

## DREAMING BIG



2023-2024 Annual Report

#### A MESSAGE FROM

#### THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





Once again we are pleased to report that Tamir has made great strides towards achieving the ambitious vision outlined in our Strategic Plan.

We have continued to expand our programs, offering more services to more people through day programs as well as residential programs, and continuing to develop our services for neurodivergent children and youth. In all we service a multicultural group of over 178 service users, a substantial increase over the numbers in 2022. Our Jewish life programs have continued for those who want to lead a Jewish life and for those who enjoy participating in them. We have renovated and upgraded many of our residences and added accommodation in some locations. We have continued to adapt our organization structure to meet the demands of today and have introduced new electronic systems to upgrade our efficiency and provide better protection from cyber-attacks. Finally, we have worked closely with our leadership team to design and deliver training programs across the organization, with an emphasis on Tamir's values, professionalism and performance measurement. More details appear below in this Report.

To promote Tamir and to further our mission, we continue to play an active role in our community through our many partnerships and through our executive director who, for example, chairs the ODSN Regional Affordable Housing Committee and is the co-chair of the Ontario Faith and Cultural Inclusion Network. Regarding governance, your Board of Directors has initiated a program of self-evaluation to ensure it is functioning as well as possible and is creating a first formalized Board development plan

for the coming year. At the same time, we have been meticulous in responding to the Risk Assessment program of the MCCSS where, we are pleased to say, Tamir is scoring well. We have also been assessing the impact of the newly applied Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010 (ONCA), and are taking the opportunity to refresh our Board policies and to bring our onboarding for Board members up to date. You will also find that our name "Tamir" has been officially registered as a name of our organization, and officially the "Tamir Foundation", can be used for fundraising and donations.

We are right now beginning the pre-construction phase of the new Tamir Centre and hope to start site preparation next year. These state-of-the-art buildings will ensure that people with developmental disabilities are supported to fully participate in our community and live fulfilling lives, itself a primary objective of the Ministry's long-term vision "Journey to Belonging". It will be an inclusive, affordable housing build that is multi-generational and responds to the needs of the most vulnerable in the community.

We would both like to again extend our thanks and gratitude to the whole Tamir community, our frontline staff, our expert leadership team, our volunteers, the families of our participants, and our friends and partners in the community. This includes our volunteer Board of Directors for their hard work throughout the year and their unwavering support of Tamir. We acknowledge, with thanks, the generous gifts to the Tamir foundation from our many donors, and both cash and legacy gifts, including gifts through the Life and Legacy program. Your donations, both large and small, represent an essential contribution to what we can do and enable us to offer so much more to our participants and their families. It is the passionate dedication of our friends and supporters that enables us to go the extra mile to enrich the lives of all of our participants.

loe Brownstein **Board Chair** 

**Risa Plotnick Executive Director** 

#### **IMPLEMENTING OUR** STRATEGIC PLAN

Tamir's Strategic Plan was officially adopted in 2022. After a phase of familiarization and development, we are now two years in and looking forward to adding new achievements in the coming year. Our work to date has been focused and deliberate, with a view to increasing our capacity to manage both our current responsibilities and the growth planned to meet our mission.

This year there has been a strong emphasis on developing the skills of our leadership team at Tamir, while paying close attention to developing Tamir's systems and procedures and adjusting the organization as things progress. We have been moving ahead across the board on all five of our strategic pillars, making "living our values" a reality across the organization, and becoming better and better at measuring our progress against key performance indicators.

#### **MISSION**

Tamir supports 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.

#### **VISION**

A society in which people with Developmental Disabilities and people with Autism live the life they choose as full and valued members of the community.

#### **MANDATES**

Tamir has a dual mandate. The Government of Ontario mandates Tamir to provide multicultural support for people with a developmental disability and people with autism. Tamir also holds a cultural specific mandate recognized by the government for people of the Jewish faith to live a Jewish life, spiritually and through the active practice of Jewish values. The Jewish Federation of Ottawa and Jewish community partners supports Tamir to provide a Jewish cultural environment and Jewish programming for all demographics.

#### **VALUES**



**People First** 



**Community** 



A Jewish Community Open to All



**Advocacy and Accessibility** 



Health, Safety, and Prevention



**Valuing Our Employees, Volunteers** and Partners



**Excellence in Everything We Do** 

#### STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Programs and services
- Infrastructure
- **Strategic partnerships**
- Resourcing
- **Professionalism**

#### **OUR VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND MANDATES**

We have continued to focus on our purpose. Our vision, mission, values and mandates permeate in everything we do, our Tamir values are the cornerstone of our philosophy and all our programs, and we periodically review our progress to ensure that our actions match our words. We continue to provide care for people of every faith and culture while providing a Jewish environment for our Jewish families.

An important initiative this past year, which continues as we write, is firming up a structure to ensure the inclusion and participation of the family members of our residents and program participants, including our refreshed Family Engagement Committee.

