

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



It Takes a Community

As we reflect on 2020, it's safe to say, it has been a year unlike any other.

This year marked the beginning of a new era for Ometz, as a new CEO was named and two major initiatives, L'Annexe and Clinique entourfamille were poised to launch. The pandemic became a fourth factor, that presented numerous unprecedented challenges for us all. Indeed, when lockdowns first began none of us could have anticipated what lay ahead.

But before we knew it, hours turned into days. Those days turned into weeks. Then months. And here we are now, over one year later and counting—doing what we do best: reaching out to the community—being there to respond, to listen and to provide comfort. That help just looks a little different these days and we are so incredibly proud of our devoted staff, volunteers, dedicated Board, donors and loyal partners for stepping up, adapting to this 'new normal' and moving ahead.



There is no doubt, the pandemic has been disruptive for us all. It has forced us to pivot in ways we never thought possible. From prioritizing service responses, Zoom meetings, home offices, virtual visits, online workshops and events—these have all been learning curves. This past year has completely altered the way we live, plan, interact, and work.

And many members of the community have been severely affected—and continue to deal with isolation, anxiety, loss and depression. For some, difficult situations have only become harder over time. In 2020, the pandemic exponentially increased issues related to social isolation and economic insecurity, highlighting increased need for support—in particular around mental health. It exacerbated parental fatigue and anxiety and put children at additional risk, particularly those struggling academically and socially. It exposed the financial and skills-related gap between our most vulnerable clients and the technology that connects them to much-needed services and social supports.

But while this has been a challenging time for the community and for Ometz, it is also a time of opportunity. We believe there is every reason to be hopeful.

In this period of social distancing, quarantining, and Zoom, we are dedicated to maintaining our connection to community and to our clients. We are committed to leading through the COVID-19 crisis and recovery—strengthening our agency, building on our strong foundation by planning for the future and enhancing our position as a vital and relevant Montreal organization. And we could not have done it without our partnerships, which have been critical to our ability to respond to the pandemic and will be key in our work to create a stronger, more integrated and impactful human service agency.

It is said that “a community is too heavy to carry alone.” At Ometz, we are reminded of this every day and are proud of the way we have been there for each other and our community.

We appreciate your ongoing commitment to Ometz and those we serve—it is your support and dedication that makes Ometz such a special place.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D McCaughey".

Dominique McCaughey
Chief Executive Officer,
Ometz

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Aronovici".

Michael Aronovici
President,
Ometz

It Takes a Community

Some highlights from the past year:

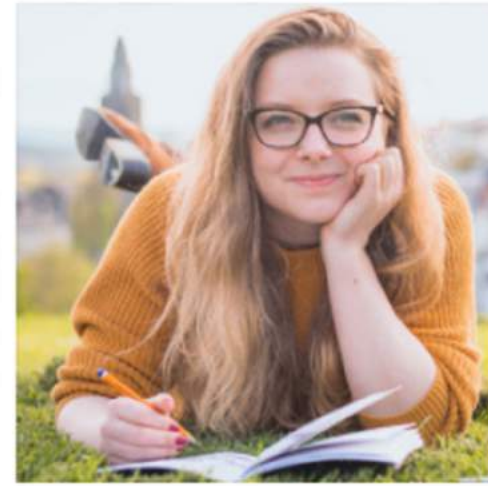
- The Social Services Teams of Cummings Centre and Ometz worked together with Federation CJA on the front lines of the newly established Community Helpline delivering emergency response, generating increased demand for social services for our Intake team.
- Ometz partnered with Federation CJA's Gesher– the Bridge—an initiative to ensure that impacted families can get the support they need to cope through this crisis.
- Staff from L'Annexe, our new Ometz Centre for Young Adults, were able to pivot all individual and group services to an online and remote mode and meet the needs of their increasingly vulnerable clientele, responding to a stunning 111% increase in the number of interventions during a short period.
- We continued our expansion to service adults (30+) with mild intellectual disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorder (some with dual diagnoses with mental illness), who often have limited access to other mental health resources. Services focused on helping our clients with lower support needs to increase autonomy by working on improving self-esteem, social skills, and independent living skills including cooking and financial literacy.
- Ometz continued its partnerships with CIUSSS Centre-Ouest de l'île de Montreal, City of Montreal social housing office, Habitation Communautaire NDG and the Jewish General Hospital Department of Outpatient Psychiatry to offer community mental health support to our clients requiring supported independent living and affordable social housing. The main objective is to increase and improve access to social housing, as well as the necessary mental health support for our clients living autonomously.
- We proudly launched **Clinique entourfamille™**, a specialized division that supports children and their families by providing guidance and solutions around developmental, social and academic growth. The clinic offers several virtual and on-site services, including online speech therapy, behavioural support services, family/child therapy, occupational therapy, group social skills and anxiety/emotional regulation workshops. As families of school-aged children face new obstacles since returning to the classroom, access to these professional services is more important than ever.
- Mindful of pandemic related challenges but dedicated to framing the future and setting the course for Ometz, we developed our three-year strategic plan. The plan is a deliberate, disciplined, thoughtful roadmap with objectives, actions, measurements and accountability. We believe that it will go a long way in continuing our vision of building a vibrant, growing community where people care for themselves and for each other.

