



הסוכנות היהודית
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THE JEWISH AGENCY
FOR ISRAEL

נפש Nefesh
בנפש B'Nefesh



Ministry of Aliyah and
Immigrant Absorption

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nefesh B'Nefesh Announces 'Bonei Zion' Prize Winners for 2016

Prize is awarded to English-speaking Olim who have significantly contributed to the State of Israel

JERUSALEM, April 4, 2016 – Six Olim (immigrants) from English-speaking countries who have made a major impact on the State of Israel were awarded the 2016 Sylvan Adams Nefesh B'Nefesh Bonei Zion Prize. The honorees include: **Professor Howard (Chaim) Cedar**, Professor of Developmental Biology & Cancer Research at Hebrew University in the field of Science and Medicine; **Estelle Friedman**, Director of Production of Israel Education Television in the field of Culture, Sports & Arts; **Barbara Levin**, Founder of the Tali school system in the field of Education; **Dr. Rachel Levmore**, Rabbinical Court Advocate & Director of the Agunah & Get-Refusal Prevention Project in the field of Community and Non-Profit; **Scott Tobin**, General Partner of Battery Ventures in the field of Entrepreneurship and Technology; and **IDF Staff Sgt. Sahar Elbaz** in the field of IDF and National Service Young Leadership Award.

An additional Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed upon **Moshe Arens** for his contribution to shaping and impacting Israel through diplomacy and dedicated Hasbarah efforts on behalf of the State of Israel. (Please see details of all the winners below)

This year's prizes, announced today, are sponsored by Sylvan Adams and are due to be awarded at an official ceremony in the Knesset on **May 23, 2016**. Sylvan Adams, a recent Nefesh B'Nefesh Oleh and Canadian real estate developer, is committed to developing and advancing the State of Israel. Sylvan is dedicated to showcasing the impact and achievement of Israelis to the world, and views the Bonei Zion Prize as an integral piece of this mission.

Hundreds of Olim from English-speaking countries – including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, UK, and USA - were nominated for the prize. The prize recognizes outstanding Anglo Olim who have helped Israel in a meaningful way by encapsulating the spirit of modern-day Zionism and contributing in significant ways towards the State of Israel. Recipients were chosen by a prestigious panel of [committee members](#) in the following categories: Science & Medicine; Community & Non-Profit; Education; Entrepreneurship & Technology; Art, Culture & Sports; and IDF & National Service Young Leadership.

"It is truly remarkable each year to see how Olim are making such a significant impact on the State of Israel. The Bonei Zion Prize recipients exemplify how Anglo Olim are making historic advancements and contributing, each in their own field, to the success of the country and our nation," said Nefesh B'Nefesh Co-Founder and Executive Director **Rabbi Yehoshua Fass**. "The goal of the Bonei Zion Prize has been to highlight to Jews worldwide the incredible achievements Olim are making in their respective fields in Israel and how one can succeed despite being a newcomer."

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The following are the details of the 2016 Nefesh B'Nefesh Bonei Zion Prize recipients:

Community and Non-Profit: **Dr. Rachel Levmore** is the Founder and Director of the Agunah & Get-Refusal Prevention Project of the International Young Israel Movement and the Jewish Agency for Israel. As a rabbinical court advocate, she assists Agunot in Israel and in the Diaspora to free themselves from the chains of unwanted marriage through a dignified process. Dr. Levmore revolutionized Israeli society's view on women's halachic personal status by participating in the authorship of the Israeli reciprocal halachic prenuptial "Agreement for Mutual Respect", thus preventing get-refusal. As a ground-breaking halachic scholar and author of the seminal halachic book *Min'ee Einayikh Medim'ah* on prenuptial agreements, PhD in Talmud & Jewish Law and decades-long social activist, Levmore has worked tirelessly to prevent get-abuse, culminating her efforts as a member of the Israel Commission for the Appointment of *Dayanim*. By working within Jewish law, Levmore is pulling the state religious establishment into the 21st century in the family law field, thus creating healthy family units – the building blocks of Israeli society. Dr. Levmore made Aliyah in 1976 from the USA.

Entrepreneurship and Technology: **Scott R. Tobin** serves as General Partner at Battery Ventures, which he joined in 1997. He leads investments in Israel, the United States, and Europe. Scott has focused on a variety of interests at Battery, including: venture capital and private equity investments in enterprise infrastructure, application software, business services, media and financial services. Scott has been named multiple times to the Forbes Midas List, which ranks top venture capitalists from around the world. In 2008, he relocated to Battery's Israel office to build the team and to lead the firm's further expansion into Israel, the Middle East and Europe. He graduated with honors from Brandeis University with a BA in International Relations and Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. Scott is involved in a number of social-impact initiatives in Israel, on a local community and national level. He proudly serves on the Board of Directors of "Maoz", an organization identifying and accelerating the impact of Israel's best and brightest public sector leaders, who collaborate on cross-sectorial solutions to Israel's most pressing challenges. He officially made Aliyah in 2011 from the USA.

Science and Medicine: **Professor Howard (Chaim) Cedar**, a Safra Distinguished Professor at the Department of Developmental Biology & Cancer Research at Hebrew University has made pioneering contributions in the field of genetics. He discovered that, in addition to the genetic "text" inherited from our parents, which contains all of the instructions for making every component of the human body, there is also a system of "annotation" that marks this "text" and represents a further layer of information. This annotation, which is accomplished chemically through DNA methylation, marks genes as being either active or silent and constitutes the cornerstone of human development. Methylation plays a role in many diseases and especially cancer where Prof. Cedar's discoveries have led to the development of new approaches for diagnosing and treating this disease. DNA methylation also holds the key for understanding how the environment impacts on human behavior. Prof. Cedar made Aliyah in 1973 from the USA.

