

THE JEWISH
FEDERATION
OF GREATER
WASHINGTON
presents

ROUTES

November 5, 2017



*Feed Your Intellect
Nourish Your Spirit
Expand Your Journey*

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The Jewish Federation
OF GREATER WASHINGTON

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SESSION 1

1A. Featured Speaker: InterfaithFamily/DC presents

Rebranding Judaism

Ideas for do-it-yourself Joyous Judaism to spice up a current Jewish practice or start a new one, putting an end to JewBarrasment and Spiritual Envy and the truth about the Shabbat police (there are none)

Presenter: Archie Gottesman

InterfaithFamily/DC aims to broaden the inclusion of local interfaith couples and families by creating a welcoming Jewish community where everyone can participate in the way that is most meaningful to them. We want to engage, educate and connect interfaith families to the richness of Jewish life which brings our community together, creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. Through this lens, we are proud to present ROUTES Featured Speaker, Archie Gottesman, and her powerful vision for making Judaism accessible and appealing to all.

Archie starts a frank and vulnerable conversation about breaking down the so-called rules that can make Judaism less meaningful and more intimidating while empowering her audience to “do Jewish” their own way. “If your kids want to go to the soccer game on Friday night, that’s not the end of the world,” she says. “But you can still make the Shabbat blessings first. Just do something to make Friday night, your Shabbat, a bit special. There are no Shabbat police who are going to come and tell you that you are doing it wrong.” In fact, it’s often the fear of doing something wrong that keeps people away from Jewish practice in the first place.

Archie loves seeing people smiling and nodding their heads in recognition when she introduces a term she coined: JewBarrasment (that uncomfortable feeling most of us get when we think we’ve said or done something wrong with regard to Jewish practice). Encouraging people to ask questions and take chances – and to be fearless about their Judaism – is key to religious practice in today’s world. Archie’s dream is to help people achieve that delicious experience of Joyous Judaism that she sees around her own Shabbat table – often from people who haven’t been to a Shabbat dinner in years or have never been to one at all. It’s this dream that led her to co-founding JewBelong.com, a free online community resource that puts fun, relevant, usable content at everyone’s fingertips. Archie will share her inspiring and irreverent how-to guides – including tips to “Make Your Fast Go Faster” on Yom Kippur and “How to Lead a Kick-Ass Seder” for Passover, plus much more!

1B. Music, Movement and Midrash

Presenter: Matisyahu Tonti

From the cantillation of Torah texts to the Chassidic *niggun*, Jewish tradition understands the power of rhythm to evoke meaning. This session will explore how to “embody” the tales of the Torah by using our bodies to encounter Torah Text and Midrash in a musical and rhythmic way. Using a classic Torah story, and musical techniques from the Orff Approach to Music Education, we will learn and then create a short performance that will be fun, kinesthetic, rhythmic, musical, and intellectually stimulating. Please come ready to move your body!



1C. Behind the Technicolor Dreamcoat: Hints of Abuse in the Joseph Story

Presenter: Rabbi Gordon Fuller

For beginners as well as more advanced text study learners, Rabbi Gordy will look at different clues in the Joseph story, and other biblical texts that can lead to a conclusion of a hidden sexually abusive relationship in the narrative. Text study methodology, as well as the clues themselves, will be discussed. Our sacred texts deserve much credit for having nuanced profiles of our national ancestors. The power of deep text inquiry and commentary (*parshanut*) is one of our legacy tools for finding meaning in ancient texts today.

1D. Soviet Jewry & the Jewish American Experience

Presenter: Aaron Bregman

“When we are unwilling to draw clear moral lines between free societies and fear societies, when we are unwilling to call the former good and the latter evil, we will not be able to advance the cause of peace because peace cannot be disconnected from freedom.” – Natan Sharansky

In this session, we will travel back to the 1970’s and 80’s to navigate the Soviet and American Jewish experience of trying to promote and unchain those Soviet Jews who try to flee from behind the Iron Curtain. As we explore the more well-known events of this historical period, participants will also become more informed, critical thinkers who may deeply appreciate the Jewish world that emerged during this time. We will explore how Jews in Washington responded to the reports of harassment and oppression of Soviet Jews by organizing rallies and marches, lobbying politicians, sending packages and Rosh Hashanah greetings to refuseniks, visiting Jews in the Soviet Union and, perhaps most prominently, establishing a 15-minute silent vigil outside of the Soviet embassy in Washington, DC that met daily for over 20 years. Was this experience the last time diaspora Jewry bonded together over such an important topic? Is our community more or less divided today than when the Soviet Union fell by the end of the 1980’s? What does it take to galvanize or unify our Jewish community?

These and other important questions will be asked throughout this session.

1E. Hungry Values into Delicious Action: The Making of a Sustainable (Kosher) Kitchen

Presenter: Evonne Marzouk

Protecting the environment is more important than ever today, in a world of increasing population and resource use, with immediate and future threats to our oceans, climate and health. Jewish tradition teaches us to protect the environment through a wide range of lessons about how to conserve resources and use them responsibly.

Jewish wisdom is meaningful and inspiring, but if doesn't change our actions, it's just words on paper. Jewish values are meant to be lived, and they can make a real difference if they impact our actions today. This year, one local family is taking these values into action and supporting local environmental businesses by creating a sustainable kosher kitchen as a beautiful home improvement -- and as a model for the community.

In this session, you will learn about what Jewish wisdom says about protecting the environment and using resources sustainably, then see pictures and learn about the "ingredients" of sustainable home improvement.



