

ALL THINGS BEIT T'SHUVAH

Donor Spotlight: Connecting a Caring Community



The cornerstone of living a life of joy and fulfillment is service. No one knows this better than Connecting a Caring Community Founder and Executive Director, Lisa Kodimer. Connecting a Caring Community is an organization that has set out to help those in need through not only donations, but also interactive programming. They have made it their goal to make sure everyone, no matter how much they have struggled, can find happiness.

When Lisa and her son were getting ready for his Bar Mitzvah, they decided that it would be a good idea to have him do some charity work. The idea to start a special needs baseball league at their local park was born.

The creation of this program changed the entire community. Everyone rallied behind the league and it made Lisa realize the importance of not only giving, but also teaching others to do the same. Shortly after, Connecting a Caring Community was born.

Their work started with just moms. Lisa's thought was: "Inspire moms. Change homes. Change communities." Before long, their organization grew far past the initial "Moms in Action" program they started with, and it is now full of a diverse group of over 300 people.

Connecting a Caring Community helps so many causes, and for the last six years, we have been

blessed to have them work with us as well. On the first Tuesday of every month, they come to our campus and lead an incredible program with our residents. Activities have included art classes and making sandwiches for the homeless. They always remind the communities they serve that "no matter where you come from, we are all brothers and sisters."

They are always willing to help Beit T'Shuvah in whatever way possible. When we needed new outdoor furniture for our patio, they got it for us. When we needed a new mixer for Baked T'Shuvah challah, they got it for us. This year, they are helping us renovate our coffee bar area.

So, when you are sitting outside, eating challah, or hanging out in the coffee bar, you can thank them. Their donations to Beit T'Shuvah go even further than just their time, energy, and money. The members of their group have built strong, long-lasting relationships with multiple residents and alumni. If Lisa and the other members of her organization have proved one thing, it is that they truly do care about connecting our communities. We could all take a page out of their book and, as they say: Give. Love. Grow.



Mazel Tov!

Congratulations to our Cantorial Soloist, Nathan Roth, on his engagement to Sarah Pesa Gurian! Our Beit T'Shuvah family continues to grow. ❤️



Challah!!

Our Baked T'Shuvah challah is back and better than ever! Order today! \$15 per challah.

Weekly pick up on Fridays at Beit T'Shuvah from 10:00 AM through 8:30 PM.

High Holiday Special: Order 3 round challahs and get FREE DELIVERY! Place your order at www.bakedtshuvah.com



Welcome Our New Board Members!

Rick Chanin	Doug Mankoff
Jackie Elkins	Vaughan Meyer
Pat Train Gage	Bryan Schimmel
Nicole Gumpert	Neil Solarz



Thank you and congratulations to our new Board Chair, Keith Elkins!

2023 Gala

Beit T'Shuvah's biggest fundraising event of the year, our 31st Annual Gala, was held on Sunday, February 26, 2023. Over \$1.8 million was raised, ensuring we can continue providing critical services to individuals struggling with substance abuse and other addictions—regardless of their ability to pay. The evening featured a silent auction, dinner, live performances, and many personal stories of redemption.

We joined together to honor the Saul and Joyce Brandman Foundation for the remarkable impact it has had on the Los Angeles Jewish community, and especially on Beit T'Shuvah. In 2010, the Saul and Joyce Brandman Foundation made a significant contribution to Beit T'Shuvah, allowing us to purchase additional property and expand the reach of our services. Since then, their

connection to our organization has only deepened. Joyce Brandman is a member of the Beit T'Shuvah Board of Directors and the Foundation has remained a true partner in our mission to save lives—supporting further facility development, general operations, and helping to subsidize a research project conducted by UCLA.

Over the course of the evening, several guest speakers and performers contributed to the festivities. Jarrett Harper, an alum of the program, spoke from the stage about the impact that Beit T'Shuvah made on his life and current success. Congressman Brad Sherman presented us with a check for \$300,000 to support the Extended-Care Program and the recovery support services it provides for our residents.

