AMERICAN FRIENDS OF MAGEN DAVID ADOM
ANNUAL REPORT 2020
Keeping Israelis healthy, no matter the crisis.
Ever since there’s been an IDF protecting Israel, there’s been an MDA ensuring their health.

Magen David Adom has been saving lives since 1930, some 18 years before Israel became a state.

We take immense pride in being Israel’s national emergency medical service and in supplying the blood and medical care for the soldiers who have ensured Israel’s existence.

Save a life in Israel. Support Magen David Adom at afmda.org or call 800.626.0046.
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A message from MDA’s Director-General Eli Bin

To our cherished American friends and supporters,

The year 2020 was unlike any we’d ever experienced before — a pandemic the likes of which the world hasn’t seen since our grandparents’ or great-grandparents’ days.

For those of us working at Magen David Adom, the year was particularly challenging. But it was also greatly validating, demonstrating to us, to all Israelis, and the rest of the world the effectiveness of MDA’s approach to pre-hospital emergency care. From the outset of the pandemic in Israel, MDA’s men and women were at the forefront. In fact, in the earliest days of the outbreak, the Ministry of Health authorized MDA to handle all pre-hospital care for Covid patients, a testament to the faith Israel had in our training and our obsessive culture of preparedness.

On day one, our EMTs and paramedics knew how to properly treat and transport patients with infectious diseases — all while protecting themselves from infection — because we’ve trained for this very scenario, whether it was in the context of an epidemic or a biological warfare agent.

Our emphasis on technological innovation also proved invaluable as we increased our call-taking capacity 13-fold literally overnight, something we could accomplish only by our belief in creating redundancies in our tech systems. And, when Covid cases forced some of our own dispatchers into isolation as a precautionary measure, they were able to work from home, dispatching calls from their living rooms with virtually no change in their daily procedures or compromises to the security of the system.

In addition, when we discovered some Covid patients suffering from silent hypoxia, drastic drops in blood oxygen saturation levels without the typical symptoms of shortness of breath, we developed remote monitoring technology. That innovation enables paramedics working in MDA’s National Operations Center to spot changes in patient’s vitals while the patient is being transported in ambulances to hospital — even if the changes are sudden and immediately escape the notice of attending EMTs. On numerous occasions, that technology saved lives, including spotting the early, pre-symptomatic signs of pending heart attacks.

Several months into the pandemic, we led the nation in testing Israelis for coronavirus to help stem the spread of the disease, testing thousands of people in their homes and, ultimately, testing more than 4.5 million Israelis at drive-through and walk-in testing centers throughout Israel. In addition, before monoclonal antibodies were available to treat coronavirus patients, MDA’s Blood Services Division collected antibody-rich plasma from recovered patients and provided it as an immune-boosting therapy to people struggling with the disease.

Covid was, in many ways, the biggest challenge Israel — and MDA — has faced. But, as I write this, I’m happy to say that many of the actions we took in 2020 have enabled life in Israel to nearly return to normal.

This was all made possible by the 30,000 men and women of Magen David Adom — volunteers and professionals, EMTs and paramedics, hematologists and phlebotomists. And it was made possible by you.

Through your support, you helped provide the resources for the technological developments, the equipment, and the supplies that we expended so much of. We are truly grateful for all you did.

On behalf of Magen David Adom — and the people of Israel — thank you.

With our appreciation,

Eli Bin
Director-General
Magen David Adom in Israel
Dear AFMDA Friends,

2020 was perhaps the most difficult year in generations. The Covid-19 pandemic exposed how poorly the world was prepared for such a health catastrophe. With more than 600,000 lives lost in the U.S. and millions around the world, it impacted every aspect of our lives — our health, the economy, our working lives, our social interactions, our education, and our travel, to name but a few.

We grieve for those who lost friends and loved ones, and pray for those who continue to be affected by the lingering symptoms of "long Covid." Yet, through it all, and despite this pain, suffering, and isolation, we were united by our love of Israel and our deep admiration of Magen David Adom.

