

Greater MetroWest names its new exec



Executive committee approves appointment of Dov Ben-Shimon

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Dov Ben-Shimon has been named the next executive vice president/CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ, the eighth largest Jewish federation in the country.

The federation's executive committee approved the recommendation of a 13-member executive search committee on June 2, according to a statement by the search committee. Ben-Shimon will succeed Max L. Kleinman, who is retiring after 19 years at the helm of the organization, in the fall.



Dov Ben-Shimon

Ben-Shimon, who lives in Fanwood, is currently executive director for strategic partnerships for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), serving as a resource to American Jewish leaders on global Jewish needs and JDC's programs and priorities.

"In Dov we have found someone who not only knows us but clearly sees Greater MetroWest's destination of mission success and will take us there by the best route," said Gary Aidekman, a former federation president who chaired the search committee with the assistance of the JFNA Mandel Center for Leadership Excellence. "I'm proud of our search committee. The committee represented a cross-section of committed and knowledgeable community leaders. They envisioned the future of our federation and understood what our next exec must have to get us there."

Ben-Shimon's selection by the committee was unanimous, said Aidekman.

"This is clearly an historic time in the life of our Federation. We have a strategic plan poised for implementation and a new CEO standing in the wings ready to take the reins and guide us into the future," said Lori Klinghoffer, federation president. "We are beyond confident that Dov Ben-Shimon has exactly what we here in Greater MetroWest need to drive us forward. His passion, commitment, and energy will undoubtedly inspire and motivate us all — lay leaders and professionals alike. He comes to us with a great deal of experience in our Jewish world and has already begun to develop relationships with our stakeholders."

The federation funds multiple initiatives in Israel and allocates funds to a network of 27 local partner agencies providing social services and Jewish educational, vocational, and recreational services. It has funded projects meeting Jewish needs in 70 countries and responds to emergency and disaster situations around the world.

It is the publisher of *New Jersey Jewish News*.

Ben-Shimon was born in England and moved to Israel at the age of 18. He was an Air Force rescue medic and Infantry combat medic in the Israel Defense Forces, and saw active duty in both the Gaza and Lebanon fronts, with the rank of staff sergeant.

Ben-Shimon has a BA and MA in international relations from Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He served as assistant spokesman to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and chargé d'affaires (deputy ambassador) at the Israeli Embassy in Luanda, Angola. After several years in Jerusalem as the director of resources for the Israeli Reform Movement, he served as major gifts officer at the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles. He was appointed to his current post at JDC in 2009 after serving as its assistant executive vice president and its director of board development.

"I'm excited and honored to be selected as the next executive vice president/CEO," said Ben-Shimon. "I have lived in the Greater MetroWest community for several years and have seen the thriving and dynamic nature of Jewish life here. I'm grateful to the lay and professional leaders of the community for their warm and kind expressions of support, and I'm very much looking forward to meeting with community representatives and leaders.

"It is no easy task to step into the shoes of Max Kleinman, a visionary leader who has inspired so many in the community," he added. "I'm grateful for his guidance, and the counsel and encouragement of so many in our federation, our agencies and synagogues, and the community-at-large."

In January, the *Forward* newspaper noted that a number of top executives had announced their retirements from many of the largest federations, including Greater MetroWest, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. The newspaper asserted that the "2014 vacancies appear to be just the tip of a broad generational turnover."

"One of the things I love about Greater MetroWest is that we never hesitate to take on new challenges and opportunities," said Leslie Dannin Rosenthal, incoming federation president. "One reason we are able to do this is our rich history of dedicated lay leaders and professionals. We know we have people on whom we can rely for advice and guidance, and who also want Greater MetroWest to move forward into the future.

"It is in that spirit of tradition and innovation that I look forward to working with Dov," she added.

The JDC also congratulated Ben-Shimon.

"We offer our warmest *mazal tov* to Dov and our partners at Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ. We are proud that one of JDC's senior professionals was tapped for this major leadership post in the American Jewish community and look forward to further strengthening our critically important relationship in the years ahead," said JDC CEO Alan H. Gill.

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