

QPIRG McGill

ANNUAL REPORT

2016-2017



M.SEA 17

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ABOUT QPIRG-MCGILL

MANDATE

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group at McGill (QPIRG-McGill) is a resource centre for students and community members working towards social and environmental justice. We strive to engage students in research, public education and action, and to support grassroots activism around diverse social and environmental issues. We seek to build campus-community alliances and inspire social change through inclusive and non-hierarchical approaches.

QPIRG-McGill is opposed to all forms of discrimination on the basis of: race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. QPIRG-McGill is committed to engaging in research and action that are rooted in an anti-oppression analysis and practice.

HISTORY

In 1970-71, Ralph Nader, in the US, encouraged the formation of the first two PIRGs by university students and their organizing efforts and structures became the blueprint for the hundreds of groups to follow. By 1973, there were chapters on 135 campuses in 19 states across the US. In Canada, the first PIRG was set up in Ontario during the 1972-73 school year at the University of Waterloo. In Quebec, QPIRG has been an organization at both Concordia and McGill Universities since 1980. However, it was not until 1988 that a referendum was passed at McGill making QPIRG at McGill the first student-funded, autonomous PIRG in Quebec. Now, there are student-funded PIRGs at Concordia, McGill and UQAM.

Over the course of their thirty year development, Canadian PIRGs have diverged in important ways from their US counterparts. Most importantly, they are interested in encouraging grassroots organizing and changing public attitudes, rather than engaging in government lobbying. The PIRGs' mandate has been to provide a structure within which students and community members can develop the knowledge and practical skills needed for activism and community work. By providing a forum and training ground for people to be engaged members of their community, the PIRGs also provide a bridge between academia and organizing, by linking theory and practice. In the last five years, QPIRG McGill has been instrumental in promoting and supporting progressive movements on McGill's campus, through the formation of events like Culture Shock and Social Justice Days. As well, QPIRG regularly collaborates with other campus groups who are working for social and environmental justice.

Since 2001, QPIRG has adopted an anti-oppression framework, seeking to oppose all forms of oppression as they play-out within society at large as well as within our organizing work.

As of 1988, all McGill undergraduate and graduate students are automatically members of QPIRG-McGill and are entitled to all the organization's services by virtue of a refundable semester fee. Community members are eligible for membership if they pay the "community member" fee and complete 15 hours of volunteer work at QPIRG-McGill.

QPIRG-MCGILL STRUCTURE

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD

A volunteer Board of Directors, elected at the Annual General Meeting, runs QPIRG-McGill. The Board is responsible for all the decisions pertaining to the operation of the organization. The Board defines the vision and direction of the organization, allocates the budget, and also organizes independent QPIRG events.

QPIRG-McGill's voluntary Board members gain valuable skills and receive hands-on, practical training in running a non-profit organization. This year the Board formed the following committees: Staff Committee, Rad Research Committee, Popular Education Committee, Finance Committee, Outreach Committee, the Convergence Editorial Committee, Policy Committee, and Accessibility Committee.

STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS

Aishwarya Singh
 Arabella Colombier
 Laura Khoury
 Megan Shanklin
 Julie Skarha - resigned
 Christine Gannon - appointed Sept. 2016
 Coco Zhou - resigned
 Chalani Ranasinghe - resigned

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS

Anna Lovett
 Nathaniel Philip
 Wade Walker - resigned
 Sara Sebti - resigned

SSMU REP: : IGOR SADIKOV - APPOINTED SEPT. 2016, RESIGNED

(SOME OF!) OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Shaina Agbayani, Anna Tyshkov, Megan Shanklin, Arabella Colombier, Vanessa Yan Lee, Leah Paul, Samia Marshy, Kevin Paul, Irene Dambriunas, Jaime MacLean, Wade Walker, Rae Dooley, Simmie Steinberg, Sarah Woolf, Rhiana Warawa, Blare Coughlin, Tonie Miller, Leslie Anne St. Amour, Kelly Schieder, Rafaella Alegre, Annie Chen, Chris Gismondi, Marie Deckers, Saad Rajper, Agatha Slupek, Lucie Lastinger, Nina Hermes, Radney Jean-Claude, Cinder Ikeda, Viola Chen, Dan Wolfe, Anne Favory, Lauren Laframboise, Lindsay Nixon, Tanya Gill, Josh Falek, Coyote, Macho Philipovich, Degane Sougal, Annie Preston, Andrea Figueroa, Jodie Beck, Jamie McLean, Holly Nazar, Fred Burrill, Cleve Higgins, Delice Mugabo, Lena Palecios, Adrienne Hurley, Michelle Hartmann, Aimee Louw, Al Blair, Jean-Luc St Amour, Shyam Patel, Elizabeth Higgins, Caitlin Manicom, Camillia Elachqar, Simone Lucas, Reilly MacDonald, Aaron Lakoff, Nicole Ebert, Louise Burns, Noah Eidelman, Otto Buxton, Liam Mayes, Alienor Cambridge-Lemieux, Mutatayi Fuamba, Alex Garcia, Rosalind Wong, Leah Freedman, Bill Van Driel, Mary Foster, Anna Pringle, Gwendolyn Muir, Carolin Huang, Amanda Lickers, David Whiteside, Kota Harbron, Malek Yalaoui, Max Silverman, Noe Arteaga Santos, Viviana Carol, Mostafa Henaway, Sarah Malik, Danielle Holyk, Joey Calugay, Josh Pavan, Sheehan Moore, Alex Matak, Cera Yiu, Stefan Christoff, Steve Baird, Pei-Ju Wang, Bader Takriti, Clifton Nicholas, Maria Forti, Sam Bick, Noah Bick, Elena Stoodley, Dylan Fishlock, Freda Guttman, Nazik Dakkach, Gretchen King, Simone Page, Allison Figueroa, Joel Pednault, Jon McPhedran Waitzer, Brad Fougere, Cassie Smith, Sofia Fuad, Lina Martin Chan, Sasha Simmons, Caytee Lush, Sarah Mostafa Kamel, Ashley Fortier, Jill Hanley, Guillermo Martinez de Velasco, Edith Lafreniere, Hirut Eyob, Neil Kastro, Dror Warschawski, Oula Hajjar, Rémy-Paulin Twahirwa,

QPIRG-MCGILL STRUCTURE

Rena Saad, Rushdia Mehreen, Samiha Sharif, Melis Cagan, Isaac Stethem, Adrienne Pan, Chalani Ranasinghe, Coco Zhou, Nadir Khan, Sajdeep Soomal, Alice Rougeaux, Aidan Gilchrist-Blackwood, Saima Desai, Stacey Gomez, Parker Finley, Sumaya Ugas, Yasmin Ali, Christian Scott, Emily Yee Clare, Alaast Kamalabadi, Lee Lai, Morgan Sea, Annie Savage, Alex Heggie, Elie Darling, Tamara Filyavich, Delali Egyima, Hera Chan, Larissa, Avi Gross-Grand, Nathan McDonnell, Nathalie Cohen, Eunice BÉlidor, Sophie Le-Phat Ho, Libby Shea, Elessar Bulatao, Michael Costain, Buse Doyuran, Simone Fillion-Raff, Meara Kirwin, Kabisha Vellauthapillai, and Elizabeth Yu, Lillian Boctor, Jean-Phillippe Bombay, Farah Kashem, Amal Kenshil, Ifeoluwa Kolade, Lauren Laframboise, Cassie Smith, Lisa Starr, Arisha Khan, Djenaba Dayle, Tamara Filyavich, Emma Sutherland, Elaine Patterson, Damon Davis, Dalychia Saah, Caleb Luna, Nyoka Hunter, Karine-Myrgianie Jean-François, Jackie Girgis, Berlin Reed, Kira Page, Kama Maureemootoo, Cadence O’Neal, Connor Spencer, Magassay M’bow , Mubeenah Mughal, Rana Salah, Alejo Briones, Emma Lighstone, Farin Shore

STAFF

QPIRG-McGill has three core staff members who coordinate the day-to-day operations of the organization. The staff works hard to insure reliability, continuity and skill sharing within the organization. In addition to daily operations, the staff is responsible for programming, finances, outreach, working groups, programs, coordinating resources, volunteers, projects, grant research, and policy development among many other things. The FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR was BECCA YU. The OUTREACH AND PROMOTIONS COORDINATOR was RAPHAËLE FRIGON and the WORKING GROUPS AND COMMUNITY RESEARCH COORDINATOR was AMY DARWISH.

