



bernard betel centre

Annual Report

2023-2024

Message from the President, Board of Directors and the Executive Director

The Bernard Betel Centre helps seniors live healthy, active and creative lives in a safe, supportive environment. During one of the toughest years our community has faced in decades, this work was vital.

Just as we climbed out of the COVID-19 pandemic, the events of October 7, 2023 and the rise of antisemitism shocked, saddened, and frightened us all. As a centre rooted in Jewish culture and values, we have ensured security and access for our diverse community. Equally important has been maintaining a place for creativity, learning, health and wellness. It's where we create meaningful relationships and connections that keep the community strong.

It is also a place where helping happens. This year, we continued to step up to provide emergency Kosher Meals on Wheels to isolated, vulnerable seniors. With the generous support of donors and funders such as UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Azrieli Foundation, we raised more than \$1.3 million to support hundreds of people unable to access nutritious, culturally appropriate food. The dedication of our funders, donors, volunteers and staff has been critical and a lifeline to the recipients.

We are continuing to build and strengthen the centre. We have completed renovations that refreshed our building, making it more welcoming and better able to accommodate the growth of our Meals on Wheels. We have strengthened our participation as a Core Partner of North York Toronto Health Partners, our Ontario Health Team. We have grown to more than 1,700 members, ever closer to where we were before the pandemic. This speaks to the community's need for our breadth of recreation, cultural, health and wellness, trips and travel programs where all members and participants truly belong.

Next year, Bernard Betel Centre will celebrate our 60th anniversary. From our founding by National Council of Jewish Women as the Centre for Creative Living to today, has been a period of growth and great strides. As you read through this year's Annual Report, we hope you'll see how much we can celebrate in enriching people's quality of life – for life!

Sincerely,

Marcus Staviss
President, Board of Directors

Gail Gould
Executive Director



Marcus Staviss
President, Board
of Directors



Gail Gould
Executive Director

Bernard Betel Centre *Mission*

Providing exemplary and multilingual educational, cultural and wellness programs in a safe and supportive environment to encourage healthy, active and creative living for individuals 55+.

ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosted the 51st Annual Community Seder at the Bernard Betel Centre, which was generously sponsored by Anne Tanenbaum z'l Passover Seder Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, and in partnership with Association of Jewish Seniors, CIJA, and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.
- In partnership with North York Toronto Health Partners, a network of primary health care and community partners from New Zealand visited the Bernard Betel Centre.
- Hosted the annual Victory Day event with hundreds of Russian-speaking members.
- Launch of on-site Dermatology Clinic with Dermatologist Dr. Kendall Billick, from Toronto Western Hospital. Dr. Billick diagnosed numerous skin cancers and other urgent skin conditions reinforcing how critical and life-saving access to dermatology care is.
- Hosted the annual Rosh Hashanah celebration with hundreds of seniors and community members, and joined by Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada.
- Relaunched our overnight Trips and Travel program.
- In partnership with JIAS Toronto, over 75 Russian-speaking newcomer seniors, many from Ukraine and Israel attended mental health and art therapy support groups that took place at the Bernard Betel Centre and Schwartz Reisman Centre.
- Hosted the 2nd Annual Tribute Event supporting our Meals on Wheels Program honouring Dr. Anna Shternshis.
- Initiated numerous meetings at Queen's Park with government officials, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and Prabmeet Sarkaria, President, Treasury Board of Ontario, regarding Meals on Wheels.
- Hosted the annual Celebrating Yiddish Music Concert in Memory of Lou and Edith Stillman with a concert by Juno Award Winner Lenka Lichtenberg.



