



WOMEN AT THE HEART OF THE CITY  
41 elected women at your service!



*Conseil des  
Montréalaises*

Montréal 

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# A Word from the Chairman of the CITY COUNCIL



## 70 years of women's commitment!

It is with great enthusiasm that I underscore the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's commitment to municipal politics in Montreal, a traditionally masculine institution where they soon learned to become involved.

Thus was it that, as soon as 1940, three women joined the municipal council, beginning with Ms Kathleen Fischer, first elected woman and councillor from 1940 to 1954. In 1947, Ms Fischer became the first woman to preside over a meeting of city council, standing in for the president of the council. Ms Elizabeth Monk, a law graduate from McGill University, also became a councillor as a delegate of the Montreal Citizens Committee (*comité des citoyens de Montréal*) in 1940, a position she held until 1942. Finally, still in 1940, Ms Lucie Bruneau joined the municipal council when she was appointed by her peers to replace a councillor.

From 1954 to 1960, Ms Eustache Letellier of Saint-Just, also a delegate of the *Ligue du progrès civique* (league for civic progress), occupied the position of city councillor. In 1957, she was elected as substitute mayor. Following this nomination, nearly 15 years went by before seeing another woman sit on the municipal council. In 1978,

Ms Justine Sentenne became the first woman to join the executive council. A few years later, in 1986, the executive council of Mayor Jean Doré was composed of three men and three women.

Since the last elections in autumn 2009, we are seeing a woman as head of the official opposition, but also a woman vice-president of the municipal council and five women as members of the executive committee. All in all, there are 41 women who sit as city and borough councillors out of a total of 103 elected officials.

Women are thus taking their legitimate place since the pioneers of the 1940s, and I am one of those who believe that they should be far more numerous for the benefit of the community. This is the reason that, with this project, we not only honour them, but also hope to hereby inspire others to come forward and represent the citizens of Montreal. ■

**Claude Dauphin**  
*Chairman*

# A Word from the Responsible for the STATUS of WOMEN



The look women cast upon the world has its own colour, whence the importance to all our societies of seeing them numerous in various action and decision-making positions. Politics are part of these areas of power that contribute to making things move forward and change. It is therefore essential that women be forever more present, especially on the local level.

In this field, Montreal leads the way. With nearly half of the members of the executive council and almost 40% of all elected positions occupied by women, our city stands above other Canadian cities. It is the result of a deliberate policy that we launched many years ago.

Thanks to the work of the *Conseil des Montréalaises* that you have before you, you can now better see the paths and contributions of each of these women elected in the Montreal municipal elections of 2009.

I hope their example will inspire new vocations. Although the field of politics is often decried, it nonetheless remains a privileged area to serve the public. This is why I invite women that wish to participate in advancing debate and discussions that concern Montreal women to get involved in politics in order to one day attain full equality! ■

## Helen Fotopulos

*Executive Committee Member, Responsible for Culture, Heritage, Design and the Status of Women*



# A Word from the President of the CONSEIL DES MONTRÉALAISES



I am touched at presenting this first in the history of the city of Montreal, this portrait of 41 women

elected on November 1, 2009. They decided to dedicate their talents, their skills and their energy to the service and well-being of their fellow-citizens and, in this way, become models for generations to come. Others earlier blazed the trail, as shown by the table on page 27. There especially comes to mind that great pioneer, Ms Vera Danyluk, Mayor of the Town of Mont-Royal who, sadly, left us much too soon.

From its very launch in 2004, the *Conseil des Montréalaises*, comprising 15 volunteers named by the municipal council, busied itself with the place women occupy in decision-making positions, in the corridors of power, and on the political scene. In the wake of the last municipal elections, the project for making this brochure took form, and its members decided to embark on this adventure.

The City of Montreal, with 39.8% of its elected officials being women, looks rather good on the Quebec scene. We nonetheless call for parity in representation between men and women, as well as equitable representation for young people, immigrants and the handicapped. Important steps have been taken, but there is still much to do, most notably in the real centres of power. We believe it to be fundamental that women be represented at all levels of government and in all positions. Democracy is

alive when it is inclusive and diversified. It is strengthened when everyone has a voice and takes part in governance.

Meeting with each elected woman has made clear that politics is a very demanding profession, but also a fascinating one. They have overcome very concrete challenges and obstacles, such as access to financing, conciliation of work and family, and less extended social networks. But none regret having dared to enter this still too male-dominated arena.

Therefore, I am very happy to have you get to know the women borough mayors, city councillors and borough councillors who, through their daily work, contribute to making Montreal a city where it is good to live. Each of these encounters affords us the opportunity to cast a more human and concrete glance at what it means to be in politics, no matter the gender. This brochure also seeks to demystify the role of our elected officials. I sincerely hope that these portraits will inspire many to either participate more in city affairs or to make the decision to present themselves as candidates for election in 2013. ■

**Marie Leahey**

*President*



## Émilie THUILLIER

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

**Borough: Ahuntsic-Cartierville**

**District: Ahuntsic**

A few years ago, master's degree in environmental science in hand, Émilie Thuillier put her skills at the service of *Projet Montréal*, which was at its first steps. Indeed, back in Montreal after a year of scrutinizing evaluations of public policies regarding sustainable urban development in northern France, Ms Thuillier decided to share her passion for the land as an area of geographical and human development. She also took part in drafting the party program, mainly based on sustainable development. So it was only natural that she should leap into politics as a militant, passing, as it were, from the theoretical to the practical. In her mind, however, politics are the domain of a certain class of society of which she has no part, and seeing her face plastered on city walls was not easy. The real leap, therefore, required a deeper conviction and the awareness that *"I am the best ambassador for imparting to the community my values and knowledge"*.

In 2005, Ms Thuillier decided to run in the municipal elections, but it was only in 2009 that her perseverance was rewarded after three electoral campaigns that proved very fulfilling. From then on, her project for reducing circulation so that her neighbourhood could become, not only a place to drive through, but a place to truly live, allowed her to pursue her commitment to humanizing the City. She keeps a vigilant eye on all files she works in order to ensure that the needs of women are met. She also participates in the work of the *Commission permanente de la présidence du conseil*. ■



## Jocelyn Ann CAMPBELL

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

**Borough: Ahuntsic-Cartierville**

**District: Saint-Sulpice**

An experienced communicator and translator by profession, Ms Campbell's career path revolves around the three periods during which she grasped the important issues of the City of Montreal from various viewpoints. In the 1980s, she was editor in chief of a newspaper in the Centre-Sud neighbourhood of Montreal. Consequently, she stood at the heart of the urban, social and economic issues of a neighbourhood in transition. As a press secretary from 1990 to 1994, she dealt with all dossiers as a member of a municipal team. From 1998 to 2005, as director of communications at the *Palais des congrès de Montréal*, she developed the communications strategy in support of the expansion of the Congress Centre and contributed to promoting the International Quarter of Montreal.

In 2005, conditions were ripe for her to enter politics. The possibility of balancing work and family life, an interest in issues of the day, and her availability were all reasons that colluded to have her enter politics. To do so requires team work, and she had excellent allies.

Aware of current issues at stake, Ms Campbell counts urban development and housing amongst her priorities. She is currently vice-president of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le développement culturel et la qualité du milieu de vie*. Also, having participated on the committee that oversaw the policy *Pour une participation égalitaire des femmes et des hommes à la vie de Montréal* (for the equal participation of men and women in Montreal life), Jocelyn Ann Campbell believes it is vital that we ensure the follow-up of its implementation.

For more democratic governance, it is indispensable that women actively participate in the decision-making process at all levels. To achieve this, the proportion of women in government bodies must increase. It is a slow process that must continuously be revived. ■



## Andrée HÉNAULT

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Anjou**

District: **Anjou**

An Anjou resident since 1960, Andrée Hénault has long been involved on the local scene. More specifically, she has done volunteer work on many electoral campaigns. A Bell Canada retiree, she remains very active in the community; she is a founding member of the CLD of Anjou and has also sat on the board of directors of the *Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal* (Anjou).

A municipal councillor since 1989, Ms Hénault is currently the president of the *Commission du soutien aux organismes*, vice-president of the *Commission du développement économique, des équipements métropolitains et des finances* and member of the *Commission des services aux citoyens* of Anjou borough. She also sits on the *Commission permanente du conseil d'agglomération sur les finances et l'administration*. All these experiences as an elected official are opportunities for apprenticeships which she applies to all fields of endeavour,

Her first priority is the quality of life of her fellow citizens. This obviously depends on a budget that allows for the maximum offer of services. She actively participated in implementing the first family policy in her borough, for which she is still responsible. She also is in charge of activities for 12-17 year olds.