1F. Creating a Jewish Museum in Washington

Presenters: Kara Blond and Samantha Abramson

Washington is about to get its own Jewish museum, and it's about time! Planning is underway for the Lillian & Albert Small Jewish Museum in a new building adjacent to the Capitol Crossing Project near Judiciary Square. The Museum will incorporate the historic 1876 synagogue, the region's first and oldest purpose-built synagogue building. In addition to a new core exhibition exploring Washington's local and national Jewish heritage, the museum will boast several program spaces, temporary exhibition space and a family gallery. Join Executive Director Kara Blond and Program Manager Samantha Abramson for a preview of the project and a discussion about how museums like this one can serve as agents of memory and change. Hear how museums worldwide are fostering dialogue through storytelling, exploration of identity, community-building and social action. Kara will also explore the dual challenge of culture-specific museums to celebrate and honor the past while charting a future that places themselves as a node within the ever-expanding community of interfaith and multi-generational Jewish Washingtonians.

1G. Using Media to Open Difficult Conversations About Israel

Presenter: Steve Kerbel

Well-chosen and composed media can sometimes say in minutes with sound and pictures what can take much longer to explain in words. In this session we will use a variety of media-- some documentary, and some from the entertainment world, to open up conversations about Israel and its role in the Middle East, as the in-gatherer of exiles, as home to a diverse population and as an exporter of technologies that make the world a better place. Participants will receive a list of links to online resources to make these materials available to their communities, schools and congregations.



SESSION 2

2A. Featured Speaker: Jewish Women’s Renaissance Project *presents*

Women Making an Impact

Presenter: Alina Gerlovin Spaulding

For the first time ever at ROUTES, Jewish Women’s Renaissance Project MOMentum mission participants – and others in our community – will be able to experience a Women’s Empowerment track of learning! Featured speaker Alina Gerlovin Spaulding will share her personal story and guide us in how to be a part of the global Jewish family through the lens of tolerance, empowerment and philanthropy. Alina believes there is no greater privilege than taking part in community efforts to address the greatest needs.

JWRP uses the hashtag #ItStartsWithWomen. Indeed, it does! Come be inspired by an inspirational story of humanity and impact, led in the 70's and 80's, [mostly] by women. Take some time to think about how you want to change the world. Critical times call for extraordinary leaders. The time is now, the leader is YOU! In this session you will learn how Federation and its global partners can open this world of impactful giving to you. Alina will share her compelling personal story and her passion for nurturing Jewish Peoplehood that transcends generations. And yes, there really is no gender barrier to becoming an agent of change through philanthropy, so everyone is invited to this session to learn how to make an impact.

2B. Featured Speaker: Federation’s Imagine Israel Changemakers Series *presents*

The Battle for Israeli Judaism and Why American Jews Should Care About It

Presenter: Rabbi Esteban Gottfried

This session is part of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington’s Imagine Israel Changemakers Series*, and is the first of three sessions taking place in 5778. Under the radar from the official Jewish religious establishment in Israel, and for more than a decade, a grassroots movement of Israeli Judaism is emerging, gaining supporters and slowly changing the way Israelis connect to their Jewish identity. This Israeli Judaism is progressive, Israeli, indigenous and moderate. It's passionate and secular-based yet still highly spiritual. Its language is both traditional and contemporary, and its core values echo the democratic values of Israel (instead of conflicting with them). Most importantly: It works.

Join us as Israeli Changemaker Rabbi Esteban Gottfried, Co-Founder and Director of Beit Tefilah Israeli, shares the story of the movement and how prayer, song and celebration became the main weapons in the battle for the future of the Judaism in Israel.

*Federation’s Imagine Israel Changemakers Series brings innovative Israelis to Washington to share how their life, work and passions intersect to make a substantial impact on Israeli society. These prominent Israeli agents of change will visit Washington to lead community conversations about their unique ideas, influential actions and social change. Learn more at shalomdc.org/changemakers.



2C. Elation, Despair and Hope - The Emotional Impact of the Six-Day War

Presenter: Jennifer Raskas

For Jews around the world, the time-period of the Six-Day War was marked by an existential fear of the possible extinction of the State of Israel, followed by an unimaginable euphoria over the incredible military victories and capture of Jerusalem. The emotional highs and lows have continued throughout the past 50 years. In this lesson, we will examine the emotional impact the Six-Day War has had on the Jewish people and the ramifications it continues to have for Israelis and Jews around the world. This will help us better appreciate the events of the past 50 years and uncover our own emotional mindsets regarding the 50th anniversary of the war.

2D. Rituals: Our Actions Speak Loudest

Presenter: Dan Finkel

Many people link rituals with religion or God. Recent research in psychology and anthropology provides evidence that children and adolescents are particularly primed to learn from and integrate ritual experiences into their senses of personal identity. This idea presents each of us with a rich opportunity to bring joyful and meaningful rituals into our own and our children's lives during this sensitive window, and allows us to communicate the values of our tradition in experiential ways that "stick" with our children as they grow. In this session, we will explore the ways in which Jewish family rituals can help us prepare ourselves and our children/grandchildren to lead increasingly meaningful lives.

2E. Expanding Your Comfort Zone for Family

Presenter: JoHanna Potts

Blended families, extended families, in-laws. As our families grow through time, so do the number of relationships. The blessing of America is that there is so much diversity within the Jewish community. Sometimes this diversity includes political differences, differences in religious affiliations and practice, attitudes toward sexuality and gender identity, parenting approaches, and even different holiday traditions. All of these differences can be opportunities for personal growth. Judaism, throughout time, has incorporate traditions and foods from other cultures – think about all the recipes for *charoset*. Sometimes, these new attitudes or practices may appear to conflict with our own, and then the real work of "Shalom Bayit" begins: how to open our hearts and our minds so that family members truly feel a sense of belonging.

