



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: December 9, 2020
Re: President's Report

Here is an update to the Board on activities and issues since the November 25th meeting. It is a very hectic time at Federation – programming, allocations, OVH issues management, fundraising and communications. It has been an overly ambitious December!

Additionally, I am personally actively involved in the National Re-Imagining Process. It has been and will continue to be a time-consuming process, whose outcome is not yet certain.

DEVELOPMENT

Life and Legacy

Federation's Life and Legacy team hit a number of milestones in the last month. We secured 4 Letters Of Intent (LOI) in November which qualified us for a \$720 special incentive grant offered by the Foundation. More importantly, we also hit the goal of securing 18 LOIs, meaning that we have secured a USD \$5K incentive for year 1. Both of these grants will be added to the Emergency Campaign for Community Resilience. A special thank you to the many board members who have already signed an LOI. We have verbal commitments for 2 additional LOIs. If we secure 25 LOIs before the end of February, the incentive grant from the Foundation will increase.

Campaign Results To Date

Annual Campaign 2021 The results of the campaign continue to inspire, given the circumstances. Currently, the campaign stands at \$4.4M from 1,431 donors. This represents a 3% increase on a gift by gift basis.

Emergency Campaign: 31% of Annual Campaign donors also made a gift to the Emergency Campaign, which currently stands at \$2.57M from 614 donors.

Analysis: We continue to be amazed at people's generosity, particularly from donors whose businesses we know have experienced significant financial losses. That being said, much work remains with 420 dollar cards valued at \$420K still outstanding and this will almost certainly be the hardest part. Every week we analyze gifts greater than \$5,000 that have not yet been secured to assess risk. I am pleased to report that there are fewer and fewer at risk gifts remaining to close.

OPERATIONS

OVH

Two local doughnut manufacturing plants have recently been certified under the OVH. One supplies products to Pudgyboy's, and the other to Farm Boy. This will ensure Ottawa has plenty of options for kosher sufganiyot for Chanukah and year-round!

The OVH is also in conversations with established caterers in Montreal and Toronto who have expressed interest in establishing an Ottawa presence, to fill the gap left by CKC's decision to give up its kosher certification. This remains a high priority, though progress is slow.

Security

We are partnering with CIJA to host a virtual Situational Awareness training session via Zoom, available for our synagogues, schools and agencies.

Compliance

All GST has been paid, our payroll is current, source deductions have been made, and all other filings and payments are in compliance.

FEDERATION PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

Community Building

November 21 – **PJ Havdalah under the Stars:** In collaboration with OJCS, we gathered PJ families for two socially-distant candlelight stories and a Havdalah walk for 12 families and over 45 individual participants.

December 2 – **Chanukah Cooking with Chef Solomonov:** 372 households (510 people) participated in the first of 2 “*Cooking with Chef Solomonov*” events. The event is a partnership with the SJCC and hosted by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. The next event will be Passover Cooking with Chef Solomonov, on March 16. 100+ people joined the Ottawa “Preshow Schmooze”, to chat and break out into 19 small rooms for a smaller group schmooze session. At this time, 83.3% of post-event survey respondents indicated that the event improved or greatly improved their likeliness of participating in future Federation events. 80% indicated that the event improved or greatly Improved their likelihood of recommending future Federation events to others.

December 3 – **Launch of the BGS “Bevvies, Gratitude & Schmooze”:** Ben Gurion Society members were invited to a virtual social scheduled to happen on January 23, with Kosher beverage kits and a demonstration from the professional mixologist at *Bar from Afar*. Sponsors have been, and continue to be secured.

December 6 – **PJ Chanukah Craft Kits:** In collaboration with the SJCC, Federation sold and distributed over 100 Chanukah craft kits to 56 PJ families.

December 6 and 7 – **Newcomers Virtual Chanukah Parties:** The first gathering was for 10 new families, who received special welcome packages, for a total of 45 individual participants. They participated in a Zoom interactive meet up with community champions. The second similar gathering was for 10 young adults new to Ottawa, who also received welcome packages.

December 9 – **Special Event Honouring Rabbi Sacks Z”L:** To mark the Rabbi’s *Shloshim*, the event will include speakers Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, Irwin Cotler, Rabbi Reuven Bulka and video messages from Dr. Erica Brown, Director, Mayberg Center, The George Washington University, Sivan Rahav Meir, the World Mizrahi Scholar-in-Residence & a meaningful tribute video by Ottawa Rabbinical Leadership. We expect just over 200 participants.

