

Charles Bronfman, other Jewish philanthropists, sign Giving Pledge

September 19, 2012

(JTA) -- Four Jewish philanthropists, including Charles Bronfman, are among the latest individuals to sign the Giving Pledge, committing to giving the majority of their wealth to charity.

Bronfman, Dan and Jennifer Gilbert, and Peter Lewis were announced Tuesday as among 11 philanthropists to sign the pledge, which was initiated by Warren Buffet and Bill and Melinda Gates. Under the pledge, the wealthiest American individuals and families agree to give more than half of their wealth to philanthropy or charitable causes during or after their lifetimes.

"Philanthropy is in the DNA of my family," Bronfman, who chairs the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies and co-chairs Birthright Israel, said in a statement Tuesday. "Doing what we can to repair the world was instilled in me from an early age. I will never forget my siblings and me knitting squares for blankets to be sent to the troops during World War II. This was an inspiration from my mother. It's no surprise, then, that each of us has tried to contribute to society in our own way."

He is the namesake of the Charles Bronfman Prize, which celebrates the vision and accomplishment of an individual or team of individuals under the age of 50 whose humanitarian work, driven by Jewish values, has had a significant impact on the world's most pressing challenges and is an inspiration to the next generations.

Dan Gilbert founded Quicken Loans Inc. and owns the Cleveland Cavaliers. Lewis is chairman of Progressive insurance.

The four join 81 other philanthropists who have signed the pledge, including Bronfman's brother, Edgar.