

NEW **CHAPTERS** MAY 11 2021

AN EVENING  
TO BENEFIT  **FOOTSTEPS**

**Congratulations to Our Honorees**

Debra Fine & Elie Gordis

**and to Our Trailblazer Award Recipient**

Adina Kadden

*We are who we are, and we are where we are,  
because of the chapters you wrote.*

**Thank You to Our Incredible Gala Chair**

Shelly Kivell

**and Gala Committee**

Shelley Fischel • Gary Freilich • Merle Gonchar  
Jamie Hooper • Ann Kirschner

*With deepest appreciation and admiration,*

**FOOTSTEPS BOARD AND STAFF**

## DEAR FRIENDS OF FOOTSTEPS,

Thank you for joining us for our first-ever virtual gala, **New Chapters: An Evening to Benefit Footsteps!** Under normal circumstances, I would get to see all your faces—familiar and new—in the audience and enjoy the buzz of shared energy as we schmooze and toast the evening. We're so grateful that you've chosen to support Footsteps by being here tonight, and eagerly await when we can see you in person.

In thinking of new chapters—for our members, for our organization, and for the world—we must first acknowledge what has come before.

The past year has been difficult and disorienting for all of us, especially for many of our members. When Footsteppers take steps to pursue self-determined lives, it often comes at the expense of the very relationships and safety nets that many of us have relied on during the COVID-19 pandemic. The intense isolation we have felt in this era is something that our members routinely face—an isolation that has only increased as the new communities and relationships they have built are socially distancing, too. And when Footsteppers experience financial hardship due to the pandemic, they often cannot turn to their families or communities of origin for help.

**But your support has allowed Footsteps to rise to the occasion to meet Footsteppers' needs during this crisis.** Practically overnight, we moved all of our services online, and expanded and refined our offerings in real time as community needs shifted. Since last March, Footsteps has given over \$250,000 in crisis funds to members in emergency situations. That funding allowed 140 members to pay rent and medical bills, get food on the table, and access vital mental health services.

This has only been possible with your commitment and with the strong foundation that tonight's honorees—Elie Gordis, Debra Fine, and Adina Kadden—have helped build over the past decade through their service to Footsteps.

The leadership and insight that our honorees have provided on Footsteps' Board of Directors enabled the organization to grow by leaps and bounds. When Elie, Adina, and Debra joined our board in 2011 and 2012, Footsteps was a small, grassroots group



with four staff that served 200 people annually. Today, thanks to their guidance and commitment, Footsteps is a thriving, professionalized nonprofit with a team of 27 strong and an annual budget approaching \$4 million—well positioned to meet the needs of our growing community. **We now serve far more members, more deeply than ever before,** and despite all the extra obstacles to reach our members this past year, we served 845 Footsteppers. Our honorees helped us lay the groundwork so we could hold our members through this unthinkable year; I am deeply grateful to them for their service and partnership.

With the closing of this chapter, a new one begins. We are truly fortunate to have Ann Kirschner and Jamie Hooper as our new Co-Chairs, and to have welcomed Yoseph Horowitz, Miriam Moster, and Nitza Rubin as the next generation of members on Footsteps' Board. We are grateful to them, and to our entire leadership team, for helping us write the next chapter. And of course, my immense thanks to each of you who have offered support and co-authored our organizational story.

The past year has been hard, and the road to recovery will be long. But I'm comforted in knowing that Footsteps is an organization chock full of trailblazers and individuals eager to pen their own stories.

With gratitude,



Lani Santo, CEO

# TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

7:30 pm

## PROGRAM BEGINS

### "Coming Home to Who We Are"

Rena Branson & Batya Levine

### Opening Remarks

Luzer Twersky

### Honoring Debra Fine

Chani Getter

### Remarks

Debra Fine

### Trailblazer Award Presentation to Adina Kadden

Malkie Schwartz

### Special Guests

Mandy Patinkin and Kathryn Grody

### Member Testimonial

Jake Frankel

### Message from the CEO

Lani Santo

### Honoring Elie Gordis

Yoseph Horowitz and Malky Goldman

### Remarks

Elie Gordis

### Closing

Luzer Twersky

Mandy Patinkin and Kathryn Grody

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# OUR HONOREES



**DEBRA FINE** has been a member of the Footsteps board since 2012 and served as Board Chair from 2016-2020. A passionate advocate for global human rights and humanitarian aid, Debra also serves as Vice Chair of the international organization Save the Children. Debra is the Founder and Chairman of Fine Capital Partners, an investment firm founded in 2004, that manages equity assets principally for university endowments and foundations. Before starting Fine Capital, Debra worked as a portfolio manager, buy-side equity analyst, and investment banker. Debra has three children and has served on a range of non-profit boards and investment committees, including The Jewish Museum and Congregation B'nai Jeshurun.

Debra is also a seed investor in social enterprise firms focusing on financial inclusion, both domestically and internationally.

**ELIE GORDIS** served as a member of the Footsteps Board from 2011-2021. As a strategic thinker and a natural connector, Elie has been unwaveringly committed to elevating the voices of Footsteps members and so many others all too often overlooked by the Jewish community. Elie is Executive Vice President and General Counsel at Ovation Travel Group, a division of American Express Global Business Travel. Elie joined Ovation in 2001 and helped build it into one of the country's leading corporate travel management companies. Elie began his career as a corporate attorney at Skadden Arps, where he specialized in securities and mergers and acquisitions. He then co-founded Strategic Legal Resources, a pioneer in the field of legal staffing. Under his direction, the company rapidly grew to become one of the industry leaders providing temporary lawyers to businesses and law firms nationwide. Elie has three children and has served on several other non-profit boards, including the Jerusalem Foundation and Cornell University's Hillel.



# OUR TRAILBLAZER AWARD RECIPIENT



**ADINA KADDEN** grew up in Baltimore, Maryland in the Orthodox “Yeshivish” community. While still living in that community, she obtained a Bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts and Technology from Stevenson University. In 1998, Adina moved to New York to attend law school, and she received her JD from Cardozo School of Law in 2001. She first encountered Footsteps in 2005, when the organization was still in its infancy. At Footsteps, she found a lifeline of support that she had never encountered, and did not know could exist. Since then, Adina has been an active member and leader in the Footsteps community, and she served on the Footsteps Board of Directors from 2011 to 2020. Adina has spent most of her career in legal administration/management, working for both law firms and consulting firms. She is currently a Legal Project Manager at Hogan Lovells.