She firmly believes that women should contribute to society by putting forth their idea in the public arena. Women work hard and deserve equality at all levels. Parity in politics is a question of balance, much as the tango, it takes two. Women must stand up and take their rightful place, and men must accept to share the field. ■



## Michelle ZAMMIT

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Anjou**

District: **Centre**

A resident of Anjou since 1983, Michelle Zammit has traced a dynamic career path. Financial consultant at the National Bank until 1989, she then started up her own business, a children's clothing store that she sold in 1997. She then dedicated her time to raising twins, while also doing volunteer work for various neighbourhood organizations. It is by her commitment as a citizen and by popular acclamation that she was convinced to run for municipal office. Consequently, in 2005, she decided to take the plunge and live this new and very different experience. Amongst her involvements, she is president of the Anjou CLD and of the *Commission de soutien aux organismes*.

After having secured a first mandate, she ran again in order to dedicate yet more time to the citizens of her borough. She listens to them, considers herself at their service, and maintains an open door policy – it is the continuance of the client services she provided while in business. She is currently member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur les services aux citoyens*.

The involvement of citizens of the borough, both men and women, warms her heart. It is for this reason that she pays tribute and gives recognition to Anjou volunteers each year at the *Soirée des 1 000 bénévoles*. In closing, she believes that the parity of men and women in politics is indispensable, if we are to have the complementarity of viewpoints and ways of doing things. However, she understands that changing mentalities is a slow process that requires time. For Ms Zammit, change will come through projects that allow women to further enter the spheres of economics and politics. To this end, she possesses all the necessary skills and abilities. ■



## Helen FOTOPULOS

CITY COUNCILLOR

Borough:

Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

District: Côte-des-Neiges

Of Greek and Russian descent, Helen Fotopulos is a Montrealer firmly rooted in her community. Strengthened by this diversity, she sees herself as being in the image of the city, a multicultural mosaic. Having first worked in teaching and labour relations, she later became political advisor to the mayor on matters of culture and intercultural relations before deciding to run in the election of 1994. Elected as city councillor of the Mile-End district, she held this position until 2001 to then become mayor of the Plateau-Mont-Royal borough from 2002 to 2009. Re-elected in 2009 as city councillor for the Côte-des-Neiges district, she remains a member of the executive council as responsible for culture, heritage, design and the status of women.

A woman of action with a passion for the arts and culture, and a deep concern for all aspects of development in Montreal, Helen Fotopulos has been the source of various innovative initiatives over the years. More notably, she is the instigator of many important policies and major realizations. To mention but a few, there are the policies regarding culture and heritage, the development of the *Parc-des Pins* and the protection of Mount Royal. Convinced of the importance of citizen participation, she has established various mechanisms of participatory democracy, of which the better known is certainly the participatory budget of the Plateau-Mont-Royal borough, inspired by the Porto Alegre experience.

Moreover, Ms Fotopulos has always been sensitive to issues relating to the status of women. She ensured the implementation of the municipal administration's commitments taken during the 2002 Montréal Summit, amongst which was the creation of the *Conseil des Montréalaises* in 2004, and the adoption of the policy, *Pour une participation égalitaire des femmes et des hommes à la vie de Montréal* in 2008. ■



## Susan CLARKE

CITY COUNCILLOR

Borough:

Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

District: Loyola

With a background in telecommunications, Susan Clarke has worked in the field of IT and Web security for major telecommunications firms. In order to help friends who were blind, she became a reader and lent her voice to the recording of English language books for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) on a volunteer basis. She also sits as a member of the board of directors of the CNIB, Quebec Division, of which she was twice president.

Having become a mother, she took a rather prolonged break during which time she continued her involvement in the community, with the CNIB and with other organizations. Over a period of six years, she and her husband took in and helped 29 foster children and young people. After going back to work, she turned to the world of teaching and occupied the position of school commissioner for 10 years. She naturally had opportunity to meet with political actors, which led her to take an interest in municipal politics. Elected in 2009, she took part in the work of the *Commission permanente de la sécurité publique*.

Ms Clarke speaks enthusiastically of the Graffitis dossier that she works on in collaboration with local groups and community people to encourage graffiti artists to evolve toward art and move away from "unauthorized" graffiti. Public consultation is always at the heart of her *modus operandi*, and as president of the housing committee of her borough, the cleanliness and safety of buildings is always a priority to her eyes.

Educated along egalitarian lines, she never imagined that she would meet obstacles that could not be surmounted. As for her career, her work has never been diminished or belittled because she was a woman. ■





## Jane COWELL-POITRAS

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

Borough: Lachine

City councillor in the Lachine borough since 1988, Jane Cowell-Poitras was re-elected in November 2009 for a third mandate. Originally from Great Britain, she discovered an interest in politics at a very young age. At only 15, she participated in her first electoral campaign as a volunteer. This gave her a better understanding of the electoral process. She took part in all elections from 1968 onward, until she was herself elected in 1988, while still caring for her infant daughter born only months before. She is a firm believer in the importance of public services and in her role as an elected official, a job that allows her to work for the good of the community on a daily basis.

Family-and seniors-related issues are her priorities. All levels of government are concerned with the continuously ageing population and its consequences. Changes will have to be made in order to deal with this reality. These are generations that have always fought hard for the recognition of their rights and who will undoubtedly demand their rights loudly and strongly. Ms Cowell-Poitras also wants Montreal to be a city that welcomes families, big or small. As a widow and mother of three having experienced life as a single-parent, she is well aware of the challenges.

Her priority as regards the status of women is to see a greater number of women enter politics. Their integrity, financial management skills, and their often different outlook on important issues are valuable assets to the municipal world. She is convinced of the importance of parity between men and women. ■



## Lise POULIN

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: Lachine

District: Du Canal

Lise Poulin, with a bachelor's degree in sciences from *Université de Montréal*, has training in intervention with young people, and in drug dependency and mental health.

While still a teenager, and with the support of her municipal councillor, she formed a group of young people. This level of social commitment bided well for a future of active participation in political life.

Working for a major corporation, she was granted an unpaid leave of absence in 2009, allowing her to dedicate her time and energy to the municipal electoral campaign. On November 1, 2009, Lise Poulin was elected to a first mandate as borough councillor of the *Canal* district of Lachine. Suffering from muscular dystrophy from birth, she became the first elected municipal official with limited mobility.

Prejudices have been common to her everyday life for as long as she can remember, and she well understands those who must deal with limited mobility or who are physically challenged. As borough councillor, Ms Poulin is fully committed to issues of universal access and socio-professional integration. She also deals with dossiers touching, either closely or remotely, environmental questions, anything regarding youths, and many other municipal concerns regarding family, housing, and transportation. She is a member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le transport, la gestion des infrastructures et l'environnement*.

Her ideas abound and evolve. She is adamant about facing up to numerous challenges. Determined, tenacious and deeply committed, Lise Poulin wants outright equality for and recognition of women in society by taking into account what they bring that is specific and singular. ■



## Manon BARBE

**BOROUGH MAYOR**

Borough: LaSalle

A businesswoman convinced of the importance of customer service, Manon Barbe left the business world to dedicate herself to her family. It was in 1995 that she took her first steps as a politician. Her knowledge of municipal issues developed as a citizen has allowed her to set to work for the well-being of the residents of her neighbourhood. As life would have it, she discovered she had a vocation for politics.

She defines the role of a city councillor as that of a person on the ground, who can take a problematic situation and find its solution taking into consideration the realities of the milieu. Ms Barbe got quickly involved with many working groups. As of 2003, she became mayor of the borough of Lasalle. At this point of time, she hopes to see the parity of men and women in politics at all decisional level, and to see parity become part of our mentality.

Concerned for the future of the city of Montreal, Manon Barbe is currently the executive council member responsible for the transportation dossier. She also spends an important part of her time with the overall development of the island of Montreal as a member of the *Conseil d'agglomération* and as *president of the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal*.

