



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: April 17, 2020
Re: President's Report

Here is an update to the Board on activities and issues since the February 26th meeting. In addition to this report, the board has been receiving regular email updates since mid-March.

DEVELOPMENT

Currently, Campaign 2020 stands at \$4.7M (annual, match and supplemental gifts). On a gift-by-gift basis, donors increased their annual giving 6.2%. To date, \$301,000 of the match has been used.

Assumption letter

An assumption letter was sent to roughly 60 donors (donors who have given at a consistent level for 3+ years). Of these letters, there was only one negative response to the tactic, which compares favorably with other communities.

Annual Campaign 2020

Given the circumstances, we have been circumspect with efforts to close gifts. Nonetheless, the limited efforts at closing some of the remaining top donor gifts have either been successful or graciously deferred by the donor. Significantly, no monthly donors reached out and asked us to reverse their March payment (which took place post-COVID) and with 1 exception, none have asked to defer future payments.

Top Donor Briefing – held with approximately 30 top donors on March 30th. Presentations were made by Jon Mitzmacher, OJCS and Sarah Caspi, JFS, along with a Federation briefing.

Emergency Campaign

In preparation for an eventual emergency campaign, we organized a meeting with some senior canvassers to discuss candidates outside the normal campaign structure. One \$10K gift has already materialized as a result of this meeting, and other asks are being prepared. Micah and I have been analyzing what other communities are doing and thinking through strategy and messaging,

OPERATIONS

Campus Projects

Planning work is continuing on four upcoming and high priority projects: the new accessible playground, the parking lot repaving/painting project, an RFP for a new snow removal contract, and the engineering study required to comply with the mandatory backflow upgrade. The Ontario Trillium Foundation has granted an extension to the playground project, allowing us to defer completion to November 2020.

COVID-19 Campus Budget Impact

While it is too soon to know the full impact on the Campus budget, we anticipate a continued loss of revenue. Campus Management is preparing a plan to defer non-critical projects to a later date while continuing prudent budget management.

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 Pre-COVID

J-Fellows Session, February 27: the second session of J-fellows drew nearly 30 participants, many of whom were attending for the first time. Then, on March 3, in partnership with Tamir, J-Fellows held a joint pre-Purim Hamentaschen bake with Tamir residents. The baked goods were donated to the JFS Street Smarts program.

MOL Shabbaton, February 22: MOL participants enjoyed Shabbat dinner and Saturday learning sessions.

Hillel Update

February 24 – **Rudy Rochman**, well-known Israel advocate, visited Ottawa to present a session to Hillel's Israel on Campus Committee as well as other interested students. 38 students attended

February 25 – **Israel Learning Fellowship** (weekly/ongoing), 12 students attended

February 26 – **Jewish Learning Fellowship** (weekly/ongoing), 6 students attended

February 27 – **Loft Board Game Night**, 20 students attended

March 3 – **Israel Learning Fellowship** (weekly/ongoing), 12 students attended

March 4 – **Jewish Learning Fellowship** (weekly/ongoing), 6 students attended

March 6 – **Purim** style Shabbat dinner, 60 students attended

March 12 – **Comedy for Peace** special event featured 3 comedians from NYC. One is Israeli, one is Christian and one is Muslim. 30 students attended (many more students were expected but social distancing had begun and attendance suffered as a result).

Since the Onset of Social Distancing:

EG Trivia Night, social distancing edition: April 13 with 25 young people

Hillel Update

As of Monday March 16th, universities moved to distance learning, and consequently, many students left town. Staff quickly transitioned into online coffee dates and meetings, offering content over Zoom, informing students of other events in the community, and continuing to do mental health checks.

Both the Jewish Learning Fellowship and the Israel Learning Fellowship were successfully moved to an online format. Both fellowships completed their last classes during the week of April 1.

March 26 – **Virtual Hillel happy hour**, 12 students participated

April 2 – **Hebrew Speakers Hangout**, 8 students participated

Passover: In partnership with Chabad Student Network, Hillel offered Passover meals to students who found themselves in need of a Passover Seder. Hillel also held a small Zoom seder for students isolated and still in town.

COMMUNICATION:

Community Messages

The COVID-19 crisis has prompted extensive community-wide messaging with special messages sent March 12, 14, 15 & 16. Shabbat messages from the CEO have been sent weekly, March 13, 20, 27, April 3 and April 17.

Social media

Federation's **Facebook** presence expanded with two new group pages:

- Emerging Generation, with 106 members.
- Jewish Ottawa Helps, with 1,108 members.

Overall **Facebook** engagement continues to be strong at more than 12K people.

Instagram growth is steady with 841 followers.