

## Mitzvah Projects completed by PAS Bnei Mitzvah

### BEIT RUTH

**Beit Ruth for Young Women & Girls At Risk** is a long-term residence, school, and pioneering Youth Village in Israel, for at-risk teenage girls—who have been removed from their homes due to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Our mission is to ensure that vulnerable and at-risk girls are given the opportunity to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically, thereby breaking the cycle of violence for themselves and future generations of children in Israel.

#### Bnei Mitzvah Engagement

The organization works closely with the Bnai Mitzvah family to find specific projects and activities at Beit Ruth that resonate deeply with them that they would like to support. They will prepare a special video from the girls of Beit Ruth to celebrate this milestone and thank them for their generosity!

**Website:** <https://www.beitruth.com/bnai-mitzvah-program>

#### Organization Contact Information:

*Melanie Vesely, Development and Communications Coordinator* 212 266 0112

[Melaniev@beitruth.com](mailto:Melaniev@beitruth.com)

### CampLauncher

A nonprofit that makes specialized sleepaway and day camps available to neurodivergent kids who otherwise could not afford to go.

#### Bnei Mitzvah Engagement

Thons can take any form -- think walk-a-thon, sing-a-thon, whatever-you-and-your-friends-love-to-do-a-thon. As long as you can quantify the activity, CampLauncher can help you structure the event. In the end, everyone wins - you and your friends have fun, everyone learns about neurodiversity, and kids on the autism spectrum and related profiles can experience the joy of fitting into a community designed especially for them -- often for the first time.

**Organization Contact Information:** *Marissa Siegman, Director of Advancement and Administration* [Marissa@camplauncher.org](mailto:Marissa@camplauncher.org)

**Website:** <https://www.camplauncher.org/>

### CASA VERDE Home of Hope

The key to Casa Verde is that it provides a home and family for its children, located in Envigado, a suburb of Medellin, Colombia, not just a place to live. Education, healthcare, religion, music, and, most importantly, love and human values are integral parts of life at Casa Verde.

## **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Andrew raised money for Camo Verde, a country retreat, where the children can get some fresh air and play sports. Since Andrew loves sports, he chose to raise money to provide them with safe and fun sports equipment for soccer, swimming, basketball baseball and other sports.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

<https://casaverdehomeofhope.org/> <http://www.casaverdehomeofhope.org/>

## **THE CENTER FOR DISCOVERY**

The Center for Discovery is a residential school and community for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Nate's brother Jaden is a resident of TCFD, in a house with 11 other boys between the ages of 16 and 21.

## **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Nate did a one-hour weekly Zoom which was projected on a 5 ft by 8 ft screen in the living room of the residence and read to the boys a variety of books and was able to show the pictures as he read. It was a tremendously rewarding experience, especially because his brother was involved.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

*Richard Humleker* 845-707-8506 [rhumleker@tcfd.org](mailto:rhumleker@tcfd.org)

## **CHALLENGED ATHLETES FOUNDATION**

Empowering lives through sport. High costs of adaptive sports equipment and lack of resources should not keep individuals with physical challenges from being active. That's where we come in.

## **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Arielle assisted track and field challenged athletes during practice and races. She cheered them up during the NYC Marathon. She connected with them during practice.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

*Doug Olson, Senior Development Director* [doug@challengedathletes.org](mailto:doug@challengedathletes.org) 908-433-3088

## **CHICKENSLED**

Inclusive theatre company based in North London. Creates both adult and children's theatre productions, education courses, outreach projects and performance.

Chickenshed NYC has been sharing the magic and methodology of Chickenshed with the people of New York City since 2018. Its founding management, staff, Teaching Artists and

participants have embraced our inclusive vision with authenticity and enthusiasm. We are so pleased to celebrate their work and connect you with them.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Hayley worked with children with disabilities to help them integrate into a musical theatre program

#### **Organization Contact Information:**

Cyndi Harrod

[Cyndi@chickenshednyc.com](mailto:Cyndi@chickenshednyc.com)

## **CMEE (CHILDREN'S MUSEM) IN BRIDGEHAMPTON**

To spark imagination and foster learning for children of all backgrounds and abilities and to build strong connections within the East End community by providing playful experiences.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Harry supported the food drive at CMEE by collecting food from friends and family and hosting a walk -a -thon

#### **Organization Contact Information:**

Steve Long

631-537-8250

[Steve@cmee.org](mailto:Steve@cmee.org)

## **COMMON PANTRY (New York) At-Home Sandwich-Making**

Join the monthly PAS initiative from our Tikkun Olam Committee to make sandwiches at home and help bring nourishment to neighbors in need. Drop them off at the synagogue in the morning and they'll be enjoyed by the afternoon. (PAS Tikkun Olam)

