If We Don’t Take Care of Our Community, Who Will?

The Centennial Campaign of the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund is off and running toward its goal of helping to secure the future of our local and global Jewish community. To mark that progress, the Federation’s new board chair, Richard Fiedotin, shares his personal reasons for choosing to support the Centennial Campaign.

Richard grew up in Atlanta. His parents were immigrants from Argentina who strongly identified as Jews but were not particularly observant. Richard’s family belonged to a Conservative synagogue, where he became a Bar Mitzvah. The family did not live in a “Jewish neighborhood,” and he and his siblings attended a Christian day school, where they studied the New Testament and attended, but did not participate in, weekly prayer sessions.

Richard’s sense of identity went through a dramatic transformation at the age of 12, when his parents took him to Israel to visit family that had made Aliyah from Argentina. It didn’t take long for Richard to feel an acute sense of Jewishness. “I remember distinctly on the drive from the airport feeling this sense of wonderment,” he says. “I can’t even really explain it. I was looking at this land where much of our history took place—history that, until that point, had always seemed like remote stories to which I felt no connection. Visiting the sites where many of these ‘stories’ occurred, walking through the Old City of Jerusalem, seeing the archeological sites at Masada and elsewhere, I began to see our collective narrative as actual history. It became real to me.”

Around the time of this first visit to Israel, Richard learned that his great-grandparents had died in the Holocaust. Less than two years after the trip, the uncle he had visited there was killed while serving in the Israeli Defense Forces. As Richard reflected on these events, he felt a greater obligation to continue a tradition that his elders had died for, a tradition that had in countless ways helped him. “I look back on that trip to Israel as one of the most transformative experiences of my life. Being there, I felt connected to the land, to our history and to our people. Over time, I felt not just a connection but a responsibility and a commitment to the Jewish community.”

Today, Richard is a passionate supporter of the Bay Area Jewish community and Israel, recently providing a generous legacy gift to the Federation’s Centennial Campaign to carry out work that is meaningful to him.

Richard, a physician, health care entrepreneur and executive, says he was inspired to make a legacy gift because of the Federation’s unique role as a convener and safeguard for the whole community. “Like other communities, we have needs. And we are fortunate to have a lot of people who want to help, and organizations through which they can channel that concern for others. The Federation is in a unique position to help the community by convening agencies to identify needs and coordinate responses, and by providing leadership, expertise, financial support, and other resources.”
Chairman’s Report

Our Federation plays a key role for the Jewish people, working with our partners to build a community that is vibrant, welcoming, and secure. Our Centennial Campaign will not only protect the investments in the Jewish community that we have made in our lifetimes, but will ensure that the people, organizations, and programs that we have so proudly supported will continue to thrive into the future.

As the momentum accelerates for the Campaign, I am so pleased to report that $125 million has been secured in legacy commitments and realized gifts to the Federation’s Endowment Fund toward a new goal of $250 million.

The lasting impact that Centennial donors will make is profound. Just this year, through our Endowment Fund, your dollars are supporting Jewish engagement for thousands of Bay Area teens and young adults, high quality Jewish camp programs for our youth, Israel experiences and leadership training, Jewish arts and culture, and seed-funding for innovative Bay Area nonprofits addressing new needs. Through these endeavors, we are continuing to carry out the vision of those who came before us—of a flourishing community imbued with the richness of Jewish tradition.

In these pages, read about a few of the community members who have answered the call for a new generation of visionaries to make their mark on the future, inspiring generations to come. Thank you to each of you who has stepped forward to affirm your legacy intentions.

If you have not yet had the opportunity, I invite you to join in the planning for the future welfare of our community by formally making or confirming your Centennial gift. Thank you for your enduring commitment that will help write the next chapter of our community’s history.

Jim Koshland
Chair, Centennial Campaign

A Treasure for Future Generations

The Book of Life is a magnificent work of art that houses a unique treasury of testimonials from 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 will have their names inscribed on Jerusalem stone on the artistically crafted Wall of Honor, located in the Federation’s lobby, and will receive Centennial recognition at other Federation offices and in a digital display currently being designed.
Oftentimes, the legacy of philanthropy is passed down through the generations. Joan Davis and her son, Jordan Sills, are prime examples—and they are now working on the fourth generation.

Joan, who grew up in San Francisco, was taught by her parents the importance of tikkun olam. Over the years, she has been very active in the Jewish community, including serving on the board of the Jewish Home, where she and her husband, Charlie Davis, have honored Joan’s parents with a generous gift to endow the Edward and Marion Goodman Building.