A Story of Gratitude

Dear Jackie,

I just wanted to take the time to let you know how well I'm doing and to thank you for everything you did to help me get to the better place I'm at now.

I'm currently in my second year at Concordia University, specializing in English Literature. I'm studying full-time and am maintaining a full-time job as a concierge at an apartment building, which is a good job. I have another year and a half until I graduate, after which I haven't yet decided what I'll do. Maybe teach English abroad; possibly apply to graduate school right away. There are many options, more than I ever thought there would be when we first met.



I've also paid off all my debt and have contributed a lot to my savings. I was planning to travel this summer for 3-4 months all over Southeast Asia, backpacking. However, I have postponed my trip until next summer due to the pandemic. Instead, I'll keep working and saving up while getting ahead on obtaining my degree by taking a few summer courses.

Life still has its ups and downs, but I've come so far from that girl you met so long ago. I can barely remember what it felt like to be so weighed down as I was. I was in a dark hole and never thought I'd crawl out of it. I barely even had the strength to imagine the effort it would take.

Fortunately, that's no longer the case, and I'm happy more often than not. Although not everything is perfect, and I still have some things to work on, it's no longer an impossible challenge that I dread or see as insurmountable. I have every confidence that I can handle whatever curves life throws at me and have no intention of letting that outlook escape me. I will not look back and say I wish I did things differently.

I want you to know that you made a significant impact on my life, a positive one, and I owe my recovery as much to you as to myself. You gave me the tools I needed and the support I lacked. I am so grateful and wanted to take the time to recognize the work you do. It does make a difference, and I needed to make sure you, and anyone seeking your help, know that. I don't know where I'd be now otherwise, and I'm glad for where I am working towards a bright and prosperous future.

Thank you. Thank you so much for your help. Thank you for always believing in me. You always did, even when I didn't—couldn't—believe in myself. And thank you to all of Ometz for the services you offer to help people when they need it most. I consider myself extremely blessed to have had the opportunity to receive so much support from you. I hope one day I can make a positive difference in people's lives like you made in mine.

Alexis D.

OUR VISION

A VIBRANT, GROWING COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE CARE FOR THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER.



agence
ometz

OUR MISSION

Agence Ometz is a Jewish human services agency offering social, employment and immigration services to help people fulfill their potential and to secure the growth and vibrancy of the Montreal community.

