



## Memo

**To:** Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors  
**From:** Sarah Beutel, Interim President and CEO  
**Date:** October 31, 2023  
**Re:** President's Report

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Here is an update on Federation activities since our last board meeting on October 18. As the war in Israel continues, and it is a very stressful and challenging time for the Jewish community, as the numbers of antisemitic incidents have risen, the Federation team continues to work at a frenetic pace to meet ongoing commitments and newly arising issues and needs.

### DEVELOPMENT

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#### Emergency Campaign

As of October 30, 614 donors have contributed over \$3,247,000 to the campaign, which is truly incredible. Speaking of cities of comparable sizes, we should all be very proud of our community.

#### Annual Campaign

	Campaign 2024 – Oct 30	Campaign 2024 – Oct 2	Campaign 2023
<b>Dollars</b>	\$3,153,259	\$1,944,703	\$4,964,976
<b>Donors</b>	828	460	1533

While we have managed to make some significant progress over the last month despite everything going on, we would have hoped to be further ahead, as it becomes increasingly difficult to close gifts as time progresses. The top donor event on October 10 was a huge success at raising funds for emergency relief efforts. In terms of the Annual Campaign, despite circulating pledge cards that enabled people to self-canvass for Campaign, only one person took advantage of that.

### COMMUNITY BUILDING

Staff have shifted into high gear to address the needs of the community since the war began. Most planned events have gone forward with modifications to ensure they meet the needs of the community at this challenging time.

Program	Details	Engagement
<b>Community Gathering</b>	<b>Oct 28, Havdallah for the Hostages on Parliament Hill.</b> The focus of the vigil was the 30 children being held, with an installation of 30 empty strollers. Feedback from the community was very positive, although many stayed away expressing fear and reservations about	500+

	their safety. Despite several media outlets being present, there was scant coverage, which was disappointing.	
<b>Emerging Gen</b>	<p><b>Oct 15, Stronger Together Support Group</b> to help people due to the war. This included a 2.5-hour session with JFS staff.</p> <p><b>Nov 1, Drip Drop-in</b> The first of several planned informal gatherings at coffee shops. The intention is to engage with young Jews across diverse city locales who are looking to find connections and chance to speak with others at this challenging time.</p> <p><b>Nov 2, Think n' Drink</b> Tour of the Jacob M. Lowy collection and rare books workshop.</p> <p><b>One-on-one meetings with young adults:</b> Since the outbreak of the war, staff have met with 5-6 people weekly, twice the normal amount. Also, more people are reaching out through social media / WhatsApp, looking to talk and share.</p>	<p>12 community members + 3 newcomers</p> <p>15 people expected</p>
<b>PJ Library</b>	<p><b>Oct 13, PJ Babies &amp; Brews</b> Families with babies and toddlers were invited to Ottawa's kosher brewery to meet other PJ families, provide support to one another during a difficult time and enjoy a free beer together.</p> <p><b>Oct 22, PJ All Aboard the Ark</b> in partnership with Kehillat Beth Israel. Families gathered to experience a petting zoo and learn about the Jewish value of taking care of animals.</p> <p><b>Oct 23 PJ Babies &amp; Bagels</b> Families with babies and toddlers were invited to a PJ parent's home to meet other PJ families.</p> <p><b>Nov 3, PJ Shabbat Party at OJCS.</b> This will be held on a Friday, aimed at reaching families with preschool children.</p> <p><b>Touchpoints and coffee dates</b> 11 families (coffee dates) plus daily check ins with families to provide support during this difficult time.</p>	<p>5 families</p> <p>30 families</p> <p>10 families</p> <p>TBD</p>
<b>Newcomers</b>	Staff and newcomer ambassadors continue to meet with and provide support to newcomers, particularly newcomer Israeli families.	5 families
<b>Shoah Committee</b>	A Night of Human Rights Insight with David Matas, Nov. 4, in honor of Holocaust Education Month. Featuring the screening of the film "Prosecuting Evil: The Extraordinary World of Ben Ferencz," that recounts the life of Ben Ferencz, the last surviving Nuremberg prosecutor. The film will be followed by a Q & A period with David Matas, senior honorary counsel to B'nai Brith Canada.	90 registered

## Microgrants

This cycle there were a total of five new Microgrants awarded.

