

St. Paul Jewish Federation Community Planning Process

Priority 2: L'dor Va'dor Engage the Next Generation Final Report November 2017

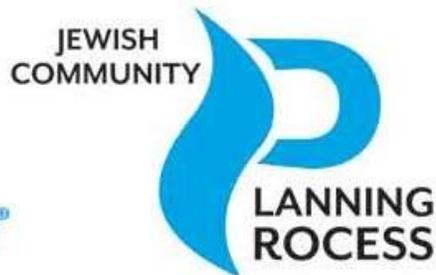


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Letter from the Chair

The organized Jewish community is led and governed primarily by our older generations. **Engaging the younger generations is arguably our most important task.** We have to pay careful attention to make sure we that are structuring our community in ways that engage them.

Our younger generation's world is somewhat different from our older generations' world. There is nothing that is new under the sun and there is a lot that's new under the sun. The younger generations have different news sources, different economic pressures, a different sense of community, different ways of communicating, a different sense of multi-culturalism and globalism – and more.

Our younger generations are the future of our community. The older generations need to listen deeply and carefully to who they are, to what they are thinking, and to what they value. As Ruth Shack of Dade Community Foundation wisely said, we need to be able to know our community intimately and respond with affection. Where our current community structures don't fit with the younger generations' reality, we need to be open to considering whether we should introduce some change. It will not work to just say they are wrong.

Of course we need to be grounded in thousands of years of Jewish wisdom, text, and community learning. We need to be grounded in our core Jewish understanding of what it means to be a community, what it means to be in a family, what it means to be a friend. But our formats, our administrative structures, our communication styles, our ways of organizing, our community connections, and more – about these we need to be flexible and adaptive. We need to be in dialectic, we need to learn, we need to be in conversation. We need to sort things through, we need to reach out. We need to figure out where we need to hold onto old ways and where we need to be truly open to new ways.

The research described in this report – particularly the anonymous in-depth interviews with ten younger people in our community – give us a window into how we might think about the future of our community. The ten interviews presented here are a sampling of Jewish young adults (ages 22-35) who represent various points on the spectrum of Jewish affiliation and Jewish education. Despite the small sample size, we can't afford to write-off or disregard what we learn here. These young peoples' responses are consistent with national research. We need to value what we learn here and respond with affection to build a bridge to the next chapter of a vibrant, deeply-rooted Jewish community in Saint Paul.

Executive Summary – Community Planning Process

The Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Greater Saint Paul initiated the Community Planning Process in the spring of 2012. Through the leadership of a Steering Committee chaired by Randi Ilyse Roth, the Federation facilitated listening sessions to learn more about what Saint Paul's Jewish community was thinking and what community members wanted to share. This process engaged more than 350 people from virtually every demographic segment of the community. Through analysis of data from these listening sessions, a guiding principle and five community priorities emerged.

Guiding Principle

To engage all Saint Paul Jewish agencies, institutions and synagogues to build a vibrant, cohesive and inclusive Jewish community in Greater Saint Paul. To be successful, lay and professional leaders will intentionally work together in ever-increasing collaboration and with common purpose.

Five Priorities

- Build the foundation of community: Warm, welcoming connections
- Engage the next generation: Reach out – *L'dor Va'dor*
- Inspire giving: Create the commitment to sustain a vibrant and caring Jewish Saint Paul
- Strengthen Jewish education: Find and implement effective models for today's world
- Enhance cooperation between Saint Paul and Minneapolis Jewish communities

Research and recommendation panels were convened to identify the current state of affairs, learn from others engaged in similar work locally and nationally, identify realistic goals for the Greater Saint Paul Jewish community, and make recommendations for a path forward.

Panel recommendations will be presented to and may be implemented by Federation agencies, independent agencies and bi-city agencies, synagogues, and individuals in Saint Paul's Jewish community. These intended users are encouraged to apply the recommendations in the ways that best fit their constituency and organization.

For each recommendation that is chosen for implementation, we should develop and apply an evaluation. This will allow us to track our progress and to respond quickly to the need for any mid-course adjustments in our approaches.

