



2017 Annual Report

FORWARD@120 A Year of Transformation



Message from our CEO and Publisher, and Board Chair

“We have gone from being the Jewish Daily Forward, to becoming the Jewish 24-7 Forward.”

Dear Friends,

If our visionary founder Abraham (“Ab”) Cahan were alive today, he would kvell! In 2017, not only did the Forward reach the milestone birthday of 120 years, but we are reaching more readers than at any time in our history, with some of the most outstanding journalism we’ve ever published. And our readers are younger than ever: one-third of our audience is now under the age of thirty-five.

With the success of the Forward’s digital transformation, we have gone from being the Jewish **Daily** Forward, to becoming the Jewish **24-7** Forward. Now we not only have the capacity to report on events in real time, as they occur, but we can offer some of the most insightful, in-depth analysis found anywhere. Last summer, at the first sign that the demonstrations in Charlottesville were turning violent, we were able to quickly send a seasoned staff reporter to cover the events live. In fact, the Forward was the only Jewish publication to provide this level of coverage.

This past year, the Forward received considerable recognition from many of our peers in the news industry. In October 2017, the *New York Times* published an article on how “Anti-Semitism’s Rise Gives the Forward New Resolve.” Or as National Public Radio’s David Folkenflik stated in his interview with Jane Eisner in May 2017, “the Forward is a small publication with an outsized influence.” Furthermore, the Forward’s groundbreaking coverage of Sebastian Gorka’s ties to an anti-Semitic, Hungarian militia won us a prestigious Sigma Delta Chi award from the Society of Professional Journalists.

In July, we switched to a new format and introduced our beautiful glossy magazine – a change that has allowed the Forward to publish more feature-length stories, presented with beautiful photography and eye-catching

layouts from our award-winning design team. In print, the Forward may look different now, but the essentials haven’t changed: our commitment to fearless reporting, incomparable storytelling, and a deep dedication to the truth, all with a smart and sometimes provocative Jewish lens on the wider world.

Then in November, our 120th Anniversary Gala was a resounding success. Our sold-out event, honoring Samuel Norich’s twenty years of service, raised over \$1 million to support our world-class journalism at a time when a free, independent press matters more than ever. Truly, this event was a testament to the Forward’s continued value and meaning to the American Jewish community.

With the added depth of our news coverage, widened audience reach, successful launch of a beautiful magazine and so much more, 2017 has truly been a year of growth and transformation and we’re excited to see what lies ahead.

Thank you and zayt gesund,



Rachel Fishman Feddersen
CEO and Publisher



Jacob Morowitz
Board Chair












Rachel Fishman Feddersen



Jacob Morowitz

A Year of Achievement

<p>WEBSITE USERS</p> <p>2,171,921 Jan. 2017</p> <p>1,529,771 Jan. 2016</p> <p>42% GROWTH</p>	<p>DONATIONS</p> <p>\$1,906,391 2017</p> <p>\$1,467,505 2016</p> <p>32% GROWTH</p>	<p>FORWARD PRINT READERS</p>  <p>2017</p> <p>55,000</p>
<p>PAID SUBSCRIBERS</p> <p>13,000</p> <p>25% GROWTH</p>	<p>PAGE VIEWS</p> <p>5,633,769 Jan. 2017</p> <p>2,941,186 Jan. 2016</p> <p>92% GROWTH</p>	<p>AWARDS</p> <p>Number of prestigious Rockover Awards received, recognizing excellence by the American Jewish Press Association</p> <p>9</p>  <p>TOTAL AWARDS WON 19</p>
<p>FORWARD NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS</p>  <p>2017</p> <p>100,221</p>	<p>AVERAGE MONTHLY USERS</p>  <p>1,684,026 Jan. 2017</p> <p>1,585,819 Jan. 2016</p>	<p>פֿאַרווערטס</p>  <p>555,169</p> <p>NUMBER OF YIDDISH YOUTUBE VIEWS IN 2017</p> <p>868</p> <p>NUMBER OF ORIGINAL YIDDISH FORWARD ARTICLES IN 2017</p>
<p>SOCIAL MEDIA REACH</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="284 1648 544 1900">  <p>98,026</p> <p>followers in 2017</p> </div> <div data-bbox="755 1648 1015 1900">  <p>51,704</p> <p>followers in 2017</p> </div> </div>		<p>2 </p> <p>YIDDISH AWARDS WON</p> <p>264 </p> <p>NUMBER OF YIDDISH BLOG POSTS IN 2017</p>

The Forward Association gratefully acknowledges the individuals and organizations listed, whose gifts made between January 1 and December 31, 2017, enabled the Forward to inform, connect, and inspire American Jews with exceptional, independent journalism.

