

Your connection to the Jewish Community...

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Yvonne Amato

Yvonne Amato is among the 228 individuals and families in our community who have created legacy gifts to support its future. Please take the time to read her story and thank her for her gen-

erosity. It is our hope that you will be inspired and encouraged to think about how you can create your own Jewish legacy.

By Yvonne Amato

My father taught me the importance of staying connected to Jewish life. After emigrating from Eastern Europe, he met my mother in South Africa, where she was born. He never spoke about life in Europe or his family, who were all lost in the Holocaust. At a young age, I occasionally attended shul on Shabbat by myself and my mother began lighting candles. When a shul was built in our neighborhood, we attended as a family for High Holidays.

I was married in 1967 and we moved to Zambia. Eighteen months later, we moved to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to be with his family. We became involved in the Jewish community serving on 14 different committees and adopted a daughter and son. In 1986, following complications from surgery, my husband passed away. The previous year we had spent six weeks traveling through-

out the United States and Canada visiting relatives on both sides of the family who we had stayed connected to through letters. They had all immigrated to North America and our plan was to join them. In December of 1986, with little money, my two young children and I moved to Hartford, CT where we connected to its Jewish community.

In 1991, with my son in college, my daughter and I moved to San Diego to be closer to him. San Diego had a huge South African Jewish community and I worked for the Jewish Federation and Jewish Family Services. I also met Ivan, a recent widower, who also grew up in Johannesburg. We didn't know each other in South Africa but we did have mutual friends. We married in 1995. I was very blessed to share my life with him, his three children and two of my own. In 1999, we joined my daughter and her family in Charlotte. In 2008, Ivan passed away after suffering from Parkinson's.

Life provides us with challenges and enriches us with blessings. The relationships with my children and my grandchildren are truly blessings. Another is the ability to leave a legacy gift. I never thought someone like me had the ability to leave a gift to support future generations, but I have learned that we all can. That knowledge and the creation of my legacy gift have been a life changing experience. It has allowed me to feel like a truly connected member of our Jewish community. ☆



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Our Jewish Community's Newest Legacy Donors

The following individuals/families have recently informed our community, through Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community (FCJC) or one of the ten Create Your Jewish Legacy community partners, that they have created a legacy gift to support the future of Charlotte's Jewish community. Some are creating legacy gifts for the first time while others

have added new organizations to their previously created legacy plans. There are now 230 individuals/families throughout our Jewish community who have included a local Jewish organization in their legacy plans creating 440 unique legacies. We thank our newest legacy donors and welcome them into our community's Book of Life Society. ☆

- Anonymous
- Amy Augustine
- Jill and Craig Balick
- Melissa and Steve Raphael
- Raenea Siegel
- Albert Rogat