OUR STORY

For over 150 years, Ometz has been serving the needs of the Jewish community of Montreal. Beginning as three separate agencies, Jewish Employment Montreal (JEM), Jewish Family Services (JFS) and Jewish Immigration Aid Services (JIAS) joined together in 2008 to form the organization that we know as Ometz, or “Courage” in English. Our mission is to deliver accessible, confidential, personalized, and culturally sensitive community services based on Jewish values. Our staff members are responsive, compassionate, engaged and inspiring — and sensitive to the cultural and language needs of our diverse community. Our vision is to build a vibrant, growing community where people care for themselves and each other.

Looking ahead, our goal at Ometz is to continue to be a source of strength and help our clients find the courage to reach their full potential. We are guided by the words of Maimonides: “Give a man a fish and feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

OUR VALUES

Ometz is the Hebrew word for courage and is a reflection of the courage of those who seek our support in transforming their lives. Our work is guided by the following core values:

SELF-SUFFICIENCY: By engaging our clients — whether individuals or families — to actively participate in the choices that lead to a more productive, meaningful life.

INCLUSIVITY: By welcoming and embracing everyone, without regard to race, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other factor.

HUMAN DIGNITY: By appreciating the uniqueness of each individual and interacting with sensitivity, empathy and non-judgment.

CARING COMMUNITIES: By creating social, emotional and cultural links, often with community partners, to engage those who might otherwise be isolated or feel disconnected.

EXCELLENCE: By upholding the highest professional standards and committing to life-long learning, renewal and innovation.

How We Are Making A Difference



FOR THE COMMUNITY

13,023 individuals benefited from Ometz services, programs and activities in 2020-2021.

371 virtual workshops, webinars, conferences and events organized by Ometz were attended by **1,931 people**.

7,924 people received our support to improve their quality of life, reduce social isolation, achieve financial autonomy and develop a positive outlook of their future.

1,728 children and families benefited from material and financial assistance to meet essential needs and secure a decent standard of living.

367 individuals, couples and families used our counselling services to improve relationships, cope with crisis and develop confidence.



FOR OUR VULNERABLE MEMBERS



FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

365 people living with mental health challenges, intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder received support to advance their quality of life, personal well-being and employment status.

52% of our Mental Health clients reached out for psychosocial support related to increased feelings of severe anxiety and/or depression during the first wave of the pandemic.

25% overall increase in interventions for clients of our Mental Health Support Services and a **53% increase** in interventions for clients in our Counselling Services during this one-year period.

904 young adults aged 18 to 35 at risk of social and economic exclusion received support and guidance to set personal goals, improve their quality of life and maximize their potential.



FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

How We Are Making A Difference



FOR JOB SEEKERS

1,138 job seekers used our services online to navigate the job market, update their skills, attend virtual workshops and find suitable employment opportunities.

274 people with mental health related disabilities received support navigating the job market, finding, securing and maintaining employment.

232 people participated in virtual workshops, trainings and peer support groups to learn techniques and gain confidence for successful job search.

835 newcomer families received information and support at every step of their immigration and integration to their new lives in Quebec.

434 adults and children learned more regarding their new home and connected with the community through our virtual integration activities.



FOR NEWCOMERS



FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

177 virtual sessions of our Learning & Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP) provided mentoring, academic and emotional support to **60 youth**.

1,775 children, parents and school personnel participated in discussions about relationships, sexuality, Internet safety, prevention of bullying, conflict resolution and resilience.

241 parents received support from their peers and child development specialists through our parenting groups.

150 people participated in the ABCs of starting a business – a series of free public and virtual workshops for aspiring entrepreneurs.

100 startups received business plan coaching, help with accessing financial resources and technical support through our accelerator program.



FOR ENTREPRENEURS

A Year Of Responding To COVID-19

Ometz has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in numerous ways, and we are committed to continuing our efforts to help the community recover from this crisis.



The importance of food security meant that *not a single day* of service to our community was interrupted and food assistance continued to be delivered to clients.



Leveraging data to respond in timely manner thanks to developing and implementing a Crisis Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which helped to identify emerging needs.