#### **PAS Contact Information:**

Wendy Shar

[sharwendy@hotmail.com](mailto:sharwendy@hotmail.com)

Katherina Grunfeld

[katmkg@gmail.com](mailto:katmkg@gmail.com)

<https://pasyn.org/communities/tikkun-olam>

## **CONCERTS IN MOTION**

Concerts in motion provides personalized, community-based live music and engagement for New York's most isolated residents. Their youth program supports young performers' personal growth through thoughtfully developed outreach-based performance opportunities.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Students of all ages can participate in their Intergenerational Open Mics, which consists of performances by students and older adults who want to share their talents with each other in a safe space. These can include music performance, poetry, dance, and other creative outlets. They host two hour-long Open Mics each month on Zoom, in addition to in-person Open Mics in

collaboration with our partner organizations. For their Bnei Mitzvah, students aged 12-13 can participate or even help organize an Open Mic event in their community.

Note: they also have programs for high school age students

### **Organization Contact Information:**

*Niti Parthasarathy*      [nitip@concertsinmotion.org](mailto:nitip@concertsinmotion.org)      470-659-8674

## **DAYS FOR GIRLS (DFG)**

Days for Girls is a nonprofit organization that prepares and distributes sustainable menstrual health solutions to girls who would otherwise miss school during their monthly periods.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

There are many ways to engage with Days for Girls (DFG). They run a monthly two-hour (first Monday of each month) volunteer meeting where volunteers put together the components of the kit that is sent to girls in need. You can do everything from cutting Flannel used to make the pads to cutting ribbons for the drawstring bags that are enclosed. You can also order supplies like colored underwear and washcloths or make components at home and deliver them back to DFG. They can provide a link in lieu of gifts and/or help you organize your own kit making party.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

*Hilary Steinman, Outreach Director*    917-576-7537    [hilaryklotzsteinman@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryklotzsteinman@gmail.com)

## **DOROT**

DOROT is a nonprofit organization addressing the challenges of an aging population. We serve our clients with a diverse range of programs and service. We deliver those programs and Services through intergenerational connections with volunteers of all ages.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement (4 Bnei Mitzvah Projects listed)**

1. Robert prepared and delivered to the Upper West Side location a main course for 10 people who are residents of the Dorot's Homeless Prevention Program.
2. Kira made hand sewn eye glass cases to be used as birthday presents. She also volunteers playing intergenerational chess with Dorot.
3. Intergenerational After School Chess (in-person) Each week older adults play chess with experienced chess players who are in grades 6-12.
4. Eden had a series of 30-minute calls with a senior citizen who participates in Dorot programming to brighten the senior's day.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

*Elijah Wong*      212-769-2850      [ewong@dorotusa.org](mailto:ewong@dorotusa.org)

<https://dorotusa.org/volunteer/youth-and-family-volunteering/bar-and-bat-mitzvah-engagement>

## **EDEN REFORESTATION PROJECTS**

We work with local communities to restore landscapes on a massive scale, thereby creating jobs, protecting ecosystems, and helping mitigate climate change.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Carson obtained sponsors to support his running 10 Kilometers in order to plant 10,000 trees. This was in honor of his relative who hid from the Nazis in a forest and when celebrating his bar mitzvah alone in the forest, used 10 sticks to serve as his "minyan" for the makeshift service. In total, Carson raised enough money to plant 11,393 trees.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

Allison Wiltshire

[allison@edenprojects.org](mailto:allison@edenprojects.org)

## **FARE (FOOD ALLEGY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION)**

FARE enhances the lives of individuals with food allergies empowering them to lead safe, productive lives with the respect of others through education and advocacy initiatives and improved awareness around healthcare options and treatment.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Alex is allergic to many things. She partnered with her friend Charlie to organize an awareness walk for food allergies in central park and a fundraiser for FARE. They had almost 100 people walk in the park and they raised \$17,000 for this organization that has done so much for food allergies.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

703-691-3179

[www.foodallergy.org/contact-us](http://www.foodallergy.org/contact-us)

## **FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE-CHABAD UES**

At Friendship Circle Upper East Side we are dedicate to bringing happiness and companionship to Jewish children, teens and young adults with special needs, as well as bringing energy, support and peace of mind to their families. Built on the foundation Torah principle of "V'ahavta L'reyacho Komocha" – "love your fellow as yourself", our unique model pairs teen and young adult volunteers with individuals with special needs for hours of fun and friendship at our 37 tailor-made programs.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Julia volunteered in the Sunday Circles Program which involved helping play with children with special needs including arts and crafts, baking, and sports every other Sunday from 10:30 am–2:00 pm.

