

Northern VA Leadership Cohort 2025-26

Participants



Izzy Arbetter

Izzy serves as President of Rodef 2100, the 20s and 30s community of Temple Rodef Shalom. She first became involved after moving to Arlington 2021, following her graduation from Miami University. Izzy quickly became an active participant, regularly attending events before joining the board as Vice President, a role she held from 2022 through summer 2025. In that position, she focused on strengthening outreach to people in their 20s and building partnerships with Jewish organizations across NoVA. Now, as President, Izzy aims to expand Rodef 2100's presence within the broader Jewish community of Northern Virginia and Washington, DC. She is grateful to join the Federation's NoVA Leadership Cohort, where she looks forward to learning from and collaborating with fellow leaders to meet evolving community needs. Professionally, Izzy is a lobbyist at Lewis-Burke Associates. In her free time, she enjoys music, cooking, and discovering new hiking trails around the DMV. She recently moved to Capitol Hill after living in Arlington for four years!



Ellyn Fine

Ellyn Fine has been a member of Congregation Olam Tikvah (OT) since 2004. She has been involved with OT's membership committee, young professionals group, and the religious school and Sisterhood Board. Since 2020, she has served on OT's Board of Directors and is currently the congregation's 2nd Vice President. Ellyn is the state coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund cleanup program and is an Internationally Board Certified Lactation Consultant for Capital Area Pediatrics. Ellyn lives in Falls Church with her husband Todd and post-b'nai mitzvah teenage sons who consider Capital Camps a second home. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies and Master of Public Administration both from The George Washington University. Ellyn is originally from Philadelphia, PA.



David Goldman

Dave is a new member of the Greater Washington Jewish community. Before coming to the area in August 2025, he lived in Richmond, VA from 2022 to 2025. For the last year and a half, Dave has served on the executive board of Congregation Or Atid—a small conservative synagogue in Richmond—as well as the Congregation’s Ritual Committee. During his time in Richmond, he also served on the Jewish Community Federation of Richmond’s Israel and Overseas Committee, making decisions regarding international funding recipients, and SparkRVA, an innovative program that provides institutional microloans to small Israeli businesses struggling after October 7. Dave works as an attorney at the Department of Justice.



Andy Grabel

Andy is a strategic communications professional with a passion for partnerships, powerful narratives, and community impact. For 20 years, he has served organizations dedicated to preserving and celebrating cultural heritage, the natural and built environment, and public education, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the NEA Foundation. Today, he works as public information officer for the Fairfax County Park Authority. Andy began his career as a writer and editor at newspapers in Black Mountain, NC, Dawsonville, GA., and Beaufort, SC. He grew up in Atlanta and is an alumnus of the Grady College of Journalism at the University of Georgia. Andy has served on the board of the Pozez Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia since 2023. He lives with his wife and daughters in Fairfax, VA.



Amit Hickman

Amit is excited to represent Capital Camps and Retreat Center as a part of the NoVA Leadership Cohort! Amit's three children (a 15-year old and 13-year old twins) have been attending camp for 7 and 5 years respectively and their love for camp prompted Amit to join the Parent Committee a few years ago. Professionally, Amit works as the Early Childhood Education Director at the Pozez JCC as well as at JSSA in Fairfax as a Mental Health Clinician, where she specializes in Parent-Child Interaction Therapy and



Couples Counseling. Amit has her MEd and MSW from George Mason University but her heart belongs to the University of Pittsburgh where she did her undergrad (LET'S GO PITT). Amit is currently serving her second term as a School Board Member for the City of Fairfax. In her "free" time, Amit enjoys reading, spending time with family, walking her dog, and traveling.



Jennifer Kulkin

Jennifer (Jen) Brezel Kulkin has served as a Speech-Language Pathologist in Fairfax County Public Schools since 2006. Jen grew up in Atlanta, where her strong sense of Jewish identity was shaped by attending Congregation B'nai Torah, The Epstein School, Blue Star Camps, and being involved in a Jewish youth group. These experiences fostered her sense of connection, values, and service. She is currently a member of

Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church, VA and serves on the Israel committee. She also served as the World Zionist Captain (WZC) for the recent WZC 2025 campaign. Jen lives in North Arlington with her husband, Matt, and their three daughters—Ava, Julia, and Elise—and their yellow lab, Oliver.