Executive Summary – L’dor Va’dor Panel

Our panel focused on engaging the next generation of Jewish adults in the Saint Paul Jewish Community. Communities and organizations across the globe are now concerned about how to connect with and engage individuals graduating from college and beginning their careers (ages 22-35). The Community Planning Process Listening Session data indicated that Saint Paul community members were concerned with the declining participation and affiliation of young people, as well as with insufficient and ineffective outreach to newcomers and youth in the community. L’dor Va’dor, Panel 2 in the Saint Paul Jewish Federation’s Community Planning Process, initiated a process designed to collect the perspectives of these individuals, with a focus on youth ages 22-35, related to community and engagement, both within and outside of the Jewish community.

The Panel’s research included a review of literature, interviews of young adults in our community in our targeted age range, and testimony from experts. The interviews pointed to several attributes of an ideal Jewish community:

- **Relevance:** Interviewees expressed that they were more likely to engage in community opportunities that have relevance to their lives.
- **Belonging:** Interviewees want to connect with and belong to a community of others who share similar purpose and passion.
- **Community-based:** Interviewees want opportunities to connect Jewishly in their homes, neighborhoods, and through other community-based networks.
- **Choice and Acceptance:** Young Jews want to engage in the community without being subjected to judgment about the ways in which they do or don’t conform to others’ ideas about what it means to be Jewish.
- **Commitment to Social Justice:** The participants urged the Saint Paul community to deeply engage with questions of identity, power and privilege.
- **Relationship-focused:** Interviewees want opportunities that develop and deepen relationships.
- **Opportunities for Co-creation:** Young Jews want to learn alongside more experienced people, while also having their talents, ideas, and energies valued and utilized.

Guided by our charge, our research, and attributes identified above, the panel members propose the following recommendations. Our hope is to develop opportunities for deepening levels of involvement, starting with participation and leading to true engagement.

Recommendation #1: Develop Young Adult Philanthropy Fund that Encourages Social Entrepreneurship. We should create the opportunity for youth and young adults to propose, fund, and carry out initiatives that are developed and led by them.

Recommendation #2: Engage in Partnerships in Larger Community For Social Good. We should actively partner with local nonprofits.

Recommendation #3: Engage in Safe Discussions. We should develop a series of forums designed to elicit diverse viewpoints in an open, nonjudgmental manner.

Recommendation #4: Expand Jewish Professional Affinity Groups. We should expand what the Jewish community offers in terms of affinity groups in professions beyond medicine (Maimonides) and law (Cardozo).

Recommendation #5: Address Cost Issue. We should research the feasibility of creating a “Passport to Jewish Life in Saint Paul.”

Additional recommendations include:

- 1) Expanding the Warm & Welcoming Connections Panel’s work regarding enlarging TCJewfolk’s “Who the Folk” concept; and,
- 2) Expanding the Enhance Cooperation Panel’s work regarding educational, networking, and leadership development opportunities in the bi-cities Harry Kay Leadership Program.

The Community Planning Process

LISTENING SESSIONS

The Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Greater Saint Paul initiated the Community Planning Process in the spring of 2012. Through the leadership of a steering committee chaired by Randi Ilyse Roth, the Federation facilitated listening sessions to learn more about what Saint Paul’s Jewish community was thinking and what people wanted to share. This process engaged more than 350 people from almost every demographic segment of the community. Community volunteers, acting as moderators and note-takers for the listening sessions, asked a set of 12 questions at the meetings and had participants fill out an exit survey at the conclusion of the session. The set of questions is attached as Appendix 1.

Participants in 37 listening sessions included agency members, staff, volunteers, donors, and various other community members. All ages participated, ranging from teenagers to individuals who were more than 100 years old. Most participants were born in the United States, Israel and the former Soviet Union. The participants were diverse in terms of home zip codes, marital status, sexual orientation, income, and synagogue membership. It was a challenge to engage those who were unaffiliated, meaning those who did not have a membership at a synagogue or Jewish agency.

The listening session phase was led by Rainbow Research, which provided in-depth analysis of listening session data and survey results.¹ Members of the Steering Committee and Leadership Team met to analyze the data and identify priority areas for the community. The membership of the Leadership Team is detailed at Appendix 2. The Leadership Team discussions resulted in overwhelming agreement that our community should adopt one overarching guiding principle and five priority areas for study and action.

