

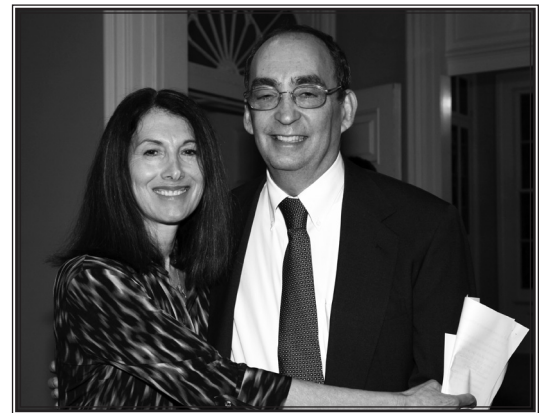


## Reach *Chai* with Federation

In Hebrew, *chai* simply means "life." Less simply, the letters of *chai* also represent the number 18. Combine the two, and *chai* takes on significant spiritual meaning - which is why we as Jews often make philanthropic gifts in multiples of *chai* (\$18, \$36, etc.).

We take joy in giving, and giving *chai* is a special expression of our Jewishness.

This year, our 2012 Annual Campaign, led by Lou Good and Karen Sher (pictured, right), looks to capture that joy and help our community reach *chai* with Federation.



Each of us has a connection to giving Jewishly - whether it's reaching out to at-risk youth in Israel and impoverished Jews in Ukraine, funding scholarships to day camp at the Jewish Community Center or to the New Orleans Jewish Day School, providing support to our seniors through Jewish Family Service's Bikur Chaverim outreach, or fostering a welcoming Shabbat for students via Tulane Hillel. It's how we express our link to the varied meanings of *chai*. Why should you give through the Annual Campaign?

We have an incredible opportunity this year to push our efforts even further, reaching and helping more Jews, both here in New Orleans and around the world. If you haven't given to the Annual Campaign, this is your chance to make a difference—because your new gift will be generously matched at 25% by the Goldring Family and Woldenberg Foundations. If you are already a current donor, your increased gift will mean even more this year—the increased portion of your gift will be matched at 25%, while the remaining portion will be matched at 12%.

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## 2011-2013 Lemann-Stern class takes Israel by storm



### *Aliyah* to New Orleans

by Asher Friend

On the morning of November 6, 2011, a group of 19 members of the New Orleans Jewish community met at Louis Armstrong International Airport to embark on the New Orleans Lemann-Stern Mission to Israel - the initial stage of our involvement as members of the 2011-2013 Lemann-Stern Young Leadership class. For many of us, the preliminary anxiety over leaving behind the structured comforts, routines and responsibilities of our respective family and work lives was coupled with a general unfamiliarity with expectations for our trip. These emotions were mitigated only by raw intrigue about the privilege we have each been afforded to experience the rich history of the State of Israel and its people.

From the moment we arrived at Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv that Monday morning, and albeit cliché, it's more than fair to say that each of our lives would soon become irrevocably touched by what was to come.

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# 2011-2013 Lemann-Stern Mission (continued from page 1)

Simply stated, we were given the best - lectures from some of the preeminent authorities on Israeli society, politics and history; tours of modern-day Kibbutz life in the southern Golan Heights; learning principles of leadership, nationalism and community from a colonel and base commander of the Israel Defense Force; visiting the community of Rosh Ha'ayin, the sister-city of New Orleans in Israel, and witnessing first-hand the positive impact that the "Partnership 2gether" program has had on this community.

We spoke with students at the Ulpan Etzion, the first Hebrew ulpan, about the impetus behind their individual decisions to make aliyah to Israel; seeing the struggles, hardships and tribulations faced by the Jewish people of Ethiopia and the life-altering opportunities afforded to them by the Israeli government; experiencing Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust museum, through the eyes of

Eliezer Ayalon (pictured, right), a survivor of five concentration camps throughout Europe during the Holocaust. The list, as they say, goes on, but the principle remains the same - the members of Lemann-Stern are given not only the gift of this distinctively precious insight into the culture and pride of Israel, but perhaps even more importantly, the opportunity to share this experience with the future leadership of the New Orleans Jewish Community, future generations of our families and along the way, make life-long friends.

While each of us invariably has our own "take aways" from this experience, from a purely personal perspective, the most powerful and notable sentiment I would like to share with the greater New Orleans community, particularly those who may have not yet had the opportunity to experience Israel for themselves, is what I perceive to be the incredibly distinctive similarities between the Jewish community of New Orleans and the people of Israel - similarities that I'm not sure can be replicated (or at least not in the same way) with any other community in the world.



People say that particularly after Katrina, New Orleans is a city comprised almost entirely of people who "choose" to be here. With that comes an unrivaled sense of community and passion for the prosperity of the city shared by all. Having myself moved from Long Island, New York and living in New Orleans for the past 10 years, I can say without hesitation or equivocation that these blessings of community, generosity, togetherness and love shared by so many people in New Orleans are uniquely palpable, and nothing short of intoxicating.

At its core, these same sentiments are shared in every way by the Jewish people of Israel. Despite the constant threat of terrorism, political and religious unrest - clearly almost nothing seems to be cherished by the Israeli people more than their own choice to continue to grow the seeds of the Jewish faith, family and community in the Jewish homeland. Much like

with New Orleanians, to the Israelis, the juice is well worth the squeeze...and being there as a New Orleanian, you can feel it almost instantly. In a very real way, by making a choice to live in our beloved city of New Orleans, I think each and every member of our Jewish community has already made some form of *aliyah* - at least in our hearts.

The mark that this experience has made on my life is too wide to cover and too deep to fill, and is something that will be with my wife, Erin, and me forever.

On behalf of myself and the rest of our Lemann-Stern class...thank you!