

Portrait of CIFEJ's New General Secretary: Monic Lessard

It is never easy to introduce oneself. I'll start right now with the reaction concerning my recent nomination as General Secretary of CIFEJ. **I am thrilled!** Thrilled because I see the chance to stay close to my pet project, my long-standing cause, that of the children. Furthermore, the idea of working within CIFEJ to move forward with the fascinating issue of youth and the media is an honor and a delight.

For the past few years, I was Vice-President of Canal Famille, a television channel specializing in programs for youth. In that capacity, I was often faced with budgets that were far from adequate for the concept and creation of original productions made for various target audiences: preschoolers, 6 to 9 year-olds, and 9 to 12 year-olds. Also, let me tell you that you have to get up very early and in a good mood in order to find the product or the series for the youth market that meets the barest minimum of requirements.

I also had the pleasure of working for many children's programs, among them: Watatatow, for the past 12 years, a youth series on Société Radio-Canada, and Télé-Pirate, a magazine with services for 9 to 12 year-olds. What luck, to be able to work with a team of scriptwriters, directors, researchers, all looking to create and produce a good show for youngsters. My training in journalism allowed me to travel. In conjunction with UNICEF in South America, I covered news (unfortunately, still current) about street children and infant mortality; in Africa I had the pleasure of teaching television journalism.

This CIFEJ nomination arrives at just the right time in my professional and private life since I have chosen to work on more humanitarian causes. I am still very active: I teach scriptwriting, directing, youth television production and I am manager of contents for an educational television project. In truth, my volunteer and consulting work in the television milieu keep me happy, on the lookout for everything that is happening in the media and with young people.

The causes defended by CIFEJ are noble ones. I endorse them without hesitation. I am delighted with the idea of getting to know you better at my first General Assembly in Norway next November.

I will then be filling the shoes of outgoing Secretary Robert Roy. They are big shoes to fill and it will be honor to meet that challenge. I am also pleased to be working with the office staff in Montreal with whose competence and dedication I am already acquainted.