Lauren with 3 other Bnei Mitzvah volunteers helped to organize Friendship Circle's annual carnival event. The organization is dedicated to bringing happiness and companionship to Jewish children, teens and young adults with special needs.

## **FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NYC**

## **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

The Friendship Circle is a community for children with special needs. People of any age, but specifically middle/high school aged kids, can volunteer for the variety of programs involving children with special needs. One program is Sunday Circle, where the children and volunteers have time together to play and interact with others. Another program is Friends at Home, where one or two volunteers meet a child at their home.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

212-348-2527      [office@friendshipcirclenyc.org](mailto:office@friendshipcirclenyc.org)  
<https://www.friendshipcirclenyc.org/volunteer-project>  
<https://www.friendshipcirclenyc.org/events>

*Note for Chabad: For some projects, Chabad might ask that your child join a donation webpage.*

## **GRASSROOTS GROCERY**

As a bottom-up movement, we partner with trusted community leaders who get food to their neighbors. We have placed 7 community fridges in low-income housing developments and host Saturday morning “produce parties,” where volunteers unload our refrigerated truck filled with excess produce. 33 hyper-local sites receive these deliveries.

NOTE: they have opened an upper east side fridge at 1780 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, New York, NY 10128, NYCHA Holmes Towers, Open 24/7

## **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Sandwich making, cook and deliver your favorite meal, decorate cookies and share your creations with communities in need, substitute floral centerpieces with fruit baskets to be picked up by Grassroots, create your own project!

Annabelle recruited friends to bring ingredients to her home and make sandwiches. Dan spoke to the group at her apartment. They made the sandwiches and brought them to the Community Fridge on 92<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>. She has continued through student leadership to focus on food insecurity issues as well as composting.

### **Organization Contact information:**

Dan Zauderer 917-497-2514    [Dan@grassrootsgrocery.org](mailto:Dan@grassrootsgrocery.org)

## **GUIDING EYES FOR THE BLIND**

Guiding Eyes for the Blind provides guide dogs to people with vision loss. We are passionate about connecting exceptional dogs with individuals for greater independence.

## **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Danielle and Sophie raised a Labrador puppy from 8 weeks old to 16 months old so he could be a guide dog. We took him to weekly classes and followed a guided daily routine with him. Our entire family contributed to this project and since it took us 14 months, both of my youngest

daughters were able to do it for their b'nai mitzvah. After we gave our puppy back for formal training,

We continued to puppy sit for families that are raising puppies. Very rewarding. A lot of work but we got so much love in return from our super puppy Alec. During Alec's formal training, the trainers decided that Alec was too high energy to be a guide dog but he was selected by the Massachusetts State Police and today Alec is an explosives detection dog at the University of Massachusetts. He wears a badge and does mitzvahs every day.

**Organization Contact Information:**  
**845-878-3330**      **[guidingeyes.org](http://guidingeyes.org)**

## HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Alexandria and Eliana read with/tutored 6th-grade girls at a Harlem Charter School via Zoom.

**Organization Contact Information:**  
*Organized through an English teacher working at the school*

## HOCKEY FIGHTS CANCER

Hockey Fights Cancer is a charitable initiative of the US and Canadian National Hockey League Players Association dedicated to raising money and awareness toward cancer research.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Gabriel raised money by giving donors lavender hockey tape for their hockey sticks. Every hockey player tapes their stick a different color as a way to express themselves. By putting on the lavender tape, you are expressing that you support the Hockey Fights Cancer organization because lavender is the color used to represent the organization. I chose this organization because it combines my love for the sport of hockey, which I play and the love that I had for my uncle, and anyone else suffering from cancer.

**Organization Contact Information:**  
<https://www.nhl.com/community/hockey-fights-cancer>

## HOMEBOUND NEIGHBOR

One need not do a mitzvah through an organization. Oliver shopped for his elderly homebound neighbor, picking up groceries, medications, and other items on a weekly basis. Do you know of a neighbor in need?

### **Gallop NYC**

Gallop NYC uses therapeutic horsemanship to help riders in NYC with disabilities walk, talk and learn, inspiring them to live their lives as fully, independently and productively as possible.

**Organization Contact Information:**

<https://gallopnyc.org/>

## **ISRAEL PARASPORT CENTER formerly AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ISRAEL SPORT CENTER FOR THE DISABLED**

Israel ParaSport Center's mission is to empower people with disabilities through sports. It currently serves more than 2700 children and adults with disabilities annually through both its holistic rehabilitative and competitive sports programs. With the help of the Center's staff, children and adults with disabilities gain self-confidence, learn new skills, find community, and successfully integrate into Israeli society.