¹ Documentation and data created and shared by Rainbow Research can be found here: <http://bit.ly/JewishCPP>

Guiding Principle

To engage all Saint Paul Jewish agencies, institutions and synagogues to build a vibrant, cohesive and inclusive Jewish community in Greater Saint Paul. To be successful, lay and professional leaders will intentionally work together in ever-increasing collaboration and with common purpose.

The Five Priorities

- Priority 1. Build the foundation of community: Warm, welcoming connections.
- Priority 2. Engage the next generation: Reach out – *L'dor Va'dor*.
- Priority 3. Inspire giving: Create the commitment to sustain a vibrant and caring Jewish Saint Paul.
- Priority 4. Strengthen Jewish education: Find and implement effective models for today's world.
- Priority 5. Enhance cooperation between Saint Paul and Minneapolis Jewish communities.

RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS PANELS

Research and recommendation panels were convened for each of the five priorities. The panels were asked to identify the current state of affairs, learn from others engaged in similar work locally and nationally, identify realistic aspirational goals for Saint Paul's Jewish community, and make recommendations for a path forward. The panel process was designed to include 8-10 meetings in which panel members would follow a 7-step approach to research:

1. Define the current state of affairs regarding the issue.
2. Specify scope of work.
3. Learn from evidence by:
 - a. Examining how other Jewish communities have approached this issue,
 - b. Examining how non-Jewish communities have approached this issue, and
 - c. Listening to views of those with deep experience in our community.
4. Make sure we are staying true to the guiding principle in our work.
5. Develop recommendations including (a) a realistic aspirational goal for our community; and (b) a realistic path to achieve goal.
6. Communicate back to the community. (Make recommendations; write report on what was considered, what was chosen, why.)
7. Evaluate efforts.

L'Dor Va'dor Panel

The focus of the L'Dor Va'Dor panel concerned engaging the next generation.

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN SAINT PAUL

This planning process concerns Jewish people living in Saint Paul and the surrounding suburbs. Saint Paul's Jewish community has thousands of members, a significant percentage of whom are not engaged with the work of Federation, agencies², or synagogues. The planning process concerns both engaged³ and unengaged Jews.

The listening session data that relate closely to the work of his panel are summarized below.

As members of the Saint Paul Jewish Community, Listening Session participants described many good things about their lives in the greater Saint Paul area. They feel that they, their families, and their friends have benefited in many ways from what the Jewish community has to offer. In particular:

Inclusive and caring community: Participants find our community is inclusive and caring, with institutions that are welcoming, supportive, and bring together people of diverse interests and backgrounds.

Support for Jewish values and beliefs: Participants spoke generally about the community's support for Jewish practices, traditions, beliefs and values. They see this in the positive influence the community has on community members' lives, and on building Jewish identity and pride.

Cooperation between Jewish Organizations: Some participants described appreciation for cooperation and collaboration taking place between our community's Jewish organizations and synagogues.

When asked about the specific benefits of living in the greater Saint Paul Jewish community, people listed:

- **Closeness.** Close knit, inclusive and caring community with opportunities to build long standing friendships and broad relationship networks.
- **Variety.** Wide variety of cultural, athletic, and learning activities appealing to a range of ages and interests.

² For the purposes of this paper, the term 'agencies' refers to Jewish agencies funded by the Federation. Jewish institutions not funded by the Federation are referred to as 'organizations'.

³ In this paper, "engaged" means those who are members of or who participate in agency, synagogue or other institutional programs.

- **Community Work.** Many opportunities for volunteering, for community engagement and for social justice related activities.
- **Welcoming.** Community institutions that are welcoming, accepting, and supportive.
- **Diversity.** Brings together people of diverse interests and backgrounds.

When asked about the specific issues or concerns related to living in the greater Saint Paul Jewish community, people articulated a concern that the community's **young people are less likely to participate in organized Jewish community life and to affiliate with a synagogue**, and that **finding and recruiting new and young leaders is a challenge**. Related to this, some participants feel there is insufficient and ineffective outreach to newcomers, the unaffiliated, youth, and other diverse segments of the community.⁴ Possibly related to declining participation, participants listed two other concerns: **division and lack of cooperation between Jewish organizations and communities**, and **the high costs of tuition, membership and services**.

