

Jewish Community Board of Akron



annual report



2014/5774

# Jewish Community Board of Akron



**Debra Shifrin**  
PRESIDENT



**David K. Koch**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER

It's been a quite a year for the Akron Jewish community; arguably a game changer in many ways. The mere fact the Akron Jewish Federation (renamed the Jewish Community Board in 1999) is celebrating 100 years of service is amazing. How many institutions can claim a century of community building and investing the future?

As the pictorial timeline highlighted in each issue of the *Akron Jewish News* (founded in 1929) shows, we have a rich history and so much to be proud of.

Re-imagine Jewish Akron has helped to add new energy and focus on our collective Akron Jewish future. The collaborative nature of the Re-Imagine process is already paying dividends, and we've only begun to work through the ideas generated by the early exploration.

The Albert L. & Janet A. Schultz Campus for Jewish Life endowment bequest is helping us in the short-term to update and improve our campus infrastructure. The long-term implication of the bequest will allow us to fund innovative programming in almost all areas of Jewish life—youth and young adults, seniors, Jewish leadership, campus Hillels, Israel experiences, Jewish cultural arts and camps. Consider the possibilities!

Create a Jewish Legacy (CJL) has been introduced across the Akron Jewish community, and we can claim some early success. Every member of the Jewish community can help insure our future by creating his/her own endowment.

The 2014 Jewish Welfare Fund has seen a high level of participation and, to date, the special 100 for 100 Centennial campaign challenge has added over \$90,000 new dollars.

Thanks to all for helping make the past 100 years possible and continuing to assure a healthy future.

## rubber city jews

Nurturing and growing a Jewish young adult population has long been a concern and aim of the JCBA. The need for a group for younger adults (under age 45) was addressed at Imagine Jewish Akron in 2009. In mid-2013, the right elements came together, and Rubber City Jews (RCJ) was formed.

"JCBA was instrumental in initiating the first meetings of the RCJ group," says Jacob Rosen, an early leader of the group. "They've been a constant partner, advocate and supporter. RCJ has now been approved for funding in the 2015 financial year budget to partially support programming, and engagement meetings."

The group held its first event in October 2013 and has organized several other social events since then, draw-

ing people who might not have typically participated in Jewish activities. Leora Cohen, recently chosen to helm the organization, says that while the group will still hold social events, it intends to pursue other directions. RCJ will be starting a monthly learning session, which group members will have the opportunity to lead if interested. They plan to hold more Shabbat dinners and participate in community service activities as well.

"It's important for the young Jewish people in Akron to feel connected to any type of home base," says Rosen. "Organizations like RCJ are so important to connect young Jewish people on a cultural basis, engage them together in their peer networks, and create a true sense of long-term belonging."





# re-imagine

There couldn't be a better moment in our history to Re-Imagine Jewish Akron. Inspired by our centennial year we look ahead to the next 100 years, realizing the opportunity to plant a vision for the next generations, as our founding fathers did for us. The game-changing gift from Albert L. and Janet A. Schultz affords more opportunities to invest in our future than ever before. However, regardless of our financial situation, a carefully planned vision is needed to direct our focus and investments.

Charged with the goal of leveraging Akron's Jewish institutions, professional relationships and business networks to make Akron a thriving 21st century Jewish community, we launched Re-Imagine Jewish Akron. More than 100 people representing all the facets of our community engaged in this process. Finally we're now at the phase of planning and implementing the actual initiatives. We hope that you join us in this exciting endeavor and help make our next 100 years happen.

## GOAL: MAKING AKRON A THRIVING 21ST CENTURY JEWISH COMMUNITY

### OBJECTIVES

Anyone who self-identifies as Jewish, has a Jewish family member or is curious about being Jewish is welcome to participate in the Jewish community

10-15 younger adults (under age 45) are recruited to Akron annually

10 individuals under age 45 participate in Jewish leadership experience/program

Participation in Jewish life is simple because of exceptional organizational collaboration

An individual or family can access all basic Jewish services at any stage of life

Retain 10-15% of graduating high school seniors through college years

### INITIATIVES

Business leaders coordinate efforts to recruit and place younger Jewish talent

Jewish organizations and congregations launch a joint marketing campaign for involvement in Jewish life

Mandel School (Case Western), Rubber City Jews, Leadership Akron and Siegel Lifelong Program co-create Jewish leadership experience

JCBA funds a community concierge

A passport to the Jewish community - pay one fee for access to services that allows passport-holders to pass seamlessly between agencies and congregations

# Shaw JCC of Akron

The Shaw JCC creates a community based on Jewish values by providing quality programs and services in a safe and secure environment for people of all ages. The JCC has been home to our community for over 80 years and this year we have set the foundation for continued service, performance, and the next steps to renewal. Together as one community, we learn, grow and evolve towards a common goal of a stronger community. This community showed renewed strength this past year with undergoing changes...changes in staff and changes in building structure. We learned that with change comes new opportunities, collaboration and a bright future for the Shaw JCC of Akron.