Our very own band and choir were joined by hip-hop violinist Josh Vietti and rapper Jonny Selz.

JUNK Films, founded by two Beit T'Shuvah alumni, created two moving videos highlighting the importance of community and connection and celebrating our honorees. The room was overflowing with love, gratitude, and support!

We are grateful beyond measure to all who helped us plan this amazing evening. Pat Train Gage and Barbara Tell co-chaired the Gala Committee, which included long-time supporters Nikki Axelrod, Heidi Bendetson, Lynn Bider, Robin Bloch, Emily Corleto, Jackie Elkins, Janice Kamenir-Reznik, and Annette Shapiro.

We'll see you at next year's Gala on Sunday, January 28, 2024, at The Beverly Hilton! Please save the date!

If you'd like to get involved, please Addy Mkawasi at 310.202.2288 or amkawasi@beittshuvah.org.



LA Marathon

On Sunday, March 19, 2023, Beit T'Shuvah's Gilberg Family Running 4 Recovery Team crossed the finish line of the LA Marathon, raising just over \$90,000!!!

Our team consisted of 32 participants—a mix of residents, alumni, staff, and community members. The team began their physical training in October under the leadership of Leslie Gold and Anna Johnson, who generously volunteered their time to prepare our team. On Marathon morning, the team members filled our vans, left BTS at 5:30 AM, and headed to the Dodger Stadium suites to stretch and relax before the official 8:15 AM start time. The room was full of giddy excitement and nervous anticipation to tackle this formerly insurmountable goal they all set for themselves.

In the meantime, our Marathon Coordinator, Sarah Jacobs, gathered over 40 residents, staff, alumni, and community members at our Cheer Zone in Beverly Hills. They energized our team and the thousands of other participants who passed along the intersection of Doheny and Burton Way. Residents and staff made dozens of colorful posters and banners that were held with pride. The team celebrated their big accomplishment at our Development Director, Avia Rosen's, home. Delicious food, fellowship, and a relaxing jacuzzi were just what the team needed to wrap up a long season of hard work and dedication. Thank you to everyone who donated and supported our team. You helped them cross that finish line! If you wish to be a part of the 2024 Marathon on Sunday, March 17th, please contact Armando Igari at aigari@beittshuvah.org.



16th Annual Circle of Majesty Luncheon

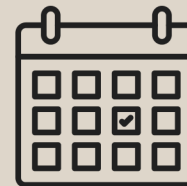


On June 1, 2023, Beit T'Shuvah held its 16th Annual Circle of Majesty Luncheon at the beautiful SLS Hotel in Los Angeles. What started 16 years ago with what felt like an ambitious goal of finding 10 women to each donate \$1,000, has grown into something so much larger than any of us could have imagined. The event was buzzing with joy, enthusiasm, and overwhelming support for Beit T'Shuvah and this year's honorees Emily Corleto and Heidi Praw for over 13 years of commitment to our mission.

The afternoon was engaging, with boutique shopping, live musical performances from Cantorial Soloist Nathan Roth and Thea Goldstein, two powerful stories from alumni Shira Presser and Tricia Mercer, and the Majesty Service Award presented to Emily Corleto and Heidi Praw.

The event closed with our featured speaker and alumnus, Doug Rosen.

The intention of our events is to thank our supporters and leave you better informed about how Beit T'Shuvah is tackling the addiction crisis. We work hard every day to ensure that there will always be a sacred home of recovery for all who need it. Thank you for being part of our lifesaving work. We couldn't do it without you.



High Holidays

Visit www.beittshuvah.org/hh to sign up for our services, become a member, or renew your temple membership.

