ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 12.31.2016

making a difference

THE FOUNDATION
JEWISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
LOS ANGELES
The Jewish Community Foundation completed another extremely gratifying year in 2016 with $81 million in grants awarded, $133 million in donor gifts, and total assets rising to $1.1 billion, a nearly 50 percent increase from 2011. Over the past five years (2012–2016), grantmaking totaled $366 million, and donors added $586 million to their charitable funds.

While these numbers are formidable, it’s the stories behind them that illuminate most. Growth has come as a result of our ability to forge deep connections with donors—irrespective of age and background—and understand their unique requirements. Our donors are all bound by an intrinsic, unifying thread: compassionate hearts and the desire, as well as the resources, to make a difference in the world. Hence the theme of our report, Making a Difference.

Our featured donors—Terry and Lionel Bell, Judy and Lou Miller, Andrea and Glenn Sonnenberg, and Leah and Sam Yebril—reflect this. All derive deep fulfillment from causes that resonate intensely with them, and they are each making a real difference in our community. The Sonnenbergs and Yebris, in fact, personally conceived and launched their respective highlighted initiatives—both of which have received, as point of note, a Foundation Cutting Edge Grant that seeds transformative programs across Jewish LA. Likewise with the Bells and Millers; their featured causes have been recipients of multiple Foundation grants over the years.

As our assets have grown beyond the $1 billion threshold, so, too, has the amount of our annual Cutting Edge, Israel, General Community, and Restricted Endowment Grants, which increased by $1 million in 2016. Immense gratification comes from both the grants we award and the positive outcomes they enable.

These collaborative efforts between The Foundation, donors, and grant recipients all working toward a common goal profoundly influence the lives we touch as well as our own.

Sincerely,

William R. Feiler (R)
Chair, Board of Trustees

Marvin I. Schotland (L)
President & CEO
We experienced a very robust year of charitable activity in 2016, with our donor family contributing a total of $133 million in gifts to The Foundation in three areas: $109 million into Donor Advised Funds, $15 million into Endowments, and $9 million into Family Support Organizations.

A total of $81 million in grants was distributed to nearly 2,400 nonprofits throughout Los Angeles, nationally and in Israel. This represents $74 million in donor recommended grants and $7 million in Foundation grants awarded in four categories: Cutting Edge, Israel, General Community, and Restricted Endowment Grants. (For more details, please see pp. 15–18.)
Foundation donors Andrea and Glenn Sonnenberg are passionate about Wise Readers to Leaders, a summer literacy and enrichment program engaging Jewish teens working with underserved LAUSD students. Andrea, an attorney, founded it six years ago, and her husband, Glenn, head of a real estate firm, says that of all his Jewish community involvement, this is the most fulfilling.

“It positively impacts both the Jewish and wider communities,” they explain. “Jewish kids engage their Jewish values by mentoring underprivileged kids and helping improve their reading skills, while learning what it is to live a rich Jewish life.”

“And our fund at The Foundation, we have the flexibility to support a variety of worthy causes, like Wise Readers to Leaders. We’re also building a charitable legacy to engage our children as future leaders.”
“Every possible need is taken care of...”

Terry and Lionel Bell have been passionate supporters and lay leaders of The Jewish Federation for 70 years, both having served as chairs of the organization. “Every possible need is taken care of through The Federation,” they explain. “It exposes you to all aspects of our community and many different causes.”

“After the 1994 earthquake damaged our building, I led a $25 million campaign to rebuild the structure,” says Lionel. “Today it’s a thriving center of Jewish activity. We’re so proud to visit and feel the energy of this beautiful place.”

“In addition to The Federation, our other major interests are LACMA, Vista Del Mar, and Wilshire Boulevard Temple. We use our fund at The Foundation to conveniently support these causes we hold dear. We’ve had a fund for many years, and it’s an ideal vehicle for giving tzedakah.”

Terry and Lionel Bell outside The Jewish Federation building they take such great pride in and helped rebuild. The building serves as a vibrant central address for LA Jewish organizational life.
Sam Yebri—an attorney, community activist, and Foundation trustee—helped launch 30 Years After in 2008 as a grassroots movement to involve more Iranian American Jews in civic, political, and Jewish life. “Iranian Jews—especially the younger generation—are eager to share their unique perspectives and step into leadership roles,” say Sam. “Fortunately, many are getting involved, becoming activists for Israel-related and civic causes, pursuing nonprofit careers, and contributing philanthropically.”

