



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: February 28, 2023
Re: President's Report

Here is an update on Federation activities since our last meeting on February 8th, 2023.

DEVELOPMENT

	Campaign 2023, as of 01/23/23	Campaign 2023 as of 02/15/23	Campaign 2022 Final
Total Dollars	\$4,634,246	\$4,871,067	\$4,888,116
Total Donors	1,443	1,476	1,624

Progress continues to be made on successfully concluding Campaign 2023 and it should be a slightly increased campaign. There are currently 146 open dollar cards representing \$124,515. Of these, 9 cards are worth \$76K, and at least \$20,000 is deemed to be significantly at risk for a variety of reasons.

PJ Library Pay It Forward Campaign

We have launched our PJ Library Pay It forward campaign which solicits families who have received PJ Library books for a minimum of 2 years and do not currently give to the annual campaign, with an ask of \$67 to pay forward their subscription to someone else. We use email solicitation, direct mail, and some limited direct canvassing. While the campaign rarely raises significant dollars, we use it as a donor acquisition channel, with the people who give being grouped with specially trained canvassers for the next annual campaign, who can help explain to them that PJ Library is part of a Jewish ecosystem that is supported by the campaign.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community Building

Michael Reznik, the still relatively new Campaign Engagement Specialist, continues to meet with 6-8 young adults each week, including many Israelis.

	Program Details	Number of People Engaged
Ottawa Jewish Archives	<p>Feb. 21: Heritage Day Fair at Ottawa City Hall. The Archives was one of the participating heritage organizations.</p> <p>Feb. 23: Kindness Week Event: Plantable Paper and Card Making together with the Greenberg Families Library.</p>	<p>approx. 40 people</p> <p>5 people</p>
PJ Library Ongoing PJ engagement: Staff are connecting with/going for coffee with 3-5 families per week.	<p>Feb. 5: PJ Library/PJ Our Way Cross-Canada Tu B'Shevat Eco-Party: With Federations across Canada and Aleph Canada, Emily Litvack (Ottawa's PJ staff) led a virtual eco-party for children ages 7-12. Participants planted pre-packaged items together, discussed environmental issues and more.</p> <p>Feb. 16: PJ Library Babies and Bagels: This second session of a series of indoor playgroups that are inclusive to all types of families and the only Jewish playgroup in the city that is also open to dads on parental leave.</p> <p>Feb. 26: PJ Library Kindness Event: In collaboration with Labour of Love Project, families participated in a day of hands-on volunteering, packing labour bags with supplies for new moms from underserved populations.</p> <p>March 3: PJ in PJs Celebrate Shabbat: At the JCC, Purim style Shabbat pizza dinner.</p>	<p>27 families across Canada</p> <p>12 families, with a waiting list as space was limited.</p> <p>13 families</p> <p>TBC</p>
JDAIM, Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month	Feb. 12: Community Inclusive Skating at Brewer arena for JDAIM.	10 families
Newcomers	Staff have been engaging 3-5 newcomer families per month. Newcomer Ambassadors have been engaging those new to Ottawa and the Jewish community. (ongoing)	
Emerging Gen	Feb 27: Spread the Chesed Kindness Initiative. Volunteers assembled dozens of healthy lunch bags to be donated to Caldwell Family Centre for distribution to families in need.	23 people
Indigenous-Jewish Relations	March 8: For International Women's Day, Federation is celebrating the success of Jewish and Indigenous women entrepreneurs. Speaker panel includes Dr. Karen Dover (Laser & Cosmetic Medicine), Tamara	TBC

	Scarowsky (Forward Family Law), Ashley Clark (Bougie Birch), and Marissa Dube (Erialize Lashes). This intimate networking event is in collaboration with NACCA (National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association) and will be hosted at the Adaawe Indigenous Business Hub.	
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Between the 1:1 meetings with young adults, PJ families and newcomers, Federation's engagement work has significantly increased in this area.

Grants & Allocations

The new Jewish Journeys Fund is now accepting applications. The Fund offers not-for profit and local groups "impact grants" to pilot new programs. The goal of the Fund is to build Jewish identity through significant, sustained and meaningful Jewish experiences; appealing to those already engaged, somewhat engaged and to those not yet engaged. Find more details [HERE](#).

Microgrants

Since July 2022, \$65,456 has been allocated to support 32 community initiatives through Microgrants. Four new initiatives, listed below, received funding in February.

