



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: November 18, 2020
Re: President's Report

Here is an update to the Board on activities and issues since the October 21st meeting.

DEVELOPMENT

Lion of Judah

We are thrilled to report that the Lion of Judah chairs have secured another step-up Lion, bringing the total of new Lions to date to 5! Yasher Koach to Gillian Presner and Donna Dolansky for their enthusiasm and dedication to growing the program.

Canvassers

Federation's Life and Legacy team continue to make progress. After presentations to both the Federation and the Foundation boards, team members have personally followed up with every Federation board member. Currently, we have 15 letters of intent and are beginning to speak to additional prospects beyond the board. We also recently had a donor endow their Lion of Judah for \$100K, and since new permanent endowments count for the program, we will add this to our total once we receive the letter of intent.

Campaign Results To Date

Annual Campaign 2021 currently stands at \$4,111,056 from 1,197 donors. This represents a 2.56% increase card over card which is particularly impressive, given the Emergency Campaign and the pandemic.

Emergency Campaign: 33% of Annual Campaign donors also made gifts to the emergency campaign, which sits at just over \$2.5 million with 396 gifts. We are waiting for the funds from the Jewish Federations of North American Match of \$60K US, which will bring us closer to \$2.6M.

Analysis: We continue to be amazed at the progress of the annual campaign and the generosity of the community. That being said, many works remain with 522 dollar cards outstanding representing almost \$600K. While some of this is normal timing with gifts we are not concerned about (e.g. historically the donor gives in the Spring), we do know that as the year progresses, it becomes harder to close cards. There are a handful of top donors whose gifts have been deferred until later in the year, as they assess their financial situation, and what they are realistically able to do.

OPERATIONS

Campus

With Jewish National Fund vacating its space in building 11 in December, Campus is in discussions with current tenants and reaching out into the community to identify agencies in need of office space.

We are in negotiations with OJCS on the terms of a formal occupancy agreement. Many thanks to Michael Polowin and Jake Shabinsky for their insight and guidance.

IT

Taking additional steps to reinforce our ability to support staff working remotely, IT has been working on three important projects: replacing our VPN software with a more reliable and accessible app, updating our firewall, and making remote office phone services available to staff working from home. We expect to complete these upgrades in early 2021.

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

Hanukah – in addition to Hanukah programming for EG and PJ Library, Federation has been actively working with partners to ensure that there are multiple opportunities to celebrate. These include:

- In partnership with the SJCC and numerous other communities, a Hanukah cooking program on December 2nd with chef Michael Solomonov. To date, 330 people have already registered.
- Coordinating a calendar of events being offered in the community.
- In partnership with the SJCC, and participation from Rabbis and schools, coordinating a virtual menorah lighting every night of Hanukah.
- Microgrants in support of innovative programs.

October 26, **Mid-Way on the Highway with YidLife Crisis**, with Event Co-chairs Lyon & Cybele Hamburg: Approximately 430 people (237 individual devices) watched the event. As an experiment to boost interactivity and live-feel, the event also included a moderated chatbox for community members to communicate with one another. Feedback from the event was positive, and the post-event survey received 66 responses, with the majority (84.9%) of respondents rating the event as excellent with a score of 8 or more out of 10.

Survey of EG: The survey was launched on Oct. 20, to determine the best ways to engage young adults at this time. The survey received 69 responses, of these, 39 identified as singles & couples (no children), and 30 as adults with children. Results revealed that EG constituents vary widely in their interests. There were shared interests in certain areas and with this, the possibility of micro-communities within the EG demographic. More work will be done to further analyze results and efforts will be made to champion individuals within an identified theme to lead an interest-based small group. Work already is underway to convene small group gatherings of newcomers to Ottawa, engage EG in volunteer opportunities and in the planning of a larger social gathering for Chanukah.

Nov. 15, **EG Sunday Schvitz**. Twenty people participated in this month's program which featured a virtual Zumba session.

November 21, **PJ Library Havdalah Under the Stars:** In partnership with OJCS, PJ Library will celebrate Havdalah at Centrepointe Park. This socially distant, outdoor event is geared for families with young children (ages 0-8). Registered families will receive items to practice Havdallah at home.