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement (when it was American Friends)**

Josh planned a 5km sponsored walk in Central Park for family & friends. He created a page on the charity's website and sent a link out to people he knew asking for sponsorship. I am excited to raise money for the Center.

**Organization Contact Information:**

*Jessica Milstein Mishra*      [jessica.mishra@israelparasport.org](mailto:jessica.mishra@israelparasport.org)

## **JEWISH YOUTH CLIMATE MOVEMENT (Adamah)**

A Gen Z-led movement dedicated to combating climate change and environmental injustice from a Jewish lens. Their goal is to make taking collective action towards climate justice a central, defining feature of what it means to be Jewish over the next decade, empowering the next generation of Jewish youth to be leaders in their fight to build a sustainable and equitable world for all.

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

<https://adamah.org/for-teens-youth-adults/jewish-youth-climate-movement/>

These are geared to those in 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Organization contact information:**

*Miriam Ehrlich*      [miriam.ehrlich@adamah.org](mailto:miriam.ehrlich@adamah.org)

## **KIDS CANCEL CANCER**

Supports the Samuel Waxman Pediatric Cancer Research Program, which is funding researchers in Israel and the U.S. who are working together on promising new treatments for childhood leukemia and Ewing sarcoma—a rare and aggressive bone cancer that affects kids and teens.

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Be on the committee for an annual event organized by kids for kids which this year will take place on August 12 at The Clubhouse in East Hampton. All money raised will go directly to Samuel Waxman Pediatric Cancer Research Program. The event specifically funds the work of Dr Shai Izraeli at Tel Aviv University who is on the cutting edge to pediatric cancer research. Work with other teens to make the event a success! This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year Mischa has worked on the event. Mischa and her friends would like to get some younger kids to join and ultimately continue its legacy as Mischa and her friends go off to college.

**Organization contact information:** Please contact Ruth Abend, [ruthabend@gmail.com](mailto:ruthabend@gmail.com)

If you would like more information from Mischa Abend, contact Ruth and she will get in touch.

### **MADDIE KRAMER FOUNDATION: "DANCING WHILE CANCERING"**

The Maddie Kramer Foundation: "Dancing While Cancering" has only one mission: to bring joy to the inpatient hospital experience for children with cancer. Increasing joy and happiness to those with cancer not only lifts their spirits, but also signals our care and love. Our hope is to spread Maddie's positive energy to other childhood cancer heroes. Dancing While Cancering is committed to fighting the darker hospital moments with the bright light that Maddie shined upon her battle with cancer.

#### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Raised money for the organization and plans to deliver Smile Packs to hospitals in non-Covid times.

#### **Organization Contact information:**

*Pammy and Scott Kramer* 212-920-7115

[pammy@dancingwhilecancering.org](mailto:pammy@dancingwhilecancering.org)

### **THE JEWISH BOARD (PAS Mitzvah Day 2024)**

The Jewish Board is one of the United States' largest nonprofit mental health and social service agencies and NYC's largest social services nonprofit. They promote resilience and recovery by addressing all aspects of an individual's life including mental and physical health, family, housing, employment and education.

There are many volunteer opportunities.

As examples:

Collect ten pairs of your favorite socks and tie them up in a ribbon for families in their preventive program

Summer Activities; pack up chalk, balls, bubbles and jump ropes to make happy and active summers for the children across the city

Favorite Books – bring the love of reading to the children in their shelters with a collection of your favorite books

Create your own project

**Organization Contact information:**

Dana Mindlin [dmindlin@jbfcs.org](mailto:dmindlin@jbfcs.org)  
[jewishboard.org/get-involved/volunteer/](http://jewishboard.org/get-involved/volunteer/)

**JEWISH NATIONAL FUND – USA**

*Bnei Mitzvah participants can practice the values of tzedakah and chesed by fundraising for a Jewish National Fund-USA project that supports one of the following areas: Disabilities, Fire and Rescue Services, Children's Baseball, Bomb Shelter Beautification, the Israel Resiliency Campaign and more.*

**Organization Contact Information:**

Dana Klein, [dklein@jnf.org](mailto:dklein@jnf.org), 617-423-0999 x484  
Rick Abrams, [rabrams@jnf.org](mailto:rabrams@jnf.org), 973-593-0095 x828

**MET COUNCIL**

MET Council is America's largest Jewish charity dedicated to serving the needy. Met Council's ten different departments are staffed by experts who helped over 305,000 clients in 2020 and continuously advocate on behalf of all needy New Yorkers. Our holistic programs range from 1005 affordable housing at 20 locations to our award-winning family violence program to comprehensive Holocaust survivor assistance to senior programming to crisis intervention to the largest free kosher food distribution program in the world. Our network of 101 food pantries, 20 affordable housing sites, and 15 JCCs provide service directly in neighborhoods across New York.