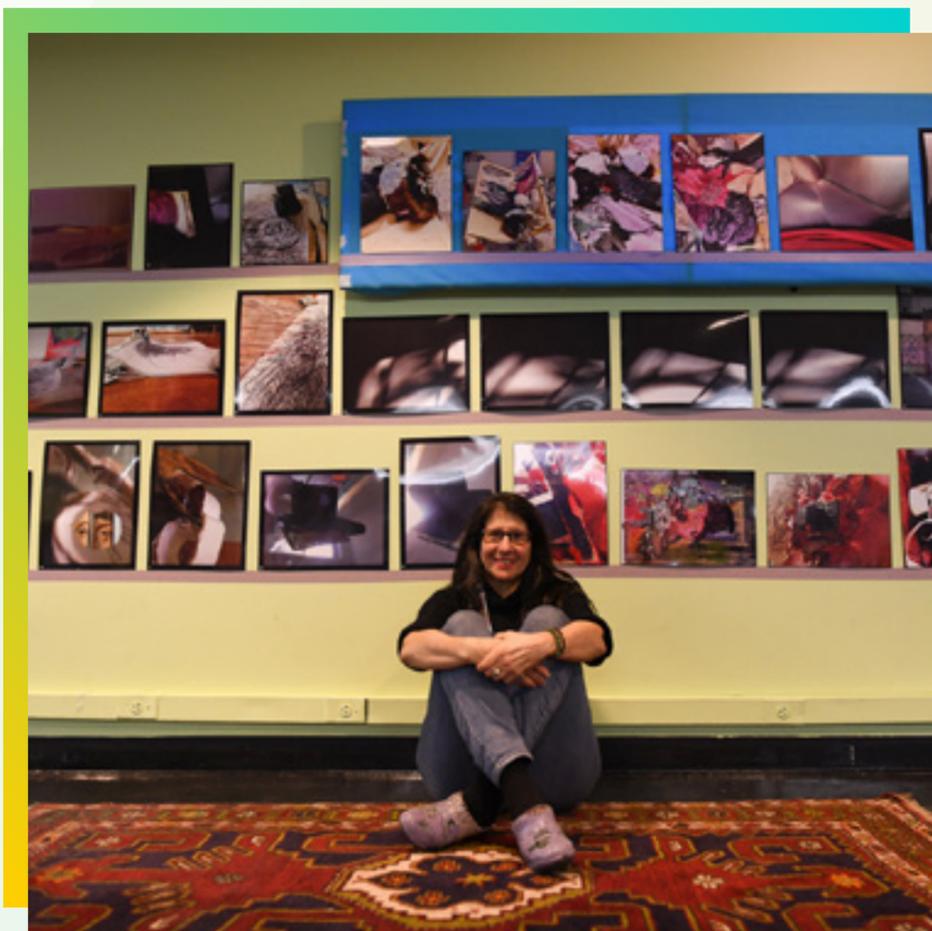
## TONIGHT’S EMCEE

**LUZER TWERSKY** is a Footsteps member and award-winning actor. He is best known for his roles in the film *Felix and Meira*, for which he won Best Actor at the Amiens International Film Festival and Torino International Film Festival; *High Maintenance*; *Transparent*; and the upcoming *No Name Restaurant*. Luzer joined Footsteps in 2008 and was one of three Footsteps members whose stories were the focus of the 2017 documentary *One of Us*.



# FEATURED ARTIST AND CREATOR OF TONIGHT'S AWARDS: SARA KLAR

Through her intimate association with the individual members in the Footsteps community and through her own lived experience, **SARA KLAR**'s body of artwork reflects the collective yearning for transcendence and freedom from the suffering inherent in being brought up within the imprisoning and crushing demands of an insular, rigid Orthodox community.



Over a forty year period, the time necessary to cast off the mentality of enslavement, Sara's art practice has evolved from self-excavation for learning her self to compassionate collaborations. Her art-making is the means of exchange for others to let go of their darkest experiences and from this, create art embodying new beginnings.

Moving beyond the either/or paradigm of her Orthodox upbringing, Sara has re-kindled loving relationships with her parents and siblings. She might consider this—along with finding her right to determine what Judaism is and with her Footsteps community, re-claiming the joys of being Jewish—her greatest accomplishment.

Sara Klar's art has been exhibited at: Derfner Judaica Museum, NY; Museum Of Drawings, Sweden; Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York; Islip Museum, Islip, New York; NYU Washington Square East, NY; UMASS Gallery, Amherst, Massachusetts; Howard Payne University, Texas; and Marymount Manhattan College, NY. She has had solo, two-person, and group exhibitions at Brooklyn and Manhattan galleries. Her art has been featured in articles, journals, and a dissertation/book from University of Chicago Press.

You can see more of her work at [saraklar.com](http://saraklar.com).

## **The IGNITE! Community Impact Microgrant & Reclamation Project for the Intentionally Constructed Self: A Collaboration With Footsteppers**

*Launched in 2016, the IGNITE! Community Impact Microgrant Program promotes leadership, creativity, and ingenuity among Footsteps members by providing microgrants geared toward enhancing the culture Footsteps members are creating and advancing social awareness and change based on their personal experiences of ultra-Orthodoxy and the process of leaving.*

*A recipient of the 2018 IGNITE! Microgrant, Sara Klar's ongoing series, Reclamation Project for the Intentionally Constructed Self: A Collaboration With Footsteppers, offers Footsteps members a means to let go of religious articles and objects that are traditional reflections of symbols of power—serving as reminders of a fixed, predetermined, and immovable existence, but also as containers for remembrances of family once belonged to.*

*By listening to the narratives shared with her that are attached to these objects and then reshaping these objects and their past, Sara exhibits these physical symbols as a new way of claiming the right to authority, to redefine what it means to be born Jewish and to have choice. In doing so, she also provides Footsteps members and other people from the OTD community the opportunity to find new paths to the richness, warmth, and spirit of their individuality through art and the healing power of the creative spirit.*

*Three new works based on this series are featured this evening for our three Honorees. You can view photos of these works and their accompanying artist statements on the pages that follow.*

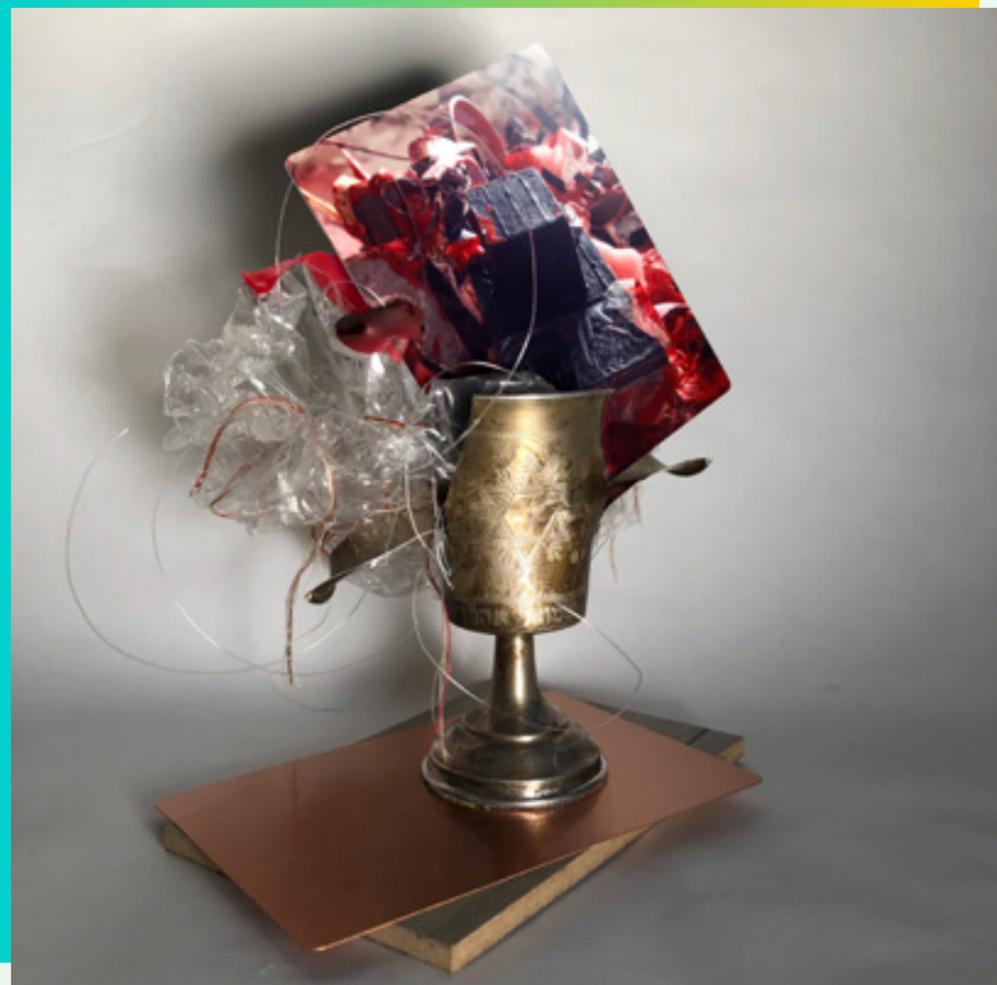
## ***Our Fellow Traveler, Our Trailblazer, We Are So Grateful—And WOW! 2016-2021***

I am so grateful to you, **ADINA**, for your many years of dedication, for what you have done to help us heal and lead full lives.

I have been so impressed for the years I've been a member, seeing how Footsteps stays true to its core values of helping us, truly caring, even while it grows in outreach, funding, and reputation.

This is not an easy accomplishment.

Even more, I am blown away by all you are, our fellow voyager, one of us OTD'ers,



one of us who from birth was told in every way that there was only a narrow sliver that we would ever be allowed to inhabit.

