

Now is the Time

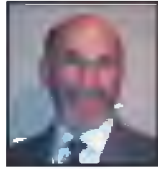
By Jeff Bierer, FCJC Board Chair

We have all heard the saying, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." In my years on the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community (FCJC) board I have seen the need for sustainable funding for our synagogues and Jewish agencies become clearer, along with a growing understanding of the role legacy giving must play in solving this funding challenge. It is clear to me that now is the time to address our community's long term funding challenges and that now is the time for all of us to think about the legacy we want to leave.

I have had the privilege of participating as a board member of the Levine Jewish Community Center and Temple Beth El at different times in my 18 years here in Charlotte. And I'm fairly cer-

tain that the budget challenges I observed every single year were just as commonly experienced at Temple Israel, our schools, the Hebrew Cemetery and throughout our Jewish agencies. Every year we are collectively faced with how to fund the very things our families want. Every year each of us hears the call to contribute more to the Jewish organizations that mean so much to our families.

Believing the time is Now for addressing the long term funding challenge, FCJC stepped up to develop and lead the Create Your Jewish Legacy (CJL) initiative. While probably not as well known or understood as some of our Jewish organizations, FCJC saw the need to move beyond its more recognizable role of investing and



Jeff Bierer

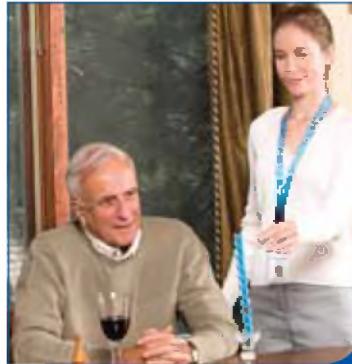
administering Jewish agency endowments. Over the last 18 months we've researched other successful legacy initiatives across the country, received critical grants to fund our own CJL initiative, and organized our synagogues, schools, Federation, and other Jewish agencies to begin having legacy conversations. While perhaps still not a household name, FCJC is a partner to each of the Charlotte Jewish agencies most important to you. Together we're educating our community about the need and ease of supporting our cherished Jewish organizations after we die, just as we have in our lifetimes. It can be as simple as listing your desired agency, synagogue, or the Federation as an additional beneficiary on your life insurance or IRA, and does not impact your current giving.

As I step down as president of the FCJC board, I reflect on how FCJC has grown to meet the needs

of our Jewish community. I've seen the dedication of our lay leaders and professional staff as they searched for and found a path to help all our Jewish agencies move closer to long-term financial health and stability. And I am always excited to hear about board members and volunteers at our Jewish agencies stepping up with their own bequests and asking others about the legacy they want

to leave in Charlotte.

What started as a whisper is gaining its voice, and surely will become a loud and successful call to action to secure the future of our Jewish community. ☆



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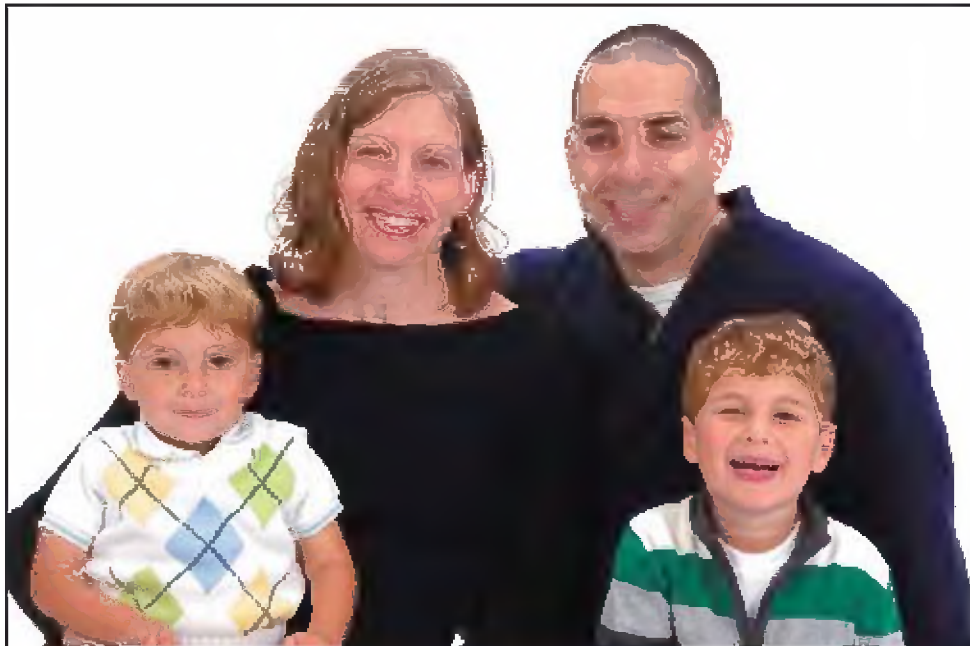
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Legacy Spotlight

Glenda and Brian Bernhardt are among the 125 current members of our community who have created legacy gifts to support its future. Please take the time to read their story and thank them for their generosity. It is our hope that you will be inspired and encouraged to think about how you can create your own Jewish legacy

By Glenda and Brian Bernhardt

Judaism and Jewish community are at the heart of the way we live our lives. Our paths to this destination, however, were very different. Brian grew up in Charlotte and although he attended the Hebrew Academy, swam at the old Jewish Community Center on Sharon Amity Road, and had his Bar Mitzvah at Temple Israel in Dilworth, he was not otherwise engaged in the Jewish community. Glenda, on the other hand, grew up a Rabbi's daughter in Huntington, WV, was active in local youth groups, attended Jewish summer camp, and later served as campus Hillel leader at Ohio Wesleyan University.

When we met in Ann Arbor, Glenda was interning at the Ann Arbor Jewish Federation while studying Jewish communal service at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. Brian had only recently begun volunteering at the Ann Arbor Federation, and then only as a way to meet new friends. Eventually, however, Brian's involvement with the Federation led to

a trip to Israel and ultimately to a deeper commitment to the Jewish community. Glenda's background and graduate work helped her begin her career as a Jewish professional, working for Hillel and then the Federation.

In 2009, we moved to Charlotte so that our children could grow up closer to family. From day one, the Charlotte Jewish community embraced us and we have tried to do the same in return, finding great joy as active members of the Jewish community. As our family has grown, we have found that our involvement in the Jewish community has influenced our decision to incorporate Jewish ethics and values into our daily family life, so that our children will not only grow up Jewish, but Jewishly as well. Surrounded by a loving family, a vibrant Jewish community, and a wonderful group of friends who have a shared passion for Israel, Judaism, and Jewish community, we are excited about all the Jewish opportunities that exist for us and for our children.

Our Create Your Jewish Legacy gifts are an extension of our belief in the strength of the Charlotte Jewish community and our hopes for the future of our children. We want to help ensure that the Charlotte Jewish community survives and thrives not only for us, but for our children and our children's children. Although we are a younger family, our decision to leave legacy gifts was easy. We hope that other families will follow our lead. ☆

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