

ANNUAL REPORT



2024-2025



Champaign-Urbana
Jewish Federation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW

- Mission
- Team
- President's Report
- 2024-2025 Board of Directors

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Allocation
- Campaign
- CHAI Seniors
- Chevra Kadisha
- Committee Against Antisemitism
- Holocaust Education Center
- Human Services
- PJ Library

COMMUNITY EVENTS

FINANCIALS

- Financial Summary 2024-2025
- Budget & Allocations 2025-2026

ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

- Chair's Report
- Foundation Capital 2024-2025
- Expenditures & Distributions 2024-2025



Overview



OUR MISSION

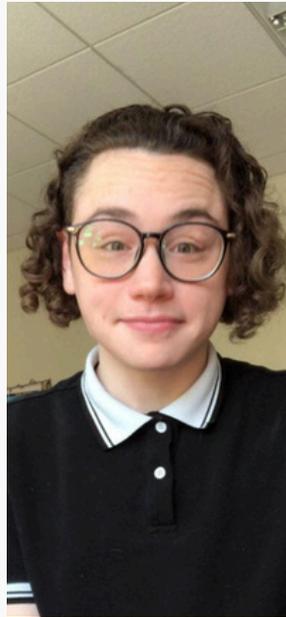
The Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation provides and supports local Jewish programs and activities; provides help to local community Jews in need; supports humanitarian causes locally, in Israel and in other places on behalf of the local Jewish community; and educates about Jewish issues and against antisemitism.

OUR TEAM



Ma'ayan Weinberg

Executive Director



Azer Matten

Community Engagement
Coordinator



Alena Fishkin, LSW

Jewish Family Services
Coordinator

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lee DeVille

As we come to the end of the fiscal year, I want to begin this letter with my sincere thanks to our membership, Board(s) of Directors, and our staff.

I want to lead the letter by acknowledging our staff. Our Executive Director, Ma'ayan Weinberg, has been working tirelessly for several years now to put everyone's ideas and dreams into action. Azer Matten, our Community Engagement Coordinator, has done a wonderful job in organizing events and coordinating our community for almost two years now. Alena Fishkin came on board this year to create and administer our new program in Jewish Family Services which, while it's just taking off, promises to make some real impact in our local community.



I would also like to thank both our Federation and Foundation Board members for volunteering their time and energy so generously to keep our organization in a healthy financial position. I would like to point out our two departing Federation Board members: Rob Silverman and Alison Rosenblum, both of whom we are sorry to lose.

And last, but not least, I want to thank all of you! Without the support of our members and our community, who generously give both their money and time to support our organization, we would not have been able to do any of the great work we have accomplished over the last year.

Later in this document, you will see reports from our committee chairs. Taken together, they represent a true accounting to the depth and breadth of our work this year: from programs aimed at our youngest, like PJ Library; to programs aimed at our oldest, like CHAI Seniors; to the incredible work by the Foundation in stewarding our financial future; to our efforts to address antisemitism that effects our community members today; and to the educational efforts of the Holocaust Education Center; and so much more. I'll let the committees speak for themselves below, but I want to pause to highlight one new endeavor in particular.

A clear throughline in the Federation Board's discussions this past year has been the need for vigilance and flexibility in protecting our community from ever-changing and metastasizing threats, and I am very proud to point out our new partnership with the Secure Community Network --- the premiere security organization for Jewish communities across North America, as well as highlighting our recent award of a Tepper security grant. We look forward to continuing our work with these organizations in the coming years to make our events, our spaces, and our community as safe as possible as we celebrate Jewish life here in Champaign-Urbana.

As we transition to the coming fiscal year, I want to invite each of you to continue walking this path with us. There is a role for everyone in CUJF's future.

To our staff and volunteers: your time, energy and expertise are the driving engine of our work. Keep bringing your ideas, your care, and your courage.

To our partners and donors: your support has allowed us to cross bridges we would never have been able to on our own. Please continue to invest—not just in us, but in the future that we are building for the Jewish community, both here in Champaign, and abroad. Every hour volunteered, every dollar contributed, every introduction made—it all helps us to build a sustainable base of support for our local Jewish community.

And to our members: please talk about us. Share our story with someone who hasn't heard it yet, or even with each other. Let's build those bridges and let's forge those connections. The more people who understand what we do and why we do it, the more powerful our impact will be.

With appreciation and shared purpose,

Lee DeVille
CUJF President 2024-2026

2024-2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee



Lee DeVille
President 2024-2026



Arielle Weinstein
VP Allocations 2022-2024



Carmel Elazar
VP Campaign 2024-2025



Diane Gutenkauf
Treasurer 2023-2025



Jessica LeRoy
Secretary 2023-2025

Board of Directors



Lawrence Rauchwerger
2024-2026



Arne Fliflet
2023-2025



Barry Isralewitz
2023-2025



Marisa Natale
2023-2025



Alison Rosenblum
2023-2025



Robert Silverman
2023-2025



Mitch Harris
2023-2025



**Tamarra Rennick
Bernstein**
2024-2026

Ex-Officio Board Members



Tania Ionin
Former Board President



Rabbi Dovid Tiechtel
Chabad



Alex Scheeline
CUJEF



Erez Cohen
Hillel



Rabbi Jody Cook
Sinai Temple



Eugene Avrutin
Jewish Culture and Society UIUC

COMMITTEE REPORTS



Allocations



Committee Chair: VP Arielle Weinstein

Committee Members: Mitch Harris, Tania Ionin, Julia Robinson, Marc Snir, Diante Gutenkauf

This year's allocations budget was three percent above last year's, which allowed us to provide funding for the newly created CUJF Committee Against Antisemitism. We were also able to continue to fund our CUJF committees, local partner organizations, and send 18% of our allocations budget to a variety of organizations doing valuable work in Israel.

The Allocations Committee also discussed and clarified reporting procedures for grant recipients. In addition, we are developing a clearer set of criteria for evaluating report submissions.

Thank you so much to a devoted committee that delves into detailed analysis and big picture conversations about where and why we are allocating CUJF's funds. Thank you also to a devoted Jewish community whose support enables the allocation of funds to keep our local Jewish community thriving and our support of Israel strong.

