2023 Annual Report



100 Cummings Center, Suite 220-G • Beverly, MA 01915

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank You to Our Donors



Dear Friends,

The barbaric terrorist attack of October 7, 2023, by Hamas on Israel gut-punched the entire Jewish world and beyond. With barely a moment to mourn the devastating loss of life, Israel was thrust into a war for survival, all the while strategizing for the release of more than 200 hostages – including children, women, elderly, IDF soldiers, and others. No corner of the Jewish world has been spared the unprecedented uptick in Jew-hatred and anti-Zionism.

While meeting new and urgent needs for increased antisemitism and Holocaust education since the attack, we have remained wholeheartedly and passionately committed to our mission of *enhancing Jewish identity across generations* by providing programs that build Jewish pride, which we believe is the antidote to antisemitism.

Lappin Foundation had another remarkable year with record-breaking program attendance and new initiatives, including:

- Expanded Holocaust and antisemitism education for students and faculty in public and private schools, law enforcement professionals, and others
- Black-Jewish alliance-building with New England Blacks in Philanthropy (NEBiP) and the Redstone Family Foundation
- Established a new program partnership with the American Jewish Committee
 (AJC) piloting Leaders for Tomorrow for teens in our community
- Produced compelling new educational videos about antisemitism and the Holocaust featuring survivors

Our long-standing programs - Youth to Israel Adventure, PJ Library, Rekindle Shabbat, Introduction to Judaism, and others - engaged thousands of individuals throughout the year in thought-provoking and rich Jewish programs that supported our mission. Our work was funded by our most successful annual campaign, thanks to our 2023 Honoree, Bob Ogan.

The Foundation's leadership expanded with the addition of Matthew Swartz of Swampscott to our Board of Directors, and with the addition of Dorit Cohen of Andover and millennial Lauren Kagan (2017 Y2I) of Salem to our Honorary Board of Advisors.

To our donors, we are deeply grateful for your generous support, which makes it possible to do our vital work to ensure a Jewish future. Thank you for having faith in us and for inspiring us to challenge ourselves in new ways to meet the ever-changing needs of the Jewish world.

With gratitude,

Deborah L. Coltin

President and Executive Director

Deborah L. Coltin

MISSION

Enhancing Jewish Identity across Generations in the Jewish Community and Beyond



We accomplish our mission by:

- Funding dynamic programs for children, teens and adults that spark an interest in Jewish living and learning
- Building Jewish pride
- Developing a connection to and love for Israel
- Serving as an educational resource center to the community for programs about Judaism, the Holocaust and antisemitism
- Fostering positive relationships through education with individuals of all faiths and backgrounds
- Imbuing Jewish youth with the desire to stay Jewish and raise their own children Jewish

Lappin Foundation removes cost as a barrier to participation whenever possible, making our programs free and accessible to all who want to participate.

Our areas of programming include:

- Youth to Israel Adventure for Teens
- ▲ Teen Leadership Development
- ▲ PJ Library & PJ Our Way
- Antisemitism and Holocaust Education
- Families with Young Children

- ▲ Interfaith Outreach
- ▲ Israel and Current Events
- Jewish History and Culture
- Professional Development
- ▲ Black-Jewish Alliance

Visit LappinFoundation.org for up-to-date information about our programs.



LEADERSHIP

2023 Board of Directors

Lappin Foundation's Board of Directors serves an active role in the Foundation's ongoing success.

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Deborah L. Coltin

President and Executive Director

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The Honorary Board of Advisors is comprised of leaders who believe in the work of Lappin Foundation and who serve as ambassadors of our work.