This year our three part-time staff members were ANYA SIVAJOTHY (RESOURCE CENTRE COORDINATOR) and VIV WALZ (CURE COORDINATOR) and KIERA SHEPPARD (CAMPUS OUTREACH COORDINATOR). The 2013-14 accountant was DAN LACROIX.

In the summer of 2016, QPIRG-McGill hired three RAD FROSH COORDINATORS: WADE WALKER, CADENCE O’NEAL (community-based), and KELLY SCHIEDER (student-based); and two SCHOOL SCHMOOL COORDINATORS: SUMAYA UGAS AND ANNIE CHEN We funded two summer research stipends, with the Indigenous Arts Council and Somali Semantics. Jointly with the SSMU, we hired BATU KAYA to coordinate Culture Shock and Social Justice Days.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (CRCC)

At the Annual General Meeting in April 2016, the following QPIRG-McGill members were elected to the CRCC: EMILY CLARE, ANNIE PRESTON. The CRCC follows a CRCC policy to address complaints involving QPIRG-McGill members that cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

TRAINING, VISIONING

This year's QPIRG board training was held at the beginning of May and other trainings occurred throughout fall semester. These sessions were facilitated by full-time staff and external paid facilitators. The topics included PIRG history across Canada, anti-oppressive practices, consensus process, conflict-resolution, accessibility, finances, board and staff dynamics, and labour relations. The first board meeting was held right after the training in May and went over descriptions of committees and board members chose which they would prefer to join. Since there were some board members who were unable to make it to the training in May, it was great to have more interspersed throughout fall semester. However, due to many changes in the board membership, some of the board members did not receive training. To ensure that all board members have a similar base of knowledge in their positions, it would be great for future years to investigate alternative forms of training for those who join the board later.

Board visioning this year was facilitated by the stellar Cadence O'Neal! All three full-time staff and three board members were present. We started out by discussing the place QPIRG holds in relation to the university and to other organizations in Montreal. This included reviewing individuals people, programs, and infrastructure that are vital to the work we do. We also continued an ongoing conversation about the QPIRG space and accessibility in our organizing. We also discussed the following list of topics:

- Review accessibility - what we've done, what else we can do
- MOA + Referendum
 - Collaborating with other groups on campus
- Role of board
 - In direct organizing ?
 - Is the role of the board clear? Are you clear about what you should be doing as a board member?
- Clear outline for funding decision making
- Internal dynamics
- Division of labor
 - Community member involvement?
 - Board-staff work division
 - Who ends up doing what labor? What labor is valued?
 - Clarifying roles

MAJOR THEMES AND ISSUES

A major theme that the Board worked on and discussed is QPIRG-McGill's relationship with the McGill Administration following the referendum we held in the Fall 2016 semester and our MoA negotiations with the Administration. At the beginning of the Fall semester, Kira Page, the former McGill Outreach Coordinator, gave a presentation on the history of MOA negotiations and QPIRG-McGill referendums for all board and staff members. QPIRG-McGill almost fully depends on student membership fees to run its operations and programming, which is managed by McGill's Administration. McGill also provides QPIRG-McGill's lease and utilities as part of the MoA. In light of this dynamic and the administration's positionally, the board and staff have found it extremely difficult to negotiate changes to the MoA which would highly benefit QPIRG and its membership, mainly because McGill would reject multiple requested changes without providing reasoning that we could then negotiate with. Most importantly a major issue is that the MoA requires us to run a referendum to renew our fees every five years, which highly hinders the board and staff's capacity to continue the organisations programming and causes large burnout for both the board and staff. We are continuously discussing how to work through these challenges.

Furthermore, a major issue that arose this year was how to appropriately deal with perpetrators within or adjacent to QPIRG. There were a few instances where we received complaints about perpetrators of intimate and sexual violence that either volunteered for the organisation, used the space, attended our events or worked externally with us. It was difficult for the Board and Staff to navigate these situations, especially due to the nuances in each case and their effects on the community. The Board also discussed establishing some sort of guidelines or policy to provide some direction on how to respond to similar cases in the future, but did not get to extensively discuss or work on it. In light of this, it could be beneficial to add a training that directly focuses on issues of sexual and gendered violence, especially since it can be particularly triggering and should be handled carefully to reduce any harm on the community.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

BOARD CHALLENGES

The main challenges within the Board this year were board engagement and burnout. The board was smaller this year than it has been in previous years, so there was often difficulty reaching quorum at board meetings. Burnout was most notable after the referendum period. Additionally, there were some issues with communication. To address this, the board created a Facebook group to discuss/coordinate logistical things, which has seemed to help.

BOARD DYNAMICS

There was generally a friendly and cordial dynamic among board members. Board engagement, however, was a concern, with several people not finding it feasible to participate and others taking on a lot of work. As a result, oftentimes there was limited cohesion within the board and an inequitable of work.

This year's board was understaffed and underwent a lot of changes due to multiple appointments and resignations throughout the year. There was a high burnout in the first semester due to the referendum which might have caused the low involvement of board members. Furthermore, during the referendum period, the board directed all of their energy to the campaign which highly reduced their involvement in other parts of the organisation causing a lot of load to be redirected to the Staff. There were also a couple of members of the board that regularly attended meetings and took on tasks which caused a disproportionate load on a small number of people. Although this is highly understandable due to people's different capacities and level of commitments to the role, it should be taken into consideration for next year's recruitment and training in order to accommodate our members who are busier or have a smaller capacity to participate. Moreover, though the board is a majority women and femmes, there are still marginalised communities that are not adequately represented on the Board. Most notably, the majority of the board (though not all) are financially secure, cisgender and non-disabled.

STAFF

CORE STAFF

Amy Darwish stayed on her second year as the Working Group and Community Research Coordinator. Amy's strengths include her knowledge of community organizing within the city, her organizational skills, and dependability. All these skills have been crucial to her work organizing and participating in board meetings, assisting QPIRG's working groups, and leading the Radical Research Committee. To list just some of Amy's accomplishments, she has helped launch the Convergence Journal and Radical Research Mixtape, strengthened ties with and between Working Groups, and organized another successful year of the Community-University Research Exchange (CURE) program! Amy's work is very much appreciated! Thank you Amy!

Becca Yu started her first year working as Finance and Administration Coordinator. Becca has worked very hard at learning new and relevant skills for her position. She did an excellent job introducing and explaining the budget to the board. Becca has contributed a lot of time and effort working with the Accessibility committee to create a more comfortable and accessible space at QPIRG and elsewhere. Additionally, she has taken on the task of finding a new, more accessible space for QPIRG. Thanks, Becca, you rock!! :-)

Raphaële Frigon has completed her second year as QPIRG-McGill's Outreach and Promotions Coordinator. She has continued to use her extensive tech and design skills to help make the organization run more smoothly. She has helped organize QPIRG's online storage, designed wonderful outreach materials, and waded through a sea of numbers to help make a decision on a new photocopy machine. Alongside the Popular Education Committee and the Outreach Committee she has helped to improve QPIRG's presence on campus, as well as to organize many events large and small. Raphaële's energy, creativity, and enthusiasm have helped push the organization in new directions. Thank you so much for your excellent work this year! <3 <3

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

PART-TIME STAFF

Kiera Sheppard was rehired as the Campus Outreach Coordinator. Kiera worked closely with the Outreach and Promotions Coordinator to organize and promote events like Rad Frosh and Social Justice Days. Kiera also helped prepare the board to campaign for this year's referendum! She has also helped to launch and bottomline the Outreach Committee. Her dedication, creativity, and innovation helped to create a strong social media and on-campus presence for QPIRG.

