



JFM *focus*

THE POWER OF PHILANTHROPY

TISHREI 5786 | SUMMER 2025

WOMEN EMPOWERING WOMEN

WOMEN'S ENDOWMENT CELEBRATION EVENING IN MAY HIGHLIGHTS THE FUND'S INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

"If you want to lift up humanity, empower women. It is the most comprehensive, pervasive, high-leverage investment you can make in human beings." – Melinda Gates

This past May, the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba hosted the Women's Endowment Fund (WEF) Celebration evening at Congregation Shaarey Zedek. Nearly 120 philanthropists gathered to celebrate the impact of WEF and to honour one of our community's leaders: Marjorie Blankstein.

Three recent WEF grant recipients—Jewish Child and Family Service (JCFS), Gowns for Grads, and the Alzheimer's Society of Manitoba—shared stories of what the grants have accomplished. Each spoke to how WEF grants have made a meaningful difference in the lives of those they serve.

Al Benarroch, Executive Director of JCFS, described the most recent grant, which supported A New Home: Stories of Jewish Newcomer Women to Winnipeg. The project captures the settlement journeys of women new to the community.

"We were able to contract a community worker to meet one-on-one with these Jewish women, who had arrived from places like Greece, Argentina, and Israel," said Benarroch. "These women have powerful stories: stories of courage, of faith, of starting over, and of building a new life from the ground up."

Analyn Baker, representing Gowns for Grads, spoke about WEF's support, which allows the program to maintain inventory in dress sizes 18–30.

"We often get calls and emails inquiring if we have these sizes because teachers do not want to bring students to appointments to have them leave disappointed," she explained. "Over the last five seasons, an average of 38% of students attending Gowns for Grads required dresses in these sizes. But donations in this range remain limited. This is where WEF had the most significant impact."

Erin Crawford, representing the Alzheimer's Society of Manitoba, shared the impact of the Minds in Motion and Touch Quilt Project programs. The Touch Quilt Project features handmade quilts, crafted from fabrics of varied textures, providing comforting sensory stimulation for people living with dementia. Volunteers, primarily women, from churches, schools, senior centres, and quilting groups contribute their time and care to craft the quilts. Crawford presented one of these quilts as a gift to Marjorie at the celebration.

The stories were profound. As the evening concluded, it reiterated that WEF is not merely a collection of contributions. WEF is a powerful movement—women supporting women, building a stronger and more compassionate future.

Marjorie Blankstein, joined by family and friends, was celebrated for her decades of leadership. She served on the Foundation's Board and Executive in the 1980s and is now a JFM Governor. She shaped strategic planning in 2006 and 2011, supports 11 Jewish organizations through organizational endowment funds, and maintains her own named funds supporting camperships, Judaic programming, and urgent community needs through the Community Impact Fund.

Her daughter, Carol McCarton, also an endowment fundholder at the JFM, reflected on WEF's enduring impact.

"The Women's Endowment Fund evening last year left us with the message that work is yet to be done," she said. "And that work does not stop with us. It cannot stop with us. The generation before mine laid the framework, and we must ensure the torch is passed to those who will carry it further."

Thank you to all who joined in May to honour Marjorie and to celebrate the enduring strength of community philanthropy.



To learn more about the Women's Endowment Fund and how you can contribute, please contact Stephanie Casar, Director of Development & Gift Planning, by telephone at 204.202.7377 or by email at scasar@jewishfoundation.org

SWIM WITH ME!

WOMEN'S ENDOWMENT FUND GRANT HELPS CHILDREN LEARN TO SWIM

"Swimming should be a right, not a privilege," says Rishona Hyman, Owner of Aqua Essence, and Director of Swim With Me!. "Everyone needs to learn how to swim, and there shouldn't be barriers for young people to do so."

Thanks to a Women's Endowment Fund (WEF) grant, Hyman's belief was put into action for a group of girls who otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to learn.

