

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2010/ 2011



**HOJO**  
Housing & Job Bank  
[hojo.csu.qc.ca](http://hojo.csu.qc.ca)

# TIME LINE

## 1984

CUSA Job Bank service began, open only for the summer. Students could look at postings or if a job needed to be filled, the Job Bank would contact students. Opened as “Federal Student Employment Centre on Campus...[was]...often criticized as bureaucratic and unresponsive to the needs of the majority of students.” (The Link, V. 8, N. 4, 1988)

## 1988

CUSA Housing Service opened in collaboration with the already running Off-Campus Housing Service of the Dean of Student’s Office. Service had a focus on finding affordably priced housing for students, offering apartment listings on a bulletin board and free phones to contact landlords.

## 1988

CUSA Job Bank was computerized

## 1989

CUSA Housing Service expanded, promoting tenant rights information and assistance to students.

## 1991

CUSA Housing Service offered it’s first Housing Handbook. The CUSA Housing Service and CUSA Job Bank were offered in the same room, H-637.

**Even as far back as 1997, the CCSL provided some funding to our services.**

|                                     |              |
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# MISSION

The Concordia Student Union Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank (HOJO) works to empower, educate and support the Concordia community by providing reliable housing and employment information, resources and referrals. We encourage a proactive approach towards finding adequate housing, part-time and summer employment as well as addressing challenges related to these domains.

# VISION

HOJO is a service that is centered on students' needs. We strive to support students in learning about and exercising their rights as tenants and employees.

# VALUES

The CSU Off-Campus Housing & Job Bank is guided by the following core values:

1. We respect the dignity and rights of all users of HOJO's services.
2. We recognize that students have unique needs with respect to the efficient allocation of scarce budgetary and time resources.
3. We believe that our strength and our major resource in achieving our objectives is our staff and that personalized interaction is the focus of our work.
4. We believe that the transparent exchange of information, ideas, knowledge and values is essential to the achievement of our mission.
5. We believe in managing HOJO with openness and integrity, and we are accountable to the undergraduate students of Concordia University.
6. We believe that continuous improvement enabled by client feedback is essential to maintaining the high quality of our services.
7. We uphold the right to confidentiality and privacy with respect to information provided to us by students.
8. We recognize that some governmental organizations may have limitations of scope with regards to meeting the unique needs of students in both official languages. We therefore cater our services with this in mind.

# HOJO TEAM

The HOJO team for 2010-2011 was Alain Asafor, Datson Yan, Nadia Prevost-Lowry, Vicki Hamilton and Vimala Naidoo.

Dear CCSL members

We would like to thank the Concordia Council on Student Life for its many years of supporting our service. This year, we saw another rise in demand for our services. We continued to offer workshops, designed new resources and educational campaigns as well as worked to promote student's issues in the media.

We continue to react to several trends we see in needs related to housing and employment for students including:

- A greater reliance on online sources for information.
- A city-wide bed bug problem which leaves students especially vulnerable as they are very mobile tenants with limited funds.
- A large and diverse student population made up of international, out-of-province, anglophone, allophone, parents and visible minorities amongst others, that have their unique challenges regarding employment and housing.

We believe that quality service is essential, so training for employees is an ongoing project. Trainings by government and community organizations and their accompanying documents are essential to our service.

This year campaigns around the difficult issue of housing discrimination new students to Concordia face and student's right-to-privacy when applying for housing were front and center. We hope to continue to proactively address such problems in the future through widespread education and awareness raising, in our office, in our workshops and on our website.

Thanks again for your support. If you have questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to working with you for another year.

Melissa Fuller, CSU VP Services & Loyola  
Leanne Ashworth, HOJO Coordinator

## **Student Civil Rights Trainings**

In collaboration with The CSU Legal information center and the CSU Advocacy center, we received training from the Center for Research Action on Race Relations (CRARR). This training led us to look at Students Civil rights and how best to inform students of their rights and how to uphold them. This led to the creation of our Housing Discrimination campaign and an enlargement of our Right-to-Privacy campaign.

## **New campaign on housing discrimination launched**

We launched our housing discrimination awareness campaign at HOJO's first press conference on September 1st 2010. We presented to over 20 different print and television media with other concerned groups in an attempt to reach international, out-of-province and visible minority students. Our message was that being treated differently due to citizenship, race, language or religion was not permitted. Landlords have to follow the provincial housing regulations for all students. We wanted students to be aware there is a problem particularly in the Ville Marie area with this and that we are able to assist them, they are not alone.

## **Right-to-Privacy Campaign**

Each year HOJO discusses the importance of keeping confidential information safe when applying for apartments and ways to attempt to get private information returned or removed after the fact. This campaign has grown as this information is disproportionately demanded of certain students from certain neighbourhoods.

## **Landlord/ Employer Complaint Database**

Our database is now up-to date with 160 different landlord and employer complaints files . Of interest is the fact that many of our housing complaints focus on a few buildings and companies. We use this database to inform students of other students experiences in order to prepare them for challenges that they too may face in renting an apartment. As well if a landlord or employer who a student has complained about attempts to post an ad on our site, we inform them we have received complaints about their practices and request they send us documentation that outlines how they manage their buildings including the lease form they use. We also now specifically request information on their bedbug protocol. This database allows us to have a higher quality service of housing and jobs

## Bed Bugs campaign

The bedbug problem continues especially for tenants and travellers in Montreal. Awareness and knowledge of how to deal with the issue is the focus for HOJO. We provide resources and support to students on how to report the problem and how to ensure the correct protocol is followed.

## Increased Web Presence

In an effort to provide services to people outside of our office opening hours we are continuing to look at ways to reach people online with reliable, well-researched resources. HOJO uses both facebook and twitter to inform and remain informed on current housing and employment information. We have also noted that students are increasingly relying on online interactions to obtaining housing and we are focused on helping students to avoid fraud, as safety and false advertising concerns abound!

## Translation of outreach documents

We often speak with francophone landlords, employers and people offering volunteer or internship opportunities who would prefer receiving our instructions on how to post on our website in French.

## New Resources Developed include:

- Neighbourhood affordability resource
- FAQ's on housing & employment
- Students and Employment resource



The flyer is divided into two main sections. The left section has a teal background with white text and a house icon with a magnifying glass. The right section has a white background with yellow and teal accents. It lists services provided by HOJO and classifieds.csu.qc.ca.

**CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank**

Your reliable source for employment and housing information & assistance.