**Thom Mandel**  
PRESIDENT



**Eric Goldstein**  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR





# make a splash!

*"Frankly, you take the pool out and you're left with a hole that's not only in the ground – but one in our community as well"*

- LILA MARKS

Renovating the Shaw JCC indoor pool became critical in 2013. We undertook the renovation because the pool and the aquatics programs held there are intrinsic to our mission. A significant part of the vibrant local community, the pool is also important to the

City of Akron and Summit County. For our Schultz Campus family, the aquatics program not only promotes wellness; it has become the basis for forming lifelong bonds with friends and family

Of Shaw JCC members, **65%** of them regularly use the indoor aquatics area—an average of 145 people per day. Over **2,200 children** every year participate in group and private American Red Cross "Learn To Swim" lessons. This includes children from our Early Childhood Center, as well as The Lippman School. The pool is also the home for senior "Aqua Arthritis", adult water aerobics and "Mommy & Daddy & Me" classes, as well as a thriving youth swim team.

*"The kind of community that the Shaw JCC has developed through its aquatics facility is one that is truly beautiful and irreplaceable."*

- CATHLEEN

Once we knew that renovation was our only option, we were determined to make a great thing even better. Improvements include an increased shallow pool area, non-skid tiles, on-deck whirlpools, updated locker rooms, and better accessibility.

"The pool has to come back – not just for me, not just for this generation, but for everyone in our community and for many generations to come," says Lila Marks, honorary chair of the Make a Splash! committee.



## Augie's Story

"Our son Augie has been swimming at the J since he was a baby. We actually joined the J for him because of the indoor pool. Augie has never missed a swim season. As he has completed the various levels of the Red Cross Learn to Swim program, we had a front row seat of his beautiful journey to becoming a confident swimmer.

We both learned how to swim and wanted to make sure he was not fearful of water. We still remember the day he learned to jump off the platform. He was *so* nervous and it had taken him several weeks to get up the courage. His JCC swim teacher was awesome! She was patient and encouraging and she knew just how to motivate him. She built his confidence that she believed in him, and then one day, he did it. These days the diving board is one of his favorite things to do.



# Jewish Family Service



**Richard Zelin**  
PRESIDENT



**Gizelle Jones, LISW-S**  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

Jewish Family Service provides counseling, care management and education for Summit County residents, age 45 and over and the adults who care for them. We have a new title for our counseling and care management program – “Seniors, Healthy, Happy, and at Home.” This past year we saw 143 clients in this program; 41% were Jewish and 59% were non-Jewish.

We provide these services to six senior apartment buildings in the Akron area, which are owned by Summit Management, Milenia Corporation, and Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority. These services are not a luxury or value-added service. Many of the seniors receiving our services are low income, mentally ill, physically or developmentally disabled, or poorly educated. Many also lack community support such as friends or family.

In 2014 our work with seniors led to a new collaboration with Adult Protective Services, Summit County Probate Court and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Service to develop a volunteer guardianship program for indigent Summit County seniors. JFS will train volunteer guardians to serve as caring advocates and surrogate decision makers for wards who are unable to make informed decisions for themselves and who do not have a family member who can or is willing to serve as their guardians. Through the supportive and consistent relationships delivered by our trained and supported volunteers, Volunteer Guardian Program will make a difference in the lives of those who need us most as they are facing the most difficult times of their lives.

We also provide community education to the seniors we serve. In Center Towers, where most of the Jewish Seniors we serve reside, we provided 24 programs including topics on health, finances, and emotional well being.

## impact

**Nearly 600 clients** were served by Jewish Family Service last year through counseling services and educational programming.

**97% of individuals** receiving Counseling and Care Management Services reported that they achieved their goals and increased or maintained their quality of life while in our care.