Campaign

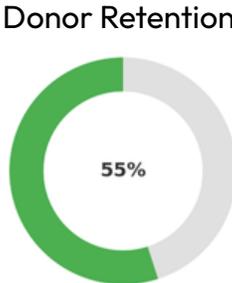


Committee Chair: VP Carmel Elazar

The campaign faced a particularly challenging year, with multiple divisions arising in the wake of the Gaza conflict. Despite these obstacles, the campaign was overall successful, coming very close to achieving our fiscal year goals. While overall performance was strong, donor participation was lower than hoped, with only about 55% actively contributing. Looking ahead to the next fiscal year, in addition to pursuing our monetary targets, we aim to re-engage past donors and strengthen overall participation.

YouThe "As One" annual fundraiser brought the community together at The Venue CU for an evening of reflection and purpose. Keynote speaker Ken Krimstein and community leaders emphasized that our strength lies in our unity. The funds raised during this event directly sustain our community's most vital pillars: Holocaust education, emergency human services, youth scholarships, and the preservation of our sacred traditions. Even in divided times, our community chose to stand together to ensure Jewish life in Central Illinois continues to thrive.

Towards the end of the fiscal year a group of volunteers conducted a focused end of fiscal year outreach effort, personally contacting past donors who had not yet contributed in the 2024-2025 fiscal year to express appreciation and invite renewed support.



CHAI Seniors



Committee Chair: Diana Jaher

Committee Members: Linda Bauer, Andy Bernstein, Tamarra Bernstein, Joyce Eisenstein, Paula Kaufman, Wynne Korr, Janet LeRoy, Sara Rosenberg, Lauren Senhoff, Art Siegel, Sherry Steigmann, Steve Wolff, Janie Yairi

The Chai Seniors Committee remains dedicated to fostering a vibrant sense of community and lifelong learning among our senior members. By hosting monthly programs that span the arts, history, and wellness, we ensure that our seniors remain deeply connected to both Jewish culture and one another. This year was particularly marked by a diverse array of speakers—many from our own University of Illinois community—who brought global perspectives and local history directly to our members.

Monthly Programming & Highlights

July - Sharon Matten kicked off our year with a hands-on Challah baking workshop.

August - We were honored to host Dr. William Gingold, a prominent voice from the Holocaust Education Center. Dr. Gingold shared his personal testimony of survival of the holocaust.

September - In a timely and academic session, Judy Maltz (Haaretz) and Prof. Amit Schejter (Ben-Gurion University) discussed their experiences as Israel Studies Project visitors. They recounted their dialogues with American Jewish communities following the events of October 7.

October - Prof. Joseph Altshuler of the UIUC School of Architecture introduced us to the Chicago Sukkah Design Festival

November - Prioritizing holistic health, Robin Goettel led a restorative session of chair yoga.

December - Rabbi Dovid and Goldie Tiechtel graciously hosted our annual Chanukah party at Chabad.

January - Prof. Valleri Robinson took us on a journey through the history of Yiddish Theatre in America.

February - Prof. Paula Kaufman shared a gripping piece of personal and professional history. She detailed her 1987 encounter at Columbia University with FBI agents who pressured her to release library records.

March - Continuing our exploration of Jewish letters, Prof. Rachelle Grossman shared her specialized research on modern Yiddish literature.

April - Dr. Brian Kahn presented a poignant session on his genealogical research. He shared the emotional journey of tracing his family tree, which ultimately revealed the tragic loss of many relatives during the Holocaust.

May - Amanda Riggerbach, Graduate Student archivist for the Central Illinois Jewish Community Archives at UIUC provided a fascinating overview of the Central Illinois Jewish Community Archives.

June - To conclude the year, Sybil Mervis hosted the group at her Riverbend estate. As the founder of our community archives, Sybil shared invaluable stories of Jewish life in Central Illinois.



Initiatives:

- **Service & Outreach:** We partnered with PJ Library in April's National Days of Jewish Service to create and distribute gift bags to our seniors in assisted living.
- **Community Care:** We began talks with the Human Services Committee and Alena Fiskin (Family Services Coordinator) to visit and aid (rides, errands) our seniors in assisted living.
- **Ensuring Accessibility:** In a significant shift toward inclusivity, we have replaced fixed luncheon fees with a suggested donation model. This ensures that our programming remains accessible to all members of our community, regardless of financial circumstances.

Chevra Kadisha



Committee Co- Chairs :

Jessica Kopolow and Marcey Goldstein (January 2025- June 2025)

Lee Melhado and Jessica Kopolow (July 2024 - December 2024)

Committee Members are confidential by tradition

Throughout the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year, the Chevra Kadisha continued its work of providing preparation of the dead for burial according to Jewish law and tradition, education about Jewish death and mourning practices, and respectful, low-cost burial for the indigent. As in years past, all work was performed by volunteers who gave their time anonymously as an act of true loving-kindness. Any associated costs of this crucial service to our community were covered entirely by contributions from families served.

Lee Melhado gave lectures to students in the UIUC School of Social Work, as she has done for 20+ years; Jessica Kopolow taught Sinai Temple Religious School's 5th grade students an introductory class about Jewish burial practices and traditions; Jessica Kopolow and Marcey Goldstein spoke to a group of Illini Hillel students participating in Rabbi Gabe Miner's Shomer Series.

We would like to send heartfelt thanks to Lee Melhado for her decades of service as Chevra Kadisha Chairperson. Since the 1990s, Lee has worked tirelessly to ensure that our community is educated about the supports available in times of mourning and empowered to make informed decisions about end-of-life issues. Her care and attention to detail have set a strong foundation and framework for the work of the Chevra Kadisha for years to come.

Committee Against Antisemitism



Committee Chair: Tania Ionin

Committee Members: Carmel Elazar, Inbal Elazar, Mitch Harris, Barry Isralewitz, Ruth Kantorovitz, Eileen Kohen, Lisa Libman, Lawrence Rauchwerger, Lauren Senoff, Arielle Weinstein, Mick Woolf, Joshua Woolf-Senoff

This was the first full year of the CAA (which was formed partway through the previous fiscal year, in response to heightened antisemitism following the October 7 massacre). The CAA has been quite active this year. Our activities can be divided into three main types.

