STRENGTHENING The Fabric of Lifelong Jewish Learning

2022-2023 Impact Report







"Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher."

-PARKER PALMER

This year, Jewish LearningWorks celebrates its 125th anniversary nurturing and training Jewish educators in the Bay Area and beyond.

With your partnership, each year thousands of children from preschool through high school experience the feeling of belonging that comes from being part of a powerful Jewish community — one with teachers, youth directors, clergy, camp counselors and role models at the center.

Our year round training, coaching, mentoring and leadership development programs empower Jewish educators to build new skills, engage their creativity, increase their cultural competence, and model the importance of lifelong Jewish learning. The rich professional network we have built elevates the field of Jewish education, advances diversity, equity and inclusion, and ensures that the Jewish community will continue to have Jewish educators from generation to generation.

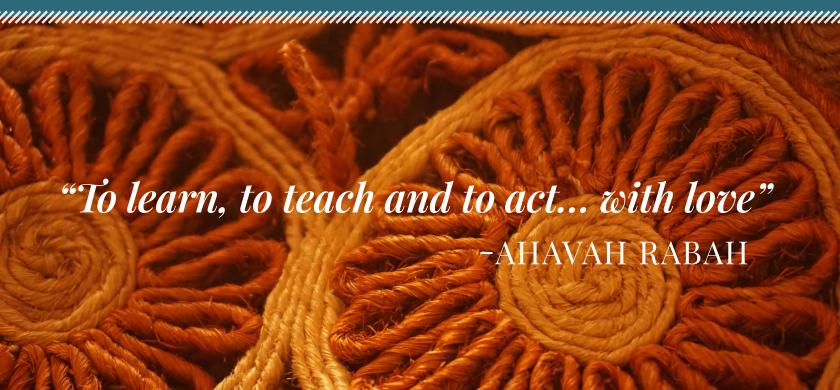
We are grateful to our colleagues, supporters and community members, for helping us weave a tapestry of vibrant Jewish life, with love.



Dana Sheanin
Chief Executive Officer



Irina Kovriga
Board President



One Learner, One Teacher at a Time

We imagine a community where children of all ages have access to relevant, compelling, Jewish experiences that enable them to thrive as learners, and as Jews.

Our mission is to elevate the field of Jewish education by nurturing educators, inspiring innovation, and building Jewish literacy.

Our values ground our efforts, and remind us of our commitment to providing high-caliber professional learning opportunities for educators and professionals across educational settings.



מנהיגות / Manhigut / Leadership: We are fearless in our pursuit of continuous improvement, experimentation, and thought leadership that expands the intellectual horizons of those with whom we work.

Sakranut / Curiosity: We are lifelong learners who delight in discovery, and strive to spark imaginative inquiry among those we serve.

קשר / Connectedness: We believe in the power of belonging, and seek to equip Jewish educators not only with the tools and practices they need to thrive alongside their learners, but also to foster a strong community of support.

אחריות / Achrayut / Mutual Responsibility: We believe in the shared responsibility of learners and educators to bring their best selves to the experience of vibrant Jewish learning, and to the pursuit of a more just and perfect world.

הגשמה עצמית / Hagshama Atzmit / Personal Fulfillment: We recognize every Jewish educator and learner as a whole, creative and resourceful person worthy of finding joy and meaning in Jewish life.

Organizational Milestones Since 1898

"I held the position of CEO of JewishLearningWorks (then the BJE) for 14 years. It was a wonderful period of growth and change and I was blessed to work with exceptional talent as well as dedicated volunteer leadership.

We had the support needed to create impactful new initiatives in teen education, family education, Israel education and other areas that not only served our own community but became models for others across the country. It was here that I learned just how much could be accomplished when visionary leadership was provided with the resources to dream big and turn those dreams into reality."