As Eli notes in his message, the great advantage that Magen David Adom and Israel had over the rest of the world was an unmatched degree of training and preparedness. As Israel’s national EMS service, dispatching not only its own paramedics and EMTs, but also those of every other Hatzalah organization in Israel, MDA constantly trains this vast army of lifesaving men and women for just such events.

Despite the hardships visited upon our donors this year, they stepped up once again when their help was desperately needed. They gave what they could, when they could, and engaged with us in webinars and Zoom calls when events were cancelled and people were prohibited from leaving their homes or meeting in person. We called to check up on them, and they called to check on how we were doing. We did what families do in such situations. We cared for each other, supported one another, and knew we would get to the other side.

Magen David Adom’s degree of preparedness is in good part thanks to its loyal donors and friends in the United States. Since its inception in 1940, American Friends of Magen David Adom has raised the most charitable support for MDA of any country in the world. In the last decade alone, AFMDA has raised more than $245 million for MDA — to fund lifesaving ambulances and Medicycles, to provide critical EMS and blood services supplies that make their day-to-day work possible, and to build the world’s first underground and shielded, state-of-the-art blood bank and blood-processing center, the Marcus National Blood Services Center.

Bernie and Billi Marcus are remarkable philanthropists and leaders. Their passion for Israel, the Jewish community in America, and their beloved hometown of Atlanta have fueled their philanthropic focus. When they see a need to be addressed or a problem to solve, they are at in the forefront of finding a solution. And so it was when it was clear that Israel’s current blood center was woefully small, technologically out of date, and in imminent threat of destruction by a rocket, missile attack, or earthquake. They recognized the need, and they stepped up in a powerful way to take the lead in seeing this urgently needed facility transformed from an idea on paper to a stunning new building that will be dedicated in 2022. This building would not exist without their vision and support, and Magen David Adom and American Friends of Magen David Adom are deeply grateful for what they have done for the people of Israel and MDA.

As the largest and most ambitious project in MDA’s history, the Marcus Center will truly serve the people of Israel for decades to come. We hope you will join us in May 2022 as we host a donor mission culminating in the dedication of this critically important new facility in Ramla, Israel. Please contact our national office or your regional AFMDA office for more information on the mission and dedication. “Next Year in Jerusalem” will be slightly amended to “Next Year in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Ramla, and Abu Dhabi”!

With our deepest appreciation,

Mark D. Lebow
Chairman of the Board

Catherine Reed
Chief Executive Officer
42 new paramedics join the ranks of MDA.

Magen David Adom, already the largest trainer of paramedics in Israel, added 42 new paramedics to its ranks after 25 women and 17 men, half of them members of Israel’s National Service (Sherut Leumi), completed MDA’s training course last month. This is the second consecutive year in which a large contingent of National Service participants took the paramedics course, with a group of 28 completing the course last year. This year’s graduating class joins the more than 350 paramedics in Magen David Adom and the more than 23,000 other EMTs with the organization. Paramedics are the most highly trained of Israel’s emergency medical technicians and typically are assigned shifts aboard MDA’s Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulances, which are used to treat seriously injured or critically ill patients.

Ministry of Health activates MDA as official responder for people with coronavirus symptoms.

Responding to a rise of Israelis testing positive for Covid, Israel’s Ministry of Health activated MDA to home-test civilians who think they may be exhibiting symptoms of coronavirus. The move by the Ministry and MDA was designed to diagnose possible coronavirus cases without having the patients converge on Israeli hospitals and healthcare clinics and possibly infect hundreds or thousands of other Israelis, some of them potentially at greater risk because of underlying existing health issues.

MDA’s new initiative sends paramedics to people’s homes to assist doctors in conducting remote examinations of patients.

In May, MDA launched a community medicine initiative that enabled paramedics to make house calls and use technology to connect doctors directly with patients, providing the doctors with the ability to examine the patients remotely. The goal of the initiative is to reduce by a third the number of patients who visit clinics or hospitals. By providing them with medical exams at home, as well as administering medication or performing selected tests, the paramedic and the doctor will determine whether the patient’s condition requires hospitalization. “Using this new model, we estimate that about a third of our patients — more than 200,000 each year — could be treated at home without being taken to the ER,” said Dr. Refael Strugo, MDA’s medical director.

