

# JUST WHO ARE

# GOOD PEOPLE?

the  
good  
people  
מעשים  
טובים fund

2015

SMALL ACTIONS, HUGE IMPACTS [WWW.GOODPEOPLEFUND.ORG](http://WWW.GOODPEOPLEFUND.ORG)



# OUR STORY

Friends of The Good People Fund, Shalom!



Photo by Mark Berkley

Another year has passed since we last shared our work with you, our donors, who make it all possible. What a year it has been! We have been very busy.

As you read through the pages of this report you will note a record number of new programs—18 to be exact (an appropriate but unintended number). Each of them is the result of one person, or a few, asking a simple question—“How can I (we) make this world a better place?” Each is committed to *tikkun olam* in creative ways, working quietly, and most with little support. As we discover each one, our own excitement grows, and we want nothing more than to share their stories so more people can be inspired and hopefully offer to help.

Certainly, each of our Good People could have pursued more traditional careers, and, yet, each felt compelled to devote their time to easing social injustices. As a child growing up in the Deep South, Alvin Irby hated to read and school was boring. Yet, when he complained to school officials and was placed in more challenging classes, he learned that reading opened the door to another world, a world of possibilities. Today, with advanced degrees in education and an impressive work history, Alvin devotes his time to introducing the love of reading to inner-city boys in a venue they all know well—the barbershop.

And then there are Vivi Mann and Naomi Brounstein, two Israeli women who used their considerable background and skills to develop *Ten Gav*, an online platform that offers donors the chance to contribute modestly to individual needs identified by local social workers. As you read on, you will meet still others, like Helene and Barry, Jared and Deena, and more. I promise you will be inspired.

## LEADING WITH OUR HEART

This past February, while reading the latest issue of *The Chronicles of Philanthropy*, we came across an article written by Peter and Jennifer Buffet. The Buffets very appropriately point out that the word “philanthropy” means “love of humanity,” and, yet, “In the race for philanthropic impact, we’ve got our heads in the game, but what about our hearts?” (Of course, our work is deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition and what we do is clearly *tzedakah* or giving “Jewishly,” but the two are closely related.)

What a strikingly simple and thoughtful idea. Too often, our giving is directed by what is in our head and not by what is in our hearts. Love and caring take a back seat to strategies and outcomes. Grantees and donors fail to establish real partnerships. After reading their essay, however, I realized that what they were advocating was very much the way in which we operate. Our goal continues to be to develop a deeply personal relationship with our grantees, one based upon love and mutual respect. Our grantees see us not so much as funders but as true partners in their good work. On more than one occasion I have heard grantees admit that as important as

the money is, what is even more significant is our caring, our belief in them and, sometimes, just being there to listen.

How validating it was to know that there are others like the Buffets with far more significant resources, who share our unique perspective.

## GETTING “JEWCED”

While much of the past year was spent in support of our existing programs and searching for new Good People in more traditional ways, last fall we ventured into the world of crowdfunding, but with an unusual twist. For those of you not familiar with the concept, quite simply, crowdfunding uses the internet to bring together the community to fund, in relatively small amounts, a specific venture, be it commercial or *tzedakah*. In the case of our campaign on the Jewish crowdfunding site Jewcer.com, we turned the model a bit on its head and used the platform to uncover potential new Good People doing great *tzedakah* work in places we might not otherwise have discovered.

We really had no idea how this would all evolve, or if, indeed, there would be a response. The entire campaign, “We’re Looking for a Few Good People,” was run through social media. As we began the process we felt that we would be successful if we had proposals from a few dozen people. To our surprise, at the end of the 30 day period for submissions, we had more than 150 entrants who invested time to answer our questions and explain their vision.

Our original plan was to accept five of these individuals, who would each then go on to raise, through crowdfunding, \$1,800, which we would match with a \$3,200 grant. The quality of the applicants was so good that we ultimately selected six, rather than five, and those six went on to raise more than \$20,000, which, when combined with our matching grants, yielded more than \$40,000 in *tzedakah* dollars.

We were also delighted by the extraordinary exposure we received. Jewcer’s founder, Amir Give’on, estimated that more than 150,000 people learned about our work and the efforts of the six entrants. Three of the six who received our grants are now official grantees and you can read about their work in this report.

## AND FINALLY . . .

It has been nearly 25 years since I was introduced to the wonders of this unique *tzedakah* model—almost a quarter of a century! Despite the passage of so many years, I have to admit that I am as excited about getting up and going to work today as I was at the beginning. To be surrounded by these amazing men and women (and even some kids) is a privilege I am honored to experience.

Come join us! Read through the pages of this report and find your passion. The smorgasbord of good we present here offers you an opportunity to do no less than change the world for the better.



**WWW.GOODPEOPLEFUND.ORG**

*Small actions, huge impacts*

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# THE FOUR S's

## THE FOUR S's

We believe that what makes our work both unusual and highly effective can best be described by the four S's – scope, screening, supervision and speed:

### S

#### SCOPE:

The programs we work with cover a broad spectrum of needs – from poverty and hunger to elders and disabilities, and more.

### S

#### SCREENING:

We take the screening process very seriously, carefully vetting each organization we fund to be sure their work is legitimate.

### S

#### SUPERVISION:

Once we commit to an organization, we don't just hand them a check. We supervise their work and guide them on their way.

### S

#### SPEED:

When needs are great, time is of the essence. We work efficiently and often on a moment's notice to insure that needs are met as swiftly as possible.







## HUMAN NEEDS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

**A Place to Turn When All Else Fails**

**ISR and USA**

Perhaps the most profound lesson we learn each day is that people's lives can disintegrate precipitously, with little warning and often with little hope for change. There are untold ways this happens and certainly those with the fewest resources are at a far greater risk. Sometimes we learn about these situations from the very organizations we support; other sources are social workers or doctors with whom we have developed a close relationship and who know that when no other resources are available we can be "a place to turn where all else fails." In some instances it means "saving a life" in the most literal way possible.

In addition to "keeping the lights on" for many people we also provide emergency funds for food, medical needs, summer camp and rent. Sometimes, by joining forces with other resources we are able to mitigate even more serious needs such as the purchase of a car for an otherwise self-sufficient victim of domestic violence or payment of tuition for young men and women who have chosen to leave their insular ultra-religious community and in so doing have lost both family and friends. In each case we know our funds have made a significant difference in helping to restore dignity and hope to people who far too often have so little.

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*\*New program*

*The printing of this report was underwritten by donor-recommended funds.*

## HUNGER

## Amir Project

*Inspiring Young Adults to Pursue Social Justice through Gardening*

*This program is hands-on, experiential, and unlike anything else our campers do... I can't imagine our camp without our Amir Garden.*

**David Fox**, co-founder of Amir Project, launched his program in 2009 as a response to his love of summer camp and his passion for social justice. Today, Amir Project has expanded from coast to coast, benefiting over 10,000 children.

For the past six years Amir has brought eager campers together with a group of carefully selected fellows (appropriately called "Farmers") charged with the responsibility of planting and overseeing a sustainable on-site garden. A medium for teaching youth basic gardening skills and empowering them to become stewards of the earth, Amir also provides the rich soil for learning about social justice. Rather than simply talking about these issues, campers get to "do it" firsthand; in the process, Amir infuses long-lasting, powerful lessons about issues surrounding poverty, hunger, community and resource allocation that will remain with campers long after the summer ends.

Our funding was directed to camps that serve at-risk children, a new focus of Amir's mission.

## AmpleHarvest.org

*Home Gardeners Helping Hungry Neighbors*

When it comes to a problem as pervasive and insurmountable as hunger in our nation, most of us don't know how to begin to make a change. But for **Gary Oppenheimer**, a tech wizard and master gardener who looks for unique solutions to difficult problems, his abundant summer vegetable garden inspired a great answer: home gardeners could donate their excess bounty to local food pantries where healthy produce is rarely offered.

Since 2009 when Gary began his work, close to 7,500 pantries in every state have registered with AmpleHarvest.org. While it's not possible to determine the exact number of pounds of fresh produce donated, anecdotal evidence points to significant success for Gary's virtual operation. His message about unnecessary food waste has drawn the attention of the White House, state governments and many others concerned about hunger in America.

Helping to support his virtual network, we know that our funds make it possible for even more people to enjoy the taste of fresh summer tomatoes, sweet corn and more.

## USA

## Gideon Ben Ami

*One Man's Quest to Feed Hungry People*

## ISR

Some people are passionate about sports while for others it might be music or even the latest food craze. For **Gideon Ben Ami** it is all about *helping others*. This once successful restaurateur in both the U.S. and Israel may be retired but he readily admits that his present "job" helping others has given him more satisfaction than anything else he has ever done. A true entrepreneur long before the term became fashionable; Gideon always finds creative and meaningful ways to improve others' lives. This is what seems to fuel *his* very soul. Feeding breakfast to African refugees in Levinsky Park, daily pick-ups from Tel Aviv's restaurants, bakeries and supermarkets, rescuing refugees who are victims of racist attacks and implementing the distribution of tons of donated fresh produce to hungry people are just a few of his many accomplishments. With our support and the help of others, Gideon's simple and efficient operation runs nearly day and night and offers visibility and hope to people often hidden from sight.

## \*Groceryships

*Empowering Individuals Through Nutrition Education and Food Scholarships*

## USA

Too much TV-watching may turn us into couch potatoes, but sometimes a good program can have quite the opposite effect. For **Sam Polk**, founder of Groceryships, and his (now) wife, TV documentaries about the problems of childhood obesity and food insecurity, particularly in low-income families where finances make healthy food choices difficult or even impossible, transformed their lives—and the lives of families in their community. Inspired by the documentaries to modify their diets, the couple saw positive results and began to wonder how they could encourage better eating habits in LA's inner-city neighborhoods where the problem was particularly acute.

Thus began Groceryships. Participants in the six-month program receive scholarships to purchase nutritious, whole foods, while taking part in a comprehensive nutrition education course and weekly support groups. Families are empowered to lead a healthier lifestyle as they learn about nutrition, healthy cooking and effective shopping skills. They also become part of a network that discusses issues of emotional eating and food addiction in a safe, sacred space, where every person is respected and honored.

When we met Sam and heard about the group's positive outcomes we were convinced to direct funds to the formation of an additional group now being organized.



## \*Interfaith Food Pantry of the Oranges

USA

*An Interfaith Approach to Feeding Hungry People*

It is a model that could be applied to a wide range of social challenges. The Interfaith Food Pantry of the Oranges (IFPO) provides supplemental and emergency food to low-income residents in Orange and East Orange, NJ. What sets IFPO apart from other, similar efforts? It is a collaboration of interfaith groups working together to solve problems of hunger and poverty in nearby, less affluent communities—truly a “neighbor helping neighbor” arrangement in every sense.

This totally volunteer-driven effort serves close to 17,300 individuals, of whom nearly 40 percent are children. Clients include single men and women, veterans, senior citizens, families with young children, new immigrants, single parents, people with disabilities and individuals who are employed but do not make sufficient income to meet their basic food needs.

Having enough food to stock the pantry’s shelves is but one of the group’s challenges. The cost of hygiene and personal care products far exceeds the small pantry’s budget. We offered a challenge grant to make the purchase of those items possible.

[facebook.com/thegoodpeoplefund](https://facebook.com/thegoodpeoplefund)

## \*Salem Harvest

USA

*Harvesting Healthy Foods to Feed Hungry People*

A compassionate community of neighbors helping neighbors, the Oregon-based Salem Harvest connects farmers and backyard growers with volunteers to harvest fruits and vegetables that would otherwise go to waste. This win-win program in the fertile Willamette Valley allows volunteers, many of whom are food pantry clients themselves, to keep up to half of what they harvest, while the remaining produce is donated to local agencies. In just five years, a force of 2,600 volunteers has harvested and donated more than 500,000 pounds of fresh produce, earning Salem Harvest recognition as the largest community harvesting organization in Oregon.

One of the most active volunteers is **Elise Bauman**, whose dedication to the effort was deeply rooted in her own experiences as a young mother who struggled to find sufficient food for her family. With volunteer hours stretched to the limit and too much produce left unharvested because of insufficient manpower,

Salem Harvest wanted to create a more professional operation with a full-time executive director. Elise recently assumed that position and soon was organizing emergency harvests of summer fruit due to the Northwest’s unseasonably hot weather.

