



Rabbi Eric Wittstein

The Gimprich Family Foundation is pleased to announce that Rabbi Eric Wittstein is the Foundation's new president and wishes him the best of luck in his new role. For the past seven years, Eric has served as the Foundation's Vice President and has been an active member of the Foundation's board for nearly 25 years.

Eric earned his BA from Swarthmore College, his smicha from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (NY) and his juris doctorate from NYU School of Law. For the past two decades, Eric has worked in the not-for-profit and philanthropic worlds at such fine institutions as the World Union for Progressive Judaism, Habonim Dror, and American Friends of the Hebrew University. Currently, Eric is the Director of Development and Operations at the Center for Media and Democracy, a nationally recognized watchdog in the U.S. political arena.

Eric is a Sabra, and while he has lived most of his life in the United States, Eric spent a high school year on Kibbutz Kfar Blum in the Hula Valley and several years in Jerusalem, including while attending Hebrew University. Eric currently resides in Park Slope, Brooklyn, with his wife, Jane, and their two young men, Ben and Josh, and their significant others. Eric is thrilled to be in this new role and hopes to meet with many of our grantees and potential grantees on upcoming trips to Israel that he will make on behalf of the Foundation in the coming months and years.

Sadly, the reality of day-to-day life remains challenging for Israelis, with little relief in sight. Many communities, both within Israel and beyond, are dealing with external and internal threats; hostages and those lost are in limbo, the displaced yearn to return home, there are ever-growing numbers of Israelis facing mental health challenges, there is a general feeling of unrest as the country continues to face foreign threats, the work of rebuilding has been slow to commence and more. With this, we all share the hope that recovery will soon begin.

The Gimprich Family Foundation trustees are particularly concerned with the ever-growing need to provide support for the significant mental health challenges and their extensive consequences, as the prevalence of PTSD, depression, and anxiety is considerably high among Israeli citizens of all backgrounds.

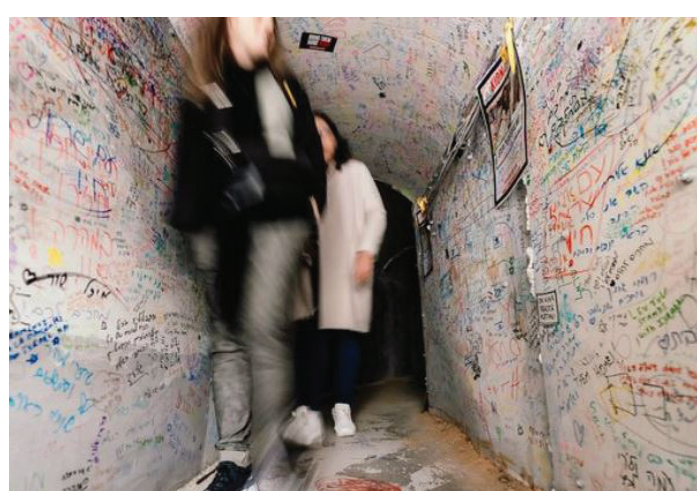
Despite these challenges, many Israeli non-profit organizations continue to do outstanding work toward planning and building for a better and stronger tomorrow. At the fall board meeting, Gimprich Family Foundation trustees were pleased to learn about some of these organizations and recognize their vital contributions to their communities. If anything, these dedicated groups give us hope for the future.

The Foundation's Fall 2024 board meeting focused on the complex and pressing issues in Israel, reflected in the applications for support from nonprofits. Along with programs in the realm of mental health and work to assuage the impact of trauma, there were requests for support from organizations that focus on increasing community resilience, strengthening democracy and shared society, and essential projects that serve to improve our environment for future generations.

The Fall 2024 grantees are doing much-needed work toward creating a stronger and more cohesive Israeli society while tackling some of the most pressing challenges that Israel faces today. **A total of \$322,000 in funding** was approved, comprising two emergency grants, two multi-year grants, and eight single-year grants to other organizations.

EMERGENCY GRANTS

Israel is in the midst of a national trauma crisis, and the ever-growing demand for mental health support landed on an already underfunded and understaffed mental healthcare system. The Gimprich Trustees were impressed by the nonprofits' ability to pivot and rise to meet the challenges quickly and provide much-needed assistance to those most vulnerable.



A total of \$82,000 was granted to:

- [Mashiv Haruach Initiative](#) - \$50,000 to support the emotional and mental needs of volunteers and professionals who experienced the horrors of October 7th and the war as first responders. The program provides space to process the events they experienced, strengthen their resilience, and experience a unique group space for growth and development from the events. The Israeli Trauma Coalition chose the organization as their designated provider of resilience workshops – they are also an authorized WHO provider in the field of resilience.
- [Tamar](#) - \$32,000 in support of mental health treatment focusing on clients in Arab communities, predominantly in the Negev. Among other services, Tamar provides online psychological support using a model adopted to provide targeted mental health care for Bedouin society. The model ensures confidentiality and geographic and cultural accessibility. This combination enables the Bedouin population to benefit from psychological aid and annually assists thousands of children, youth, teenagers, and adults.

