



## Memo

To: Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors  
From: Andrea Freedman, President and CEO  
Date: January 18, 2022  
Re: President's Report

---

Here is an update to the Board on activities and issues since the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

On Friday January 21, CIJA hosted an important Ontario summit on antisemitism attended by approximately 100 mayors, councillors, police, and municipal staff. Panelists shared best practices in the fight against hate, discrimination, and antisemitism in our cities. I am pleased that Mayor Watson participated and I was honored to moderate a panel discussion with Police Chiefs across the province.

### DEVELOPMENT

---

#### Campaign 2022

As of January 18<sup>th</sup> we have secured pledges of **\$4,632,685** from 1,490 donors. This represents a **5% increase** on a card over card basis. We still have 309 dollar cards outstanding with a total value of **\$345,275** which the campaign team and a few incredible canvassers continue to work at closing. Some of these gifts are clearly at risk

#### Monthly Mitzvah Club

We currently have **19 individuals signed up**. Cumulatively these donors are providing **\$13,235** and the same 19 individuals gave \$8,081 for the 2021 campaign. This initiative is included in this year's Business Plan.

#### LOJ

The pride was finally able to do a virtual trip of Jewish Majorca on January 12<sup>th</sup>. Approximately **20 Lions attended** and while the feedback showed an obvious preference for in person gatherings, the general sentiment was that people were appreciative of the ability to gather. Kudos to Gillian Presner and Donna Dolansky for their leadership, along with Campaign Co-Chair Karen Palayew, of the group during an exceptionally difficult stretch of time, and their ability to encourage collectiveness in spite of all the challenges.

#### Arrears

Even with the pandemic, the total arrears list is very manageable with it currently running at **less than 1%**. With great sensitivity to the variety of financial situations, the team is doing follow up through both personal outreach and email/mail.

#### Antisemitism briefing

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, approximately 60 major, top and BGS donors gathered along with board members for a briefing on antisemitism with keynote speaker Irwin Cotler. It was sobering, but very well received.

#### \$150,000 Gift for the archives

Federation has now officially received a gift of \$30,000/year for the next 5 years from the children of Sid Cohen Z'L. None of the children live in Ottawa and this generous gift is to support the work of the Archives (\$25k for a mutually agreed upon special project(s) and \$5K to support the Archive's budget).

## OPERATIONS

---

### Campus/Security

In response to the hostage situation in Texas on January 15, Federation's security manager Andrea Blaustein convened representatives from our synagogues on January 20. A refresher on key protocols and security measures was provided. She was joined by CIJA National Security Advisor Gerry Almendrades and Ottawa Police Services Hate Crime Division Lead Sgt. Ali Toghrol. Almost all congregations had one or more representative and feedback was positive.

We are also evaluating JFNA's Security Communities Network new online security training course to determine if this is a quick and efficient way to provide enhanced security training for our synagogues and community members. We have encouraged CIJA to convene all Canadian rabbis in a virtual program to impress upon them the need to participate in greater awareness and training in the event of a hate incident.

### Hillel House – Laurier Avenue

Following the inspection report's recommendation, we have engaged our electrical contractor to do a deeper review of the electrical systems at the host. There is no immediate safety concern, but this was flagged as something to review to ensure compliance with standards.

### OVH

Creative Kosher Catering has re-opened under OVH supervision as of January 16, 2022. We organized a virtual meet-and-greet for the OVH lay and rabbinic committees to meet Miriam Richmond, our new FT mashgiach.

### Governance

A nominating committee for the board and committees for community awards are being struck.

The Governance committee held its first meeting of the year on January 14 and is actively engaged in three initiatives: refining the role of the Immediate Past Chair, evaluating whether the Student Leadership award would be better served as Hillel and CSN led and implemented, and considering a new community award to recognize communal professionals. Recommendations will be brought to the board at a future meeting.

A smaller sub-group of the Governance committee will be reviewing Federation's bylaws as a best practice, and will be engaged in a more fulsome review of the Campus governance structure, objects and bylaws to be in compliance with the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) and CRA.

### Compliance

All GST has been paid, our payroll is current, source deductions have been made, and all other filings and payments are in compliance.

## FEDERATION PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

---

It continues to be a struggle to engage EG members in programming and activities. Many in this demographic are struggling during the pandemic.

### EG Campaign

The current total for the EG campaign is **\$114,057** with a **27% increase** in card value over last year. Several canvassers have taken on additional cards to close those remaining, of which 41 are dollar cards.

### Engaging Newcomers, EG and Young Families

Federation Staff met individually with four newcomers to Ottawa and connected them with local Jewish community network and resources. Lindsay Newman, the PJL Coordinator connected with five new PJ Library families who have registered in the past month. She also continues to connect with exiting PJ families, and reaches out to three families each week.

### PJ Library

The Pay It Forward Campaign will begin in February. This campaign is designed for PJ Library families who have received books for two years, but are not yet donors to the Annual Campaign. An effort is being made to recruit canvassers from among PJ Library families.

### PJ Library at-home activities for Kindness Week (February 17-23)

In association with Kind Canada. This includes an online art contest and the creation of cards, which will be distributed to residents of Hillel Lodge.

### Community Building

#### Grant Writing Workshop

A 2-part grant writing workshop attracted **23 people** representing staff and volunteers from twelve local Jewish organizations. The sessions were led by leadership educator Darren Levine, and topics ranged from mobilizing stakeholders to impact evaluation. Feedback was very positive.

