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[rudermanfoundation.org](http://rudermanfoundation.org)



## Our *Commitment* to Inclusion, Innovation, and Leadership



The Ruderman Family Foundation believes that inclusion and understanding of all people is essential to a fair and flourishing community. Guided by our Jewish values, we support impactful programs, innovative partnerships, and a dynamic approach to philanthropy in our core areas of interest: advocating for and advancing the inclusion of people with disabilities; fostering a more nuanced understanding of the American Jewish community among Israeli leaders; and modeling the practice of strategic philanthropy worldwide.

## Letter from the President

If I asked you to identify the largest minority group in the U.S., few people would know that it's people with disabilities. Even fewer would know that this minority group makes up an entire fifth of our country's population. The fact is that people with disabilities are among the most segregated and neglected people in our midst, with their civil rights constantly violated. We at the Ruderman Family Foundation seek to create a society where people with disabilities are fully included and welcomed to participate in all areas of life.

When we say all areas of life, we really mean it. We work on projects that enable inclusion in employment, education, housing, worship, and self-determination—just to name a few. This publication introduces you to one project in each of these areas to give you a glimpse of how our visionary partnerships are making our community a model of inclusion.

In order to further strengthen our community, our mission also has a second focus: instilling a desire and commitment among a critical mass of Israeli leaders to strengthen the relationship between Israel and the American Jewish community.

This brochure showcases some of the successes we have achieved through cutting edge philanthropic practice, using highly focused and strategic approaches, and by harnessing the powerful influence of media—especially social media—to further inclusion advocacy and create an impact that reaches beyond any specific project.

I hope you enjoy this visual overview of some of these seminal projects we've worked on over the last ten years. We are always seeking allies in our work to make society fully inclusive for everyone— and we'd be happy to connect with you on the Ruderman Family Foundation's website ([www.rudermanfoundation.org](http://www.rudermanfoundation.org)), Facebook page, and on Twitter at @RudermanFdn.

Yours,



Jay Ruderman

 @jayruderman



# Inclusion is a Civil Right

## THE JOURNEY OF A PHILANTHROPIC FAMILY

The Rudermans followed the pattern of many philanthropic families—starting with generous check-writing at the kitchen table and quickly moving into strategic investment. Founder and successful businessman, Morton E. Ruderman, had long been giving back to the Jewish community in Boston. More than a decade ago Mort decided to make a

major gift to local Jewish day schools. When they learned about the absence of children with disabilities in their classrooms, the family felt this systematic exclusion was an affront to their Jewish values. They agreed to focus on correcting this injustice and from the beginning understood their commitment to the inclusion of children and adults with disabilities as a social justice imperative.

## VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Mort tapped his oldest son, attorney Jay Ruderman, to lead the Foundation. Jay's experience with civil rights issues enabled him immediately to understand the disability community as a socially, economically, and politically excluded and segregated class. This is the assumption from which he leads the Foundation and the fundamental perspective we hold today: disability rights are civil rights.

## AN EVOLVING JOURNEY

Today the Ruderman Family Foundation is a leading voice for disability rights, an innovator in strategic approaches to philanthropy, and a partner for Israeli leaders who are gaining a vital understanding of the American Jewish community. This unique family foundation is successfully changing societal attitudes and advocating for the fullest and fairest use of each person's potential.



**The Ruderman family**  
(from left to right):  
Jay Ruderman, Shira Ruderman,  
Todd Ruderman, Marcia Ruderman,  
Sharon Shapiro

*“When my family first ventured into addressing disability issues with our philanthropy, we had a strong commitment to social justice but little personal knowledge or expertise in the field. Over the years we have learned a tremendous amount from professionals, our staff, parents of children with disabilities and most importantly, individuals with disabilities.”*

**Sharon Shapiro**

*“Everyone deserves a fair shot in life—that was a bedrock value of my father.”*

**Jay Ruderman**

Nearly  
**1 in 5**  
people  
worldwide have  
a disability.

