



FAMILY FOUNDATION

## MISSION STATEMENT

**The Bernstein Family Foundation is committed to investing in people and ideas to strengthen and celebrate the greater Washington, DC, community.**

The Foundation makes grants in the areas of Jewish causes, American democracy, and arts & culture. Within these three core areas, the Foundation pursues its mission by:

- Identifying and supporting strong community leaders and replicable programs
- Fostering innovation in leadership, in vision, and in programmatic implementation
- Creating dialogue among community leaders within and across areas of emphasis
- Encouraging community leaders to think critically about the future
- Providing resources to underwrite the costs of bringing organizations and leaders together
- Replicating proven models
- Celebrating the greater Washington, DC, community and its cultural assets
- Actively leveraging Foundation resources through partnerships with other foundations, public agencies, community leaders and nonprofit organizations

The Foundation was established in 1952 by our family patriarch, Leo M. Bernstein. Born at the turn of the century in the heart of Washington, DC, Leo was an innovator, an explorer, a successful entrepreneur and a community leader. To this day, the Foundation's vision is powered by the legacy of his character and contributions. We are inspired by his lifelong commitment to thinking critically, encouraging innovation, building community, promoting strong social values and bringing people together to share, learn and create change.



## OUR TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Philanthropy is a privilege and a responsibility. As board members, we will conduct ourselves with integrity. We will honor Leo's legacy, yet impart our unique style and perspective.
2. Family is important. We value our differences, and we will concentrate our investments in areas where we share common ground: Jewish causes, American democracy, and arts & culture.
3. Our grant making decisions will provide a platform to think critically about issues we care deeply about and allow us to contribute to the well-being of our community and world.
4. We will use philanthropy as a powerful vehicle for social change, and we will roll up our sleeves and become part of that social change.
5. Philanthropy is more than just check writing. Because the **Bernstein Family Foundation** is relatively small, we cannot solve any single issue. We will maximize our effectiveness by investing in people and ideas and by creating mechanisms to harvest and share those ideas.
6. The **Bernstein Family Foundation** will act as an incubator for innovation. It will foster activities that are focused primarily in the Washington, DC, area but that could make a difference at the regional or national level.
7. The **Bernstein Family Foundation** believes in strategic partnership. We are not here to reinvent the wheel. Instead, we will build on existing infrastructure of innovative programs.
8. The **Bernstein Family Foundation** will leverage its intellectual and social capital to magnify its grant making. We will enhance our grant making by convening groups of people together to strengthen organizations in the Foundation's three core funding areas.
9. The **Bernstein Family Foundation** will take risks the right way. By conducting due diligence, asking the right questions and surrounding ourselves with quality people and organizations, we can be leaders with significant impact.
10. The **Bernstein Family Foundation** intends to prevent redundancies by encouraging transparency and the sharing of ideas. We believe that the field of philanthropy is strengthened when leaders in diverse fields share and learn from each other.