**HOJO**  
Housing & Job Bank  
hojo.csu.qc.ca

**CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank**

**Visit HOJO for**

- Help with general housing and work issues
- Legal information, handouts and referrals
- Workshops on tenants' and workers' rights
- To file and view complaints against landlords and employers
- Information on Quebec residency and leases
- Resources to conduct your search for housing and jobs

**Visit Classifieds.csu.qc.ca for**

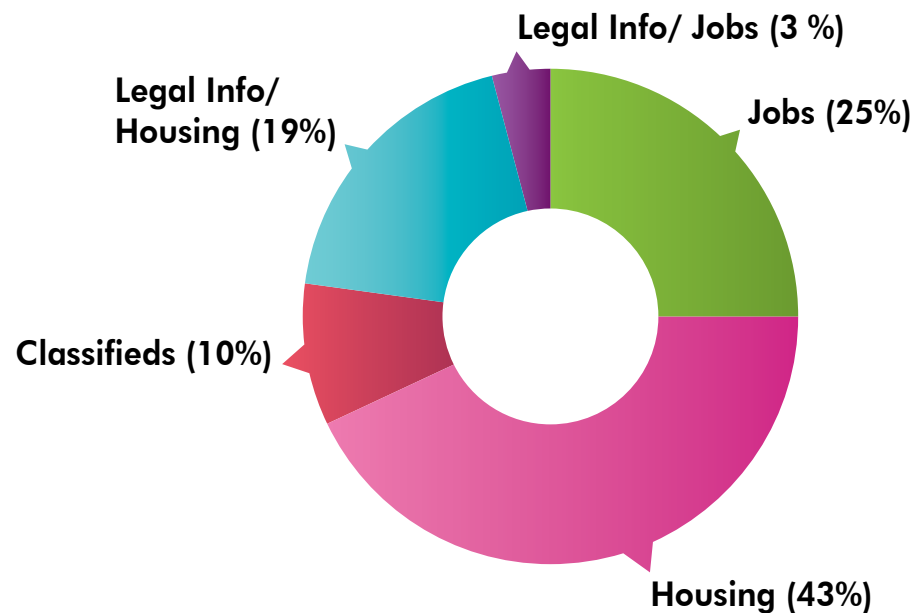
- Part-time jobs
- Affordable housing
- Roommate profiles
- Buy or sell books, furniture and more

**HOJO**  
Housing & Job Bank

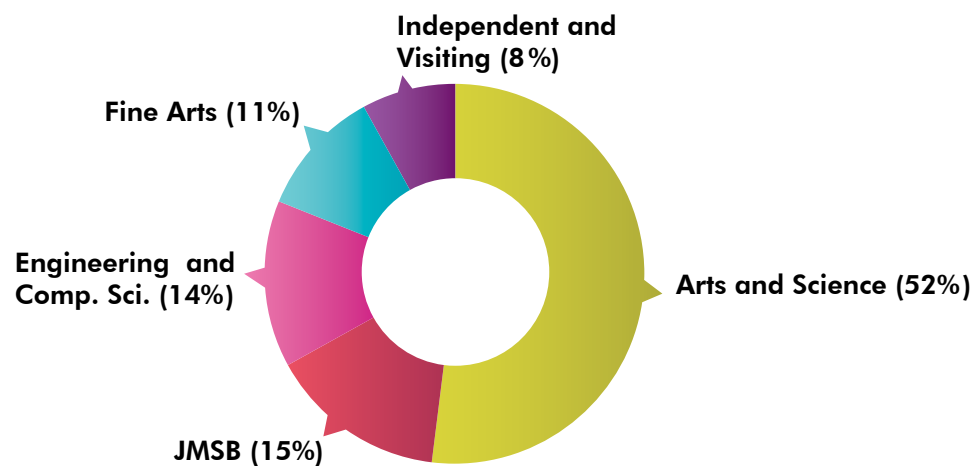
In The Hall Building: H-200  
Monday to Thursday 10-6 | Friday 11-4  
Phone: 514-245-7474 ext. 7933  
Fax: 514-245-7419  
hojo@csu.qc.ca | hojo.csu.qc.ca

This chart shows the breakdown of the 5 types of information we discuss with students. The largest aspect of our service is providing general housing information to students. Next, 25% of inquiries that are focused on job search information. The third significant part of our service is that 1 out of 5 information requests we receive are regarding legal information around housing. Both classifieds and legal job information are smaller in numbers over the year.