Joan has shared those values with her sons, Jordan and Jason. When Jordan was young, he was assigned chores on the weekends. When his parents gave him his allowance, he put a portion in a tzedakah box—and he chose where his donations were allocated. Today, he and his wife, Abra, are passing down those same values—and the tzedakah box—to their children, Erev and Ber.

“I’ve learned that philanthropy is a family affair,” says Jordan. “To this day, when my mother wants to make a gift, she calls my brother and me to discuss where it can have the most impact.”

This is why the Centennial Campaign was a natural fit for the Davis-Sills family. Their generous legacy gift will help ensure that future generations of Bay Area Jews are cared for, supported, and educated in Jewish values—including the importance of philanthropy.

Jordan says that he and his mom chose to give to the Campaign because of the depth and breadth of the Federation’s work.

“It comes down to impact,” he says. “The Federation has a team of professionals who have dedicated their careers to figuring out what the needs are in the community.”

The Davis-Sills family has certainly done its part and much more. Along with their philanthropic involvement with the Jewish Home, Joan and Charlie have been longtime supporters of Hillel. They are current supporters of JDC, and Joan has served on the national women’s campaign board of Jewish Federations of North America. Jordan is the former president of the Federation’s Young Adult Division (YAD), and the 2011 recipient of the Dinkelspiel Award for Young Leadership. He met Abra while fundraising for YAD.

For her part, Abra grew up in Illinois with a familial connection to the work of the Jewish community. “The Federation enables me to be able to help while treating people like human beings, with consideration for their personal dignity and pride,” she notes. “Philanthropy through the Federation is a natural extension of the love I feel for all things Jewish, and I want that love to continue long after I am gone.”

“I think that what I have learned—and have worked to pass down to my kids—is the importance of giving back,” notes Joan. People who need support depend on the Jewish, community because, as she adds, “if Jews don’t take care of each other, who will?”
Centennial Donors: A Legacy of Generosity

The following generous donors have left legacy gifts, made formal Centennial commitments, or established permanent funds since the beginning of the Federation's Centennial year, 2010. Also included are those individuals who have reaffirmed their intention to make a legacy gift.

VISIONARIES
$10,000,000 & above
Barbara and Gerson Bakar
Beverly and Bernard Wolfe and Mary z”l
Valli Benesch and Bob Tandler
Elizabeth and Howard Shwiff
Edward I. and Judith A. Jaclyn and Dan Safier
Harry and Carol Saal
Harry, Ella and Pearl
Laura and Gary Lauder
Anonymous (2)

SUSTAINERS
$1,000,000–$2,999,999
Ann and Irwin Bear
Bunny and Steven Fayne
Meri and Joseph Erlich z”l
Doris and Ben Blum
Elizabeth Bing z”l
Ann and Irwin Bear (2)

GUARDIANS
$3,000,000–$4,999,999
Jill and John Freidenrich
Hilda and Manfred z”l Nammm
Ellen and Raoul Wexberg

BUILDERS
$500,000–$999,999
Ethnie and William Auslen z”l
Alvin H. Baum, Jr.
Stephanie Block
Leonie J. Darwin z”l
Marion and Jack z”l Euphrat
Freedland
Mimi and Arthur Gauss
Chris and Warren z”l Hellman
Phyllis and Stuart z”l Moldaw
Eleanor and Laurence z”l Myers
Mildred and Jeremiah Nissim z”l
Catherine and Michael Podell
Barbara and Richard
Ruth and Donald z”l Seiler
Ronald and Anita Wornick

GREAT GIVERS
$250,000–$499,999
In honor of Congregation Sholom
Barbara z”l and Jerry Bentkowski
Phyllis and David Z. Cook
William z”l and Adele Corvin
Dana Corvin and Harris Weinberg
Joan and Charlie Davis
Leslee and Wayne Feinstein
Saul A. Fenster z”l
Robert and Michelle Friend
Ruthellen and Monte z”l Toole
Carol A. Weitz
Gerda Wodlinger z”l

VISIONARIES
$10,000,000 & above
Phyllis and Harvey z”l Koch
Marvin Langsam z”l
Alvin and Roseanne Levitt
Larry and Gladys Monroy Marks
Diane and Robert Neuhaus
Robert and Jan Newman
Barbro and Bernard Osher
Shirley and Robert Raymer
Joyce and William Remak z”l
Sue Seligman Family Foundation
Albert and Susan Rothenberg
Dorothy and George z”l Saxe

