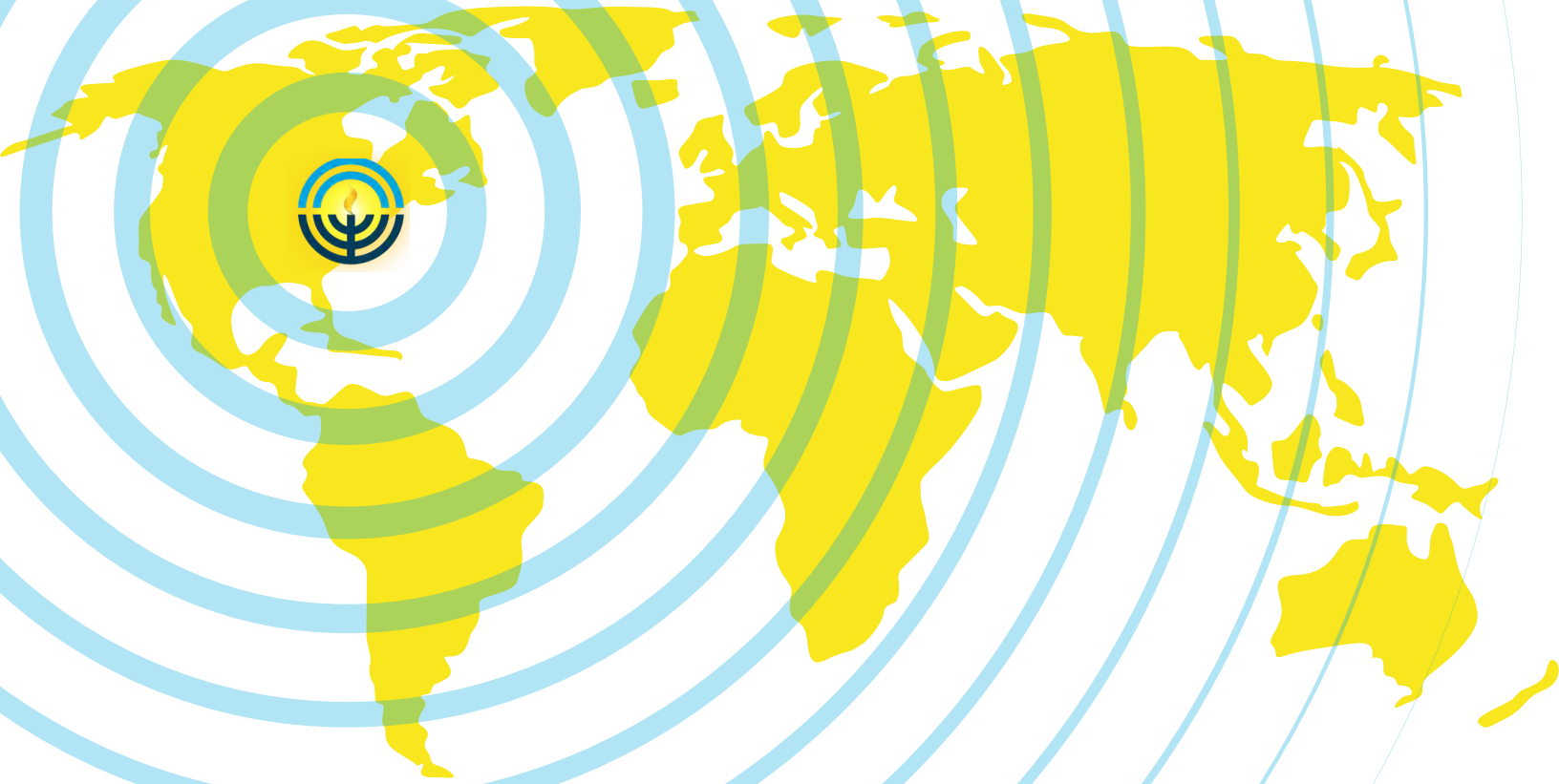




JEWISH FEDERATION
OF GREATER FAIRFIELD COUNTY

CONNECTING Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield,
Georgetown, Monroe, Norwalk, Redding,
Ridgefield, Rowayton, Southport,
Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport,
and Wilton (and beyond)



COMMUNITY REPORT

2022

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief.