Our matching grant was directed to this new position, and we have already seen the benefits, as more volunteers and farmers enlist in the effort.

## Second Helpings Atlanta

USA

*Redistributing Food to Atlantans in Need*

What began more than a decade ago with **Guenther Hecht’s** work-related contact with Atlanta hunger organizations grew into his synagogue-sponsored Second Helpings Atlanta (SHA), a social action project that helps feed hungry city residents. Today, SHA is an independent organization with more than 300 volunteers who pick up and distribute food, primarily from local supermarkets and some restaurants, 364 days a year.

Our visit this past December was a case study in efficiency and mutual cooperation. Within 15 minutes of our arrival at one of several markets that donate to SHA, two volunteers drove up and immediately loaded their cars with box after box of fresh produce, prepared foods, meats and even beautiful flower arrangements. After a short ride to Malachi’s Storeroom in St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, the pantry volunteers helped us unload and weigh the day’s donation, nearly 1,000 pounds of nutritious food. Soon, another SHA volunteer arrived with her haul from a nearby Whole Foods. Every Wednesday, the pantry prepares a meal for more than 200 families (averaging 800-1,000 people) and also welcomes clients for a supermarket-like shopping experience.

We are excited to be part of a team of donors supporting SHA. Our grant has underwritten part of the salary for the group’s first full-time director, who is already expanding the number of volunteers and donor food establishments to help feed the more than 750,000 Atlantans who rely on outside resources.

## The Bagel Brigade

USA

*Distributing Leftover Baked Goods in LA*

Not many people who have reached retirement age would opt to volunteer for an organization that operates seven days a week, rain or shine. But that’s exactly what the dedicated volunteers from LA’s Bagel Brigade do as they gather leftovers from area bakeries, food markets and warehouse stores.

The Bagel Brigade is **Herman Berman’s** (z’l) legacy, built on a lifetime of good works inspired by his experience of hunger as a child. When Herman learned exactly how much leftover bread,



pastries and, yes, even the lowly bagel, were thrown away by stores every day, he felt compelled to do something. The Bagel Brigade was his response. As with most food recovery programs, the problem was not finding baked goods or hungry people who could benefit; it was getting the baked goods *to* those individuals. That is why the volunteers' efforts are so important.

We have witnessed the operation and can confirm that it is efficient, impactful and cost-effective. In fact, with minimal operating costs which we help underwrite, The Bagel Brigade rescues almost 1,000 large bags of baked goods weekly for a yearly total of more than \$300,000 worth of food. Their efforts are a testament to what a few people can do to benefit so many others.

## Village Harvest

USA

### *Creating Community While Harvesting Fruit*

Bet you can't guess how many delicious recipes you can prepare with fresh persimmons. More than a dozen, we learned, during last fall's visit to the West Coast to see **Craig Diserens** and his California-based Village Harvest in action. This backyard (and small orchard) gleaning effort gathers thousands of pounds of fresh fruit and distributes it to local hunger programs, where people who might not have the means to purchase costly produce can enjoy the seasonal bounty.

On the day of our visit, 15 volunteers led by a volunteer coordinator gathered at the local food agency and received instructions and maps to nearby homes, where they were to pick crate after crate of luscious persimmons. Armed with the food agency's van and equipped with all of the tools needed to carry out the mission—ladders, telescoping pickers to reach the highest branches, crates, gloves, rakes and more—in less than three hours we gleaned nearly 900 pounds of juicy persimmons.

Despite the ongoing drought, California is still the nation's fruit bowl, and Village Harvest is but one of many small efforts creatively tapping into this resource. As in the past, this year's donation helped underwrite the costs of a mini-conference where similar organizations gathered to discuss best practices in volunteer management, appropriate software, publicity and other concerns.

## Youngstown Community Food Bank

USA

### *Feeding Hungry Families in the Rust Belt*

Once a successful grocery store owner, **Joe Lordi** learned a hard lesson when he overexpanded his business during an economic downturn—he was forced into bankruptcy. Losing everything as his business failed taught him what it meant to be hungry, unable

to pay your bills, lose your home and watch your family suffer. His response? Creating the Youngstown Community Food Bank.

Joe approached local food stores and asked for donations, which quickly filled his station wagon. Other local families in similar circumstances benefited from the surplus, and the owner of a nearby property eventually offered a building free of charge if Joe wanted to start a more formal operation.

Today, more than 7,500 people benefit from Joe's simple operation. He supplies more than 100 local food pantries, and each Tuesday, like clockwork, people line up outside his door to fill shopping bags with whatever they need. In addition to donated dairy and other grocery items, local farmers contribute huge crates of fresh produce to help Joe's effort.

It is our pleasure to underwrite the cost of insurance for several used vehicles that help keep everything running smoothly.

## Solving Hunger in the Neighborhood

### Backpack Buddies

Necha Malka

Zehava and Karyn

USA

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ISR

These small programs are fine examples of how one individual or small group can make it possible for neighbors to have sufficient food in ways that are both creative and respectful.

When the members of Temple Shalom of Aberdeen, NJ heard about a similar award-winning program which provided backpacks filled with weekend food to students who relied on the federal breakfast and lunch program, they decided they could do this on the local level with the help of interested congregants. **Lou Schoen** and **Helene Monat** and the Temple's social action committee have spearheaded this simple effort for four years. Our grant which underwrites some of the food packed in the bags helps them reach thirty-five students in three area schools. Lou and Helene report that they receive ongoing requests from other communities on how they might best replicate the effort. Perhaps, you might even consider it in your community.

In Israel, **Shira Gilor**, a resident of Hashmonaim thought she knew her neighbors well until the day she was approached by a local mom. The woman confided that she did not have enough food for her children. Quietly, Shira delivered a package to the family, an event which became a personal turning point for her as she pondered the food waste she witnessed around her. Shira

knew that this woman was not necessarily an exception and so began her grassroots, neighborhood operation to secure food and feed her hungry neighbors very discreetly. Necha Malka (named for the mother of a generous community member who wanted to help Shira) serves 24 families vetted by local social workers. Volunteers facilitate the work and supermarket scrip (which we help underwrite) makes possible the purchase of any food that is not donated. Shira also benefits from our grantee, Gideon Ben Ami and his regular Sunday produce distribution.

**Karyn Gellman** (and **Zehava Taub** before she moved away) reside in Baka, one of Jerusalem's most affluent neighborhoods. When they learned from the nearby school that there were neighbors who struggled to put food on the table they thought they might help. They approached other families who agreed to volunteer as well as provide food and additional basic items on a monthly basis, and the program was born. Today, about ten families receive this simple but important boost which is enhanced at holiday time with supermarket scrip we have purchased on their behalf.

## KIDS

### Art Creation Foundation for Children

*Using the Arts to Help Haiti's Children*

USA

Haiti is known for its warm weather, sandy beaches and gracious people. It is also known for its extreme poverty. But in the city of Jacmel, a group of children from impoverished families will know a different reality because of their association with Art Creation Foundation for Children (ACFFC).

Begun in 2003 by a small group that included **Judy Hoffman**, a frequent visitor to the island who despaired over the children begging on every corner, ACFFC empowers children in need through art and education. The program provides its students with scholarships, art instruction, tutoring, medical care, daily food and water and leadership training. Families are involved so that they can also benefit and instill these values in the home. What began as a three-day per week program with only eight children is now a daily program involving 100 children and teens in a permanent building.

While evidence of the programs' success can be found in the spectacular mosaic murals throughout Jacmel as well as locations beyond Haiti, the true measure is the community and sense of security and possibility that ACFFC instills in the children. Our grants that underwrite food and scholarships help ACFFC raise a group of dynamic thinkers, talented artists and role models who represent hope and the key to a brighter future for Haiti.

### \*Baby Bank

*Serving Seattle's Impoverished Infants and Children*

USA

As the co-founder of one of Seattle's oldest and busiest non-profits that provided for the needs of newborns and toddlers of impoverished families, **Jeannie Jaybush** was committed to her mission. With major administrative changes afoot in her original organization, Jeannie started anew this past year by opening Baby Bank. This young program, powered by Jeannie's passion, spirit and commitment fulfills the immediate, unmet physical needs of infants and young children living in poverty. For families in the Seattle area with a new baby, who cannot afford necessary supplies such as diapers, car seats, bottles and more, she remains an invaluable resource.

We underwrote the cost of a storage space (as well as nursing bras for low-income moms) for donated baby items. Upon receiving her non-profit determination notice, Jeannie wrote, "Thank you so much for all of your help. There wouldn't be a Baby Bank without you!" Actually, Jeannie, there wouldn't be a Baby Bank without you and your devotion to the smallest and most vulnerable living in Seattle.

### Beit Hayaed

*Caring for Orphaned or At-Risk Children*

ISR

Real family does not come from your blood. It is the people standing beside you when no one else is.

By this modern definition of family, the children of Beit Hayaed group home in Israel have definitely been blessed with a real family. Removed from their biological parents at a young age by the courts, these at-risk children ended up in the loving care of **Yitz Feigenbaum** and **Irit Zuker**, co-founders of *Beit Hayaed* located on *Kibbutz Merav*. While all of the children's basic needs were certainly provided for, Yitz and Irit gave so much more. Twenty one years of commitment to two groups of children has produced young men and women—most of them now adults—with a good education, stable careers and some who are even raising their own families.

After graduation this year Irit and Yitz have turned their focus to working with the Beit Hayaed graduates, while the *kibbutz* will bring in other staff to welcome a new group of children. Over the years it has been our privilege to help Yitz and Irit as they raised these kids. Every Bar or Bat Mitzvah, wedding, new baby or career success seemed in some way our *simcha* as well. This year, as in the past several years, our funds made it possible for the children to receive ongoing psychological counseling to help them heal from the trauma and abuse that was part of their lives before finding a home and family at *Beit Hayaed*.

## Birthday Angels

*Empowering and Celebrating Kids in Israel*

It all began with birthday parties for kids who rarely if ever celebrate because the cost is beyond their family's means, but today **Ruthie Sobel Luttenberg's** creation, Birthday Angels, is so much more. Trained as an informal education professional, Ruthie once ran a business that provided elaborate high-end birthday parties for families with exceptional means. The longer she ran this business the more it bothered her that there were thousands of Israeli children who never celebrated a birthday at all and that was when she decided to change that reality by founding Birthday Angels. With the help of a national mentoring program whose participants run the parties, and an amazing birthday party kit (which we helped fund) that Ruthie herself created, tens of thousands of children have now enjoyed the birthday experience.

Not satisfied with just providing kids with parties, Ruthie then went on to develop two additional programs, Teen Angel and Design for Change. Teen Angels is a service learning program that trains youth (many themselves kids-at-risk) to facilitate parties in their own neighborhoods. More than forty groups now operate throughout the country benefiting both the birthday celebrant *and* the volunteers who gain self-esteem and important leadership skills. Design for Change is based upon a model developed in India which empowers kids to identify ways they would like to change the world around them and then gives them the tools to do just that.

Each of these programs is the product of Ruthie's extraordinarily creative mind and each helps kids, often the most vulnerable, overcome some of life's hardest challenges.

**"No, this is the fast I desire... it is to share your bread with the hungry..."**

*Isaiah 58:6-7*

## Breaking the Chain Through Education

*Rescuing Enslaved Children in Ghana*

How did a humble history teacher in New Jersey come to rescue enslaved kids in Ghana? Meet **Evan Robbins**, founder of Breaking the Chain through Education (BTCTE). It takes a very special person with compassion, selflessness, commitment and a creative mind to choose this path. Evan has not only rescued dozens of Ghanaian children, but also inspired a generation of students in his classroom to pursue social justice.

**ISR**

Astonished by an exposé in the *New York Times* describing the exploitation of children sold by their parents into slavery to fisherman in the Lake Volta region of Ghana, Evan decided to teach his students about the atrocity. Those profound lessons about human rights soon morphed into school-wide fundraisers to rescue trafficked children in Ghana, and ultimately led to the formation of Breaking the Chain through Education, dedicated to eradicating child slavery in Ghana. To date, BTCTE has successfully freed 51 children, with some of those rescues facilitated by our matching grant. Another 250 children in a remote area attend a newly built school as part of an exchange that BTCTE negotiated to protect local children from being sold into slavery.