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PJ Library Program Associate RachelL@lappinfoundation.org

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Development Director sovadia@lappinfoundation.org (978) 740-4404

Sharon Wyner

Program Manager swyner@lappinfoundation.org (978) 565-4450

2023 FINANCIALS

INCOME & EXPENSE STATEMENT

Income

Donations and Grants	\$1,760,546
Program Fees	\$21,650
Misc. Interest & Gains	\$35,616

Total Income \$1,817,812

Expense

\$20,865
\$3,191
\$7,530
\$25,786
\$28,295
\$23,186
\$18,290
\$4,813
\$12,481
\$676,538
\$81,895
\$2,500
\$49,847
\$84,400
\$9,038
\$21,875
\$43,138
\$6,833
-\$166
\$67,635
\$228
-\$600
\$6,925
\$3,451
\$12,460
\$348
\$3,570
\$668,213

Net Income -\$64,753

\$1,882,565

Total Expense



BALANCE SHEET

Current Assets

Current Assets	
Cash	\$126,089
Pledges Receivable	\$100,000
Money Market Account	\$312,200
Fidelity - Stock Donations	\$10,646
Fidelity - PJ Library Endowment	\$67,936
Total Current Assets	\$616,872
Other Assets	
Furniture & Equipment	\$28,767
Operating Lease Right of Use	\$192,729
Accum. Depreciation & Amortiza	tion -\$1,739
Total Other Assets	\$219,757
Total Assets	\$836,629
	4030,023
	Ψ030,023
Current Liabilities	\$030,023
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable	\$10,255
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease	\$10,255 \$192,729
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable	\$10,255
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease	\$10,255 \$192,729
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease Accrued Payroll	\$10,255 \$192,729 \$34,852
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease Accrued Payroll Total Current Liabilities	\$10,255 \$192,729 \$34,852
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease Accrued Payroll Total Current Liabilities Capital	\$10,255 \$192,729 \$34,852 \$237,836
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease Accrued Payroll Total Current Liabilities Capital Retained Earnings	\$10,255 \$192,729 \$34,852 \$237,836 \$553,629
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease Accrued Payroll Total Current Liabilities Capital Retained Earnings HS Feffer Scholarship	\$10,255 \$192,729 \$34,852 \$237,836 \$553,629 \$9,918
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable Operating Lease Accrued Payroll Total Current Liabilities Capital Retained Earnings HS Feffer Scholarship Pledges-Restricted	\$10,255 \$192,729 \$34,852 \$237,836 \$553,629 \$9,918 \$100,000

Total Liabilities and Capital



\$836,629

Dr. Hans Fisher of Newton, who escaped Nazi Germany as a child in 1939 as a passenger on the SS St. Louis, received the 2023 Inspirational Jewish Leader Award for his work educating younger generations about the Holocaust in our Holocaust Symposium for Teens.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Working together makes our community stronger. We thank our program partners for fruitful relationships that enrich our joint efforts.

America-Israel Friendship League

American Jewish Committee (AJC) New England

Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England

Berwick Academy, Maine

Bigelow Middle School, Newton

Boston 3G

Brooksby Village Jewish Community

Camp Hadar

Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Salem State University

Chabad of Peabody

Chabad of the North Shore

Chelsea Public School's Equity and Belonging School & Community Series

Cliff & Susan Rucker Charitable Foundation

Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP)

Congregation Ahabat Sholom

Congregation Ahavas Achim

Congregation Ahavat Olam

Congregation Eitz Chayim

Congregation Shalom of Chelmsford

Congregation Shirat Hayam

Congregation Sons of Israel

Congregation Tifereth Israel, Sephardic

Consulate General of Israel to New England

Cummings Foundation

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Duxbury Student Union

Epstein Hillel School

Hadassah Brandeis Institute

Hadassah - Manchester, NH

Hadassah North Shore, MA

Hadassah Northeast

Hamilton Council on Aging

Harold Grinspoon Foundation

Holocaust Legacy Foundation

Israeli American Council

Jewish Community Center of Greater Boston

Jewish Community Center of the North Shore

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston

Jewish Family and Children's Services

Jewish Federation of New Hampshire

Jewish Journal

Jewish National Fund-USA/ Alexander Muss High School in Israel

Jewish Teen Initiative

Jewish War Veterans, Massachusetts

Lafayette College Hillel

Lives Eliminated, Dreams Illuminated (LEDI)