Thank you

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE \$100,000 OR MORE

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Estate of Jean Appleton
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continued on page 12



Kathleen Peratis, Sam Norich, Caryl Ratner, Jake Morowitz



Lynne Galler, Sam Norich, Hezzy Dattner

Outstanding Jewish Journalism Through the Years



1897
Jewish Daily Forward publishes its first issue under the leadership of founder Abraham (“Ab”) Cahan.

1902

“Bravo, Jewish women!” The Forward applauds the 20,000+ women in the Lower East Side who took to the streets to protest an unconscionable increase in the price of kosher meat.

1906

Bintl Brief advice column begins.



1911

The Forward Association builds its 12-story skyscraper at 175 East Broadway.



1911

146 low-wage workers, most of them young women and girls, perish in a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Ab Cahan’s editorials crying out for justice help lead to the enactment of America’s first workplace safety laws.

1913

Leo Frank, a Jewish superintendent at an Atlanta pencil factory, is wrongly convicted of murdering employee Mary Phagan. Ab Cahan’s editorials help bring this miscarriage of justice to national attention. In August 1915, Frank is dragged from his jail cell and lynched.

1925

The Forward’s daily circulation tops 275,000, higher than that of The New York Times.

1927

The Forward launches WEVD, “the station that speaks your language.”



1934

In response to the rise of Nazism in Germany, the Forward Association helps establish the Jewish Labor Committee in collaboration with Jewish labor leaders, to mobilize public opinion against the Nazi threat; helps elect Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia.



1935

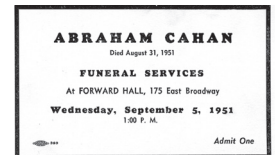
Isaac Bashevis Singer arrives in the U.S. from Warsaw and begins writing a regular column for the Forward, which continues until his death in 1991.

1939

The Forward carries the first reports of the mass murder of Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland.

1945

The Forward begins publishing the names of survivors collected in the DP camps, facilitating the reunification of thousands of Jewish families.



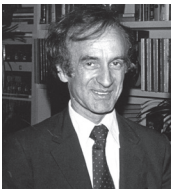
1951

The death of Ab Cahan. Condolence letters arrive at the Forward from heads of state and major cultural figures from around the world.



1953

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are executed for the crime of espionage. The Forward had earlier criticized the Rosenbergs for their actions, but condemned their death sentences as an expression of anti-Semitism.



1967

As a Forward staff writer, Elie Wiesel writes a series of thoughtful essays for the Forward about Israel's victory in the Six-Day War and its implications for Israel's future.



1970

The Forward rails against the killing of four students, three of whom were Jewish, at Kent State in a protest against the Vietnam War, which the Forward called "legalized mass murder."



1970s and 80s

The Forward covers the plight of Soviet Jews and the efforts by worldwide Jewry to reestablish contact with them and reawaken Jewish culture in the Soviet Union.

1978

Isaac Bashevis Singer wins Nobel Prize for literature. Forward extends its "mazel tov" not only to Singer but to all readers and writers of Yiddish.

1986

Anatoly Scharansky emigrates from the USSR. "No other activist struggling for human rights was so brutally punished by the Soviets ... But this emaciated, tortured young man ... was unbreakable! His Jewish pride and spiritual bravery attracted the free world to his struggle."



1990

The Forward launches its weekly English language edition.

1996

The Forward launches its website, Forward.com.



1997

Samuel Norich joins the Forward, becomes General Manager, Publisher, and later, President.

2006

Forward journalist Nathaniel Popper investigates the Agriprocessors kosher slaughtering plant in Postville, Iowa. His reports of labor abuses and food safety violations lead to federal investigations and prosecution of company owners.

2008

Jane Eisner becomes the first woman editor-in-chief of the Forward.



2015

At the height of the debate in the U.S. regarding the Iran nuclear agreement, Larry Cohler-Esses becomes first journalist from the Jewish press to report from inside Iran since its 1979 Islamic revolution.



