



Jewish Federation
of Madison

2025

YEAR IN REVIEW

We Are Stronger Together



A Message of Thanks

From Our Board President and Interim Managing Director

We live in complicated times, with difficult challenges both abroad and here at home. In moments like these, the strength of community matters more than ever. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks wrote, “when the winds blow the hardest, we need the deepest roots.” This year, our community showed the strength of those roots. Volunteers, staff, donors, and community members stepped forward again and again to support one another and sustain vibrant Jewish life in Madison. We are deeply grateful to everyone who helped meet the challenges of this year with generosity, care, and commitment.

The Jewish Federation of Madison reflects the voice, needs, and values of our community. Behind every allocation and initiative is a personal story: a family finding belonging, a child discovering confidence, or someone receiving support in a moment of need. As part of our commitment to global Jewish responsibility, our overseas allocations supported programs that promote shared society in Israel, strengthen minority communities, advance religious pluralism, provide emergency assistance to trauma victims, and expand access to mental health care. We also increased our support for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), helping address urgent Jewish social service needs in Jewish communities around the world.

Here in Madison, the Federation continued to invest in experiences that strengthen Jewish life across generations. 622 children and teens

participated in Camp Shalom and NOBO, supported by 169 staff members, nearly half of whom were once campers themselves, reflecting the leadership pipeline our camps continue to nurture. 103 campers and 25 staff gathered for Winter Camp, while 45 children attended Gan HaYeled Preschool, where play-based learning is rooted in Jewish values and culture.

Ensuring that these experiences remain accessible continues to be a priority. Camp scholarships totaling \$81,992 supported 43 campers, while \$15,000 in preschool scholarships helped families participate in Gan HaYeled. Teens deepened their Jewish learning through Midrasha Hebrew High School, while adults built connection through initiatives like the Active Jewish Adults Hiking Group, strengthening relationships across our community.

As we reflect on the year behind us and look toward the year ahead, we are reminded that Jewish community is sustained not only by tradition, but by the ways we continue to build and strengthen it together. The future is shaped through countless stubborn acts of people who refuse to give up on mercy, justice, and love. These acts help us endure difficult moments, preserve continuity, and build a future grounded in unity and hope.

With your partnership, we remain stronger together.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robyn Sperling".

Robyn Sperling
Interim Managing Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Minkoff".

Deborah Minkoff
Board President

Preparing for the Next Chapter: CEO Search Underway

This year, the Jewish Federation of Madison began an important process to identify the next Chief Executive Officer who will guide our community into its next chapter. The Federation's Board of Directors launched a thoughtful and inclusive search designed to ensure strong leadership for the future. Leadership transitions provide an opportunity not only to find a new leader, but also to reflect on our shared priorities and aspirations for Jewish life in Madison.

To lead this effort, the Federation's Executive Committee formed a search committee made up of board leaders and community members. The committee, co-chaired by Lainie Minkoff and Becca Youngerman, is partnering with the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), which is assisting with a national search process designed to attract strong candidates from across the Jewish communal landscape. Together, they developed a comprehensive position description that reflects the Federation's mission, priorities, and the unique character of the Madison Jewish community.

Throughout the early stages of the process, the committee prioritized listening and learning.

Conversations with staff, board members, and community partners helped identify the qualities and leadership strengths that will best serve our community. These conversations also helped surface the values, opportunities, and challenges that will shape the Federation's work in the coming years. These discussions reinforced the importance of a leader who can deepen relationships, strengthen partnerships across the Jewish and broader Madison community, and continue building a culture of philanthropy and engagement.

As the search moves into its recruitment phase, the committee is working with JFNA to conduct broad national outreach to identify outstanding candidates. Early outreach is already generating interest, and board members and community leaders are helping to spread the word and connect the search with networks across the Jewish communal world.

The search committee and Executive Committee remain committed to a thoughtful and thorough process. The goal is to find a leader who will build on the Federation's strong foundation and help guide our community with vision, collaboration, and purpose in the years ahead.

Our Mission

To inspire, build, and sustain vibrant Jewish life by fostering diverse opportunities to connect at every age and mobilizing our community in common purpose in Madison, Israel, and around the world.

Our Vision

A flourishing, engaged, inclusive Jewish community in a thriving world - today and always.

