



Ethan Bronner was the Jerusalem bureau chief for *The New York Times* from 2008 to 2012, following four years as its deputy foreign editor. In mid-2012, he became the *Times*' national legal affairs correspondent, based in New York. Ethan served as assistant editorial page editor of the *Times*, and before that worked in the paper's investigative unit, focusing on the September 11th attacks. A series of articles on al Qaeda that Ethan helped edit during that time was awarded the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for explanatory journalism. A graduate of Wesleyan University's College of Letters and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, Ethan began his journalistic career at Reuters in 1980, reporting from London, Madrid, Brussels and Jerusalem.



Shira Ben-Sasson Furstenberg serves as the Grant Officer for the New Israel Fund's Jewish Pluralism Pool. Previously, she served as the Religious Pluralism Project Coordinator at Shatil, NIF's Empowerment and Training Center for Social Change Organizations, in Israel. Her work focuses on assisting three target populations: the general public (secular, Reform, Conservative, etc.), the liberal Orthodox public, and immigrants from the former Soviet Union—all in order to promote Jewish Pluralism and freedom of religion in Israel. Born and raised in a liberal Orthodox family in Jerusalem, Shira was an officer in the IDF and received her BA and MA in cultural anthropology from the Hebrew University. She worked for five years in the Knesset Research and Information Center, focusing on education and culture. She is a founding member of Hakhel—an Orthodox egalitarian congregation in Jerusalem. She is married and a mother of three.



Lynn Harris is a believer, and leader, in the creation of pop culture for social change. She is the communications director for Breakthrough, a global human rights organization based in New York and India that uses the power of culture to transform hearts and minds. She is an author, essayist, commentator, mostly-retired comedian, and award-winning journalist (also retired). She wrote about pop culture, politics, gender, relationships, religion, and disability, sometimes all at once. Her most recent book is the satirical novel Death By Chick Lit, which New York Magazine called "brilliant." She is also co-creator—with Chris Kalb—of the award-winning website BreakupGirl.net,

headquarters of the only superhero who rescues men and women from romantic emergencies and saves love lives worldwide. Lynn met her husband, Rabbi David Adelson, at a New Israel Fund benefit.



Vanessa Hidary, aka The Hebrew Mamita, grew up on Manhattan's culturally diverse Upper West Side, graduating from LaGuardia High School of the Arts and Hunter College. Her experiences as a Sephardic Jew with close friends from different ethnic and religious backgrounds inspired her to write "Culture Bandit," the nationally toured solo show that chronicles Vanessa's coming of age during the golden age of Hip-Hop and her dedication to fostering understanding and friendship between all people. She has aired three times on "Russell Simmon's Presents Def Poetry Jam" on HBO, and is featured in the short film, "The Tribe," which was selected for the Sundance Film Festival, the Tribeca Film Festival, and the Jewish Motifs International Film Festival in Warsaw, Poland. Vanessa received an MFA in acting from Trinity Rep theatre Conservatory. She lives in Manhattan, where she recently completed her first collection of poems and stories titled The Last Kaiser Roll in the Bodega.



Yohannes Bayu is the Founder and Executive Director of the African Refugee Development Center, an NIF-grantee. A recognized refugee in Israel, Yohannes received his undergraduate degree in Social Sciences from the University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, specializing in HIV/AIDS prevention and counseling. Before he was forced to leave Ethiopia in 1997 due to political persecution and government harassment, he worked for various non-governmental organizations in HIV/AIDS counseling and prevention programs. He also worked two years for Doctors Without Borders as a special advisor on an HIV/AIDS prevention project in Addis Ababa. Yohannes was only granted political asylum in Israel, however, some five years after his arrival following a 23-day hunger strike on the steps of the Refugee Commissioner's office and an order from Israel's Supreme Court. Driven by such experiences, Yohannes resolved to help the thousands of other asylum seekers escaping to Israel and founded ARDC the following year in 2004.