Israel Cancer Research Fund

Israel Cancer Research Fund 50 years

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Your source for breakthroughs in Israeli cancer research

Rebecca z'l and Alan Simpson with their children Kelly, Hannah and Jared.

A Year of Impact: ICRF Toronto’s Remarkable 2025

ICRF Toronto closed out 2025 on a high note, surpassing its fundraising goal thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community, most notably the Simpson Family, who served as Match Donors. “I am incredibly proud to share that we raised over $130,000 in new funds,” said CEO Elysa Greisman. “With the Simpson Family’s generous $72,000 match, our total reached $200,459 allowing us to exceed our $2 million 50th Anniversary Campaign goal.” Alan Simpson, honouring the memory of his late wife, Rebecca z”l, shared: “Supporting ICRF advances world-class cancer research in Israel work that represents hope, science, and meaningful impact. Rebecca would have been deeply proud.”

In 2025, ICRF International supported 77 research grants totaling more than $4.7 million. ICRF Toronto contributed $1.21 million toward these efforts and committed an additional $2.56 million in research funding through 2030. Over the past 50 years, ICRF has invested more than $100 million in groundbreaking research fueling discoveries that continue to improve patient outcomes around the world.

ICRF 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Welcome A-Board!

The ICRF Toronto Board of Directors provides essential guidance and support to advance our mission. Board members offer strategic leadership, oversee fundraising initiatives, manage financial stewardship, recruit new donors, and advocate for Israel’s leadership in cancer research. We are thrilled to welcome **Dr. Rafi Hoffstein and Dr. Kevan Orvitz** to the Board, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to all members for their dedication and invaluable contributions. Together, we look forward to driving research breakthroughs and making an even greater impact in the year ahead.

The Rotenberg family—Debbie, Joel, Carly and Jordana

Rotenberg Family Turns Loss into Hope

The Rotenberg family, Debbie, Joel z”l, Carly, and Jordana have been part of the ICRF community since 2007, when they established the **Shilamus Katchky Memorial Fund** at ICRF Toronto in memory of Debbie’s mother. Following her father’s passing in 2018, the fund was renamed the Shilamus and Max Katchky Memorial Fund, reflecting their ongoing commitment to advancing cancer research.

Their dedication became deeply personal when daughter Carly was diagnosed with cancer at 24, and in 2025, the family faced another devastating loss when Joel was diagnosed with aggressive plasma cell leukemia and passed away just 11 days later. In his memory, the family invited loved ones to support ICRF, continuing the fund’s mission.

“Supporting the brilliant minds advancing cancer research in Israel feels like a meaningful way to channel our grief,” shared Debbie. As a passionate supporter of Israel and ICRF Toronto, Joel would have been proud knowing their hope is that this research will save others.

READ MORE ABOUT THE ROTENBERG FAMILY

Professor Naama Barkai, PhD, Weizmann Institute

As January marks Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, ICRF Toronto is pleased to highlight the work of Professor Naama Barkai, PhD, Weizmann Institute of Science. She studies a range of cancers that affect women, including breast cancer, ovarian, and uterine cancer, as well as certain men's cancers. Professor Barkai is also the recipient of a named grant, "The Janice & Jeffrey Bly and Family Project Grant", made possible thanks to ICRF Toronto board member Jeffrey Bly, his wife, Janice, and their family. "We chose her as she is a rock star in her field," said Jeffrey Bly. "The gift reflects our commitment to advancing research in our pursuit of eradicating cancer." Professor Barkai is currently researching how cell process information to find new ways to target key cancer regulators.

READ MORE ABOUT PROF. BARKAI

ICRF Upcoming Events

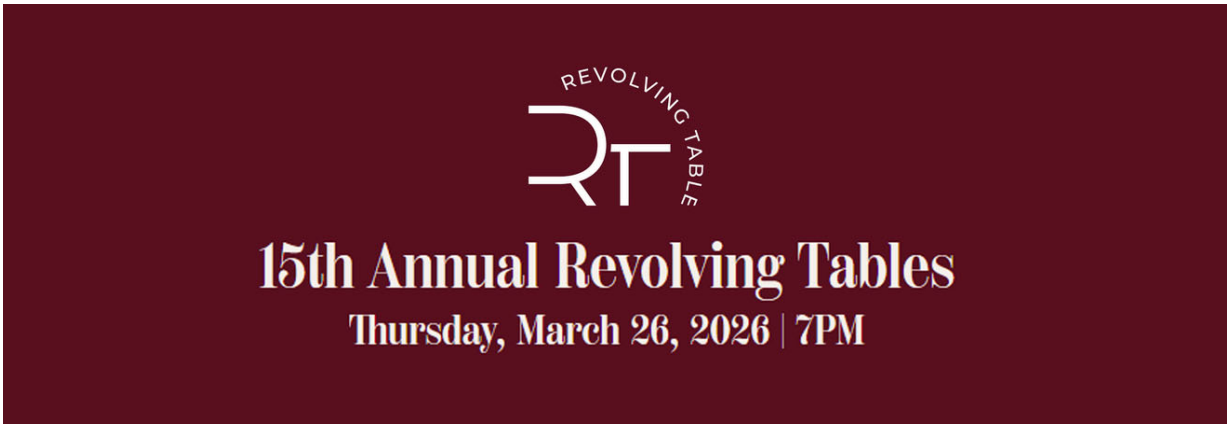
Save the Dates!

Health Series Event on Brain Cancer

Feb 25 | 7:30 pm | Temple Sinai

Join ICRF Toronto for an engaging evening exploring the latest advances in brain cancer research and treatment. Hear from leading experts Dr. James Perry, Dr. Nir Lipsman, Dr. Stuart Selby, and Dr. Jay Detsky, with the discussion moderated by Dr. Neil Berinstein. Drawing on perspectives from neuro-oncology and neuroscience, the panel will highlight emerging therapies, innovative research, and what these developments mean for patients and families. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage directly with the experts during a live Q&A.

REGISTER



Revolving Tables

Mar 26 | 7 pm | Park Hyatt

Calling all young professionals! Join ICRF Toronto for the 15th annual Revolving Tables, an evening of networking with Canada's top professionals across finance, tech, entertainment, and moreall in support of cancer research.

Attendees rotate tables at each course, engaging in small-group discussions with new peers and a mentor of their choice. Designed to raise awareness and vital funds for ICRF, this dynamic event helps support our scientists conducting groundbreaking cancer research in Israel.We are deeply grateful to our sponsors, whose generosity transforms this evening into real-world impact.

TICKETS & INFO

Women of Action Celebration

May 3 | 11 am | Beth Tzedec Synagogue

Join ICRF Toronto for the 24th Annual Women of Action (WOA) Celebration, our signature luncheon honoring outstanding women whose leadership and impact have shaped our community.

For over two decades, WOA has brought together women and community members to celebrate excellence while supporting life-saving and groundbreaking cancer research in Israel. This inspiring event highlights exceptional women and advances the work of ICRF-funded Israeli scientists.

Learn more, make a donation, or become a sponsor: **HERE**

REGISTER