Instead, you expanded to take up space, actualizing who you wanted to be, rejecting limitations that others designated. And then you did not forget us. Rather, you said—“follow me,” using your knowledge and experience continuously to further our cause, so we too and more of us could grow and thrive.

You are our barrier breaker, our trailblazer.

So to create art that will be a lasting permanence giving thanks to you, this is an honor.

*Our Fellow Traveler, Our Trailblazer, We Are So Grateful—And WOW! 2016-2021* is the name of your desktop sculpture.

It is composed of numerous parts.

The photographic work held by the Becher is *Oh Amulet! (The Tefillin Series)*. It asserts our right to self-determine our own personhood.

It refuses acceptance of Tefillin as a weapon of gender control, bondage, submission.

The silver Becher is a religious article trusted to me by a Footsteps member to transform its energy. It is from my ongoing artwork, *Reclamation Project for the Intentionally Constructed Self: A Collaboration With Footsteppers*, funded by the Footsteps IGNITE! grant.

It expunges the physical and emotional abuse wielded by a religious father against his son, whom he would beat with his belt and chase with a knife as this little boy ran for his life.

The translucent containers, up-cycled, once held eggs. They symbolize our happiness, buoyancy, and success. From the chrysalis we enter when we choose to take ownership of our life, with much hard work, the support of Footsteps, your many years of dedication, we emerge triumphant.

Once more, with gratitude, our hearts filled, we say, "thank you."

**Sara Klar, 2021**

***Flipping the sheitel, hacking the wigs, facing-off brain-washing, we claw back our minds***

For **DEBRA**: Because of all you've done, your many years of unstinting dedication, this sculpture is possible.

It is the shape of courage, the shape of Footsteppers taking control to shape their own destinies. It's the culmination of all the strengths, smarts, and stamina you deployed over these years to bring Footsteps to the incredible organization it is today. An organization wealthy with resources teaching Footsteps members, once so bound, how to take control of their lives, to become truly independent.

This sculpture is called: *Flipping the sheitel, hacking the wigs, facing-off brain-washing, we claw back our minds*.



It is composed of numerous parts.

The sheitel was entrusted to me by a Footsteps member to transform its energy for my ongoing work funded by the Footsteps IGNITE! grant, *Reclamation Project for the Intentionally Constructed Self: A Collaboration With Footsteppers*.

This member lives a secret, remaining inside the ultra-Orthodox community because if she were to leave, she would lose her children and grandchildren. When she visits Footsteps, she takes her sheitel off. These are her precious hours when she is free.

Bedded on the sheitel's crown is my drawing/print, *Gaining Courage, Stepping Forward, Speaking Up, Footsteps 6/19*, from *The Notebook Series* which records the ongoing process of breaking inculcated patterns to forge new paths for living a self-determined life.

The third element, the translucent container, once cradled eggs. It is symbolic of a chrysalis that forms to protect transitional states, so that early growth may come to strong fruition.

For us, this begins when we take ownership of our lives. With your invaluable work, your many years dedicated to our growth, we emerge triumphant.

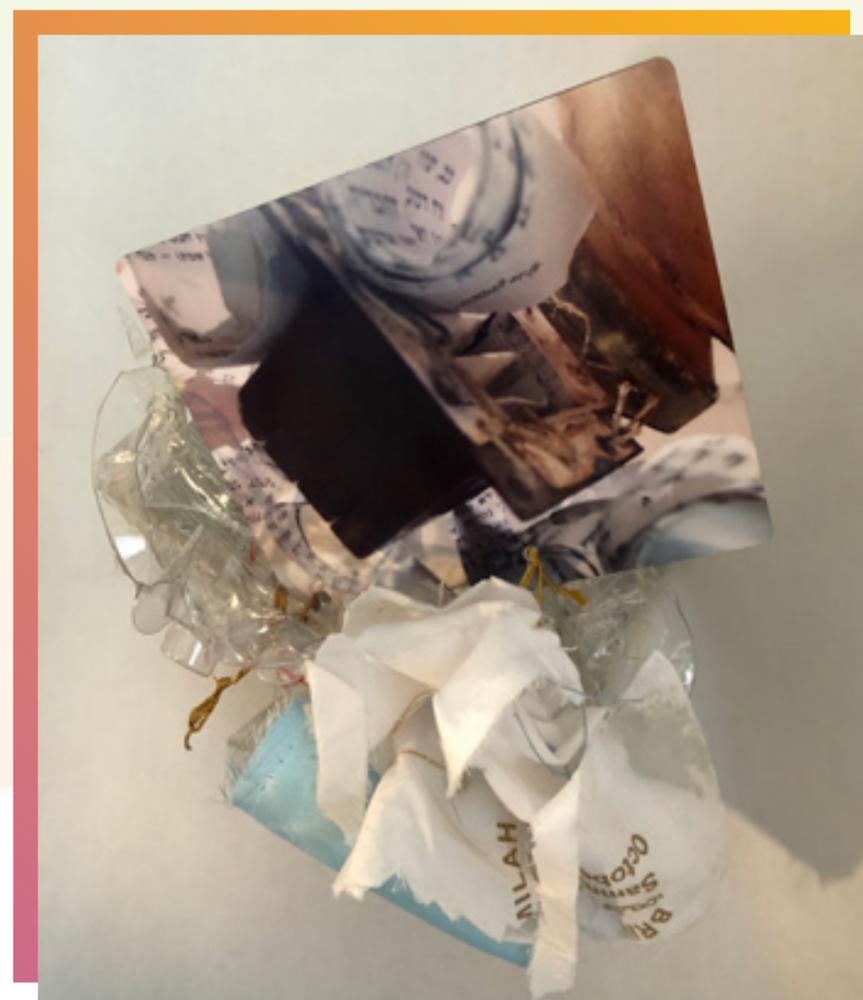
With the greatest gratitude, we say thank you.

**Sara Klar, 2021**

### ***With Persistence Eventually We Fly***

For **ELIE**: Not only all these years have you always said yes, with astuteness you have done everything within your power for Footsteps to grow and prosper. You have accomplished this with humility, teaching us to hold true to our core values, the best of what being Jewish offers. You are always a reminder of what the Talmud says: "The highest form of wisdom is kindness".

For you we present the sculpture: *With Persistence Eventually We Fly*.



It is your activist persistence, trust, and faith in what a truly righteous Jewish community can accomplish that has enabled so many Footsteps members to first learn to walk freely and then eventually fly.

This sculpture is composed of numerous parts.

The sky-blue kippah from the bris celebration of a Footstep member's first child was entrusted to me to transform its energy for my ongoing work, funded by the Footsteps IGNITE! grant, *Reclamation Project for the Intentionally Constructed Self: A Collaboration With Footsteppers*.

Usually this would be a joyous occasion. Not for this member, for it came with a threat when four days after giving birth her husband said, "you're fat; you'd better be thin for the bris, or else..." In working with Footsteps, this member learned she had worth. She now heads an organization assisting others to find their strength to fight injustice.

Pointing upward is *Eventually We Fly*, (from *Tefillin On The Cusp Series*). My photographic/print series subverts the orthodox narrative of bondage and submission to an offering of opportunity for each of us to reach full potential.

The third element, the translucent container, once cradled eggs. It is symbolic of a chrysalis that forms to protect transitional states so that early growth may come to strong fruition.

For us, this begins when we take ownership of our lives. With your invaluable work, your many years of dedication to us, we emerge triumphant.

