, your community center could not achieve the success it has.

As you read through our activity report, you will see, as I do, the undeniable dedication of our team to fulfilling our social mission. From the Board of Directors to the management team, and including our great animation team, we are all committed to providing a rich leisure environment for all our members.

Your management team and all the employees at Centre du Sablon strive every day to offer our members an unparalleled experience and service. Whether it be classes at the pool, access to facilities for physical activities, offering a variety of programs and activities including education, and improving the infrastructure of our buildings such as the recently renovated gymnasium, are just perfect examples.

As we present the 2023 Annual Report to all Centre du Sablon members, we also hold our Annual General Meeting to provide everyone with an update on our support to the community. 2023 also marked an important milestone for our corporation as we reviewed and modernized our Corporate Bylaws. On behalf of your Board of Directors and all Centre du Sablon employees, we thank every member for the support and encouragement you give us every day.

On behalf of all members, I would also like to acknowledge the dedication of our employees to Sablon's success. Without them, without their ideas and without their ever-evolving vision, Centre du Sablon would not exist.

Sincerely,

Brian B. Tracey

President, Board of Directors

General Manager's note

Dear members,

We are pleased to present the 2023 Activity Report of the Corporation du Centre du Sablon (CDS). 2023 represents the return to normal for our activities at the center. While the uncertainty of the health crisis is finally behind us, it has not spared us from facing new challenges: a staffing shortage at the start of the year, and a cyber-attack to end the year. If there's one important lesson we've learned over the past three years, it's that of resilience and composure. Our team, despite being considerably reduced at the beginning of the year, has met these challenges head-on, and has not lost **heart** for a moment in delivering impeccable service to our members. Our promise has always been to offer a **vibrant**, **energetic** living environment, and our team has delivered by drawing on the strength of our community! Together, members, volunteers and staff, no challenge can hold us back. We're all committed to a **vibrant community!**

And so we continue our mission to offer you, our members, respite through recreation, leisure and fitness. What better way to combat isolation than to be part of a community and feel a strong sense of **belonging**, which a community center like Centre du Sablon can offer without restraint. We are all focused on our mission and optimizing the future. This is the **strength** of our **CDS community**.



General Manager's note (cont'd)

Despite all the challenges, our team has made it its mission in 2023 to develop and innovate our services both inside and outside the Centre. Keen to make a significant **social impact**, the Centre du Sablon team reaches out to more vulnerable populations to offer them access to sports and leisure activities and to adhere to **healthy lifestyle** habits. None of the magic we see every day at Centre du Sablon could happen without the invaluable contribution of each and every person I'm lucky enough to have on my great team.

Centre du Sablon **IS** the place to be. It feels like home.

Angela Faraoni

General Manager



For a vibrant community!



Centre du Sablon is a recreational and sports center, with day camps for spring, summer, and winter school breaks and an adapted fitness room. We offer educational activities for preschoolers and children with special needs. We offer aquatic, sports, community and cultural activities for children, teens, adults, seniors and people with limited mobility.



The only person who doesn't fit in is the one who decides not to come. One visit will suffice.











Our Corporation's 2023 Accomplishments

- Resumption of all the Centre's activities despite shortage of human resources
- Review of the Corporation's Governance bylaws
- · Development of a more efficient customer service
- Establishment of new partnerships in the community
- Implementation of a restructuring of the community and cultural department in order to improve operational efficiency
- Launch of the Centraide funded Accessible Leisure Activities (ALA) Program in partnership with City of Laval and the Comité de développement local de Chomedey (CDLC) to provide extra-mural services for the Chomedey community, particularly in the VAL- Martin integrated urban revitalization sector (RUI)
- Continued revitalization of the facilities inside the center (completion of the installation of LED lighting in several areas of the center, replacement of the gymnasium floor, and sandblast and painting the pool basin) thanks to our main partner, Ville de Laval
- Continued negotiations with our main partner, the City of Laval, for public/private partnership tenant improvement projects including the relocation of the Trek-Fit outdoor exercise structures currently located in the Sablon woods.
- Finalist in two categories for the Dunamis prize awarded by the Laval Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIL): Social Économy Entreprise and Grand Prix Dunamis
- Nomination for the "Excellence in Programming and Camp Life" award at the Association des camps du Québec (ACQ) convention for our project: Enhancing the expertise of "Les spécialistes réinventés au Camp du CDS".

Slam dunk towards a new look!