### Microgrants

Three microgrants were approved to date since mid-January. The committee also launched a *Call to Action* for Kindness Week initiatives, in honor of Rabbi Bulka.

Greenberg Families Library	Cheers to Art	\$2,380	Organization
Jodi Green & NCSY	JFX Tu B'Shevat Fruit Carving	\$547	Organization
CBB & OKFB	Mitzvah Skate & Disco	\$1,545	Organization
<b>Total Grants to Date</b>		<b>\$46,617</b>	

### Fund for Innovative Capacity Building

The results of round 16 of the Fund are in, with eight successful applicants and a sum total of **\$33,860 allocated**.

Agency	Project	Allocation
Jewish Education through Torah (JET)	Consultancy fee for Strategic Planning	\$5000
Jewish Youth Library (JYL)	Consultancy fee for Strategic Planning/Professional Development	\$4860
Camp B'nai Brith (CBB)	Consultancy Fee for Diversity & Inclusion training/professional development	\$8000
Jewish Family Services (JFS)	Consultancy Fee for Diversity & Inclusion training/professional development	\$5000
Tamir	Consultancy Fee for Board Training/Professional Development	\$5000
Congregation Beit Tikvah of Ottawa	Website Development & Marketing	\$6000
<b>Total Allocations</b>		<b>\$33,860</b>

### **International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Jan. 27**

Federation staff convened CIJA, CHES, the Israeli Embassy, and the newly established National Holocaust Monument Committee to develop a commemoration for IHRD. Unfortunately, due to pandemic restrictions, planned events were canceled. However, we are collectively moving forward with the social media campaign titled **#WeRemember**, which has been publicized in our community and schools. In honor of this day public infrastructure will be lit up in yellow, including buildings at all 3 universities in Ottawa. The national monument has been selected as the commemorative site where the Israeli embassy, American Embassy, Federation, CIJA, and the Mayor will convene and speak and which will be livestreamed.

### **Community Havdallah and Prayer Services January 15**

At the time of the scheduled Kahoot game, the hostage situation in Colleyville was active. Accordingly, we quickly pivoted to Havdallah and brief Prayer Service. With an hour's notice, 100 "devices" participated (approximately 150 people).

### **Hillel Update**

Looking back on the fall semester, despite the fact that university classes were mostly on-line and little activity was happening on campuses, Hillel remained active and managed to engage many students and in multiple ways.

*Here are engagement stats for Sept – Dec. 2021:*

- 569 student engagements in programming
- 150 students reached in 1-1 coffee dates
- 16 programs and events

### **Programming**

For the current semester, and in response to the latest restrictions, Hillel will be pivoting to virtual programming for the time being. The winter term began by meeting with student leadership and partner organizations to brainstorm the best way to keep students involved and engaged during this time. Hillel staff are focused on connecting with students, and assuring them that we are here to offer help and support.

The **Tu B'Shvat lunch and learn** attracted **15 students**. The Jewish Learning fellowship kicks off in January as does the weekly Israeli book club which will be discussing Einat Wilf's book, *The War of Return*.

### **Advocacy**

January 18<sup>th</sup>, Hillel Ottawa in partnership with Hillel Ontario and CIJA participated in a roundtable discussion on campus antisemitism with Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities, Jill Dunlop, and Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce. This was an important opportunity for government leaders to hear directly from Jewish students from across the province about their experiences with antisemitism and discrimination on campus.

Hillel continues to work closely with Hillel Ontario to share resources and combine efforts to address issues related to antisemitism on campuses, in an effort to support students. Both Hillel Ottawa staff and student leadership are benefitting from this strong relationship with Hillel Ontario and other Hillels.

## COMMUNICATION

### Eblasts

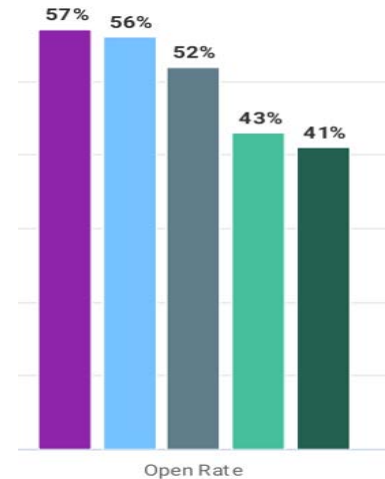
Open rates are doing exceptionally well. **Since Dec. 1, 2021, the average open rate has been 56%. Up 10% from the 2021 average open rate of 46%.**

As reported in the last update, this increased engagement comes from several well-received and timely communications. For example, the email sent in response to the Texas synagogue hostage taking had a 65% open rate.

Also, interesting to note is the improved engagement with **E-news** since we reinvigorate subject lines and *send from* fields. From open rates in the low 40%, we are now seeing 56%-57% open rates. (See graph)

### Gifts in Action (GIA) Update

The GIA initiative is a monthly email campaign to donors to share the impact of their gift to the Annual Campaign. The emails have been very well received with open rates at **65%** and are an example of specialized donor stewardship initiatives.



### End-of-year fundraising emails: Just say yes!

At the end of December, we tested a new email campaign that targeted past donors who had not yet given to the Annual Campaign asking them to “just say yes” to renewing their pledge by simply replying to the email. Open rates were **68%** and the initiative resulted in unexpected donations.

### Social media

The last month on social media was a bit quieter since it fell over a holiday period, but since January, there has been an uptick again. Interestingly, there has been an effort to share more agency events on our platforms, unfortunately, so far they are not performing as well as we had hoped. We will continue to watch and test the content.