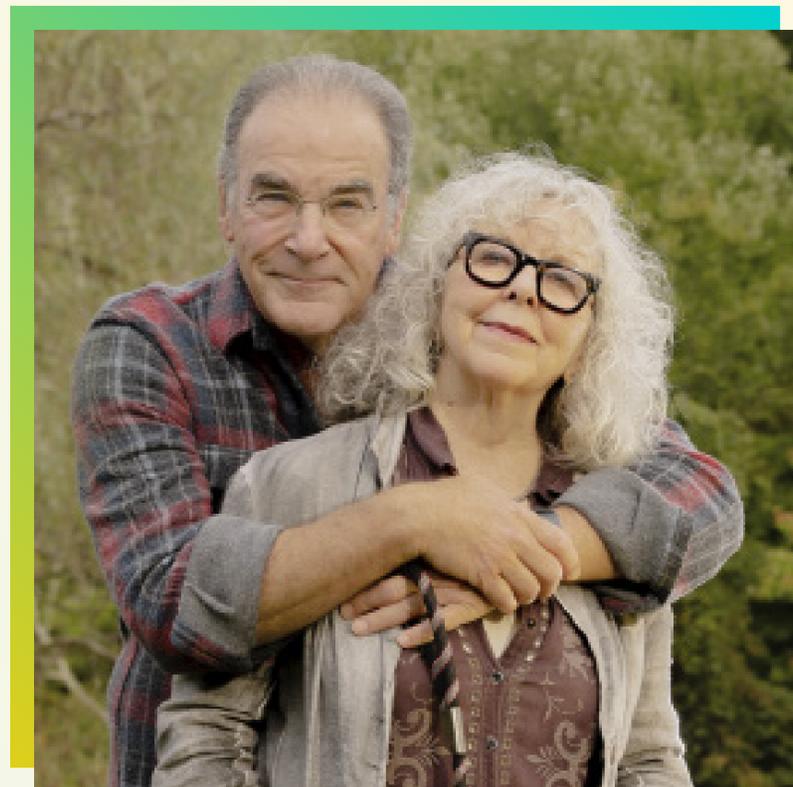
With our greatest gratitude, we say thank you.

**Sara Klar, 2021**

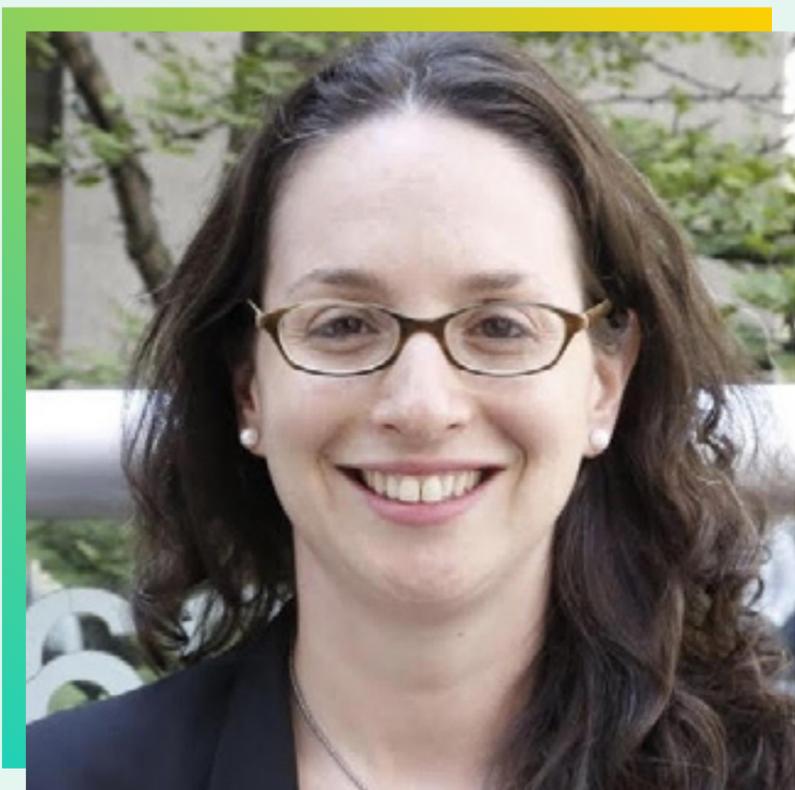
# SPECIAL GUESTS

**MANDY PATINKIN** is an award-winning actor and singer known for his work on stage and screen. He is best known for his roles in the film *The Princess Bride* and the television shows *Homeland* and *Criminal Minds*. In his 1980 Broadway debut, Mandy won a Tony Award for his role as Che in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Evita*, and he received a Primetime Emmy Award for his role in *Chicago Hope*. He is also a prolific recording artist, and has toured in concert around the globe.

**KATHRYN GRODY** is an award-winning actress and writer. After winning two Obie Awards for her acting in off-Broadway performances, she wrote, and acted in, the autobiographical play *Mom's Life*. Mandy and Kathryn have been married for 40 years, and live in New York City. They are champions of many humanitarian and social justice causes, with a deep focus on the ongoing refugee crisis around the world.



# FEATURING



In 2003, **MALKIE SCHWARTZ** founded Footsteps to support individuals who, like her, sought to enter or explore the world beyond the insular ultra-Orthodox communities in which they were raised. Currently, Malkie is an attorney at Hunter College. She also serves as Director of the Eva Kastan Grove Programs and designs and implements programs for students pursuing careers in public service. Now, 20 years after leaving her community, Malkie continues to care about the issues that affect people who leave—as well as those who choose to stay—in insular religious communities of all faiths. She is the co-founder of Rights and Religions Forum, an organization that seeks to challenge a status quo where rights

and choices of individuals are often compromised in the name of religious freedom. The organization recognizes that while each faith has unique beliefs and practices, individuals who leave face similar challenges.

**JAKE FRANKEL** joined Footsteps staff as a Peer Connector in 2020. Jake grew up in Monroe, NY; his family is Hasidic Orthodox, his mother tongue is Yiddish, and he did not learn English until his late adolescent years. Jake has been a Footsteps member for over a decade and is a long-time supporter of the OTD community. Jake is a searcher, and his open heart has led him to practice conscious movement for the past four years. He is now pursuing training to become a conscious movement teacher. Jake's long-term goal is to become a life coach, so that he can help his fellow searchers find their own journeys and passions in life. As a Peer Connector, Jake plays a key role in listening to and holding members on their journeys to recognizing that choice is the birthright of every person on this planet.



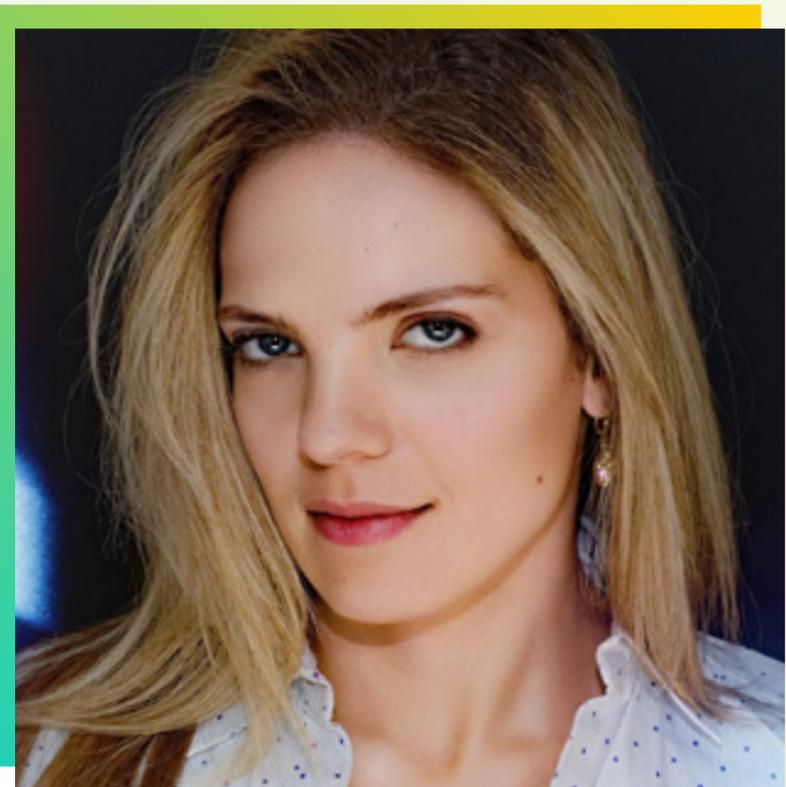


**CHANI GETTER** is Footsteps' Senior Director of Organizational Development. Chani is a licensed social worker and a leader in the fields of personal growth and spiritual development. Chani has reached individuals and professionals in North America and Europe through a series of workshops, panel discussions, teachings, and motivational speaking. Over the years, Chani has led informational and support groups on a variety of topics. Chani coaches individuals and professionals in defining and achieving their goals. Chani is committed to being a part of Footsteps, as Chani knows first-hand the complexity of leaving the black and white world behind. Chani joined Footsteps in 2013 as

the program manager for Rockland. Later, Chani was instrumental in launching Footsteps' Family Justice Program. This included training attorneys, social workers, and guidance counselors on the unique journey Footsteppers encounter when leaving their community. Now, as Senior Director of Organizational Development, Chani is leading Footsteps' effort to create a culture of appreciation and well-being for staff and all that they serve.

