

## NEWS RELEASE

## For immediate distribution

### *Women who are changing our society in positive and long-lasting ways!*

#### *The Women's Y Foundation Announces the Laureates of the 2017 Women of Distinction Awards*

**Montréal, May 23, 2017.** This morning, the **Montréal Women's Y Foundation** announced the names of the laureates for the 24th edition of the Women of Distinction Awards. Every year, the Foundation presents these unique awards that pay tribute to the accomplishments of women who have changed our society in positive and long-lasting ways. This year, seven awards were presented in categories that cover every sphere of activity. Two special prizes were also awarded: the Montréal Women's Y Foundation's Inspiration Award, and the YWCA Montréal's Coup de Coeur Award.

These prizes have an **added social value** because they highlight the contributions of women who are part of the solution when it comes to providing a secure future in which women and girls of Montréal can develop their full potential. They will be presented on September 26, at the Arsenal in Old Montréal, during the 2017 Women of Distinction Awards gala, presided over by Édith Cloutier, Vice-president, Sales, Québec-Rogers.

"I'm extremely proud to be associated with the Montréal Women's Y Foundation's Women of Distinction Awards this year. I am honoured to be part of highlighting the accomplishments and impressive life stories of these committed and inspiring women. Their contributions are crucial to ensuring equality and inclusion in our society," said Édith Cloutier.

**The Women of Distinction Awards will be presented on September 26, 2017, to laureates in the following categories:**

- **Business and Entrepreneurship: Annie Lemieux**, president, LSR GesDev
- **Arts, Culture and Design: Suzanne Sauvage**, president and chief executive officer of the McCord and Stewart Museums
- **Education and Information: Ève Lamont**, filmmaker
- **Social and Environmental Engagement: Anne-Marie Messier**, executive director, Centre de santé des femmes
- **Public Services: Géraldine Martin**, director of entrepreneurship, Ville de Montréal
- **Sports and Wellness: Dr. Marie Laberge-Malo**, head of Sainte-Justine Hospital's Department of Physical Medicine
- **Research and Innovation: Annie Pullen-Sansfaçon**, assistant professor, School of Social Work, Université de Montréal

Two special prizes were also announced this morning: the Inspiration Award, presented to Shahrzad Arshadi, for her social engagement as a volunteer, and the Montréal YWCA's Coup de Coeur Award, presented to Dinah Oliel for over 25 years of service with the Montréal YWCA's legal information clinic as a volunteer lawyer.

In 2017-2018, each laureate will volunteer her time, talent, and expertise by becoming the honorary sponsor of one of the Montréal YWCA's programs or services. In this way, each woman will serve as a symbol of success and perseverance in a particular area.

“The Foundation’s mission is to support the Montréal YWCA, which provides programs and services to address the concerns of women in Montréal. It offers women assistance to prevent violence, ensure their safety, aid them in their job-seeking efforts, prevent sexual exploitation, and reduce isolation. The Women of Distinction Awards evening recognizes extraordinary women. This unique event is also a major fundraising activity that enables the Foundation to continue supporting the Montréal YWCA in ensuring a better future for women and girls in Montréal,” said Sophie Fortin, president of the Montréal Women’s Y Foundation.

Thanks to our **partners** who, through their financial contributions, make this major event possible: Rogers, Scotiabank, Bell, TD Bank Group, L’Oréal Canada, Rogers, McKesson Canada, and Riverview Food Service.

The Montréal Women’s Y Foundation was founded in 1995 with the mission of providing a stable and recurrent source of funding for Montréal YWCA programs and services. To this end, it provides financial support to the Montréal YWCA for its work to promote the social and economic integration of girls and women in Montréal. Through its activities and influence, the Montréal Women’s Y Foundation is an indispensable ally, providing financial support and outreach for the Montréal YWCA.

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**Contact:**

**Ève Cardinal, project manager**, Montréal Women’s Y Foundation  
514 866-9941, extension 239 [ecardinal@ydesfemmesmtl.org](mailto:ecardinal@ydesfemmesmtl.org)