

Globe Midwest Adjusters International CEO travels to Ukraine and returns – Unity Event with partners

Something like Coke can bring joy to those who are going through such a difficult time. Now you can help if in Detroit or online if outside of Detroit.

SOUTHFIELD, MI, UNITED STATES, December 1, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "It seems like the rest of the world has already forgotten about us." This is something that several Ukrainians told businessman [Ethan Gross](#) when he recently visited the country.



Ethan Gross handing out Coke to the kids of Odessa

About nine months into the escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian War, media reports that individual donations are declining. But after Gross saw the effects of the war firsthand, he knows that Ukrainians are still – more than ever – in need of our support.

“

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*Ethan Gross, CEO Globe
Midwest Adjusters
International*

“It's my goal to keep the awareness going because it's too easy to just move on to the next topic. But, in Ukraine, it's not over, and it's not going to be over anytime soon,” said Gross, who works as the chief executive officer of Globe Midwest Adjusters International in Southfield.

During his 30-plus years as a public insurance adjuster, Gross is no stranger to disasters and tragedies – but nothing to the magnitude of what's going on in Ukraine.

“When there are millions and millions of people displaced essentially overnight, that's something most of us haven't

seen in our lifetimes; it's reminiscent of World War II. This is such a massive humanitarian crisis, and everybody needs to try and help out in any way they can,” said Gross.

“For me, I wanted to go and see things in person. Gross spent a week with the Jewish Relief Network Ukraine (JRNU). He started his trip in Berlin, Germany where the Mishpachah Orphanage of Odesa, Ukraine moved temporarily since Russia’s invasion. Nearly 200 people – including children, staff, and refugees – have been staying at this makeshift orphanage within a German hotel since the first days of the war.

“They were able to rent out an entire hotel – converting the rooms into bedrooms, classrooms and shul. The work being done there is truly amazing. It goes far beyond food and shelter. It is love, caring and creating a sense of family for everyone there,” he said.



Ethan Gross on Trip to Ukraine

While visiting the orphanage, Gross learned that even the smallest gestures make a world of difference to these children. He asked the staff if there was anything specific, he could do for the children and was told that they love Coca Cola as a treat. So, Gross went out and bought them 200 cans of Coke.

“Seeing the smiles on the children’s face and the excitement and gratitude they had just to receive their own can of Coke – it was beautiful. It’s amazing how something as simple as a can of Coke that most people take for granted can bring joy to those who are going through such a difficult time,” he said.

Gross spent the second part of his trip in Odesa, where he visited a preschool, high school, senior center and synagogue that are run by Chabad of Odesa and supported by The JRNU. Every weekday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the JRNU hands out boxes of food at the Chabad of Odessa synagogue to hundreds of families. The organization works closely with more than 150 Chabad rabbis across Ukraine to help individuals and families in crises and provide hot meals, food packages and medicine to about 35,000 men, women, and children each month.

“Seeing it on the news is different than being there in person and seeing all these people lining up for food. Some of the people are from Odessa and some are refugees escaping from more dangerous cities like Kherson. And they’re there every day until 5 p.m.,” said Gross.

When touring the schools, Gross said he found out how things have changed within the last nine months. Approximately 60% of the Jews from Odesa have left. With families fleeing to other cities and countries, the class sizes have diminished – although more and more refugee children are

attending classes there. They've also had to consolidate their classrooms so they could use one of the buildings with a basement as a bomb shelter.

"One of the biggest differences since the war started is, of course, funding. Funding is certainly more limited. Many of the biggest donors to the JRNU had to move because their businesses were destroyed. So, now they're dealing with a smaller and more needy community. That's where the JRNU comes in – giving them money to help cover their costs," said Gross.

On his flight back to Detroit, Gross said he felt melancholy. He knew, once he returned home, he wanted to do more to help the people there.

So, he came up with the idea to put together a coalition of metro Detroit congregational and business leaders to work together to support the Jewish community in Ukraine and continue spreading awareness. When Gross shared his experiences, and then his idea of [sponsoring a Detroit / Ukraine Jewish Community Unity Event](#), his partners, Bobby Levin, Carl Gross (also his brother) and Danielle Levin, immediately and enthusiastically agreed.

The event will take place on December 12, 2022, from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at Shaarey Zedek. Attendees will hear the stories of individuals who have helped support Ukraine – such as an Okemos man who delivered ambulances and medical supplies to the country and a teenage girl who made bracelets with her friends at her Bat Mitzvah to give to orphans. Rabbi Mendel Moskowitz will be a featured speaker, sharing his harrowing escape from Kharkov. And, Judi Garrett, the COO of JRNU USA will update everyone on current conditions and need of the Jewish community in Ukraine.

visit <https://www.jrnu.org>, click donate, and select "Detroit Campaign for Ukraine and JRNU" in the dropdown menu.

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