On the local level, along with the major residential development project in the Angrignon neighbourhood, she also spends a great deal of her time with the dossier of conservation and development of the Rapides de LaSalle Park, a site where the biggest rapids of one of the biggest rivers in the world come together with an ecological area of impressive variety, rich in human, economic and military history, and an exceptional tourist experience in a natural setting. ■



## Josée TROILO

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: LaSalle

District: Cecil-P-Newman, post 2

As a graduate of the Greater Montréal Real Estate Board and realtor in the sector, Josée Troilo has lived in Lasalle since her early childhood. Her career path was not one linked to politics but she has an in-depth knowledge of the area. She is inhabited by a sense of belonging that comes from 30 years of treading the streets of her hometown. Known for her integrity, she was first approached to become a municipal candidate in 2009. Accepting the invitation, she made use of her experience and skills as a businesswoman, volunteer, organizer and citizen to keep her ear to the ground and listen to her constituents. Her role as an elected representative allows her to be actively at the service of her fellow residents. Amongst other functions, she sits on the *Commission permanente du conseil d'agglomération sur le développement économique*.

Of the many dossiers she holds most dear, there are the projects of the social development table. These tie into the fight against poverty, a women's issue for the most part. The problems of poverty cross over to other issues, such as access to housing and jobs. For Ms Troilo, it is important to take actions that will improve the quality of life of residents. In view of the violence that many women still suffer today, the safety and security of women concerns her greatly.

She would also like to bring to the fore the issue of women's participation in city life, in its social, political and economic dimensions, and this, in all public arenas. To attain equality of men and women, Josée Troilo hopes to see an increasing number of women enter politics so that they may fully participate in the decisions that concern them. ■



## Laura-Ann PALESTINI

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **LaSalle**

District: **Sault-Saint-Louis, post 2**

A resident of Lasalle who still lives in the house where she was born and enjoys living in her neighbourhood, Ms Palestini thought that she could positively contribute to solving some of the problems the locals encountered. While in her mid-twenties, she decided to sit in on city council meetings only to realize that the task at hand was far more complicated than it seemed, but also very stimulating. She seriously considered running for election, but had to delay that plan until the following elections for personal reasons. She is now in her second mandate, while continuing to work full-time. To reconcile her regular job with the workload of an elected representative demands discipline and meticulousness: both her employer and the other members of city council must also take into consideration the stringency of her schedule. She has also had to forego a few career promotions.

Though all council members are on the same electoral team, this does not deter them from having heated discussions in order to ensure the correctness of the decisions taken in the interest of borough residents. At times, residents must be helped in regard to questions that, although not directly related to the municipal structure, nonetheless have an impact on neighbourhood development. Thus, some may be concerned with grade school closings; this can indeed have a significant impact on young families as to whether they would become and remain citizens of the neighbourhood. This well illustrates the job of a borough councillor.

Laura-Ann Palestini wants all residents to be treated in a fair and equitable fashion. To achieve this, she recognizes a major challenge: the borough council must have the financial means and necessary manpower to enforce its regulations. It is not only a question of making rules, but also to implement them in order to improve the well-being of the population. ■



## Josée DUPLESSIS

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Le Plateau-Mont-Royal**

District: **De Lorimier**

Sociologist by profession, Josée Duplessis takes an interest in the evolution of the environmental awareness in society. She campaigns for the advancement of city politics and is involved in community networks by, amongst other means, conducting research in the field. She ran a consulting firm dedicated to improving the environmental practices of Quebec municipalities. This allowed her to better understand the workings of city governments. At the coming of the 2005 municipal election, she made the jump to politics. Upon her arrival, she grasped how difficult it is to get women involved in politics because of their many responsibilities, for example, that of being a mother.

Josée Duplessis believes that one of the major challenges the city of Montreal must face is that of greater cooperation in sharing the best practices of each borough, and cooperation is what women do best. Elected officials must initiate this practice and trade knowledge and expertise no matter what their political affiliation.

In all dossiers, the viewpoint of women enriches debate and should be represented. More often than not, the responsibilities given women in politics mainly deal with social or cultural development. They are often absent from the dossiers of urban and economic development. These matters are still largely concentrated in the hands of men. Ms Duplessis, currently member of the *Commission permanente sur le transport, la gestion des infrastructures et l'environnement*, is fully aware of this. However, she has shown with each of her interventions, the enriching value of a woman's viewpoint in the analysis of these files. To her, parity must be an objective to attain at all decisional levels. ■



## Piper HUGGINS

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Le Plateau-Mont-Royal**

District: **Jeanne-Mance**

With an educational background in political economics from Concordia University, Piper Huggins has long worked as a political organizer for the New Democratic Party of Canada – Quebec sector. From the very start, the place of women in politics has always been an important issue to her, and she strives to develop positive political action to that end within the party. Taking an interest in the *Projet Montréal* proposition, she got involved in the 2005 electoral campaign.

Often invited to present herself as a candidate, she hesitated, having never considered herself a politician. However, rubbing elbows with people who believed that politics need not be as we see them, she decided to run in the 2009 electoral campaign. She appreciates the team work practiced in the Plateau-Mont-Royal borough and the role elected officials must assume in the development of their files.

Passionate about social justice, she takes on the responsibility of various dossiers that touch on cultural and environmental issues, and on public services. Take, for example, her work aiming at the inclusion of public housing in the projects developed by promoters; projects which in turn ensure that tenants have access to quality and affordable housing. Ms Huggins also sits on the *Comité consultatif d'urbanisme* of the borough.

The fight against poverty is of major concern to her, and the challenge of finding collective and sustainable solutions is an important one for boroughs, by reason of often limited means. Support for community-driven, inspiring projects is one path to follow in order to improve the quality of life of citizens. ■



## Véronique FOURNIER

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Le Sud-Ouest**

District: **Saint-Henri–  
Petite-Bourgogne–Pointe-Saint-Charles**

With a master's degree in social economics and a bachelor's in social work and community organization, Véronique Fournier considers community development from a perspective of defending the values of social justice, fairness and sustainable development. To her mind, young women must get involved in the political process and form an emerging class of politically involved women. This is the reason she decided to run in the municipal elections of November 2009.

Politics served as a very good launch-pad to address further local development with the existing actors of the milieu. She enjoys addressing the issues and working collaboratively. She is part of the *Commission permanente sur le développement culturel et la qualité du milieu de vie*.

For Ms Fournier, the rebuilding of the Turcot interchange is, first and foremost, a project that should allow for the harmonious development of the affected neighbourhoods. At the start of the new millennium, it represents a challenge for the future of urban development and transportation in the city of Montreal. The societal choices to come will allow for creativity as regards architectural and urban design, and culture, taking into account local residents. Presiding over the *Comité consultatif d'urbanisme du Sud-Ouest* affords her a sound platform to address these preoccupations.

Access to public transportation is crucial to women, and the most recent report by the *Conseil des Montréalaises* puts the emphasis squarely on this issue. To close, we must not forget the importance of housing in all its aspects: access to housing, cleanliness, affordable rent, sufficient number of rooms and access to property. Women living in poverty are strongly affected by these matters. ■





## Sophie THIÉBAUT

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Le Sud-Ouest**

District: **Saint-Henri-  
Petite-Bourgogne-Pointe-Saint-Charles**

As a community organizer in the neighbourhood for many years, Sophie Thiébaud has been an important player in *Mobilisation Turcot*. A committed woman, active on the ground, she rejected the Turcot interchange project as proposed in September 2007 by *Transports Québec*. She did not actively seek to enter politics. It was rather more an opportunity that presented itself through a young political party that advanced principles and values that she believed in that convinced her to run in the municipal election of 2009. The campaign that she led as a logical follow-up to her preceding work allowed her to broaden her field of endeavour.

She is reassured to see that the current municipal team of elected representatives in the *Sud-Ouest*, composed of individuals from different parties, all pull together despite the partisanship. Along with the transportation file, Ms Thiébaud is also active with the housing dossier, as the borough has gained the interest of real estate investors with its many available lots open to development and its close proximity to downtown. As a member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur la mise en valeur du territoire, l'aménagement urbain et le transport collectif*, she casts a new and, at times, critical glance on the urban development of the borough in which she resides, and that she would like to see preserve its soul and richness.

Her party favours parity between men and women, and this may have influenced her selection as a candidate. To her, parity should not be seen as rivalry, but rather as the possibility of having complementarity and sensitivity, especially with files that could have important consequences on the living conditions of residents. ■



## Huguette ROY

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Le Sud-Ouest**

District: **Saint-Paul-Émard**

The varied career experiences and uninterrupted involvement of Huguette Roy in many organizations have always been guided by a desire to serve and to realize projects. She has dedicated 12 years to the advancement of the quality of life of seniors. An increasingly ageing population represents an economic, social and political challenge that we must all face together.