**MALKY GOLDMAN** is an actor and artist currently located in New York City. Born in Jerusalem, in a Chasidic family as the tenth child out of fourteen, Malky relocated with her family at the age of 19 to New York City. After leaving an arranged marriage, she left everything behind to stop dreaming and start doing. She graduated from Hunter College with a Degree in Fine Art.

Her most recent acting work includes a Chasidic Horror film called *The Vigil* (Blumhouse/BoulderLight) directed by Keith Thomas which premiered at TIFF and is distributed by IFC; she also appeared in the Netflix show *Unorthodox* and the HBO show *High Maintenance*. She has previously appeared in a



couple of stage productions such as playing Hedda Gabler, starring as Daisy in the Yiddish production of *Rhinoceros* by the New Yiddish Rep, and in the *New York Times* critically acclaimed production *God of Vengeance*. Malky has been a Footsteps member since 2010.



**YOSEPH HOROWITZ** grew up in a Chasidic home in Boro Park, Brooklyn. In 2008, he turned 18 and decided to leave his predestined life behind and backpack the world. He joined Footsteps a few years later, seeking community and an education. He received his GED in 2011, and graduated with honors from Hunter College in 2015 with a degree in Art History. He is now a Fine Art Appraiser and has been fortunate to work with distinguished collectors, museums, institutions, auction houses, and artists. Based in New York City, his areas of expertise are in Postwar, Contemporary, and Emerging Art, and he has a passion for the world of Judaica. He is an

Accredited member of the Appraisers Association of America (AAA). Over the past decade, Yoseph has been an active participant at Footsteps and the community at large. He was an inaugural member of the Footsteps Membership Advisory Council (MAC), serving for 3 years, and joined the Footsteps Board of Directors in September 2020.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO

Marti Balcom • Jake Frankel • Kara Freedman • Malky Goldman • Phyllis Goldman • Avra Gordis • Alan Gotthelf • Kathryn Grody • Yoseph Horowitz • Amanda Howell • Adina Kadden • Sara Klar • Mandy Patinkin • Darci Picoult • Jessica Pilot • Davyd Pittman • Malkie Schwartz • Theo Sefcik • Marc Spero • Lavern Sullivan Spero

## AND THANKS TO OUR FAMILY JUSTICE AND PRESERVING THE BOND PARTNERS

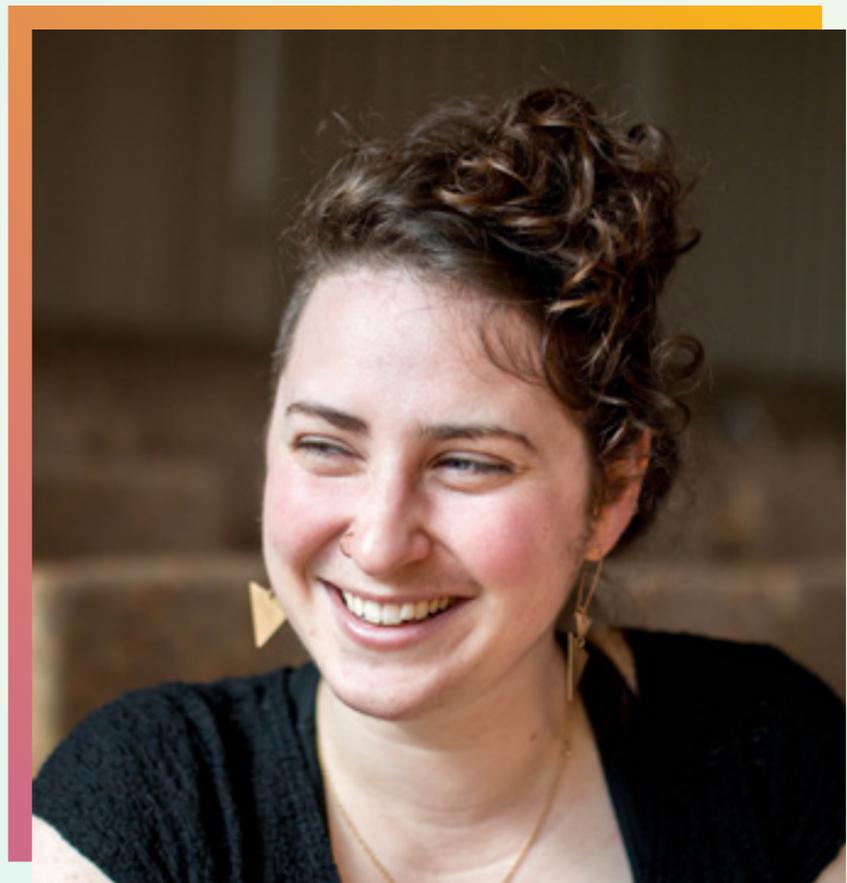
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## OPENING MUSIC BY



**RENA BRANSON** (she/her) is a Jewish composer, ritual leader, and educator who uplifts personal and collective healing through song. She founded A Queer Nigun Project, which organizes monthly community singing events for LGBTQ Jews and sends nigun recordings to people who are incarcerated in NYC jails. She is among few women who specialize in recording and teaching Chassidische melodies, along with composing original tunes for liturgy. Rena is the Cantorial Soloist at Congregation Leyv Ha-Ir in Philadelphia, and is proud to have been an Avodah Program Associate at Footsteps from 2014-2015. You can hear her music at [renabranson.com](http://renabranson.com).

**BATYA LEVINE** (she/her) uses song as a tool for cultivating healing and resilience in her work as a communal song leader, musician, shaliach tzibur (Jewish prayer leader), and cultural organizer. She believes in the liberatory power of song to untie what is bound within us, and sustain us as we build a more just and beautiful world. Batya is a founding core team member of Let My People Sing! and is a Cultural Organizer with Linke Fligl. She offers song, ritual, and workshops in a variety of communities, and composes original music made of Ashkenazi yearning, queer heart-medicine, and emunah (faith/trust). Batya recently released her first album, *Karov*. Learn more at [batyalevine.com](http://batyalevine.com).



## Coming Home to Who We Are

Words and music by Rena Branson

*We are whole just as we are  
And we will go where our truth calls  
We may not know just where the path goes  
But we're coming home to who we are*

*Thanks for your love, but I don't need your worry  
If you think you know what's better for me  
It's good to learn to trust myself, and feel safe to be myself  
With support from community*

*We are whole just as we are  
And we will go where our truth calls  
We may not know just where the path goes  
But we're coming home to who we are*

*Our ancestors wouldn't want us to suffer  
They would want us to thrive  
And when we find what brings us joy and meaning  
They'd shep naches for our lives*

*We are whole just as we are  
And we will go where our truth calls  
We may not know just where the path goes  
But we're coming home to who we are*

*Please don't make me into a symbol  
And I will try not to flatten you either  
We are infinitely complex creatures  
And we deserve to be known*

*We are whole just as we are  
And we will go where our truth calls  
We may not know just where the path goes  
But we're coming home to who we are*

*We're coming home to who we are  
Yes we're coming home to who we are*

# ABOUT FOOTSTEPS

## OUR MISSION

Footsteps supports and affirms individuals and families who have left, or are contemplating leaving, insular ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities in their quest to lead self-determined lives.

## ABOUT FOOTSTEPS

Footsteps was founded in 2003 by a young woman, Malkie Schwartz, who left her ultra-Orthodox Crown Heights home in pursuit of an education. From a one-person start-up that met in coffee shops, Footsteps has blossomed into a full-service organization with an annual budget of almost \$4 million, 27 staff, and close to 2,000 members.

