



# We Cultivate a Jewish Future



## JDC PROGRAM DASHBOARD

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OUR WORK

# We Cultivate A Jewish Future

...because the Jewish part of Jewish life is worth fighting for.

Community is at the heart of what we do.

We work hand-in-hand with Jewish communities around the world, empowering them to realize their own dreams and care for their most vulnerable. This means giving Jews from Minsk to Mumbai pathways to express their Jewish identity and encouraging grassroots efforts that welcome Jews of all ages and backgrounds to claim their stake in—and shape—the Jewish future.

Our global Jewish service program, where young volunteers support their fellow Jews and others in need, is the largest in the world—and growing. We are building new generations of leaders who are poised to take on the challenges of tomorrow and inspired to act on the value of global Jewish responsibility.

Living Jewish values is how we sustain Jewish life. It's why the future of Jewish life needs us now.

# PROOF POINTS\*

\*All statistics as of June 2019

All proof points are illustrative and do not represent all of JDC's programs

## 84,000 PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH THEIR JEWISH IDENTITY, VALUES, AND COMMUNITY through JDC in 2018.

In the 1980s, as JDC regains entry to countries throughout Central and Eastern Europe, it adds Jewish cultural and training components to its social welfare activities wherever possible, taking advantage of every opportunity to nurture the beginnings of a Jewish reawakening well before the fall of Communism.



### 25,000+ Camp Szarvas Alumni are the vanguard for a bright Jewish future in Europe and beyond

Camp Szarvas and its ripple effect has transformed European Jewish life.

- Established in 1990 in Hungary, Camp Szarvas today has more than 25,000 campers, staff, and alumni who continue to fuel and to lead reinvigorated Jewish communities and innovative organizations in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and beyond.
- It hosts 1,600 Jewish campers aged 6-18 from over 25 countries every summer, many of whom remain the first in their families to embrace, explore, and connect to their Jewish identities.



### The 3,100 Young Jews

in the remarkable and rapidly expanding **Active Jewish Teens** network—with chapters today in 60 cities and counting in the former Soviet Union—are a shining example of the goals we are striving to reach as we cultivate a Jewish future throughout these regions.

In 1987, JDC establishes the Jewish Service Corps, placing young Jewish professionals and recent college graduates in JDC programs around the world. Over the years, the many innovative activities that JSC fellows create strengthen local Jewish communities and fulfill a variety of humanitarian needs.

Today, the Jewish Service Corps is part of **JDC Entwine**, our young adult platform. It offers a variety of global service, educational, and leadership development opportunities that are building a generation of young Jews who lead and live a life of action with Jewish responsibility at its core.

# Building Strong Global Connections

**For many young American Jews,** “Jewish community” means family, their synagogue, perhaps a summer camp or youth group. But for Samantha Levinson, community extends much further.

Levinson is community and program manager for Junction, the partnership between JDC, the Schusterman Family Foundation, and Yesod that catalyzes a network of young European Jews taking an active part in fostering Jewish life relevant to their generation and beyond.

How does an American Jew from Virginia find her way to the heart of Europe’s reemerging Jewish communities? For Levinson, the answer was JDC Entwine’s Global Jewish Service Corps (JSC) Fellowship.

Every year, the fellowship offers college graduates and young professionals the opportunity to spend a year overseas volunteering with a community in one of the 70 countries where JDC works. It’s a powerful way to develop leaders and deepen an understanding of the global Jewish world.

While visiting Jewish communities abroad as co-president of BBYO, the international Jewish teen movement and longtime JDC partner, Levinson — then a teenager — frequently found herself crashing on the couches of JSC Fellows.

She realized quickly that she wanted to follow in their footsteps, and after graduation, she made her dream a reality. She moved to Budapest and became a JSC Fellow, working for Junction.

Her involvement in a pan-European program

helped Levinson build a stronger connection to a Jewish world that had often felt remote.

“Jewish life was usually so America-centric for me,” she said. “JDC opened up what global Jewish life could look like.”

What she discovered is a diverse community of young Jews taking the future into their own hands — which often means building Jewish community themselves.

“They’re saying, ‘Yes, we have to do something and we have to do it now, during the biggest drop-off point in Jewish communal life,’” she said. “If we want to be resilient, if we want to be sustainable, we have to figure out how to put young people in the driver’s seat.”

Extending her placement for a second year, Levinson became a mentor to the new class of JSC Fellows, organizing a

speaker series to showcase Jewish “communal professional superstars.” Last year, she joined the Junction team full-time.

Two of the young leaders she’s worked to support are Beni Hess and Bini Guttman, co-founders of the Austrian Union of Jewish Students, a democratic organization for Austrian Jews aged 18 to 35. The Union has revitalized Jewish life for this new generation by giving them avenues to engage in politics, culture, and student life through a Jewish lens.

Through a micro-grant, Junction provided Hess and Guttman with crucial startup funds: Even a relatively small investment can give a young adult the resources to bring their vision to life, and



to effect meaningful, transformative change in their community.

“Junction helped us in an incredible way,” Guttman said, “Only with the generous funding of events and the enormous network they offer were we able to organize all this while studying and working.”

For many Junction partners, the connection with other like-minded young Jews is invaluable.

“Junction has been a source of inspiration and networking with other passionate Jewish social entrepreneurs from all over Europe,” said Dekel Peretz, program director of the revived Fraenkelufer Jewish community in Berlin. “At Junction events, we found new partners and ideas, as well as acquired a deeper understanding of how what we do fits into a bigger picture of European Jewish revival.”

Today, Junction is building bridges beyond Europe with Global Co:Lab — a collaboration between Entwine and Junction that brings together young Jewish leaders and changemakers from around the world for a global gathering rooted in Jewish responsibility. Now in its third year, Co:Lab has been a successful and natural outgrowth of the relationship built through JSC Fellows like Levinson.

amplifying younger voices. Programs like Junction and JSC are how we create a truly interconnected global Jewish community.”

Levinson has seen this cultural exchange firsthand: It is at the heart of her experiences with both Entwine and Junction, and it’s made her optimistic about the next generations of Jewish life.

Take it from someone whose Jewish community spans continents: “There are so many things to learn from each other. We’re much more similar than we are different.”

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**JDC OPENED UP WHAT GLOBAL JEWISH LIFE COULD LOOK LIKE.**

“Cultivating a Jewish future means more than just supporting Jewish communities around the world,” says Diego Ornique, JDC’s co-chief program officer. “It’s about bringing community leaders together, sharing best practices, and