

**NEWS RELEASE**

**THE 2016 WOMEN OF DISTINCTION AWARDS EVENING:  
A SUCCESSFUL BENEFIT!**

**Montreal, September 29, 2016**– The Montreal Women’s Y Foundaton had a very successful celebration of its 23<sup>rd</sup> Women of Distinction Awards evening on Tuesday at the Théâtre Saint-James. The benefit evening, which this year adopted the theme and flavours of the 1920s, honoured 12 winners from different fields, whose achievements have brought positive and lasting changes on society. The event raised \$242,500 in support of programs and activities that the YWCA Montreal organizes for women and girls in the Greater Montreal area. Three special awards were also given out: the Outstanding Achievement award, the YWCA of Montreal *Coup de Cœur* award and, for the very first time, the Inspirational Man award.

As the awards were given out, hosted by well-known actors Vincent Leclerc and Mélanie Pilon, videos introduced each winner and their category partner. Many of the testimonials were deeply moving, and the crowd applauded the recipients on several occasions. Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau spoke at the start of the evening via video.

The 400 guests were also treated to a magnificent high-wire performance by artist Geneviève Drolet of Cirque Eloize, to the sound of *Quand le voyage devient possible*, created by David Pelletier especially for the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the YWCA Montreal.

“I would like to highlight the exceptional contributions made by the partners, sponsors, guests and organizers, who made this evening possible I would also like to thank the volunteers for their passion and generosity. We are proud to present this unique evening for the 23<sup>rd</sup> year,” noted YWCA Montreal President Sophie Fortin.

The funds were raised through draws for more than 150 prizes, all generously donated. Six special prizes topped off the lot, one a holiday in a villa in Saint-Martin donated by Optimum Caraibes, a pair of platinum tickets donated by the Montreal Canadiens, a stay at Auberge Godefroy, a piece of jewelry from Birks, an aerial simulation donated by CAE, and a meal for two at the new workshop of Chef Joel Robuchon at the Casino de Montréal.

“On behalf of the YWCA Montreal, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to our Foundation, which, year after year, enthusiastically supports our mission,” noted YWCA Montreal Executive Director Hélène Lépine.

The videos, the photos of the event, and the official photos of the winners, the list of partners and the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary song are now available on the Montreal Women’s Y Foundation web site at: <http://fondation.ydesfemmesmtl.org/en/>

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For 23 years, the Women of Distinction Awards have helped recognize the role of women in the advancement of society (innovation, discovery and inspiration), by shining a light on women who, through their achievements, have brought positive and lasting changes on society. This benefit evening is the main fundraising event for the YWCA Montreal.

Thank you to the evening's partners and donors, who, through their involvement, make this keynote event possible and, most of all, enable thousands of women and girls to build a better future: BMO Financial Group, National Bank of Canada, Scotiabank, TD Canada Trust, Bell Canada, McKesson Canada, Desjardins, Les services alimentaires Riverview, L'Oréal Canada, DDB, Microsoft, BDC, Cava Spiliadis, Domtar, Reitmans Canada, Secrétariat à la condition féminine, cirque Éloïze, Javelot Design, Metro, Freeman, Quadriscan, Théâtre Paradoxe, Le Grand costumier and Senior Costume Designer Francesca Chamberland.

*The Montreal Women's Y Foundation was created in 1995 to ensure a stable and continuing source of funding for the YWCA Montreal programs and services. In so doing, it provides financial support for the YWCA Montreal, which plays an active role in the social and economic integration of girls and women in Montreal.*

**Source: Ève Cardinal**  
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