## Creating Connected Communities

*Developing Young Leaders Through Outreach*

About twenty years ago, Amy Sacks (now **Amy Sacks Zeide**), then age 12, was stunned to learn that holiday toys were stolen from a local shelter. She immediately donated some funds to help replace them. The next year, for her bat mitzvah project, she organized Amy's Holiday Party, which brought together kids from local social service agencies for a fun day that ended with gifts of toys and games.

Amy's interest in helping kids led her to found Creating Connected Communities (CCC) in Atlanta in 2010. CCC trains local teens in leadership skills, with a special focus on homelessness and advocacy. The program connects teens seeking meaningful volunteer opportunities with disadvantaged kids who greatly benefit from those relationships.

The holiday party is one facet of the year-long leadership training. Nearly 2,000 volunteer hours go into planning the party, which offers multiple activities, such as face-painting, cookie decorating, all manner of arts and crafts and, of course, age-appropriate gifts. Our funds made possible the expansion of CCC's program so that even more children could benefit.

## Kaima

*Organic Farming as Alternative Education*

*I can't believe I wake up (at 6:30!) to begin the day, excited for all that can happen. This is a brand new feeling for me. Maybe there is a future and some hope for me in it.*

This young man is fortunate to be part of Kaima, a sustainable organic farm that brings youth who struggle in traditional settings to the farm to learn about business practices, agriculture, the environment and perhaps, most importantly, themselves. The founders of Kaima, headed by **Yoni Yefet-Reich** are all social

**USA**

**USA**

**ISR**



entrepreneurs, many with extensive experience working with youth. Unlike traditional programs, Kaima focuses on a model that emphasizes empowerment and instills within its participants the idea that they have the ability to shape their own lives. Farm operations are developed and managed by the kids along with the staff which teaches them how to interact with their peers and adults in a positive way. In fact, part of our donation underwrote the purchase of several chicks while the design and building of the chicken coop was actually undertaken by the young farmers.

We first met Yoni a few short years ago in a rock-strewn field not yet cleared for farming. Now so much has changed as the farm expands and more youth are engaged. Their economic operation based upon a successful model sometimes referred to as a social business, proves that community-supported agriculture (CSA), (friends and neighbors of the farm purchase shares and in return receive weekly packages of produce) can reduce the need for outside philanthropic investment.

## Leveling the Playing Field

*Sports for Everyone*

USA

The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) in suburban Maryland was looking for a way to not only engage the kids in their substance abuse prevention/sex education program, but also to attract new participants. Perhaps a sports program like soccer would help get the kids involved? **Max Levitt** and Leveling the Playing Field responded by providing soccer balls, cleats, shin guards, socks, goals and jerseys for new Wednesday afternoon games. In just two months, LAYC had an abundance of new attendees who wanted to participate and, equally as important, parents were suddenly engaged in their kids' activities, a significant challenge until then.

The power of sports to impact young people in positive ways was something Max learned from an early age. Sports-related activities were always a significant part of his life. While attending Syracuse University, he was the football team's equipment manager, an experience that opened his eyes to the extraordinary excess of equipment found in formal programs as well as in many households. These experiences inspired Max to begin Leveling the Playing Field (LPF) which collects used and new equipment and gets it to kids who would not otherwise experience the many benefits of sports activities—better grades, better health, team skills and so much more. As Max's program experiences significant growth our matching grant has allowed this one-man operation to add another staff person ensuring more equipment drives, greater visibility and more equipment for cash-strapped programs.

## S.A.H.I.

*Empowering Troubled Youth Through Compassion and Giving*

ISR

When we first met **Oded Weiss, Avraham Hayon** and **Anat Birnboim**, the visionaries behind this organization dedicated to helping kids-at-risk, we did not fully grasp the impact and scope of their work which they describe as “giving as a way of life”. During this past winter's visit to Israel we actually experienced S.A.H.I.'s activities and it all came into focus perfectly. On a bitter windy night in one of Jerusalem's poorer neighborhoods, we witnessed teens gather in a local community center. Most wore sweatshirts bearing the S.A.H.I. logo and there was a sense of camaraderie within the group. After a discussion led by adult volunteers that centered on values and community the group disbursed to assemble food packages which they would later deliver anonymously and under darkness of night to neighbors they themselves have identified as being in need. As we participated in the actual distribution, going from house to house, we came to understand the power behind S.A.H.I.'s model.

Empowering youth by the very act of giving to others is a model that promotes self-esteem, a sense of belonging, and has a positive ripple effect that actually changes the wider community. Activities are not limited to food distribution but include other “giving” activities that the kids themselves have identified—construction of a handicap ramp at a local synagogue, direct help to Shoah survivors, visiting shut-ins and more. In fact, during this past winter's severe snow storm that struck the city, S.A.H.I. participants were enlisted to reach out to isolated neighbors and in one case actually saved an elder's life.

There are now eighteen S.A.H.I. groups (which provide food for about 2,000 people weekly) impacting at least 500 young people with requests for additional groups coming from municipalities around the country. With a goal that so closely mirrors our own, the act of giving, we are proud to direct our grant to the costs of a unit leader in the South where several programs operate.

## Shutaf

*Redefining Inclusion and Community for Kids in Jerusalem*

ISR

Inclusive...Interactive...Inspiring. These three words could easily be the tagline for Shutaf, a Jerusalem-based inclusionary after-school and camp program for children and teens with and without disabilities. Ironically, as fitting as these “I” words may be to describe this winning program, there is nothing “I” about Shutaf. It is really all about the “We”. **Miriam Avraham** and **Beth Steinberg**, two Jerusalem moms who each have special needs kids lamented the dearth of meaningful opportunities for



their children. Rather than just identify the void, they teamed up to fill it. This joint effort began in 2007 as a summer program with 10 children and has today evolved into a finely tuned, thriving organization that provides enrichment experiences for more than 150 children, *both* special needs *and* typical.

Shutaf programs encourage diversity, welcome children from across the religious and economic spectrum and provide opportunities for growth, friendship and learning through the classic line-up of camp activities. A visit to Shutaf is always an experience in organized chaos and fun. Kids who otherwise would remain isolated can feel good about themselves and are part of a supportive community, while other kids learn lessons of tolerance and celebrate differences. That is the magic of Shutaf and the prime reason we offer funds for both programming and administrative needs.

**“Raise up a child in the way he  
should follow and even in old age  
he will not depart from it.”**

*Proverbs 22:6*

## The Quincy Kids

*Students Helping Kids Around the World*

## USA

For anyone who ever challenged the belief that kids could change the world, all it takes is one close look at The Quincy Kids from Broad Meadows Middle School in Quincy, MA to prove otherwise. Their story dates back to 1994, when Iqbal Masih visited their school. Iqbal was a young Pakistani child who had been released from a life of bondage weaving intricate carpets while chained to a loom. He spoke passionately about the evils of child labor.

When the students learned, several months later, that Iqbal had been murdered upon his return to Pakistan, they began the campaign to keep Iqbal’s memory alive. It was this young crusader’s message about the central role of education in ending child slavery that inspired the kids’ initial fundraising efforts to build a schoolhouse in Iqbal’s memory in the remote village where he was born.

Today, more than 20 years later, the kids are part of Operation Day’s Work (ODW), one of the most successful youth-activist movements in the country. Guided by their dedicated teacher and role model, **Ron Adams**, students from Broad Meadows (and other schools) request applications from international child welfare organizations, evaluate those proposals and ultimately

vote on which they will fund. Youth from Haiti, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Nepal and Bangladesh have all benefited.

The latest campaign was dedicated to help children in Uganda, where the funds raised (about \$15,000) are helping orphans with nutritious food, seeds for planting, livestock to grow, education and more. Our role in the kids’ campaign was to provide the “tools” to carry out their work so successfully. Paper, markers, postage and poster board can create a lot of good.

## Tzimaon

## ISR

*Creating a More Equal Society in Israel through Education*

In Israel, as in the United States, the gap between those who prosper and those who struggle to make it through each day is wide and growing wider. **Shlomo Artzi**, his wife **Michal**, and some friends were deeply troubled by that chasm. They felt the income disparity did not reflect the Israel they recalled from their youth. The challenge was how to change that reality.

Education became their primary focus when they founded Tzimaon in 2005. As the years have passed, the all-volunteer group has evolved. Programs began in Givat Olga, a poor neighborhood within the city of Hadera, where Tzimaon’s scholarships, tutoring, food distribution, leadership courses and several other community programs have touched many youth and made it possible for them to lift themselves out of poverty.

More recently, the group has focused on the huge refugee population living in South Tel Aviv, where poverty, discrimination and despair prevail. Much has been written about the tens of thousands of African refugees struggling to make a life there. Tzimaon’s efforts are directed to the many toddlers who attend the *ganim* (daycare centers) in the area. Sadly, sub-standard conditions in these centers have resulted in the deaths of some children, while others survive on minimal diets devoid of any proper nutrition. Our matching grant has underwritten the cost of a healthy lunch each day, which includes chicken and fresh vegetables. We are thrilled that the “circle of vegetable eaters” has grown since the program began.

## WOMENS' EMPOWERMENT

### \*Ba'asher Telchi

ISR

*Navigating Haredi Women through Divorce*

Her story is one far too common today in the religious world. **Fainy Sukenik** was a young Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) woman with three small children when she realized that she must leave her abusive marriage. With little cooperation from religious courts, alienated by her community, Fainy struggled with her new reality of social isolation. Through sheer perseverance and with great courage, she ultimately succeeded in acquiring her *get* (religious divorce), continued on with her life and eventually remarried.

Had Fainy not cared about remaining within her community, the decision to divorce might not have been so challenging, but she did not want to give up her beliefs and all that was familiar to her. Aware of the many other women caught in similar circumstances, Fainy vowed to help them by founding Ba'asher Telchi (from the biblical story of Ruth, "wherever you will go, I will go") in 2013. Drawing on her own experiences, Fainy built a multi-prong program that provides legal and financial advice (40 pro bono lawyers and rabbis have been enlisted to help), psychological counseling and socialization to remove the stigma of divorce and isolation. As word about the organization has spread, Fainy has heard from hundreds of women. Currently, 150 women receive services throughout Israel.

After meeting Fainy in Israel last winter, we immediately understood why she has been identified as a leader in the Haredi community and invited to partake in a prestigious leadership training program. Our funds, directed towards part-time administrative assistance as well as program expenses, will provide the necessary resources for Fainy to expand her work.

### \*Druze Association for Developing Foreign Relations, Culture and Education

ISR

*Empowering Druze Women*

When we were asked to meet with a Druze community leader in Israel last February, we were happy to discover another inspiring individual whose greatest joy in life is helping people. **Samih Halibi** and his dedicated wife, **Nihaia**, have been actively assisting fellow Druze citizens in the city of Daliyat al Carmel for many years. Druze countrymen have been dedicated defenders of the State of Israel, and Samih and his children have all served with distinction in the IDF.

Samih's dream was to select 15 to 20 women between the ages of 30 and 40 and introduce them to modern technology in a 12-session course held at a local college. For many Druze women leading isolated lives, email, creating word documents, even introduction to the internet can open up a world of possibilities. Can you imagine getting through life today without these tools? We were excited to fund the course and make Samih's dream possible.

### Get Jewish Divorce Justice

USA

*Preventing Abuse in the Jewish Divorce Process Through Education and Advocacy*

Imagine being the catalyst for change that frees women from a destructive marriage that they cannot escape. In every way, this honor belongs to **Esther Macner**, an attorney who moved to Los Angeles several years ago and founded Get Jewish Divorce Justice (GJDDJ). The only West-Coast based organization aimed at eliminating abuse in the Jewish divorce process, GJDDJ helps women chained to dead marriages (known as *agunot*) obtain a *get*, the traditional document that terminates a Jewish marriage given exclusively by the husband and often withheld as a bargaining chip. Just before *Pesach*, during a moving event, Esther and her small group were able to celebrate the release of ten women, each recently granted her *get* after many years of struggle.

