



among friends ^{ב"ה}

WINTER 2018

P.O. BOX 25067 | PHILADELPHIA, PA 19147 | WWW.PHILLYFRIENDSHIP.COM | 215.574.1765



FC YOUTH IN JERUSALEM DURING
THE 2018 INCLUSION BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL TRIP

Dear friends,

Since bringing the first two friends together in 2004, we continue to be amazed by the hundreds of meaningful friendships that grow year after year. One of the first lessons we teach our youth is about the tremendous impact each of us have on one another. At FC, each of us has a chance to be nurtured and shine, enabling us all to impact our friends and community in a beautiful way. We are so grateful to each of you for what you contribute!

*In gratitude and friendship,
Chani & Zev Baram
CO-FOUNDERS*

Staff Celebrate FC Milestone

Caity Gilmartin: LEAD BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST

“Over my 10 years at FC, I have become more involved at Sunday Circle – pretty much everything from A to Z when it comes to the pairings and relationships. It grew organically over time as programming grew and the needs of FC changed. I adapted and grew with it- maybe that is why we've been such a good fit!

FC has meant a lot to me personally- it's helped me understand who I really am and how I relate to others. It's broadened my idea of what socialization and behavior programming look like for youth and adults of all ages and how my professional role fits into that. It's provided me with a family and connections.

This is my tenth year with FC, so I am running the Miami Marathon to celebrate this milestone and show my commitment to FC. I don't enjoy running (I'm more into yoga), so my motto in fundraising has been **"Hates running, loves friendship circle."**”



CAIT AND THE REST OF OUR FRIENDSHIP EXPERTS.

A Beautiful Friendship *Gabrielle & Shoshona:*

SUNDAY CIRCLE FRIENDS

“I've always wanted to be friends with Shoshana since I saw her at my first day at Sunday Circle. We have developed a strong bond, and have so much fun together. It's different because she can't talk as well as other friends but we found a way to communicate. I am working together with her to learn sign language.

As our relationship has grown, every time I see her she is instantly ready to play with me and hang out and we even came up with our games like the one where she comes to hug me and pretends to fall and I catch her.

Something that's different than other friendships- I don't know how to describe... With other friends you can get into fights and arguments, but we are always happy to be together.”



FC Friends Grow With Us

Seth Feldman: FC ALUM

This year, Seth served as the first Alumni Co-Chair of The Philly Friendship Walk. He is now spearheading a new alumni initiative and works in NYC.

“It's really nice to see from the alum side that management and leadership cares about our opinions and have made it clear that we have made an impact. It's been fun reconnecting with other alum and bringing ideas with a broader knowledge base. I've seen firsthand that every single donation makes an impact on an individual's life. It is rewarding to still contribute and continue growing that network.”



Lena Armstrong:

TEEN BOARD LIAISON

After participating in various aspects of our Leadership Program, Lena has grown into our Teen Board Liaison.

“I signed up for my first Sunday Circle and I fell in love with the experience that has two rules: be yourself and have fun! It is an amazing community where people act with absolute kindness, patience, and compassion. As a leader it was such a meaningful experience to be part of the creation of programming and to see my feedback be recognized. Now as Teen Board Liaison, I have the chance to gather feedback from the volunteers and present it at board meetings. FC is truly a place where everyone can belong and have fun.”



The Silbers:
FC Family

Ethan and Aaron regularly participate in Sunday Circle and Ethan learns with Rabbi Zev for his Bar Mitzvah.

“My husband, Noel, and I have two beautiful sons, Ethan and Aaron, who like me, are Autistic. Like all people, each one of us is unique and has our own strengths and challenges, but I knew from

personal experience that sometimes it can be difficult for any Autistic person to connect with a larger community in a meaningful way, including the Jewish community. It was important to Noel and me that the boys developed that connection.

The kids became a part of FC early in their lives. They loved going, and it was a place they could celebrate being Jewish in a comfortable, accepting, and joyful way.

One thing that I especially appreciate, as an Autistic person myself, is the feeling that people in FC genuinely like, appreciate, and value my sons exactly as they are. They do not underestimate them or under-support them, and they respect their differences. Being treated with not only kindness, but also acceptance, is more important than I can express when it comes to developing self-worth and confidence.

They are growing up in Friendship Circle, active participants in the Jewish community, surrounded by joy and warmth.”



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lena Armstrong
(Teen Board Liaison)
Rebecca Cohen
Jaime Gordon
Tracy Gordon
Howard Levin
Jonathan Seltzer

The Philly Friendship Circle

connects teens and young adults to youth with special needs through a full range of social offerings. While creating inclusive friendships, our youth cultivate kindness, understanding, and responsibility to ensure a caring and accepting community.

CONNECT
WITH US:



HELP US GROW *Please remember us in your End-of-Year Giving*

Thank you to all our donors for your generous support. You have created smiles at our programs and helped us to celebrate the true meaning of friendship.

- Recurring monthly donations
- Lifecycle events: In honor or memory of a loved one
- Online shopping: Amazon Smile (Friendship Circle Philadelphia Region, Inc) and Goodshop (Philly Friendship Circle)
- Inquire about:
 - Endowment & naming opportunities
 - United Way donations (44542)
 - Corporate matches, event sponsorship
 - Donations of stock or security
 - Matching gifts
 - Legacy gifts

Philly Friendship Walk

What a wonderful celebration of inclusive community. Thanks to all our Donors, Sponsors, and Walkers for making this event a success.

We are so proud!