IDF and National Service Young Leadership: **Staff Sgt. Sahar Elbaz** is a recently released lone soldier from the IDF's Givati Brigade. During Operation Protective Edge, Sgt. Elbaz and his unit came under attack in Rafah, in the Gaza Strip. Ignoring his commander's order to take cover, Elbaz returned fire, overcame a jam in his weapon, and eliminated four of the five attacking terrorists. Describing the event, one of his commanders said, "Sahar's story will be taught at commanders' courses for many years to come." Elbaz arrived in Israel, on his own, from the USA four years ago, and immediately joined the Givati Brigade, where he served as a combat soldier in the Rimon unit. Elbaz was one of only five soldiers to receive the chief of staff's citation in Operation Protective Edge, which was bestowed upon him for his bravery, resourcefulness and fortitude. Sahar made Aliyah in 2012 from the USA.

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Culture, Sports and Arts: **Estelle Friedman**, began her long journey in educational television in 1968, as a screenwriter and TV teacher for the English teaching TV series "More About English." Soon after, she was appointed producer of the English Department and produced over 500 episodes teaching English on TV. Her success opened the door to becoming Director of Production at Israel Educational TV, where she worked producing programs that became an integral part of Israeli culture. Many generations have acquired the basics of the English, Hebrew and Arabic languages, and basic concepts of Judaism, thanks to the innovation and accessibility Estelle brought to educational programming. She has touched the lives of millions of young people and adults, and contributed to the education of Israelis as well as the creation of a culture of values of Israeli society. Estelle's work was born out of a Zionist sense of duty to provide new skills and learning tools for students in Israel. She made Aliyah in 1964 from the USA.

Education: **Barbara Levin** began, in 1976, as principal of the First Traditional School, where pluralistic Jewish subjects were included in the curriculum for children from both secular and observant families. The school grew from a group of 33 to 300 pupils and served as the prototype for schools that wanted to adopt its unique curriculum. Today, there are 96 schools, 134 nursery classes, and some 35,000 pupils in the TALM educational system. While serving as principal of the Frankel School for 29 years, Barbara also managed to successfully institute a wide range of innovative projects, including Community Theater, a twinning program, the Frankel Center for Jewish Family Education, an initiative to begin teaching English from first grade, and a program that integrated pupils with autism into the school's classes. Retired in 2005, Levin continues to consult schools and volunteers teaching prayer skills for youth as well as with seniors in her local community. She made Aliyah in 1969 from the USA.

Lifetime Achievement Award: **Moshe Arens** entered the political arena in 1973, when he was elected to the Knesset on the Likud party list. He served as Foreign Minister, Defense Minister, and as the Israeli Ambassador to the USA. The author of two books, Arens currently writes a column for Haaretz Newspaper and serves as Chairman of the Board of Governors of Ariel University in Samaria. He enlisted in 1944 for two years in the U.S. army's Engineers Corps and then completed a B.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering from MIT. He managed various aircraft and missile development projects, for which he was awarded the Israel Defense Prize in 1971. Arens has been Chairman of Teuza, a venture capital firm. He is the author of two books: Broken Covenant, published in 1995 by Simon and Schuster and by Yediot Sfarim in Hebrew, and Flags Over the Warsaw Ghetto, published in 2011 by Gefen Publishing House; it has also been published in Hebrew and Polish. He made Aliyah in 1948 from the USA.

The selection committee members include:

- **Major General (res.) Yaacov Amidror** – Former Military Secretary to the Minister of Defense
- **Yael Arad** – Olympic medalist
- **Lieutenant General (ret.) Gabi Ashkenazi** – Former Chief of Staff of the IDF
- **Colette Avital** - Israeli diplomat and Former Minister of Knesset
- **Rabbi Paul Freedman** - USCJ Director Israel Strategic Partnerships
- **David Gerstein** - Internationally renowned painter and sculptor
- **Barbara Goldstein** - Deputy Executive Director of Hadassah, Israel
- **Vera Golovensky** - Senior Advisor to the Chairman of the Executive at the Jewish Agency for Israel
- **Efraim Halevy** - Former Director of the Mossad
- **Professor Jonathan Halevy** - Director General of Shaare Zedek Medical Center
- **Isi Leibler** - Veteran international Jewish leader
- **Steve Linde** – Editor-in-Chief of The Jerusalem Post
- **Ambassador Reuven Merhav** – Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Claims Conference
- **Russell Robinson** - CEO of the Jewish National Fund (JNF)

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- **Professor Gabriella Shalev** – Former Ambassador to the UN, President of the Higher Academic Council and Dean of the Law School at Ono Academic College
- **Dr. Chaim Waxman** - Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Jewish Studies at Rutgers University, Senior Fellow at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, and Research Fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace
- **Rabbi Berel Wein** - Founder and Director of The Destiny Foundation
- **Binyamin Zomer** – Country Manager of Noble Energy

About Nefesh B'Nefesh (www.nbn.org.il):

Founded in 2002, Nefesh B'Nefesh in cooperation with the Israeli government and The Jewish Agency for Israel, is dedicated to revitalizing Aliyah from North America and the UK by removing or minimizing the financial, professional, logistical and social obstacles of Aliyah. The support and comprehensive social services provided by Nefesh B'Nefesh to its over 45,000 newcomers has ensured that over 90% of its Olim have remained in Israel.

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