CUJF-internal actions

This year saw the creation of the CAA website (<https://www.cujf.org/antisemitism>). The website provides resources, shares information about CAA activities, and includes a link to a form for submitting information about any antisemitic incidents in the community. In the past fiscal year, CAA proposed three motions to the CUJF Board which were approved by the Board. The first two motions resulted in the Board taking a clear stand for Israel and against antisemitism, while the final motion resulted in the adoption of the CAA mission statement and goals.

Fighting antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the Champaign-Urbana community: CAA efforts have included informing the wider community about the problematic nature of an anti-Israel advisory question on the Cunningham Township election ballot; addressing the disruption that took place at the campus screening of the film ‘Saturday October 7’;

and communicating with Central High School about the erasure of Israel from a map of the region in the yearbook (a matter which the school has addressed). More information about these and other efforts can be found on the CAA efforts.

Engaging in educational outreach about Israel and about antisemitism and anti-Zionism: This year, the CAA has sought to establish a relationship with the local public schools. The CAA also explored options for education and engagement for the local Jewish community. Members of the CAA were involved in organizing a screening of the documentary film ‘Saturday October 7’.

This year the committee hosted a screening of the film “Saturday October 7” with the UIUC Program in Jewish Culture and Society, and co-hosted by CUJF, Chabad, Hillel and Sinai; it was screened on campus on May 6, 2025. Tania Ionin, CAA chair, organized the screening in her



capacity as an affiliate of the PJCS, and other members of the CAA and the local Jewish community more broadly assisted with the organization. Even though the screening was disrupted during the first 20 minutes, it was ultimately a success. The screening was followed by Q&A with Guido Kohan, one of the survivors featured in the film, and Monique Beadle, the film’s executive producer and an attorney for the Jerusalem Institute of Justice.

There were approximately 70 community members in attendance.

Holocaust Education Center



Committee Chairs: Dr. Brian Kahn (-2024), Courtney Smith, (2024 - Present), and Dr. Carrie Smith (2025 - Present)

Committee Members: Linda Bauer, Tamarra Bernstein, Erez Cohen, Tamra Gingold, William Gingold, Rebecca Lawson, Lisa Libman, Sybil Mervis, Sam Plusker, Valerie Prescott, Angie Rouley, Robert Silverman, Holly Thompson



During a season of leadership transitions, our volunteer teams grew in numbers, knowledge, and experience. Dedicated to reaching and teaching regional 5th grade-college students about the Holocaust, developing and supporting classroom teachers, and providing valuable educational experiences for the community, volunteers served on multiple projects while advancing their own education through coursework, research and other Holocaust resources. Co-chairs met weekly with Azer Matten, CUJF Community Engagement Coordinator; the HEC Committee met monthly; and, project subcommittees met often, as needed. Our work is as rewarding as it is demanding; it's inspiring to watch our teams put their hearts into every endeavor in this antisemitic climate. Below are highlights of a full year, with honor to our dedicated volunteers and our "Go-the-Extra-Mile" Azer Matten



Podcast Series

Initiated by Robin Goettel with Elizabeth Hess, two seasons of "Holocaust Stories of Champaign-Urbana and Beyond" were posted on YouTube and Spotify, with a total of 639 views, and still rising. Season One (summer 2024) interviews included Dr. Brian Kahn, Linda Bauer and Dr. Bill Gingold; Season Two (Winter 2024/2025) included Erez Cohen, Micahel LeRoy, Sharon Shavitt, Larry Kanfer, Gene Robinson and Tova and Shachar Meron.

Thank You, Robin Goettel!

Retired after 33 Years of
Dedicated Service with the HEC



Contest

The 2nd annual “Through Their Eyes” Holocaust Art and Writing Contest, grades 5-12, headed by Becky Lawson, was expanded to 15 counties. Eleven volunteer judges reviewed 17 entries and awarded 5 \$50 prizes to Grand Champions of each category. Film Category Winner Hannah Needham also won Grand Champion of the prestigious National Chapman University Holocaust Art and Writing Contest. Becky mentored Hannah throughout and the HEC presented a scholarship (\$750) to Hannah so she could attend the awards ceremony in CA. Strategic planning for next year began with research on similar contests in the US to increase entry numbers and add a music category to this valuable educational opportunity.



20 Students

Participated in the EDUC 201 Course in 2024-2025

Education 201

For the third year, HEC and Illini Hillel hosted a section of Education 201, a course at the University of Illinois that provides future teachers with 20 contact hours with a selected local service organization. Dr. Brian Kahn and Erez Cohen planned the semesters' syllabi. Dr. Kahn, our Site Coordinator, presided over class sessions, correspondence, and materials for a total of 20 students this



past year. Students were taught about the Holocaust, given sound pedagogical practices, and learned about antisemitism. Meals were arranged and provided by Azer Matten, who also handled the Tech for each 2-hour class. Sessions included talks from Holocaust survivors and descendants, presentations on Holocaust units from exemplary local teachers, touring an exhibit and attending commemorations. Students' final presentations focused on resisters, rescuers or liberators along with 2 corresponding lesson plans for their chosen grade level. The goal: become teachers who incorporate Holocaust education into the curriculum to multiply learning to future generations.

2024 Research Finding

Students who learned about the Holocaust through survivor testimony show higher critical thinking skills and greater sense of social responsibility and civic efficacy.

-Echoes and Reflections

Book Trunks

Last year, volunteers packed 12 heavy-duty wheeled cases with \$400-\$500 of grade-appropriate books, a Table of Contents with book descriptions, and other HEC materials for every library in Champaign Unit 4 school, organized by Ma'ayan Weinberg and Azer Matten. This was made possible through a generous donation by the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois. Sybil Mervis was one of the volunteers who participated in packing the trunks, and she wanted to furnish every 5th, 8th and 10th Grade classroom in Vermilion County (ROE #54) with book trunks of their own. It took a year to plan through the efforts of Sybil, Ma'ayan, Azer, Superintendent Aaron Hird and staff, and HEC volunteers. Spoiler Alert! It came to pass the following fiscal year! Thank you Sybil for this significant contribution to Holocaust education.