Wade Walker, Kelly Schieder, and Cadence O'Neal were hired as this year's Rad Frosh Coordinators. Not only did they carry on the accessibility recommendations implemented by last year's Rad Frosh Coordinators, but they also worked diligently, collaboratively, and creatively to make Rad Frosh a success. In fact, they had to increase the maximum number of participants because so many people wanted to be a part of Rad Frosh! Despite other setbacks and obstacles, the Rad Frosh Coordinators worked together with the Core Staff, volunteers, and the greater community to help bring first-years in contact with activism and organizing in Montreal.

A consistent difficulty with Rad Frosh is the extremely time-consuming and stressful period at the end of August leading up to Frosh events. This time leads to increased hours and overtime work for core and part-time staff. Even having hired a third coordinator, the workload was rather heavy. In the future, in addition to navigating the shifting landscape of funding, it would be beneficial to have a visioning at the start of the Rad Frosh Coordinator contract with core staff and the members of the Summer Collective to plan distribution of labour and a general timeline of tasks. Thank you so much for all your hard work, and for organizing such a successful Rad Frosh!

Viv Walz was rehired this year as CURE Coordinator. Viv was extremely self-sufficient and had a great deal of knowledge about how the program worked, making her fairly autonomous. Through consistent coordination with board and staff, she was able to successfully outreach to McGill students and administration, maintain and coordinate projects, and coordinate with QPIRG-Concordia. Viv was able to make CURE an enriching experience for all those involved.

Anya Sivajothy was hired this year as Resource Centre Coordinator. The previous coordinator, Nina, made the sure the library ran smoothly, through effectively and diligently doing daily tasks like ordering new books and materials, assisting library users, coordinating volunteers, managing the resource center budget, etc. Anya reorganized the structure of the library, built the fiction section, and worked on the Audio Zine Project which involved creating audio book versions of popular zines. Good job Anya!

Annie Chen was hired this year as School Schmool Coordinator. Annie worked alongside Sumaya Ugas, who was hired by QPIRG-Concordia, to create this year's School Schmool agenda. Annie reached out to local artists and activists for content, and designed the layout of the agenda. This year's School Schmool was a wonderful compilation of many forms of media from comics to articles. Annie was self-directed and helped create a beautiful final product, both visually and functionally. Thank you for your hard work and for sharing your beautiful vision!

Batu Kaya was hired this year as Culture Shock Coordinator and Social Justice Days Coordinator. They worked incredibly hard to plan both event series. They were jointly hired by QPIRG-McGill and the SSMU. They worked closely with the Outreach and Promotions Coordinator, as well as the Campus Outreach Coordinator, to plan and advertise. They were also a key member of the Popular Education Committee, as well as a member of the newly formed Outreach Committee. They have proven themselves to be a strong and organized event planner, and have helped make both Culture Shock and Social Justice Days a success. Good job, Batu!

POLICY COMMITTEE

This year, the Policy Committee held meetings to work on the Hiring Policy. There was also an effort to meet with the Accessibility Committee to jointly work on the Accessibility Policy. The Elections Policy was amended to remove the collection of 50 signatures from the Board elections procedure.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

Increasing the accessibility of QPIRG's space, events, and work has been an increasing priority in recent years, as the Board has identified this as an area in need of improvement. During the summer of 2014, QPIRG provided a Summer Stipend to Chaim, in order for them to conduct an audit of QPIRG's accessibility and to issue a report on their findings, along with recommendations. In the year following this stipend, an Accessibility Committee was struck to continue addressing issues of accessibility on an ongoing basis. In its first year, the Accessibility Committee brought in non-fluorescent lighting to the majority of the rooms in the QPIRG space, instituted a scent-free policy for the QPIRG space as well as for all QPIRG events, began using Interaction Signal Badges for use during Rad Frosh, strived to ensure that all public QPIRG events were held in wheelchair-accessible spaces, and prioritized the inclusion of thorough accessibility information in promotional material for events.

This year, the Accessibility Committee continued to meet in order to further address the issue of accessibility at QPIRG. Anya, QPIRG's extraordinary library coordinator, has been working on creating a greater selection of audiozines from the library. This exciting project is ongoing! Additionally, we have put together an accessibility bag to bring to events which includes interaction signal badges, metro tickets, and other helpful materials. We also made accessibility signs to post at public events. These signs will designate bathrooms as gender neutral, provide notice of our scent free policy, and also explain the use of interaction signal badges.

Coming out of last year's Accessibility Visioning we have short- and long-term goals for increasing the accessibility of QPIRG which have not yet been completed. In the next year, we hope to accomplish as much as our capacities permit us of the following:

- Revamping the website and ensuring that it is up to accessibility standards, including screen reader usability
- Completing the full Radical Accessibility Audit Project assessment of the QPIRG space
- Solidifying our Discretionary Funding Policy with regards to requests for events up flights of stairs or otherwise significantly inaccessible
- Discussing the possibility of creating an Accessibility Fund for organizations to apply to in order to fund the development of a more accessible space, project, and/or event
- Drafting an accessibility policy in collaboration with the Policy Committee
- Offering an accessible event planning and overall accessibility workshop to all working groups at the start of each year
- Providing an accessible facilitation training for the new Board
- Ongoing Board discussions about ways to make Board and Staff positions more sustainable, including discussing the possibility of having varied Board positions with different time commitments
- Conducting outreach to groups with various access needs, to collaborate in assessing how our space and events - as well as greater community ones - might be made more accessible to them
- Standardizing the application of text-based accessibility guidelines to all posters and other promotional materials issued by QPIRG and its working groups and committees
- Standardizing accessibility information provided across all print and online outreach materials

The Accessibility Committee has a number of recommendations for QPIRG going forward: 1) that the Board as a whole be part of setting priorities and goals regarding increasing the accessibility of QPIRG resources and programming, particularly in regards to a future, physically accessible new space for QPIRG-McGill; 2) that the Board prioritize the completion of implementing current measures, such as ensuring the availability of non-fluorescent lamps throughout the QPIRG-McGill office, and increasing the amount of information available regarding the scent-free policy; 3) that the Board undergo training on ableism and accessibility to have a common framework for approaching these problems.

While these measures are a start, the Accessibility Committee members did find themselves rather unsure about potential next steps in improving accessibility. Furthermore, other projects that were discussed by the committee and supported by the Board were unable to get off the ground for various reasons, including lack of time and lack of communication between the board and the committee.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

REFERENDUM

In the fall semester, QPIRG ran an existence referendum, as the memorandum of agreement (MOA) with McGill expires in 2017. A full day workshop was given by the very knowledgeable Kira Page on the past history of QPIRG referendums and how to run a successful campaign. The question below was the sent out to all students that are part of SSMU and of PGSS. A short timeline of the events is also shown below. The timeline was based on the QPIRG bylaws. The bylaws also required two staff to be hired for the referendum process, a Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and a Deputy Electoral Officer (DEO). A hiring committee was formed and Narmada Gunawardana and Julia Darel were hired as the CEO and DEO, respectively. The Yes Committee for undergraduates was chaired by Julie Skarha for undergrads and by Mona Luxion for grad students. There was about 40 people who joined the committees. A budget of \$300 was allocated to each committee (as stipulated by the bylaws) to pay for campaign materials such as posters, buttons, and flyers. There was no No Committee formed and there was little anti-QPIRG sentiment on campus. However, there was an op-ed in the Bull and Bear advocating a “No” vote for QPIRG continued existence. Campaigning lasted for nine days and involved flyering places on campus such as Midnight Kitchen or the Y-intersection, tabling in Leacock and other buildings, and making classroom announcements. Voting was open for six days. Results were announced on November 8th at the Arts Undergraduate Lounge. Amy brought amazing squirrel cupcakes.

A break-down in order of the timeline:

1. Referendum training,
2. Submitted referendum question to McGill for approval,
3. Gave notice of CEO and DEO positions,
4. Hired CEO and DEO,
5. Formation of yes committees,
6. Campaign period,
7. Voting period,
8. Results announced!

RESULTS:

SSMU

Question: Do you support QPIRG continuing as a recognized student activity supported by student fees with the understanding that a majority “no” vote will result in the termination of undergraduate student fees to QPIRG?

