

A Message from Dr. Sol Lizerbram, President, Jewish National Fund-USA

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digestive health, and herbalism.

This bold young woman refused to let adversity stand in the way of her aliyah dream. Ayelet said: “Although COVID-19 happened and borders were closing, I didn’t want to sit idly by in New York, anguishing as the country shut down. It wasn’t easy to come to Israel now, but it was the right choice. Ultimately, I arrived with my cup very full, and I am excited to make an impact within Israel. This is where I fit in the puzzle. It feels fulfilling. I could live in another country and be happy, but there is an element here that makes me feel complete.”

Friends, over the next 24 months, we expect to see a significant increase in the number of people following their dreams and moving to Israel. Will you join me in helping the thousands of young olim like Ayelet, who represent the next generation of pioneers by providing a gift to Jewish National Fund-USA?

This Rosh Hashanah, as we take stock of our lives and reflect on all that we have done, and all that we continue to do for our families, communities, and Israel, we must also ask ourselves: “How have we changed the world today?”

At Jewish National Fund-USA, thanks to you, every day we are changing so many worlds in so many ways. We use our eyes to see the path ahead, yet, it is our heart that leads us forward in everything we do.

Jewish National Fund-USA’s affiliate, ALEH Negev-Nahalat Eran, the leading rehabilitation village for people with intellectual disabilities, embodies what pure kindness and compassion look like as their 500 staff members and 800 volunteers provide round-the-clock care for Israel’s most vulnerable.

As our lives and communities were turned upside down earlier this year, the staff at the rehabilitation village took preventative measures to protect the village’s residents from COVID-19. For many people with intellectual disabilities, it’s critically important that they feel a personal connection to the person who’s caring for them, like Dor Nasimian, a rehabilitation village physiotherapist, who means the world to the village’s residents and they to her. Since Dor and her colleagues had to wear protective clothing to protect the residents’ health, they placed photos of themselves on their coats so the patients could identify them thus remaining calm while they received treatment. It’s people like Dor who make our world, and the worlds of the people they care for, a better, kinder place. “As our lives and communities were turned upside down earlier this



Dr. Sol Lizerbram, President of Jewish National Fund-USA.

Photo: Video generated

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Further south, Jewish National Fund-USA affiliate, the Arava International Center for Agricultural Training (AICAT), is teaching innovative Israeli farming techniques to farmers from all over Southeast Asia and Africa. Imagine a farmer from a small village in Kenya who has relied on low-tech subsistence farming all his life to feed his family. He’s never been on a plane, yet here he is taking a chance and leaving his loved ones as he goes to Israel for 10 months, a country he has only read about in the Bible. He returns with the skills and knowledge to implement farming practices that allow him to do more with less and in turn, bring greater economic prosperity to his family and village.

This is Israel - a tiny country fulfilling its mission as a light unto the nations - and it’s in large part because of you. With your support, we are strengthening organizations like AICAT by attracting the best and brightest Israeli minds to the Negev to work in the fields of agriculture, science, and R&D.

When they move from Israel’s crowded center to the south, they’re not just moving because of the exciting job opportunities. They’re moving because they want a better quality of life for themselves and their children. Thanks to Jewish National Fund-USA and you, we’re changing lives and creating new realities for the next generation.

Through our strategic One Billion Dollar Roadmap for the Next Decade we have created, and continue to create lush green oases, world-class medical facilities, and beautiful new housing sites. When Israelis move with their families to the towns and cities of the south, they see opportunities as limitless as the breathtaking wide-open plains of the Negev Desert.

Who would have thought that in just a few short decades, our tiny homeland, a nation forged in the heat of battle, built with few natural resources, and surrounded by adversaries for most of her existence, would one day lead the world in everything from fighting cancer to creating the modern computer chip? Well, one man did. He was Theodor Herzl, and while he may not have known what a computer chip was, he knew that it was time for our people to strive for Jewish self-determination in a homeland of our own.

Through Herzl’s vision, determination, and conviction, a movement that would be charged with uniting the Jewish people the likes of which the modern world had never seen was established. That movement was called Jewish National Fund and today, you and I are the proud custodians of Herzl’s visionary dream. Make no mistake, Herzl’s dreams were backed by action, and as he famously said, “If you will it, it is no dream.” Today, we are turning a region’s dreams into reality through Jewish National Fund-USA’s Galilee Culinary Institute (GCI by JNF). The soon-to-be launched Institute in the Greater Kiryat Shmona Region will

transform Israel’s northern food basket into the gastronomic center of the world. GCI by JNF will be more than a mere cooking school. It will be an international destination for aspiring chefs, foodies, and tourists from around the world seeking to immerse themselves in the melting pot of peoples, cultures, and cuisines that define Israel’s north.

GCI by JNF will play a key role in our Go North East strategy, which has brought and continues to bring economic prosperity and opportunity to Israel’s north.

GCI by JNF will be like nothing else. Imagine being a culinary student and starting your morning by learning about artisanal cheesemaking at Shirat Roim, a boutique dairy making quality sheep and goat cheeses nestled in the lush rolling hills of the Galilee. In the afternoon, you head to Lotem Winery and learn about the next generation of organic winemaking followed by an evening lecture with the CEO of Nutrilees, an Israeli company working on turning the byproduct from wine production into an innovative protein source for the culinary world.

By collaborating with local tour operators, farmers, restaurateurs, and food purveyors, GCI by JNF will provide students with real-world experiences while heralding a new economic reality for Israel’s north.

Everything Jewish National Fund-USA does is thoughtful, strategic, and consistent with our vision of population growth in the north and south, connecting the next generation to Israel, infrastructure development, ecology, forestation, heritage preservation, and so much more - all for the land and people of Israel. From the awe-inspiring expanses of Israel’s Negev to the rich bounty of the Galilee, Jewish National Fund-USA continues to weave a tapestry of interconnected initiatives that lend themselves to our core mission.

As we think about all we have achieved over the past year, let us look to the future as we continue our nation-building work all for the land and people of Israel and Jewish people everywhere.

On behalf of my family and Jewish National Fund-USA’s lay leaders and professionals, I want to wish you and your family, and all the readers of The Jewish Post a “Shana Tova U’Metukah” - a good and sweet New Year! And a healthy one of course.

Dr. Sol Lizerbram is President of Jewish National Fund-USA. To support the land and people of Israel this Rosh Hashanah through Jewish National Fund-USA, visit jnf.org/donate or call 212.879.9300.