

FEDERATION FOCUS

YOUR JEWISH COMMUNITY CONNECTION

VOL. 23 /
WINTER
2017

Welcome to Federation Focus, the quarterly supplement about your Jewish Federation, its partner agencies and their impact on Jewish life. Federation Focus keeps you informed and connected with important issues in our community, ensuring that everyone knows where to find a helping hand and where to extend one.

Cost and Distance Create Barriers to Community Life

When you hear the words “existential crisis,” you tend to think of dramatic events. But here in the Lower Mainland, our community is facing a creeping, slow-motion existential crisis brought on by concerning realities. The challenges are two-fold: the accessibility and affordability of Jewish life. Half of the local Jewish population now lives outside of Vancouver, where they do not have easy access to Jewish programs and services. At the same time, many of those who live more centrally, are struggling to pay for housing, groceries, and childcare, and cannot afford the costs of Jewish activities and programs.

Vancouver is the most expensive city in Canada. Many in our community are spending so much on basic expenses that they are forced to make heart-wrenching choices about how much, or even whether, they can participate in Jewish life. Shockingly, more than 16% of our community lives in poverty. That's a total of more than 4,200 Jews in Vancouver alone, including 630 Jewish children. Not only may families be unable to send their kids to Jewish day school, they may not be able to afford day camp or other Jewish programs. Jewish overnight camp is out of the question. Even maintaining a kosher diet in Vancouver can break an already stretched budget.

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver is

determined to meet these challenges head-on and make Jewish life and community affordable in Vancouver and across the Lower Mainland. Dollars from the Federation Annual Campaign fund subsidies that enable children to go to day schools and camps; families to enroll in JCC

Judaism is, at its heart, communal. Our most important prayers and life cycles events are meant to take place with community around us.

programs; and seniors to access much-needed care and services. Funds from the Federation Annual Campaign help keep the cost of Jewish programs and services low, and support

subsidies for those who need them. But as the cost of living continues to climb, there is pressure on the campaign to keep up with growing needs. However, affordability only addresses part of the problem. The other challenge is accessibility. Fully half of the local Jewish

population now lives outside of Vancouver, often beyond the reach of Jewish organizations. It can be difficult to access Jewish programs and services there, resulting in decreased

community engagement for families, individuals and seniors. In the regional communities, the Federation Annual Campaign is focused on extending the reach of Federation and its partner agencies to increase Jewish programming closer to where these community members live. The idea of “creating Jewish community where you live” is at the heart of Jewish Federation’s Connect Me In initiative. This effort brings Jewish programs, events and holiday celebrations to Burnaby, New Westminster, The Tri-Cities, Mission, Squamish, Surrey, Langley and more.

Through the Jewish Food Security Task Force, jointly led by Jewish Federation and the Jewish Family Service

Agency, opportunities to address hunger and food security are being explored. This includes expanding the food security initiatives, so seniors and families in the regional communities don't have to travel to get the food they need.

Your gift to the Federation Annual Campaign not only supports expansion of services where they are needed most, it also increases subsidies for those who still can't afford to participate — ensuring that no one is left out of our community

Federation Annual Campaign helps keep the cost of Jewish programs and services low, and supports subsidies for those who need them.



Leon Glassman z”l Remembered for Commitment to Jewish Education and Continuity

A few weeks ago, our community lost one of its most devoted supporters, Leon Glassman z”l. But Leon will be remembered for generations to come for his commitment to Jewish education and its central role in Jewish identity and continuity. Through the Jewish Community Foundation, Leon created a legacy that reflects his lifelong passion in these areas. Together with his wife Rose Marie, they made an indelible impact on our community — an impact that will ensure his memory lives on.

Leon and Rose Marie’s commitment to Jewish education goes back decades to their life as young parents in Regina. Their move to Vancouver was motivated in part because here they would be able to provide their children with a Jewish education, which they saw as an integral aspect of helping them develop strong Jewish identities.

Leon and Rose Marie recognized that the high cost of living in the Lower Mainland today has reduced the ability of many families to enroll their children in Jewish day schools and Jewish educational programs. They wanted to find a way not just to help families and children, but to strengthen Jewish continuity for the community as a whole.

In April 2016, Leon and Rose Marie made a million dollar gift to create the Leon Glassman Fund for Jewish Continuity through Education endowment fund. The response from community members who share their passion, as well as from the day school community that understands so clearly the impact this endowment will make, was tremendous, and it inspired Leon and Rose Marie to make a second million dollar gift to the fund.

The fund will provide a steady source of support for tuition assistance, so more children can reap the benefits of a Jewish day school education. This endowment will support an area of need that was close to Leon’s heart, enriching our community in perpetuity.

According to executive director Marcie Flom, the Jewish Community Foundation was “privileged to work the Glassmans to create Leon’s legacy for the Jewish community,” adding that “Leon’s philanthropy reflected his life’s passion and his commitment to Jewish education in a way that perpetuates his memory for his children and grandchildren.”

Like Leon and Rose Marie, there are many community members who support causes that reflect their interests and their values. If you are among them, then you, too, can create a legacy that reflects your passions at the Jewish Community Foundation.

To make a contribution to the Glassman Fund or for more information on how to create a legacy, please visit jewishcommunityfoundation.com.

Incentive Adds \$250 to New Donors’ Gifts

An additional \$250 will be donated to the campaign for every a gift made by a donor who missed last year’s campaign or who is making a first-time gift.

When it comes to tzedakah, it’s often said that every gift counts. That has never been more true than in this year’s Federation Annual Campaign.

An additional \$250 will be donated to the campaign for every a gift made by a donor who missed last year’s campaign or who is making a first-time gift. If that’s you, then this is the year to give. Your donation — of any amount — will trigger the incentive.

The incentive is funded by campaign chair, Alex Cristall, and his family. Recognizing the vital importance of every single donor and each gift, the Cristalls have committed \$50,000 to engaging more community members in supporting the campaign through this incentive. Cristall says, “We want people to know that every donor counts, no matter what the dollar value is, because when people get involved and give, that’s how you grow community.”

If you qualify for the incentive, this is the year to start giving, or to start giving again. Your gift will help the thousands of people who rely on programs and services funded by the campaign each year. It will also help address the dual issues of affordability and accessibility that are making it difficult for community members to participate in Jewish community life. As Cristall says, “We want to make it easier to live a Jewish life.”

If you don’t qualify for the incentive, you still have an important role to play. Cristall is asking every donor to “please spread the word to your friends, family members, colleagues and neighbours.... With your help, we can keep our community connected.”

To make a gift online, please visit jewishvancouver.com. To make a gift by phone, please call 604-257-5100.



jewishvancouver.com

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