



Philanthropy With Purpose: Building Endowed Capital for Generational Impact

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Imagine a Jewish community of fewer than 90,000 people that consistently ranks among the top in North America for per-capita giving to Federation. A community where Jewish life is not only surviving but flourishing, where schools, and Jewish organizations are strong; where our youth are resilient, united in their commitment to Israel, and proud of their Jewish identity; where participation in Jewish life is not our bottleneck, but the capacity to meet the rising demand is.

Now imagine that within this same community, families can access financial support, for formal and informal Jewish educational experiences and social services, through a single, secure, centralized portal, a one-stop gateway designed to ensure that every Jew, regardless of background or circumstance, can have easy access to Jewish life.

Then stop imagining. Because this is not a dream. This is Montreal's Jewish community.

At the heart of this success lies a century-old truth and a deliberate philanthropic strategy: invest in Jewish overnight camping as a cornerstone of Jewish continuity. Decades before "engagement strategy" became a buzzword, our community understood that Jewish camping is more than a summer experience, it is a generational investment in Jewish identity, leadership, and belonging.

A Legacy Rooted in Vision

More than 105 years ago, Montreal's Jewish leadership had the foresight to establish a Jewish community camp, a place built on Jewish traditions, Zionism, and Jewish joy. This was not simply about recreation or education; it was about shaping a future where Jewish values and pride would be interwoven into the very fabric of our youth.

Through the decades, thousands of children experienced their first Shabbat under the stars, sang Hebrew songs around campfires, and gained a sense of connection and purpose that would continue long after the summer ended. Camp became a formative

space, one where Jewish identity was lived, not just taught. We have invested in a legacy rooted in a vision of lived Jewish peoplehood.

Building Capital for Generational Impact

Recognizing the powerful return on this investment, 20 years ago Federation CJA took a bold step to secure an endowment fund dedicated to Jewish overnight camping. The purpose was twofold; to expand access for families through financial support, and to strengthen the quality and sustainability of the camps themselves.

Through this visionary act of philanthropy, Federation CJA built something extraordinary. A designated endowment that ensures our community's youth can have transformative Jewish summer experiences regardless of financial constraints. This is philanthropy not just for today, but for generations to come.

The Power of Jewish Overnight Camp

Why camping? Because the data is clear, and the outcomes are profound. Study after study has shown that Jewish overnight camp yields the highest return on investment (ROI) of all Jewish identity-building experiences.

- Camp alumni are dramatically more likely to value being Jewish, support Jewish causes, marry Jewish partners, and give to Federation later in life.
- They show higher levels of attachment to Israel and to Jewish communal life.
- They are more likely to take on leadership roles in Jewish organizations as adults.

In short, Jewish camping doesn't just fill summers, it deeply shapes lives and strengthens communities for decades.

Federation CJA has turned this evidence into strategy. The investment in Jewish camp has a ripple effect, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of engagement. Camps become feeders for youth movements, Israel experiences, volunteerism, and leadership programs. Parents connect through their children's experiences. Generations bond around shared values and memories.

This is not accidental. It is the product of intentional philanthropy, strategic focus, and collective vision.

The Montreal Model: Strength Through Strategy

This alignment of values, infrastructure, and deep investment in Jewish camps is a part of the bedrock of what has made the Montreal Jewish community not just good, but

great. Federation CJA's foresight to invest in endowment capital across the full Jewish journey, from classroom to camp to Israel, has enabled new generations to connect deeply, meaningfully, and joyously to Jewish life. It is a virtuous cycle: strong identity fuels engagement, engagement strengthens community, and community inspires ever-greater philanthropy.

Philanthropy With Purpose

Federation CJA has set a gold standard for purposeful giving. This is *philanthropy with purpose*, not simply reactive generosity, but *strategic investment* in the future of Jewish peoplehood.

The lesson for Jewish communities everywhere is clear: to build vibrant, resilient Jewish life, we must think long-term. We must invest in experiences that deeply shape identity and belonging. And we must ensure those investments are secure, endowed for generations, so that our children and grandchildren inherit not only our institutions, but also our values, pride, purpose, and connection to the Jewish people.

The Montreal Jewish community's story is one of vision, courage, and commitment to the Jewish people today and in the future. A model of what happens when philanthropy aligns with purpose. From a century-old camp to quality from engagement to enduring connection, our journey shows the direct correlation between investing in Jewish overnight camp and cultivating one of the most dynamic, generous, and united Jewish communities in North America. Through endowment, foresight, and faith in our youth, Federation CJA continues to prove that when we invest in camping, we directly invest in our community's future, for this generation, and for every generation to come.

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