



2020

ANNUAL REPORT



End

# WELCOME



Dear Friends,

It is with great excitement that we share with you A Wider Bridge's annual report as we embark on our 10th anniversary year.

2020 was a year of challenges – from Covid 19 to rising anti-Semitism – and opportunities as we expanded our reach and impact in the LGBTQ and progressive worlds.

The year started with a spate of antisemitic incidents around the country – and AWB rose to that challenge – mobilizing our #BridgeOverHate campaign that brought our AWB Mission alumni, stakeholders, and community members to fight back against antisemitism. Their posts received thousands of likes on social media. During a time when Jews everywhere felt isolated and threatened, AWB alumni said loud and clear “you are not alone!”

Then we had a leadership transition. We said goodbye to Tye Gregory who was our first full time director and helped AWB grow exponentially. We are deeply grateful for his leadership.

Then COVID-19 hit and we transitioned to the virtual world.

- We were one of the first organizations to pivot to online programming and proudly hosted more than 20 virtual community events to promote LGBTQ and Israel education.
- Our “Building Bridges” webinar series connected LGBTQ Israelis and the international pro-Israel community. Our programs had more than 30,000 unique views!
- More than 100 mission alumni attended our virtual alumni summit, learning new insights about Israel, discussing topics such as racial justice, and diving deeper into advocacy to advance both equality for Israel and in Israel. AWB has some of the most engaged alumni of any group that leads missions to Israel. Their experiences and rich connections with Israeli LGBTQ leaders were shared throughout the year on social media, opeds, and in progressive networks.
- We launched our “A Wider Lens” series, showcasing films, food, and literature at the nexus of LGBTQ, Israel, and Jewish interests.

Our grantee partners in Israel continue to face unique challenges such as limited funding from the government, increased LGBTQ-phobia, and repeated elections in which LGBTQ rights have been used as a wedge issue. Through it all, A Wider Bridge has been there to offer guidance, support and funding for their crucial programs - such as fighting conversion therapy, protecting LGBTQ youth, and standing up to acts of hatred across Israel.

It is thanks to you, that our “big tent” approach allows us to welcome many different people into our family so that many diverse voices feel at home at AWB. At a time when our environment has grown increasingly fraught with a rise in antisemitism, anti-Israel, and anti-LGBTQ hate, activists like you have come together to stand up for our beliefs, for our community and for each other. A Wider Bridge's “big tent” allows many diverse voices to feel at home and connected.

Thank you. We also want to express a special note of appreciation to our contributors, who have enabled us to accomplish so much in the past year. Together we can continue to fight for equality in Israel, equality for Israel, and justice for all.

Wishing you much happiness and health! L'Shalom,

  
Alan Schwartz  
Chair of the Board

  
Ethan Felson  
Executive Director



**"Connecting** is just so **powerful right now**, when everyone is feeling so isolated. I underestimated how distanced I have been feeling, so **this was great.**"

*Row Iliescu, June 2019 Mission, Development Director Equality Florida*



**"We are very honored to have been able to host you, and together with you create a safe and inclusive space for Jewish LGBTQ students, as well as for their allies, from around the world. While WUJS has made its first steps to signal that it is for everyone, we certainly have learned a lot from your sessions about how to make our world union even more inclusive and safe."**

*World Union of Jewish Students*



# A WIDER BRIDGE IMPACT GRANTS

A Wider Bridge Impact Grants are designed to empower LGBTQ organizations in Israel in their effort to expand rights and acceptance within their communities.

Through our grants program, we partner with organizations and advocates to change hearts and minds across Israel – from the metropolitan Tel Aviv bubble to the communities in the periphery that are electing homophobic and transphobic representatives at the local level and to the Knesset. We believe the best investments to secure LGBTQ rights and community in Israel are those that provide needed financial resources, help build capacity and amplify activist voices on the ground.

Our Impact Grants are funded in large part by our individual supporters – everyday folks who are committed to A Wider Bridge's Mission of advocating for equality in Israel alongside our partners in Israel.





“Supporting **individual freedom and equality are core values for our foundation**, and A Wider Bridge embodies these principles. We strive to focus on the future, seeking to **support partners who are working to create a vibrant and inclusive Jewish community** and a more central role for Israel globally.”