This pioneering organization deters abuse in the Jewish divorce process by working with rabbis, attorneys and educators to intervene on behalf of current victims of *get* refusal. They also instruct prospective brides to avoid becoming future victims through preventive measures such as Jewish pre-nuptial agreements, or an alternative agreement to resolve extreme cases where the husband refuses to cooperate but cannot be found. And finally, GJDDJ has designed curricula for high school and college students to raise awareness of the problem.

With Esther's recent report that the *Bet Din* of America has replaced the official pre-nuptial agreement with a version that she and a team of California attorneys drafted—and that the standard version has been revised for all States—we know that our support of Esther's efforts in the form of a matching grant has brought about significant reform for Orthodox women, not only in California, but nationwide.

## Unchained At Last

USA

*Support for Women Leaving Arranged/Forced Marriages*

When Laleh was only 15, her parents married her off to someone she barely knew—not an unusual arrangement in the Middle Eastern country where she lived. Soon after, she immigrated with her husband and his family to the U.S., where they subjected Laleh to repeated physical and emotional abuse. They even told her that the police regularly attacked young girls, hoping to prevent her from seeking help. After two years, Laleh managed to make her way to a shelter where officials heard her story and reached out to **Fraidy Reiss**, founder of Unchained At Last.

Stories like Laleh's are not unusual; many cultures promote such marriages. Fraidy herself fled an abusive arranged marriage, which prompted her to found an organization dedicated to helping women in similar circumstances. Unchained At Last has brought hope to a little-known but significant problem here in the U.S. Thousands of people (predominantly women) are subjected to these arranged/forced marriages, living in accord with religious laws and social customs that make divorce nearly impossible.

Unchained At Last not only provides pro bono legal assistance and emotional support, but also advocates to change laws that make these coercive marriages possible. The fact that Fraidy and her committed volunteers manage to accomplish what they do with only one full-time employee amazes us; that's why we have dedicated our funds to that position.

**“...many women have done well,  
but you surpass them all!”**

*Proverbs 31:29*

## Yotsrot—Turning the Tables

ISR

*Training and Empowerment of Women Exiting  
the Cycle of Prostitution*

Some people get their best ideas in the shower while for others it can be a long run in the park. For **Lilach Tsur Ben-Moshe** it was her walk to work each day that opened her eyes to one of Tel Aviv's most significant social problems. Long interested in feminist issues, Lilach used her fashion and sewing background as a volunteer in a women's shelter and also helped out at a local rape crisis center. With that in mind it was no surprise that the sight of a thriving prostitution business in the area troubled her

and inspired her to think about how she could change the reality for women trapped in this world.

*Hofchot et L'Yotsrot* or Turning the Tables was Lilach's response. This young organization provides vocational training and economic empowerment to women who want to escape and in a relatively short time has grown to the point that the studio now operates seven days a week with dozens of women participating in the program. A visit to Yotsrot's busy studio this past winter was inspiring. In addition to the sight of women sitting at machines creating beautiful items, were several clothing racks filled with finished garments. One woman has been so successful that her clothing line actually launched this year and others have created signature items that are beginning to catch on. With a new branch opening in Haifa we have underwritten the cost of the vocational counselor who directs the program.

## ALTERNATIVE HEALING OF BODY AND MIND

### HAMA (Israel)

ISR

### Humans and Animals in Mutual Assistance

*Animal-Assisted Therapy*

Imagine living in a community where the sights and sounds of incoming rockets are with you day after day, month after month, both in times of declared war and times of peace. For the children in and around Kfar Darom in the Western Negev, this is reality—a reality that has left many of them with severe PTSD, unable to function in school or at home.

**Avshalom Beni**, the dynamic founder of HAMA (Israel) Humans and Animals in Mutual Assistance, knew that his program could help these children find some relief. HAMA harnesses the unique bond between animals and humans in a therapeutic technique that reduces emotional pain for many different types of problems.

With our funding and the help of Shay Agmon, one of Avshalom's most accomplished students in the animal therapy course he teaches at Hebrew University's Machon Magid, students from several border communities were able to benefit. Shay's unique methods blend art, music and animal assisted therapy techniques. Over the course of 20 weeks, children previously unable to express their fears through traditional means were freed from some of the trauma that haunts them.

## INTRA

## Israel National Therapeutic Riding Association

*Therapeutic Horseback Riding for People with Disabilities*

*I have started to come to INTRA. The first time I came there I didn't want to ride, I just wanted to walk in the dark with a horse; it seemed to find its way to my soul. I am not missing a visit, I am now riding the horse, and I am beginning to feel relaxed...*

The Israeli soldier who shared these thoughts served in Gaza during Operation Protective Edge and returned home to his family emotionally paralyzed by his experiences. He found relief and healing at INTRA-Israel National Therapeutic Riding Association. **Anita Shkedi**, who founded INTRA with her husband, **Giora**, many years ago, is one of the foremost researchers on the use of therapeutic riding with PTSD patients like this soldier. Her ground-breaking work is shared in lectures she delivers around the world.

If you put someone who is *physically disabled* atop a horse, the animal's stride stimulates muscles and nerves that may be unaffected by traditional therapy. For those struggling with PTSD, the unique animal-human bond promotes self-confidence, relaxation, discipline and many more benefits. In the past our funds have helped several veterans with PTSD, some suffering since the Yom Kippur War. This year's grant was directed to help more veterans.

Lev Leytzan-Heart of A Clown USA  
*Clowning as a Therapeutic Tool*

*As we were joking back and forth with another hospice patient, she sheepishly admitted to us that chewing bubble gum and blowing bubbles was her favorite thing to do. I offered to blow her some soap bubbles, but every time I tried, the bubble burst. As I kept trying . . . and making fun of myself along the way, the woman said, "That's ok, it doesn't matter. Nothing really matters any more but being good with God. And that you're here."*

Interactions like this one between a medical clown and hospice patient are what Lev Leytzan (Heart of a Clown) is all about. Founded by **Dr. Neal Goldberg** in 2004, the NY-based program brings therapeutic clowning to those who are sick or infirm, proving that sometimes all it takes is a healthy dose of laughter and joy to lift spirits and even boost the healing process. Lev Leytzan clowns undergo rigorous training to prepare for this therapeutic role in collaboration with medical personnel, mental health professionals and professional clowns.

## ISR

We directed our grant this year toward Neal's latest initiative, Medical Clowns on Rounds!, which brings the program to homebound and hospice patients, with the support of specialized ElderHearts™ clowns who evoke memories of those afflicted with Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Poignant testimonials from those who interface with the clowns speak to Lev Leytzan's continued success. So do the numbers: Nearly 900 individuals from NYC and beyond, both young and old and across affiliations, have benefited from the good cheer, compassion and embrace of a medical clown.

**"You shall not insult the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind."**

*Leviticus 19:14*

## Music &amp; Memory

## USA

*Bringing Personalized Music to Elders through Digital Technology*

Revolution! While all our programs have a significant impact on the people they serve, only rarely can we declare one of our grantees responsible for setting a trend. Music & Memory falls into this rare category, leading a revolution in how care organizations help people with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and other cognitive and physical challenges.

Back in 2006, **Dan Cohen** began to wonder what would happen if he couldn't hear his favorite '60s music if he ever had to live in a nursing home. Combining his social work and technology background, he had a brainstorm to introduce iPods loaded with personalized playlists to residents of a local New York nursing home, where he volunteered. The rest, as they say, is history. The outgrowth of that experiment, Music & Memory, has been implemented by more than 1,600 care organizations in every state (seven of which have officially made the personalized music program a priority in nursing homes statewide), throughout Canada, in Australia, Denmark, England, the Netherlands and Israel. The benefits are enormous. Many participants who formerly were unable to communicate have regained the ability to talk and socialize, are calmer and able to tap cherished memories. Preliminary research indicates that personalized music may also contribute to a decrease in the use of psychotropic drugs, avoiding detrimental side effects and saving millions in medication costs.

Our funding to Music & Memory was directed to create the Music Therapy Support Line, a pilot project that gives MUSIC & MEMORY<sup>SM</sup> Care Organizations access to professional music



therapists who help troubleshoot difficult cases. Lessons learned from this project will help expand the personalized music revolution.

## Shelter Music Boston

USA

*Feeding the Souls of Boston's Homeless Shelter Residents*

Researchers have long found that music can have a profound effect on people's well-being. If you are a concert-goer, think back to the last time you sat in a concert hall or other music venue and were transported to a different place by the performance.

Concert violinist **Julie Leven** knows firsthand the significant benefits that music can offer. Her love of music, combined with a strong interest in social justice, inspired her to found Shelter Music Boston (SMB), which brings the power and peace of music to people who find themselves in the city's homeless shelters. It's no wonder that Julie often hears comments like, "The music captured my emotions and transformed rage to peace. Thank you." SMB provides monthly, professional concerts in seven shelters throughout the city. A group of twelve musicians (who are compensated for their work) attend regular rehearsals and interact with the audience both during and after each performance. Many, like Julie, admit that this is among their most meaningful professional experiences. We are excited about supporting an organization that enables individuals living on the very edge to feel that "the music reminds me that I am still human, and renews my ambition to resolve my circumstances."

## Tunefoolery Music, Inc.

USA

*Music as a Pathway to Healing*

Music can be an important tool in helping people recover from illnesses or personal challenges; some of the very programs we describe here focus on just that. Tunefoolery Music takes that idea one step further. Founded and managed today by *musicians who are themselves in mental health recovery*, the Boston-based group offers more than 50 artists the means to achieve personal stability and recovery by using their musical skills and creativity.

Artists perform at numerous venues throughout the city and beyond, proving that mental illness should not define who a person is. In fact, over the years, more than 200,000 people have attended Tunefoolery performances. As one musician shared, *Doing something well makes me feel better about myself. Now I have places to go, things to do. I watch less TV, feel less depressed. I have learned assertiveness, trust in myself and dealing with the public.*

With outcomes like that, we have offered Tunefoolery leadership extensive mentoring as well as funds to continue to build a sustainable model.

# LITERACY

## \*Barbershop Books

USA

*Enhancing Literacy for Young Boys*

Growing up in the Deep South, **Alvin Irby** never enjoyed reading, despite his mother's efforts to encourage him to practice this critical skill, until he reached high school and discovered the magic in books. Now with multiple advanced degrees in education as well as experience as an early childhood educator, Alvin hopes to inspire young African American boys to love books. So in 2013, he began Barbershop Books in New York City as a community-based literacy program that creates child-friendly reading spaces in neighborhood barbershops for boys aged four to eight. The program gives boys greater access to engaging, age-appropriate books and encourages them to read for fun, outside classroom walls.

In African American communities, the barbershop is often a neighborhood hub. Unlike school-based or library-based literacy programs, Barbershops Books brings carefully selected children's books into a male-centered, supportive cultural environment. With a disproportionate number of African American kids lacking access to books, bookshelves in barbershops are a creative solution to closing the literacy gap. The program not only fosters a critical association between books and a child's identity, but also enhances the reading journey by giving young boys important adult male role models who might otherwise be missing from their lives.

With reading spaces now set up in six barbershops in Harlem and Brooklyn, reaching more than 240 boys annually, Alvin has expanded his portable library to even more locations citywide, with our matching grant.

## \*Caravan to Class

USA

*Bringing Literacy to Timbuktu*

Californian **Barry Hoffner** enjoyed foreign travel and lived overseas for many years before returning to the States. The storied past of Timbuktu, Mali, in West Africa, held particular appeal. So when the time came to celebrate his 50th birthday, a trip to a music festival in Timbuktu seemed like an exciting way to commemorate this milestone.

What came from that trip could never have been anticipated. While there, Barry traveled to nearby villages and learned of the staggering illiteracy rates, in some cases as high as 90 percent. Back home, he thought about this injustice and decided to gather family and friends to help him underwrite the cost of a new school

in one particular village. Joining forces with a local NGO that facilitated construction, Barry was surprised by how smoothly the entire process went and soon founded Caravan to Class, to help other villages nearby. It costs about \$120 annually to educate a child in a government-approved school, so Barry knew that there would be considerable return on the investment, with many children becoming the first in their family to attain literacy.