The WEF grant funded a 10–12 week swimming and water safety program, which saw Swim With Me! partner with a school in a high-risk community for girls aged 10–13, taught by Aqua Essence's instructors.

"These girls never had access to formal lessons," says Hyman. "For some, this was their very first time in a pool. Many had never worn a bathing suit or been swimming in anything other than everyday clothing."

To navigate sensitivity and barriers around body image and cultural comfort, Swim With Me! utilized part of the grant to purchase rash guards for the girls, creating a private, welcoming environment where they could feel safe and confident.

The girls in the program received bathing suits, hygiene products, and transportation to and from lessons. The consistency of the same instructors every week helped build trust and meaningful relationships for the students, creating connections with role models in the process.

The program's impact was felt both in and out of the water, with their school reporting improvements in attendance, confidence, and social engagement. For many of these students, extracurricular activities are not accessible. This program gave them something to look forward to, providing structure and skill-building they had not felt before.

Beyond learning to swim, the girls practiced life-saving techniques, became comfortable in the water, and gained basic safety awareness.

"The drowning rate in Canada is quite high," says Hyman. "But it is also very preventable. Very basic swimming experience and water safety can have a huge impact."

Swim With Me! is about ensuring all children, regardless of their family situation, can learn how to swim.



To learn more about the Women's Endowment Fund Grants or any JFM Grants, please contact Marla Aronovitch, Director of Operations & Grants, by telephone at 204.202.7446 or by email at marla@jewishfoundation.org

A LEGACY OF CARE

A DONOR'S DREAM TO ENSURE CARE FOR THOSE OFTEN UNDERSERVED

As he celebrated his 87th birthday, Mel Fages looked not only at the years behind him but also at the future — for his family, for his community, and for the legacy he hopes to leave. Out of that reflection came a remarkable act of generosity: in the winter of 2024, Mel made a gift of shares to the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, valued at over \$1.1 million, establishing the Mel & Arlene Fages Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund.

For Mel, the Foundation has always held "important real estate" in his mind. He first served on the Board of Directors, made his first gift in 2002, and later directed life insurance policies to the JFM. This most recent gift, he says, was a natural next step.

"I have always believed in the work the Foundation is doing," he explains. "[The Foundation] is establishing longevity for our community assets, and it is important to me that we continue in that direction."

As he considered how best to shape his gift, Mel focused on an area deeply personal to him: mental health and wellness. "I find that a lot of the time, when people decide where to make gifts or what to do with their funds, things like support for mental health and resources for the elderly fall to the bottom of the pile," he says. "The aging community is somewhat forgotten."

Mel's connection to the cause is personal and immediate. Each afternoon, he visits his wife at the Simkin Centre, where he sees firsthand the quality of care and the vibrant lives residents are enjoying in their later years.

"The idea is that if we establish this fund, there will be opportunities to uplift causes close to our family," he explains. "With that being the case, I want this to be something my whole family is involved with going forward, not a one-time shot."



True to that vision, Mel involves his two daughters in every discussion regarding the fund — and has begun including his grandchildren in the process as well. Just as Mel once inherited the value of giving back, he is now ensuring that spirit carries forward to the next generation.

The Mel & Arlene Fages Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund is more than a significant act of generosity. It is a living legacy, and one that will continue to strengthen community resources, champion mental health, and honour family values for generations to come.

To learn more about your giving options contact JFM offices, by telephone at 204.477.7520 or toll-free from the US/ Canada at 1.855.284.1918 or by email at info@jewishfoundation.org

A NEW ERA OF FUN!

GAN RE'UT" (גן רעות) – FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

This October will mark the beginning of a new era of fun and excitement for families in our community.

With help from a JFM Jewish Community Impact Grant and a JFM donor's directed distribution, Asper Jewish Community Campus (AJCC), Gray Academy of Jewish Education and the Rady JCC are replacing one of their two longstanding play structures. The structure that has stood tall for 25 years will transform into a new, vibrant, and inclusive playground for Gray Academy students and local children.