Jane Eisner interviews President Obama in the Oval Office, becoming the first journalist from the Jewish media ever to interview a sitting president.



2016

Rachel Fishman Feddersen becomes the first woman publisher and CEO of the Forward; Rukhl Schaechter becomes the first woman editor of the Yiddish Forverts.



2017

The Forward celebrates 120 years of outstanding Jewish journalism.

In May, the Forward launches its paymeter on Forward.com

In July, the Forward launches its monthly magazine in place of the weekly newspaper.



Journalistic Highlights

“The Forward is a small publication with an outsized influence.”
— David Folkenflik, NPR



SEBASTIAN GORKA

The breadth of the Forward’s award-winning journalism and the depth of its impact on American Jewish life have never been more evident than during 2017. Early in the year, the Forward broke the story about **Sebastian Gorka**, President Trump’s top counter-terrorism adviser, and his connections with a Hungarian far-right, anti-Semitic group with historic ties to the Nazis. Major news outlets around the country praised the Forward’s exclusive coverage of this story, and our series of articles sparked a process that led, ultimately, to Gorka’s departure from the Administration.

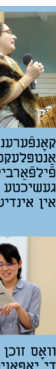
CHARLOTTESVILLE

At the first sign that last summer’s white nationalist **demonstrations in Charlottesville** were turning violent, the Forward immediately sent a staff reporter who filed reports live from the scene of the action. In fact, we were the only Jewish publication to cover this critical story in real time. In true Forward fashion, our writer fearlessly interviewed “alt right” leader Richard Spencer, attended a rally for David Duke, and later wrote sensitively about the ongoing impact of the riots on Charlottesville’s Jewish community.

COLLEGE GUIDE

In another major achievement, two Forward reporters made use of their finely tuned research skills to create the first-ever **College Guide for Jewish Students**. They compared data from over 170 American colleges and universities regarding Jewish student life, relationship to Israel, Jewish academic opportunities, and cost. Our guide, which will be continuously updated online, is the first in-depth guide of its kind and clearly fills a void based on the overwhelmingly positive response we received from students, parents and university professionals.

“We’re journalists first in this job but we’re also Americans, and we’re also Jews. And we can’t help feeling affected in all three ways.” — *Jane Eisner, Editor-in-Chief*



THE FORVERTS

In 2017, the Forward began to translate and publish more content from **the Forverts, our Yiddish publication**, into English, which attracted a greater audience to the Forverts. This included the award-winning story, “Finally, Der Nister Gets a Gravestone,” which told a thrilling adventure tale of the quest to locate and mark the grave of one of the 20th century’s greatest Yiddish writers, Pinkhes ben Menakhem-Mendl Kahanovich, who wrote under the pen name Der Nister. Persecuted under Stalin, he had died under mysterious circumstance in a Gulag near the Arctic Circle in 1950, in what had until now been an unmarked grave.

JEWISH CULTURE

Our coverage of Jewish culture in 2017 was as vibrant as ever. In “How Modigliani’s Jewishness Informed His Art,” we took a deep dive into the Jewish Museum’s recent retrospective and explored how the artist’s Jewishness and outsider status in France influenced his work. Did Modigliani’s Jewish origins play a role in his rejecting the notion of European cultural superiority? If so, was this evident during the artist’s lifetime, or is it something we can only observe with 20-20 hindsight?

AMERICA’S CONSCIENCE

Lastly Abraham Cahan, our founding editor, would be pleased to see that his 21st century counterpart is carrying on the Forward’s tradition of helping American Jews navigate a changing society. At a time when American political norms and press freedoms have been threatened like never before, Jane Eisner, the Forward’s editor-in-chief, has helped our community to make sense of it all. Her November 2017 editorial, **“One Year After Trump’s Election, Who Are We?”** provided a soul-searching analysis of the challenges facing American Jews of all political persuasions. Jane urged the community to see past our polarization and to continue to act as America’s conscience. This is a challenge that, for 120 years, the Forward has eagerly embraced.

