

Issue #56

## WHAT'S NEW at YOUR VOLUNTEER CENTRE?

### JAC, NOVA & VWI

**What Do These Groups Have in Common? The Desire to Help!**



Launched as a collaborative initiative in 2007 by **Volunteer West Island** and **John Abbott College Professor Reynolds**, *Community and Communication* is a practical course focusing on volunteer work in a community context. Professor Reynolds notes, *Thanks to strong, ongoing support of the JAC Administration, the program has flourished, each academic year seeing a rise in interest in volunteer work among students.* He has added another section to his course, expanding it to *three* classes this term, with a total of 115 students volunteering in their community. During the five years of the program's existence, more than 600 students have been helping out in their community; they began in five non-profit groups; there are now 22 happy to accept JAC volunteers!

**NOVA West Island** is among the organizations welcoming JAC students. They work in the NOVA Thrift Shops and help out in NOVA's Adult Day Centres. This term a new activity was added: driving clients to medical appointments at downtown hospitals. The pilot project with JAC students complements and expands NOVA's existing and much-needed Patient Driving Program, staffed by 53 dedicated adult volunteer drivers. A NOVA volunteer himself for the past seven years, Alphons Evers coordinates drives for patients who find it difficult, exhausting, and expensive to commute to hospitals for necessary medical treatments and diagnostic tests.

The five JAC students clocked 43.5 volunteer hours, involving 25 rides for patients during the first month alone. *It's an acute need - getting patients to hospital - and one*

*that will - like the whole shut-in seniors demographic - only get more acute. I'm already getting stories back from NOVA's Drivers' Coordinator Alphons about patients wanting "to adopt" our students, says Professor Reynolds.*

The feeling is mutual. Marc-Antoine Nolet, a Police technology student and JAC volunteer driver says he loves his experience and feels it will help him later as a police officer since he is meeting vulnerable people with many different needs.

Marie-France Juneau, Executive Director of NOVA states, *The positive comments from our clients tell us we made the right decision by putting this new expansion to an existing program in place. We hope to maintain this in the future.* She shares some of the comments received from clients:

*Mrs. K.M., 82: I had two female students; they were wonderful! They even came up with me for my treatments; they were interested in what I was going through. They were knowledgeable and kind and did this as part of their studies.*

*Mrs. C.T., 72: The student worked out terrifically. I can't give him enough accolades – 100%. He is courteous, kind, punctual, and caring. A nice conversationalist and all-around nice person!*

*Mrs.L.V., 48: Ce projet est fantastique; il faut le continuer. Tout s'est déroulé excessivement bien, ils étaient à l'heure et prompts, avaient une approche amicale; ils sont curieux et ont même partagé leurs propres expériences. Ce projet leur démontre une expérience de vie et les prépare à la vraie vie. Continuez ce programme et essayez de recruter des étudiants de d'autres CEGEP ou d'écoles secondaires.*

*M.S.B., 36: C'est une très bonne idée d'avoir des étudiants en Technique Policière qui conduise pour les clients atteints de cancer. À mon avis, c'est gagnant-gagnant. On en demande toujours plus aux policiers au niveau des contacts interrelationnels et cette expérience peut donner une perspective différente et plus humaine aux étudiants. NOVA l'Ouest de l'Île est devenue comme ma famille au cours des dernières semaines et je tiens à vous remercier pour les soins infirmiers et les transports.*

*Mrs. M.S., 51: L'étudiante était magnifique, on a jaser beaucoup, elle est une très bonne personne. Elle m'a bien accompagnée, m'a même trouvée dans l'hôpital. Elle m'a émue au fond de mon cœur.*

This partnership has indeed yielded rich results – for all concerned!

**Volunteer West Island**

**It's about time...**

**...time to help others**

**[www.cabvwi.org](http://www.cabvwi.org)**

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