

KAVOD • כבוד

• A tzedakah collective •

8914 Farnam Court • Omaha, Nebraska • 68114-4076

E-mail: KAVOD@KAVOD.org • Home Page: <http://www.KAVOD.org>

It's been ten years since **KAVOD** was founded and we're grateful to you for all you've done to help us change the world. With your help, we have been able to provide an aviary for a home for the aged, dozens of therapeutic horseback rides, hundreds of pairs of shoes, and thousands of meals. We've kept the phone lines open at a Jerusalem rape crisis center, helped Jewish elders on the lower East side of Manhattan live richer lives, and responded quickly to earthquakes, terrorist attacks, and private, personal tragedies. And we've done all of this while remaining true to our core values of protecting human dignity, finding and attaching ourselves to mitzvah heroes whom we trust to turn our tzedakah dollars into miracles, and operating always as a collective by striving to form personal relationships with those who are part of the **KAVOD** community.

Since our inception, we've distributed almost \$400,000 with an overhead of

under \$100. (People often ask how we are able to operate with such low overhead. Our administrator and board members are all volunteers and all direct expenses, such as mailings and photocopying, are paid for by our board. One hundred percent of your donation is distributed to the worthy tzedakot that we support.)

To our supporters we say *Yasher Koach* — all the more strength to you! We hope you will enjoy reading about the projects and programs that your gifts have supported. Many will be familiar, as we generally have continued (and increased) our commitments to groups we have supported in the past. Additionally, there are a number of wonderful programs (indicated with an asterisk) to which **KAVOD** contributed for the first time this year.

KAVOD Tzedakah Fellowship Update

One of our most exciting projects is the **KAVOD** fellowship program, now in its second year. The goals of this program are ambitious: in partnership with the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), we are training the next generation of rabbis, cantors, and Jewish educators to raise and distribute tzedakah wisely and effectively. We are expanding the **KAVOD** community and planting seeds that will yield a bountiful tzedakah harvest in the years to come.

Here's how the fellowship works: all first year HUC-JIR students studying in Israel are eligible to apply for the fellowship. A small committee of **KAVOD** board members selects the fellows and then pairs each fellow with a "Mitzvah Mentor" - a **KAVOD** Board member, Jewish professional in the community, or

SUMMARY OF KAVOD'S FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Allocations, 2003: **\$60,050.00**

Allocations to date ('93-'03):
\$368,690.53

Expenses to date: **\$75.48**

lay leader with expertise in the realm of tzedakah who helps the fellow raise and distribute funds in accordance with the values of our tradition. Look for a comprehensive report of the good work of our first set of fellows, Alissa Forrest and Jocee Hudson, on the Kavod website in the near future.

KAVOD recognizes that for students to understand fully the challenges (and joys) of giving money away, they must understand the challenges of raising money. So in addition to an upfront sum that **KAVOD** entrusts the fellow to donate, we offer a 1:1 matching grant for funds the fellow raises on her own. Over the four years of the fellowship, each fellow will give away up to \$11,000: \$6,000 from **KAVOD** plus another \$5,000 raised by the fellow. Alissa and Jocee *exceeded* our first year challenge of \$500 and have recently put these tzedakah monies to use (since these checks went out after December 31, 2003, they will be included in next year's report). Our second set of fellows, Erica Greenbaum and Elana Erdstein, are already raising funds for

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a 501(c)(3), tax-exempt corporation
Doing tzedakah since 5754 (1993)
Tax ID # 47-0789888

Volunteer Executive Director

Rabbi Josh Zweiback

Volunteer Administrator

Judy Zweiback

Volunteer Board of Directors

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Julia Davis • Rabbi Bob Davis

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Rabbi Jay Moses • Rabbi Felicia Sol

Adam Zweiback • Rosie Zweiback

Dr. Speedy Zweiback • *Hermene Zweiback* (ד"ר)

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translates to "dignity, honor, integrity" – the values we try to embody in how we give and in what we choose to support.

distribution. Please note: the \$60,050 we gave away this year *does not* include funds that the fellows are distributing.

We love the idea of the Kavod Fellowships for a number of reasons. For one, it's a great tzedakah investment - every dollar directed to the fellow is given to tzedakah. The fellow then raises his/her own additional funds for tzedakah. It is a *generative* program - it's a fellowship that keeps on giving because we expect great things from these fellows going forward. They will quite literally change the world (in fact, they already are).

Know that all funds for the KAVOD Tzedakah Fellowships are raised separately from our regular fundraising. The KAVOD Board has committed itself to sponsoring two fellowships, one in memory of longtime KAVOD supporter, Dorothy Gimp Brand. If you'd like to sponsor a fellow-or know of someone who would-please contact us at KAVOD@KAVOD.com.