Our funding is directed toward two new schools in nearby villages.

## Change the Truth

USA

*Providing Opportunities for Children in Uganda*

How many of us have spent long days trekking around college campuses with our kids? Think about what that might be like for kids in Uganda, where going to college is almost unheard of. Unless you are one of the lucky kids who are part of the Saint Mary Kevin orphanage that our grantee, Change the Truth, supports.

**Gloria Baker Feinstein**, a professional photographer, founded the program several years ago when she visited the region while on a photojournalism trip. Witnessing the extraordinary number of children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic, Gloria felt unsettled and wanted to do more. That “more” was founding Change the Truth, which provides these kids with food, scholarships, books, a library, music education, medical care and other essentials.

Over the years, we have underwritten enrichment programming held during holidays and between terms for the upper school students. This past year we also made it possible for 13 upper classmen to visit Makerere University, Uganda’s largest university, where they could experience college life and hear from former orphanage students now enrolled in the school. By all accounts, the 13 seniors came away motivated and inspired to work hard to eventually gain acceptance to this fine school—a dream otherwise impossible without Change the Truth’s commitment.

## Reading Village

USA

*Promoting Literacy in Rural Guatemala*

What would life be like if you couldn’t read? Could you hold a job? Dream about the future? In the rural villages of Guatemala, the literacy rate is nearly the lowest in the Western Hemisphere, and the indigenous people don’t imagine a life without reading—they live it. Books and libraries are scarce and school systems substandard.

When **Linda Smith**, perennial volunteer and activist, traveled to Guatemala to learn Spanish, she sensed a hopelessness and despair that permeated a place where the majority of its people could not read. Fueled by the desire to foster hope and change,

Linda began Reading Village in 2006 and has been transforming lives through literacy ever since.

Reading Village’s core program, *Leaders and Readers*, enlists Mayan teenagers to serve as “reading promoters.” The teens run weekly reading circles for children, giving them the opportunity to read aloud, a skill that has proven to be a cornerstone of literacy. In exchange for their volunteer efforts, the teens receive scholarships (which we help fund) to complete high school, as well as mentoring and leadership training. Operating in four villages, Reading Village has empowered 78 teens to help more than 4,500 children. A recent evaluation of sixth graders in each of these communities revealed enhanced reading comprehension as well as a greater love for and more habitual reading.

## \*Sulam L’Atid

ISR

*Tutoring and Food for At-Risk Teens in Exchange for Reduced Work Schedules*

Retired judge, **Gary T’har Lev**, began this all-volunteer organization to assist bright, disadvantaged teenagers who must help support their families by working long hours while still in school. Often this work schedule interferes with the kids’ chances to succeed in school and their successful completion of their *bagrut* (final exams upon completion of high school). Kids who commit to reducing their work schedules and attend tutoring with qualified volunteers receive vouchers to purchase food at neighborhood markets. The close cooperation that Gary has developed with parents, school administrators, teachers and volunteer tutors ensures each child’s success.

With such a simple model we were excited to offer funds to cover the costs of 4 new students (for a 4 month period).

# POVERTY

## Family-to-Family

USA

*Providing Hunger Relief and More to Profoundly Poor American Families*

It was a news article describing hunger in a rural American town that inspired **Pam Koner** to found Family-to-Family (FtF) in 2003. While the original program matched “families with more” to “families with less” through a sponsorship program, today FtF is that and so much more.

What continues to impress us about this visionary’s work is her extraordinary creativity. Kids from poor families can’t afford a birthday party? The Birthday Party Project with its “party-in-a-box” enables generous donors to put a smile on a child’s face.

Want to provide literacy opportunities to kids whose families might not have the extra money to buy books? One Book at a Time lets you underwrite the cost of a book sent each month to a child whose hungry mind will grow with this nourishment. Want to help families feel good about personal appearance? “Shower to the People” shows you how a group can collect personal hygiene items, which are then distributed to families and individuals in need. Pam’s ideas are endless; her spirit and enthusiasm equally so.

To manage all of these projects and more, Pam works out of her home office, assisted by a few dedicated part-time staff. Our funds offset the costs of this essential help.

## **Gabriel Project Mumbai** **USA** *Poverty, Hunger and Education in the Mumbai Slums*

After numerous business trips to Mumbai, **Jacob Sztokman** could not get over the visions of extraordinary poverty and deprivation that he witnessed on his travels. He dreamed of helping the children in the slums, kids he so aptly refers to as “on the margins of the margins of society.”

He started Gabriel Project Mumbai (GPM) in 2012 to foster health, nutrition, literacy and empowerment. Children who attend class are assured a healthy meal prepared by local women who receive micro loans to assist them in their catering business. We like to call this the perfect trifecta—kids are fed, literacy grows and women gain a modest income. GPM’s impact is even greater because Jacob recruits young adults from around the world to participate in this service learning program that benefits all involved.

This past year, Jacob came to us with the idea of adding fresh fruit to the kids’ diets, something they have never enjoyed, which can only enhance their health. Our matching grant has given 1,000 children the opportunity to enjoy “an apple a day.” A second matching grant underwrote additional food.

## **\*Hope and Comfort** **USA** *Bringing Dignity through Personal Care Items*

What began as a way to teach their two-year-old the importance of helping others while she celebrated her own birthday turned into a profound life lesson for **Jeff Feingold**, his wife and their children. Rather than buy a gift, guests were asked to bring new clothing, school supplies, toys and toiletries to meet the needs of low income families in and around Boston. Jeff and his kids delivered the collection to a nearby organization, where he learned how seemingly small items such as soap, shampoo and toothpaste could boost an individual’s dignity and self-esteem, as well as general health.

Despite significant career responsibilities, Jeff began Hope and Comfort in 2011. To date, tens of thousands of basic personal care products have been distributed to homeless and needy adults and children through local partner organizations and across the country. Hope and Comfort now works with the Boston Public Schools, the Boys and Girls Club of Boston and even the New England Patriots’ Fantasy Day, when fans and players assembled hygiene kits (toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant and toothbrushes), which were used as teaching tools in local health education classes. As the organization has grown, a rented warehouse space has replaced the Feingold’s garage, allowing volunteers to drop off donated supplies as well as pack up the hygiene kits in a more suitable setting. Our grant funded a part-time outreach coordinator who will be responsible for organizing additional drives, identifying new potential donors and introducing Hope and Comfort to a wider audience.

**“For there will never cease to be  
needy ones in your land which is why I  
command you: open your hand to the  
poor and needy kinsmen in your land.”**

*Deuteronomy 15:11*

## **Kentucky** **USA** *Reaching Out To An Impoverished Community in Appalachia*

Our trip to McRoberts, Kentucky this past June was our sixth since we were first introduced to the region in 2010. In fact, we’ve made the trek for so many years that it is becoming more difficult to distinguish each trip and the good that comes from our visits. Adults, college students, physicians, even volunteer dentists on this last trip, always accompany us and all agree that the work that we do and the interactions we have are among the most transformative experiences imaginable. The core group is composed of members of Congregation B’nai Israel in Millburn, NJ and Congregation Shaarai Shomayim in Lancaster, PA. They bring with them building skills, nursing and education expertise and perhaps more important, hope and compassion for the residents of this isolated region.

This year’s building project was the design and construction of a handicap ramp for John, a young man with multiple sclerosis confined to his hilltop home due to limited access to the driveway below the home’s main entrance. This was surely the most meaningful project we have ever attempted as well as the most challenging in terms of engineering and building skills. And yet, after three days of digging, measuring and digging some more, the

ramp's shape was visible. Six weeks later the crew from Lancaster arrived to complete the job and finally John was able to leave his home in a safe and comfortable manner.

As in the past, the crew also unloaded a 53 foot trailer filled with food donated by another grantee, Joe Lordi from Youngstown Community Food Bank. With the help of **Susie** and **Everett Duncan**, our contacts in McRoberts, we are also able to provide food to ten families each month, all purchased and distributed by the Everetts who give true meaning to the term "good neighbors."

**Meet some of our Good People here:**  
**[www.youtube.com/goodpeoplefund](http://www.youtube.com/goodpeoplefund)**

## **Keren Segulat Naomi** **ISR** ***The Rabbanit Kapach: A One-Woman Social Service Agency***

Nestled in the narrow streets of the now-gentrified Nahlaot neighborhood in Jerusalem was a house known by most of the city's cab drivers as "the Rabbanit's". For decades, actually from the time she was a pre-teen (and a new immigrant from Yemen), the **Rabbanit Bracha Kapach** (z'l) tirelessly cared for the city's weakest and most forgotten residents in creative and impactful ways. (She named her organization in her mother Naomi's honor.) Swimming classes for stressed mothers, Shabbat food for those who would otherwise not enjoy a proper meal, school supplies, wedding gowns for brides too poor to afford a proper white dress on their special day, Pesach food packages, or just lending a sympathetic ear were all part of the Rabbanit's daily routine. Though she passed away a few years ago her family continues some of her remarkable work as they distribute thousands of those same Pesach food packages to residents referred by the city's welfare department. Our part in this specific mitzvah? Matzah! Thousands of pounds are underwritten by our special grant to keep this amazing woman's legacy alive.

## **Mitzvah Circle Foundation** **USA** ***Providing for People Walking Along Life's Edge***

*What I find stunning is that we live in a country where individuals, families, schools and sometimes entire communities are in desperate need of items that most people consider basic... It is heartbreaking.*

**Fran Held**, founder of Mitzvah Circle Foundation, wrote these words some time ago. How many things do we all take for granted? What simple, basic items do we assume that everyone has? A pencil for school work? Soap, toothpaste or a toothbrush to start the day? As Fran notes, there are far too many people

in our country—a land of abundance and extremes—who do not have these simple items readily available. This inequity drives Fran, each and every day, to set things right.

The seeds for Mitzvah Circle Foundation were sown years ago when Fran witnessed a bakery worker toss a beautiful cake in the garbage because the icing had cracked. Soon she enlisted volunteers to pick up leftovers from local Pennsylvania stores and deliver them to agencies feeding hungry people. From baked goods to clothing to diapers and more, Fran's vision grew and evolved to the point where today a huge warehouse serves as the heart and hub of her work. Last year alone, 35,000 people and 71 organizations received help from 320 volunteers who donated more than 24,000 hours of service. More than 2,700 boxes of critical items reached those in need, all sorted and assembled first in a clean, well-organized space bustling with activity and care.

Our belief in Fran's efforts to heal the entire "soul" is reflected in the grants we have given to underwrite the purchase of diapers for her Diaper Bank, the extra administrative help she has brought on to manage the organization's expansion and, finally, the internship program which attracts many college students seeking careers in social services. The lessons they have learned under Fran's tutelage will be with them forever.

## **One Can Help, Inc.** **USA** ***Supporting Court-Involved Families in Boston***

All too often, **Anne Bader-Martin**, a Boston-area attorney working in the juvenile court system witnessed clients' lives spiral out of control because they lacked a modest amount of money that could avert a crisis. Without bus fare, a mother separated from her children could not visit and maintain a relationship; without enough money to pay a delinquent utility bill, a parent could lose custody of children; without a security deposit, a homeless family could not find stable housing. In each case, a small amount of money could prevent lives from unraveling.

What if court-appointed attorneys and social workers could tap a resource to help underwrite these one-time emergency needs? How many lives would ultimately be saved? That was the problem Anne was determined to solve when she began One Can Help.

Today the organization is poised to grow as it moves from an all-volunteer effort to one with modest administrative support, with our help from a matching grant challenge. For people who find themselves in the juvenile court system, often because of grinding poverty, One Can Help is a lifesaver.



## **\*Sundara Fund**

**USA**

### ***Soap Recycling in Impoverished Regions of the World***

*The new machines are up and running! We've got three now (shipped to us from Singapore this week) and are excited to scale our impact and produce more soap. We've also added a few extra tables, a drying rack and some used furniture (chairs mostly) using your funds. And a fresh coat of paint!*

This short note and the pictures that accompanied it proved once again how quickly our *tzedakah* dollars can make good things possible. **Erin Zaikis**, the writer, founded Sundara (meaning “beautiful” in Sanskrit) as a response to what she witnessed as a young college graduate volunteering in rural Thailand. Astonished by the fact that millions of people in remote regions of the world die each year because they lacked access to something as basic as soap, Erin returned home determined to change that reality.

