

“The relationship between Israel and the United States cannot be taken for granted. Creative and bold action is needed so that the larger population, including younger generations, understand how each country can benefit from the other.”

*Eric J. Gertler, Chairman of the Board
Jonathan Barsade, President and Treasurer
Amb. Dan Gillerman, Chairman of the Board, Israel*

WHAT IS THE AMERICA-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE? The America-Israel Friendship League (AIFL) is a 50-year-old organization that operates like a new and nimble startup. While we remain true to our long-time mission of “making friends for Israel”, we constantly pivot and adjust to the changing times. Even as we continue to plan for the resumption of international travel activity for our influential persons and youth delegations in 2021, we have doubled down on virtual engagement to expand our base and renew interest from lapsed stakeholders as well.

Adaptive Leadership and Relationship Building During COVID-19 Crisis

When crisis hit the global Jewish community, the United States and Israel, and the world at large, AIFL turned this threat into an opportunity, seizing the moment to create new connections between Israelis and Americans of all backgrounds, and building a positive outlook and approach in an otherwise dark and challenging period.

This past year, AIFL has reimagined our people-to-people activities through webinars that we stream twice a week, featuring Americans and Israelis and covering a broad array of topics. The webinars are designed to both showcase the story of modern Israel and to emphasize the commonalities among the people of the two countries, by sharing examples of technical, social, medical, and artistic innovations that emanate from Israel and positively impact the world we live in.

New daily programs that were launched over the summer and fall—B’Tweens and B’Teens—bring together youth from both countries using virtual streaming technologies to enable peer-led educational and social activities.

All of AIFL’s efforts—old and new—aim to connect Americans and Israelis from all walks of life by showcasing our many common interests and values.

2020 AIFL Activities by the Numbers

The primary accomplishments of this initiative through the end of the year, include:

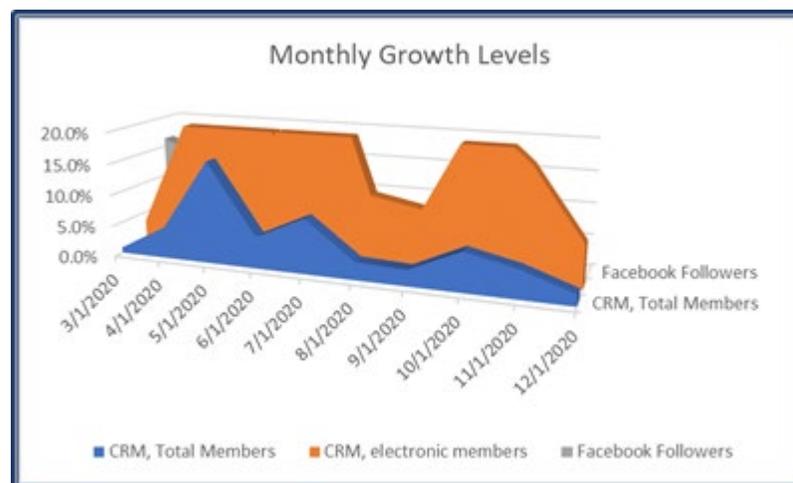
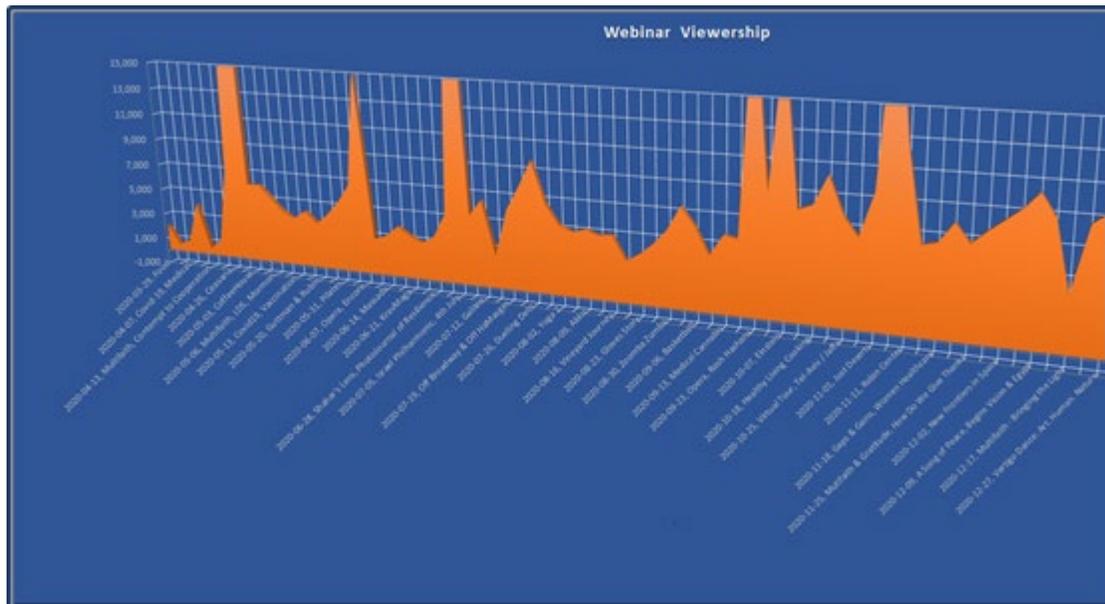
- Steady increase of participants on each webinar, from around 1,000 in March 2020 to over 7,500 viewers per webinar in December 2020;
 - Close to 600,000 unique viewers of AIFL webinars in 2020
 - A total of 80 unique webinars in 2020
 - Over this 9-month time period, our community/database of constituents has grown by over 50%
 - In 2020, AIFL also greatly increased our content and distribution partner network