December 7 and 9 – **Lion of Judah Chanukah:** A copy of the book, **The Extraordinary Unordinary You** are being delivered to each Lion on December 7 and 9. The gift is in preparation for the event featuring the book’s author, herself a Lion, Simone Knego in spring 2021.

December 13 – **PJ Chanukah Story and Singalong**: In collaboration with Ganon and the SJCC, Federation will host an online story and Chanukah singalong. Over 110 families have registered, with over 400 individual participants.

December 15 – **EG Chanukah Dough Ball**: Young adults are invited to learn to make sufganiyot with chef Alan Naimon, and have the opportunity to celebrate Chanukah and chat with friends.

Virtual Menorah Lighting: in partnership with the SJCC, there will be a live menorah lighting featuring community leaders from Federation and the SJCC, Rabbinic leadership and a short video of Hanukkah songs from day schools and pre-schools. To date, just over 100 households have registered to receive the link.

Microgrants are supporting a total of six community-wide Chanukah events.

Microgrants for Chanukah	
Israeli Community Chanukah	\$1,500
JET Light Up the Night	\$1,500
OTC Chanukah Drive-In	\$1,800
SJCC Chanukah Live Candle Lighting	\$285
Israeli Women Paint Night	\$1,500
Jewish Youth Library - Lessons of the Light	\$2,000
Total	\$8,585

Hillel Update

As the fall term comes to a close, Hillel Ottawa staff are busy checking in with students and planning for the winter term. There was a strong finish to the fall term with over 1,000 student engagements, with approximately 200 individual students. Final numbers will be available once the database is complete.

November 19: **SAGE Israel themed paint night** (30 students attended), SAGE (students acquiring graduate education) in partnership with Federation micro-grants and the Canadian embassy of Israel ran a virtual Israel themed paint night.

November 23: **Israeli book club** (15 students attended), students completed the book **Letter To My Palestinian Neighbor** and discussed their experience.

November 24: **Israel Learning Fellowship weekly class**.

November 25: **Jewish Learning Fellowship final class**, this term's Jewish Learning Fellowship concluded with six students completing all requirements in order to receive a stipend.

November 26: **Student executive meeting** (20 students attended), end of term student executive meeting to discuss positives, negatives, and begin to plan for winter term.

November 29: **Follow Your Roots National Event** (45 students attended), a Canadian coast-to-coast event for Jewish students of Russian descent. This event was planned and run by Hillel Ottawa staff, in partnership with Limmud FSU (Former Soviet Union).

December 1: **Final Israel Learning Fellowship class**, this term's Israel Learning Fellowship concluded with ten students completing all requirements in order to receive a stipend.

December 10: **Hannukah Gift Bags** (60 students), Hillel Ottawa distributed 60 gift bags to students that include menorah, gelt, dreidels, the materials to build an edible "Hannukah house", and more! The Hannukah gift bags were a huge success and sold out within days of being posted. Students will be joining together online throughout the nights of Hannukah to light the menorah candles together.

December 14 to 17: Hillel Ottawa staff are attending this year's virtual **Hillel International Annual Global Assembly**.

COMMUNICATION & ADVOCACY:

Community Messages

In the last 30 days, Federation has experienced an increase in eblast open rates of 1%, now at 47%, and clicks have increased from 8% to 10%. There has also been an increase of 158 new contacts. Many of the new names come from event participation as well as interest in the upcoming new E-Bulletin newsletter.

Social Media

Federation's **Facebook** impact is again higher this month with our busy event schedule. The reach from November 3rd to December 3rd is at 34,372 people. Engagement is also up with 6,961 interactions.

The **EG Facebook group** has grown by 6 members to 167, while **Jewish Ottawa Helps** has increased by 16 to 1,296 members.

Instagram now has over a thousand followers at 1,008. **Twitter** is steady at 1,676.

Video

Two unique videos have recently been created: PPE distribution and a video of local Rabbis honoring Rabbi Sacks Z"l.

Advocacy:

- On November 27th, I participated in a meeting organized by Kehillat Beth Israel with MPP Jeremy Roberts, as a follow-up to the disturbing anti-Semitic video at Nepean High School.
- On December 9th, I and other leaders in Ottawa are participating in CIJA's virtual lobby day at Queen's Park.
- On December 14th, Federation in partnership with CIJA and Congregation Machzikei Hadas is participating in *Light across the Middle East* - the first ever simultaneous Chanukah candle-lighting in United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Canada, and Israel. It will bring together faith leaders and dignitaries from across the region with our community in Canada to celebrate the Abraham Accords.