



THE STEINHARDT  
FOUNDATION  
FOR JEWISH LIFE

# CONTACT

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**NEW TRENDS  
IN FUNDRAISING**

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The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life is dedicated to strengthening and transforming American Jewish Life to ensure a flourishing, sustainable community in a fully integrated free society. We seek to revitalize Jewish identity through educational and cultural initiatives that are designed to reach out to all Jews, with an emphasis on those who are on the margins of Jewish life, as well as to advocate for and support Hebrew and Jewish literacy among the general population.

## NEW TRENDS IN FUNDRAISING

**A**s the global economy lurches fitfully back from the precipice of disaster, many in the Jewish philanthropic community might expect a slow but unwavering return to normalcy: a steady influx of resources, renewed funder commitment, and reliability of near-term as well as long-term giving. But such expectations overlook trends that preceded the recession and that will likely continue into the foreseeable future. These include generational shifts in areas and priorities of giving; transformations in philanthropic allocations from core operational support to directed and controlled giving; dwindling relevance of 20th-century fundraising pivots such as immigration and relief aid, anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and the establishment of Israel; and, more generally, continued disinterest that has had an adverse effect not only on Jewish literacy but also on Jewish generosity.

As a result of these trends, the ratio of giving to Jewish causes in relation to general causes has been on a continuous decline for decades. An exacerbating factor today is the tendency to view the American Jewish community, the most successful in Jewish history, as self-sufficient — or at least less worthy of philanthropic support than, say, hospitals or research centers. Especially in periods of economic austerity, when funders are limiting their largesse, it's the ostensibly expendable causes that risk being cut first.

And yet, without renewed philanthropic support, the Jewish community's efforts to sustain Jewish life and identity will founder. How the community adapts to a changing philanthropic landscape will quite simply determine the shape of tomorrow's Jewish world. With this in mind, the articles in this issue of CONTACT explore new trends in fundraising — from general trajectories to specific strategies, from academic as well as personal perspectives. Taken together, they offer the beginnings of a blueprint for a community seeking to strengthen its capacity to revitalize Jewish life today and into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eli Valley".

Eli Valley

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# WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT RAISING MONEY FROM JEWS

by ROBERT P. ARONSON

In 1975, a failed art student, I began working at the Milwaukee Jewish Federation as a clerk typist. One day my boss, Mel Zaret, asked me to attend a fundraising meeting. There were about twenty men in the room listening to an Israeli army officer wearing sunglasses. He spoke about the battle for the Suez Canal.

After that, to my astonishment, the men went around the room and announced pledges to the 1975 Federation Campaign: "I give 50!" (He meant thousand) "I give 100!" "I'm taking out a second mortgage on my home so I can give 25!"

I remember thinking that this must be the greatest job in the world, because these men come here and literally throw money at you!

That was the way it was. Israel was the trigger to fundraising. Giving was collective and emotional. There was no talk about supporting Jewish education and identity; that was for the nerds and the Orthodox. At that time, giving money to the Federation was a religion unto itself, and God forbid someone should try to designate their gift or ask where the money was going. They would have been banished from the community. Those were the days of the UJA!

Let's fast forward 35 years. Our world is different, but the bottom line is this: Jewish fundraisers are still operating in the world of 1975, but our donors, both real and potential, have moved on.

First of all, a definition of terms: A Jewish fundraiser is a Jew who works for a Jewish organization and is expected to raise money for that organization from Jewish donors. A potential donor, real or imagined, is the ultimate target of the Jewish fundraiser. And this is where the disconnect begins.

Most Jewish fundraisers earnestly believe

that the organizations they work for are so important that they are automatically entitled to the donor's money. Even when a gift is made, the fundraiser and his/her bosses consider it inadequate to the donor's means. This causes great angst to the fundraiser and leads to Lesson Number One in the "2010 Jewish Giving Handbook":

"Just because they have money doesn't mean you're going to get it."

Giving relies upon two elements: capacity and willingness. Having one without the other is meaningless.

Lesson Number Two has to do with the Jew in the Modern

World. There are many opportunities to give, and non-Jewish organizations solicit funds better than we do. Jewish fundraisers are too busy focusing on themselves and what they want as opposed to what the donors want. Non-Jewish organizations don't make this mistake.

Most Jewish fundraisers cringe when we read about a new \$100 million gift made by a prominent Jew (whom we have pursued for years) to a university, hospital or cultural institution. We say: "Crap! How did that happen?" (Although we don't say it out loud.)

The answer is the rule of the "two affinities" which we fundraisers miss because we still inherently believe that we are entitled to the donor's money.

Here's an example of two strong affinities in one donor family:

Three generations of a family attended a certain University. The father made his fortune in engineering, which he learned at the University. That is two affinities right there. Why are we surprised the University receives a \$30 million gift to the School of Engineering? And, by the way, the glossy University publication features the donor wearing a graduation cowl. How do we compete with that?

The fact is that we don't know how to; we don't even understand it.

The problem here is that today's potential donor has the unmitigated gall to want to determine for him/herself where they want their charitable dollars to go. The donor wants to make a difference, demands accountability and measurable results for his/her gift (which is really a charitable investment) and often-times wants to leverage the commitment with giving from others. This is, of course, a disaster for those of us focused solely on what it is we are trying to sell. Our heads are full of it. I refer to this as the "orchestra playing in your head" phenomenon.

This brings us to lesson Number Three. You cannot hear what the donor is saying if you have an orchestra playing in your head.

In other words, listen. You might actually find out what the donor wants. Listening depends on face-to-face appointments and the development of long-term relationships of trust and mutual respect.

This, more than anything, is problematic for Jewish fundraisers, who have monthly quotas to meet, gifts to close and annual campaigns to complete. They simply do not have the time, or often the skill, to develop relationships with donors, especially new ones.

The time-honored Jewish answer to this problem is "Let's have a big event and honor somebody important. The people will come."

This leads us to Lesson Number Four: Traditional Jewish honoree events don't work anymore. The fact is that most people, especially today's new donors, simply don't like them. Events are costly, dreary, in poor taste considering today's pinched economy and excruciatingly long. They also take huge amounts of staff time.

Here we can take a page from the University Playbook. Yes, universities run annual campaigns, but they are relatively minor in comparison to capital campaigns and long-term designated giving. University fundraising officers are no longer called "development" professionals but "advancement" professionals, which certainly sounds better.

This raises a troubling possibility. Perhaps Jewish fundraising organizations will have to consider a radically different approach: to reduce expectations for annual campaigns and focus on long-term, targeted and personalized giving. Interestingly, the Federation system, which stresses annual giving, has seen a steady decline in annual campaigns and a dramatic increase in endowed giving, often to organizations outside the Federation umbrella.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

From my early days at the UJA until today, I've referred to myself as a "deli schlepper." I would do anything for the donors: carry their bags, make them drinks, anything.

I have learned in my 35 years in the fundraising business that passion for the cause is still important, but the ability to understand what people want and turn it into real action is more so.