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement (Two Projects Listed)**

1. Over the years, while packaging groceries and delivering food for the Met Council Food Pantry, Asher noticed that there are minimal spices available for the clients they serve. For his Mitzvah Project, he wanted to make sure the food pantry clients have access to spices, so they can flavor their food in the ways they prefer. He experimented with recipes using the basic foods available at the pantry and enhancing the flavors using a variety of spices. He made a list of some great recipes and solicited spices from corporate donors as well as asked friends and family for donations to buy additional spices, so he could help as many food pantry clients as possible. He packaged spice kits and recipes to be distributed to Met Council Food Pantry clients.
2. Preparing boxes of food for homebound elderly Jewish community

**Organization Contact information:**

Shelby R. Brown 732-320-8186 [sbrown@metcouncil.com](mailto:sbrown@metcouncil.com)  
Alanna Mantel [amantel@metcouncil.org](mailto:amantel@metcouncil.org)

**NEW YORK CITY VOLUNTEERING – DOING GOOD TOGETHER**

*Sign up for their email and you will receive a monthly list of projects for teens of different ages*

<https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A www.doinggoodtogether.org family-2Dvolunteering-2Dnyc&d=DwlCAg&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7iXrwqOf-v5A CdpqnVfiiMM&r=43QZJYvsJCDmofDFciUjPViCrjAWSTVvIRfNp2G sE0&m=pKj8lvNS 4UJ5Oyoh0FrErRjUIR2e6vQhM7UbbPNHVqkVK6J4R9-hZavMopvU0TUG&s=yDMT2Et8vHBdrSE4YWAhmbu3s B83kMizZCqet78y3s&e=>

## NEW YORK JUNIOR TENNIS LEAGUE

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Julia and Robbie taught tennis to inner city kids in the Bronx

### **Organization Contact Information:**

Jay Devashetty

718-247-7420

[jdevashetty@nyjtl.org](mailto:jdevashetty@nyjtl.org)

## PARKINSON'S - TEEN'S COMBATING PARKINSONS

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Teen's Combating Parkinson's is a youth-led organization dedicated to raising awareness about Parkinson's disease and thereby improving the lives of Parkinson's patients. We aim to develop initiatives that provide support, encouragement, and inspiration for individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease. We hope that by empowering teenagers to become Parkinson's advocates we can contribute to an increase in understanding and support for Parkinson's disease.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

Hannah Raskin

917-657-4260

[teenscombatingparkinsons@gmail.com](mailto:teenscombatingparkinsons@gmail.com)

## PAS: PASTA

Ava volunteered as a PASTA (Park Avenue Teaching Assistant).

### **Organization Contact Information:**

Aaron Hersh, Associate Director of Congregational School **212.369.2600, x183**

[ahersh@pasyn.org](mailto:ahersh@pasyn.org)

## PITCH IN FOR BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

Youth sports help kids build character, leadership skills, confidence, and resiliency. Kids in under-resourced areas often cannot afford the equipment needed to play baseball and softball. Our mission is to eliminate barriers by providing equipment directly to leagues, schools, and organizations around the world who are most in need.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Ian and his friend George (from his baseball team) created a fundraiser to raise money for an organization called Pitch in for baseball and softball that buys equipment for teams. You can also donate gear that is in good condition.

#### **Organization Contact Information:**

Meredith P. Kim      215.313.7476      [www.pifbs.org](http://www.pifbs.org)

## **READATHON**

Another example of independently creating your own mitzvah project. Lucas organized a readathon and asked for pledges per hour of reading from friends and family. He was able to donate directly to a classroom in need of books for their students.

## **SUPPLY DRIVES FOR ANIMAL SHELTERS in NY and NJ**

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Harlan Organized three bedding and supply drives for the The Humane Society of New York and for the Monmouth County SPCA, no-kill shelters that need supplies to take good care of the animals they rescue. A wish list of items was shared by email to friends and family. Most things are not pet items so even non-pet owner could participate.

#### **Organization Contact Information:**

This was self-directed by Harlan so an example of how you can do a mitzvah related to something you care about and would like to support.

