

HERE WE ARE  
SEND US

**MAZON**

A Jewish Response  
To Hunger

Dear Friends,

**“Here I am. Send me.”** (Isaiah 6:8)

The world is in chaos. Someone must act to repair it in the face of great risk and ongoing assaults. In response to this need, this is Isaiah’s reply to God: “Here I am. Send me.” These words hold the same inspiring power today as they must have thousands of years ago. As champions for those who struggle, who experience derision, bullying, and ever-increasing efforts to intimidate and exclude them — this is our work. When others cannot go, we take up their cause and act on their behalf. When our country seems to be devolving into one we no longer recognize as the hope and inspiration of the world, this is when we must step up. This is what it means to be an advocate for others.

Here we are, as a community of individuals, partner organizations, religious institutions, clergy leaders and more, stepping up together to confront the great injustice that is hunger, and declaring together: Here we are. Send us.

In these pages, we explore our vision and intention, and how we’ve brought them to bear on the needs facing our communities. For over thirty years, we have been building a network of relationships that allows us to carry out our work with a deep foundation of expertise. With an ear to the ground and an eye for the missing details, we surface and spotlight issues — and people — that have gone unaddressed by the greater anti-hunger movement. We build capacity in our partners and in our community to be stronger advocates, filling regional, strategic, and moral voids. We educate, and ask that people educate their communities, in the hopes of bringing about systemic change rooted in compassion. We protect and strengthen policies with a proven track record of lifting people out of poverty. You’ll hear from our partners, and you’ll see time marked in tangible successes. And ultimately, we hope you hear that still, small voice saying, “Send me.”

Sincerely,



Liz Kanter Groskind

BOARD CHAIR



Abby J. Leibman

PRESIDENT & CEO

# SENIORS

For a shocking number of seniors nationwide — at least 10 million — hunger is a daily reality. MAZON is working to see that number shrink, and to address the unique barriers that LGBT seniors face as they try to access the food they need with the dignity they deserve.

This year, we stepped up to influence the **Older Americans Act** reauthorization, which includes provisions to improve food assistance to seniors, and began the hard work of data collection and assistance for **LGBT seniors** struggling with hunger. We elevated the issue of senior hunger at our National Hunger Seder at the U.S. Capitol, which every year includes several Members of Congress with the power to address senior hunger. In the coming year, we look forward to continuing our work to advance policies that make **accessing food easier** for struggling seniors and removing discriminatory barriers faced by LGBT seniors through the Inclusive Aging Act, the Elder Pride Act, and the Ruthie & Connie LGBT Elder Americans Act.



1 IN 7 SENIORS LIVES IN POVERTY



“Most of us in the gay community never thought we’d end up poor. But many of us don’t have the support system as we age that straight people do. And if sickness comes along, it can drain all your money in one day. That’s what happened to me. To be standing in a line with people who need food, no way did I ever think I’d be in this position.”

— Barbara, an LGBT senior in New York

MAZON works to build the Jewish community's capacity to change the systems that perpetuate hunger. Together with our synagogue, clergy, and Jewish community partners nationwide, MAZON is working to build the nation's understanding about who struggles with hunger and why, and how we can create the change we know is possible.

### Jewish Clergy Justice Mission

While charity is an important part of making sure people get food on the table, we must step up and use our voices to **change the system** that allows people to be hungry. MAZON works with our national network of **Jewish clergy** to make sure that the Jewish response to hunger is as powerful and resonant as possible. Our 2019 Jewish Clergy Justice Mission brought more than a dozen rabbis and cantors representing multiple denominations to Washington, D.C. for a day of learning about hunger in America through a Jewish lens, **advocacy and policy training**, and legislative meetings on Capitol Hill.



Jewish Clergy Justice Mission participants met with more than **50 Members of Congress**



“Bringing Judaism’s moral voice to bear on the national dialogue is not only confined to sermons. That is why I have joined with fellow rabbis and cantors from around the country to participate in MAZON’s Jewish Clergy Justice Mission. I am proud that as a result of our advocacy, 60 Members of Congress signed a letter opposing changes to federal programs that would have a devastating impact on hungry people in America.”