Our Values

**Klal Yisrael | the collective unity of the Jewish people
Tzedakah | the obligation to care for those in need
Tikkun Olam | the repairing of the world
Torah | the commitment to lifelong Jewish learning**

Current Jewish Federation of Madison Staff & Leadership

Officers & Executive Committee

Acting President: **Deborah Minkoff**
Vice President (first): **Dan Weiss**
Vice President (second): **Jeremy Tunis**
Vice President (third): **Lainie Minkoff**
General Secretary: **Beth Schreiber**
Treasurer: **Douglas Berry**
Assistant Treasurer: **Livia Asher**
At-Large: **Joel Minkoff, Diane Seder, William Haus**

Board Members (Non-Executive Committee)

Mark Aronson, Rob Asen, Debbie Blitz, Rita German, Marci Gittleman, Shira Goldman, Yolanda Gorman, Jacob Harris, Marta Karlov, Barry Klemons, Amy Krauthamer-Maloney, Don Miner, Sarah Minkoff, Judy Pierotti, Michelle Poliak-Tunis, Linda Reivitz, Beth Schreiber, Robyn Sperling, Gerald Sternberg, Ziva Wear

Honorary

Hannah Rosenthal

Executive Director Emeritus

Steven H. Morrison

Ex-Officio

Rabbi Betsy Forester (Beth Israel Center), Rabbi Yona Matusof (Chabad of Madison), Rabbi Jon Prosnit (Temple Beth El), Rabbi Laurie Zimmerman (Congregation Shaarei Shamayim)

Past Presidents

Kathy Blumenfeld, Fred Gants, William Haus, Sasha Kerlow, Mark Laufman, Deborah Minkoff, Joel Minkoff, Thomas Palay, Lester Pines, Alicia Schiff, Diane Seder, Marc Shovers, Joe Shumow, James Stein, James Youngerman

Staff

Robyn Sperling, Interim Managing Director
Kaite Batina, Office and Database Manager
Svetlana Govorukha, Finance Director
Marla Becker, Gan HaYeled Preschool Director
Ellen Weismer, Camp Shalom Director
Logan Bookstaff, Camp Shalom Assistant Director and Camp Shalom Noar-Bogrim (NOBO) Director
Shoshana Prager, Communications Director
Bar, Israeli Shaliach
Debbie Blitz, Interim Co-Midrasha Director
Parthy Schachter, Interim Co-Midrasha Director

Committee & Panel Chairs

Budget and Finance: **Douglas Berry**
Camp Shalom: **Mark Aronson**
Communications: **Yolanda Gorman and Sarah Minkoff**
Community Grants: **Deborah Minkoff**
Community Relations: **Marc Shovers and Jeremy Tunis**
Fundraising and Development (FRD)/Annual Campaign 2025: **Deborah Minkoff and Dan Weiss**
Gan HaYeled: **Anna Edelstein**
Goodman Campus: **Joel Minkoff**
Local Agencies and Services Panel: **Linda Reivitz**
Local Security Committee: **John Lind and Ari Friedman**
Midrasha: **Dana Prager and Lynn Renner**
Nominating and Leadership & Board Development: **Douglas Berry**
Overseas and National Panel: **Deborah Minkoff**
Strategic Planning Oversight: **Lainie Minkoff**
Yom HaShoah: **Livia Asher and Paul Grossberg**

Mazel Tov, Svetlana!

20 Years of Service to the Jewish Federation of Madison



Svetlana began her career at JFM as a Russian-speaking office assistant/receptionist during the height of our Russian Resettlement period. With a background in finance, Svetlana took on some bookkeeping responsibilities in that role. Her strong work ethic, ability to learn quickly, and ability to grow with expanded responsibilities were evident

from the start. Svetlana was promoted to Finance Director in 2008, and her outstanding contributions were recognized with the Andrea Stein Jewish Professional Award in 2017. Join us in thanking Svetlana Govorukha for over 20 years of service to JFM and the Jewish community of Madison.

2025 Award Ceremony

At this year's 85th Annual Meeting, held on November 18, 2025, over 90 community members gathered, and we recognized people for their leadership. Benjamin R. Minkoff is this year's Miriam Singer Sulman Young Leadership Award winner. Deborah Hoffman (z"l) received the Jewish Community Professional Award named for Andrea Stein, of blessed memory. It is with a heavy heart that we share that Deborah passed away in January 2026, shortly after receiving this well-deserved honor. Merle and Gerald Sternberg received the Ben Minkoff Volunteer Service Award for their devotion to our community. A surprise recipient, Livia Asher, received the Alex Temkin Distinguished Service Award.

Mazel Tov! Congratulations to our 2025 Award Recipients!



