



BUILDING
HOPE



IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025

Douglas
FOUNDATION

MENTAL HEALTH
RESEARCH AND CARE



Laura Fish

President and Chief Executive Officer
of the Douglas Foundation



Philippe Fortier

Chair of the Board of Directors
of the Douglas Foundation

Dear partners, donors and friends,

Together, we are breaking down stigma, building awareness and propelling mental health research forward like never before. With your unwavering support, we didn't just meet our goals – we surpassed them across the board. We welcomed a record number of new donors, saw a remarkable increase in overall contributions and received generous support from our partners. Through the powerful voices of our ambassadors – including the amazing Jay Du Temple – and the success of *Questions folles* Season 2, produced in partnership with Desjardins, we've reached thousands of people across Quebec.

Our events, such as *Open Minds*, the *Douglas Show*, the *Douglas BBQ*, the *Bâtisseuses d'espoir* luncheon and *Bingo Night for Mental Health*, would not have been possible without the generosity of our partners. Their ongoing commitment has been instrumental to our ability to make an impact, allowing our experts at the Douglas to develop essential research programs that improve therapeutic approaches, enhance our understanding of the human brain and move us closer to realizing the dream of a world where healing is possible.

We are deeply grateful to our donors, partners and volunteers. Because of you, we have the means to fulfill our mission and pursue impact with determination. This report reflects the life-changing outcomes of the many initiatives made possible through your support.

Together, we have the power to make a difference. Together, let's build hope for everyone whose life has been affected by mental illness.

Every Gift Counts

EVERY DAY, YOUR DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

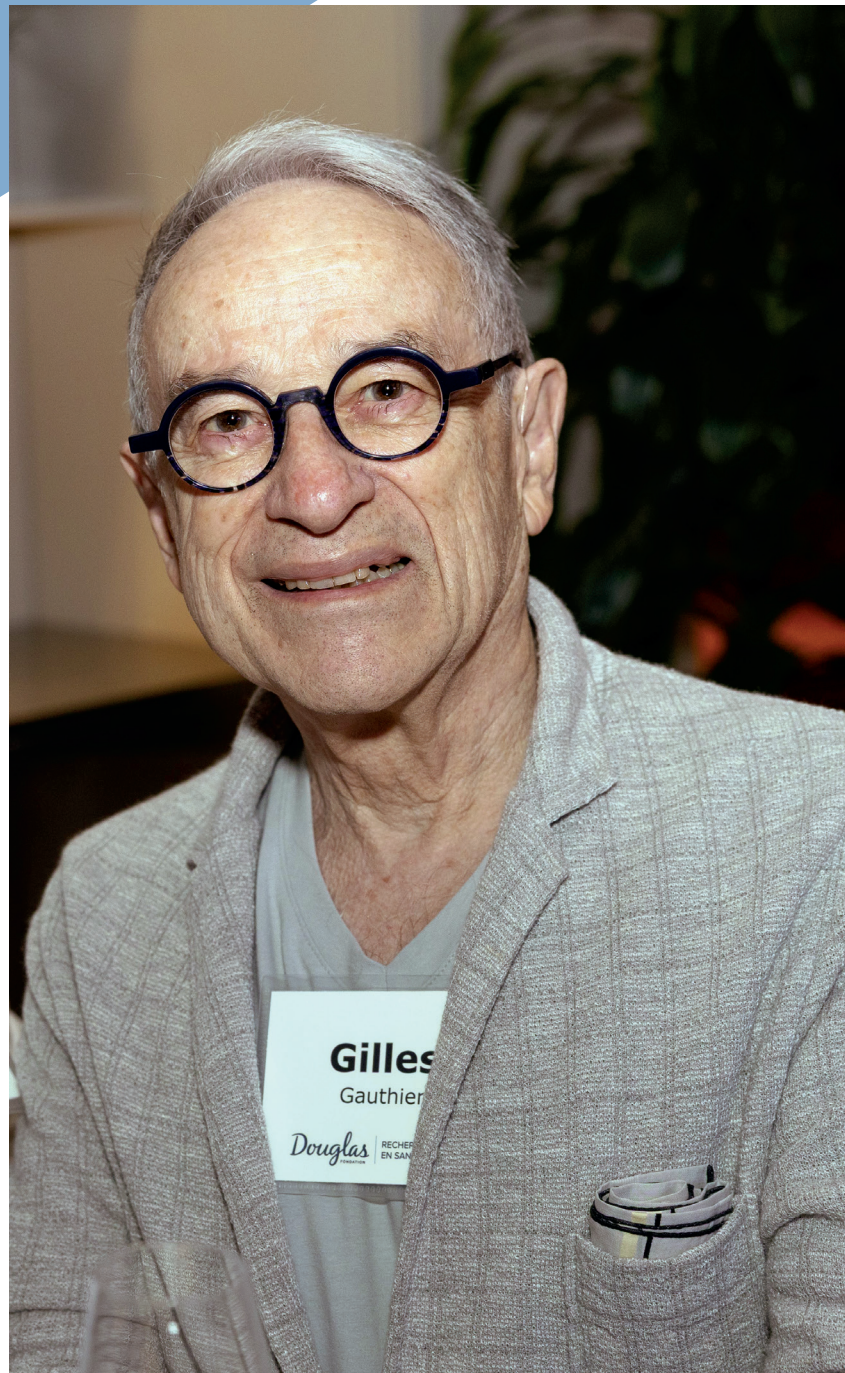
In 2025, our annual campaign focused on the powerful stories of three of our ambassadors: Nicolas, who lives with schizophrenia; Chelsea, who is affected by borderline personality disorder; and Marie-Andrée, who lost her son to suicide. They generously agreed to be part of our television campaign and opened up to comedian and host Jo Cormier to speak about their experiences with mental illness.

