



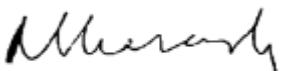
UPDATE TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

January 2018



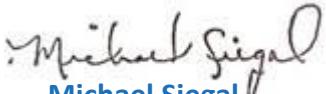
Dear Friends,

We are pleased to send you the monthly update to the Board of Governors on activities, challenges, and ongoing issues. We wish you a fruitful new calendar year and as always welcome your feedback and comments.



Natan Sharansky

Chairman of the Executive



Michael Siegal

Chairman of the Board

New Appointments



We are pleased to inform you of the appointment of Ms. Nelle Miler as the new Chair of the FRD and Community Services Committee. Nelle serves on the Jewish Agency Board of Governors since 2010; She has served as the President of the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee and has held various leadership positions within the federation; she also sits on the National Women's Philanthropy Board at JFNA. We wish Nelle much success in this important position and would like to take this opportunity to thank Richie Pearlstone who is stepping down from this position for his tremendous contribution.

Fundraiser to Honor Natan Sharansky, with Special Guest George W. Bush

On Wednesday, March 7 at Cipriani 25 Broadway in New York City, we will honor Natan Sharansky as he concludes his nine-year tenure as our Chairman of the Executive. This exciting fundraising event is chaired by James and Merryl Tisch, with honorary chairs Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson. We look forward to an extraordinary evening of storytelling with special guest President George W. Bush.

Proceeds will support The Jewish Agency's Shlichut Institute, the new center for ongoing training with advanced tools for shlichim. A beautifully-designed book to commemorate the evening will include a collection of stories, letters to Natan as well as tribute pages for the event's supporters. The dinner will be our premier fundraising event of 2018, and we welcome the participation of the entire Board of Governors along with philanthropists, Jewish leaders, major Jewish organizations and Federations to join us. For additional information about the event, please contact Jane Karlin (JaneK@jafi.org).

Israel's Largest-Ever Housing Project for Senior Citizens Launched in Ashkelon



On January 17, Minister of Construction and Housing Yoav Gallant and Chairman of the Executive of The Jewish Agency for Israel Natan Sharansky laid the cornerstone of the largest housing project for senior citizens ever in Israel. 471 apartments will be built in Ashkelon by The Jewish Agency via its subsidiary, Amigour, as part of an initiative of unprecedented scale led by The Jewish Agency and the Ministry of Construction and Housing. In total, 2,650 housing units will be constructed across the country for individuals and couples eligible for public housing. The plan will cost some NIS 1.5 billion to implement and will be funded

by the Ministry and The Jewish Agency, in partnership with Jewish communities worldwide.

The plan will make use of land owned by The Jewish Agency. The Jewish Agency recently completed a unique financing agreement with the Harel Group for approximately NIS 600 million to help fund the project. The apartments will be offered for long-term lease to elderly individuals and couples eligible for housing assistance from the Ministry, for monthly rent of no more than NIS 300.

Aliyah of 1,300 Olim from Gondar and Addis Ababa

The Israeli government's decision in 2016 to allow 1,300 immigrants from Ethiopia as part of the family re-unification process has been implemented to completion; in 2017, a total of 1,308 Ethiopian olim arrived in Israel. Per the government decision, almost all arrived in the second half of the year, and were housed in Jewish Agency absorption centers in Safed, Haifa, Be'er Sheva, Ibim, and Kiryat Gat.

Month 2017	Number of Olim
January	4
June	176
July-August	257
September	246
October	118
November	228
December	279
TOTAL	1,308



The Jewish Agency notes the excellent collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in bringing the olim to Israel and placing them in Jewish Agency housing. They are now in the initial stages of their integration into Israeli society.

Ending One Year, Starting Another: Post-Shlichut Traditions, New Initiatives

For the post-shlichut program, December was a busy month. Two new "Beit Midrash" (evening Jewish and Israeli text study) programs for returning shlichim, have begun to take place monthly around Rosh Chodesh (beginning of each Jewish month) in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The Tel Aviv program is led by Shelley Kedar, Director of the newly-formed Shlichut Institute. The Jerusalem program is initiated and led by returning shlichim alongside changing senior educators (for example: Vadim Blumin, Director of The Jewish Agency's Mandel Program for Excellence).

In December, a new group opened in the **Gvanim for Returning Shlichim** program, which operates in conjunction with the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, The Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma Counties. The group includes 18 shlichim who, over the past decade, returned from a variety of shlichut work from communities around the world, and today engage in a range of meaningful positions in the social, government and business sectors.

Local Look is also starting a second group, with 20 participants who returned from shlichut in the past three years, and who meet every two weeks for joint studies about Israeli society, identity and bringing shlichut home. The program is moderated by Adi Veron, from the Mandel Program, and Dafna Yizrael, director of the Amitai Bronfman program – both veteran returned *shlichot*.

The **Feeling at Home Campaign** also began in December, as a partnership between the Returned Shlichim Network and the Unplugged Shabbat venture of the Shaarim non-profit. The program connects returned shlichim, new olim and participants in Israel Experiences, through a range of experiential Israeli Shabbat gatherings.