Marblehead High School

Marblehead Parenting

Massachusetts Association of Chiefs of Police

Massachusetts State House

Merrimack Valley Jewish Federation

Dr. David M. Milch Foundation

NAACP - Boston Branch

New England Blacks in Philanthropy

New England Friends of the March of the Living

New Hampshire Jewish Federation

Newton North High School

Newton South High School

North Shore Rabbis and Cantors Association

North Suburban Jewish Community Center

Northfield Mt. Herman School

Peabody Clergy and Ministerial Association

Peabody Public Schools

Peabody Veterans Memorial High School

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Pollard Memorial Library, Lowell

Redstone Family Foundation

Rhode Island Coalition for Israel

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Salem High School

Saugus High School

Saugus Public Library

Senator Joan Lovely

Showcase SuperLux

StandWithUs

St. John's Prep Jewish Student Union

Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Clark University

Swampscott Public Library

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Temple B'nai Abraham

Temple Emanu-El - Haverhill

Temple Emanu-El - Marblehead

Temple Emanuel - Andover

Temple Ner Tamid

Temple Sinai

Temple Tiferet Shalom

Terezin Music Foundation

Tewksbury Public Library

Town of Swampscott

TribeTalk

Vermont Holocaust Memorial

Walnut Street Synagogue

Wellesley High School

Zion Church Ministries

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Bob Ogan 2023 Youth to Israel (Y2I) Award Recipient

hat Bob Ogan remembers most about his own Youth to Israel trip 50 years ago is the caring and love for Israel that he felt in the weeks following the trip when Israel was attacked during the Yom Kippur War.

He recalls being glued to the radio for news, all the while wondering, "Why would all these countries gang up on Israel? What did they do to deserve it?" Bob realized that the summer he spent in Israel, time on moshavim and kibbutzim, and formative experiences with other Jewish teens, really got to his subconscious.

Much later, as he grew into his own role as a leader in the Jewish community and an active supporter of Israel, and after several more trips to the Jewish homeland, Ogan reflected on the gift that Robert I. Lappin gave so many Jewish teens by providing the free Youth to Israel (Y2I) experience. "When you go to Israel, regardless of your mindset prior to going, you will come back a different person. You will be touched in some way and my guess is in a way that you are not even looking for," he noted.

Ogan's first trip to Israel came after a lifetime of role modeling from his parents and their peers. He recalls forging friendships through the Kernwood Country Club, the only country club for Jews at the time, and through Temple Emanu-El in Marblehead. His father, along with other Jewish businessmen, committed themselves to building and supporting the Jewish institutions in the community: the Jewish Community Center, the predecessors to Epstein-Hillel Academy, the synagogues, and the Jewish Federation of the North Shore. As a friend of Peter Lappin. Ogan witnessed the deep commitment of Robert I. Lappin (z"l) to both Israel and the community.

Against the backdrop of this role modeling, Ogan understood the values of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world, and has always, one way or another, been involved with the Jewish community. He had various different leadership roles with many organizations including: the Jewish Federation of the North Shore, the



Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Community Center, and Lappin Foundation. With his wife Leslie, the Ogans have philanthropically supported almost all the Jewish agencies and others, too, such as Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Today, he lauds the work of Lappin Foundation. In addition to sending so many teens for formative experiences in Israel, he supports the Foundation's work with antisemitism, Holocaust education, and young families through Shabbat programming and P.J. Library. "I believe it will help make the Jewish community, and ultimately the world, a better place."

Ogan is the President and CEO of Bake'n Joy Foods, Inc., a company started by his grandfather in 1941 when he came to the U.S. from Russia. His son Michael now works alongside him in the business, taking it into the fourth generation. One thing Ogan learned through participation in leadership programs designed to create unthinkable business breakthroughs is to "never to put any boundaries on our thinking. If you put boundaries on your thinking, then you limit the possibilities. That holds true in thinking about the community. That is something I want to share with young people today."