-Bob Sherman, Former CEO (1993–2007)



- 1898 Founded as the Jewish Education Society, a centralized Talmud Torah program
- 1948 Relocated to 639 14th Avenue, San Francisco
- 1954 The Jewish Community Library grew in the executive director's office
- 1958 Name officially changed to the Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE)
- 1976 Opened a dedicated Jewish Community Library building at 601 14th Avenue
- 1982 Established Battat Educational Resource Center for Jewish educators
- 2003 The Jewish Community Library relocated to the Jewish Community High School

- **2004** Established Jewish Professionals CoOp (UpStart)
- **2012** Rebranded as Jewish LearningWorks
- 2014 Sold 1333 Balboa Street property, creating a board fund for our future
- 2017 Leased the remaining 14th Avenue properties to the Stratford School
- 2022 Offices moved to the new Jewish community campus in Oakland
- 2023 The Jewish Community Library became independent





Student body of the first session of the Central Hebrew School - Talmud Torah Circa 1890

CELEBRATED

Programmatic Initiatives

"I regularly reflect on my good fortune that Bob Sherman hired me to follow in the big shoes of Dr. Debbie Findling. The culture of excellence, learning and innovation created a fertile field for nurturing the whole staff to bring its best self to serving educators' needs. Indeed, we hear from educators that their lives and work continue to be inspired by their learning experiences with us. Jewish LearningWorks has continued to reimagine and innovate, moving from strength to strength over these many years. So much cause for celebration!"



-Toby Rubin, Former Jewish LearningWorks Senior Leader and founder of Upstart

Jewish Community Library

The Jewish Community Library began as a resource for educators in 1954 and now boasts a collection of 40,000 items and year round public programs. Today the Library is independent and is housed at the Jewish Community High School in San Francisco.

Feast of Jewish Learning (1995–2019)

The Feast of Jewish Learning, hosted in partnership with South Peninsula organizations, brought hundreds of community members together for an annual evening of adult learning. In 1995 the Feast of Jewish Learning won the Federation's Distinguished Program of the Year award.

Grief and Growing™

A healing program for bereaved individuals and families. This comprehensive experience brought the best of grief support, spiritual care, family engagement and education, and Jewish camping to mourners of all ages. In 2000, Grief and Growing won the Federation's Distinguished Program of the Year award.

(tĭ•kē•ä) and Shofar (2001–2007)

The tikea and Shofar programs trained 24
Bay Area teen educators through ongoing
learning and an Israel trip. Most remain
connected to each other, and today form a
core segment of the Bay Area's organizational
leadership, working in synagogues, JCCs,
camps, and other Jewish organizations.

Mandel Teacher Educator Institute, Bay Area cohort (2006–2008)

We were proud to partner with the acclaimed Mandel Teacher Educator Institute on a two-year Bay Area cohort designed to develop educational leadership.

On the Map

A curricular framework designed to make enduring changes regarding how Israel is taught to middle and high school students. On the Map teaches students how to think about the history, politics and culture of Israel using maps to inspire conversation.

BASIS (2008–2012)

The BASIS initiative worked to integrate Israel education across 11 local day schools to create personal, enduring connections to Israel, and the Israeli people.

Voices for Good

A women's leadership initiative, designed to nurture and train the next generation of female leaders and promote gender equity in Jewish communal organizations. The initiative includes a fellowship, which has served 21 women through two cohorts, and regular gatherings for female leaders.

NESS (2008-2012)

The Nurturing Excellence in Synagogue Schools (NESS) initiative supported Bay Area congregational schools to transform their offerings by refining their vision and mission, and aligning their curriculum and goals. Participating schools continued to receive support beyond the three-year process.

Ruby Award

The Ruby Award, named for philanthropist Rob Ruby, is awarded annually to recognize an outstanding professional in the field of teen engagement. The Ruby has been awarded to Meg Adler, Jenessa Schwartz, Zephira Derblich-Milea, Devra Aarons and Rick Concoff.

Special Needs Inclusion

Support for special needs learners began in 1988. Since then, services have included family programs, camp, training for educators and madrichim, clinical student observations, professional consultations and sensory toolkit grants.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

Critical training to help educators identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents. 250 individuals have been certified through Jewish LearningWorks since 2018.

STRENGTHENING

the Educator Talent Pipeline

Each child's learning experience is only as good as the adult creating it. Today, our community faces a crisis in recruiting and retaining passionate, inspiring, and qualified educators for our schools and youth programs. Through a diverse menu of professional learning opportunities including training, coaching, mentoring and fellowships, **Jewish LearningWorks is nurturing tomorrow's teachers today**. This year we:

Hosted 30 workshops for 437 participants. Besides our return to in-person events, and ongoing hybrid learning, programs such as "Torah Godly Play" with Rabbi Dr. Michael Shire, and "Gender & Well-being for Every Teen" with Moving Traditions responded to the emerging needs of educators post pandemic.