Some Words of Thanks

We are grateful to everyone who makes our work possible. We offer a special thanks to Mike Abramson, our pro bono accountant and lawyer, and Miles Nelson, who provides us with our KAVOD envelopes on his dime. Most of all, we thank Judy Zweiback, our volunteer administrator. Judy donates hundreds of hours a year to KAVOD. She writes every acknowledgement, designs, produces, and distributes our beautiful KAVOD tribute cards, and handles all of the day-to-day administration. She is the backbone of our collective.

One who follows
righteousness and
loyalty finds life,
righteousness, and
KAVOD.
Proverbs 21:21

Please tell your friends about KAVOD, and feel free to make copies of this annual report for distribution. Visit us online at www.KAVOD.org to learn more about our collective and the meaning of *kavod*. Think of us when you want to make a donation in honor or memory of a loved one or friend. If you would like to make a bequest to KAVOD as part of your estate plan, please let us know. Tax-deductible donations (tax ID # 47-0789888) can be made to us any time at:

KAVOD
8914 Farnam Court
Omaha, NE 68114-4076

Statement of Purpose: KAVOD is a non-profit tzedakah collective. *We create new programs and fund existing programs that help Jews and non-Jews living in the United States, Israel, and around the world to live in dignity and honor.* As a tzedakah **collective**, we try to personalize our giving by visiting all of our beneficiaries and encouraging our donors to do the same. We strive to operate as close to 0% overhead as possible and to support programs that similarly demand efficiency.

**TZEDAKAH
PROJECTS**

1. Beit Frankforter.....\$2,500
Inspired by the model of Myriam Mendilow, לוי, the people of Beit Frankforter are committed to preserving the essential **KAVOD** of their community of Elders in Jerusalem. Simi Zini and her staff have created a community center that truly embodies **KAVOD**, the dignity, honor, and integrity that every person deserves. The elders served by Beit Frankforter are uplifted and honored, enjoying regular care not only from dentists and ophthalmologists, but also from hairdressers, reflexologists, manicurists, and yoga instructors. Our funds this year helped support a new program called "A Sandwich for Every Child." Every day the elders of Beit

Frankforter prepare approximately 100 sandwiches for local school children whose families are experiencing economic hardships.

[Beit Frankforter, ATTN: Sima Zini, 80 Derech Beit Lechem, POB 10074, Jerusalem, 91100; 02-671-4848; frankfor@netvision.net.il]

2. The Blue Card.....\$1,000*

For over sixty years, the Blue Card has distributed funds to Jewish Shoah survivors who live in poverty. The Blue Card was established in 1934 in Germany to help Jews who were suffering economically because of Nazi oppression. Blue cards were distributed to American Jews who donated funds to support their brothers and sisters in Europe. With each donation, these American Jews received a small stamp of commemoration which they could place in their "Blue Card" to track their giving. Our gift was used to provide monthly stipends for survivors in need.

[The Blue Card, ATTN: Sandra Wiesel, 171 Madison Avenue, #1405, NY, NY 10016, 212-239-2251; www.bluecardfund.org]

3. Chai Project.....\$1,500

The Chai Project began as a needle exchange program designed to decrease the transmission of HIV among intravenous drug users. Unfortunately, because of New Jersey state law, the Chai Project has been forced to discontinue its needle exchange program. (New Jersey, by the way, has one of the highest HIV rates in the country, 60% of which is due to IV drug use.) Director Jay Petillo and his volunteers have instead focused their efforts on education for high-risk populations, emphasizing HIV prevention and, for those who are ready, workshops on getting clean and starting over. Our grant this year supported a breakfast program that is provided as a component of the safe space they offer their participants. Healthy breakfasts are provided Monday through Friday, and participants are also invited to drop in during the day for snacks and drinks. The people at the Chai Project are real heroes, empowering people to recover their dignity and their lives.

[The Chai Project: ATTN: Jay Petillo, POB 1470, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, 732-247-7014]

4. Congregation Sulam Ya'akov.....\$2,500
 Congregation Sulam Ya'akov was founded in 1996, the first and only progressive congregation in Zichron Yaakov, a pioneer town settled in the 1880s during the first wave of Aliyah. The congregation is building a wonderful, vibrant community of committed progressive Jews. Such communities, despite receiving no governmental support, provide an essential Jewish framework for social action, inclusiveness, and celebration, serving thousands of modern Israelis whose needs have long been unmet. Our donation helped support the congregation's library as well as tzedakah projects within the community.