MDA triples its call-taking capacity during the pandemic.

On March 15, Magen David Adom fielded more than 82,000 calls from citizens and, despite the onslaught of calls, answered them in an average of 10 seconds. This was a result of the organization’s decision to expand its already robust call-taking capacity from 80 workstations to 500. MDA usually has 150 people answering calls in their National Operations Center but has created more than 450 additional phone-answering work stations that enabled pairs of call-takers — one specializing in coronavirus calls and one specializing in dispatching conventional EMS calls — to handle an anticipated further increase in people calling 101 (Israel’s 911).

Different faiths, but the same commitment to saving lives.

Just prior to their shift in Be’er Sheva, MDA EMTs Avraham Mintz, a Jew from Be’er Sheva, wrapped himself in his prayer shawl and turned north toward Jerusalem, and Zoher Abu Jama, an Arab from nearby Rahat, unfolded his prayer rug and knelt facing south toward Mecca. Together, they’ve worked to battle the spread of the coronavirus in Israel.
How an obsession with preparedness gave MDA a leg up on combating coronavirus.

With a culture of constant preparedness, MDA EMTs and paramedics train regularly for a wide variety of scenarios, from earthquakes and train crashes to — this being the Middle East — terror attacks and enemy rocket fire. And they regularly train for the possibility of an infectious disease epidemic. “Our mantra is that you can’t train for a crisis once it’s already started,” says Guy Caspi, head of multi-casualty training for Magen David Adom. “If this crisis ends relatively well for the Israeli people, it will be the result in part because of how we handled things at the very beginning. And that, to a large degree, is what preparedness is all about.”

MDA and other Israeli organizations partner on making low-cost ventilators for coronavirus.

As hospitals around the world faced a shortage of ventilators, Magen David Adom and a coalition of other Israeli organizations and entrepreneurs developed a design for a low-cost ventilator that can be made locally from readily available parts. The Israeli design, called AmboVent, emulates the bag-valve mask ventilators used by paramedics when they’re manually ventilating patients in an ambulance en route to a hospital. The AmboVent offers controls for respiration rate, volume, and maximum peak pressure — and enabled the Israelis to come up with a low-cost design that could be executed around the world.

Blood Services Center using plasma from coronavirus patients to develop treatment for the disease.

Starting in April, MDA began collecting blood plasma from recovered coronavirus patients in an effort to produce an antibody treatment for Covid-19 patients. Recovered Covid-19 patients are thought to have antibodies in their blood that provide immunity against repeat infections, and these plasma units should provide patients with a “passive vaccine” that may help seriously ill patients recover. To date, antibodies from recovered patients have been given to 1,000 patients battling the virus. They have responded well to the treatment, with some moderately ill patients showing significant improvement.

First baby’s life saved by MDA’s National Human Milk Bank.

In early April, Magen David Adom’s National Human Milk Bank received a request from the Carmel Medical Center in Haifa for an urgent delivery of safe breast milk for a premature baby boy. His mother could not breastfeed him due to medical complications. Not yet fully operational, the milk bank was able to get permission from the Ministry of Health to provide the milk the baby needed. The little boy became the first baby in Israel to receive lifesaving milk from the milk bank. The baby was receiving milk for two weeks, made up of donations from several different mothers. The baby’s condition improved significantly, and medical professionals credited the safe breast milk and the dedicated care of the neonatal care unit at the Carmel Medical Center. “We hope our personal story will open the door for more babies whose lives can be saved by the milk provided by the National Human Milk Bank,” said the baby’s mother.
MDA in 2020

MDA helps the Democratic Republic of Congo with coronavirus testing.

MDA worked with the Democratic Republic of Congo to establish a drive-through and walk-in Covid-19 testing center in the country’s capital and largest city, Kinshasa, to assist the African nation in containing the spread of coronavirus there. The center opened in May on the grounds of Stade des Martyrs de la Pentecôte, the country’s national football stadium, and marks the nation’s most aggressive effort to test citizens to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic there. In May, Congo had about 2,600 cases of Covid-19 and 68 deaths since the virus first appeared in the country.