Led 36 customized trainings for 264 participants. These professional development interventions have the capacity to produce deep and long-lasting educational impact. Training last year included a year-long series for Club Z staff about program evaluation; multi-pronged support with Yavneh Day School focused on staff culture, and a three-part series for congregational education directors in Seattle on the role of parents as people, partners and lifelong learners.

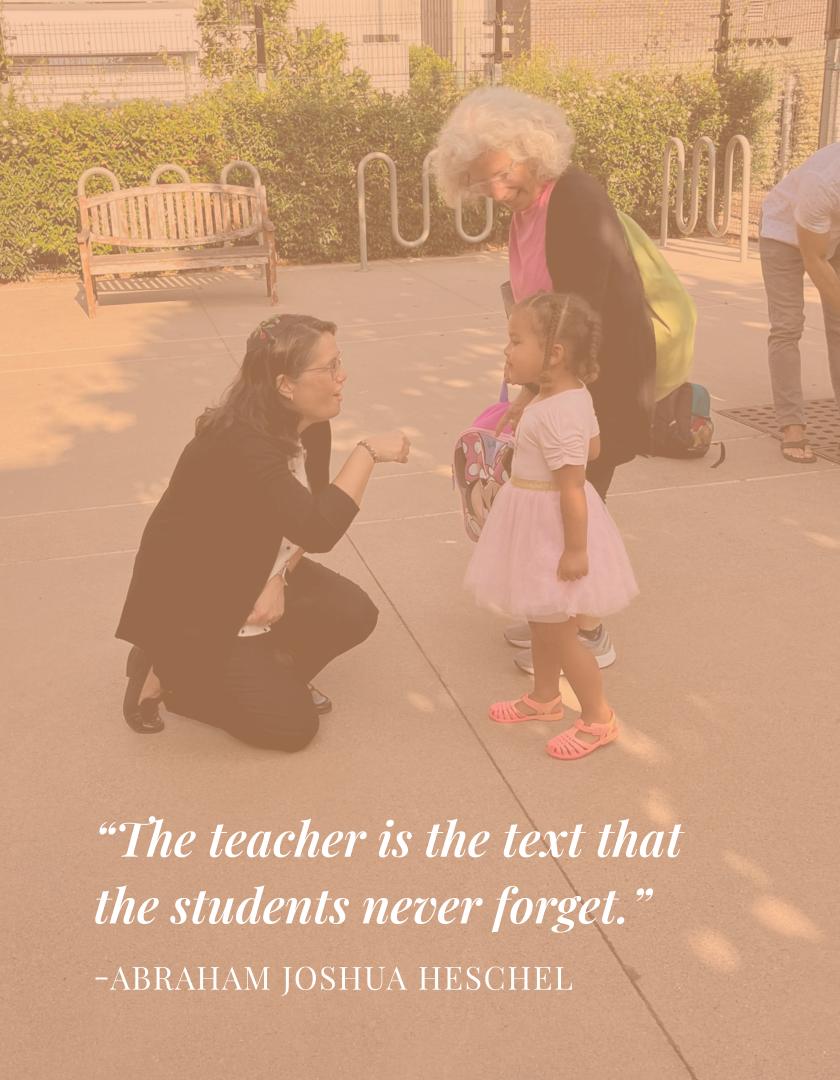
Facilitated 178 coaching sessions for 20 professionals, making it our program of most growth and demand among educators and other communal professionals. This program combines world-class coaching techniques, a customized approach, and engagement of Jewish values to empower exceptional leaders.

Matched 10 pairs of Bay Area mentors and mentees to support educators in new roles. Our cross-community mentor program piloted in collaboration with local partners matched 28 mentees with 9 mentors from Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston and Atlanta.

Co-led The WELL, a cross-community cohort supporting new and rising congregational educators in collaboration with 13 partner organizations. The WELL supported 6 participants from the Bay Area, and an additional 68 national participants in 12 sessions throughout 10 months.

Celebrated the 3rd Annual Ruby Award to honor the contributions of those who work to keep Jewish teens healthy, engaged, and thriving.





A Lifelong Learning Community

Temple Sinai in Oakland is a vibrant Reform synagogue with a preschool, congregational school, and an ethos of lifelong learning. It is precisely through this lens that many of the Jewish educators at Temple Sinai utilize the services and programs at Jewish LearningWorks to further their professional development.