## Types of Information Requests

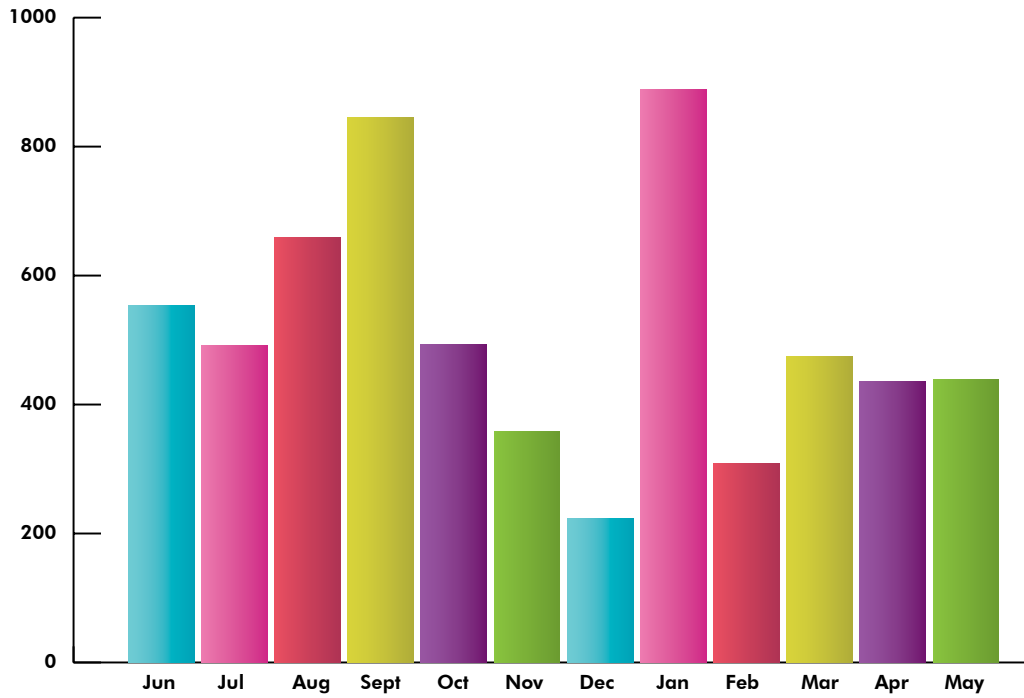


## Undergraduate Visits by Faculty





## Visits, Calls and E-mails

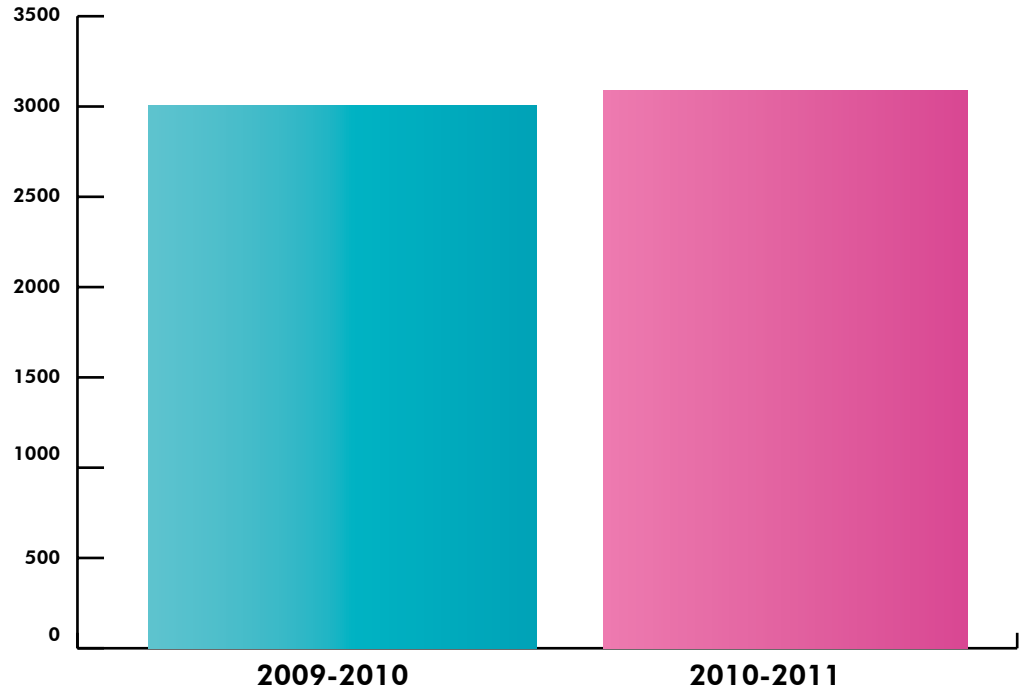


## First Time Visitors to Office in 2010-2011

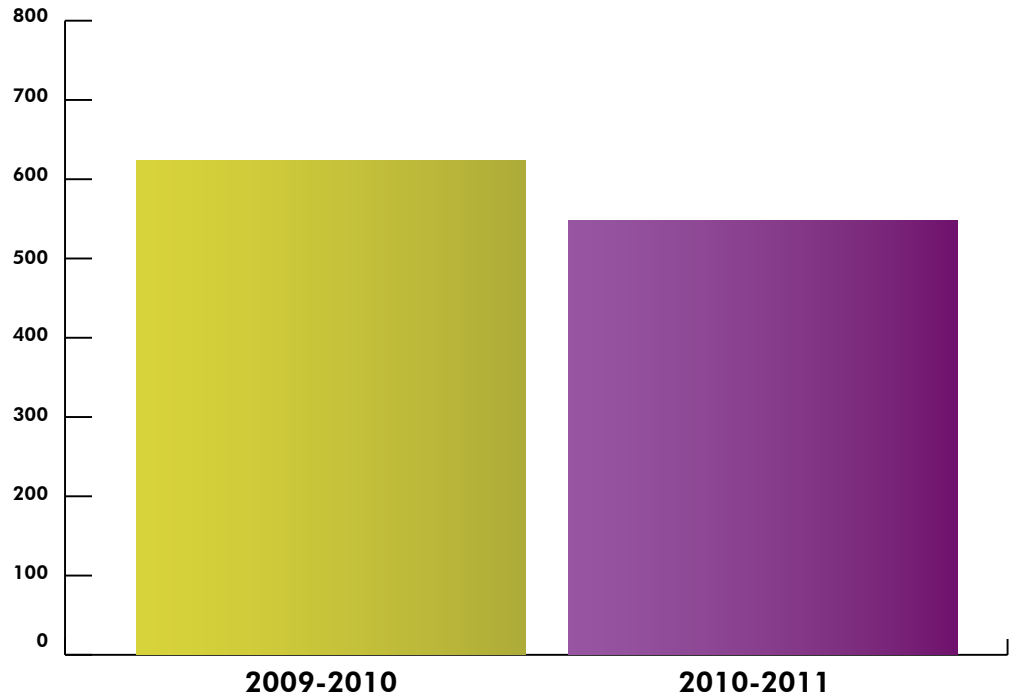
• 1803

# HOJO OFFICE STATS 2010-11

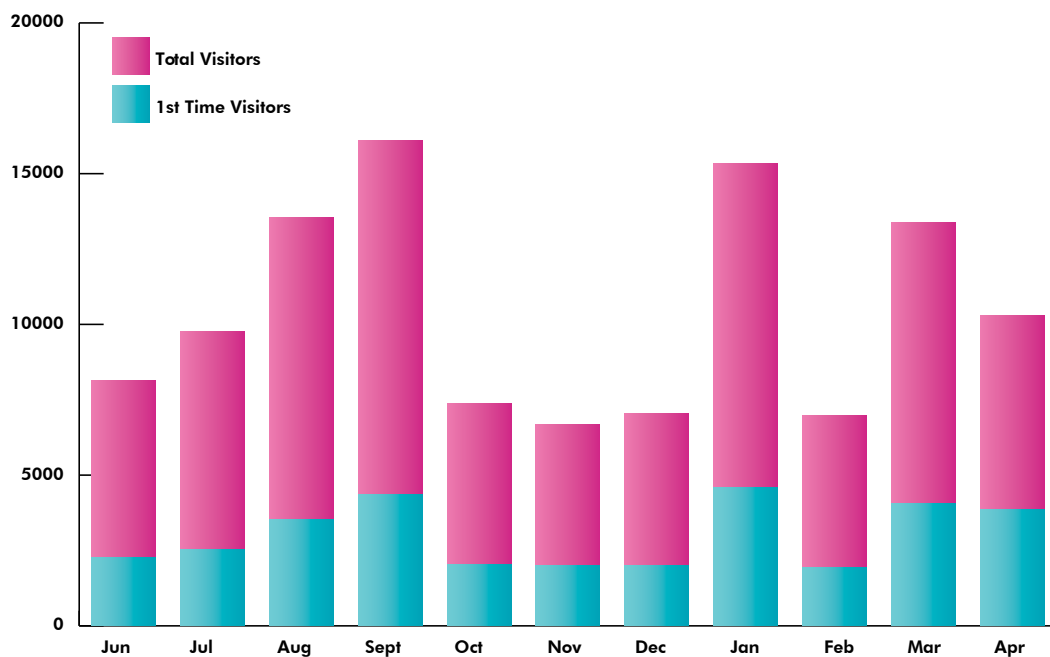
## Undergrad Visits to Office



## Graduate Visits to Office



### First-time visitors and total visitors to the HOJO website

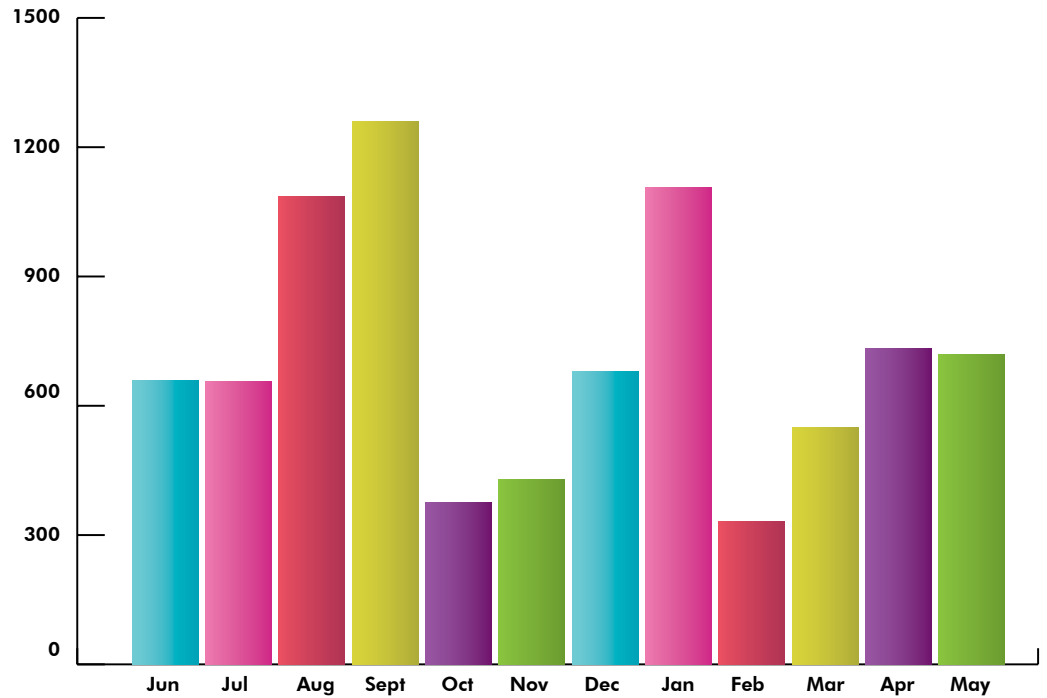


# HOJO CLASSIFIEDS

## WEB VISITS

This year we are now keeping track of the ads we post on our classifieds site in order to better monitor the work we do. As e-mails and online assistance becomes more and more popular we are working to use the internet to assist students. You can see the popularity of our classifieds site in the charts below.

### Ads Reviewed for Classifieds Site



### What resources are visitors to the HOJO website looking for?



- Job search resources / 32%
- Basic facts about renting in Quebec / 11%
- Bed bugs / 9%
- Rental averages in Montreal / 8.5 %
- Minimum wage in Quebec information / 8.5 %
- Annual Rental increase in Quebec information / 7%
- How to post on our website / 6%
- Moving Checklist / 4.5 %
- Neighborhoods in Montreal / 4%
- Temporary Accommodation in Montreal / 3.5 %
- Lease types in Quebec / 3%
- Tenants Rights and recourses in Quebec / 3%

# HOUSING ASSISTANCE

## Bed Bugs campaign

The bedbug problem continues to escalate in Montreal and HOJO provides resources and support to students in reporting the problem and insuring they receive a proper extermination and follow up in conjunction with their landlord. In February we attended Montreal's first Bed Bug Symposium which brought together many concerned parties including exterminators, housing committees, real estate, public institutions, the hotel industry, legal parties and local government. This symposium led to the city of Montreal creating a large public education campaign including brochures and a website. The city has also recently passed legislation outlining landlords responsibility to exterminate correctly and has begun keeping a private list of addresses where bed bug extermination is required in order to monitor the outbreak.

**I Have Bedbugs! Now What?**

- A single bite at each stage of life, bed bugs can cause for at least 5 days or -10 days.
- Only 5% of the population is allergic to bed bugs. For most, this is not a problem.

