

SLINGSHOT FUND

September 19, 2012

Slingshot lore has it that a funder in his 20s said to a small group of other young philanthropists, "Wouldn't it be great if there were a *Zagat*-style guide for Jewish life, so we could understand the alphabet soup of organizations trying to resonate with us?" Without the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, that is exactly where that conversation would have ended. Instead, Andrea and Charles Bronfman put their faith, funding, and foundation staff behind that group of next generation funders, and *Slingshot* has grown to become an important funding source, a closely watched seal of approval, and leading voice advocating for innovation in Jewish life.

The founding story for Slingshot is an example of what is possible when unengaged members of the next generation are empowered, supported, and challenged. The investment from the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies included funding and staff time, but the reason for our success is Charles and Andrea Bronfman's faith in a small group of funders in their 20s. It is my privilege to be able to thank Charles and ACBP for this trust, which has paid off for dozens of next gen funders, hundreds of innovative organizations, and tens of thousands of readers of *Slingshot*, including myself.

In the midst of my career in the secular not-for-profit world I was given a copy of the first issue of *Slingshot* and read the opening words, "This book may be the most optimistic portrayal of the American Jewish community written in a long time." It turns out that optimism was well founded, as I read the profiles of 50 previously invisible organizations seeking to ensure that Jewish life would continue to resonate even as the world changes around us. *Slingshot* was my guide as I went to Jewish concerts, gave money to Jewish organizations, and for the first time in my adult life belonged to a Jewish community. After following diligently for years, I was thrilled to be given the opportunity to join the ACBP family as Slingshot's first Executive Director.

While the *Slingshot* resource guide may be our best-known product, Slingshot's most important legacy will be its impact on a generation of funders in their 20s and 30s who use their experience with Slingshot to explore and get involved with the Jewish community. Eight years after the first volume of *Slingshot*, our most core value is to follow Andrea and Charles Bronfman's example of empowering, supporting, and challenging a new generation of participants in their 20s. This value will allow Slingshot to continue to serve as an entry point for future generations, who will take Slingshot to new heights in the coming years.

In addition to Charles and Andrea, Slingshot owes a special debt of gratitude to the staff of ACBP, especially Jeffrey Solomon, John Hoover, Roger Bennett, and Sharna Goldseker, who made the vision of Slingshot a reality.

Best,



Will Schneider

Executive Director/Devoted Slingshot reader