In this session, we will explore how we can move past our own fears and expand our comfort zones so that our families are the strong, safe places we always want home to be.

2F. Emma is my Home Girl: How a Jewish Poet Defined Refugee Resettlement in the United States

Presenter: Kerry Brodie

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," has been a rallying cry for nearly 150 years. But what about the woman behind these words? Emma Lazarus was a fierce advocate for refugees and set in motion how we as a country think about, and treat, the "other." In this session, we will learn about her brief life and her legacy, from the Statue of Liberty, to vocational training, to Emma's Torch, a small non-profit engaging refugees through food in New York City.



2G. Addiction and Jewish Spirituality

Presenter: Rabbi Paul Steinberg

Addiction indiscriminately penetrates *all* corners of society, transcending race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic level, age, and gender. Moreover, addiction includes not only substances and alcohol, but also processes (e.g., gambling, sex, eating, and gaming) and relationships (e.g., codependency). Science has greatly improved our understanding of addiction both through the biology of the brain and psychological processes, and now renders it to be a disease within the medical community. Despite scientific advance, however, no medicine or single “cure” has been discovered to treat addiction. And stigmas continue to frustrate those seeking help. The session explores addiction from a Jewish perspective, including personal accounts, and points to Jewish spiritual wisdom and practice as a path toward integrative recovery.



SESSION 3

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Archie starts a frank and vulnerable conversation about breaking down the so-called rules that can make Judaism less meaningful and more intimidating while empowering her audience to “do Jewish” their own way. “If your kids want to go to the soccer game on Friday night, that’s not the end of the world,” she says. “But you can still make the Shabbat blessings first. Just do something to make Friday night, your Shabbat, a bit special. There are no Shabbat police who are going to come and tell you that you are doing it wrong.” In fact, it’s often the fear of doing something wrong that keeps people away from Jewish practice in the first place.

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3B. My First Day of School: Making a Sweet First Impression

Presenter: Rabbi David Kalender

Throughout history, Jews have always focused on marking lifecycle moments with rituals that broaden and deepen personal and communal connections. Some of our rituals go back to the first book of the Torah while others are being created in our contemporary moment.

There was one popular childhood ritual in medieval Germany and France. It is fascinating from historical, anthropological and religious perspectives, and studying it offers us an opportunity to reflect upon our own values today. In the Medieval period, Jews living in Germany or France would mark the beginning of formal schooling with a special initiation ceremony. Our session will study and consider how families and teachers sought to involve, engage and educate the youngest members of their society. We’ll explore how Jews of Christian Europe educated children to prepare them for a religious life different than the majority, and used those rituals to strengthen their connection to their faith. The session will include text study and discussion.



3C. The New Face(s) of American Jewish Life

Presenter: Rabbi Sid Schwarz

In a pioneering new national project called *Kenissa* (entrance-way): Communities of Meaning Network, Rabbi Sid is uncovering an array of organizations across North America that are literally re-inventing conceptions of Jewish identity and Jewish life. Many of these organizations are operating under the radar of the organized Jewish community yet they are attracting the next generation of American Jews who are, for the most part, bypassing the legacy institutions of the organized Jewish community.

This session will provide insight into the people and ideas that make these Jewish communities of meaning exciting, hopeful and inspiring.

3D. Love and Responsibility – To Neighbor, Immigrant, Self, Other and World

Presenter: Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb

We are commanded to love both our neighbor, and the "ger" (stranger, immigrant, outsider). In today's global village, amidst the worst refugee crisis since the Shoah and WWII, both of these commandments take on new urgency and meaning. Together, through text study, dialogue and reflection, we'll explore this nexus of love and responsibility -- as we let French Jewish philosopher Emanuel Levinas challenge our very notion of ethics, celebrate HIAS and local synagogues who work to keep liberty's lamp lit for today's "huddled masses yearning to breathe free," link Leviticus with Black Lives Matter and come to see ourselves as strangers, too.

3E. Not Your Mother's Mikvah: Making an Ancient Ritual Relevant and Resonant

Presenter: Arielle Mortkowitz

"Mikvah" is one of those topics that does not get discussed much. Either the concept makes you uncomfortable, or it's a mysterious place veiled in secrecy, or it's an outdated tradition that has little relevance beyond ancient excavation sites in Israel. At the Agam Center, we love talking about mikvah. We'd like to show you how we have used our mikvah to revolutionize how we connect spiritually and as a community, making the ritual relevant and meaningful even in today's modern, secular society. "Mikvah" is one of the most ancient biblical rituals still practiced. It differentiates itself in our highly cerebral tradition as one of the few fully embodied rituals we have. It is also one of the oldest tenets of Jewish communal life; the Talmud prioritizes the construction of a community's mikvah before its synagogue. But mikvahs are an underutilized communal resource, uniquely positioned to enhance and deepen our connections to our Jewish communities – particularly in times when synagogue involvement is suffering.

The Agam Center reframes mikvah as a community center for spirituality, wellness, education and connection. There are so many life experiences that don't have a place in our faith communities; circumstances that are stigmatized and isolating. We think mikvah is the place in our communities to address issues like intimacy and relationships, fertility and parenting, aging and illness, and mental health and body image. It's bringing people together in times of support and comfort and celebration. And it's amazing.