Thanks to the support of our ambassadors, we were able to make a significant impact and deliver a powerful message of commitment that places the Foundation's donors at the heart of our success. Together, we are building hope.

A year of triumphs for the Foundation

Last year marked an extraordinary turning point in our mission to build hope for mental health. Through your unprecedented generosity, we achieved remarkable milestones: **8,086 donors** joined forces to make **10,392 donations** and propel mental health research and care at the Douglas Institute to new heights. Each donation represents more than a gift – it is a building block of hope for thousands of people who are struggling with or affected by mental illness.





Including the Douglas Foundation in your will

A LEGACY OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Including a gift for the Douglas Foundation in your will creates a lasting impact by transforming lives and building hope for those affected by mental illness.

For Gilles Gauthier, this gesture is deeply personal. “One of my older brothers suffered from schizophrenia,” he shares. “He was hospitalized for many years until his death. That experience profoundly affected me.”

By including a gift in his will, Gilles hopes to contribute to more effective treatments for schizophrenia and help develop better support systems for families living with the effects of mental illness.

When asked what building hope means to him, his response is simple: “The possibility of recovery. And the chance to live a happy life.”

And to others considering making a legacy gift, Gilles offers nothing but encouragement. “Go for it,” he says. “Mental illness is becoming an increasingly common and significant health concern.”

For Gilles, it's all about having compassion and making an impact. “Compassion and generosity make a difference in overcoming indifference.”



Jay Du Temple x The Douglas Foundation

WORKING TOGETHER TO ADVANCE MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

After covering 7,095 km in 77 days, Jay Du Temple not only pushed his own limits; he raised **\$151,561.89** for the Douglas Foundation.

Jay visited us earlier this year with his ambitious idea to cross the country by bike and on foot in order to raise funds for mental health research. Thanks to his dedication, and to your incredible support, we surpassed our goal with flying colours.

We are deeply grateful for this wave of solidarity – and for the opportunity to have supported Jay throughout this journey.





BRINGING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE: INNOVATION ON THE MOVE

Launched in 2022, the Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health brings the Douglas' broad portfolio of youth-focused programs under one bold, unified vision: to drive innovation in care delivery, advance cutting-edge research and train the next generation of mental health professionals.

Since then, the Centre has continued to deliver on that promise through meaningful partnerships, forward-looking practices and one key innovation: a mobile outreach initiative.

Thank you to the Lighter initiative and Medavie for proudly supporting this project.

With the mobile outreach vehicle, the team was able to participate in a record 86 community awareness events in and around Montreal – more than any other year in its history.