Traveling Exhibits

The HEC expanded their available exhibits after acquiring 3 new exhibits from Yad Vashem. We now can offer 6 Holocaust exhibits with exhibit guides and volunteer docents, trained by Dr. Brian Kahn and Becky Lawson.

“Courage to Remember” ran for a week in January 2024 at the Booth Library at Eastern Illinois University, with a special commemoration ceremony for International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27th.

“SHOAH: How Was it Humanly Possible” was exhibited for Education 201 students in Fall 2024 and Spring 2025; it also ran for a week in February 2025 at Unity HS, Tolono, and was open to the community during parent-teacher conferences; finally, it was displayed at the Magical Music Live fundraiser event on April 6, 2025.

The Mobile Museum of Tolerance (MMOT), a high-tech self-contained bus of multi-media presentations from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, was scheduled for a week in July 2024, with stops at Lincoln Square Mall (Urbana), Old Orchard/Elks Club (Savoy), Vermilion County Museum (Danville) and Boys and Girls Club (Champaign). Unfortunately, the bus broke down after the first day, but we have booked the MMOT for October, 2026 and hope to share it with the community with no unexpected issues.



“**This exhibit is so needed, whether someone is Black, White, Muslim or Jewish - intolerance and hate are an injustice to all.**”

-Timothy Tyler, Champaign Police Chief
after viewing the SHOAH: How Was it Humanly Possible exhibit

Speakers Bureau

This year, 7 volunteer speakers gave presentations, at no cost, to 44 groups, representing hundreds of learners in schools, public libraries, university settings, community centers, churches, at luncheons and with a local business. Our indefatigable Holocaust survivor Dr. Bill Gingold spoke 19 times; Dr. Brian Kahn, 12; Becky Lawson, 5; Dr. Carrie Franke, 5; Erez Cohen, 2; Courtney Smith, 2 and Linda Bauer once. The enduring impact of these presentations is invaluable.



44 Groups

hosted a Holocaust speaker or educator

Resource Room and Lending Library.

About 15 years ago, Sinai Temple donated a room for HEC resources: Classroom Collections for Teachers, a Lending Library for individual study, and storage for our growing number of exhibits. This year, teams of volunteers overhauled the room, organized and consolidated collections, made room for storing exhibits, and created a spreadsheet inventory. Azer researched different applications for cataloging and check out, which we are currently testing. This library currently has over 200 titles available to borrow.

Professional Development

The HEC is honored to participate in Unit 4 (Champaign) and Unit 116 (Urbana) Professional Development days, where educators can offer supplemental education for current teachers. Dr. Brian Kahn, Courtney Smith and Becky Lawson presented 60-minute workshops on topics of how to teach the Holocaust and best ways to help students connect with the content. Most districts do not allow for this level of Holocaust pedagogical and content instruction, and the Holocaust Education Center applauds these districts for this opportunity

Events and Commemorations

The Holocaust Education Center hosted a table at Read Across America (Summer 2024) Home School Expo (Jan 2025), Jeffrey Gingold Author Talk (Feb 2025), and helped with the Musical Magic Live Fundraiser (April 2025). Commemoration participation included the Commemoration of October 7th, Sinai Temple; Kristallnacht, Cohen Center; and Yom HaShoah with “Through Their Eyes” exhibit of student art and writings.

The HEC's reach this year includes:

- **4000 Individuals**
- **27 Schools**
- **22 Counties**
- **3 Traveling Exhibits**



343 books gifted with the Holocaust Education Book Trunks to Unit 4 Schools

20 UIUC students in the School of Education participated in a course on teaching about the Holocaust

to research the historical events leading up to the Holocaust and as well as resistance and rescuers during the Holocaust



28 locations hosted a Holocaust speaker
1766 students and 722 adults heard these stories

Musical Magic Live

Music and Song of Jewish Artists Through Time

A fundraiser to benefit the Lilly and David Gingold Holocaust and Tolerance Education Outreach Fund

The inaugural Musical Magic Live fundraiser took place on April 12th, 2025, featuring a wonderful array of live music from artists Cameron Cornell, Angie Rouley, and Tamra Gingold. Attendees were also able to view the SHOAH: How Was It Humanly Possible traveling Holocaust exhibit, created by Yad Vashem. This exhibit was paired with personal stories of Holocaust survivors that are or were local to Champaign-Urbana.

Whether you joined us in person or supported from afar, thank you. The night was standing-room only — a testament to the deep commitment of our community.

We're especially grateful to Dr. William and Phyllis Gingold for their vision and leadership in launching this initiative as a tribute to Dr. Gingold's parents, Lilly and David Gingold z"l.

Let's keep building this future — together. We hope you will join us for the second annual Musical Magic Live on April 19th, 2026!



\$11,706

Total donations raised to directly support Holocaust and Tolerance education in Central Illinois



Human Services

Committee Chair: Barbara Kaplan

Committee Members: Lee Melhado, Janis Topolosky, Andrea Klein, Marion Smith, Leane Anderson

During FY 2024-25, the Human Services Committee (HSC) has had two separate budget lines: one specifically for scholarships to Jewish summer camps and another to assist local families and individuals, primarily within the Jewish community, in urgent financial need.

Scholarships: HSC disbursed its entire budget to support community youth attending religious camps in the United States and in Israel.

Urgent Financial Need: HSC applied all the funds in this budget used all of this budget, with two-thirds going to rent and utility assistance for members of the Jewish Community (hereinafter “Community”) and the general Champaign/Urbana community (financial assistance to which is capped at not more than 10% of HSC’s budget), and the remaining one-third toward Community medical bills and Community health and well-being needs.

Non-Financial Community Support: (includes providing transportation to/from hospitals and medical appointments, errand-running and shopping, emergency pet care, and visits to Community members at their residences and/or at medical facilities): HSC engaged in more than three dozen in-person visits, provided about a dozen rides, ran a small number of errands, and looked after one pet. It is always looking for volunteers so that it could provide more non-financial assistance, especially more visits!