- September 15th at 7:00 PM
Erev Rosh Hashanah
- September 16-17th at 9:00 AM
Rosh Hashanah
- September 24th at 7:00 PM
Kol Nidre
- September 25th at 9:00 AM
Yom Kippur

Alumni Picnic

Come see old friends, make new ones, and reminisce! It's like a high school reunion...but for rehab!

- October 8th at 10:00 AM
Lindberg Park

Golf Tournament

Join us and save a soul with every swing! To register, or for more information, contact Addy Mkawasi at amkawasi@beittshuvah.org or 310.202.2288, or visit www.beittshuvah.org/golf

- October 23rd at 11:30 AM
El Caballero Country Club

Sisterhood Fashion Show

Featuring exclusive clothing from our BTS Thrift Store

- November 12th at 2:00 pm
BTS Sanctuary

32nd Annual Gala

- January 28, 2024
The Beverly Hilton

LA Marathon

- March 17, 2024
Dodger Stadium

Stay tuned for more!

Join Us for Shabbat



Alumni Shabbat
August 25th
 Rabbi Ed Feinstein



September 8th
 Rabbi Noah Farkas



High Holidays
Sept. 15-17th and 24-25th
 Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz

Stay Connected



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Sergio's Corner



Dear Community,
 It has been a busy summer at Beit T'Shuvah! Our census is the largest

it's been since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and our talented clinical and spiritual staff continue to provide lifesaving addiction treatment both at our main campus and through a variety of offsite activities as well.

The Gilberg Family Summit Program, which brings together BTS staff and residents, is preparing for its annual hike that will take place in Yosemite National Park this year. We also held a spirited dodgeball tournament between residents and staff earlier this summer, and our annual alumni picnic is scheduled for October 8th.

As we continue to embark on this next life stage of our organizational journey, the Board of Directors has formed a rabbinic search committee that is currently in the process of identifying Beit T'Shuvah's next rabbi to serve as the spiritual leader of our community. I am excited for all the good work that continues to unfold each and every day. While we have seen many changes over the last few years, our organization remains strong, and we continue to offer the highest quality of recovery services to our residents. Our greatest strength remains the continuity of our sacred mission to save and transform lives.

JQ International Pride Shabbat



On May 5, 2023, Beit T'Shuvah partnered with JQ International for its first ever Pride Shabbat. The sanctuary was bursting with joy, vibrancy, acceptance, and an abundance of love to celebrate our LGBTQI+ community.

This special Shabbat was born out of our residents sharing with us that pride month is a challenging time for them. It was a memorable and very meaningful Shabbat for our entire community, and we plan to make it an annual tradition.

Family Immersion



In late June, Beit T'Shuvah celebrated a significant milestone by hosting its first onsite Family Immersion since the pandemic. Over the past two decades, families from various corners of the country have convoked at BTS to participate in an intensive, immersive encounter, gaining insights into their family members' recovery journey as long-term residents within our treatment program.

Over the course of three days, the Immersion's families was paired with a dedicated therapist, engaging in daily sessions to foster understanding and progress. A pivotal element of this experience was the multi-family process group, guided by Zac Jones, Director of Clinical Services, and Jill Rosenberg, Family Program Director.

Esteemed presenters enriched our event, including Sergio Rizzo-Fontanesi, who eloquently delved into the history of BTS. Dr. David Friedman expounded upon an integrative approach to addiction and treatment at BTS, while Doug Rosen from Partners in Prevention shared invaluable insights. Chaplain Adam Siegel, Bradley Elkins, Avia Rosen, Andy Besser, Julie Soter, and Nikki Hayden Bloss also graced us with their expertise.

The program encompassed engaging activities, such as attending Shabbat services and a performance of *Freedom Song*. This year, *Freedom Song* was integrated into "A Night of Creativity in Recovery," a showcasing of residents' artwork, which also included a silent auction of their pieces, and of course, refreshments. Piece by Piece, a non-profit organization, taught interested residents the art of mosaic. That collaborative effort produced a live auction item that will adorn the BTS entrance. Other mosaic tiles created by our residents were bought and donated back to BTS by Annette and Lynn Shapiro. We also owe our gratitude to Beargivers, whose generous donation facilitated the acquisition of essential art supplies.