[Kehilat Sulam Ya'akov: ATTN: Kenneth Grossberg, POB 10011, Zichron Ya'akov, Israel, 30900; 24-629-3113 www.sulam-yaacov.org.il]

5. Eden Alternative.....\$1,500
 The Eden Alternative seeks to eliminate the three plagues of the long-term care institution—loneliness, helplessness, and boredom. They know that companion animals, the opportunity to care for other living things, and the variety and spontaneity that come from an enlivened environment can succeed where pills and therapies fail.

Dr. Bill Thomas teaches that The Eden Alternative “is a new way of thinking about long-term care that has the potential of remaking facilities all over the country. However, before that can happen, we need to teach others about what The Eden Alternative is and how they can use it to transform the facilities in which they work.” Thanks to Dr. Bill's vision, the principles of the Eden Alternative have taken hold at more than 300 homes nationwide. This year we helped fund the Eden at Home program which seeks to bring the principles that inform the work of the Eden Alternative to elders who continue to live on their own.

[The Eden Alternative, ATTN: Dr. William Thomas, 742 Turnpike Rd., Sherburne, NY, 13460. 607-674-5232; www.edenalt.com]

6. Elijah's Promise.....\$1,500
 Rev. Lisanne Finston runs this model community soup kitchen that not only serves meals, but also provides nourishment for life. Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick, New Jersey fulfills the highest level of tzedakah, enabling people to become self-sufficient and to need tzedakah no longer. Guests at

To follow the Most High is to know that nothing is of greater importance than the approach made towards one's neighbor, the concern with the fate of the 'widow and the orphan, the stranger and the poor person', and that no approach made with empty hands can count as an approach... The traumatism of my enslavement in Egypt constitutes my very humanity, that which draws me closer to the problems of the wretched of the earth, to all persecuted people.

Emmanuel Levinas

Elijah's Promise are offered nutritious meals, health screening, counseling and referrals, job training, and more. Most exciting for us is “Promise Jobs,” the culinary school they opened several years ago which teaches the art of food preparation to some of the soup kitchen guests. Graduates of the program have been placed in restaurant jobs throughout New Jersey, including positions in some of the state's fanciest restaurants. Our donation helped purchase equipment for the culinary training program, including four mixers, knives, and a commercial food processor. Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple in New Brunswick hires Elijah's Promise to cook all of its kosher Shabbat dinners.

[Elijah's Promise: ATTN: Rev. Lisanne Finston, 18 Neilson St., New Brunswick, NJ, 08901. 732-545-9002; www.elijahspromise.org]

7. Emergency Relief:
Israel.....\$2,650
Argentina and the Former Soviet Union.....\$500
 Rabbis Jay Moses and Michael Mellen served as our *sh'lichim* ("messengers") to Israel this year. We are grateful to them for

their good judgment and wisdom. Through their efforts, we provided Hanukkah candles to needy families, a DVD player for a youth immigrant absorption center, carpet for a children's club, direct assistance to individuals in need, and funding for "Piece of the Pie," an amazing organization that helps families in distress turn their lives around by providing job training, housing assistance, and daycare so parents can work. We are grateful to several students of the Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem who helped us deliver bags of nuts to Magen David Adom ambulance crews as a gift of love and solidarity from the KAVOD community. We thank Danny Siegel for this fantastic idea. The purchase of the nuts directly supports Israel's badly damaged economy and the gift bags help uplift the spirits of the rescuers. We also helped provide emergency assistance to the Jewish communities in Argentina and the Former Soviet Union.

8. Free Loan Societies:
Hebrew Free Loan Society of New York City.....\$2,000
Hebrew Free Loan Association of San Francisco.....\$2,000
Israel Free Loan Association.....\$3,500

The Israel Free Loan Association describes donations to free loan societies as "gifts that never end" for they are recycled again and again. A \$10,000 donation recycled in the course of ten years provides 100 loans of \$1,000 each—resulting in a "helping value" of \$100,000. Whether it's for college tuition, expenses related to the adoption of a child, emergency assistance for a family who has been victimized by terror, or a small business loan, free loan societies are there to lend hope and dignity to those in need. Each of these societies combines low-overhead with maximum impact--values that are near and dear to the KAVOD community.

[Hebrew Free Loan Society, ATTN: Shana Novick, 675 Third Avenue, Suite 1905, NY, NY 10017; 212-687-0188; Hebrew Free Loan Association of San Francisco, 131 Steuart Street, Suite 425, San Francisco, CA, 94105; 415-546-9902; www.hflasf.org; Israel Free Loan Association, ATTN: Prof. Eliezer Jaffe, 64 Azza Street, 92384 Jerusalem, Israel. 22-563-0248; www.freeloan.org.il]

9. The Happy Birthday Foundation...\$1,000*

Our teacher Danny Siegel says that some of the most glorious mitzvah ideas come about when a person says simply, "why not?" Craig Wolsten asked a "why not" that led to the creation of the Happy Birthday Foundation. Why shouldn't kids in homeless shelters celebrate their birthdays with all of the same hoopla as kids with homes? Why shouldn't they have streamers and clowns and party favors and presents and birthday cake? Why not indeed. Last year the Happy Birthday Foundation provided 279 birthday parties, on the actual date of the child's birthday, to kids in shelters in Middlesex County, New Jersey.