Microgrants Awarded to November 16, 2020

Summary of Grants since July 1, 2020	
Ripple Effect summer camp, Chabad of Centrepointe	\$2,500.00
Making online services accessible, KBI (technology)	\$1,800.00
Lulav & Etrog, KBI & OJCS	\$1,500.00
Virtual Learning, Ottawa Talmud Torah (technology)	\$1,600.00
Chabad of Centrepointe, Rosh Hashanah Drive-Thru Carnival	\$1,000.00
Chabad of Kanata, High Holidays Tent	\$2,500.00
OJCS Alumni Event: US Elections Talk	\$206.25
Israeli Community Chanukah celebration	\$1,500.00
OJCS Little Learners, weekly virtual sessions for preschoolers	\$2,200.00
Hillel SAGE Israeli Paint Night	\$500.00
JET Light Up the Night, Community Menorah competition	\$1,500.00
SJCC Chanukah Lighting, Tech	\$285.00
OTC Drive-in Theatre event	\$1800.00
Total Grants to Date	\$18,891.25
Balance remaining (Total Fund = \$70,000)	\$51,108.75

Hillel Ottawa Update

Over the past month, virtual events have been continuing with increased success and student participation. Hillel Ottawa staff have continued to provide online one-on-one coffees as well as occasional socially distanced in-person coffee dates. Both the Jewish Learning Fellowship and Israel Learning fellowship are entering their 6th week, with 10 students participating in each of the Fellowships on a weekly basis.

In meeting the needs of the students, there is now close cooperation and partnership between Hillel and Chabad Student Network.

October 19th, **Israel Book Club offered by Israel on Campus (IOC)**. Each student was provided with a copy of the book "Letters to my Palestinian Neighbor" by Yossi Klein Halevi. (15 students attended).

October 23rd – **"Israel 101" event in partnership with CAMERA**, on the topic of answering difficult questions about Israel. (8 students attended).

October 15th – **Yiddish Bingo Night** (30 students attended).

October 24th to November 1st – **Reading Week:** Many students were not able to travel home for the reading week due to COVID-19 restrictions. Hillel Ottawa and Chabad Student Network partnered together to provide meals for students who remained in town throughout the week, for lunch (26 students participated) as well as Shabbat dinner (50 students participated).

October 26th – **"Nas Daily" Hillel International event:** An intimate chat with Arab-Israeli media innovator Nas about his career, life in Israel, and creating content that brings people together (number of attendees from Ottawa is currently unknown).

November 6th – **Israeli style Shabbat Dinner** (75 students received a box meal that included information about Israel as a multi-cultural society).

November 12 – **Holocaust Education Month** event: Conversation with Survivor, Angela Richt.

November 16 – **Escape the Night** event with an online escape room.

November 19 – **Israeli Paint Night for SAGE** (Students Acquiring Graduate Education).

November 23 – **Israeli Book Club**,

COMMUNICATION:

Community Messages

It has been a busy period for community messages, and we have been in contact with our members sharing Shabbat greetings, event info, surveys to event guests and Emerging Gen participants as well as crisis communications concerning the Bulletin, the suspicious package on Campus and Kashruth. Open rates remain high at 42% and we have added 479 new contacts to our email system. We have also begun having board members write periodic Shabbat messages.

Social Media

Federation's **Facebook** impact has been higher this past month with the increase in fall activity, and the number of people reached is over 20K.

The **EG Facebook group** has grown slightly to 161 members, while **Jewish Ottawa Helps** has increased to 1280 total members.

Instagram is at nearly a thousand followers and **Twitter** is steady at 1,672.

Advocacy

Recently as part of a civics class at Nepean High School, an anti-Israel and anti-Semitic video was shown. This video had been used over the summer at different Ontario schools and after a successful intervention by CIJA, the offensive video was removed from the Ontario curriculum.

Upon being contacted by a parent about the video, together with CIJA, I immediately met with Superintendent Shannon Smith. We agreed on the following course of action:

- An apology letter, acknowledging the error and the anti-Semitic nature of the video was immediately sent to parents.
- The following day the Superintendent met with students to help with the education process, to mixed reviews by parents.
- An additional learning moment with those students will take place with CIJA.
- CIJA will work on a training session for teachers. Most of the time, incidents like this occur because of a lack of knowledge and not malice.
- An investigation was launched to determine how this video continued to be used in the classroom after it had been removed from the curriculum. It would appear that the teacher in question, did not use approved materials from the website, but rather relied on the teacher who previously taught the course for materials.