

OUR HARBOUR WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) created the MHCC's 5th Anniversary **National Mental Health Awards** to recognize programs, projects and initiatives across the country that are having a profound influence on our mental health system. The L'Abri en Ville Network which includes Our Harbour received an award in the category Capacity Building. The award recognized initiatives that strengthen the capacity of community-based mental health services to meet identified community needs, foster recovery and well-being for clients, and for their support networks. We are very proud to be a recipient of this prestigious award that recognizes the work done in the community by ourselves and our three sister organizations – L'Abri en ville, Ancoura based in Ottawa and Les toits d'Émile in Chateauguy. Being part of this network is beneficial to Our Harbour as we can share ideas and best-practices.

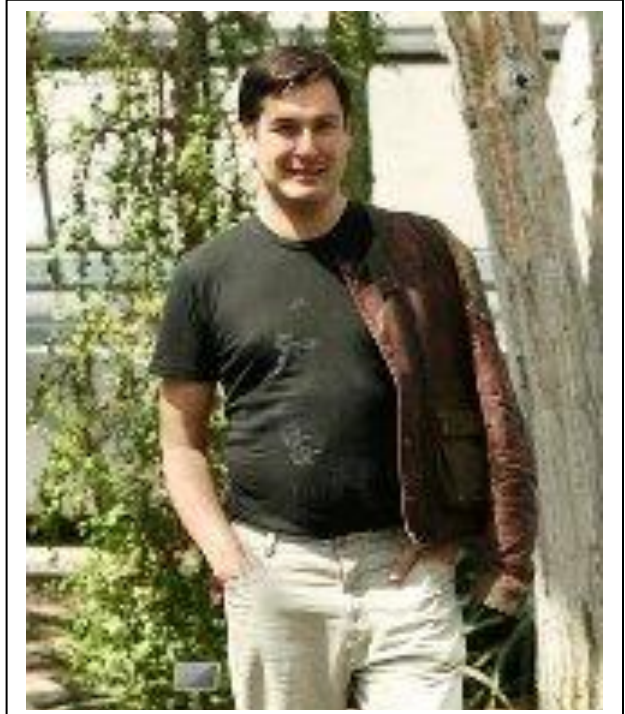


(Front row, 2nd from left: Catherine Gillbert, OH President; Back row, 3rd from left: Perveen Khokhar, Coordinator)

Hats off to Billy!

Billy, one of the residents in apartment 4, first came to Montreal from his home in Ontario when he heard that the Aboriginal Design Council was starting up here. He had always been fascinated by fashion and design and wanted to learn more. Now, seven years later and after 18 months at Our Harbour, he has enrolled at ACCESS, the Riverside School Board's centre for adult education. Five days a week, three full-time courses – that's quite a challenge but Billy is getting high grades, especially in English and math, and is justifiably proud of his achievement so far. He is very aware that he still has a long way to go, especially now that his focus is on architecture rather than art, but he is up to the challenge.

Good luck Billy!



3rd ANNUAL MONTREAL WALK FOR MENTAL HEALTH

by Perveen Khokhar

The 3rd annual walk for mental health took place on Sunday, October 14. The rain held off although it was damp and gloomy, but not so the spirits of all the participants. As we gathered in Philips Square in downtown Montreal, there was a real 'party' atmosphere. Strangers were greeting each other, dancing to the pulsating music, drinking coffee and eating muffins, but most of all, everyone seemed focused and ready to go. The enthusiasm was contagious. The speeches by the sponsors and celebrities were joyous and energizing. Margaret Trudeau, as the chair, was brief but bubbly and obviously delighted to be there to promote this cause.

Our Harbour residents, volunteers, stagiaires and staff put on their bold blue T-shirts and looked impressive, so much so that the media photographed us several times. Almost all the residents came and had many comments as we walked down to Guy Street and back. Here are some of the things they said:

"We hit the streets instead of walking on the sidewalk, I found that and the police escort really special..."

"There seems a lot more people - it was so energizing..."

