



WE'RE HERE FOR GOOD

2023-2024
IMPACT REPORT



THE BIRMINGHAM JEWISH COMMUNITY IS HERE FOR GOOD.

As we write this letter, our hearts are overflowing with gratitude and pride for the Birmingham Jewish community. This past year, despite the shadows cast by global challenges and rising concerns, we stood together, stronger and more committed than ever. Our actions were a beacon of hope and solidarity, proving that **we are indeed here for good.**

For over 85 years, the Birmingham Jewish Federation has sustained Jewish life in Birmingham and offered unwavering support to Jewish communities in Israel and around the world.

As we grapple with war in Israel and the chilling rise of antisemitism, it's easy to feel isolated, overwhelmed, and powerless in the face of uncertainty. But, here at the BJF, we know that the Jewish people are not just a collection of individuals, but a united force fueled by the strength of our rich history, culture, and traditions.

Together, we are dedicated to uplifting and empowering communities worldwide, no matter what. We know that, thanks to your continued support, **we're here for good.**



JACK ALAND
PRESIDENT

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DANNY COHN
CEO

WE'RE HERE FOR GOOD

One community empowering Jewish journeys, driven by tradition, innovation, and sustainability.

For more than eight decades, the BJB has ensured that the lives of those in our community most at risk are cared for, that Jewish life in Birmingham and abroad continues, and that together, we support and care for one another.

In this impact report, you'll see stories and examples of the rich tapestry of programs and initiatives that make up the Birmingham Jewish Federation's work and prove time and time again that this community is here for good.

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RESPONSE TO OCTOBER 7TH

When crisis strikes, we're here for good.

ISRAEL EMERGENCY CAMPAIGN

Following the horrific attacks of October 7th, the Jewish Federations of North America raised over \$845 million in emergency funds with **100% of the funds raised going to support those in need in Israel**. In the wake of adversity, our community's generosity was incredible. Together, **the Birmingham Jewish community raised \$1.5 million in a record six weeks**, providing crucial support to those in need. Each donation was a pledge of solidarity, a declaration that no matter the distance, **we stand with Israel for good**.

FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Donor Advised Funds are accounts that allow a donor to make a charitable contribution, receive an immediate tax benefit, and recommend grants from the fund over time. At the **Birmingham Jewish Foundation**, our Donor Advised Fundholders went above and beyond in their support for Israel after the attacks on October 7th, making **89 grant recommendations** and **contributing over \$457,000 to support Israel and local Jewish communities**. These grants went to a variety of critical causes including the BJF Israel Emergency campaign, American Friends of Magen David Adom, local synagogues for enhanced security, and organizations fighting antisemitism.

BLUE RIBBONS FOR ISRAEL

With the Blue and White Ribbon Campaign coordinated by the BJF, **our community came together to visually show support for Israel**. Blue and white bows adorned mailboxes across neighborhoods, a symbol of our unity and resilience displayed proudly outside our homes. **777 bows were sold** (95% of purchases were from the non-Jewish community) **raising \$10,000 for Israel**.



COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY PROGRAM FOR ISRAEL

On October 10th, 2023, hundreds of members of the Birmingham Jewish community and our allies gathered at the LJCC to **publicly display our love and support for the people of Israel**. The event was live-streamed to hundreds more who watched the program virtually, as well as being covered by multiple local news outlets. This show of solidarity **provided much-needed solace** to those grappling with the aftermath of October 7th, and **showcased not only unity, but the resilience of the Jewish people**.



MARCH FOR ISRAEL

In response to rising antisemitism and to demand the immediate release of the Hamas-held hostages, the Birmingham Jewish Federation sent a delegation from our community to stand with 300,000 other individuals at the March for Israel on November 14th, 2023. **The largest pro-Israel gathering in American history**, this March was an incredibly meaningful way for our Jewish community to **send a resounding message against hate and intolerance**.

