Research Aims
Major hospitals significantly alter the social landscape of the surrounding neighbourhood, bringing both problems and opportunities for growth. How can a hospital’s potential be harnessed to maximize the social capital of area residents? The purpose of this research project is twofold:

(a) first, to chart the hiring process used by the MUHC and the career paths of MUHC employees in four selected fields – nursing, préposées aux bénéficiaires, secrétaires médicaux, and aides techniques en pharmacie – in order to provide a portrait of the ‘typical’ MUHC employee in each field.

(b) Through the examination of local hiring programs in the United States and the United Kingdom, along with an inventory of employment programs available in Montreal, to evaluate the potential for the implementation of a local training/hiring program in the new MUHC super-hospital.

Key Results to Date
Phase One: Review of Local Hiring Programs in the United States and United Kingdom
A study of hiring practices in the UK’s National Health Service (NHS) reveals a recent commitment to corporate responsibility and sustainable practice. Under this framework many hospitals have developed local hiring programs tailored to match the employment needs of the hospital with those of the surrounding communities. Programs feature targeted entry level employment supported by multiple levels of internal and external job training. The concept of local hiring is also expanded to include local purchasing of food and services, and the active support and encouragement of local peripheral industry. The NHS frameworks provide interesting potential scenarios for Montreal. Many large British cities share characteristics with Montreal and the MUHC – shortages in technical fields such as nursing; hospitals located in less privileged neighbourhoods; and large populations of immigrants and/or minorities with higher than average rates of unemployment.

In North American hospitals local hiring programs are less common, but are sometimes included in Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs). A CBA is an official agreement between community groups, the municipal government, and an institution or development which ensures that community members receive an equitable share of the benefits that come with a new institutional development. The CBA also helps to ensure a long term relationship between a community and an institution, as well as drawing the city’s attention to the community’s needs.