Women’s Philanthropy, a Division of Jewish Nevada, raises money each year in collaboration with Federations of North America to promote Tikkun Olam, “healing the world”.  This year seven women from the Las Vegas community embarked on a five-day mission to Israel.  During this five-day mission, our women participated, first hand, in programming designed to see Jewish Federations “dollars at work”, for example, providing support for the elderly, absorption of Ethiopian immigrants into Israeli society, and first responder care during crisis occurring in Israel, and around the world.

Upon returning from the Heart to Heart 8 Mission to Israel held February 5-7th, we are excited to share with you some highlights of this amazing experience.  We travelled to Israel with 66 participants, representing 18 different communities.  Participants ranged from Lion donors to women who are just beginning their Federation journey.  We were fortunate to be led by Heart to Heart Co-Chairs Stacey Davis (Greater Metro west) and Leslie Kramer (Buffalo), National Women’s Philanthropy Chair, Judy Altenberg, as well as 10 other NWP Board Members. Rabbi Shira Stutman joined us as our mission scholar and brought Torah, spiritual guidance and an incredible positive energy, as well as our own Cantor Jessica Hutchings from Congregation Ner Tamid, who added song to our spiritual and educational journey.

We, along with other members of our group,  presented new trees to plant to the members of Beit Meir, a Moshav outside of Jerusalem that received grants from the Jewish Agency to repair damages after the recent wildfires.  Fran Fine, one of the participants from Nevada, stated, “it was heartwarming to hear from a local physician whose home was destroyed share with our group that when the fire crews arrived to their Moshav, he danced.  He danced with grace, that although his house had been destroyed, God was protecting his community from further damage and that his family was safe.”

Fran also explained, she “was so overcome by emotion from being able to witness how her donations make a real impact on the lives of Israelis.”

In addition, the delegation participated in science and technology activities with World ORT (a vocational and educational training organization) that provides for young students at their YOUniversities throughout Israel. We learned about the important work we do in organizing the Ethiopian-Israeli community. We met with young Olim, IDF lone soldiers and MASA participants. We joined in a dialogue about freedom of choice in marriage in Israel moderated by iRep leadership and so much more.

Israeli Lion of Judahs provided home hospitality, and an incredible evening for participants.  Enriching conversations about philanthropy and the positive impact women can make in the Jewish community were filled at the home hospitality dinners.

The mission ended with a beautiful ceremony, at a venue overlooking the City of Jerusalem, where 14 women participating in this Mission were called to the Torah as B’not Mitzvah.  These women were joined by young Ethiopian-Israeli girls, who were proud to celebrate their B’not Mitzvah too.  There was singing and dancing.  Joy and deep emotion were felt by all.  Following the ceremony, women had the opportunity to reflect on the mission.   During this reflection, women shared their thoughts that affirmed how incredibly impactful, inspiring and empowering this mission is.

Cantor Jessica Hutchings, a Las Vegas participant, expressed, “My heart, mind, and soul is forever changed. I truly feel connected to the mission of JFNA in a whole new way, and am inspired like I could have never imagined.”

Heart to Heart is an incredible mission that connects and inspires women. **Please mark your calendars for Heart to Heart 9: February 4-8, 2018** to participate this next coming year! For inquires, contact Arielle Ventura at Jewish Nevada 702-479-4441

We look forward to you joining us!