Employment and entrepreneurship services responded to the needs of job seekers laid off or terminated during the pandemic, small business owners hard hit by the crisis, and new graduates facing unexpected barriers upon their entrance to the job market.



Employment Services offered a peer support group for mature workers ages 45+ with a focus on managing the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic while looking for a job. Each session explored mindfulness and resilience strategies to manage the job search process and stress brought on by these unprecedented times. Enrollment to the group doubled during this period.



L'Annexe workers quickly shifted to a virtual format and continued to work online with our young clients to provide special events, job coaching, life-skills training and mentorship through one-on-one sessions and group workshops.



The Helpline, staffed by Ometz and The Cummings Centre, responded to over 3,800 calls in the first 6 months of the pandemic, averaging close to 100 calls per day in the first 3 months.

A Year Of Responding To COVID-19



Changes to newcomer status, citizenship and residency during the pandemic led Immigration Services to hold special sessions on Canadian Immigration Law with an Immigration Advisor. These sessions focused on permanent residency, temporary work and study permits, Citizenship applications, special measures related to foreign workers, special processing measures, travel restrictions for residents and non-residents.



Immigration Services created a successful *Virtual Ometz Newcomers Club* to help newcomers feel less isolated during the pandemic. With few opportunities to network in their new home and cut off from their families abroad, this program helped newcomers better integrate into the Jewish community by providing virtual opportunities to meet with other families, such as cooking classes, physical activity workshops, gardening and painting classes.



To enhance and support digital empowerment, our staff distributed computers, laptops and tablets to clients who were isolated, looking for employment, studying in high school and university—and worked with volunteers to help with training and tech support. Free internet access was provided to those who could not afford it.



Virtual one-on-one and online group programming supported our mental health clients in overcoming isolation, reducing anxiety and building life skills. We quickly transitioned all of our individual and group sessions with clients from in person to virtual/telehealth format and continue to develop this model of working with clients.



Ometz partnered with Federation CJA's *Gesher—the Bridge*—an initiative to ensure that impacted families can get the support they need to cope through this crisis.



School services increased academic after-school programs and provided support accessing available and safe activities to over 100 families who did not send their children to summer camp.

Our Partnerships

Ometz is proud of our many partnerships and we are especially grateful of the relationships we have built and strengthened during the crisis and challenges of COVID-19. Each year, we work with public, private and community organizations and contribute our voice and expertise to numerous local networks, professional alliances, roundtables and citizen groups, including:



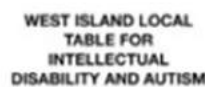
As members of the Table de concertation en santé mentale et dépendance, we are official community partners of the CIUSSS Centre-Ouest on all matters concerning mental health services in this territory. We have become a significant voice in defining and advocating for the housing needs of those living with mental health issues through our participation in the sub-committee on housing.



In partnership with GenMTL, we created and implemented an innovative training program for young adults willing to develop their leadership potential and create positive change in the community. Program graduates will have the opportunity to become members of the Peer Advisory Committee of l'Annexe, our Centre for Youth and Young Adults.



In March 2020, we partnered with Cummings Centre to organize the COVID-19 Community Helpline. This community-wide response was accessible to the thousands who were looking for information, support and services in the crisis. In the first weeks of helpline operation, our colleagues were receiving over 100 calls per day.



Our People

MEMBERS OF OUR BOARD



Michael Aronovici
President



Joel Shalit
Vice-President



Jeffrey Berkowitz
Vice-President



Bill Itovitch
Secretary | Treasurer



Saul Carliner
Past President



Yvonne Bensimon



Ruth Bensimon Choueke



Igor Bernadski



Geneviève Busbib



Rob Fainer



Amy Fish



David Martz



Viviana Mauas



Linda Schachter



Karen Sigman

MEMBERS OF OUR EXECUTIVE TEAM



Dominique McCaughey
Chief Executive Officer



Allan Ptack
Chief Operating Officer



Susan Karpman
Chief Program Officer



Barbara Victor
Chief Clinical Officer

Our Funders

None of the work that Ometz is doing would have been possible without the faithful support of our funders and donors. From a transformational gift to an occasional cheque, every dollar allows us to create positive change in the lives of thousands of members of our community. In 2020-2021 over **400 individuals, foundations and corporations** supported Ometz through their donations. We sincerely thank each one of them.