But he also wants to share the lessons of kindness, something that is especially important in today's climate of escalated hate rhetoric and incidents. "What I learned over the years from family is to be a better person and to be empathetic."

"My message to young folks would be to never forget your roots, never forget what the Jewish people have accomplished. Don't forget the Holocaust and don't forget the Jewish community, both worldwide and here. We can make a difference, and it is incumbent on you to do so, because no one else will. It is important that you take a stand for what you believe," Ogan said.

Ogan lives in Marblehead with Leslie, his wife of 42 years. Their family includes their grown children Rachel and Michael, daughter-in-law Emily, and grandchildren Lylah, Nathan and Levi. The Ogans are members of Congregation Shirat Hayam.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

\$100,000+

Combined Jewish Philanthropies

\$25,000 to \$50,000

Congregation Ahabat Sholom Harold Grinspoon Foundation Jody Kipnis and Todd Ruderman

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\$18,000 to \$24,999

Cummings Foundation Sarah Ovadia **Sharon and Howard Rich** Marcia Ruderman

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G2 Travel Israel Howard A. Cook Family Foundation Karen and David Rosenberg

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We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please email dcoltin@lappinfoundation.org if a mistake has been made.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Deborah Coltin presented a Holocaust education program at the MA State House sponsored by Senator Joan Lovely.

Holocaust & Antisemitism Education

appin Foundation's interactive Holocaust and antisemitism education programs reached thousands of students in 14 high schools and middle schools throughout Massachusetts and beyond. Programs included our multi-session Holocaust Symposium, presentations by Holocaust survivors, commemorations for International Holocaust Remembrance Day, and lessons about contemporary antisemitism.

The Teddy Bear and The Ship, our new animated films narrated by Holocaust survivors, transmit the stories and lessons of the Holocaust to younger students in an age-appropriate way. Our new film Swastika — Symbol of Hate teaches students the history of the swastika and its negative impact on society today. A teacher's guide accompanies each film.



Antisemitism education for student leaders at Danvers High School





Lappin Foundation funded subscriptions for more than 1,000 children to receive PJ Library books throughout the year. PJ Library is the Jewish book-of-themonth club for children, ages 0-8. Beautiful books that transmit our rich Jewish culture and tradition are mailed directly to families every month. Additionally, more than 110 engaging Jewish programs were held throughout the year for PJ Library families, providing them ample opportunities to connect with each other and with the Jewish community.

Congregation Ahabat Sholom









cjp

Rekindle Shabbat

In the comfort of their homes, 132 families celebrated Shabbat multiple times throughout the year with family and friends in our Rekindle Shabbat program.

Delicious Shabbat meals and a Shabbat kit (candles, candle sticks, challah cover, kiddush cup, tzedakah box and more) were provided to families to enrich their Shabbat celebrations.

Introduction to Judaism

Introduction to Judaism enrolled 51 individuals in our 21-week course for adults studying for conversion to Judaism or for individuals wanting to learn more about Judaism. The Foundation funds immersion in the *mikveh* (ritual bath) for conversions and presents new Jews-by-Choice a gift of their choice of a Jewish ritual item. The program is made possible with generous support from the Morton and Lillian Waldfogel Charitable Foundation and Peter and Maureen Waldfogel.



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Leaders for Tomorrow for Teens

Lappin Foundation was selected to be the first pilot organization in the country to partner with AJC (American Jewish Committee) to offer its Leaders for Tomorrow to high school students. Leaders for Tomorrow teens attend monthly learning sessions exploring contemporary issues that educate and empower young Jewish leaders to make a difference by advocating on behalf of the Jewish people and Israel. Teens gain knowledge, confidence, and passion as they become positive changemakers among their peers and in our community.







Building the Black-Jewish Alliance

Lappin Foundation is excited to work with leaders of the Black community to strengthen the Black-Jewish Alliance through relationship-building and thoughtful programming. Our first joint program, the film screening and discussion of *From Swastika to Jim Crow,* held at Showcase SuperLux Chestnut Hill, drew a full house for an evening of thoughtful discussion.