ISRAEL EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

In the aftermath of October 7th, the Birmingham Jewish Federation & the Birmingham Jewish Foundation hosted a variety of **in-person and virtual programs to educate the community and strengthen our connections to the people of Israel**. These programs included a Zoom webinar with a top Israel educator, an in-person gathering with the director of **Operation Lifeshield**, a panel discussion with an Israeli delegation from the **Sheba Medical Center** in Israel, and the well-attended, impactful program **Using Our Voices**, which sought to raise awareness of sexual violence against women during war-time.



SUPPORTING GLOBAL JEWISH COMMUNITIES

GLOBAL PARTNERS

As one of 146 Federations in the Jewish Federations of North America network, the Birmingham Jewish Federation works to ensure **safety and security of Jewish communities worldwide** through our partnership with the **Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)**, the **Jewish Agency for Israel**, and **World ORT**.

Our mission is fueled by the generosity of community members like you. Your gift to the annual campaign empowers us to provide **humanitarian aid to our allies, combat antisemitism, and nurture vibrant Jewish communities**.

UKRAINE

Two years ago, through a special emergency campaign, **the BJF raised \$125,000 for Ukraine** for humanitarian purposes when the war broke out. In addition, Federation staff and volunteers participated in a Jewish Federation of North America **mission to Moldova** to gain insight into how Jews are affected by the war in Ukraine and how our dollars were being used to help refugees.

Through our generous community, the BJF facilitated the **donation and delivery of eight 50 lb duffle bags of much-needed supplies** to Jews in Moldova and Ukraine.

As with Israel, Federation's unique infrastructure of global partners allows us to continue to uplift Ukraine by **offering strategic and unwavering support to those who need it most**.

ISRAEL WORLD JEWRY BUREAU

The Israel World Jewry Bureau, (IWJB) is our Federation's **overseas allocations process**. This unique undertaking has allowed The BJF to help fund smaller, yet equally important agencies, **doing vital work for people in need in Israel and around the world**.

Through the Israel-World Jewry Bureau allocations process, dollars raised by our annual campaign, as well as dollars contributed by the Birmingham Jewish Foundation, are not only **making an important difference in the lives of those we help**, but also enable members of our Birmingham community to **work in direct partnership with our brothers and sisters in Israel and around the globe**.

In 2023, **\$181,000 was allocated to 16 organizations** that focus on vital **humanitarian aid, social needs, and crisis intervention** programs.



BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH BROTHERS & SISTERS IN ISRAEL

OUR SISTER CITY

In 2005 Birmingham and Rosh Ha’Ayin in Israel signed a Sister City agreement that formalized the long-standing relationship between our two communities. Over the last 20+ years, we have **raised money**, partnered in **designing & implementing social programs**, and created a series of **people-to-people exchanges** between our two communities. In the past year, we held multiple Zoom programs with Rosh Ha’Ayin, including a **multi-generational panel after October 7th featuring a survivor of the Nova Music Festival**. In January 2024, we were honored to **host the Partnership2Gether steering committee delegation** from Rosh Ha’Ayin in Birmingham.



YOUNG LEADERSHIP MISSION TO ISRAEL

In 2023, our Young Leadership program concluded its **first cohort in almost thirty years, sending 18 young adults to Israel**. This program provides an opportunity to **build a pipeline of young leaders who are knowledgeable and passionate about our Jewish community** and worldwide Jewry. Many YL participants are now on Jewish boards/committees and giving financially to the community as well. A new YL class will start its cohort in the Fall of 2024.

MOMENTUM

The BIF has formed a partnership with Momentum Unlimited, a year-long program **to create a meaningful engagement with Judaism and a deep connection to Israel**. In the first year, 12 mothers participated in the inaugural launch in 2022, and another group of 10 mothers will travel to Israel with MOMentum in November 2024. This cohort-based program **brings together Jewish women in Birmingham and connects them to each other, Israel, Jewish Birmingham, and women like them worldwide**. This engagement continues to provide our community with mothers committed to volunteering and assuming leadership roles.