"Many families don't have access to regular care such as this and this is more than just babysitting, my children are actively engaged and actively doing something."

**Emma McWatty** Parent of 2 children who attend our Children and **Youth Sunday Funday Programs** 

"I am with a worker called Landon and when we go out to places and my brother and I have a disagreement instead of Landon trying to solve the problem for us he helps my little brother and I work together to solve our problems."

Hailey 11 yrs. participant in Adventure Club



Board members at Staff Appreciation.

(L to R) Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn, Liisa Vexler, Shira Brass, Joe Silverman, Harvey Goldberg, Ira Abrams, Gary Viner, Barbara Grinfeld. Missing: Joe Brownstein, Jacob Polowin, Ira Marcovitch, and Rebecca Rosenstock

#### **BUILDING ON OUR** STRATEGIC PILLARS

The tangible goals of our Strategic Plan are expressed in five Strategic Pillars that align the major thrusts that Tamir is following to achieve its vision and mission. Together our Pillars ensure that our operations are orchestrated to provide maximum impact.



#### **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Deliver best practice programs and services to meet the needs of our communities, with special reference to responding to gaps in service as these arise.

First among the five pillars is our focus on maintaining and improving our existing programs while expanding into new service areas to meet our community's needs. Over the past year we have made significant strides in enhancing our residential services and expanding our community support programs.

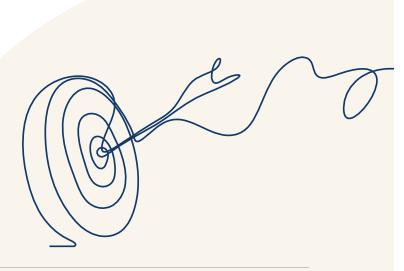
We welcomed three new individuals into our residential services, where we've redesigned our homes to include apartments that prioritize person-centered care and promote autonomy for independent living. Our adult respite program has also seen expansion, now offering services at an additional location to accommodate six more individuals. This expansion aims to provide essential respite to families and caregivers while offering recreational and residential support services to their loved ones.

Additionally, we successfully transitioned a complex care individual who had spent many years in hospital care into our community. With the unwavering support of our dedicated leadership team, the individual's family, our partners, and the Ministry, they are flourishing in their new environment.

Tamir has recently expanded its Keshet services for children and youth to encompass familyfocused respite and after-school programs, with a strong emphasis

on vocational assistance and paid supported employment opportunities. Initial feedback from both participants and their families underscores a notable satisfaction with these customized services.

In addition to enhancing our youth programs, Tamir has launched a new family engagement nurturing aimed at stronger relationships with our participant families. Simultaneously, we've reintroduced a variety of social events designed to foster community interaction and support. These endeavors underscore our steadfast commitment to holistic care, seamless community integration, and ongoing enhancements to meet the diverse needs of those we serve.



Currently, Tamir proudly supports a total of 178 individuals across all programs, with 70 participants benefitting from our comprehensive residential services, including group homes and semi-independent living arrangements for 55 individuals. Our network of partnerships has expanded significantly by over 20, enhancing our capacity to deliver inclusive support and resources to our community. These achievements exemplify our dedication to enriching lives and promoting independence among our participants and their families.

"Adam enjoyed his time. The staff were able to break through and understand Adam.

"Adam is mostly nonverbal due to selective mutism and can sometimes be difficult to bond with. The staff broke the barrier, and we appreciated this as this was Adam's first visit at Broadview."

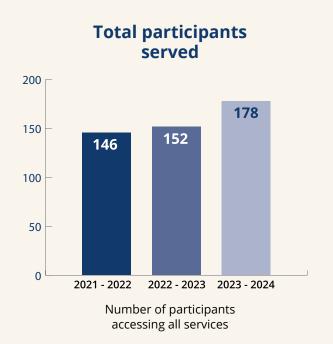
#### - Respite parent

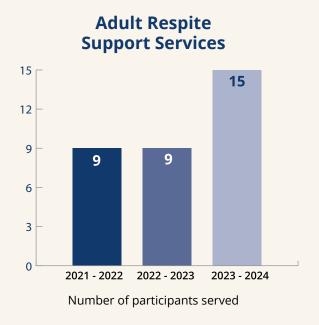
David, who moved into a newly renovated apartment, shared; "I like my apartment – it gives me the freedom to come and go as I want. I like living on my own it's been great."

Tamir's Adult Community Services continue to play a vital role in supporting individuals through a range of tailored programs aimed at fostering independence and community engagement. Currently, we provide community support services to 47 participants, ensuring personalized care that meets their specific needs and enhances their quality of life. Our vocational and paid employment initiatives have positively impacted 19 individuals, facilitating their integration into the workforce and promoting economic independence. Additionally, recreation program serves 29 participants, offering enriching activities that promote socialization and personal growth. We have established partnerships with 10 workplaces, further enhancing opportunities for participants to gain valuable work experience and skills. These efforts underscore our commitment to empowering adults with diverse abilities, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

"It makes me happy beyond words to see my boy fulfilled in his adult life, and his home is a huge part of that. There were many years I was afraid it would not happen."

