



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: January 3, 2023
Re: President's Report

Here is an update on Federation activities since our last meeting on December 6th, 2022. Antisemitism continues to be a challenge and top priority. I have provided the board with email updates and links to some of the recent media coverage. I have met with two additional trustees: chair of the board Lyra Evans and Amanda Pressley with David Sachs (whose district includes SRB) and a third meeting by phone with Donna Dickson.

There will be a motion brought forward in January for a Jewish Equity Coach and David Sachs and I have an important meeting with the OCDSB on January 11th, where we have indicated our expectation that they present their plan for antisemitism education, including timelines. As I wrote in my letter to the OCDSB: "Since September, we have appreciated your outreach and have expressed gratitude for the OCDSB's public acknowledgments of antisemitism and important dates on the Jewish calendar. **It is imperative that in January 2023, words are translated into action.**"

DEVELOPMENT

Campaign

The 2023 Annual campaign continues to trend well and while we are still processing year end gifts, as of the January 3rd reports, the campaign sits at \$4,476,455 from 1358 cards which represents a 4% increase card over card. There are currently 229 dollar cards that remain open which have a value of \$415K. The team continues to work on closing these and will circle back to some canvassers who told us that they would have some additional time in the new year.

Our General Campaign chairs, EG campaign chairs, as well as board Chair Ian Sherman all joined for a call night on December 8th to help secure gifts.

Efforts to close additional cards by year end included a Hanukah themed solicitation by mail and email, as well as a "just say yes" email, which prompts donors to simply respond with a "yes" in order to renew their pledge.

Life and Legacy

Federation just received our year 2 incentive cheque from the Foundation for \$8,106. Thank you to all the board members who signed Letters of Intent (LOIs) to help make this happen. We used a small part of this money to make a donation to the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank in honour of all our legacy donors in lieu of Hanukah gifts and the remainder will be used to add to strategic funding to combat antisemitism. Year 3 continues to go well, with Federation securing another LOI to bring our year 3 total to three (the goal is 4) and 59% of our LOIs having been confirmed (the goal is 50%).

CIJA Legal Conference

On March 2nd 2023, CIJA will be hosting their annual legal conference virtually. This gives Ottawa lawyers increased opportunities to participate as well as allowing local federations to secure sponsorship dollars that will stay in their community. We are pleased to report that Soloway Wright has agreed to become Ottawa's title sponsor and Lawrence Soloway is our local chair for the virtual event.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

HR: A new Campaign Engagement Specialist has been hired. Michael Reznik started on January 4 as part of the Community Building team, and will focus mainly on the emerging gen campaign and engagement. The Archives has hired three new part time staff who will be working on various projects. On January 3rd Michaela will join us as Collections Assistant working over the next year to complete the Collections Reconciliation project. The week of January 9th, Ashley and Emma will join us as Photographic Negatives digitization assistant and Oral histories digitization assistant, continuing the work of digitizing our deteriorating film collection. They will each be with us for 6 months. Finally, Yulia Elgin will begin work as the Campaign Manager in February. Yudit Simmons is expected to begin her maternity leave in April.

Led by Rena Garshowitz and Sabrina Vitoriano, a series of Chanukah activities were organized for the team, including a Chanukah Party.

Meeting of Rabbis: On December 8, Ian Sherman and I met with pulpit Rabbis. Many important issues were discussed including: antisemitism and a courageous preliminary discussion on the challenges of Jewish unity. Specifically, the composition of the likely Israeli government and what it means for Canadian Jews and disrespectful conversations that have occurred on social media with respect to Jewish Ottawa. It is clear that with the composition of the new Israeli government, we are heading into a potentially challenging time for Jewish unity.