This year, Jewish educators at Temple Sinai participated in multiple Jewish LearningWorks' trainings, as well as our mentorship program. Professionals from both the David Pregerson Preschool and Temple Sinai Religious School attended our day-long Torah Godly Play training with Dr. Rabbi Michael Shire; 17 teen madrichim in the religious school participated in our *madrichim* inclusion training pilot, while leadership in the religious school received mentoring. In addition to formal workshops and programs, the preschool worked with Jewish LearningWorks to provide inclusionoriented classroom observations, and receive consultations to support early childhood educators in meeting the needs of diverse learners.

"Working with teens has been newish to me this past year and it has been super helpful discussing with my mentor the struggles that they may be facing, how to engage them in programs, and everything in between."

-DALYA AZULAI, PROGRAMS COORDINATOR



Multi-pronged professional development interventions like this have a ripple effect on the experience of educators and students alike, but also on the well-being of the entire community. We are proud to have been chosen to provide support to the congregation's preschool, religious school, and leadership.







EMBRACING

A Diverse Community of Leaders and Learners

Building Cultural Competence for Educators

More than 50 Jewish educators and professionals from the Bay Area and beyond participated in our 2023 yearlong Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) series, Widening Our Lens with Dr. Sandra Chapman. We met virtually for a total of 6 sessions, and in between, participants were invited to discuss the content with our educators, to make connections and brainstorm applications specific to their work, setting and community. Participants joined from synagogues, day schools, JCCs, and community organizations.

This series was offered in partnership with Association of Reform Jewish Educators (ARJE) to provide high quality continuing education, and professional development to their members.

By delving into the concepts of implicit bias, identity and racial anxiety, stereotype threat, and microaggressions, we learned about **children's development of difference, and how they understand themselves and the world around them.** "I really appreciate the content of this series led by Dr. Chap. It has created a space to not only think about issues of race and bias, but is offering the opportunity to engage in conversation. I feel that conversation is critical to change."



-Lisa Friedman, Education Director



Developing Capable and Visionary Women Leaders for Our Community

The Jewish professional world is made up of primarily women and yet gender inequity persists in every type of organization — from synagogues to schools to philanthropy. Our Voices for Good initiative aims to advance gender equity in Jewish life, and support women in positions of leadership and influence. This initiative has supported more than 150 Bay Area professionals since 2018; 21 of those are alumnae of our Voices for Good Fellowship program.



This year, the Voices for Good fellows attended their final learning session with Dr. Miriam Heller Stern (HUC-JIR), and celebrated at a culminating siyum held at the San Francisco Jewish Community Center.

As we look to the future we are excited to expand this work to include participants in the Pacific Northwest (Seattle), and the Mountain States (Denver/Boulder). Together with their Bay Area colleagues, participants in the third cohort of the Voices for Good Fellowship will benefit from the flexibility of a hybrid learning environment, interactive online seminars with national thought-leaders, as well as deep collaboration in regional, in-person seminars.



"Plagued by imposter syndrome and a hunger to 'earn my spot at the table,' I used to lead from a place of fear and self-doubt. Through this incredible community of women+ who lift each other up, where we could be our full selves from day one, I began nurturing self-compassion. The journey is ongoing, but I'm now able to lead from a place of curiosity and generosity, embracing my inner mentor instead of my inner critic."

-Amanda Cohen, Voices for Good Fellowship Alumna

Creating Inclusive Learning Environments for All Children

Disability inclusion at Jewish LearningWorks mirrors best practices for supporting students in a classroom and school, providing diverse points of entry. Whether it is customized training on a specific topic for a team, or a year-long intensive program to strengthen the school's culture of inclusion, Jewish LearningWorks provides a variety of ways for educators, schools, and educational settings to meet the needs of diverse learners.

This year Jewish LearningWorks provided:

- Twenty two inclusion specific trainings, 14 of which were customized specifically to the needs of the congregations, schools and JCCs that requested them.
- A three-part training for madrichim, during which 37 teens learned to better support children with special needs.
- The curation of sensory toolkits for 25 educational programs from day schools, preschools, and congregational schools.
- Subsidized student observations and consultations, and a monthly drop in series on inclusion practices for preschool teachers.
- An immersive "Culture of Inclusion" training at the Leslie Family Preschool at the Oshman Family JCC. This year-long series provided monthly training and on-site individual mentoring to guide best practices from theory to implementation.





