

## We've Made It. Now What?



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The United States has been an amazing country for Jews. The Golden Medina. We have been welcomed and accepted – and, in turn, reached heights of success, prosperity, and comfort like no place else in the world.

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**It takes more of our Jewish community coming together to really make a difference.**

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As we approach the 250th anniversary of our country, it is worth recognizing and honoring this.

For many Jews, living the “American Dream” went beyond leading quiet lives in peace or attaining success in business or a profession; the best form of success was fitting in and being just like everybody else. After being kept out of many clubs and professions, we succeeded in that arena as well and were welcomed with open arms – in country clubs, in universities, in Hollywood.

We’ve made it. Congratulations to us.

Now what?

We currently face a wave of antisemitism and unfair opposition to Israel that is dwarfed only by what we see in Europe. And Canada. And we have huge numbers of Jews, especially younger Jews, who don’t see the benefit of defining who they are as Jewish. Not just Jew...ish, but fully embracing their identity as part of a particular people, a giant extended family, complete with crazy relatives but also ties that bind.

Our making it in America certainly helps with our ability to respond to the myriad challenges our community faces today. But I wonder if our focus on “fitting in” American society, trying to be like everybody else in order to gain acceptance, has been a bit misplaced. Jews have been some of the biggest donors to civic and cultural causes, leaders and contributors to political parties, leading advocates in civil and human rights causes – and where has it gotten us today?

Would a stronger, internally-oriented focus on strengthening Jewish education and connection have made a difference? If we focused more on strengthening our Jewish institutions, culture, and solidarity, would we be both more self-confident and resilient in the face of the challenges we face today?

I think so.

I also believe it is not too late to make those investments and strengthen our pride and resolve in being Jewish. That’s what we are focused on as a Jewish Federation. And it takes more of our Jewish community coming together to really make a difference.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for being our partners.