RESEARCH APPROACH AND PROCESS

As described previously, each panel has been charged with following a seven-step approach to research. An outline of each panel meeting and the approach taken in that meeting is attached in Appendix 3.

EXTERNAL RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

The panel reviewed several resources, examples and articles on youth and young professional engagement and consulted with local and national experts. The panel explored both Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

Resources listed include academic articles, periodicals and blog posts as appropriate to the conversation at hand. While not exhaustive, we did an extensive review of materials related to L'Dor Va'Dor produced by:

- Pew Foundation
- Rose Community Foundation
- Journal of Jewish Communal Service
- Ejewishphilanthropy.com
- Contemporaryjewry.org
- Federations across the country
- Business and religious communities across the country

⁴ A small number of people also identified that it is difficult to find, recruit and mentor new and younger leaders and noted an increase in intermarriage and interfaith families with children.

What We Know About Engaging Jewish Millennials

In this section, we review key findings from recent, extensive and important studies on Jewish life in America. The full list of articles related to engaging Jewish millennials can be found in Appendices 6 & 7.

Review of the Pew Foundation 2013 report, "A Portrait of Jewish Americans." Highlighted important topics such as high rates of intermarriage in the Jewish community, low rates of institutional and religious affiliation among Millennials, a sense of urgency, and suggestions for creating identity and connectedness among millennials.

The Elcott and Himmelfarg study sought to understand, in part, whether the institutions, behavioral norms, and values that have served Jewish life in the United "States over the past century are appropriate for the current generation of Millennials. The researchers found that a significant minority of connected Jews are leaning away from long-term commitments and toward episodic participation (pg. 5). Highly connected younger Jews are **only somewhat satisfied with Jewish communal institutions** (pg. 5). Specifically, **younger respondents are less satisfied with their synagogue experience** (pg. 59).

Engaged Jews are strongly identified both with universal values (making the world better for everyone) and with being Jewish (addressing Jewish needs), but their **levels of motivation and enthusiasm for universal values are significantly stronger and more consistent than their Jewish ones** (pg. 5). This is related to the finding that younger American Jews are **without a compelling narrative to bind them** as the Holocaust wanes as an effective unifying narrative (pg. 5).

Ultimately, given the changing landscape, much remains unknown about how young people form a Jewish identity in America. Given this, and the decreasing engagement with Jewish-specific causes, the researchers advise intentionally bridging universal and Jewish values, listening and responding to the needs of community members, and creating a new narrative to support the formation of Jewish identity and Jewish communities.

The Yelman and Schonberg report commissioned by the Rose Community Foundation found the single most important tool to engage and build connections with NextGen Jews was one-on-one conversations. These proved to be an essential learning experience. Some things learned in this study about the NextGen Jews is that they have:

- 1) Strong, positive Jewish identities
- 2) Powerful connections to family
- 3) High percentage of interfaith marriage
- 4) Diverse social networks
- 5) Sense of alienation from and dissatisfaction with Jewish organizations
- 6) Commitment to creating personal Jewish experiences
- 7) Broad social awareness

The study came up with several recommendations focused on Jewish communal organizations and funders:

Jewish Communal Organizations:

- **Legwork** – Relationships are built through one-on-one, face-to-face interactions, requiring time and resources.
- **Network** – Jewish professionals create a web of relationships and interpersonal connections. The organizations need to be responsible for turning their individual relationships into a network of people, a community, that can be mobilized.
- **Teamwork** – Working with Millennials in teams is recommended, with a goal of developing relationships aimed at particular goals, with two caveats:
 - Teams are temporary and interest-focused
 - Professionals play a vital role in coordinating, organizing and inviting people to be involved.

Funders

- **Framework** – The frames around Jewish life in America are changing. There are new arrangements of Jewish values different from previous generations. We have to cultivate new frames of understanding and engagement.
- **Patchwork** – Rather than looking for a single solution or a single problem, funders have the opportunity to foster Jewish diversity.
- **Artwork** – Jewish life is not a science. It's a process of building relationships and mobilizing community, and both require time and investment.