Do justly *now*.
Love mercy *now*.

You are not obligated to complete the work,
but neither are you free to abandon it.

-Pirke Avot (The Ethics of the Fathers)



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WHO WE ARE

We are the Jewish Federation of Greater Fairfield County. Our name reflects our large and diverse community and our commitment to bringing our Jewish voices together around a common purpose.

We offer meaningful programs that enrich Jewish identity. We fund a wealth of agencies that work to respond to ongoing challenges and emerging issues. We inspire our youth, feed the hungry, support refugees, strengthen Israel, and lead a strong, united front against antisemitism.

We are re-imagining Jewish life in innovative ways.
We are collaborative.
We are effective.

We are here for you.
We are here for good.

Shalom!

It's been quite a year for us.

Our shared Jewish values provided a road map for weathering the uncertain and highly challenging times in our community, Israel and the world. We translated those values into community-defining actions: feeding the hungry, caring for the most vulnerable, protecting our community, and performing acts of kindness.

We are the community connector. Through our programs, we help shape the lives of young adults, support those in crisis around the world, strengthen the Jewish identity of young families, empower women to face the world with dignity, and foster Jewish leaders of tomorrow.

This is what Federation does best. The work of the Jewish Federation of Greater Fairfield County transcends age, gender, geography and levels of religious observance.

Whether these following pages are your first introduction to our work or you have been a dedicated supporter for decades, we hope that this Community Report inspires you to further engage with your Jewish community through Federation—to feel the power and inspiration of communal action.

We are your Jewish Federation. We are here for you. We are here for good. Thank you for making all of this possible!



Carin Savel
CEO



Mindy Siegel
Board Chair



**GETTING AID
TO REFUGEES**

**GETTING REFUGEES
TO SAFETY**





Within days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we launched the Community Ukraine Emergency Fund, raising \$315,000 that provided boots-on-the-ground relief and critical humanitarian aid for those fleeing west and for others not able to leave.

As the war in Ukraine raged on, we collaborated with our partner synagogues, private donors, and the Jewish Agency for Israel to charter three planes to fly 450 Ukrainian Jews to safety in Israel. At home, we resettled refugees in our community and offered them a safe haven and fresh start.

Your donations helped us to provide meaningful financial support to a Ukrainian Jewish family who fled the war and resettled in our community.



Thanksgiving 2022

Dear Jewish Federation,
It's very symbolic holiday for our family. I am very Grateful to you for your support of my family, grateful so much to the donors who made an incredible contribution to our family. When we come to the USA from Ukraine, we didn't have anything, but thanks to a lot kind people we have warm furnished home, clothes and food.

But the most what we have is confidence. No matter what bad happens, there will always be people who will understand you and help.

Many thanks to the United States of America and the Jewish Federation for supporting Ukraine.

It will be a day to think about everything that happened and what we can do today, tomorrow, and always. Because one day it will be my turn to help people who are in need.

My family very much appreciates you.
O.

ENHANCING LITERACY & SELF-ESTEEM





Jared Haynes's Books2Connect book drive

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 37% of 4th-grade students in U.S. public schools don't meet the organization's basic literacy level, down 4 percentage points from 2019. The National Adult Literacy Survey reported that 70% of all incarcerated adults in the U.S. cannot read at a 4th-grade level, lacking the reading skills to navigate many everyday tasks or hold down anything but lower-paying jobs.

Federation's trained **BookBuddies** volunteers provide one-on-one reading practice with 2nd-grade students at Blackham School in Bridgeport each week, sharing a love of books and changing young lives with the gift of literacy.