“AT EACH SESSION, MY COUNSELOR FOCUSED ON MY IMMEDIATE NEEDS OR THE CURRENT PROBLEM CAUSING ME DISTRESS. BECAUSE OF THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE APPROACH, I FELT LIKE NO MATTER WHAT I WAS GOING THROUGH, I WAS ALWAYS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.”

– Mobile outreach participant

The mobile outreach initiative

More than a vehicle that brings services directly to community spaces, schools and Aire Ouverte locations, the outreach vehicle is an extension of the Centre's mission to break down barriers, destigmatize mental illness and improve access to care.

Single Session Therapy (SST)

For many young people, their first therapy session might be the only time they seek care. With that in mind, the Centre has adopted the SST approach – each encounter is designed to be impactful, solution-focused and tailored to the young person's immediate needs. In some cases, a single session of therapy may be all they need.

It's a low-barrier, high-impact method that resonates with youth, especially those who have had difficult or disappointing experiences with mental health services in the past.

Together, mobile outreach and Single Session Therapy embody the Centre's commitment to innovation and inclusion. By tackling not just accessibility but also the destigmatization of care, they bring mental health support closer to the realities of young people's lives – when and where they need it most.

“AS YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, WE ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING TO BUILD TRUST WITH A POPULATION THAT IS OFTEN WARY OR HESITANT TO SEEK HELP. AND WHEN WE SUCCEED IN THAT FIRST STEP – WHEN A YOUNG PERSON AGREES TO SIT DOWN WITH US – WE NEED SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE APPROACHES THAT DELIVER RESULTS WHILE PRESERVING THAT HARD-EARNED TRUST. SINGLE-SESSION THERAPY DOES EXACTLY THAT.”

– Pierre Alexandre Richard,
Human Relations Officer, Aire Ouverte

“I FELT LOST, ALONE, CONFUSED AND OVERWHELMED BY THE INTENSITY OF MY EMOTIONS.”

– Chelsea

Anxiety, self-harm, suicidal behaviours. Chelsea struggled with her mental health from a very early age. Diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, she had trouble finding a therapist who truly understood her unique needs. But with perseverance, hard work and the unwavering support of her mother, Chelsea was finally able to make sense of her emotions and behaviours.



I've struggled with my mental health ever since I was four years old: separation anxiety, depression, borderline personality disorder (BPD). Near the end of high school, I started engaging in self-harm and suicidal behaviours. But my psychiatrist at the time never really believed in my struggles, labelling them as emotional problems while changing my meds every week.

Near the end of high school, after a major period of instability which included several visits to the ER for suicide watch, my mom reached her breaking point. She looked at me and said, “*Chelsea, I don't know what else to do but go to the Douglas.*” I was terrified. But I knew that if I wanted help, this was going to be the place to get it. And I knew I was never going to be alone; my mom was always going to be by my side.

After seeing a specialist in dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT), which I was told was a promising treatment for people with BPD, I met a therapist who finally understood my struggles: I intensely feared abandonment, had intense and unstable personal relationships, zero sense of self, crisis-induced paranoia and dissociation, extreme impulsivity, severe mood swings, uncontrollable anger, and suicidal and self-injurious behaviours – the perfect BPD cocktail. In one of my darkest moments, I ended up in the emergency room fighting for my life.

I vowed to myself I would never want to make myself or my loved ones feel that way again. Today, I like to describe my struggles as severe emotional dysregulation, with all of my behaviours being maladaptive coping mechanisms I used to deal with the intense, overwhelming and painful negative emotions I was experiencing.

The year 2021 was a pivotal point in time for me: I was in a good place mentally (though I still had my days) and began to appreciate the importance of prioritizing myself, taking care of myself and finding things I love to do. I finally felt ready to do something meaningful with my recovery story, and so I began work on a short documentary with a youth mental health organization called **Jack.org**. I decided I wanted to change the narrative surrounding BPD.

Today, I hold a Bachelor in Honours Psychology, and I'm currently pursuing graduate studies in counselling psychology, through which I hope to one day become a psychologist and help people just like my younger self. The Douglas was critical in my journey to recovery, and it's truly a full circle moment for me to be working with the Douglas Foundation now.