She long reflected on the suggestion that she should run in the municipal election of 2009. This afforded her the possibility of advancing her causes, as being in municipal politics is being at the heart of change for the betterment of the quality of life of people. She presently sits on the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur les services aux citoyens*.

She finds the Sud-Ouest borough particularly pleasing by its diversity, architectural beauty, and citizen pride, all elements that increase the enjoyment of life in the borough. In collaboration with the *Regroupement des organismes pour aînés du Sud-Ouest de Montréal*, Ms Roy is at work on the pilot project *Le Sud-Ouest, un arrondissement ami des aînés*, that aims to create a living environment where growing old is a pleasant experience. Truly innovative in this regard, the borough wants to become a reference and an inspiration for Montreal, by looking at growing old in a different light, where seniors can continue to lead active lives.

Sensitive to the many issues that touch women, Huguette Roy focuses on the importance of their role in governance, amongst other issues. She believes that, in order to attain equal representation, a greater presence of women and young people in politics is necessary. To do so, we will have to rethink the formula in terms of a better conciliation of the work-family equation. ■



## Diane GIBB

### BOROUGH COUNCILLOR

Borough: L'Île-Bizard–Sainte-Geneviève

District: Pierre-Foretier

Holder of a degree in commerce, with a marketing major from Concordia University, Diane Gibb has acquired varied professional experiences with different employers. In 1995, she founded her own company. She became a consultant in business start-ups and promotional campaigns.

Consulted as a citizen on a question of urban development and safety and realizing how quickly the matter was settled, she decided to offer her skills by running in the municipal election. First elected in 1999, she is now in her third mandate as borough councillor. To her, the fundamental role of elected officials is to serve as liaison between the citizens they represent and the municipal government, a go-between, if you will.

She has brought her attention to bear on various dossiers over the years. Amongst them, Ms Gibb deals with environmental matters, public safety, but mostly on questions of sports, leisure, culture and social development. To provide families and seniors with a quality living environment and living spaces for children and young people is only one of her priorities. Transparency, empathy, field work, and the search for solutions with local associations are all part of her daily workload.

Many of her initiatives have resulted from consultations since 2005, particularly projects regarding families and youth. Noteworthy: more and more young people are taking part in borough projects, evidently feeling better heard, understood, and valued.

Diane Gibb believes that women have a place in politics, as much as men do, and that they must have their competencies recognized. She believes that one of the principal challenges resides in balancing family and work. This requires a good sense of organization and, especially, the unshakeable support of the people who surround us. ■



## Lyn THÉRIAULT

### CITY COUNCILLOR

Borough:

Mercier–Hochelaga–Maisonneuve

District: Louis-Riel

Lyn Thériault has garnered vast professional and volunteer work experience as a coordinator and manager. She was elected as school commissioner. A people person, she has always been preoccupied with the well-being of the people around her, through her work as a volunteer as well as by being a mother and grandmother. In 2000, while she reflected on her future, she decided to join the team of Pierre Bourque and was elected as city councillor for Louis-Riel. Borough mayor from 2005 to 2009, Lyn Thériault was re-elected in November 2009 to the position of city councillor for the same district and nominated as a member of the executive committee of the city of Montreal.

She particularly holds dear questions of social and community development. She also laments that the media too often fails to report positive events or achievements, as witnessed by the family dossier and all its indirect consequences in terms of environment, transportation, safety, etc. To her, interventions such as parking spaces for families, identified by teddy-bears, could be more widely publicized. Likewise, she considers that the city-wide universal access measures implemented did not receive the media coverage such hard work deserves.

As regards the status of women, Ms Thériault is of the opinion that women must take their place, and it is through participation that they will achieve this. The *Comité femmes-arrondissement* is a fine example of a place that lends itself perfectly to the task, a place where the major issues of the day can be discussed, subjects, for example, such as urban safety or public housing. ■



## Louise HAREL

**CITY COUNCILLOR  
CHIEF OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION**

**Borough:**  
**Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve**  
**District: Maisonneuve-Longue-Pointe**

A political woman for quite some time, Louise Harel knows the ropes. Recognized first for her social commitment, she began her political career in the 70s after having completed her studies in sociology, and being admitted to the bar in 1978. She was elected MNA for *Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* in 1981, a position she held for 27 years. During that time, she was named as head of various ministries and became, in 2002, the first woman to occupy the position of president of the Quebec National Assembly. She left provincial politics in 2008, and jumped to municipal politics in 2009 as chief of the official opposition of the city of Montreal.

To Ms Harel, questions of ethics and governance are important subjects, being, as it were, the pledge of effective participation by the citizenry in municipal life. This to her is vital in view of the projects she has for the city of Montreal, especially as regards key elements linked to its development. This is why she strives to bring improvements to the modes of operation of the municipal administration.

In regard to the status of women, she remains attached to the question of parity. As the mother of the law on pay equity, she would like to see the work of women's recognition pursued in all work environments. Women must also find and take their place in politics, because this is where change originates. She surrounded herself with women in her party. Louise Harel particularly likes the rich and commonsensical look women cast upon political issues. She suggests that women retain their femininity, even when in power. ■



## Clementina TETI-TOMASSI

**CITY COUNCILLOR**  
**Borough: Montréal-Nord**  
**District: Marie-Clarac**

After her studies in management, Clementina Teti-Tomassi was working for a claim settlement firm when she was approached by Union Montréal to become a candidate in the 2005 municipal elections. Touched by this confidence, she ran and was elected as city councillor. Mother of five children, Ms Teti-Tomassi relies on organization in order to perform her duties, and further relies on her family's support to do so. It is the support of her loved-ones that allowed her to make the jump into politics.

Re-elected as city councillor in 2009, she considers the job a privilege, as it allows her to meet with citizens daily and to lend them an ear. She appreciates the diversity of the work of a politician, the field work that calls forth her sense of responsibility and requires that she find concrete solutions to the problems and difficulties of the residents of Montréal-Nord. Being elected allows her to see the borough from another angle and to better understand its functioning. She sees herself as a hyphen between a citizen and the required service.

With the acquired experience of Montréal-Nord realities, she is involved in dossiers of borough circulation and embellishment, as well as with the *Comité des sports, loisirs et développement social*. Ms Teti-Tomassi occupies the position of assistant-leader of the majority at city council. She also sits on the *Commission permanente de la présidence du conseil*. ■



# The 41 elected women

## at the CITY OF MONTRÉAL



### WERE PRESENT FOR THE PICTURE

*From left to right*

#### 1<sup>st</sup> row

Diane Gibb, Michelle Zammit, Mary Deros, Andrée Hénault, Monique Worth, Ginette Marotte, Lise Poulin, Suzanne Décarie, Anie Samson, Élane Ayotte, Louise Harel

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> row

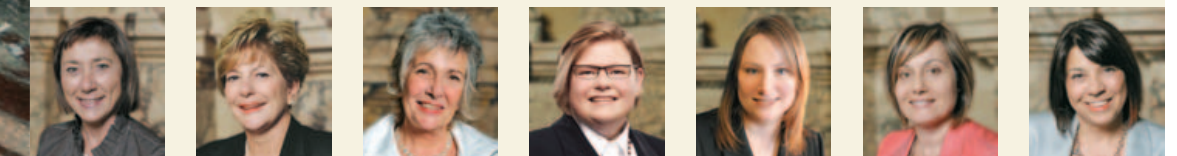
Monica Ricourt, Maria Calderone, Susan Clarke, Huguette Roy, Michèle D. Biron, Marie Potvin, Émilie Thuillier, Caroline Bourgeois

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> row

Jane Cowell-Poitras, Josée Duplessis, Clementina Teti-Tomassi, Sophie Thiébaud, Céline Forget, Chantal Rouleau

#### 4<sup>th</sup> row

Lili-Anne Tremblay, Jocelyn Ann Campbell, Chantal Rossi, Marie Cinq-Mars, Ana Nunes, Elsie Lefebvre, Lyn Thériault, Helen Fotopulos, Véronique Fournier



### WERE ABSENT

*From left to right*

Manon Barbe, Andrée Champoux, Catherine Clément-Talbot, Ann Guy, Piper Huggins, Laura-Ann Palestini, Josée Troilo





## Chantal ROSSI

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Montréal-Nord**

District: **Marie-Clara**

Daughter of former member of Parliament Carlo Rossi, Chantal Rossi was introduced to public life at a young age. Singer by profession, she displayed her passion and talent for singing at family gatherings. Her willingness to actively participate in community development brought her to occupy the position of school commissioner for Pointe-de-l'Île in June 1998, as well as vice-president of the *Commission de l'éducation des adultes et de la formation professionnelle, du transport scolaire et des technologies de l'information*. Elected borough councillor in 2009, she worked with the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le développement culturel et la qualité du milieu de vie*.

