

Collaboration

In the space of one day I saw what a community can do.

As many of our colleagues and leaders walked slowly in to the office Monday morning you could see the afterglow of an amazing day. The sore muscles were a testament to the incredible “Tour de Summer Camps NJ” bike ride the day before, in which hundreds of riders raised almost a million dollars (!!!) for incentive grants and scholarships

to send local kids to Jewish summer camp. Thanks to the generosity of our [sponsors](#) and the vision of event chairs Gary DeBode, Susan Ratner, Eric Sellinger, and Jon Ulanet, the Tour is the latest success of our community calendar. If you’re one of the hundreds of people who showed up, biked, cheered, volunteered – **thank you**. This is what community looks like.



It was particularly inspiring to have 15 Israelis from a group called Cycling2Gether biking with us on Sunday. Our incredible partnerships with communities in the Negev enables us to cross oceans and spend time biking, learning, and building living bridges together. This relationship is an amazing testament to the vibrancy and spirit of our love for Israel. The partnership continues as Cycling2Gether is recruiting members of our community to ride the desert trails of the Negev in February 2019. Contact my

colleague [Randi Brokman](#) for more information about this amazing opportunity to cycle in Israel. And, of course, we’re excited to bring 450 members of our community to visit our partnerships during our commUNITY Mission in October. Meanwhile, we’re already planning for Tour de Summer Camps NJ 2019! If you’d like to get involved, contact my colleague [Ora Warmflash](#).

After lunch I heard from several execs of partner beneficiary agencies that they had successfully finished a course of executive coaching and training, funded by a special professional development grant from our Federation. “My coach was incredibly helpful,” one CEO told us. “This was really a great opportunity for leaders in our community. I got so much out of the experience.” Each agency CEO private coaching sessions, to develop professional skill sets and help shape our community leaders to being even greater leaders.

In the afternoon I accompanied a delegation of Board and professional leaders to visit our beneficiary agency JESPY House, a community-based nonprofit that has been serving adults with learning and development disabilities in the South Orange area for 40 years. We toured several of their inspiring facilities, heard about the collaborations and partnerships – through

ABLE, CARES, Executive Coaching, our annual UJA Allocations process, and more – that Federation provides, and the vision of a caring community that provides daily living skills training, case management work, readiness coaching, clinical and behavioral support, and much more.

What's the competition between synagogues and Federation? Is it Federation's responsibility to build synagogue memberships and provide grants for young families to join our synagogues? Did you know that we have over ten different denominations of Jewish practice in the community? These were some of the discussions we had on Monday evening as our Federation president Scott Krieger and Mariela Dybner, Chair of the Synagogue Leadership Council, convened some 40 synagogue presidents from around Greater MetroWest for a discussion on shared horizons and challenges, and a wide review of the programs that Federation offers our synagogues. I'm grateful to my colleague Sarah Segal, our Synagogue Liaison Manager, who put the event together and works hard to deepen and strengthen our relationships with the over 90 synagogues in the community.

All this in a day. Imagine what we can accomplish together in a week.