"The play structure currently on our hard-top has been there for the students since we opened our doors in 1997," explains Lori Binder, Gray Academy Head of School. "It has served generations of children well, but it's time for an update."

With the grant's support, the new structure is designed to be safer, more engaging, and more accessible for all children.

"One of the main features of the new structure will be an inclusive design," she says. "Students have different needs, and experience play differently. Now all children can use the play structure to its full potential."



COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS

Built with accessibility and safety in mind, the structure will be a place for all. More than a place to climb and slide, it will be a space where students can connect, explore, and experience play to its fullest.

Whereas the previous playground was entirely one unit, the new structure includes a more modular design, creating a versatile space where kids' imaginations can run wild.

The project also breathes new life into the grounds at the AJCC. With modern design and fresh energy, the new structure offers students and visitors a visual upgrade to the campus landscape.

This project is more than just a playground renovation. It's an investment in the well-being, inclusion, and joy of current and future generations of children. The updated

play space in the community reflects AJCC's commitment to providing environments where all children can thrive, and the JFM is proud to assist them in that mission.

The project is still underway, and more funding is needed to push it over the finish line. If you're interested in contributing, please get in touch with Teresa Tataryn at the Asper Jewish Community Campus at ttataryn@ajcc.ca or 204-477-7492.



To learn more or to help grow the Community Impact Fund, please contact the JFM office at 204.477.7520 or email info@jewishfoundation.org

JFM focus BOARD MEMBER Spotlight Stephen Rosenfield

A lifelong Winnipegger, if you don't count a brief post-university stint in Australia, Stephen Rosenfield has spent more than 45 years as an accountant in Winnipeg, over 40 of which he has run his own practice. Now, he brings his expertise and experience to the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba Board of Directors.

"In your work, you always try to deliver better than the day before," he says, describing one of his core philosophies. "It is a privilege to continue having clients come to me for guidance and advice, and for them, I try to ensure that I continue to improve."

Stephen is a proud husband, father, and grandfather. Though most of his extended family has moved to Toronto or San Francisco, Stephen and his daughter are among the last of the Rosenfields still rooted in Winnipeg. "What's kept me here is my family and friends. I like to keep it simple," he reflects.

Stephen's decision to join the Foundation's Board stems from a long-standing belief in the organization's lasting impact on the community.

"I'm a big believer in the Foundation. The bottom line is that it's one of the most important charitable organizations in this city," he explains. "The capital remains in Manitoba, which is huge for me."

After years of volunteering on boards throughout the province, he now makes his way to the JFM.

"In the twilight of my career, I'm choosing to focus on one of Manitoba's most important foundations."

Stephen and his wife, Corky, have also been inspired by others who have committed to leaving a lasting legacy in the community through the Endowment Book of Life. They



plan to follow in the footsteps of those before them in the near future.

Stephen and Corky have also established multiple Community Impact Funds at the JFM, which Stephen has affectionately dubbed his 'I Love You' funds.

"People often use the words 'I love you' as a nice remark but without any weight behind it," he explains. "I decided I want there to be strength behind those words, I want people in the future to benefit in the name of those I say I love."

We welcome Stephen to our Board of Directors and are eager to benefit from the value he brings.

THE FUTURE OF GIVING

2024/2025 NEW BAR/BAT MITZVAH FUNDHOLDERS

The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba has always been guided by a vision of building for the future. At the heart of that vision is the next generation.

To help young people engage with philanthropy early on, Bar and Bat Mitzvah funds offer an opportunity for children to learn about giving while planting seeds for tomorrow.

These funds teach the importance of tzedakah and give young people the chance to make a difference in the community and to see the impact of their contributions. Each participant gains insight into community needs, experiences the satisfaction of helping others, and begins a lifelong journey of meaningful giving.

Today, there are **440** Bar and Bat Mitzvah endowment funds at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba. Collectively, these funds hold more than **\$909,670**.