Sundara focuses on reducing preventable hygiene-related deaths and disease by creating sustainable soap recycling programs for under-served populations worldwide. With hotels throwing away billions of bars of used soap annually, Sundara collects those bars before they hit the garbage and cleans, sanitizes and packages them for distribution in conjunction with basic hygiene classes. An added benefit: community members are enlisted in the effort, offered employment and training, and perhaps most important of all, dignity. These new machines, referenced above, are now being used in the slums of Mumbai where hygiene-related death and illness is a fact of life.

## **\*Ten Gav**

**ISR**

### ***Helping “Modestly” in Israel***

We have all heard the idiomatic expression, “I’ve got your back,” but for **Vivi Mann** and **Naomi Brounstein** the expression was particularly apt when they started *Ten Gav* (loosely translated as “I’ve got your back”) in 2014. Using an online crowd-funding platform, Vivi and Naomi hoped to encourage Israelis and others to donate modest sums of money to specific verified needs for people living in poverty in Israel. The program works simply and efficiently. Municipal social workers submit to *Ten Gav* an application with a case history and a summary of the individual’s specific need. It can be something as simple as a washing machine, eyeglasses, a refrigerator, funding for a course that will lead to someone’s self-sufficiency—all modest needs that will make life easier for someone struggling to survive. Donors who access the organization’s website can then contribute to those costs. With numerous controls in place to insure the integrity of the process, the requested item(s) are purchased and delivered and, perhaps most important, all is done discreetly and with *kavod*, or respect for the individual.

Our funding has underwritten those needs that have not received sufficient support from the “crowd” as well as going towards the development of a marketing plan to help raise awareness of *Ten Gav*’s work.

## **The Forgotten People Fund**

**ISR**

### ***Helping Ethiopian Families One by One***

At the age of four, Shuli was diagnosed with a brain tumor and in the intervening twelve years has endured numerous surgeries which have left her an invalid requiring nearly constant care and attention. For a poor Ethiopian family with six children and struggling to get by, Shuli’s needs are overwhelming. With her latest surgery, bathing in their rundown apartment became impossible, as there was no shower, only a tub. Would social services eventually step in to modify her family’s home? Maybe. When? Who knows, and that is why The Forgotten People Fund, an all-volunteer organization in Netanya, is so important to that city’s very poor Ethiopian families. **Anne and David Silverman, Aida Miller and Wendy and Jeff Starrfield**, retired social workers, head a team of dedicated volunteers who have been assisting Netanya’s large Ethiopian population since 1998.

While emergency needs have always been part of their focus, today FPF is directing even more funds into scholarships for those young Ethiopians who have successfully completed their high school courses and received scholarships for advanced education opportunities. This important investment has helped end the “cycle of poverty” that plagues the Ethiopian community in Israel. With a mere 1.5% of their budget spent on overhead, FPF is a sound investment which is why our support has been directed to both scholarships as well as emergency needs.

## **\*The Jewish Gift Closet**

**USA**

### ***Meeting Basic Needs for Families in San Diego***

Who would think that in San Diego, known as a relatively upscale community, there would be people struggling to get by? The “hidden poor” can be found anywhere as **Helene Bortz** and her friend **Myrice Goldberg** learned back in 2007 when the economy began to falter. Armed with a “Can Do” attitude, the women mobilized and with the help of other volunteers collected donations of clothing, household appliances and baby equipment, and rented a warehouse to set up a shopping experience for those needing these items. Thus began The San Diego Jewish Gift Closet, also known as a *G’mach* (an acronym for *gemilut chasadim*, or deeds of loving kindness), which today sits in a permanent location and opens twice a week (or by appointment) to find solutions for people in need. With the utmost *kavod* (respect) Helene and her volunteers provide emergency cash, meals or food gift certificates, housing, shelter, rent subsidies, help with

job placement, business mentoring and participation in Jewish holiday celebrations or personal celebrations for those who cannot afford to do so on their own.

Helene and The Jewish Gift Closet were one of the finalists in our online Jewcer campaign last year where our grant underwrote individuals' specific needs as they became known.

## **The Redistribution Center** **USA** *Rescuing New Merchandise to Help People in Need*

Since 1991, **Ranya Kelly** has devoted her time and energy to rescuing perfectly usable, new merchandise (actually, more than \$70,000,000 worth), donated to The Redistribution Center by some of the country's largest retailers, among her many sources. Once rescued, items are distributed to individuals and families in need, particularly Colorado's military families, many with members who are disabled. More recently, she has added a small food pantry to her site, which provides sustenance when larger food banks' shelves are bare.

Ranya's focus on redistributing merchandise started when she needed a box to ship some gifts. While searching behind a strip mall, she reached into a dumpster and discovered 500 pairs of brand new shoes discarded by a nearby shoe store. Why would perfectly good items end up in a landfill when there are so many people in need? That is the question Ranya has been answering ever since. In fact, in the last year she has rescued more than \$3,000,000 (salvage value) worth of goods.

The return on our investment in Ranya's good work is considerable. The program is staffed by a corps of dedicated volunteers (including veterans, police and fire personnel) who do the often back-breaking work. Expenses are limited to gasoline, vehicle maintenance and financial oversight all of which we help to underwrite.

## **ELDERS**

## **Alice Jonah and the Diplomat Hotel** **ISR** *Building a Community of Elders Helping Elders*

They were once doctors, engineers, professors, artists, even famous opera stars in their native Russia. But each left what was familiar and emigrated to Israel for a better life—a Jewish life. Ultimately, their journey brought them to what was once the glorious Diplomat Hotel, a Jerusalem five-star retreat that had fallen on hard times and was transformed into an absorption center, complete with single room apartments and adjoining bath.

Life was not easy in their new home, with a strange language and a bureaucracy not so different from what they knew in their homeland. Then **Alice Jonah** came into their lives. Filling in as a volunteer for a friend who served as the Diplomat's activities director, she ended up staying in that role when the friend never returned from vacation. Eventually Alice became a paid staff member charged with the social integration of residents.

Alice's skill as a community builder soon became evident as the residents availed themselves of language courses, computer education, a Russian library, a very successful choir and much more. But her best innovation was the home health aide program, which employs able-bodied elders on an hourly basis to help the less-able with simple tasks now too difficult for them to do on their own. Though Alice herself is no longer employed at the Diplomat, she maintains her connections, and our funding allows this program to continue.

**“Rise before the aged and honor the faces of the elderly.”**

*Leviticus 19:32*

## **In Their Shoes** **ISR** *Creating Awareness and Understanding of Dementia and Aging*

Imagine the swell of emotion that overcame **Zissie Gitel**, co-founder of In Their Shoes, when she described the breakthrough moment of a patient who had been non-responsive for years. This once catatonic elder lifted his chin from his chest and opened his eyes wide at the sound of a familiar Mozart melody in his headphones. For Zissie and her husband Sandy, this kind of “awakening” was what they had hoped for when they began In Their Shoes as a constructive response to their own journey caring for elderly, memory-impaired parents.

Their mission is to increase compassion and empathy within Israel's caregiver community so that patients can be treated more humanely. The initial focus of their work was The Virtual Dementia Tour™ which simulates real life experiences of dementia patients and gives caregivers, both professional and family members, important insights into how elders navigate basic daily tasks. More than 1,350 people have benefited from this awareness-raising exercise. Recently, they have introduced Israeli nursing facilities to the pioneering work of Music & Memory™, another GPF grantee that brings personalized music via iPods to individuals with dementia, Alzheimer's and other isolating

conditions. This powerful tool has brought them numerous calls from facilities inquiring about how to implement the programs. We have underwritten the cost of some equipment to help them make their presentations.

## **LiLY-Lifeforce in Later Years** **USA** *Aging-In-Place Manhattan Style*

Carmela\* has called Manhattan's Morningside Heights her home for over a decade. Thanks to **Irene Zola**, founder of LifeForce in Later Years-LiLY, and LiLY's Morningside Village program, Carmela's community is a place where many elders feel safe and often stop to chat with neighbors and shopkeepers. For many years, Carmela managed with the help of her sister, with whom she resided. But after her sister's death, Carmela, who is 91 and speaks very little English, was threatened with eviction by her landlord. When Irene learned about Carmela's emergency she sent LiLY's Spanish-speaking social worker, a position our funds have made possible, who helped Carmela prove that she had, indeed, resided in the apartment for the past decade. With that assistance all eviction proceedings grounded to a halt.

"Aging in place" or being able to remain in one's own home is, no doubt, what most of us would prefer as we grow older and more infirm. Irene's devotion to enabling elders to live at home as long as possible came on the heels of her personal experiences caring for an aging mother and learning firsthand the difficulties of nursing home life. How lucky for the elders on Manhattan's Upper West Side to have Irene working on their behalf.

\*a pseudonym

## **Survivor Mitzvah Project** **USA** *Providing For the Needs of Holocaust Survivors in Eastern Europe*

Among the millions of people murdered or who suffered beyond comprehension in concentration camps such as Treblinka, Auschwitz, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen were millions of children. We know that more than 1,500,000 children died in the Shoah, but what happened to those who survived the war and are now approaching the end of their lives?

It was those children, now old, alone and isolated, that **Zane Buzby** discovered back in 2001 as she visited remote villages in Eastern Europe, searching for her family's roots. Astonished by what she saw, Zane returned home committed to changing the lives of as many as possible by offering them modest financial help as well as friendship and a respite from the loneliness they endure each day. She founded Survivor Mitzvah Project (SMP) to fulfill this commitment. With the help of a small staff and a

corps of volunteer translators, letters are exchanged and funds mailed or wired to cover a critical medication, food, costly repairs to modest and often sub-standard homes and more.

Time is running out, and within ten years there will be few, if any, survivors remaining. With this reality comes our commitment to continue to send funds to Zane so that she can reach even more than the 2,000 survivors currently receiving assistance.

## **VETERANS IN THE US AND ISRAEL**

### **A Package From Home** **ISR** *Providing Creature Comforts to IDF Soldiers*

Though more than a decade has passed, we have never forgotten the dedicated volunteers standing in "assembly line" fashion, gathering toothpaste, a toothbrush, new white t-shirts, some Bamba, a chocolate bar—all part of individual packages for Israeli soldiers serving on the front lines. In fact, since 2001, A Package from Home (APFH) has distributed more than 230,000 parcels (along with personal notes) during both times of peace and conflict.

APFH was the vision of **Barbara Silverman**, a Chicago native who made *aliyah* with her young family many years ago. With a long history of activism and helping others, Barbara founded the organization in response to the Second *Intifada*. Though age has slowed her down, Barbara's good work continues in the capable hands of Shira Gilor. All of the funds committed to APFH were donor-designated.

### **\*Internity** **USA** *A Resource for Victims of Military Sexual Trauma*

We will never forget our first phone conversation with **Dr. Ruth Moore** whose experiences as a young servicewoman more than 20 years ago make her uniquely qualified to guide other women and men who suffer from PTSD and related conditions as a result of Military Sexual Trauma (MST). When we asked why she chose to start Internity her response was profound—*What kind of a human being would I be if I didn't use what happened to me to help others?*

Dr. Moore's two-decade battle to recover benefits as a result of repeated abuse has given her insights and empathy invaluable to other victims facing similar challenges. In fact, she has testified before Congress to raise awareness and bring justice to so many of our veterans. In just the first six months, Internity's advocacy enabled seven soldiers to retrieve more than \$1.5 million in benefits.

Dr. Moore began Internity with the help of several other veterans. As part of her program, she is touring the country in a campaign called “Each One, Reach One.” The road trip includes visits to major veterans’ centers to raise awareness and encourage proper treatment for this frequently hidden, but widespread, problem. Our funds have helped to underwrite the costs of this cross-country tour.