ENSURING A THRIVING JEWISH FUTURE



PJ LIBRARY

PJ Library engages Jewish families with young children (ages 0 to 8 years) to **create Jewish homes with stronger Jewish connections** – homes that foster children’s curiosity about their Jewish heritage and help families explore their Jewish identity. In the past year, **247 children (176 families) received a book each month with a total distribution of 2,717 books.** The books and young family programming facilitated and funded by the BJF and the Birmingham Jewish Foundation continue to have a **tremendous impact on Jewish families** in our community.

YOUNG JEWISH PHILANTHROPY (YJP)

Young Jewish Philanthropy (YJP) for children in 3rd through 6th grades **teaches the importance of philanthropy** and provides programs for philanthropic opportunities. This past year, YJP has partnered with our local synagogues for combined programming focused on **learning about local non-profits and volunteering in the community, all through a Jewish lens.** The children worked with CJFS, Hand in Paw, and Heart Gallery Alabama. Some of the topics and Jewish values discussed were kindness to animals, learning about the CJFS Senior Grocery Initiative, and welcoming others. This program **expands on the lessons of PJ Library** and ensures that children in this age range have a **non-denominational space to connect together Jewishly.**

BBYO

Thanks to funding from the Birmingham Jewish Federation and Foundation, Birmingham is home to 2 BBYO Chapters: **Magic City BBG** and **Rabbi Abraham Mesch AZA.** BBYO is the **leading pluralistic Jewish teen movement** which provides exceptional **identity enrichment** and **leadership development** experiences. Birmingham’s BBYO Chapters serve 46 teens, 3 of whom have been elected to serve on the Regional Board. Over the past year, teens participated in 20 programs and 3 conventions.



THE GREAT CHANUKAH READ

BJF’s **Women’s Philanthropy** and the **JCRC** implemented our second annual “**The Great Chanukah Read.**” The Great Chanukah Read is an initiative through which we send **volunteer readers** into the elementary schools to **share about the holiday of Chanukah** and field the great questions that third graders have about the holiday and/or Jewish faith.

In 2023, we read the PJ Library book, *The Trees of the Dancing Goats*, by Patricia Polacco. **Twenty-eight volunteers read to 3rd grade classes in nine schools**, representing four Birmingham area school systems and three private schools.

In addition to reading the book, the volunteer readers explained the history and customs of Chanukah and each student received their own dreidel. Together we **engaged over 35 educators and approximately 600 students.**



YOU BELONG IN BIRMINGHAM

You Belong in Birmingham (YBIB) is a program of the Birmingham Jewish Federation that **engages young adults through networking and philanthropic opportunities**, social gatherings, and greater community events. Since August 2023, YBIB has hosted 11 events and activities including happy hours, Shabbat dinners, volunteer opportunities, networking events, and holiday gatherings. Every gathering of YBIB is designed for young adults to **form valuable friendships** and to **feel at home around their peers.**



CARING FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

JEWISH WAR VETERANS (JWV)

Founded in 1896 as the “Hebrew Union Veterans Association,” JWV is **the oldest continuously active Veterans organization in the United States**. JWV Post 608 in Birmingham was chartered in August, 1980. Currently, Post 608 has members who have served from WWII to Iraq/Afghanistan.

In 2023, JWV held 3 **services in honor of Veterans Day**. JWV also worked with students from Temple Beth El and Temple Emanu-El to replace old flags on Jewish veterans’ graves with new flags and to organize a “**Sock Drive**” for veterans, which were donated to “3 Hots and a Cot”.

INTERFAITH WORK

One key function of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) is **building bridges of understanding within our Jewish community and to our broader community**. To build those bridges, the JCRC Director attends monthly meetings of Southside Faith Communities and meetings of the City of Birmingham Mayor’s Faith Leaders’ Roundtable. The JCRC was also instrumental in **securing speakers on Israel and antisemitism** for Edgewood Presbyterian Church and Baptist Church of the Covenant.