Craig's mom Stacey runs the foundation but Craig is still quite active, handling most of the email and leading training sessions for volunteers. One of their regular volunteers is a 15 year old boy who first discovered the foundation as a resident in one of the shelters. The Happy Birthday Foundation helped him celebrate his birthday then, and now that he and his family have a home of their own, he's giving something back by volunteering his time to help throw parties for other kids. Stacey writes that one of the most important lessons that she tries to teach the volunteers is that helping out at the parties "is not just 'something nice that we do' - it is our RESPONSIBILITY to give back simply because we can."

[The Happy Birthday Foundation, ATTN: Stacey Wolsten, POB 7, East Brunswick, NJ, 08816; 732-254-5914; bdayfoundation@aol.com]

10. HUC-JIR's Menschlich

Soup Kitchen\$1,000

The College-Institute's seal says: "To educate leaders who will make the Torah come alive, to sustain our Jewish heritage and to ensure a rich Jewish future for our children, their children and generations to come." The people who run the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion's soup kitchen are the leaders who make the Torah come alive. They go out of their way not only to nourish hundreds of weekly guests physically, but also to nourish their sense of KAVOD. Every Monday evening, hundreds of guests are welcomed to the HUC-JIR soup kitchen with warm food, warm smiles, and flowers and tablecloths on the tables. Some volunteers serve heaping

Violence is to be found in any action in which one acts as if one were alone to act: as if the rest of the universe were there only to receive the action.

Emmanuel Levinas

dishes, while others bring their needle and thread to mend the guests' clothing, and others play soothing music on the piano. Law students from NYU donate their time and give free legal advice. Local high schools and colleges learn the principles of KAVOD, dignity and honor, through volunteering. More than a soup kitchen, this is a dynamic gathering place for the entire community.

[HUC-JIR Soup Kitchen, ATTN: Rabbi Aaron Panken; 1 West 4th Street, NY, NY, 10012. 212-674-5300; www.huc.edu]

11. INTRA—Mitzvah Horses.....\$4,000

Last year we asked Anita Shkedi to reflect on what it means to be human. Here's what she taught us:

1. To give of yourself without expecting reward
2. To enjoy giving of yourself
3. To try to understand the needs of others
4. To listen to others
5. To hear what their needs are
6. To treat every day of your life as your last day, and try to have no regrets.

Anita and Giora Shkedi continue to do their breathtaking work with INTRA (Israel National Therapeutic Riding Association), utilizing the tools of therapeutic horseback riding to achieve astonishing breakthroughs where other forms of physical therapy fail. Anita and Giora open up new worlds to people with a wide array of emotional and/or physical difficulties (including wounded soldiers and victims of terror). If you never have seen therapeutic horseback riding in person, by all means find a center near you (or, even better, arrange a trip to Israel to meet Anita, one of the world's acknowledged experts on the subject). The results are sublime, inspirational, and nothing short of miraculous. Our donation this year enabled

Anita and Giora to make some much need repairs to the INTRA stables.

[INTRA-Mitzvah Horses, ATTN: Anita & Giora Shkedi, Hadassah Neurim, 40298, Israel; 09- 866-6305; www.intra.org.il]

12. IRAC.....\$2,800

Visit the website for the Israel Religious Action Center, and you will find lists of court rulings and numerous fascinating articles that reveal an Israel struggling for its freedom and conscience. IRAC, the public and legal advocacy arm of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, is a leader in that struggle. According to Rabbi Uri Regev, the visionary former director of IRAC, "Only when the establishment and the public recognize, as one, that the rainbow's rich diversity is what can truly unite us, will a new era of dynamic Judaism and democracy begin in the State of Israel." In assisting IRAC in its noble cause, we express our devotion to religious freedom, pluralism, tolerance, social justice, and civil liberties in Israel.

Anat Hoffman, the director of IRAC, wrote to us: "In our prayer book it says, 'For we are all partners in *tikkun olam*.' In our current situation, however, the fear for our physical survival erodes this Jewish mandate for *tikkun olam*. Yet I am convinced that it is forbidden for us to lose the ability to be a *mensch* – no matter how debilitated we feel. This is why our work at IRAC is so important. I think of IRAC as *tikkun olam* in action. I am proud of the changes (*tikkunim*) that have been made under our influence in Israeli society and proud of the fact that we have worked in partnership with so many of our friends. Friends like you."