**371 seniors** participated in Community Education Programs. 16% were Jewish and 84% were non Jewish.







## how JFS helps *Sam's Story*

At age 88, Sam lost Sarah, his wife of 60 years. In the midst of extreme grief, Sam was not taking care of himself. He did not shop, cook, or do laundry and he forgot to bathe and take his medication. Sarah had done everything for him and without her he just could not attend to his everyday needs. Sam's daughter Ella saw his already fragile health getting worse, but was unable to help her father. He was resistant and angry. Ella called JFS for help. Ella and a JFS Counselor met with Sam at his home and although it took several sessions, he eventually agreed to participate in counseling to deal with his anxiety, grief and depression, and to allow a Care Manager to help him deal with his day-to-day life needs. Eventually JFS staff helped Sam choose an assisted living facility that took over many of the chores he was unable or unwilling to do. With his physical and emotional needs greatly improved, Sam was able to enjoy more quality time with Ella and his grandchildren.

## collaborations

### With the Shaw JCC:

- "Two Great Organizations Under One Roof" for the WAKR luncheons for Seniors
- Jewish Veteran's Day
- Senior Expo at Summit Mall

### With the shlichim, Shirel and Eran Bin Nun:

Presentations of Israeli life in all senior apartment buildings served by JFS

### With Mature Services:

Brown Bag Medication Review

### With Adult Protective Services:

A JFS social worker serves on their emergency task force

### Volunteer Guardianship program

A collaboration with Adult Protective Services, Summit County Probate Court and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Service

## program initiatives

**LGBT Resource Fair** and local premiere of the movie *GenSilent*

**Legal rights** of LGBT seniors

**Senior Walking Program**

**"Why Gay Marriage is a Jewish Issue"**  
with Rabbi David Horowitz

**Reflections on the End of Life: A Series**

**Financial Program** for Seniors



# The Lippman School



**Margaret Slesnick**  
PRESIDENT



**Sam Chestnut**  
HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Lippman School opened its doors in the fall to another year of strong enrollment and retention of students. We attribute the strength of the school to a variety of factors, including increased curricular opportunities for all students, a highly competent staff, supporters, and family members who believe in our school and our mission.

In January, we hired an Advancement Coordinator to better highlight our school and its programs to potential new families, and also keep our current community informed and engaged. We have received more coverage in local papers, on radio stations, and e-communications.

Our cross-cultural partnership with The Northern Cheyenne nation continues to flourish. Rabbi Lee Moore joined a planning team from school to more fully develop the significant spiritual learning available to our students. She highlighted the opportunities to deepen their sense of peoplehood by understanding the Jewish experience as members of a tribe.

This fall, twenty-five Northern Cheyenne leaders, teachers and students visited Akron. They shared their music, stories, and traditions with our school, our Jewish Community, and the greater Akron community. Our students and community also taught them about our traditions, including challah baking, a Shabbat dinner and the synagogue service. This May, our 7th and 8th graders travel to the reservation in Montana, to experience traditions, history, and sacred sites in the Northern Cheyenne homeland.

We thrive on the diverse and creative learning experiences that are possible because of our staff, our board, our families, our community, our partnerships and our donors.

## recognition highlights

One of our students was featured on the front page of **Akron Life Magazine**, as part of their story on the area's "best and brightest" in K-12 education.

The **National Association of Independent Schools** highlighted our school on its website, conveying the value of our global education model and our learning partnership with the Northern Cheyenne Nation.

**WAKR radio station** interviewed our Head of School Sam Chestnut, about our cross-cultural programming and our unique entrepreneurial, charitable student project.

We made a presentation at the annual **National Jewish Community Day School Conference** (RAVSAK), where our school model was described as invigorating "not only secular studies, but also, and importantly, the Judaic experience for families and students."

We were chosen among a highly select group of educators to make a presentation on global collaboration at the **International Society for Technology in Education** annual conference in Atlanta.



# building on educational opportunities

**Expanded collaboration** between the school and the Shaw JCC Early Childhood Center

**New Transitional Kindergarten** through the school and ECC developed and marketed for this coming fall. It has kept several current families on campus, as well as recruited new families.