*Moses and Susan Libitzky,  
Libitzky Family Foundation*



“There are few organizational opportunities where I can find the **intersection of my strong Jewish and LGBTQ identities**. A Wider Bridge is one them. AWB **brings understanding, acceptance, learning, and engagement**. It is mighty important work.”

*Jeffrey Schoenfeld,  
Brown Brothers Harriman & Co.*

## STATISTICS OF IMPACT

**486,600**

The number of people uniquely reached on social media in 2020, a 268% increase over 2019

**71,800**

The number of followers on social media representing, a 112% increase over 2019

**1416**

The amount of unique attendees to virtual community programs

**101**

The count of alumni that attended A Wider Lens Alumni Summit

**3,1,1**

Hosted 3 Alumni events, 1 Pre-Shabbat mixer, 1 Alumni Summit

**50+**

The count of online alumni-led or moderated AWB educational programs

**QUARTERLY**

Beyond the Bridge alumni engagement programs

**BRIDGE OVER HATE CAMPAIGN**

62 trip alumni engaged in the mobilization

Alumni engaged through social media over 65 times, thousands of followers reached

19 Organizations or houses of worship made statements of solidarity

3 Elected Officials made statements of solidarity

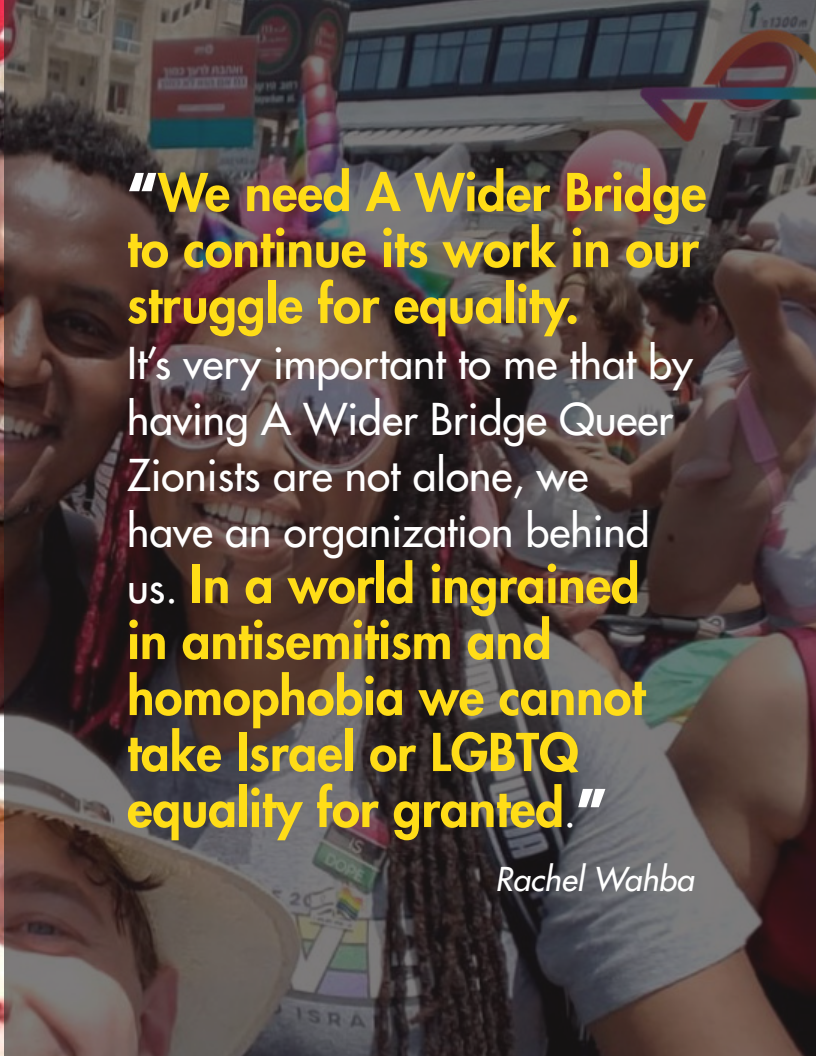
3 Media Outlets published about topic including an op-ed by Tyler Gregory





"I love attending A Wider Bridge's programs. Nowhere else do I experience this **unique blend of American and Israeli queer, progressive, Zionist mishpacha.**"

*Andrea Beth Damsky*



"We need A Wider Bridge to continue its work in our struggle for equality.

