Once in a century, we have the opportunity to celebrate something legendary. With Joy Sisisky as our Federation’s new Chief Executive Officer, Centennial Campaign donors gathered to recognize Jim Koshland, Laura Lauder, and Jackie Safier for stepping up to safeguard the future with their distinctive leadership and legacy gifts.

Jim was recognized at a special event on October 13, as he handed the baton to the next leaders of the Centennial Campaign at the end of 2022. Over the past 12 years, his deft leadership helped raise $220,197,304 from 377 individuals and families—an unprecedented accomplishment in the Federation’s 112 years of history.

Jim was supported by a stellar Federation Centennial Committee that includes: Gerson Bakar z”l, Adele Corvin, Steven Fayne, Richard Fiedlotin, John Friedenich z”l, John Goldman, Nancy Grand, Stephen Grand z”l, Jim Heeger, Warren Hellman z”l, Tom Kasten, Ron Kaufman, Laura Lauder, Bernard Osher, John Pritzker, Richard Rosenberg, Alan Rothenberg, Dan Safier, Donald Seiler z”l, Arthur Slepian, Roselyne Swig, and Harold Zlot.

Joy had the pleasure of working closely with Laura Lauder, the dynamic immediate past chair of the Federation’s Endowment Committee, who was acknowledged for her exceptional contributions in overseeing, stewarding, and growing the Federation’s Endowment Fund, including introducing impact investing opportunities and raising emergency funds for Hebrew Free Loan during the COVID-19 deluge of need.

The gathering was the first event open to the community in the newly refurbished Federation building. Jackie Safier, Chief Executive Officer of Prometheus Real Estate Group, was also congratulated for her generosity in donating and overseeing the building upgrade at 121 Steuart Street.

The Federation is fortunate to have such exceptional leaders guiding its future as the organization evolves with the times, meeting new challenges and helping to build a stronger, safer, and more vibrant Jewish community.
Libi Cape’s parents didn’t have much beyond their compassion. But according to Libi, that was more than enough to provide for their family and quite a few others. “We were poor,” Libi said, “but we always had a little blue box for charity. Whenever anyone was in need, they’d give what they could.” And not just money. They gave their time, their care, and even their home—adopting two orphans, Libi’s brother and sister, and raising them as their own.

Nurtured on those values, it’s no surprise that Libi made a career out of caring. She paid her way through nursing school at McGill, became an RN and subsequently received a Master’s degree in social welfare from UC Berkeley. She has literally spent over fifty years caring for bodies and minds.

Her husband and partner, Ron Cape z”l, was a legendary figure in the field of biotechnology. As co-founder of the Cetus Corporation, the world’s first biotech company, Ron oversaw the development of lifesaving scientific breakthroughs ranging from cancer treatments to PCR technology. Though brilliant and driven, his most striking characteristic, according to Libi, was his human decency. “As accomplished as he was, you’d never know it talking to him,” Libi said. “Because he was kind and never talked down to anybody. So when I talk about my values, they were his values too.”

Indeed those values have reinforced Libi’s steadfast Federation support, which includes two permanent endowment funds. Through her donor-advised fund, she has established an endowment for Birthright Israel as well as a scholarship to provide financial aid to Jewish women. While the details are still being developed, its fundamental purpose is quite clear. “It’s for Jewish women who have completed high school,” Libi said. “That’s the only qualification. Just identify as being Jewish and I’ll pay for them to go to college.”

Libi’s connection to Birthright is equally poignant, connecting her love of Israel to her love of her family. “Years ago, my grandson was having a bit of an identity crisis and didn’t really know who he was,” Libi said. “So when he went to Israel, someone approached him and asked if he wanted to put on tefillin. My grandson replied: ‘Well, I’m kind of a Reform Jew so I think you may want somebody else.’ Then the man smiled and said, ‘We’re all Jews here.’ And in that moment, he had an epiphany. He became Jewish and it was one of the most meaningful experiences of his life.” It was so meaningful, in fact, that since then, Libi has become a passionate supporter of Birthright so that other young people can find their own meaningful connections to Israel and the Jewish people.

From Canada to Israel to the Bay, Libi Cape has lived the values she learned in her parents’ kitchen. And now, through her generosity she shared with her husband, future generations, and perhaps her grandchildren’s grandchildren, will get to live them as well.

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**Grants from permanent endowment funds**

Over the decades, families have made their own imprint on the Jewish future by establishing permanent endowment funds that provide annual support, in perpetuity, for a particular organization or purpose. Last year, these permanent endowments provided:

- $2.3 million for local Jewish agencies and synagogues
- $1.5 million for programs to strengthen Israel and assist Jews around the world
- $1.4 million in financial aid for Jewish camp, day school, preschool, travel and study in Israel, and college
- $1 million for the Federation’s Annual Campaign to support the local and global Jewish community
L’dor v’dor is an oft-used phrase in the Jewish world as well as with Jan and Bob Newman. And what’s being passed from generation to generation is a set of values and practices that are deeply embedded in Jewish tradition and in the founding principles of the Federation.

