

John Stein Elected Trustee at Jewish Foundation Annual Meeting

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John Stein, community leader with local and national Jewish organizational experience, was elected as the newest Trustee of The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati at the organization's 18th Annual Meeting. Stein was elected to a five-year term along with Bret Caller, who was originally appointed in February to fill the remainder of Benjamin Gettler's term. The Foundation also formally elected its new slate of Officers, as Michael R. Oestreicher, who was elected Chairman, passed the gavel to Beth Guttman, who presented her inaugural remarks as President.



John Stein

In reporting on Stein's addition to the Board, former Chairman of the Foundation Gary Heiman described him as a leader with "deep analytic skills and understanding of our community." Stein is the president of FSI Group, a Cincinnati-based investment firm, and he is on the Boards of Governors of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Natan Fund. Stein has also been on the national board of American Jewish Committee and was President of AJC's Cincinnati Chapter. In addition to serving on the Mayerson JCC Board and joint investment committee, Stein has leadership experience beyond the Jewish community as a member of the Playhouse in the Park Board.

"We are very fortunate to have someone of John's caliber and background as a Foundation Trustee," said Beth Guttman. "His unique perspective and insights will add a new dimension to our Board discussions, and he will help us meet new objectives as we continue to evolve as an organization."

"The Cincinnati Jewish community has done so much to support me and my family over the years," said Stein. "I grew up at Yavneh (now Rockwern), the JCC, and Wise Temple, and when Jen and I moved back to town, we were welcomed and embraced. It is a great privilege to serve on the Foundation board and to help sustain and build our community for this generation and the next."

This Annual Meeting also marked the retirement of the Foundation's last three original Trustees – Robert Kanter, Gloria Haffer and Gary Heiman. The Foundation paid tribute to all ten original Trustees by presenting a history of their service to the community, as well as a compilation of letters from organizations supported by the Foundation during the past 18 years.

In his final President's Report, Oestreicher focused on the major theme of the meeting and video presentations: "Investing in Our Community...For Our Community." He described the interwoven nature of the Foundation's investments in its new era, providing several examples of seemingly unrelated grants which were in fact intentionally connected with one another in ways that benefited the community. Oestreicher also reported on the status of the Foundation's capacity-building efforts in fundraising at the Jewish Federation, and in programming and engagement expertise at the Mayerson JCC. Finally, in framing the video presentations, which featured several individual "end-users" of programs and initiatives funded by the Foundation, Oestreicher characterized them as demonstrating the Foundation's aspiration to positively impact individual lives in addition to strengthening institutions.

Executive Director Brian Jaffee reviewed the Foundation's grantmaking activity since the 2013 Annual Meeting, including new initiatives with the congregations, with the Jewish Federation and JVS Career Services, and with four organizations participating in a Senior Services Working Group. Jaffee also reported on major investments in each of the Foundation's five priority funding areas: Unmet Basic Needs, Jewish Education, Leadership Development, Continuous Jewish Engagement and Israel Connection.

Addressing the community for the first time as President, Guttman thanked Oestreicher and each of the original Trustees for their contributions, and outlined what she thought would be the major priorities

of her three-year term, including senior services in the Jewish community, Jewish teen engagement and education and Jewish communal professional development. Guttman emphasized the need for the Foundation to view issues through multiple lenses, particularly with respect to continued focus on capacity-building, excellence and sustainability.

“Because of the visionary work of the founding Trustees 18 years ago, the Jewish Foundation is positioned to provide the kind of institutional funding, and build the partnerships necessary, to be a community of greatness,” said Guttman. “Because of the focus and discipline of the last several years, there is an atmosphere of trust, partnership and possibility...and in the years ahead we aim to continue on that path.”