



# HERITAGE **ib** NEWSLETTER



December 2022

Letter from the Coordinators

For our first Service as Action opportunity, Heritage collaborated with "ENTRE PARENTS" in order to help recent immigrant families in Montreal. Allegra Sayat, the author of our first newsletter, participated in the winter clothes drive both at Heritage and at the donation center in Montreal North.

Tessa Barrans & Sebastien Porco



## SERVICE AS ACTION

by Allegra Sayat - IB Secondary 2

I first learned about the "Heritage Winter Clothing Drive" through Ms. Barrans, my English teacher and IB co-coordinator. The drive is run by the IB students of Heritage Regional High School in collaboration with the organization "ENTRE PARENTS", that helps immigrant families in Montreal North. I remember when Ms. Barrans told my class about her own experience from previous years, how she had started off small, but that the project has grown. I was invested in what she was saying, and I knew that I wanted to collaborate in any way possible. When she asked if anyone would like to join her in this initiative this year, I immediately volunteered. I knew it would be a good experience, one that would stay with me for years to come.

When the drive had come to an end, I remember stepping into the conference room and was surprised to see the number of clothes that the Heritage community had donated, which was more than 1500 pieces of clothing. It felt that Ms. Barrans' message to everyone was taken to heart and our community had shown solidarity with those in need of help.

Many students spent their lunch hour helping, sorting, organizing or packaging the winter clothing. There were many piles of clothing all over the room, socks, hats, mitts, coats, snow pants, boots, etc. The collection included items from babies to adults. Anyone who came to the conference room was welcome to jump in and help separate each piece of clothing according to size, we were all collaborating for a greater good.

On November 5th, everyone gathered at the donation center in Mtl North, and when Mrs. Barrans arrived, we were surprised to see a car packed, full of brand-new clothes that were ready to be donated, along with some other clothes donated to Heritage. As families started to arrive, my excitement for the day grew. I notice some parents were sad and embarrassed, however, the volunteers were able to make them feel more comfortable and at ease as they were welcoming them inside.

One of the first things they told us was that 500 families had signed up for this event, but unfortunately, only 70 were chosen to come as they were the neediest. It is true what they say; one thing is to talk about something and another is to see it with your own eyes. It was at this moment that I started to realize that there are so many people who are in need of warm clothes for this upcoming winter and there are not enough resources to help. As the day went on, there were times when we didn't have the right sizes for them and there was no alternative. We didn't have unlimited amounts of winter clothing and supplies ran out earlier than expected, there just was not enough to fulfill everyone's needs. It broke my heart. It was difficult to see adults leaving without the items they had come for, but more so children.

I enjoyed volunteering that day because I got to see many adults and children leave with smiles on their faces, some even had happy tears because they were so thankful. I feel grateful that I was able to be part of this project to help my community, it allowed me to interact with some families that I might never have had the chance to meet. I believe that even though we couldn't improve everyone's situation, we all contributed to making a small difference in these families' lives.



The people who are part of the organization did a great job. We were greeted when we arrived, they explained how the day was going to pan out, they also provided a traditional Hatian lunch and they were overall very pleasant.

I hope that this letter will reach out to our community and inspire those who would like to help volunteer for the next year, to donate for the next "Heritage Winter Clothing Drive". It would be a great achievement to be able to collect more clothes than we have this year so we can make more families happy and have one thing less to worry about as the cold weather arrives.