Each instance of support, whether monetary or non-monetary, is supported by phone calls, texts, in-person meetings with utilities and/or rental agents, and e-mail. These communications are not included in the contact count, even though they may amount to virtual visits.

Jewish Family Services



Alena Fishkin, LSW

Jewish Family Services was established this year as a direct expression of CUJF's values and our belief that caring for one another is the foundation of a strong community. Rooted in *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world), *Gemilut Hasadim* (acts of loving kindness), and *Tzedakah* (justice), the program turns our shared values into tangible support for individuals and families, helping people navigate challenges and strengthen long-term wellbeing.

As needs have grown more complex, CUJF recognized the importance of a more coordinated and professional approach to care. Jewish Family Service now serves as a trusted first point of contact, offering resource navigation, referrals, advocacy, and compassionate guidance for concerns related to finances, caregiving, health, and life transitions. In partnership with the Human Service Committee, the program helps facilitate short-term financial assistance when urgent needs arise. Services are available to all, regardless of religious affiliation, strengthening both our Jewish community and the broader Champaign-Urbana area.

This year also focused on building accessible, preventative supports for the community. Jewish Family Service launched the Jewish Wellness Today blog (CUJF.org/jfs/jwt) to share timely wellness information and local resources; facilitated Jewish Wellness Circles and trainings to Jewish professionals centered on connection, trauma awareness, and self-care; and created multiple resource guides and directories to help individuals and families more easily find food, mental health, caregiving, and financial support.

To ensure thoughtful, high-quality care, CUJF hired a licensed social worker, Alena Fishkin, to lead the program, bringing professional training and trauma-informed, evidence-based practices to this work.

With these foundations now in place, Jewish Family Service will continue expanding programming and partnerships in the year ahead, strengthening our network of support and helping ensure that no one in our community has to navigate hardship alone.

PJ Library



Committee Chair: Jessica LeRoy

Committee Members: Sadie Braun, Sara Schwebel, Alison Rosenblum, Jenny Schwartzberg

The PJ Library Committee had an exciting and impactful year, marked by expansion in both participation and programming. We now have 85 children actively enrolled in PJ Library and PJ Our Way, with 23 new subscriptions added this year, bringing Jewish stories and values into more homes each month. This growth was supported by generous grant funding from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and generous gifts from CUJF donors!

This year saw a dramatic increase in family programming thanks to the tireless efforts of our Community Engagement Coordinator, Azer Matten, and an IPEG grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. The IPEG grant supported a partnership with Sinai Temple for week-long summer and winter break day camps, multiple “School’s Out” day camps, and some wild “Parents Night Out” events (let’s just say some axes were thrown). We gathered to decorate challah covers, hike at Busey Woods, sing Hanukkah songs with Zach Mayer, and enjoy Lag B’Omer s’mores. PJ Library proudly represented Jewish families at the Youth and Family Pride Party, the Read Across America Fair, and several farmers markets, bringing Jewish learning into new spaces and building connections with the broader CU community. The year wrapped up with a joyful, Shavuot-themed visit to Prairie Fruits Farm, bringing together Jewish traditions, delicious dairy treats, and learning about regenerative agriculture. It has been a truly remarkable year of growth, connection, and celebration for PJ Library in Champaign-Urbana. Thank you all so much for your generous gifts that helped make it happen!

Small but Mighty

As a Jewish community located in Central Illinois, PJ Library provides invaluable access to information on Jewish holidays, culture, and values that are not easily available to those surrounded by corn and soy. We are proud to share the wonderful resources PJ Library creates with our friends and families.

85

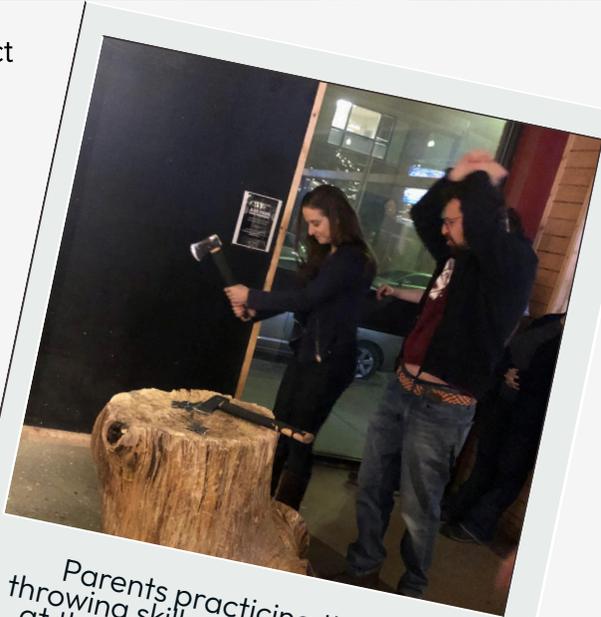
Jewish children enrolled in PJ Library and PJ Our Way received books every month in the mail.



Schools Out Camp & Parents Night Out

Implementing Partners Engagement Grant

This year, CUJF PJ Library and Sinai Temple partnered to help connect parents and families in Champaign-Urbana using the Implementing Partners Engagement Grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. This was accomplished through providing childcare at “Schools-Out Camps”, full family connecting programs, and adults-only “Parents Night Outs” with babysitting paid for! We look forward to continuing this grant supported partnership through 2026.



Parents practicing their axe throwing skills at Parents Night Out at the Axe Bar in February, 2025



Shavuot at Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery



21
Families participated in our first year of IPEG programming



COMMUNITY EVENTS



C-U Pride Fest & Parade

CUJF participated in Uniting Pride's annual Pride Fest, Parade and Fair with events for all ages. We hosted an LGBTQ+ Jewish History workshop in partnership with Keshet, an American nonprofit organization that advocates for the equality and inclusion of LGBTQ+ Jews and their families in Jewish communities and institutions. We also had a blast customizing bags at our tie-dye booth in the Youth and Family Pride Party! We also ended our programming with a fantastic group at the annual Pride Parade and a booth at the Pride Festival Thank you to all who shared in our Pride celebration!



