



Sh'ma Koleinu *Hear our voices*

שמע קולנו



WINTER 2023-24

Wishing You a Bright and Joyful Chanukah Celebration!



Joe Brownstein,
Chair



Risa Plotnick,
Executive Director

Dear Friends and Families,

As the Festival of Lights, Chanukah, begins, we want to extend our warmest wishes to you and your family. In this season of celebration, reflection, and unity, we are reminded of the power of light to dispel darkness and bring warmth into our lives.

For families with loved ones who have developmental disabilities, this time of year can be particularly meaningful. Chanukah teaches us about resilience, hope, and the triumph of light over adversity — powerful lessons that resonate deeply with the journey you and your family may be on.

Just as the menorah's candles illuminate the darkness one by one, so too do the unique qualities and strengths of individuals with developmental disabilities light up the world around them. Your family's love, support, and unwavering commitment are the flames that guide and inspire, creating a beautiful tapestry of acceptance and understanding. As you gather to celebrate Chanukah, may the glow of the candles remind you of the incredible light within your loved one and the joy they bring to your lives. Each night, as you kindle the candles, reflect on the progress, achievements, and the unique gifts that make your family so extraordinary.

Chanukah is also a time for miracles, both big and small, and may have challenges, but it is filled with moments of courage, growth and love. Embrace these miracles and celebrate the victories, no matter how small, for they are the building blocks of a brighter and more inclusive future. As the glow of the Chanukah candles warms our hearts and homes, it is with deep gratitude and joy that we take a moment to reflect on the light each of you brings to our community. This Festival of Lights serves as a poignant reminder of the strength and resilience that reside within us, individually and collectively.

Tamir is proud to congratulate Mark Palmer on having been awarded the Order of Ottawa for championing people with developmental disability for over 30 years. Under his leadership, Tamir grew from supporting 3 people to a multi-service organization. He was

instrumental in advocating for community inclusion and belonging for people with disabilities. He retired in 2020 and left Tamir with a strong foundation for growth and future development. Through Mark's legacy we will continue to strive for excellence and strengthen Tamir's impact on the community.

To our dedicated staff: Your unwavering commitment to the well-being and growth of those in our care is a beacon of inspiration. Day in and day out, you pour your compassion, expertise, and dedication into making a difference in the lives of individuals we support. Your tireless efforts do not go unnoticed, and the impact you have is immeasurable. Thank you for being the guiding lights in the lives of those who depend on your care and support.

To our cherished partners: Collaboration is the cornerstone of progress, and we are fortunate to have partners who share our vision for a more inclusive and compassionate world. Your shared commitment to creating opportunities and breaking down barriers for individuals with disabilities is a testament to the strength of our collective mission. Thank you for standing with us as we work together to illuminate the path toward a brighter future for all.

To our esteemed Board members: Your guidance and strategic vision are the pillars upon which our organization stands. Your commitment to steering us toward success, combined with your passion for our cause, is the driving force behind our ability to make a meaningful impact. Your leadership is a guiding light that empowers us to navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

As we kindle the Chanukah candles, let us be reminded that each flame represents the potential for positive change. Together, we illuminate the darkness, dispelling ignorance and fostering a community where everyone is valued and included. May the spirit of Chanukah inspire us to continue our shared journey toward a world where the light of acceptance, understanding, and love shines brightly for all.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyous Chanukah filled with warmth, hope, and the blessings of togetherness.

Warmest regards,

Joe Brownstein
Chair Tamir Board

Risa Plotnick
Executive Director

Chag Sameach!

Creating Meaningful Opportunities: Deerfield Day Program

By Estelle Allen, Community Program Supervisor and
Julia McKinnon, Primary Counsellor

The Deerfield Day Program, located in the neighborhood of Algonquin College, has a small group of energetic, hardworking, talented, and friendly individuals who enjoy spending time participating in and enhancing their community. The goal of this program is to create meaningful experiences that include a mix of recreation and employment opportunities.

The Deerfield group volunteers and contributes to Ottawa's Jewish community through their work at the Kosher Food Bank, mail outs for the Synagogues, and regularly preparing baskets/gifts to thank and celebrate the kind acts of others. These individuals have also performed regular acts of kindness such as planting spring flower gardens at Tamir homes and sending out cards. The creative and caring people who attend Deerfield are always excited about new opportunities and experiences.