Turnout: 3604 voters/ 22469 electors (16.0%)

Yes: 2349 votes (71.6%)

No: 931 votes (28.4%)

Abstain: 324 (9.0%)

PGSS

Question: Do you support QPIRG continuing as a recognized student activity supported by student fees with the understanding that a majority “no” vote will result in the termination of graduate student fees to QPIRG?

Turnout: 1426 voters/ 7223 electors (19.7%)

Yes: 950 votes (73.6%)

No: 340 votes (26.4%)

Abstain: 136 (9.5%)

We won!

QPIRG-MCGILL STAFF REPORT

STAFF REPORT

This year has continued to be a time of change, adjustment and hard work at QPIRG-McGill! Importantly, we made it through an existence referendum in the fall, and we have infinite gratitude to all of the volunteers that pulled us through that stressful and daunting time!

Amy Darwish stayed on as the Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator for a second year. Raphaële Frigon is also in her second year as Outreach and Promotions Coordinator. Kama Maureemootoo left after three amazing, transformative years at QPIRG-McGill. We are so grateful for all of the amazing work Kama did over the years, from working on building our financial security to greatly expanding programming by and for queer and trans people of colour. We were so sad to say goodbye, but we wish her all the best and are excited to continue watching her grow outside of QPIRG-McGill. In August 2016, we hired Becca Yu as the new Finance and Administration Coordinator.

As always, we shared our workspace with truly amazing and talented individuals: Kiera Sheppard (Campus Outreach Coordinator), Viv Walz (CURE Coordinator), and Anya Sivajothy (Resource Centre Coordinator). We have also been lucky to work with Cadence O'Neal, Kelly Schieder, and Wade Walker (Rad Frosh Coordinators), Annie Chen and Sumaya Ugas (School Schmoool Coordinators), Batu Kaya (Culture Shock and Social Justice Days Coordinator), and Stephen Kamp and Dan Lacroix (our bookkeepers). Our work is, of course, made all the more interesting thanks to our volunteers and to our Board of Directors, who bring so much energy and enjoyment to the work that we do! And shout-out to our friends at The Midnight Kitchen, the UGE, MUNACA, AMUSE, AMURE, Black Students' Network, SPHR McGill, the McGill BDS Action Network, CKUT and QPIRG-Concordia! We love collaborating with you and we hope to continue strengthening our networks in the coming year! <3

We look forward to continue growing and expanding the capacity of QPIRG-McGill and what we do. Some of our future plans include creating timelines in order to begin planning our event series earlier, working to alleviate stress in projects where we are still stretched too thin, updating our promotional material, seeking more varied sources of funding, continuing to commit to and learn about accessibility, and ensuring a consistent supply of oreo cookies on every surface of the office.

In solidarity,

Amy Darwish, Raphaële Frigon & Becca Yu

POPULAR EDUCATION

CULTURE SHOCK 2016: INTO THE SPOTLIGHT! - BATU KAYA

Culture Shock seeks to bring together racialized communities to engage in dialogue about issues relevant to their lives, as well as to allow those who do not belong to these communities to learn more about these experiences and struggles in Canada and beyond through workshops, discussions, panels, and a performance night.

This year we had 5 workshops, 1 keynote speech and 1 performance night over the course of 3 days. We also cross-promoted for Damon Davis' performance with Kalmunity Jazz Project. The events comprised of:

Indigenous Perspectives: History and Solidarity

Anti Racism 101: Breaking Things Down

Cut n Paste: A Black n Muslim Grl Zine Making Workshop

Trans Migration : A Round Table

"Heavy Vetting: A Night of Fat QTBIPOC Performances & Clothing Swap"

All Hands on Deck : a presentation, workshop & performance by #blacklivesmatter activist Damon Davis

Black New World: a workshop with Damon Davis

Kalmunity Jazz Project concert with Damon Davis (cross promotion)

This year's events were overall well attended. Specifically, the Damon Davis Keynote and Heavy Vetting Performance Night were highly attended by McGill and community members alike.

Despite the stressful timing of the QPIRG referendum right before the onset of Culture Shock, we managed to have all the workshops start on time, and with minimal technical difficulties. However, due to the demands of the referendum, carrying out logistics and promotion became a hardship due to additional commitments of the staff and the volunteers alike. I determinedly suggest hiring the events-series coordinator earlier for having a more collaborative process between the Popular Education Committee, the coordinator and the QPIRG staff to plan out the event series. The fact that the coordinator is hired only after the workshops have been chosen limits the diversity of opinions and perspectives that go into the selection process.

In order to ensure accessibility, we integrated the use of microphones in our workshops, and this gesture has been appreciated by workshop participants. One of the problems was the late notice about the inaccessibility of the venue for the keynote event. Due to some language/translation problems in the correspondence, we found out that the lift for wheelchairs at the venue had been compromised, and would not be fixed on time. To compensate, we set up a live Facebook feed for people to watch the event. Even though the live feed worked and was highly attended to, we should pay additional attention to ensuring the physical accessibility of our venues and pursue to eliminate last-minute notices to our best abilities.

For next year, I suggest hiring the coordinator and starting targeted promotion earlier, and improving correspondence with the venues.

I am very grateful for the support from the QPIRG staff, the QPIRG board and the members of the Popular Education Committee.

SOCIAL JUSTICE DAYS 2017 - BATU KAYA

Intended to stimulate an alternative political culture in the McGill University community and beyond, Social Justice Days marked its 12th year with a weekend of workshops, discussions, film screenings, and speakers discussing local and global issues. Social Justice Days testifies to the diversity of critical political engagement on McGill campus, and offers students concrete opportunities to get active in their global community. Social Justice Days is co-organized by the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at McGill and the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU).

This year we had 4 workshops, 1 journal launch event, 2 movie screening-discussion events, and one panel over the course of 3 days. We also cross-promoted for 2 events:

Convergence VII Launch

Accessibility as Collective Care // Inaccessibility as Collective Harm

Who can afford to heal? A critical look at self-care and capitalism

Right Time, Right Place: Black Queer Sex, Love, and Life in the Age of AIDS (cross promotion)

Resisting Wars of Aggression, Women on the Frontlines

Suicide intervention for weirdos, freaks, and queers: helping our friends who sometimes want to die maybe not die

Perspectives on Syria: Revolution, Counter-Revolution, and Empire

Three Films Envisioning Queer, Feminist, Anti-Racist Futures through Media

The Self-Love Cabaret: l'amour se conjugue à la première personne (cross promotion)

We wanted to foster critical thinking and discussions about difficulties of organizing at McGill, collective care in activism, history of organizing locally and globally, artistic and/or alternative forms of resistance and creativity in organizing spaces.

The keynote event, Convergence VII Launch, included a variety of media and mediums of expression. The Radical Research Mixtape, which is available for streaming on Soundcloud, included poetry/spoken word, reports, excerpts from roundtables, and interviews on community organizing, Barriere Lake, racial inequality, and much more.

Overall, attendance in workshops and events was consistent, and participants enjoyed the content and the execution of the workshops that we offered. All of our events took place in accessible venues, and there were no problems with regards to the accessibility of SJDs.

For next year, I suggest hiring the coordinator and starting targeted promotion earlier.

I am very grateful for the support from the QPIRG staff, the QPIRG board and the members of the Popular Education Committee.

POPULAR EDUCATION

RAD FROSH 2016: BURSTING INTO BLOOM - WADE WALKER, CADENCE O'NEAL and KELLY SCHIEDER

Rad Frosh is an alternative orientation to McGill and Montreal for over 150 new students over four days (September 1st – 4th, 2016). Jam-packed with parties, workshops, music, food, and more, it's a fun and unique opportunity to check out local activist and community groups, get introduced to and learn about a wide range of social, environmental, and political issues, meet fellow students and cool folks, and for froshies to get the tools to make the most of their time at McGill and in Montreal.

The 2016 schedule is below. Last year, Rad Frosh was expanded to occur over four days. New programming is bolded.

Sign in, meet and greet

Campus scavenger hunt

Picnic at Parc Mont-Royal

Drag 101 Workshop

A workshop on the art of drag, given by local performers

Drag and Burlesque Show

The show, held in Players' Theatre, featured various local performers.