## **THE CHICK MISSION**

The Chick Mission is a non-profit organization that supports newly diagnosed female cancer patients in preserving their fertility options prior to treatment.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Jack organized a run / walk called Jack be Quick, with all proceeds benefitting The Chick Mission. Jack Be Quick raised \$14,000, which funded two hope grants - funding two women's fertility treatment prior to beginning life-saving cancer treatment.

#### **Organization Contact Information:**

Tracy Weiss      [tracy.weiss@thechickmission.org](mailto:tracy.weiss@thechickmission.org)

Jack's parents are happy to speak with anyone about this organization.

## **THE SWISH PODCAST**

Created and run by one of our Bnei Mitzva, Jake, and his best friend, it is an all-sports podcast and Instagram account.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

We are both passionate about sports. We began The Swish last Spring at the start of the pandemic as a way to keep ourselves busy with so much time at home as well as to raise money for Covid-19 relief from friends and family and others who were interested in listening to our podcast. We have raised over \$11,000 to benefit the United Nations Foundation, Inc, (UN Foundation and UNF) COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund for WHO, but we want to do more! With our Bar Mitzvahs quickly approaching, the importance and meaning of a becoming a Bar Mitzvah has been shifted into greater focus. As we began to think about our Mitzvah projects, we knew that we could use our podcast platform to raise even more money for Covid-19 relief.

## **WEST SIDE CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUNGER (WSCAH)**

WSCAH is on a mission to alleviate hunger by ensuring that all New Yorkers have access with dignity to a choice of healthy food and supportive services. They pioneered a model that invites their customers to choose food from an array of healthy options.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

An example is joining their Block Party where there are opportunities to pack boxes of shelf-stable food and fresh produce. They have a food pantry on the upper west side at 263 West 86<sup>th</sup> Street

For Age 10+, Group Volunteer Opportunity: pack fresh and shelf stable food and fallen boxes for recycling. To register, visit: <https://www.newyorkcares.org/home>

There are other possibilities – the website, [www.wscah.org](http://www.wscah.org) lists them all.

### **Organization Contact Information:**

*Kira Garfinkel*      [kgarfinkel@wscah.org](mailto:kgarfinkel@wscah.org)      212-362-3662 ext. 3783 [www.wscah.org](http://www.wscah.org)

## **WIN (Women In Need)**

Homeless moms often enter a Win shelter at an extremely low point in their lives; our team listens to their stories, helps them with a plan to move forward, and provides support for their children. Win staff is committed to helping these women find their way back to independence for themselves and their families.

Raffi chose this charity because it connected to the theme of her Torah parsha, nobody gets left behind. WIN saves thousands of women from being left on the streets each year and is a hugely important part of the community.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

She chose to support the program Camp WIN, a summer program that affords kids a summer camp experience, an experience she herself enjoys, while their parents can go to work. For \$5000, the program can send 5 kids to camp for the whole summer. She raised \$12,000 by holding a “Charity of Hearts” fundraiser.

**Organization Contact Information:**

Jessica O’Brien [JOBrien@winnyc.org](mailto:JOBrien@winnyc.org)

## YAD LEAH

Yad Leah provides clothing to people in need across Israel. They only accept gently used and new clothing and accessories to ensure that Israelis have high-quality and dignified clothing to wear. Yad Leah supplies its 25 stores with donated items to provide shoppers with a dignified shopping experience. People pay a token amount for the clothing, so they do not feel they are taking charity.

### Bnei Mitzvah Engagement

Arie Donath and Jane Schneidman organized a clothing drive, successfully collecting 104 bags of donated items, including all types of clothing, shoes, and accessories. They collected from over thirty friends and family members, organized a drop-off point, and arranged for a U-Haul to take all the items to the Yad Leah warehouse in Passaic, New Jersey. They also provided tax receipts and donuts!

**Organization Contact Information:**

<https://yadleah.org/>

## YOUTH RENEWAL FUND – Darca Schools

YRF is the philanthropic funding partner for Darca Schools in Israel, investing in innovative education throughout Israel’s most underserved communities to improve social mobility. Darca strengthens underserved communities in Israel’s periphery by creating and operating groundbreaking, enriching, and efficient educational frameworks for more than 25,000 students in 45 schools nationwide.

### Bnei Mitzvah Engagement

From their website: raise money for STEM/Robotics programs, purchase instruments and supplies for music & performing arts programs, and sponsoring Darca student delegations to travel to the US for various conferences or competitions.

