

GIRLS ACTION FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT
2020



TABLE OF CONTENTS

P.2: Team and board of directors

P.3: Collaborations

P.4 and 5: Message from the Chair

P.6: Message from the team

P.7: Mission, vision & principles

P.8 and 9: Programs and projects

P.10: Community contributions

P.11: Financial contributions

P.12: Statement of solidarity

P.13: Network and partnerships

P.14: A few statistics!

TEAM AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Team from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

- Natasha Harvey - Operations Manager
- Jennifer Addison - Interim Operations Manager / Network and Partnership Manager
- Brittany Williams - Programs and Strategies Manager
- Naoual Laaroussi - Communications Manager
- Rebeca Abigail - Communications Intern
- Leela Shamash - Project Intern
- Alison Abrego - Project Coordinator - Support is essential
- Tinika Sampson - Operations Coordinator

Board of Directors from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

- Ericka Navarro Ho-Sang (Chair)
- Lambrini Soulos (Vice-Chair)
- Jillian kifoil
- Christine Caines
- Gilda Boffa (treasurer)
- Aniqah Zowmi (Chair)
- Phaedra de Saint-Rome (Vice-Chair)
- Naomie Joseph

COLLABORATIONS

Collaborations from April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Thank you all for your involvement and dedication to girls, young women and gender diverse youth.

Niti Marcelle Mueth, Loralie Bromby, Katherine Gauthier, Lotus Collective, Marcelle Partouche Gutierrez and Monica Paraghamian, Samantha Hinds, JoJo Worthington, Nora Toutain, Meryem Saci, Naïka Champaigne, Gabi Tomé, Valerie L.- Guillemette, Samantha Sylvestre, MALICIOUS, Afoali, Serisha Iyar, Arezoo Najibzadeh, Jessica Ketwaroo-Green, Rachel Wang, Leila Moumouni Tchouassi, Jade Cayley, Shanese Indoowaaboo Steele, Aniqah Zowmi, Veroushka, DAWN Canada, Rivers of Hope, Kétura Daméus, Nidia Guerrier, Toni de Cosmique Tea, Powetik, Mags, Marlene Hale, Marbella Carlos, Éli Abdellahi, Hagar Moussali, Olivia du journal d'une guerrière.

Special thanks to Marlo Turner Ritchie for her support in all Girls Action's adventures!



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Nothing has been more front of mind over the past year than the need to show up more often and more meaningfully for communities that have been and continue to be disproportionately affected by crises, including COVID-19. It was not a mistake that multiple civil rights movements have been renewed or created against the backdrop of the pandemic. In this context, it is of utmost importance that our communities stand together and effectively coordinate to amplify our work and efforts.

Stepping into the Chair role of Girls Action Foundation is an honour in the best of times; stepping into this role in the midst of a pandemic, which our staff and QTBIPOC communities feel the most heavily, is a responsibility. Stepping into this role wholly as a young, Muslim woman of colour is doubly an honour and a responsibility: it is an honour to be in service to the public in a position of leadership where my identity is carried as a mark of pride, but also a reminder that the impact of this work most directly affects people like me and, therefore, I have a responsibility to ensure that this role is one of service to these communities, and not solely one of leadership and 'power'.

CONTINUATION OF THE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In this spirit, I was honoured to bring on a new cohort of Board members whose intersectional experiences will, particularly against this renewed and revitalised social justice backdrop, push Girls Action Foundation into a new chapter of more meaningfully and intentionally embracing intersectional feminism, particularly in the way we communicate our mission, vision, messages, and shape our initiatives. It is a privilege to be able to hold this space with so many other incredible, intersectional feminists.

As we reflect on GAF's successes in the past year, and the promise we have for the future, I think about what a privilege it is to be in this space, surrounded by such incredible and powerful people. And, in reflecting on this power and privilege, I think often to a quote shared by Tarana Burke, the founder of the Me Too movement and a Black, intersectional feminist that I hope will guide the GAF family into yet another powerful, reflective, and deeply moving year:

“Inherently, having privilege isn't bad, but it's how you use it, and you have to use it in service of other people.”

