

# hope news

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## In Israel: Leaps, not steps, toward disabilities inclusion

*On Feb. 8, Israel Unlimited—a partnership between the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the Ruderman Family Foundation, and the Israeli government—collaborated with The Ted Arison Family Foundation and the U.S. Embassy in Israel to host a delegation of experts from The National Leadership Consortium at the University of Delaware. Lynne Seagle, addressed the audience. The experts addressed pressing issues in the field of disabilities.*

By Jay Ruderman and Avital Sandler-Loeff

February in the U.S. marks Black History Month and Valentine's Day. For the global Jewish community and Israel, this month also marks Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month, a time to celebrate and double down on efforts to foster inclusion of people with disabilities and their families in our communities.

This kind of recognition wasn't always a given, but as people with disabilities are the largest minority worldwide—representing 20 percent of the global population, including more than



Photo courtesy JDC

1 million in Israel—it became incumbent on us to build a more open and welcoming Jewish and Israeli communities for people with disabilities. Living with a disability affects every aspect of life, not only the person with a disability but also their families, friends, and the society they live in.

Are we doing enough for people with disabilities, who want more control over their own lives and desire greater engagement as members of society? After all, inclusion, and independent living, aligns directly with our Jewish values. In order to develop a strong and sustainable people, it is essential that community-based programs have

an inclusive mindset. In Israel, we still have a way to go. That is why Israel Unlimited—a partnership between the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in Israel, the Ruderman Family Foundation, and the Israeli government—collaborated this week with The Ted Arison Family Foundation and the U.S. Embassy in Israel to bring a renowned delegation from The National Leadership Consortium at the University of Delaware to address the most pressing issues in the field of disabilities. The seminar addressed by the delegation was organized

to foster cooperation between the U.S., Israel, and Jewish communities worldwide to increase accessibility and the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of our societies.

The confab is providing top-level training to Israel's senior professionals in the government, leaders with disabilities, local municipalities, and disabilities NGOs making the decisions shaping the future of individuals living with disabilities. They are spending an intensive week with the National Leadership Consortium and creating a network to lead change in the disability space and confront many challenges. And what are those challenges?

*Cont'd on p.6.*



# The only way to truly be successful is that voice must match touch.

*Oh, the places you'll go.* — Dr. Seuss

The first time I traveled for the purpose of speaking about Hope House Foundation was over 20 years ago. My colleague, Pam Katrancha, who is now on our board, and I went to a disability conference in Virginia to present on our agency's style of management and our approach to creative teambuilding. We believed then that what we had to say would be helpful, motivating and even inspirational, because we had experienced those ourselves within Hope House. Though our presentation was a big hit (maybe it was the costumes Pam insisted we wear), nevertheless as time went on I did not see many agencies adopting the more progressive and business-tested approaches we advocated.

Once our agency closed all of our group homes, I was sought out more and more to speak about this transformation. At first that seemed strange to me, as we had done this for the simple reason that people with disabilities did not like to be

lumped, labeled and congregated into these arrangements. There was nothing miraculous about it — it was just the right thing to do. More importantly, I began to notice that people



Lynne Seagle

loved the presentation and delighted in hearing stories depicting our struggles as well as our successes. I incorporated how staff were treated within our agency, and in particular the value we hold for direct support professionals, similar to that first presentation Pam and I did. It made sense; the two go together. But still I did not see many people picking up the gauntlet and transforming their own organizations.

I then finished my master's degree, which afforded me the opportunity to learn about the science of organizational development, strategic planning and leadership development. This education also validated that the management and leadership approaches our agency had implemented were modern and in line with current and effective business practices.

I then turned my focus to working with businesses to raise funds to support Hope House. I worked with architectural and engineering firms, an oil company, shipbuilders, a coal company, police departments, a medical school, sports teams, several museums and retail stores, to name a few. All the while, I still spoke about Hope House and its work at various conferences, workshops and institutes.

As Hope House Foundation's exposure increased, so did the requests for consulting, presenting and facilitating, which were now bringing in

consistent funding for our agency that in turn supported our continued creativity.