Books2Connect distributes donated new and gently-used books to at-risk children throughout Connecticut via schools, shelters, community centers, and social-service agencies.



BUILDING OUR BENCH





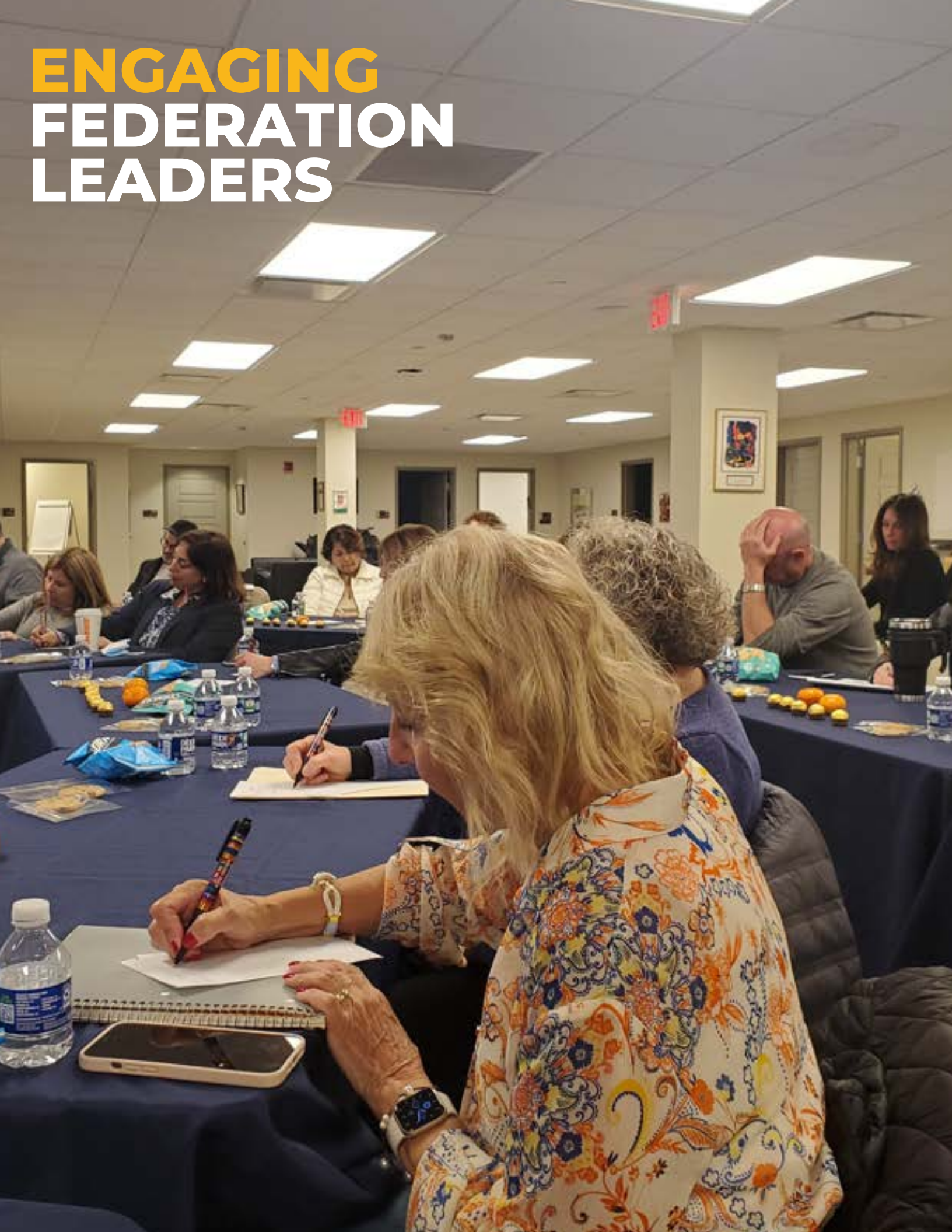
Merkaz Community High School for Judaic Studies provides a meaningful and relevant Jewish education to our community teens that builds character, positive values, leadership, and a strong Jewish identity, and creates a sense of unity with the Jewish people.