— **Rabbi Michael Singer**, spiritual leader at Congregation Brith Sholom of Bethlehem, PA, and Chairperson of the Rabbinical Assembly Food Justice Committee

# THIS IS HUNGER™

A community engagement program of MAZON | A Jewish Response to Hunger

## This Is Hunger: Digital

Learning about hunger — who experiences it and how we can solve it — is an essential building block of changing policy. That's why we created our powerful **This Is Hunger** experiential exhibit — to illuminate the profound prevalence of hunger in America and ignite our community's commitment to end hunger once and for all. This year we released our This Is Hunger: Digital experience, to bring the **stories of six Americans** struggling with hunger directly to schools, synagogues, communities, and homes nationwide.

## National Hunger Seder

Our annual National Hunger Seder brings the issue of hunger **directly to Congress** in an engaging, and values-driven event. Bringing together Members of Congress from the House and Senate, subject-matter and policy experts, and members of the Jewish clergy, our National Hunger Seder has become an **important touchstone** for legislators to engage with, and recommit to, the issue of hunger each year.

# JEWISH COMMUNITY



Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (IL-09) speaks during MAZON's 2019 National Hunger Seder

"We can end hunger in our lifetime. We have the food. We have the know-how. What we need is the political will. And I'm so grateful to MAZON for helping to build a movement that demands change. Seeing MAZON's work and the partners they bring to the table truly makes me believe that there's a light at the end of the tunnel."

— Congressman Jim McGovern (MA-02),  
Chairman of the House Rules Committee,  
member of the House Agriculture Committee

# STUDENTS

Access to nutritious food is fundamental to learning. MAZON works to ensure that no student, no matter their circumstance, faces hunger as a barrier to success.

## College Hunger

Hunger among college students is a pervasive problem, one that MAZON has been working to **elevate and eradicate** for years. The issue was not officially recognized by the federal government until January 2019 when the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its report on the issue — **spurred by MAZON advocacy.**

The results were shocking:



**TWO THIRDS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS AREN'T SURE WHERE THEIR NEXT MEAL IS COMING FROM**

# 2 MILLION

**AT-RISK STUDENTS WHO QUALIFY FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE ARE NOT RECEIVING BENEFITS**



In response to this wide-spread lack of access to nutritious food, MAZON:

- Organized the **Congressional Briefing: “Hungry in College: Food Insecurity on American Campuses,”** in conjunction with the release of the GAO report.
- Co-sponsored and helped draft **28 bills** at the federal and state levels aimed at addressing the causes of college student hunger.



### Lunch Shaming

MAZON was the first national organization to elevate and address the practice of “lunch shaming” through its 2014 work in Minnesota, co-leading the first successful campaign to expose and ban such practices. MAZON leveraged this success to pass **anti-lunch shaming legislation** in California, and assisted partners in New Mexico and Oregon in passing their own anti-lunch shaming bills. Now this unacceptable practice is being fought at the federal level, an important step to ending “lunch shaming” once and for all. This year, MAZON was a crucial voice in crafting the **“No Shame at School Act,”** a bill introduced in the House of Representatives, which makes significant strides to address the cruelty faced by students when their families cannot afford school lunch.

**LUNCH SHAMING** doesn’t just happen — it flourishes in ever more creative and cruel forms. Students who are unable to pay are regularly subjected to:



Going through the lunch line only to have their trays of food dumped in the trash and being given half of a cheese sandwich as a replacement;



Being branded with a hand stamp with the word “money” or “low balance;”



Exclusion from school activities — even graduation ceremonies — because of accrued debt.

# VETERANS & MILITARY FAMILIES

An unacceptable number of veterans and currently-serving military families struggle to keep enough nutritious food on their tables and can't access the programs that would help them do so. MAZON is leading the charge to address these issues head-on.

In 2019, MAZON crafted the **Military Family Basic Needs Allowance**, a legislative proposal to help military families put food on the table. MAZON engaged Congresswoman Susan Davis (CA-53) and Senator Tammy Duckworth (IL) as champions for this proposal, and worked closely with the National Military Family Association to draft and advocate for this policy solution to the long-ignored problem of military hunger. We secured the inclusion of this provision in the House National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

As part of this effort, MAZON appeared on **NBC's The Today Show** and **NBC Nightly News** as a leader on the issue of hunger among currently serving military families. This national news piece led to **17 articles** in publications around the country.