St. John's Prep Jewish Student Union

Throughout the year Jewish students at St. John's Prep engaged in meaningful programming provided by Lappin Foundation. Topics included Holocaust education, discussions about antisemitism, and holiday celebrations.

Adult Programs

Dozens of Jewish programs, held online and in-person, were enjoyed by thousands of individuals throughout the year. People were educated, entertained, and inspired by talented presenters on a wide variety of topics, including Israeli current events, Holocaust education, film screenings, book discussions, and more.



Holocaust and Antisemitism Education for Law Enforcement

In 2022, after participating in the intergenerational, multi-session Holocaust Symposium for students and community leaders in Danvers, Massachusetts that was organized and funded by Lappin Foundation, Danvers Police Chief James Lovell approached Lappin Foundation President and Executive Director Deborah Coltin with an idea.

What if Lappin Foundation sponsored a trip to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) for law enforcement officials on the North Shore?

"I think it is crucial to learn from the past so history does not repeat itself," Lovell, who visited the museum with his family five years ago, explained. "As leaders within our departments and communities, it is important that we are prepared to document, prevent, and deter incidents of antisemitism and hate crimes. Through education and awareness, we can make a difference in our communities."

One of Lappin Foundation's missions is to educate about the Holocaust and antisemitism and to rapidly respond to requests for learning experiences, whether by

teachers, students or law enforcement. Coltin thought Lovell's suggestion was perfect for the Foundation. "We want to build bridges, partnerships, and allies," she said. "I'm a big proponent of different constituent groups understanding antisemitism and the Holocaust. Of course, law enforcement is one of them."

Coltin enlisted the help and support of Jody Kipnis, President and CEO of the Holocaust Legacy Foundation, which co-funded the resultant Holocaust Symposium for Law Enforcement.

On April 13, 2023, Coltin, Kipnis and a law enforcement delegation from the North Shore traveled to Washington, D.C. to visit the USHMM. It was a ground-breaking initiative that brought together Essex County District Attorney Paul Tucker, Sheriff Kevin Coppinger and 16 local police chiefs.

The chiefs included: Donald Cudmore, Georgetown; Kevin DiNapoli, Wenham; Scott Dumas, Rowley; Thomas Fowler, Salisbury; Jeffrey Gillen, Groveland; Thomas Griffin, Peabody; Neal Hovey, Topsfield; Dennis King, Marblehead; James Lovell, Danvers; Lucas Miller, Salem; Mark Murray, Newburyport; Paul Nikas, Ipswich; Ruben Quesada, Swampscott; Christopher Reddy, Lynn; Eric Shears, Merrimac; and Russell Stevens, Hamilton.

In preparation for the trip, participants attended an educational session about the Holocaust and antisemitism that included an update of last year's ADL antisemitism audit. An optional program set aside time to meet with Holocaust survivor Magda Bader.

"Hearing Bader speak should motivate every law enforcement official to respond to every incident of hate with a determination to use all resources to hold offenders accountable and show the community-at-large that these acts will not be tolerated," District Attorney Tucker said. "As members of the community, law enforcement officials can be educators who show that we all must stand up to hate, alongside those who are targeted."

During the day-long museum visit, participants experienced a two-hour tour followed by two interactive sessions that examined the role of police in Nazi Germany and explored the challenges of policing today.

"The Holocaust serves as a powerful reminder of the consequences of complicity, indifference, and unethical behavior," Kipnis said.



For many, the sessions that examined the role played by local police in 1930s Germany was particularly chilling. Led by Russell Garnett, the museum's Program Coordinator for Law and Justice Initiatives, they learned how the Nazis enlisted local law enforcement to support their cause and legitimize the early days of the SS regime.

"Law enforcement is built on the premise of protecting those individuals who may not have a voice and protecting all human rights. Not only were those principles violated, but law enforcement was complicit. It is a reminder that we must think critically about how our implicit or complicit actions can affect and alter the outcome of world history," said Swampscott Chief Quesada.