To her eyes, the strategic plan of Montréal-Nord constitutes an important dossier. Covering some ten years, the plan aims to improve the quality of life of residents. The revitalization of Charlevoix Street and the development of a transportation network on Pie-IX Boulevard are elements of the plan. Within the broad scope of the plan, we also find the festivities associated with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Montréal-Nord, an event dear to Ms Rossi's heart. The event is planned for 2015, and Ms Rossi is already hard at work, documenting and organizing various files for festivities that will run over the entire year. It is an opportunity to increase the sense of belonging of long-time Montréal-Nord residents and to transmit this feeling to new residents. She hopes the centennial celebrations will bring the community together.

Her priority as regards the status of women is to halt violence perpetrated against women. In Chantal Rossi's view, it is necessary to better protect women so that they may assert themselves and reject this violence. ■



## Monica RICOURT

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Montréal-Nord**

District: **Ovide-Clermont**

Born in Montréal-Nord from Haitian parents, Monica Ricourt took an interest in politics at a very young age. A dynamic individual, she founded an organization to make known the viewpoint of young people from cultural communities, and worked as a volunteer on various projects in Haiti, again dealing with children and youths.

In time, her interest in local and international events brought her to study political science. After having worked as political attaché to Minister Line Beauchamp for five years, she decided to run for office as a candidate in the municipal election for Montréal-Nord in 2009. Her experience as a militant and her profound knowledge of the realities of the borough have served her well.

Ms Ricourt firmly believes that politics, at all levels, must be representative of the population, whether it be young people, people from the cultural communities or women. This representativeness must also be present in key positions, on boards of directors, and where decisions are made.

She is particularly concerned with young people in society. As borough councillor, she organized a young people's talent show that allowed them to get involved and claim the project as their own, to showcase their strengths while collecting funds for Haiti.

Ms Ricourt hopes to continue developing such projects that allow the young people of Montréal-Nord to get involved and live positive experiences that favour transfer of experiences. It is also a way of developing future community leaders and organizers. ■



## Marie CINQ-MARS

**BOROUGH MAYOR**  
Borough: **Outremont**

A graduate in Arts and Communication from Concordia University and the *Université du Québec à Montréal*, Marie Cinq-Mars is very active in her community. She discovered the world of politics through citizen and career initiatives, most notably with the opening of the *Galerie d'art d'Outremont*. She entered politics in 1999 as an Outremont city councillor and developed that city's first cultural policy.

Following the municipal amalgamations, Ms Cinq-Mars presided over the local commission for public safety and parking, as well as that for arts and culture. A sitting member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le développement culturel et la qualité du milieu de vie*, she became its president from January 2006 to December 2008.

Elected mayor of the borough in 2007, Ms Cinq-Mars is presently the councillor associated with culture, heritage, design and the status of women on the executive council of the city of Montreal.

One of her hopes as councillor is that the city can attract and retain families and provide them with an environment of art and culture that is clean, safe and green.

As for her priorities regarding the status of women, she hopes to see more women at all levels of government. *"Women represent slightly more than half of the population. They must be able to present their ideas. An equitable representation of this reality is vital to a democratic society."* ■



## Ana NUNES

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**  
Borough: **Outremont**  
District: **Jeanne-Sauvé**

An architect, Ana Nunes is active in her community. She was first elected to borough council in 2005. Her concern for the environment led her to occupy the position of president of the *Comité consultatif sur l'environnement et le développement durable* of Outremont. This committee was the source of many recycling initiatives. Since 2007, she also presides over the *Comité consultatif d'urbanisme* of the borough. Re-elected in 2009, she worked with the *Commission permanente du conseil d'agglomération sur les grands équipements et les activités d'intérêt d'agglomération*.

Used to working in predominantly male environments, Ana Nunes is intent on casting a woman's gaze on various files that, too often, are a man's prerogative. It is indeed rare to see a woman in charge of dossiers dealing with construction, transportation and urban development. However, she takes an interest in such dossiers because she has expertise in the matter. Her preoccupation with the environment and sustainable development remains her leitmotiv: she insists in applying in her work as an elected official the same rules of conservation that she does in her work as an architect.

A fervent defender of women's rights and touched by the precarious situation of many women, Ms Nunes works hard to see that the realities women must face on a daily basis are taken into account. As the head of a single-parent family, she knows full well how difficult it is to navigate a day full of obstacles, such as complicated transportation routes, apartments that are insanitary, too expensive or ill-fitted, etc. This is why she believes it important that we deal with women's issues in a comprehensive manner and encourage women to band together to positively transform their living conditions. ■



## Céline FORGET

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Outremont**

District: **Joseph-Beaubien**

Ms Forget is the only borough councillor in Montreal who sits as an independent. As such, she sees her role as that of a "watchdog" for the interests of her fellow citizens. She performs her duties as a councillor while continuing her regular job in landscaping. Active in her community, she is first elected in 1999, when Outremont was still an autonomous municipality. Her mandate was fore-shortened by the municipal amalgamation that made of Outremont a borough of Montreal in 2002. She again became a councillor in November 2009.

For Céline Forget, democratic life does well when citizens take part in public affairs. The harmonious development of the borough comes about when people feel concerned by the decisions that are taken. To stimulate their involvement, she wants to make borough council as transparent as possible. This is done by way of the continuous supply of quality information. Well aware of the fact that the members of the electorate are busy with their professional, family and personal affairs and that they do not always have time to attend council meetings, Ms Forget has created a Website where residents can view the subjects that were discussed at council meetings and concern their borough. She shares the required information in order to better understand the main issues of the day. In this way, with pertinent and precise information in hand, residents can mobilize and intervene, if they so desire. ■



## Marie POTVIN

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Outremont**

District: **Robert-Bourassa**

Geographer and consultant in public and governmental affairs, Ms Potvin had a long career in the Quebec civil service and political apparatus. A passionate person, she was a researcher at the Quebec National Assembly, political policy advisor to the Outremont MNA (1997-2003) and to the Quebec Minister of Finance (2003-2005). Although she well knows the ins and outs of political life and has solid experience in the public and para-public domains, her political life as an elected official since 2007 required some adjustment.

The environment and land development are the main interests of Ms Potvin on the municipal scene. She looks at urban development from a sustainable environment angle, a concern that should be shared by everyone. She sits on the permanent commission that deals with such matters.

She is also quite sensitive about the needs of senior citizens. The reality of an ageing population will bring about major changes in our society and will transform the issues and challenges facing the city. She is also member of the board of directors of *Baluchon Alzheimer*.

Finally, the safety of women especially that of older women is at the heart of her concerns. This is why she keeps abreast of the latest developments in public transportation and works together with the *Société de transport de Montréal (STM)* to improve safety in the streets of Outremont, as well as in the metro. Ms Potvin would like to promote the *Entre deux arrêts* program. She remains attentive to matters regarding universal access, so necessary to seniors and the physically challenged. She is also concerned about budget deficits of the municipal administration and the problems that will ensue. ■



## Monique WORTH

**BOROUGH MAYOR**

Borough: **Pierrefonds-Roxboro**

Mother of three, Monique Worth worked for a pharmaceutical company for 22 years. First elected as a city councillor in Pierrefonds in 1990, she became mayor of the Pierrefonds-Roxboro borough in 2001. For many years, she simultaneously performed her duties at work, as mayor and as a mother. This was a particularly trying period in her life.

Very involved in the community, Ms Worth has been member of the board of directors of the *Fondation du refuge des femmes*. Over the years, she perfected her knowledge and developed her expertise as a politician. She was a councillor associated with the executive committee of the city of Montreal in the dossiers of sustainable development, the environment, eco-territories and blue spaces. Since 2009, she has been a member of the executive committee and responsible for the Sports and Leisure dossier.

On the local level, sustainable development is the priority. An eco-territory project to preserve green spaces, tied to a mixed residential project is under way. Concurrently, the renovation of arenas and the building of new soccer pitches are important works to complete to answer the needs of residents.