“Every year, we spend billions to ensure that our Nation’s service members are trained and equipped to defend our country and her interests at home and abroad. But all too often we forget about the cost associated with the battles those service members, their spouses, and their families are facing at home, and we should not be adding to their burdens by having them worry if their child is going to bed hungry.”

— **Representative Don Young** (R-AK),  
Statement submitted to and read during  
MAZON’s Military Hunger telephonic press  
conference, July 2019



“We’ve identified that there are food pantries on or near almost every military base in this country. And there’s nothing wrong with going to a food pantry when you need emergency help, but there’s no reason that those who are serving in the armed forces should have to do that on a routine basis.”

— Josh Protas, MAZON Vice-President of Public Policy, quoted on NBC



**1 IN 3 CHILDREN AT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE-RUN SCHOOLS ON MILITARY BASES IN THE UNITED STATES — MORE THAN 6,500 CHILDREN — ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCHES.**

# CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE U.S. & ISRAEL

MAZON has made it a priority to build anti-hunger infrastructures in the United States and Israel that are capable of both meeting the urgent and immediate needs of people struggling with hunger and achieving the vision of long-term food security for all.

## United States

In the United States, MAZON's Emerging Advocacy Fund (EAF) is enjoying important successes in its second year of **funding anti-hunger advocates** in 11 of the 15 most food insecure states in the nation. In 2019, MAZON hosted its first Emerging Advocacy Fund **convening in Washington, D.C.** MAZON partners met to collaborate with each other and report on their anti-hunger work in **rural America** in a Congressional Briefing.

## Israel

We have made great strides in our work to build awareness of the scope of the issue of hunger in Israel among the broader **Israeli civil society movement.** This work has deepened the movement's understanding of the role the Israeli government can and should play in combatting hunger throughout the country.



90,000  
PEOPLE



in **MISSISSIPPI** can now access the food they need due to the hard work of a coalition formed by MAZON-funded anti-hunger advocates, who overturned a lifetime ban on people with drug felonies accessing SNAP.

“The connections between anti-hunger advocates in politically similar states that MAZON has fostered through the Emerging Advocacy Fund have been exceptionally valuable to our work. I know from my conversations with my peers and from my own experience, that MAZON’s work has been a powerful force behind new coalitions and louder voices that are working together with communities that face hunger to make sure that our anti-hunger policies meet the needs of the people they serve.”

— Danny Mintz, Louisiana Budget Project

## IT’S HARD TO BE HUNGRY, HARDER STILL TO BE HUNGRY AND ASHAMED.

In 2019, MAZON fought for policies and programs with proven track records of success in the face of unprecedented attacks. These attacks threatened to use federal regulations to damage national safety-net programs and take life-saving assistance away from millions of Americans.

Who would be hurt in these attacks? **Veterans** struggling to feed themselves while looking for work, **families** working to lift themselves out of poverty, **children** who rely on school meals to learn and thrive, and **seniors** who already face heightened barriers to getting the help they need. All told, our efforts protect vital food assistance for over **2,000,000 people in need.**

MAZON submitted public comments informed by our decades of expertise, led an interfaith coalition, provided support to our partners, and joined a brief filed in federal court to **oppose these proposed rule changes** that would make it harder for vulnerable people to feed themselves and their families with dignity.

MAZON organized three Congressional sign-on letters to oppose these rule changes, resulting in

**145** SIGNATURES   
FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS



**41 INDIVIDUALS & ORGANIZATIONS CITED MAZON’S LEADERSHIP AND EXPERTISE** in their opposition to these harmful attacks.

# RURAL, REMOTE & TRIBAL NATIONS

The impact of the removal of indigenous people from their homelands and traditional food sources is still felt today. Native American families have limited access to culturally relevant and healthy food, and suffer from some of the highest rates of hunger, diabetes, and obesity in the country. We are proud to stand alongside our partners and lift up Native-led solutions that will lead to food secure tribal nations.