In recent years, Danvers has been the target of a spate of antisemitic and hate crimes, and Lovell applauds Coltin's quick and effective programming responses and the strong relationship between Danvers Police Department and Lappin Foundation. "Programs like this Law Enforcement Symposium reinforce that we have partners to help us fight antisemitism in our communities," he said.

Sheriff Coppinger echoes Lovell's belief that, to be successful, law enforcement today depends on community-based partnerships.

"Working with groups like Lappin Foundation allows us to not only learn from each other, but also help others understand the often

unique challenges we all face,"

he said.

Chief Quesada said the museum visit was one of the most sobering experiences he ever had.

was one of the most sobering experiences he ever had. "Together, we can care for our most valuable assets and resources - our children. We can educate, inform, and provide resources about antisemitism, hate, and discrimination. Only love, compassion, and understanding can eradicate hatred," he said.

The Foundation's second trip to the museum in December included a variety of law enforcement professionals, including a representative from the Governor's Task Force on Hate Crimes. Participants included: members of the executive committee of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association (Chiefs of Police Michael Bennett, Templeton; Terence Delehanty, Winthrop; Thomas Fowler, Salisbury; Eric Gillis, Agawam; James Hicks, Natick; Ernest Martineau, Fitchburg; and Shane Woodson, Southbridge); Edward Conley, Chief of Police, Gloucester; William Gerke, COO Essex County Sheriff's

Department; Sheriff James
Perelman, Nantucket; members
of the Massachusetts Office of
Public Safety and Security (Jeff
Farnsworth, Gina Kwon, Emily
Todisco, and Susan Terrey);
Anthony Marino, Winthrop Town
Manager; Ferruccio Romeo,
Winthrop Deputy Chief of
Police; and David Shapiro,
Lobbyist. The program was
funded by the Cliff and Susan
Rucker Charitable Foundation.



Cliff & Susan Rucker Charitable Foundation

TEEN LEADERS



The Teen Antisemitism Task Force is committed to combating antisemitism and all hatred through education and action. Monthly meetings feature national speakers with a particular expertise around antisemitism, as well as provide a safe space for teens to share what they have been personally experiencing. High school students of all faiths are welcome to join the Task Force.

Meet the Co-Chairs











Teddy Friedman, Wayland ➤ Antisemitism has spurred Teddy to action – to learn and to act, both reactively and proactively. Teddy hopes through his work individually and with others, he will make a change in generations to come. He believes that living proudly as a Jew and sharing our Jewish stories with others will encourage more people to become educated about the hatred faced by Jewish people. Teddy was one of the national high school winners of the 2023 Shine a Light on Antisemitism Civic Courage Award. Teddy is a student at Gann Academy in Waltham.

Max Hubbard, Newton ▶ Max's desire to give back to his community in a meaningful way was the reason he stepped up to serve as co-chair of the Task force. The Task Force provides Max with knowledge and skills to combat antisemitism, especially when it occurs at his school. Max loves teaching, and he currently works as an intern, teaching children programming with languages like Python and Java. Over the summer, he worked as a camp counselor at the Chestnut Hill Camp in Brookline and trained for the cross-country track season in the fall. Max is a student at Newton South High School.

Presley Jacobson, Newton ➤ Seeking a platform to bring awareness to antisemitism, something Presley often finds to be overlooked, and to meet other students her age with a similar passion were motivating factors in Presley assuming a leadership role as co-chair of the Task Force. Presley brings to the table enthusiasm for learning and a desire to share ideas. She doesn't hesitate to ask challenging questions and explore complex issues around antisemitism. Presley is a captain of the speech and debate team, a coxswain for the varsity crew team, and a violinist in her school orchestra. Presley is a junior at Buckingham, Brown and Nichols in Cambridge.