In the past year, fundholders distributed over **\$11,000** to **44 different charitable organizations**. They also contributed more than **\$26,000 to the Jewish Community Campership Fund**. That support ensured that **180 children** in our community could attend camp in 2025—even when their families could not cover the full fees.

Help your child gain an understanding of community needs, earn the satisfaction of contributing, and get them started on a path of meaningful giving.



Samuel Hayes
Cosman-Sturrey



Lyla Rose Katz



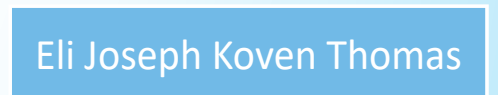
Simon Paterson



Allie Willow Brawerman



Kate Violet Lapointe



Eli Joseph Koven Thomas



When a Bar/Bat Mitzvah fund reaches **\$750**, the Nora & David^{z"l} Kaufman Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fund contributes an additional **\$250**. With the fund reaching **\$1,000**, the child will now have the ability to direct the fund's yearly distribution to a charity of their choice.

To date, the Nora & David^{z"l} Kaufman Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fund has contributed **\$82,250** to top up **329** Bar/ Bat Mitzvah Endowment Funds.

Interested in starting a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fund on behalf of a child in your family?

Contact Donor Services at 204.477.7520
Canada/U.S. toll-free 1.855.284.1918

THE POWER OF A PLAN

PHILANTHROPY IS A JOURNEY, AND WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR DREAMS



Planned giving is more than leaving a gift for the future. It ensures that an individual's values, stories, and relationships live on. It creates an impact that lasts forever. It leaves a legacy to be proud of.

There are many powerful examples of how planned giving can lead to much more than financial support. It is a pathway to community connection, leadership, and meaning. One such story is that of Naomi Levine, an Endowment Book of Life Signer in 2022.

"For most of my working life, I was involved in many organizations," Naomi reflects. "But when I retired, and had a chance to really reflect, I thought it was time to give back. I feel very lucky that my family made it to Canada and had set us up in a terrific position. I wanted to do something to honour my maternal grandparents and my parents."

With that at heart, Naomi established the Bookhalter-Levine Scholarship Fund at the JFM, which funds scholarships for students attending the University of Manitoba. For her, it was a way to uplift the next generation and pay tribute to her family and their contributions to the Jewish community, the city and the province they call home.

"My mother's father owned a garment factory, and my father's father owned a restaurant. Both were very involved in the community," she explains. "Deciding to leave a legacy gift and sign the Endowment Book of Life was easy for me. It is important to me that their names are recognized as the community grows and evolves."

Creating the endowments, setting up the scholarships, and participating in EBOL could have been the end of her involvement with the JFM, but they were the beginning.

She explained that she had felt like an outsider in the Jewish community for many years. Opting for a life without children, instead choosing to pursue education and career, she sometimes felt disconnected from traditional community paths.

"I would go to shul and feel alone," she recalls. "At times, I felt alienated. There was no place to belong."

That all changed when some community members encouraged her to get involved. With their support, Naomi began to see volunteering and leadership as avenues where she truly fit.

"I first became involved with Shaarey Zedek, and now I'm president of the Atlantic Jewish Council," she says. "It feels comfortable to be at shul because it reminds me of my family. That led me to become more involved and eventually to join committees, including the Foundation's Women's Endowment Fund Grants Committee."

Her planned gift, born from a desire to honour her parents and grandparents, became the springboard for something much larger: a deep connection to her community, a role in shaping its future, and a legacy of leadership.

If you have already made a planned gift to the JFM, but have not signed the

Endowment Book of Life, consider sharing your family's story and joining the hundreds who have already done so.

At the JFM, we can help you achieve your philanthropic goals, which look different for everyone. We will work with you to ensure your gift leaves the impact you wish for and ensures your place in the story of our Jewish Community.

We know that philanthropy looks different to everyone, and at the JFM, we embrace this. Naomi Levine found a way to engage with the JFM in a way that is meaningful to her, a way to give back to and connect with her community.

