



The AVI CHAI Foundation

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AVI CHAI Offers \$12,000,000 to birthright israel

The trustees of AVI CHAI have observed, with increasing interest, the growing success during the past four years of the birthright israel program. The foundation was not initially one of the philanthropic partners, choosing instead to support a series of birthright follow-up programs, including the AVI CHAI birthright israel Bookshelf that offers all returning birthrighters the opportunity to select two books from a wide variety of titles about Judaism and Israel.

When our trustees learned of the unwillingness of the Israeli government to provide its support for the program in 2004, they believed it was unfortunate for the program to have to suffer a significant reduction in the number of participants just as birthright was reaching full strength.

The trustees reviewed how they might be of assistance at this critical juncture, a time they considered to be one of great opportunity, and decided to provide a challenge grant of \$7 million which would, if matched by the philanthropist group, enable the program not to falter this year, but rather to be strengthened significantly.

It is our understanding that the philanthropists have agreed to match the \$7 million commitment of our foundation. With an additional financial injection of \$14 million in 2004, the philanthropists will have more than covered the \$70 million commitment they undertook for the first five years of the program.

The trustees of AVI CHAI want to go forward as a partner with the fourteen philanthropists for the next five years and they eagerly await the government's clear and unequivocal commitment to fund the program, at increasing levels of support, beginning in 2005. It is also hoped that the community federations in North America and Europe will shoulder their one-third share to enable this important program to go from strength to strength.

The trustees of AVI CHAI identify strongly with the centrality and the importance of the State of Israel to the Jewish people. The birthright participants' visit strengthens their Jewish identity and adds much to their understanding of the centrality of the State of Israel.

Arthur W. Fried Chairman