Parade of Lights



The C-U Jewish community came together for the Champaign Center 24th Annual Parade of Lights with our Hanukkah themed float titled "Latke Lane". Even in the frigid cold, families sang Hanukkah songs and walked together through downtown Champaign. Children helped pass out small bags to parade viewers with Dreidels, Gelt, and instructions how to use them.

Our Latke Lane float was made possible thanks to the generosity of Julia Rietz and Al Johnston, who shared their truck and spent hours helping with float set-up. We are grateful for your partnership! We are also grateful to Cecile & Ira Lebenson for their sponsorship of our float!

Thank you to all of the organizations coming together to participate: CUJF, Illini Chabad, Illini Hillel, Sinai Temple, UIUC Program in Jewish Studies





Zach Mayer in Residence

Champaign-Urbana had the honor of hosting musician Zach Mayer for an unforgettable series of events between December 13th - 15th, 2024.

Friday morning kicked off with a special workshop at Urbana High School, where Zach shared his expertise with the orchestra students. Later that evening, his soulful cantorial melodies enriched **Shabbat services at Sinai Temple**, creating a deeply spiritual atmosphere.

Saturday was a day of learning and connection. Zach captivated attendees at the Cohen Center with the history and melodies of **nigunim**. That evening, his community concert at **Spurlock Museum** uplifted minds and spirits alike, inspiring many to take to the dance floor!

On Sunday afternoon, Zach brought stories, songs, and endless energy to the **Urbana Free Library**, transforming children into dreidels and bringing much naches (joy) to all in attendance.

We are profoundly grateful to our sponsors, including the **Dr. Samuel and Sadie Small Fund at the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Endowment Foundation** and the **Program in Jewish Culture & Society at UIUC**, whose funding helped make these events possible. We are also grateful to our cosponsors **The Spurlock Museum, Sinai Temple, Illini Hillel**, and **The Urbana Free Library** for hosting events.

A heartfelt thanks to our dedicated volunteers, **Frances Harris** and **Tania Ionin**, for their invaluable help in organizing and coordinating these programs.

Thank you, Zach, for a weekend filled with music, stories, and joy—our community will carry the inspiration of your visit for a long time to come!



FINANCIALS



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2024-2025

	Budget	Revenue	Expenses	Balance
INTERNAL PROGRAMS				
Human Services	\$10,473	\$150	\$10,593	\$30
Chevrah Kadisha	\$9,162		\$0	\$9,162
Community Events	\$6,000	\$10,500	\$16,595	-\$95
CHAI Seniors	\$2,744	\$2,602	\$4,648	\$698
Holocaust Education	\$12,800	\$29,162	\$13,189	\$28,773
PJ Library	\$4,500	\$4,850	\$8,963	\$387
Camp Scholarships	\$7,000		\$7,000	
Total Internal Programs	\$52,679	\$47,264	\$60,988	\$38,955
OPERATIONAL COSTS				
Administration	\$31,126	\$2,145	\$25,840	\$7,431
Campaign	\$9,276	\$8,862	\$12,227.00	\$5,911
ED Discretionary	\$1,000		\$823.00	\$177
Payroll	\$136,958	\$10,370	\$133,430	\$13,898
JFNA Membership	\$9,400		\$9,247	\$153
General Reserves	\$25,000			\$25,000
Emergency Fund	\$5,644			\$5,644
Total Operational Costs	\$218,404	\$21,377	\$181,567	\$58,214
LOCAL ALLOCATIONS				
Illini Chabad	\$9,951		\$9,451	\$500
Illini Hillel	\$40,000		\$40,000	
Sinai Temple	\$24,150		\$24,150	
Total Local Allocations	\$74,101		\$73,601	\$500
ISRAEL ALLOCATIONS				
Birthright Israel (via JFNA)	\$3,200			\$3,200
Friends of IDF	\$1,400		\$1,400	
Jaffa Institute	\$2,525		\$2,525	
BINA (NIF)	\$2,525		\$2,525	
Aviv for Holocaust Survivors (PEF)	\$3,025		\$3,025	
No2Violence (PEF)	\$2,608		\$2,608	
Yad Sarah (PEF)	\$1,550		\$1,550	
Hand in Hand	\$2,525		\$2,525	
Save a Child's Heart	\$3,025		\$3,025	
Tenufa Bakehila	\$2,525		\$2,525	
Total Israel Allocations	\$24,908		\$21,708	\$3,200
Total 2024-2025	\$370,092	\$68,641	\$337,864	\$100,869

BUDGET & ALLOCATIONS

2025-2026

	Budget	Carryover	Earmark/Obligated	Total
INTERNAL PROGRAMS				
Human Services	\$9,155			\$9,155
Committee Against Antisemitism	\$3,065			\$3,065
Chevrah Kadisha		\$9,162		\$9,162
Community Events	\$10,000			\$10,000
CHAI Seniors	\$4,147			\$4,147
Holocaust Education	\$11,583		\$28,000	\$39,583
PJ Library	\$10,500			\$10,500
Camp Scholarships	\$7,000			\$7,000
Jewish Family Services	\$18,988			\$18,988
Total Internal Programs	\$74,438	\$9,162	\$28,000	\$111,600
OPERATIONAL COSTS				
Administration	\$26,000			\$26,000
Audit	\$5,000			\$5,000
Campaign	\$12,000			\$12,000
ED Discretionary	\$1,000			\$1,000
Payroll	\$147,674			\$147,674
JFNA Membership	\$9,400			\$9,400
General Reserves		\$25,000		\$25,000
Emergency Fund		\$5,644	\$4,356	\$10,000
Total Operational Costs	\$201,074	\$30,644	\$4,356	\$236,074
LOCAL ALLOCATIONS				
Illini Chabad	\$10,000			\$10,000
Chabad Security Funding	\$12,800			\$12,800
Illini Hillel	\$40,000			\$40,000
Hillel Security Funding	\$4,000			\$4,000
Sinai Temple	\$24,150			\$24,150
Sinai Temple Security Funding	\$12,000			\$12,000
Total Local Allocations	\$102,950			\$102,950
ISRAEL ALLOCATIONS				
Birthright Israel (via JFNA)		\$3,200		\$3,200
Friends of IDF	\$1,475			\$1,475
Jaffa Institute	\$2,600			\$2,600
BINA	\$2,600			\$2,600
Aviv for Holocaust Survivors (PEF)	\$2,600			\$2,600
No2Violence (PEF)	\$2,600			\$2,600
Yad Sarah (PEF)	\$2,475			\$2,475
Hand in Hand	\$2,600			\$2,600
Save a Child's Heart	\$2,600			\$2,600
Tenufa Bakehila	\$2,600			\$2,600
Total Israel Allocations	\$22,150	\$3,200		\$25,350
Total Budget 2025-2026	\$400,612	\$43,006	\$32,356	\$475,974

ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION



CHAIR'S REPORT

Alexander Scheeline

The Champaign-Urbana Jewish Endowment Foundation is the organization most focused on the long-term financial health of the Champaign-Urbana Jewish community. We manage approximately \$5 million of endowments supporting CUJF, Hillel, Sinai, and Chabad. Most of these 63 funds support institutional or community-wide programs. Within our portfolio, about ¼ by value is owned by Sinai Temple but managed by the Foundation, and an additional 15% are funds benefiting Sinai but owned by CUJEF. Approximately 15% benefit Illini Hillel. One quarter is for on-going support of CUJF, with the remaining 20% benefiting a range of cross-community activities.



Some programs support individuals, for example through subsidized youth travel to Israel via the Josh Gottheil Fund or attendance at Jewish summer camps through several Sinai and CUJF funds. The list of all the funds which have been generously donated over the decades, and to which additional donations are always welcome, is included in this report and can also be found at CUJEF.ORG.

The Foundation has continued to evolve into a more professionally managed organization. Instead of the Board of Directors acting mainly as a Committee of the Whole, subcommittees do significant detail work, making for final Board decisions that are better informed but less time-consuming. Faye Lesht is acting treasurer; Alena Fishkin is secretary. Susan Frankenberg chairs the Stewardship Committee that reviews potential new endowments and ensures that existing endowments, some over 40 years old, have operating rules consistent with changes in community needs. Deborah Katz-Downie chairs the Grants Committee that ensures proposals receive funds from the appropriate endowment, that our grants are adequately acknowledged by recipients, that we receive reports on how the funds were used, and that any modifications to proposals that may be required to align community needs with indenture restrictions are negotiated before a proposal reaches the CUJEF Board.

Finally, I chair the Development Committee. We have met with many of you to discuss how your interests might lead you to contribute now or as a legacy to existing or possible new endowments. The community's financial stability and future depend on generosity from all of us.

June 30, 2025 marks a significant transition for CUJEF. Co-founder of the Foundation, Ehud Yairi, is stepping down from the Board. He and Janie have been leaders of CUJF and CUJEF for 46 years that I know of and probably longer than that. They trained me in how Federation can and should work; they similarly influenced many others in the community. They are principal contributors to the Ehud and Janie Yairi Fund for Communications Disorders at Tel Aviv University, the Goldberg-Gordon-Yairi Fund for Seniors, and the driving force behind the establishment of Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment funds. We owe Ehud as an individual, and Ehud and Janie as a team, our immense gratitude for half-a-century of service to the community, the Federation, and the Foundation.

The CUJEF Board this year was made up of 14 people. Four were ex officio: Ma'ayan Weinberg and Lee Deville from Federation, Sam Bernstein and Lil Levant from Sinai Temple, yours truly as chair, and nine elected Board members. Ma'ayan was in charge of Foundation operations day-to-day, and was ably assisted by Azer Matten, Alena Fishkin, Marco Shehab, and flocks of volunteers. After decades of using a spreadsheet originally authored by Al Avner in the 1990's to manage the connection between our pooled investments and our individual endowments, we moved to employing PGCalc, a national foundation support contractor, to do the managing. We flourished as each of us were led by our office's expertise and we collaborate, pushing each other to act in the community's interest.

Joining the Board on July 1 are Sinai Temple President Amy Roady and newly appointed Board members Ari Mark Neuman and Alaina Kanfer. The community can look forward to reliable stewardship of endowment funds, additional efforts to raise capital, careful vetting of proposals, and mitzvot all around. During the summer, we will publicize the amounts available from our various funds. When applying for funds, please remember: 1) applications from individuals must be endorsed by one of the Jewish institutions in Champaign-Urbana. 2) We require at least a month between application and decision (and preferably two months). 3) Whenever possible, we pay whoever provides a service to a grantee; in all events, we need copies of receipts to show that our funds were used for the purposes granted. More formalized procedures and greater dependence on professionals for accounting and recordkeeping are essential to assure the members of the CU Jewish community that only the highest standards for accountability are at work here. Thank you to all, past and present, for their on-going generosity.