We added this event partially as a response to the previous year's feedback of desiring more queer programming.

Workshops included

AIDS: A Radical Perspective

Colouring Outside the Lines: Exploring Our Personal Histories of Race

Nestuapuguei (Mi'kmaq: I speak truthfully/wisely)

Riots and Resistance - An Intro to Prison Abolition Activism

Our forests (lungs), our rivers (veins). Embodied Environmentalism & Self-Care for People of Colour and Allies

Creating Space for Us: Considering Neurodiversity in University

Walking tours included

Demilitarize McGill: War, Colonialism, and the University

A (Rad) Bookworm's Guide to Montreal

The Milton Parc Story

Montreal Trans History Tour

Anti-Gentrification Struggles in St-Henri

Open Mic Night

Annual Benefit Concert

The concert was held at Bar le 'Ritz' and featured Phèdre (Toronto), Hand Cream and m.a (both from Montreal).

We fundraised for Reclaim Turtle Island and the Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition.

After-Party with DJ's

We held our own dance party after the concert at Brasserie Beaubien, with local DJ's

Hike up Mont Royal

Do-It-Yourself Fair

Stations included:DIY lipstick, bike maintenance, herbalism, Demo Safety, yarn bombing and building a radio transmitter and others!

Park games and BBQ

Closing Loft Party

This included karaoke, a DJ and pay-what-you-can haircuts

Changes, New Initiatives and Recommendations

In 2016, Rad Frosh had three coordinators, unlike previous years which had two. This increased capacity and allowed us to expand slightly into a four day program. We decided to move the campus scavenger hunt to Thursday afternoon, which allowed us to spread out the schedule on Saturday and Sunday. This helped to address feedback from previous years that the weekend was too packed.

We decided to have online Rad Frosh registrations happen exclusively through the Orientation website this year. The fact that participants were able to see Rad Frosh's info and register on the same website as for all the other froshes, instead of being redirected

POPULAR EDUCATION

to our own website and Paypal system, and having Rad Frosh included on the Orientation website from the time it launches, likely accounted for most of our much higher registration numbers this year, and the fact that we had a lot more participants registered earlier than previous years.

The clothing swap room was a new initiative. We collected clothing donations throughout the summer and provided them to participants to browse through and take as needed. The intention of this space was to facilitate access to gender affirming clothes for queer and/or trans and/or gender nonconforming participants. University is often the first opportunity for students no longer living at home to begin to express themselves according to their own identity. For low-income queer and trans students, it can be especially challenging to find affordable clothes that fit, and align with their gender identity and/or expression. By providing a wide variety of clothing for free/exchange to participants, we hoped that students would have the option to start their university time off wearing what makes them feel good!

Building on the work of the past few years, we kept accessibility a high priority. All of our venues had step-free access, we promoted the use of interaction signal badges at all events, attempted to have a scent-free policy, offered bursaries (up to the full registration fee), had a quiet room available, had fidget toys at workshops, prepared to offer childcare and ASL interpretation if requested a couple weeks in advance (no requests this year). We also updated our website with new options like changing contrast and font size. One recommendation for next year is to acquire much more portable non-fluorescent lighting.

We recommend booking venues with full step-free access as early as possible, including rainy-day back-ups in this! Keep in mind other important factors for venues; not only cost, but also what the impact of holding a McGill-affiliated event there will be on the surrounding neighbourhood, and if there are any other reasons you might not want to host an event there.

We had initially had budgeted for a 130 participant maximum but we quickly reached that limit and decided we had to adapt to increase our capacity. We decided to implement a wait-list, but answering waitlist emails and manually deregistering and adding every single person took far too much time. We ended up with 170 or so registrations but only had about 130-140 participants actually show up. This meant that some of our last minute scramble to make more frosh bags and book an extra loft party space, were largely unnecessary.

We also recommend setting aside a small portion of each registration fee to be donated to the same beneficiaries as the benefit concert so that participants could be contributing to the fundraiser while still not having to pay cover at the concert itself.

SCHOOL SCHMOOL ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - ANNIE WENAN CHEN AND SUMAYA UGAS

School Schmool is an annual agenda that's meant to be a more informative, more practical, more radical alternative to the school-provided ones. It aims to connect students to the larger Montreal community and to access resources that often directly combat what is indoctrinated in the university setting. One of the biggest changes this year from previous years is the large increase of artwork and artists- whereas usually School Schmool commissions a few artists to create the majority of the artwork, this year we opted to accept only one or two pieces from a large number of independent and not very well-known artists.

An outline of the major activities include: InDesign workshop with Katasoho, outreach and gathering awareness of the project, a call for submissions using campus-community outlets and social media (including useful resources), compiling and curating the various submissions, sourcing and formatting smaller graphics online, organizing the layout of the submitted work with the actual planner, meeting with Katasoho (the publisher) to finalize sizing/formatting/layout etc, final printing, final compiling, early distribution during Rad Frosh, mass distribution to McGill, Concordia, and various community venues.

The project is now finished and almost entirely distributed, but the most immediate plans or developments would be to digitalize all the content onto the School Schmool website, which has been dormant for the last 2 years.

Many aspects of this year's production could have been improved and streamlined

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--Volunteers: we essentially had no volunteers to help us with the outreach, curating, layout. The issue is largely because we were so busy with increased number of people/submissions we were dealing with that the prospect of training and aiding volunteers felt too daunting. In addition, it felt as though the two of us had a very specific visual vision for the production such that we were reluctant to loosen our control on the final product.

--Outreach: Because a new School Schmool facebook page is created each year so that community members can easily submit work for that year, its online presence needs to be built from the ground up each year. This results in only close friends and coworkers from both QPIRG and the insular community of radical community members/students hearing the submissions, which directly hinders School Schmool's mission of reaching and representing a much larger and diverse Montreal community. This year we tried to ameliorate this issue by directly reaching out to artists/writers online and to especially elevate those who weren't already well known, but this endeavour was incredibly time consuming and many folks we reached out asked for more compensation than we could dispense. This issue is probably the biggest issue we've faced and it doesn't seem like we're the first ones to face it.

--Funding: The previous issue is directly tied to the issue of funding. Because the final product is given out the students for free/ pay what you can, a large component of School Schmool is managing to gather a large and wide variety of work and be able to pay each contributor a fair commission.

This year, we gave each contributor a flat rate of \$40/person no matter the size/length of their work, and we could not commission anybody to do the cover art. School Schmool is entirely funded by Young Canada works, QPIRG grants and their year-long fundraising efforts that extend way beyond the period of creating School Schmool. If we could get more funding through more community organizations, or set up a different system so we could pay contributors more, reach many more artists, and possibly even hire a third coordinator, that would be of great help to future coordinators.

--More languages: This issue only included a few pieces in French, despite our mission to reach and represent beyond the anglo community. Again, this was a result of our limited outreach efforts and in part because School Schmool is supported by two anglophone QPIRGs. In the future, more effort needs to be devoted to the increasing visibility of marginalized francophone artists, and perhaps other languages, too.

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

SUMMER RESEARCH STIPEND REPORT

Each year, QPIRG-McGill offers summer research stipends to fund research projects leading towards action and change. In particular, we tend to prioritize projects that align with QPIRG-McGill's social and environmental justice mandate, that take direction from directly-impacted communities, and that are local in scope and fit within a grassroots model in terms of their approach.

In many respects, 2016 proved to be the Year of the Publication at QPIRG-McGill. This year's summer research stipend recipients included Yasmin Ali and Sumaya Ugas for Somali Semantics, a project that included a second edition of the "Somali Semantics" zine, along with a short film about black women and friendship. We were also excited to fund the Indigenous Arts Council's "mâmawi-âcimowak" (they tell stories together in Plains Cree) journal, a biannually published periodical showcasing writing, art, and cultural work by Indigenous peoples- and highlighting the work of Indigenous women, Two-Spirit peoples, and Indigenous feminist analyses in particular.

