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Dear Federation and Community leaders,

As we get ready for Seder, I hope that you and your family are healthy and getting through this crisis as best as possible. I want you to know that **our Jewish Federation has been working hard on building responses to care for those in need and plan for future needs**. We've been sending out regular video messages on social media –you can see some of mine below.

[Friday's Video Message](#)

[Today's Video Message](#)

[Blog Post About Effective Giving](#)

I want you to know **how proud I am of our professional team**. They've pivoted efficiently and effectively to the new situation, and we're working hard to make sure that the community's most critical needs are met. We're examining our staffing and resources to make sure that everyone is working effectively to meet the needs of the moment. We've put together a team of Federation professionals to help all our agencies and synagogues with the loan application process under the Federal CARES Act. And Scott Krieger, our President, has asked President-Elect David Saginaw to set up a "Day After Committee" to start thinking strategically about what we've learned so far in this crisis, and what kinds of changes we expect when the 'all-clear shofar' blows and we start to move to a new way of life.

To remind you, **we've reorganized our immediate allocations focus into three main tiers**: Tier one looks at food, medicine, health/homecare needs; tier two focuses on mental health counseling; and tier three is centered on community outreach, strengthening families and supporting education needs. The Emergency Response Team, and the Executive Committee of our Board, have met to review these needs and they'll keep at it, making sure that our response is meaningful and impactful. **We've already sent out \$1 million in immediate support to our partner agencies**, and we'll keep going. We're focusing our efforts at home but this is a global pandemic and we won't lose sight of our global mission. To that end we've sent significant support to our

partner agencies JDC and JAFI, for food and medical support for elderly Jews and Holocaust survivors, and to partners in Ofakim and Rishon LeZion for Pesach food packages.

**Our Federation and agency teams are at the front lines.** Every day, our Jewish Federation chaplains, our Federation volunteers who distribute food packages, our agency partners who provide for food, medicine, counseling, mental health care, and disability services, and so much more, are the face of our community's response to these times. Our national Jewish Federations of North America is convening affinity groups and offering a wealth of opportunities to be and learn together via weekly [Virtual Meetups](#). And our partner the Jewish Agency for Israel's Shlichim (Israeli emissaries) have created a lineup of [fun online activities here](#).

Check out also how our funded partner Birthright Israel tries to keep our spirits high with these two amazing videos:



Kotel



Tel Aviv

With great sadness and profound sorrow, we mourned the passing of Donald Feldstein, former CEO of our Jewish Federation, who died this weekend of heart failure and COVID-19. [You can read a little about Don here](#). May his memory be for a blessing, and may his family and friends be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

As we approach Pesach in the middle of this crisis, with more weeks of physical distancing and suffering potentially to come, this is a time for us to connect and come together like never before. If you haven't made a gift to the United Jewish Appeal, [we ask that you do so today](#). Our Jewish Federation is going to keep going, to reach out to those who need us most, and to help the community's response. [Check out our new amazing Passover Gift Guide](#), with meaningful and inspiring gifts for your Afikomen-finder, or someone you love. What greater gift is there than honoring someone with a gift of love that also helps our community? The online gift catalog provides a visualization of the kinds of things your donation can help support. And have a look at this incredible [Virtual Passover Page](#), where our Greater MetroWest clergy and educators joined forces to create a terrific selection of videos to help you make this year's Seders particularly meaningful and enlightening. Feel free to incorporate them into your virtual or personal seders however they work for you. There's also a curated list of downloadable Haggadot and virtual Seders hosted by area synagogues that you're invited to attend.

[Passover Symbolic Gift Catalog](#)

[Give to UJA](#)

[Virtual Passover Page](#)

Thank you to all those who stepped up so quickly with your donations, your time, and most of all your compassion, to help those who need it most. May your Passover be safe and healthy.

Chag Sameach,  
Dov

## **Dov Ben-Shimon**

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