- Miles (Father of David, Hare Resident)





"Morale has been home since Covid with no program to attend. Since starting Tamir in December 2023 she is thriving; she is a happy girl! She eats and sleeps well. We are very happy with the program. Thank you to everyone working with Morale."

-Ron (father of Morale, Donald Street Recreation Program)

"The recent move to Deerfield to work at the Thrift store and get out into the community with Julia and his peers has taken Jim's enjoyment and fulfillment of life to a whole new level. He is on cloud 9 being able to live his values of being of service and connecting with people. I've come to believe that there is no limit to what lim can do."

-Marian (sister of Jim, Deerfield Vocational **Program and Killeen Resident)** 

Tamir's Keshet Children and Youth Services are dedicated to providing comprehensive support and opportunities for growth to young individuals with diverse abilities. Currently, we serve 43 children and youth through our specialized programs, which include family-focused respite, after-school activities, and vocational assistance. We are pleased to report that three youth have successfully secured paid work placements, marking a significant achievement in their journey towards independence and career readiness. These initiatives are designed not only to meet immediate needs but also to foster long-term skills development and community integration. At Tamir, we remain committed to empowering children and youth with the tools and support they need to thrive and achieve their full potential.

"Our children have been able to access the community in a new and positive way. They have been able to engage in many community-based activities they otherwise would not have had access to."

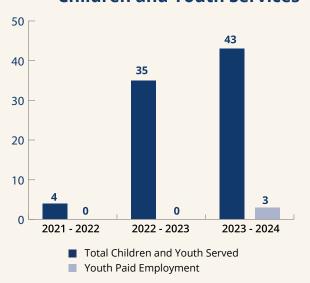
- Mother of 2 children ages 9 and 11

"This program has changed our lives in a very significant way. As a family we have struggled with caregiver burnout for some time, having access to this program has assisted heavily in the reduction of caregiver burnout. As parents we have been able to finish tasks we have struggled to complete for some time."

- Parent of child in Adventure program

#### **Adult Community Services** 50 41 40 30 19 20 10 2021 - 2022 2022 - 2023 2023 - 2024 ■ Total Participants Served Vocational and Paid Employment **Recreation Programs** ■ Workplace Partnerships

#### **Keshet community Connections Children and Youth Services**





#### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

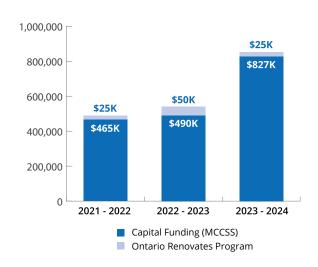
Develop and maintain a state-of-the-art infrastructure for Tamir, including the built environment needed to ensure the smooth delivery of our programs and services.

#### **Residential Homes**

Ensuring our buildings are up-to-date and suitably adapted is crucial to fulfilling our mission effectively, especially in providing optimal environments for our residential participants. This year, we are pleased to have upgraded four of our homes and two apartments, enhancing their functionality and comfort.

In several instances, we have expanded these residences to better accommodate our residents' needs. Notably, we introduced the Supported Independent (SIL) Lounge, a vibrant communal area designed to serve as a social and recreational center for SIL residents. This space supports residents in pursuing their individual interests and fostering independence, reflecting our commitment to continuously improving our facilities to better serve our community.

#### **Infrastructure Funding**





Broadview: front heated ramp and elevator



Basement apartment renovated in group home



Broadview: Back deck and ramp



All the bells and whistles Arjo tub spa room

#### **Technology Systems**

This past year we have substantially improved our IT systems. Tamir engaged 'OnPoint' to recommend improvements to our information technology infrastructure and we have been working to complete upgrades to all our programs to enhance security practices and internet connectivity. To help support this we secured a \$20,000 grant from the Ontario Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant program of the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

Tamir also worked with KnowBe4, an online learning management system that has been rolled out to all management and administration staff. These learning opportunities increase staff knowledge on topics such as security awareness, identifying phishing emails, cell phone and device use, and Wi-Fi use. In the coming months this training will be expanded to include front line staff and will focus on increasing awareness of cybersecurity threats.

The Finance, Scheduling, and Human Resources teams worked to transition payroll from the Sage 50 system to ComVida, with the first live payroll taking place in April. ComVida payroll provides a more streamlined process for payroll as it functions in conjunction with our scheduling and HRIS system and has minimized payroll errors. In addition to updating the system to prepare for this change, staff participated in approximately 10 hours of training delivered by ComVida to ensure a smooth transition to the new system. In addition, the Sage 50 system was upgraded to Sage 300 replacing manual applications with automated technology.

An additional platform acquired by Tamirthis past year is Surge Learning, an educational system geared to the healthcare and developmental services sectors. It provides a wide range of course offerings specific to the needs of our participants and employees. The system can eliminate many manual processes currently being done in HR. Tamir has also purchased the Policy Professional function that facilitates a streamlined approach to policy revision and approval, in line with MCCSS guidelines.

