

## NA'AMAT battles domestic violence with awareness campaigns

By Sharon Sutker McGowan

A new NA'AMAT public awareness campaign in Israel encourages women who are in violent relationships to get help and get out.

Called "Who will replace you," the joint campaign with Histadrut promotes NA'AMAT's \*9201 hotline through social media, prime-time television and in print. The message is directed to women who remain with their abuser because they mistakenly think it's better for their children. It concludes with a warning: "When you're in a violent relationship, you can plan who will take care of your kids or plan how to get out of it."

Women who call the NA'AMAT hotline, whether they are victims of domestic violence or need other types of support, are put in touch with a staff social worker or lawyer who provides assistance. The hotline launched at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Operated by trained volunteers, the hotline is available from 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. According to Shirli Shavit, director of NA'AMAT's International Department, extending the hours would require additional funding. People calling after hours are directed to municipal hotlines.

The annual public awareness campaign is just one aspect of NA'AMAT's efforts to combat domestic violence. In 2022, NA'AMAT sponsored a major conference and more than 40 lectures given by Edith Tytunovich, head of NA'AMAT's Legal Bureaus, throughout Israel during November and December.

The conference, attended by 500 women at the Ayanot



*Hagit Pe'er (center) poses with Meirav Cohen (left) and Ayelet Razin Bet Or, director of the Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women at the Social Equality Award ceremony.*

Youth Village, focused on gaslighting, an insidious form of psychological manipulation in which the abuser attempts to sow self-doubt and confusion in the victim's mind.

"Her ability to trust her gut feelings is damaged, and she tends to blame herself," Tytunovich said. "At the same time, there is a tendency to hide such information from friends and family members who could have helped her if they only knew what kind of relationship she is in."

Tytunovich said that it's important to explain to women that the situation "is not her fault and she should not be ashamed; she is not alone, and we can help her." She add-

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# Awareness campaigns

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ed, "It's much more complicated for a woman to escape gaslighting relationships than when she is physically abused, since it is a silent and hidden violence."

As NA'AMAT Israel President Hagit Pe'er put it, "There are no external signs, no cuts or bruises on the body, but the soul is slowly murdered."

The "Who will replace you" and the gaslighting campaigns more than doubled the number of women seeking help, compared to a typical month. In an average month, approximately 100 people call the \*9201 hotline. In November 2022 about 250 women contacted the hotline.

Nevertheless, according to Pe'er, "We are only exposed to the tip of the iceberg because nearly 80 percent of the victims do not report to the authorities and are afraid to seek help."

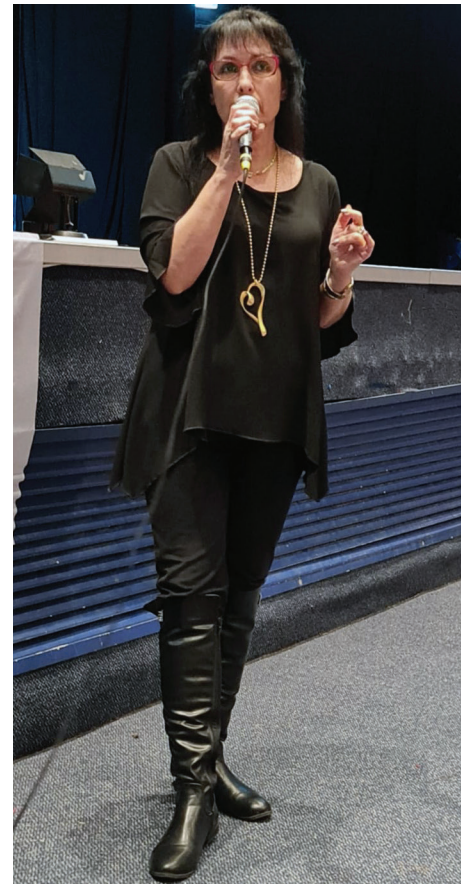
NA'AMAT's efforts have been recognized by the Israeli government. The Ministry for Social Equality recently presented a Social Equality Award for NA'AMAT's significant contribution in the fight to end violence against women. NA'AMAT was honored for its 2021 public awareness campaign,

called "My Sister's Keeper." Meirav Cohen, the Minister for Social Equality, presented the award to Pe'er at a ceremony on Nov. 25, the International Day for the Prevention of Violence Against Women.

The video campaign, which garnered millions of views on Facebook and Instagram, featured a dozen of Israel's biggest celebrities, including Moran Atias, an actress and model; Yael Bar Zohar, a television host; and Roy Asaf, an award-winning choreographer. The videos urged viewers to call the NA'AMAT hotline if they know domestic violence victims who are too frightened or depressed to ask for help themselves.

According to a new report by the Knesset Research and Information Center, from early 2020 to August 2022, 29 Jewish women were murdered; 27, or 93 percent, were killed by their partner or another relative. In the same period, 40 Arab women were murdered, about one-third of them by a relative. The Jerusalem Post noted that some of the women who were murdered had applied for orders of protection against their abusers, which were not granted by police.