3F. Developing a New Narrative for Our Relationship with Israel

Presenter: Rabbi Stephanie Bernstein

What does Israel mean to me, to the Jewish people and to the world?

This is an opportune time to explore these questions—June marked the 50th anniversary of the 1967 war; November marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration; in May, Israel will mark its 70th birthday.

It is a time to celebrate the past and look to the future. It is a time to honor those who made Herzl's dream a reality. It is a time to commend Israel's myriad accomplishments in technology, agriculture and medicine. It is a time to reflect on what we hope Israel can be.

Studies show that—for many Jews in North America— Israel is not as important as it used to be. Fifty years after 1967, an occupation that was supposed to be temporary seems permanent. In the West Bank, 2.7 million Palestinians live under Israeli military law, without rights of citizenship- how do we reconcile this with democratic ideals and Jewish morality?

Donniel Hartman, president of Israel's Shalom Hartman Institute, believes that we need a new framework for our relationship with Israel:

“The Jewish community is not in need of an Israel advocacy campaign of facts and figures alone, but also of a new Jewish narrative based on Jewish ideas and values for engaging Israel in a way that will help integrate Israel into a modern Jewish identity. Jews today need to be able to address crucial questions for which they currently do not know the answer. For example: what is the role of "peoplehood" in modern Jewish identity? What is the meaning and purpose of Jewish sovereignty in the land of Israel to modern Jewish life? What are the requirements of fighting a “moral” war, and how can Israel use its power in a way that is consistent with the highest standards of Jewish morality and values? How does Israel balance its legitimate right to self-defense with the rights of others? Can a Jewish state be reconciled with the values of Jewish pluralism and freedom?”

Join Rabbi Stephanie Bernstein in the study and discussion of how we can help shape this new narrative.



SESSION 4

4A. Featured Speaker: Jewish Women’s Renaissance Project *presents* Women Making an Impact

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4C. Jews on the Move: Jewish Travel in the Modern World

Presenter: Lauren Strauss

The well-worn image of the Wandering Jew has long been seen as a negative commentary on the instability of Jewish existence, the result of exile and persecution, and a reality that leaves Jews vulnerable and alone. But in today's society, Jewish transience is more often a matter of choice. It is an affirmation of identity, a search for roots, and a chance to revel in the diversity and history of our world. From nostalgia for the Lower East Side and the Catskills, to youth trips visiting Israel and Poland, to retirees "returning" to Spain, Portugal, Ukraine and the Czech Republic, the impetus for Jewish travel is often a blend of spiritual seeking, curiosity, and a search for roots in a vanished world. What is "authentic" and what is opportunistic? What does it mean to hold festivals and tours of Jewish culture in places that are not only devoid of Jewish communities, but which uprooted their long-time Jewish residents in the most barbaric ways possible? Have trips to Israel become a substitute for Jewish religious commitment and knowledge, especially for younger people? What do these trends say about the future of Jewish communal life?

In this session, we will encounter more questions than answers. Afterwards, you may never again book this type of travel without searching your soul for the real reasons behind your trip.

4D. No, Thank YOU: An Exploration of Gratitude in Jewish Prayer

Presenter: Maharat Dasi Fruchter

This session will explore the role gratitude plays in the rhythm of daily Jewish prayer. Does understanding prayer through the lens of gratitude, instead of request, change our orientation towards ourselves, one another, God? Join us as we look at a few key pieces of Jewish liturgy to address this important question. What do the origins and practice of blessings teach us about the power of integrating the practice of gratitude in our everyday lives?

Participants may discover a few prayers appropriate for enriching their Thanksgiving family dinner!

4E. Gedalya (423 BCE), and Rabin (1995): Trauma and Turnaround in Society

Presenters: Tzachi Levy and Federation's Congregational Shlichim

Taking two historical episodes where Jewish society was torn by trauma, Federation's Senior *Shaliach* and Congregational Shlichim (Israeli emissaries) will share their life experience observing Israeli cultural upheavals. At a historical moment when Israel-Diaspora relations are complex and perhaps filled with mutual misconceptions, hear how young Israelis process historical events and apply them to the direction their lives will take. ROUTES takes place one day after the anniversary of the Rabin assassination, and this session will offer the opportunity to remember the event and discuss its dramatic effect on individual lives.



4F. What Will the Jewish World Look Like in 2050? A Moment Symposium

Presenter: Laurence Wolff and George Johnson

This session is presented by the editors of the 2017 Moment “Jewish Future” symposium. It will examine how our knowledge about the Jewish population in the US, Israel and around the world informs what the Jewish future will look like in 33 years. Moment asked 24 prominent US and Israeli scholars, demographers, social scientists and historians to give their candid views. Relying on survey and hard census data, they often drew radically different conclusions. Strong optimism and strong pessimism about the Jewish future seem to freely coexist. But each of these experts defends their view and raises questions about the extent to which the future is foretold or in our hands. Parallel trends seem to be at work in the US and in Israel, despite wide differences in the make-up of these populations. Rapid growth in Orthodox populations in both countries coexists with growing and evolving secular approaches.

We will examine fascinating trends in migration, considering both personal identity and country of residence, and the impact of geopolitical forces. This session will separately examine Israeli and diaspora trends, and try to distill overall patterns that will characterize Jewish life in the future. It will conclude by discussing whether and how the various streams of Jewish life can connect more positively and upon what the future vitality of the Jewish people will depend.