"There was lots of enthusiasm; I was so proud to be there walking to get rid of the STIGMA. I felt so well...The media coverage was exciting and made the participation a lot more positive...made us feel united, I saw unity there..."

"...I so enjoyed sharing the special time with people of different nationalities, beliefs, and the fun of it contributing to mental health...it permitted me to get implicated in something good being done..."

"...felt like we accomplished much...maybe now there will be a miracle cure..."

"...What was good for me was that it was not a protest but a statement...it was well organized and not haphazard...being set in stone for each year means we are serious about this cause and I was so proud to be part of an extended group-a community doing something good for posterity and myself..."

"... getting sponsors and raising funds was new this year and well worth raising the issue to another level...we looked so good in our blue T-shirts so much so the media focused on us and featured us on the evening news... and going to Vichy's for brunch after as a group made it a OH event..."

NEW LOGO



Did you notice our new logo in the masthead of the newsletter?

This is the work of a professional graphic artist, shaped with feedback and suggestions from many of our members over the course of several months.

We're very pleased with the final product, symbolizing a safe environment for our residents created by the personal outreach of many caring people. If those are your arms offering support, we thank you; if not, we invite you to reach out and become part of this life-changing project.

ourharbour.org/donate



Our Harbour family extends its appreciation to all friends and supporters over the year



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Become a Our Harbour supporter by donating today

Our Harbour Fall 2012 Awareness Campaign

How many of your friends and acquaintances have heard of *Our Harbour* and the work we do? With a new logo to share and after being in operation for over a decade, the *Our Harbour* Individual Fundraising Committee organized a fall 2012 awareness campaign. Its goal is to further increase exposure for *Our Harbor* within the community so that more and more people become familiar with the work we are doing. You may have heard from us: in November we sent letters to our regular donors to thank them for their continued support. We also touched base with donors whom we have not heard from in a while. We encourage you to talk to others about our organization and invite them to visit our web site. Donations are always appreciated, and as well, there are many other ways (like volunteering) that individuals can become involved with our community. Help us to continue this awareness campaign-because word of mouth among friends is the best way to spread our message.

Praise from one of our stagiaires

Our Harbour offers services that are so outstanding and unique and that help meet the needs of its residents. The staff members really have the residents' best interests at heart as they provide them with the tools and support they need to strive to reach their full potential in all aspects of their lives. They exhibit strong values of advocacy, respect, equality, and support for people suffering with a mental health problem. Their approach in all of these areas greatly targets the social change aspect around creating a wider awareness for mental health. I was given the pleasure of a year long opportunity as a stagiaire, to actively participate as a member of the Our Harbour team and I must say that it was both empowering and motivational to see the amount of dedication both staff and volunteers have towards helping better the lives of their residents. Our Harbour is a great family to belong to for both volunteers and residents.

Sincerely,
Dawson Stagière in Social Services,
Melissa Bernes



Le Havre
Our Harbour

Providing a haven for people
living with mental illness

Newsletter Fall/Winter 2012

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*The Our
Harbour
family
extends
to you
our
warmest
wishes
for a
Happy
Holiday
Season
& a New
Year of
good
health*



Catherine Gillbert (second from right) proudly waves the Our Harbour flag from the top of Africa

On Top of the World

Some people will go to any length (or height) to help Our Harbour. And that includes our President, Catherine Gillbert, who climbed the 19,341 feet of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa, this summer to raise funds for Our Harbour, while satisfying her own sense of adventure. Catherine set off with 2 friends, and a 14 member support team consisting of guides, cooks and porters, and she made it right to the top, arriving in the early hours of their sixth day to see the mountain top glacier bathed in the light of the full moon. "We booked it to be there on a full-moon night. It was truly spectacular," she says. As for the fundraising, Catherine raised almost \$5000 for Our Harbour from members and friends who sponsored her climb. We certainly appreciate Catherine's initiative and hard work, as well as the generosity of all who supported her. As usual, it pays to reach for the top!

Want more news about Our Harbour? Visit our web site

<http://ourharbour.org/>