

## The Business of Charity: Helping People Help People

Shai Goldstein is passionate about helping people. He takes an even greater pleasure in helping other people help people. While the desire to help others is simple and basic, setting up a nonprofit is anything but. Through his company, A2Z Filings, Goldstein enables others to help and serve their communities -- whether the global community or in their own backyard. Goldstein's mission is to make it easier for others to get ready to give.

Born in Israel, Goldstein was raised with the spirit of hard work and community service. His father is a rabbi who has organized countless fundraisers and raised millions of dollars for charity throughout the years. Goldstein himself is constantly on the move, working, investing, helping and mentoring.

Goldstein is committed to expanding the vital role of nonprofits in society; nonprofits serve to help people and strengthen communities. In the United States there are currently over 1.5 million nonprofits registered with the IRS and the number grows each year. The nonprofit sector is 10% of the American workforce and provides 11.4 million jobs. It is the third largest workforce in the US, right behind retail and manufacturing.

According to Giving USA, a major source of data on the nonprofit sector, total private giving from individuals, foundations, and businesses totaled \$424.74 billion in 2017. An estimated 25.1 percent of US adults volunteered in 2017, contributing an estimated 8.8 billion hours. These figures have been rising consistently, and reports for 2018 show that American individuals, bequests, foundations and corporations gave an estimated \$427.71 billion to US charities.

Through the vehicle of the nonprofit, people have the power to make an impact on those in need and the world around them. Charitable endeavors can change lives of the recipients and the givers alike. With A2Z Filings, Goldstein has created the opportunity to help hundreds of people change their lives and affect communities across America.

"I always had an entrepreneurial spirit but I also love to help people. From an early age I would often go out of my way to help people, devoting much of my time and money to people's causes." As a young boy, Goldstein worked alongside a technician fixing refrigerators, air conditioning and washing machines. "I loved that job -- all day I was meeting people and listening to their issues and problems. From there I discovered that I was a great listener. People started talking to me and telling me their problems, and I try to help them in every way I could."

Goldstein shares the story that set him on his path. In 1996 Goldstein's family moved to Florida from Israel and Goldstein befriended an elderly man named George. George did not know how to drive so Goldstein volunteered to teach him the driver's education manual. When George had a very tough time comprehending the information in the handbook, Goldstein took him out on the road to show him the signs so he could understand them visually.

Goldstein's novel approach proved successful; George passed the written test. "From that moment I realized that there was a need to create a visual animation for driver's education. My entrepreneurial

spirit kicked in. I turned to my father, who has a lot of experience in the nonprofit world, and asked him which would be the best entity to establish an animated driver's handbook. He advised me to go with a nonprofit, explaining that it becomes much more personal and will help people connect to each other."

Goldstein searched for accountants and lawyers that could assist in his new endeavor, but had difficulty finding anyone to help. When he did find a capable accountant, the fee was very high. Goldstein realized that most general accountants and lawyers don't really know much about establishing nonprofits and hesitate getting involved in this very time consuming and complex process. He was determined to figure it out on his own.

"It took me almost a year to be recognized by the IRS and it cost a lot of money," recalls Goldstein. "I kept calling the IRS and asking them why was it taking so long. They told me they have a lot of applications to work through and that it could take up to six months. They also told me there is no guarantee that they will actually approve it. Not surprisingly, they found issues and problems with my application. I began a lengthy correspondence with the IRS. All the back-and-forth took another six months. I was extremely tired and discouraged and almost gave up numerous times. Nevertheless, I pushed ahead." Goldstein finally opened his first nonprofit, "Animated Driver's Ed".

Goldstein realized there was a great need for a service that would work with clients and ensure that nonprofits could be approved as quickly as possible, without problems, issues or unnecessary complications. He decided to open up a company dedicated solely to setting up nonprofit organizations, handling everything from "A to Z" -- and A2Z Filings was born. He made a decision from the outset to keep the fees reasonable, to allow more people to be able to achieve their goals and actualize their dreams.

Goldstein spent six months doing research and learning everything he needed to know about setting up nonprofits; he called the IRS countless times. With the help of the Foundations Center, Goldstein taught himself about grants and grant-making organizations. The next crucial step was to find somebody that could work with Goldstein in putting all of the intricate paperwork together.

Establishing a charitable endeavor as a nonprofit offers a level of credibility and has many benefits, including making it easier for others to support and donate to your cause and certain tax exemptions. A nonprofit organization which is a religious, charitable, or educational based organization is eligible for exemptions if it meets the necessary requirements. One of the first steps in the arduous and complicated process is completing the IRS Package 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption.

To initiate the nonprofit application with the IRS, a great deal of information must be gathered concerning the history of the corporation, the board of directors, the yearly projected budget, the proposed fund-raising procedures and many other aspects of the corporation's functions. All this information goes into the 1023 packet, which also includes a running commentary to the 1023 form, explaining the answers to its questions. In complex cases, the final 1023 packet may be as long as 80 pages.

Goldstein joined forces with Nathan Glueck, a knowledgeable writer and psychotherapist who has extensive experience getting nonprofits recognized by the IRS. Glueck had previously volunteered his time to help many community activists, social workers, religious leaders and concerned citizens and is very adept at putting together the paperwork for the 1023 packet. The founding documents require a very specific language to be used; otherwise the IRS will reject the application. If the writing is clear and convincing, the application will be processed quickly. Glueck does all the technical writing for these applications and A2Z Filings has received positive feedback from the IRS regarding the high quality of the work.

“My dream when I was young was to help people all around the world, but I had no idea how to make it happen. I realized that through A2Z Filings I could really help the masses.” Goldstein has set up hundreds of diverse organizations across the US – from museums, synagogues and community centers to homeless shelters, halfway houses and diaper banks. Internationally, Goldstein has been involved in causes such as helping people have access to clean water in Nigeria. “We’ve also opened up some very unique nonprofits. The first one was Praise 4 Healing in Huntington, New York; its mission was to bring music and singing to people that are sick in hospitals.”

Many nonprofits missions are born out of personal experience and a client’s challenges or needs become the driving force behind the cause. Goldstein still relies on his skills as a patient listener, and often becomes a confidant for his clients and potential clients as they share their dreams and their struggles with him. People come to trust him quickly as he guides them through every step of the process.

To date A2Z Filings has helped hundreds of people establish nonprofits. None of Goldstein’s clients have ever been turned down and all of the applications have been processed smoothly. Clients who demonstrate a genuine need for expedition have had their applications processed in as little as a month.

The services of A2Z Filings are more crucial now, given the current pandemic and the potential social and economic fallout, as there are so many in need of assistance and many others looking to help. Even after the current situation resolves, the needs will remain for some time. Goldstein is prepared to handle whatever may come, now and in the future.

“Our goal is to help enhance and enrich people's lives for the better by building stronger and healthier communities through creating and fostering nonprofit organizations.”