I earned my first job in 1975 when I told my prospective boss, "I want to work with the Jews." I knew nothing more than that.

As Jewish fundraisers, we must continue to follow our hearts. But to be successful, this is simply no longer good enough. It's one reason why there are so few successful Jewish fundraisers and every organization is scrambling to find one.

The rules have changed, but we're still living in the 1970s. It is imperative that we adapt, change our organizational goals and train our professionals differently, or we'll face a future of increasing anachronism and irrelevance. ■

**Robert P. Aronson** is President of The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life and President of the Birthright Israel Foundation.



Remembering the Holocaust was once a potent force in stimulating support for various Jewish organizations and for Israel. But memory is fading, and Jewish organizations must counterbalance this trend with other approaches and programs.

**A**merican society is increasingly aware of the critical role of its 1.8 million nonprofit organizations and the more than \$300 billion that they raise each year. The Jewish community, too, is dependent on nonprofits in efforts

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# REFLECTIONS ON JEWISH FUNDRAISING

by NAOMI LEVINE

ranging from Jewish education to the protection of civil liberties to support for Israel. In order to succeed effectively, there are several recent trends all nonprofits should keep in mind:

## 1. AGE

There is an increased interest in fundraising today among younger people. In the past, people in their sixties, seventies and older were the engine in fundraising both in the non-Jewish and the Jewish commu-

nities. Today, people in their thirties and forties are actively involved in fundraising. They have more money, and they have an increasing interest in trying to make the world a better place. Even on college campuses, thousands of young people are involved in raising money for charities, which is now considered a "cool" pursuit.

Campus Jewish groups were among the first to raise funds after 9/11 and for the victims of the Southeast Asian tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, Darfur, Haiti and now Chile.

This means that established Jewish and non-Jewish organizations must begin to give serious thought to how to target this young audience. The dinners and “card calling” of yesterday are not the best methods of raising funds among younger people. New approaches must be developed.

## **2. TECHNOLOGY**

The Internet and technology clearly affect fundraising today. All of the evidence indicates that younger men and women are making gifts through the Internet and use Google, Facebook, Twitter, etc. to identify institutions to which they want to contribute. This is true in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

## **3. SPECIFIC CAUSES — NOT UMBRELLA GROUPS**

In addition, younger Americans seem interested in giving money to specific causes rather than to umbrella groups like the United Way and UJA-Federation. This poses serious problems for some of the less “sexy” communal responsibilities that clearly lose out when donors target specific gifts.

## **4. NEW FOUNDATIONS AND NEW NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

The desire of younger donors to target their charity to specific causes has led to the creation of many new foundations and nonprofit groups. Many issues are faced in the creation of foundations and charities, including accountability, disclosure, the role of boards, fiduciary responsibilities, conflicts of interest, etc. Many nonprofits could have avoided the loss of money that occurred in the Madoff scandal if they had been more careful about conflicts of interest and about their boards’ responsibilities, and if they had done due diligence before investing their funds. More training in this area is essential.

## **5. PRIORITIES**

The priorities of younger donors have also changed. They are now showing increased interest in environmental issues, global problems overseas (helping in Haiti or NGO work in Africa and Southeast Asia), AIDS research and other causes. Concern for overseas charities has always existed, but in the last few years it has become increasingly popular. In 2008 it represented about 4 percent or \$13 billion in funds raised. The Jewish community will

certainly suffer because of this change of priorities — a trend that must be watched carefully.

Among young Jews, this change in priorities clearly diverts giving from traditional Jewish causes, including Israel.

Moreover, remembering the Holocaust was once a potent force in stimulating support for various Jewish organizations and for Israel. But memory is fading, and Jewish organizations must counterbalance this trend with other approaches and programs.

## **6. MISMANAGEMENT**

Today there is a great deal of media attention on the mismanagement, excess salaries, conflicts of interest and even criminal behavior in nonprofits. Jewish communal institutions are not immune from this. Organizations must provide more training sessions for their board members and staff in order to make certain they understand Federal and State laws and the ethical perspectives involved in fundraising. They must also pay more attention to how their organizations are managed, how salaries are determined and how funds are raised and spent. The institution of additional audits, budget controls, conflict of interest statements and codes of ethics is a step in the right direction.

## **7. WOMEN AND PHILANTHROPY**

The increased involvement of women in leadership and fundraising positions is another recent development. The Jewish world has not been as aggressive in this regard as non-Jewish institutions. While more women sit on boards in the Jewish world and there are volunteer women who are chairs of Jewish institutions, there are few women professional directors heading major Jewish organizations today. The Jewish community must examine this more carefully. Fifty-one percent of the wealth in this country is in the hands of women. To run an effective campaign today, women must be involved in every aspect of the campaign and in the leadership of the institution — both at the professional and lay levels.

## **8. PERSONAL THOUGHTS**

Now let me end with a very personal comment. I think the importance of new trends is in some way exaggerated. Yes, the Internet is making some changes. Yes, some of the donors are younger. Yes, there are more

organizations to which donors wish to contribute. Yes, the Jewish community is giving an increasing amount of money to non-Jewish causes. But these trends have been developing slowly over the last several years. However, fundraising will always depend on individual gifts, one-on-one meetings and traditional rules of fundraising. While new trends have to be watched carefully and there must be efforts to accommodate new demands, I do not think they will profoundly influence the course of major-gift fundraising, which is the heart and soul of any effective campaign.

The real challenge in the Jewish community is not these new trends. It is the development of programs and priorities to reach large segments of the community that have become secular and whose ties to the community do not depend on religiosity. This is clearly noticeable on college campuses. Add to this the Jewish illiteracy of the students and, I might add, the illiteracy of their parents, and we get a dismal forecast for tomorrow. It is these deeper issues that need our attention. How we handle them will determine the strength — indeed, the very existence — of a strong Jewish community tomorrow.

However, there is another aspect of the “new” philanthropists’ approach to philanthropy that deserves special attention. In much of what they say and in many articles written about them, there is an assertion that the source of new ideas and creativity resides only outside major communal institutions. This assumption, I believe, is not true. No one has a monopoly on creativity. New ideas and new approaches sprout in many places and in the heads of many individuals, whether they are working in established organizations or are creating new ones. Indeed, many of the most creative ideas have sprouted within the same organizations that many of the new philanthropists would view as stodgy and frozen in the status quo. What the community needs today is for these new philanthropists to stop deriding the established communal organizations and to work, where appropriate, in partnership with them — exchanging ideas, strategizing over programs and problems, and exploring and evaluating what is being done and what should be done. In this way, each can learn from the other. Where such partnerships have existed, the whole community has benefited. ■

# JEWISH FUNDRAISING 1.0 IN A 3.0 PHILANTHROPIC WORLD

by JEFFREY R. SOLOMON

In the century since the arrival of large numbers of Jews from Eastern Europe, the American Jewish philanthropic scene has been an extraordinary success story that has combined Jewish and American values. Jewish philanthropy has taken root in this country because it is based on the timeless values of *B'Tzelem Elohim*, the infinite value of each human life; *tikkun olam*, our personal responsibility in completing and healing the world; and *kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazez*, all Jews are responsible one for another. This aligns quite well with the American concept of "a more perfect union" and faith in the voluntary sector — that citizens coming together can achieve societal good better than government.

