



**Press Release  
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## **Douglas Hospital launches “mini-site” to destigmatize mental illness**

**Montréal, July 19, 2006** – To commemorate its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Douglas is launching a mini-site: [www.douglas125.qc.ca](http://www.douglas125.qc.ca). In keeping with this festive occasion, the site features facts, historical anecdotes and personality profiles — riveting accounts of people’s ongoing battle against the myths of mental illness. The site also includes a photo gallery and—its crowning achievement—a virtual Hospital tour.

“This initiative shows our determination to use the Web to raise awareness of the Douglas and mental illness in an imaginative and unconventional way,” explains Marie-Gabrielle Ayoub, the Douglas Hospital’s interactive communication advisor. “It allows people to follow the Hospital’s evolution from a nineteenth century asylum to its current status as a University Institute in Mental Health.”

### **Step back in time...**

Did you know that fear and the flu were thought to be probable causes of mental illness back in 1890? Visitors to the site can step back in time to learn about this institution, its patients and its staff—from its origins as the "Protestant Hospital for the Insane" to today’s Douglas Hospital.

### **“Open Minds” profiles destigmatize mental illness**

On the site, you’ll meet Katarina, Mehereen, Stella, Jim, Marielle, and Ann. Each of them, in their own way, are boosting public awareness of mental illness and battling its devastating myths.

### **The latest in interactivity**

At a time when today’s technology lets people stroll the streets of Quito via satellite, the Douglas introduces its virtual campus map—a user-friendly, informative tool.

Visitors can zoom in and out, travel east or north by dragging the mouse over the map. By clicking on buildings, they’ll access fact sheets rich with historical information, current services, and early and recent photos. Each sheet invites visitors to the main Douglas site at [www.douglas.qc.ca](http://www.douglas.qc.ca) for additional information.

A virtual tour for some, a historic resource for others, the map propels the Douglas in the world of interactivity.

This site was conceived and developed in PHP by the Montréal agency Bivouac Studio [www.bivouacstudio.com](http://www.bivouacstudio.com). It combines the dynamic potential of Flash, the flexibility of vectorial drawing, and the rigors of XML tree structure and text storage.

Click, visit! [www.douglas125.qc.ca](http://www.douglas125.qc.ca)

### **125 Years of Douglas**

Founded in 1881 by Alfred Perry and a group of Protestant clergy and other Montréal citizens, the “Protestant Hospital for the Insane” was established to be the most progressive mental health institution in Quebec. In 1965, the name was changed to the Douglas Hospital in honour of James Douglas, MD, a pioneer in psychiatry, and his family, who contributed generously to the hospital. Major research breakthroughs by Heinz Lehmann, MD, in the 1950s resulted in the introduction of antipsychotics in North America. These medications made it possible for many patients, previously

thought incurable, to regain an active life in society. Today, the Douglas Hospital provides specialized and ultraspecialized care for all ages, treating 250 in-patients and 9,000 out-patients—from Montréal and throughout Quebec—who suffer from depression, schizophrenia, eating disorders, attention deficit disorder with or without hyperactivity, anxiety, and degenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease. The Douglas Hospital Research Centre, created in 1979, is the second most extensive mental health research centre in Canada, with over 60 scientists and clinical researchers, and 180 university students. This team works tirelessly to discover the causes of mental illness—whether genetic, environmental, cultural or social—in order to develop new diagnostic tools, treatments, and methods of prevention.

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