HOW IT ALL STARTED

In the early 20th century, a small group of visionary philanthropists recognized that turbulent times required a major change in how Jewish New Yorkers could support the causes they cared most about. Felix Warburg, a Jewish investment banker and humanitarian, spearheaded a group of community leaders to launch a federation, a central organization that would reduce the duplication and competition among many local Jewish charities, and maximize what they could do together.

On January 10, 1917, the Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies of New York City was formally chartered by the State of New York. In its first year, it distributed $2.2 million to Jewish hospitals, orphanages, and social service organizations.

The agreement creating the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) was signed in January 1939 to provide relief for European Jews trapped in the vise of war, to sustain Jews living in pre-state Palestine, and to facilitate German Jewish immigration to safer countries.

In 1941, UJA of Greater New York incorporated, making it by far the most important affiliate of national UJA. In 1986, UJA formally merged with Federation to create UJA-Federation of New York.

HISTORIC CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

During our first 100 years, we’ve been at the forefront of responding to major events that have shaped our city and our global community. At every point, people have counted on us to make their lives better — and we have.

100 YEARS OF IMPACT

THE EARLY 1900S

1.5 million Jewish immigrants arrive in New York Harbor, leading to the creation of a Federation to meet increasing needs.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The young Federation is moved to mortgage its headquarters to provide job training, counseling, and food to tens of thousands of people.

1939 In the aftermath of Kristallnacht, the newly created national UJA raises $124 million to rescue 162,000 Jews, with New York contributing one third of all funds.

1948 The State of Israel is created. Federation sends staff and volunteers to aid in absorption of 685,000 immigrants backed by a $200 million contribution from American Jewry to the young State.

1967 AND 1973

To rebuild and ensure Israel’s survival, the New York community raises $72 million after the Six-Day War and more than $100 million in the wake of the Yom Kippur War.

1984 AND 1991

UJA-Federation supports two historic efforts to rescue Ethiopian Jews from civil war, famine, and religious persecution.

1989 With the collapse of the Soviet Union, UJA-Federation supports Operation Exodus and Passage to Freedom, helping 130,000 Jews immigrate to America, and 700,000 resettle in Israel.

POST-WAR AMERICA

The Federation building fund raises $53 million over 14 years to enable the purchase and construction of new hospitals and social service facilities.

2001 UJA-Federation creates the Israel Trauma Coalition (ITC) to help Israelis cope with psychological needs. In the years to follow, ITC offers expertise in the aftermath of terror attacks in France and Boston, and natural disasters in Japan, Haiti, and the Philippines.

SEPTMBER 11, 2001

UJA-Federation agencies are among the first responders, providing crucial support for families and survivors, and forming the 9/11 United Services Group, a partnership of local social-service agencies.

2005 Following Hurricane Katrina, UJA-Federation raises $5 million for the Gulf Coast.

SECOND INTIFADA

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2009 In response to the Great Recession, UJA-Federation launches Connect to Care, helping 87,000 middle-class people get back on their feet.

2005 As Israel launches Operation Protective Edge, UJA-Federation offers critical support for medical equipment, psychological trauma relief, recovery, and rebuilding.

2014 UJA-Federation brings our community together to care for those in need, respond to crises close to home and far away, and shape our Jewish future.