The 20th Century brought extraordinary, existential pain to the Jewish community, culminating in the *Shoah* and followed closely by the collective emotional response to the creation of the State of Israel. These emotional connections permeated Jewish life throughout the globe and were the underpinnings of modern Jewish philanthropy. In many ways, the great philanthropic enterprises such as the UJA-Federation system, the Jewish National Fund, Hadassah and countless others were built on six 20th Century realities:

- The Jewish community was affluent;
- Jews self-identified as Jews;
- Jews felt a sense of insecurity for their brethren discriminated against here or at risk in various parts of the world;
- Jews felt an organic connection to the development of the State of Israel;
- Jewish DNA was tied to the *kehillah*, or community governance system of the communal past, and therefore Jews appreciated the role of central charities;
- The other great American philanthropies — secular universities, museums and hospitals — were less interested in Jewish support because of the social discriminatory patterns that existed at that time.

Only the first of these conditions remains in effect today. The very universities that once had Jewish quotas today have Jewish presidents. Jewish identity is but one of a multiplicity of identities that we carry in our open, pluralistic society. Among younger Jews, a connection to Israel is no greater than that of all young Americans. We want to follow our dollars and are part of a society that

has created "disintermediation" as a term of art. Our great secular universities, hospitals and museums are disproportionately Jewish in leadership, governance and philanthropy.

In *The Art of Giving: Where the Soul Meets a Business Plan* (Jossey-Bass, 2009), Charles Bronfman and I talk about the three phases of philanthropy:

- Philanthropy 1.0, where people gave strictly from their hearts.
- Philanthropy 2.0 (stimulated by the dot com era), in which people were going to solve major problems and give only from their heads.
- Philanthropy 3.0, where people's hearts blended with the demands of a carefully developed strategy to achieve impact.

We believe these trends offer both risks and opportunities for Jewish philanthropy.

The major risk is that organizations will believe that their donors will continue to give strictly from their hearts — having no expectations regarding the likelihood of their gifts improving the world. Virtually every major Jewish philanthropic organization has faced a decline in donors and maintains a greater reliance on small numbers of major donors. These major donors constitute the last generation to have personally witnessed and/or experienced the horrors of the *Shoah* and the redemption in the creation of the State of Israel. As was noted in research conducted several years ago by the late Gary Tobin and me, Jewish donors of mega-gifts (more than \$10 million) were overrepresented in this population by an amazing multiple of nine. However, even among this cohort, 94 percent of their gifts went to secular rather than to Jewish causes. And the people of the Philanthropy 1.0 cohort — who don't think about impact — are of a generation that is dying off. Today, a new generation has emerged that lacks a visceral and emotional connection to the major Jewish events of the 20th Century. Many Jewish organizations have failed to make a case to this new generation. Clearly, an emotional connection between the cause, the organization and the donor is absolutely critical. But given the generational changes in philanthropy, today's Jewish organizational challenge is to speak to both the donor's heart and head.

At the same time, however, donors, especially younger donors, have grown up in an age in which information is readily accessible, inexpensive and critical to decision-making. When

a Travelocity or an Expedia allows you to look at best air fares globally, and a Kayak.com even provides an analysis of those services, why would you simply accept a warm (or, occasionally, not so warm) thank-you letter for a gift to an organization without having a sense of how those funds are making a difference? The growth in the use of information resources such as GuideStar and Charity Navigator, two tools to help donors better understand the effectiveness of charitable organizations, underscores this point. Indeed, Charity Navigator and other such sites are today looking at ways of measuring effectiveness as dramatically as they've measured efficiency so that donors can appreciate the relative value of their philanthropy. Charity Navigator has efficiency measures, ranking organizations with zero to four stars. It is painful to see how many of the 247 Jewish organizations listed by Charity Navigator, including some of the major names in Jewish philanthropy, have only one or two stars.

As we look generationally, we see these challenges grow exponentially. The younger generation has been wired (or is wireless) from birth. Its expectations for information are even more significant. The pyramidal social hierarchy, which has helped so many Jewish charities in the past, has been replaced by a far flatter system of social networking. Consequently, giving that came from the strength of relationships with community leaders is on the decline. This is the most self-confident Jewish generation in history; it will support self-confident, competent organizations. This generation is far less likely to define its philanthropy from a sense of self-taxation, responsibility or guilt.

As with any set of challenges, these variables represent enormous opportunity. Those organizations that are learning how to present their work in compelling and new ways are growing both in the number of donors and in the total dollars raised. As we look at the enormous growth of organizations such as the American Jewish World Service, Jewish Funds for Justice, Birthright Israel Foundation and others, we see how these trends can be used to create a better future, one that continues to be built on timeless Jewish values and on the unique role of philanthropy in America. Transparent, powerful, compelling Jewish organizations will continue to set the trends and build a meaningful future based on the beliefs and heritage that brought us to this wonderful moment. ■

**Jeffrey R. Solomon** is President of The Andrea & Charles Bronfman Philanthropies.



# THE AREIVIM LEGACY COMMUNITY PROJECT

by GAIL G. LITTMAN AND MARJORY KAPLAN

*Recession or not, an enormous transfer of wealth is happening before our eyes. Through the Areivim Legacy Community Project, communities can embrace this unique opportunity to help people of all ages create legacies for the organizations that have shaped their lives.*

**A**s seniors gathered at a local Jewish organization to hear about leaving bequests for the community, one eager woman raised her hand. “What took you so long?” she asked with a grin. “My alma mater has asked me for a bequest. My hospital has asked me for a bequest. And now, finally, you are here asking me for a bequest for my Jewish community. That’s the most important bequest of all.”

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**Gail G. Littman** directs the Create a Jewish Legacy® program, the Endowment Leadership Institute (ELI) and the Governance Leadership Institute (GLI) at the Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego. Since 1994, **Marjory Kaplan** has served as chief professional of the Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego, where she holds the Miriam and Jerome Katzin Presidential Chair.

This scene could have taken place almost anywhere.

While the North American Jewish community can legitimately be proud of its record for current giving — annual, emergency and capital campaigns — planned giving efforts have been generally weak.

In most cases, community organizations are insufficiently focused or are not



## **With foresight and generosity, thousands of Jews will express their passion, purpose and commitment to the future by creating Jewish legacies.**

focused at all on planned giving and bequests, and certainly not on legacy gifts for Israel or national programs such as Birthright Israel. With the recession, fund-raising staffs have been reduced, so the prospects of expanding or even establishing planned giving resources are remote.

### **INSPIRING INNOVATION**

Enter the Areivim Philanthropic Group, which has identified an innovative model that is bringing enormous success to the San Diego Jewish community. The San Diego Jewish Community Foundation is now ready to build on its experience of having first launched a legacy project in San Diego, and having helped a number of other communities launch legacy projects in the past few years.