Deborah Hoffman z'l
Andrea J. Stein
Jewish Community
Professional Award



Benjamin R. Minkoff
Miriam Singer
Sulman Young
Leadership Award



Livia Asher
Alex Temkin
Distinguished
Service Award



Merle Sternberg
Ben Minkoff Volunteer
Service Award



Gerald Sternberg
Ben Minkoff Volunteer
Service Award

Annual Campaign Kickoff 2025

Our 2025 Annual Tzedakah Campaign kicked off with Kolot HaKehilah (Voices of the Community), a truly inspiring evening celebrating the strength and resilience of Jewish Madison. Through powerful personal stories, we saw firsthand how Federation programs transform lives. The night was brightened by a spirited performance from UW-Madison's Jewop A Cappella and delicious desserts from Adamah. Your presence and generosity fuel our work all year long. We are stronger together.



The Rising Need for Security in Jewish Spaces

A definition adopted in 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, an intergovernmental organization, identifies antisemitism as a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

It is sometimes masked as anti-Israel criticism, though we know the difference. Antisemitism can be expressed through words, actions, or violence – and we’ve seen it rise by more than 350% since the 10/7/23 Hamas invasion of Israel.

Antisemitism has become an escalating global crisis, leading to a critical and urgent need for enhanced security in Jewish communal spaces. The year 2025 has been marked by a series of horrific targeted attacks that underscore this danger.

Major Incidents in 2025

- *Harrisburg, PA (April 13)*: An attacker targeted Governor Josh Shapiro’s home during Passover with Molotov cocktails. The perpetrator cited opposition to Israel’s actions in Gaza as the motive.
- *Washington, D.C. (May 21)*: Two Israeli Embassy employees were shot and killed outside the Capital Jewish Museum following a reception. The suspect faces federal hate crime and terrorism charges.
- *Boulder, CO (June 1)*: An individual attacked a peaceful hostage-release walk using a makeshift flamethrower and Molotov cocktails. Several were injured, and an 82-year-old woman died from her injuries.
- *Bondi Beach, Australia (December 14)*: Gunmen opened fire on a “Chanukah by the Sea” festival, killing 15 people and wounding dozens. Authorities labeled the mass shooting an act of antisemitic terrorism.

While these incidents are reported from 2025, we note that other incidents have already occurred in 2026, including a major targeted attack in the Detroit, MI area in March 2026.

Recent data and local shifts highlight a troubling rise in hostility toward the Jewish community, moving security from a preference to a necessity.

Findings from ADL Survey on Public Sentiment Regarding Antisemitism (July 2025)

While 60% of Americans recognize antisemitism as a serious national problem, a significant minority holds extremist views:

- 24% find attacks on Jewish targets “understandable,” while 13% view them as “justified.”
- 24% of respondents believe these incidents are “false flag” operations.
- 27% believe Jews in America should answer for the actions of Israel

Our Local Madison Community Response

As hostility has surged since October 2023, safety has become a fundamental requirement for Jewish life around the world and in Madison. The Jewish Federation of Madison is taking the following actions:

- Pivoting away from traditional “open door” policies.
- Hardened Security: Shifting from “performative” measures (unarmed greeters) to restricted access and protected facilities.
- Emergency Protocol: Solidifying clear safety and security procedures for the Jewish Federation of Madison and Gan HaYeled Preschool staff.

Accepting the new, harsh reality, maintaining safety now requires significant financial and emotional investment, fundamentally changing how the local community operates.

Reporting Antisemitism

If you have experienced an incident of antisemitism, extremism, bias, bigotry, or identity-based hate or discrimination, please report it to the Jewish Federation of Madison website using our incident form at: jewishmadison.org/report-hate

The Jewish Federation of Madison will follow up with you and the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Resilience in Action: Supporting our Global Family

While local impact is our priority, our commitment to the global Jewish community remains strong. This year, we focused on identity, rescue, and supporting those sustaining Jewish life worldwide. By partnering with Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), we turn collective resources into essential lifelines.

Cultivating Our Connection to Israel

Our connection to Israel is rooted in its people and the values we share. This year, our funding prioritized programs that support Israel's most vulnerable. We focused on shared society initiatives and trauma recovery, ensuring that every citizen has the support they need to rebuild. Through the Israel Education Center (IEC), we have moved beyond the news headlines to highlight the richness of Israeli culture, arts, and innovation. By fostering direct connections, we ensure that our community's bond with Israel remains personal, meaningful, and grounded in our shared heritage.

Resilience in Ukraine

As the conflict in Ukraine continues, our mission has shifted from emergency evacuation to long-term survival. Through the JDC and JFNA, we have provided a critical safety net for Jews who choose to remain in the country. Our support has funded safe

spaces offering heat, electricity, and community during blackouts, and delivered life-saving winter supplies to the elderly and the poor. We are also funding trauma support centers that provide mental health services to families managing the heavy burden of life away from home.

