

# Letter to Friends:

A Message from Ometz



Dear Friends,

We hope that your new year is off to a good start and that you have been enjoying this snowy weather. As you will see in our February edition of Letter to Friends, Ometz has had a busy winter so far, and although our community continues to face challenges, we also have many things to look forward to in the months ahead.

## Ukraine: One year later



This month marks the one-year anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine. Since Jewish Ukrainian refugees began contacting our agency in March 2022, Ometz's Immigration Department has been providing much-needed resettlement services related to housing, employment, navigating government

services and psychosocial support. We have already helped **over 185 Ukrainians** build new lives in Montreal and, as the crisis enters into its second year, the caseloads continue to grow.

One of the most important services that Ometz provides to all our immigration clients – which include over 800 newcomers from around the world each year – is connecting them to the local Jewish community. We were thrilled to host, on Sunday, December 18, our first in-person **Family Hanukkah Party** since the pandemic. Over 300 newcomers celebrated with delicious food, a dance performance, and fun activities like animation filmmaking, chess and arts and crafts. Additionally, almost 200 kids received a bag full of new toys to make the holiday extra special. [Click here to read an article about the event in \*Montreal Jewish Magazine\*.](#)

Lastly, we are pleased to share that nine deserving recipients were recently awarded the **Ometz Newcomer Education Scholarship** to help them pursue their educational and career goals. Over the past 10 years, this scholarship has been awarded to over 80 newcomers in fields including medicine, nursing, engineering, music, law, business/finance and computer science. Mazal Tov to this year's winners!

[Click here to read an article in \*La Voix Sepharade\* about how Ometz helps French-speaking Jewish newcomers find their place here through L'Initiative France Montréal.](#)

## L'Annexe ribbon cutting: A long-awaited celebration



On November 2, Ometz's centre for young adults, L'Annexe, finally had its **long-awaited "official" opening**. Delayed by two years due to the pandemic, the ribbon cutting celebrated the donors who supported the centre's bold vision for a new way to engage young people, as well as the staff and clients who have brought the space to life and turned a long-held dream into reality for the

entire community. [Click here to read coverage of the inspiring evening in the Canadian Jewish News.](#)

In addition to weekly events and workshops, L'Annexe hosts 3-4 sessions of creative arts therapy groups throughout the year to promote well-being and self-care. This winter, we are running a 6-week **music therapy group** that includes song composition, sing-alongs, music relaxation and improvisation. Additionally, L'Annexe is currently leading a **special cohort of accès:succès** – our pre-employment program for neurodivergent young adults – **at Concordia University**, to help university students develop their skills and awareness in interpersonal communication, time management & prioritization, and mental wellness. This is the first time that accès:succès is being held outside of L'Annexe, and we're excited to continue developing new partnerships as the program grows and evolves.

## Helping children and families



Our School Department has been busy running a variety of workshops all over the city this winter. These workshops are a powerful tool to help children and teens navigate their preschool, elementary and high school years. We also offer workshops for teachers, school personnel and parents. With a special grant from Federation CJA to promote Covid Mental Health Relief, we created **three different workshops on how to deal with challenging behaviours** geared at students, teachers and parents.

clinique entourfamille – Ometz's fee-for-service, multidisciplinary clinic for children and their families – recently hired two **speech and language pathologists**, as well as an **occupational therapist**, who are all accepting new clients. We also just launched an **Emotion Regulation Group** for grades 4-6, which helps young people recognize their emotional states, create a personal toolbox of coping skills, and learn how to adjust their behavior for

---

## Looking ahead: JDAIM art exhibition on February 15

February is [Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance and Inclusion Month \(JDAIM\)](#), a unified effort among Jewish organizations across North America and beyond, to raise awareness and foster acceptance and inclusion of people with disabilities and mental health conditions, and support those who love them. To celebrate JDAIM, L'Annexe will be presenting a **multigenerational art exhibition – “From strength to strength”** – in partnership with Ometz, the Cummings Centre, ALink, the Sylvan Adams YM-YWHA and Moishe House, on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. Artists from around Montreal will be displaying their pieces inspired by this important month in the Ruth & Alex Dworkin Hall of Honour at the Y. The event is free and open to the public! [Click here to find out more.](#)

## Thinking of You

- Volunteering with Ometz is a great way to give back to the community! We are currently looking for GED (high school equivalency test) tutors and volunteers for our Learning & Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP). To find out more, email [volunteer@ometz.ca](mailto:volunteer@ometz.ca).
- To make an appointment with one of the clinicians at clinique entourfamille, or to learn more about upcoming groups for children and families, [click here](#).
- To learn more about Ometz school workshops, including how to book them, [click here](#).
- To read more of our recent press coverage, [visit Ometz's Newsroom page](#).
- Don't forget to follow Ometz on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) (and [L'Annexe](#) on Instagram) to stay up-to-date on all our latest news!

## Thank you for everything your generosity makes possible!

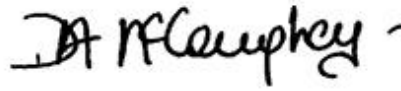
We were overwhelmed by the generosity of everyone who donated to the **2022 Ometz Hanukkah Year-End Campaign**. In the coming year, these funds will help Jewish Ukrainian refugees find housing, employment and a sense of community in Montreal; young adults at L'Annexe build autonomy, engage in community and discover their unique vision of wellbeing; and children and families get the social, academic and mental health supports they need to keep moving forward.

Whether you are a client, volunteer, donor, funder, or partner: thank you for believing in our mission, and being part of the Ometz community!

With warm wishes,



**Joel Shalit**  
President, Ometz



**Dominique McCaughey**  
Chief Executive Officer, Ometz



ABOUT US

VOLUNTEER

DONATE



Services communautaires, emploi & immigration  
Social Services, Employment & Immigration



Agence Ometz | 1, Carre Cummings | Montreal, QC H3W1M6 CA

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)