Footsteps is the only organization in the United States providing comprehensive services to people who have chosen to leave insular ultra-Orthodox communities and begin new lives. Based in New York, Footsteps provides a range of services, including social and emotional support, educational and vocational guidance, workshops and social activities, emergency financial assistance, and access to resources. Thanks to Footsteps, former ultra-Orthodox Jews have a safe, supportive, and flourishing community to turn to as they work to define their own identities, build new connections, and live on their own terms.



During this incredibly challenging year, this is how Footsteps has been rising to meet the needs of our members throughout the COVID-19 crisis:

Our Social Workers Held  
**1,760** **one-to-one** meetings with members  
(**500** more than last year)

**Distributed over \$250k**  
in **COVID-19 relief** to 140 members



**1,900+**  
members strong  
(and growing!)

**135** Footsteps Scholars received **over \$501k** in scholarships  
(our largest year to date!)



 Launched the **Footsteps Warm Line**  
—a support phone line staffed by peers

**Welcomed 180** **New** Footsteps members to our community  
(**15% more than last year**)

**matched 248** members with **volunteers**  
—up 36% from last year!



Held **599** one-to-one **educational** and **employment** counseling sessions  
—**up 35% from last year**



Matched **684** members with **NY partner agencies** to meet their needs—a **74%** increase from last year

**FOOTSTEPS**  
& our members' stories featured in  
**THE NEW YORKER**

Congratulations to my wife  
for doing a fantastic job chairing the  
barrel. It is so important to you and the  
community that this evening has really paid  
off. What you do is a success. V

**Howard**

ife, Shelly, on doing such  
the gala. Footsteps is so  
e effort that you put into  
d off. Everything that you  
You are amazing!

**d Kivell**



We are so proud of our m  
tireless efforts chairing  
work that she does on be  
wonderful role model, and  
her exampl

**Melissa, Cory, Robert**

nom, Shelly Kivell, for her  
this event and for all the  
half of Footsteps. She is a  
we continue to learn from  
e every day.

**t, Julie, and Caroline**

*“It’s exhilarating to be alive in a time of change, but at the same time, it can also be confusing, and overwhelming.”*

—Adrienne Rich

Debra, Thank you for a  
Footsteppers whose con-  
to a new reality... and fo

**Sally Go**

*time of awakening consciousness;  
disorienting, and painful.”*

Johnne Rich

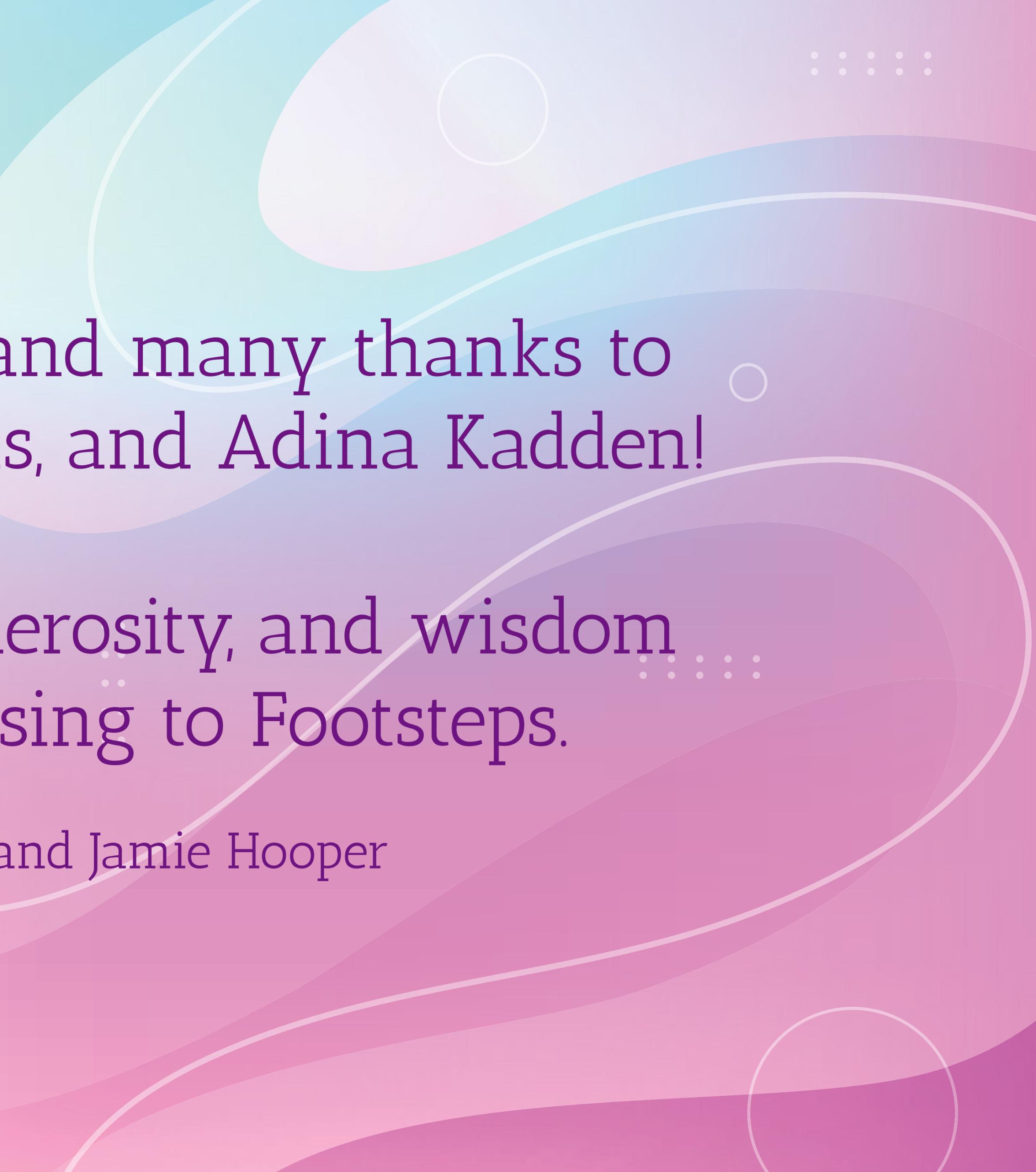
all you've done to help  
consciousness is awakening  
or all else you do as well.

**tttesman**

A huge Mazel Tov! a  
Debra Fine, Elie Gordi

Your dedication, gen  
have been a bles

Marti Meyerson a



and many thanks to  
s, and Adina Kadden!

erosity, and wisdom  
sing to Footsteps.

and Jamie Hooper

We are proud to support  
good friend, Debra Fine  
do for Footsteppers, e  
challeng

**Shari and Jo**

port Footsteps and our  
e. Thank you for all you  
especially during this  
ing year.

**Jeff Aronson**

To Adina, Debra, and  
your incredible leadership  
your work on Foots  
years to

Carrie Shapiro

d Elie - thank you for  
ership. The impact of  
steps will be felt for  
o come.

and Peter Frey

Footsteppers—you ins  
our own destiny an  
own choosing. Cong  
impressive acc

Charles and Lynn Schuster

aspire all of us to forge  
and build lives of our  
gratulations on your  
accomplishments.

