



Winter 2026 Foundation Focus

News from the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City

A Strong Foundation for the Year Ahead

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At the Jewish Community Foundation, each new year brings a great deal of promise, and it begins with you. The generosity of our Foundation Family has fueled unmatched levels of giving and helped propel the Foundation to a record high of \$418 million in charitable assets. These resources hold extraordinary potential to advance the charitable ambitions of our fundholders and strengthen the vital work of nonprofits across our community in the year, and years, ahead.



The Foundation is highly efficient at deploying grants in prompt response to our fundholders' recommendations, ensuring each dollar reaches the intended organization quickly and accurately. We also welcome the opportunity to serve as a thought partner in your philanthropy, helping you clarify goals, explore giving strategies, and identify organizations or projects that align with the impact you want to achieve.

One of the opportunities we are most excited about in the coming year is the launch of the Bushman Legacy Initiative. Generously supported by the Stanley J. Bushman Charitable Supporting Foundation in honor of Stan's enduring legacy, this initiative will strengthen legacy giving across our community by providing training and meaningful programmatic and financial support to partner agencies.

We are grateful for the trust you place in the Foundation, and we will continue to work tirelessly to be your partner in philanthropy. We hope to see you at one of our programs, connect with you personally about your charitable goals, and support you in whatever ways are most helpful. If you would like to schedule a philanthropic check-in in the coming months, it would be our privilege to connect.

Best wishes for a wonderful year ahead,

Joshua Stein, President & CEO, and Joseph Hiersteiner, Board Chair

Connecting Through Philanthropy



J-LEAD @ the Mitzvah Garden

In October we had a great time volunteering at the Mitzvah Garden KC with J-LEAD families harvesting sweet potatoes, learning about honey production, composting, and touring the garden. It was a fun opportunity to come together to learn and get our hands dirty!



PJ Library Grandparent Huddle

This fall we hosted a Grandparent Huddle with PJ Library Kansas City + PJ Our Way on the topic of family philanthropy. The group shared ideas for engaging kids in giving and transmitting Jewish values to younger generations.



Site Visit to Jackson County CASA

In November we visited Jackson County CASA and learned about the many ways the organization, together with dedicated volunteers and nonprofit partners, cares for and uplifts children and families.

New Funds

Donor Advised Funds

Janet P. Provines Agron Donor Advised Fund
Emily Ariel Bamberger Memorial Fund
Drs Sarah & Jonathan Dubin Charitable Fund
Girson Family Fund
Hanan & Natalie Hammer Donor Advised Fund
Jeff & Jody House Donor Advised Fund
Michael H. & Carrie J. Jaben Family Fund
Zach & Linsey Mallin Donor Advised Fund
Craig Novorr Foundation
Scott & Carla Oppenheimer Giving Fund
Elizabeth W Peden Donor Advised Fund
Barry Sevett Family Charitable Foundation
Scott & Lora Shepherd Donor Advised Fund
Silverkorn Family Donor Advised Fund
Stolper Advisory Fund
The Wongs Foundation

B'nai Tzedek Funds

Jonah Antes B'nai Tzedek Fund
Eli Berger B'nai Tzedek Fund
Sophie Blazar B'nai Tzedek Fund
Ada Robinson B'nai Tzedek Fund

Restricted Funds

Green Pulpit Flower Fund
Karol Leadership & Gelb Oneg Fund
Sasone Supporting Fund

Endowment Funds

Todd Clauer Fund for Education and Justice

Operating Funds

Bushman Legacy Initiative



Bushman Supporting Foundation Makes Major Gift to Strengthen Community Through Planned Giving

The Jewish Community Foundation has received a multi-million dollar grant from the Stanley J. Bushman Charitable Supporting Foundation to establish the Bushman Legacy Initiative, a renewed community-wide effort to strengthen and sustain the Jewish community through a focus on planned giving. This initiative of historic magnitude will build upon the success of the Bushman Community Endowment (BCE) program which ran from 2008-2016. BCE put planned giving at the forefront of the communal agenda and raised millions of dollars in realized and future funding for Jewish agencies and synagogues.