2020/2021 Priorities

- **FRIENDS-IN-DEEDS WEBINAR SERIES**

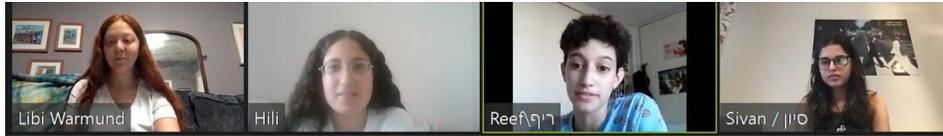
AIFL’s ongoing campaign of “Friends-in-Deeds” is anchored by livestream webinars connecting individuals from their homes in an array of live, interactive activities, from cooking to yoga and acoustic guitar concerts to Beit café sing-a-longs and virtual museum and site tours, to help build community

virtually and in many instances to provide a much-needed distraction and de-stressing from homebased quarantine. One of the keen insights AIFL learned from participants in the early weeks of the campaign is that there was a desire for both “thinking” and “doing” activities for the webinars, so we produce a mix of both.



During this period we have also enhanced the engagement levels per session to a sustained 20+% engagement, measured as a ratio of pro-active engagement with the session (comments, likes, shares) and the session viewers.

applicants. The campers', counselors', and parents' responses were overwhelmingly positive, and we plan to continue to engage this group next summer and throughout the year.



“From the first meeting, the administration of the program was fabulous, and the counselors were incredible. I was surprised to discover that my daughter was quick to remind me every day that she had a “Zoom” and sometimes skipped other activities in order to participate. -- Shirley, Parent of B’Twins Participant

- **B’TEENS TEENAGE SOCIAL NETWORK**

B’Teens is a platform being launched in October that connects teenagers from Israel and the U.S. and led by Israeli and American teens from the AIFL program network. The group meets twice a week to plan online activities that will engage their peers after school. Based on a peer-to-peer engagement model, this network of teens organizes weekly online sessions composed of social, cultural, and educational activities. B’Teens leverages the social media skills and engagement networks unique to Generation Z, as a way to generate savvy online content about Israel that is appealing to their demographic and later shared on popular social media channels including TikTok and Instagram.

- **SHOWCASING AND ENGAGING DELEGATION ALUMNI AT VIRTUAL PARLOR OUTREACH EVENTS**

When the Covid-19 crisis hit, AIFL launched an outreach effort to our thousands of delegation alumni around the country. By the summer, realizing that travel and large indoor gatherings would be on hold for the foreseeable future, this effort blossomed into virtual parlor meetings. AIFL first identified an anchor host(s) in a local community (Bethesda, MD; Long Island, NY; Chicago, IL; Tallahassee, FL and Northern New Jersey so far) and created a private, invite-only virtual event. The host(s) invited guests from their network to a free, curated, intimate program as an introduction to AIFL. In each of these events, AIFL invited an alumnus/a from a prior AIFL delegation to Israel (e.g. Influential Women Leaders, Youth Ambassador Student Exchange, etc.) to speak to the group, showed video clips from past and recent AIFL activity, and engaged attendees in a group discussion. Alumni speakers included prominent African American leaders including advocate and law professor Stefan Williams of John Jay College; Dr. Malou Chantal Harrison, President of Miami Dade Community College; and Dr. Nicol Turner-Lee of the Brookings Institution.

- **DISRUPTED DELEGATION ACTIVITY**

AIFL continues to monitor travel and health restrictions in the U.S. and Israel. We anticipate a return to our delegation activity, including previously scheduled and postponed delegations (e.g. Youth Ambassador Student Exchange, Youth Ambassador Technology Exchange, National Association of Attorneys General, National Conference of State Legislatures, and more by spring/summer 2021.

What our Stakeholders are Saying

“I need to say that AIFL webinars have helped make the pandemic period one of intellectual stimulation and growth.” -- Robin

“The COVID-19 pandemic has caused everyone to be resilient, creative, and flexible and to constantly adjust to the new normal. Your leadership is so greatly appreciated during this unprecedented challenging time.” -- Daniel