Maddie Katzen, Georgetown ► Maddie's Israel experience on the Foundation's Youth to Israel Adventure helped her to rediscover her Jewish identity. Since returning from Israel, she wanted to become more involved in the Jewish community, and she saw a leadership role on the Task Force as an avenue to increased involvement. The Task Force opened Maddie's eyes to the power of education and action. While seeing antisemitism on the rise around her, she felt inspired to make a change through the work of the Task Force. Maddie works as a Certified Nursing Assistant in a rehab facility, plays varsity lacrosse, and dances competitively. She is a senior at Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School in Haverhill.

YOUTH TO ISRAEL ADVENTURE (Y2I)

O23 Y2I teens returned home from their Israel adventure with new and renewed bonds to Israel and Judaism. Since its inception in 1970, more than 3,000 teens have participated in the Youth to Israel program, the cornerstone of Lappin Foundation. Created by Robert Israel Lappin (of blessed memory) in the early years of his leadership at Jewish Federation of the North Shore, the fully subsidized trip to Israel reflects Lappin Foundation's most fundamental mission -Jewish continuity. He believed the teen Israel experience is key to ensuring Jewish continuity and building Jewish pride, and the most effective way to prepare college-bound Jewish students to effectively deal with antisemitism and anti-Israel activities and sentiments.

Against a backdrop of antisemitism and assault unparalleled since the Holocaust, his words ring even truer today, especially for the 2023 Y2I cohort of 83 teens from 29 communities and 34 high schools across the North Shore, Greater Boston, and Merrimack Valley who spent nearly two weeks traversing Israel, hiking Masada, celebrating Shabbat in Jerusalem, and more.

"Getting Jewish teens to Israel during their high school years is an unparalleled Jewish identity-builder. Following up the Israel experience with educating teens on how to identify and respond to antisemitism in its many forms is an effective approach to help them deal with the alarming rise of antisemitism on college campuses," said Lappin Foundation President and Executive Director Deborah L. Coltin, who has supervised Y2I since 2006 and attended Y2I (then "Let's Go Israel") in 1973.

During their monthly pre-trip meetings from January through May, teens had the chance to get know each other while learning about Israel. Those bonds strengthened and expanded during the trip. "There was an immediate, unspoken connection among the teens on the trip because we're all Jewish and experiencing this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity together," said Eliza Naftoly of Newburyport, who is a senior at Berwick Academy in Maine. "Exploring sacred Israel with this group of teens is something I'll share with them forever."

A new addition to the 2023 itinerary was the photography workshop, "Humans of Tel Aviv," where teens spoke to Israelis they met on the street. They asked about their personal stories and took pictures.

During these one-onone encounters, they heard different views, perspectives, and opinions on many different subjects. They also learned how helpful Israelis are by nature.



For the first time, Y2I included a visit to Shafdan, Israel's water reclamation plant. For many teens, discovering that Israel leads the world in reclaiming waste-water was a surprising and proud moment.

The itinerary incorporates other hands-on experiences, such as StandWithUs Israel Advocacy Workshops and a four-day *migfash* (encounter) with Israeli teens who joined the Y2I group.

As in past years, the presentations by StandWithUs Senior Educator and Director of International Programs Charlotte Korchak received high marks. (StandWithUs is an international and non-partisan Israel education organization that inspires and educates people of all ages and backgrounds, challenges misinformation, and fights antisemitism.)

continued



Korchak spoke with passion and from personal experience, explaining the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and counseling how best to respond when encountering anti-Israel propaganda and untruths.

These talks were the trip's favorite moments for Swampscott high school junior Liora Ragozin. "Charlotte taught me about why I am a Zionist," she stated. During the history part of the lesson, Liora learned that Jews are native to Israel. That historical fact inspired and empowered her.

Ely Wallen most enjoyed celebrating Shabbat at the Western Wall on Friday evening, where Israelis welcomed the American teens into their dancing circles. "I got a whole new perspective on how Judaism can be practiced," he said. Now that he is more familiar with Jewish and Israeli history, he understands better why so many Jews are religious and observant and is more open to the idea.