The French Aliyah

The resilience of the French Jewish community is central to their story. Facing rising challenges in Western Europe, thousands of French Jews have made the life-changing decision to return to Israel. We are proud to have provided the practical tools and personal support required for this transition through our partner organizations, such as JAFI. From language immersion to employment placement, our contributions helped ensure that for French immigrants, Aliyah was not a move of necessity, but a purposeful step toward a vibrant future.

The Bnei Menashe of India

One of the most moving chapters of our year was the continued homecoming of the Bnei Menashe. This community in Northeastern India has maintained its Jewish traditions for thousands of years. This year, they set out on their long journey home. The Bnei Menashe is a powerful reminder that the Jewish story is global, multi-ethnic, and deeply interconnected.

Community Relations Committee: Advocacy, Education, and Community Engagement

Over the past year, the Jewish Federation of Madison's Community Relations Committee (CRC) continued to strengthen relationships across the broader community while advocating for Jewish safety, understanding, and civic engagement.

The CRC's central focus was on advocacy addressing antisemitism. CRC members worked with the Wisconsin Jewish Conference and the Milwaukee Jewish Federation's JCRC to support legislation (AB446) adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism in Wisconsin. AB446 passed both houses of the legislature with bipartisan support and will become law with the Governor's signature. CRC members also participated with JCRC in legislative advocacy days at the State Capitol on issues important to our communities.

Education and dialogue remained another pillar of CRC programming. In February, the CRC hosted Gil Hoffman, executive director of HonestReporting and former chief political correspondent for The Jerusalem Post, for a well-attended event at Temple Beth El (TBE). Hoffman shared insights on global media coverage of Israel, the post-October 7th information environment, and how communities can better recognize and respond to misinformation and bias.

The CRC supported the Federation's annual Yom HaShoah program featuring distinguished Holocaust historian, Northwestern University professor Peter Hayes, who explored the rise of Nazi antisemitism and the broader failures that allowed the Holocaust to unfold.

The CRC also co-sponsored a Juneteenth program at TBE featuring Tom Jacobson, Holocaust survivor, passenger on the MS St. Louis, and pioneering Milwaukee civil rights attorney who represented key leaders of Milwaukee's civil rights movement.

Locally, CRC leaders engaged with Madison Metropolitan School District administrators and school leadership to discuss concerns about antisemitism and anti-Israel rhetoric in schools following the October 7 attacks and the Israel-Hamas war. These conversations emphasized belonging, accurate historical context, and respectful dialogue while ensuring Jewish students and families feel supported.

Through advocacy, education, and community partnership, the CRC continues working to strengthen understanding and build relationships across the Madison community.

2025 | Commitment to our Programs

Gan HaYeled Preschool



As I reflect on this past year at Gan HaYeled, it is often the small moments in our classrooms that stay with me: children helping one another, solving problems together, and learning how to care for their community.

At the heart of our work is b'tzelem Elohim, the belief that every person is created in the image of God. This year our educators continued to focus on nurturing the whole child by reflecting on each child's development and intentionally creating experiences that support growth across many areas. Children's interests help shape the daily flow of the classroom, and teachers collaborate closely to support each child in ways that best meet their needs.

Each educator also brings unique gifts to our community, whether filling the halls with guitar music, inviting children into immersive art

experiences, organizing shared spaces, or presenting at professional conferences.

Our sense of kehillah continued to grow. We welcomed five new Israeli families, enriching our classrooms with additional language, culture, and connection to Israel. More families also joined our Pyramid Model Leadership Team, helping guide our shared learning and support for the social, emotional and behavioral well-being of the children. This spirit of community was especially visible at our end-of-year celebration, where more than 150 people gathered together.

Gan HaYeled also continued to reach beyond our classrooms. Through a City of Madison grant, we hosted Positive Solutions for Families workshops and Intensive Intervention workshops focused on supporting children's social and emotional development. We were especially proud to offer a Spanish-language series, helping expand access and connect with more families across the Madison community.

Throughout the year we witnessed chesed in action among the children. Three-year-olds reminded one another to be safe and kind, and children often checked in on friends who were hurt or upset.

Our community also continues to explore tikkun olam, the idea that we can help care for the world and for one another. This year our families participated in food drives supporting people in need. Children also practiced caring for their environment and shared spaces, learning that even small actions, like letting plants continue to grow, can make a difference.