At Merkaz Bridgeport and Merkaz Westport...

- We explore our Jewish values & connect them to our daily lives
- We create a bridge between the history of our people and the world today
- We use the arts, STEM & texts as a springboard to understanding our Judaism
- We partner with the community to do Tikkun Olam (repair the world)
- We become confident Jewish adults that our Bubbe would be proud to know
- We foster future Jewish leaders



ENGAGING FEDERATION LEADERS





We created the Future Fund to encourage our Jewish students to develop an understanding of, and connection to, Israel. Students in 8th grade through college can now directly apply for grants for fantastic programs in Israel. From summer camps to a semester abroad in Israel to Jewish pre-college and gap-year programs, there are plenty of enriching opportunities for students to build strong Jewish identity through Israel. Look for the button on the Federation website!

Meet the leaders of the Future Fund.

Alyssa Gold is Chief Operating Officer for itrek, a nonprofit organization dedicated to building greater understanding of and appreciation for Israel amongst students from the world's top graduate programs in business, law, policy and STEM. She lives in Fairfield with her husband, Josh, and daughter, Abigail.



Alex Bahary is a Vice President in JPMorgan Chase's Not-For-Profit Banking Group, responsible for a diverse portfolio of not-for-profits in New York City. He and his wife, Suzanne, live in Fairfield.

I am volunteering my time toward this important project aimed at the next generation of American Jews so as to light the spark of pride, joy, and gratitude for the Jewish People and the Nation of Israel.

In October, Federation CEO Carin Savel and board treasurer **CECILIA MESH** (left) attended the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly in Chicago.

It was so inspiring... We learned a lot from young Jewish leaders, about how they're rebuilding connections with the older generations and carrying Judaism forward to the next generations.



FIGHTING PERIOD POVERTY... ONE TOTE AT A TIME





Human dignity should not be considered a luxury, yet nearly 30% of menstruators in the U.S. suffer from period poverty, lacking the financial resources to purchase basic menstrual-hygiene necessities. This obstacle can result in lost days of work and school, further compounding the cycle of poverty.

In 2022, Federation's Dignity Grows volunteers packed 1,000 totes of essentials for women and girls in need, funded by individual donors and a grant from Fairfield County's Community Foundation, and distributed by our social-service partner organizations.

- Bridgeport Islamic Community Center*
- Alpha Community Services - Emergency Shelter*
- Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Norwalk Office*
- CIRI (Connecticut Institute for Refugees & Immigrants)*
- LifeBridge Community Services*
- Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County Kosher Food Pantry*



HAVING FUN & DOING GOOD



Your donations are the bedrock of our impact. We offered meaningful programs that enrich Jewish identity. We funded a wealth of humanitarian and educational agencies that work to respond to ongoing challenges and emerging issues.

Guests and honorees at our annual Gala raised money to purchase an ambucycle for emergency medical responders in our sister region of Afula-Gilboa, Israel -- the first in that community!



DOR L'DOR

STEPPING INTO JEWISH LIFE AT THEIR OWN PACE



The Jewish Federation and PJ Library sends free Jewish children's books to area families every month. We know that something magical happens when parents sit down together to read with their children. Through books and community events, **PJ LIBRARY & PJ OUR WAY** shares the best of Jewish tradition—ethics, values, culture, heritage, and rituals—in a way that is accessible, adaptable, and above all, fun for kids from birth through age 11.

FEDERATION YOUNG FAMILIES is a group of parents with young children who come together for social activities, building friendships, and giving back with purpose, stepping into Jewish life at their own pace and discovering other young families to do it with.





