



Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO
Date: December 29, 2021
Re: President's Report

Here is an update to the Board on activities and issues since the December 7th meeting.

Many team members have taken some well-deserved time-off in December and early January.

DEVELOPMENT

Campaign

As of December 21st, Campaign 2022 stands at **\$4,608,546** from 1,425 donors. These same donors represent a **5%** gift-over-gift increase from last year (including new gifts). There are currently 374 open dollar cards representing \$383,687. While some of this is a routine function of timing, a few of the larger outstanding gifts are normally in at this time of year. It is difficult to fully know what is delayed due to COVID (including fatigue of donors and canvassers) VS. what is at risk.

Courtesy calls have been made to donors \$1,000+ who have not yet paid their 2021 gift and normally do by the end of the year, there are very few significant payments outstanding.

LOJ

The tour of Jewish Majorca, scheduled for December, was unfortunately cancelled at the last minute due to illness of the tour guide. It has been rescheduled to January 12th. Promotions for this event are being coordinated with the JFNA launch of the 50th anniversary of the Lion of Judah program which is set to take place January 9th.

Leadership briefing on antisemitism

All donors \$5k+, members of the Ben Gurion Society and all board members have been invited to a special briefing on January 24th, with keynote speaker Irwin Cotler.

Life and Legacy

In Year 2 of the program to date, Federation has secured 11 Letters of Intent on a minimum goal of 18 letters. We have until March to secure the remaining letters in order to qualify for the \$5,000 incentive grant and remain in good standing.

OPERATIONS

Campus/Security

Planning and budgeting for significant projects in 2022 is underway, including the mandatory backflow prevention implementation for all 3 buildings.

Installation of the security upgrades funded by the Ontario Safer and Vital Communities grant is underway. Federation was recently invited by CIJA to meet with the Government of Canada to discuss their Security Infrastructure Grant program and ways in which it can be more inclusive.

Federation's security manager was invited to participate in an all-day security policy workshop and training exercise at the Professional Development Institute at the University of Ottawa on December 14.

Special appreciation to our custodial manager and groundskeeper for taking on additional tasks in the absence of our maintenance technician. Efforts to hire a temporary contract resource to fill this role have thus far been unsuccessful. Other options are being considered for early 2022.

Hillel House – Laurier Avenue

Federation recently engaged the services of a home inspector to perform a comprehensive inspection of the home on Laurier Avenue. The report will assist with long term planning.

OVH

Significant steps have been taken to prepare for the opening of Creating Kosher Catering under OVH supervision in January 2022. We have also been seeking a part-time Mashgichim to supplement our new full-time Mashgiach by assisting in the kitchen and at events, as needed.

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

EG Campaign

The EG campaign is currently at **\$84,772** with a **28%** increase in card value over last year. A *Just Say Yes* direct mail outreach took place in mid-December and a Call Night for open cards will be held with the EG Campaign co-chairs in January.

It continues to be challenging to engage with members of the EG Steering Committee and difficult to plan gatherings at this time. The Chanukah Event hosted by Yudit and Ze'ev Simmons at their home on **December 4**, attracted **16 in-person guests**, the evening was warm and festive, this is the kind of smaller more intimate gathering that we hope to repeat going forward.

J-Fellows

We have secured two new co-chairs for J-Fellows 2022, Isaac Bushewsky and Amanda Shore and are now in the process of honing our objectives and selecting speakers for the launch in February.

PJ Library

Chanukah Kits, in partnership with the SJCC, were well received, and completely sold out at 100 packages. The next PJL activity will be associated with Kindness Week (February 17-23).

Microgrants

Three new microgrants were approved and it is great to see the increase in individuals applying.

Ronen Chen	1st Chanukah Lighting in Brockville	\$575.00	Individual
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Hen Tomer	Jewish Women's Bake Off & Dance Party	\$1,875.00	Individual
Justin Levine	The Shtick Handlers Hockey Development Program	\$2,500.00	Individual

Fund for Innovative Capacity Building

There are two rounds per year, with \$60k available annually, it is currently in its 16th round. The Grants Committee is in the process of reviewing eight applications for funding, and their recommendations will be sent to the donor in January for the final funding decisions.

Jewish Women’s Renaissance Project (JWRP) Israel Trip

JWRP is planning a Canadian trip in July 2022. Federation is investigating the possibility of participating. The trip aims to connect women with young children so they may strengthen their Jewish identities and through this, impact entire families and ultimately communities. JWRP runs high quality trips that are highly subsidized for participants (\$200 admin fee + flight), and the investment is reasonable for Federation (\$800 USD per participant) given the outsized impact of this immersive experience. It is challenging to recruit participants for any travel experience at the present time.

Hillel Update:

Hillel closed the semester with an in-person Chanukah Party at a popular venue that **65 students attended**. Although staff are still compiling semester engagement stats, there were **569 program engagements** (sum of attendees at all Hillel programs). In addition to this, **150 students** were engaged in one-to-one coffee dates with Hillel staff. Despite the challenging semester, Hillel has worked very hard to engage students and serve them where they are at.

Unfortunately, advocacy took up a disproportionate amount of staff and student resources this past semester.