What does legacy look like to you? On November 2, the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba will host the Endowment Book of Life Signers' Brunch, an event that brings to life the stories of this year's Signers.

The morning will be a celebration of commitment, vision, and community. It will gather those who have already chosen planned giving and those considering the meaningful step of leaving a legacy.

To attend the Endowment Book of Life Signers' Brunch or to learn more about planned giving at the JFM, please contact Pam Minuk at 204-477-7520 or pminuk@jewishfoundation.org



JEWISH FOUNDATION
OF MANITOBA

Endowment
Book of Life
2025 Signers' Brunch

NOV 2
TWENTY TWENTY-FIVE

10:30AM - 12PM
CONGREGATION SHAAREY ZEDEK

FOR TICKETS - EMAIL [INFO@JEWISHFOUNDATION.ORG](mailto:info@jewishfoundation.org) OR CALL 204.477.7520
ADULTS - \$36 CHILDREN - \$20

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE OUR 2025 SIGNERS!

Your Generosity at Work

Thanks to fundholders like you, the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba helps organizations deliver programs and services that make a difference in people’s lives.

Jewish Community Impact and Ongoing Grants

In spring 2025, the Board of Directors of the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba approved the following Jewish Community Impact grants.

Birthright Israel Foundation of Canada \$25,000
Support provided for **Birthright Israel Manitoba**, giving young adults a transformative Israel experience that strengthens Jewish identity and lifelong community engagement.

B’nai Brith Jewish Community Camp \$25,000
Support provided to expand housing and programming for the **Staff-in-Training Program**, building leadership skills in Jewish youth.

Camp Massad of Manitoba \$40,000
Support provided for dining hall upgrades, including triple-pane windows, to improve energy efficiency, safety, and year-round usability.

Chavurat Tefila \$42,370
Support was provided to replace the main entrance doors with modern, secure, and accessible doors.

Gray Academy of Jewish Education \$18,000
Support provided for a community-wide stakeholder consultation survey to guide school planning and improvement.

Gray Academy of Jewish Education \$24,000
Support provided for training educators to better support English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) students. (2 years/\$12,000 per year.)

Asper Jewish Comunity Campus, Gray Academy of Jewish Education and Rady JCC \$122,000
Support provided for an new accessible outdoor play structure, ensuring safe, inclusive play for children and families.

Gwen Secter Creative Living Centre \$5,000
Support was provided for the **Talk of the Town campaign** to expand awareness of programs and services, with outreach in multiple languages.

Gwen Secter Creative Living Centre \$3,500
Support provided for **Shtick & Show**, an eight-week theatre program for older adults, culminating in a peer performance.

Jewish Federation of Winnipeg \$30,000
Support provided for the **Enhancing the Winnipeg Shabbat Experience** program, engaging families in meaningful Shabbat celebrations. (3 years/\$10,000 per year.)

Jewish Federation of Winnipeg \$45,000
Support provided for **PJ Library**, delivering Jewish books to families to promote literacy and connection to Jewish culture. (3 years/\$15,000 per year.)

Lubavitch Centre \$5,600
Support provided for classroom projectors and technology to enhance teaching at Oholei Torah and community programs.

Saul & Claribel Simkin Centre \$12,500
Support provided to reduce reliance on disposables by introducing sustainable and dignified kosher dining solutions.

Saul & Claribel Simkin Centre \$29,052
Support provided to redesign and modernize the Simkin Centre website, improving communication, transparency, and engagement.

Shalom Residences \$15,000
Support provided to replace aging windows with energy-efficient triple-pane windows in a supportive home for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Temple Shalom \$31,000
Support provided for kitchen refurbishment, including new appliances and necessary installation work.

Winnipeg Jewish Theatre \$15,000
Support provided for Jewish Community Players, a community theatre program for non-professional performers. (2 years/\$7,500 per year.)