SUSTAINERS
$1,000,000–$2,999,999
Anonymous (2)

GUARDIANS
$3,000,000–$4,999,999
Jill and John Freidenrich
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Leslee and Wayne Feinstein
Saul A. Fenster z”l
Robert and Michelle Friend
Ruthellen and Monte z”l Toole
Carol A. Weitz
Gerda Wodlinger z”l

We invite all donors, including members of the Living Legacy Society who have previously informed the Federation of their intention to make a legacy gift, to reaffirm their commitment now to join the Centennial Campaign.

CENTENNIAL LIVING LEGACY SOCIETY
Up to $249,999, permanent funds or reaffirmed commitments at all levels
Anonymous (18)
Bernard S. Aarons, D.D.S. z”l
Don Abramson
Hyman Agid z”l
Maimoona M. Ahmed
Jeanne and Philip Alper z”l
Beverly z”l and David Altman
Edith and Peter Altman z”l
Hilde and Alfred Amkraut z”l
Robert Charles Armstrong z”l
Millie and Aron Aronovsk’y z”l
Marie Aslan z”l
Yetta and Morris Bach z”l
Ralph and Estelle Bardoff z”l
The Barlow Family
Keith P. Bartel z”l
Fritzi Benesch z”l
Riva and David Berelson in memory of Gita and Henry Baigelman z”l
Annette M. Berger
Aline and Bernard Berk z”l
Jean Katherine Bernstein z”l
Crownie and Martin Billik
Lenore Kay Bleadon
Judy Gold Bloom
Betty and John Blumlein z”l
Jerome and Dolores Braun
Margot E. Braun
Arthur z”l and Lucille Brown
Martin and Geri Brownstein
Neill and Linda Brownstein
Aviva Shiff Boedecker
Jane and Sumner Burrows z”l
I. D. Caplan z”l
Ruth Carolyn z”l
Helene H. and Frank J. Catz z”l
Geraldine Crane z”l
Robert F. Cowan
Dr. Elaine Dallman z”l

Please contact Linda Solow Bouwer at 415.512.6232.
Legacy of Generosity

The following generous donors have left legacy gifts, made formal Centennial commitments in writing, or established permanent funds since the beginning of the Federation’s their intention to include the Federation in their estate plan in the last six years.