Chelsea Cuffaro



BINGO NIGHT FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The second edition of Bingo Night for Mental Health, hosted by MC Gilles, gave participants a chance to relive the fun and frenzy of an old-school bingo night while winning fabulous prizes. Held in May at Entrepôts Dominion, the event raised **\$62,553** in support of mental health research and care.

THE DOUGLAS SHOW

Following a highly successful first edition, the Douglas Show, hosted by the energetic Jo Cormier, returned to Club Soda for an even more outrageous evening. Our comedy show in support of mental health research featured a stellar lineup of comedians, including Eddy King, Mégan Brouillard, Mariana Mazza, Christine Morency and Katherine Levac. Thanks to your laughter and generosity, we raised **\$152,355** during the evening.



OPEN MINDS

This year marked a historic edition of the Open Minds evening, held once again at Théâtre Paradoxe. Thanks to the generosity of our partners and donors, an impressive **\$752,483** was raised to support mental health research at the Douglas Institute and build hope for those whose lives have been affected by mental illness.



DOUGLAS BBQ

Our unique culinary experience on the Douglas Institute grounds, was a tremendous success thanks to its festive and unifying atmosphere – as well as the help of the province's best BBQ chefs. The event raised **\$188,942** in support of our mission.

BUILDERS OF HOPE

Last fall, inspiring women gathered on the 9th floor of the Eaton Centre to advance the cause of mental health. Thanks to the generosity and commitment of our hosts Marie-Chantal Côté from Sun Life and Dr. Marie-Claude Geoffroy from the Douglas Research Centre, who shared their experiences with authenticity, raised awareness and mobilized the community, we were able to make a real impact by raising **\$113,835** for research at the Douglas Institute.



LET'S BOND

The Let's Bond collective, made up of 50 young professionals dedicated to the cause of mental health, raised **\$239,214** to support the mission of the Douglas Foundation and build hope in mental health. We are grateful to all participants who contributed to the success of Let's Bond's unforgettable events.

THIRD-PARTY EVENTS

Thanks to over 50 initiatives led by an exceptional and committed community, we raised an impressive **\$871,910** in support of our activities. Thank you to all our partners, donors and volunteers for your generosity and unwavering dedication throughout the year.

The Lise and Giuseppe Racanelli Foundation

A STORY OF SUPPORT, HOPE AND PROGRESS

Véronique Racanelli, President of the Lise and Giuseppe Racanelli Foundation, knows firsthand about the reality of those living with mental health challenges; her brother Nicolas was diagnosed with schizophrenia at the age of 15. Despite receiving the best treatments and all the love of his family, Nicolas remained trapped by his illness.

This deeply personal family experience inspired Véronique and her family to take action in support of mental health research. With profound conviction, they donated \$2 million to the Douglas Foundation in support of the Douglas Brain Bank and helped establish the Douglas Centre for Multi-Scale Integrative Neuroscience.

One of the largest in Canada, the Douglas Brain Bank collects and preserves brain tissue samples used by researchers around the world to make critical discoveries about various psychiatric conditions and disorders such as schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease.

The Douglas Centre for Multi-Scale Integrative Neuroscience brings together cutting-edge facilities, including the Cerebral Imaging Centre (CIC) and the Neuroinformatics Platform, to support increasingly precise, advanced research that transforms our understanding of the brain and mental health.

The contribution of the Lise and Giuseppe Racanelli Foundation is much more than a financial gift; it's an investment in the future of mental health research. Thanks to this support, researchers at the Douglas Institute can continue their vital work and build hope for a world where healing is not just a possibility – it's a tangible reality.

**BUILDING
HOPE**



The Douglas Research Centre

SPOTTING DEPRESSION EARLIER: A BREAKTHROUGH IN TEEN MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH



Thanks to your support, the Douglas Foundation is helping fund transformative research that is changing how we understand, diagnose and ultimately treat depression in young people.

A team led by Dr. Cecilia Flores, Researcher at the Douglas Research Centre and James McGill Professor of Psychiatry, has made a major breakthrough: they've identified nine unique microRNAs in the blood samples of teens living with depression. These teen-specific biomarkers could one day help clinicians detect depression earlier and more accurately – and even predict how symptoms may evolve over time.

Diagnosing adolescent depression has traditionally relied on self-reporting, which can delay care when youth don't recognize symptoms or feel uncomfortable speaking up. With a simple finger prick, this blood-based screening tool would provide a much-needed, objective approach that could expand access dramatically.