As I look back on the year, I feel grateful for the ways children, educators, and families continue to shape Gan HaYeled into a warm and vibrant kehillah, where Jewish values are not only taught, but lived each day.

-Marla Becker, Gan HaYeled Preschool Director

Women's Philanthropy



This year, JFM launched a new Women's Philanthropy initiative, creating meaningful opportunities for women in our community to connect, learn, and engage more deeply with the Federation's work. The program was created to strengthen leadership, build connections, and expand the role women play in shaping and supporting our community.

Women's Philanthropy is part of a broader network through JFNA, where women across communities lead philanthropic efforts, support critical initiatives, and help shape the future of Jewish life.

JFM hosted a special Women's Philanthropy gathering last December that brought together women from across the Madison Jewish community for a morning of inspiration, conversation, and connection. The event featured two remarkable guest speakers: Shira Phelps, Executive Director of the Office of Crime Victim Services at the Wisconsin Department of Justice, and Orit Sulitzeanu, Executive Director of the Association of Rape Crisis Centers in Israel.

Through powerful personal stories and reflections, the speakers highlighted the strength and leadership of women in times of crisis and the critical role women play in building resilient communities. The gathering created space for thoughtful dialogue and meaningful connections among women across the Madison Jewish community.

The enthusiasm around the event made it clear that women in our community are eager to grow a vibrant Women's Philanthropy network in Madison. Building on this momentum, JFM looks forward to hosting another gathering in coming months as women continue to connect, lead, and make a meaningful difference together. Stay tuned for more opportunities to get involved.

- Lainie Minkoff, Volunteer at Women's Philanthropy

Active Jewish Adults Hiking Group



Did you know that you can hike along a new boardwalk trail near Lake Kegonsa? Or that you can hike past an Osprey nest after being above Rock Lake? Or that you could see the beautiful colors overlooking the Wisconsin River Valley from Blue Mounds? If you hiked with the Active Adult Hikers, these scenes are what you would have taken in on our hikes. We meet monthly during the warmer months for a 90-minute, relatively flat hike in our area, often introducing you to a park you never knew existed. We meet at the hiking area first for bagels, cream cheese, and coffee, then set off on our adventure. We finish off feeling good after spending time with others out in nature. Most of the hiking areas we go to are in Dane County, and we have yet to repeat one. But we all have our favorites!

- Marsha Cohen, Volunteer at Active Jewish Adults Hiking Group

Camp Shalom



Even when weather forced us to pivot, our staff met the moment with resilience and care, reinforcing that camp is defined not by perfect conditions, but by how we show up for one another. Camp Shalom remains a place where children feel known, challenged, celebrated, and safe.

-Logan Bookstaff, Camp Shalom Assistant Director

Camp Shalom Noar-Bogrim



Camp Shalom this summer was, as always, filled with laughter, creativity, music, and connection. Each day began and ended in community, singing together, celebrating campers and counselors, and building the kind of belonging that brings families back year after year. Within that shared rhythm, each Unit developed a personality of its own. Our Unit Heads intentionally shaped experiences that were developmentally appropriate and uniquely engaging. Our youngest campers thrived in spaces filled with silliness and imaginative group adventures, while our older campers were challenged with programming that supported their growing independence and social awareness.

This summer especially highlighted our commitment to inclusion. With dedicated support staff and thoughtful planning, more campers were able to participate fully in the magic of camp. The result was not just greater access, but a stronger community where empathy, flexibility, and teamwork were modeled daily by both staff and campers.

NOBO continues to be a space where middle schoolers can stretch their independence while still feeling deeply supported. The NOBO summer is defined by choice and community. Campers explored new interests through Yitzeerah, during Kehillah, and built confidence through both on-site and off-site adventures.

Traditions like Shabbat, Maccabiah, Carnival, and overnights continue to bring an energy that only this group can create. Campers stepped into leadership roles and grew in responsibility, particularly around our new phone policy. The result was more presence, more laughter, and more genuine connection.

Our Inclusion Aide program made an equally powerful impact at NOBO, ensuring that campers with a range of needs could fully participate. Counselors worked collaboratively and flexibly, modeling maturity and care. Even when the weather disrupted plans, the whole community adapted together to nonetheless create memorable and meaningful experiences for campers.

NOBO is more than a continuation of camp; it is a bridge. It is where campers begin to see themselves not just as participants, but as leaders and future staff. It remains a vibrant community rooted in friendship and growth.

-Logan Bookstaff, Camp Shalom Noar-Bogrim Director



Winter Camp offers a different kind of magic, quieter and rooted in the heart of our community. Held during the week of the New Year, these four days bring campers together in a season that invites both adventure and connection.