Recipient	Program/Project	Allocation Approved
Dina Teitlebaum	Mikvah Study Series	\$1,000
SJCC	Summer Camp Purim Carnival	\$2,500
Israel Bonds & Partners	Israel@75 Celebration with Tamir	\$750
Beit Tikvah	Winterpalooza	\$1,500

Hillel Update

Student engagement:

- Feb. 24: Reading Week Shabbat Dinner at the Hillel House was sold out with 30 students. Hosting a Shabbat dinner on the Friday before reading week has become a very popular program among students and gives those who do not leave town a reason to come together.
- During Reading Week, Hillel offered drop-in hours and provided study snacks on the campuses.
- March 5: Hillel Purim Party.

Advocacy

Hillel is preparing for the Israel Style Shabbat Dinner in March that will include allies and partners from across the campuses. This will be a large event with over 100 students expected and will include an Israeli guest speaker from StandWithUs Canada.

Hillel has been alerted that University of Ottawa student groups are bringing back Israel Apartheid Week in March. Staff are working to find out what events are being planned. University of Ottawa administration will also be notified and asked for increased security presence if necessary. Hillel will not be doing any pro- Israel programming on campus during this week, as it tends to provoke a larger turnout to the apartheid week. Hillel will

instead be giving students a heads-up when events are happening and holding space at the Hillel House for anyone who needs a safe space or someone to talk to.

Maccabee Task Force Fact Finding Trip to Israel: This past month a large portion of staff time has been dedicated to recruiting for the trip, scheduled for May 2023. All student participants must be confirmed by the end of the month. We recently have also run into unforeseen difficulties in participant recruitment as the University of Ottawa Student Union passed a new bylaw prohibiting any member of incoming student government from taking more than 5 vacation days in May. This affects many of the non-Jewish students recruited for the trip. Also, students are feeling unsafe to travel to Israel due to the most recent terrorist attacks there, and Canadian government advisories about travel to Israel.

FINANCE

Staffing

With the hiring of Donna Foget as the Accounts Receivable Clerk/Scheduling Coordinator, as of February 13, the finance team is fully staffed after a lengthy series of staff transitions.

It is likely that the database system used for SJCC, Unison, will be replaced in the next few months, which will require significant effort from the finance team.

Banking

The new bank account has been set up, while daily reconciliations continue to be made with the previous account. Payments were put on hold for a few days but are already back in process. The transition is running smoothly, and no further delays are expected.

Payment System

Finance is developing an online payment system to assist with the approval process and allow for tracking of any outstanding payments. This process will be completed in approximately four to six weeks.

COMMUNICATION

February 2023 – Communication update – Jan. 23, 2023- Feb. 16, 2023

Eblasts: Communication activity has picked up the pace again in the last 30-day period. There were 54K individual messages up from 21K individual messages in the quieter holiday period. Average open rates remain high at **58%**.

Highlights include:

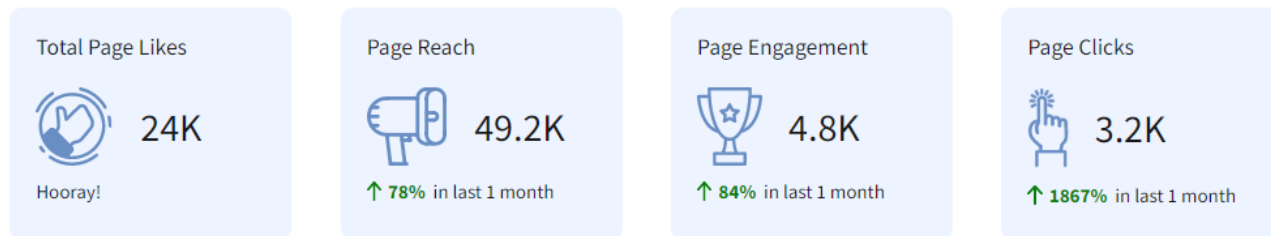
Shabbat greetings: Among the most well-received messages were the last Shabbat messages with over 60% open rate from Michael Polowin (Jan. 27), Andrea Freedman (Feb. 3) Ian Sherman (Feb. 10).

Directed messages: There have also been numerous directed messages to specific communities including increased outreach to PJ Library families; special invitation to lawyers for CIJA's legal conference; and the Canvasser Corner messages which continue to enjoy over 70% open rate.