**Organization Contact Information:**

Emily Grant [emily@youthrenewalfund.org](mailto:emily@youthrenewalfund.org) and Liza Byrne [liza@youthrenewalfund.org](mailto:liza@youthrenewalfund.org)

## UJA GIVE A MITZVAH-DO A MITZVAH

The Give a Mitzvah Do a Mitzvah program enables bar and bat mitzvah students to create their own unique mitzvah project that connect their interests and hobbies to UJA-Federation of New York's work around the world. Alongside a UJA-Federation mitzvah coordinator, participants brainstorm individual projects and then contribute their time, energy, and a portion (or all) of their gifts to this special mitzvah project. There is a minimum donation requirement.

**Organization Contact information for GMDM:**

**Tess Korn** [kornt@ujafedny.org](mailto:kornt@ujafedny.org)

*Some families listed the contact at the organization they were involved with. In either case, please contact the UJA.*

## Afya

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Sarah brought friends with her to Afya Foundation to sort and package humanitarian supplies for Ukrainian refugees and she raised funds that UJA donated to the Afya Foundation.

**Organization Contact Information:**

Mary Grace Pagaduan at Afya, Tess Korn at UJA (contact information above)

## Edenwald

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Visiting and hanging out with boys in residential care; raising money for residential home in Israel.

## Etgarim

Etgarim's mission is to empower and integrate people with disabilities through outdoor sports. Approximately 5,000 children and 1,000 adults take part in their activities each year. Brian focused his fundraising efforts on their sailing and cycling programs, which are two of his personal passions. Their cycling program is offered to adults and youth with nearly all kinds of disabilities, including cerebral palsy, autism, intellectual disabilities, and vision impairment or blindness. Their sailing program teaches participants mutual dependence, support, teamwork, friendship, and leadership skills.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Bnei Mitzvah raised funds for Etgarim, an Israeli sports-focused social service organization and then visited the program in Israel.

## Israel Tennis and Education Centers

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

In lieu of gifts and in honor of his bar mitzvah, Bnei Mitzvah asked family and friends to consider supporting his mitzvah project. Through UJA-Federation's Give a Mitzvah - Do a Mitzvah

program, Benjamin raised funds for Israel Tennis and Education Centers (ITEC), an Israeli sports-focused social service organization.

ITEC was meaningful to him because he enjoys playing tennis, and he has visited their tennis centers several times while in Israel. He played tennis with their students both in Israel and in New York. ITEC uses tennis to teach life skills to children, regardless of background, religion, or physical ability. Through tennis, homework support, and coexistence programs, ITEC fosters the values of self-esteem, character, and tolerance. ITEC serves over 20,000 Israeli children of diverse backgrounds every year. They have 14 centers throughout Israel, many in underprivileged neighborhoods, providing disadvantaged children with a safe, structured, and nurturing environment.

**Organization Contact Information:**

Lori Kolinsky

212-836-1541

[kolinskyl@ujafedny.org](mailto:kolinskyl@ujafedny.org)

## JCAA

From residential programs to in-home family therapy, JCAA's dedicated staff provide expert, evidence-based services to more than 17,000 children and families.

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Harry made cooking videos for kids at JCAA during the pandemic.

## Joint Jewish Distribution Committee

For over a century, we've put Jewish values into action when the world needs it most.

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Max raised funds for the JDC with a focus on Guatemala. In addition, until the pandemic hit, he volunteered at the New Jewish Home with a WWII vet

**Organizational Contact Information:**

212-836-1460

[www.jtfn.org/profile-program/261](http://www.jtfn.org/profile-program/261)

## Mid Island JCC /UJA

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Dylan and Max packed backpacks for Mid Island JCC back to school

**Organization Contact Information:**

Gail Warrack 516-822-3535 x347

[Gwarrack@mijcc.org](mailto:Gwarrack@mijcc.org)

## YM & YWHA of Washington Heights & Inwood

**Bnei Mitzvah Engagement (Two Projects Listed)**

1. Sam volunteered with children with autism in a program called Sunday Funday, mainly helping with gym activities.
2. Rose volunteered at Sunday Funday with autistic children and raised over \$5,000 for the Washington Heights Y summer camp scholarship program.

**Organization Contact Information:**

Victoria Neznansky, Chief Development Officer

212-569-6200

## WJCS

### Bnei Mitzvah Engagement

Sophie donated learning tablets to children in need at WJCS. Made cards and pictures to send with each tablet. Vicki was our contact there. Elana, at UJA, helped facilitate this.

**UJA Contact Information:**

Tess Korn                      kornt@ujafedny.org

**WJCS Contact Information:**

Vicki Forbes

914-595-0041

[vforbes@wjcs.com](mailto:vforbes@wjcs.com)

**Engagement in Israel** – for those families who are going to Israel and are looking for some mitzvah projects there or would like remote projects here.

