



From the Desk of the CEO

In a world where we can't seem to plan, where 'pivot' seems overused and we hoped to be much farther along in the path to recovery, there is one thing I can tell you for certain. We at the Jewish Federation of Edmonton are going to continue to provide services, experiences, and assistance with the utmost of safety and care.

We have had to plan for 'the Yoms', Good Deeds Day and Film Fest knowing that they would be different from previous years. While we could safely guess that indoor gatherings would not be allowed under public health guidelines, the idea of hosting outdoor events had seemed highly likely. Once we saw case numbers and variants rise, we pulled back and will continue to provide virtual programming until it is clearly safe to contemplate doing otherwise.

Our staff is working diligently behind the scenes to support the many volunteers who are putting their heart and souls into planning and ensuring that while things may be different, they can still be relevant, meaningful and even fun. Where we can, we will continue to partner with local and national agencies to do this as well.

To this end, we hope that you were inspired by the Light of Days Book Launch and moved by our unique Yom Hashoah Commemoration, which you can watch again [here](#). Dr. Colin Muscat, Marnie Bondar, and I were hosted by Ryan Jespersen to talk about Yom Hashoah and our conversation touched upon antisemitism and at times became emotional. You can catch that interview [here](#). If you are concerned about the issue of online hate, CIJA is hosting an action summit this week and [Arndrea Waters King and Martin Luther King III](#) will be keynote speakers on April 14. We are joining with MASA for [Yom Hazikaron](#), in what will surely be a moving ceremony. While we had to put the brakes on our [Yom Haatzmaut](#) plans, the JFNA virtual ceremony is a celebration that include Olympic athletes and more.

Together we are showing care as our community has been generously supporting the Edmonton Food Bank food drive for Good Deeds Day. Will we make the goal of filling the one-tonne truck coming to our offices this weekend? I encourage you to take a Sunday drive, stay in your car, and our masked, distanced, cohorted volunteers will remove the groceries from your trunk. We are joined virtually by the Catholic community through yegSpark who have been helping us publicize this event.

Offering assistance to community members struggling with regular employment due to the pandemic is another way we are showing care. We have provided grocery cards to many families within our community. The covid relief program is in place to assist with essential bills and the Jewish free loan program to help bridge people who require more. These are anonymous and you can learn more at jewishedmonton.org

While we could not have anticipated being back at stage one, we encourage you to stay home, stay safe, and get ready to enjoy our upcoming Film Festival in its 25th year! Donations to the film festival will also support the covid relief program are most welcome as all movies are free of charge. I encourage you to [register now](#) for this stellar lineup.

Shabbat Shalom

D. Lewitt