MULTI-YEAR GRANTS

A total of \$45,000 was granted to:

- [Sikkuy-Aufog](#) - This \$30,000 grant is the last year of a three-year partnership (\$90,000 in all) focusing on the "Education for a Shared Society" program. Sikkuy-Aufog succeeded in advancing the Ministry of Education's adoption of new policies supporting shared society within the education system and promoting broad policy shifts.
- [Rashut Harabim](#) - This \$15,000 grant is the second part of a two-year grant (\$30,000 in all) supporting the Community House (a previously neglected bomb shelter that was renovated to serve the residents) to maximize its potential as a community hub promoting values of Jewish pluralism. The Community House team facilitates activities and builds community among diverse communities, organizations, and Kiryat HaYovel residents (e.g., workshops, text study, Shabbat and holiday services, family and children's activities, creating a curated outdoor leisure space, and more).



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FOCUS ON SELECT GRANTS

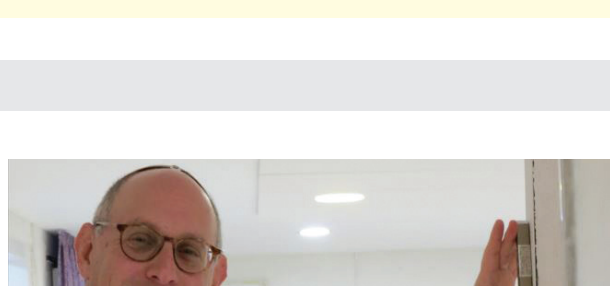
The trustees approved eight grants totaling \$195,000 for additional nonprofits working to support democracy, strengthen shared society, empower women, and protect the environment. Two of the eight nonprofits have previously partnered with the Foundation, and six are new initiatives.

Highlights from this group of grantees include:

- A \$30,000 grant was made to [Women Wage Peace](#), an organization that tirelessly fosters peace and reconciliation through grassroots advocacy and inclusive dialogue. This grant will support the organization's efforts to enhance its operational capabilities by implementing a CRM system to bolster capacity-building efforts, streamline communication, improve donor management, centralize data for better resource management, and more. .
- [Tishreen—Activism and Social Empowerment](#) - is a non-profit, non-partisan civil society organization founded in 2008 in the Triangle area of Israel. It works to strengthen civil society and empower women. A grant of \$20,000 was awarded in support of an empowerment workshop group for women, ages 40+, from Taybeh. The group focuses on social and political issues and personal development and allows them to create a community for discussions, activities, and personal growth.
- A \$25,000 grant was awarded to [Shomrim - The Center for Media and Democracy](#), an independent, nonprofit news organization established to strengthen Israeli democracy through investigative journalism. This grant will be leveraged to engage the younger generation and those traditionally underserved by conventional media by tailoring its fact-based and unbiased content for platforms like Instagram, podcasting, videos, and Telegram. It will establish itself as a reliable, in-depth, and trusted source of information on social issues (in Russian, Arabic, and Amharic).
- [The Shamsuna Center—Sayyid Alharumi Initiative](#) received a \$20,000 grant. This grant will support a pilot program to harness solar energy to replace the potentially harmful diesel generators currently used to power kindergartens for Bedouin children in the Negev. The project hopes to demonstrate the feasibility of this solution and create a replicable model in similar sites across the Negev.

The events of October 7th, 2024, the outbreak of war, the ensuing losses and trauma are taking a heavy toll on the mental health and well-being of Israelis. In preparation for the spring 2025 grant round, the Gimprich Family Foundation has strategically decided to focus on supporting trauma-related initiatives for Israeli citizens.

- **We invite organizations working in mental health, resilience, and trauma-related fields to contact Tamara Klinger Levi, Israel Representative, no later than January 31, 2025, at representative@gimprich.org.**



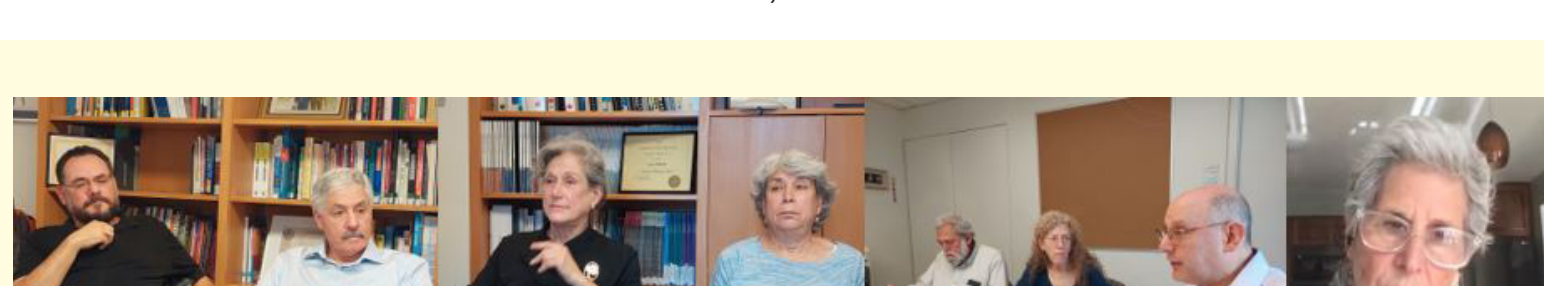
Lastly, we close our newsletter by offering our sincerest thanks to Michael Schmidt for his seven years as President of the GFF and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

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