Israel National Firefighting and Rescue Authority selects MDA to develop its new dispatch system.

After evaluating the offerings of international technology firms, Kaba’ut VeHatzala, Israel’s National Firefighting and Rescue Authority, chose Magen David Adom, Israel’s national EMS service, to develop its new dispatch system. “Having worked closely with Magen David Adom for years, we’re familiar and have long admired their dispatch system and related technologies,” said Lt. General Dedi Simchi, commissioner of Israel Fire and Rescue. “We’re looking forward to having a similarly customizable and integrated system for Israel’s fire authority.”

Introducing MDA’s latest lifesaving project: “The Smart Ambulance.”

As part of MDA’s extensive efforts in the fight against coronavirus, MDA in conjunction with Mifal Hapais (Israel’s national lottery) has created a “Smart Ambulance” that can transport Covid-infected patients without contact. The Smart Ambulance brought MDA and Mifal Hapais together to outfit dozens of MDA ambulances with cameras and sophisticated monitoring systems to observe and transmit the patient’s vital signs to MDA’s National Operations Center during transport. This enables patients to be completely isolated from EMTs and ensures the safety of the driver and teams who previously rode alongside patients to constantly monitor their vital signs.

MDA launches Corona Guardians program to break the chain of infections.

When the number of coronavirus cases spiked in October, Magen David Adom responded by launching the Corona Guardians project in which the organization trains the public to learn how the virus works and cut off the chain of infections among their family, friends, and coworkers. Corona Guardians teaches the public about the importance of adhering to Covid safety guidelines, teaching the community about the Israeli Ministry of Health guidelines, distributing masks to citizens, and helping to raise awareness about the virus.

MDA paramedic honored with cauldron lighting role on Independence Day.

In a nationally televised Israeli Independence Day commemoration, MD paramedic Yasmeen Mazzawi, a 21-year-old from Nazareth, was chosen to light one of the event’s cauldrons, becoming a point of pride for Israel’s Arab community and a role model for young girls across the country. “The mother of a baby who I intubated and had to ventilate on the way to the hospital months ago [and who’s since recovered] called me several days ago to tell me how proud she was of me to be lighting the candle,” Yasmeen said. “The reaction brought tears to my eyes.”
MDA in 2020

MDA's Shafir Botner named one of Israel's “People of the Year.”

Last year, Dr. Shafir Botner was named by the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth as one of its People of the Year, citing his work at the outset of the coronavirus pandemic there. The newspaper reported that “during the crucial early weeks and months of the pandemic, Dr. Botner routinely worked 16 to 20 hours a day, helping Magen David Adom, contain the outbreak.” Dr. Botner is the director of Magen David Adom's Paramedic School, a veteran MDA paramedic for nearly 20 years, and one of only a handful of first responders serving in MDA’s Helicopter Service.

MDA creates groundbreaking Community Medicine Initiative.

In November, MDA launched a telemedicine-powered community health program that could reduce the number of patients requiring hospitalization by as much as a third. MDA paramedics and EMTs arriving at sick patients’ homes will use technology that connects doctors from the patient’s HMO to the scene and enables them to examine the patient remotely to determine whether they can recuperate at home. The program rolled out in the Yarkon and Sharon regions of Israel to patients of Kupat Cholim Macabbi, the second-largest of Israel’s four national HMOs.

Marcus Foundation makes additional $10 million matching gift toward Israel’s new blood center.

In December, the Marcus Foundation announced that it will make a $10 million matching grant to ensure the completion of Israel’s new national blood services center. Passionately committed to the health of the Israeli people, the Marcus Foundation also gave a $25 million gift in 2016 prior to the project breaking ground, and given their generosity, the facility was named the Marcus National Blood Services Center. To learn more about the current construction status of the blood center and join us in building Israel’s most crucial project, please go to page 10.

MDA conducts over 3.4 million coronavirus tests since beginning of pandemic.

Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic outbreak at the end of February, Magen David Adom and its 30,000 EMTs and paramedics have conducted more than 3.4 million tests. The tests have taken place in several locations, including private homes, clinics, hospitals, nursing homes (as part of the Protecting Fathers and Mothers project), MDA drive-through testing stations, and educational institutions. During the week of September 13th, MDA swabbed 152,864 people (the highest number of samples in one week), and the day after Yom Kippur, 34,027 people were tested (the highest number of samples in one day).
The Marcus Center grew by leaps and bounds in 2020 as many of the important mechanicals were received and installed.

**January** Work started on the sprinkler piping installation. The second floor of the Marcus Center, L2, was completed on the west side. A key achievement was the installation of the emergency HVAC chillers system, which will kick in and keep the cold rooms operational after any failure of the chiller system.

**February** The potable water piping works started.

**March** The huge air-handling units were installed on highly shielded and underground level U3.

**April** The cold room cooling compressor skids were put in place on level U3. We also began construction of the plasma cold rooms on level U3. In addition, significant progress was made on the water reservoir tank and the pumps room.

**May** The acoustical silencers for the chillers were installed and floor L2 was completed on the eastern side of the building.

**June** The massive job of installing the aluminum cladding was started, and the roof on the east side of the building was completed. The walls of the main water reservoir were also completed.

**July** The huge task of positioning the main generators on level U3 started, and the metal roof cladding was put in place. Finally, the transformers were installed on level U3, the floor that houses much of the mechanical operations of the Marcus Center.

**August** The assembly of the front screen walls got underway, and the escalators were assembled and installed. The long-awaited elevator shipment arrived.

**September** The base floor on level U3 was completed and the roof insulation was installed on the west side of the building. In addition, the positioning of the first of the high-voltage switchboards was completed on level U3.

**October** The positioning of the main chillers on the roof of the building was completed. We were able to start the installation of insulation on level L0 around the building.

**November** We began the excavation of the underground fuel tanks area and crane #3 was removed from the site. The cold room walls were completed, and the main switchboards arrived on the site.

**December** The blast shrapnel door for the generator room, measuring 4 x 4 meters, arrived on the site. The framework for the security guard booth at the main entrance was completed. We were able to start the installation of the lighting fixtures throughout the building and crane #1 was dismantled. The machine room and the reflection pool were sealed with polyurea, and the tiling of the Mark D. Lebow Convening Center started.

To support the new Marcus National Blood Services Center and ensure Israel’s lifeblood is protected for the years to come, please contact your local AFMDA office on page 19.
More than 70 young philanthropists came together in support of our beloved Israel and to honor Magen David Adom’s heroes. Thanks to our special guest and Israeli advocate, Siggy Flicker, the energy in the room was out of this world.

The annual event honored Yuval Eran, a MDA paramedic who heroically saved the lives of Rabbi Eitan Shnerb and his son, Dvir, after a terror attack last August. Yuval was also involved in developing a low-cost ventilator solution called AmboVent (see page 7). The inspiring event also featured guest speaker Siggy Flicker and entertainment by renowned mentalist Lior Suchard.

Jason Greenblatt, former special envoy to the Middle East, spoke about his time working to bring peace to the region and his thoughts on Magen David Adom’s new Marcus National Blood Services Center project.

More than 500 people from across the country gathered for a webinar featuring Sinai Temple’s Rabbi Wolpe and Times of Israel co-founder David Horovitz. The two discussed how Israel has been on the cutting edge of technological and medical advancements and MDA’s response to Covid has been no different.
AFMDA’s first online celebration attracted more than 7,375 viewers in the U.S. and Canada (the most people who’ve ever attended an event for the organization) and raised about $1.4 million. The star-studded event featured Seinfeld star Jason Alexander as host, as well as comedian Howie Mandel and musical artists David Broza, Idan Raichel, Jarrod Spector, Miri Ben-Ari, Gad Elbaz, and Dudu Fisher.

