

**ALLIED JEWISH FEDERATION
OF COLORADO****Doug's Drash from
Doug Seserman, President and CEO**

Dear Community Members,

As always, at the end of the year, I find myself reflective. This year we have seen and experienced so much. I will get into that more below but as I look back on 2012, I have an overwhelming feeling of thankfulness. I find myself thankful that we live in a country that is free, in a country that is not threatened daily by rockets, in a country where when there are natural disasters we all step up to help each other. We just wrapped up Chanukah and if we look at what Judah Maccabee was fighting for we see that it was a true and abiding freedom. The freedom to worship how we want. The freedom to vote for whomever we feel would be our best representative in the government. Our Maccabees taught us not only to fight for freedom but to also be thankful for our traditions. You see this in the story of Chanukah, after winning the battle... the people go to the destroyed Temple and rather than celebrate their victory, they clean and rebuild this sacred space. They invest, as it were, in their community. It is not only for us to fight and win the battle for freedom, it is for us to remember the traditions that guide our lives and keep them sacred. And so, I hope that you all had a very meaningful Chanukah and that this new year brings freedom and peace to all of our brothers and sisters.

**2012
IN
REVIEW****2012 in Review**

As I mentioned above, I can't help but reflect on what a intense calendar year it has been. We have done so much, for example we concluded a year of research and announced the new direction of the Federation in the next phase of our Reimagining process. Our Young Adult Department (YAD) has a lot of momentum, adding new and exciting programs for the next generation of Jewish leaders.

Through our Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), we hosted our annual luncheon where we honored Howard and Carol Boigon and Rep. BJ Nikkel. Our JCRC members spent a day at the capitol hearing from legislators and watching the Colorado House and Senate at work. Additionally, we provided a platform for our local political candidates to speak about issues that directly affect the Jewish community with record attendance. And in addition to all of that, we mobilize the community in times of crisis and this year, we were four for four.

Support for Colorado

When crisis strikes, we helped Coloradans in need. We raised nearly \$93,000 from 500 donors, 20% of that coming from out of state, for Coloradans suffering from the wildfires that swept through our state. We also raised \$11,000, from 93 donors, for those in need of emotional or medical support following the terrifying movie theater shooting in Aurora. You came to us and asked for a Jewish way to respond to tragedy. We listened and utilizing our existing infrastructure, we are able to raise resources with 100% of the donations going to the causes.

**Support for our Country**

Swiftly, we reacted to the horribly destructive Hurricane Sandy, raising over \$45,000, from 158 donors, for the victims of this tragic storm.



We went out and voted then had our signature events, CHOICES and Men's Event in the days after Election Day. We brought together 2,500 Coloradans at our events to hear inspiring stories and raise funds for the programming we do here, in Israel and around the world. And just as we thought we could breathe and prepare for Chanukah... another crisis struck, this time in Israel.

Support for Israel

On November 20, more than 650 members of our community came together to show solidarity for Israel at Hebrew Educational Alliance. Both US Senators Udall and Bennet spoke to the crowd. It was a moving program where we heard stories from friends currently in Israel, we heard from Michal, our Israeli Shaliach who is from the South of Israel, and even the Consul General called in to speak to those assembled. It was an incredible opportunity for us all to come together as a Colorado community and support Israel. While there is a tentative peace right now due to the cease fire, there is a lot to do in Israel. We still have our Israel Crisis Fund open for donations if you would like to give. To date, we have raised more than \$29,000 from 87 donors. The funds will be distributed through our partnership region, Ramat HaNegev as well as JFNA, JNF, JDC, and JAFI. [To donate, click here.](#)

**Thank you**

As I recount our year... I find myself surprised. I can't recall another year where we have reached out into our community so many times for crises. I can't recall another year where the need has been so broad. From wildfires to rockets in Israel, the Colorado community has consistently come together to support their neighbors in space and faith. And so I must say thank you.

Thank you all for your incredible support and for utilizing the Federation and our existing infrastructure to respond to a crisis in a moments notice. Let us hope and pray that 2013 holds many more simchas and joyful events... and many less tragedies.

**Thank
You!**

I hope you will take this chance to make a year-end gift to the Federation. I know you may have been asked many times this year but as you can see, from the year I have recounted for you, Federation makes an impact on all of our lives. Support our existing infrastructure today.

[Click here to donate now.](#)

[And don't forget to pay your existing pledge before the end of the year! This benefits you from a tax perspective and helps keep Federation running smoothly. Click here to pay your pledge now!](#)

Mark your calendar:

- **JFNA Women's Heart to Heart Mission to Israel**
Join women from our community and all over the United States for a special mission to Israel February 2-8, 2013. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **JCRC Luncheon**
During this election year and the crisis in Israel, your [Jewish Community Relations Council \(JCRC\)](#) has been very active. Join us on March 21 for the JCRC Luncheon to learn more about what JCRC does.
- **Walk for Israel/Celebrate Family**
Save the date! We will have a community walk for Israel on May 19. Join us for this walk through the east side of Denver culminating at the JCC Celebrate Family Festival. Stay tuned for more information.

Happy New Year,

Doug Seserman
President and CEO