

Welcome everyone! Thank you for coming today. I'm Susan Mattisinko, co-chair of the Hazon OC Ride along with my husband Rob De Leon. We're thrilled to have 117 cyclists and 33 spinners, Peloton riders, and Move on Your Owners, 16 teams including 2 from San Diego, 2 from LA, my brother Robert's Move On Your Own team from Arizona, and over 42 volunteers.

Our top team in both members and fundraising is Congregation B'nai Israel Tustin. Other than my family, our top individual fundraisers are David Victor from LA, Lauren Rublin from NJ, and Beth Elster, a past CBI president. Our top fundraising duo are Natalie Weiss and Aaron Willis from Temple Beth Am LA. Mazal tov David, Lauren, Beth, Natalie and Aaron!

Together we've raised over \$18,813 to date for Hazon's environmental education and sustainability efforts in Jewish OC and beyond. Thanks to all and keep those donations coming! If you've met your fundraising goals, many thanks and, if you haven't, we'd be grateful for whatever you wish to donate or raise.

Thank you to our fabulous volunteers who made this Ride possible, with a special shout out to SoCal Bike Escorts, the CBI bike mavens, our LA friends who schlepped here to volunteer, Michelle Onufer of Beth Jacob, the host of our Peloton Ride, and to 3-generations of volunteers from the Sklar family.

Thanks to our generous hosts, the Merage JCC and TVT Community Day School. At the JCC, we thank Scott Braswell, Debbie Meline, Eddie Priesand and their team. At TVT, we thank Jeff Davis and his team. Jeff has been cycling with Hazon for 14 years and he, plus 3 other cyclists here, will be joining the Hazon Israel Ride in November, a 5-day bike ride from Jerusalem to Eilat.

We're grateful to our other amazing Ride partners. CSP Community Scholars Program of OC, Hillel of OC, Irvine Hebrew Day School, Jewish Collaborative of Orange County, and Jewish Community Foundation OC. We also extend a special welcome to OC clergy joining the ride. Rabbi K'vod Wieder is leading the Temple Beth El of South Orange County team. Rabbi Marcia Tilchin is leading the Jewish Collaborative of Orange County team and is a Move on Your Owner as she can't be here today.

Especially close to my heart is the sponsor of the Hazon OC Ride, my dad's memorial fund, the Norman Mattisinko Memorial Fund of Jewish Community Foundation. My dad taught me how to ride and bought my kids their first trikes. Sadly, he died of covid before there were vaccines, and he never got a chance to visit us in Irvine because we moved here at the start of the pandemic. My dad would have loved this Ride, seeing all of us here and knowing that his granddaughters Lois and Audrey flew home to cycle and volunteer at the Ride, that his wife Joan, my mom, is a Move on Your Owner and that his cousin Ethan Sharvtzman is one of our photographers.

Finally, our deepest gratitude to the entire Hazon team. Rob and I had no prior relationship with Hazon - we were not even on their mailing list - but Rob reached out, offering to organize a Hazon OC Ride. He was upfront that we had never actually been part of an in-person ride and that we were new to OC and only knew a few folks here due to the pandemic. So Hazon thank you for believing that we, our partners, volunteers and community, together with Hazon, could launch the OC Ride in just 3 months.

We're honored to have here with us today from Hazon, Jakir Manela, CEO; Sara Pilavin, Associate Director of Special Events, and Morgan Dorsch, Hazon's LA Associate Director of Development. Sara, along with David Rendsburg, Hazon CFO, have been the fantastic Hazon leads for this Ride. We are so grateful for their enthusiasm and expertise, and it has been a privilege and a lot of fun to partner with them these past few months.

Thank you again for being part of the Hazon OC Ride and Happy Cycling.

And now it is my great pleasure to introduce Jakir Manela, CEO of Hazon and Pearlstone.

Born and raised in the Washington DC metropolitan area, he graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 2004 and went to work at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center as a Teva Jewish outdoor environmental educator. He then moved back to the Chesapeake region in order to establish North America's first Jewish Community Farm, Kayam Farm at Pearlstone, in 2006.

Jakir was promoted to become Pearlstone's Executive Director in 2012, and for the past ten years, Jakir has helped lead Pearlstone to its perennial status in the Slingshot Guide as one of the most innovative Jewish organizations in North America - helping to lead an amazing team engaging over 22,000 participants each year in immersive retreats, experiential Jewish outdoor education, and community sustainability initiatives.

Jakir also served on the Hazon board during that time, advising Hazon's leadership as the largest faith-based environmental organization in the United States. Today, Jakir works collaboratively with wonderful staff and board members at Hazon and Pearlstone, as well as funders and partners across the country, leading the new Hazon-Pearlstone entity into a new chapter of growth and impact. Jakir lives just up the road from Pearlstone with his amazing wife, Nets, and their four boys. He coaches youth sports and loves building campfires and making music with friends.