JUNE
Ambassador David Roet and David Makovsky Webinar

Ambassador David Roet, deputy director general of the North American Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and former deputy permanent representative at Israel’s Mission to the UN, and David Makovsky, Ziegler Distinguished Fellow and director of the Project on Arab-Israeli Relations at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, had a riveting discussion about current issues in Israel and the Middle East.

AUGUST
Tour of Marcus Center

Director of MDA’s National Blood Services Professor Eilat Shinar and AFMDA’s Moshe Noyovich gave a virtual tour of Israel’s most crucial security project: MDA’s state-of-the-art, underground Marcus Blood Center.

AUGUST
Rosh Hashana Cooking Class with Chef Michael Solomonov

The James Beard Award-winning chef and executive chef of the renowned Zahav, Michael Solomonov, enchanted viewers by sharing cherished recipes he cooks every Rosh Hashanah.

NOVEMBER
Virtual Celebration
Impact in Israel — Your Gift at Work with MDA

In 2020, your support of MDA’s training and technology helped save countless Israelis. Here are some of the ways you made an impact in 2020 — and can continue to in the future — in Israel.

**EQUIP A PARAMEDIC**
Donors equipped MDA paramedics and EMTs for a year with critical tools to save lives.

$3.6M
RAISED FOR EQUIPMENT, TRAINING, AND OTHER LIFESAVING NEEDS.

**MDA AMBULANCES AND MOBILE INTENSIVE CARE UNITS**
Every year, MDA needs 100 new ambulances and Mobile Intensive Care Units to replenish its fleet.

49 AMBULANCES
20 MICUS
1 ARMORED AMBULANCE
RAISED FOR ISRAEL IN 2020
To learn more about these items or any other funding opportunities, contact your regional AFMDA office (see page 19).
2020 Financial Information

Revenue and Expenses by Category

TOTAL REVENUE
(per IRS form 990)

$488,577

- $19,121,854 MDA project expenses, training equipment, Blood Services Center supplies and general projects
- $19,940,317 The Marcus National Blood Services Center
- $8,153,266 Ambulances, MICUs, Medicycles and other emergency medical response vehicles
- $488,577 Other income

Total: $47,704,014

TOTAL EXPENSES
(per IRS form 990)

$29,097,770

- $29,097,770 The Marcus National Blood Services Center
- $8,225,023 MDA project expenses, training equipment, Blood Services Center supplies and general projects
- $5,284,974 Ambulances, MICUs, Medicycles and other emergency medical response vehicles
- $5,289,605 Project- and program-related operating expenses
- $3,682,095 AFMDA operational expenses
- $4,746,019 AFMDA fundraising expenses

Total: $56,325,486

additional financial available upon request
American Friends of Magen David Adom mourns the generous friends and supporters who passed away in 2020 or about whose passing we learned in 2020.

Their devotion to Israel and Magen David Adom saved lives and made Israel a stronger nation. May their memories be for a blessing among the mourners of Zion.

David Blacher  
Frieda R. Caplan  
Marvin L. Charney  
Carol S. Cohen  
Alan Cornell  
Bernard Davison  
Charlotte Eth  
David N. Fleischer  
Morton A. Freedman  
Judith Glatt  
David Halpert  
Leslie Hefter  
Gary E. Hubschman  
Vivienne F. Ivry  
Howard I. Kaplan  
Alan R. Katz  
Lawrence B. Katzen  
Berton Korman  
Eugene Lerner  
Stanley Levine  
Alan Levy  
Ernest Loebl  
Bernard Loev  
Sylvia Lynn  
Deborah Morgenstern  
Alan Moss  
Murray Pell  
Sherry Puro  
Beverly Rechler  
Donald H. Rosenthal  
Leonard Schatz  
Edith Simon  
Annette Singer  
Sydney Sussman  
Susanne Vamos  
Morton Wapner  
Floyce Wooten
Magen David Adom is Israel’s paramedic and Red Cross service, serving as emergency medical first responders for the state’s 9.3 million people. MDA is the only organization mandated by the Israeli government to serve in this role, but it’s not a government agency, so it relies on people like you for funding. Through your gift, you’re saving lives.