



LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Since 2007, NewGround has held our focus on building relationships between Muslims and Jews in Los Angeles to establish foundations that can endure the storms of current events and the pain that wracks our communities. We made significant changes to protect each other's health in 2020, holding our major public events and completing our professional and MAJIC fellowship programs online. We didn't think that 2021 would be easy, but we hoped it would be smoother.

No such luck. In addition to navigating new waves of the pandemic, the waves of polarization seem to be swelling rather than abating. As conflicts over ideology and identity tear greater divides between Americans, we are deeply concerned about the way we're handling disagreements as a society. When we call someone else out, we label them, which we know will make them dig in their heels and respond in the worst way. We need the capacity to help people feel understood, and the tools to demonstrate our understanding. Otherwise, pressure continues to build until it breaks our relationships to each other, our community and even our society.

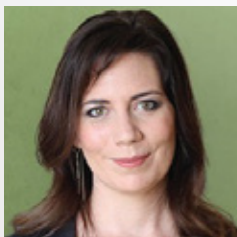
This past year brought new and sometimes heart-wrenching challenges, and we reexamined our mission and practice once again.

The lived experiences of NewGround alumni and community members inspired us to confront racial bias and hate within our communities at a level of depth we hadn't explored before. We held more public events in the wake of violence in Gaza and Israel to give our community the space to share and understand each others' pain. Throughout, we held true to our mission: connecting and empowering Jews and Muslims, and helping people of varied backgrounds and experiences build bridges across divides.

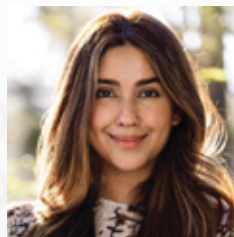
Our model of building resilient relationships that can stay strong through the most difficult conversations, and then holding space for those conversations, proves to be both relevant and necessary year after year.

We've invested in the tools to help our staff, fellows and alumni practice the deep listening skills we need to understand each other. Even in the face of collective "Zoom fatigue," we had higher event attendance and stronger donor support this year than the year before. We leaned in, and you leaned in with us.

2022 has already brought new challenges, and NewGround stands ready to face them with the knowledge that conflict is inevitable, but not intractable. With your partnership and generosity, we have the strength to meet the moment, no matter what the moment brings.



Rabbi Sarah Bassin
NewGround Board Co-Chairs



Nurya Shabir

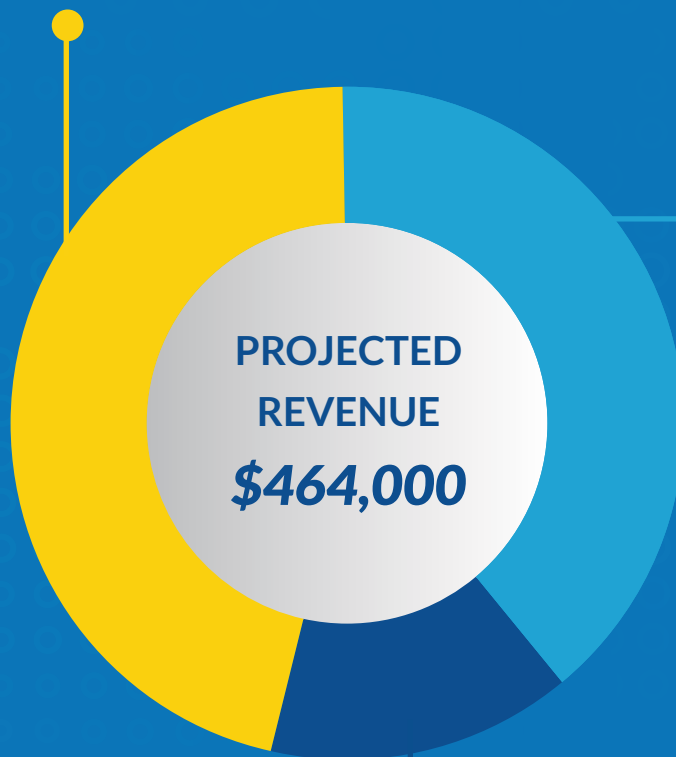
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2021-2022 BUDGET