As a heartwarming testament to the impact of our program, a family deeply touched by the immersion experience offered a generous donation. In line with their

suggestion we compiled a wish list, with their only request being that we replace the outdoor tables and chairs in the Zen Garden and patio.

The essence of Beit T'Shuvah thrives on community, serving as the lifeblood of our endeavors. Rapidly forming bonds among families during the event paved the way for their unanimous desire for a follow-up Zoom group session in the near future. At the core of healing addiction lies not only individual progress but the weaving together of shared experiences.



Support From Our Local Congressman



Over the past several years, Beit T'Shuvah has been fortunate enough to receive the enthusiastic support of Congressman Brad Sherman. In 2022, he was instrumental in helping our organization secure funding in the amount of \$300,000 to assist in the establishment of a robust Extended-Care Program to further enhance the recovery process for residents undergoing addiction treatment here at Beit T'Shuvah. Congressman Sherman attended our Gala to publicly present us with a check and spoke to a crowd of over of

over 500 people about his dedication to our mission. Currently, he is advocating for Beit T'Shuvah to receive a Byrne Justice Grant that will help reduce crime in Los Angeles through quality addiction treatment.

Congressman Sherman has positioned himself as more than just a peripheral supporter; he has become an active collaborator, contributing considerable resources to help secure the long-term sustainability of our organization.

Recently, the congressman and several members of the Beit T'Shuvah Board of Directors got together for a morning of meaningful conversation about important issues in the community. Congressman Sherman shared with us his knowledge of potential avenues for additional funding that might be worthy of further exploration. We have gained an important ally in Congressman Sherman, and we are grateful he has chosen to partner with us in our battle against addiction.

Gratitude for: Cathy Galper



The word "gratitude" doesn't even begin to sum up what we feel for Cathy Galper. She is a true member of the Beit T'Shuvah family.

For decades, Cathy has been volunteering her time to help anyone who might need assistance reading Torah. Every Friday night she arrives early to lend a hand before services, and each Saturday morning you can find her helping run the spiritual learning program. We have never known someone so selfless and dedicated—both willing and wanting to give back in whatever way she can.

Cathy relates on a profound level to all of the residents and staff here at Beit T'Shuvah, as she has been on her own journey of recovery. We are truly blessed to have her as a Sanctuary Committee member as well as a longtime Sisterhood member who stepped up to fill the role of Interim Sisterhood President when called upon. She embodies the true spirit of Beit T'Shuvah.

We are grateful for Cathy's commitment to our community, and we are honored to call her part of our family.

Volunteer Spotlight: Jerry Leifer

Seven years ago, Jerry Leifer's life had become completely unmanageable. His successful 35-year career as a television executive had to come to an abrupt end, along with the healthy salary that helped him pay for his children's Beverly Hills education and ensured he could fulfill his spousal support commitment. He turned to high-stakes poker in an attempt to make ends meet, a choice that quickly escalated into a full-blown gambling addiction.

At the recommendation of a friend, Jerry was admitted into Beit T'Shuvah, first as an outpatient and then as an inpatient resident, where he spent an entire year immersed in the recovery community learning how to live a healthy and productive life.

Over the past seven years, Jerry has kept up what he called "minimal contact" with the Beit T'Shuvah community, occasionally attending a Shabbat service. However, upon his recent retirement, he realized he craved a deeper connection—a way to bring meaning back into his own life while making a difference in someone else's. He immediately thought of BTS.



An avid golfer, Jerry began taking residents twice a week to the Rancho Park Golf Course for a couple hours of anxiety-free sober fun. "They seem to get a lot out of it!" Jerry says. "It's a stress release for them, and it has given me meaning in my retirement." These golf outings have truly enhanced the recovery program for our residents, offering them a reprieve from the pressures and anxieties of treatment, and getting them outside and out of their head. "I owe Beit T'Shuvah a lot," Jerry says. "I am very happy to have the chance to give back."