Forward Initiatives

Today, one-third of our readers are under the age of 35



NEXT GENERATION INITIATIVE

In the spring of 2016, the Forward undertook our Next Generation Initiative with the goal of engaging the next generation of young Jewish readers. To accomplish this, the Forward launched an ambitious digital transformation geared to meaningfully connecting these young adults with Jewish ideas, Jewish culture, and Jewish life. Just as in 1990 when we launched our English edition, with the goal of attracting a new younger generation of Jews, today we are reaching young people where they spend much of their time: in the digital universe. The Forward has developed content specifically designed to fit our varied media platforms, including print, our website (www.forward.com), our dedicated email newsletters, and Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, among others. These efforts are clearly succeeding. Today, one-third of our readers are under the age of 35. Your support of this initiative will:

- Allow the Forward to deepen our impact with our readers by expanding our news coverage.
- Attract and retain a top-notch social media team that will enable the Forward to reach the largest audience possible, especially younger readers.
- Support a technology infrastructure to enable our journalists to succeed in today's competitive digital marketplace.

SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

For over 120 years, the Forward has stood for the idea that great journalism has the power to change the world. By holding the powerful to account, by including voices not heard elsewhere, and by calling attention to critical social issues, we are helping to fulfill both American democratic principles and the Jewish prophetic imperative to repair the world. A gift designated for the Forward's Social Justice Initiative will support the kind of bold journalism that manifests those values; uncovering wrongdoing within an otherwise trusted institution, opinion pieces that express the perspectives of those who might otherwise be marginalized, or stories that raise awareness of economic inequality, environmental degradation, human rights or racial justice issues. Your gift will support:

- The rising costs of attracting and retaining top journalists and editors.
- The expenses incurred by sending Forward staff reporters on location to provide first-hand news coverage.
- The Forward's ability to bring a broad range of voices to the table.

We now have the capacity to reach a wider, younger audience, capturing the voices and attracting the attention of a new generation.

CELEBRATING YIDDISH INITIATIVE

Founded in 1897, the Yiddish Daily Forward, or Forverts, now thrives well into the 21st century by adapting to the needs of a changing audience. Our current Yiddish publications—both our monthly print and our daily online editions—showcase some of our most lively content, including entertaining and informative videos with English subtitles, and a broad range of stories covering every aspect of the Yiddish-speaking world. The Forverts is the living embodiment of the vibrant Yiddish culture of today and tomorrow. The majority of our Yiddish readers today

are relatively young students of the language who have found a source of pride in Yiddish culture, viewing it as an essential part of their Jewish identity. A gift to our Yiddish publication does more than preserve our connection to the Yiddish past; it helps ensure that the Forverts can celebrate Yiddishkeit for many years to come:

- By strengthening our Yiddish digital and print editions.
- By paying for writers and translators.
- By supporting the production of new Yiddish videos.



120th Anniversary Gala



From left to right: Claudio Pincus, Rabbi Leonard Sharzer, Lois Sharzer, Ann Applebaum, Penny Pincus



Forward Publisher & CEO, Rachel Fishman Feddersen presenting the award to President, Sam Norich

Nothing says 120 years of outstanding journalism better than the Forward's 2017 Gala! This sold out event successfully raised over \$1million.



Sam Norich, Fran Drescher, Deborah & Jim Veach



Andrea Mitchell accepting her award by video



Sam Norich, Dorian Goldman, Patti Kenner



Daniel Kahn



Forverts Editor, Rukhl Schaechter

This landmark year also gave us an opportunity to acknowledge Samuel Norich's 20 years of service to the Forward with the Abraham Cahan Lifetime Achievement Award.



Ed Blank, Fran Drescher, Marta Gucovsky



Gila Norich, Sam Norich, Deborah Ugoretz, Nessa Norich



Letty, Bert and Abigail Pogrebin



Jane Eisner, Fran Drescher, Rachel Fishman Feddersen



Fran Drescher, Rachel Fishman Feddersen



Gette Shay, Judah Fischer



Ben Smith, accepting his award



Robert F. Kennedy, Norman Furman, General Manager of WEVD



Subway Archive



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Abraham Cahan was a visionary. From the moment he founded the Forward in 1897, he set out to change American journalism and earned a place in the pantheon of America's greatest newspaper editors. His legacy of activism and hope for the Jewish future continues to inspire us today. In his honor, we have founded the Abraham Cahan Society.

“Giving is always gratifying,” says our President, Sam Norich. “But it’s even more meaningful when you’re helping to extend the life of a treasured community asset that’s been part of our families for generations—and is still making an impact today.”

We thank those who joined the Abraham Cahan Society by making a legacy gift to the Forward.