BERNARD BETEL CENTRE STATISTICS

Serving seniors in the community for **59 years**

1,727 active members



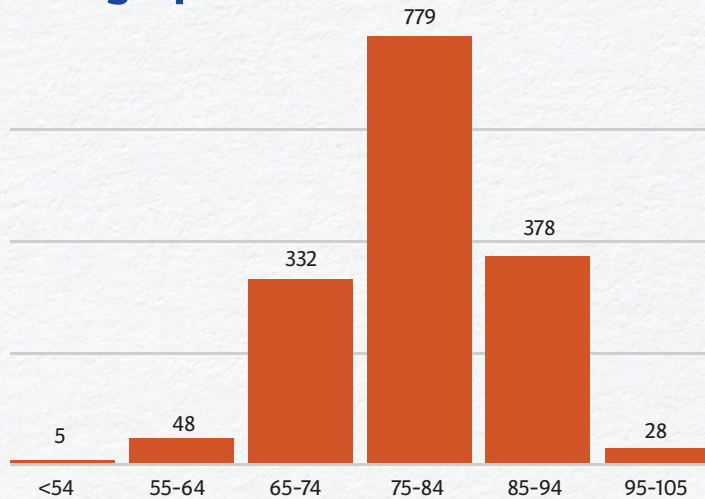
736
members living
in York Region

991
members live in the
City of Toronto

56 languages spoken



Age Demographics



*157 members did not provide their age

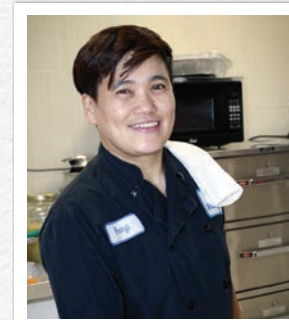
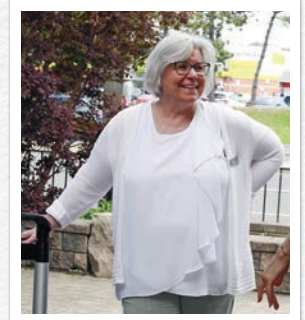
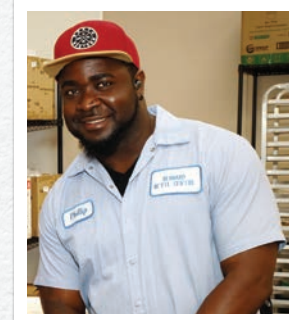


6,000 seniors took part in 7 online and 64 on-site programs and services each week



STAFFING AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

34 full-time and 6 part-time staff
14 Board of Directors



CREATIVE LIVING DAY PROGRAM

The Creative Living Day Program provides seniors opportunities to socialize, build support systems, connect to the community, and engage in learning through a variety of recreational and educational programs including arts, music, computers and digital media classes, intergenerational events, games, discussion and support groups, language programs, lifelong learning programs, library, writing programs, health promotion and wellness, and special events.



Program Impact

87%

of participants have gained new knowledge and/or improved their skills and abilities since taking part in programs.

80%

of participants feel more connected to their community since taking part in programs.

88%

of participants have seen an improvement in their mental health since attending programs at the centre.



Testimonials

“Excellent programs, friendly atmosphere, delicious café. Several of my friends have joined because of the wonderful lectures, concerts and trips.”

“I recently retired and felt a bit lost. I walked into the centre looking for a volunteer opportunity and came out busier than ever. I now participate in programs multiple times a week as well as lead a class!”

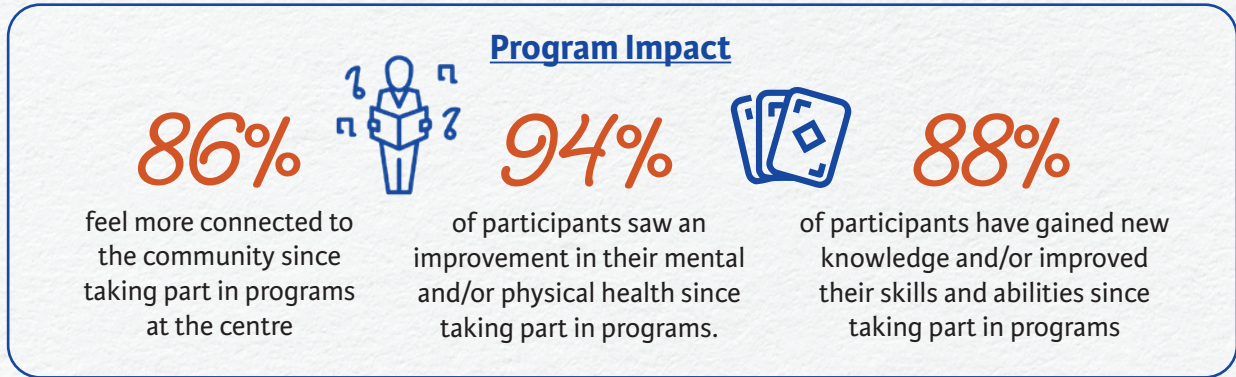
“I am so grateful for the Bernard Betel Centre. The sense of community and support is unmatched. The activities are engaging, and there's always something new to try. The staff are wonderful, always ready with a smile and a helping hand. It's a fantastic place for seniors to connect, have fun, and stay active.”



RUSSIAN GOLDEN AGE CULTURAL PROGRAM



The Russian Golden Age Cultural Program is an innovative, culturally and linguistically sensitive program for Russian-speaking seniors including arts, music, computers and digital media classes, library, educational lectures and workshops, and special events.



