



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OFFER TANGIBLE BENEFITS AND THE MEANS TO REPAIR THE WORLD

By Dan Rothblatt

In 1954, Judge Isaac Pacht assembled a group of prominent local leaders to take a long-term view of the Los Angeles Jewish community. Post-World War II L.A. was evolving rapidly, the State of Israel had been established just a few years prior, and this visionary group foresaw the need for a permanent source of charitable funds to support causes here and half a world away alike.

What resulted is the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles (The Foundation), which ranks among the nation's largest Jewish charitable institutions and today manages about \$1.3 billion in charitable assets for L.A.'s Jewish philanthropists. In 2019, The Foundation distributed \$129 million to more than 2,600 causes and programs locally, nationally and around the globe.

Judge Pacht and his contemporaries possessed foresight. The Foundation was conceived precisely for a year such as 2020, where the world has shifted beneath our feet, and we confront the ravaging effects of a once-in-a-century pandemic, the resulting economic downturn, record levels of unemployment, and civil unrest.

The Foundation and its donors have risen to this moment, together committing about \$14 million in grants for COVID-19 relief since the outset of the pandemic. Our sustained ability to serve communities in the times it matters most underscores precisely why The Foundation was established: to help the afflicted, to alleviate human suffering, and to heal the world.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY AND DONORS ALIKE

Organized as a grantmaking public charity, The Foundation exists to address the needs of the communities it serves—making a positive, lasting impact now and in the future. As a resource to donors, we help develop flexible, efficient and tax-effective giving strategies that enable them to fulfill their charitable passions and ambitions. One of our most important roles is to make it easy to become a philanthropist, offering charitable products and insights for people to leave a lasting impact on their community and the causes about which they care most deeply.

PARTNERING WITH THE FOUNDATION

Through charitable funds established with us, donors can support not only a countless number of Jewish causes, but also the full range of societal needs, such as healthcare, arts and culture, education, homelessness, domestic violence, at-risk youth and many others. At the heart of The Foundation's mission is the Jewish precept of *tikkun olam*—Hebrew for healing the world—and nothing underscores this more than the continuum of causes and programs donors elect to support. And community foundations offer a more cost-effective approach for pursuing philanthropy through shared resources and other operating efficiencies.

More than 1,300 Los Angeles Jewish individuals and families, as well as nonprofit institutions, place their trust in us to manage their charitable assets.

The reasons they turn to The Foundation include:

- **Deep understanding of Jewish and general community nonprofits.** Our ongoing interaction with various nonprofit agencies and program providers offers a deep reservoir of knowledge on where the best work is being done to improve the community.
- **Convene thought leaders for the benefit of donors.** Acting as a convener, we host programs and offer access to experts—the best and the brightest—on topical matters and pressing issues.
- **Collaborative approach to solving pressing social issues.** We work cooperatively with other funders and segments of the community which can provide leverage in addressing our most complex social challenges.

permitted to accept contributions of cash, securities, IRA distributions, real estate, limited liability companies and other assets, making it easy to fund your philanthropy.

- **Favorable tax treatment.** Contributions to a fund established with us afford donors deductions for income and estate tax purposes to the maximum extent permitted under current tax laws. Donations of appreciated assets are not subject to capital-gains taxes and an income-tax deduction is permissible on the full, fair market value of the gift.

A COMMITMENT TO GIVING BACK

The rabbi Hillel the Elder asked: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I'm only for myself, what am I?" These philosophical questions are as relevant today as they were when the rabbi first pondered them over 2,000 years ago. They also motivate many of our Foundation donors. These individuals

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- **Engage multiple generations in thoughtful, effective philanthropy.** Among our many resources is the Center for Designed Philanthropy, which partners with donors and their families to develop effective intergenerational giving strategies.
- **Broad range of products affords flexible charitable solutions.** One of the value-added benefits of partnering with us is that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution. We can work with you and your professional advisors to develop the charitable-giving vehicles most appropriate to your circumstances, including donor advised funds, endowments and support foundations.
- **Stability and permanence.** Here today and for tomorrow, The Foundation administers nearly 350 charitable endowments on behalf of donors, ensuring that bequests intended to extend beyond their lifetimes are faithfully implemented in perpetuity.
- **Stewardship and accountability.** The Foundation affords donors peace of mind—from ease of administration, to access of information 24/7, to sound investment management of charitable assets.
- **Your ability to contribute a range of charitable gifts.** As a public charity, The Foundation is

and families, governed by compassionate hearts, deem it their solemn obligation to use their good fortune to repair the world and help those in need.

This primer about The Foundation is the first in an informational series. Upcoming articles will cover various gifting vehicles, as well as tax-advantaged giving strategies.

To explore how you can embark on your own journey in giving—and the joys that come with it—as well as to maximize the potential of your giving through one of The Foundation's charitable products, we invite your inquiry. You can learn more by visiting www.jewishfoundationla.org, calling (323) 761-8704, or emailing development@jewishfoundationla.org.

About the author: Dan Rothblatt is executive vice president of the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles.

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