



PRESS RELEASE

Three Community Housing Organizations To Integrate Under One Roof *Les Maisons Kehilla expands affordable housing impact for those in need*

Montreal – September 9, 2024 - B'nai Brith Housing, Caldwell Residences and Kehilla Montréal Residential Programs are pleased to announce their upcoming integration under the banner Les Maisons Kehilla. The newly formed housing organization will represent eight buildings with over 1,000 apartments offering a mix of social and affordable rents to a full spectrum of the Montreal community from young families to seniors.

“By bringing together three Montreal community housing organizations under a single entity, we are creating an opportunity for operational synergies, common governance and coordinated fundraising,” said Avi Hasen, President of Kehilla Montreal Residential Programs. “Integration allows us to better deploy our limited resources across a broader set of real estate and most importantly, maximize availability of affordable housing to those in need in the community.”

At the helm of Les Maisons Kehilla will be its recently appointed Chief Executive Officer, Leah Berger. Ms. Berger has an extensive history of involvement in the Montreal Jewish community including in strategic planning and allocations at Federation CJA where she spearheaded the creation of Kehilla Montreal Residential Programs. Most recently, Leah served as the Assistant Director for the Support Program for the Autonomy of Seniors within the Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux (CIUSSS) West-Central Montreal, where she managed the admissions process to long term care institutions and supervised social work and recreation services across multiple sites.

Both Caldwell Residences, a pioneering housing agency in the Jewish community, and B'nai Brith Housing have served the senior population in six buildings across the Cote-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough and Côte St-Luc for 70 and 20 years respectively. Kehilla Montréal's first building, Kehilla I, welcomed tenants into its 68 one- to three-bedroom apartments, built to the highest standards, in 2020. A second Kehilla building is located in Côte-des-Neiges and is home to individuals and small families in its 15 renovated apartments.

“Our provision of safe, quality housing at affordable rates uplifts thousands of vulnerable people,” explained Dean Mendel, president of Caldwell Residences and incoming president of Les Maisons Kehilla. “But this is also about building and strengthening communities. At Caldwell and B'nai Brith Housing, a full range of programming is integrated into the residences in order to reduce isolation, increase socialization, and improve quality of life.”

When it was founded in 2014, Kehilla Montréal—its name meaning “community” in Hebrew—followed in these important footsteps by aligning with both Cummings Centre and Agence Ometz, non-profit agencies serving vulnerable populations in Montreal, to ensure that tenants and recipients would be fully supported by a wide range of social services.





PRESS RELEASE

“There is significant evidence that a secure, affordable home is the foundation to many successful outcomes including improved mental and physical health, better educational outcomes and more employment opportunities,” stated Mendel.

Despite the housing crisis in Montreal and over 700 households on the waitlist for Kehilla Montréal, very high costs, regulatory challenges and zoning hurdles have made it a challenge to embark on new construction projects in recent years. In order to meet the need, Kehilla Montréal launched its Rental Assistance Program in 2021 providing monthly subsidies to vulnerable households to defray the cost of their existing rent, enabling them to both stay in their home and retain funds to cover essentials such as food, clothing and transportation. Today, it is helping 150 families and has disbursed over \$1.2 million since its inception, all of which was raised through donations from the community.

With new prospective projects on the horizon and a strengthened, expanded organization, Les Maisons Kehilla is strongly positioned to mitigate the urgent matter of housing unaffordability through innovative housing solutions.

For more on Kehilla Montreal, consult the [2023-24 Annual Report](#). Kindly contact Leah Berger, Chief Executive Officer, Les Maisons Kehilla, at leah.berger@kehillamontreal.org for further information.

Photo available [here](#). Caption: From left to right, Dean Mendel, incoming and first president of the newly formed Les Maisons Kehilla, Leah Berger, CEO of Les Maisons Kehilla, and seated, Avi Hasen, outgoing president of Kehilla Montréal. Photo credit: PBL Photography