Testimonials

“The centre has provided me with so many opportunities to meet new people and diversify everyday life! I have been able to try so many new things since joining and have the opportunity to lead some classes as a volunteer.”

“I moved here from Russia only a few years ago and the centre has allowed me to feel more at home in Canada. I met other people who speak my language and I can continue to celebrate holidays and events just like before.”

MEALS ON WHEELS

Delivered

155,683

meals to the community

110

Meals on Wheels volunteers, includes 49 volunteer drivers and 61 meal prep and packing volunteers

Provide

3

free meals a week to

620

vulnerable Jewish seniors and Holocaust survivors who struggle daily, a total of

96,720 meals

Program Impact

100%

of recipients are food insecure, most of whom are marginalized seniors and Holocaust survivors, with over 80% living off less than \$15,000 per year.

Over 87%

of Meals on Wheels recipients reported improved quality of life and reduced hunger and food insecurity.



Meals on Wheels Testimonials

“I am incredibly grateful for the meals I receive from the Bernard Betel Centre. As a newcomer who is a survivor of elder abuse, I am facing many challenges and struggling to make ends meet. I don’t have any friends in Canada and have no one to ask for help. However, thanks to this program, I know I can rely on having at least one thing – a kosher and nutritious meal. It’s more than just food. It’s a reminder that I am not alone and that there are people who care. The meals I receive have been a lifeline, and I cannot express enough gratitude for your kindness and support.”

“I greatly appreciate your help with Meals on Wheels and really enjoy your food. I have a very low income and constant back pain, so it’s hard for me to buy my own food, and very difficult to cook. These ready made meals of yours have been a healthy solution for me.”



COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Over **1,300** Healthy at Home participants took part in in-person social, health promotion, and recreation programs at 12 Healthy at Home locations.

Facilitated access to a wide range of community resources for over **3,000** seniors, providing support in person and virtually.

Community Support Services staff made over **24,000** phone calls in English and Russian, contacting over 3,500 seniors to provide resources, service navigation, referrals, and answer questions.



Program Impact

83% of Healthy at Home participants met new friends while attending the program.

96% of Healthy at Home participants feel more cared by and connected to Jewish community.

98% participants in our support groups reported improvement in their mental health and wellbeing.

98% of Healthy at Home participants are highly satisfied with the program.

Testimonials

“Healthy at Home program is a highlight of my week. I always look forward to this program. It always offers great opportunities for older adults to learn something new, to stay active and to interact with other people who are in the same stage is life. The program makes seniors feel important and empowers them to live a more active and healthy lifestyle.”

“I feel so grateful to have joined this support group. As I’ve grown older, I’ve faced many challenges that have left me feeling isolated and lonely. This support group has given me a sense of community and connection that I thought I’d lost. I’ve learned to approach aging with a more positive mindset, focusing on what I can still control and finding ways to cultivate purpose and meaning in my life. I’ve also gained practical tools and strategies to manage stress, anxiety, and physical limitations. Most importantly, I’ve found a sense of belonging and connection that has enriched my life in ways I never thought possible.”

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteer roles include Board of Directors, Members' Council, committees, program leaders and instructors, program support and assistants, Meals on Wheels packing and drivers, friendly visiting, dial-a-friend, fundraising, administration, and much more.

Impact of the Volunteer Program

- The Bernard Betel Centre Volunteer Services program provided volunteer support for all our pre-pandemic programs and services and recruited skilled volunteers to facilitate new and innovative programs.
- Our Information and Welcome Desk reopened and volunteers are available to assist our members five days a week.
- Volunteers assist in the Betel Café and contribute to providing our members with exceptional customer service.

260 community volunteers 24 corporate volunteers

16,950 volunteer hours



"Our volunteers fulfill our mission"

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteer Testimonials

Phyllis

"I became a volunteer 6 years ago. I sit at the Welcome Desk, host bingo once a month and am on Members' Council which meets once a month. It's the best thing I've done to become a volunteer. It gives me so much happiness when I see a smile on someone I have helped. It truly is a mitzvah."



Elaine and Gal

"Having recently retired after working in full time careers for over 40 years we always knew we wanted to devote some of our time to meaningful volunteer roles. Bernard Betel has provided us with just that. Just knowing we perform a small part in the many step process of delivering food to hundreds of people every week is very heart warming."



Cari and Ros

"The Meals on Wheels Program has a special place in our hearts. We know that the seniors receiving the meals are being cared for in the way they should be. It is our responsibility to continue the circle of Jewish life. We like assisting with meal prep, and we like the people we are volunteering with. It is a good cause, and you feel better when you leave."