Embracing a Culture of Inclusion

The leadership of the OFJCC Leslie Family Preschool in Palo Alto reached out to us with a conundrum: Each year they send their teachers to professional development programs; their teachers come back excited and refreshed; and more often than not, little changed in the classroom. They wondered how to support their teachers in applying their new learning.

Our staff worked with the preschool's leadership to craft a ten-month training program for 13 teachers and five administrators focused on strengthening the school's culture of inclusion. The group gathered monthly for seminars ranging from how to use visual schedules, to working with parents as partners, to language development.

"When I shared my views and knowledge on how to best support children, and their families, I felt valued as a teacher and a member of the community. I felt heard by my instructors' and colleagues alike, and noticed how voicing my point of view and beliefs may help teachers from other classrooms try approaches they may have not considered before."

-NIV KOHEN. CLASSROOM TEACHER



In addition to the monthly seminars, Jewish LearningWorks is proud to have offered teachers the mentorship they needed to help them bring their new skills and ideas into the classroom.

Besides this customized training, the OFJCC also requested inclusion training for their afterschool program, took part in a Youth Mental Health First Aid training, and participated in our Voices for Good C Suite network, prioritizing equity and inclusion across their community.







NURTURING

the Bay Area's Jewish Education Ecosystem

JCCs

Congregational Schools

"I have played a variety of roles in the Jewish community over my 25-year career — from educator to executive director to funder. Working at Jewish LearningWorks, particularly as the Founding Director of the Jewish Service Learning Project gave me a robust network, strong pedagogical frameworks, and an entrepreneurial orientation that I have used in every subsequent position. I'm so grateful to have been able to leverage my leadership skills across the Jewish ecosystem!" - Jaré Akchin, Former staff member and Third Plateau Vice President

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Teen Education

& Engagement



DEEPENING

Our Support For Educators & Leaders



716
participants
from all Jewish
educational
settings



593 unique individuals

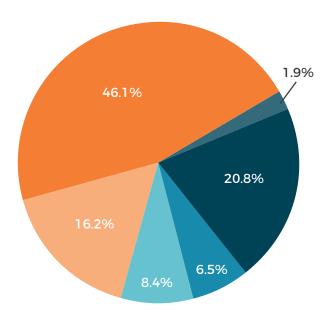


participants
in our online
programs, 69%
more since the
first year of the
pandemic and 9%
more than last
year



states represented in our online programs

154 ORGANIZATIONS SERVED



Congregational Education Program	71
JCC / Non-Synagogue Afterschool Program	25
Day School	13
Early Childhood Education	10
Camp (Day and Residential)	3
Other	32



"Learning together with the team at my work allowed me to understand my coworkers in a more personal sense. The collaboration made me feel more as part of the community, forging a sense of inclusivity within coworkers and making us better educators overall." -Cinthya Zavala, Preschool Teacher

Honoring Our Colleagues

Jewish LearningWorks is perhaps best known for its people. As an organization dedicated to professional development, we know that our community offerings truly sparkle because of the people behind them. We are proud to recognize the following educators who have been part of Jewish LearningWorks' staff. Their best thinking, creativity and hearts are stitched into our shared mission.

Jaré Akchin

Noa Albaum

Erica Aren

Merav Berger

Maya Bernstein

Ellen Brosbe

Deborah Burg-Schnirman

Julie Emden

Rabbi Yoshi Fenton

Dr. Debbie Findling

Deb Fink

Howard Freedman

Allison Green

Elizheva Hurvich

Fred Isaac

Debby Jacoby

Rose Katz

Sidney Keith

Vicky Kelman

Flora Kupferman

Michael Lederman

Deb Sagan Massey

Claire Mikowski

Michal Morris-Kamil

Dr. David Neufeld

Toby Rubin

Malka Scheinok

Adrian Schrek

Jonathan Schwartz

Ronit Sharir

Leah Strauss

Nechama Tamler

Vavi Toran

Jen Wakefield

Zvi Weiss



Current Educator Team

Liora Brosbe Ellen Lefkowitz and Alisha Pedowitz,

Dr. Kathy Schwartz

Jenni Mangel the newest members of our team!

Todah Rabah for sustaining our lovingly crafted community!

Like databases, our memories are imperfect. We apologize to any educator we may have overlooked.