In 2006, through his deep involvement with JCF, Stanley Bushman was introduced to a planned giving program at the Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego that changed the way he thought about philanthropy. Bushman, a past president of the Jewish Community Foundation, was inspired by the effort in San Diego and worked closely with local JCF leadership to develop a similar program in Kansas City.

Together they created the Bushman Community Endowment program, a high quality, results-oriented initiative in which JCF collaborated with professional and lay leadership from more than a dozen communal organizations to establish bequests and other planned gifts. The Foundation provided intensive training, consulting, coaching and marketing support, along with generous financial incentive grants. Thanks to these efforts, more than 1,000 planned gifts have been established by community members, including \$130 million in realized planned gifts and another \$125 million in future commitments.

“I think this is the best investment I ever made in my life,” said Bushman of the program. “Every dollar I put in has been returned 50 times. It’s incredible what this community has done, and this is just the start.”

During his lifetime, Bushman established the Stanley J. Bushman Charitable Supporting Foundation of the Jewish Community Foundation and hand selected a trusted board to serve as stewards of his philanthropic resources. After Bushman’s passing in 2025, the trustees identified an impactful funding opportunity which reimaged a planned giving



Leadership of the Stanley J. Bushman Charitable Supporting Foundation: Mike Schultz, Josh Stein, Charles Helzberg, Lauren Hoopes, Meryl Berenbom & Mike Berenbom. Not pictured: Jim Klein

program that built on the tremendous success of BCE. The Supporting Foundation honored Bushman's charitable intentions through this gift to JCF to establish the Bushman Legacy Initiative, an effort which will continue Bushman's vision of ensuring a strong and vibrant community for future generations.

"We are hopeful and confident that the dimension and scope of this new effort will make it one of the most impactful charitable initiatives in the history of Kansas City's Jewish community," said Charles Helzberg, president of the Bushman Supporting Foundation and Stanley's lifelong friend and business partner.

"In the true spirit of legacy giving, Stan put plans in place through his estate to ensure that his vision would continue to grow," said Marilyn Berenbom, a supporting foundation trustee and dear friend of Bushman's. "This initiative will support local donors across the full lifecycle of giving, emphasizing the growth of our endowments through gifts both during donors' lifetimes and from their estates. It is the truest expression of who Stan was, helping each of us to be our best, make a greater difference and strengthen our own legacies in the process."

The Bushman Legacy Initiative will be developed and implemented by the Jewish Community Foundation over the course of the coming months. Through the new program, JCF will provide organizations with professional and lay leader training, prospect identification and cultivation, comprehensive marketing resources, access to stewardship events, and ongoing education and development support. The program will include substantial financial incentives to motivate best practices for securing legacy gifts and for donors to help realize their ability to make an impact. In addition to planned giving, the program director will promote JCF's resources for the "Philanthropic Life Journey," which includes educational touchpoints along life's milestones such as marriage, starting a family, making an impact through tax-smart giving in peak earning years, and retirement planning.

According to JCF President & CEO Josh Stein, "One of the things that initially brought me back to KC was Bushman's vision and foresight to make legacy giving a priority in this community. I am now humbled to be able to honor Stan's legacy in a manner reflecting his personal approach, through supporting and stimulating the legacies of others."

"The Stanley J. Bushman Charitable Supporting Foundation is honored to continue to support Stan's transformative vision for the Kansas City Jewish community," said Lauren Mattleman Hoopes, Supporting Foundation Trustee and former JCF Executive Director. "Stan's wisdom, warm heart, and open hand continue to provide a lasting legacy of leadership and love."

For more information about the Bushman Legacy Initiative or to learn how you can support your favorite organizations through a planned gift, contact Suzanne Galblum Dicken at sdicken@jcfkc.org or 913-327-8286.



Celebrating “Legacy in Motion” at JCF’s 66th Annual Meeting

On the evening of December 10th, more than one hundred community leaders and Jewish Community Foundation supporters gathered for our 66th annual meeting and installation of officers and trustees. The event began with a lively reception during which guests socialized and enjoyed refreshments, followed by an informative and engaging program that celebrated highlights of the Foundation’s work over the past year. The theme of the event was “Legacy in Motion,” an acknowledgment of the many inspiring ways legacy giving moves the community forward.