In the future, we hope to conduct outreach more widely to ensure that this year's call for summer research stipends reaches beyond QPIRG-McGill's immediate networks. Last year, we held an information session for prospective stipend applicants and plan to offer one again this year- again, with more advance notice and outreach. We also hope to vary the types of projects that are selected this year, while also reflecting in more depth on how employment equity considerations may apply in the context of summer research stipends. Moving forward, we hope to continue providing funding and support to community-driven research projects in the months to come.

SUMMER STIPEND PROJECT, 2016: SOMALI SEMANTICS ZINE - YASMIN ABDULQADIR ALI

The Project: Overview

Somali Semantics is a digital zine project created in the summer of 2015 by Yasmin Abdulqadir Ali and Sumaya Ugas. As two Somali girls born and raised in Toronto and Montreal respectively, the goal of Somali Semantics was to explore the intersections between girlhood, blackness, and "authentic" soomaalinimo; with the inclusion of our ruminations on sex, patriarchy, and the policing of women's bodies through culture, religion, etc. We ultimately wanted to connect with Somali girls and femmes, with the hopes of sparking honest conversations around diaspora and identity-making.

Issue #1 of Somali Semantics was published in September 2015 and was written, edited and published entirely by us independently. It was first launched online (on Issuu.com) and then in print during QPIRG McGill's 2015 Culture Shock series. The response surrounding Issue #1 and all the wonderful folks we met through this love-work heightened our interest in creating more content. This is where the lovely folks at QPIRG come into the picture.

Sumaya and I were lucky enough to be granted a \$3000 summer stipend from QPIRG-McGill to further expand our vision for Somali Semantics. The plan for the summer was to work on our second issue of the zine, as well as completing a short film exploring the nuances of love and sisterhood, within the context of a black female friendship. We were offered a spot at the Radstorm Residency in Halifax, Nova Scotia for August 2016; and so, the plan was to shoot most of the film during our stay there.

Project Progress over the Course of the Summer

We made some great strides on our project. The most tangible outcome was the writing, editing, and publishing of our second issue (on Issuu.com). Many of the pieces in our second issue were created during our residency in Halifax; the time and space we were given to solely develop our craft while staying there was invaluable to our creative process. The film was a little trickier. I suspect that we overestimated our capacity, in terms of what we could accomplish during

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

the course of a single summer. We did end up shooting the scenes of our film in their entirety while in Halifax. However, the footage is still un-edited and not fully composed into a cohesive film.

Project Challenges

We faced a few challenges around this project, the most significant being that it highlighted some of the incompatibilities Sumaya and I have around our organizational/work techniques. We had an ambitious summer planned, and I think we both exhausted ourselves in different ways. With that said, these kinds of tensions often surface in most collaborative relationships; so it still served as an interesting and informative learning experience re: conflict resolution and compromise.

Project Outcomes

The creation of Issue #2 was the most tangible outcome of this project. We were able to publish it, and Sumaya also hosted a workshop for QPIRG McGill's 2016 Culture Shock series loosely structured around some of the pieces from the zine. Folks have responded very positively to the second issue; and we've received some really kind emails from Somali girls across many different countries.

We also have a ton of footage from our summer film. We hope to use this work in some way moving forward.

We'd like to thank QPIRG-McGill for our summer stipend grant; it really allowed us to be bold and brave with our creative endeavours – which is something that is really not afforded to working-class black Muslim women on a regular basis. Getting to participate in Radstorm, specifically, was a life-changing experience and we couldn't have done it without your support.

COMMUNITY UNIVERSITY RESEARCH EXCHANGE AT MCGILL - VIV WALZ

This year (May 2016-April 2017) my role as CURE Coordinator took a different focus than last year. My priority was less on outreach to classes, but more towards supporting students in ways adapted to their preferences and needs and towards improving institutional memory. This summer was very quiet, but during the year my time was quickly filled with meeting with interested students, responding to applications and liaising with CURE-Concordia. Overall this year I was more involved with QPIRG's general activities - I tried to attend trainings where I could (Referendum training, for example), and joined the Outreach Committee. Looking back on the year CURE made a lot of new connections, helped several people get involved with research projects, and we reached out to the McGill and Montreal communities in a variety of ways. I think we also learned some good lessons about best practices that will carry over to next year!

Main Activities:

CURE Events:

- Tabling at Rad Frosh on September 4th
- Tabling at Activities Night on September 6, 7, 8 (with QPIRG-McGill)
- Research Justice/CURE Info-session on November 22nd
- Tabling in November at McLennan Library on November 18th
- Class presentation to GSFS 300: Research Inquiry on January 25th
- Open Space, cohosted with CURE-Concordia on March 29th

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CURE Projects:

- 9 students filled in agreements and began working on projects
- With organizations including Projet Bleuét, Solidarity Across Borders Shelters Committee, Solidarity Across Borders Food 4 All Committee, Re-Con & Black Rose Books
- 2 completed projects with Food4All, 1 with Re-Con
- New project finalized in November 2016:
Best Practices and Funding Opportunities for Assisted Living for Young Adults in the Autistic Spectrum
- Project Coordination activities:
 - Facilitated 4 group meetings with researchers and community groups
 - 11 individual information or working meetings
 - 24 Applications received from McGill students
 - Updated promo material including leaflets and bookmarks
 - Regularly posted about CURE in listserves
 - and did targeted outreach to various departments about relevant projects

Collaborations with the Rad Research Committee:

- Community Engagement Day on September 29th (Accessibility Audit-o-thon)
- Promoted the event and the Radical Accessibility Audit Project (RAAP) on All Things McGill on September 19th
- Rad Research Skillshare on January 21st
- Film screening of "In the Shadow of the Borders" on February 17th
- Bake sale on February 24th
- Budding Ideas Community Research Symposium - Collaboration with the ECOLE Project and Rad Research Committee on April 1st

In the works/Future plans:

- Research Justice/CURE Info-session early April (April 6th)
- Walking tour with the Milton-Parc Citizens' Committee in early May
- Strengthen links with academic departments:
 - Presentation about CURE at the GSFS Steering Committee meeting at the end of April (date TBC)
 - Present to Independent Study Project coordinators in the School of Social Work
 - Together with current and past researchers, build a more supportive structure to help students to complete their projects
- Follow up on collaborations with the Social Equity Diversity Education (SEDE) Office

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

CONVERGENCE REPORT - AMY DARWISH

Convergence is an annual journal, co-published by QPIRG-McGill and QPIRG Concordia, that highlights undergraduate and community contributions to research and art.

Now in its seventh edition, the journal was published in December 2016. This year's edition featured 18 pieces grounded in struggles for prison abolition, indigenous solidarity, and against police violence and anti-black racism. The journal featured an incredible array of artwork by many local artists, including Alex Abu Tagiya, Fanny Aishaa, Freda Guttman, Kevin Lo and residents of the Passages shelter. While remaining a space for undergraduate students to showcase their research, there was a much greater number of submissions from community members this year. The journal also included a broader range of formats, including poetry, maps and charts

This year also marked the first edition of the Radical Research Mixtape, which brought together audio interviews, music, sound art, spoken word, and poetry highlighting various forms of grassroots knowledge. Mixtape contributions included poetry by Shanice Nicole and Rana Salah, interviews with Barriere Lake community members' Norman Matchewan and Michel Thusky, a report from Solidarity Across Borders' Month Against Deportations, and a sound art piece recorded by Stefan Christoff at last year's vigil in solidarity with Fredy Villanueva.

In February 2017, we held a launch for the journal and mixtape at Concordia University as part of this year's Social Justice Days event series. The event featured food, presentations from several contributors, excerpts from the mixtape, and opportunities to learn more about research justice programming at both QPIRG-McGill and QPIRG Concordia. The journal has since been distributed to various alternative libraries and has been promoted at QPIRG events.

Convergence VII would not have been possible without the tireless work of its contributors, artists, and editorial collective members. We would also like to thank Ensley Chau for their beautiful cover art, Jaime MacLean for all her late nights finalizing layout at the office, and Lillian Boctor for bringing so much energy and so many skype chat selfies throughout the process. More information about Convergence VII is available online at <http://convergencejournal.ca>

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE LIBRARY - ANYA SIVAJOTHY

One of the main projects this year was to extend our collection in various directions. Over the past couple years we've been extending our fiction collection, and also started a separate graphic novel section. There was major reshuffling of materials in the library to make more room and so that the materials which were more popularly browsed were more visible. In terms of subject, we've been trying to purchase more content on accessibility since there seems to be a need for that in the library.