“I inherited the Federation gene,” Bob said. “My father was executive director of the Indianapolis Federation for over thirty years, and I grew up with him being out at meetings and community events almost every night. So that’s where it started for me.” Similarly, Jan’s commitment to creating a vibrant Jewish future is inspired by the example of her parents, Pearl and Roy Harlan. “My mother was the principal of the temple religious school in Dayton. And while my dad was an active congregant, my mother was… a force, you might say.”

Well, the force is strong in both Jan and Bob, as evidenced by their dedication to a multitude of causes, focusing frequently on education, the arts, social justice, and the environment. Those priorities manifest in regular and legacy gifting for institutions like the Federation, the San Francisco Ballet, Mills-Peninsula Hospital and the San Francisco Campus for Jewish living, where Bob is a Foundation Trustee and Investment Committee chair. They are also active at Congregation Emanu-El where Bob serves as a board member and co-chairs their Investment Committee; the Joint Distribution Committee and many other non-profits, where Jan regularly volunteers her creative talents.

Their focus on the future informs every aspect of Jan and Bob’s giving. But perhaps no more vividly than in their most recent and perhaps most creative philanthropic endeavor. Jan and Bob recently had a family meeting and made a proposal to create a donor-advised fund at the Federation for their nieces and nephews to follow in their philanthropic footsteps, but each in their own way. “We said ‘we want you to think about what you would do if you had a sum of money that you knew was set aside for you to give away.’ And that got them thinking.” Subsequently, the cousins have followed up on their aunt and uncle’s offer and have grown increasingly excited about the opportunity to make a humanitarian impact on the world around them. And in so doing, in their literal sharing of values, they are becoming even closer as a family.
There is nothing glamorous about Fred Isaac’s philanthropy. His giving occurs nowhere near the limelight. And that’s just the way he likes it. “My own belief is that the work matters. My name doesn’t,” said Fred.

Accordingly, you’d be hard-pressed to find a wing of any building with his name on it, despite the fact that through his Frederick J. Isaac Philanthropic Fund, a donor-advised fund administered by the Federation, he has provided critical operational support to a diverse cadre of grantee organizations, from food banks to sleepaway camps. And that support will continue intergenerationally through his legacy gift to the Federation’s Annual Campaign.

Fred’s fundamental belief is that while operational support rarely garners headlines, it could not be more crucial to the survival of so many philanthropic endeavors. “In my opinion, if you don’t take care of the infrastructure, if you don’t make sure that the people have the things they need, then they can’t do the work,” Fred said. “So, I want them to have what they need to do it.” Accordingly, as it says in his donor-advised fund’s annual report, the primary focus of his funding is “helping nonprofits do what they do… better.” Implicit to that statement (and his longtime Federation support) is his conviction that the work of our grantees is vital to our community and the more efficiently and effectively they can do that work, the brighter our future will be.

Fred’s selfless dedication has deep roots. His parents, Irving and Marjorie, of blessed memory, were “huge believers in direct giving but never talked about it,” he said. “They believed that after you take care of your family, you do what you can for the world.” Philosophically, Fred draws much of his inspiration and guidance from Talmud and Torah study, and the poignant words attributed to Rabbi Tarfon in Pirkei Avot: “It is not your responsibility to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it.”

It’s clear that Fred will never desist from the work he does for the Jewish community. And though his name may not be inscribed on the side of any buildings, it will most certainly be inscribed in the Book of Life. Rabbi Tarfon would approve.

The Book of Life: A Road Map for Generations to Come

The Book of Life is a stunning work of art that houses a unique treasury of testimonials from local donors, recording their ideals and motivations for keeping our Jewish community strong and healthy. Designed by renowned Bay Area artist Joseph Goldyne, the book is prominently displayed in the Federation’s building at 121 Steuart Street in San Francisco. All Centennial donors are invited to compose messages that will permanently document the personal thoughts, stories, and values that deepened their Jewish identity and inspired their philanthropy. Along with being included in the Book of Life, donors who have made commitments of $250,000 or more have their names inscribed on the Wall of Honor, located in the Federation’s lobby.

Eleanor Myers has endowed her own personal gift to the Jewish Community Federation in addition to an annual gift from the Eleanor and Laurence Myers Foundation, with a particular concern for Jewish seniors and Jewish youth.
In Memoriam

Theodore Geballe

“We were both raised in the Bay Area and were married here 57 years ago. Our parents were also raised in the Bay Area. Their lives and ours have been centered around the cultural and academic and Jewish community affairs here, with a deep consciousness of our Jewish heritage.”

– Theodore Henry Geballe

Frank G. Meyer

“Life today is a lot better for Jews than it was 50 years ago, when there were quotas at universities and Jews were not allowed to stay at some hotels. I support the Federation and hope my gift will benefit generations yet to come.”

– Frank G. Meyer

Mary Ann Tonkin

“Sooner or later, if we are wise, we’ll discover that life is a mixture of good days and bad, victory and defeat, give and take. Therefore, we should give to others now—while we can. Hopefully, by our giving we’ll teach our children to ‘give back’ and also help create a better world for all people.”