Ken Lichtman

Ken Lichtman became involved in synagogue leadership after retiring from the Federal Government. He currently serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors and as Men's Club Ritual Vice President at Agudas Achim Congregation (AAC) in Alexandria, VA. In 2025, he was recognized as AAC's Men's Club Blue Yarmulke Person of the Year. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Ken moved to Alexandria in 1987. He met his wife at Beth El

Hebrew Congregation where their children later attended Keshet preschool. After preschool, their family joined AAC. Ken received his undergraduate degree in Economics from SUNY Albany and his Masters degree from Virginia Tech. Ken began his career as an Economist with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in NYC, transferred to the US Bureau of Mines in Washington DC and later returned to the USACE at Fort Belvoir where he worked until his retirement in 2019.



Ali Nadel

Ali is originally from the Chicago suburbs and has lived in Arlington for over 20 years. She is an attorney and practiced law—primarily litigation—at a large international law firm for over a decade before the pandemic. In 2020, she shifted focus and became more deeply involved in Jewish organizations that are important to her and her family. At Temple Rodef Shalom, Ali launched the Caring Committee, which organizes and encourages acts of loving-kindness to fellow congregants. She also serves on the Temple's Leadership Council and has served on various other temple committees. She is excited to soon begin working at the Temple's preschool! Ali also serves on the Board of Directors of Camp Laurelwood in Madison, CT, the Jewish overnight camp that her kids have attended for the past five summers where she is involved in recruiting, retention, and development. Ali lives in Arlington with her husband, their two boys (a 6th grader at Dorothy Hamm Middle School and a 9th grader at Washington-Liberty High School), and their dog Grover.



Steve Pregozen

Steve Pregozen is a member of Congregation Beth Emeth (CBE) in Herndon, VA, and currently serves on the CBE Board as Treasurer. Before that, Steven was CBE's Secretary, Security Task Force Chair and member of Rabbi search committees. Professionally, Steve was a Special Agent with Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) where he investigated complex financial crimes. After his retirement from the IRS, Steve applied his skills as Chief of Staff of law enforcement consulting firm in Reston, VA. He is an avid UCLA fan, a car enthusiast, and enjoys biking in his spare time. Steve and his wife Jerri have two adult sons.



Kevin Rachlin

Kevin serves as the Vice President for Government Relations and Washington Director at the Nexus Project with over a decade of experience in U.S.-focused advocacy and non-profit leadership. Kevin previously served as the Vice President of Public Affairs at J Street and as the U.S. Director for the Alliance for Middle East Peace, a coalition of 150+ Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilding organizations. He is currently



a Senior Fellow for Israel and Palestine Policy at the Alliance of Peacebuilding. Kevin and his wife live in Fairfax, VA, with their two daughters.



Joel Regignano

Originally from Philly, Joel currently lives in Alexandria, VA with his wife, Crystal, and their two kids, Maurice (10) and Eliza (5). Joel's been in real estate for over 20 years and has spent the last 16 with The Bozzuto Group in DC and VA. He's a Vice President on their Commercial Assets team within the management company, overseeing a portfolio across the DMV and out West in CA and WA. Joel also serves on the Network Council for

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, focusing on growing the Jewish business professional community in Northern Virginia. Outside of his real estate and community-building passions, it's Family, Fitness, Food, and Shoes—in that order! He loves all things sports and coaches his son's basketball and baseball teams, and makes frequent trips back to Philly for Phillies, Sixers, and Eagles games!



Jesse Reisman

Jesse has been part of the Beth El Hebrew Congregation family since 2019. Over the years, he's taken on a variety of roles—chairing the Membership and Religious School & Youth committees, and the COVID Reopening Task Force. He's now in his second term as Vice President on the Executive Committee, following a few years on the Board. Jesse works in cybersecurity, supporting both public and private organizations

as they navigate how to keep critical systems secure. Before moving into the private sector in 2017, he spent 15 years as a federal employee across several agencies, focusing on protecting national interests and infrastructure. He lives in Alexandria with his twin children, who are also part of synagogue life—keeping Beth El a central part of family life and connection.



Joel Stillman

Joel Stillman is the Co-Founder and President of Capitol Financial Consultants, Inc., where he has advised individuals and organizations for almost four decades. A Certified Financial Planner and Chartered Life Underwriter, Joel began his career as an attorney before moving into financial advisory services. He is deeply engaged in the Northern Virginia Jewish community, serving on the Board of Directors, the Finance Committee, and Investment Committee of JSSA, as well as, engaging in leadership roles at Temple Rodef Shalom. Joel has also devoted more than 30 years to youth athletics as a former President, and now Treasurer, of McLean Youth Athletics and as a coach in various youth sports. He looks forward to connecting with fellow leaders and supporting collaborative community impact across Northern Virginia.