See above for Beit Ruth and Yad Leah among others.

## AMERICAN FRIENDS OF BEIT ISSIE SHAPIRO

Beit Issie Shapiro is Israel's pioneering leader and innovator in the field of disabilities, developing and providing life-changing services, and exporting best practices for a more inclusive society around the globe. Through top therapies and services, including technology, hydrotherapy, sports therapy and more, they are able to change lives of children and adults with disabilities every day!

### Bnei Mitzvah Engagement

Organize a sports or gaming tournament, bake sale or creative project to help raise money for life-changing therapies at Beit Issie Shapiro so children with disabilities can enjoy and reap its rehabilitative benefits.

**Organizations Contact Information:**

Domonique Gauthier, Nat'l Development Coordinator 212-840-1166

[domonique@afobis.org](mailto:domonique@afobis.org)

## Leket Israel Harvest Helpers Rishon Lezion

Leket Israel, Israel's National Food Bank, rescues over 71 million lbs. of surplus, high-quality food annually, that otherwise would go to waste, from hundreds of farms, hotels, corporate caterers and IDF army bases. The rescued food is distributed to over 300 non-profits feeding 415,000 Israelis of all backgrounds each week. Since the war, Leket has been providing critical emergency relief and focusing on meals for homebound individuals and seniors, food and essential supplies for displaced families, financial support for evacuees and assisting farmers in harvesting their crops. Hands-on volunteer opportunities in Israel available year-round include gleaning (picking) fresh fruit and vegetables for the needy and sorting and packing freshly picked produce at the Leket Israel Logistics Center, for delivery to hungry Israelis. In the U.S., you can decorate tote bags to be used by Israeli teens picking produce in Israel for those in need, create a special craft to sell and donate proceeds to Leket Israel, compile a recipe book and more.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement in Israel**

Eden spent a morning picking vegetables in the fields outside of Tel Aviv

#### ***Organization Contact Information:***

Elena at: [elena@leket.us](mailto:elena@leket.us) or (201) 331-0070 x2

## **THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR ISRAEL**

A bat and bar mitzvah should be a time of joy and pride with family and community coming together. At this time, Israel is in mourning, with many families longing for their loved ones and entire communities uprooted from their homes. As you celebrate, we ask that you direct your thoughts, prayers and intentions (כּוּוּנָה) (towards the homecoming, comfort and rebuilding of the lives of the victims of terror.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement**

Connect with a bnei mitzvah age youth and their family. Develop a relationship sharing each other's stories. You can raise money to be donated to the Jewish Agency's Fund for Victims of Terror and note that it is "in honor of your "Bnei Mitzvah Match's" bar or bat mitzvah.

#### ***Organization Contact Information:***

Michal Abramoff [michalabr@jafi.org](mailto:michalabr@jafi.org)

[War in Israel | Jewish Agency for Israel – North American Council \(jafina.org\)](https://www.jafina.org)

## **Pantry Packers**

Pantry packers is the food distribution arm of Tzedakah Central/Colel Chabad, the oldest continuously operating network of social services in Israel – established in 1788. Every month Pantry Packers delivers crates containing all the necessary foods and household maintenance supplies to Israel's poorest families and senior citizens. They maintain a packing plant in

Jerusalem where visitors and tourists may partner in its efforts by helping pack food staples which are then included in the Pantry Packers crates.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement in Israel**

Eden spent an afternoon in Jerusalem at Pantry Packers packing dry foods for food insecure Israelis .

#### ***Organization Contact Information:***

<https://pantrypackers.org/you-can-help/>

### **PROJECT 24 Sports Mitzvah Project**

In the aftermath of October 7th, Project 24 provided Jews in North America with meaningful, direct and creative ways to support the rebuilding of Israeli communities devastated by the attack and war.

### **Bnei Mitzvah Engagement in Israel**

P24 is proud to introduce Sport Mitzvah, an innovative initiative that connects young American Jews with Israeli youth athletes, fostering cross-cultural bonds through sports. By pledging their mitzvah to this project, B'nei Mitzvah participants become “General Managers” (GMs) of an Israeli youth sports team in either Northern or Southern Israel. Their impact is twofold: they raise initial funds to support their team, then spend the rest of the year promoting and strengthening its activities. This program not only empowers young athletes in Israel but also provides participants with a meaningful leadership experience, strengthening their connection to Israel and Jewish value.

***Organization Contact Information:*** Shir Drucker Attias [Shir@project24israel.org](mailto:Shir@project24israel.org)

<https://www.project24israel.org/>