Through a generous matching grant program, five communities will create top-of-the-line endowment and legacy programs based on the San Diego model.

Areivim will support a two-year grant for this timely and significant project — The Areivim Legacy Community Project.

The key assumptions of the Project are:

- 1.** Jewish community organizations can be successful by working together to create bequests and other planned gifts.
- 2.** Legacies are really about developing rich and meaningful relationships with donors who have long histories with Jewish organizations. A conversation about leaving a legacy comes naturally and brings joy and satisfaction to the individual or family.

Under the Areivim Legacy Community Project, the five selected communities will each receive up to \$310,000 in a matching grant payable over two years that will allow them to:

- Hire a talented, well-respected legacy manager for the community.
- Identify and engage Jewish organizations in the community to participate.
- Implement a proven course of study that consists of group sessions and individual coaching for several local Jewish organizations.

ine what it would be like for Jewish organizations of the future to receive increasing endowment income to enrich their annual budgets.

### **THE SAN DIEGO MODEL**

What has happened in San Diego over the past six years? In 2004, the Jewish Community Foundation implemented the Endowment Leadership Institute (ELI) with twenty Jewish organizations, synagogues and day schools. To date, almost 800 people have made arrangements for bequests and other planned gifts approximating \$200 million.

San Diego donors report that they are being thanked and appreciated more regularly and in more meaningful ways. There is an overall positive impact on annual and capital campaigns. In fact, research shows that legacy donors will give twice as much annually as those who do not have a legacy gift in their wills (E. Krauser, *Bequest Giving Study for Campbell & Company*, Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, March 2007).

What's more, the culture around legacies has changed. "If you're Jewish and active in the San Diego Jewish community, then a legacy plan is the next natural and joyous step," says Jane Scher, founding ELI chair in San Diego.

### **MOBILIZING THE COMMUNITY**

Recession or not, an enormous transfer of wealth is happening before our eyes. Through the Areivim Legacy Community Project, communities can embrace this unique opportunity to help people of all ages create legacies for the organizations that have shaped their lives. These future endowments can free organizations from relying solely on current fundraising efforts, the all-too-typical hand-to-mouth approach that threatens to topple organizations during tough times.

National data tells us that charitable bequests usually grow in a recession. However, a recent article in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* stated, "For those who think the generational transfer will automatically flood their organizations with resources, it's time to think again. Without putting in the hard work of generating these planned gifts, 90 percent of donor mortality will simply result in lost current giving." (April 11, 2009)

Areivim and the Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego are prepared to put in the hard work to help others imag-

### **CHANGING THE FUNDRAISING LANGUAGE AND LANDSCAPE**

The San Diego model shows that legacy building departs from traditional fundraising terminology. People aren't cards. No one needs to be rushed. The emphasis should be on conversations, not solicitations. These conversations are not with prospects but with loyal and trusted friends of our organizations. These friends need to be consistently and caringly connected to our organizations over time and over generations.

Areivim's overall mission is to reach the next generation of Jews. Areivim's Legacy Community Project will work closely with communities to build legacies for their Jewish institutions including Birthright Israel, campus life, overnight Jewish camping and Jewish day schools, among other Jewish organizations and institutions.

The Areivim Legacy Community Project will give a unique and wonderful gift to our North American Jewish community. With foresight and generosity, thousands of Jews will express their passion, purpose and commitment to the future by creating Jewish legacies. ■

# THE ELUSIVE FUNDRAISER: A COMPLEX SITUATION WITH SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

by AMY L. SALES

**A** few years ago I worked on an analysis of the putative shortage of fundraisers for the Jewish community. Was recruitment or retention at the source of the problem? Was the dearth of fundraisers most acute at the entry, middle or senior level? And was the problem intractable or amenable to intervention? Months of study found the answers to be “yes, yes and yes.” (Amy L. Sales and Nicole Samuel, *Developing the Developers*, Brandeis University, 2007.)

## COMPLEX SITUATION

The shortage of fundraising professionals is the result of a complex set of structural, human resource and organizational issues that have increased the demand for well-trained development professionals.

**Structural issues.** Jewish communal institutions have come to realize that in order to survive and thrive they must embrace the best practices of nonprofit management, including fund development. Less than a decade ago, it was rare for Jewish summer camps to have a development director; today, at least 40 do. The same holds true in the synagogue world. As these institutions improve their business practices, they inevitably add to the demand for fundraising talent in the Jewish community.

Moreover, in the past decade, nonprofits in the United States have proliferated at a high rate. Since it is not uncommon for fundraisers to move between Jewish and secular agencies, Jewish organizations must compete for development talent not only with other Jewish organizations but with nonprofits writ large.

Demand for professional fundraisers in the Jewish community is also driven by an increased need for dollars — a result of a rising demand for services, higher costs of doing business, and a pent-up need to raise the quality of facilities, programs and services. In addition, a shift in federation funding from core operating support toward targeted grants has forced local Jewish organizations to raise a greater percentage of their

budgets from outside sources.

**Human resources issues.** Fundraising professionals have high turnover rates. In the Jewish sector, the intention to seek employment elsewhere is highest among development professionals as compared with all other job categories. Turnover is related to burnout and lack of job satisfaction, but it is also exacerbated by the fact that “poaching” is one of the principal ways that Jewish organizations find fundraising talent. A study by my colleagues at Brandeis found that in the past two years, almost half of those working in development in the Jewish community had been approached by other Jewish organizations with job offers (Shaul Kelner, Michael Rabkin, Leonard Saxe, and Carl Sheingold, *The Jewish Sector's Workforce: Report of a Six-Community Study*, Brandeis University, 2005). Instead of cultivating new talent, these organizations simply woo existing talent.

**Organizational causes.** Organizations recognize the need for fundraising professionals, but they often do not know how to work with them. Here is a common scenario: A Jewish organization hires a development director. Delighted with the choice, the CEO and the board wash their hands of the development task, believing they have solved their fundraising problem. At the end of the year, the organization fires the development director because she has not raised enough money, and it begins the search for her replacement. The problem here is a mistaken belief that the development professional has the sole responsibility for raising funds for the organization.

## SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

The fundraiser problem is complex but it can be ameliorated by increasing the talent pool, building support for development professionals and changing the mindset of top leadership. I refer to these as “simple solutions” not because they are easy but because any one of them could make a significant difference.

**Increase the talent pool.** With support, Jewish communal service and professional leadership programs could train more students for careers in development. Funded scholarships for advanced degrees with a specialization in development would attract and prepare more professional fundraisers in the Jewish commu-

nity. Their degrees would put graduates on a level with other executives and accord them the respect and power they merit and need in order to do their jobs. Funded internships would give Jewish young adults an opportunity to try out a career in development, gain experience and skills, and build their resumes. The internships would help Jewish organizations create stronger career paths in development. As interns become junior members of their organizations, others can be moved up to higher level positions.