**12.5%**  
of Americans  
without disabilities  
live in poverty

**28%**  
of Americans  
with disabilities  
live in poverty

The  
Foundation  
has invested  
**\$32.5 M**  
in disability  
inclusion since  
2007

# A *Passion* for Public Advocacy

The Ruderman Family Foundation seeks to serve as a champion of disability inclusion through active use of both traditional media and social media. We publicize all of our programs broadly, using our resources to inspire and implore others to take responsibility for inclusion in their local institutions and communities. External evaluators report that the Ruderman name is inextricably linked to the message of disability inclusion in the Jewish community and beyond.

“The Foundation has ‘beautifully branded’ itself as both a leading philanthropy in this arena, and as an advocate and thought leader: according to multiple reports, ‘Ruderman Family Foundation’ and ‘inclusion’ have become nearly synonymous among leaders of U.S. Jewish philanthropies and larger institutions, across the country.”

2015 Impact Evaluation of the Foundation by Community Matters

In the last  
5 years:

Jay Ruderman  
has gained over  
**16,000**  
Twitter followers

The Foundation  
published nearly  
**100**  
Op-Eds

The Foundation  
has been cited  
in over  
**2000**  
press articles

**Donald Trump Criticized After He Appears to Mock Reporter Serge Kovalski**—NBC NIGHTLY NEWS (video)—November 26, 2015

“It is unacceptable for a child to mock another child’s disability on the playground, never mind a presidential candidate mocking someone’s disability.” Jay Ruderman

**Ruderman Foundation pushes for bottom-up inclusion movement for people with disabilities**—THE JERUSALEM POST—November 4, 2015

“What we are trying to do is build a movement from the bottom up. That’s the whole idea behind the summit.” Jay Ruderman

**Twenty-five years since the ADA, focus must be on employment** by Tom Harkin and Jay Ruderman  
THE BOSTON GLOBE—October 31, 2015

“For the next 25 years of the ADA to improve employment and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities we will need a commitment on the part of employers, elected officials, and the broader public much like the efforts that were made to pass and implement the ADA.”

**Stop Enabling Donors’ Outsized Influence on Jewish Life**  
THE FORWARD—October 22, 2015, by Jay Ruderman

“It’s understandable that wealthy people have a voice — even a disproportionate voice — in organizational life. The problem arises when that voice drowns out everyone else’s, completely obscuring the democratic ethos of Jewish civic life.”

Among the publications in which the Ruderman Family Foundation has been featured are:



# The Right to *Inclusive* Employment

As the U.S. economy continues to recover and unemployment falls, it is important to remember that people with disabilities still face major barriers to work. Only one in five are participating in the labor market because many, frustrated by workplaces that are unwelcoming, have simply given up their job searches. People with disabilities want to work, and given the opportunity, are among the most committed and dedicated employees. The Ruderman Family Foundation participates in several employment initiatives and one of our favorites is showcased here.

The Foundation's flagship workplace initiative is Transitions to Work, a partnership with Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CIPO), Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), and Boston-area employers. Through its comprehensive approach, Transitions raises the business community's awareness about inclusive hiring practices while providing well-trained candidates for employment. For Transitions graduates, the customized training program develops job-specific skills leading to placements that provide earnings and a sense of purpose. As a side benefit, their enthusiastic presence often improves morale in the whole company.

*"I can't say enough good things about this program and how it really changed the way I think and has affected my team's morale."*

CVS REGIONAL EMPLOYER

## FEATURE STORY:

### TRANSITION TO WORK IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

"It's great for business," says Prime Motor Group, CEO David Rosenberg, and we could not agree more. Introduced to Transitions through his involvement with CJP, at first Rosenberg thought he was doing a *mitzvah* (act of charity) by providing a job to someone with a disability. After hiring his first Transitions graduate, Isaac, his perspective changed. "Isaac has been with us for three years. I witness his commitment, his diligence, his joy in being able to have a job and provide for himself. After a very short time I realized that I wished everyone had his attitude, and that he improves the environment at the store." So far Rosenberg has hired Transitions graduates at three of his 25 dealerships.