erman Family Philanthropies

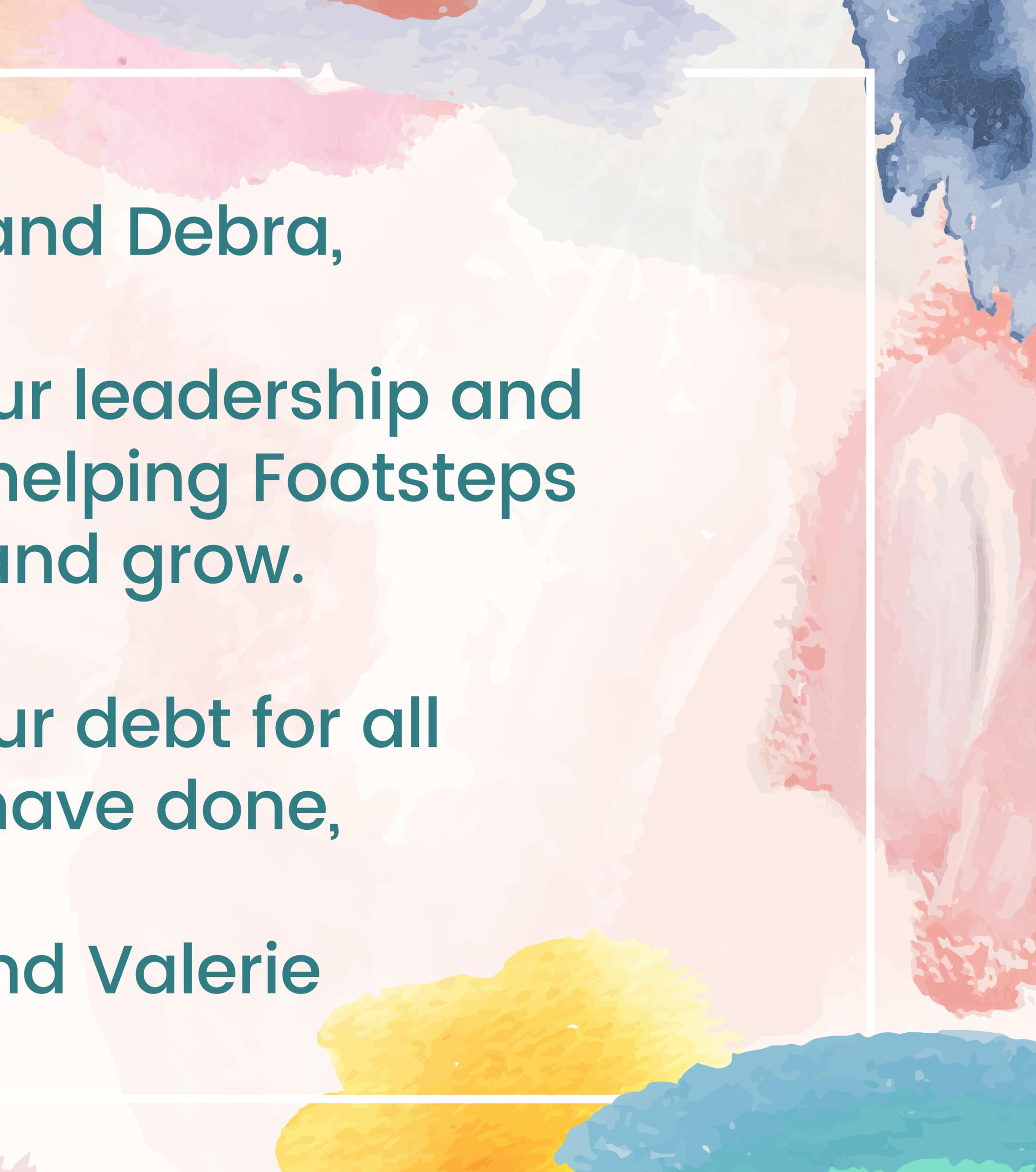


Dear Elie o

Thank you for your  
commitment to h  
flourish o

We are in you  
that you h

Steven an



and Debra,

ur leadership and  
helping Footsteps  
and grow.

ur debt for all  
have done,

nd Valerie

To Debra, Elic

It has been a pleasure

Your leadership and

always th

Ari Ros

e, and Adina:

re serving with you.

nd guidance was

thoughtful.

enberg

**Congratulations,  
Debra!**

Steve Stulman

**Congratulations to Debra and Elie on  
this well-deserved honor.  
Your dedication and leadership to  
Footsteps is an inspiration to all.  
Your tireless efforts have brought  
Footsteps from strength to strength.**

**—Shelly and Howard Kivell**

**Congratulations to the amazing Lani,  
her talented staff and dedicated  
board on this, the 18th anniversary  
of Footsteps. You have built an  
organization that does lifesaving  
work, responding to people in  
crisis and welcoming them to a  
safe, accepting space. Wishing you  
continued success.**

**With deep admiration,  
Barbara & Eric Dobkin**

**Debra,**  
**You are an inspiration to so many—  
and a teacher to us all. Thank you  
for your friendship, your passion and  
your endless heart. And thanks for  
keeping us giggling until we can giggle  
no more. We love you!**

**Suzanne Schecter and Todd Ruback**

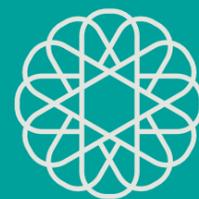
How blessed we are to have Elie as a role model. For him, caring for others is an instinct. With him, we age in a much more fun way than with others. Because of him, we call on ourselves to do more, to notice those who are unseen, to give what we have to give.

Mazal tov, Elie, on this honor, on your sixtieth birthday, and thank you for being the best possible ambassador to the world that our family could ask for.

With honor and love,  
The Gordises of Canada, Israel, and the United States

*With deep appreciation to Debra, Elie, and Adina for their committed and thoughtful leadership of Footsteps. Thank you!*

**Katie Workman & Gary Freilich**



# Mazal Tov

to our longtime and dedicated community member

Debra Fine and to all of the New Chapters honorees.

We join in celebrating all of the Footsteps members and their tremendous achievements during such a difficult year.

B'NIAI  
JES'HIRUJIN

# MAKE AN IMPACT

Freshfields is proud to support Footsteps and delighted to join in honoring the extraordinary work of Debra Fine and Elie Gordis.

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP

**Congratulations to our dear friend Shelly Kivell on a wonderful event in support of Footsteps members and their journey to lives of self-determination.**

**Linda and Seth Plattus**

**To Elie:**

**You introduced me to Footsteps and gave me the opportunity to have a most meaningful philanthropic experience.**

**To Debra:**

**Thank you for your dedication to Footsteps. You enabled the organization to surge forward!**

**Merle Gonchar**

**Congrats to Lani, Shelly Kivell  
and the Footsteps team for an  
incredible 18 years!**

**Fondly,  
Sheryl and Chip Kaye**

Thanks, Debra, for your long service  
on behalf of marginalized members  
of the Haredi community

Randy and Rona Nelson

**Congratulations to Debra Fine  
on her years of service.**

**Tracey and Robert Pruzan**

**טהר ליבנו לעבדך באמת**

Purify our hearts to serve in the footsteps of our remarkable study partner, fellow seeker, and activist, Debra Fine.

Mazal tov from your Vetaher Libenu sisters!  
Harriet Abraham, Robin Fleischner, Barbara Glassman,  
Nancy Kahn, Jill Lebwohl, Suzanne Schechter, Julie Sissman

In Honor of Shelly Kivell:  
“Congratulations on your first Footsteps Gala!”

Sarah & Bruce Kayle

We applaud Elie Gordis and the other honorees for  
their exceptional dedication, service and leadership.

Miriam & Robert Caslow

*Congratulations*  
**LANI SANTO**

*On ten amazing years as Footsteps CEO.*

*And our gratitude for her ongoing commitment  
to the Footsteps Community  
As well as her persistence in ensuring that members  
can lead meaningful and independent lives.*

Malkie Schwartz - Founder and Founding Executive Director  
Peter Cherneff - Founding Board Chair  
Deborah Freedman - Founding Board Member  
Mark Goldberg - Former Board Member and Chair

*Congratulations*

**ADINA, DEBRA AND ELIE**

*We are so grateful to you all for being "on board."*

Malkie Schwartz - Founder and Founding Executive Director  
Peter Cherneff - Founding Board Chair  
Deborah Freedman - Founding Board Member  
Mark Goldberg - Former Board Member and Chair

**In honor of my friend and my hero, Carrie Shapiro, whose devotion and commitment to Footsteps is the embodiment of Tikun Olam. The world is a better place because you walk in it, Carrie. May others follow in your footsteps.**

**Dr. Bonnie Maslin**

**THANK YOU, DEBRA, FOR YOUR  
EXTRAORDINARY BOARD LEADERSHIP.  
ELIE AND ADINA—WE WILL MISS YOU  
AND YOUR DEEP INSIGHTS INTO SERVING  
OUR COMMUNITY. THANK YOU BOTH.**

**MARK LIPTON**

Congratulations to Debra Fine, Elie Gordis and Adina Kadden who have left large footprints at Footsteps as board members.

