



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: November 11, 2015
Re: President's Report

It has been a challenging time for Federation staff. The fall is always exceptionally busy and currently 3 key team members have been away on sick leave for extended periods of time. Additionally, Nicole Collette, maternity replacement for Rachel Abenhaim, will be leaving the organization at the end of the month. Interviews are now underway for a new Executive Assistant. Nonetheless, as evidenced by this report, positive progress continues on all fronts.

DEVELOPMENT

- As of November 11th, the 2016 Annual Campaign has raised **\$3.1M**, from **1,288** pledges, representing a **3.6%** increase on a gift-by-gift basis.
- On Friday October 23rd, 85 people gathered at Congregation Machzikei Hadas for the inaugural **Lion of Judah Family Shabbat Dinner** in conjunction with The Shabbat Project. The keynote speaker was Richard Marceau, Senior Adviser at CIJA. Special thanks to Sharon Weinstein, Leiba Krantzberg and Sharon Appotive who led the initiative.
- A **Canvasser Call Night** was held on October 26th, raising \$9,000 and closing approximately 80 gifts.
- An unexpectedly large demand for **PJ library** participation over the summer dictated a need to raise additional funds for the program. Sufficient funds have been raised to cover the additional participants, and there are now 391 children benefiting from the program.
- **Top Donor briefings** were held October 29th and November 3rd with approximately 35 top donors participating. The format was changed this year to allow for small group discussions. Additionally, input on the Annual Campaign Kick-off and top donor pre-reception was solicited. A copy of materials presented that evening is included in your board package.
- A **Canvasser Appreciation Event** will take place at the Canadian Tire Centre on November 19th, hosting our canvassers, as the Ottawa Senators play the Columbus Blue Jackets.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- **Shabbat Project:** With 24 local organizations participating, Federation coordinated this year's Shabbat Project in Ottawa. Many of the participating organizations held special programs and services before and throughout the October 23/24 Shabbat Project weekend. Federation took the lead in organizing the **Women's Challah Bake**, led by Federation board member Stacy Goldstein, and **Unity Havdallah**. 200 women participated in the first ever, and highly

successful Challah Bake, and an estimated 400 people attended Unity Havdallah and enjoyed music, food and activities.

- **JWRP Women's Trip to Israel:** Federation is proud to be partnering with the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project (JWRP) that seeks to inspire women to transform themselves, transform their families and their communities by bringing women on an eight-day journey through Israel. Federation has secured 36 spots on the November 13-22, 2016 mission which offers women an action packed experience that informs and inspires through living and learning Jewish values. Women travel together, grow as a group and continue their journey back to their communities as sisters after having shared this significant educational and experiential gift. Federation is seeking local partner organizations to work together to recruit participants, and will then coordinate follow-up programming to keep participants engaged in community.
- **"A Night to Remember"** on November 1st was a resounding success (though not sold-out). This concert to launch Holocaust Education Month raised significant funds for JFS programs for Russian speaking seniors and Holocaust survivors. The evening was co-sponsored by Jewish Family Services and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa's Shoah Committee, chaired by Debbie Halton-Weiss. The concert received significant media attention.
- **Two more events for Holocaust Education Month** – the movie "There Was Once...." on November 15th and a presentation on Holocaust Restitution on November 23rd will round out the Shoah Committee's events for the month. Other events by community agencies are being featured throughout the month and promoted by Federation.
- Twelve students, including one from Kingston and one from Toronto, are registered for Ottawa's **March of the Living** 2016.
- **Discussions between Torah Academy and Rambam to Unify:** parent consultations took place November 1st and November 2nd, and discussions are ongoing. A united, strong Orthodox school is a positive for our community, however, they may opt not to be on campus, representing a financial challenge for Federation.

Hillel Ottawa

- **October 4th** - 8 politically engaged students learned from CJPAC about election volunteering at a Pizza & Politics event.
- **October 9th** - 30 students, unable to go home for the thanksgiving break, enjoyed Shabbat dinner with Hillel.
- **October 9th & 16th** – 70 students across Ottawa took it upon themselves to express unity with Israel during this difficult time and lit "Candles for Peace."
- **October 13th** - 10 students enjoyed an Israeli Film evening at the Hillel House (Bananot/Cupcakes).
- **October 15th** - 37 students participated in a special "Drinks & Dialogue" event by the Israel Awareness Committee to learn more about Israel and dealing with Israel on campus.
- **October 19th** - 11 students participated in a Jews & Brews event during the Jays game.
- **October 23rd** - Shabbat Project musical Kabbalat Shabbat and dinner for 10 students who stayed on campus during reading week.
- Weekly **"bagel & Schmear"** events were held: October 8th (24 students); October 14th (23 students); and October 21st (28 students).

CORPORATE SERVICES

- The database conversion project is on track and all milestones are being met. The 3rd data cut is underway and significant progress is being made.
- Campus management met with Hillel staff to discuss the vacant room rental. An assessment is underway to potentially reconfigure the office layout in order to create a new tenant room to maximize the chances of filling the vacancy. This is important, as Hillel has an obligation to meet a targeted capital reserve each year.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

- Federation's insurance broker has introduced a new product for data security breaches and privacy losses (e.g. cyber-security). We are arranging for the broker to host an information session so that experts can describe the coverage to Federation and other community agencies. When sufficient information is gathered, a recommendation will be made to the board regarding considering such coverage.