Collaborative programs, such as the annual Thanksgiving “Thankfulness” service, Pride Month service, Interfaith Youth Tour and lunch together in the Sukkah, were also instrumental in helping the JCRC deepen connections between the Birmingham Jewish community and the broader Birmingham community.

WOMEN’S PHILANTHROPY

The Birmingham Jewish Federation’s Women’s Philanthropy offers **a way for Jewish women to engage in the fulfilling work of tikkun olam**. Our collective philanthropy enriches our own lives while improving the lives of others.

In April 2023, when 25 women from Jacksonville, FL were in town for a Civil Rights experience, 11 women from Birmingham joined them for dinner where we shared programming ideas, talked informally about Federation, and bonded over our shared values and aspirations.

Over 70 women participated in last year’s **Women’s Philanthropy Signature Event** in conjunction with the BJF Annual Campaign. This program highlighted 3 young women from the Birmingham community and how their experiences with Federation positively impacted their Jewish identity and bolstered their Jewish leadership.



ANTISEMITISM, SAFETY & SECURITY

JCRC

On August 25th, over 250 educators, social workers, civic leaders, community members and elected officials attended **"Together Against Antisemitism"** co-sponsored by the JCRC and Levite Jewish Community Center. The program featured a conversation between Dov Wilker from the American Jewish Committee and Sheri Falk, local news anchor and an account by Kimberly Cook, Vestavia Hills City Councilor on her own personal journey after she used an antisemitic trope on social media. Educators and Social Workers received CEUs for participation.

In November 2023, the JCRC hosted **"Advocating for Your Student, Recognizing and Responding to Antisemitism in the Schools"** a two-part program designed to **provide parents with an understanding of antisemitism in today's world**, specifically within middle and high schools. Additionally, the program **provided valuable insights and resources for parents on effectively engaging in conversation with their children about antisemitism** and procedures to follow in the event of an incident in their school. Over 35 people attended the parent session which was immediately followed by a parent/student session in conjunction with Kesher community high school program. Gabe Ivker with Stand With Us was the featured speaker.

COMMUNITY SECURITY

Keeping our community safe and secure is one of our top priorities. The Federation manages the position of **Regional Security Advisor**, a Jewish community-wide position from which our agencies and synagogues benefit.

In the past year, the Federation has **provided 62 security consultations** and **held 19 security briefings**. Additionally, 264 people participated in trainings such as **Active Threat** and **Stop the Bleed**.



YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

When you choose to give through the Birmingham Jewish Federation, you're **joining hands with a global family committed to nurturing and sustaining the heart of our community.** Rest assured, every organization, agency, and project we support has been carefully vetted—ensuring your contribution goes exactly where it's needed most, **touching countless lives and critical causes.** Together, **we're not just making donations; we're making a difference.**

Investing in Our Youth

- Young Family Programming: PJ Library, Shalom Baby, Young Jewish Philanthropy
- Teen Programming: B'nai Brith Youth Organization
- College programming: Hillel Connections
 - Work experience and networking for college students to keep them in Birmingham.
- You Belong in Birmingham
 - Social and networking group for Jewish community members 21-35.

Fundraising Donor Development Administration

- Engaging and building our donor community
- Salary, expenses, insurance
- Technology support and enhancements

Allocations & Grants

Community Grants

Local & Regional Allocations

- Anti Defamation League
- AJC - National Jewish Advocacy Corps
- Alabama Holocaust Education Center
- Collat Jewish Family Services
- Hillels of UA and Auburn
- Levite Jewish Community Center
- N.E. Miles Jewish Day School



Community Engagement & Collaboration

- Annual Community Meeting
- Community Calendar
- Jewish Community Relations Council
- Jewish War Veterans
- Presidents' and Executive Directors' meetings
- Sponsorship of community events and programs
- Young Leadership Development Program
- United Way Partnership

JFNA

Support national partner, Jewish Federations of North America which provides us with training, materials, and a network of 300 communities.