Rabbi David Glickman of Congregation Beth Shalom welcomed the crowd with a meaningful d’var Torah, which was followed by a memorial presentation by JCF Past President Marilyn Berenbom. Berenbom honored Stanley Bushman, z”l, a fellow JCF past president who, together with Foundation leadership, founded the Bushman Community Endowment (BCE) program. Through BCE, the Foundation worked with communal agencies and synagogues to raise more than \$250 million in realized and future gifts for the community.

“Stan believed in the Foundation’s mission and its role in securing the long-term strength and vitality of our communal institutions,” said Berenbom. “He was generous, visionary, and relentlessly focused on impact. His legacy looms large and continues to inspire all of us who knew and loved him.”

Berenbom announced that the Jewish Community Foundation has received a multi-million dollar grant from Bushman's estate to create the Bushman Legacy Initiative, a new program that will build on the success of BCE. The initiative will support local donors across the full lifecycle of giving, emphasizing the growth of endowments through gifts both during donors' lifetimes and from their estates. The Foundation will provide participating communal organizations with customized consulting and education, significant incentives that award best practices, and comprehensive marketing support. The community can expect to learn more about this exciting effort in the coming months.

Foundation Chief Financial Officer Elizabeth Peden shared an investment update highlighting Strategic Investment Group's strong results, outperforming benchmarks across all measured periods. These investment returns, coupled with generous contributions, have brought JCF's current assets to an all-time high of \$376 million. The Foundation is honored to be the trusted steward of these resources which will make an extraordinary philanthropic impact now and into the future.

Josh Stein, JCF President and CEO, and Joseph Hiersteiner, JCF Board Chair, reflected on highlights of the year. In 2025, JCF launched a robust "Connecting Our Giving Community" calendar which included several site visits to Jewish and general community nonprofit organizations, as well as intimate events where fundholders came together to discuss philanthropic topics and learn from one another's experiences. Several new funds with unique purposes were established, such as the Mark Edelman Theater Fund to enhance the performing arts, and the Ben and Martin Jabenis Memorial Endowment Fund which provides scholarships to students at Johnson County Community College and Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy. The Foundation also created a new strategic plan that will guide its work over the next three years. The plan focuses on three important imperatives: inspire generosity across generations; support enhanced community engagement; and strengthen organizational capacity.

As Stein explained, "The generosity of our donors, coupled with the talents and creativity of our staff, is a powerful force for good in our community."

Beatrice Fine, JCF Director of Grantmaking and Impact, honored the Menorah Women's Foundation, a special fund at JCF which celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. The fund grew out of the Menorah Women's Auxiliary, an organization with a rich legacy of elevating programs and creating a welcoming atmosphere for people of all religions and races at the hospital. Since its inception, the Menorah Women's Foundation has granted more than \$500,000 to enhance the emotional and physical well-being of the Jewish community.

The evening concluded with the presentation of the Friend of the Foundation Award honoring Ilana Silverstein. The award recognizes community members who have gone above and beyond in support of the Foundation's mission. Silverstein was instrumental in launching the Foundation's popular site visit program which brings fundholders behind the scenes of local nonprofits to gain a deeper understanding of their work. Silverstein assisted Foundation staff in

deciding which nonprofits to visit and encouraged the spotlighting of smaller nonprofits which serve a variety of vulnerable populations throughout the Greater Kansas City area.

“This award is not given every year, but as we reflected on the success of the ‘Connecting Our Giving Community series,’ it became clear that Ilana’s influence was special and noteworthy,” said Fine. “Sometimes, an organization needs a champion. Sometimes, it needs a friend. For the Foundation, Ilana has been both.”

The following trustees were elected at the meeting: Louis Cohn, Joshua Hoffman, Paul Greenwood, Joseph L. Hiersteiner, Andrew Kaplan, Lara Krigel Pabst, Ora Reynolds, and David N. Sosland.

The following officers were also elected at the meeting: Joseph L. Hiersteiner, Chair; Lara Krigel Pabst, First Vice Chair; Fay Balk, Vice Chair; David N. Sosland, Vice Chair; Catherine D. Singer, Treasurer; and Gary Weinberg, Secretary.