*"Our staff experienced gratification in seeing people learn. It has made work more rewarding for people. That's a culture change."*

EMPLOYER, *Newbridge on the Charles*

#### Transitions to Work Employers

AMC Theaters	Cohen Hillel Academy	Hannaford Supermarket	Kesher Jewish Preschool	Ocean State Job Lot	State Cleaning Service
Anton's Cleaners	Costco	Honey Farms	Legal Sea Foods	Panera Cares	Stop & Shop
Au Bon Pain	CVS Caremark	Hebrew Senior Life Roslindale	Little Sprouts	Panera Bread	Sudbury Farms
Barnes & Noble	Destination XL	Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center	Margaritas Mexican Restaurant	Petco	Target
Bed Bath & Beyond	Dollar Tree	JP Licks	Modell's Sporting Goods	Pooch Palace	TD Garden
Best Friends Pet Care	Donelan's Supermarket	Kmart	More Than Words	Prime Motor Group	TJX Companies
Bertucci's	Fairhaven Healthcare Center	Kappy's Fine Wine & Spirits	New England Aquarium	Rebecca's Café	Urban Hops
Boston Globe	Fresh Pond Cinema	NewBridge on the Charles	New England Aquarium	Reebok	Walgreens
Brigham & Women's Hospital	Home Depot			RSIG Security	Walmart
Combined Jewish Philanthropies	Goddard House Assisted Living			Sage Dining Services	Whitson's School Nutrition
				Santander Bank	Whole Foods Market
				Shaw's Market	
				Star Market	

**19%**  
of people with disabilities in the US are employed

**68%**  
of people without disabilities in the US are employed

The Foundation has invested over **\$4 M** in employment programs



*"Many customers have someone with disabilities in their families, and it's very positive for them to see this reflected in our stores."*

David Rosenberg, CEO, Prime Motor Group

*"I love it here. I keep things clean and organize things. I just help out. They (Transitions) did a very good job. David talks to me a lot, and that makes me more comfortable talking to people."*

Isaac Varon

*"I was having trouble finding a job. I never thought I would be working at an office, and I really enjoy it. The program helped me a lot."*

Rebecca Biller

# The Right to *Self-Determination*

## THE RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION

Outdated assumptions that people with disabilities should not be permitted to make major life decisions on their own behalf have resulted in rigid and oppressive guardianship laws in many countries. The Ruderman Family Foundation strongly believes in the reform of guardianship policies around the globe, and we have partnered on several projects specifically tackling reform in Israel. This highlights one of them.

**1.5 M**  
Israelis have a disability

Approximately  
**8 M**  
people live in Israel

**21%**  
of working-age Israelis have a disability

**40,000**  
adults in Israel are subject to guardianship laws

### THE NATIONAL SELF-ADVOCACY PROJECT, ISRAEL

In Israel, as in other countries, people with intellectual disabilities (ID) are often prevented from making important decisions about how they want to live and from taking steps toward greater independence. This is changing with the National Self-Advocacy Project. This unique collaboration between the Ruderman Family Foundation, Israel Elwyn, and Beit Issie Shapiro has organized dozens of self-advocacy groups across the country to provide people with ID the information, tools, and resources needed to make greater self-determination a reality. A recent success story illustrates the impact of this powerful project.

Each year, the National Self-Advocacy Project convenes hundreds of self-advocates to develop strategies for tackling one key issue affecting people with disabilities. A recent conference focused on Israel's ratification of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). Self-advocates developed a position paper asserting that Israelis with ID should be actively included in making decisions about their own guardianship and daily life issues, and a leadership contingent met with members of the Knesset. They expressed their support for the CRPD, demanded to be recognized as people with equal rights, and asked the Knesset members to take this into account in policymaking that impacts the disability community. These rights include the right to make life decisions for one's self, the right to inclusive employment, the right to inclusive housing, the right to privacy, and the right to acquire life skills that promote independence.

Victory! These self-advocates successfully shifted the perceptions of the Knesset members, who are adjusting Israel's guardianship laws in response.