Application of this research to Saint Paul. As noted above, those who engaged in the Listening Sessions felt that the Saint Paul community's **young people are less likely to participate in organized Jewish community life and to affiliate with a synagogue**, making it difficult to **find and recruit new, young leaders**. The research reports reviewed above reveal that this is a national situation that Jewish communities across the nation are facing.

What We Know About Engaging Millennials in Non-Jewish Communities

Looking across research related to engaging the next generation of non-Jewish youth, it becomes clear that engaging newer and younger voices required that organizations or community operate with a high degree of fluidity and a commitment to actively including diversity. One frequently cited reason for non-engagement included new community members feeling that they weren't given the space or structure to voice their ideas and opinions.

The Giess and Patel article focused on interfaith work demonstrates the importance of having youth leaders working together to build one-on-one relationships, and finding meaning in their spirituality. This collaboration worked best when students were able to use their strengths, build new relationships and take collective action by putting vision, values, and higher purpose into real-life practice.

Zeldin raises the importance of getting direct experience in community development as a youth to generate and support investment and ownership in one's community. Zeldin's research supported that to engage young people effectively, organizations need to engage youth early in the processes of creative strategic planning and policy change efforts.

The Evolvement model report suggests that successful youth engagement can:

- Integrate effective and creative strategies for policy change efforts
- Generate and amplify public support
- Help to successfully change public health policies

The four basic concepts of the model include:

- **Branded Campaign** – Your policy issue is organized into a campaign with an appealing brand and S.M.A.R.T. objectives.
- **Measures of Progress** – Tangible and quantifiable indicators of progress are identified and implemented to achieve your S.M.A.R.T. objectives, such as petition signatures, support statements and surveys.
- **Mini-Grantees** – Existing youth organizations are provided with mini-grants to participate in the youth engagement effort, making youth recruitment and training efficient and expedient.
- **Youth Projects and Events** – Youth-lead projects and events in your community to reach community members and stakeholders. Youth measure their impact by completing measures of progress.

WHAT MILLENNIALS IN OUR COMMUNITY SAY: RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN SAINT PAUL

By conducting professional interviews with a carefully-chosen sample of 22-35-year-olds in the greater Saint Paul community, we hoped to be able to listen deeply and learn about their realities, their journeys, their hopes, their fears, and their experiences around engagement. We hired an evaluation professional to conduct interviews with 10 members of the community ages 22-35. Due to resource and time constraints the sample size was small; however, the evaluator advised the panel that the ten members chosen were qualitatively representative.

The interviews sought to answer these questions:

- What are the lives of 22-35 year-olds like within the Greater Saint Paul Jewish community?
- In what ways do these individuals currently engage in the Jewish community, either formally or informally, if at all?
- How do they wish they were engaging now, or as they look ahead to their future?
- What meaning does the Jewish community hold for them?

We followed the following process:

Selected 10 interview candidates.

1. The potential interviewees were selected with the following goals in mind:
 - **Age:** Ages should span the spectrum from 22-35.
 - **Parenting:** Interviewees should represent those with and without children
 - **Relationship Status:** Interviewees should represent those who are single and those who are married/partnered
 - **Sexual Orientation:** Interviewees should include at least one person who identifies as LGBTQ.
 - **Engagement:** Interviewees should include people who span the full range of engagement, including people who are not engaged, minimally engaged, highly engaged, and engaging in non-traditional ways.
 - **Geography:** Interviewees should include people who live in the metro area and some who live in surrounding communities.
2. Worked with panel members to draft interview protocol.
3. Hired an experienced interviewer to conduct interviews with consistency, depth and rigor.
4. Wrote up interview transcripts as case stories.
5. Asked interviewees to review their stories and provide permission for the panel to share.
6. Conducted cross-case analysis to look for patterns in the stories (presented in this report).
7. Used learning to inform recommendations process.

A brief description of each of the 10 interviewees appears in the next section. A description of the themes surfaced through and analysis of the interview transcripts follows.