List in formation, as of October 4, 2016

Betty Denenberg Adler
Margo and Robert Derzon z’l
Annette Dobbs z’l
Edith z’l and Benjamin Dorfman
Dr. Ronald Steven Dunn
Maryxne Earl z’l
Dr. Jack and Seena Elfant z’l
John L. and Linda L. Elman
Barbara and Jeff Farber
Wesley and Bonnie Fastiff
Sylvia and Michael z’l
Felsenstein
Louis and Janet Fisher z’l
Dr. Martin Fleshman z’l
Susan and David Folkman
Eleanor and Albert Fraenkel
Tom and Myrna Frankel
Lilli and Max Frank z’l
Isabelle and Edgar Freuder z’l
Mara and Rudolph Friedman z’l
Peter and Luz M. Frohwein in memory of Hans and Flore Frohwein z’l
Rebecca and Seymour Froemer z’l
Louise H. Ginsburg z’l
Dr. Abraham and Natalie Goetz z’l
Jane Blumberg Goldberg z’l
Sylvia and Captain Walter Goldenrath z’l
Eric Goldman
Adene Golub
Rabbi Marvin Goodman and Deborah Kalin
Doris Livingston Grasshoff z’l
William z’l and Frances Green
Lorene and Samuel Greenblat z’l
Flora Greenhoot z’l
Erna z’l and Guenter Gruschka
Dr. and Mrs. Melvin Gunsberg
Peter Haas, in memory of his parents Ernst and Helen Haas z’l of Portland, OR
Susan Hamlin
Helen z’l and Arthur Hausman
Ida G. Hodess
Gerald Hoyt z’l
Dr. Alex and Bernadette Inkelas
Barbara R. Jacobs
Phyllis and Alvin Janklow
Ellen and Robert Jasper
Raymond Kaliski z’l
Dorothy and Harry Kallberg z’l
Joel Kamisher
Tom and Kendra Kasten
Isabel F. Kaufmann z’l
Em Knopf
Vivian and Sidney Koprowski z’l
Peter z’l and Carol Kornfeld
Stephanie and Morris z’l
Krantz
Bernis and Larry Kretchmar
Linda and Frank Kurtz
Adele and Donald Langendorf
Jack Langsam z’l
Albert Leaver z’l
Warren G. Lefort
Joseph J. Levin
Lenore and Lewis B. z’l
Levin
Harold and Phyllis Levy z’l
Lucille and Henry Libicki
Mel and Bettie Lichtman
Greta and Eric Livingston z’l
Eva T. Lokey z’l
Fern and William Lowenberg z’l
Hans Lowhurst z’l
Lois and George Maisels z’l
Susan and Jay Mall
Elie and Gerry Marcus z’l
Marlyn G. McClaskey z’l
Barbara J. Meislin/z’l
Martha Meislin
Elsie M. Stevens z’l
Dr. Alex and Bernadette Inkelas
Dr. Jack and Seena Elfant z’l
Karen Kaufman Perlman and Brian Perlman
Frances Pivnick z’l
Lilly Radcliffe z’l
Jan Cook Reicher
Joyce Baker Riffkind
Caryl Lantzer Ruff
Gloria and Milton Roberts z’l
Miriam and Eddie Robinson z’l
Patricia and Robert Ronald
Ray H. Rosenman z’l
Gerald B. Rosenberg z’l
Maureen and Paul Roskopf
Luba R. Ross
Barbara and Julius Roth z’l
Lottie L. and David T. Rothschild z’l
Phyllis Rubenstein z’l
Esther Rubin z’l
Ellen and Jerry Saliman
Wendy Croft Salinsky z’l
Ethel Salwen z’l
Loren and Shelley Saxe
Gail Schlachter z’l
Adrienne and Norman Schlossberg
Carol Schussler
John R. Schwabacher
Grace Shulman z’l
Nathan z’l and Rebecca Siegel
Alice and Daniel Simon z’l
Esther and Richard Sirinsky
Mildred Snitzer z’l
Vivian Solomon z’l
Susan Wander Sorkin
Paul Spitz z’l
Marlene and Martin Stein
Walter R. Steinberg z’l
Ruth S. Steiner
Elise M. Stevens z’l
Anne Strauss
Dr. and Mrs. Irving B. Tapper z’l
Olga Thein
Isabelle and Lawrence Tomsky z’l
Charlene and Sid Tuchman
Gertrude Vederoff z’l
Dorothy R. and Walter z’l
Vogel
Myron and Jerrie Rubenstein
Wacholder z’l
Joseph z’l and Kathi Wahed
Thomas L. Waite z’l
Alfred z’l and Lee Weber
Esther Y. Wedner
Lewis and Helen Weil z’l
Margot and Ernest Weil z’l
William and Roschelle Weiman z’l
Marilyn K. z’l and Raymond L. Weisberg
Charles and Barbara Weiss
Otto and Idell Weiss
Erna and Herman Wertheim z’l
Gail Wilensky
Kathy Roberts Williams
Celina (Basia) and Jacob Wisniewski z’l
Gerda Wodlinger z’l
Margaret and Martin Zankel
David R. Zemansky z’l
Mark Zitter and Jessica Nutik Zitter
Alanna Zrimsek and Lee Weber
Joseph z’l – Zichrona Livracha, of blessed memory

...
For Howard and Elizabeth Shwiff, the Federation is much more than a philanthropic organization—in their case, it was a matchmaker.

"I wouldn't be married to Howard if it weren't for the Federation," says Elizabeth. "In 1989, the Federation sponsored a huge event at the Hotel Nikko called 'Operation Exodus' to raise money for Soviet Jews, and that's where we met."

Over the ensuing 27 years, the Shwiffs have deepened their ties to the community, and, in 2016, made a generous commitment to the Centennial Campaign.

The Shwiffs came to their Jewish identity in very different ways. Howard was raised in a large Jewish family in Dallas. He was deeply affected by a family tradition, called "the family circle," in which the family elders would convene at gatherings and offer interest-free loans to family members in need. As a result, the Shwiffs are generous benefactors of the Hebrew Free Loan Association of San Francisco.