"Just by switching to our new ComVida system, we have reduced resources needed for payroll from 80-hours bi-weekly to 12, enabling us to devote resources to other priority areas."

- Krista Beaupre, Director of Human Resources and Administration



#### The New Tamir Centre

We are thrilled to introduce the development of The Tamir Centre, a purpose-built complex aimed at providing supportive and affordable housing solutions for both the Jewish and broader Ottawa communities. This initiative aligns closely with the City of Ottawa's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan (2020-2030), focusing on three primary goals.

Firstly, The Tamir Centre will contribute to the objective that everyone deserves a roof over their head by offering 72 affordable housing units, accommodating up to 102 individuals and families in need.

Secondly, the Centre will ensure that people receive the support they need by integrating 24/7 support services directly within the building, fostering a safe and inclusive environment.

Lastly, through collaborative efforts with the City of Ottawa and the Developmental Service Sector, we aim to address housing challenges by providing essential support to vulnerable individuals on the social registry and the ODSP waiting list. The Tamir Centre represents our commitment to enhancing community well-being and inclusivity through innovative housing solutions and comprehensive support services.



Support from Mayor Sutcliffe for the Tamir Centre
Past and Present Board members from The Jewish
Federation of Ottawa and Tamir Staff. Left to right: Jacob
Polowin, Elizabeth Tyrie, Ian Sherman Risa Plotnick, Mayor
Sutcliffe, Karen Palayew, Michael Polowin, Sarah Beutel,
and Rena Garshowitz. Missing: Joe Brownstein







DRAFT OF NEW TAMIR CENTRE





#### **Strategic Partnerships**

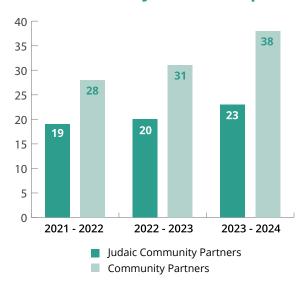
Promote and maintain a wide range of partnerships to extend the scope of Tamir's offerings and better serve and advocate on behalf of our communities.

Our Strategic Plan was put together with the input of over 35 partners, and this has guaranteed its continuing relevance. We work closely with a wide range of partners, including organizations such as Thrive Thrift Store, Toys R Us, ReSource Thrift Store and A Dashing Pinch.

We have over 20 Jewish partner organizations, including Jewish Family Services Kosher Meals on Wheels and MADA Montreal and MADA Ottawa and over 35 community partnerships. We'd like to give a particular mention to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ontario, the City of Ottawa, and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, as key supporting partners.

Partnerships like these enable us to reach more people with more services, all of which contributes to the achievement of our mission and enables our participants to each live their best life.

#### **Judaic** and **Community Partnership**





Celebrating Maaya Ziv on her Governor General Innovation award for her Access Now App. Left to right: Bryan Keshen, CEO Reena, Maaya Ziv, Founder Access Now App, Risa Plotnick, Executive Director Tamir



Jessica, David and Ashley working hard at the ReSource Thrift Store.



#### Resourcing

Attract and retain the financial and human resources that Tamir needs to ensure its stable growth and to meet its mission.

This pillar underscores the critical importance of managing our resources effectively to ensure the ongoing success and expansion of our organization. Our ability to maintain current programs and explore new service areas hinges on our management of both financial and human resources.

Financially, we maintain close collaboration with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) to align with their priorities and ours, while actively pursuing grants from various agencies and foundations. These efforts complement the generous contributions from our Tamir Foundation and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, which significantly bolster our operational funding. This year, our total operational funding reached \$9,976,122, reflecting an increase from the previous year's \$8,985,000.

In terms of capital improvements, we have invested over \$800,000 to enhance our facilities, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of our participants and community. Moreover, through diligent efforts in grant applications and fundraising, we have secured over \$150,000 in grants and donations since 2021, totaling more than \$300,000 in additional resources.

These financial strategies underscore our commitment to sustainable growth and capacity building, enabling us to continue providing high-quality services and advancing our mission effectively.

### **Human Resources and Change Management**

Our investment in our people continues. As before, we have been investing heavily in training. Throughout last year, in addition to technical training for all levels of the organization, we placed a particular emphasis on training and development for our leadership team. This generally takes place monthly and has concentrated on helping our leaders run their own training or sessions with their teams. Topics have included the linkages between day-to-day operations and the Strategic Plan, goal setting, accountability, professionalism, team building, and the application of Tamir's corporate values. The sessions end with an evaluation of the training quality, and this input is used to improve future sessions.

A particular focus is now being placed on the setting of measurable objectives for all operational initiatives and the tracking of key performance indicators: "if you're not measuring, it's just practice". We continue to make strategic hires and to adjust our organization structure and processes as our needs develop. The dedication, skills and engagement of our people right across the organization are critical to the success of Tamir.