4G. Don't Just Survive – Thrive! Juggling & Coping Skills for Real Life

Presenter: Nira Berry

Life can feel overwhelming during times of transition, or even on an everyday basis. In this session, you will learn time management skills and stress reduction techniques that will help you find your balance through every stage of life and reach your goals. We'll find ways to help you cope, and even thrive when life gets tough—and even how to just have fun, let go and enjoy life. In addition to valuable life balancing strategies, you will experience techniques such as laughter exercises, deep breathing, journaling, guided visualization and more!



PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Samantha Abramson

Samantha Abramson is the Program and Outreach Manager for the Jewish Historical Society. In her current position, she oversees educational programming for adults and youth and manages the membership program. She holds a Master's in Museum Studies from The George Washington University and a Bachelor's degree in History with minors in English Literature, Jewish Studies and Spanish from the University of Minnesota.

Rabbi Stephanie Bernstein

Rabbi Stephanie Bernstein grew up in Duluth, MN. She received a Bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, an M.A. in Guidance and Counseling from Eastern Michigan University and an M.S.W. from Catholic University. She was a clinical social worker in the DC area for over 20 years. Rabbi Bernstein was president of Temple Sinai in Washington, DC. She was student rabbi at Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation in Reston, VA. Rabbi Bernstein received her rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2009.

Rabbi Bernstein is currently a rabbi at Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church. She is also the DC area coordinator and teacher for the Union for Reform Judaism's Introduction to Judaism classes. Rabbi Bernstein has been a chaplain with the Jewish Social Service Agency, serving patients in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. She was the Study Guide writer for "The Torah: A Women's Commentary." Rabbi Bernstein has served on the boards of the Jewish Community Relations Council, Jews United for Justice and Equality Maryland.

Nira Berry

Nira Berry is known worldwide as the Happiness Coach, specializing in guiding people to find their passion, joy and laughter. Nira is an upbeat, motivational keynote speaker who can help you ignite your spark through unique inspiring presentations, life coaching, laughter therapy and team-building events. Nira is a stress-management expert and the founder of the LaughingRx wellness programs.

Nira discovered the power and healing benefits of laughter during her recovery from cancer. Since then, her passion is to spread the message of living with joy and laughter to thousands worldwide. She has been a featured speaker at hundreds of government, health and corporate events for over 15 years. Combining her expertise in wellness coaching and her expertise in Laughter yoga, Nira founded the laughter wellness movement.

Kara Blond

Kara Blond, the new Executive Director of the Lillian & Albert Small Jewish Museum, has nearly 15 years of experience managing complex, transformational exhibitions at major national institutions. At the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, where she most recently served as Director of Exhibitions, Kara was responsible for overseeing design and development of experiences across 350,000 square feet of public space. She oversaw more than 30 exhibitions, including the redesign of the National Fossil Hall and the broader Deep Time Initiative. Kara previously worked at the National Zoo, where she helped develop the Aisa Trail. Her work has been recognized with both national and Smithsonian-wide awards.



Kara holds a Master of Arts in Education in Learning, Design and Technology from Stanford University and a B.A. in English from the University of Pennsylvania, where she graduated *magna cum laude*. Kara is a native of the Washington, DC area with deep roots in the Jewish community.

Aaron Bregman

Aaron grew up in Boston, MA and attended American University in Washington, DC, where he received his B.A. in History with a concentration in American Foreign Policy & Jewish Studies, and his M.A. in Secondary Education. He began his teaching career just outside of the Boston area, and later transitioned to working at The David Project, a non-profit organization that helps shape campus opinions on Israel. As the High School Curriculum/Program Manager for The David Project from 2009-2012, Aaron was responsible for developing and maintaining strong working relationships with Jewish Day School teachers across North America. During his tenure, he edited, researched and re-constructed The David Project's high school curriculum on the Arab-Israeli Conflict.

In the summer of 2012, Aaron returned to the classroom, and for the past five years has taught American, European and Middle East Jewish History at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville, MD.

Kerry Brodie

Kerry, a DC native, JDS graduate and writer for Federation's Jewish Food Experience® website, is Founder & Executive Director of Emma's Torch, but she dreamed of Emma's Torch long before it became a reality. Cooking has always been Kerry's passion: at the age of five, she started training under the watchful eyes of her grandmother, a former caterer and event planner. Working in media -- as the Global Press Secretary for the Human Rights Campaign and the Director of Communications at the Israeli Embassy -- the daily headlines about the refugee crisis screamed in her face. The time to act is now, she decided. After all, as Anne Frank once said, "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." Isn't it though?

Kerry is a graduate of the Institute of Culinary Education, where she won the Wusthof Award for Leadership. She holds a Master's in Government from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor's in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University.

Dan Finkel

Dan is the Head of School at Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax, VA. He was born in Riverdale, NY and grew up in Atlanta. His background in Jewish education includes time spent as an Outdoor Educator at Camp Ramah Darom in Clayton, GA, Faculty and Director of Student Life at The Weber School, a pluralistic Jewish high school in Atlanta and Judaic Studies Principal at Ronald C. Wornick Jewish Day School in Foster City, CA. Currently a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology at the University of Connecticut, Dan holds a B.A. in the Biological Basis of Behavior from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. in Judaic Studies and Jewish Education from the Laura and Alvin Siegal College of Judaic Studies in Cleveland. He is particularly interested in the roles that music and ritual play in creating a meaningful religious life.