45%

\$200,000

Individual Contributions



39%

\$192,000

Foundation Grants

16%

\$72,000

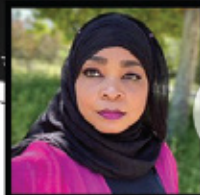
Board Contributions

CONFRONTING RACIAL BIAS



COURAGE ACCELERATOR

2021 presented twin “cris-ortunities” and we designed a new program to meet this moment: our Alumni Courage Accelerator. It was vital to focus on addressing how racial bias impacts our communities, and rather than starting new relationships on Zoom, we chose to gather some of our dedicated alumni and help them refine their skills. Together we learned from experts within our Alumni Advisory Council, the Leadership Lab of the Los Angeles LGBT Center and Resetting the Table to confront bias and heal the wounds it causes in our communities.



MARGARI HILL
Executive Director
Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative
muslimarac.org



CHAVA SHERVINGTON
Board Member
Jewish Multiracial Network
jewishmultiracialnetwork.org

FACING RACISM

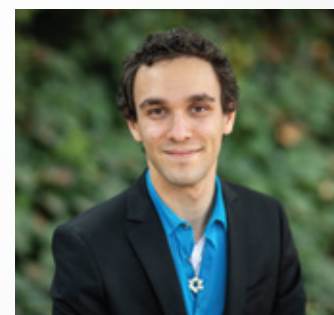
June 16: NewGround held a public dialogue about the function of anti-Black racism in faith communities, and how storytelling can be utilized as a tool to build more inclusive faith communities. Margari Hill (Executive Director, Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative) and Chava Shervington (Board Member, Jewish Multiracial Network) shared their personal stories about racism in these communities, and discussed actionable tools for navigating and combatting hatred.

“

Working as part of NewGround’s staff has given me so many new tools for strengthening my listening skills, and has helped me maintain patience and curiosity in the heat of conflict. I’m humbled and invigorated by the stories I get to hear and uplift, and I’m excited to deepen these skills in the new fellowship cohort!

Ben Ginsburg

COMMUNICATIONS &
OPERATIONS
COORDINATOR,
CURRENT
NEWGROUND FELLOW



SPOTLIGHT: BREAKING BIAS

September 23: The revival of our Spotlight event was an evening of transformative storytelling directed by Amir Abdullah and Stacie Chaiken, exploring lived experiences of bias told by community members. After our six featured speakers shared their stories and poems, participants joined breakout groups and shared their own stories as well.

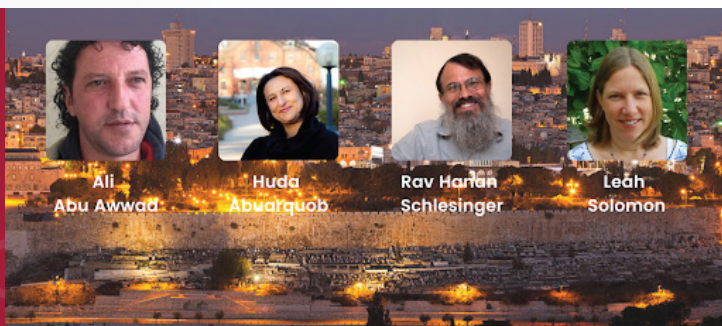
ADDRESSING THE CRISIS IN ISRAEL AND GAZA



CREATING SPACE

August 31: At one of our first in-person events since the start of the pandemic, we gathered a small group of highly-engaged community members for an intimate encounter with raw and heartfelt stories of Israel and Palestine.

Four of our alumni modeled NewGround's mode of constructive engagement, and then a crack team of facilitators guided attendees through vulnerable conversations of their own.