[ATTN: Anat Hoffman, POB 31936, Jerusalem, ISRAEL 91319; 02-625-6261; www.ira.org]

13. Jerusalem Rape Crisis Center.....\$1,500

The Jerusalem Rape Crisis Center in Memory of Linda Feldman helps survivors of sexual abuse. The JRCC also runs educational programs for Israeli high school students to raise awareness about abuse and harassment. About one third of the callers to the Rape Crisis Center hotline are under 18 years old. So many of these young survivors are afraid to seek much needed medical and emotional help, and it is truly a blessing for them to have a safe place to find solace and counsel. Our donation was used to provide

a 16-session supervised support group for 11 teenaged survivors of rape and incest. The JRCC remains the only organization offering this kind of support in Jerusalem and surrounding areas.

[Jerusalem Rape Crisis Center, ATTN: Jane Jacobs, P.O.B. 2549, Jerusalem, Israel, 91024, 02-623-2451; jrcc@netvision.net.il]

14. Jewish Life in the Former Soviet Union: WUPJ.....\$1,000

After 70 years of oppression, Jews in the Former Soviet Union can once again celebrate their Judaism. The World Union for Progressive Judaism works hard to make sure that there are liberal options for these Jews. One of the best ways to make this happen is by training young people to become Jewish educators, communal leaders, and rabbis. The *Machon* Institute in Moscow is where a new generation of community leaders is being trained to serve throughout the Former Soviet Union. Our sponsorship will help a young woman, Alexandrina Privezentseva, pay for tuition, books and supplies, transportation, and room and board in Moscow while she attends the *Machon*. Alexandrina and others like her are engaged in *tikkun olam* of the highest order: they are bringing whole communities back to a life of Torah.

[World Union for Progressive Judaism, ATTN: Rabbi Uri Regev, 13 King David Street, Jerusalem, Israel 94101; 02-620-3447; www.wupj.org]

I am not the equal of the Other. This applies in the very strict sense: I see myself obligated with respect to the Other; consequently I am infinitely more demanding of myself than of others. "The more just I am, the more harshly I am judged," states one talmudic text.

Emmanuel Levinas

15. KESHER ("Connection").....\$1,000*
Why not? Why can't Jewish children with learning disabilities attend Jewish day schools? Why can't they experience the warm sense of community that so many of these schools provide? This is the question that inspires Keshet. Each year, 80 kids with special needs attend Jewish day schools through the assistance of Keshet. This program insures that the *kavod* of all of God's children is protected. Our gift helped provide scholarship monies for families in need.

[Keshet, ATTN: Rabbi Ezra Levy, 18900 NE 25th Avenue, North Miami Beach, FL 33180; 305-792-7060; keshetld@bellsouth.net]

16. Magein/Irena Gaster Hostel.....\$1,500

The Magein hostel is a large group home for developmentally disabled adults. Sara Sherman helps these people live lives of dignity and meaning by enabling them to perform wonderful acts of *chesed*, lovingkindness. Mageiniks joyfully contribute to their community, making *hamantaschen* and distributing them for Purim, baking *challot* for Shabbat at Congregation *Kol Haneshamah*, visiting sick children at Hadassah hospital, caring for their mini-zoo teeming with life. The staff at Magein has given these adults with Down syndrome and other mental handicaps the most wonderful gift of all — the ability to help others and become partners with God in *tikkun olam*, repairing the world.

[Magein, ATTN: Sara Sherman, 19 Yad Harutzim St., Suite 304, POB 53409, Jerusalem, Israel, 91533; 02-672-8731; info@akim-jerusalem.org.il]

17. Maureen Kushner.....\$1,500

Maureen Kushner channels her immense creativity into empowering children to share, explore, and understand their own extraordinary histories. It was written about her, "Kushner has definitely found her passion – not just teaching, but teaching big dreams to children who otherwise might not have had much of a chance." She created the "Kids' Comedy Club," which started in New York's Washington Heights. The Club has hundreds of twelve-year old members. The Club requires them to read at least twenty humorous books a year, draw, write, and perform. She said, "Humor helped them reach a new plateau, inspired them to respond to a higher calling... sometimes you see a child is

Anyone who closes his eyes to a request for tzedakah is like one who worships idols.

Talmud, Bava Batra 10a

so bored. And then, if you do it right, you find this world inside them. You see there is hope. Beyond every bored face, there's a world of hope." She helps Ethiopian Jews create art that celebrates and documents their long, heroic journey, and helps Jewish and Arab children identify their prejudices through art.