REMEMBRANCE

Special Kavod to Our Former Colleagues

In the past two years, we lost two beloved former staff members – Rachel Brodie and Ilan Vitemberg. Their teaching touched thousands in our community, helped us grow and love deeper than we could ever imagine, and both left us too early.



Rachel Brodie z"l

Rachel Brodie's body of work as an author, visionary and teacher is unforgettable. Her sparkle, her commitment to Jewish text, and her laugh remain with us always.

Read more about Rachel's contributions, and a small sample of her Torah.





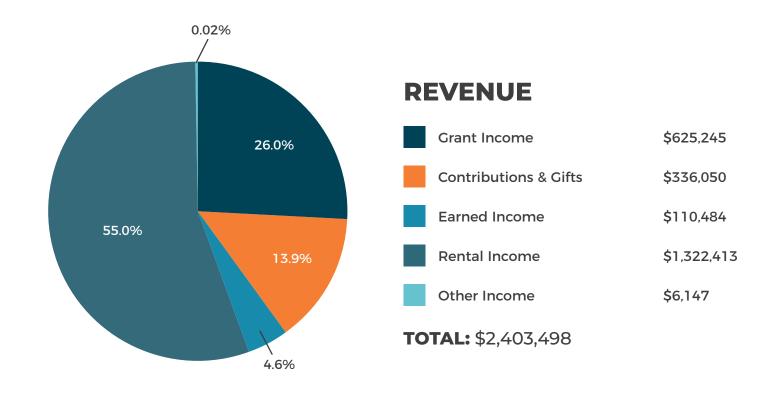
Ilan Vitemberg z"l

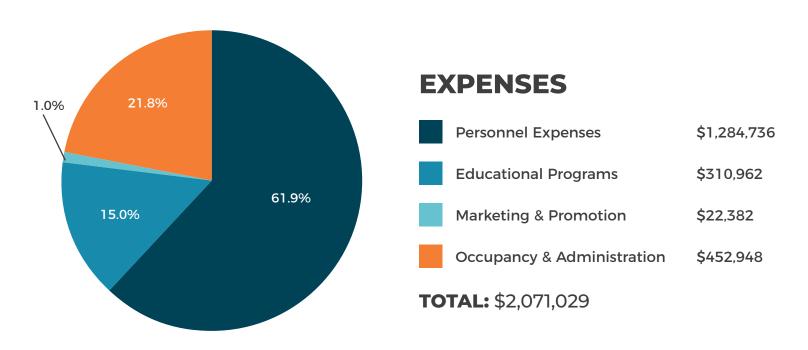
Teacher, storyteller, rolemodel, cultural critic, human rights activist, performance artist; Ilan's life was his art and his curriculum. In his teaching and in his life, he approached it all with passion.

Read more about Ilan, and his unquenchable pursuit of justice and joy.



Financial Sustainability







Make a Gift in Honor of Our 125th Anniversary

When you support Jewish LearningWorks, you help Jewish educators create responsive educational environments, build meaningful relationships with their students, become stronger role-models, and make a difference in the lives of our children and youth.

Every contribution enables us to bring educators together, give them a caring community, keep their training current, and connect them to the tools that elevate their craft, and passion for building a vibrant present and future for Jewish youth.

"High quality Jewish education doesn't just magically fall out of the sky, yet it is critically important in shaping who our children become. We give to Jewish LearningWorks because of the extraordinary and often 'invisible' work they do to equip educators with the skills they need to deliver the most meaningful and longestlasting Jewish learning."

-Julie Dorsey, past president & Dan Leemon



Donate Online

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Text JEWISHLEARNING to 44321, and donate via Google Pay, credit card or your bank account.

SCAN TO GIVE



Legacy Gifts & Planned Giving

Naming Jewish LearningWorks as a beneficiary in your estate plan is a powerful way to sustain our impact. If you want to invest in the future of Jewish education by leaving a legacy gift, please contact Dana Sheanin at dana@jewishlearning.works.

Todah Rabah

Jewish LearningWorks is deeply grateful for the generous support we have received from our community over the past 125 years. Your commitment to Jewish life and learning enables our community to thrive.

"The world stands on three things: Torah - learning, Avodah -worship, and Gemilut Hasadim - acts of loving kindness."

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David Steirman

grateful for your generosity.

Ron and Sheree Roth



"The nature of relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school, and on student accomplishment, than anything else."

-ROLAND BARTH



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