I had the good fortune to work almost monthly in the UK for two decades, present numerous times in Canada, lead teambuilding in Japan for a basketball team, and present on Hope House in Saipan, Qatar and most recently Israel. I have worked all across the United States and am currently involved in a project to assist an organization in Alaska transform their services.

I am a faculty member at the University of Delaware within the Leadership Consortium on disabilities and a board member for an advocacy organization for disability issues called Virginia Arc. I also provide consultation and advisory expertise to the National Association of Direct Support Professionals. All of this was possible only because of Hope House Foundation and the people past and present who formed, inspired, and continue to improve this incredible agency.

Through my outside work, I have learned a great deal that I believe has benefited our agency immensely. People from all types of jobs have shared wisdom and insights that I have gratefully received as authentic gifts of the heart. The greatest lesson that continues to influence me is this: Regardless of the mission or purpose of a particular workplace, the only way to truly be successful is that voice must match touch. Then oh, the places you'll go.

Lynne,

Thank you so much for your engaging presentation and invaluable guidance at our retreat. I am astounded by how much we are able to learn and to put into action by spending only a few hours with you. Our board left the retreat energized, confident and most importantly with a tangible action plan. You have a presentation style that puts your audience at ease and draws them in as you make your points; the real-life examples you use to illustrate your concepts are both entertaining and educational.

I am truly grateful for our developing partnership and your generous investment of time and expertise. The strategies you help us develop will enable Hampton Roads Pride to better serve our mission and make Hampton Roads a more inclusive place to live and work. Thank you.

Michael Bertucchi  
President, Hampton Roads Pride

*"I am a slow walker, but I never walk back."*

Abraham Lincoln

Presented by  TOWNE BANK

# Stockley Gardens 2016 Spring Art Festival



Sat. May 21, 10 am–5 pm • Sun. May 22, Noon–5 pm  
Art Party, Sat, 5 pm–7 pm with Broke Mouth Annie | Cash Bar

*Hope House Foundation partnered with the Governors School for the Arts on a student competition to design the spring poster. The winner, Amanda Burgess, receives \$100 and other prizes are \$75 for second place and \$50 for third. All three top entries are automatically part of the Festival's student exhibition area.*

**Saturday, May 21**

10:0am, Karl Werne

11:30am, The Janks

1:00pm, Mason Brown and The Shiners

3:00pm, Feral Conservatives

**Sunday, May 22**

Noon, Nate Sacks

12:30pm, House of Cards

1:30pm, Who We Are Not

3:30pm, Blended Light

# The Eyes of Hope

## Feather the Nest

Photography: Howard Rodman



“Never confuse movement  
with action.”

Ernest Hemingway



# Shamrockin' in Ghent

Photography: Katie Goode



“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”

R. Buckminster Fuller



# Understanding the ABLE Act

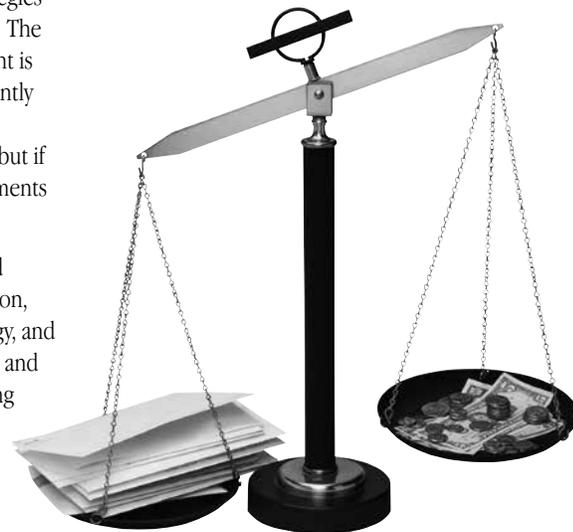
By Brian Boys, Attorney with Atlantic Law, PLC

In 2015, Virginia became the first state to authorize a program under the achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act. The Act provides a means by which certain individuals with disabilities may establish a tax-advantaged savings account, similar to a 529 college-savings plan, to be used for certain disability-related expenses. The account will allow an individual to save additional funds beyond the limits in place for Medicaid programs and for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), while maintaining eligibility. ABLE accounts will not be available until regulations are finalized, perhaps not until the end of 2016.