Elizabeth was born in the Admont, a Jewish refugee camp in Austria after World War II. Her mother, who was raised in Odessa and escaped to Vienna, met Elizabeth's father, who was Russian, in the Admont camp. In 1951, the family immigrated to the United States and Elizabeth grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

"Because we were immigrants, my mother always said that, in our house, it would be like the Old Country, speaking our languages," says Elizabeth. "But, in order to survive, when you step out of the house, you have to adapt." Elizabeth went on to become an expert in linguistics and speaks four languages. She also holds a master's degree in taxation, among other degrees.

She has worked around the world for the U.S. State Department and other entities.

Elizabeth's peripatetic career took her back to Austria in the 1970s, to interview emigrating Soviet Jews for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. It was one of the experiences that strengthened her connection to the Jewish community and helped her recognize the ways community institutions could help people in need.

Today, Elizabeth and Howard, who live and work in San Francisco, are principals in Shwiff, Levy and Polo, a CPA and financial services firm they founded in 1989. Howard is also a real estate investment manager and advisor.

For Elizabeth, it's the Federation's longstanding track record in the community that compelled her to give.

"The people at the Federation are highly professional and competent; they're going to be around for a very long time," she says. "I'm not going to be around forever, and who knows what's going to be needed in future years? I trust the Federation to make the right decisions and be the caretaker of the Jewish community."

"We want to see many more Jews have the opportunities we've had, to become safe and secure, part of a community, grow a business, and maybe become a leader. And that is what the Federation does."
Tzedakah has always played an important role in the lives of Dorothy and George z"l Saxe. It’s a value Dorothy learned from her own parents, who modeled generosity and compassion. Dorothy recalls how, even with limited means during the Great Depression, her parents would feed complete strangers who showed up on their doorstep.

Dorothy and George moved from Indiana to Menlo Park in 1959 as George pursued new professional opportunities in the Bay Area, and they quickly became involved in the Jewish community. The couple, together with their children, Loren, Joel, and Ellen, have been consistent leaders, participants, and supporters of the Jewish community.

Their exploration of the arts began in the late 1970s as a special shared pursuit. “George played golf and I went to the opera and ballet,” Dorothy explained. “We wanted to find something neither of us knew anything about that we could do together.” Fast forward 30 years and today the Saxe collection of contemporary art, glass, and crafts is world renowned.

Dorothy and George have touched countless lives through the generosity of their time and resources—providing leadership and support to the Federation, Temple Beth Am, Jewish Community Centers, the Contemporary Jewish Museum, the Jewish Home, Jewish Family and Children’s Services, and countless more organizations along the way.

Their desire to do good in a Jewish way also extended to their grandchildren. Dorothy and George established Donor Advised Funds for each of them when they were teenagers in order to instill a sense of community, responsibility, and philanthropy early on.

There’s much to be proud of. “There was a time when the kids were growing up, we took them to services every single week—even if we had to drag them there!” Dorothy said. Today, her children and grandchildren have followed in her footsteps, taking prominent leadership roles in the Jewish community themselves.

Thanks to Dorothy’s commitment to the Centennial Campaign, the Saxe family legacy will carry on for generations to come.

“I’m thrilled that my commitment to the Jewish community continues to strengthen with each passing year.”
The new Wall of Honor stands as an eternal tribute to the Centennial donors’ extraordinary generosity and is the centerpiece of the Federation’s lobby, recognizing individuals and families whose gifts begin at $250,000. The individual Jerusalem stones in the sculpted wall allow new donors to be added and celebrated each year. Centennial donors at all levels will be prominently recognized.

You can ensure a strong Jewish future

Create the most meaningful legacy for you and your family. If you would like to ensure that your annual gifts live on in perpetuity, you can do so with a Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment (PACE) or a Lion of Judah Endowment (LOJE). Or you can establish or add to a special purpose fund in an area of particular importance to you. Perhaps you would like to make a gift to the Federation’s endowment, or a fund to meet the future needs of our community.

Choose your gift vehicle. The simplest and most common way to make a legacy gift is through a bequest, a gift from your will. Another easy vehicle—with great tax advantages—is your retirement plan (401(k) or IRA). To benefit from additional income during your lifetime, consider a charitable gift annuity or a charitable remainder trust. Donor Advised Fund remainders, life insurance, and gifts of real estate or other appreciated property are other options that can provide significant tax savings.

A confidential conversation about your philanthropic and estate planning goals will help prepare you to work efficiently with your professional advisors on the best options for you. To begin or continue the conversation, contact Linda Solow Bouwer, Director of Endowed and Planned Gifts, at 415.512.6232 or at lindab@sfjcf.org