



NA'AMAT Now!

A publication of NA'AMAT USA

Fall 2021

Glickman Center program puts focus on fathers

By Sharon Sutker McGowan

The program is called “Abba,” the Hebrew word for father. Young men who are new to fatherhood, coping with single parenthood or loss, abusers or those who have been abused can all benefit from Abba: the NA'AMAT Center for Fathers, established in 2020 at the Glickman Center for the Treatment & Prevention of Domestic Violence in Tel Aviv.

Modeled after programs in Europe, Abba is available to men of all ages, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. They are recruited through NA'AMAT's 23 Multi-Purpose Day Care Centers for at-risk children, as well as through outreach to men's groups and on social media.

The need for the program was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic as families struggled with the closure of schools and workplaces, illness or death, and social isolation. Personal meetings, group and spousal meetings, counseling and training all were conducted on Zoom. Topics of discussion included work and family issues such as lack of self-esteem related to unexpected job loss and financial pressure.

Virtual sessions will remain an important part of the program for those who can't or don't want to meet in person.

One of the center's key goals is to help break the cycle of violence by providing counseling and services for fathers. The program for batterers focuses on anger

management, issues of power and control, and alternatives to violent behavior. It aims to make men accountable for their actions and thus better partners and parents.

NA'AMAT was the first organization in Israel to address family violence by treating men. The center's professional staff aims to treat the whole family, recognizing that gender equality can be achieved only when each parent takes responsibility for raising healthy children.

The work to break the cycle of violence in families attracted two grants to NA'AMAT USA, totaling \$10,000. A \$5,000 grant from the Entertainment Industry Foundation, awarded in June 2020,

supported programming for fathers who have a history of abuse and need guidance on their children's upbringing.

In June, NA'AMAT USA was awarded \$5,000 to help support the Abba program from the Jewish Teen Foundation of Greater Boston, which teaches high school students about philanthropy and civic leadership. The organization made \$75,000 in grants to 12 organizations out of 56 that applied.

One of four student boards chose to focus on domestic abuse. After researching NA'AMAT and other organizations, the board asked the national of

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Project celebrates Shabbat, NA'AMAT

For her Bat Mitzvah project, Lila Zellner wanted to study strong women in Jewish history and to raise money for an organization that reflects her family's Jewish and Zionist values. An internet search brought her to NA'AMAT USA.

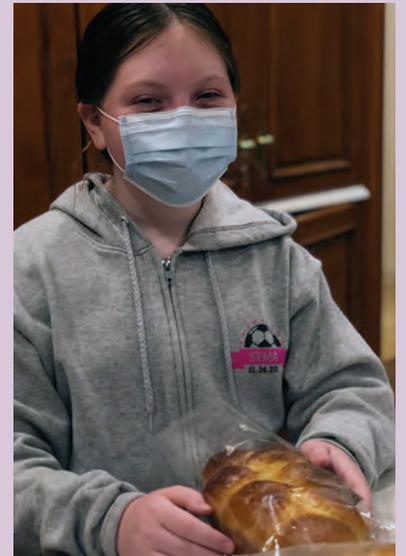
With help from her mother, Michelle Zellner, Lila baked, sold and delivered about 200 challahs to friends and family, raising \$1,188 for NA'AMAT. Each challah was wrapped in cellophane and delivered in a paper bag printed with a label that read “Challah by Lila, Shabbat Shalom.”

“It was a great project for Lila,” said Zellner. “We wanted it to be something she was active in. We didn't want to send out an email and ask for money; we wanted her to take part in doing something important.”

To thank Lila for her contribution, NA'AMAT USA gifted Zellner with an annual membership, and gave Lila an affiliate membership.

Lila's Bat Mitzvah, on May 2, was delayed because of the pandemic. Between her 12th birthday in November 2020 and her Bat Mitzvah,

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Lila Zellner's challah baking raised more than \$1,000 for NA'AMAT USA.

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Meet the NA'AMAT staff

Diana Cohen, Southeastern Area Director

I was born in Toronto to immigrant Israeli parents. My love, passion and connection to Israel began at a very early age, stemming from my parents' rich Israeli history. My mother is a sixth-generation Israeli.



Diana Cohen

I have spent close to 20 years working in the Jewish communal world, in New York, Baltimore and now Miami. Working at NA'AMAT among members who have Zionism running through their veins is a truly inspiring experience. I am married and have three daughters, from 10 to 2 years old. Living in the Miami area for the past seven years, I can never imagine living through another Northeastern winter! In my spare time, I love going to the beach, exploring new parks with my kids and going to the zoo or aquarium. I am passionate about the land of Israel, its people, places and food. As it is said in Hebrew, 'libi bamizrach': my heart is in Israel.