As the first non-Native organization to join the **Native Farm Bill Coalition**, we've used our platform this year to press for legislation supporting the ability of tribes to feed themselves by developing their own food and agriculture systems.

Currently we are working on **omnibus legislation** that seeks to reverse the chronic and **severe underfunding** of Native American programs within the federal budget. With our partner, the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, we are drafting food-policy provisions to include in this legislation, which did not originally address any anti-hunger concerns.



“The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative is incredibly grateful for MAZON’s continued support and genuine partnership to find Tribally driven solutions to food insecurity issues in Indian Country. This is exemplified by MAZON’s approach to directly engage IFAI and Tribal stakeholders, respectfully listen and learn about the Tribal-specific concerns, and thoughtfully ask how they can best lend support.”

— Colby D. Duren, Director, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, University of Arkansas

**1** IN **4** NATIVE AMERICANS  
STRUGGLES WITH FOOD  
INSECURITY

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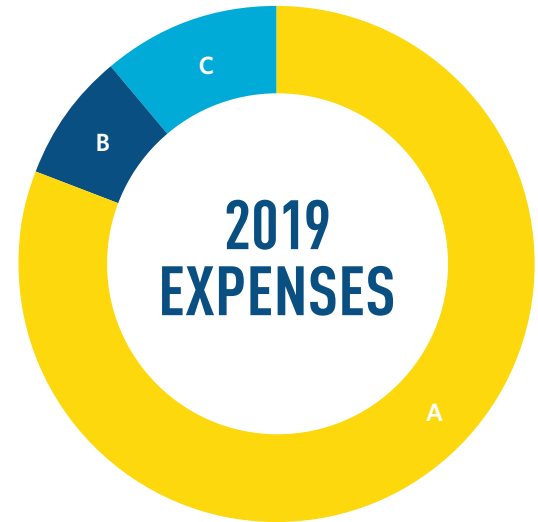
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*Founder, MAZON:  
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## PRESIDENT & CEO

**Abby J. Leibman**

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<sup>o</sup> Past Chair



**A** Programs **81%**

**B** Administration **8%**

**C** Fundraising **11%**

<b>STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Without Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>With Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>			
Grants and contributions	\$6,276,229	\$354,424	\$6,630,653
Special events, net of direct benefit of costs of \$8,906	100,779	-	100,770
Net investment return	132,483	-	132,483
Interest income	63,227	-	63,227
Net assets released from restriction	520,172	(520,172)	-
<b>Total revenues, gains and other support</b>	<b>7,092,881</b>	<b>(165,748)</b>	<b>6,927,133</b>
<b>FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES</b>			
Program services	5,352,956	-	5,352,956
Support Services			
Management and general	508,789	-	508,789
Fundraising	775,816	-	775,816
<b>Total support services</b>	<b>1,284,605</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,284,605</b>
<b>Total functional expenses</b>	<b>6,637,561</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,637,561</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	455,320	(165,748)	289,572
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	4,209,307	1,535,354	5,744,661
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>4,664,627</b>	<b>\$1,369,606</b>	<b>\$6,034,233</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2018	2019
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$3,438,756	\$3,580,632
Investments	2,381,753	2,692,696
Prepaid and other assets	221,907	139,594
Property and equipment, net	22,644	38,612
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$6,065,060</b>	<b>\$6,451,534</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$98,275	\$76,546
Accrued personnel costs	80,357	106,939
Grants payable	10,000	50,000
Deferred rent	131,767	183,816
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$320,399</b>	<b>\$417,301</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions	\$4,209,307	\$4,664,627
With donor restrictions	1,535,354	1,369,606
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$5,744,661</b>	<b>\$6,034,233</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$6,065,060</b>	<b>\$6,451,534</b>

Full financials available at [mazon.org/financials](https://mazon.org/financials)

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We are deeply grateful for the generous support of our donors.

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MAZON recognizes and honors our supporters who express their commitment to fighting hunger by including MAZON in their estate and financial plans. We are grateful to these loyal donors for their sustaining support.

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