DOUBLING DOWN IN DIFFICULT TIMES: PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVES

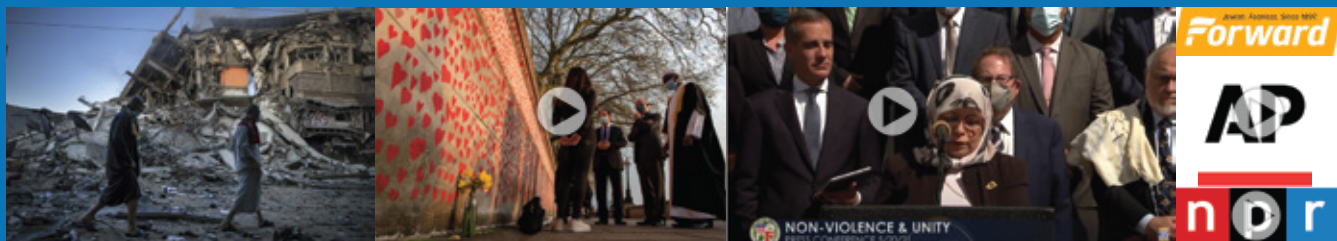
July 6: We convened a conversation with bridge-builders in Israel Palestine who were holding grief and finding a way forward from the violence in Gaza and Israel in May 2021. Together, we explored which tools and approaches worked for them, and which ones didn't. We wanted to give our community tools to ensure that people can hear one another in all their complexity, to create change, one step at a time, and how to be good allies to their work as an American community of Muslims and Jews.

“

Working with MAJIC alumni for the past year has shown me just how impactful and long-lasting MAJIC and NewGround programs are. There are very few places where you can have meaningful, intentional conversations about relational differences.

Maya Al-Mansour Matthews

M '20, MAJIC FACILITATOR



NEWGROUND SPEAKS

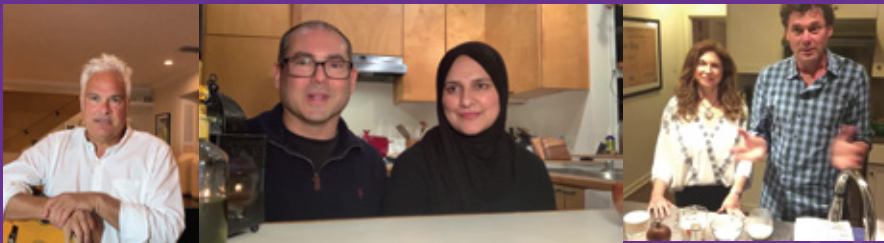
So many were searching for answers and guidance in the wake of the violence and death in Gaza and Israel last May. NewGround staff spoke with journalists for national outlets like NPR and the Associated Press, and to local programs like KPCC's AirTalk. NewGround also engaged with our Los Angeles community to stand up against reactionary hate and violence that targeted Muslims and Jews in LA.

BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS DIVIDES



APEIROGON EVENT

In one of our most moving public conversations, we held a discussion of Apeirogon with author Colum McCann and the protagonists, Bassam Aramin and Rami Elhanan about how they use stories to build empathy.



VIRTUAL COMMUNITY IFTAR

April 27: Our annual interfaith community Iftar featured recipes and stories from Rob Eshman, Rabbi Naomi Levy, Imam Jihad Turk, Anjum Mir, and music from our friend Craig Taubman. The Zoom event was also covered by Voice of America.



TRAILBLAZER: ACROSS DIVIDES

November 14: Our Suzy & Wally Marks z"l Trailblazer Awards ceremony honored Samara Hutman, MN AG Keith Ellison, Brie Loskota, and Rev. Gary Mason, leaders who have created change by forging partnerships that light a path beyond hate and conflict. In addition to rich stories and conversation, we received the gift of music from singer-songwriter Naimah.

THE BAND'S VISIT

December 12: A snap-opportunity arose to see Tony-award winning musical The Band's Visit as a NewGround community in Hollywood. Afterwards, Aziza Hasan facilitated a talk-back with the cast about their experiences acting in the show and how they feel the show's message aspires to deeper, more authentic connections and how it falls short.



Our family is a NewGround family because we understand that NewGround's approach helps people build capacity for challenging conversations, and invites us all to a place of curiosity rather than assumptions - and we know that our society is in great need of that right now.