**Doubled the number** of Lippman students who went to Shaw JCC camp

**Partnered with Jewish Family Service** creating. intergenerational communication and shared experiences

**Shared learning experiences** with some of our local synagogues.

**Partnerships continued** with Kent State University and the University of Akron

**Programmed with the local Metro Parks** and the Portage Path public elementary school



# Israeli Shlichim



**Shirel & Eran Bin Nun**  
ISRAELI SHLICHIM

Shlichut is a Hebrew word that means sending out or commissioning people. It generally refers to an outreach program that is based on strong values and ideologies. Our mission in this Shlichut was to straighten the long going connection between the Jewish community of Akron and the state of Israel by sharing Israel's story and culture through our personal point of view and experience, organizing Israeli events and programs, promoting and supporting community activities, raising awareness and expand the knowledge about Israel and participating in an active way in the community life.

Once a month we held the Erev Tarbut (Israel Culture Night). At these community lectures and discussions, we discussed different topics related to Israeli history, culture and society. Throughout the year we also held "Movie and a Snack," featuring different Israeli movies followed by a discussion. It's never boring in the Middle East! In our "Coffee & Politics" programs, we discussed Israel current affairs and talked about the different views on each topic.

In April we hosted a guest speaker from Israel - Elisheva Mazya, CEO of "New Spirit" organization which works to rejuvenate the city of Jerusalem and its goal is to ensure the Capital's rightful place as a young, vibrant, pluralistic and attractive city. The lecture was open to the community, and together we learned what Akron can do to keep the young adults community in the city.

By living and working in the community, we believed it is important for us to take a part in the community life. We attended services at the three Akron congregations, were active members in Rubber City Jews, participated in teen activities, connected with the Hillel at Akron University, took part in committees such as Yom Hashoah and Purim Ball and participated in different community events.

In the past year we got to teach and talk a lot about Israel, but we also learned so much from the wonderful people in this community. We are sure that this experience will stay with us for the rest of our lives.



## lunch & learn

With the support of the Shaw JCC and Efrat Ohayon's kitchen, we've had monthly "Lunch and Learn" programs with all the different agencies' staff. Each time, we discussed different topics, such as Israeli society, Israeli weddings, and more.

We had the honor to have four IDF officers visiting from Israel in the very special week between Yom HaShoah and Yom Hazikaron. The officers, who have very different roles in the Israeli army, shared their experiences from their army service and their personal story. The program included free lunch, and members from the community and the agencies' staff attended.





## Working with students

This year we had the pleasure of working with the 7-8th graders at The Lippman School throughout the year. We met every other week, discussing Israeli society, culture and history. In the two months preceding the Yom holidays, we met with the kids every week and talked about Judiasim, Holocaust, memory and Zionism.

We also joined the school trip to Montana, which was a very meaningful experience. We held Israeli programs during the trip as well.

On Yom Ha'atzmaut on May 5, we hosted guest singers from Israel, who performed in front of the school while the kids danced and sang.

Through the year we have also been involved with the three Akron congregational schools. Visiting every school once a month, we presented Israeli activities and discussed the different Jewish holidays and how they are celebrated in Israel.

## Sharing with senior adults

We were very fortunate to be invited to programs for senior adults in the community, where we could share our stories and also learn from others. These programs included joining The Jewish Veterans Club for coffee and conversation and speaking at the Be'tay Avon Café events (led by Myra Feinberg through the Shaw JCC).

Through Jewish Family Service, we visited six different nursing homes in Akron and Portage Lakes this year. With the help of Nelda Anderson from the JFS, we led open discussions about Israel and Judaism.

## the 'yom' holidays

The nine days between Yom HaShoah, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut have a very important meaning in the Jewish and Israeli calendar. Being a part in organizing these events here in Akron was a very powerful experience for us.

This year we decided, together with the wonderful committee, to have Yom Hazikaron ceremony as a part of the Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israeli Independence Day) event. To promote and involve the community in the upcoming event, we made a fun, celebratory video with all the Schultz Campus staff participating. The video was very successful and got more than 900 views on YouTube, with many shares on Facebook.

The Yom Ha'atzmaut event, which took place on May 4, started with a ceremony commemorating Israel's Memorial Day. Children from The Lippman School and the congregational schools opened the celebration by waving flags, dancing and singing. At the event, participants, young and old, took a "tour" of Israel—enjoying Israeli food and themed activities.



# Community Relations Committee



**Martin H. Belsky**  
CHAIR



**Joyce Butlien**  
DIRECTOR

CRC continues our long-standing traditions of informing Akron about issues and events significantly affecting the Jewish and interfaith community, and building broad relationships.