Maharat Dasi Fruchter

Maharat* Hadas (Dasi) Fruchter is the Assistant Spiritual Leader at Beth Sholom Congregation in Potomac, MD and the Director of eLEVate Beth Sholom, the synagogue's center for innovative engagement programming. She thrives on spiritual leadership, vibrant Torah learning, teaching and community building. Originally from Silver Spring, MD, Maharat Fruchter was ordained by Yeshivat Maharat in June of 2016. She graduated *summa cum laude* from the Macaulay Honors College at Queens College, and completed an M.P.A. in Non-Profit Administration and an M.A. in Jewish Studies from New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. She is a Wexner Graduate Fellow/Davidson Scholar and was the Program Director at ImmerseNYC, New York's only community mikveh project, in addition to advising brides and grooms before their weddings. She completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at the Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale and was trained in community organizing through the Jewish Organizing Institute and Network (JOIN) Seminary Leadership Project.

Maharat Fruchter believes deeply in helping others--regardless of age, background and experience--to find resonance in the richness of Jewish ritual life, wisdom and narrative. She is deeply interested in building spiritually robust and empowered Jewish communities. When not at shul, she can be found trying to improve her guitar-strumming technique, looking up cute photos of biblical animals or cooking a hearty soup.

**title for female clergy in Orthodox Judaism.*

Gordon Fuller

Rabbi Gordon Fuller recently became the Executive Director of The Foundation for Jewish Studies in Rockville. During his first year in Maryland, he served as rabbi at Shirat HaNefesh in Chevy Chase, and has since continued to teach local congregations. Rabbi Gordy was ordained in 2004 after a 20-year career in Jewish Education, including positions in formal and informal education around the country. Before moving to MD, he had a pulpit in Waco, TX for 11 years, and was an active member of the community. Originally from Detroit, Rabbi Gordy holds a B.A. in Human Development from Northwestern University and an M.A. in Social Work from the University of Chicago. He is a committed pluralist and a believer in interfaith relations. He currently sits on both the Washington and Howard County boards of rabbis and is a founding member of The Good People Fund. Though he was always late turning in written papers, he is the co-author of a book with his friend and cardiologist, Dr. Joel Roffman, entitled "*Coping With Adversity*." He is as passionate about the environment and text study as he is about his family. He's also a non-recovering chocoholic (as long as it's at least 70% dark).

Alina Gerlovin Spaulding

Alina Gerlovin Spaulding is NOT an insomniac, but rather a "short sleeper." Which is great, since she is one of the most sought-after speakers on The Jewish Federations of North America's speaker circuit on the topic of philanthropy and impactful giving. Having been involved in fundraising for 22 years in a variety of agencies in the United States and overseas, Alina firmly believes that there is no larger privilege than channeling philanthropic gifts. Alina has done transformational philanthropic work in areas of housing sustainability, Jewish Day Schools, Jewish Federations of North America, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, youth engagement, the arts, and trauma and mental health care. She is a subject matter expert on innovative development strategy, helps direct major donors and philanthropists in their giving and enjoys coaching new talent as they enter the world of development. When she is



not making a difference in the areas that are most important to her, she loves to travel around the world in search of the perfect French macaron, baking, eating, visiting with family and friends and laughing! She is also the author of *The Guilty Pleasures of a Totally Unbalanced Life*, a completed book which has yet to be published.

Archie Gottesman

A wise rabbi once said: “Judaism is a great product, but the marketing sucks.” As a Jew and a branding professional, Archie Gottesman is in full agreement. Archie knows in her kishkes that warm, meaningful Jewish rituals are key to keeping everyone connected to their Judaism, whether they have a regular Jewish practice, are new to Judaism or haven’t even thought about Judaism in a long, long time. This is what led her to founding JewBelong.com, a groundbreaking website focused on rebranding Judaism. Archie knows about connecting with people through compelling branding-- for 20 years, she was the voice behind Manhattan Mini Storage’s iconic billboard and subway ads. Archie currently sits on the board of the Foundation for Jewish Camp and the Women’s Board of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC). She is a past chair and current vice chair of Animal Haven Shelter, NYC. Archie is also a frequent guest lecturer about family business at Columbia University. Archie is a graduate of Northwestern University and a Wexner Heritage Program alum. She lives in Summit, NJ with her husband, Gary DeBode. They have three daughters and an ever-changing number of shelter dogs.

Rabbi Esteban Gottfried

Rabbi Esteban Gottfried is the rabbi, co-founder and director of Beit Tefilah Israeli (BTI), a fast-growing community in Tel Aviv that is renewing and revitalizing the notion of prayer. Services at BTI combine live music, modern poetry and literature with the traditional prayer book. In recent years BTI became famous for its Summer Kabbalat Shabbat service at the Tel Aviv port, which attracts up to 800 worshippers each week. This phenomenon— attracting many secular Israelis who once felt marginalized by the Jewish community—is now being replicated in Jerusalem and throughout Israel. His successes offer insight to our own challenge in striking a balance between tradition and change.

Rabbi Gottfried was ordained at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem, and is a graduate of the Israeli Rabbinical Seminary of the Shalom Hartman Institute and Hamidrasha at Oranim. Before pursuing the rabbinate, he studied theater in Tel Aviv and London. During his 20-year career in the theater, Esteban received numerous awards, including two “Israeli Oscars” (Ofir) as a writer and actor. He is married to Ruthie and is the father of Maya and Toby.

George Johnson

George Johnson is a Washington-based lawyer and writer and is a Senior Editor of Moment Magazine. Johnson joined the Moment staff in 2013 where he has published columns, interviews and symposia, and feature stories. He is the former Research Director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Planning and Research of the Synagogue Council of America. He is the author of studies on numerous Jewish policy issues, including inter-marriage, Russian-Jewish immigrants, American aliyah, and Israeli negotiations with the Palestinians.