Your contributions make research like this possible. Supporting the Douglas Foundation enables our teams to pursue bold, early-stage science that addresses the complex mental health challenges facing the next generation.

With continued investment, researchers will expand this work to larger and more diverse populations, and deepen our understanding of how these molecules interact with genetics, the environment and brain development. The ultimate goal: early intervention that changes lives.

“ALARMINGLY, MORE AND MORE ADOLESCENTS ARE BEING DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION, AND WHEN IT STARTS EARLY, THE EFFECTS CAN BE LONG-LASTING AND SEVERE. TEENS WITH DEPRESSION ARE MORE LIKELY TO STRUGGLE WITH SUBSTANCE USE, SOCIAL ISOLATION AND EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS THAT OFTEN DON'T RESPOND WELL TO TREATMENT.”

– Dr. Cecilia Flores

The Douglas Eating Disorders Continuum

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES ACROSS QUEBEC TO ADDRESS EATING DISORDERS

Founded in 1986, the Douglas Eating Disorders Continuum combines clinical care, research, teaching and knowledge transfer, serving people all across the province thanks to its supranational mandate. Between outpatient group therapy, the day hospital and inpatient treatment (hospitalizations), demand for this program is high, and the waitlist for services is long.

To help bridge this gap, the Continuum is constantly developing new ways to provide families with resources and peer support, and one of the most effective ways to achieve this is to ensure individuals receive quality care in their own communities.

Since its inception, the Eating Disorders Continuum's ECHO program has supported care providers across Quebec through training, knowledge exchange and case supervision. ECHO participating sites have collectively treated more than 1,000 people under the guidance of experts at the Douglas, with outcomes comparable to those seen at the Eating Disorders Continuum.

Thanks to your support, the Eating Disorders Continuum can continue to equip care providers across Quebec with the skills necessary to manage eating disorder cases locally and provide support when – and where – it is needed most.



Approximately
600 people
served each year

Around
300 users
active at any given time

As a result of such strong community partnerships, **referrals to the Douglas Eating Disorders Continuum from participating sites have decreased by 25%**, showing that more people are now receiving effective care closer to home. In fact, one participating site in the Trois-Rivières area has become nearly fully self-sufficient.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Our Donor Circles play a crucial role in supporting the activities of the Douglas Foundation. **The Nair Circle**, reserved for donors who have contributed over one million dollars, over a lifetime, honors Dr. Vasavan Nair, one of the founding members of the Douglas Research Center, and his impact on mental health research.

The Robson Circle, named in honor of Ann Robson, a nurse at the Douglas Institute, welcomes donors who have given over \$1,000 in the past year and honours Ann Robson’s role in reducing stigma by integrating mental health patients outside of the Institute.

Builders of Hope includes corporations who have donated to the Foundation.