*From left to right:  
Marselo Gaston, Bracha Taub, Yana Mavshav, Dudo Hafsady, and Adiv ABu-Amar of the National Self-Advocacy Project, at the Israeli Knesset*



*“Article 12 of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities] powerfully reinforces the right of the individual to make decisions for him/her self.”*

**Final Report of an International Committee of Experts submitted to the Israeli Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services (2011)**

# The Right to *Inclusive* Education



In the United States, 12% of Jewish children attend private day schools, providing a foundation for Jewish learning and a supportive community that shares their family's values and beliefs. Unfortunately a Jewish day school education may be a distant dream when a family has a child with disabilities—especially if the special educational needs are complex. Even in the rare cases where services are available in the school, parents typically must take on the costs themselves. The result: day schools often fail the test of inclusion.

In response to this shortcoming the Ruderman Family Foundation, in partnership with Combined Jewish Philanthropies, founded Gateways: Access to Jewish Education to promote day school inclusion. This groundbreaking project makes it possible for children with diverse learning needs to receive direct services in the schools, for teachers to receive professional development, and for parents to receive financial support to defray the cost of services.

*“The hardest conversations I have are with families who dream of giving their child a Jewish education, but we are not able to meet their student’s particular educational needs.”... This fund “changes the question from ‘how can we maintain what we’re doing to meet the needs of diverse learners?’ to ‘how can we do more?’”*

**Rabbi Elliot Goldberg**  
Head of School for Solomon Schechter Day School, Newton

**15**  
Boston day schools have been served by Foundation programs

Nearly **600** students have received services

The Foundation has invested over **\$14 M** in special education

## FEATURE STORY: KEEPING JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY

The Ellenbogen family moved from Albany, New York to Sharon, Massachusetts as an investment in their children’s education. According to Debbie Ellenbogen, “We were committed to an education that reflected our values and lifestyle.” Recognizing their hometown couldn’t provide the Modern Orthodox education they wanted for their children, they discovered the Striar Hebrew Academy of Sharon (“Striar”) and recognized it as the right school for them.

When Binny Ellenbogen was born with Down syndrome, his four older siblings were already attending Striar. With an eye toward the future, Debbie soon began a dialog with Striar staff. Until the age of three, Binny attended the Striar toddler program and received home services through the state’s Early Intervention program but after that things became more difficult. Binny aged out of Early Intervention, and private schools like Striar seldom have the means to accommodate such a child—whose complex range of special needs required speech, language, and

occupational therapies; a one-to-one teaching aide; and assistance with reading, math, and other subjects. Even if Striar could have provided in-school services, the cost to his parents would have been prohibitive. The alternative was for Binny to be pulled out of Striar for hours each day to receive services through the public school—a choice that seemed unacceptable.

While the Ellenbogens aspired to the highest quality education possible for Binny, Debbie says “we also knew that we wanted Binny to be in a place where he was wanted and valued like any other child.” Staying at Striar became a reality with the support of Gateways, which provided all the necessary in-school services as well as financial assistance. With Gateways services, Binny enjoyed the full Striar experience alongside his siblings and continued to be part of an inclusive learning environment. As a child receiving an inclusive Jewish education, Binny now offers his full potential to the Jewish community and beyond.

The Ellenbogen family (Top row l-r): Leah (23), Dov (19), (bottom row l-r): Binny (13) and Yishai (10), Shira (16)

# The Right to *Inclusive* Housing

People with disabilities often face difficulties in housing, especially as they strive to become more independent and integrated into the community. Israel is trying to catch up with the West's progress in helping people move from large institutional residences to more independent housing environments. Among Israel's challenges are limited support services and significant social stigma. Through several partnerships, the Foundation is helping Israel develop successful approaches to community-based housing. We highlight two of them.

## PARTNERING ON A NATIONAL HOUSING CAMPAIGN

The Ruderman Family Foundation has partnered with Bizchut, the Israeli Human Rights Center for People with Disabilities, to create a national housing campaign— part of Bizchut's ongoing work to promote independent housing for people with disabilities. As a result of this campaign, the Ministry of Welfare began a new program in which 900 people with developmental and intellectual disabilities will move from institutions to more progressive housing options.