The first woman to be elected in Pierrefonds in 1990, Ms Worth clearly expresses the need to convince young women to enter politics. Women often pursue different objectives than men, have their own way of looking at various matters, and this can make a difference. Balancing the demands of family, career and political life is certainly not easy. It is a considerable challenge, but ever so exciting! ■



## Catherine CLÉMENT-TALBOT

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Pierrefonds-Roxboro**

District: **Ouest**

Lawyer and accredited mediator, Catherine Clément-Talbot has always been involved in the community. Her involvement in the *Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys*, as well as with the *Association de médiation familiale du Québec* are two fine examples. Along with her participation in the organization and holding of elections in the 1980s, it is particularly through her civic involvement that she discovered an interest in politics. Elected as a borough councillor in 2005 and re-elected in 2009, she is also president of the *Comité consultatif d'urbanisme de Pierrefonds-Roxboro*.

A major residential project in Pierrefonds is of particular interest to her. The project is for a high-density habitat that requires rethinking the entire city and its connections in such a way as to afford future residents easy access to services (daycare, grocery stores, post office, etc.). Amongst them, municipal services will have to answer the needs of the population, such as libraries, green spaces, sports and leisure infrastructures, etc. As the project is, to her eyes, first and foremost a community project, she would like to see it develop into a social and ethno-cultural mix.

As for the status of women, Ms Clément-Talbot considers that, despite the increased participation of women in the job market, they nonetheless are still main caregivers of children. To her, we should better support these women, be it only by facilitating their displacements. Improving the public transit system in the borough would be an important step forward. This is why that dossier has now become one of her priorities. ■





## Chantal ROULEAU

**BOROUGH MAYOR**

Borough:  
**Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles**

A woman used to working in male-dominated fields, Chantal Rouleau is attached to environmental and developmental issues. After having occupied various positions of responsibility in the field of natural resources, she decided to orient her professional career in such a way as to find herself in a decision-making position. It is by making the jump to politics that she achieved that end, by becoming mayor of Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles borough in the by-election of June 2010.

Ms Rouleau hopes to do what is needed to make her borough attractive. Amongst the projects she holds dear, one worth mentioning is the re-engineering of the major thoroughfares common to the territories of Rivière-des-Prairies and Pointe-aux-Trembles in the aim of favouring exchanges within the borough. Moreover, she is also looking closely at the possibility of developing a beach to the east of the borough, a project that requires improving the water quality of the Saint-Laurence and transforming the shores into areas accessible to the general population.

On women's issues, Chantal Rouleau reflects on the work-family balance of women in politics, because, as she says, *"If there is one place where that is truly necessary, it most certainly is politics where meetings often finish at 11:00 at night, for example"*. To her mind, politics is the public arena that is probably the least adapted to the needs of women. And it is precisely in that arena that they have an important role to play in order to ensure that the decisions that are made better reflect society as a whole. ■



## Caroline BOURGEOIS

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

Borough:  
**Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles**  
District: **La Pointe-aux-Prairies**

With a degree in journalism in hand, Caroline Bourgeois thought that she would work as a parliamentary correspondent in Quebec City or Ottawa. Working as a community radio broadcaster led her to develop an interest for municipal politics and local development. She got involved in her community by serving, amongst others, in the *Comité de liaison de l'industrie et de la communauté de l'est de Montréal* and, professionally, for *Solidarité Mercier-Est*, the issue table of the community. Since November 2009, she is the city councillor of the district of Pointe-aux-Prairies. As a young elected official, she considers being part of the emerging political elected officials, a group that is certainly learning from more experienced colleagues, but also brings new ideas.

One major concern of Ms Bourgeois is to increase the participation of citizens by promoting the importance of their involvement in managing their living environment. She notes that young people are politicized, but this interest is not expressed through partisan politics. It is therefore important to consider this aspect when encouraging them to get involved.

Also, the issue of local transit service, particularly between Pointe-aux-Trembles and Rivière-des-Prairies, is close to her heart. In this regard, she presides the *Comité de circulation* of the Borough, and is a member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le transport, la gestion des infrastructures et l'environnement*.

In 2007 and 2008, Caroline Bourgeois was a member of the *Conseil des Montréalaises* and enjoyed the rich experience. Henceforth, her priority in terms of status of women, other than public transit, is to improve women's representation in politics and in the public life. ■



## Suzanne DÉCARIE

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

**Borough:**

**Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles**

**District: Pointe-aux-Trembles**

Suzanne Décarie has got the bug for politics through her community implications in the Pointe-de-l'Île. Her true leap happened once her professional and family situation allowed it, seven years ago. She now dedicates herself fully to politics. For her, this is a vocation. Elected borough councillor in 2005, then city councillor in 2009, Ms Décarie is member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le transport, la gestion des infrastructures et l'environnement*. She is also commissioner of the *Commission scolaire de la Pointe-de-l'Île* since 2003.

Her strong empathy for the residents of Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles explains the attention she pays to the services offered to the population. In this regard, she wishes to see greater equity between various boroughs throughout Montreal. For her, the needs of Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles should be further considered, because behind the apparent prosperity of the population in the borough are hiding significant pockets of poverty where basic local services are deficient. She aspires therefore to provide these citizens with decent and effective services so that they are proud to be Montrealers.

On the issue of women status, Suzanne Décarie believes that women must take their place without prejudice to men's place. Women have certainly more challenges in society, but she believes we are heading toward a certain balance in which everyone learns from each other. Women have worked hard to get there. The issue of pay equity is one of her top priorities. ■



## Maria CALDERONE

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

**Borough:**

**Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles**

**District: Rivière-des-Prairies**

Businesswoman in property management, Maria Calderone is also interested in community life. Her involvement within school authorities and community-based organizations attests of this interest. Throughout her commitments, she knew her path would sooner or later lead her into politics. For her, this was a logical extension to her studies in political science, sociology and community organization. Elected borough councillor in 2005, and re-elected in 2009 as city councillor in the district of Rivière-des-Prairies, she is chairwoman of the *Commission permanente du conseil d'agglomération sur le développement économique*. Among the issues that are dear to her heart, she intends to pursue the Maison de la culture construction project.

In her opinion, each person can make a difference and become an agent of change. In this regard, she wishes to see women and young people more involved in politics. Ms Calderone believes that incentives should be offered to encourage them to enter politics. At present, becoming a candidate means putting your life on hold during the campaign, including your job, without any certainty or minimum social protection. For her part, she had to resign from her job, confronted with the impossibility to reconcile her professional activities with being an elected official and a mother.

Maria Calderone firmly believes in gender equality and is particularly sensitive to the issue of pay equity. However, it is clear that there is still a long way to go. Little space is given to women while, in her eyes, they are the future. It is therefore necessary to give them the opportunity to work and get training, among others. ■



## Éleine AYOTTE

**CITY COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie**  
District: **Marie-Victorin**

Trained in communication, Éleine Ayotte is a well-known media figure, as a journalist, news anchor and TV host. In the 2009 municipal election, she chose to take a stand as a citizen and run as a candidate. The arrival of Ms Louise Harel, a woman of experience, aspiring to be the mayor of the City of Montreal, was the key factor in her decision. She is currently vice-president of the *Commission permanente de la présidence du conseil* and a member of the *Commission permanente du conseil d'agglomération sur les grands équipements et les activités d'intérêt d'agglomération*.

In her vision of an ideal city, Ms Ayotte pictures Montreal responding to the aspirations of the whole population. We must increase measures to ease home ownership, essential to attract young families. We must invest in recreational infrastructures, develop access to the river banks, but also take into account the ageing of the population and become a friendly city to senior citizens. She dreams of seeing Montreal take its place as a cultural metropolis in the international arena and wants to contribute to this goal by developing inspiring projects, such as the celebrations of the 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Montreal in 2017, for example.

Since municipal politics reflects women's concerns, they have every reason to get more involved. Citizen participation is an important contribution to building a better society. Two issues are of great importance for Éleine Ayotte: economic empowerment of women, through employment, and gender equality, which includes a large debate on secularism within our public institutions. ■



## Michèle D. BIRON

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: **Saint-Laurent**  
District: **Norman-McLaren**

The interest of Michèle D. Biron for politics stems from her childhood. Her father was very involved and, at a very young age, she loved to attend meetings that he held at home with his staff. Later, having left Berthierville, her hometown, her interest in politics was expressed through activism.

In early 1980, the *Parti Québécois* launched the idea of municipal political parties and of having more women as candidates. This is when the Mayor of Saint-Laurent at the time, Marcel Laurin, approached her to become a candidate for the elections of 1982. This is how she became the first woman elected to the council of the Town of Saint-Laurent and the first woman nominated at the executive committee. She was re-elected since then without interruption. The issues that are dear to her heart include projects related to the environment, the construction of a second library and a sports complex to give the community adequate sites to have family activities.