There were more initiatives to increase the outreach of the library. We started getting local artists to help us with designs for bookmarks and posters which have been circulating around. We created an Instagram account for the alternative libraries network to share more of the content available in the library. We've also been co-hosting, or being a presence at, events throughout the year to let people know about the library. There are currently workshops being planned for the summer on topics such as bookbinding and zine-making, which has proved to be extremely popular in the past.

In terms of circulation and cataloguing, there has been work this year on institutionalizing the knowledge about our pmb catalogue system. Since there are high turnover rates within our library as well as the other libraries, there is a working document that was created a couple years ago that's been getting updated—especially with regards to adding new libraries. There have been four main libraries sharing the alternative libraries catalogue and this year we helped facilitate the addition of two more libraries: one with AMUSE and also Sustainable Concordia.

In terms of accessibility, one of our major projects this year, which was actually started last summer, was the audio zine project. Currently, we've recorded three zines, and we're expecting to do more. They're being edited right now but we're going to be publishing them on SoundCloud relatively soon which is pretty exciting! We've also been trying to improve accessibility in terms of the physical space. The library is on the third floor of a building with no elevator, so there has been an informal pick-up/drop off service that we've been trying out for this year during open hours. We've also added more lights to the library (although we're doing more research to improve that) and have rearranged furniture.

Some of the challenges this year is that although we have very dedicated volunteers to the library, the overall committee has been relatively small. One of the goals is to improve the visibility of the library, especially to those in information studies who would be most interested in volunteering. Another challenge is also trying to network with the other alternative libraries to standardize some of the cataloguing sections and to make the circulation a little more consolidated, but it's been difficult because it involves a big time commitment throughout the busy year and there are high-turnover rates.

Another challenge that I'll be working on over the summer is reorganizing how the materials are presented—specifically the zines to make them easier to browse.

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RADICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Radical Research Committee aims to support QPIRG-McGill's community-driven research programming. Now in its second year, its activities include conducting outreach for the Community University Research Exchange (CURE) program, and organizing workshops and skillshares.

Some committee initiatives this year included co-organizing an Accessibility Audit-o-Thon with Accessibilize Montreal as part of Community Engagement Day, tabling for the CURE program, holding a bake sale in support of the Barriere Lake Land Defense Camp, organizing an Introduction to Research Justice workshop in November 2016 and a forthcoming CURE information session in April 2017. The committee also played an important role in visioning, promoting, and coordinating logistics for the events that unfolded during this year's Radical Research Days event series. Committee members brought a lot of energy, enthusiasm, and excellent baking skills and their hard work contributed a great deal to generating visibility around QPIRG-McGill's research justice projects this year. We hope to continue building momentum in the months to come and to promote research models that are accountable to communities and accessible to all.

RADICAL RESEARCH DAYS - AMY DARWISH

Radical Research Days is a monthly event series that aims to highlight grassroots knowledge work and build links between campus and communities. Taking place over four months in Winter 2017, this year's events have included:

Nuts and Bolts: A Radical Research Skillshare (January 21, 2017)

The event featured an afternoon of workshops covering tools and skills needed to tackle community research projects. Workshops included an Introduction to Access to Information Requests with Cadence O'Neal and Macho Philipovich, Interview Skills with CKUT Radio's Djenaba Dayle, and Data for Social Justice Research with Lisa Starr of Convergence Editorial Collective.

Lunch and Learn: In The Shadow of Borders (February 17, 2017)

The Radical Research Committee worked with members of Solidarity Across Borders to organize a screening of the migrant justice documentary "In the Shadow of Borders", featuring a presentation from a member of the Non-Status Women's Collective. The screening also took place as part of the Midnight Kitchen's Lunch and Learn series.

Budding Ideas Community Research Symposium (April 1, 2017)

Co-organized with ECOLE, the symposium provided a forum for ECOLE, CURE, and QPIRG-McGill members to showcase their contributions to community-driven research. The event featured science fair-style presentations, a Palestine volcano, a build-your-own atom cookie bar- and was the science fair of our childhood dreams!

Overall, events were well-attended and succeeded in reaching participants beyond QPIRG-McGill's immediate networks. In the future, the Radical Research Committee hopes to round out the series by holding a Milton-Parc Radical Walking Tour in early May. We also hope to hold more events in community spaces and to plan events more in advance, in order to allow more time for promotion and to avoid overstressing committee capacity.

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

DISCRETIONARIES 2016-2017

QPIRG-McGill funds action-oriented research that supports our mandate of social justice and environmental activism, we provide several avenues for securing funding and support, enabling a diversity of groups and actors to participate.

Each year, QPIRG-McGill's Board of Directors sets aside an amount of money to fund external projects. Campus and community groups are encouraged to apply to this discretionary fund when planning any goal-oriented social justice and/or environmental events.

DATE	TO/EVENT	AMOUNT
June 2, 2016	#controlencours	• \$50.00
	Filipino-Canadian LGBTQ Meet and Greet	\$250.00
	Public Assembly for an Autonomous Space in St Hen	\$100.00
	Le Radical Queer Semaine	\$150.00
	Indigenous Media Panel at Anarchist Bookfair	\$250.00
	Poetry Across Borders	\$200.00
	Borders are Bonkers Action	\$150.00
July 6, 2016	CKUT Radio Camp Workshops	\$250.00
	Solidarity with Esteban	\$350.00
	Fierté Trans- Euphorie Dans le Genre	\$250.00
August 9, 2016	Land-Based Learning Youth Camp	\$250.00
	Writing While Black	\$105.00
September 14, 2016	Hip Hop You Don't Stop x CKUT Stretch x Bobbito Screening	\$250.00
	About the Other Third Wave Zine	\$50.00
October 28, 2016	Indigenous Resistance in Five Minutes	\$250.00
November 16, 2016	Songlines Across the Sea	\$200.00
	Gender B(l)ender	\$100.00
	PaleZine	\$100.00
	Film Premiere: Queer Vietnameseess + Nuroc	\$100.00
December 2, 2016	Get to the Pointe!	\$100.00
	Hoodstock Films	\$150.00
	Call from Non-Status Women: Regularization!	\$125.00
	Prisoners Correspondence Project- Holiday Mail Out	\$125.00

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

DATE	To/EVENT	AMOUNT
January 12, 2017	New Years Eve Noise Demo	\$150.00
	Mixd: A Mixed-Race Compilation Zine	\$100.00
	Show Love for a Trans Migrant Organizer	\$150.00
	Visit of Alfred Woodfox and Robert King	\$200.00
	Groupe de soutien avec migrantEs LGBTQ- AGIR	\$150.00
February 6, 2017	End of Immigration Film Screening	\$100.00
	Reclaiming the Wine	\$100.00
	Art and Native Feminisms Conference	\$100.00
	2017 Homelessness Marathon	\$100.00
	Radical Potential of Queer Activism: An Arab and Muslim Response	\$125.00
	Beyond Polarized Kvetching: Effective Communication on Israel/Palestine	\$125.00
MARCH 9, 2017	Resist DAPL Benefit Concert	\$150.00
	Montreal Aboriginal Health Centre	\$100.00
	Brunch and Blockades: Film Screening in Support of Barriere Lake	\$150.00
MARCH 24, 2017	ANTI375	\$50.00
	DIRA Library	\$100.00
	Rap Battles for Migrant Justice	\$200.00

CoSPONSORSHIPS, ENDORSEMENTS AND CAMPAIGNS 2016-2017

Every year, QPIRG lends it's administrative, political, and mobilization capacities to dozens of events and campaigns throughout the year. These are just some of them!