Ellie Cohen, Western Area Director

I joined the NA'AMAT USA team in 2018, serving the clubs and councils in the Western area (including California, Nevada and Arizona). I have a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, a Human Resources Management certification and a QuickBooks certification. I have 20 years of office management experience and have worked for Jewish nonprofit or-



Ellie Cohen

Did You Know?

... Golda Meir, the future prime minister of Israel, and her husband Morris were initially turned down by Kibbutz Merhavya, which didn't want married couples. They were later accepted, perhaps because Morris had a phonograph and classical records.

ganizations for the past seven years. I chose to work for NA'AMAT because Israel is near and dear to my heart, especially because I have family there. I believe that by working for NA'AMAT I am helping the women and children of Israel. I look up to all our volunteers who are dedicated to helping NA'AMAT and am here to support them in any way I can.

Marci Curtis, Cleveland Council Executive Director

I spent 20 years training people to use computers as the owner of Cleveland Software Training. I traveled through the U.S. providing training services to clients, and became one of six executive assistants to Cleveland Mayor Michael R. White. I was responsible for the mayor, his staff and the city's 2,000 volunteers.



Marci Curtis

Prior to joining NA'AMAT in 2018, I was the Director of Marketing & Communications for The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio for 10 years, doing fundraising, marketing and community outreach. I developed the annual Walk, Rock & Run, which grew to more than 8,000 participants in a few years. Working for NA'AMAT brings all these experiences into one position. I spearhead an annual fundraising honoree event each year, work closely with the board and interact with Cleveland Council members. I live with my two rescue dogs and Princess, the cat who runs everything.

Felicia Gross, Midwest Area Director

I joined NA'AMAT USA at the end of 2018 and have become a true believer. I am proud to be a part of this wonderful organization and what we stand for. As the director, I support my members with their programs and fundraisers, facilitate a monthly book and movie discussion group, and utilize the many software pro-



Felicia Gross

grams that keep the Midwest Area running smoothly.

As a native Chicagoan and a Midwesterner, I relish the changing seasons (except when shoveling snow off my buried car). I started a balcony garden, growing milkweed and flowering plants that attract butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. I harvest arugula and tomatoes. It is an honor and a joy to produce exciting and innovative programming and fundraisers with members and colleagues to help the women and children of Israel.

Ange Nadel, Eastern Area Director

I started at the Brooklyn Council in 2003 as an administrative assistant. After five years, I became administrative assistant for the Eastern Area in New York City and began as the director in 2015. I am the contact for our councils and chapters, and I've attended many meetings and functions where members share our love of Israel and show support for our fabulous programs there.



Ange Nadel

I visited Israel for the first time in 2015, for NA'AMAT's international convention, where I had the opportunity to see the facilities that we support. I revisited Israel in 2019 for the NA'AMAT USA convention, where I saw the terrific work NA'AMAT Israel is doing for families.

I'm also a wife, mother and grandmother, and volunteer for my synagogue's sisterhood. I've been employed in the nonprofit field for more than 25 years and volunteered for 15 years in the New York City public school system.

We are pleased to announce that NA'AMAT USA has received a Platinum Seal of Transparency, Guidestar's highest level of recognition. Guidestar is an information service on U.S. nonprofit organizations.



Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

I was delighted to read the brief profile of Beba in the recent NA'AMAT newsletter.

My grandmother, Libby Brandstein, was an ardent Zionist and long-term member of Pioneer Women. She emigrated to Israel in the 1950s from the US. I first visited her there during my 1962 summer college tour. She asked about the tour and especially where and how we lived when not on the road. I described the old building in Jerusalem which had been turned into a summer dormitory for the hundreds of visiting college and high school students from around the world. When I casually mentioned we were sleeping on straw mattresses, she insisted I accompany her to see Beba.

She marched into Beba's office and made me tell Beba about the mattresses. My grandmother said, "How can we expect American young people to make aliyah if they think all Israelis sleep on straw?" Grandma urged Beba to intervene so Americans don't get the

wrong ideas about life in Israel. I was embarrassed but now I think Grandma was right and it was a privilege to meet Beba.

Shelah Leader, Ph.D.

To the Editor:

The Spring 2021 issue of this publication was a special joy to me. I am a passionate lover of Israel and greatly enjoy learning about and visiting historic sites.

"NA'AMAT remembers founders during Women's History Month" was of special interest as I have visited the towns and historic places within Zichron Ya'akov, Rosh Pina, Rishon Lezion and Petach Tikvah and I particularly enjoyed reading about the three women featured whose contributions to the state go back to the early 1900s. The three women noted, and many of their fellow heroic peers, are all too often overlooked for their great contributions to the state and I was happy to read about them.

Don Sable

Ed. note: Letters were edited for length.

Fathers

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to submit a Request for Proposal. Next came a virtual site visit, during which board members discussed the Abba Center with Executive Director Deanna Migdal, International Liaison Shirli Shavit and Abba Center Director Dr. Yair Apter.

