

Dear Friends,

It was nearly 30 years ago when Ellie and I came to Boston with our children, Ari and Nili, ages nine and six at the time. I arrived at CJP from The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, an organization that taught me a great deal about the power of community and the enormous responsibility of Jewish leadership at times of immense challenge and opportunity.

I realized how little I really knew, and the prospect of providing leadership for a great Federation like CJP in the fifth (now fourth) largest Jewish community in America was more than a little intimidating. What I did bring with me, however, was a passion for Jewish life, a commitment to our role in the wider world, and a belief in the possibility of change in a community like Boston; a community of great intellectual strength and power.

Over the years, I've had the honor of working with some of the smartest and most dedicated people in our community: volunteers and professionals at CJP, at our agencies, and in our synagogues and day schools. These individuals have pledged their lives to the creation of a vibrant Jewish future filled with meaning and purpose. Together, we have positioned ourselves at the leading edge of Jewish history. We have worked long and hard to make Jewish learning a source of pride for ourselves and our children, to create a welcoming and inclusive community for everyone, to support our brothers and sisters in Israel and around the world, and to reach out with love to the next generation of Jews and to the broader community with a deep commitment to justice and righteousness.

We wrote our mission, in the words of our God, on the walls of our building and resolved to carry them in our hearts and in our minds and teach them to our children:

*"I have loved them (Abraham and Sarah) because they will teach their children and grandchildren to follow the way of God by doing justice and righteousness."*

We have accomplished a great deal but are still far from making our very best dreams for our community a reality. There is still much that remains to be done.

I want to share with you that after almost 30 incredible years, I will be stepping down from the role of CJP President. I expect this change will take place around the summer of 2018. A search committee, chaired by Aron Ain, CEO of Kronos and Shira Goodman, CEO of Staples, will begin its work in September to identify my successor.

I've given a great deal of thought, along with our board, to the very best way for me to continue to work on the issues of greatest concern to our community, issues where I can continue to have an impact, nationally and locally, while assuring the best possible professional leadership for CJP's future. These include issues related to Jewish identity, especially Jewish adult learning, Birthright, outreach to young adults and interfaith households, inclusion and strengthening ties to the Jewish people and to Israel. Along with the great joy of working in this community, is the greater joy of spending time with my family, particularly my grandchildren. At this point in my life and in theirs, I want to see them more frequently while continuing to build a Jewish future for them.

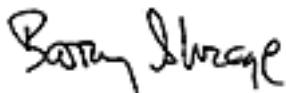
Our intention is for me to continue to support CJP in the capacity needed once a smooth transition to the new President has been completed. This would be in addition to the work I will be pursuing with national and local Jewish institutions and foundations, on the issues I care so deeply about.

As an Orthodox Jew and as a part of Boston's Jewish community, I have been influenced deeply by the teaching of the "Rav," Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (zt"l). The Rav once described the story of the Jewish people and the responsibility of Jewish leadership to teach that story to the Jewish future:

*"It is an exciting story that we tell them. Our story unites countless generations. Present, past, and future merge into one great experience... Our story tells of a glorious past that is still real, because it has not vanished, a future which is already here, and a creative present replete with opportunity and challenge. It is a privilege and a pleasure to belong to such a prayerful, charitable, teaching community, which feels the breath of eternity."*

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to be part of Boston's Jewish community; a prayerful, charitable, teaching community, which feels the breath of eternity.

With great love and appreciation for having had the opportunity to work with you as part of the amazing adventure of Jewish life,



Barry Shrage  
President, CJP