The **ISRAEL EMISSARY PROGRAM** is a true "living bridge" between Greater Fairfield County and our partnership region of Afula-Gilboa in northern Israel. Through hands-on activities in our preschools and religious schools to thought-provoking community-wide discussions and programs, our young Israeli "ambassador" shares a love of Israel with community members of all ages.

This year, we are thrilled to welcome back **OFEK MOSCOVICH**, who lived in our community as one of four Israeli Young Emissaries in 2017-18. Before returning to Federation, he served in various combat positions with the Israel Defense Forces and then at Camp Ramah New England as a counselor and as director of the Israel education program.



INSPIRING COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

JAN

Behind the Pages: *The Scaffold Effect: How to Raise Resilient, Self-Reliant, and Secure Kids* with author Harold S. Koplewicz, MD in conversation with Gwen Lopez-Cohen, MD

FEB

Behind the Pages: *Food Americana* with author David Page



MAR

Behind the Pages Community Read: *A Play for the End of the World* with author Jai Chakrabarti, co-sponsored by The Westport Country Playhouse and The Westport Library

Jewish Perspectives of Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice rabbis' panel discussion with National Council of Jewish Women

APR

Sen. Richard Blumenthal briefs the community on his trip to Ukraine

Dozens of community volunteers convened to decide who receives funding from Federation's annual campaign



MAY

Israel at Your Doorstep: Jewish Agency for Israel Emissaries visited our community religious schools to share activities on Israel.

JUNE

Behind the Pages: *Jewish Pride* with author Ben M. Freeman in conversation with Steven Goldstein



20

Four Winters screening & talkback with filmmaker Julia Mintz at The Westport Library

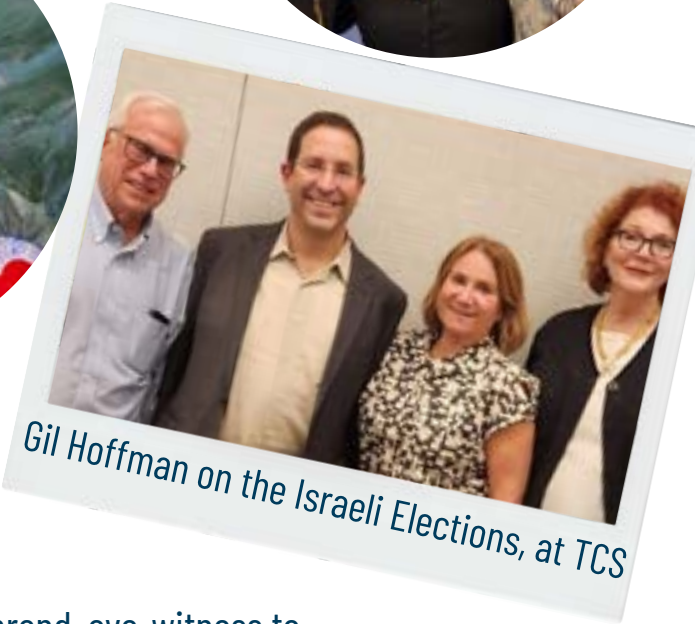


Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, at Chabad of Fairfield

Behind the Pages - *Modern Jewish Comfort Food* author Shannon Sarna in conversation with Liz Rueven, at Chabad of Westport



PJ Library, Federation Young Families, and Congregation Beth El Fairfield turned Silverman's Farm in Easton into a Rosh HaShanah extravaganza.