Crisis communications: Federation helped support Camp B'Nai Brith with messaging after a fire at the camp on Feb. 12. Working in coordination with the camp, we helped draft a message for their families and then also communicated to our members about the incident. Messaging helped allay fears and was well-received. (Open rate 64%)

Social media

Facebook stats are significantly up in the last 30 days.



This increase is likely due to several special initiatives. One for **Black History Month** where we highlighted Jewish Black excellence by sharing the stories of Jewish Black leaders once a week. The posts ran with photos, a link to a website with full stories. (<https://www.jewishottawa.com/events/february-is-black-history-month-2023>). Here are two examples of the four posts:



February was also **Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM)** and we have been sharing inclusion successes in a post a week. These include an image with an abbreviated quote and then the longer explanation. Here are three examples:



The Faces of Jewish Ottawa

The Faces of Jewish Ottawa social media initiative continues to engage an above-average number of people with engagement in the thousands compared with standard individual posts receiving about 150- 250 post reach. Here are two examples:



Faces of Jewish Ottawa My most "Jewish" memory is going to shul and davening. I am most proud of celebrating Shabbos! The Jewish community impacted my life with the Machzikei/Alta Vista bus because...
Thu, Feb 9

Post reach	Engagement
5,347	873



Faces of Jewish Ottawa My most "Jewish" memory is the feeling of arriving "home" when I first landed in Israel. I am a bit of a lurker from the sidelines but I have been inspired by so many members of the Jewish community, especially thos...
Thu, Jan 26

Post reach	Engagement
1,684	586

Shabbat posts also continue to receive high engagement:



Shabbat Shalom from our families to yours! #ShabbatShalom
#JewishOttawa
Fri, Feb 10

Post reach	Engagement
1,524	196



Shabbat Shalom May the warmth of Shabbat fill all your households on this very cold Ottawa weekend! For anyone venturing outside, be sure to take precautions as the city has issued an extreme cold warning. (More on t...
Fri, Feb 3

Post reach	Engagement
1,238	193

Instagram (IG)

The last 30 days has also seen a jump in engagement and reach on Instagram. Similar to Facebook, the increase is due to special initiatives such as BHM, JDAIM, and Faces of Jewish Ottawa. Another reason might be job postings which draw people to visit our Federation webpage. The web clicks increase shows that more people went from IG to our website.

Extra effort has also been made to share links to help people seeking more info.



ADVOCACY AND COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM

School update

OCDSB's trustees heard from delegate Beisan Zubi on February 21st who was calling on the board to introduce a motion to hire a Palestinian equity coach. She was the only spokesperson. CCRC member Jonathan Calof watched the meeting and shared that her presentation was not particularly clear or persuasive. She started with her experiences as a OCDSB student many years ago and how challenging it was to be an Arab (Palestinian) student at the time of 9/11.

She cited an interesting statistic that in 2019 Arabic was second most spoken language in the OCDSB system after English.

She also credited Jewish organizations for voicing support for Palestinians re hatred.

On February 28th, there were 3 additional delegations on the topic. While standing against hate of all kinds, there is concern over the recent demands made by representatives of the Palestinian Youth Movement that threatens to bring a geo-political conflict to the OCDSB.

Consultations continue with the OCDSB and feedback has been provided on the Jewish Equity Coach job description and their plan to combat antisemitism. Unfortunately, there continues to be frequent reporting of antisemitic incidents as they have been slow to finalize the job description.

Advocacy event

Ben Freeman events were a huge success with approximately 250 people in the community hearing him speak about Jewish pride. At the community-wide event Feb. 7 (100 people), Ben spoke to a packed hall on themes related to antisemitism. His message: never forget that we are not to blame, but neither will we be defined as victims. Jews will define and tell the Jewish story. The next day, Ben spoke with equity leaders in the federal public service. That afternoon, he spoke to students at Carleton University's Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies. The lecture was open and was attended by students from across campus as well as senior members of the Carleton EDI team. Then in the evening, Ben, along with Rabbi Daniel Mikelberg, spoke at Temple Israel, first to the Temple's youth group and parents, and then at a special wine and cheese for LGBTQ+ Jews and allies.

United Way

David Sachs has begun work with the United Way on their youth-directed anti-hate campaign, collaborating with dozens of Ottawa community groups.