After several years of negotiations, and with a goal to revitalize our facilities, the City of Laval began the project to replace the floor of our gymnasium in early 2023. This revitalization project was important to guarantee a higher level of safety for our members and sports participants. The floor we had was original to the building (1968), and was in dire need of replacement.

At the end of summer, it was the pool's turn to receive some special attention! The project to sandblast and paint the pool basin took place at the beginning of September.

These projects were long overdue and on behalf of all our members, volunteers and employees, we say a BIG THANK YOU to the City of Laval for these investments!





2023 A YEAR IN REVIEW

AQUATICS



2024 Objectives

- Improve group class experience by creating instructor reference materials, training sessions for assistant-instructors, and improve swimmer evaluation methods.
- Train a new special needs aquatics instructor to respond to the growing need
- Develop new aquatic activities in the deep end, such as water polo.
- Continue to take advantage of the Provincial Government subsidy for the lifeguarding courses and the training of water safety instructors by organizing training courses to fill staff shortages.
- Increase the number of leisure swim periods

Artistic swimming

In September 2023, the aquatic department added three artistic swimming groups to its program for the first time, and 10 members registered.

Special needs open swim periods

The growing demand for aquatic activities for our members with special needs has enabled us to offer a slot for families taking part in other CDS adapted activities to come and swim in the pool on Friday evenings.

Swimming lessons

To improve the quality of our aquatic services, we have introduced midsession evaluations of the swimmers to enable parents to see how their child is progressing. We have also improved the aqua-teen program by developing progression materials (notebooks, evaluation criteria).



Aquatics in numbers

2959

registrations (24% increase vs. 2022)

SPORTS



2024 Objectives

- Participate in inter-community sports tournaments, to encourage youth involvement in sport and strengthen community ties.
- Establish new partnerships with local sports organizations, schools, clubs, and associations to expand the available sports offer and maximize the use of resources.
- Increase participation in sports programs for 12-17 year olds, by actively promoting these programs and adapting the offer based on feedback from participants.
- Organize an annual community sports tournament to strengthen ties within the community, with the aim of attracting new active participants from diverse backgrounds.
- Launch a variety of new sports activities at the center to enrich our programming and encourage greater community participation.
- Offer Extracurricular activities in local primary and high school in partnership with the French and English school boards



SPORTS (cont'd)

Leisure accessibility programs

As our ALA program was received with great interest by the low-income community in Val-Martin's RUI sector, we offered additional places for some of our sports activities in our gymnasium during our fall session in addition to those offered at the Campeau community center in order to help those in need.

In the spirit of accessibility, low-cost yoga classes were offered during the winter and spring sessions to adult residents of the Office Municipale d'habitation à Laval (Low income housing - OMH Laval), rue Évariste.

CDS also participated in the launch of the Accès-Loisirs Laval program, and has offered several places to the Laval community since the arrival of the Laval accessibility program. This program aims to make sports accessible to the low-income population and newcomers through free activities offered by leisure organizations throughout Laval.

Pickleball

Due to the great popularity of this activity and growing demand from our members, we have added three extra morning pickleball periods per day, Monday to Friday.

Sports in numbers

670

registrations (8.4% increase vs. 2022)

Open Basketball

To attract teenagers to the center, break down isolation and promote healthy lifestyle habits, we offered 3 hours per week of open basketball slots. Due to high demand, we had to extend our periods, which in turn attracted many basketball enthusiasts to practice and play in our renovated gymnasium.



SABLON-FIT



2024 Objectives

- Develop and launch a corporate membership package: Introduce a customized corporate membership package with a special discounted rate, offering unparalleled savings, and including two lunch break courses (mobility & H.I.I.T) to encourage a healthy and dynamic work environment among our corporate partners.
- Launch new health and wellness workshops throughout 2024:
 Organize workshops dedicated to health and wellness to offer a
 comprehensive understanding of holistic wellness, encouraging
 participants to adopt healthy habits and integrate exercise into their
 routines for a healthier community.
- Increase group class participation
- Develop new partnerships with other health institutions in Laval for members with reduced mobility and in rehabilitation.
- Achieve a balanced budget for fiscal year 2024, ensuring that revenues can support Sablon-Fit's expenses.



Increased visibility

CDS redefined the visibility of our community fitness room by staying ahead of the curve with strategic use of social media.

SABLON-FIT (cont'd)

Group fitness classes

For 2023, we have expanded the range of fitness classes and offered a varied program during the day and evening. We have also made 30-minute classes popular, which are short, fun and intense. These include a variety of dance classes for cardio, stretching and mobility for joint exercise and muscle toning for all ages and fitness levels. All our classes are adapted to the abilities of our members.

