community calendar

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A MESSAGE FROM **ROB NAGUS**

have recently returned from a powerful and transformative week in Israel.

It was a meaningful experience shared with our Coast to Coast partners across Canada, as well as with our extended family in the North of Israel and several dedicated Jewish Calgarians. Among the group were our Director of Development, Diana Kalef, who led our highly successful Israel Emergency campaign, the long-time local leader and builder of our formal infrastructure in Israel, Cathy Cole, and the wonderful volunteer and Community Relations Committee member, Samantha Kassel.

This trip offered us an eye-opening perspective on the remarkable relationships and partnerships that Calgary Jewish Federation has built in the northern region of Israel, often referred to as Etzbah Hagalil, or the Galilee Panhandle. These communities include Metulla, Kiryat Shmona, Yesod HaMa'ala, the Upper Galilee Regional Council, and the Mevoot Hermon Regional Council.

Though the media surrounding the current Israel-Hamas conflict has understandably been focused on the South-particularly the area known as the "Gaza Envelope"—there's been far less attention

ight now, I'm feeling incredibly fortunate. I on Israel's northern communities. Yet, Hezbollah launched an ongoing assault on Israel's most vulnerable northern communities, which hold deep significance to Calgary's Jewish community due to our historic partnership.

> Northern Israel is truly a stunning and unique place. If you were placed there without context, you might think you were in Northern Italy-its rugged mountains are dotted with lush greenery and endless vineyards. Despite its natural beauty, life in the north has always been challenging. The region is one of Israel's most fertile and ecologically diverse and is home to many Kibbutzim and Moshavim.

> While the devastation in Metullah is stark-with barren streets, bullet-riddled buildings, and ghosttown feel-it's the more subtle devastation in border communities who haven't evacuated that also weigh heavily as I reflect on this emotional week.

One of the most significant moments of our trip, particularly for our Calgary community, was the Am Yisrael Chai, announcement of the \$20 million investment from our Canadian Jewish communities aptly named, Project Regeneration. This funding will be used Rob Nagus "Build Back Better" in northern Israel. We'll be Chief Executive Officer to working closely with Tel-Hai College (soon to be a Calgary Jewish Federation

university), local community organizations, councils, and our partners at the Jewish Federations of Canada-United Israel Appeal (JFC-UIA) to provide critical services and infrastructure that will ensure the longterm vitality of Israel's north.

By the end of the trip, we were inspired by the strength of the partnerships and the sense of fellowship between our communities. Whether we're in Woodlands or a small kibbutz in the Galilee Panhandle, we are supporting one another in times of need. K'lal Yisrael.

There's still much work to be done, and I am deeply honoured to continue stewarding and growing this vital, long-lasting partnership. We are also exploring the option of a pan-Canadian mission to the region in the fall so stay tuned! In the meantime, we look forward to keeping you all updated on our collective efforts.

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Building an inclusive community is a priority. Contact us and we will make every effort to meet your needs.











Todah Rabah!

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