This group is preparing to begin new vocational experiences at The Home Depot Baseline and Merivale Road Re-Source. Community excursions enjoyed by all include museum and gallery visits, swimming, and a friendly competitive game of mini-putt at Putting Edge.

This group has developed positive connections within the community that allow for authentic, inclusive experiences.



Jessica, David and Ashley, participants, on their first work day at the Re-Source

Falling Into Autumn Programming for Children and Youth

By Sunbul Rai BCBA

It is hard to believe that it is already December, and Tamir's Fall programming has been running for over a month. This fall, we launched four programs — Sunday Fun Day, Adventure Club, Lego Club and a Baking and Pizza Club.



Joshua at the Museum of Nature

Our Sunday Funday and Adventure Club programs allow children to socialize and integrate into various exciting settings throughout the Greater Ottawa Community. Our dedicated integration aides have packed the days with field trips, swimming, crafts, and so much more. Some of the excursions have been to places such as the Nature Museum, Science & Technology Museum, bowling and Colour me Mine.

The children in Lego Club are having a blast designing different structures using Lego while working on their play, leisure and social skills. In our Baking and Pizza Club, our youth are building towards independence while learning various skills and socializing while making pizzas with an authentic Italian chef!

Children, youth, and parents alike have expressed satisfaction with the programming and the hope it will continue. We are thrilled to continue providing these programs during Winter 2024. Stay tuned for information about our Winter Programming by following our Instagram and Facebook pages. In the meantime, check out pictures of children, youth and staff participating in our programming.

A Little Light Shines Bright

By Rabbi Nir Koren, Judaic Inclusion Coordinator

What is the secret of the magic of Hanukkah? Why do we, even after 2200 years, continue to light the menorah candles in the windows of our homes, and keep telling the story of the victory of the few against the weak, the many over the strong?

We light candles for eight days to remember the miracle of the jar of oil. When the Maccabees recovered the Temple from the Greeks, who had defiled all the oils, only a small jar of pure oil was left to light the menorah (the ritual chandelier). The jar was supposed to be enough for one day at most. But the impossible happened, and a miracle occurred: the oil burned for eight days and eight nights, allowing the Jews to make new pure olive oil to light the menorah. When the impossible happens and a miracle occurs in front of our eyes, we get the most important thing that motivates people even in their most difficult moments: hope.

In the same way, the candles symbolize the miracle that occurs as a room full of darkness is filled with light by the lighting of one candle. Anyone who has had the opportunity to stay up all night can remember the uplifting feeling and the loss of fatigue as the sun begins to shine. The light gives us hope and the possibility to

see things in a better way, which leads to understanding. When we understand why, it is much easier for us to deal with difficulties. Of course, the essence of the holiday is not only to lighten up the outside world but also to lighten up our inner world, the chambers of our hearts, or putting a smile on people's faces.

Chanukah candles symbolize hope and joy but also generosity. The light of the candles flickering in the distance does not diminish due to the fact that thousands of people are enjoying it; the heat coming out of the candle — does not change, and one candle can light many thousands of candles without losing anything from its own light and warmth.

Good deeds help, the same as the candles, they influence and spread their light far and wide, and it is sometimes difficult to perceive how one kind word to someone can change his life, the lives of those around him and the world. And like the candles; the more good deeds there are in one place, the more their heat rises and their light increases.

Tamir is a small candle in a thousand-year-old Jewish menorah that brings light even to the darkest places, being there at the right moment for those who need its light and warmth.

Join us for an afternoon of music and activities!
Everyone is welcome!



ChanukOttawa
Join us in sharing the first night of Chanukah together as a community!

REGISTER NOW



SCAN ME

December 7, 2023, 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm.
Kehillat Beth Israel 1400 Coldrey Avenue
If you require an accommodation, please let us know at fdavila@tamir.ca



Tamir Chanukah 2023
Let's Share the Light!

Sunday, December 10th, 2023,
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm.
Kehillat Beth Israel 1400 Coldrey Avenue
Register by Dec 6th - Link attached



REGISTER NOW

If you require an accommodation, please let us know at fdavila@tamir.ca



SCAN ME

Our Staff is Growing!