Specialized courses

A major focus in 2023 was on rehabilitating our members with reduced mobility. The following classes were added to our program: Adapted Cardio-Muscle (Cardiovascular accidents), Boxing with Parkinson, Soft Tonus, Zumba on chair and Reduced Muscle-mobility.

Partnership with the Jewish Rehab Center

Through a collaboration with the staff members at the rehab center, we added a new class to our programming: a class for stroke patients which aims to improve quality of life after such an injury. The goal is for them to return to their daily habits and we are proud to be able to promote healthy living. This course was offered in our training room and virtually for those members for whom travel was more difficult.



Sablon-fit in numbers

841

memberships (39% increase vs. 2022)

208 registrations - fitness classes. 8 elite memberships.

COMMUNITY ?



2024 Objectives

- Expand cultural programming activities
- Expand the Little School program to attract more parents
- Involve teens in the center through an interest-based program or teen club
- Develop and expand the ALA program (Accessible Leisure Activities)
- Offer extracurricular activities in local elementary and highschools, working in partnership with the Laval school boards.

Accessible Leisure Activities (ALA program)

Thanks to the financial support of Centraide, and in collaboration with the City of Laval and the Comité de Développement Local de Chomedey (CDLC), Centre du Sablon was able to offer extra-mural activities and deploy accessible leisure activities for \$20 per child per activity. After the three sessions, we can see the growing need for this program, which we are renewing in 2024 at the request of our partners.



Community in numbers

254

registrations for community and cultural activities (10% increase vs. 2022)

COMMUNITY (cont'd)

Special needs programming

Our Life Skills program is a social skills group for teens aged 12 to 17 who are on the autism spectrum. This recreational activity is supervised by specialized educators. During this program, teenagers on the spectrum gain practical life experiences in a playful context (making phone calls, managing money, etc.), work on their self-confidence and develop their coping and self-regulation skills. We started with one group during the winter session and have expanded to two groups for the spring and autumn sessions.

Dance lessons

In 2023, we introduced new dance styles, such as contemporary and ballet/tap. The variety is appreciated by our members, and two of the three age groups have started. Participation by the teenage population continues to be a challenge.

Little school

The little school program has seen an increase in registrations. We would like to open other groups in 2024. Educational classes continue to be a service offered by CDS. We had two classes in 2023.

Community in numbers

370

registrations for family life activities

(10% increase vs. 2022)



DAY CAMP



2024 Objectives

- Open a life skills program for our special needs teens within the Counselors-in-Training (CIT) program
- Reform the 12-15 yrs old CIT program (junior and senior)
- Open more places in our high support needs group (low ratio)
- Revamp our special needs sensory room
- Open an outdoor library in the Sablon Vert for camp use
- Obtain DAFA certification (Diplôme d'Aptitude aux Fonctions d'Animateur - a national training program for animators that meets the demanding requirements of the leisure and sports milieu)
- Open a new extramural ALA camp (accessible)
- Open a 4-year-old group



registrations for our various day camps (12% increase vs. 2022)



DAY CAMP (cont'd)

ACO Excellence Award

CDS camp gets recognized by its peers! Nomination for the "Excellence in Programming and Camp Life" award at the Association des camps du Québec convention for our project: Valorisation de l'expertise Les spécialistes réinventés au Camp du Sablon.

Special camp during school strike

For the first time in the camp's history - Opening of a 2-week emergency camp to help parents during the school strike. Kids never had so much fun during "school hours"!

Winter camp

The most wonderful time of the year brings many children to the center! 40 campers were able to enjoy the wonders of winter at CDS (double the amount of registrations from 2022). Regular scheduled programming included swimming, playing outside, and lots of fun creative activities.



Contributors

We would like to thank the following institutions for their support and financial contributions throughout the year, as well as all our generous donors for your grants and contributions to our various projects and fundraising campaigns.





















ARLPH LAVAL



Community-based accessbility initiatives

In order to pursue its accessibility mission, Centre du Sablon works in partnership with several neighbourhood organizations to build a strong neighbourhood where mutual aid and community integration are fundamental values for its citizens. Our partners include, among others, the City of Laval, the Comité de développement local de Chomedey (CDLC - where our General Manager sits on the Board of Directors), Comité du Petit Chomedey, the Comité de revitalisation urbaine intégrée (RUI), the Fêtes de Quartier committee, the Pole Régional des Entreprises d'Économie Sociale de Laval (PRESL), the Association Régionale de Loisirs pour Personnes Handicapé de Laval (ARPHL), The Table Régionale de Concertation des Aînés de Laval (TRCAL) and Centre de santé et de services sociaux de Laval (CSSS de Laval).

