



The Jewish Federation OF EDMONTON

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As I prepare this message this week, my house is filling with the most delicious smell of fresh baked challah. Admittedly, I do not make my challah as frequently as I used to. However, the opportunity to enjoy the Community Challah Bake was one I could not pass up! Despite being moved back to a Zoom event I appreciated the inspiration to bake and enjoy one another's company. Thank you to Rebbetzin Penina and the many volunteers who pulled this together.

Baking challah is a hands-on way to touch Judaism. These are three lessons it reminded me of while handling the dough:

1. There is always something new to be learned. I learned a different recipe, and some handy tips despite making challah for over 25 years.
2. Sometimes, you mire through the mess to get the reward. With flour all over my counter and a few dishes to wash after a full day of work, I look forward to the fresh challah on my Shabbat table.
3. The most authentic Jewish experiences occur in community. As Jews, we pray in community. We eat in community. Gathering with others elevated a regular task of making challah to something joyful and more meaningful.

We are in the midst of the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) campaign. When you support the campaign, you are supporting our efforts to strengthen and connect with the community. Your contribution is a signal to me you value the work that my team and our board are doing and that we have your encouragement to keep moving forward.

This week I had the honour of speaking with a community member about the UJA campaign. It is an honour for me to share the accomplishments our team has made, and some of the exciting initiatives on the horizon. He challenged me why the donation was necessary when this person supports other Jewish causes.

At that moment, I could share with him the strides we have made during the pandemic to sustain community. How we created more opportunities to support the vulnerable, sought new grants, and offered programming that engages and connects people to combat social isolation. I shared how we represent our community in the face of rising antisemitism, whether with media, political candidates or with outreach events such as Heritage Days. I told him about how we preserve relationships with the Edmonton Police Service and RCMP; how we are the face of the community when a person calls who 'wants to report the Nazi coin being auctioned this

weekend'; and that they can trust we will tackle it head on. (Incidentally, the auction house had it removed after our discussion).

To those that have made their gifts to the annual campaign, I thank you for ensuring that we are Here for Good. Your gift not only ensures that we support individuals, agencies and engaging programs. Your gift ensures that we grow and nurture Jewish Edmonton.

On a final note, we will launch programs that connect the Next Generation (known as JCORE) soon. This is an activity in progress. If you are keen on getting involved, please contact me at ceo@edifed.org. Many have asked me about the March of the Living 2022 for high school and university students. We are in discussions nationally about this program and will have material to share soon. If you are interested, please fill out [this form](#) so we can contact you once we schedule an information session.

Shabbat shalom

D. Lewitt

Stacey