



From the desk of the CEO

As I slowly get to know you, the weeks are flying by. Today marks the end of my first month and as I write to you Tu B'Shevat is drawing to a close.

Our temperatures are colder than Antarctica and yet we can only imagine the beautiful trees set to bloom in Israel. Through P2G our younger teens are learning about it first hand in their virtual exchange continuing this weekend and with the help of JNF there will be new trees planted in their honor. Hillel students will be keeping warm in their kitchens when they will be cooking together virtually this coming Sunday.

For those who attended the Dr. Deborah Lipstadt event on International Holocaust Remembrance Day hosted by the Jewish Federation of Calgary and the Calgary Public library, you heard that antisemitism is not only a threat to democracy but that hatred is dangerous and we are morally compelled to call it out in all its forms. Dr. Lipstadt reminded us that what makes us Jews is honoring tradition more so than defining ourselves based on combatting hate and antisemitism. When asked how she goes on with this work, she told us it was in finding the joy, not the joy! Whether it is in small meaningful moments such as lighting candles, eating challah, listening to Jewish music or more, I hope that you are finding your joy. We also look forward to working with Calgary Jewish Federation on partnered events in the future.

Along with some of our community leaders I attended a virtual town hall with Premier Kenney, Dr. Hinshaw, and numerous other Ministers to provide us with updates and answer questions. While our community has been exemplary in following guidelines with respect to religious practices, we were informed that the easing of restrictions overall will be slow and gradual to ensure, especially with a new variant of the virus entering the country, that we do not lose the gains we have made. Vaccination is now on a pause in Alberta and it is easy to be fatigued and frustrated with this pandemic. I hope that you are taking part in the programming offered by many of our community groups and join us for the events we are planning for you as well.

Shabbat Shalom,

Stacey