This year our contribution helped with her "Peace Through Humor" workshop for Jewish, Arab, Druze, and Bedouin children. It gave kids a creative outlet to express their feelings while teaching tolerance and understanding through jokes. Maureen traveled on foot and by bus all over Israel presenting this workshop. "When kids listen to the inside of their hearts and discover the best part of themselves, peace will be possible," she said. We have KAVOD cards available featuring artwork created by Ethiopian Jews in Maureen's programs. The cards themselves were produced through a special donation for this purpose made by a KAVOD supporter. For more information about the cards, contact Judy Zweiback, 8914 Farnam Court, Omaha, NE 68114, 402-397-1975, judyz@KAVOD.org.

[Maureen Kushner, 122 Park Place, Brooklyn, NY, 11217. 718-230-5369]

18. NACOEJ.....\$2,000

In 1981 twelve North American Jews went on a mission to Ethiopia that was to change their lives and those of Ethiopian Jews forever. Riding on mules, this small group made their way up the Semien Mountains in northwest Ethiopia to remote villages where Jews lived, isolated from the rest of the Jewish world for 2,000 years. The appalling poverty, illness, and hunger they saw there, coupled with a deep commitment to Jewish life, so moved the participants that they returned home wholly devoted to the rescue of this phenomenal Jewish community. Shortly thereafter, the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry was born. This grassroots movement was founded with four mandates:

Whenever R. Tarfon's mother wanted to climb into bed, he would bend down and she would climb [on him to get] into bed. And whenever she got out [of bed], she would descend on him [in order to reach the floor]. R. Tarfon came and praised himself... They said to him: 'You have not yet reached half of the honor [that one can show one's parents].' *Talmud, Kiddushin 31a*

to help Ethiopian Jews survive in Ethiopia, to assist them in reaching Israel, to aid in their absorption in Israel, and to preserve their unique and ancient culture. NACOEJ provides livelihoods through embroidery projects, scholarships for studies, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* training, and phone calls to family members left behind in Ethiopia, helping people live with dignity and pride. Not only does NACOEJ provide assistance to 900 elementary school children, 1000 high schoolers, and over 300 college students, but they are deeply involved in alleviating great suffering in Gondar Province and Addis Ababa.

[NACOEJ, ATTN: Barbara Ribakove Gordon, 132 Nassau Street, #412, NY, NY, 10038, 212-233-5200; www.nacoej.org]

19. No Limits.....\$750

Our gift to No Limits allowed ten deaf and hard of hearing children from the Greater New Jersey area to participate in a fun and creative production of "Believe it or Not!." Participating in this empowering show improved their speech, communication skills, and self-esteem. The kids performed four sold-out shows and held special performances for local schools. It was a wonderful way for No Limits actors to have their hearing friends see them shine on stage.

[No Limits, ATTN: Brian Ross Adams, 9801 Washington Blvd., 2nd Floor, Culver City, CA 90232; 800-948-7712; www.nolimitsspeaksout.com]

20. A Package From Home.....\$2,000*

For many years now, Barbara Silverman has been helping soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces live a bit more comfortably. Her project, A Package from Home, delivers thousands of care packages each year to those who risk their lives in defense of the Jewish homeland. It's extraordinary what a pair of warm socks, a wool hat, a few chocolate bars, and some toiletries can do to lift a soldier's spirits. Each package also includes a hand-written note from an American or Canadian religious school student.

[A Package from Home, ATTN: Barbara Silverman, 12/63 Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael Street, Jerusalem, Israel, 92428; 02-623-2548; emess@netvision.net.il; www.apackagefromhome.org]

21. Project Ezra.....\$4,050

Under the guidance of Misha Avramoff, Project Ezra has been supporting older adult Jews on the Lower East Side of Manhattan for the past 25 years. They combat poverty, despair and loneliness, and treat those they serve with the utmost tenderness, love, and honor. Project Ezra is there, from augmenting the below poverty level social security of many elders, to sending art therapists to homebound elders, many of whom are suffering from dementia, helping them use art to communicate

Misha Avramoff writes, "Project Ezra is also continuing to stretch Social Security checks so as to improve the quality of our elders' lives. A stipend of \$30-\$40 a month allows someone living on minimal Social Security checks to get an occasional ice cream or cake without worrying about the cost. We want to expand this effort to include many more needy elders.

This year, we allocated funds to three immigrants from the Former Soviet Union who had buried their wives recently and simply had no funds to cover the entire funeral expense. The three small headstones for which Project Ezra obtained funds made the bereaved husbands feel that they had said the proper farewell to their loved ones. It is all part of what we do here to make life easier for our elders." It is truly our *kavod* to be able to support the work of this magnificent

organization and to be able to call Misha our teacher and friend.