In solidarity,

ANIQA H ZOWMI

Presidente du Conseil
d'administration

MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM

The past year has been one of transformation, standing in solidarity with our allies and renewal for the Girls Action team! We saw key team members leave for new opportunities, but we have also welcomed new dynamic, passionate and dedicated people. We have positioned ourselves on issues that are important for the communities we represent, we have taken a critical look at our programs in order to create programming that is truly by and for the communities we aim to serve. Finally, despite a turbulent year in the midst of a pandemic, we continued to provide and share resources, mentorship, information and solidarity to girls, young women and gender diverse youth. It was also an opportunity for reflection and to evaluate ourselves in order to create tools to make Girls Action an organization that is more democratic, horizontal and representative of its network.

Thank you to the Girls Action community for being a catalyst for social change!

The Girls Action Team



MISSION, VISION & PRINCIPLES

Mission

Girls Action Foundation inspires and supports the empowerment, leadership and healthy development of girls, young women and gender diverse youth by increasing their access to resources and opportunities.

Vision

A national movement of empowered girls, young women and gender diverse youth taking action to lead social change in their communities. To create a world where youth are strong, confident, and engaged leaders.

Principles & Approaches

- Popular/ Critical Education
- Intersectional Feminism
- Social Change & Action
- Strengths-Based
- Youth Led

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Activate Change

Activate Change was a virtual gathering of girls, young women and gender diverse youth programmers and leaders. An inspiring group of young leaders from the greater Toronto area led discussions and workshops around youth-led social change and activism in the context of COVID-19.

#Visions2025

#Visions2025 was a collaboration with Evoke Creative and a virtual creative hub for girls, young women and gender diverse youth to come together and imagine a more just, inclusive and feminist world in 2025 through creative expression. The theme was built around #environmentaljustice topics like food security, climate action and racial inclusion in the environmental movement.

Feminist Summer School

To celebrate our 25th anniversary, we've teamed up with Platform to bring you a Feminist Summer School. The Feminist Summer School aims to increase the capacity of young women and gender diverse youth to practice intersectional and anti-oppressive leadership.

PROGRAMMES ET PROJETS

Redefining activism and being a good ally in times of pandemic

Workshop presented by two young women from the Girls Action community. The challenges of the pandemic, the role of ally and community response to social issues.

Arctic Youth Development Agency and Platform partnership

Supporting young women and gender-diverse youth in remote and rural communities. This project was a partnership between the Arctic Youth Development Agency (AYDA), an Indigenous, woman-led initiative that has been serving Indigenous youth in the Northwest Territories; Platform, a civic leadership platform for Black, Indigenous, and racialized young women and gender-diverse people, and Girls Action Foundation provide virtual programming focused on culturally appropriate mental wellness programming and community to Black, Indigenous, and racialized women in rural and remote areas.

Support is essential

This project aimed to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic on mental health by creating access to mental health support and a support space among young people, especially those from marginalized communities. We focused on the neighborhoods most affected by Covid-19 (Parc-extension, Côte-des-Neiges and Montréal-Nord). Thus, we were able to offer therapy groups with a BIPOC therapist, subsidies covering 80% of the costs for seven sessions with a mental health professional, eight circles of support that lead to the creation of a zine (Healing Guide) and the distribution of radical self-care baskets.

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Girls Action celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2020! For this occasion, we had prepared some surprises for our network, in partnership with artists, programmers and young leaders from our communities.

Visit: www.girlsactionfoundation.ca/25thanniversary to learn more.

We would like to thank all the volunteers who have supported us this year, especially for our Support is essential project!

Thank you to Garage for their jeans donations for our “radical self care” baskets!

Thank you to all the people who were willing to do “Takeovers” on our Instagram page to address important issues and leave them a platform to express themselves.

Thank you to all the people who facilitated, translated or participated in our workshops!

Thank you to the Girls Action community for being catalysts about our communities’ social demands!



FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Thanks to our funders:

- Women and Gender Equality Canada / Government of Canada
- Employment Quebec
- Canada Summer Jobs
- Emergency fund for community support / Government of Canada
- Foundation of Greater Montreal
- YWCA Canada Community Engagement to Address and Prevent Gender Based Violence
- Covid Response Fund

Thank you to all the people and companies who donated or set up fundraising campaigns for our causes:

- Ouitch
- Studio Sveja
- Horace Jewelry & Robin des Bas
- Estate of Brenda Protheroe
- Louise Green & Reitmans
- Sephora
- Eric T. Webster Foundation
- Massi Madi

STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY

In this moment of major social transformation where the creation of a better, more just world feels possible, we believe that it's important to make a clear statement that we stand with the Black Lives Matter movement & Indigenous sovereignty.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT BLACK LIBERATION AND INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY ARE INTERCONNECTED. THESE COMMUNITIES SHARE A LONG HISTORY OF COLONIZATION, AND CONTINUING CONDITIONS OF VIOLENCE, STOLEN LAND, POWER AND PEOPLE. IT IS OUR INTENTION THAT ALL OF OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE ACTIONS BE IN SUPPORT OF BLACK AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S LIBERATION AND WELL-BEING. WE UNDERSTAND THIS AS INCLUDING THE END OF ALL POLICE VIOLENCE AGAINST BLACK AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, THE ABOLITION OF ALL POLICE FORCES, THE END OF MASS INCARCERATION OF BLACK AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, AND THE ABOLITION OF ALL PRISONS. TO THIS END, WE WILL WORK TOWARDS REPLACING POLICE AND INCARCERATION CULTURE WITH RADICAL COMMUNITY CARE. BLACK LIVES MATTER. INDIGENOUS LIVES MATTER.

QUOTE FROM GIRLS ACTION STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY
WWW.GIRLSACTIONFOUNDATION.CA

NETWORK AND PARTNERSHIPS

The network

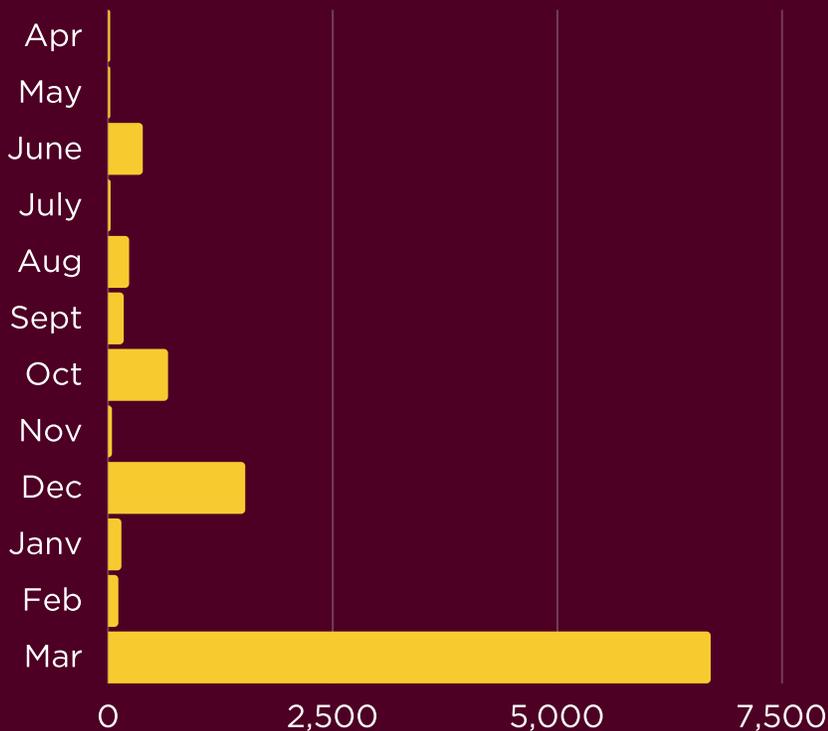
The Girls Action National Network is nearly 300 organizations and groups that support or work directly with girls, young women and gender diverse youth across the country. The objective of the network is to bring together and share the experience and knowledge of those who set up programs for our communities and who are interested in the specific issues of girls, young women and gender diverse youth.

Our contributions to the community

- Movement for Schools Free of Sexual Violence (MESVS)
- National Feminist Influencing Group
- Defund the Police Coalition
- Genders, health and environment collective
- Active member of Maison Parent-Roback
- Participation in the Agir program panel - Apathy is boring
- Participation in the panel: Culture in Tio'tià: ke / the island of Montreal - Table of groups of Women of Montreal
- Working Group on Advancing Canada's National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence

A FEW STATISTICS!

- 500 participants at our Feminist Summer School
- 84 "radical self-care" baskets delivered
- 5 participants at our circles of support
- 10 participants at our group therapies
- 15 people accessed mental health grants
- 5 people volunteered



INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Here is a chart that shows the donations that we have received throughout the year.

Thank you to all our precious donors!



“You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time.”

— Angela Davis

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