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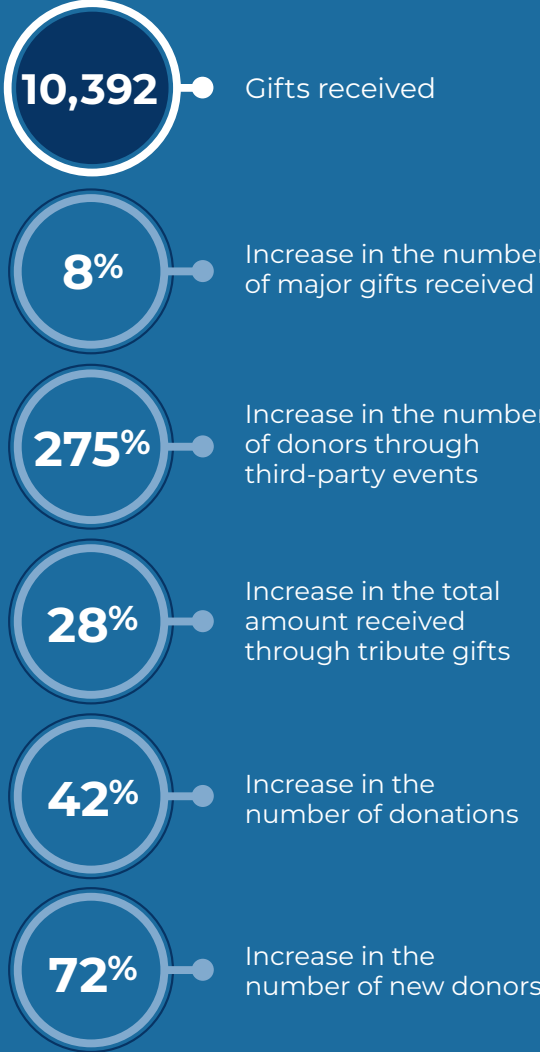
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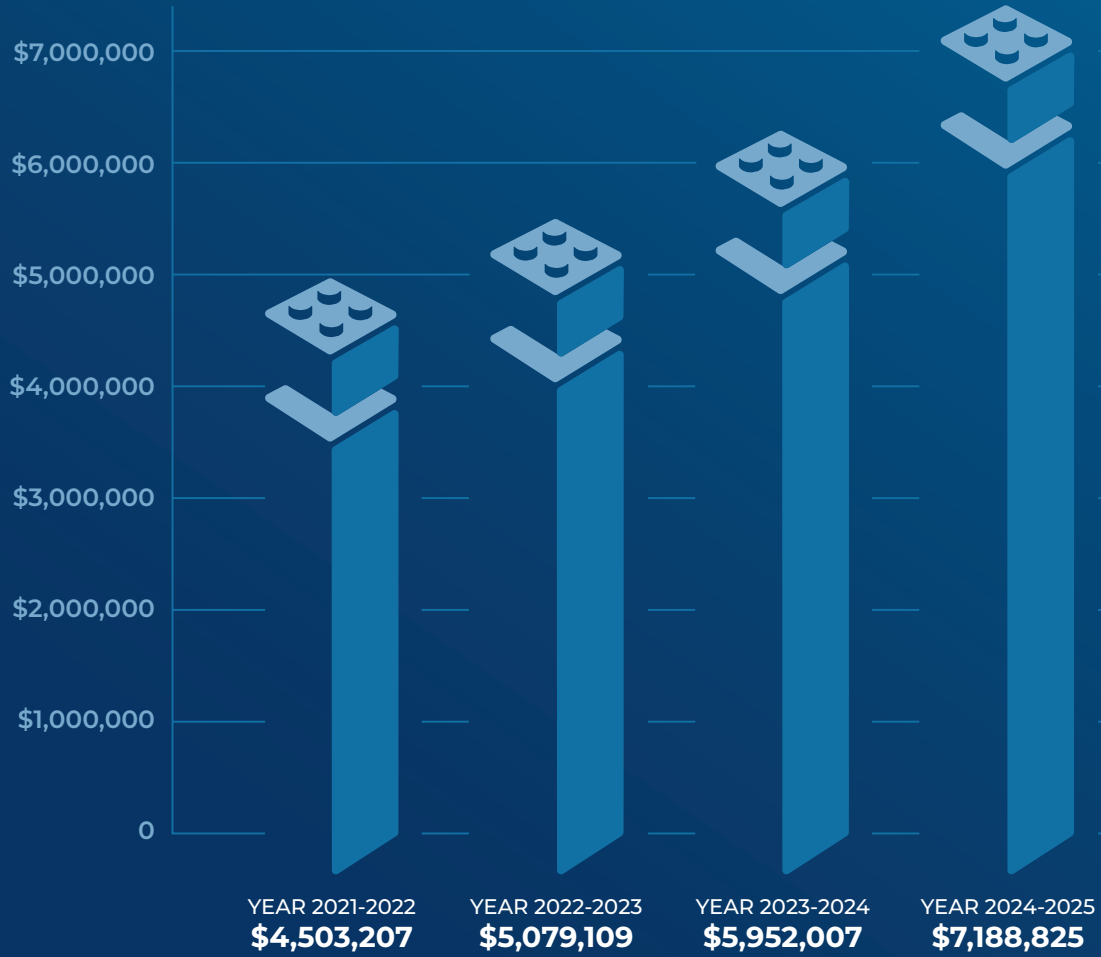
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DURING THE LAST FISCAL YEAR



OUR REVENUE





FOR MORE INFORMATION

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