Rabbi David Kalender

Rabbi Kalender grew up in an active Conservative congregation in Kansas City and has been part of Olam Tikvah since 1998. Over the years, he developed a love of all things Jewish through family, synagogue life and Camp Ramah. Eventually, he realized that he wanted his life to revolve around helping others find the joy and inspiration that comes from a traditional Jewish framework. He holds a B.A. in English from Columbia University and a B.A. and an M.A. in Jewish History from The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). Israel is central to his life and he guides a group from Olam Tikvah to Israel almost every year.

Beyond Congregation Olam Tikvah and Glenbrook Road, Rabbi Kalender serves as the Chairman of the Fairfax County Faith Communities in Action and has served as board member of the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, Gesher Jewish Day School and the Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in Fairfax County.

Steve Kerbel

Steve Kerbel is an independent education consultant in the Greater Washington, DC area, and has been involved in formal and informal Jewish education, youth group, camp, day school and congregational school for the last 30 years. Steve writes curriculum and provides in-person and online teacher training. Steve is currently an adjunct faculty member for the Center for Israel Education at Emory University and for Gratz College. Steve served as Director of Education for Congregation B'nai Tzedek in Potomac, Maryland. Before this, he served as the inaugural Retreat Director of Capital Camps & Retreat Center in Waynesboro, PA. Prior to working at Capital Camps, Steve was Director of Education of Ohr Kodesh Congregation in Chevy Chase for seven years. Steve has also been a full-time faculty member at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville and an educational consultant to the Seaboard Region of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and USY.

In what seems like a different lifetime, Steve earned a law degree and was in the private practice of law for eight years. Steve's avocations include facilitating wine tastings featuring Israeli wines and teaching about the geography of diversity of Israel through its wines and wine makers.

Tzachi Levy

Tzachi Levy is in his first year as The Jewish Agency Senior *Shaliach* (Israeli emissary) to The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. Most recently, he served as Director for The Jewish Agency's Shinshinim Shlichut Program. Tzachi has a B.A. from Beit Berl College in Informal Education and History, and a M.A. in Public Administration from Sapir College. Prior *shlichut* opportunities have allowed Tzachi to serve as an emissary to Pittsburgh, PA and to South Africa. As a 13th-generation Israeli, Tzachi's strong family roots and Zionist youth movement education serve as his motivation and energy for working at Federation and in the Jewish world.

Evonne Marzouk

Evonne Marzouk is the founder and former Executive Director of Canfei Nesharim: Sustainable Living Inspired by Torah (www.canfeinesharim.org). Evonne has spoken worldwide on the Torah-environment connection, and has also launched successful local Torah-environment committees in Washington, DC and Silver Spring, MD. In 2009, she was selected as one of The New York Jewish Week's "36 under 36." Evonne also initiated and led the team which



developed Jewcology.com, a web-based portal to support resource sharing and collaboration across the Jewish-environmental community.

Evonne currently works on teams addressing global pollution at the Environmental Protection Agency, and is excited to continue to put Jewish values into action through her sustainable kitchen project.

Ariele Mortkowitz

Ariele Mortkowitz is the founding director of the Agam Center. She has been a volunteer mikvah guide in the Washington, DC area for over 13 years. Through her work, she has seen how the mikvah ritual can augment an individual's spiritual journey and create a space for personal connections. She is also unafraid to admit that the concept of mikvah can be very complicated. Ariele created the Agam Center at Ohev Sholom in 2016 as an expansion of what a mikvah can mean to a community. She has a background in the Jewish nonprofit world with a focus on strategic planning, organizational growth, and staff training. She has presented on modernizing mikvah at national conferences and university seminars. Ariele is originally from Fair Lawn, NJ and moved to Washington, DC with her husband, David Hain, in 2004. They live in Shepherd Park with their three children.

JoHanna Potts

JoHanna Potts is currently the Education Director of The Jewish Studio and the founder of Advancing Wisdom and Education. She served as Director of Education at Temples Solel and Shalom, Director of The Primary School at Washington Hebrew Congregation, and Director of the Middle School at Gesher Jewish Day School in the Washington, DC area. She also taught in the Florence Melton School for Adult Learning for several years. While at the Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning, she designed and led a community education change initiative. Prior to moving to the Washington, DC area, Rabbi Potts worked in university administration and student development. She teaches adults across the metro area at JCCs and multiple congregations. Her current areas of focus involve strengthening organizations and families, engaging others in enJOYable Jewish learning and empowering individuals to create lives of meaning through Judaism.

Rabbi Potts earned a B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis. She holds an M.A. in Education and Human Development and Jewish Studies from The George Washington University. She has done graduate work in Organizational Studies at the University of Wisconsin and is a certified mediator.

Jennifer Raskas

Jennifer Raskas is the Director of the Israel Action Center of the JCRC of Greater Washington, which educates the community about the politics and history of Israel, trains community members to be effective advocates of Israel and encourages all community members to find and share their Israel story. Jennifer has over a decade of professional experience working directly for and on behalf of the State of Israel. She was previously the Business and Community Development Manager for the Maryland/Israel Development Center, the Director of Trade and Operations of the Government of Israel Economic Mission in Houston, TX and the Public Affairs Officer for the Embassy of Israel in Washington, DC.