## PARTNERING FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING

The Foundation promotes housing solutions for people with disabilities through Israel Unlimited, a strategic partnership with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Government of Israel. Israel Unlimited's Supported Housing Program serves over 300 people with physical disabilities, high functioning autism spectrum disorders, and intellectual disabilities who wish

to move from their parents' home or an institution into independent housing but have difficulty doing so without assistance. This program works closely with participants to develop individual plans targeting short-term milestones on the way to long-term success.



**Bat-El Breitman Hacohen**  
*enjoys living independently*

### FEATURE STORIES:

#### LIVING HER DREAM *(on left)*

Bat-El, 30 years old, was born with cerebral palsy and grew up with her mother in northern Israel. At the age of 17 she was moved to a residential institution for people with disabilities under the Ministry of Welfare. Growing up, her dream was to live independently in the community, but she was unable to fulfill her dream due to bureaucratic obstacles and the need to develop independent living skills. Eventually Bat-El joined the Supported Housing Program of Israel Unlimited and signed up for independent living supports from the State of Israel. A Care Coordinator in the program helped her learn the skills to set up an apartment, manage a budget, operate a household, and get to know a community.

Bat-El has lived in her own apartment for over three years. She met her life partner during the program and about a year ago the two were married. Today the couple lives independently in Kiryat Haim with the services of a personal care assistant, and receives support for personal, family and medical issues. Now that Bat-El has fulfilled her dream of living independently she is determined to join the mainstream job market, get her driver's license, and have children.

#### A NEW APARTMENT FOR RACHEL *(not shown)*

Rachel, a 26-year-old Ethiopian woman with mild cerebral palsy and intellectual disabilities, was having difficulty living at home in Ashkelon with her parents. Despite concerns about Rachel's ability to live alone and to win the support of her family for doing so, an Israel Unlimited Care Coordinator met with Rachel's family. The Care Coordinator was careful to respect the culture of Ethiopian Israelis and navigate the language barrier.

After careful consideration and consultation with local providers, Rachel and the Care Coordinator decided to take the next steps and look for an apartment. Rachel searched online, called landlords, and visited available apartments. She and the Care Coordinator found an apartment with a very supportive landlord. After checking the lease with an attorney to ensure her rights would be protected, Rachel moved in. She received financial support through Israel Unlimited to help buy necessities such as towels, sheets, and a microwave; social services agencies provided a washing machine, stove, and help with cable installation. Rachel also received assistance in learning how to manage her household and her expenses. The Care Coordinator even met with Rachel's workplace to help her find a better position there.

Thanks to the Israel Unlimited Supported Housing Program, Rachel was empowered to live independently.

*“The ability to live where you want and with whom you want is a challenge in Israel. Our mission is to enable people with disabilities to live independently, with the services they require, to live in dignity.”*

Avital Sandler-Loeff, Director of Israel Unlimited





# The Right to *Inclusion* in Religious Life

Our religious communities give us a sense of who we are as Jews and a place in the larger Jewish community. Through the following partnerships with the Foundation, congregations across every major stream of Judaism are developing new ways to welcome people with disabilities at all stages of life.



## The Ruderman Synagogue Inclusion Project

A Partnership with Combined Jewish Philanthropies



## URJ Ruderman Initiative on Disabilities Inclusion

A Partnership with the Union for Reform Judaism



## The Ruderman-Chabad Inclusion Initiative

A Partnership with Chabad Lubavitch



## The Ruderman Inclusion Action Community

A Partnership with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism



## Yachad New England

A Partnership with the Orthodox Union

*"There are now opportunities for Chabad communities to do inclusion in a way they didn't even know was possible."*

**SARAH KRANZ-CIMENT, DPT**

Program Director, Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative

## FEATURE STORY: BLESSED BY INCLUSION

Starting with speaking to hundreds of people at the tender age of four, Matan A. Koch has been an exemplar of advocacy for people with disabilities. Born with a congenital disability that leaves him unable to walk, this hasn't stopped him from rising to prominence as a student at Yale and Harvard, an attorney, and in his current position as a national advocate, educator, and consultant dedicated to promoting full inclusion in the Jewish community.