– Mary Ann and Bertram M. Tonkin

Kathy Williams

“Caring for our Jewish community is a tradition and an obligation to be fulfilled by all Jews. My endowment gift will assure that my children, grandchildren and the Jewish community will continue to be provided with the resources they need to flourish for generations to come.”

– Kathy Roberts Williams

Jean and Richard Zukin

“Jean and Dick Zukin were long time supporters of the Federation. They planned carefully to ensure that the Federation and other favorite charities were included in their estate plan.”

– Phyllis Cook

Maurice Kanbar

“An inventor, entrepreneur, and supporter of the arts, Maurice Kanbar was deeply proud of his Jewish identity.

“I’m looking to do good before I leave this planet.”

– Maurice Kanbar

Rosanne Levitt

“The Torah teaches us to ‘leave the corners of the field’ unharvested for those who have no food. We are leaving a legacy with the Federation to inspire our children and our future generations as we were inspired to give and live a Jewish life.”

– Rosanne and Alvin Levitt

Sheldon Wolfe

“We feel privileged to be able to leave a legacy to the community that has given so much to our family. Our gift is in admiration for those who have gone before, in celebration of those now living, and in dedication of those yet to come.”

– Rhoda and Sheldon Wolfe

We also remember Ruth Andersen, Harry Battat, Harold Greene, Frances Greenberg, Eleonore Gruenebaum, Joseph Koerpel, Rosanne Levitt, Lorry Lokey, Elizabeth Marcus, Milton Mosk, Ilse Rosenbaum, Anne Strauss, Olga Thein, Charlene Tuchman, and Vera Zatkin, all of blessed memory.

Build a strong Jewish community while receiving income for life

In exchange for a gift of cash or appreciated stock, you can secure guaranteed income for life, receive a charitable income tax deduction, and make a meaningful difference to the future of the Jewish community. After your lifetime, the remainder of your gift becomes part of the Federation’s Unrestricted Endowment, adding to your Jewish legacy.

Douglas’s Legacy

Douglas is a 75-year-old long-time donor to the Federation. He has $100,000 in appreciated stock that is currently yielding about 2% in annual dividends. He donates the stock to the Federation in exchange for a charitable gift annuity. He begins receiving quarterly payments totaling $6,000 per year – about three times as much as he might expect from the stock dividends. These payments are guaranteed for life.

Douglas enjoys a tax deduction in the year of his gift, based on the projected future value of the gift to the Federation. And he is proud to know that after his lifetime, the remainder of his charitable gift annuity will become a Centennial Campaign legacy gift to the Federation, helping to secure Jewish life for future generations.

For more information contact Steve Brown, Senior Director, Gift Planning and Endowments at 628.267.2627.
COVID-19 has presented serious challenges but also opportunities to our Jewish community. The Federation’s Unrestricted Endowment was built over decades, specifically to address these kinds of emergencies. Every year—thanks to visionary gifts from hundreds of committed community members and through lifetime gifts or bequests—millions of dollars of grants come to the rescue. In fiscal year 2021-22, grants from the Unrestricted Endowment allowed us to respond to urgent needs, helping our community and the global Jewish community emerge stronger than before.

**Early Childhood and Jewish Community Centers ($495,000)** The pandemic left parents of preschoolers unconnected to each other and their young children’s schools. Grants to synagogue and JCC preschools created new connections, built new family programs, and included more children with special needs. Grants to JCCs also provided operational support during a very difficult time, while helping them expand classes and create new ways for members to engage with the community.

**Jewish Day Schools and Preschools ($665,000)** Jewish day schools received support to expand enrollment and deepen their impact as they educate the next generation of Jewish leaders. Day schools began to do collaborative marketing across the Bay Area, develop new curricular resources, and stay open and competitive—by providing exceptional educational experiences rivaling secular schools. Building on generous Endowment support in 2020-21, grants for scholarships helped an estimated 141 families to continue sending their children to Jewish day schools and preschools, despite financial challenges brought on by the pandemic.

**Mental Health Support ($335,500)** One of the pandemic’s many negative impacts has been on community members’ mental health. Endowment grants provided resources for much-needed mental health support for preschoolers, youth, teens, and young adults from our community struggling with loneliness, anxiety, and other mental health challenges.

Create a legacy tailored to your special interests and needs.

Make a gift that lives on in perpetuity. Create permanent funding for the Federation’s Annual Campaign, the Jewish organization you cherish most, or the area of greatest importance to you. Or, make a legacy gift to the Federation’s Fund for the Future to help address future emergencies and new community needs as they arise.

Choose your legacy giving vehicle. A gift in your will or trust is the way many choose to give. You can specify a percentage, fixed amount, or the remainder of your estate. The Federation can be named a beneficiary of your IRA or 401(k)—the most tax-smart method for many—or of a life insurance policy. Gifts of appreciated property may also yield significant tax savings. To benefit from additional income during your lifetime, consider a charitable gift annuity or a charitable remainder trust.

Contact us at 415.777.0411, ext. 4915 to have a confidential conversation about these options—and your philanthropic and estate planning goals.