- Get to the Pointe Alternative Sexual Health Conference
- PARCours- October 2, 2016
- Concordia HIV/AIDS Lecture Series
- CKUT Radio Without Borders Funding Drive- October 20-31, 2016
- Faggity Ass Friday Revival- October 28, 2016
- CKUT Fee Levy Renewal- YES Committee
- Midnight Kitchen YES Committee
- Art Action for Standing Rock- December 7,2016
- Taking a Knee, Taking a Stand: Resistance and Sports in the Age of Trump- February 17, 2017
- Israeli Apartheid Week 2016- March 6-15, 2017
- Café Collab
- Call for Zine Submissions- Intersectionality and Sexual Violence- March 22, 2017
- Sexual Assault Awareness Week- March 27-31, 2017
- No More Heroes: Grassroots Challenges to the Saviour Mentality- April 3, 2017

FINANCE & OUTREACH REPORTS

OUTREACH - KIERA SHEPPARD & RAPHAËLE FRIGON

This year, we did more outreach than usual during Rad Frosh. We made efforts to ensure froshes learned about what QPIRG does beyond Rad Frosh and made listserv sign-up sheets available at nearly every event at Rad Frosh. We've continued this trend at all of our events throughout the year.

Culture Shock and Social Justice Days had high attendance. Most of our outreach has been through social media and the listserv. This has been effective because we are getting new listserv sign-ups more often at our events and through tabling at Fall and Winter Activities Nights. We are also finding Facebook ads to be very effective.

This year, we started an Outreach Committee, coordinated by Kiera and Raphaële. In the Fall semester, the Outreach Committee was occupied with referendum efforts.

In the Winter semester:

We have made plans to rewrite/reorganize a lot of the content on the QPIRG website and are looking into hiring someone to create a new structure.

We have put out an artist callout for a new sticker/button design. We will be working with the artist over the next couple weeks and are hoping to have new buttons and stickers by the first week of May.

We have started making plans for a "What is QPIRG" video to be added to the new website. It will likely be filmed in the Fall of 2017.

We have created some new resources such as an easy to follow guide to the different ways to be involved with QPIRG, a list of things for volunteers to bring when tabling for us, and a timeline of outreach goals & events for the 2017-18 year.

We are also working on restructuring the volunteer training so that new volunteers are familiarized with QPIRG as a whole and its various branches, without being overloaded with information.

Next year, we want to continue with the current projects we have going and grow the outreach committee, so that we can do more.

FINANCES - BECCA YU

It's my first year as Finance Coordinator, having started in the beginning of August. I received training from the previous coordinator, Kama Maureemootoo, for the first two weeks of working at QPIRG-McGill. Kama did some truly amazing work to help QPIRG-McGill financially adjust after receiving the fee increase in Winter 2015. We have so much love and gratitude for the work that Kama did over her three years at QPIRG-McGill!

The 2015-2016 financial year was the first year that we operated with the increase of almost \$90,000. The majority of this went to restoring budget lines that had been reduced by inflation and funding cuts over the years, as well as hiring additional staff. However, we did end the year with a surplus of \$14,441, which is a good place to be in considering it was a year of huge adjustment. As such, we used some of that surplus on assets for the organization, such as two new computers for the staff which were desperately needed. We are doing a few budget reviews throughout the year this year to continue to help QPIRG-McGill adjust financially.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The year 2016-2017 has overall been a good year for QPIRG-McGill's finances, with greater financial security than we have seen in a long time. There are still elements of challenges and unpredictability in terms of fundraising and institutional agreements, but overall we continue to be able to secure budget lines that previously were strained.

Importantly, we completed our audit dated Aug 31, 2016. Our audit was conducted by an independent auditor's office, APSV Chartered Professional Accountants inc., by Caroline Pombert and Mélanie Desmarais-Sénécal. We had previously been with auditor Denis Larouche for many years, until he retired this year. Working with Caroline and Mélanie was a great experience and we thank them for their patience and hard work. They confirmed QPIRG-McGill's finances to be healthy and in order; their full breakdown can be found after this report.

Other updates from this year:

We had to allocate some of our programming budget to running a referendum this year. As per our Referendum bylaws, QPIRG-McGill pays all expenses relating to referenda. With admin expenses, the hiring of CEO and DEO, and committee budgets, we spent about \$1,000 this year.

We managed to increase the Working Groups budget line by \$4,000 this year. We had a record high number of working groups this year, and we believe they are such an important part of QPIRG-McGill that we were glad we could shift around the budget to provide them greater resources.

Our financial relationship with SSMU continues to be in flux, often changing with each executive. Our financial support from SSMU has dwindled over the years, right now our agreement stipulates that we receive \$2040 for Culture Shock and Social Justice Days, which is considerably lower than a few years ago. Access through funding applications remains unclear and unpredictable, but we did manage to cover additional Culture Shock expenses through the Equity Fund, although it required multiple discussions. We plan to meet with outgoing and incoming executive members to discuss a new MOA throughout the month of May.

As is the case every year, we apply to employment-based grants through government funding bodies, namely the Young Canada Works (YCW) and the Canada Summer Jobs (HRDC) programs. For our summer 2016 jobs, we received two YCW grants, and one HRDC grant, two for Rad Frosh and one for School Schmoool. We previously had received 2 grants total most years, so the extra grant this year allowed us to hire three Rad Frosh coordinators for the first time and significantly expand Rad Frosh's programming. We are still waiting to hear the results regarding this upcoming summer.

Our opt-outs are fairly standard and stabilized at approximately 10% of the student population, as has been the case over the past couple of years, and is consistent for many other campus groups. For us, this amounted to a total of \$28,296 for the 2016-2017 year. We do not predict a change in this unless there are active opt-out campaigns or other forms of organized backlash, which we haven't seen much of over the last few years.

Our accountants are Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp, whose diligence and knowledge is greatly appreciated, and they do so much for the financial health of QPIRG-McGill. Our deepest gratitude to the many groups and organizations with whom we collaborated with this year, or supported us in various ways, including but not limited to: The Students' Society of McGill University, Midnight Kitchen, People's Potato, Union for Gender Empowerment, ECOLE, Queer McGill, AMUSE, MUNACA, AMURE, QPIRG-McGill-Concordia, Institute for Gender and Feminist Studies, articule, Right to Move, HOWL!, and many others.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

QPIRG-McGill BUDGET

Budget 2016-17

Revenues

Student Levy	285,628
QPIRG Events	9,000
Working Groups	
Workstudy	10,800
Radical Frosh	6,000
Radical Frosh Registration	6,300
Revenue from Misc sources	
Gov't Grants	22,099.00
School Schmool	2,000
Fundraising	
Miscellaneous	
Interest Revenue	150
Photocopy Revenue	500
TOTAL REVENUE	342,477

Administrative Expenses:

Rent	23,280
Office Supplies	1,500
Repairs & Maintenance	2,818
Bank Charges	560
McGill Admin Fee	1,000
Opt out refunds	30,000
Photocopies	3,681
Audit	3,100
Legal	1,000
Accounting	3,119
IT	699
Telephone & Fax rental	3,620
Insurance	3,121
Postage	150
Late Fees	100
Emergency Fund	
Incorporation	35
Total Administrative Expenses	77,783

Programming Expenses

Accessibility Expenses	1,000
Elections	750
Referendum	1,400
Board and Staff Training	2,500
Board and Staff Appreciation	1,500
QPIRG Events	12,500

CURE and Convergence	1,450
Discretionary	6,600
Library	2,500
Translation	300
Promo Materials	1,500
Summer Stipend 1	3,000
Summer Stipend 2	3,000
Radical Frosh Programming	12,000
School Schmool	5,000
Working Groups	20,000
Total programming expenses	75,000

Payroll

Internal Coordinator	34,380
External Coordinator	34,726
Research Coordinator	34,726
Intern	11,375
Work Study Library	8,385
Work Study CURE	8,385
Work Study Campus Outreach	8,385
HRDC Summer Position	3,010
Rad Frosh Coordinator	14,000
School Schmool Coordinator	5,000
YCW Fall Coordinator	
Provincial Source Deductions	13,555
Federal Source Deductions	3,128
QHSF	
CSST	1,104
CNT	
QPIP	
Health Insurance	7,426
Bonus	750
Total payroll	188,334

*Petty Cash Short/Over**Write Offs**Suspense**Depreciation*

1,100

TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES**342,217****NET PROFIT/(LOSS)****260**