MAJOR FUNDERS



MIRIAM AARON
ROLAND SOCIAL
SERVICE FUND



Betty and Bernard S. Shapiro
Family Endowment

LAURA
SCHECHTER
FUND

THE ARLENE
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THE LEONARD
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PEARL AND DAVID
TOBIAS TRIBUTE
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RICHTER



THE GUSTAV
LEVINSCHI
FOUNDATION

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GOVERNMENT FUNDERS



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada



Donors and Sponsors

\$10,000+

The Arlene Fels Trust	Gustav Levinschi Foundation	The Leonard Albert Family Foundation	Ruth & David Steinberg Family Foundation	Steven & Sophie Lewar JIAS Canada Endowment Fund
ECHO Foundation	Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal	Nachshen, Larry	Small, David	
Gross, Stephen & Saryl	King, Marlene & Joel & Family	Peter Harasty Memorial Fund	Small, Sarah	

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bernadski, Igor	Fraiberg, William	Kolber, Leo	Mendel, Leonard	The Richter Charitable Foundation
Dekhter, Alex	Hecht, Robert	Lazare, Dawna	Second Harvest	Anonymous
Finnie, Shaun				

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Abenhaim, Haim	Carliner, Saul	Jean & Manny Spinner Memorial Fund	Nathan & Lily Silver Family Foundation	Sigler, Jonathan
Abitbol, Laurie	Centraide du Grand Montreal	King, Richard	Paperman, Ross	Steinberg, Leesa
Amar, Viviane	Cohen-Domanus, Jonathan	Laxer, Eric	Reinitz, George	Tanya Bartczak, SPERS
Arthur Pascal Family Helping Families Fund	Dubrofsky, Tami	Mann Feder, Varda	Reitmans (Canada) Limited	Victor, Harley & Barbara
Association des comites de parents anglophones	Elman, Robert	Martz, Sandy & David	Richter Family Office Inc.	Victor, Steven
Benaroche, Patrick	Fainer, Robert	Matalon, Ilse	Saad, Moussa & Rakel	Wexler, Alon
Berkowitz, Jeffrey	Goldie & Joe Raymer Endowment Fund	Mauas, Viviana	Schwartz, Julia	
Bicher, Jonathan	Goldwarg, Eliot	Modextil Report Collection	Segal-Voronoff, Renee	
Bratin, Milan	Heppner-Waldston, Sara	The Morris & Rosalind Goodman Family Foundation	Shaare Zion Congregation	
Busbib, Genevieve	Jaclyn Fisher Foundation	Nat & Thelma Rappaport Fund	Shapiro, Barry	