## **Tzvika Levy and the** **ISR** **Lone Soldiers Program**

*Extended Family for Soldiers Without Families in Country*

As the war in Israel dragged on last summer, much attention was directed to *chayalim bodedim*, or lone soldiers, young men and women from around the world who have chosen to volunteer in the Israel Defense Forces. More than 5,000 strong, lone soldiers give up family and friends to come to Israel to defend the country. For **Lt. Col. (ret) Tzvika Levy**, these young people have become the focus of his daily work as he provides *kibbutz* housing, a washing machine, a fan, a TV and more. But the most important thing Tzvika offers these strangers in a foreign land is his warmth, his ear, his guidance. This role is the direct result of the personal tragedy he suffered at the loss of one of his children. It was the advice of another army officer who suggested he start helping others to ease his own pain and from that moment that is exactly what he has done. Nothing is too much for him. If you are fortunate enough to be in his presence while he juggles calls from three cellphones, you come to understand his devotion and compassion.

## **Veterans Farm** **USA** **Horticulture Therapy and Disabled Combat Veterans**

**Adam Burke** received the Purple Heart for combat injury in the line of duty. But for this young veteran, home from several tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq with both physical and emotional wounds of war, the honor was more than just a medal. Those injuries inspired him to found an organization dedicated to helping other returning veterans who struggled from the aftermath of battle.

Adam suffered from both PTSD and traumatic brain injury, but healed by returning to his own roots in farming. Why not harness the healing qualities of horticulture and establish a handicap-accessible farm where his fellow disabled combat veterans could heal too? In 2010, that was Adam’s goal in founding Veterans Farm.

Talk about a remarkable and life-changing accomplishment! Not only has the farm grown from a 2.8 acre plot to 19 acres, but to date, more than 40 veterans, including the three we funded

this year, have graduated from the training fellowship program. More than 160 veterans have received assistance in starting both agricultural and non-agricultural businesses. Other vets have benefited from mentoring and counseling. As a result, many at-risk veterans who might otherwise have been lost have now gone on to become successful leaders in their communities.

In addition to the fellowship program, our funding also underwrote the costs of a much-needed case manager to help transition the veterans beyond the fellowship and successfully meet their personal goals.

## **ILLNESS, DISABILITIES** **AND WELL-BEING**

### **Amuta (Non-Profit)** **ISR** **for the Emotional Support** **of Girlfriends and Fiancées of** **Fallen IDF Soldiers** *Grief Counseling and Care*

So many of the visionaries whose work we support have found their way into the non-profit world because of some personal event that impacted them and their families in a significant way. Certainly that was the case in 1999 when **Phyllis Heimowitz** realized that there was no place to turn for help when her youngest daughter lost her soon-to-be fiancé who was killed while serving in Lebanon. Traditional therapists could not relate to the loss and others offered consolation with a reminder that she would “meet someone else” and all would be better. Nothing was available to help the *girlfriend* of the soldier mourn this loss despite the fact that in truth, “the girlfriend is the widow without a wedding ring.”

With the help of her older daughter, Tamar, and Rina Kahan, herself the fiancée of a fallen soldier from the *Yom Kippur* War, Phyllis’s crusade has provided hundreds of young women (and men) with individual and group therapy to help them overcome their loss. Perhaps even more significant, the *Amuta* has successfully changed the culture in Israel. Today, the girlfriend or fiancée of a fallen soldier is recognized by the Ministry of Defense and there is greater cooperation between the *Amuta* and the ministry. With Operation Protective Edge last summer the organization was overwhelmed with more than 40 new young women and men who lost their beloved in the war. Our funds were directed to the costs of some of these new groups.



**ATZUM**

**Helping Survivors of Terror, Righteous Gentiles, and Victims of Human Trafficking**

Though long passionate about social activism and ensuring that Israel always be “a light unto the nations,” **Rabbi Levi Lauer** began ATZUM-Justice Works in 2002 to address several key injustices in Israeli society; among them, victims of human trafficking, survivors of terror attacks and Righteous Gentiles (the remaining Righteous Among the Nations residing in Israel).

At one time Israel was home to more than 100 individuals identified as the Righteous Among the Nations; people who risked their own lives during the Shoah to rescue Jews from certain death. Today, there are fewer than twelve elderly men and women, all infirm, living simple modest lives, often alone with no family or friends, and dependent upon National Insurance which provides for their basic needs. It has been an honor for us to make possible ATZUM's additional support which comes in the form of volunteers and financial aid for needs not covered by National Insurance which could include housing, medical needs, legal aid and more.

**\*Courageous Parents Network USA**

**Empowering Parents to Care for Children with Serious Illness**

1 in 80,000,000—most people would agree these are pretty improbable odds. And yet, for **Blyth Lord** and her family what was deemed nearly impossible became reality when within a six month period both her daughter and her nephew were diagnosed with Tay-Sachs, a rare, incurable genetic disease. Making this near impossibility even stranger was that the fathers of these two young children were identical twins who, by coincidence, married women who were both carriers of the gene. As both children eventually lost all cognitive and physical abilities and faced death, Blyth's family was able to derive strength from an extraordinary support network which included a pediatrician with expertise in palliative care and a skilled grief counselor.

Blyth's level of caring and determination as well as her drive to help others in similar situations is astounding. When you meet her you come to understand how, after addressing her own healing process, she would use her professional skills as a filmmaker to found an organization to help other families caring for children with serious illness. This virtual community uses both written and filmed resources to provide parents with the skills, tools and support they need to cope and adapt throughout their child's illness. With the goal of reaching 250,000 parents and 183 children's hospitals nationwide, Courageous Parents Network (CPN) must develop relationships with patient disease organizations whose constituents are families with children

**ISR**

suffering from these life-threatening illnesses. Our funding has allowed CPN to further customize their web site to disease-specific resources.

**Our Story:**

**<http://bit.ly/1E6H9aD>**

**Hosts for Hospitals**

**Home Hospitality for Patients and Families**

**USA**

*Thank you so much for everything that [our hosts] did to assist my husband and my family to fight this disease head on with hope. Our end result may not have been the traditional win, but we were lucky enough to have been together throughout this fight and together when he took his last breath. [Our hosts] were our family. They celebrated with us, cried with us, laughed with us, sang to us and ultimately prayed with us for peace at the end... If not for HfH, there would have been no hope, love or laughter.*

We are sure that when **Mike Aichenbaum**, founder of Hosts for Hospitals (HfH), read this note, it reminded him of his own struggle with life threatening illness years ago. Though Mike won his medical battle, the financial costs for his family's extended hotel stays during his treatment at an out-of-town hospital were crushing. But Mike turned this experience into an opportunity—not only to help other patients in similar circumstances, but also to provide host families with uplifting, transformative experiences.

HfH provides no-cost, in-home hospitality for out-of-town patients and families who travel to the greater Philadelphia area for treatment with more than 75 healthcare facilities. This past fiscal year alone HfH provided 10,531 total nights of lodging with a fifteen year record of over 101,000 nights, saving families \$6.75 million in equivalent hotel expenses. Our grant to underwrite the development of a soon-to-be launched new website with enhanced functionality will help streamline Mike's very lean operation.

**Inbar**

**Finding Love For Everyone**

**ISR**

*We received a phone call from a woman in her early 30s who had been coming to Inbar from the very beginning. She was calling to report that she had become engaged. She wanted to share her excitement because she believes it was the participation in our workshops that enabled her to develop this relationship and fall in love. This is our “Bat Mitzvah” couple – number 12.*

When **Rabbi Shaul Inbari**, profoundly disabled and alone, shared his unhappiness about a life without love and companionship with his dear friend, **Shalomi Eldar**, neither imagined that their conversation would spark so much joy. Shalomi challenged Shaul to act on his feelings of loneliness, so the pair advertised a gathering for disabled people with similar frustrations. The response far exceeded their expectations. Clearly, they had uncovered a significant need. That discovery prompted them to found Inbar (derived from the Hebrew word for “amber”), which offers social events, courses in relationships and social integration, as well as matchmaking services for people with disabilities.

Despite the very short time since Inbar’s founding, the need for their services becomes more and more obvious: they are the only program in Israel to offer this kind of support. With the guidance of a professional social worker, partially funded by our grant, Inbar has expanded its focus to parents with disabled children, a social support group for couples with disabilities and more.

## Jeremy’s Circle ISR

### Supporting Children Living With Cancer in the Family

*Dear Yitz,*  
I spoke with two of the patients who participated in the Shushan Purim Fun Day. . . . The first family had a great time. . . . Their son was so happy; he proudly shared the pictures of all the beautiful scenery with all his Facebook friends. The second family . . . specifically noted the shared quality time they were able to enjoy at such a spectacular place. The mother was very grateful for the opportunity given to them. On behalf of our entire staff here—thank you again for inviting our patients...

**Jeremy Coleman** succumbed to cancer in 2007 but his legacy lives on in this beautiful program, which realizes the shared vision of Jeremy, his wife **Pamela Becker** and his two sisters. Confronted by Jeremy’s terminal cancer diagnosis, family and friends assisted in every way possible. One of the most meaningful moments came when Zoe, his then-6-year-old daughter, was uplifted by spending time with another girl her age whose father also suffered from cancer. That revelation inspired the blueprint for Jeremy’s Circle, which creates a supportive community for children whose parent or sibling has cancer or who have experienced a cancer loss in their immediate family.

In the past six years, hundreds of children and their families have participated in the free, volunteer-run Fun Days, including some tailored specifically to teens, held throughout the year. We know there are so many more who would benefit if Jeremy’s Circle could move from an all-volunteer effort to one with a professional part-time experienced executive director; our matching grant was directed to that position.

## Kashouvot

### Advancing Pastoral Care in Israel

## ISR

*Just today the staff asked me to see a man whose roommate had passed away last night. He awoke to see the man, with whom he had become quite close in the past months, covered by a sheet. After we processed his feelings . . . he thanked me for coming and said “a stone has been taken from my heart with this conversation... I feel like I can turn the page now.”*

While medical professionals treat our difficult illnesses and manage end-of-life care, who cares for the hearts and souls of those making this journey? Who assumes the role of “guide” to help make the experience less frightening and more meaningful? Here in the U.S., this role is often filled by a hospital chaplain or hospice professional.

In Israel, chaplaincy as we understand it is not found in many settings. In 2010 **Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz**, along with **Rabbi Valerie Stessin** (who is no longer with the organization), began *Kashouvot* (“attentive”) in Jerusalem to fill that need, pioneering pastoral care in Israel. The going is slow; attitudes and customs do not change easily, but today *Kashouvot* works with a team of seven chaplains at five different sites, one of which is funded by our grant.

**On Twitter: @goodpeoplefund**

## NY Center for Law and Justice USA

### Justice for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community

Betty is one of many indigent New Yorkers trying desperately to make ends meet. The fact that she is deaf and has lost most of her vision makes the challenge even more difficult. And yet, for five years she traversed the city’s public transportation system to get to her job on time. But last year when she was hit by a car, her life changed in an instant. Unable to report for work her employer used a “visual” system (akin to Facetime) to inform her of her rights, but of course with compromised vision Betty was at a loss and her employer refused to provide her with a “tactile” interpreter (one whose hands she could actually feel). Betty lost her job and with it her independence.

To **Bruce** and **Liz Gitlin**, both attorneys and founders of The New York Center for Law and Justice, Betty’s situation represented exactly what they hoped to change when they started the organization in 2008. The Center’s focus is on helping the City’s indigent deaf and hard of hearing navigate the legal system,

particularly for matters related to the shelter system. In addition to offering legal assistance we have granted our funds to help provide education about deaf rights within the (deaf) community and the social service agencies that serve them. Perhaps what astounds us most about Bruce and Liz's commitment is that this modest Center with a small full-time staff is the *only* one in the world dedicated to the rights of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

## \*Refa'enu

USA

***Education and Support for Those with Mood Disorders in the Jewish Community***

Many of the founders of the organizations we discover and ultimately support are brave people, inspired to change our world in unique and, often, deeply personal ways. It was a friend's suicide that moved **Deena Croog Cohen** to found *Refa'enu* ("Heal Us"), an organization dedicated to providing the Jewish community with education about and support for those affected by depression and related mood disorders. In so doing, Deena not only acknowledged her own long-standing battles with mood disorders, but also went public with a very personal op-ed column entitled "I Have Bi-Polar Disorder."