Gil Hoffman on the Israeli Elections, at TCS

Fred Behrend, eye-witness to Kristallnacht, at TCS



Behind the Pages - *Fighting Back: Stan Andrews and the Birth of the Israeli Air Force* with authors Jeffrey Weiss & Craig Weiss, at Congregation Shir Shalom

Behind the Pages - *#antisemitism: Coming of Age during the Resurgence of Hate* with author Dr. Samantha Vinokor-Meinrath, at TCS

The U.S. and the Holocaust: Are We Listening? screening & talkback with CT Public, at The Westport Library

Federation Young Families Parents' Night Out - Israeli Beers & Burekas with Federation Israel Emissary Ofek Moscovich, at Congregation B'nai Israel



JULY
AUG
SEPT
OCT
NOV

DEC

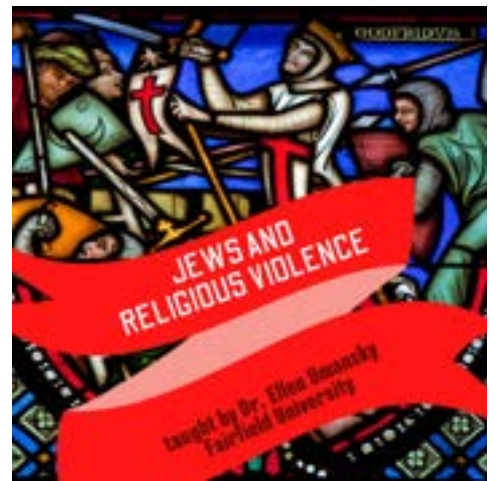
COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS ALL YEAR LONG



SPRING

Congregation Beth El Fairfield and TCS in Westport were dropoff locations for a community-wide donation drive to benefit **CIRI** (Connecticut Institute for Refugees & Immigrants) in Bridgeport.

Federation co-sponsored the **BENNETT CENTER FOR JUDAIC STUDIES'** popular and long-running annual Lunch & Learn program, the last taught by out-going longtime director, Prof. Ellen Umansky.



Federation co-sponsored the annual **TOWN OF FAIRFIELD HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION** at First Church Congregational.

Annual **YOM HAATZMA'UT CELEBRATION** at the Stamford JCC, with UJA-JCC Greenwich and United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien.

- We want to thank-you so much for your scholarship to send our children to camp this summer. It enriched their Jewish education in ways we couldn't have imagined.
Sincerely -

SUMMER

Federation's annual allocation to the **JOAN AND BEN ZINBARG-SCHOKE JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE CAMP SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** gave children from Greater Fairfield County families experiencing financial difficulties the invaluable gift of Jewish summer camp.

HOLOCAUST CHILD SURVIVORS OF CONNECTICUT, INC. (HCSC) found a new home at Federation, laying the groundwork for an innovative regional **HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER**, opening in 2023.





Stuart Frisch, National Training and Exercise Advisor for Jewish Federations of North America's **SECURE COMMUNITY NETWORK**, provided in-person community network security training for Jewish lay leaders from our congregations and organizations.

Prof. Philip Eliasoph of Fairfield University debuted a special preview of the seminal exhibit, *In Real Times - Arthur Szyk: Artist and Soldier for Human Rights*, opening in September 2023 at the **FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM** and co-sponsored by Federation.



Former Israeli Prime Minister **EHUD BARAK** took the bimah at Temple Israel.

Federation Israel Emissary Ofek Moscovich hosted an evening of Israeli wines and hummus -- the documentary and his own homemade version -- with **CONGREGATION BETH EL FAIRFIELD**.



HOLLANDER HOUSE celebrated its 40th anniversary. The Federation was an early funder of The Greater Bridgeport Jewish Housing Corp., a unique non-profit created to provide affordable housing for seniors, and gave land for the apartment complex.

WINTER

Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County unveiled the community's first-ever **MOBILE KOSHER FOOD PANTRY**, funded by Federation and other donors and organizations.



In 2022, the Federation provided funds, goods, and/or volunteer hours to 31 partner agencies and organizations locally, in Israel, and around the world.



