



Foundation *Insider*



Today is an exciting day, because tonight the Jewish Foundation Women's Giving Circle will have its first official meeting.

Giving circles are a powerful tool for nurturing connection within our community, for building knowledge and skills together, and for fulfilling our obligation of *tzedakah* and our calling to repair the world. There are many such circles in Jewish communities and other institutions around the country. This will be our first here at the Foundation—and I hope more will follow!

In recent months, we have all experienced grief and trauma. Times like these can cause us to retreat, to seek safety in seclusion, to keep our guards up. My own perspective is that true safety comes from a just society in which everyone is valued. That safety cannot be achieved without a connected community where we all care for one another.

I have observed over the years that even in the realm of philanthropy, with all of the good that it does, there can still be isolation or reinforcement of hierarchies. That's understandable; anything where money is involved can have that effect. Creation of a donor-led circle, where each member contributes and has an equal voice in decision-making, is one way to fight against this isolation and to intentionally build connection as we give, one-to-another and all-to-community.

I will quote from our Circle's mission statement: "The mission of the Jewish Women's Giving Circle is to educate and empower women as philanthropists, funders, and decision-makers. Guided by Jewish values, it seeks to improve the lives of women and children in the Greensboro Community and in Israel."

It is important that this Circle will be supporting causes both within the Jewish community and in the broader community, because that is how we build real safety. We all know our Hillel, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?" This is as true on a community level as it is on an individual level.

Caren Appel and Janis Fields will be our founding co-chairs (If you would like to join this circle, please reach out to them). I have no doubt that their leadership will grow this group into a powerful and enduring force strengthening our community and benefitting women and children both here and in Israel.

For additional information, please contact Susan Gutterman, 336-852-0099 or Frandee Woolf, 336-852-1123.

J. Sam Cone, Board Chair

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