Finally, as chairwoman of the *Commission sur le développement culturel et la qualité du milieu de vie*, she always keeps in mind the importance of maintaining venues where access to cultural activities is free for all citizens.

She welcomes the fact that more and more women hold decision making positions but, at the same time, she is aware of the road ahead to reach equality.

For Ms Biron, working as an elected official is a vocation. It requires to be attentive to citizens' requests and to remain available, an approach that she embraces. ■





## Lili-Anne TREMBLAY

### BOROUGH COUNCILLOR

Borough: Saint-Léonard

District: Saint-Léonard Est

Recruited by her predecessor, Lili-Anne Tremblay became borough councillor in 2009. A graduate of the *École nationale d'administration publique*, this generous woman, with her great energy, had contributed to the two previous municipal campaigns and felt ready to assume the functions of an elected. For this newly elected, serving the population is a way to thank her family and society for her own development. Surrounded by an experienced team, Ms Tremblay wants to work with citizens to promote better neighbourhoods and develop a culture of mutual support.

Recognizing the benefits and limitations of government programs, this civil servant wants to support community organizations of her borough so that they can implement projects that promote harmonious social fabric in step with economic development. These projects must address the entire population, while maintaining focus on young people, who will form the society of tomorrow. She is also a member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur les finances, les services administratifs et le capital humain*.

In her opinion, the advancement of women was significant, at all points of views. However, the gains remain fragile. Their precarious financial position remains; physical and psychological violence against them is seen on a daily basis; family and work balancing act is still their burden. This is why women must continue to work towards improving their lives and work. To achieve this, they must rely on the support of woman politicians, hence the need to address the issue of succession so that more women decide to run for office. ■



## Ginette MAROTTE

### CITY COUNCILLOR

Borough: Verdun

District: Champlain-L'Île-des-Sœurs

Although very active in her community, Ginette Marotte did not think to be destined to go into politics. Yet, she made the leap in 2001, her professional situation allowing her to do so. Elected borough councillor then, she was re-elected in 2005 and again in 2009 as city councillor for the district Champlain-L'Île-des-Sœurs of Verdun. She is also associate advisor to the City on issues related to sustainable development, environment and parks. She is vice-president of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur le transport, la gestion des infrastructures et l'environnement* and participates in the works of the *Commission du conseil d'agglomération* on the same issues. Locally, Ms Marotte is responsible for the *Société de développement commercial*.

Environment is one of her choice issues. In this regard, Ginette Marotte is particularly proud of the 180-degree turn made by the district on waste management. Verdun has indeed become a borough where no waste is produced thanks to an industrial composter, and where the recycling rate has increased 20%. She intends to continue to work towards changing the image of waste, that is to say, to assert waste as a resource, a remarkable source of energy. She wants to leave her grand-children a healthier world, contributing to that goal at the scale of the island of Montreal.

With regards to woman status, Ms Marotte would like to see further work accomplished by the *Conseil des Montréalaises* to support women, and this, by informing them again and again, because in her view, information is power. ■



## Andrée CHAMPOUX

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: Verdun

District:

Champlain-L'Île-des-Sœurs, post 2

With a degree in administration, Andrée Champoux began her career at the head office of Canadian National, where she held various positions. In 1986, as general manager and assistant commissioner of the CN pavilion at the Vancouver World Expo, she discovered the multiple aspects of business management and was particularly interested in human relations. Always curious to learn, she decided to start a manufacturing company. Being multi-skilled, she became a trainer and coach. In 2005, she founded Performance Action Client, an enterprise that offers training and coaching services in the areas of management, sales and customer service. Ms Champoux also volunteered with the Club Richelieu for deprived children.

Interested in public affairs, she likes confrontation of ideas and debates. On several occasions, she declined invitations to run in provincial elections, focusing then on her role as a mother and a businesswoman. Her involvement as president of the governing board of her children's school brought her back to municipal politics. After volunteering for the party *Union Montréal*, she entered politics in the fall of 2009.

Now chairwoman of the *Commission sur le sport, la culture et les loisirs* of her borough, she would like to develop venues for performing and circus arts. She also serves on the *Commission permanente du conseil d'agglomération sur l'environnement, le transport et les infrastructures*.

For Andrée Champoux, woman autonomy depends on economy and employment. This is through those means that she envisions gender equity. As a priority, she wishes to support local initiatives offering help to women in the course of their return to employment. ■



## Ann GUY

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Borough: Verdun

District: Desmarchais-Crawford, post 1

Ann Guy is a computer specialist, graduate of Concordia University, and currently employed by Environment Canada. Verdun resident for several years, she particularly appreciates the warmth of human contact and access to the water. Her desire to get involved in her community led her to volunteer in the *Rendez-vous mondial du cerf-volant*. Over time, she met people, became a member of the embellishment committee of her neighbourhood, and a volunteer for election campaigns. Candidate as borough councillor in municipal elections, she was elected in November 2009.

As chair of the *Commission de l'urbanisme, de l'habitation et du patrimoine*, she is very interested in the modernisation of the land-use plan of the borough. Public consultations related to the issue are central to get the approval of citizens. Ms Guy is also a member of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur la mise en valeur du territoire, l'aménagement urbain et le transport collectif*.

Her interests are many. Sport, recreation and culture are important elements in the quality of life for people of Verdun. She dreams of seeing the construction of an indoor pool in the neighbourhood. She is proud of the many efforts made to provide access to culture, such as free concerts.

The housing issue is of great concern to Ann Guy. To provide single mothers, elderly women and families with better access to safe and affordable housing, she sits at the joint table on social housing, which goal is to increase the number of social housing units in Verdun. ■



## Anie SAMSON

### BOROUGH MAYOR

Borough:  
**Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension**

Anie Samson was elected City Councillor in 1994. On November 1, 2009, she was elected for a second term as mayor of the borough of Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension.

She holds a master's degree in Communication and a bachelor's degree in Political Science. Since her election in 1994, Anie Samson was able to successfully fulfil her duties as associate advisor to the mayor, responsible for environmental issues, 2<sup>nd</sup> vice-president of the Island of Montreal's Inter-municipal Region of Waste Management, and president of AMGA (*Alliance métropolitaine graffiti et affichage*). She has also served on the board of the CRDÎM (*Conseil régional de développement de l'île de Montréal*). She was a member of the Soundscape Consultative Committee of the Montreal International Airport, and of the *Commission de l'environnement* of the CUM. She was responsible for the program *Éco-quartier*, youth issues, and graffiti issue. She is a founding member of the *Fondation du maire de Montréal pour la jeunesse*. Currently, Ms Samson serves as leader of the official opposition in City Hall. She is also responsible for the communities of different origins and sits on the Standing *Committee of the Commission permanente de la présidence du Conseil*, and on the Agglomeration Council. In addition, she is a member of the Government Commission on Ethics.

Since 2005, Anie Samson is celebrating marriages. With revenues raised, she created a fund dedicated to food security, which she considers one of her finest achievements.

In connection with women status, Anie Samson observes that equality between men and women is not yet secured for all women. She sees this as a real challenge for future generations. ■



## Mary DEROS

### CITY COUNCILLOR

Borough:  
**Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension**  
District: **Parc-Extension**

Before entering politics, Mary Deros was working in the travel industry. Although very involved in her community, she was not envisioning herself as a politician. It is actually Pierre Bourque who approached her in 1998 to join his team. Because she appreciated the man, she decided to take the plunge and, under his guidance, won elections and became city councillor for the district of Parc-Extension. Re-elected in 2009 for a fourth term, she still holds the presidency of the Urban Planning Advisory Committee of the borough. In addition, she serves on the executive committee of the City of Montreal and is responsible for communities of different origins.

During all those years as an elected official, she developed many skills that have helped her to lead many great projects to fruition. She considers having the power to make a difference in her neighbourhood. Since 2009, she is very attentive to the dossier of communities of different origins. This is a crossover issue as it requires, for example, interventions in the fields of sports, economic, or housing. Ms Deros is also sensitive to the fact that City Hall is a place little known to cultural communities, although they have equal rights and equal access to services.

