

## **BACKGROUND UNITED ISRAEL APPEAL THE JEWISH FEDERATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA**

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### **History**

United Israel Appeal (“UIA”) was first established in 1925 as the United Palestine Appeal (“UPA”) in order to unify fundraising in America for a Jewish national homeland. Keren Hayesod, the fundraising organization for the Jewish Agency, Hadassah, Hebrew University, the Jewish National Fund and Mizrahi were the constituents. UPA was dissolved in 1930 and reconstituted in 1936 by Keren Hayesod and the Jewish National Fund. In 1938, UPA entered into a partnership with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (“JDC”) to found the United Jewish Appeal (“UJA”).

UIA has undergone vast changes since those early days. In addition to the partnership begun in 1938, the most significant changes prior to 2000 came in 1971 as a result of the reconstitution of the Jewish Agency for Israel. After the Reconstitution Agreement, for the first time, American Jewish leaders from federations, as well as all the American Zionist organizations, served as members of the UIA Board. UIA was allocated 30% of the seats on the Board of Governors (“BOG”) of the Jewish Agency. UIA appointed federation representatives to the Jewish Agency Board, while the American Zionist organizations had seats on the Jewish Agency Board through their membership in the World Zionist Organization (“WZO”).

The Reconstitution Agreement in 1971 was followed by UIA naming the Jewish Agency for Israel as its exclusive operating agent in Israel.

In 1999, United Jewish Communities (“UJC”) was created as a merger of UIA, National UJA and the Council of Jewish Federations (“CJF”), into a single, national organization. After this merger, UIA became a subsidiary of UJC, since renamed the Jewish Federations of North America (“JFNA”). One result of the merger was the restructure of the UIA Board, no longer including formal representation by the Zionists, who are represented at the Agency by the WZO.

### **UIA Today**

In August 2013 the UIA Board adopted a Futures Committee Report. It was accepted by the Jewish Federations of North America as the blueprint for UIA’s continuing work.

United Israel Appeal continues as a nonprofit, charitable organization whose principal objectives are to work on behalf of the federation system in the United States in assisting the work of the Jewish Agency and related activities in Israel. UIA has its own US 501(c)(3) tax status and Board of Directors. It provides fiduciary oversight and allocation of the funds provided to it from donors and the allocations to UIA from American Jewish Federations and JFNA. UIA monitors and evaluates the programs operated on its behalf by the Jewish Agency.

UIA secures and monitors a United States Government Resettlement Grant for the immigration and absorption of Jewish humanitarian migrants to Israel from countries of distress, including areas within the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, Eastern Europe and the Near East. Congress initiated the US Resettlement Grants during the early 1970s in response to the first large influx of Soviet Jews to Israel. Since 1973, UIA has been awarded in excess of \$1.7 billion in US Government funding.

UIA continues to functionally control 30% of the seats on the Jewish Agency Board of Governors on behalf of the federation system and the US Jewish community. In consultation with JFNA and individual federations, UIA nominates members and observers of the Jewish Agency BOG, members of its committees, and designates delegates to the Jewish Agency Annual Assembly.

UIA has seats on the board of the Amigour Housing Company. In 1967, American Jews wished to support Israel after the Six-Day War but were precluded by US law from providing direct support to the Government of Israel. As a result of these funds, UIA, in the name of American donors and federations, purchased low-income housing from *Amidar*, the Israel Public Housing Company, and created *Amigour* in 1972. UIA plays an active role in the oversight and management of this company. Today, Amigour has evolved into the largest provider of low-income, senior citizen housing in Israel.

UIA has offices in New York and Jerusalem.

UIA assists American Jews to fulfill their ongoing collective commitment to contribute to and participate in the building of the State of Israel. UIA, with the Jewish Agency as its partner, has performed this function since before the creation of the State of Israel and continues to the present day on behalf of the federation system and JFNA.

### **Israel Education Fund (“IEF”)**

The Israel Education Fund was founded in 1964 as a partnership between UIA, National UJA and the Jewish Agency for Israel. Its historic purpose is to raise funds for educational buildings, scholarships and other capital projects in Israel as part of the mission of the Jewish Agency.

IEF, together with Project Renewal, Partnership 2000, followed by Partnership2Gether (“P2G”), and the North American system, has built over 1,300 educational and cultural institutions ranging from colleges; high schools; community centers; pre-kindergarten daycare centers; youth-activity centers; libraries; adult-education centers; recreational, sports and senior-care facilities; academic scholarships and academic enrichment programming. UIA holds the title to most of these buildings and works with the program providers and municipalities to ensure that the original wishes of the donor or donor community continue to be fulfilled. UIA monitors and evaluates these projects and buildings through an ongoing program of

onsite inspections. IEF reports to donors and donor families as well as to federations on the state of their project.

UIA/IEF formed non-profit companies to administer the operation of capital projects not otherwise operated by non-profit organizations, in accordance with the requirements of the 1964 IRS ruling. It is estimated that these projects touch the lives of one in seven Israelis every single day.

### **The Jewish Federations of North America**

The Jewish Federations of North America represents 148 Jewish Federations and over 300 Network communities, which raise and distribute more than \$2 billion annually through planned giving and endowment programs to support social welfare, social services and educational needs. The Federation movement, collectively among the top 10 charities on the continent, protects and enhances the well-being of Jews worldwide through the values of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), *tzedakah* (charity and social justice) and Torah (Jewish learning). The Jewish Federations of North America are thought leaders and advocates in the fields of caregiving, aging, philanthropy, disability, foreign policy, homeland security and health care.