JET	Jewish Matchmaker Live in Ottawa	\$2,500.00
NCSY &	Women's Self Care Paint Night of Unity	\$1,130.00
Yotam Saban	Rally for Israel	\$2,250.00
Ottawa Torah Centre	Tradition with a Twist with Chanie Apfelbaum	\$2,500.00
Michael Kent	Sushi Shabbat for Young Professionals	\$450.00

Since July, 2023, the committee has successfully granted \$25,312.50 towards 14 Jewish communal initiatives.

## A Place for Everyone, Tuition Incentive Program

To date, there are 39 new students enrolled in supplementary schools using the tuition incentive program. Additionally, there are 11 new registered students, siblings of those leveraging the tuition incentive, which brings the total up to 50 new enrolls. We continue to work with our schools to ensure families are aware of this incentive program.

School	Number of Students	Number of Siblings Registered
OTT @ KBI	6	2
OMJS	13	2
Chabad Hebrew School	10	
Temple Israel	10	6
NSCY	2	0
Totals to date	39	11

In tandem, Federation is supporting a Hebrew first-language supplementary school, HaKibbutz, through the Jewish Journeys Grant. There are currently a total of 26 students enrolled in this program.

## Hillel Ottawa Update

**Student Engagement:** Staff have been very active on social media and in one-on-one meetings with students, responding to threats on campus that have been identified by students. An *Antisemitism Incident Report* was created to properly document all incidents. Hillel has offered free and immediate access to mental health support to students and is working to get the word out through various means to as many students as possible. To date, in the past 2 weeks, 10+ students have reached out for this support.

## **Events:**

Oct 19 - Discussion & Support: Carleton with Emily Segal – 12 students

Oct 23 - Discussion & Support: Reading Week with JNF – 10 students

Oct 26 - Ben Freeman: Jewish Pride and Self-Advocating in a Time of War – 10 students

Oct 27 - Shabbat Dinner at Hillel House – 40 students

Oct 28 – Community Havdalah for Hostages on Parliament Hill

Oct 30 - Daily Open Hours (10am-2pm) Begin in Zelikovitz Centre Boardroom

#### **Upcoming Events:**

Nov 1 - Meeting with Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs at uOttawa

Nov 1 - Kol Yisrael class #2

Nov 5 - Kol Yisrael class #3

Nov 7 - Book Club Meetup

**Fundraising:** Hillel Ottawa also received a \$9,450 grant from Beth Shalom Legacy Fund to Combat Antisemitism by initiating a Jewish-Student-Faculty Mentorship Program. The program will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

**Advocacy:** Hillel Ottawa's Israel Learning Program, a 6-week training course for student leaders, will continue through the semester. Eleven students have registered for this course that will be taught by a leader in the Ottawa Jewish community. Staff have also been in close communication with university administration regarding antisemitic incidents on campus.

## **FINANCE**

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Finance has completed work for the audit of JFO and the review engagement for Campus. The audited statements will be ready for the board's review at the December board meeting.

The finance team is working on updating the financial systems for JCC moving from Unison to Amelia/Dynamics. This is almost completed. The finance team is also undergoing a transition in the financial systems for the OJCF, away from Financial Edge to using Foundant as its new financial system.

## **COMMUNICATION**

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### **Eblasts overview**

In the last period, there have been more than 87K individual messages, representing a jump of 30K over the last period. The open rate has gone up from 60% to 64%. The increase represents Federation response to the war in Israel and our efforts to support the community and to share information. Highlights include:

**Israel in Crisis:** On Oct.7, we made the decision to communicate with the community on Shabbat to share our pain regarding the Hamas terror attack and to provide a local security update as well as to share the news of the Solidarity Gathering, held on Monday. The event was attended by more than 1,400 people. Open rate of the email was 66%.

**A thank you email:** Sent with photos from the solidarity event and further updates was sent out on Oct. 7. Open rate was 65%.

**Security Update:** Sent on Oct. 11 in light of the call for a global jihad, this message provided information on how to report antisemitic incidents and reassured the community that Federation was working with Ottawa Police Services and that proper security was in place. There was a 70% open rate.