By Krista Beaupre, Human Resources Manager and
Michaela De Curtis, Human Resources Admin Clerk

Working at Tamir comes with many rewards: meaningful work, establishing relationships with the people we support, and working with other like-minded people in a caring environment. At the same time, the work is challenging and fast-paced. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the staffing levels in the Developmental Services Sector Province-wide, including the staff team at Tamir. The hard work and dedication of all our staff at Tamir is recognized, valued and appreciated. They are the cornerstone of care for the people we support.

Our Human Resources team has been working diligently to fill vacant positions and aligning qualified staff with the programs that match their skillset. We have been utilizing new and innovative recruiting methods while keeping the high level of quality of support required at the forefront. We have worked with local education institutions, relaunched the employee referral program, promoted awareness on social media, and are implementing a new recruitment application. We will continue to find innovative ways to recruit qualified and dedicated staff to continue to provide quality care and support to the people we serve.

In addition to growing our staff team, Tamir is dedicated to recognizing the hard work our employees do each and every day for the people they support. Tamir has implemented an Employee

Recognition committee to brainstorm and collect data to rekindle care for Tamir Staff. Tamir has launched a #GivingTuesday campaign with the goal of \$20,000, through matching donations, to be used towards recognizing our dedicated and compassionate staff team. The community giving has been gracious and it is easy to see how our dedicated staff are appreciated by families and the community at large.

Coming next for our team will be reviewing our current onboarding practices and implementing changes to support our new hires within their new work environment. Stay tuned for new streamlined, efficient practices that encompass our key initiatives identified within our strategic plan.



Overcoming Visual Impairment Through Other Abilities

By Dale Wyman, Lead Supervisor

Merissa Loeb is a bright young lady filled with many skills and talents. With assistance from her support staff, Amanda, Merissa secured a volunteer position at the Ottawa Mission. Although she is visually impaired, Merissa has a keen ability to identify different textures that helps her sort the clothing that is brought in for donations.

When Merissa was asked about what she likes most about her new job, she stated, *"I really like that I can do the whole job using my hands. The colours don't matter, and I don't have to worry about doing it wrong."*

She found going to the mission the first time scary, however liked this opportunity of a new adventure. People are friendly and always greet her with a "hello." If you are shopping at the local mission, be sure to stop in and say hello Merissa.



Merissa in her volunteer position at The Mission

Corinna Persihl, 25 Years of Service: A Profound Vocation and A Way of Life!



By Estelle Allen, Community Program Supervisor and
Chris Frizell, Residential Supervisor

Corinna joined Tamir on January 2, 1998, as a Primary Counsellor at Day Program. She was instrumental during the deinstitutionalization process. During that time, Tamir welcomed a number of new residents from Rideau Regional and other Eastern Ontario institutions.

In the heart of Tamir, Corinna found her purpose. Her journey began as an employee, but soon evolved into a profound vocation and a way of life. Day after day, Corinna touches the lives of countless individuals with developmental disabilities and their families offering kindness, respect, and the unwavering belief that every individual possesses unique strengths and potential.

As a Campus Day Program team member, Corinna prioritized supporting every participant in being active members of the Ottawa community. Individuals supported by Corinna were active members of the JCC. They could be found swimming and/or on a treadmill in the weight room weekly, walking dogs as per their volunteer commitment through the Ottawa Humane Society, delivering meals to shut-in community members for JFS' Kosher Meals on Wheels program, enjoying leisurely days on the Rideau River with the Sport Fishing group as well as basking in the sun at Rideau River Provincial Park. Corinna and her peers remained focused on ensuring that those attending

the day program were offered every new experience imaginable throughout the day.

In 2011, Corinna joined the 12 Van Lang residential team in an overnight position. Corinna's current supervisor, Chris Frizell, has witnessed firsthand the impact she has made on the team around her and on the individuals that live at the home. She is passionate about the support she provides, and exemplifies Tamir's highest standard of care and compassion for the people she support. Bravo!!

Twenty-five years is not just a celebration of commitment to an organization but also a testament to the commitment to a cause—the cause of enabling those supported by Tamir to lead lives filled with meaning and purpose. The impact of Corinna's dedication can be witnessed in the smiles and the progress of those she has supported over the years. As we celebrate Corinna's remarkable journey, we acknowledge her years of service and express our gratitude for the love, care, and passion she has brought to Tamir.

