

Letter to Friends:

A Message from Ometz



Dear Friends,

We hope that you have had a nice summer, a relaxing Labour Day weekend, and a good start to fall.

Celebrating adaptability and innovation



At Ometz's 2023 **Annual General Meeting** – our first in-person AGM since the

pandemic – we came together as a community to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and share our plans for the future. Thank you to everyone who joined us at the Gelber Conference Centre, including both new and longtime supporters, and to iA Private Wealth for sponsoring our cocktail d'natatoire in the Peace Garden! [You can read more about the inspiring evening in *The Westmount Independent*.](#)

One of the most moving parts of the AGM was hearing **first-hand testimonials from our clients about how Ometz positively impacted their lives**. We invite you to [read our 2023 Annual Report to learn more about how we helped almost 12,000 people move forward](#) last year through our immigration, employment and social services.

Our organization is in a **period of active renewal**, and the AGM marked a significant changeover in Ometz's Board of Directors. [We welcomed a new President, Jeffrey Berkowitz](#), and two new Board Members: Mark Brender and Brenda Gewurz. We also honoured our immediate Past President, Joel Shalit, and departing Board Members, for their service. We are in the last year of our three-year strategic plan, which continues to be a powerful tool to guide our organization ahead with purpose and focus. Our 2023-24 Board will be having its first retreat at the end of the month, and we are excited to benefit from their insights, ideas and approaches to emerging issues.

Cultivating community and health



All summer long, the inaugural **Intergenerational Community Garden** provided space for participants of all ages to learn about planting and caring for a garden while enjoying the therapeutic benefits of nature. The produce was grown, shared and distributed among clients of the Ometz Mental Health Support Services Department, young adults from L'Annexe: the Ometz Centre

for Young Adults, and senior volunteers from the Cummings Centre; it was also used to prepare healthy meals in various cooking programs. In August, we celebrated the garden's success with a delicious Harvest Party.

Additionally, the **Mental Health Department** organized activities such as music in the morning, movie afternoons, a creative arts group, and skill-building workshops on stress and time management. At [L'Annexe](#), there was dog therapy, a drama therapy group, a healthy relationships workshop with Auberge Shalom, [a community booth at MTL Pride](#), the first Dungeons & Dragons group for Ukrainian speakers, and two more cohorts of accès:succès (our pre-employment program for neurodiverse young adults). The **Immigration Department** led group outings across Quebec and Ontario to help our newcomers from around the world connect with their new home. We are grateful to have benefited from several enthusiastic summer students, as well, thanks to the support of the Federal Government's Canada Summer Jobs Program.

Helping newcomers feel at home



Ometz has now **welcomed over 250 Jewish Ukrainian refugees** since the war began in 2022. As part of our holistic, wraparound approach, we are providing immigration, employment and social services to help them integrate into the community and build new lives here. This summer, we partnered with Federation CJA and Camp B'nai B'rith again to give young newcomers an unforgettable camp experience in the Laurentians.

[Click here to read a beautiful full-circle story about how two of our Ukrainian clients were brought together](#) when Vlada (who recently graduated from Ometz's training and internship program for integration aides) worked as a "shadow" at the Y City Inclusion Camp for Victoria's six-year-old son, who has

Looking ahead: Promoting academic and employment success

From screenings to school workshops to tutoring, Ometz provides a range of programs to **support peoples' educational journeys**. This fall, we are offering our Learning & Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP); individual academic and language mentors for mentees ranging from young children to adults; and GED classes. Additionally, accès:succès will be partnering once again with Concordia University's Access Centre for Students with Disabilities to help university students develop their skills and awareness in interpersonal communication, time management and prioritization, and mental wellness.

[clinique entourfamille](#) – Ometz's fee-for-service, multidisciplinary clinic for children and their families – just held a fun and therapeutic Mini-Camp for 4 and 5-year-olds. Combining occupational and behavioral therapy techniques with social games, the camp promoted social, motor and emotional development, helping prepare the participants for Kindergarten. In October, there will be an Emotion Regulation Group for grades 2-3 and 4-6, to help young people recognize their emotional states, create a personal toolbox of coping skills, and learn how to adjust their behavior for different contexts.

Lastly, for adults looking to acquire a new skillset or even a new career, our **Employment Department** is running a Financial Accounting/Bookkeeping workshop this month, and another Integration Aide training and internship program in October.

Thinking of You

- The next time you're in the building, stop by [Café Soleil: a welcoming, affordable, and inclusive environment that employs adults of all abilities!](#) The new cafe is a joint venture of the Cummings Centre, Agence Ometz, JEM Workshop, and Zera Café, with funding from Federation CJA.
- Volunteering with Ometz is a great way to give back to the community! We are currently looking for individual academic and language mentors, and volunteers to help with our Learning & Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP). To find out more, email volunteer@ometz.ca.
- To register your child(ren) for clinique entourfamille's upcoming Emotion Regulation group, [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](#) and [Facebook](#)) to stay up-to-date on all our latest news!

Thank you for helping young people, and their families, thrive

We are thrilled to say that we **exceeded our goal for A Chance to Shine!** Over the coming year, these donations will help fund a wide range of beneficial programs and services for children and young adults.

To all of our clients, volunteers, donors, funders, and partners: your trust and support make our work possible. *Thank you.*

As we head into the High Holiday season, we want to wish everyone a happy, healthy and sweet New Year ahead!



Jeffrey Berkowitz
President, Ometz



Dominique McCaughey
Chief Executive Officer, Ometz



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