Support for continuing education and professional development for those already working in the field would raise the level of an organization’s in-house expertise. Foundations and federations have funded programs, but have not required grantees to build their capacity to raise the monies needed to sustain these programs in the future. They could easily do so by making training, education or planning a condition for grants and covering the costs of such activities.

**Build support.** Over the past year, the Fisher-Bernstein Institute at Brandeis University has worked with a cohort of Jewish organizations in Development at the Core, a program designed to help them create a “culture of fundraising.” Participants say that the network of colleagues is perhaps the greatest benefit of the program. Indeed, development directors have little contact with others in their profession and few trusted people to turn to for support and advice when the going gets tough (as it frequently does). In this vein, much could be done to create communities of inquiry, a professional association or regular gatherings of development professionals in the Jewish community. By defining a field of practice and providing support and motivation, such structures could attract and hold talent while raising the level of practice.

**Change the mindset.** As per the scenario above, executive directors and boards of trustees of Jewish organizations need to understand that fundraising is everyone’s job, not just that of the development director. In Development at the Core, we have been re-educating leadership on the shared role of the development professional and the organization’s various stakeholders in the fundraising task. It is challenging work but where breakthroughs have occurred, fundraising has increased many times over.

Changing the mindset also entails the study of Jewish teachings that underlie the work of the fundraiser. Study reminds the development professional and top leadership of the importance of this work and its profound purpose and meaning. As one of our students said of Jewish textual learning, “It made me feel I’m doing what I was meant to do.” Our tradition has a built-in mechanism for sustaining those who secure the funds for the wellbeing of our community. We should use it often and well. ■

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**Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.**, is Director of the Fisher-Bernstein Institute for Jewish Philanthropy and Leadership at Brandeis University and of its signature program, *Development at the Core*.



# KEEPING THE FAITH IN A CHANGING ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

by RICHARD M. JOEL and DANIEL T. FORMAN

The Jewish story lives on. Through thick and thin, through years of Jewish prosperity and depression, through periods of peace and war, our people march forward, empowered by timeless Jewish values and a mission to be a light unto nations. Helping to fuel that march has been and continues to be a key responsibility of the community.

## NEW FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES

Fundraising has always been a challenge, but this is especially the case today. After the boom years of the last decade, we find ourselves in a serious and stubborn economic downturn. This one is different from past recessions because it has affected several sectors of the economy simultaneously.

The impact has been wide and deep. At Yeshiva University, and at practically every other university in the country, hardly a week goes by when we don't receive special requests from students and their parents for increased financial support. Most of our parents have been paying day-school tuition for years, often for multiple children. But the situation is exacerbated now by the loss of jobs and income. Some parents avoid private universities, fearing that even with partial scholarships, the burdens of tuition will be too great. More subtly, these times have provoked a recession of the spirit, where even benefactors who haven't been brought low feel low, and a sense of limit overshadows a sense of possibility.

The current economic climate has accentuated certain philanthropic trends that have been evident for some time. These include a heightened sense of

accountability; rising expectations of donors, trustees, alumni and parents; the desire to be engaged in a meaningful way; and the shaping of gifts to include evidence of impact and success. Together, these trends put Jewish institutions in uncharted waters, with few precedents to draw upon and few models from past experience. How should we respond to achieve fundraising and overall institutional success?

We believe the answer lies in an approach that combines working smarter and more creatively, being fully attuned to the latest developments in communications and technology, all the while remaining faithful to our core mission and sharing the passion of that mission with our community.

## WORKING SMARTER AND MORE CREATIVELY

Working smarter and more creatively covers a lot of ground. We must be crystal clear about our priorities. The times call for us to distinguish between what we must do now to sustain recent advances and to remain academically and financially strong, and what we can aspire to do when finances permit. With respect to fundraising, it is imperative to differentiate between what we must have and what we can have. Yeshiva's fundraisers know that scholarships are the number one priority in order to make a Yeshiva University education available to all qualified students regardless of their financial circumstances. Toward that end, we have tailored special scholarship drives to our varied constituencies, including matching gifts and online scholarship giving.

We have given more thought to structuring gifts that meet both immediate and long-term needs. For example, in large commitments for scholarships, professor-

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**Richard M. Joel** is President of Yeshiva University. **Daniel T. Forman** is Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Yeshiva University.

ships and programs, we have sought to secure “blended” gifts that include current-use funds along with an endowment component to ensure permanent support. Blended gifts are a win-win for the institution and for the donor, who gets to see the immediate benefit of the gift while perpetuating his or her benefaction.

Working smarter and more creatively involves understanding the entrepreneurial mindset of younger donors who, having made their fortunes by age 40, are more likely to make focused decisions. Also, the traditional model of engagement primarily through board membership needs to be modified. Some donors will respond more favorably to projects that will enable them to have a relationship with a professor or a program. Impact is crucial.

We have also been successful in grooming many of our younger alumni for more significant involvement by elevating them to positions of leadership on our boards and committees.

Another important trend is to recognize the power of social networking to build and broaden the base of volunteers and supporters. This is a new world for us, and we have only begun to explore it. Younger donors, in particular, require that we use the latest technologies — peer-to-peer online giving, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter — to create new opportunities for involvement and for enhancing the ties between Yeshiva and this growing constituency. The process of engaging many people to assume responsibility for a project in order to achieve a fundraising goal is very appealing to our students, younger alumni and other volunteers.

#### KEEPING THE FAITH

Especially in times of uncertainty, institutions must remain true to their visions, ideals, philosophical foundations, messages and distinctiveness. The mission of Jewish institutions is too important to deviate from this cardinal rule of fundraising. Besides, the competition for the philanthropic dollar from the same donors and, in some instances, for the same purposes is too keen to do otherwise.

Fortunately, our institutions are grounded in Jewish values such as the primacy of Jewish education, which gives our young people the tools to achieve meaningful lives and to make a commitment to lifelong learning, building strong Jewish communities

and improving the world around us. When our top donor families share our values, partnership results and fundraising assume their natural course. These families are our partners not only in shaping their lifetime gifts, but also in shaping the vision and future of our institutions.

We must keep our top families close to us and stay in touch with them, particularly during difficult times, when they may be unable to contribute at optimum levels. Patience and understanding are key. We must keep them informed, on a regular basis, about developments at our institutions, including the tough measures we have taken to weather the current economic storm. Effective stewardship is a necessity, not a luxury.

Being patient does not mean not asking for support. On the contrary, we double our efforts to make the case of why, why now and why us — why now is the perfect time to give, to affirm confidence and commitment to our mission, and why failure to do so will set back the institution, with perhaps serious consequences. An institution that does not change and adapt will fall behind. All of us need to show our supporters a vision of what can be, not what is or what used to be.

Philanthropy is, increasingly, a family enterprise involving both spouses and, at times, their grown children and extended families. Institutional reports increasingly show more donors listed as family members. Family solicitations can be tricky, since family members may have different interests and some may have allegiances to other causes — but, at the same time, they afford opportunities to present to a wider audience the grand vision of our institutions and the role of such families in that vision.