#### **Professionalism**

Ensure that Tamir organizes and operates to evidence-based exemplary standards and that appropriate governance structures are maintained.

Professionalism speaks to the quality of how we manage and the way that we interact with one another. This has been a particular focus during the past year and has included, for example, the creation of a training kit on Professionalism for use by our leaders across the organization.

This pillar extends to the overall governance of the organization which has focused this past year on the ongoing updating and tracking of all our operational plans, the identification, researching and reporting of key performance indicators: our ability to present performancetracking data is improving by the month. Our Board of Directors is also looking to ensure

that appropriate governance structures are maintained and has taken a number of measures to ensure that they do everything possible to discharge their oversight responsibilities and to work well together as a team.

Another recent feature of our professional governance relates to the newly published MCCSS Risk Management requirements. These are intended to ensure that ministry transfer payment receiving agencies are being managed to appropriate professional standards, and our preliminary assessment is that Tamir's practices are certainly acceptable and in some cases exemplary.

#### IN CONCLUSION

Tamir is on a journey to ensure that, year-by-year, its strategic plan becomes a reality. This last year has been marked by overall progress thanks to the dedication and participation of the whole staff and volunteer community.

Not surprisingly some things did not go as planned, but the introduction over the past couple of years of new or refreshed policies and procedures has enabled us to better identify problems and understand appropriate solutions. Change continues across the organization as we prepare for the upcoming challenge of building and operating the new Tamir Centre as well as continuing the growth in focus of our programs and services.

We practice the professionalism that we preach and work hard to create supportive and loving environments for those we serve. Our organization continues to develop rapidly, and we expect the pace of change to continue in the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

## DEPARTMENT OF SUPPORT SERVICES

#### By Christa Janes, Director of Support Services

As we continued to operationalize our strategic plan throughout 2023 and early 2024, we introduced a number of initiatives that align with our values. In our residential programs we updated our Individual service plans known as our Personal Outcome Plan in process and procedure to ensure the person supported is both celebrated, known and has tangible goals we can support in the coming year. We increased person-centered outings leveraging the individual's Passport Funds. These outings were planned with the unique interests and wishes of the person supported in mind. As we move into this new fiscal year, you can expect to hear more about person-centered outings and activities - we have some big plans in store.

A system of monitoring the physical, emotional, and social needs of the people we support was rolled out this year. Its objective is to know the person's existing health and well-being and to monitor if it is maintained and improved where possible. It also helps us understand and respond to the changing needs of the person. These checks are completed 3 times a week by frontline staff on a 24-hour rotation and analyzed by the supervisor monthly. These checks have been completed for 100% of the individuals we support in residential services, and they are monitored closely by our Manager of Operations. It takes a strong team to deliver quality services and we have been working together in all positions to ensure that gaps in communication and support are minimized as much as possible.

In our community participation support programs (formerly known as day programs), we have expanded our vocational employment services and are re-invigorating our recreation and leisure programs. This past year we supported 19 individuals in meaningful employment and volunteer work across the city. As I have visited many of these work sites, I am always touched not only by the pride I see on the faces of the supported person, but also in the natural connections made with the other employees and volunteers. True inclusion! Our recreation and leisure program served 28 individuals this past year in our Donald Street location and other smaller programs in the city. These programs are each unique as we continue to introduce new partners and enhanced activities based on the individuals within the program.



Danny taking a break at the park

The needs in the community continue to exceed our community's capacity. We are told that currently there are over 3000 individuals waiting for residential support in the Ottawa area. As part of our MCCSS requirement we offered services to four new people, all priority individuals from the ministry wait list. I am proud of us as an agency for responding to the community needs and moving in these individuals, ensuring it is done with excellence and in a people-centered manner.

We have further addressed the community needs by increasing our respite capacity. Many of the individuals waiting for residential support are living in family homes with caregivers in desperate need of a break. In November 2023, we opened an additional respite bed at our Broadview location. The addition of this respite bed has resulted in respite for 7 individuals and their families, and we will be adding one more individual in the coming weeks. These families will be able to access respite throughout the year which will result in scheduled breaks for families and caregivers. The respite bed is in a fully accessible home with 24-7 staffing, allowing us to provide respite to individuals with more complex profiles. The team has risen to the occasion, and successfully introduced 7 individuals all with great success since November.



Jay our honorary in-house maintenance staff assists Carmelo our Property Management Coordinator



Family BBQ hosted by the Broadview home



Boating at Long Island Locks

"Our daughter recently stayed at Broadview for the first time, after a respite gap of a few years owing both to the pandemic and to her previous agency suspending its respite services. We were a bit concerned that she would have difficulty with the transition, but she was immediately made to feel welcome by the staff and residents and settled right in. Our daughter had a great stay from which we all benefitted, and she's keen to visit again."