Interviewees

We interviewed 10 Millennials who live in the Greater Saint Paul Jewish community. They vary in age, parental status, affiliation, and educational attainment. Four of the ten were married; six were single; and three were raising children. A brief description of each of these 10 individuals is provided below.

Chris. Chris grew up in a suburban city outside of the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in his mid-20s. He is not married, does not have children, and currently lives in Saint Paul. He has not historically been active in the Jewish community, but has been trending toward more involvement since graduating from a local university. His deepest engagement is with a volunteer organization not supported by the larger Jewish community. He is very generous in the donation of his time and effort to this specific program and offers particular insight around the distribution of the time and talent of others in his generation. Chris is an entrepreneur who recently sold his start-up business and has now taken on a consulting role for a new company. He said he lands near the middle in age among his six full- and step-siblings and that his Jewish background is only on his father's side.

Elizabeth. Elizabeth grew up in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in her early to mid-30s. She is married and does not have children. She has lived in the local community for nearly her entire life and has remained somewhat active in the Jewish community during that

time. For example, she continues to serve the community through her work and with leadership positions that she has held for specific programming, while she grew up active in synagogue and youth group. In her own words, she “loves Jewish culture” and even considered becoming a rabbi. She owns her own start-up business and also works full-time in the Jewish community. She has previously and thoughtfully considered how to engage individuals her age and younger in Jewish life, so she was particularly insightful in what works and what does not work when making these efforts.

Sylvia. Sylvia grew up in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in her late 20s. She is married and has children. Her husband is not Jewish. She has remained in the local community for nearly her entire life and has been moderately active during that time. For example, since returning from attending college outside of the area, she has been active supporting youth programming from time-to-time for either her synagogue or other Jewish organizations. She has experience working as a teacher.

Alena. Alena grew up in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area, moved away and has now returned. She is in her early 30s, is married and has children, and lives in a Saint Paul suburb. She was not raised in a Jewish household and converted some years ago. Upon returning to the Twin Cities, she became and has remained somewhat active within the Jewish community, serving on various boards and committees. She has previously considered how to engage individuals her age and younger, so she was particularly insightful in how an organization might try to speak to the generation. Alena completed her conversion to Judaism in a large city in another state. Moving back to the Twin Cities, she was surprised by how difficult it was to engage with other members of the Jewish community.

Edward. Edward grew up outside of the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in his early to mid-30s. He is married and does not have children. He was raised at an Orthodox Jewish synagogue, and though he isn't Orthodox, he still attends the same synagogue. He currently lives in Saint Paul. He is very generous in the donation of his time and effort to this specific program and offers particular insight around the distribution of the time and talent of others in his generation. Edward attended private Jewish school as a younger child. He continues his activity to this day.

Roger. Roger grew up in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in his early to mid-30s. He is not married and does not have children. He was raised as a Conservative Jew, and does not attend synagogue. He currently lives in the city. He isn't actively involved in the community but sees it as part of his future should he have children.

Mara. Mara grew up outside the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in her early to mid-20s. She is not married and does not have children. She was raised in a very liberal Reform and Secular Humanistic community in her home state, and she does not attend synagogue. She currently lives in the city. She says that she isn't actively involved in the community, but she also described many instances of activity and does work within the Jewish community. She did describe herself as “far more Jewishly engaged than the previous two generations of my family.” Mara mentioned that her community interests are still developing, and she tends to be most active in the community of friends that she made while in college.

Denise. Denise grew up outside the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in her early to early-30s. She is not married and does not have children. She was raised in a household with a Jewish mother and a “kind of agnostic” father. She currently lives in the city. She has not been

actively engaged in the religion since she started college. She said, “I really consider myself a secular Jew. I don’t practice at all.” In fact, since she moved to Minnesota, she has had absolutely no contact with the Jewish community. The first community that Denise spoke about was that surrounding her work at a local university. She said that her friends and colleagues populate that group. Within this group are some practicing members of the Jewish community. She said they have invited her to come to Shabbat dinner, which she has attended from time to time.

Julia. Julia grew up in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in her mid-30s. She is not married and has one child. She was born in New York. She currently lives in the city. At one time, she expected to pursue a career as a rabbi but settled on a career outside of the temple with a similar type of spirit and work atmosphere. She also has a part-time teaching job at a university. She is mildly engaged in the Saint Paul community; however, she does feel a deep sense of understanding about its dynamics, saying, “I’m sure it’s not true that I know everyone Jewish in Saint Paul, but it feels like it’s true.”