Helen

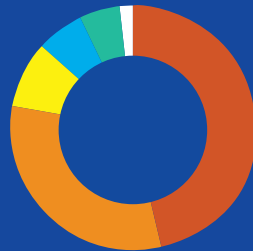
"I volunteer in the Computer Lab on Wednesday mornings and in some of the computer classes. Technology can be scary and I love it when I can help someone overcome their fear of it. There are some people who come in every week to learn something new and it's wonderful to see them leave with a smile on their face. Volunteering is so rewarding."



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (as of March 31st, 2024)

Revenue from External Sources

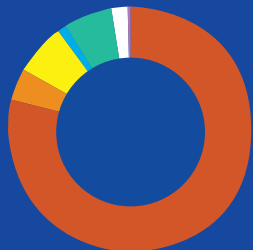
Total:
\$2,068,577



● Ministry of Health (Ontario Health):	\$951,801
● UJA Federation:	\$655,420
● United Way Greater Toronto:	\$190,192
● City of Toronto (Community Services Partnerships):	\$147,069
● Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility:	\$102,876
● City of Toronto (Toronto Social Services):	\$21,219

Revenue from Internal Sources

Total:
\$2,044,674

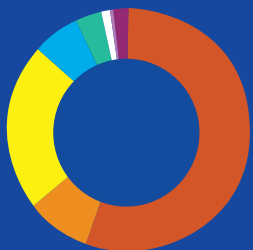


● Fees from services:	\$1,613,865
● Membership fees:	\$85,620
● Fundraising and donations:	\$138,063
● Rental:	\$23,740
● Investment income:	\$130,139
● Amortization of deferred capital contributions:	\$43,896
● Other revenue:	\$9,351

TOTAL REVENUE:
\$4,113,251

Expenditures

TOTAL EXPENDITURES:
\$4,167,022



● Salaries and wages:	\$2,323,720
● Employee benefits:	\$357,598
● Direct program delivery costs:	\$930,891
● Building occupancy:	\$259,108
● Administration:	\$145,758
● Publicity and promotion:	\$49,744
● Support for Elderly Person Centre:	\$17,476
● Amortization:	\$82,827

Unrealized gain
on investments \$58,611

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES NET
of Unrealised Investment Gain:**
\$4,108,391

DONORS AND FUNDRAISING

Thank you to all our generous donors and supporters!

\$138,063 from **1,029** individual donations

A special thank you to those individuals and companies that supported the Tribute Event:

Arrow Communications Group
EJB Steinberg Family Foundation
Feigelson & Kellar Insurance Inc.
Jules Lewy
Larry & Judy Tanenbaum Family Foundation
Michael Silver
Novak Private Wealth Counsel
The Brown-Nusbaum Family Foundation
Ullman Wealth Management Inc
Volunteer Success
Wagner Green Family Trust

Many more exciting fundraising events to look forward to in 2024-2025!



Thank you to Elen Steinberg for being the Chair of the 2023 Tribute Event honouring Dr. Anna Shternshis.

GRANTS

Grants received from:

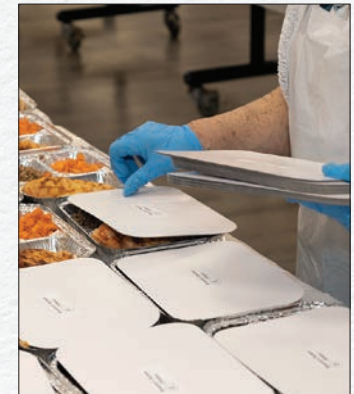
- 4imprint
- Anti-Hate Security Grant
- Azrieli Foundation
- Canada Summer Jobs Grant
- George C. Hunt Family Foundation
- Inclusive Community Grant
- Jewish Teen Board Grant
- MAZON Canada
- North York Toronto Health Partners
- OACAO Seniors Active Living Fair Grant
- Ontario Health Central
- Ontario Seniors Community Grant
- ParticipACTION
- Red Cross
- The Joseph Lebovic Charitable Foundation
- United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto

Total amount of grant money received in 2023-2024:

\$1,146,939.13

Grants funded the following programs/projects:

- Accessible Outdoor Space:
Renovation of Back Patio
- Community Support Services
- Enhanced Security Measures
- Fitness Programs
- Food for Meals on Wheels
- Meals on Wheels Program
- Mental Health Programs
- Promotional Items
- Seniors Active Living Fair
- Funding to Hire Summer Staff



Thank you!



bernard betel centre

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