#### -Respite Parent

This year has been a full year, and one we are proud to share and celebrate. As we continue to operationalize the Strategic plan and bring to fruition some of our work in progress, we look forward to sharing more throughout the year. Stay Tuned!

## COMMUNITY DAY SERVICES

#### By Estelle Allen, Community Participation Program Supervisor

#### **Vocational Programs**

We are pleased to share that individuals from the Vocational Training and Employment Program attended a Volunteer Appreciation Event in recognition of the time they donated in support of Salvation Army, Bethany Hope Center and young parent families. Bethany Hope has had a long standing partnership with Passages, our community volunteer/work program. Leading up to their monthly Monday volunteer day Jody Saikali, participant, often shares how much she looks forward to seeing the women at Bethany Hope. The group of ladies are always greeted with positivity and gratitude when they arrive at their volunteer job. One of this group's preferred tasks is the assembly of craft kits for young parents to complete with their children at home.

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Ganon preschool teachers presenting Vicky with a thank you card for all her hard work.

As a Dashing Pinch employee, Vicky Ferkin, is responsible for delivering the lunches to the children at the Ganon Preschool on Wednesday and Friday. The children eagerly await her arrival and greet her by name when she arrives. Vicky also participates in weekly Shabbat Service alongside the Ganon Preschool children. As an act of appreciation, a group of children along with their teachers presented Vicky with handmade and signed Thank You card while at work. Vicky was touched by this gesture.

This year individuals from Tamir's vocational program filled several new placements. One of these placements was at ReSource Thrift Store where they work alongside other community volunteers and are tasked with a number of duties. They have become well acquainted with their colleagues who they consider as their friends. Diane, the ReSource Coordinator, makes it a habit to put aside items that she knows this group would enjoy. The kindness she showed was returned when everyone made her a wonderful card for her birthday.



Guess who I am? ...Batman with super powers!

#### **Daytime Judaic Programming** and Partnerships

Tamir individuals are always in demand and are regularly called upon to assist with packaging for Kehillat Beth Israel Kosher Food Bank, Meals on wheels deliveries to shut in community members, Yom Kippur, Purim and Passover basket assembling at Machzikei Hadas for Ten Yad. This group loves to be of service to their community!

Judaic festivities and activities at programs included an apple picking excursion for Rosh Hashana and a ceremony of Tashlich, crafts, music and delights for Succot, Hanukkah and Tu Bishvat.



Picking apples



Merissa and Michael picking apples



#### **Recreational Programming**

We continue to have multiple recreational sites that tailor their day to the participants they support. Our days are a combination of onsite activities and excursions. At our retirement program the participants enjoy weekly spa days with foot baths, nail care and more. Our Donald Street program keeps busy with bowling, exercising in the park or gym, baking and crafting. All our participants enjoy singing along to old and new tunes presented by music leaders, Andrew from 'I Love Music' as well as Becky Jarvis.

Omega Park was a hit this year as the animals popped out to greet everyone. In preparation for these park visits participants purchased carrots that welcomed the animals closer to the vehicles. Following the drive through the park, groups enjoyed a picnic lunch before taking a scenic drive back to Ottawa. Many individuals enjoyed a stroll through the Tulips during the ever so popular Ottawa Tulip Festivals. Visits to local museums were a hit, especially the Science and Technology Museum...who doesn't appreciate the challenge of walking through the crooked kitchen?! Recreation groups have



Enjoying the Autumn colors

been making a day of their visits to Long Island Locks for many years thanks to the wonderful volunteers at Friends for Sport Fishing. Sailing on pontoon boats, feasting on a BBQ lunch and relaxing on a manicured lawn is the usual agenda for the day. For several individuals, fun times were had gardening at home, prepping scrumptious meals and baked goods for friends and enjoying a swing at local parks and creating for special occasions such as Mother's Day.

## RESIDENTIAL SERVICES \_\_\_

#### By Dale Wyman, Operations Manager

Residential programs have consistently strived to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for all residents. Our focus continues to be on delivering high quality care through various personalized services, programs, and community engagement activities.

Our residents took part in many exciting community outings designed to foster social interaction, community involvement and personal enjoyment. Notable excursions included trips to local museums, parks, libraries, gyms, etc.

Vacation trips were carefully planned to offer both relaxation and adventure, with visits to nearby cities and natural attractions. Some ventured to Montreal to see the Biodome, cottages where they were able to enjoy nature, and some ventured even further to Memphis, Nashville, Cuba, etc.

In-home activities continue to cater to diverse interests and needs of our residents. These include arts and crafts, music, fitness, and gardening projects. Technology driven activities also saw increased popularity with digital games and online activities.

We have celebrated numerous special occasions throughout the year, including birthdays, holidays and cultural events. Programs continue to have summer barbecues with families that are organized with themed activities and delicious meals creating a festive and inclusive atmosphere.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff, families, and community partners for their unwavering support and contributions. We look forward to building on our successes and embracing new opportunities in the coming year.



Saul the star of the show!



Ben throwing a strike.