A signature program of CRC is our Interfaith Missions. This past year's highly successful program to Washington, D.C. included community, business and religious leaders, and elected officials. Briefings were given from the Jewish Federations of North America, the ADL, the US State Department and the Israel Embassy. We also visited the Holocaust Museum. Later this year, participants were invited to the Austen Bio-Innovation Institute of Akron to discuss ways to work together.

Additional CRC sponsored or co-sponsored community programs included a luncheon with Federal Judge Dan A. Polster, who spoke about hate crimes and the Amish beard cutting case, an Akron school board Candidates Forum with the League of Women Voters, and a panel on the Affordable Care Act with Hadassah. The Bernard I. Rosen Memorial Lecture included guest speaker Supreme Court correspondent Tony Mauro, and panelists discussing affirmative action and how universities are responding.

Through efforts by us and other statewide Community Relations Committees and Ohio Jewish Communities, John Carey, Chancellor, Ohio Board of Regents, issued a statement condemning academic boycotts of Israel. It followed the statement of the Presidents of the 14 public universities in Ohio opposing any proposed boycott.

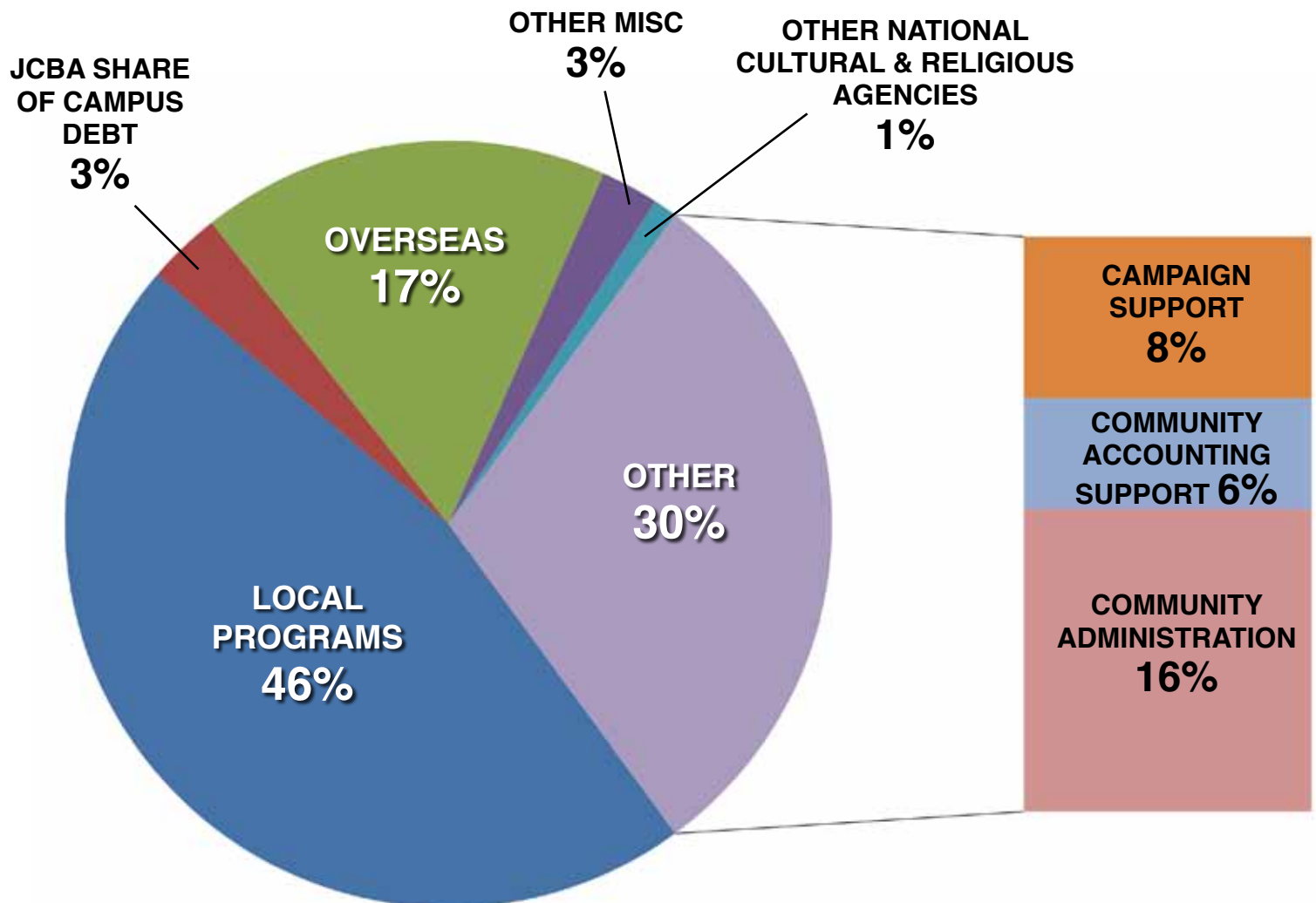
Planning is already underway for the coming year for another Bernard Rosen Memorial Lecture, an exhibit and speaker for National Law Week, and a fall Mission to Philadelphia to include a visit the American Jewish Museum.