Pe'er has vowed to continue the struggle against domestic violence and



*Edith Tytunovich, head of NA'AMAT's Legal Bureaus, lectures on domestic violence.*

for women's equality. "There are forces that wish to set us decades back and erase achievements and progress that took years to establish. We will not allow dark forces to push us away and make us smaller."

Since 2017, NA'AMAT USA has sent \$1.6 million to Israel from the Eleanore Raymer Trust to support domestic violence prevention programs. Ms. Raymer was a NA'AMAT member who lived in Orange County, Calif.

*Your donation can help prevent domestic violence in Israel. Use the enclosed envelope or click here to donate: [naamat.org/waystogive/donate-now](https://naamat.org/waystogive/donate-now). To learn about legacy giving, visit <https://naamat.org/waystogive/planned-giving/>.*



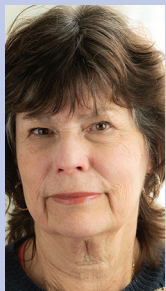
*Audience members listen attentively at a NA'AMAT-sponsored conference.*

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## Message from the President



**By Jan Gurvitch**

2022 was a special year.

In August, NA'AMAT USA women joined with world Jewry in Basel, Switzerland to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the First World Zionist Congress. There, our members stood in the room where Theodore Herzl first shared the words "If you will it, it is no dream." Some 50 years later the State of Israel would be born with the support of NA'AMAT, which provided essential social services to the women, children and families of the fledgling nation.

This past year NA'AMAT USA continued to make a difference in the lives of thousands of Israelis. Services provided spanned the entire map of Israel and benefited Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Druze families. We helped build new playgrounds at day care centers. We raised funds for a new architectural curriculum at Ayanot, a residential youth village. We supported scholarships for highly motivated women who continue to break the glass ceiling in the fields of science and medicine. We raised awareness about domestic violence throughout the country.

In April, NA'AMAT women from nine countries will attend an international conference

in Israel. As we share the camaraderie and sisterhood that defines NA'AMAT, we will tour NA'AMAT's many installations. Following the conference, NA'AMAT delegates will attend the WZO's World Zionist Congress, where we will begin the celebration of Israel's 75th birthday.

NA'AMAT USA has much to be proud of. Thank you for helping us grow from strength to strength. On behalf of the national board and staff, I wish you a healthy and meaningful 2023.



## Meet Sarah Musher Brenner, Eastern Regional Director

Sarah Musher Brenner brings experience in organization development, project management, training and development, fundraising and community planning to her role as NA'AMAT's new Eastern Regional Director.

"I'm excited to be working with a mission-driven organization that is aligned with my personal passion for community building, women's causes and Tikkun Olam," Brenner said.

Her nonprofit experience includes creating an executive level volunteer leadership program for the Jewish Federation & Family Services of Orange County, Calif.; managing the Young Leadership Division of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington; and national and international fellowships



*Sarah Musher Brenner*

with Hillel. She also worked at a leading global firm in corporate education, where she developed customized executive education programs for a global client base.

A resident of Maryland since 2017, Brenner is actively involved in her children's school, the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School. She previously served on the boards of her synagogue and the Jewish Community Foundation of Orange County.

Sarah earned her MBA in Management and Organization at the University of Maryland's Smith School of Business and a BS in Animal Science from Cornell University. She lives in Bethesda with her husband and three children.

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NA'AMAT NOW is written and produced by Complete Communications Inc., Skokie IL

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*Ayanot students begin studies that could lead to a career in architecture.*

## Architecture program at Ayanot needs support

With help from NA'AMAT USA, the Ayanot Youth Village will be renovating its facilities to accommodate an exciting new architecture program. The new program is being designed in cooperation with the Israel Defense Force (IDF).

The program will give students a head start in their architectural training and can help launch them into a career after serving in the IDF.

Renovations to classrooms and dorms will cost approximately \$120,000. NA'AMAT USA aims to raise \$50,000 to bring the classrooms up to the standards needed to provide this opportunity to Israeli youth. About half that amount has been raised so far. Can you help us meet our goal?

\$360 - Drafting table  
\$180 - Drafting stool  
\$72 - Drafting paper roll  
\$36 - Drawing tools

*To contribute to NA'AMAT's Youth Villages, go to <https://bit.ly/3HRBKg2> or use the enclosed envelope.*

## *NA'AMAT thanks Fainbarg family*

Thank you to Steven Fainbarg and the Fainbarg Family Foundation for generously supporting NA'AMAT USA. The Foundation donated \$10,000 each to the Dor Day Care Center in Rehovot and the Habe'er Day Care Center in Petach Tikvah for gardens and equipment. If you are interested in learning how you can incorporate NA'AMAT into your financial planning, please contact Marcy McKenzie at [finance@naamat.org](mailto:finance@naamat.org).



### **Did you know?**

NA'AMAT's Kanot Youth Village was recognized for the second year in a row by the Ministry of Education as one of the best high schools in Israel. Many of the 660 students come from challenging backgrounds, yet 95 percent are eligible to graduate.