As supporters of Footsteps and the entire staff, we are grateful to you for the work you've done to grow the organization.

Julie Persily and David Lefkowitz

**Congratulations, Footsteps!**

**The William and Mildred Kaplan  
Family Foundation**

*Wishing all our honorees thanks and congratulations and beautiful next chapters!*

**Ann Kirschner and Harold Weinberg**

**CONGRATULATIONS  
FOOTSTEPPERS**

Judy and Stanley Zabar

Mazal tov to Debra Fine, and thank you for your impressive leadership! With deep thanks to Lani Santo for the amazing ways you have creatively and thoughtfully guided Footsteps throughout these years. We are grateful for the whole Footsteps team!

Julie Sissman and Phil Richter

Congratulations to  
Debra Fine, Elie Gordis,  
and Adina Kadden on  
your incredible board  
leadership and your  
contributions to the  
success of Footsteps.

Stacey and Curtis Lane

*Congratulations  
Footsteps honorees  
on your thoughtful  
leadership in support  
of Footsteps and  
its members.*

With appreciation,  
Anne Germanacos

To Shelly Kivell for your  
unwavering support, the  
honorees, and Footsteps  
for your continued success  
doing much needed work,  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Jane and Norm Alpert

**In honor of  
Merle Gonchar  
and the entire  
Footsteps Team  
and the important  
work you do.**

JANET BRIEF

**We are so proud of  
Shelly Kivell and  
her dedication to  
Footsteppers seeking  
self-determined lives.**

Staci & John Barber

Thank you, Elie and Debra,  
for all your dedicated work  
on behalf of Footsteps and  
its members!

The Fischel Family



**Eve Birnbaum &  
Lawrence Goldberg**

**Congratulations to all  
the 2021 honorees and  
thank you Elie Gordis for  
introducing us to Footsteps  
and for the great work you  
do on their behalf!**

**Laurie Zucker Lederman  
and David Lederman**

**Congratulations  
to all of this year's  
honorees.**

**Robin Gingold,  
Howard Kantrowitz  
& Family**

**In honor of Elie Gordis  
and Jamie Hooper**

Patricia and Mitch Udell



**Mazel Tov to our dear  
friend Elie Gordis on  
this well-deserved  
honor. Thank you for  
introducing us to this  
meaningful organization.  
Your work for Footsteps  
has been inspirational.**

**Barbara & Allen Applbaum**

**Dear Elie,  
We are so proud  
of you!!**

Much love,  
Aba & Joan

**Congratulations to our honorees, Debra Fine, Elie Gordis and Adina Kadden and to the Chair of tonight's event, Shelly Kivell. Thank you for all that you do.**

**David and Ellen Horing**

**Shelly, your dedication to Footsteps is truly inspirational.**

**Jane and Daniel Och**

**Thank you for supporting Footsteps!**

**To learn more about our work,  
visit [Footstepsorg.org](https://Footstepsorg.org)**

# DEDICATIONS

*Mazel Tov, Elie and Debra!*  
**Lois and Aron Kressel**

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**Hannah S. and Samuel A. Cohn Memorial Foundation**

---

*Mazel Tov to Elie Gordis, a caring friend and super mensch.*  
**Lisa Gersten and Family**

---

*Kol Hakavod to Lani and the Footsteps team!  
I am so proud to play a small part in your journey.*  
**Tony Felzen**

---

*In honor of Debra Fine, a perfect friend.*  
**Faye Landes**

---

**Carolyn & Laurence Belfer**

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*In honor of our friend Elie Gordis: A good friend is like a four leaf clover—  
hard to find and lucky to have (Irish Proverb);  
A sweet friendship refreshes the soul (Proverbs 27:9)*  
**Linda Gerstel and Ed, Kayla, Sarah & Adin Joyce**

---

*In honor of our dear friends Avra & Elie Gordis.*  
**The Zeltser-Berman Family**

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*In honor of Elie, Debra and Adina, and Footsteps' amazing work.*  
**The Kern Family**

---

*Dearest Elie, "A good person is not he who does the right thing,  
but he who is in the habit of doing the right thing." –Abraham Joshua Heschel*  
**Julia Zeuner**

---

*Congratulations and thank you to Adina for your contributions.  
The Poo Family loves you and is very proud of you!*  
**Chana Schwartz**

---

*Congrats to Footsteps on all it has given and to Debra's efforts to help in that achievement.*

**Susan Fine**

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*To Elie, Avra and the many Footsteps professionals, thank you for your tireless dedication and extraordinary work.*

**Roni Rubenstein and Barry Berson**

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*Bravo To The Entire Footsteps Organization. May You Go From Strength To Strength.*

**Michael Zeuner**

---

*Congratulations to my friend Shelly Kivell and her incredible work in support of Footsteps.*

**Lisa Messinger**

---

*Congratulations to Ellie Gordis and Debra Fine!  
A special tribute to our dear friend Jamie for his tireless efforts on behalf of Footsteps. May you all go from strength to strength.*

**Ulrika & Joel Citron**

---

*Mazel Tov, Elie and Debra!*

**Lois and Aron Kressel**

---

*Congratulations and thanks Footsteps for your extraordinary contribution to repairing the world!*

**Anita Altman and Gil Kulick**

---

*In honor of Footsteps members, who inspire us with their choices and authenticity.*

**Amitai and Chanie Bin-Nun**

---

*"Do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman." –Deut 15:7  
Thank you, Footsteps, for opening our hand.*

**Abigail Pogrebin**

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*Elie's support of Footsteps mission is inspiring and changes lives!*

**Adam Grossman**

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# WITH DEEP APPRECIATION TO OUR BOARD AND STAFF

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Jamie Hooper, *Co-Chair*  
Ann Kirschner, *Co-Chair*  
Carrie Shapiro, *Treasurer*  
Steven Eisman  
Debra Fine  
Shelley Fischel  
Gary Freilich  
Yoseph Horowitz  
Shelly Kivell  
Mark Lipton  
Miriam Moster  
Phineas Reisz  
Ari Rosenberg  
Nitza Rubin  
Carrie Shapiro  
Merle Woldenberg Gonchar

## **Board Members Emeritus**

Peter Cherneff  
Deborah Freedman  
Malkie Schwartz, *Founder*

## **STAFF**

Lani Santo  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Hoda ElMahdy  
*Senior Director of Programs*

Chani Getter  
*Senior Director of Organizational Development*

Jessica Markowitz  
*Senior Director of Finance, Data,  
and Administration*

Stephanie Oster  
*Senior Director of Development*

Naomi Moskowitz  
*Director of Economic Empowerment*

Yael Reisman  
*Director of Field and Movement Building*

Leon Setton  
*Director of Clinical Services*

Chavie Weisberger  
*Director of Community Engagement*

Katharine Dow  
*Institutional Relations Manager*

Julia Jerusalem-Henig  
*Member Engagement Manager*

Sophie Kaufman  
*Senior Social Worker*

Emma Kraft  
*Donor Relations Manager*

Ayelet Parness  
*Communications Manager*

Dave Ruder  
*Volunteer Manager*

Yomaly Suero  
*Economic Empowerment  
Program Manager*

Alexa Cavallo  
*Rockland Social Worker*

Pesach Eisen  
*Case Manager*

Jake Frankel  
*Peer Connector*

Jenevieve Goldman  
*Operations Assistant*

Abby Israel  
*Program Associate/  
Avodah Service Corps Member*

Sarah Otero  
*Peer Connector*

Chana Prus  
*Peer Connector*

Yoav Rahamim Varadi  
*Program Associate/Avodah Corps Member*

Rachel Szachara  
*Executive Assistant*

Arielle Schwartz  
*Program Associate*

Molly Weilbacher  
*Development Operations Coordinator*

Sydney Enten  
*Social Work Intern*

Mary Jimenez  
*Social Work Intern*

Julie F. Kay  
*Senior Legal Strategist (Consultant)*



**FOOTSTEPS**

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New York, NY 10272  
[footstepsorg.org](http://footstepsorg.org)