It's very important to me that by having A Wider Bridge Queer Zionists are not alone, we have an organization behind us. **In a world ingrained in antisemitism and homophobia we cannot take Israel or LGBTQ equality for granted."**

*Rachel Wahba*

2020

# PROGRAMS

Feb 9 - 10  
**JCPA Conference**

Feb 13  
**Beyond the Bridge Briefing**



Mar 1  
**AWB- LGBTech event in Israel**

Mar 1  
**AWB AIPAC Reception**

Mar 17 - Apr 1  
**Navigating Difficult Conversations about Israel Beyond The Bridge Salons**

Apr 29  
**Celebrating Israel's Independence with Pride**



May 6  
**Understanding Israel's Democracy & Society**

May 14  
**Navigating the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

May 22  
**Beyond the Bridge Pre-Shabbat Mixer**


May 26  
**History of LGBTQ Rights in the US and Israel**





Jun 4  
**Creating LGBTQ  
Safe Spaces**

Jun 9  
**LGBTQ Health in  
a Pandemic**



Jun 19  
**Where Pride  
Dwells with  
Rabbi Denise Eger**

Jul 9  
**The Other Side of  
the Rainbow**

Jul 21  
**LGBTQ+  
Employment  
in Israel**

Jul 23  
**Arab & LGBTQ in  
Israel: How Tahini is  
Sparking a National  
Conversation**



Aug 25 - 27  
**2020 National  
Alumni Summit**

Oct 27  
**The Impact of Court  
Cases on LGBTQ  
Rights in the US  
and Israel**