Carleton University recently released a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion report. Hillel has been working behind the scenes with a group of students to ensure that Jewish voices are taken into account. This resulted in the IHRA definition of antisemitism being included under their definition of antisemitism.

Algonquin College’s Inclusion and Diversity Specialist reached out to Federation to bring a Rabbi to speak about Chanukah. Rabbi Zuker spoke about the holiday and lit candles during a virtual session that was attended by **25 people**. The school also included a menorah in their holiday tree lighting day on campus where students and faculty were invited to attend. Hillel staff attended and are working to identify Jewish students on that campus.

COMMUNICATION



Eblasts

Federation communications enjoyed an open rate jump in the last four weeks with an increase to a **53% average** open rate compared to a past monthly average of around 46%.

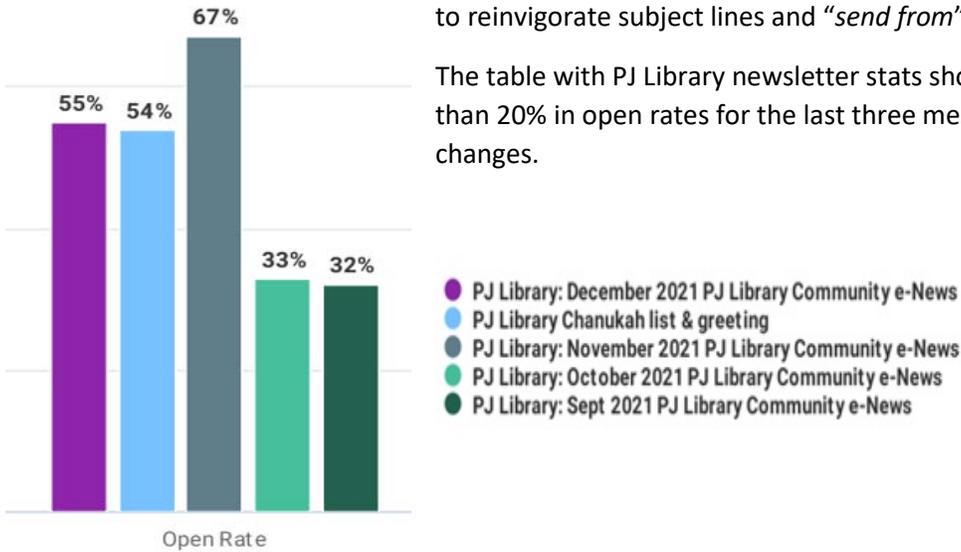
This increased engagement comes from several well-received communications, including a special **“Thank you Thursday”** message, opened by **76% of recipients**. This was sent to donors to share our appreciation and to launch our Gifts in Action initiative. Gifts in Action will

be a monthly message to donors sharing how their gift translates into action in the community. The first one focused on how Federation funding supports Hillel Ottawa and the Chabad Student Network.

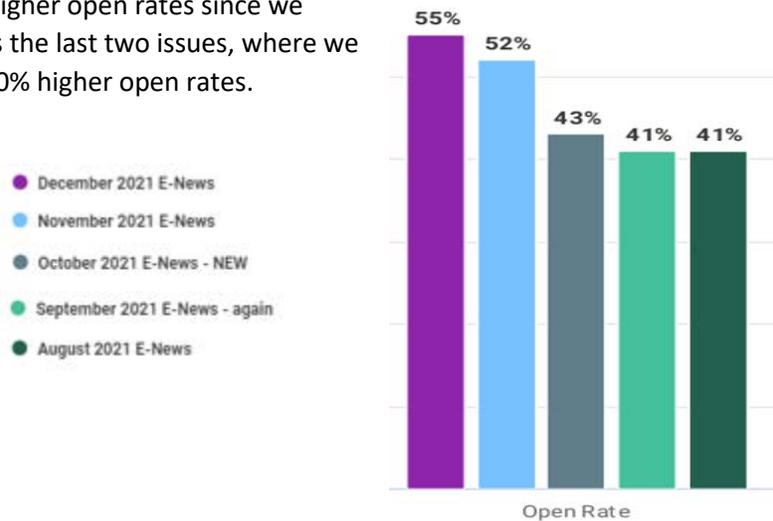
Follow up on email changes

PJ Library and the Enews continued to see a bump in readership after an effort to reinvigorate subject lines and “send from” fields.

The table with PJ Library newsletter stats shows there is a clear jump of more than 20% in open rates for the last three messages since we made the changes.



Similarly, the E-news continues to show higher open rates since we changed the subject line. The table shows the last two issues, where we made the changes, have approximately 10% higher open rates.



Social media

Facebook

We are enjoying a revival on Facebook with a jump in reach and engagement by using a strategic ad plan to boost messages we want our readers to most engage with.

Total Reach

 **74.9K**
 ↑ 85% in last 1 month

Post Engagement

 **9.8K**
 ↑ 42% in last 1 month

For example, Michael Polowin’s recent Shabbat greeting received 271 likes and 12 shares, reaching almost 3,000 people. It is important to note that while an ad helps put our post in people’s stream, the message must still resonate to receive such engagement, so yasher koach to Michael!

Instagram

We are also enjoying more connections on Instagram, which is where we reach our younger demographic (ages 25-34, compared to Facebook where our highest audience is over 55).