**Don't panic!** You need to inform your landlord that your apartment has bedbugs ASAP. See a doctor or nurse to have your bites documented and treated. Follow up any discussion with a written demand letter. The letter must be delivered with proof of receipt. (This includes a registered letter, which can be done through the post office or hand delivered with a copy signed and dated by the landlord.)

**It is the landlord's responsibility to take care of extermination.**

- Once the exterminator is booked, which should be within a very short delay, follow their instructions to prepare for their visit. You will likely need to seal your clothes and linens in bags, clean and de-clutter your space. If the exterminator suggests getting rid of any furniture due to infestation ask them to write down this demand on their company's letterhead. This may help you be reimbursed or a loan done for lost furniture.
- The exterminator should visit at least twice. Be available for these exterminations. This problem is best solved when tenant, landlord and exterminator work together.

**HOJO is here to help with your bed bug problems, come and speak to me to learn more.**

**CSU Housing and Job Bank**  
[hojo.queensu.ca](http://hojo.queensu.ca)

**In The Hall Building H-550**  
 Monday to Thursday 10-6 | Friday 11-4  
 Phone: 514-845-7474 ext. 7925  
 Fax: 514-845-7419  
[hojo@queensu.ca](mailto:hojo@queensu.ca) | [hojo.queensu.ca](http://hojo.queensu.ca)

## Rental increase awareness campaign

This ongoing campaign works to raise awareness amongst students that annual rent increase requests can be refused and that you can't be evicted for refusing a request. It is a common myth amongst students that you can't do anything if you receive a letter telling you that your rent is increasing and this is not the case. HOJO explains the refusal of rent increase process to students and hands out related documents.

## Protect your private information campaign

This campaign works to sensitize students to the importance of not giving away their private information in order to complete rental applications. Many companies have very intrusive application forms and insist that private identification documents must be photocopied in order to process rental requests. Losing track of SIN card number, and birth certificate or passport numbers can lead to problems for students. The privacy campaign encourages students not to give out this information and also discusses what to do after the fact.