Since Y2I, Ely feels more connected to Judaism, prouder of being Jewish, and more comfortable wearing a Jewish star in an area of the North Shore where he's one of the few Jewish kids. He's maintaining ties with his new Y2I friends, and is even recruiting a "bunch" to join his local B'nai Brith Youth Organization (BBYO).

Meeting with Israeli teens and hearing their perspectives on Israel, a "place we pray for all the time," provided the moments when Eliza Naftoly felt most immersed in Israeli culture. The experience was hardly one-sided. The Israeli teens – her first foreign friends – were just as curious about what being a teen in America was like. They still stay in touch by texting each other frequently.

One of her Israeli friends gave her a bracelet with a Hebrew inscription, which she wears every day. Recently, while shopping with her mother, the teenage cashier noticed her bracelet and shared that she, too, was Jewish. Eliza told her about her Y2I experience, recommending she check it out.

"This was something that had never happened to me before, where I was able to connect with another Jewish teen. It's all because of this unique experience I had. Even back home, that bracelet is helping me," she said.

For Eliza, the biggest takeaway of Y2I was how she can now share her experience, knowledge about Israel, and personal stories to educate others about Israel. "It's really amazing. I have my own fully formed perspective of Israel now. This trip will be special forever and I will remember it forever." she said.

Robert Israel Lappin envisioned Y2I as a life-changing adventure that would teach valuable advocacy skills and educate the next generation of Jewish leaders while igniting Jewish teens' curiosity and fostering self-discovery and independence. Thanks to the generous support from hundreds of donors and CJP, his dream lives on as a reality.







IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Excerpts of Post-Trip Reflections of Y2I Teens

Before the trip, I had chosen to keep my identity a secret in order to avoid any potential mistreatment because of it, but after the trip, I can finally say I am proud to be Jewish, proud to associate myself with the people of Israel, as I have seen first-hand what Jewish resistance looks like and feels like.

GUS CORDINGLEY

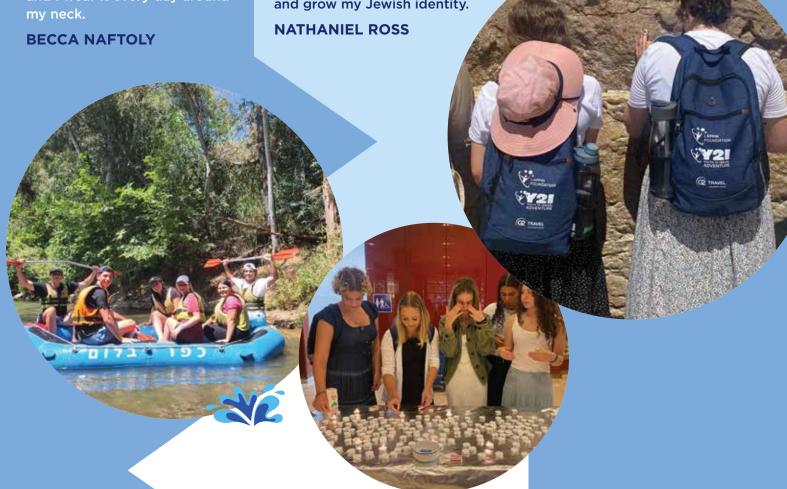
Y2I also taught me not to hide my identity as a Jew, but rather to show it with pride. I took that message back home with me in the form of a necklace, and I wear it every day around my neck. Living under the constant shadow of violence taints life in Israel, but the depth and richness of its culture and history, along with my personal experiences, have only magnified my desire to return and delve deeper into understanding this diverse nation.

DANIEL KAIE

Israel showed me the true diversity of Jewish life in an unimaginable way and offered me a new, invaluable understanding of what it means to be Jewish.

MADDIE GOLDMAN

On this journey, I realized that staying Jewish doesn't require a physical presence in Israel. It's about carrying the lessons and experiences with me, wherever life takes me. Engaging with my Jewish traditions, studying our history, and being an active part of the community are how I nurture and grow my Jewish identity.





OCTOBER 7, 2023

We remember.

We mourn.

We hope.

We stand with Israel.