\$500 - \$999

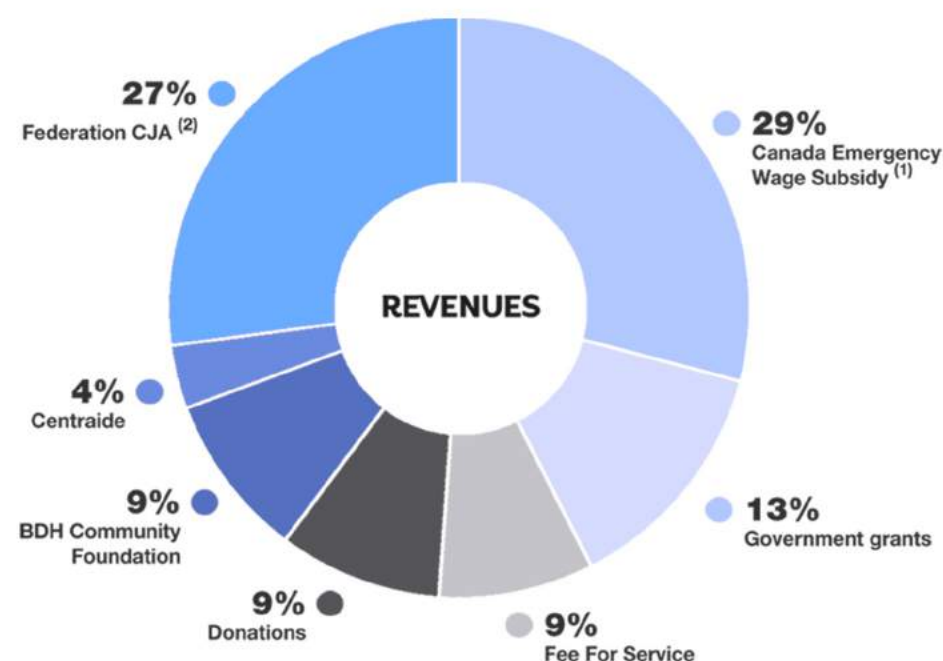
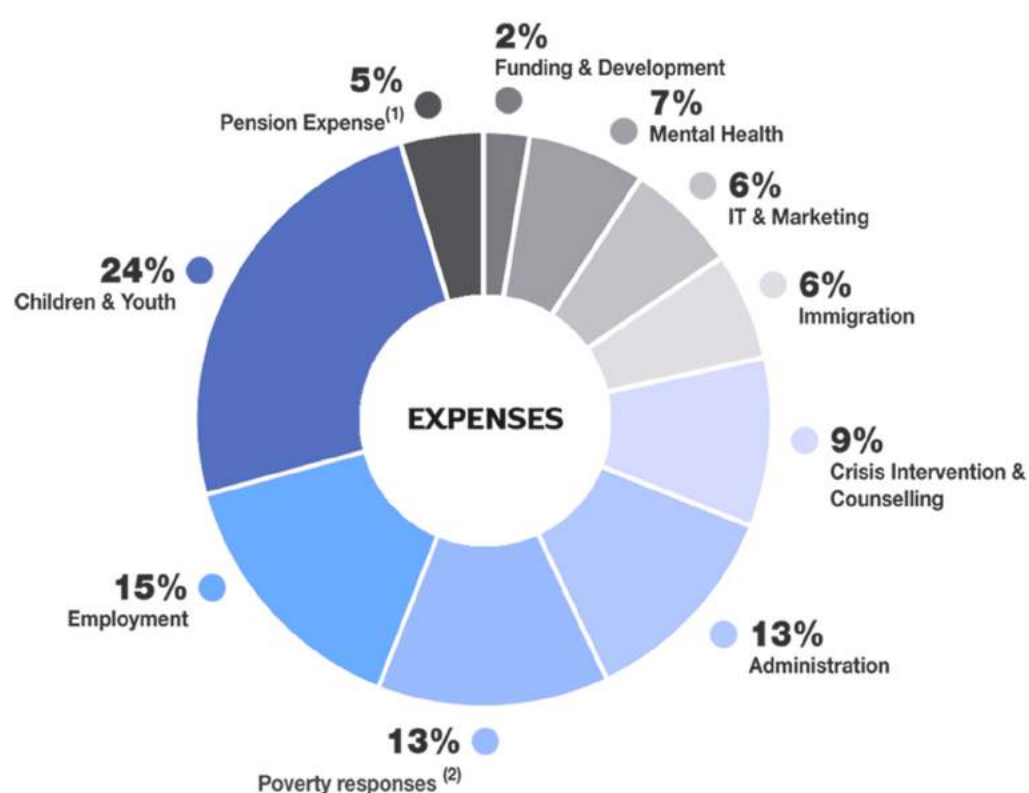
Askal, Ilana	Edelstein, Marilyn	Hecht, Thomas	McCaughey, Dominique	Tauben, Irwin
Becker, Hillel	Fainshtein, Eliya	The Henry & Berenice Kaufmann Foundation	Merovitz, Samuel	Telio Foundation
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Cohen, Howard	Gold, Michael	Lassner, William	Rossdeutscher, Simon	
Custom Diamond Int'l Inc.	Hannach Memorial Fund	Levine, Elliot	Stern, Noah	