## Quebec residency campaign

In collaboration with the CSU Advocacy centre, HOJO has created a resource explaining the necessary housing documents for students wishing to obtain official Quebec residency standing at the school. This document came out of the fact that students are often unaware of the problems they may face if they renting without a lease or are an occupant or boarder.

# NEW HOUSING CAMPAIGN

## PRESS RELEASE

### Student civil rights campaign: Housing discrimination

HOJO launched its Housing Discrimination awareness campaign on September 1st 2010 with a press conference held in the MB building. Over 20 members of the media responded to our call and our story was carried by television stations, english and french newspapers and a variety of campus media. We created and distributed a press release and a document explaining 10 of the worst problems students face.

### Press Release

#### CONCORDIA STUDENT UNION SEEKS SANCTIONS AGAINST PREDATORY APARTMENT RENTAL PRACTICES DIRECTED AT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Montreal, Wednesday, Sept. 1st, 2010 --- The Concordia Student Union (CSU) is calling on the civil rights and housing authorities in Quebec to investigate and take legal actions against abusive apartment rental practices by Montreal landlords directed at international students.

According to CSU President Heather Lucas, international students at Concordia University are regularly and increasingly exposed to "predatory apartment rental practices" (PARP) by unscrupulous landlords who exploit these students' lack of knowledge about Quebec housing laws and social vulnerability. This is believed to be the first time in Canada that the issue has been brought to the general public's attention..

CSU alone represents 30,000 undergraduate students. Graduate and continuing education students number 15,000. There are approximately 4,400 international students at the university, at all levels of study, representing 11% of the overall student population. The top three countries of origin of these students are Egypt, India and China.

As an international student herself, Texas-born Lucas is personally familiar with these abusive practices. "For me, it is not only my official duty as newly appointed CSU President, but also my personal duty as an international student who has experienced this situation, to defend international students' rights and to put an end to these predatory practices," she said.

Over the last two years, the CSU Off Campus Housing and Job Bank (HOJO), has documented a list of ten worst PARP that violate Quebec housing, civil rights and private laws. Some of these PARP include requiring students to make a deposit equivalent to 2 to 6 months rent; illegal and non-refundable application fees; large fees for sublet and lease transfers; collection of private information including passport, visa and health insurance numbers; and refusal to do repairs and provide basic services normally available to Canadian tenants.

Since mid-August, HOJO has been receiving an average of five complaints a week from international students about PARP. The number risks increasing as more students are arriving and the rental housing market is becoming more competitive. Last year, HOJO had 4,666 visitors, 9% of whom were international students.

According to HOJO Coordinator Leanne Ashworth, "This is only the tip of the iceberg since international students are still coming to Montreal, often with nothing but suitcases and their laptop. Furthermore, most are not aware of housing laws and are afraid to denounce these practices, because they can practically end up in the streets."



# NEW HOUSING CAMPAIGN

## PRESS RELEASE

HOJO will be joining up with the CSU Legal Information Clinic (LIC), other university housing services providers and outside groups such as CRARR, to combat PARP. They are condemning PARP as a violation of international students' civil rights, including the right to equality without discrimination (as guaranteed by the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms) and the right to fair housing and other tenant protections as guaranteed by Quebec's housing laws. Actions include :

1. Assist international students who are victims of PARP in taking abusive landlords to the Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission and the Quebec Rental Board;
2. Ask the Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission to launch a systemic inquiry on its own initiative into PARP, as allowed under s. 71.1 of the Quebec Charter. A formal written request will be submitted to the Commission in the coming days;
3. Develop new measures to more effectively help international students, including :
  - Ø Identify and ban landlords from HOJO databases;
  - Ø Report these landlords to the human rights commission's inquiry when it will be carried out;
  - Ø Document the countries of origin of international students who seek housing assistance and housing-related legal assistance, and setting up appropriate information activities;
4. Urge all educational institutions and student associations to better inform and assist international students on fair housing;
5. Encourage Concordia and other universities to ban all relations with and donations from landlords found guilty of PARP.

According to Walter Chi Yan Tom, LIC Coordinator, "We tend to forget that international students are persons who have the right to the equal protection and benefit of the law. They are not only students, but also major contributors to our economy as consumers, renters and payors of high tuition fees; in this regard, we as Canadians owe them full protection against discrimination, exploitation and other illegal practices."



# NEW HOUSING CAMPAIGN

## 10 WORST PRACTICES OF LANDLORDS

### 10 worst practices of landlords

1. **Illegal application fees.** Landlords demand extra money in advance of signing a lease with a student, they claim it is non-refundable regardless of whether they accept a rental application or not.
2. **Illegal Deposits-** Could be called a security deposit or a last months rent deposit, some landlords are even known to demand 6 months or more of rent paid in advance.
3. **Collection of Private Information.** Telling students that they must give confidential information to them in order to secure housing. Documents frequently requested include passport numbers, bank account numbers, visa numbers and health insurance numbers.
4. **Demanding a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or even Montreal resident co-signer/guarantor.** Students who do not know anyone in Canada are told they must pay a penalty because of this, or are refused apartments based on this, regardless of their ability to pay for an apartment.
5. **Charging large fees for subleases and lease transfers or refusing unfairly any lease transfers.** Landlords claim they are allowed to charge any price for this service, despite the fact that a credit check costs only \$25.
6. **Refusing to do repairs in the apartment.** Landlords at times refuse to even accept letters requesting repairs. They ignore repeated requests from students.
7. **Inadequate heating of the apartment.** Landlords ignore the complaints of students that heaters are broken or not functioning properly in winter.
8. **Intimidation, Threats and Harassment.** Students with little knowledge of their rights in Quebec are threatened with eviction, penalty fees or of being taken to court when they complain about necessary repairs, bedbugs or illegal fees being charged to them.
9. **Failure to provide licensed exterminator.** Some landlords do not take seriously the concerns of their tenants by hiring an exterminator. They instead spreading poison in apartments themselves.
10. **Lack of security within apartments.** Landlords enter students apartments without first clearing it with tenants. As well students complain of inadequate locks on doors and windows.

### Letter to the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse

Another part of our campaign was asking the Provincial human rights commission to open an inquiry into systemic discrimination. We explained our position in this letter and made copies of this letter available to the media.

September 1st, 2010

Mr. Gaétan Cousineau  
President  
Commission des droits de la personne  
et des droits de la jeunesse du Québec  
360, rue St –Jacques Ouest, 2ème étage  
Montréal, Québec, H2Y 1P5

#### **RE: Request for Commission-Initiated Investigation on Predatory Apartment Rental Practices directed at International Students**

Mr. President:

We hereby urge the Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission to launch an investigation at its own initiative, pursuant to s. 71.1 of the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, into the situation involving international students being subject to abusive, discriminatory and illegal apartment rental practices.