Thank you and congratulations, Corinna, for 25 years of love and commitment and for making a real difference in the lives of those you've touched!

Building a Strong Foundation for Growth!

By Christa Janes, Director of Support Services

As many of you would know, Tamir's strategic plan was born, in part, through much consultation across our community. What we heard then, and what we continue to hear today, is that families and individuals with disabilities want to live a life with just the right amount of support in a place that is their home. As we continue to build our foundation for growth we are moving forward with this commitment in mind, a commitment to provide clinically sound services that support each participant to live their best life. This commitment aligns closely with the ministry's introduction of Journey to Belonging and person-centered planning which is at the core of all we do.

As a next step towards fulfilling our commitment, we are growing our supervisor team. Please join me in welcoming Marcel Walsh. He is a seasoned leader with decades of experience in the field of disabilities with a focus on supporting independent living in residential services. His area of expertise will contribute to the growth of housing options in residential services.

Renovations and the modernization of homes continue. Our priority is always focused on safety and security. To that end, each Tamir home will have a generator that supports the running of

the home in its entirety. We are auditing each home and will look at what is needed for quality of services as it impacts the people who call it home. Broadview is done!! It is ready for winter with a heated ramp and elevator out front and accessible deck in the back, plus plus plus. As you enter the home, it is cozy, welcoming and equipped with a beautiful Arjo tub room. For those who do not know what an Arjo tub is, it is best described as an accessible hot tub built for one. This one has all the bells and whistles!!! The renovations for the apartment at Broadview are finished, and our new tenant is settling in and making the apartment her own.

We look forward to formally introducing her to you in our spring Newsletter!

The Arjo tub has its own spa room!



Exciting News, Thanks to YOU!

We are thrilled to announce that with the help of our matching sponsors Lacasse Building Solutions, family members, and all those who donated to our first-time campaign in GivingTuesday, we not only doubled all donations but also surpassed our goal with an impressive sum of **\$42,000!** We couldn't have done it without your generous support.

Through this initiative of RekindleCare for Tamir, we aim to support the commitment, dedication, and well-being of Tamir staff who work tirelessly to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities and autism. Donations made through the GivingTuesday campaign will help provide essential resources and support for Tamir staff, such as **wellness resources, team building, and development opportunities, as well as recognition and appreciation initiatives.**

By contributing to the RekindleCare initiative, you have played a significant role in ensuring that Tamir staff receive the necessary support to continue providing exceptional care to individuals with developmental disabilities and autism. Let us work together to make a positive impact on the lives of those in our community.



Join Us In Making A Difference

We're putting together a dedicated team for our upcoming fundraising and development 2024!

Our fundraising committee plays a vital role in raising funds that directly support our mission of *supporting people with Developmental Disabilities and people with Autism to live their best life by promoting individuality, independence, dignity, and community inclusion while embracing Jewish culture and values.*

Why should you get involved? Here are a few reasons:

1. Make a tangible difference: Your involvement would directly contribute to supporting the lives of participants.
2. Expand your network: By joining our committee, you'll have the opportunity to connect with like-minded people and industry experts who are equally passionate about making a positive impact.
3. Utilize your skills and experience: Your unique perspective and expertise would be invaluable in shaping our fundraising strategy and ensuring its success.
4. Participating in exciting events like Stepping Out in Style 3.0 coming up in 2024!

If you're interested in joining our Fundraising Committee or have any questions, please contact Francesca Davila at fdavila@tamir.ca. We would be more than happy to provide further details and discuss how your involvement can create a lasting impact.

Thank you for considering this invitation to make a difference in our community!

— Francesca



Rachael: Spreading Joy and Creativity

By Francesca Davila, Manager of Fundraising, Events and Development and Terri Murphy, Rachael's Mom

Since moving into her apartment earlier this year, Rachael with her vibrant and cheerful personality has become a beloved member of the Tamir family. She has a bright smile and warm attitude and never fails to remember the names of people she meets. Her genuine friendly and kind nature has made a lasting impression on all who have had the pleasure of getting to know her.