With fewer campers, the campus feels tranquil. At Shalom, campers spend their days sledding down the hills, building snowmen, creating winter-themed projects in Omanut, exploring nature in Teva, and gathering for rally. With smaller groups, friendships deepen, and staff are able to connect with campers in meaningful ways.

At NOBO, winter becomes an adventure. Campers head off-site to ski, snowboard, rock climb, and even try ice fishing. These experiences

challenge them, build confidence, and create unforgettable memories. With a much smaller group than in the summer, conversations flow easily, and friendships develop quickly.

Though Winter Camp looks different from summer, the spirit is the same. It is a reminder that camp is not defined by sunshine, but by community. Even in the coldest days of the year, Camp Shalom remains a place of warmth and joy.

-Logan Bookstaff, Camp Shalom Assistant Director



Midrasha Hebrew High School is a program in which the Jewish Federation of Madison, in partnership with Beth Israel Center, Congregation Shaarei Shamayim, and Temple Beth El, provides students in grades 8-12 with experiences and educational opportunities that will strengthen their Jewish identity and encourage and stimulate their desire to learn about their heritage. This year, students took core classes in Jewish education and chose between electives including Judaism and Mindfulness, Moral Dilemmas, Israel Tour, Jewish Mythology, Torah Stories, and Jewish Comedy. About a quarter of Midrasha students chose to study Hebrew, too! All Jewish students in the community who will be entering grades 8-12 are encouraged to join this enriching program next school year.

- Debbie Blitz & Parthy Schachter, Co-Interim Midrasha Directors

Spotlight from our Israeli Shaliach, Bar



One of the things I've loved most about serving as the Israeli Emissary to the Jewish Federation of Madison is how alive and vibrant Jewish life feels here. From large community celebrations to small, meaningful conversations, I've had the privilege of sharing Israel not as an abstract idea, but as something joyful, human, and deeply connected to all of us.

Over the past months, I've been lucky to take part in programs that brought people together across ages and spaces. At the Purim Carnival, I led a station filled with energy, laughter, and holiday spirit. During winter camp with Camp Shalom and NOBO, I ran hands-on programs, including a hummus-making competition that used food, play, and creativity to open a window into Israeli culture.

One especially meaningful moment was leading the program portion of the Federation's Annual Meeting, "7 Stories from October 7th." While the subject matter was heavy, the experience itself was powerful - coming together as a community to listen, reflect, and stand in solidarity with Israel during a challenging time.

I also had the joy of working with our youngest community members. I led a Tu Bi'Shvat program for Gan Hayaed that focused on growth, nature, and our connection to the land of Israel. At a community Hanukkah celebration, I ran a dreidel decorating station and shared the story behind the letters on the dreidel, turning a familiar tradition into a moment of learning and connection.

What stands out to me most is the warmth and openness of this community. I'm grateful for the enthusiasm, curiosity, and partnership I've felt

every step of the way, and I'm excited to continue strengthening the bond between Madison and Israel.

-Bar, Israeli Shaliach

PJ Library



PJ Library, locally administered by JFM, continues to serve as a gateway into Jewish life for families across the Madison Jewish community. Reaching children from birth through age 12 with carefully curated books and media, PJ Library introduces families to Jewish values and traditions in ways that are accessible, meaningful, and engaging.

For many in the Madison Jewish community, PJ Library is the first step in their Jewish journey. Through monthly stories, families explore holidays, customs, and life cycle moments while gaining a deeper understanding of Jewish life historically and globally. These touch points spark conversation, strengthen family connections, and build lasting traditions rooted in Jewish learning.

Since 2023, JFM has worked to grow PJ Library beyond book delivery by building opportunities for deeper family engagement within the Madison Jewish community. Looking ahead, JFM is committed to enhancing relationship-building, developing meaningful programming, and deepening partnerships with local Jewish organizations. By creating more ways for families to connect and empowering parents to take an active role in their Jewish journeys, PJ Library is poised to become an even more dynamic and engaging force in community life.

- Robyn Sperling, Interim Managing Director

The Year in Review 2025 by the numbers

45 children

enrolled this fall at Gan HaYeled Preschool
experienced play-based learning
founded on Jewish values and culture

361 children and 284 families

receive storybooks through PJ Library each month

6 projects in Madison received Community Grants through Cheryl Rosen Weston Fund of up to **\$10K each**



622 kids

in grades K-9 filling **1029 spots** Camp Shalom & Camp Shalom Noar-Bogrim enjoyed a fun, safe camp experience

103 campers and 25 staff enjoyed 4 days of fun during Winter School Break at Camp Shalom

120 people hiked **16 miles** across Dane County over **6 hikes** with our Active Jewish Adults 55+ hiking group. **110 bagels** eaten. Countless cups of coffee drunk.