Jodi cheering Ben on.

#### **KESHET COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS**

By Sunbul Rai, M.Sc, BCBA, Clinical Supervisor Rebecca Thompson, Lead Integration Aid **Estelle Allen, Administrative Supervisor** 

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share the progress and achievements of our Children and Youth department at Tamir. Through dedicated efforts, collaboration, and a commitment to inclusivity, we were able to launch a summer camp to provide children with an enriching and joyful camp experience. Our camp aimed to break down barriers, foster inclusivity, and create unforgettable memories for every participant. Our goal was to ensure every camper felt valued, supported, and empowered. From nature walks to arts and crafts, museums, music, and swimming, our camp offered a diverse range of activities tailored to cater to the interests and needs of a variety of children and youth. Through these activities, campers had opportunities to explore, learn, and grow in a supportive and encouraging environment. In total, we had 16 children and youth participate in our camp. Additionally, we supported 13 children and youth by providing integration aides to help support them in a variety of local summer camps.

We also continued to run therapeutic and respite programming for children and youth. Our most popular programs were our Sunday Funday and Adventure Club programs which services children aged 7-15. We ran several after school programs including Lego Club, Art Guild and Baking & Pizza Club and serviced 14 participants in these programs. In all we have serviced over 40 children this year!

From collaborative group activities to field trips and social skills training, children and youth have developed confidence, empathy, and resilience, formed meaningful friendships and built a sense of belonging within the community. Furthermore, Tamir hired and trained a group of transitional youth who helped support our Children and Youth Department.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to advancing our goals of inclusion and empowerment. We will continue to innovate, collaborate, and adapt our programs to meet the evolving needs of children and youth with developmental disabilities and autism as well as their families. Some of our goals include revamping our Adventure Club Program, developing a facilitated play after school program, building our resource lending library and establishing more community connections with an emphasis on inclusion. In the coming year, we look forward to nurturing growth, celebrating achievements, and building a more inclusive world.







Artist at work



Summer fun



**Strategy Matters** 

### HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

#### By: Krista Beaupre, Director of Human Resources and Administration

Recruiting, hiring, and onboarding employees is a crucial component of Tamir's strategic plan and recruitment and was a main focus of the Human Resources Department this past year. Our recruitment initiatives included launching StartDate, a centralized recruiting system that both increases exposure for job postings and streamlines our internal processes. In addition, we participated in Algonquin College's Developmental Services Worker Career Fair, hosted students for their field placement, leveraged social media to recruit external candidates, partnered with local employment services providers, and promoted our employee referral program to encourage existing staff to refer qualified candidates. Through our employee referral program 5 qualified candidates have been hired and retained. Over the course of the year 23 positions were filled by internal movement, and an additional 23 positions were filled by external hiring. Our retention rate for the fiscal year was 93%.

The Social Committee planned and hosted a staff appreciation event which took place at Sala San Marco. This event provided us the opportunity

celebrate our staff and recognize those who have reached 3, 5, 7, 10, 15, 20, and 25 years of service milestone. A buffet style dinner was served, and the event featured a 360 photobooth. We look forward to planning future events for staff to come together. We will be planning more ways for staff to gather and further connect with their Tamir community.

Mandatory training for employees is a key component of delivering quality services as well as a mandatory component of our MCCSS (Ministry) contract. Last year, 545 hours were dedicated to training front line staff in courses such as Crisis Prevention and Intervention, First Aid, and Driving Training. To further employee training efforts, Tamir has partnered with Ottawa Rotary Home to support training in Controlled Acts. Ottawa Rotary Home provides a database of online training and provides hands-on training to staff who are required to complete Controlled Acts Training. In the coming months staff will be enrolled in the online training component and will then complete the practical component under the supervision of Ottawa Rotary Home staff.



## Staff Appreciation Event

Congratulations to all 55 staff who received their years of service award.

Liisa Vexler, Board Director Staff: Nathalie Richard, Jessica Martin, Kelsey Rodgers Policies and procedures play a huge role in the function of any organization. Over the past year, the HR department has focused on implementing new policies with 7 policies being communicated and implemented across the organization. A major focus for our department currently and moving forward is a complete review of all Tamir policies and the implementation of new polices that address the changing needs of our organization. As we move forward, we will be utilizing Surge Learning's Policy Professional application to more promptly review and update policies at set intervals and to more easily share policies with all staff, reducing manual data entry for the team.

Looking to the next year, the Human Resources department is working on the development and implementation of an organizational training plan with specific training tailored to each department, continuing to recruit and hire qualified candidates, reviewing and revamping onboarding procedures to ensure staff are adequately prepared to work in our programs, and finding way to streamline processes.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all of our staff for the work they do every day for the people we support. Thank you for your continued dedication to Tamir!



Thanks to the Social Committee: Francesca Davila, Krista Beaupre, Dale Wyman, Chris Frizell, Jen Gabriel, and Jessica Martin. It was amazing!