Jennifer has organized and led many delegations of diverse participants to Israel, including Harvard graduate students from 25 different countries as well as business professionals from the DC/MD area. She received her B.A. from Columbia University and her M.P.P. from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb

Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb has served Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation (www.adatshalom.net), a serious dynamic progressive Jewish community in Bethesda, MD, ever since his 1997 ordination from Philadelphia's Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. Earlier this year, at Adat Shalom's congregational retreat attended by over 200 people, Fred led the extended exploration of *ahavat ha-ger* (loving the stranger/immigrant/other), on this very topic. The Chairperson of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (www.COEJL.org), Fred serves on the boards of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (NRPE) and the Regeneration Project (IPL). He received his Doctorate of Ministry from Wesley Theological Seminary (in 2009), capping off years of research, writing, and speaking at the intersection of ecology and religion.

A past President of the Washington Board of Rabbis and past Chair of the MD-DC-NoVA Interfaith Power and Light, Fred lives in Washington, DC with his wife Minna Scherlinder Morse and their glorious 8-and 12-year-old children.

Rabbi Sid Schwarz

Rabbi Sid Schwarz is a social entrepreneur, author and teacher. He created and directs the Clergy Leadership Incubator (CLI), a program that trains rabbis to be visionary spiritual leaders. He also created and directs the *Kenissa*: Communities of Meaning Network which is building the capacity of emerging spiritual communities across the country. Sid founded and led PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values for 21 years. He is also the founding rabbi of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda, MD, where he continues to teach and lead services. Rabbi Schwarz holds a Ph.D. in Jewish history and is the author of two groundbreaking books--*Finding a Spiritual Home: How a New Generation of Jews Can Transform the American Synagogue* (Jewish Lights, 2000) and *Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World* (Jewish Lights, 2006). Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, founder of Clal and one of American Jewry's most notable leaders, has written about Sid, "Rabbi Sid Schwarz' life and career embody a unique mix of religious vision and an ability to implement that vision in the real world."

Sid was awarded the prestigious Covenant Award for his pioneering work in the field of Jewish education and was named by Newsweek as one of the 50 most influential rabbis in North America. Sid's latest book is *Jewish Megatrends: Charting the Course of the American Jewish Future* (Jewish Lights, 2013).

Rabbi Paul Steinberg

Rabbi Paul Steinberg is a nationally recognized transformative educator. Rabbi Steinberg previously served as a principal of a Jewish day school in Dallas, Texas and as the Senior Educator at Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, California. He has published many articles on Jewish thought and education, as well as five books including *Study Guide to Jewish Ethics* (JPS, 2003) and the three-volume series *Celebrating the Jewish Year* (JPS, 2009) which earned the National Jewish Book Award. After receiving treatment for his own alcoholism, workaholicism and depression, Rabbi Steinberg served as the Beit T'Shuvah Community Rabbi (2014-17), a synagogue community with an addiction treatment center. He then published his most recent book *Recovery, the 12 Steps, and Jewish Spirituality: Reclaiming Hope, Courage and*



Wholeness (Jewish Lights), which tells his personal struggles with addiction, as well as provides the first comprehensive approach to integrating Jewish spirituality with the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Today, Rabbi Steinberg proudly serves as the Director of Life-Long Learning at Congregation Kol Shofar in Tiburon, CA.

Lauren Strauss

Dr. Lauren B. Strauss is Scholar in Residence and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Jewish Studies Program at the American University in Washington, DC, where she teaches courses on modern Jewish history and literature. She has also been on faculty at the George Washington University and the University of Maryland. She holds a Ph.D. in Modern Jewish Studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, an M.A. in International Relations from Yale University, and a B.A. from Brandeis University. Her courses range from American Jewish history – especially politics, popular culture, and women’s history – to modern Jewish history and literature, Jewish travel and migration, Holocaust literature and art, and Yiddish culture. She has also taught many adult education classes, and is a frequent public lecturer in the DC area.

From 2012 to 2017, in addition to her teaching, Dr. Strauss served as Executive Director of the Foundation for Jewish Studies, the largest independent provider of Jewish adult education programs in the Washington area. Dr. Strauss is co-editor of the book *Mediating Modernity: Challenges and Trends in the Jewish Encounter with the Modern World* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2008). She is the author of articles in anthologies, academic journals, and encyclopedias, and served as an historical consultant for the 2004 Library of Congress exhibit “From Haven to Home,” celebrating the 350th anniversary of Jewish settlement in North America. She is the historian and curator for a major museum exhibition on the history of the State of Israel. Dr. Strauss is also finishing her book, *Painting the Town Red: Jewish Visual Artists, Yiddish Culture, and Radical Politics in Interwar New York*.

Matisyahu Tonti

Matisyahu Tonti is a long-time Jewish educator who has worked as a camp counselor, outdoor educator, songleader and a classroom teacher. Matisyahu has spent four years living and studying in Israel. Most recently, he received a certificate in Jewish Philosophy and Pedagogy from the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, and was ordained as a rabbi from Yeshivat Sulam Ya’akov in Jerusalem. Matisyahu also holds a B.A. from Siegal College of Judaic Studies in Jewish Education. He currently teaches music, Torah and outdoor education at Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax, VA. He is also a father to three beautiful children and husband to an amazing woman.

Laurence Wolff

Laurence Wolff joined the Moment Magazine staff in 2016 and is currently a Senior Editor. Previously, he was an education officer at the World Bank and a consultant for international agencies. He has written and published widely on education policy issues in developing countries. Most recently he has focused on the social, educational and demographic challenges facing Israel, where he is a frequent visitor. His family is involved in strengthening the Reform movement in Israel through support of Beit Daniel synagogue in Tel Aviv/Jaffa.