An ABLE account can be established by a parent, guardian, agent or the beneficiary himself but must be opened in the state in which the beneficiary resides. While there is no maximum

age to be able to establish an ABLE account, the beneficiary's onset of disability must occur prior to age 26. An individual may have only one ABLE account, and its investment strategies may be changed no more than twice a year. The maximum annual contribution to an account is the federal gift-tax exclusion amount, currently \$14,000. The account will generally not be considered for Medicaid and SSI eligibility, but if its balance exceeds \$100,000, then SSI payments will be suspended.

The account can be used only for "qualified disability expenses" (which include education, housing, transportation, assistive technology, and legal expenses). Earned income is tax-free, and upon the death of the beneficiary, remaining assets must be used to reimburse the state for Medicaid benefits before being distributed to an account beneficiary.



## In Israel: Leaps, not steps toward disability inclusion

*Cont'd from p. 1.*

First and foremost, living independently. Today, there are 10,000 Israelis with disabilities living in institutions and if you're an Israeli with disabilities, you have few choices for independent living. You live with your parents for your lifetime with no adequate support or in a segregated setting, typically in severe poverty. Sadly, in Israel, there is also no training offered for finding an apartment, learning how to cook, making friends, paying bills, and navigating the personal aid system. All of these basic skills help someone with a disability to gain independence and move to the wider community.

In America, there are many services available for people with disabilities that are provided through the government. Tailored for individual needs identified in advance, appropriate services are then provided. Taking a page from this model, we have developed a strategy called "Supported Housing" that ensures these critical services and trainings, soon expanding to 37 municipalities around Israel.

A second challenge is employment for Israelis with disabilities. Israel, as it happens, is taking a lead and can serve as an example to other nations

where people with disabilities still face barriers to work. They have the strong desire to work, but are lacking in the knowledge, connections, and access for a career. JDC is currently collaborating with Israeli employers who already include people with disabilities in their workforce to encourage their peers in the business community to join them. This peer-to-peer model ensures potential employers hear from their colleagues about the manifold benefits that businesses reap when hiring people with disabilities.

The third, and most critical challenge is changing negative attitudes towards Israelis with disabilities. While over the last decade there have been tremendous changes when it comes to these attitudes, we still have much to do.

For example, over half of the landlords in Israel—nearly 53 percent—do not want to rent their apartments to people with psychiatric or intellectual disabilities. Many Israelis still utilize parking spots reserved for people with disabilities. And there are local communities who protest providing services to people with disabilities because local residents are concerned their property values will decrease with the presence of people with disabilities in their town—a complete falsity.

To battle these perceptions, we've developed the "Friending" program, which creates social

connections between people with and without disabilities who, after meeting and learning about one another, stand up in the face of intolerance. We are also training rabbis, sheiks, and imams to become change agents and deployed the "Friending" method in 14 leading Israeli universities, colleges, and major corporations. Using sports and lifestyle activities as a hook, we are also creating a countrywide movement of Israeli "Friends" programs that create sports and recreational opportunities with groups of people with and without disabilities.

While the challenges highlighted above are highly complex, they also present unique opportunities for positive change. From schools in Israel, to synagogues in Kiev, and even American Jewish Community Centers, people with disabilities need to be part of all strategic planning moving forward.

It is our responsibility as Jews and Israelis to solve these issues, ensuring people with disabilities live with a high quality of life and can actively participate in our communities and nation. Now is the time to make a difference.