In recent weeks, it has been brought to our attention by the Concordia Student Union that many international students at Concordia University are exposed to documented abusive and discriminatory rental practices such as:

1. **Illegal application fees:** Demand extra money in advance of signing a lease with a student; many claim that it is non-refundable regardless of whether they accept a rental application or not.
2. **Illegal Deposits:** Described as a security deposit or a last-month rent deposit, some landlords are even known to demand 6 months or more of rent paid in advance.
3. **Collection of Private Information:** Telling students that they must give confidential information to them in order to secure housing. Documents frequently requested include passport numbers, bank account numbers, visa numbers and health insurance numbers.
4. **Demanding a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or even Montreal resident to be cosigner/guarantor.** Students who do not know anyone in Canada are told they must pay a penalty because of this, or are refused apartments based on this, regardless of their ability and proof of ability to pay for an apartment.
5. **Charging large fees for subleases and lease transfers or refusing unfairly any lease**

# NEW HOUSING CAMPAIGN

## LETTER TO CDPDJ

transfers. Landlords claim they are allowed to charge any price for this service, despite the fact that a credit check costs only \$25.

As you may be aware, there are more than 20,000 international students who come to Montreal to study at our universities and colleges, due to the excellent quality of educational programs and our city's quality of life. Many of these are racialized individuals and women. Not all are economically well-off; many live in socially vulnerable conditions due to the lack of family support and their unfamiliarity with our laws.

The rental practices that are used by local landlords against these students are not only intentionally imposed with discriminatory consequences. Some may be indirect and come across as neutral, such as the requirement of a Canadian co-signer, but in practice, produce a disproportionately adverse impact on these students.

These students belong, consequently, to classes of persons protected by the Quebec Charter in light of the intersectionality of race, ethnic or national origin, gender and social condition. Based on reported cases and other anecdotal evidence, we believe that these predatory apartment rental practices violate the students' rights to equality, safety, dignity and privacy, which are respectively protected by ss. 10, 1, 4 and 5 of the Quebec Charter.

This is the first time that the problem has been brought to national public attention. It is a case of silent and suppressed discrimination as well as exploitation that violates one of the fundamental rights of our modern democracy: the right to fair, affordable and adequate housing, which is recognized in international law and in different domestic laws.

For the reasons enumerated above, we believe that a Commission-initiated inquiry is not only necessary to protect international students' right to housing, privacy and equality, but also inevitable given the number of persons affected, the legal issues and systems involved, and the roles and responsibilities of institutional stakeholders responsible on matters of education, immigration, housing, health and housing standards, privacy and human rights.

We look forward to hearing from you on this issue and we would like to take this opportunity to offer you our cooperation in ending predatory apartment rental practices directed at international students in Montreal.

Sincerely yours,

Heather Lucas  
President  
Concordia Student Union

Leanne Ashworth  
Coordinator  
CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank

Walter Chi Yan Tom  
Coordinator  
CSU Legal Information Clinic

Fo Niemi  
Executive Director  
Center for Research-Action on Race Relations

## Basic facts about renting in Quebec

This is our most popular resource that provides an overview to students of some of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. This document explains what the landlord can and cannot do, what information can be requested of an apartment hunter, the apartment sizes in Quebec, what tenants are required to do, time periods for giving lease non-renewal notice and other pertinent tips for student tenants.

## Landlord/Employer complaint database

While HOJO has been collecting student complaints about landlords since the late 1990's, the use of a database called Predator in the summer of 2010 has facilitated the use of student complaints. When a student comes in with particularly bad rental situation we ask them to file an anonymous complaint with us to prevent other students from having to deal with the same issues. The complaint includes information about the apartment and landlord, as well as the nature of the problems with the rental situation. The result of a student filing an application would be the HOJO staff opening a file within the database and entering the information given. If the landlord eventually tries to post an ad with us then we would send an e-mail explaining how a complaint had been made in the past and what it was regarding. The landlord would then be asked to send relevant documentation like the application form, the lease and any other pertinent document so that we could ensure their legitimacy and legality. This is to ensure that the ads that we post on our website are as safe and legal as possible so that students don't get stuck with an unresponsive or unscrupulous landlord. Another manner in which Predator is useful is that when students find apartments through other services of just walking around, they can tell us the address of the building in question and we can let them know whether there has been a complaint against the building and if there has, the nature of that complaint. These two uses for Predator have really strengthened our service when it comes to prevention of rental issues.

## Neighbourhood Affordability resource

In response to new students questions about prices in a variety of neighbourhoods, we researched and developed a resource that compares price averages of various apartment sizes in the 5 areas closest to Concordia's campuses.

## CMHC Resources

HOJO distributes a variety of the Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation's apartment comparison and inspection resources. These documents can help students who need to compare a number of apartments in a short period of time. We suggest students inspect apartments when visiting them to be sure they are well-maintained and don't have any hidden problems. As well upon moving in, we suggest students inspect the empty apartment and make the landlord aware of any problems with their dwelling.

## Educaloi Site

HOJO employees are trained with the assistance of the Educaloi website. Educaloi is a non-profit organization that distributes simply written legal information about housing, jobs and other topics to Quebecers in both French and English. This resource is used by employees to explain a number of housing issues and is often shown to students who come in to our office seeking legal information.

# EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

## Minimum wage Campaign

In May 2011 the minimum wage for most workers increased from \$9.50 per hour to \$9.65. However for workers receiving tips for table service, whose minimum hourly wage was \$8.25 the year before, the wage increased to \$8.35. If a student visits us and they are not getting paid the minimum wage, we encourage them to visit the Normes du travail with their pay stubs and a record of logged hours. This process will enable them to receive the retroactive amount that is missing from their pay, as well as an increase to their wage to the legal minimum.

What's  
Minimum  
Wage In  
Quebec?

**\$9.65/h** 2011

**\$8.35/h**  
If you make tips

**MIN-  
IMUM  
WAGE**

CSU Housing and  
Job Bank  
www.hojo.csu.qc.ca

The poster features a blue background with yellow and white text. At the bottom, there is a cartoon character made of yellow blocks that says 'MIN-IMUM WAGE'.

Did you  
know?

- If you don't have to declare your tips, you should be paid \$9.65/hr.
- Every employee must be paid for training, statutory holidays and vacation.
- Employees have the right to breaks for shifts 5 hours or longer.
- You must receive notice if you are fired.
- Employees must receive compensation for uniforms.
- Workers can refuse tasks that seem unsafe.
- You can consult the Commission des normes du travail for complaints.

Come visit HOJO to learn more about your rights as an employee and discuss any work-related issues.