Asked why he chooses this pursuit he says, "I enjoy being included in society. I enjoy the opportunity to bring my knowledge as a lawyer to employers, and my knowledge as a lay leader to Jewish communities who want to include."

This may be Koch's way of paying it forward. In his own words, he was privileged and blessed in many ways. He was supported by participatory parents, educational opportunities, a disability that was less stigmatized than others, and talents that he could easily access. Koch understands first-hand the power of inclusion, and he knows that his is far from a typical experience.

As someone with disabilities, he passionately shares the message that "full inclusion is a moral and social imperative." As an advocate of self-determination for differently-abled people, Koch actively leads and engages in programs that provide more people with meaningful opportunities, along with the benefits that come with it—being economically self-sufficient, having a sense of social inclusion, and having an appreciation of their own value and contributions.

Koch admits that "it's hard to know the extent to which one man talking can bring that opportunity to more people. But the one reason I do this is that if I can get one person, or five, or ten to have a passion for bringing this type of inclusion to their organization, then that will be a success with which I can truly be satisfied."

*"As a young lawyer I was told that I was valued for what I could do as a lawyer. As a young member of a synagogue, I was told I was valued for what I brought to them. Unless these places were ready to receive me and include me with my disability, they wouldn't have benefitted from my participation, and I would not have benefitted from being there."*

**MATAN KOCH**, Inclusion Consultant



**Sharon Shapiro**, Trustee and **Matan Koch**, Inclusion Consultant at Temple Ohabei Shalom (Brookline, Massachusetts)

# Celebrating *Inclusion* Around the World

*“As society begins to accept and practice the value that all people have a right to belong, the Ruderman Prize in Inclusion awardees set the standard for everyone. It is our hope that these awardees not only serve as the gold standard for disability inclusion in their communities, but for all communities across the globe.”*

JAY RUDERMAN

Demonstrating our global reach, the Ruderman Family Foundation distributes annual awards and prizes to showcase people and organizations making significant contributions to the inclusion of people with disabilities in Jewish communities and beyond.