The fundamentals of successful fundraising are constant, but they assume greater importance in today's environment. We must develop boards that give, receive and strongly advocate for our institutions. We must create strong relationships with potential givers. We must know our customers and their interests. And we mustn't forget that the messenger is sometimes as important as the message. Finally, we must be good listeners, personalize our appeals and pay attention to detail.

The most important point is to project optimism about the Jewish future. It is vibrant and it is bright, and no recession — of the spirit or of the economy — will cause it to dim. ■

## CLICK TO DONATE: AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS JUMP ON THE BANDWAGON

by TOVA A. SERKIN

In the never-ending quest to engage the sometimes amorphous “Next Generation” in Jewish life, Jewish and Israeli organizations have increased their focus on the internet. While their non-sectarian, nonprofit peers have been raising millions and even billions of dollars via the web since around 2001, it has been only in the last two years or so that significant numbers of Jewish organizations have revamped their websites, explored online giving portals and leveraged the growing number of tools available for engaging large numbers of younger donors in online giving.

To this end, JGooders, an online giving platform that connects donors and volunteers with Jewish and Israeli projects worldwide, was created at the end of 2008 to help organizations find an online home to display their projects and to help nonprofits learn to better leverage the web for fundraising.

Online giving is the only sector of philanthropy that has continued to grow during the economic downturn. More important, perhaps, all studies show that younger people are more inclined to donate and manage their giving online. Online giving today means using a variety of tools. Certainly most American organizations accept donations via their own websites, but the field also includes email campaigns, social media such as Facebook Causes, online portals such as JGooders, GlobalGiving and Razoo, and personal fundraising pages such as Give2Gether, FirstGiving and, in the near future, JGooders as well.

But online philanthropy is more than just a set of tools — it is also about an approach. Most online donations are small — at JGooders, for example, the average donation is between \$100 and \$125, on par with the global average. For larger institutions, and even smaller grassroots organizations, seeking small donations is new, and breaking down large budgets into donation requests that are easily understood by hundreds or thousands of donors is challenging. But there is a growing understanding that building this broad base of supporters is not only critical for the long-term financial security of organizations, but also a means of engaging new, younger constituents.

Because most money is still raised offline, the most successful organizations are those that examine the available options and build a comprehensive strategy that integrates relevant online tools with offline efforts. In this way, they are not only bringing in enough funds to support current activities, but they are also building the necessary infrastructure to accommodate online giving as it continues to skyrocket. ■

**Tova A. Serkin** is Chief Business Officer at JGooders. She has spent the last nearly 10 years working in the fields of Jewish Peoplehood and philanthropy. She lives in Herzliya, Israel.



# THE GIFT OF A CRISIS

by PAUL KANE

ment strategy that ranges across all modalities of giving: annual, capital, program endowment and planned giving, as well as engagement of the donor's family.

This total financial-resource development orientation recognizes that while annual gifts are critical, our major donors' relationships with UJA-Federation represent a lifelong opportunity to realize diverse philanthropic goals. In its first year, the PRO initiative trained and deployed twelve skilled senior fundraisers, who were assigned to work with 100 donors of \$100,000 and more. In the second year, we expanded to eighteen PROs working with 250 major donors. Next year, we will apply the PRO model to most donors of \$25,000 and over.

In these challenging times, with donors watching the rise and fall of their investments and with tremendous competition for finite philanthropic dollars, we no longer rest comfortably on the assumption that being blessed with a cadre of dedicated, influential volunteers is sufficient for campaign success. We still work with these volunteers, and many are great solicitors. But we are supplementing their roles as door-openers by bringing in our key executives and our PROs — professionals who are able to discuss the needs of the community to the full extent of a donor's interest and who are ready to coordinate multiple "asks" for annual, capital, endowment and planned giving. Donors today are less likely to make quick decisions about their gifts and are more likely to be generous to organizations that sustain contact and recognition of their level of commitment during the course of the year.

The second driving force in our new approach to engagement and solicitation is relentless creativity in the shaping of new venues for social connection and giving. Philanthropy is motivated by both individual values and interests and by a sense of professional and other kinds of community. Peer groups matter — they stimulate and encourage participation and reinforce generosity. In the past few years, we've reshaped our Lawyers' Division into a constellation that encompasses groups for Corporate Counsel, Bankruptcy and Reorganization, and Trusts and Estates. Our Wall Street Division has generated new groups for Investment Management and Private Equity.

In 2005, we created a Division for Emerging Leaders and Philanthropists — 25 to 45

A few years ago, in an effort to use donor questions as a springboard for self-correction, UJA-Federation launched a staff-education program called "A Complaint is a Gift." After listening closely to donor concerns, we improved, and continue to improve, our systems and operations.

The economic downturn, which has profoundly changed the environment for Jewish philanthropy over the past two years, gives rise to a related idea: A crisis can also be a gift.

When I was a younger fundraiser, first in Chicago and then in New York, I saw this principle in action in its most simplistic form. Every war in which Israel was involved produced a flood of dollars from Jews motivated by the existential threat. "Freedom Flights" for Soviet Jews and airlifts of Jewish Ethiopians produced similar outpourings. But in those crises, all we had to do was describe the needs and open the phone lines. We didn't have to change the way we did business.

Can the economic shockwave, which continues to create pain for all but the most fortunate in our communities, become the kind of crisis that is truly a gift to federations and other Jewish philanthropic efforts? Can it push us to change the way we ask members of our communities to partner with us?

At UJA-Federation of New York, the economic climate has already pushed us to expand and intensify techniques and formats for engagement and solicitation that we began experimenting with a few years ago. These experiments are now the basis for an organization-wide approach to resource development in which the donor's interests, life stage, family transitions and philanthropic objectives factor into the conversation about communal needs and the hoped-for gift.

One driving force in this new approach is the creation of a new professional role — the Principal Relationship Officer, or PRO. Our PROs build personal, ongoing relationships with New York's top donor families. Each donor is the subject of a long-term develop-

year olds seeking to add an extra measure of meaning to their busy lives. Nationally recognized, the Generosity subdivision draws 20 to 30 year olds, many from legacy families, into hands-on volunteering, missions to Israel and world Jewish communities, and fund-raising events designed for a sophisticated young demographic.

We've supplemented our traditional Women's Campaign based on the volunteer dedication of home-centered mothers and wives, with groups for top female executives and young professional women. Our office of Women's Philanthropy is now a dynamic generator of ways that women can network to benefit the entire community.

In addition to social and educational activities for singles and families with young children, we initiated Give a Mitzvah-Do a Mitzvah, which invites children approaching their *b'nai mitzvah* to volunteer and to give a portion of their *bar* and *bat mitzvah* gifts to a community project they care about. This program continues to inspire young leaders in every division to pass their philanthropic values on to their children, and it will soon be the seed for other life-cycle-based fundraising.

We're also intensifying and enhancing all donor recognition programs to make sure, in multiple ways, that our donors know how much we value their participation and commitments. If complaints and crises can be gifts, then gifts are blessings which provide sustenance for the community and a source of satisfaction and meaning for our donors. We can't say thank you too often.