[Project Ezra, ATTN: Misha Avramoff, 197 E. Broadway, NY, NY, 10002. (212) 982-3700; <http://www.projectezra.org/main.html>]

22. Rabbanit Bracha Kapach.....\$4,000

The Rabbanit Bracha Kapach, an Israel Prize winner, feeds the hungry, provides for poor brides, and makes sure poor youngsters get to experience the joy of summer camp. She provides educational material for children, helps couples finance their marriage, supports old and lonely people with food, clothing and trips, and embraces all of those who seemed to have slipped through the holes of the "safety net." She draws needy people near and gives with the generosity of a fruit tree. This year, we assisted the Rabbanit in providing Passover packages for over 5,500 families in need of nourishment and hope.

[The Rabbanit Bracha Kapach, 12 Lod St. Jerusalem. 02-624-9296]

23. SHALVA ("Serenity").....\$750

Rabbi Kalman Samuels, founder and director of Shalva, writes, "A human being is that unique being, created in the image of God, who possesses a vast array of powers of the universe. He has been given dominion over his world and free choice to care for and nurture the world he lives in. Alone he is weak and feeble, but together with his peers, he can perform small miracles." Shalva was founded on the premise that mentally and physically challenged children are not just

Torah begins with kindness and ends with kindness. It begins with kindness, for it is written: "And the Eternal God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them"; [Gen. 3:21] and it ends with kindness, for it is written: "And God buried him [Moses] in the valley." [Deut. 34:6]

Talmud, Sotah 14a

the responsibility of the families to which they were born. "Heaven's very special children" and their families need and deserve the support of the extended community to be part of society and not apart. Shalva is their lifeline, an answered prayer, providing developmentally disabled children with a loving environment that helps them reach their full potential and gives parents the ability to keep them at home, within the family.

Shalva founders Kalman and Malky Samuels dreamed of a state-of-the-art center for mentally and physically challenged children that would instill pride in those who came through its doors. This dream became a reality with the opening of the Shalva Children's Center, with fantastic programs such as hydrotherapy, support programs, music, art, computer, psychodrama and pet therapy and a veritable wonderland for the senses. At Shalva, small miracles happen every moment of every day.

[SHALVA, ATTN: Rabbi Kalman Samuels
P.O.B. Box 35199 Jerusalem, 91351.
02-651-8260; <http://www.shalva.org>]

24. Shoes That Fit.....\$800

Since 1992, Shoes That Fit has donated over 230,000 items to needy children nationwide. They have over 500 sites in 25 states and are still growing. Thanks to gifts like ours and an outstanding group of volunteers, thousands of impoverished youngsters will be able to attend school in comfort and with dignity. Shoes That Fit provides children in need with shoes and clothing that make them feel good about being in school.

One kindergarten teacher, Esther Smith, wrote: "If the persons who bought the gifts had been in my classroom, they would have seen: a girl who came to school in workout tennies on a frigid snowy morning returning home that afternoon in warm, lined boots; three boys, one in layered sweatshirts, one in his father's padded flannel shirt, and one with a handed-down jacket with a broken zipper all receive warm, hooded jackets; a girl who beamed speechlessly to herself when she received a coat. She regained her voice, though, in time to say, 'Hello' to everyone in the hallway as she walked to the bus, so that they would notice the marvelous coat she was wearing home! Had they been in my classroom, the donors might have had lumps

in their throats and realized what truly meaningful gifts they had given."

[*Shoes That Fit*, ATTN: Roni Lomeli,
1420 N. Claremont Blvd., Ste. 107-B,
Claremont, CA, 91711; (909) 482-0050;
<http://www.shoesthatfit.org>]

25. Ta Shma.....\$2,500

Rabbi Leon Dow, founder and director of Ta Shma, says: "A human being is a creature endowed with the unique capacity to live a life of moral and spiritual significance through the conscious decision to see in his or her fellow human being, and in the world of creation in which s/he participates, an 'other' in need of relationship, attention, and care." For Ta Shma ("Come and Hear"), nothing is more essential to the Jewish tradition of learning than *machloket*, disagreement. Ta Shma's educators have developed an educational methodology based on a deep belief that Judaism's vitality is rooted in the contemporary meeting of many oftentimes dissonant voices.

Ta Shma offers its participants a unique atmosphere of learning that is not merely *tolerant*, it's genuinely *pluralistic*. In each Ta Shma event, faculty members of different 'flavors' of Judaism — Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, unidentified, and undefined — join together to plan and execute the program in its entirety. It offers young adults in Israel programs that explore Jewish texts from a uniquely pluralistic perspective, resulting in a powerful and memorable Jewish learning experience. We at KAVOD are proud to support such a program that seeks to unite brothers and sisters over Torah, with respect for each student's beliefs and background. Our funds were used toward a weekend seminar for American students studying at Israeli universities, covering half of the seminar's cost.