Donors and Sponsors

\$100 - \$499

Acre, Yael	Elman, Sarita	Kareno Investments Ltd,	Namer, Alain A.	Small, Gail
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Berger, Susan	Friedland, Abram	Lieberman, Lorne	Reitman, Dorothy	Tannenbaum, Gloria
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Bergman, Thomas	Gaty, Stephen	Lipper, Ralph	Rosen, Delores	Telio, Laura
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Cassell, Evelyn	Goodman, Joy	Mark Waldman, CJPAC	Sachs, Isaac	Unger, Bonnie
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Edelstein, Cherie	Kadoch, Louna	Nacawa, Mary	Silverstein, Michael	Ziniuk, Matthew
	Kalmanovitch, William	Najman, Ruth	Sinclair, Michael	Zouari, David
				Anonymous

Financials 2020-2021



(1) The pension expense represents a liability due to Federation CJA in conjunction with the wind-up of a multi-employer defined benefit plan held and administered by Federation CJA on April 30, 2021.

(2) Poverty response through the community financial assistance program amounting to \$605,440 is not included in our statement of operations, but is included as an expense on this chart.

(1) In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Agence Ometz qualified as an eligible employer for the CEWS in demonstrating that it has observed the predetermined decrease in revenues required during the program eligibility period.

(2) Federation CJA also contributes \$605,440 for community financial assistance directed to clients. This amount is not included in our statement of operations, but included as a source of revenue in this chart.

Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
REVENUE		
Federation CJA	1 319 943	3 345 098
Fee for service	606 984	742 733
Government grants (1)	3 016 697	1 010 872
Centraide	250 000	250 000
Donations	646 843	974 452
B.D.H. Community Foundation	650 000	650 000
Interest income	4 762	30 263
Total Revenue	6 495 229	7 003 418

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
GOVERNMENT GRANTS		
Federal Grants (1)	2 080 314	-
Emploi-Québec	519 516	549 603
Immigration, francization and integration	146 222	153 495
Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires	227 775	240 202
Human resources and skill development of Canada	34 700	39 029
Other grants	8 170	28 543
	3 016 697	1 010 872

EXPENSES		
Operating expenses		
Program salaries and benefits	3 753 817	4 120 667
Program contract professionals	204 955	283 665
Activity costs	318 795	426 168
Professional development and memberships	20 228	31 463
Marketing	140 517	310 088
Information technology	272 330	227 157
Amortization of capital assets	230 298	75 278
Amortization of intangible assets	57 238	54 437
	4 998 178	5 528 923

Administration		
Salaries and benefits	523 951	755 833
Office and general	63 668	90 174
Office renovations	-	44 442
Insurance	42 364	41 274
Professional fees	80 119	51 433
Bank charges	3 448	3 238
	713 550	986 394

Funding and development	168 764	236 748
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Total expenses	5 880 492	6 752 065
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Excess of revenue over expenses before undernoted	614 737	251 353
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Pension expense (2)	315 936	-
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Excess of revenue over expenses	298 801	251 353
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(1) During the year, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Agence Ometz qualified as an eligible employer for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) and Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS), and as a result of demonstrating reductions in revenue according to the legislation during the program eligibility period, we received \$2,065,341 and \$14,973 of CEWS and CERS, respectively.

(2) The pension expense shown towards the bottom of the statement of operations represents a liability due to Federation CJA in conjunction with the wind-up of a multi-employer defined benefit plan held and administered by Federation CJA on April 30, 2021.

This page is an extract of the
Ometz financial statements