Staff: Erin Ozeroff, Sheri-Lynne Styles, Sandi McCaw, Gary Viner Board Director



Staff: Jen Gabriel, Oslou Theodore, Redica Fleming, Kimberly Krewda, Harvey Goldberg Board Director



Staff: Chris Frizell, Michael Waihenya, Ben Muoka, Cheryl Wardell, Joe Silverman Board Director

## JEWISH LIFE AT TAMIR —

#### by Chani Teitelbaum, Judaic Programmer and Advisor

This past year has inspired a strong sense of unity, both among Tamir participants and the larger Ottawa Jewish community. At Tamir, we have found and created opportunities to strengthen ourselves and each other through meaningful connection and through nourishing our Jewish culture and identities.

Our Jewish year began with Rosh Hashanah. We got into the swing of festivities with a trip to the apple orchard, and celebrated the Rosh Hashanah traditions by eating round Challah, dipping apples in honey, and attending synagogue.

As Sukkot approached, our day programs learned about the holiday with Rabbi Nir, who's lessons always turned into dance parties! We hosted our friends and families at a Sukkot party, where we shook the Lulav and Etrog, made fun crafts, and ate delicious foods. We also attended a Sukkot party with Mada Ottawa, where we enjoyed an amazing lunch and sang along to live music.

December brought about many celebrations. At our day programs we made and painted our own Menorah masterpieces. We attended an exciting Chanukah party co-hosted by Tamir, Jewish Family Services, and Mada Ottawa. We lit the Menorah, danced to live music, had a delicious dinner (with Sufganiyot and Latkes, of course!), played games, and made Chanukah crafts. We celebrated Chanukah a second time at KBI where we enjoyed a wonderful performance by the Tamir Neshama choir, devoured more Chanukah treats, and had fun taking photos at the photo booth.

Purim always brings about fun and happiness! At day programs we decorated Purim masks and made impressive Mishloach Manot bags. Our Purim party was a smashing success, with



Hebrew classes with Morah Chani



The Tamir Neshama Choir in tune.

Rabbi Mendelsohn sharing the incredible Purim story, along with fun costumes, face painting, and delicious Hamantaschen.

For Passover, we held Tamir's traditional 'Third Seder' at KBI, with Cantor Green leading us through the Haggadah. Together we sang Passover songs, drank four cups of grape juice, and dined on a delicious Kosher for Passover buffet provided by David Smith.

This year we joined the Ottawa Jewish community for a Lag Ba'Omer event, where we heard the Israeli rapper 'Nissim Black' perform! At our day program we celebrated Lag Ba'Omer with Chani, where we heard the holiday stories, created music shakers, and had a delicious BBQ lunch.

We love celebrating Shabbat, both at our day programs and in our residences, where participants light Shabbat candles, make Kiddush, eat Challah and a meal, and sing Shabbat songs. Making and shaping our own Challah is an exciting activity, and we had a great time using food colouring and sprinkles to make multicoloured Challahs with Andi Koren.

Our Tamir Neshama choir has completed another successful year of rehearsals and performances. A highlight was performing at the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation's AGM, where we were invited to open the ceremony with 'O Canada', 'Hatikvah', and a few of our favourite songs.

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#### **Main Office**

Executive Director	Risa Plotnick						
Executive Assistant to Executive Director	Elizabeth Tyrie						
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Director of Human Resources and Administration	Krista Beaupre						
Director of Human Resources (OSSO)	Brad Purvis						
Human Resources Administrator	Michaela De Curtis						
Scheduling Coordinator	Jen Gabriel						
Judaic Coordinator							
Judaic Programmer and Advisor							
Manager of Fundraising, Events and Development	Francesca Davila						
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Accounts Payable Administrator	Nasim Ahmed						
Payroll Administrator							
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Keshet Community Connections Children and Youth Programs							
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Team Lead	Rebecca Thompson						
Community Participation Services							
Supervisor	Estelle Allen						

#### **Residential Supervisors**

Nikkie Baweja, Chris Frizell, Sandi McCaw, Marcel Walsh, Cheryl Wardell, Josh Williams



Front row (L to R): Sandi McCaw, Christa Janes, Risa Plotnick, Dale Browning-Wyman, Mariana Erimiea Middle row (L to R): Josh Williams, Nasim Ahmed, Nikkie Baweja, Francesca Davila, Chris Frizell Back row (L to R): Elizabeth Tyrie, Carmelo Gentile, Rabbi Nir Koren, Cheryl Wardell, Michaela De Curtis Missing: Krista Beaupre, Estelle Allen and Farwa Hassan

#### TAMIR STAFF.

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A very special thank you as well to the hundreds of individuals and businesses who support us with their donations and time. You are a significant reason behind the successes highlighted within these pages.

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Tamir's goal is to become a leading organization in Canada for all those challenged by a Developmental Disability and/or Autism, and promotes the dream that one day all people are able to live the life they choose as full and valued members of the community.



#### Risa Plotnick, Executive Director

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