What does the future hold in our quest to meet our donors where they are? We're considering Affinity fundraising with young retirees, new bridges to the Sephardic, Orthodox and Israeli communities in Greater New York, and Affinity groups for people interested in Jewish education, sports and athletic participation, the arts and more. In our Community Division for gifts under \$1,000, we are exploring the potential of technology and online communities to complement redesigned telemarketing and direct mail.

We don't know whether this economic downturn, which is forcing us to innovate, will reverse itself to replay the flush years of 2000 to 2008. What we do know is that UJA-Federation is becoming more resilient, responsive, donor-centered, imaginative and ready to keep changing and growing to sustain a caring community. ■

**Paul Kane** is Senior Vice President of UJA-Federation of New York's Financial Resources Division.

# TRENDS AND STRATEGIES IN JEWISH FUNDRAISING: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE BAY

by PHYLLIS COOK

**E**xamining fundraising trends anywhere in North America should begin with two assumptions: fundraising is more successful in a strong economy, and committed, accountable fundraising professionals can be effective in good times as well as bad.

However, Jewish life in the West is often considered to be worthy of observation as a "canary in the coal mine," portending significant changes that may not be widely evident. The Bay Area Jewish population is largely comprised of people who were born elsewhere or whose immediate families hail from elsewhere. Individuals who reside in the area in which they were born have been more likely to maintain formal contacts within the Jewish community, including belonging to the synagogue in which they were raised and donating to Jewish charities.

This is one reason why Jewish affiliation rates in the Bay Area are currently at or below 20 percent, with the exception of the South Peninsula, or "Silicon Valley," where the affiliation rate is closer to 35 percent. The difference in the Silicon Valley is particularly pronounced among families who migrated to the Bay Area in the last twenty years. The members of this migration were older than those of previous decades and were much more interested in affiliating in some way with Jewish communal institutions.

The number of Orthodox Jews in the Bay Area comprises a smaller percentage of the Jewish population compared to most cities east of the Mississippi, and the intermarriage rate is considered to be one of the highest of large metropolitan areas.

Finally, demographers have found that the Bay Area Jewish population is notable for being widely dispersed over a large geographic area, with no significant population concentration in any particular zip code. The result is a challenging and costly delivery system for Jewish services without a highly developed public transportation system. The consequences of these factors for fundraising

purposes result in a need for very creative strategies to identify prospective donors.

In the Bay Area, the era of civic-minded Americans born before 1946, who wrote checks out of a sense of duty and did not require reports on the use of the funds, has shifted to an era of Boomers born between 1946 and 1964, who seek direct engagement and a clear sense of impact in exchange for their charitable contributions.

The fundraising strategy for the World War II generation is clear.

CEOs and development officers should focus meticulously on seeing past loyal supporters, regardless of the size of their annual gifts, and asking them to consider remembering the Jewish charity in their wills. In surveys, when endowment prospects were asked if they have put their favorite non-profits in their wills, most of them reported "I have never been asked."

For the past 25 years, large Federation endowment bequests throughout the U.S. have come principally from annual campaign donations of \$100. Many of these individuals, who received help from the Jewish community, never felt able to give up control of their assets in their lifetimes, but wanted to give back at the end of their lives. This calls post-haste for old-fashioned charitable relationship building, which is at the core of all successful fund-raising.

The Boomer generation needs more than a once-a-year phone call. These donors want to be heard, and they often insist on some kind of designation of their funds to their fields of interest. Those who fail to listen will lose the charitable funds.

Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, and Generation Y, born between 1981 and 1991, make up half the pool of potential donors, but they contribute less money to fewer charities and they give in different

ways from their parents and grandparents. Direct mail dominates 77 percent of giving among donors born in 1945. Generations X and Y donate money at retail stores or supermarkets, or through cell phones. They might find out about a charity on a friend's Facebook page or through a text message, as was the case in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake. Social events, volunteer activities and face-to-face solicitations are all more effective with younger donors, who are less concerned about research and administrative costs. Giving habits among younger Jews are also a factor of changes in Jewish identity in an age in which being Jewish is just one element in a multifaceted identity spectrum. Jewish identity and Jewish affiliation are no longer synonymous.

These factors are pronounced in the Bay Area, where many of today's new communication devices were created. As "People of the Book," these young Jews are not likely to seek authority figures in their teachers in the way past generations might have, but they value very much the culture of dialogue.



Those who wish to plan for the Jewish future must consider whether there is an effective system in place to produce great Jewish professionals who will inspire the most talented Jewish volunteers. Funders will need to focus on Jewish pre-school families and teens as well as day schools and more impactful supplemental school experiences. Funders of outreach efforts, such as Birthright Israel, will need to ensure that follow up programs, such as Birthright NEXT, are effective to protect the initial investment.

Many Jews, including Jews of the Bay Area, are searching for meaning and purpose. If we foster a sense of Jewish community, if we enable Jews to connect with others Jewishly, Jewish giving will continue in strength as donors are given the opportunity to better the world for themselves and for all those yet to come. ■

**Phyllis Cook**, Managing Director of PLC Philanthropic Services ([www.plcps.com](http://www.plcps.com)), provides expertise in the development, management, and oversight of the philanthropy of individuals and families.



# THE CHANGING RULES OF FUNDRAISING FOR AN ISRAELI NON-PROFIT

by SARI REVKIN

*Today, supporters of Jewish Federations, Israeli universities and hospitals demand measurable outcomes and budget transparency.*

The rules of philanthropic engagement for Israeli non-profit organizations (NPOs) have changed dramatically in response to 21st Century realities and in reflecting the sensibilities of modern donors. While some changes present challenges, many are beneficial and ensure greater collaboration between organizations and donors, leveraging opportunities, improved outcomes and clearer expectations.

The field of Israeli NPOs that raise funds in North America is more crowded than ever. Upwards of 9,000 nonprofits represent an estimated 8 percent of Israel's GNP and employ hundreds of thousands of employees, comprising 18 percent of the workforce. At any given time, scores of fundraisers are seeking to tap into the Jewish North American charitable market, competing for dollars and philanthropic champions. Gone are the days when an emotional appeal for Jewish solidarity would instantaneously result in cash contributions. Today, supporters of Jewish Federations, Israeli universities and hospitals demand measurable outcomes and budget transparency.

My own journey in the nonprofit world reflects these changes. Growth, competition and demands for greater accountability were already on the horizon in 1984 when I established SHATIL to improve the sustainability and effectiveness of social-change organizations in Israel. During the 1980s, a proliferation of NPOs evolved because of three converging factors: privatization of the Israeli economy, skyrocketing inflation and the weakening of the governmental safety net. The steady flow of new immigrants in the 1990s further expanded the gap between rich and poor, marginalizing many citizens on social, economic and geographic levels.