Daniel Strouse

Daniel is the Board Chair of Gesher Jewish Day School. He has two amazing children who attend Gesher (13 and 11), and a fantastic wife who convinced him to send them. Professionally, Daniel is a partner at the law firm, Cordatis LLP, where he represents government contractors across the spectrum of legal concerns specific to those selling to the government. He and his family attend Olam Tikvah and have been members since they moved to Northern Virginia in 2008. Outside of work and the Gesher Board, he spends time with his family and dogs, avidly (too avidly?) roots for Philadelphia sports teams, and reads for pleasure. He's excited to continue his journey through Northern Virginia Jewish leadership as his children grow and become further enmeshed in the Northern Virginia Jewish community beyond the walls of Gesher and Congregation Olam Tikvah.



Irvin Varkonyi

Irvin is a 30-year resident of Fairfax County, and a member of Congregation Olam Tikvah. He currently serves on the George Mason Hillel Board, chairs the Committee to Combat Antisemitism at Federation's Jewish Men's Club, and the Fairfax Democrats Jewish Caucus. As the child of Holocaust survivors, he volunteers at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and tells the story of his family's

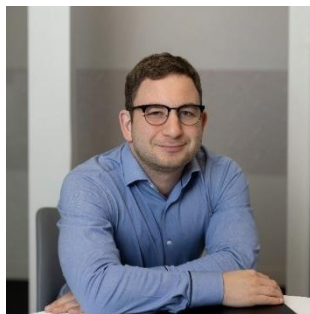


experience at schools, synagogues, and organizations. Born in Hungary and emigrating as a child with his parents during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, he grew up in New York City, earning degrees at Clark University and the Thunderbird School of Global Management. He has been married to his wife Leslie for 47 years and have two children and five wonderful grandchildren. His nearly 50-year professional career was spent in the field of supply chain management, where he worked for companies engaged in global trade and consulted on workforce development.



Misha Vinokur

Misha is deeply involved in Jewish life. As the father of two young children, he currently holds the position of Preschool Vice President on the Board of Directors at Agudas Achim Congregation, overseeing the synagogue's preschool and Young Families program. He also serves on the Board of Directors at George Mason University's Hillel, with a focus on increasing alumni engagement and expanding the business network community to help newly graduated students find opportunities in the Northern Virginia area. Professionally, Misha is the founder of a web development agency, bringing a wealth of experience in business development, technology, marketing, and sales. He offers strategic practical skills to the organizations he supports, leveraging his strong connections within DC's technology and business communities.



Michael Zalesne

Michael is the Managing Director of Prizma Strategies, a consulting firm that helps companies harness AI and data to drive growth, efficiency, and innovation. With a background spanning business strategy, policy, and advanced analytics, Michael partners with leadership teams to modernize operations, improve decision-making, and capture more value from proprietary data assets. In the Jewish community, he leads an AIPAC network for professionals ages 25–35 and has been active with The Jewish Federation and Anti-Defamation League (ADL). He lives in Arlington, VA with his wife and 10-month-old son.

FACILITATORS



Rae Ringel

Rae is a certified executive coach and founding President of The Ringel Group. For more than 15 years, she served on the faculty of the Georgetown University Institute for Transformational Leadership, where she was the founding director of the certificate program in the Art of Facilitation and Design. Rae is now the director of the newly launched Certificate in Facilitation program at the University of Virginia | Northern Virginia, and she also serves as adjunct faculty at the UVA Darden School of Business. She is a frequent contributor to *Harvard Business Review*. Rae is in high demand as an innovator in coaching, facilitation, and learning design across sectors. She works with leaders in Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits, foundations, and government agencies, enabling them to become more effective managers and stronger communicators with a formidable leadership presence.



Melanie Schaeffer

Melanie is the Associate Director of Northern Virginia Community Outreach at The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. She graduated from the University of Delaware with a degree in Elementary Education but soon moved into the Jewish non-profit space. Prior to her work at Federation, Melanie worked at Jewish Women International and GatherDC in roles focused on building community and supporting Jewish 20's and 30's. Her desire to build meaningful relationships has led her to her current role supporting the Northern Virginia Jewish community that she cares for deeply. In her free time, Melanie loves to read, go on walks, and spend time with friends and family.