Centre du Sablon also sits on and contributes to a number of other committees, including the committee for the launch of a leisure master plan in conjunction with the Service de la culture, des loisirs, du sport et du développement social (SCLSDS) of the City of Laval, and other Laval leisure organizations; contributes to the process of initiating a Laval leisure organisation's group, and finally, contributes to the process of launching a leisure accessibility program deployed by the City of Laval via the gateway of the Quebec ACCÈS-Loisirs program. The main aim of these initiatives is to improve access to community services for the entire population.

Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Laval

CDS and the Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Laval (CPSL) have a referral partnership. Families receiving services from CPSL are often referred to the center for activities (day camp, swimming lessons, etc.) or community services such as the tax clinic.



Community-based accessbility initiatives (cont'd)

Programme d'intégration au travail (CIT-Emploi-Québec)

CDS provides employment opportunities for vulnerable individuals. One of the important aspects of CDS is the effort we put into initiatives for the improvement of the living environment and the participation of disabled individuals.

In partnership with the organization L'Étape and Emploi-Québec, we are able to offer a position to an employee who takes part in this program and who has demonstrated perseverance in her integration process by playing a productive and significant role in the team. Her contribution to the center rightly demonstrates that she is an integral part of our dynamic team!

School tour

In partnership with the Centre des services scolaires de Laval (CSSL), teachers from several schools (primary and secondary) in the Chomedey and Laval area had the chance to tour CDS. During this collaborative tour, teachers identified their needs in terms of support for their students. We also shared the programs and activities we offer, so that teachers could recommend them to parents.



Community actions and impact

Accessible Leisure Activities (ALA) - New intiative

Centre du Sablon has completed its first year of the ALA pilot project. This project aims to offer accessible leisure activities to Chomedey residents living below the sustainable income threshold. Thanks to the financial support of Centraide, and in collaboration with the City of Laval and the CDLC, a plan has been put in place to implement this pilot project in 2023. Activities offered during this first year include science, robotics, painting, yoga, fitness, soccer and basketball classes for young people aged 5 to 17. Participation in the first session versus the last session of 2023 saw an increase in the participation rate from 21 families to 63 families.

Halloween activity

Thanks to the financial support of our Chomedey city councillor, Mrs. Aglaia Revelakis, a new free activity was offered this year for our community. The CDS team led a themed Halloween workshop, which included candy bag decorating, games and themed enigmas. Accompanied by our animators, families then went trick-or-treating around the neighborhood. We had a total of 40 participants!



Community actions and impact (cont'd)

Compensatory Work Program

The Compensatory Work Program offers citizens who are unable to pay their fines the opportunity to give back to the community by doing various jobs at the Centre free of charge to pay off their debts. These volunteers commit to doing various general manual labor including help with housekeeping, interior and exterior maintenance, carrying boxes, general help with renovations, etc. This program had been suspended since 2020 due to the risks of the pandemic, but this community effort was relaunched in 2023.

Feaster Festival

For the second year, although organized by GEAK event management, Centre du Sablon hosted a music festival in our beautiful Sablon Vert. This event celebrated many local artists from all backgrounds. There was a professional music stage set up in our space. A variety of food was served by a Haitian food caterer which was very appreciated by the festival attendees. Our hope is to grow this collaboration and make our center a great destination for cultural events such as the Feaster Festival.



Community actions and impact (cont'd)

Open-air cinema

Open-air cinema was back in full force in 2023! This activity was free for the community. With the financial support of the City of Laval and our city councillor, Mrs. Aglaia Revelakis, we screened the Quebec film "Félix et le trésor de Morgaa" to over 85 attendees!

Tax Clinic

In 2023, the Centre's tax clinic took place during the months of March and April 2023, where volunteers helped 171 low-income individuals with their tax returns. By providing this service, the clinic contributes to the overall financial health of the community by ensuring that everyone, regardless of income, can participate fairly and accurately in the tax system. This helps to strengthen the community's economic stability and equity.