## Ruderman Prize in Inclusion

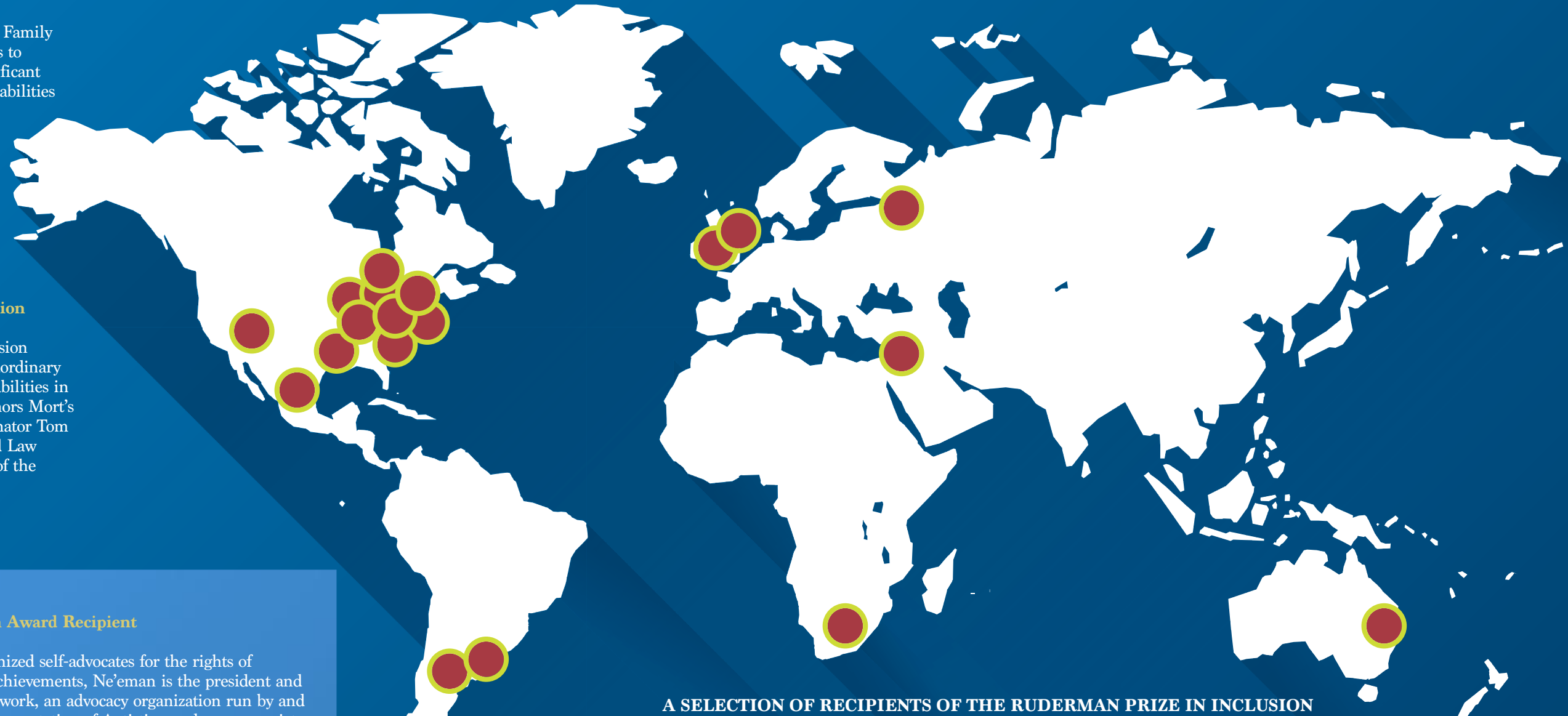
*(\$250,000 annually)*

Since 2012, the Ruderman Prize in Inclusion has highlighted dozens of organizations around the world that demonstrate innovation and best practices in the full inclusion of people with disabilities.

## Morton Edward Ruderman Award in Inclusion

*(\$100,000 annually)*

The Morton Edward Ruderman Award in Inclusion recognizes an individual who has made an extraordinary contribution to the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Jewish world and the larger public, and honors Mort's legacy. Past awardees include United States Senator Tom Harkin, Professor Michael Stein of the Harvard Law School Project on Disability, and Ari Ne'eman of the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network.



### HIGHLIGHT:

#### Ari Ne'eman, 2014 Morton E. Ruderman Award Recipient

Ari Ne'eman is one of America's most recognized self-advocates for the rights of people with disabilities. Among his many achievements, Ne'eman is the president and co-founder of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, an advocacy organization run by and for Autistic adults seeking to increase the representation of Autistic people across society.

*“As a person with autism, Ne'eman is an inspiration to millions of people with disabilities around the world,”* said Jay Ruderman. *“As one of the leading disability self-advocates in the United States, Ari is respected in our nation's capital and throughout our country.”*

Ari reports that he was sincerely honored and humbled to receive the Award. *“This recognition carries special meaning to me, not only as a person with a disability, but also as a Jew. People with disabilities deserve the right to have our voices at the center of the national conversation about us. I believe that no conversation on autism or any disability is complete without the meaningful inclusion of those most directly impacted —people with disabilities ourselves.”*

### A SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS OF THE RUDERMAN PRIZE IN INCLUSION

#### In Israel:

Akim Israel  
Reishit School  
Shalva  
Vertigo Dance Company  
AMIT Children  
Bar Ilan University  
Beit Hillel

#### In the United States:

Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boston, MA  
Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center  
San Diego, CA  
MetroWest ABLE, NJ  
Sunflower Bakery, Gaithersburg, MD  
Congregation B'nai Amoona, St. Louis, MO  
Alexander Institute of Jewish Family Services  
Houston, TX  
St. Paul Jewish Community Center, MN  
Luria Academy, Brooklyn, NY  
Jewish Family Service Association  
Cleveland, OH