# 2012-13 Campaign Allocation

**\$1,659,706**



# Akron Legacy & Endowment Fund

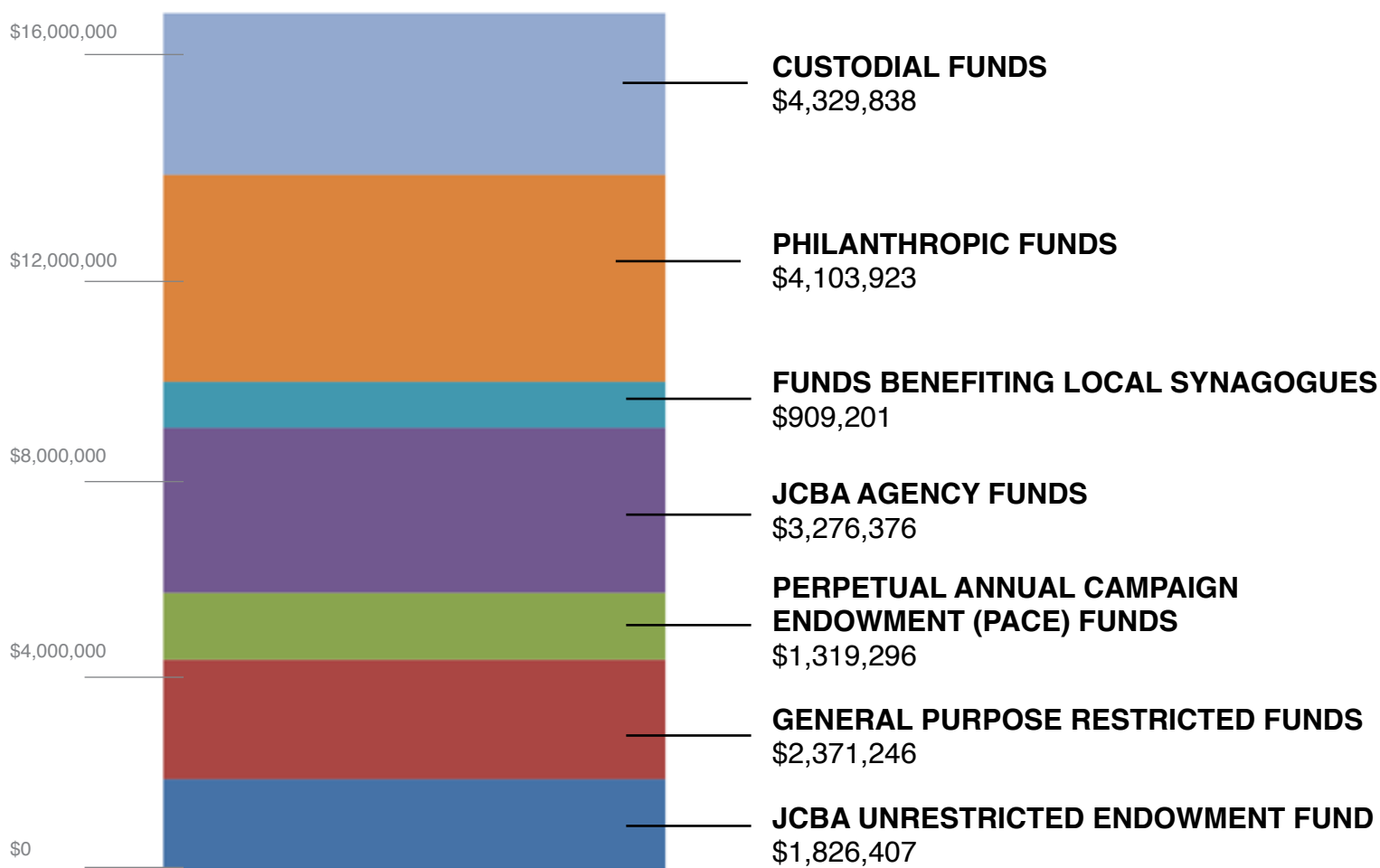


**Greta Foster**  
ENDOWMENT  
DIRECTOR

2013 will long be remembered as the year that the Albert L. and Janet A. Schultz Supporting Foundation awarded \$10 million – \$8+ million of which is earmarked for endowment – to the Jewish Community Board of Akron. 2013 was a significant year for the Akron Legacy and Endowment Fund in other ways as well. We received \$ 2,399,785 in new gifts from generous donors in our community. Our