Camp Shalom Scholarship Fund awarded **\$81,992** to **43 campers**

37 teens

experienced meaningful Jewish learning & exploration over fall/winter at Midrasha Hebrew High School

\$13,740 scholarships distributed to Gan HaYeled Preschool families

Promoted respect for diverse expressions of Judaism in Israel as **1 of 28** Federations and Foundations in the iRep coalition

169 staff at Camp Shalom and Noar-Bogrim during the summer **76** were previous campers



8 Midrasha Graduates in the class of 2025 all graduates qualified for Midrasha Incentive Awards

2,325 Day Passes and **119 Summer Pool Memberships** sold at the Goodman Aquatic Center
800+ lap swims registered

Agencies & Programs We Fund

Jewish Federation of Madison Programs

- Active Jewish Adults (50+) Hiking Group
- Camp Shalom and Camp Shalom Noar-Bogrim
- Community Relations Committee (CRC)
- Goodman Aquatic Center
- Hilde L. Mosse Gan HaYeled Preschool
- Irwin A. & Robert D. Goodman Jewish Community Campus
- Midrasha Hebrew High School
- PJ Library Madison
- Shalom Madison & Shalom Baby
- The Madison Area Jewish Education Scholarship Fund
- Women's Philanthropy

Local Community and Federation Events

- Community Purim Carnival
- Hava Nagila Jewish Community Picnic
- Madison and Dane County MLK Day Observance
- Yom HaZikaron Commemoration
- Yom HaAtzmaut Celebration
- Yom HaShoah Service & Program

Local Beneficiary Agencies

- Chabad at UW
- Jewish Burial Association of Madison (JBAM)
- Jewish Social Services (JSS)
- UW Hillel Foundation
- Wisconsin Jewish Conference

2025 Community Grant Recipients through the Cheryl Rosen Weston (CRW) Fund

- Congregation Shaarei Shamayim (CSS) was awarded a grant for Shared Journeys: Fostering Unity and Support for Immigrants.
- Legal Action WI: Barriers for Employment Clinics.
- One City Schools: Building Bright Futures: Empowering Students Through Volunteer Tutoring.
- Nuestro Mundo: Jewish and Hispanic Holidays and Traditions in a Box.
- Jason Terry was awarded a grant for Skills Drills Basketball Mental Health Camp.
- UW-Madison was awarded a grant for the Shalom Curriculum Project (SCP).

National Beneficiary Agencies

- ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
- HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society)
- Jewish Council for Public Affairs
- Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA)
- Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA)
- NCJW (National Council of Jewish Women)

Overseas Beneficiary Agencies & Initiatives

- iRep (Israel Religious Expression Platform)
- Israel Relief & Rebuilding Fund (JFNA)
- The Jewish Agency for Israel
- JDC (American Joint Distribution Committee)
- Taglit-Birthright Israel





Thank You 2025 Donors!

You make everything we do possible.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Jewish Federation of Madison! **Thanks to the generosity of 412 donor households to the 2025 Annual Tzedakah Campaign, we raised \$862,630** - essential funds that build and sustain flourishing Jewish communities here in Madison and worldwide. We are deeply grateful to campaign co-chairs Debbie Minkoff and Dan Weiss for their dedication and leadership and the many volunteers whose hard work and commitment were critical to the campaign's success (see page 18). Thank you to everyone who generously donated to our recent urgent campaigns. With your partnership, we accomplish so much good together. Your support provided \$68,862 for the Camp Shalom Scholarship Fund, \$5,780 for the Emergency Israel Campaign, \$52,823 for the Camp Shalom Playground, and \$2,174 for Camp Operations.



Annual Tzedakah Campaign

Nevi'im (Prophets) Society

\$50,000-99,999

Jonathan and Susan Lipp

Monhigim (Leaders) Society

\$25,000 to \$49,999

Irving and Dorothy Levy Family Foundation Inc.

Thomas M. Palay and Diane S. Gutmann

Diane Seder and Bruce Rosen

Frances Weinstein z"l

Allen and Ruth Zacharias

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Chai (Life) Club

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Todah Rabah! Thank You!

We do our best to ensure that the donor list is accurate; we apologize for any errors or omissions. We are truly grateful for your support, and if you are not represented correctly, please let us know so that we may accurately acknowledge your gift in the future. Donor list as of Fiscal Year, March 1, 2025-February 28, 2026.

