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Academic Excellence Among Top Funding Goals of New Family Foundation at the Jewish Foundation of Memphis



Burton Weil

Memphis philanthropist Burton Weil in partnership with the Jewish Foundation of Memphis has established the Burton Weil Family Foundation, setting in motion what will become one of the city's largest Foundations and will be a philanthropic force for generations to come.

"The Burton Weil Family Foundation is a major philanthropic investment that will benefit our community for generations. Its significance cannot be overstated," said Laura Linder, president and chief executive officer, Jewish Community Partners. "Burton has created a foundation with a strategic goal of funding organizations and programs that will strengthen our city. We are grateful and pleased that Burton has chosen the Jewish Foundation as his partner to carry out his vision."

The Burton Weil Family Foundation is another important philanthropic example for families that have a commitment to charitable giving.

"A donor advised fund or a family foundation such as Burton's are popular ways for parents and grandparents to instill a sense of charitable giving in the next generation," said Linder. "Regardless of its size, a family fund is a great vehicle for donors to finalize their legacy and teach their children and grandchildren about the importance of philanthropy and achieving charitable goals."

Which is an important part of the reason why Weil created the Burton Weil Family Foundation. Through the Foundation he can formalize his giving, engage his children, and identify opportunities for investing in move-the-needle programs.

The first major investment of the Burton Weil Family Foundation addresses an important priority of Weil: academic excellence. The Weil Scholars program is a unique academic effort established to attract some of the nation's top-performing students to the University of Memphis. Unlike other academic initiatives at the University of Memphis (UofM), the Weil Scholars Program - acceptance of which is based on academic merit – will offer opportunities to undergraduate students, graduate students, and students at the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. The program will also benefit medical students at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center School of Medicine.

"The Weil Scholars program will be transformative for the University of Memphis as it attracts some of the nation's highest performing students," said Linder "Burton's commitment to the University could grow to be the largest gift ever given to the University of Memphis in support of its academic endeavors."

Initial plans call for selection of 12 incoming freshmen, 10 graduate students and two law students at the University of Memphis, plus two medical students at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) as part of the inaugural Weil Scholars program for the fall of 2024. This will be followed by a second cohort of students for the fall of 2025, including another 12 incoming freshmen, 10 graduate students, two University of Memphis law students, and two UTHSC medical students. Students selected to be part of the Weil Scholars program annually will receive renewable academic scholarships to help cover the costs of tuition and fees through the completion of their degree programs. Top-performing Masters and Doctoral students will be selected from applicants in the areas of biomedical engineering, business administration, computer science, data science, engineering, or public health.

Part of the significance of the Weil Scholars program is that historically up to 90 percent of University of Memphis graduates, and a significant portion of graduates at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center School of Medicine remain in the Memphis community.

"The breadth and depth of this program's reach will have a lasting impact on the UofM and will elevate our national recruitment efforts," said University President Bill Hardgrave. "The Weil Fellows Program encourages students who are passionate about innovation and leadership to choose the UofM. This initiative, which supports the pil-



lars of our strategic plan, will be instrumental as we continue to distinguish the University of Memphis as a nationally recognized R1 research institution."

Weil earned his Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Memphis in 1966, and his law degree from Vanderbilt University. He later founded Venture Associates Partners, a private equity firm. In 2023, he established the Burton Weil Family Foundation at the Jewish Foundation, which will fund the Weil Scholars Programs. Weil said he created the Weil Scholars Program because of his desire to help strengthen the City of Memphis by empowering its future leaders through the University of Memphis.

"It's a privilege for me to help these outstanding students by providing them with the financial support they need so they can develop their talents and pursue their passions," said Weil. "It is my hope that they will grow to love Memphis as much as I do."

For more information, please contact Laura Linder, Jewish Community Partners, 901-767-7100.

www.memphis.edu/weilscholars~HW

Schumer Says He Would Welcome Netanyahu to Address Congress, One Week after Saying the Israeli Leader has 'Lost His Way'



Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a New York Democrat, meets with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, Feb. 23, 2021. Credit: Amos Ben-Gershom/Israel Government Press Office

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Days after calling for new elections in Israel and saying that the country's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is an "obstacle to peace" and has "lost his way," Sen. Chuck Schumer said he would welcome Netanyahu to address a joint session of Congress.

Schumer's statement, sent to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency via a spokesman, came after Rep. Mike Johnson, the speaker of the House of Representatives, said he was ready to invite Netanyahu to speak to Congress. To do that, he had to get approval from Schumer, the Jewish Democratic majority leader

from New York.

Schumer saw Johnson on CNBC last Thursday and almost immediately relayed his answer: He would welcome the speech. Notably, his statement did not name Netanyahu and made a point of saying he would extend the invitation to anyone holding the prime minister's office.

"Israel has no stronger ally than the United States and our relationship transcends any one president or any one Prime Minister," said Schumer in the statement. "I will always welcome the opportunity

(See Schumer Page 3)