

Search committee recommends new exec for Greater MetroWest federation



Dov Ben-Shimon heads 'Strategic Partnerships' for the JDC

by [NJJN Staff](#)

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The Executive Search Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest has recommended a candidate to succeed the retiring Max Kleinman as the federation's executive vice president/CEO.

Dov Ben-Shimon of Fanwood, currently the executive director of Strategic Partnerships of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, was the committee's unanimous choice at a May 14 meeting.

The recommendation and appointment are subject to reference checks, "further due diligence," contract negotiations, and the approval of the federation executive committee on June 2, according to a statement by the search committee.

"The Committee was faced with the challenge of selecting the next GMW executive from a pool of strong, talented candidates," according to the statement. "We are recommending an individual who has the vision, passion, skills and leadership necessary to maintain our Federation's standard of excellence, burnish our reputation world-wide and advance our mission for many years to come."

Born in England, Ben-Shimon moved to Israel at age 18 and served as an Air Force Rescue Medic in the Israel Defense Forces, [according to his biography at the "Joint."](#)

He earned a BA and MA in International Relations from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Ben-Shimon served as assistant spokesman to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in Israel and abroad, and deputy ambassador at the Israeli Embassy in Luanda, Angola.

Ben-Shimon has held senior financial resource development positions: After several years in Jerusalem as the director of resource development for the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, Ben-Shimon served as major gifts officer at the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.

Ben-Shimon later served as the assistant executive vice president of the Joint, a humanitarian assistance organization and partner agency of the Jewish Federations of North America. He was appointed executive director for Strategic Partnerships in 2009, in which capacity he serves as a resource to American Jewish leaders on global Jewish needs and JDC's programs and priorities.



Dov Ben-Shimon, who is a search committee's choice as the new top executive of the Greater MetroWest Jewish federation, spoke to NJ Jewish leaders in Feb. 2013 about the work of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

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In a “[JDC Strategic Partnerships](#)” blog, Ben-Shimon writes frequently about Jewish leadership issues, philanthropy, and the need for more cooperation among Jewish organizations.

Last September, Ben-Shimon lamented the “silos” that prevented different Jewish groups, as well as departments within organizations like Jewish federations, from coordinating their activities with one another. “Silos really hurt our annual campaigns,” he wrote. “They make us look inefficient, unwieldy, irrelevant. They make donors uneasy because they think (rightly) that we’re not coordinated and we don’t know what we’re talking about. And silos damage the core concept of what Jewish federations stand for – that only with a strong, coordinated, community-based response can we meet the challenges we face.”

Federation officials said they were withholding further comment on Ben-Shimon’s appointment until after the executive committee voted on the search committee’s recommendation.

The 13-member search committee began work on Oct. 22, 2013 to find a successor for Kleinman, who is scheduled to retire as the federation’s top executive on Nov. 1, 2014.

Kleinman has led the umbrella philanthropy, one of North America’s largest Jewish federations, since 1995. This year federation expects to raise approximately \$22.1 million for the unrestricted annual campaign with more than \$1 million in designated giving. Its Jewish Community Foundation has assets of \$387 million, having raised \$35 million in 2014.

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