Thank You Annual Tzedakah Campaign Ambassadors!

A big thank you to our campaign ambassadors – those who made calls, sent emails, hosted and planned events, and more. Thank you for sharing your valuable time and talents with us to support our mission and the important work we do. Your partnership makes everything we do for our community possible! Thank you for helping to create moments in 2026 – and beyond.

Douglas Berry, Melanie Cohen, Fred Gants, Rita German, Yolanda Gorman, Paul Grossberg, William Haus, Ann Imig, Sasha Kerlow, Alan Klugman, Amy Krauthamer-Maloney, Ben Minkoff, Debbie Minkoff, Lainie Minkoff, Joel Minkoff, Sarah Minkoff, Linda Reivitz, Diane Seder, Marc Shovers, Joe Shumow, Gerald Sternberg, Jeremy Tunis, Dan Weiss, Nan Youngerman

Tree of Life Orchard in Memory of Dennis Bauer

Our Tree Planting Initiative offered a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the Goodman Jewish Community Campus. Dennis Bauer was a beloved friend of our community, and during his 54 years at Bauer Builders, he was instrumental in countless projects, including many within the Jewish community.

Through this initiative, community members could plant a tree to honor, remember, or celebrate a loved one. Over three separate days, we planted 100 trees, 50 apple and 50 oak, at the Goodman Jewish Community Campus.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who donated or volunteered their time to support this initiative! Your generosity fosters continued growth within our community and helps the Jewish Federation of Madison advance its mission of inspiring, building, and sustaining vibrant Jewish life.

Trees Donated	Donor Name	Tribute
25	Brad Bauer	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
25	David and Sue Minkoff	In Memory of Ben and Evelyn Minkoff
23	Jewish Federation of Madison	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
7	Linda Bauer	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
7	Tawnya Bauer and Rich Weiss	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
2	Karla Abplanalp	In Memory of James Abplanalp and Dennis Bauer
1	Livia Asher	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
1	April Barker	In Honor of Jennifer Dana Stein
1	Stanley and Rosetta Bauer	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
1	Lorrie and Barry Klemons	In Honor of our grandsons - Solomon and Ezra Klemons
1	Randy and Carrie Kyle	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
1	Jordan and Jessie Loeb	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
1	Caren Minkoff and Ari Lampear	In Honor of Joel Minkoff
1	Michael and Elaine Minkoff	In Honor of Lita Zemmol
1	Steven Morrison and Goldie Kadushin	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
1	Diane Seder and Bruce Rosen	In Memory of Dennis Bauer
1	Beth Schreiber and Russell Kahn	In Memory of Judy Schreiber



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Upcoming 2026 Events

Stay tuned for additional events throughout the year!

Community Yom HaShoah Service & Program

Monday, April 13 • 7:00-9:00 PM

Join us to honor local survivors and their families. Led by clergy and members of the Madison Jewish community, the service will be followed by a special program.

Active Jewish Adults (50+) Breakfast & Hike

Wednesday, April 29 • 9:30-11:30 AM

Join our monthly group to explore the area's best trails and enjoy the outdoors with the Madison Jewish community. This series runs April-November (weather permitting).

Yom Ha'Zikaron: Recipe with a Memory

Tuesday, April 21 • 6:00-8:00 PM

Cook the favorite recipes of fallen IDF soldiers and share their stories. Join our Israeli Shaliach for an intergenerational gathering focused on memory and connection.

Choosing Life: From Survival to Resilience

Thursday, April 30 • 7:00-9:00 PM

In this personal testimony, Kibbutz Nir Oz resident Barak Morag shares his story of survival from October 7th and discusses the community's resilient journey to rebuild through solidarity.

Midrasha Hebrew High School Try It Night

Wednesday, April 22 • 7:00-9:00 PM

All Jewish 7th-11th graders, regardless of synagogue affiliation or congregation, are invited to try Midrasha! Parents are invited to join Midrasha committee members and other parents.

Hava Nagila Jewish Community Picnic

Sunday, August 30 • Time TBD

Join the Madison Jewish community for our annual summer celebration with music, dancing, games, swimming, and food for all ages.

Yom Ha'Atzmaut Party

Sunday, April 26 • 12:00-3:00 PM

Join the Madison Jewish community for Israeli food and fun for all ages! Enjoy a bounce house, scavenger hunt, and activity stations for everyone.

SEE MORE details, view the locations, register, and volunteer at jewishmadison.org/our-events