**Emergency Appeal:** While the appeal for the people of Israel had been shared in the Shabbat greeting of Oct. 13, and online, the first community-wide email was sent Oct. 19. 61% open rate.

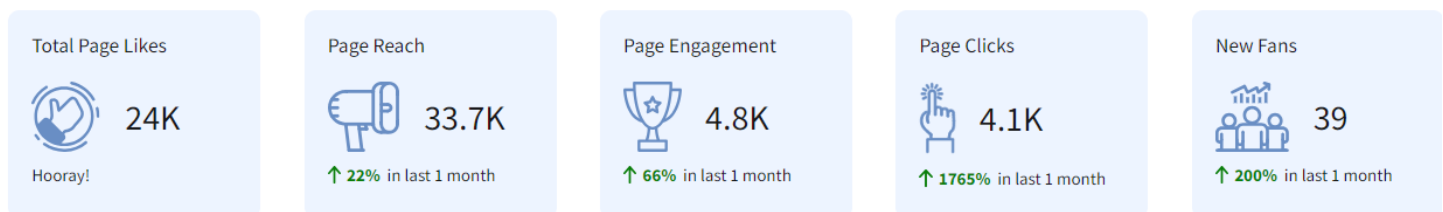
**Advocacy thank you and call to join letter-writing campaign:** A letter was sent to all the Ottawa attendees of the CIJA conference, thanking them and urging they become community advocates. So far 40 people have signed up.

**Ottawa Stands with Israel:** We introduced a new communications vehicle to share initiatives and events in support of Israel. The newsletter has resources for mental health, how to report incidents as well as donation links. 63% open rate

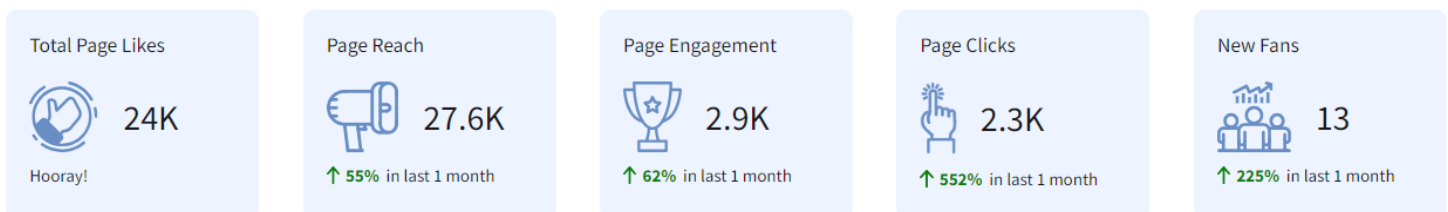
## Social media

**Federation Facebook:** We continued to see more engagement over last month.

Oct.



Sept.



**Instagram:** This is the largest increase to date. It likely reflects our advocacy posts in support of Israel.

Oct.



Sept.



## Advocacy update

### Community Relations

Jodi Green is actively engaging with external community groups: Meaningful connections were made with the Christian community; and two meetings with members from the Indo-Canadian community. They want to support the Jewish community. Additional information has been sent about the strong history of the Jews in India and the lack of persecution experienced there; Connected with a representative from CRIC (Capital Region Interfaith Council) who is making introductions to other faith leaders; Working with CCRC to connect with Claudette Commanda, Chancellor of U of Ottawa and the Association of Friendship Centres; connected with the United Way on their interfaith efforts.

### On the political and school advocacy front

David Sachs has been engaged in constant dialogue with our Hillel Ottawa team providing support to the students on campus. He is meeting with U of O provost on Nov. 1 and with the Carleton President on Nov. 2.

David is also in regular contact with Brian Kom, the Jewish equity coach, and is working on several developing files with regard to incidents at schools.

Letter-writing – thank you letters were sent to all the politicians who have attended or supported the Jewish community since Oct. 7.

Advocacy volunteers have been organized for a letter-writing campaign.

### Communications and Community Relations Committee (CCRC) update

Committee helped with talking points and letter templates for advocacy push and held an emergency meeting to help flesh out ideas.