SOCIAL SERVICES

Bridgeport Islamic Community Center
 Circle of Friends CT
 CIRI (Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants)
 Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Norwalk
 Friendship Circle of Fairfield County
 Jewish Senior Services
 Keshet Project for Developmentally Challenged Adults
 LifeBridge Community Services
 Positive Directions - The Center for Prevention & Counseling
 Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County

OVERSEAS & ISRAEL

The Jewish Federations of North America
 American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Volga Region
 Project Keshet (former Soviet Union)
 United Hatzalah of Israel

Afula-Gilboa, northern Israel:

Eemunah Afula Children's Centre
 Ethiopian National Project's School Performance and
 Community Empowerment Program
 Haifa Rape Crisis Center (Afula branch)
 Home in the Valley

JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD

Anti-Defamation League, Connecticut Region
 Bennett Center for Judaic Studies, Fairfield University
 UConn Hillel, Storrs
 Jewish Broadcasting Service

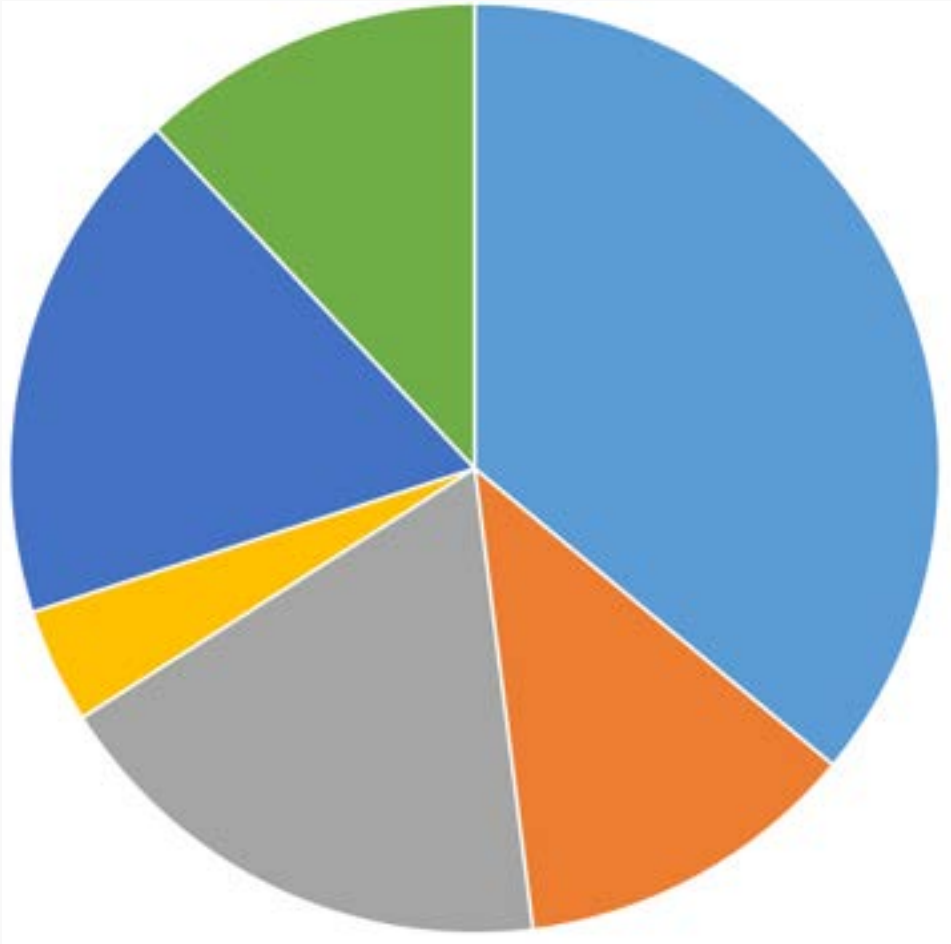
YOUTH & TEENS

BBYO (B'nai Brith Youth Organization), Connecticut Valley Region
 Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy of Connecticut (Stamford)
 Ezra Academy (Woodbridge)
 JCC of Greater New Haven Day Camps
 Southern Connecticut Hebrew Academy (Orange)

Jewish Agency for Israel
 Mishkan Museum of Art: coexistence through art
 Ofanim
 Shehakim Afula Crowns Sandwich Club:
 at-risk teens helping underserved children

ALLOCATIONS 2022

Here's how your donations made a difference.



