



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Youth and Young Adults

### *Ometz receives transformational gift from The Azrieli Foundation*

**Montreal, March 7, 2019** – At-risk youth and young adults will now have better access to Ometz services thanks to a generous lead gift from the Azrieli Foundation. The funding will go towards the creation of a brand new Centre that will offer comprehensive services and programming to 16 to 35-year-olds, in an inclusive and community-based environment. Opening in fall 2019, the new Centre (name TBD) will provide an inclusive environment for individuals to connect and form supportive relationships as well as advocacy, training, education, employment and empowerment opportunities.

“Our vision is to create an innovative community response to fill the gap in services for vulnerable youth and young adults who have or will soon ‘age out’ of the public system and have no coordinated community support,” says Gail Small, Chief Executive Officer of Ometz. “This transformational gift from the Azrieli Foundation will be a first big step in meeting the evolving needs of our growing clientele.”

At Ometz, many of the young people who seek our help have complex backgrounds that include: poverty, undiagnosed learning and intellectual disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, low literacy levels, mental illness, loss of a parent, poor parenting, lack of positive adult role models, physical and/or sexual abuse, and time spent in Youth Protection Services.

“This new Centre aligns perfectly with our belief that every individual should have the opportunity to participate fully in their community. Many of the youth and young adults who will use this Centre have previously fallen between the gaps,” says Naomi Azrieli, Chair and CEO of the Azrieli Foundation. “This Centre will foster a much-needed sense of belonging, while addressing their physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs.”

#### About Ometz

Ometz is a charitable organization that supports and strengthens individuals and families by offering a range of employment, immigration, school and community services. Serving more than 13,000 people annually, Ometz provides intervention, prevention, support services and programs aimed to enhance quality of life. Whether supporting a student who is struggling at school, a family in crisis, an individual coping with mental illness, a person looking for a new career or starting a new life in Montreal, Ometz helps change lives. To find out more about Ometz, please visit [www.ometz.ca](http://www.ometz.ca)

#### About the Azrieli Foundation:

For 30 years, the Azrieli Foundation has funded institutions as well as operated programs in Canada and in Israel. The Foundation generously supports scientific and medical research, higher education, youth empowerment and school perseverance, Holocaust education, music and the arts, architecture and quality of life initiatives for people with developmental disabilities. [www.azrielifoundation.org](http://www.azrielifoundation.org)

#### For interview opportunities, please contact:

Carly Grossman

Ometz; Senior Communications and Stewardship Officer

[carly.grossman@ometz.ca](mailto:carly.grossman@ometz.ca); (514) 342-0000 (ext.3460)