*Jay Ruderman is the president of the Ruderman Family Foundation and Avital Sandler-Loeff is the executive director of JDC's Israel Unlimited partnership.*

# SPOTLIGHT

## Local Music Awards

### Thank you to VEER

Thank you to VEER Magazine for your continued support of Hope House Foundation. The 5th Annual VEER Local Music Awards, which recognized the talents of local musicians in Hampton Roads, was held at the Naro Cinema in Ghent on February 10. Bands were given awards in more than 30 categories, ranging from best album of the year and best hip-hop artist to jazz, metal, acoustic singer-songwriter, Americana, indie pop/rock and blues. All proceeds from the event benefited Hope House Foundation. Hope House also benefits from VEER's Golden Tap Awards. Jeff Maisey and Jennifer Rowe McDonald, you ROCK!



## Stockley Gardens Arts Festival shifts to ZAPApplications

Stockley Gardens Arts Festival has been a part of Hope House Foundation since 1984, and twice a year Stockley is an anticipated event for many artists across the United States. This year, Hope House Foundation organizers upgraded the application processes to an online application method called ZAPP.

ZAPApplication.org is a website that allows artists to apply to multiple art shows through one simple online system. Through ZAPPs conveniently centralized website, artists are able to map out art shows based on their available dates and apply to all the shows that fit their personal schedules. Conveniently, over 80% of art shows have made the switch to ZAPP allowing for a more efficient and flexible application process for artists and the art shows.

Since the switch, Stockley Gardens Arts Festival has been released into a whole new world of talented artists who may have never heard of the festival previously. ZAPP has allowed the applications for the Stockley spring show to double, thus making the jury processes more competitive and allowing Stockley Gardens Arts Festival awareness and reputation reach a whole new audience.

## Generous Life

Last March, First Presbyterian Church, in conjunction with Hope House Foundation, sponsored a dinner for individuals from both organizations. This spaghetti social was designed to form connections between the attendees. Attendees left with a greater understanding of what each organization has to offer. The event was initiated and organized by FPC Member, Jill Newton, who along with Susan Rawls, helped plan the dinner.



“Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible.”

Frank Zappa

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*and everything in between.*

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## Give Local 757

This year Hope House Foundation is participating in Give Local 757. Give Local 757 brings together the Hampton Roads community to raise funds for local nonprofits and to increase awareness for their causes. For 24 hours, beginning at midnight Tuesday, May 3, everyone can be a philanthropist by donating online to registered Give Local 757 nonprofits. Go to [www.givelocal757.org](http://www.givelocal757.org).

## Hope House Foundation Board of Directors

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spring 2016

# hope news events

BE OUR FRIEND!  

- May 3** **Give Local 757.** Be a Giver! Donate online at [www.givelocal757.org](http://www.givelocal757.org).
- May 11** **Stockley Gardens Spring Arts Festival and Governor's School for the Arts reception.** 6–8 pm  
For the GSA students who submitted artwork for the spring poster at Decorum Furniture. Refreshments and silent auction of the student's works.
- May 21–22** **TowneBank presents the 2016 Stockley Gardens Spring Arts Festival.** Enjoy the works of over 125 artists in a variety of mediums. This event is free and open to the public. Visit [www.stockleygardens.com](http://www.stockleygardens.com).
- May 25** **Paint with a Purpose.** 7–9pm. Get creative and raise money for Hope House at Painting with a Twist of Chesapeake, 1437 Sam's Drive, Suite 104, Chesapeake, \$40/person (includes all materials to paint as well as wine). [www.paintingwithatwist.com/Chesapeake](http://www.paintingwithatwist.com/Chesapeake) or call 757-214-2099
- June 18** **Hops for Hope at Bold Mariner Brewing Company** From Noon–8 pm. Enjoy vendors, food trucks, live music on two stages and great beer!
- June 23** **Hope House Foundation's 38th Annual Dinner.** 6–10 pm at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott. For more information and sponsorship opportunities, please call (757) 625-6161.
- July 16–17** **2016 Hope Cup.** Join us at the Virginia Beach Field House for Hope House Foundation's 5th annual adult indoor soccer tournament. Call (757) 625-6161 for more information or to register.