Nov 19  
**Service and  
Equality**

Dec 2  
**Jewish Holy Sites in  
the Middle East**



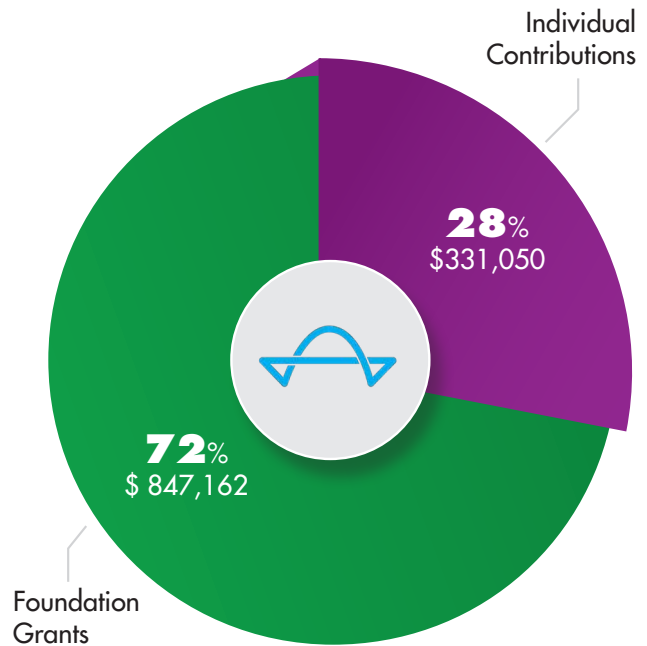
Dec 9  
**Melting Pot of  
Miracles**



2020

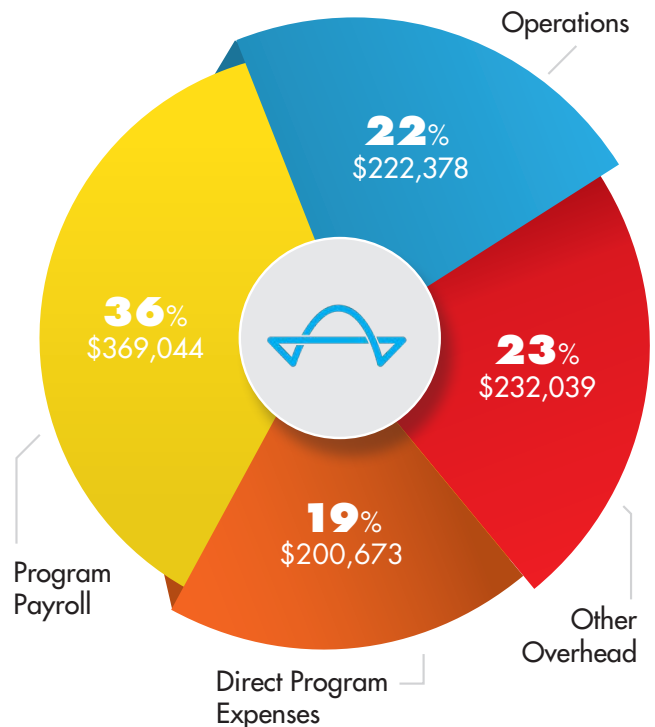
REVENUE AND EXPENSES

**Total Revenue**  
**\$1,178,212**



**Total Expenses**  
**\$1,024,134**

*The \$150,000 differential in revenue vs. expense in 2020 is in a reserve mission fund that will be fully utilized in 2021 and 2022 for additional in-person missions to Israel.*



# THANK YOU

We are So Grateful to Our Donors, Supporters  
and Especially Our Board of Directors for  
Really Stepping Up this Past Year!



A WIDER BRIDGE



# SAVE THE DATE

10th Anniversary Celebration

Join Us On  
December 12, 2021

*San Francisco • Streaming Live Worldwide*

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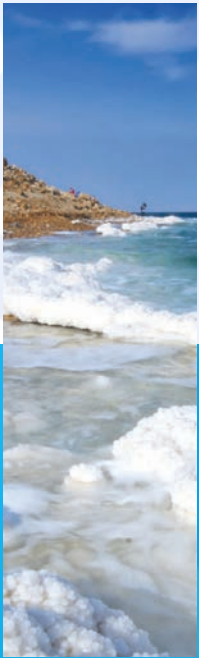
## **Honorees**

Jeffrey Schoenfeld • Tyler Gregory • Bruce Maxwell • Tracey and Michelle Labgold

***Special Tribute to***  
Founder Arthur Slepian



More details available at [awiderbridge.org](http://awiderbridge.org)



# ISRAEL

# DONOR LIST

## Institutional Support

\$100,000+

Anonymous (NYC Area)  
Koret Foundation  
Charles and Lynn Schusterman  
Family Philanthropies  
Paul E. Singer Foundation

\$50,000 – \$99,999

Anonymous (Bay Area)  
Anonymous (NYC Area)  
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Morningstar Fund  
Senser Family Foundation

\$25,000 – \$49,999

Margaret and Daniel Loeb Family Foundation

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Anonymous (NYC Area)  
Chaiken Family Foundation  
Israel on Campus Coalition  
Jewish Federation of Broward County  
The Lisa and Michael Leffell Foundation  
Libitzky Family Foundation  
Merona Leadership Foundation

Under \$10,000

Greater Miami Jewish Federation

## Individual Support

**Gesher Platina** (\$25K-\$49.9K)

Alan Schwartz and Michael Sarid

**Gesher Zahav** (\$10K-\$24.9K)

Andy Austin and Michael Sonberg  
Barry Blecher  
Friend Family Foundation  
David Hochberg  
Jeffrey Schoenfeld  
Jean-Louis Velaise  
Jane and Stuart Weitzman

**Gesher Adom** (\$5K-\$9.9K)

Ruth Thomas and Carmella Ettinger  
Mort and Amy Friedkin  
Lee Jason Goldberg  
GLBT Fund of America/Philadelphia Foundation  
Bruce Maxwell and Sergei Kokoulin  
Richard Miller and Roberto Konishi  
James Rushing  
Gerry Llamado and Arthur Slepian  
Roselyne Chroman Swig

**Gesher Katom** (\$2.5K-\$4.9K)

Dr. Dana Beyer  
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**Gesher Tzahov** (\$1K-\$2.49K)

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Mary Glasspool  
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The Isidore Grossman Foundation, Inc.

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Cindy Brown  
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Congregation Kol Ami  
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Fred Felder  
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Howard Kailes  
Jonathan Kamel  
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RMLow Foundation  
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Rabbi Lisa Edwards  
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Marla Figdor  
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Corey Friedlander  
Riva Gambert  
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Jodi Garber-Simon  
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