Not only does Rachel bring joy to all those around her, through her uplifting personality, she also channels her creative spirit into her artwork. Drawing is a passion that allows her to express her happiness and imagination. From sketching to painting, Rachel creates vibrant pieces that radiate with her own unique personality

and style. Her artwork serves as a reflection of her joyful spirit and brings smiles to the faces of those who have the privilege of witnessing her talent.

Rachael has created inspiring Tribute cards for Tamir. We invite you to send these cards to your friends and families in support of our many programs and services.

Please contact Francesca Davila at fdavila@tamir.ca or 613-725-3519 ext. 115 for further information.



Rachael with her mom Terri Murphy



Light a candle that will never go out.

How will you assure Jewish tomorrows?

To create your Jewish legacy contact:

Francesca Davila fdavila@tamir.ca

or call **613-725-3519 ext 115**



On the occasion of the Life & Legacy Donors 3rd year anniversary, we would like to express our sincere gratitude on behalf of everyone at Tamir for your unwavering dedication and support. Your generosity continues to inspire us as we strive to create a brighter future for those we serve at Tamir.

Let's Create Long Lasting Support!

By Francesca Davila, Manager of Fundraising, Events and Development

As I write about my experience as a Fundraising, Events, and Development Manager at Tamir, I cannot help but feel inspired. My time at Tamir has been a journey filled with excitement, challenges and learnings, but more than anything, it has been immensely satisfying. From working towards disability inclusion to witnessing Tamir's impact on people's lives, my role has shaped me as a professional and as a person. I am incredibly passionate about making a positive impact on the world and promoting equal opportunities for all participants to fulfill their potential. Additionally, I strongly believe in the growth and development of our organization within Ottawa and the greater Ottawa community.

Let me share a brief anecdote about my personal experiences at Tamir. During my first few weeks, I had the pleasure of collaborating with an amazing colleague and friend Tuyen Vo. Every Monday, she highlights the work I do at Tamir. Tuyen Vo not only works in my department but also, participated in a previous fashion show.



She exemplifies the ability to overcome physical obstacles and achieve her full potential.

Disability inclusion is about fostering an environment where everyone feels welcome, comfortable, and acknowledged for their unique contributions. Rather than merely accepting individuals with disabilities, it is important to embrace and appreciate

Tuyen at Fashion Show

their differences. In the workplace, individuals with disabilities, just like those without disabilities, desire recognition for their skills and accomplishments.

Tuyen Vo, who is my age, has become a close friend due to our shared sense of humor and understanding. People like Tuyen inspire us to support Tamir and create more opportunities for individuals with disabilities and autism to thrive.



Tuyen and Francesca

Let's support Tamir and work towards creating a more inclusive world where everyone feels valued and can thrive. Together, let's continue to celebrate the diverse abilities of individuals like Tuyen and empower them to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. As we approach the end of 2023, I invite you to consider setting up monthly donations that will enable us to provide even more opportunities for participants at Tamir. Let's not just offer them a place to belong but help them thrive!

Setting up monthly donations is a simple and convenient way to show your long-term commitment to Tamir's mission. By committing to a regular contribution, you provide Tamir with a stable source of funding, allowing them to plan and implement impactful programs and initiatives effectively.

Together, let's make a lasting difference and create a more inclusive future for all.

TAMIR 2024 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN



YES, I would like to support Tamir today! Please accept my gift of...

- ✓ \$54 supports Community Cultural Activities
- ✓ \$72 supports a community Music Class or Art Class
- ✓ \$180 supports Children and Youth Programs
- ✓ \$540 helps subsidize Professional Services

ONE TIME: \$54 \$72 \$180 \$540 Other: _____

MONTHLY: \$36 \$108 \$180 \$360 Other: _____

- I have enclosed a **cheque** payable to **Tamir Foundation**.
- Please charge this gift to my **credit card** using the information provided. VISA MasterCard

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| CREDIT CARD # | EXPIRY DATE |
| NAME ON CARD | SIGNATURE |
| TELEPHONE | EMAIL |
| ADDRESS | |

PLEASE VISIT: tamir.ca/donate-now

Tax receipts are issued for donations of \$18 and over. Charitable No: #10806 3686 RR0001