Cinci Fellows

For many years the Partnership2Gether programs in the Netanya-Cincinnati partnership have included two Service Year Shlichim (Shin-Shinim) from Netanya serving each year in Cincinnati. The program, “Chaverim m’Israel” – Friends from Israel – has inspired the creation of a “mirror” project called Cinci Fellows or, in Hebrew, “Chaverim m’Cincinnati” – Friends from Cincinnati. The program is in cooperation with Masa Israel Teaching Fellows.

Through Cinci Fellows, young college graduates from Cincinnati will come to Netanya for a year of educational and community activities with all age groups, particularly youth and young adults. They will educate residents of Netanya about Jewish-American culture, life in the Diaspora, and Jewish pluralism. The Fellows will teach English in local schools and engage in formal and informal afternoon activities with different population groups.

The program’s first participant, chosen by MITF and the Partnership, is Brianna Pecsok. Brianna, 25, holds a BA in International Relations from Ohio State University. She arrived in Israel in August, and immediately started both a Hebrew ulpan and pedagogy training by MITF. She now teaches English at the Tchernikovsky middle school, and is leading activities in the community. View a video about Brianna, by the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, by [clicking here](#).

Wings Alumni Chanukah Party

A successful and moving event took place on the sixth day of Hanukkah for recently-released lone



immigrant soldiers, as part of the Wings program. Wings serves lone immigrant soldiers with ongoing support during and after their IDF service; one highlight is a five-day seminar for those who are about to finish their service, to prepare them for civilian life. Wings serves former soldiers for up to two years following their release, including programs such as enrichment groups through which released soldiers can meet peers who

share a common interest. Currently, groups meet around the topics of sports, entrepreneurship, culinary arts and economics.

The Chanukah party for alumni took place at Cinema City in Jerusalem, and drew some 150 former lone soldiers. In attendance were the Minister of Immigration and Integration, MK Sofa Landver, who welcomed the participants; and Deputy Minister for Diplomacy, Michael Oren who lit the sixth candle of Chanukah together with the Mr. Itzik Ohana, representative of the Immigration Ministry. The participants enjoyed VIP hospitality and watched the new "Star Wars" movie.

South African and Israeli Young Adults Debate and Bond

The P2G partnership of Beit Shemesh-Mateh Yehudah—South Africa has launched an initiative to foster cooperation between Jewish youth movements in South Africa and Israeli youth movements. Its inaugural event, the Inter-Youth Movement Gap Year Seminar, drew 85 young participants of Habonim Dror and Bnei Akiva in South Africa and Bnei Akiva, Tzofim, Beitar, Ezra and Diller in Israel.

The goal of the seminar was for participants to learn from each other in a constructive forum, establish a platform of tolerance for religious and political differences, and allow common values to form a basis for future cooperation in strengthening the Jewish people. At the seminar, they discussed (and often debated) their views on Judaism, Jewish peoplehood, Israel and Zionism.

Participants from South Africa were challenged to identify the sources of their Zionism. They shared stories of parents, siblings and grandparents fighting in wars, volunteering and making Aliyah. First- and second-generation Israelis shared their feelings about life as a young Israeli.

The South African Zionist Youth Council stated that the seminar “was the perfect platform to connect all of our up-and-coming leadership, and promote learning and growth together. We were nervous about how the idea of this seminar would be received by the youth movements and what level of interaction and participation we would get. I can now proudly say that this has the potential to transform the manner in which South African and Israeli youth movements interact with each other, both within their respective communities and across countries.”

Orientation for Jewish Agency Employees

Orientation days for new Jewish Agency employees (of up to two years) were held in December and January by the Human Resources Unit. The goal was to strengthen employee engagement with the organization. Employees met with members of The Jewish Agency’s senior management, and learned about the organization’s mission, organizational structure and governance, strategic directions, activities, relationship with the Knesset, and current challenges. The orientation in December also included a guided tour of the historical headquarters building in Jerusalem, and stories about the fascinating personalities and events in Jewish Agency history. The second orientation day, held on the Kiryat Moriah campus, included meetings with program participants.

Chanukah Candle Lighting Ceremony for Employees Around the World



On December 19, Jewish Agency employees from around the world – Shlichim, staff members in Israel and employees from 12 Jewish Agency offices worldwide – met virtually to light Chanukah candles. The event was organized by the Human Resources Unit to increase employees’ sense of partnership in a single, global organization, with

a shared mission to connect the Jewish people – “every one of us, together.”

After being greeted by Moshe Shiff, Deputy Director General of Human Resources; Shlomi Edelstein, educational manager for Community Shlichim; and Shirley Reis-Gil, assistant to the Director General, the employees were invited to share their Chanukah traditions. Slava Tolchinsky, a finance coordinator in our Moscow office, lit Chanukah candles on the group’s behalf. The meeting concluded with all the participants singing together in Israel and abroad.

An employee from Jerusalem said: “watching candles being lit in Moscow, while we are in Jerusalem, and in the background are colleagues in Ethiopia, the US, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Paris, London, St. Petersburg and Kyiv was a special experience, one that will not soon be forgotten.”

February 2018 Board of Governors Meetings

The February 2018 Board meetings will take place from Sunday, February 25, through Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at the Elma Arts Hotel in Zichron Ya’akov. [Click here](#) for the updated schedule.