*Refa'enu* serves not only those who struggle with mood disorders, but also their loved ones, through peer-led support groups and education programs, run in day schools and *yeshivot* in Metro New York and New Jersey. By giving people needed tools, support and education, Deena hopes to help reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and to encourage more people to seek appropriate care.

As the top fundraiser in our Jewcer SPARK crowdfunding campaign, Deena has been able to facilitate additional peer-led support groups for both those diagnosed with mood disorders, as well as family members who seek guidance on how best to support them.

## \*Shai Asher

ISR

***Career Training for Adults with Special Needs***

While traveling through Israel this past winter, we discovered a jewel, tucked near the foothills of Mount Gilboa. While *Kibbutz Shluchot* may best be known for its extensive dairy or as the largest producer of Israeli carrots, *Shluchot* is also home to *Shai Asher* (Milton's Gift), a tiny program that offers meaningful employment opportunities to young adults with mental and developmental disabilities.

*Shai Asher* is the dream of **Menachem Stolpner**, a Brooklyn-born social worker who made *aliyah* about 18 years ago. Two of

the participants, Udi and Oded, work under Menachem's watchful eyes as he teaches them how to care for the animals in the *kibbutz's* small zoo. An additional apprentice, Yam, has also mastered the art of milking cows in the dairy and Mor works in the kitchen and dining hall.

As they go about their daily chores, these four young adults have blended into the *kibbutz* community. It is a beautiful program; small but so very powerful. After spending time with the "guys," it was easy to agree to fund the training of two new apprentices who will gain not only valuable work experience but also self-esteem and a sense of belonging.

## Shalheveth

ISR

***Independent Living for Severely Disabled Adults***

"Independence," "autonomy," "quality of life," "meaningful work" are terms we would all want to describe our lives. For the profoundly physically disabled adults who now reside in Jerusalem's *Shalheveth* apartments these words did not describe their existence prior to finding this community. *Shalheveth's* independent housing is the vision of **Miriam Freier**, a dynamic and dedicated force who has long championed the rights of disabled people in Israel. Residents of the thirteen apartments, all dependent upon wheelchairs for mobility, live completely independent lives with a social worker available when needed, a common social room to house community events and a van and driver (which we help fund) to transport them to work, appointments, or shopping.

All of *Shalheveth's* residents cherish their lives in this space. How great it would be if all of the country's disabled people could benefit from similar housing.

## \*The SPIRIT-Club

USA

***Fitness Programs for Everyone***

When Betty\* first sent her twenty-something son, Judson\*, to The SPIRIT-Club, she never imagined how much he would change in 18 months of weekly exercise sessions. At first, his discomfort in this social setting made it impossible for him to participate for more than ten minutes. Today, he participates in full sessions, sometimes even leads the exercises and, perhaps the most significant outcome, has lost more than 20 pounds.

For **Jared Ciner**, founder of The SPIRIT-Club, Judson's success was just what he had hoped for. After graduating from college with a degree in psychology, Jared began part-time work as a support counselor for developmentally disabled adults, while he pursued work as a personal trainer. When he learned that his clients exercised far less than those who are able-bodied

and also were 58 percent more likely to be obese, Jared began The SPIRIT-Club, which offers health and fitness programs for people with developmental disabilities, including autism and Down Syndrome. In addition to the benefits of regular exercise, participants gain social skills and learn healthy eating habits.

Now operating only in suburban Maryland, Jared hopes to see The SPIRIT-Club programs throughout the country. Our matching grant will help with start-up costs for an expanded effort while we look forward to hearing about more successes like Judson's.

*\*a pseudonym*

## Volunteers in Psychotherapy USA *Affordable, Private Psychotherapy Through Volunteering*

Why didn't we think of that? Often we find ourselves uttering this question as we support our Good People, whose creative solutions to social problems draw us to their work. From day one in our relationship with **Dr. Richard Schulman**, founder of the Connecticut-based Volunteers in Psychotherapy (VIP), and in every interaction since, we have been continually impressed with his simple yet brilliant solution to a managed care system fraught with deficiencies.

Dr. Schulman's model for reduced-fee or free private therapy sessions bypasses the need for third party payers' involvement in the deeply personal client-therapist relationship. Clients commit to four hours of volunteer work in exchange for each hour of free or reduced-fee therapy rendered. In this model, the therapy is truly private and patients get the added benefit of the positive feelings that come from helping others.

Since 1999 when VIP began, close to 600 individuals and families have earned over 6,000 therapy sessions through more than 24,000 hours of charitable work—a win-win for all parties, including the organization or community where the volunteer serves. Our grant will help VIP's efforts to introduce this model to other communities.

**“The lost will come back from Assyria,  
and the distant and rejected from  
Egypt (or “the narrow places”).”**

*Isaiah 27:13*

## OUTREACH AND INREACH

### Kulanu USA *Helping Little-Known Jewish Communities Around the World*

Scattered throughout several countries that make up Latin America, Brazil, Guatemala, Ecuador and Colombia are tiny pockets of newly formed Jewish communities. All are assisted in their Jewish journey by the aptly named, Kulanu, or “all of us.” Kulanu was founded for the express purpose of assisting little known Jewish communities world-wide. Perhaps best known for their extensive work with the Abuyudaya Jews in Uganda, Kulanu, now led by **Harriet Bograd**, also has strong ties to the “Anousim” or “crypto-Jews” whose ancestors practiced Judaism in Spain and Portugal. Through a series of “mini-grants” our funds were used to provide some of these new communities with the tools they need to grow their faith whether it be *siddurim* (prayer books) or a new school classroom where young children learn the *Alef-Bet*.

### Skilled Volunteers for Israel USA *Professional Volunteer Opportunities in Israel*

*But going to Israel and volunteering and being part of a real community is a more powerful experience than I've had before.*

Most of us enjoy touring a new country, seeing the sites and getting to know the culture, but if you want a truly immersive experience volunteering in that country can be transformative. In 2010, **Marla Gamoran** an avowed “Baby Boomer” searched for some meaningful professional volunteer opportunities in Israel. With few if any choices available she did what so many of our founders do — she decided to make it happen herself. With “voluntourism” a multibillion dollar industry, Marla's timing could not have been better. Our grant has helped Skilled Volunteers for Israel place more than 125 individuals with professional degrees from across the spectrum in customized volunteer opportunities throughout the country. While participants agree that they have benefited immeasurably from the experience, the impact on Israel's non-profit community cannot be understated.





# ALLOCATION

## ORGANIZATION

## ALLOCATION

### HUMAN NEEDS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Special Individual Needs	193,956
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### HUNGER

Amir Project	12,000
AmpleHarvest.org	5,000
Backpack Buddies	2,000
Gideon Ben Ami	73,408**
Groceryships	9,000
Interfaith Food Pantry of the Oranges	5,000
Necha Malka	10,185**
Salem Harvest	5,000
Second Helpings Atlanta	8,000
The Bagel Brigade	6,000
Village Harvest	400
Youngstown Community Food Bank	7,732
Zehava and Karyn-Feeding the Neighbors	4,300

### KIDS

Art Creation Foundation for Children	10,500
Baby Bank	5,527
Beit Hayeled	54,489**
Big Brothers, Big Sisters	55,960**
Birthday Angels	17,679
Breaking the Chain Through Education	6,000
Creating Connected Communities	5,400
Kaima	139,216**
Leveling the Playing Field	10,250
S.A.H.I.	20,000
Shutaf	25,000
The Quincy Kids	725
Tzimaon	58,100**

### WOMENS EMPOWERMENT

Ba'asher Telchi	12,000
Druze Association for Developing Foreign Relations, Culture and Education	7,000
Female Hebrew Benevolent Society	2,000
Get Jewish Divorce Justice	15,500
Unchained At Last	18,000
Yotsrot-Turning the Tables	58,450**

### ALTERNATIVE HEALING OF BODY AND MIND

HAMA (Israel) Humans and Animals in Mutual Assistance	34,513
INTRA-Israel National Therapeutic Riding Association	15,030
Lev Leytzan~Heart of a Clown	5,000
Music & Memory	3,500
Shelter Music Boston	10,000
Tunefoolery	250

### LITERACY

Barbershop Books	4,857
Caravan to Class	5,000
Change the Truth	2,500
Reading Village	7,500
Sulam L'Atid	1,200

## ORGANIZATION

## ALLOCATION

### POVERTY

Family-to-Family	7,500
Fund for Needy Immigrants	28,000**
Gabriel Project Mumbai	19,000
Hope and Comfort	7,500
Kentucky	15,182
Keren Segulat Naomi	8,700
Mitzvah Circle Foundation	31,277
One Can Help	10,000
Sundara Fund	3,650
Ten Gav	25,000**
The Forgotten People Fund	58,811**
The Jewish Gift Closet	6,074
The Redistribution Center	15,000

### ELDERS

Alice Jonah and The Diplomat Hotel	8,000
In Their Shoes	536
LiLY-Lifeforce in Later Years	15,200
Survivor Mitzvah Project	7,500

### VETERANS IN THE US AND ISRAEL

A Package From Home	50,098*
Internity	6,500
Tzvika Levy and the Lone Soldiers Program	78,868*
Veterans Farm	18,400

### ILLNESS, DISABILITIES AND WELL-BEING

Amuta (Non-Profit) for the Emotional Support of Girlfriends and Fiancées of Fallen IDF Soldiers	12,700
ATZUM	8,500
Courageous Parents Network	7,500
Hosts for Hospitals	6,500
Inbar	32,000**
Jeremy's Circle	38,241**
Kashouvot	84,056**
NY Center for Law and Justice	6,500
Refa'enu	11,806**
Shai Asher	10,099
Shalheveth	21,110**
The SPIRIT-Club	5,000
Volunteers in Psychotherapy	5,500

### OUTREACH AND INREACH

Keren Baktana	5,100
Kulanu	8,000
Skilled Volunteers for Israel	500
War In Israel	59,041**

\*All of this grant was donor-recommended

\*\*A portion of this grant was donor-recommended

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2015

<b>Support and Revenue:</b>				<b>Total</b>
Contributions				1,838,200
Investment Income				524
				1,838,724
	<b>Program Services</b>	<b>Management and General</b>	<b>Fundraising</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Grants:</b>	<b>1,706,239</b>	- 0	- 0	<b>1,706,239</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
Salaries*	50,400	37,125	37,125	124,650
Payroll taxes	3,928	3,185	3,257	10,370
Web-related Expenses*	7,926	2,264	1,132	11,322
Administrative Support*	175	50	25	250
Bank and credit card fees	4,503	1287	643	6,433
Insurance	1,604	458	229	2,291
Marketing	27,044	- 0	18,029	45,073
Office	- 0	2,842	- 0	2,842
Payroll service	591	169	84	844
Postage and shipping	1,193	341	170	1,704
Professional Fees	- 0	10,887	- 0	10,887
Telephone and Internet	546	156	78	780
Travel and entertainment	5,586	1,596	798	7,980
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>103,496</b>	<b>60,360</b>	<b>61,570</b>	<b>225,426</b>
<b>Total grants and expenses</b>	<b>1,809,735</b>	<b>60,360</b>	<b>61,570</b>	<b>1,931,665</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>				<b>(92,941)</b>
Net Assets at July 1, 2014				289,799
<b>Net Assets at June 30, 2015</b>				<b>196,858</b>

*\*These costs are underwritten by specific donations made available for that purpose.*



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RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

## A SIMPLE ACT OF KINDNESS CAN MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE.

*Thanks to the Good People Fund...*

**People with  
developmental  
disabilities can  
take part in regular  
exercise classes.  
See p.21**

**New mothers  
in Seattle have  
all the equipment  
they need to raise  
their newborns.  
See p.04**

**Kids in the  
slums of Mumbai  
have soap to help  
keep preventable  
diseases at bay.  
See p.13**

**Families with  
few resources can  
access healthy food  
and healthy eating  
habits.  
See p.01**

*Small actions,  
huge impacts*

**Nutritious  
produce in Oregon  
can be rescued and  
distributed to those  
who would otherwise  
not enjoy the fruits  
of the earth.  
See p.01**

*These are just a few ways that our Good People do great work on a personal scale and heal the world.*

# YOU CAN HELP!

## TAKE A LOOK INSIDE...