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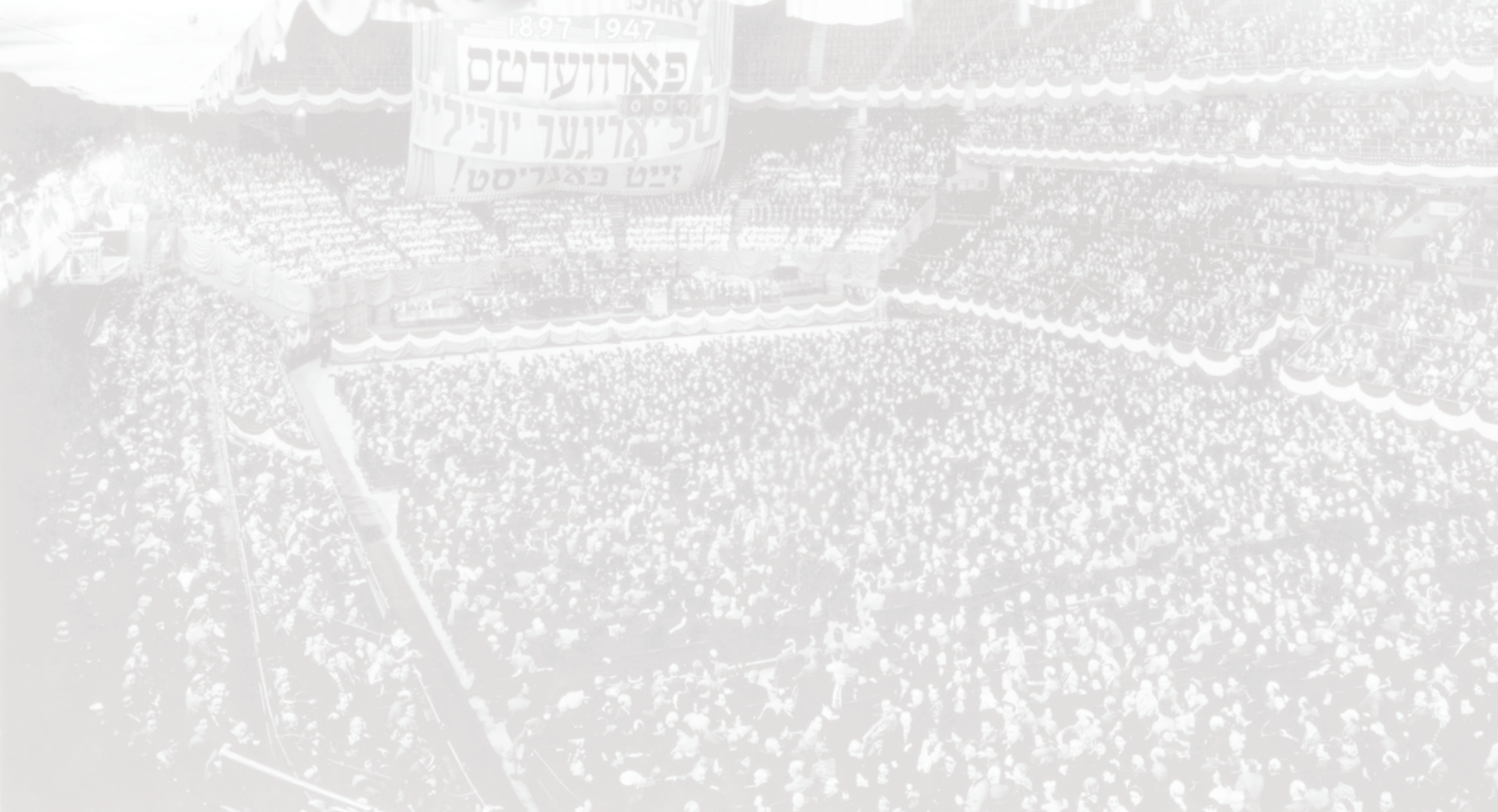
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Management	1,523,587
Fundraising	959,707
Print and Digital Media English	5,526,344
Print and Digital Media Yiddish	577,120
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TOTAL	8,586,758

Revenue

Advertising	675,341
Print subs & newstand sales	862,288
Fundraising	1,906,391
Other	227,465
Funds drawn from investment accounts	4,915,273
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TOTAL	8,586,758

*Excluding Depreciation expense.



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