In connection with women status, Mary Deros uses her own experience to encourage women to achieve their goals. Indeed, for her, if a woman born abroad is able to stand for election, to win, and then to serve in the executive committee, it shows that anything is possible. ■





## Elsie LEFEBVRE

CITY COUNCILLOR

Borough:

**Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension**

District: **Villeray**

A very active woman, Elsie Lefebvre was involved in her community at an early age, by multiplying her implications in community groups, international associations or student's unions. She became interested in politics early. Indeed, she was already active at the age of 17, and was elected in 2004, at 25, as representative of the Parti Québécois in the constituency of Laurier-Dorion. She became the youngest woman elected to the National Assembly of Québec. She then contributed to the realization of many local projects in addition to focusing on family, education and immigration issues. Elected in 2009 as city councillor in the district of Villeray, she serves as vice-chair of the city council, a first for a woman, and as vice-chair of the *Commission permanente du conseil municipal sur la mise en valeur du territoire, l'aménagement urbain et le transport collectif*.

For Ms Lefebvre, politics is a formidable way to improve the quality of life of the population. That is why her priorities are essentially oriented towards local services that make a difference. She knows very well the challenges of her district, having lived there forever. She takes to heart the issues of citizen participation, fight against poverty and Québec sovereignty.

As a mother, and in terms of advancement of women, Elsie Lefebvre believes that keeping families in the territory is one of the biggest challenges facing the city of Montreal. In this regard, it would be appropriate, she says, to offer more quality local services to families. ■

# ELECTED WOMEN<sup>1</sup>, CITY OF MONTREAL, from 1940 to 2005<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 1

Name	Term	District
Jessie Kathleen Fisher	1940-1954	N° 4, class A
Lucie (Mme Théodule) Bruneau	1940-1942	N° 9, class A
Elizabeth C. Monk	1940-1942	Comité des citoyens de Montréal, classe C
Beryl Truax	1942-1944	Ligue du progrès civique, class C
Mme Eustache Letellier de Saint-Just	1954-1960	Ligue du progrès civique, class C
Mme Saul Hayes	1957-1960	Comité des citoyens de Montréal, class C
Ginette Keroack	1974-1978	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, seat N° 3
Mariette Lapierre	1974-1978	Rivière-des-Prairies, seat N° 1
Thérèse Daviau-Bergeron	1974-1978	Saint-Michel, seat N° 2
	1986-1990	Saint-Jean-Baptiste
	1990-1998	Plateau-Mont-Royal
Carmen Millette	1978-1984	Louis-Riel
Nicole Gagnon-Larocque	1978-1986	Octave-Crémazie
Justine Sentenne	1978-1982	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce
Jocelyne Ménard	1980-1986	Villeray
Nicole Boudreau	1986-1994	Longue-Pointe
Nicole (Marie-Alma) Milhomme	1986-1994	Tétreaultville
Ginette L'Heureux	1986-1994	Maisonnette
Diane Barbeau	1986-1994	Hochelaga
Léa Cousineau	1986-1994	Étienne-Desmarteau
Diane Martin	1986-1994	Louis-Hébert
Micheline Daigle	1986-1994	Jean-Rivard
Kathleen Verdon	1986-1990	Cartierville
Martine Blanc	1986-1994	Octave-Crémazie
Manon Forget	1986-1994	De Lorimier
Nicole Caron-Gagnon	1986-1994	Émard
Sharon Leslie	1986-1994	Loyola
Ghislain Boisvert	1986-1990	La Rousselière
	1990-1994	Pointe-aux-Trembles

<sup>1</sup> Ms Lucia Kowaluk, running mate of Michel Prescott, was elected in 1998 and gave up her seat. As she did not sit, her name does not appear in the list.

<sup>2</sup> Elected women are presented by date, from the oldest to the most recent, as well as by district number, although these last are not displayed. Moreover, it must be noted that the division by borough only appears as of 2001. The women elected or re-elected in 2009 are individually presented in the brochure.

## ELECTED WOMEN, CITY OF MONTREAL, FROM 1940 TO 2005

**TABLE 1** (suite)

Name	Term	District
Jacqueline Bordeleau	1986-1994	Bout-de-l'Île
Sylvie Lantier	1990-1994	Sault-au-Récollet
Claudette Demers-Godley	1991-1994	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce
Colette St-Martin	1994-1998	Fleury
Michelle Daines	1994-1998	Étienne-Desmarteau
Kettly Beauregard	1994-2001	Marie-Victorin
Louise Roy	1994-1998	Laurier
Georgine Coutu	1994-1998	Peter-McGill
Nathalie Malépart	1994-1998	Maisonneuve
Marie Lebeau	1994-1998	Pointe-aux-Trembles
Johanne Lorrain	1994-1998	Bout-de-l'Île
Nicole Roy-Arcelin	1998-2001	Jean-Rivard
Hélène Jolicœur	1998-2001	Laurier
Sonya Biddle	1998-2001	Décarie

**TABLE 2**

Name	Term	Borough	District
Noushig Eloyan	1994-2001		Acadie
	2001-2005	Ahuntsic-Cartierville	Cartierville
	2005-2009	Ahuntsic-Cartierville	Bordeaux-Cartierville
Hasmig Belleli	1994-2001		Ahuntsic
	2001-2005	Ahuntsic-Cartierville	L'Acadie
	2008-2009	Ahuntsic-Cartierville	Ahuntsic
Claire St-Arnaud	1994-2001		Longue-Pointe
	2001-2005	Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	Longue-Pointe
	2005-2009	Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	Maisonneuve-Longue-Pointe
Colette Paul	1994-2001		La Rousselière
	2001-2005	Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles-Montréal-Est	Bout-de-l'Île
Nicole Thibault	1998-2001		Étienne-Desmarteau
	2001-2005	Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie	Étienne-Desmarteau



TABLE 2 (suite)

Name	Term	Borough	District
Denise Larouche	1998-2001		Bourbonnière
	2001-2005	Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie	Vieux-Rosemont
Florence Grassby	2001-2005	Beaconsfield-Baie d'Urfé	Beaurepaire
Anne-Marie Parent	2001-2005	Beaconsfield-Baie d'Urfé	James-Morgan
Zoé Bayouk	2001-2005	Dollard-Des Ormeaux-Roxboro	Dollard-Des Ormeaux-Roxboro
Georgette L. Morin	2001-2005	Montréal-Nord	Marie-Clara
Yvette Bissonnet	2001-2005	Saint-Léonard	20.1 to 20.2 <sup>3</sup>
	2005-2009	Saint-Léonard	Saint-Léonard Est
Suzanne Caron	2001-2005	Mont-Royal	26.1 to 26.2
Francine Senécal	2001-2009	Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	Côte-des- Neiges
Dida Berku	2001-2005	Côte-Saint-Luc-Hampstead-Montréal-Ouest	34
Oksana Kaluzny	2001-2005	LaSalle	Sault-Saint-Louis
Line Hamel	2001-2005	Sud-Ouest	Louis-Cyr
	2005-2009	Sud-Ouest	Saint-Henri-Petite-Bourgogne-Pointe-Saint-Charles
Jacqueline Montpetit	2001-2005	Sud-Ouest	Pointe-Saint-Charles
	2005-2009	Sud-Ouest	Borough Mayor
Cynthia Lulham	2001-2005	Westmount	W.-D.-Lighthall
Louise O'Sullivan Boyne	2001-2005	Ville-Marie	Peter-McGill
Christine Poulin	2001-2005	Le Plateau-Mont-Royal	Laurier
Anne Myles	2003-2005	Beaconsfield-Baie d'Urfé	04.1 to 04.2
Patricia Bittar	2004-2005	Saint-Laurent	08.1 to 08.2
	2005-2009	Saint-Laurent	Norman-McLaren
Marie-Andrée Beaudoin	2005-2009	Ahuntsic-Cartierville	Borough Mayor
Elizabeth Verge	2005-2009	Lachine	Canal
Lise Zarac	2005-2009	LaSalle	Cécil-P.- Newman, post 2
Eleni Fakotakis-Kolaitis	2005-2009	Le Plateau-Mont-Royal	Mile-End
Isabel Dos Santos	2005-2009	Le Plateau-Mont-Royal	Jeanne-Mance
Carole Du Sault	2005-2009	Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie	Étienne-Desmarteau
Josée Lavigueur-Thériault	2005-2009	Verdun	Desmarchais-Crawford, post 1
Soraya Martinez	2005-2009	Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension	Saint-Michel
Catherine Sévigny	2005-2009	Ville-Marie	Peter-McGill

<sup>3</sup> This type of identification is used when women are elected by the whole electorate of the borough.



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