“We’re delighted to support 30 Years After through our fund at The Foundation. It simplifies our charitable giving and roots us in philanthropy. We enjoy being part of The Foundation’s passionate family of donors committed to our community’s vitality.”
Strengthening Jewish education is Judy and Lou Miller’s lifelong passion. That’s why they actively support Builders of Jewish Education’s (BJE) Hebrew Immersion Program. It’s a three-year intensive enrichment program for LA day school Hebrew educators to learn the most innovative methods for teaching Hebrew.

“It’s so important to learn Hebrew—it’s vital to our people and culture,” say the Millers. “We want students to be able to not only read and write Hebrew but also to speak and understand it. Through this vital BJE program, Hebrew will become a living language in our day schools.”

“The Foundation makes it easy to support Jewish education with our charitable fund. Foundation staff simplifies everything and relieves the administrative burdens so we can enjoy our giving more.”
Our core mission is to guarantee the philanthropic legacy of our donors and strengthen the community through grantmaking, as illustrated by our donors on prior pages and by The Foundation’s own grantmaking, as the adjoining photo of LA nonprofit leaders depicts. These leaders represent more than 90 nonprofits that have received significant Foundation Cutting Edge Grants over the past 10+ years.

Grantmaking resources are made possible through the charitable funds at The Foundation. As such, our top priority is safeguarding these assets and ensuring they are well invested for both growth and stability. To that end, The Foundation’s Board of Trustees has fiduciary responsibility for the integrity and fairness of the financial information highlighted herein. Trustees work with our independent auditor, Moss Adams LLP, to assure that management provides accurate and reliable financial data. (Our 2016 audited financial statements are found at www.jewishfoundationla.org/2016auditedfinancials.)

Consistency and efficiency are Foundation hallmarks. We have operated at or under budget for more than 20 years. In 2016, our operating expenses were $6.2 million, or 0.57 percent of total assets. By ensuring sound financial transparency since our founding in 1954, The Foundation is able to grow and prosper and to strengthen our community through robust grantmaking, not only today but also for generations to come.
Donor Advised Funds represent $563 million of assets, the largest pool. A record 81 new Donor Advised Funds were established. This popular giving tool requires a $5,000 minimum gift to begin.

Endowments—which provide ongoing support to a donor’s favorite causes, a specific field of interest, or The Foundation’s community grants—reached $228 million of assets. They require a minimum of $25,000 to get started.

Family Support Organizations—which create a permanent legacy of family philanthropy, carried forth between generations—comprise $221 million of assets. This type of fund requires a minimum of $2.5 million.

Nonprofit agencies often rely on The Foundation to manage their endowments and reserve funds. These Agency Funds amounted to $82 million in assets.

At year-end 2016, total assets reached $1.1 billion, a nearly 50% increase since 2011.
In 2016, The Foundation awarded $7 million in grants to support new programs and existing initiatives to strengthen our community. These include Cutting Edge Grants for transformative programs in the LA Jewish community, Israel Grants for economic development and Jewish identity, General Community Grants for a high-priority area of concern in LA, and Restricted Endowment Grants to fulfill donors’ desires to permanently support a specific cause or issue area. Foundation staff collaborates with several grant committees to ensure the greatest impact of these awards.

In 2016, the largest amount by field of interest—$4.3 million, or 62%—supported human services, reflecting a historic trend of strong support in this area. The most popular sector was local and national Jewish causes, representing $5 million, or 68% of Foundation grants. Further information about these grants is available at www.jewishfoundationla.org/grants. The Foundation also advises on an additional nearly $2 million of grantmaking for private family foundations that rely on us to recommend, vet, and manage their giving programs.

Last year, $74 million in donor-recommended grants flowed to nearly 2,400 nonprofits through Donor Advised Funds and Family Support Organizations. Education represented the largest category of donor support amounting to $19 million, or 26%, with human services totaling $18 million, or 25% of donor grantmaking. These two categories combined represented $37 million, or 51% of donor grantmaking.

A top priority for Foundation donors is support of local and national Jewish causes. In 2016, this area of focus received $35 million, or 48% of all donor grantmaking. Causes in the community at large attracted $26 million, or 35% of donor grants. A total of $13 million, or 17% of all donor grants, was directed to causes in Israel.
We gratefully recognize the more than 300 families who had the foresight and commitment to help build the future by creating endowments at the Foundation. Since its founding in the post-60s years, we carry a legacy for this generation and generations to come, and we thank them for enabling the Foundation to grow $1.1 billion of charitable assets.
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The Foundation is committed to a sustainable future for our planet
and supports a greener work environment.