

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **\$114,200 Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant Equips JIAS Toronto with Educational Training and Technology to Empower Staff.**



**North York, ON** – On Friday, local MPP Michael Kerzner met with the team at JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto to hear more about the \$114,200 Resilient Communities Fund grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) that helped JIAS Toronto rebuild and recover from impacts of COVID-19 by equipping the organization with educational training and technology to empower their staff, teams, organization, culture, and resilience.

“As an elected representative, I couldn’t be prouder to be the MPP, to live in, and represent York Centre, a community of great diversity. I’m pleased JIAS received this grant to continue their good work in helping us build a great Ontario, together!” said Michael Kerzner, MPP for York Centre.

The funding from this grant provided a training program that gave managers the tools and confidence that they need to support high-performing teams and help further the agency’s mandate as well as strategically respond to the changes in our ecosystem. The entire staff benefited from many of the training modules as well, helping to develop a culture where everyone acts like a leader regardless of their role. Having everyone trained with the same tools has enabled peer support and team building as they co-create a shared lexicon, understanding, and toolkit for empowerment and resilience.

“When the OTF grant was announced, we explored what a resiliency grant could mean for the agency,” said Elise Herzig, Executive Director of JIAS Toronto. “We chose an educational program that would empower every employee with new skills to improve client services and collaboration in both hybrid and in-person settings. We are very grateful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for supporting this important initiative through this resiliency grant.”

In addition to the training funded by the OTF, there was also an allocation of capital resources that better equipped the agency with updated technology for a hybrid working environment.

“Our agency’s recent professional development training, funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, helped me take a step back, examine, and re-assess some of my workplace practices, and develop soft and hard skills to better position myself as a team player and a leader,” said Jodi Block, Manager of Community Engagement at JIAS Toronto.

“These trainings, funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation have made an impact on how we plan and organize programs for newcomers at JIAS Toronto,” said Naomi Kramer, Manager of Programs at JIAS Toronto. “Our Program Team has been utilizing these tools to organize ourselves, look at the big picture in a strategic way, and delegate our tasks to ultimately deliver better programs that meet the needs of our clients.”

“I recently hired 3 new members on our Refugee team,” said Lia Kisel, Director of Language and Settlement at JIAS Toronto. “Through the resources gained during this training, I was able to quickly create a collaborative environment, which I can already see will support the development of a high-performance team. The training exposed me to a vast number of tools, allowing me to identify the different working styles of each of the staff I work with and to develop strategies to best support them.”

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s leading granting foundations celebrates 40 years of grant-making in Ontario and making a lasting impact in communities. Last year, OTF invested over \$110M into 1,022 community projects and partnerships. Visit [otf.ca](http://otf.ca) to learn more.

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