#### Around the World:

Jewish Family Center Adain Lo  
St. Petersburg, Russia  
Kadima, Mexico  
Norwood Ravenswood, United Kingdom  
United Herzlia Schools, Cape Town,  
South Africa  
Escuela Arlene Fern, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Jewish Vocational Services of Toronto  
Toronto, Canada  
JewishCare Big Brother Big Sisters  
Sydney, Australia  
Kisharon, London, United Kingdom  
Yavne Institute, Montevideo, Uruguay

# Innovation in Israel-U.S. Jewish Relations

The Ruderman Family Foundation plays a strategic role in strengthening the mutual sense of responsibility and commitment between Israel and the Jewish community in the United States. Our goal is to instill desire in a critical mass of Israeli leaders to strengthen this relationship, which is crucial for the resilience and prosperity of Israel and the

Jewish people. To this end the Foundation works in Israel with senior policy designers, opinion leaders, and social change agents on several related programs. Through these initiatives the Foundation is transforming the perspectives of key leaders positioned to make policy decisions that respect and strengthen this critical relationship.

*“A relationship is something that both sides build, and you don’t build it only in times of crisis. You actually build it best when you do not need each other—so we have to pursue dialogue and understanding now.”*

SHIRA RUDERMAN

*Dozens of foundations invest in educating the American Jewish community about Israel, but only one invests in educating Israelis about the American Jewish community:*  
**Ruderman Family Foundation**



**Dr. Nachman Shai,**  
*member of Knesset and  
Chair of the Caucus on  
Israel-U.S. Relations, and  
Shira Ruderman*

## KNESSET MISSIONS

The Foundation arranges periodic missions to the United States that host members of Knesset from across the political spectrum. The Knesset members meet with governors and mayors, members of Congress, leaders of American Jewish religious movements, representatives of Jewish communal organizations and the U.S. media, and attend “town hall” meetings providing opportunities for open dialogue with the broader American Jewish community.



## JOURNALISM MISSIONS

The Foundation also hosts journalism missions that bring to the United States leading Israeli journalists from a wide range of media outlets. The goal of these missions is to raise the level of public discourse in Israel about the American Jewish community, its commitment to Israel, and the strategic importance of the relationship to Israel’s resilience and prosperity. Recent news coverage of events impacting the U.S.-Israel relationship clearly reflects a more knowledgeable, sensitive, and nuanced perspective among participating journalists.

## KNESSET CAUCUS

The Knesset Caucus on Israel-U.S. Relations focuses on deepening the understanding and relevance of the trilateral relationship between the United States, Israel, and the American Jewish community. The Caucus raises awareness among Knesset members and the Israeli public concerning the strategic importance of these relationships to Israel’s resilience and prosperity. The Caucus has been led by Ronit Tirosch and subsequently Nachman Shai, both Knesset members who visited the United States on Ruderman missions.

## THE RUDERMAN PROGRAM FOR AMERICAN JEWISH STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

The Foundation has partnered with the University of Haifa to create the Ruderman Program for American Jewish Studies—the only graduate program designed to educate Israelis about the American Jewish community. This unique academic program helps educate future Israeli leaders, practitioners, activists and Knesset members appreciating the importance of a strong, vibrant relationship with the most important Jewish community in the Diaspora.



*You are Invited  
to Join Us in the  
Social Justice Movement  
of the 21st Century*

The Ruderman Family Foundation believes disability inclusion will be fully realized only when social awareness catches up with legal mandate. We seek to close that gap by publicizing innovative program models and promoting broad public awareness of the moral, economic, demographic, financial, and cultural imperatives for inclusion.

You can join the inclusion movement from anywhere! Become a disability rights champion. Advocate for accessibility. Recognize expertise. Hire for actual—not just perceived—value. Promote independence and self-determination. Challenge assumptions. Think ability.

**CONNECT WITH US!**

[www.rudermanfoundation.org](http://www.rudermanfoundation.org)

 Ruderman Family Foundation

 @RudermanFdn

**We look forward to seeing you there.**



*Including Each. Strengthening All.*