assets now total \$ 13,804,840 plus an additional \$ 4,329,838 in custodial funds held for Beth El and the Canton Jewish Community Federation.

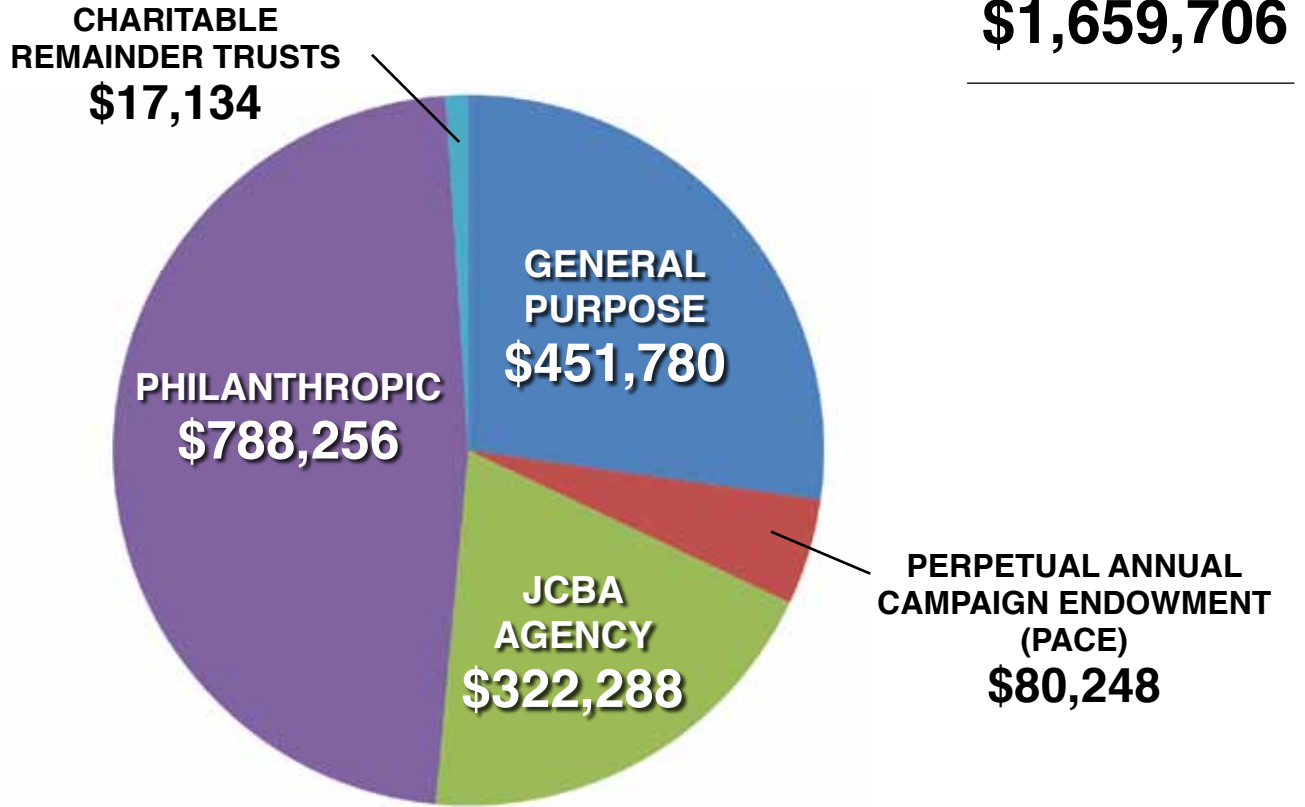
The year 2013 was also one of significant achievement for Create a Jewish Legacy. Coming together to Create a Jewish Legacy are our six partners, The JCBA, the Shaw JCC, Jewish Family Service, The Lippman School, Temple Israel, and Beth El Congregation. This community-wide initiative promises to change the culture of giving in the Akron Jewish community.