At a ceremony on June 2, Howie Brown, a member of JTTFGB's Board 2, noted that the program "helps bring in fathers who were either abusive in

the past or struggling in general with fatherhood and puts them through training and eventually safely and responsibly reunites them with their family."

He added that when the board began its research on domestic abuse organizations, "NA'AMAT really stood out with their focus on bettering the abusers themselves to heal families – we were so impressed with their unique way to prevent [abuse] and help those who have been abused in the past."

Project

Continued from first page

she often baked up to 16 challahs a week.

"We started out doing it by hand with about 10 pounds of flour a week. It was a lot," said Zellner. After her food processor broke under the strain, Lila's grandmother bought them a new heavy-duty processor.

Lila, who is going into seventh grade at SAR Academy, a Jewish day school in New Rochelle, N.Y., was inspired by her mother's grandmothers to learn about strong women in Jewish history as part of her Bat Mitzvah studies, including Golda Meir, Israel's prime minister and the first executive director of Moetzet Hapaolet,

Message from the President

By Jan Gurvitch



Summer brings its own special pleasures. For me, it is a time to kick back, relax and enjoy the longer days of sunlight that culminate in soft sultry evenings on my patio. All are

more precious after a year of sheltering in place and social distancing.

The pandemic brought challenges to NA'AMAT. Fortunately, we were able to do fundraising and programming in new and creative ways. I would like to thank our office staff led by Deanna Migdal, who never dropped the ball whether working at the office or from home. Thank you to our national volunteers Judith Shamir, Susan Isaacs, Doris Katz, Marcia Weiss, Debbie Kohn, Rhoda Birnbaum and the committees that brought us art programs, virtual tours and galas, cooking demos, bingo and more. We continue to look forward to innovative programs.

In Israel, NA'AMAT USA has taken on the challenge of renovating the multipurpose daycare center in Ashkelon. Completing this project is vital as the center serves low- and middle-income working families. The extended hours and special services that our multipurpose centers provide are essential to the success of these children and their families. Please give with a warm hand and a generous heart to our Annual Summer Campaign!

Wishing you all a sweet, healthy and happy New Year with those you love.

NA'AMAT's sister organization in Israel.

In her free time, Lila enjoys basketball, softball and hip-hop dance — and baking challah for her family. In fact, Zellner says that Lila's two siblings insist on "Lila Challah" for Shabbat and are disappointed if they don't have it.

—Sharon Sutker McGowan



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NA'AMAT Reports



Programs

Strengthening our ties through technology

Judith Shamir, Programming Chair

Now that we have emerged from the lockdowns and quarantines of the pandemic, we are thinking about how we can blend Zoom technology and in-person events going forward.

Technology helped strengthen our ties with Israel and our sister chapters in the U.S. and worldwide. Some examples are the monthly updates from Israel by Shirli Shavit, director of International NA'AMAT and the Happiness program initiated by our South American chaverot.

Technology made it possible for our members to hear from Anat Hoffman, executive director of the Israel Religious Action Center, speaking about gender equality in Israel; Dr. Ruth Westheimer, who headlined a joint fundraising event with NA'AMAT Canada; and Debra Kapnek who screened "18 Enduring Voices," a documentary about her journey painting portraits of 18 Holocaust survivors.

Future programs include a virtual tour in Jewish Spain in August, a joint fund-

raising event with Canada in October, a virtual winter cruise and a series of programs on our diverse Jewish community. We are now turning our attention to planning the national convention, tentatively scheduled for July 2022.



Membership

The time for renewal is now

Selma Roffman, VP, Membership

"Renewal" means to refresh, rejuvenate and restore. For NA'AMAT, this is our time for renewal. Following a year of challenges, it is important for us to continue our mission of enriching families in Israel and strengthening the status of women in the family, workforce and society.

Our renewal letters are in the mail with attractive bookmarks as a reminder to annual members to renew your membership. If you're a life member, consider donating during Membership Month in October. Give gift memberships to family and friends.

Golda Meir, the National Secretary of NA'AMAT, once wrote: "Trust yourself. Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all your life. Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny,

inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement."

Let's make this a year of achievement for NA'AMAT! As we return to post-pandemic lives, make the most of yourself and renew your affiliation with NA'AMAT USA.

In Memoriam

This spring, members of NA'AMAT USA bid a sad farewell to Raquel Rub, a founding member of the Or Chapter in Miami. Following in the footsteps of



her mother, Masha Stern, who was instrumental in starting a NA'AMAT chapter in Lima, Peru, Ms. Rub also served as Southeast Area Chair. Those who knew her describe her as caring, sensitive, bright, intelligent, organized, elegant and most importantly "down to earth."

The Or chapter is honoring her memory with a gift of \$20,000 to renovate the Giborim Day Center in Holon, where plaques will be placed in memory of Ms. Rub and Ms. Stern. May their memories be for a blessing.