	Program Details	Number of People Engaged
PJ Library	PJ Chanukah Party in partnership with the SJCC and the Ganon Preschool, Dec. 18: Interactive activities at the JCC for families with children ages 0-10, including crafts, story, and performance by Junkyard Symphony. Attendance was back to pre-pandemic levels for this event and feedback has been stellar!	65 families (100+ people)
J-Fellows	J-Fellows Operation Abraham - Welcoming the Stranger, Dec. 8: The final session of the 2022 J-Fellows speaker series was held virtually and focused on the leadership of Operation Abraham co-founders, Jacques Shore, Lewis Retik, Dr. Farouq Samim, and Bram Bregman. Successfully chaired by lay leader Amanda Shore, a young professional.	50+ participants

Newcomers	A new approach to welcoming and integrating newcomers is being launched. The Newcomer Community Ambassador Group includes 9 well-connected and diverse community volunteers. They will be matched with newcomers and tasked with helping them to integrate and meet new people. The Newcomer Community Ambassador Group is scheduled to have orientation and training in January 2023.	
Emerging Gen	EG Chanukah Ball, Dec. 17: Took place at Orange Gallery, for young adults ages 25-40. The event was extremely well received and represented a return to the larger gatherings offered pre-pandemic. Approx. 35% of attendees were either newcomers and/or new-to-Federation.	90 people
Indigenous-Jewish Relations	Indigenous-Jewish Relations through the Creative Arts: Dec. 10 & 11, in partnership with Temple Israel. Federation collaborated on a weekend-long series of events focused on reconciliation: two Jewish-Indigenous artistic collaborations, and an Indigenous artisans' market. The events, which focused on shared cultural experiences through the creative arts, were very well attended in person and online.	80+ participants
Chanukah @ the Sens Game	In partnership with OTC, there was a public menorah lighting at the Sens game with Jewish pride and treats.	Approx. 80 participants

Microgrants

The committee approved seven new microgrants since the last president's report and has allocated a total of \$57,706 since July 2022. As microgrants become more popular and the rate of applicants has increased, in order to ensure that funding can be spread as far and wide as possible, organizations will now be limited to a maximum of two microgrants per fiscal year.

OJCS	Community Casino Night	\$2,500
Jewish Youth Library	Rosh Chodesh Lecture Series	\$1,500
Chabad of Wellington	Public Menorah Lighting	\$1,800
Temple Israel Social Action Committee	Indigenous-Jewish Relations through the creative arts	\$2,500
Beit Tikvah	Chanukah Party with Simply Tsfat	\$2,500
Sarah Gordon	Yud Tes Kislev	\$1,500

SJCC & Tamir	Community-Wide Chanukah Party	\$1,500
		\$57,706

Grants and Allocations Committee

The deadline for Round 18 of the Innovative Capacity Building Fund, which was extended until December 9, is now closed and there are ten individual applications, which fit the criteria. The Grants & Allocations committee will meet to deliberate, and make recommendations, in early January.

Hillel Update:

The fall semester ended in mid-December with a Chanukah celebration. Activities will resume in January as students return to campuses in the second week of the month.

COMMUNICATION

December 2022- Communication update - Nov. 18 – Dec. 19, 2022

Eblasts: In the last 30 days, we have sent more than **49K individual messages**, up from **43K** in the last 30-day period. The increase reflects the busy season and more in-person events. Average open rates were **58%**, up 1% from last month.

Highlights include:

Shabbat greetings – Agency initiative: Following a suggestion made by Karen Palayew, we introduced a new initiative inviting community beneficiary agencies to write a special Shabbat greeting once a quarter to help share the amazing work being undertaken in the community. The first message was from Sarah Caspi, the Executive Director of Jewish Family Services Ottawa. It was a perfect message sharing how Federation supports JFS in their important work. Feedback was excellent. To read it visit here: <https://conta.cc/3GJkGby>.

Advocacy messaging: There was a dedicated eblast message updating the community on the Joel Harden incident; Andrea Freedman also undertook many media interviews on the concerning situation at the OCDSB.

Social media

Facebook has been enjoying strong engagement:



A post highlight was **Karen Palayew's Shabbat column**, "This Too Shall Pass", view it here: <https://conta.cc/3iwKxtn>. When shared on Facebook, it received more than 860 individual interactions/engagement.