Securing Our Jewish Community

Regional Security Advisor

- Threat Vulnerability and Risk Assessments for all of our Jewish facilities.
- Counteractive Threat Training and Stop the Bleed trainings
- High Holiday Usher training
- Security for special events in our community
- Liaison to local, state, and federal law enforcement officials

Israel Education & Programming

Israel World Jewry Bureau (IWJB)

- Humanitarian support and crisis intervention
- Bomb shelters for Israelis in critical locations
- Empowering young Israeli Ethiopians and children at risk and/or with special needs with educational, vocational, and recreational support.

JDC/JAFI/ORT

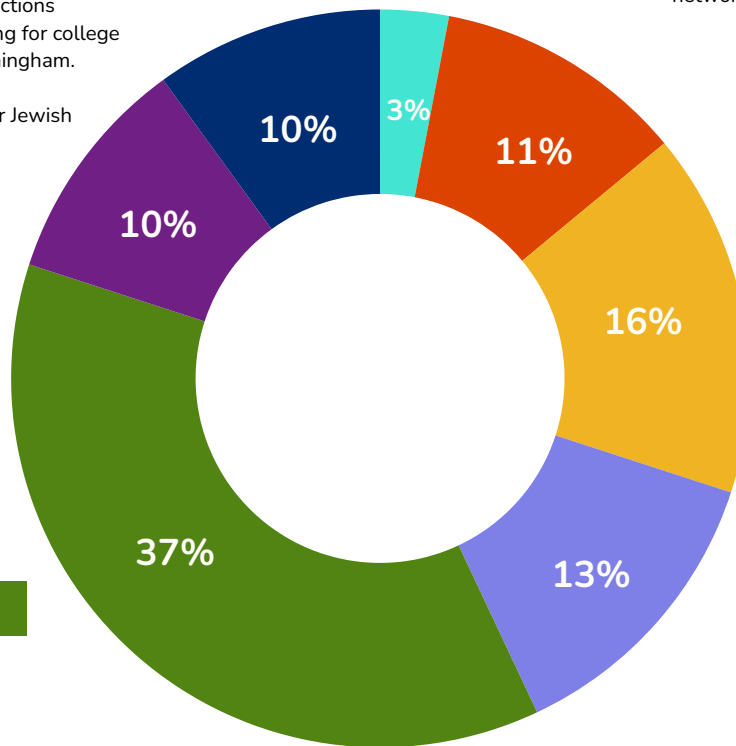
- Provide disaster relief and critical support for Jews in need around the world

Partnership 2Gether

- Cultural, social, educational interactions with our sister city of Rosh Ha'ayin

Subsidized Travel to Israel

- Momentum
- Young Leadership Trip
- Justifi



JOIN US IN MAKING AN IMPACT IN 2025

Looking back at the impact that our community has had in Birmingham and around the world over the last 2 years is truly awe-inspiring.

Despite many challenges and rising uncertainty, our community displayed remarkable unity, resilience, compassion, and empathy. We came together to support each other and to uplift Jewish communities in Israel, Ukraine, and across the globe.

Without the generous support of donors like you, none of this would be possible.

That's why we're calling on you, the dedicated members of our Birmingham Jewish community, to join us in making an even greater impact in 2025!

Together, we can continue to create a stronger, more compassionate community where everyone feels supported, connected, empowered, and engaged.

Together, we can continue working towards our vision of "one community empowering Jewish journeys, driven by tradition, innovation, and sustainability."

Together, we can show the world that the Birmingham Jewish community is **HERE FOR GOOD.**



AARON NELSON // ANDREW NEWCOMB // MARK SCHAEFFER
2025 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN COCHAIRS

Visit www.bjf.org or contact Florina Newcomb (florinan@bjf.org) to make your 2025 Annual Campaign contribution today.

BIRMINGHAM JEWISH FEDERATION LEADERSHIP

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JOIN THE BIRMINGHAM JEWISH FEDERATION IN BUILDING A BRIGHTER TOMORROW FOR OUR COMMUNITY & JEWISH COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD.



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FOR GOOD



The Birmingham
JEWISH FEDERATION