For more information about the Jewish Community Foundation’s work, please visit jcfkc.org or call (913) 327-8245.



Get to Know Our New Trustees



Andrew Kaplan

Andrew is an active member of the Jewish community and has served on the boards of numerous Jewish and general community nonprofits, chairing many. He is also one of the original founders of the Mitzvah Garden and the Jewish Community Digital Archive. Now retired, Andrew worked for Commerce Bank and Commerce Trust Company in various capacities throughout most of his professional career.

As a JCF trustee, Andrew hopes “to listen and learn about the organization, understand its strategic imperatives and areas where it would like to improve or reposition its focus. As a long-term, committed user of the services of JCF, my primary goal is to continue to help provide an effective and efficient vehicle for funders to understand the needs of the community and move charitable funds to those organizations providing much-needed services.”

“What I appreciate most about JCF is educating Sheryl and me on the most effective ways to set up and structure our Donor Advised Fund, as well as making sure we are aware of communal opportunities beyond those traditional organizations we currently support. The performance of the funds has been

stellar, allowing us to increase our grants as a result of the appreciation of our initial charitable investment(s). Also, JCF pioneered partnering with Stan Bushman on legacy giving which helped our family direct major gifts to those organizations that have the most meaning in our lives.”



Ora Reynolds

A Chicago native, Ora joined Hunt Midwest, a KC-based privately held real estate development firm, in 1991 and has been the company's president and CEO since 2010. She is involved with many local nonprofits and has served on the University of Kansas Advancement Board and chaired the Starlight Theater Board and the Board of the Kansas City Area Development Council.

“JCF advocates on behalf of the Jewish community, creates partnerships with other Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, and works to engage people in philanthropy regardless of where they are in their giving journey,” said Ora. “I want to be a champion for the organization’s mission, raise awareness of the JCF Donor Advised Fund to engage new people in philanthropy, and provide strategic advice based on my past professional and personal experiences.”

Enhancing Youth Philanthropy

Our B'nai Tzedek Youth Council recently had the pleasure of meeting JCF fundholder Lon Lowenstein, who shared about his family's inspiring tradition of philanthropy in the Kansas City Jewish community. Lon announced the creation of the Bill Lowenstein B'nai Tzedek Impact Grant which will allow senior Youth Council members to work together to make an even greater impact on our communal organizations. This special grant is named in honor of Lon's dad, Bill, a JCF past president and longtime supporter of the B'nai Tzedek program.

The B'nai Tzedek program encourages teens to become involved in tzedakah by establishing a fund for Jewish charitable giving. Opening a B'nai Tzedek fund gives teens a chance to play a part in improving



the Jewish community and the world. Since the program's inception in 2001, more than \$275,000 has been donated to community organizations by B'nai Tzedek fundholders.

For more information, contact Suzanne Galblum Dicken at sdicken@jcfkc.org or (913) 327-8286.

J-LEAD to Celebrate 20 Years of Impact

J-LEAD, the Foundation's young adult giving circle, is celebrating a major milestone in 2026 - its 20th year of making grants that strengthen and enrich the Kansas City Jewish community. Since its inception, J-LEAD has empowered young Jewish adults to pool resources, learn about community needs, and make high-impact grants together.

J-LEAD stands for Jewish Leadership, Education, Action, and Development. It was launched in 2006 as an innovative giving circle designed to engage Jewish adults in their 20s, 30s, and early 40s in philanthropy, leadership, and community involvement. Members commit to \$500 annual contributions, which are combined with matching gifts to maximize impact. Over the years, J-LEAD has funded a wide range of programs and services that benefit Jewish life in Kansas City, fostering a culture of collaborative giving and leadership development.

To honor two decades of generosity, JCF will host a 20th anniversary celebration this summer, bringing together past and current J-LEAD members, nonprofit partners receiving funding this year, and organizations that have benefited from J-LEAD grants in the past. This event will be a chance to reflect on the program's achievements and inspire the next generation of Jewish philanthropists.

For more information, contact Suzanne Galblum Dicken at sdicken@jcfkc.org or (913) 327-8286.