After leaving SHATIL in 1997, I worked with other visionaries to establish YEDID — The Association for Community Empowerment to promote access to rights, equal opportunities and social justice for all Israelis. Operating a nationwide network of 23 Citizen Rights Centers, YEDID uses four strategies to provide access to justice: Free Individual

Assistance, Community Empowerment Initiatives, Grassroots Community Organizing and National Advocacy for Policy Change. YEDID is blessed with many committed and knowledgeable donors. However, the economic realities of the past two years have caused some American philanthropists, faced with pressing domestic concerns, to question their dedication to combating poverty in Israel.

In this increasingly competitive field of Israeli NPOs, how have we been successful in maintaining a solid position in the marketplace for North American donors? The following seven strategies have served YEDID well, especially during these challenging times of reduced charitable giving and increased needs.

**STRATEGY 1: Maintain ongoing and candid communication with donors and supporters**

Being out of sight can mean being out of mind. At YEDID, we regularly celebrate our accomplishments with our donors and do not sugarcoat the challenges. The realities of organizational growth — and unfortunately, from time to time, retrenchments — are consistently communicated when identifying problems and offering pragmatic solutions. Living in North America, distance separates many donors from witnessing YEDID's work firsthand; therefore, ongoing communication enhances the commitment to and understanding of donor investment in YEDID's achievements. Our donors are, after all, our most effective sales force.

**STRATEGY 2: Provide clarity of product and "best in class" deliverables**

YEDID's mission is to empower Israelis to become self-sufficient and active members of society by promoting social and economic justice. As such, it would be easy to expand our range of activities exponentially. However, by rooting our work in four core and proven techniques — individual assistance, empowerment initiatives, grass-roots organizing and advocacy for policy change — we maintain our reputation for focus and excellence and further refine our expertise.

**STRATEGY 3: Provide a personal touch and a donor-centered conversation**

A well-written proposal is not the only key to securing grant awards. Staci Light, Director of American Supporters of YEDID, has reminded me

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**Sari Revkin**, Founder and Executive Director of YEDID ([www.yedid.org.il/english](http://www.yedid.org.il/english)), won the 2008 Schwab Award for Social Entrepreneurship and was named one of the 50 most influential women in Israel by Globes Magazine.

that even the most sophisticated foundations are driven by individuals who value personalized cultivation. Relationships are as much about donors as organizations. How can we link our agenda to their philanthropic goals and interests? What were the successes and failures of their other philanthropic investments, domestically and in Israel? Israeli organizations must develop better active listening skills and treat donors as clients and investors. We know that personal relationships will be crucial in helping us weather this storm.

#### **STRATEGY 4: Appreciate the dynamics of family and foundation philanthropy**

Often, Israelis focus on building relationships with top leadership and ignore the process required to ensure ongoing support. Future growth depends upon our ability to work respectfully with knowledgeable program officers, spouses and next generation decision makers. As a veteran in the field of community organizing, I can attest to the fact that today's client can be tomorrow's mayor. And as the world witnessed in the last U.S. election, the community organizer and lawyer of today may be the President tomorrow.

#### **STRATEGY 5: Embody sound organizational management**

YEDID's unique ability to help people help themselves and their communities often leads to stories of heartbreakin injustice, the triumph of courage and legal victories. However, the devaluation of the dollar, the economic crisis and Ponzi scheme betrayals, coupled with the dramatic escalation of client needs, has forced us to cut our already extraordinarily lean budget. Involving staff members in the difficult decisions made all the difference, as it led to their willingness to work more hours for less pay. We are continually recruiting and training more volunteers to help those in dire need. YEDID has outlasted so many other NPOs because we have taken proactive measures and we have budgeted based not on pledges but on receipts.

#### **STRATEGY 6: Leverage resources**

American donors respect organizations that diversify their income streams and leverage philanthropic support with government funding, volunteer resources and domestic fundraising. YEDID enjoys 100 percent board campaign participation, and center staff and volunteers raise funds from local businesses, creating a sense of partnership between Israelis and North Americans. Moreover, a significant percentage of our former clients become highly trained volunteers and work alongside professional volunteers from the fields of law, business, accounting and social work. Using this unique model, YEDID is able to serve four times as many clients as one would expect from our budget. Several foundations, organizations and individuals offer matching gift opportunities to further our development efforts.

#### **STRATEGY 7: Bridge the ideological divide**

In Israel, the primary political division among citizenry remains whether one is for or against "land for peace" concessions. Conversely, ideological divides regarding social issues are bridged more easily. For example, YEDID secured 44 members of the Knesset to agree to support bills eradicating food insecurity and child hunger by developing a school lunch program and family food subsidies. YEDID is the only national organization to integrate innovative strategies and to empower low-income populations to break the cycle of poverty. Highlighting victories in consensus building is yet another unique accomplishment.

The voluntary sector in Israel, an outgrowth of our experience of nation building, has the potential to perform at the forefront of global nonprofit innovation. Our philosophy is replicable, and decision makers throughout the world seek to learn YEDID's best practice techniques. We will continue to follow the aforementioned rules of engagement, and we will be flexible and forward thinking, allowing for growth as we continue to raise support in the Diaspora as well as in Israel. ■

# COUNTER POINT

by MICHAEL H. STEINHARDT

**T**he Jewish fundraising world is in a serious decline. And I say this without the benefit of statistical research and analysis. It is more of a sense based on experience and intuition. This experience, combined with strong feelings from those around me, leads me to conclude that there is a nearly profound drop in giving to Jewish causes.

For a long time, I have been of the view that this situation was in the making — for intergenerational reasons if no other. But my sense is that the current decline is far more immediate and more dramatic. Maybe I'm wrong, but what if I'm right? What if Jewish fundraising is no longer declining incrementally, but has truly fallen off a cliff? How long can we blame this on a recession or on Madoff?

The community's establishment recipients of *tzedakah* are loath to acknowledge a decline in receipts, considering that to be a failure, so numbers are not easily forthcoming. But if my intuition is correct, and again I emphasize it is only intuition, then the changes that I have foreseen in the Jewish institutional world may already be here — unannounced, unexpected and unhappy.

We have been living on yesterday's fumes for too long. Old fashioned anti-anti-Semitism, unrealistic Zionism, superficial and, in the end, meaningless congregational life (including painfully unspiritual Bar and Bat Mitzvahs) are finally taking their toll. Yes, there is a new generation with hundreds and hundreds of new organizations attempting to emerge on the Jewish scene. But each of them is small and, alas, by their nature, I think doomed to remain small — one of the unhappy byproducts of pluralism. Thus we may be entering a new period devoid of leadership except in our youngest generations, where there is a spiritual renaissance, a little inchoate but hopeful nevertheless. ■

**Michael H. Steinhardt** is Chairman of The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life.

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*...That was the way it was. Israel was the trigger to fundraising. Giving was collective and emotional. There was no talk about supporting Jewish education and identity; that was for the nerds and the Orthodox. At that time, giving money to the Federation was a religion unto itself, and God forbid someone should try to designate their gift or ask where the money was going. They would have been banished from the community. Those were the days of the UJA!*

— ROBERT P. ARONSON