## Endowment Values 12/31/13

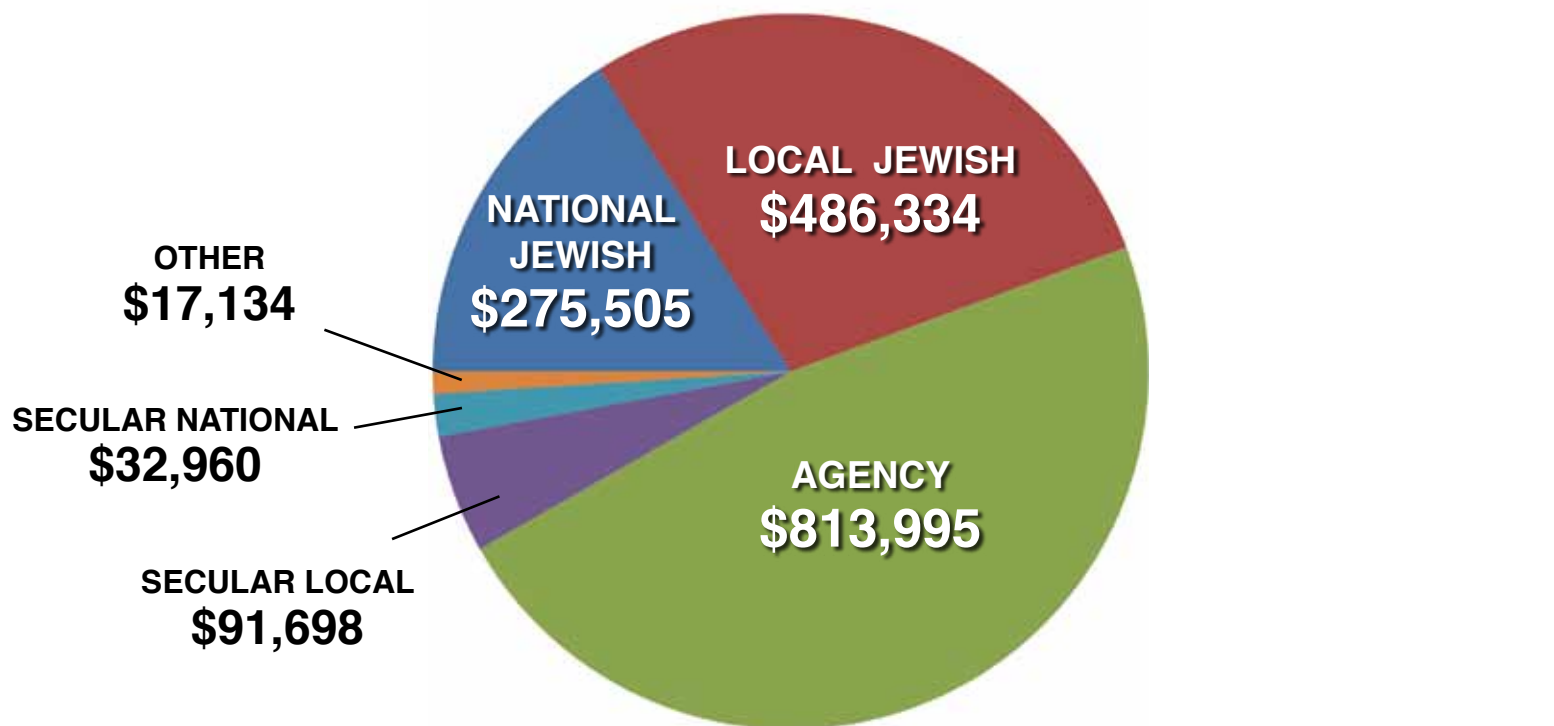




# Source of Grants from ALEF by Fund Type



# Grants from ALEF by Category





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