A MESSAGE FROM JORDAN BALaban AND JARED SHORE

As we complete the first year of our term as co-presidents of Calgary Jewish Federation, it is a critical time to look back, take stock of Calgary Jewish Federation’s achievements, and plan our year ahead for Jewish Calgary. As we wrap up our 2020/2021 programming year, we reflect back on a truly unprecedented period of time in our world. The Jewish Community, with Jewish Calgary being no exception, has faced a barrage of challenges over the past 16 months. In many ways, we share optimism with our community that we have weathered much of the storm. In other ways, it is critical for us, as a community, to know that we are very much in the midst of challenging times.

As we embarked on our presidency, our commitment to our donors, our volunteers, our Federation team, and our Calgary Jewish Community was twofold: to facilitate and encourage broader engagement and participation within our own community, and to ensure that the time, resources, and dollars that our community members dedicate to Federation continue to be both valued, and responsibly managed.

Sadly, one of the sources of increased engagement has been the antisemitism that our global Jewish community, including here in Alberta, has experienced. While we are not in the business of running fear campaigns, we have aimed to inform our entire community of the work that Federation has been doing to combat antisemitism in our midst, and have had over 200 people sign up for our action alerts over the last three months. Many others have contacted Federation with concerns about things they are seeing in media, on our city streets, and in the virtual and physical hallways of high schools and universities. Federation will continue to lead the charge, but the collective efforts of all Jews who see the imperative of a safe and secure future for our community, are critical.

We must all be ambassadors for Jewish Calgary. We will redouble our efforts to ensure that those who want to be engaged and informed, can be engaged and informed. Community members, there is much to be proud of for what we have accomplished over the past year. There is even more to be excited about in the coming year. Renewed talks about a community campus are at the forefront of our excitement. Our Holocaust and Human Rights department has an incredible project and partnership with the Glenbow Museum that will inspire all Calgarians to learn more about our Holocaust Survivors. We will welcome renowned author, Yossi Klein Halevi to our UJA campaign kickoff this fall.

And we are there to support our children and youth to celebrate and grow their Jewish identities even when it is difficult to do just that. We are there to ensure that there are no barriers to Jewish life in Calgary whether that be reflected in our Integrated Bursary Program, our support for special needs learning supports at our community schools, our support for Jewish seniors, or our advocacy work. As we see our buildings start filling up again, with activities and programming, it is a powerful reminder of our vibrancy as a Calgary Jewish Community. It is truly a beautiful sight. We are strong, Jewish Calgary – and Calgary Jewish Federation is there to ensure that we remain strong. Wishing all of you a magnificent summer!

B’Shalom,

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Co-President
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