Soniya Perl

MAJIC PARENT '18, FUTURE PROFESSIONAL FELLOW



LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

Thanks to support from UpStart, NewGround has embarked on a new partnership with Resetting the Table (RTT). We have received additional training and an agreement to train others using NewGround and RTT curricula as we build people's capacity to talk about the very things that matter most to them. The training focuses on listening tools that help the speaker be understood the way they want to be understood, which has synergized so well with our existing models. Our staff has used RTT's tools to augment and strengthen our MAJIC and Professional Fellowship programs, and is building a facilitator training program drawing from RTT's methodology and integrating it with NewGround's own. Current cohorts and alumni have expressed that they are using these tools to engage others with curiosity and connect across differences.



Most people rarely learn anything listening to themselves speak, and MAJIC gave us the skills to actively listen and to facilitate discussion. I utilize those skills on a daily basis

Aliza Benor

M '20



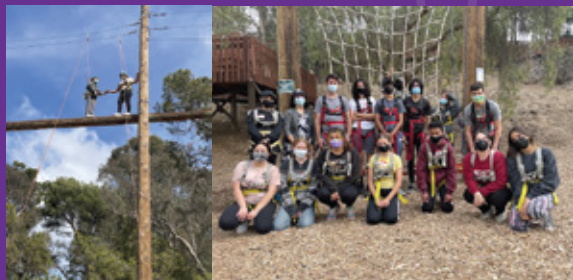
PROFESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP COHORT



This year's Professional Fellows will have the opportunity to experience a new version of our Fellowship which incorporates the next-level skill-building and focus on bias of our Courage Accelerator.

Gaining facility in this new set of tools, fellows will take an even deeper dive, helping one another understand the ways anti-Muslim and

anti-Jewish bias impact our institutional and personal lives and will help us to support our communities in breaking out of reflexive patterns of behavior.



MAJIC: LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD!

As with our adult alumni, Zoom gave us the opportunity to do two things we've been wanting to do: reconnect the graduates of our high school MAJIC program, and bring some of our MAJIC alumni to NewGround as staff! Shachar Cohen-Hodos (M '13) and Maya Al-Mansour Matthews (M '20) worked to frame conversations for the alumni network to help them navigate the challenges of COVID-19 and the tumultuous stories that crossed our news feeds. As we move into 2022, Maya continues to work with alumni and Shachar has been joined by Sara Deen (PF '20; CAP '21) to form the MAJIC program facilitation team for our new MAJIC cohort. In a beautiful full-circle experience, intern Muhammed Aly (M '18) rounds out the new MAJIC staff!

**DONOR
CIRCLE
EVENTS**

**IFTAR,
THURSDAY
APRIL 7,
2022**

SPOTLIGHT

**BOOK
CLUB**

TRAILBLAZER

STAFF MEMBERS

Aziza Hasan - Executive Director
 Maya Al-Mansour Matthews - MAJIC Alumni Facilitator
 Sara Deen - MAJIC Facilitator
 Ben Ginsburg - Communications & Operations Coordinator
 Shachar Cohen-Hodos - MAJIC Alumni Facilitator
 Andrea Hodos - Associate Director
 Tasneem Noor - Programs Director
 Maia Ferdman - Trainer/Facilitator

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Nurya Shabir - Board Co-Chair	Adam Fakhri	Molly Rubin
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Paul Beck	Farah Khan	Tasnim Shamji
Pervez Delawalla	Edina Lekovic	David Weiner

MAJIC ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS

Muhammed Aly - Intern
 McKenna Blackshire - Intern
 Armaan Ismail - Productions Manager



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*MAJIC Advisory Board Member

‡Alumni Courage Accelerator Advisory Council Member

CONSULTANTS

Stacie Chaiken (Story Consultant)

Amir Abdullah (Story Consultant)

Cindy Kaplan (Film Producer & Director)

Josh Kaufman (Director's Cut Productions)

Mustafa Zeno (Rug & Vase, LLC)

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