4%

JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD

12%

YOUTH & TEENS

12%

ISRAEL & OVERSEAS

18%

EMERGENCY RELIEF

18%

SOCIAL SERVICES

36%

FEDERATION PROGRAMS

LOOKING AHEAD 23

1

FUTURE FUND

Encouraging our Jewish students to develop an understanding of, and connection to, Israel through grants for experiential programs in Israel

2

HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER

Continuing and expanding the educational and humanitarian mission of Holocaust Child Survivors of Connecticut, Inc., through a speakers' bureau, resource library, classroom curricula, and community programs and exhibits

3

YOUNG LEADERSHIP

Ensuring the future of our Jewish community by nurturing 20s & 30s through volunteer projects, networking, and missions

THE FIRST OF MANY MISSIONS...



2022 BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Linda Lerman	Co-Chair
Mindy Siegel	Co-Chair
Keith Lender	Secretary
Cecilia Mesh	Treasurer
Deborah Hochhauser	Immediate Past Co-Chair
Ivy Gosseen	Campaign Co-Chair
James Sugarman	Campaign Co-Chair



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Anita Chargar	Louis Haber	Bonnie Marcus	Mindy Siegel
Sharon DeFala	Deborah Hochhauser	Cecilia Mesh	Bonnie Slyn
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Stacy Giglietti	Linda Lerman	Laurie Renzulli	James Sugarman
Ivy Gosseen	Sheryle Levine	Karen Sanger	David Vine



& STAFF



Carin Savel
Chief Executive Officer
carin@shalomct.org



Stacy Kamisar
Director of Programming & Partnerships
stacy@shalomct.org

Seth Marion
Education & Family Engagement Director
seth@shalomct.org



Priscilla Ling
Office & Operations Manager
priscilla@shalomct.org

Cynthia Mindell
Allocations & Grants Manager
cindy@shalomct.org



Sara Beitman
Education & Family Engagement Associate
sara@shalomct.org

Sophie Greenspan
Program Manager
sophie@shalomct.org



Alec Lessard
Marketing Manager
alec@shalomct.org

Elise Serby
Campaign Associate
elise@shalomct.org



Ofek Moscovich
Federation Israel Emissary
ofek@shalomct.org

Monique Long
Finance Manager
monique@shalomct.org



CONGREGATIONS



AGENCIES & ORGANIZATIONS

JFACT (Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut)

Jewish Federation of Eastern Connecticut

Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford

Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven

Jewish Federation of Western Connecticut

UJA-JCC Greenwich

United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien

LOCAL

Anti-Defamation League Connecticut Region

Bennett Center for Judaic Studies, Fairfield University

Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County

Jewish Senior Services

Fairfield University

First Church Congregational, Fairfield

Sacred Heart University

Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County

The Westport Library

Westport Country Playhouse

Wilton Public Library

REGIONAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL

American Society for Yad Vashem

Dignity Grows

FEMA

Israel Action Network

Jewish Agency for Israel

Jewish Book Council

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA)

JFNA National Young Leadership Cabinet

Southern New England Consortium (SNEC)

Stand With Us

United Hatzalah of Israel

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

GRANTORS

Connecticut Humanities | Fairfield County's Community Foundation | Harold Grinspoon Foundation | Jewish Senior Services Women's Auxiliary

CLICK OR SCAN TO GET INVOLVED!



**JOIN OUR
MAILING LIST**

DONATE



JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER FAIRFIELD COUNTY

4200 Park Avenue, Suite 300

Bridgeport, CT 06604

203-226-8197

shalomct.org