[*Ta Shma: Pluralistic Jewish Learning*;
ATTN: Rabbi Leon Dow; Box 10156;
Jerusalem, ISRAEL; 91101;
02-621-6168; <http://www.tashma.org>]

26. VOSH.....\$1,500

Volunteer Optometric Service to Humanity is an association of eye care professionals who travel to impoverished communities all over the world providing free eye care to those in need. They also serve the eyesight needs of people in several homeless shelters. Our funds were used to acquire needed

It is a mitzvah, a religious obligation, to give tzedakah to the poor. Anyone who averts his eyes from a beggar so as not to see him, and does not give him tzedakah, has transgressed a prohibitive command.

Mishneh Torah, Gifts to Poor People, 7:1

What is the connection between seeing and giving? Must we turn away to avoid the command?

equipment and eyeglass supplies. It enables VOSH to continue its work providing eyeglasses to patients who need them. These patients are usually working people with no insurance and low incomes.

VOSH has conducted missions to every major continent during its existence, as well as domestic missions at homeless shelters. VOSH operates with zero overhead because the doctors cover their own expenses and equipment is donated. Our donation provided 60 people with eyeglasses who otherwise would have had to do without. And this statement from Ronald Weingart's recent letter to us is music to our ears: "No donated funds are used for administration or fund raising. We have no paid staff and we pay our own expenses when we go on missions. We strive to operate as close to 0% overhead as possible."

[VOSH, ATTN: Ronald Weingart, O.D.,
1335 Douglas Road, Montgomery, IL,
60538; (630) 844-0908;
<http://www.vosh.org>]

27. Ya'akov Maimon Volunteers.....\$3,000

In the early days of the State of Israel, it was not unknown for locals to be approached on the street by an energetic man who would ask what they could do for the new immigrants who were arriving daily. That man was Ya'akov Maimon, and he believed that every individual had a unique gift that they could offer each new arrival — whether in the form



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of language tutorial, lessons on how to balance a checkbook, babysitting, or teaching a trade. That special, caring attention to individuality is what marks the Maimon volunteers, and is lived out every day by their director, Yoel Dorkam. Today's immigrants, from Russia, Ethiopia, South America, Eastern Europe, and the rest of the Jewish world, are finding their arrivals in Israel much less jolting thanks to Yoel's volunteers. He is our first resource for questions and concerns about the compassionate absorption of new immigrants into Israeli society.

*[Ya'akov Maimon Volunteers,
ATTN: Yoel Dorkam,
Kibbutz Palmach Tzuba,
D.N. Haray Yehuda, Israel.
(011) 972-2-534-7871]*

28. Yad Ezra ("Helping Hand").....\$1,500

One of the most neglected segments of any society is the mentally ill. For almost fifty years, Yad Ezra has been dedicating itself to seeking out, screening, and extending "a helping hand" to the mentally ill and the

needy in Israel. Yad Ezra offers its assistance through a network of special supermarkets, dental clinics, workshops, soup kitchens, hostels, and day-care centers. Yad Ezra has a soup kitchen as well in which "a unique group of people, some homeless, others stricken in spirit or by poverty, or by a broken home, comprise about 100 men and women who visit these premises daily. For 40% of the visitors, these premises have become their home. Along with the three meals offered daily, a delicate balance of educational lectures, guidance classes, and common prayer sessions have been introduced to strengthen and feed the spirit of visitors. A library on the premises offers a large variety of selected books and a quiet and calm atmosphere to soothe the painful spirit of many of its visitors."

*[Yad Ezra, ATTN: Samuel Katz, P.O.B.
7199, Jerusalem, Israel,
(011)-9722-537-5812]*

29. ZIV Tzedakah Fund.....\$750

Danny Siegel, founder of Ziv writes, "By being fashioned in the Image of God, by

definition, each person is endowed with *kavod*, human dignity. The purpose of *tzedakah/mitzvahs/tikkun olam* is to remind us and teach us how to relate to others with *kavod*, preserving their dignity." Ziv Tzedakah Fund celebrates ordinary people who have found their way into *mitzvah* work and have grown, exceeding their old visions of themselves, and have become giants in human action and human spirit. We are grateful to Danny and Naomi for their constant support. Their advice, wisdom, example, and love guide us in our work.

*[ZIV, ATTN: Naomi Eisenberger, 384
Wyoming Ave., Millburn, NJ, 07041.
(973) 763-9396; <http://www.ziv.org>]*

To know God is to know
what must be done.

Emmanuel Levinas