CSU Housing and  
Job Bank  
www.hojo.csu.qc.ca

In The Hall Building: H-240  
Monday to Thursday 10-6 | Friday 11-4  
Phone: 514-848-7474 ext. 7933  
Fax: 514-848-7419  
hojo@csu.qc.ca | hojo@csu.qc.ca

The poster has a white background with a yellow header and a list of employee rights.

## NEW CAMPAIGN

### Right-to-Privacy and employment

HOJO has begun to work with different groups such as the CSU Advocacy Center, the Legal Information Clinic and the Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR) to combat different sorts of civil rights abuses students face. Students may face discrimination relating to ethnicity, country of origin, marital status and social status by including too much private information on their resumes or by completing job applications which demand private information. HOJO is working to emphasize the importance of individual's privacy rights when job-hunting and are looking forward to taking the privacy rights campaign further in conjunction with the Advocacy Center. This new facet of our privacy campaign focuses on protecting students from discrimination by first informing students of their rights, and then encouraging them to protect their private information including their country of birth, age, gender and marital status when applying for jobs.

## Job Search and Employees Rights Handout

HOJO's employment handout focuses on employment rights and resources as well as finding work. While many students are unaware about what minimum wage is, who pays for a uniform and whether or not they get a break over a five hour shift, this handout is an easy-access reference for them. The handout also includes a list of employment resources that may be of use such as the Normes du travail, CSST and Employment Insurance.

The other side of the handout is a job search guide that outlines different possibilities for students. The top section provides resources for on-campus work. For many international and out-of-province students this option is the most favorable. The section includes the steps to applying for the work-study permit (which we explain to students) and occasional or temporary work within specific departments of Concordia. We also encourage students who have the time and may be lacking work-experience to volunteer or do an internship, which they can find through our links on [classifieds.csu.qc.ca](http://classifieds.csu.qc.ca).

Further for those students who need to improve their French, there is a list of community-based and affordable French courses. We also include a list of other off-campus job banks. If a student wants a full-time job or help with their CV or interview skills CAPS and JMSB's CMS' contact information is on the handout, as well as Counseling and Development for their resource library, and the Concordia Mentor Program for career guidance.

## Commission des normes du travail

The HOJO mainly refers its visitors enquiring about employment to the Commission des normes du travail (CNT) because it is the institution mandated to enforce employment rights. While we do not directly refer students out to the CNT, we frequently refer to their documentation and website. A particularly handy document is their booklet "Mieux comprendre pour mieux s'entendre," which includes the employment standards and who is covered by them. The document also contains stipulations regarding the standards and provides examples, which are always useful where the law is concerned. "Mieux comprendre" also includes what recourses and employee or ex-employee can take if their employment right have not been respected. If a student comes in and they have a complaint against their employer, after consulting this document, we generally either refer them to the CNT or another service for non-unionized workers called Au bas de l'échelle.



## NEW RESOURCE

### Students and Employment

During the summer semester HOJO developed a fact sheet, which is available on [hojo.csu.qc.ca](http://hojo.csu.qc.ca), about the current circumstances of students who are working. The fact sheet was developed by consulting Statistics Canada's data, as well as Sources et modes de financement des étudiants de premier cycle by the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec. The goal of our document is to inform students as to what the norm is for students who are working in Quebec so that they know what to expect. Students and Employment outlines what kind of jobs students have during their studies, the average hours they work and how much they make. The document concludes with different resources to help students find that job they are looking for.

### FAQ's on employment and housing

Originally we had a single FAQ that only responded to questions around posting an apartment or job announcement or registering on the website. We realized that the questions students frequently have were not being specifically addressed in our FAQ and we wanted to change that. Now HOJO has created 3 large Frequently Asked Questions documents pertaining to the job searching, apartment hunting and apartment problems sections of our resource website.

### Workshops

HOJO Presented 3 different series of workshops last year. We brought in Au bas d'échelle, a non-unionized workers organization to discuss what rights non-unionized employees have in Quebec. We gave our Apartment Hunting Workshops in August/September and in January in a room attached to the International students office. Our Moving out of Residence workshops took place in February/March in both Loyola and SGW residence buildings. In the future we will work to not overlap midterm weeks with our events as we find students are just too busy to attend. We are developing our first mini-workshop, a 20 minute long, What you need to know about job-hunting in 20 minutes or less.

# MEDIA

# Des propriétaires profitent de l'ignorance des étudiants étrangers

Le service de soutien aux étudiants de Concordia a reçu une trentaine de plaintes depuis deux semaines Les étudiants étrangers connaissent peu ou pas les lois du Québec en matière de logement



MARIE-EVE SHAPPER  
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LOGEMENT. Des étudiants de l'Université Concordia condamnent les pratiques abusives de certains propriétaires

4 400 Pas moins de 4 400 étudiants étrangers fréquentent l'Université Concordia.

donateur du Bureau d'in-



Le service de soutien aux étudiants a reçu plusieurs plaintes de propriétaires qui exigent, par exemple, de deux à six mois de loyer.

A 12 LA PRESSE MONTRÉAL JEUDI 2 SEPTEMBRE 2010

## ACTUALITÉS

### ÉTUDIANTS ÉTRANGERS

# Les « pratiques abusives » des propriétaires sont dénoncées

CATHERINE HANDELD

Lorsque l'Administratrice Heather Lewis est arrivée à Montréal pour diriger à l'Université Concordia, elle a vu un appartement dans le centre-ville. Elle a été obligée de payer le propriétaire à cette adresse pour l'avance de six mois de loyer. Il lui a également demandé une promesse de ses parents.

de 3000\$, une d'une centaine de pages à l'Université Concordia. Elle dit avoir reçu une trentaine de plaintes à cet égard depuis la rentrée. Selon le Code civil, les propriétaires ne peuvent exiger plus d'un mois de loyer à l'avance. Indique la Régie du logement de Québec, il est à la portée de tous de saisir la Commission d'accès à l'information (CAI) au cas de plaintes.

# DES ÉTUDIANTS DE CONCORDIA LANCENT UN CRI D'ALARME Des étudiants étrangers floués par les propriétaires

MARIE-EVE SHAPPER

Après six semaines de plaintes, l'Université Concordia lance un cri d'alarme. Les étudiants étrangers sont victimes de pratiques abusives de propriétaires. Les propriétaires exigent souvent de deux à six mois de loyer à l'avance, ce qui est contraire à la loi.