Jewish Studies and Cultural Programming Grants

In spring 2025, the Board of Directors of the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba approved the following Jewish Studies and Cultural Programming Grants.

Congregation Shaarey Zedek \$5,401
Support provided for the Tallit Weaving Project, expanding opportunities for community members to learn and create meaningful ritual garments.

Rady Jewish Community Centre \$15,000
Support provided for the 2025 Yom Ha’atzmaut Community Celebration, bringing the Jewish community together to celebrate Israel’s culture and heritage.

Rady Jewish Community Centre \$25,000
Support provided for 2025 JFest WPG, a week-long Jewish music, film, and literature festival.

Winnipeg Jewish Theatre \$20,000
Support provided for Inspiring Jewish Unity and Coexistence through Music, an educational program for Manitoba students centred on the Tony Award-winning musical The Band’s Visit.

Women's Endowment Fund Grants

In spring 2025, the Board of Directors of the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba approved the following Women's Endowment Fund Grants.

Holy Names House of Peace \$10,000
Support provided for Circle of HOP(e) – Nourishing our Neighbours, covering food costs to address hunger among vulnerable women.

Life’s Journey Inc. \$4,000
Support provided to ensure about 100 neurodiverse women and girls have consistent access to essential feminine hygiene products for one year.

Mount Carmel Clinic \$20,000
Support provided for furnishings in the Stronger Together: Fulfilling Potential Renewal Campaign, creating a community hub at 896 Main Street.

Swan Valley Crisis Centre \$10,000
Support provided for the Transitional Housing Project, adding new emergency and transitional housing units and a women’s resource centre.

Swim With Me! Foundation \$10,000
Support provided for the Ripple Effect program, giving at-risk girls swimming lessons, water safety education, and personal growth opportunities.

Two Ten Recovery Inc. \$7,000
Support provided for capacity building through computers, transportation, cultural supports, and shared resources for women in recovery.

A NOTE TO GRANT RECIPIENTS:

As of January 2025, final reporting for awarded grants should be completed in the online granting portal as the final step in the process.

Board of Directors

Officers/Executive
Dan Blankstein
CHAIR
Dafna Shore
VICE-CHAIR, CHAIR-ELECT
Bruce Caplan
TREASURER
Russell Olivson
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Dr. Bonnie Cham
PAST-CHAIR

Directors

Svetlana Chechelnitsky
Leah Craven
Laura Diamond
Dr. Sharon Goszer-Tritt
Dr. Daniel P. Levin
DeWayne Osborn
Stephen Rosenfield
Dr. Alex Serebnitski
Paula Parks, Ex-Officio

Governors

Sheldon Berney
Marjorie Blankstein, C.M., O.M.
Hon. Richard H. Kroft, C.M.
Lillian Neaman
Gordan M. Pullan, K.C.
Harvey L. Secter, C.M., O.M.
Joseph J. Wilder, K.C.

Jewish Foundation of Manitoba USA, Inc.

Directors

Joel J. Dudeck
Jacqueline Simkin
Dan Blankstein
Dr. Bonnie Cham

Staff

John W. Diamond, B.A., LL.B.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Ian Barnes, CPA, CGA
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Marla Aronovitch
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS & GRANTS
Patti Boorman
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION
Stephanie Casar
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & GIFT PLANNING
Laurel Hogan
DONOR DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
Lynda Joyal
DEPUTY CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Josh Kerr
MARKETING & EVENTS ASSOCIATE
Pam Minuk
DONOR SERVICES
Tracy Price
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
Drew Unger
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

JFM Focus Newsletter

Drew Unger
EDITOR
Josh Kerr
WRITER

Jewish Foundation of Manitoba

Suite C400, 123 Doncaster Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3N 2B2

Phone: 204.477.7520
U.S./Canada toll-free: 1.855.284.1918
info@jewishfoundation.org
www.jewishfoundation.org

 @JFM_MB
 @jewishfoundationmb
 facebook.com/jewishfoundationmb/