FOUNDATION CAPITAL

2024-2025

Fund Name	2024-2025 Donations	End of Year Value
Unrestricted		
General Fund	\$500	\$315,614
Supporting Program for Seniors		
Goldberg-Gordon-Yairi Fund for Seniors	\$180	\$64,441
Libby and Harry Miller Memorial Fund		\$27,031
Supporting Israel		
Josh Gottheil Youth to Israel Fund	\$303	\$184,150
The Ehud and Janie Yairi Fund for Communication Disorders at Tel Aviv University		\$153,966
Supporting Cultural Outreach		
Dr. Samuel and Sadie Small Fund for Jewish Arts and Culture	\$26	\$194,335
Golden Peacock Fund	\$1,227	\$26,211
Milton and Annette Glaser Concert Fund	\$7,252	\$71,064
Ginsberg Guest Lecturer		\$49,323
Lebenson PACE Fund		
Supporting Holocaust Education		
Harry Nelson Memorial Award		\$13,899
Lilly and David Gingold Holocaust and Tolerance Education Outreach Fund	\$29,700	\$29,557
Jack and Sayde Marco Holocaust Fund	\$2,604	\$137,215
Supporting Camp Scholarships		
Michael and Elizabeth Shapiro Camp Scholarship Fund		\$22,154
Lewis Family Fund		\$46,428
Charles R. and Helen Loeb Fund		\$64,617
Sinai Temple Sisterhood Camp Scholarship Fund		\$38,972
Supporting Hillel		
Hillel Centennial Endowment Fund	\$10,626	\$150,673
Hillel Kiddush Endowment	\$180	\$16,147
Arthur R. Robinson Fund for Hillel (Programming)		\$116,397
Eruv Endowment Fund	\$5,845	\$30,373
Weiner Endowment Fund for Hillel		\$42,439
Hillel Sachar Memorial Fund		\$12,154
Howard Jacobson Endowment Fund	\$517	\$22,521
The Susan Linowes Allen Memorial Fund		\$241,555
Hillel Director's Fund		\$61,289
Arthur R. Robinson Fund for Hillel (Building)		\$141,682
Andrea Hoffman Honorary Fund		\$18,931

Fund Name	2024-2025 Donations	End of Year Value
Supporting Sinsi		
Miles and Barbara Klein Endowment Fund		\$17,561
Joli and Donald Ginsberg Library Fund		\$26,638
Clarence and Adele Libman Sinai Temple Religious School Fund		\$103,829
The Blanche and Seymour Sudman Rabbi's Discretionary Fund		\$51,136
Robinson Quasi-Endowment for Sinai (New)		\$60,644
Julius Cohen Memorial Garden Fund		\$9,068
J. Ben Hamburg Early Childhood Education Fund		\$32,107
Korry Confirmation Education Fund		\$40,057
David Linowes Bequest		\$96,807
Richard Allen Avner and Elaine S. Avner Fund for Sinai Temple		\$294,372
Sinai Temple General Endowment Fund		\$359,220
Marvin P Steinberg Scholar in Residence Fund	\$100	\$80,522
Blanche and Seymour Sudman Rabbinic Salary Fund for Sinai Temple		\$305,011
Alfred and Natalie Smith Building Endowment Fund	\$20,000	\$124,334
Sinai Temple Tepper Board Discretionary Fund		\$39,325
Stanley and Joan Levy Youth Leadership Fund		\$46,683
Mathlia Zimmerman B'nai Israel Fund		\$40,460
Supporting CUJF		
Allen and Elaine Avner PACE Fund		\$86,302
Dan and Frances Bloomfield PACE Fund		\$52,972
Champaign Urbana Jewish Federation PACE Fund	\$11,000	\$401,412
Guttenberg PAGE Fund		\$70,159
Lebenson Family PACE Fund		\$21,755
Lefkovitz-LeRoy Family PACE Fund		\$20,805
Ezra and Helen Levin PACE Fund		\$22,084
Eli Benjamin Mandel PACE Fund		\$19,688
Lee Melhado PACE Fund	\$1,000	\$47,643
Jack Simon PACE Fund		\$97,987
Linda Bauer PACE Fund		\$16,845
Lynn and Ira Wachtel PACE Fund		\$26,437
Leo and Anne Weisel PACE Fund		\$31,732
Robinson Quasi-Endowment for CUJF (New)		\$316,697
Harris PACE Fund	\$1,000	\$25,394
Ginsberg PACE Fund		\$48,079
Infrastructure Fund		\$24,992
Supporting CUJF, Sinai, Chabad and Hillel		
Dorothy Denzig-Krakower and David Krakower Memorial Torah Endowment Fund	\$1,942	\$17,345
Hymowitz Fund		\$127,901
Total Capital Market Value	\$93,502	\$5,497,141

EXPENDITURES & DISTRIBUTIONS 2024-2025

Disbursements

Campaign	Fund	Amount
CUJF Annual Campaign	PACE funds, PAGE fund, and disbursement from Robinson Quasi-Endowment	\$66,792
Sinai Temple	General, Ginsburg, Libman, Sudman, Cohen, Hamburg, Korry, Linowes, Avner, General, Klein, Robinson	\$26,080
Hillel	Centennial, Kiddush, Eruv, Robinson, Weiner, Sachar	\$7,203
Total Disbursements		\$100,075

Funded Grants

Program Funded	Fund	Amount
Bookshelves for Cohen Center's Library	Robinson Building Fund	\$614
Office Chairs	Robinson Building Fund	\$1,848
Debbie Friedman Experience	Glaser Concert Fund	\$15,000
Bar Mitvah in Israel	Josh Gottheil Youth to Israel Fund	\$3,000
Cafe Ivrit (Hillel)	Susan Allen Fund	\$1,950
October 7th Commemoration	CUJEF General Fund	\$3,000
Folding Chairs	Hillel Director's Fund	\$688
Coffee Carafes	Hillel Director's Fund	\$70
Video Game Equipment	Susan Allen Fund	\$215
Onward Internships	Josh Gottheil Youth to Israel Fund	\$2,200
Rabbi Dalia Marx/Steinberg Scholar in Residence	Steinberg Scholar in Residence Fund	\$2,100
LED Light Conversion, Phase II	Robinson Building Fund	\$2,685
Program Coordinator to attend JPro25	CUJEF General Fund	\$1,000
Sergeant Ari Kalker speech	General Fund	\$3,000
Yom Hashoah/Colleyville film	Marco Fund	\$4,300
Camp scholarships in Israel	Josh Gottheil Youth to Israel Fund	\$4,260
CHAI	Yairi and Miller Funds	\$3,460
Israel Week	Susan Allen Fund	\$2,650
Hillel Spring Camping Trip	Susan Allen Fund	\$1,000
Torah Repair (Chabad)	Hymowitz Fund	\$2,780
Total Funded Grants		\$55,820

Operating Expenses

Category	Amount
Professional Services	\$11,389
Operating Costs	\$14,357
Bank Fees	\$16,692
Total Operating Expenses	\$42,438

CONTACT US



cujf@cujf.org



217-367-9872



www.cujf.org



503 E. John St.
Champaign, IL 61821