



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Montreal, May 12, 2017

McGill University set to become *the* world leader in retail- management education thanks to a \$25-million gift from the Bensadoun Family Foundation

*Gift to serve as catalyst for launch of international school
in retail management in the heart of Montreal*

Montreal, Quebec – May 12, 2017 – Retail icon and philanthropist Aldo Bensadoun has stepped forward with a visionary gift to his *alma mater*, McGill University, aimed at creating new knowledge and developing leaders for the rapidly changing retail industry. Thanks to a donation of \$25 million from the Bensadoun Family Foundation, announced today, McGill will work on developing the **Bensadoun School of Retail Management**: an inter-disciplinary, state-of-the-art school dedicated to all facets of the retail industry.

At a time of significant change in the retail industry worldwide, the School will act as a hub in the heart of Montreal for students, researchers and practitioners to work collaboratively towards solving the real world problems facing retailers today.

The proposed School, slated to open in Fall of 2018, comes at a time when the retail industry is faced with a host of challenges brought on by an empowered, digital-savvy consumer, and a future driven by increased interconnectivity. With the objective of preparing students to participate in all aspects of the retail industry and shape retail worldwide, the School will provide an in-depth teaching curriculum and focus on the fundamental, integrated core sections of retail management: Technology, Business and Human-Cultural.

It will study the effects of emerging technologies and practices on the retail industry such as Artificial Intelligence and make use of McGill's existing strengths in neuroscience and brain-behaviour connection to better understand how consumers make decisions. It will also leverage McGill's core philosophy of sustainability to develop ways to promote healthier and more eco-conscious decisions. The School will also promote Montreal, Quebec and Canada as an international centre for research, training and best practice for the global retail industry.

A key, defining feature of the School will be its strong experiential component, which will serve to complement its robust academic curriculum. Experiential learning opportunities will be fostered through partnerships with domestic and global retailers, a retail data centre, and a teaching and research lab that will occupy a high-visibility space on the corner of Sherbrooke and McTavish Streets. The Lab, which will feature real-world simulations, will provide students, researchers and retailers with hands-on opportunities

to work on contemporary and relevant retail problems, straight from industry, in an academic environment.

The School will also offer comprehensive academic programming in retail management, from the undergraduate to the Ph.D. levels, to develop the future leaders of the retail industry.

“Thank you to the Bensadoun Family Foundation for this visionary gift,” said Professor Suzanne Fortier, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of McGill University. “Over the course of his extraordinary career, Mr. Bensadoun has advanced both Quebec’s prosperity and its social well-being. He epitomizes the qualities of McGill’s students and alumni: an inquisitive mind, an unwavering dedication to one’s goals, and a passion for making one’s community a better place.”

“With this transformative gift from the Bensadoun Family Foundation, McGill will become the global leader in retail management education and research,” said Isabelle Bajoux-Besnainou, Dean and Professor of Finance at the Desautels Faculty of Management. “By leveraging the breadth and depth of research performed across the University, and in close partnership with the industry, the proposed School will reinvent the future of retail management.”

The School’s mission is to be a leading and highly respected source of new knowledge that can guide the development of outstanding retail enterprise in the domestic and global context. This will require experience and knowledge of best practices and promising new ones. The objective is to position McGill as a global leader in retail management, attracting the best and the finest students, professors, managers and partners, and ultimately, to shape retail worldwide.

“I’m excited about the vision of the Bensadoun School of Retail Management to become a global center of excellence”, says Aldo Bensadoun. “We will be able to provide the next generation of retailers with innovative solutions for the industry’s transformation. As the consumers’ behavior evolves, success in retail will depend largely on the integration of connected disciplines such as big data, artificial intelligence and neuroscience, and that’s what we’ll provide for our students”.

About McGill University: www.mcgill.ca

About The ALDO Group: www.aldogroup.com/about-us.html

Links to new building, images and videos

www.mcgill.ca/the-gift

More news from McGill University: www.mcgill.ca/newsroom/

Contact for McGill University:

Cynthia Lee

cynthia.lee@mcgill.ca

Relations avec les médias | Media Relations
Université McGill | McGill University
T. 514.793-6753
www.mcgill.ca/newsroom/

Contact for The ALDO Group:

Geneviève Sharp
gs@egspr.com
EGS Communications Group
T. 514-991-4361
www.egspr.com