## A Presence in the Media

# PROMOTIONS

# OUTREACH

## CAREER FAIRS

## TABLING

In order to reach as many students as possible HOJO is committed to going to students to help them learn about our service and our website. Besides distributing our information via e-mail to our on-campus partners, we also distribute large quantities of our postcards to student service offices in order to be included in their mail outs. HOJO also contributes content to the CSU monthly newsletter which is distributed to all undergraduates.

### Salon Carrieres & National Career Fairs- Palais des Congres

We provided outreach to employers and voluntary organizations in order to increase the number of positions available on our website.

### Tabling

We provided outreach at the following events and locations:

CSU Orientation—Downtown

CSU Orientation—Information Day

CSU Orientation—Clubs Fair

CSU Orientation—Many Tastes of Concordia

QPIRG Orientation—Community Day

Concordia Open House 2010—Downtown & Loyola

Volunteer Fair 2010—Downtown

CSU Winter Orientation—Downtown

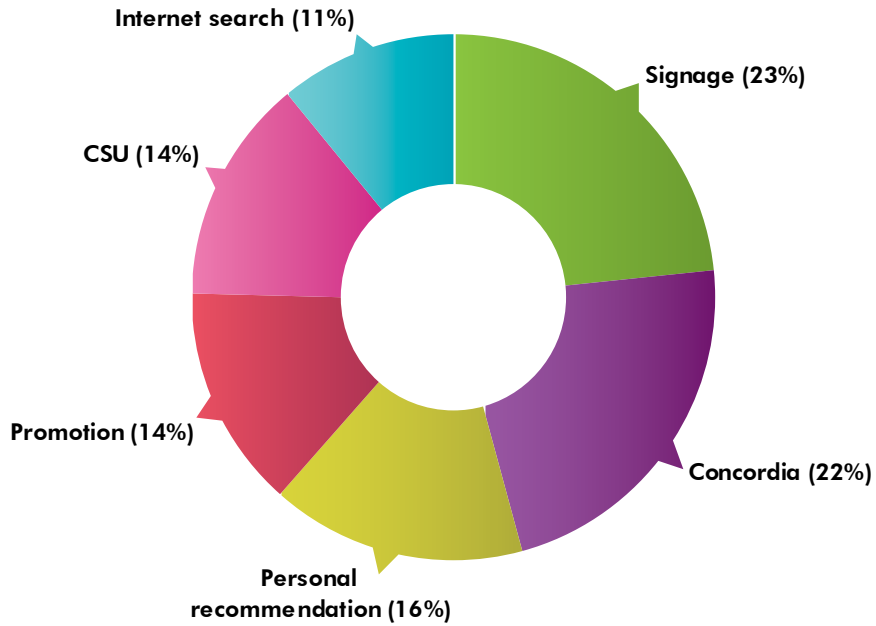
Weekly tabling at CSU Loyola Luncheon

Monthly tabling on the Hall building mezzanine



# REFERRALS

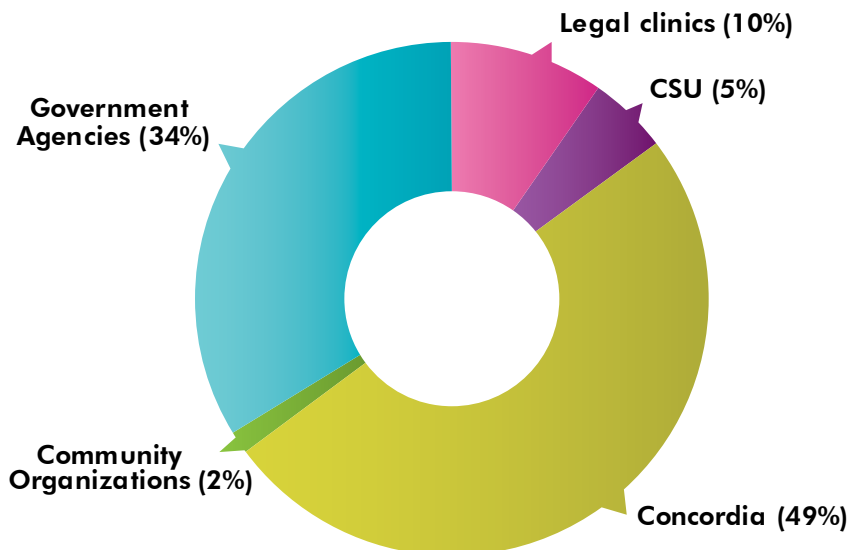
## First-time visitors to HOJO, where did you first hear about us?



## Of those that heard about HOJO from Concordia, Where did you hear about us?

- ISO 38%
- Concordia.ca 29%
- Birks Student Centre 7%
- Other 10%
- CDEV/CAPS 6%
- Campus Tours 5%
- Info Booth 5%

## Where does HOJO refer students?



## Within Concordia, where does HOJO refer students?

- CDEV/CAPS 69%
- ISO 8%
- Concordia Residence 6%
- FAAO 6%
- Birks Student Centre 5%
- Other 6%

## Challenges

- Space on campus for workshops can be difficult to coordinate
- Reaching a diverse student population requires many different communication methods
- Wait times at the Regie du logement are long for tenants with apartment problems
- Widespread disregard for housing regulations is common in many student-priced rental buildings
- Bed bug problem continues in Montreal and many landlords are unaware of proper protocols to solve the problem
- Requests for private information on job and housing applications are common
- High youth unemployment rate persists; Anglophones and International Students often have difficulties finding work while studying and in the summer

## Priorities for next year

- Continue to promote HOJO in campus media, tabling and flyering at on-campus events whenever possible
- Increase online promotions and presence to reach students at their convenience
- Incorporating social media into a promotions plan
- Promoting student awareness of Quebec Housing Rules and Regulations with a special focus on International students unique needs
- Continuing to train staff and to offer workshops to students on issues related to housing and employment in Quebec

## Long-term priorities

- Increasing resources for students from community organizations to fill gaps
- Increasing the number of jobs available on the website
- Having a bilingual website
- Working with other organizations on and off-campus to help students find jobs through workshops or other programming or services

# THANKS

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Antonio Starnino- CSU Designer  
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Au Bas de l'Échelle  
Birks Student Center  
Career and Placement Services  
Center for Research Action on Race Relations  
Centre Generation Emploi  
Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail  
Concordia's Librarians  
Counseling and Development,  
CSU Student Advocacy Center  
CSU Legal Information Clinic  
Financial Aid and Awards Office  
International Students Office  
Joanne Spinelli—Welcome Centre  
Career Management Services  
Legal Aid  
Multifaith Chaplaincy  
Commission des normes du travail  
Pina Greco—Enrolment & Student Services  
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The Dean of Students Office  
Walter Tom- CSU Legal Information Clinic  
Ville de Montreal- Public Health Division  
Youth Employment Services