We sincerely thank the following volunteers for their valuable contribution

Mr. Gilles Guénette Ms. Kalliopi Markantonakis Ms. Naila Haddad Ms. Christine Roy





Corporation's 2024 Objectives

- Development of a more efficient customer service to enhance member experience satisfaction
- Establish new partnerships in the community
- Continue negotiations with our main partner, the City of Laval, for public/private partnership tenant improvement projects including the project of relocation of the Trek-Fit outdoor exercise structures currently located in the Sablon woods, as well as the revitalization of the outdoor playgrounds of the Little School
- Enhanced benefits programs for Centre employees
- Launch a 5 years strategic planning process to further develop the mission of the corporation
- Invest in updating and fortifying the Centre's IT infrastructure and equipment following the cyber-attack incident in October 2023.

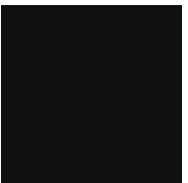


Objectifs 2024 de la Corporation (suite)

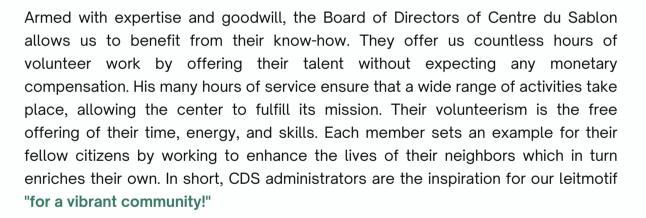
- Work with the City of Laval and other partner leisure organizations to develop a master plan for local recreation
- Conduct a supported study to analyze and draw up a portrait of our overall practices in order to improve the management of our human resources, workforce and diversity.
- Development of fundraising strategies which include integrating business partners who will contribute to the financing of our organization
- Continued work with Laval organizations to set up a Laval leisure organisation's group
- Develop and organize events to involve our members and our community to help support a greater number of young people and families in our sector.
- Develop an in-house accessibility initiative to reach out and enable our low SES community to access leisure activities.











Our entire team thank you for your continued support and trust.

President - Brian B. Tracey

Vice-president - Guylaine Leclerc (Administrator appointed by the City of Laval)

Secretary-treasurer - Duane Noel

Administrator - Raymond Bannister

Administrator – Kosta Lampros

CDS Team 2023



Management

General Manager - Angela Faraoni

Director of community and cultural development - Marianne Kassabian

Director of sports and aquatics programming - Tess La Boissière-Parent

Administration

Accounting Technician – Thi-Hanh Duong

Administrative Accounting Assistant – Lyne Beaulieu

Administrative Accounting & Customer Service Assistant – Maro Babaian

Administrative Accounting & Customer Service Assistant (Interim) - Vania Esfahani

Sports and Aquatics Department

Sports assistant-coordinator - Akram Maamar

Sablon-Fit assistant-coordinator – Leina Flores

Aquatics assistan coordinators – Ivanna Claire Silva Cusi (until February 2023),

Anaëlle Brissette (interim as of March 2023)

& a large team of assistant-chiefs lifeguards, swimming instructors, and lifeguards



CDS Team 2023 (cont'd)

Sablon-Fit Team

Trainer - Leina Flores

Trainer - Maria Isabel Herrera

Trainer - Hooma Sheikh

Trainer - Daniela Presta

Trainer - Erika Talatinian

Trainer - Taushia Siddique

Trainer - Gerard-Mosse Andonian

Welcome Agent - Alexy Iskandarian

Community and Cultural Department

Administrative Assistant for Camp & Family Life - Dimitra Tirovolas

Little School Team:

Educator – Evangelia Tsakiris (Until June 2023)

Educator – Kristina Emedy

Educator - Wedjane Teleouine

Assistant educator - Stella Diavatopoulos

Special Needs Team:

Special Educator – Kayla Caspi Special Educator – Anna Plaitis Special Educator – Mariah Thomas Special Educator – Kyra Morfopos Special Educator – Stella Diavatopoulos

CDS Team 2023 (cont'd)

Community and Cultural Department (cont'd)

Parent and tot programs:

Educator - Kristina Emedy

Animator - Samantha Amaral Chiovitti

ALA Program:

Animator - Jodie Jacobs

Animator - Samantha Amaral Chiovitti

Camp Department

Coordinator - Delphes Tremblay

Chief (summer) - Jodie Jacobs

Chief (summer) - Kyra Morfopos

Leader (summer) – Kayla Caspi (Special Needs)

Leader (summer) - Samantha Amaral Chiovitti (CIT program)

Leader (summer) – Samantha Barthélémy (CIT program)

& many camp counsellors!

Customer Service Department

Agent - Janet Ersan

Agent - Maral Jakmakjian

Agent - Vania Esfahani

Agent - Jodie Jacobs

Agent - Despina Martakis

Agent - Patrick Doussous

Agent - Luca Zeidan