We are grateful that Jerry has reconnected with our community in such a significant way, and the residents are grateful for this gift he has given them.

Support Our Mission



Mail a check made out to Beit T'Shuvah to 8831 Venice Boulevard Los Angeles, CA 90034



Visit www.beittshuvah.org/donate



Donate through Venmo @Beit-TShuvah



Contact Development Director Avia Rosen at arosen@beittshuvah.org or 310.202.2289



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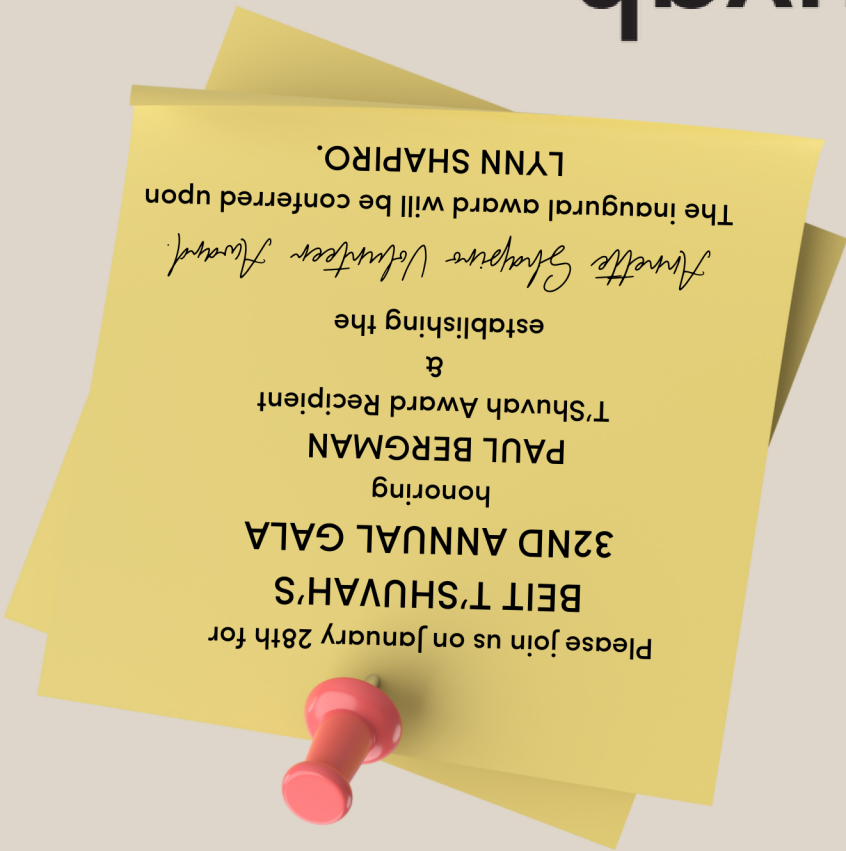
Volunteer With Us!



Hi, I'm Armando Igari. I was an intern for the Development Department for over a year, hoping to get the opportunity to be hired; and on July 1st, my hope became a reality. I will be wearing several hats here, but my primary focuses are on coordinating volunteers, engaging alumni, and managing the Gilberg Family Running4Recovery Marathon Team.

As an alum of Beit T'Shuvah who completed the program and

celebrated my one year sober birthday on June 24th, I experienced how powerful and uplifting the involvement of alumni and volunteers are to our community. I am committed to strengthening those bonds and ensuring that our alumni know that our doors are ALWAYS open to them. I look forward to making connections with all of you in the upcoming months. Email me at aigari@beittshuvah.org for information and opportunities.



beit t'shuvah

recover your passion. discover your purpose.

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GENEROUS DONORS!**