James. James grew up in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area and is now in his early-20s. He is not married and does not have children. He currently lives in the city. As a child, he was quite involved in the community, as his parents promoted religion within the home. He is very engaged with causes outside the Saint Paul community. He is not as active with any formal Jewish community organizations, though he would like to connect more. James discussed his Jewish identity as quite important to him. However, he does not know “a lot of young Jewish people that are super active” within the community.

Themes

The 10 interviewees described three overall themes:

- 1) **Importance of Jewish Engagement.** Interviewees described the aspects of Judaism and Jewish life that are important to them.
- 2) **Barriers to Jewish Engagement.** Interviewees described the factors that prevent them from more fully engaging in a Jewish life. And,
- 3) **Ideal Jewish Community.** Interviewees described the conditions that would be present in what they would describe as an “ideal” greater Saint Paul Jewish community.

1. Aspects of Judaism important to interviewees

Interviewees discussed the importance of Jewish rituals, values, and education. These themes and a summary of each theme are presented in Table 1 below. A description of why these aspects of Jewish life are important to the interviewees follows.

TABLE 1: ASPECTS OF JUDAISM IMPORTANT TO INTERVIEWEES

Aspects of Judaism important to interviewees	
Jewish Rituals and Values	Jewish rituals and values give meaning to how these interviewees live their lives. They expressed wanting to maintain their identity through Jewish practices and share these values with others.
Jewish Education	Interviewees expressed the importance of education in understanding their faith and its direct relation to their Jewish identity.
Tikkun Olam through Social Justice	Tikkun olam, to repair or heal the world, is an aspect of Judaism that plays a vital role in social justice efforts. Interviewees discussed how important social justice is in relationship to their Jewish identity.

A discussion of each of these ideas follows.

a. Jewish Rituals and Values

For some, being Jewish means living out Jewish values and observing Jewish ritual. Jewish values line up with good, solid, humanistic values, although participants discussed other value systems. Jewish ritual gives meaning and shape to important life experiences such as grieving, learning, Shabbat, rites of passage, and other celebrations.

Some interviewees wanted to share Jewish rituals with others. For example, Elizabeth expressed that belonging to Jewish communities allows her to explore her beliefs and “better” herself through the connections that she makes. She appreciates her membership in a community that in a fairly rare way, really wants to work together and preserve its culture and heritage. She has a significant interest in the overall culture of service, saying she appreciates “the responsibility, not just for our own community, but for everyone else. I think that’s really powerful, and that’s why I stay a part of Judaism, because it’s a place where people want to see other people do well.”

In Alena’s experience, events that cater to collecting members of the community for non-Jewish experiences can often fall flat. She said that in the past,

“I didn’t want to do non-Jewish things with Jewish people. I’ve got my own non-Jewish friends who I can go bowling with. I’ve got my own non-Jewish friends I can raise money for a good cause with. I can drink with non-Jewish friends. This isn’t the 1950s, and there is not rampant anti-Semitism in the Twin Cities. What I need and what I want are Jewish people to do Jewish things with. I want somebody to make Shabbat with. I want Jewish friends to make Havdallah with. I want Jewish friends who are interested in attending Passover with me because they’re Jews, and it is meaningful to them.”

Denise’s Jewish identity is more tied to her Jewish ethnicity, rather than religion. She did not have a Bat Mitzvah because her mother did not have one, having grown up in a “fairly Orthodox Jewish home.” She added, “I absolutely identify as a Jew. I identify with other Jews. I think being

a Jew means being part of a group of people who carry out either explicitly or implicitly, or react against a set of practices, and that share a same kind of ethnic identity.”

Julia wants a place to experience Jewish ritual. She grew up involved in the Jewish community. She went to synagogue, kept kosher, and attended Jewish summer camp every summer. She attended Hebrew school through high school. However, when she left for college, she moved to a community that did not have a thriving Jewish population. This was difficult. “I got homesick for the community, or the feeling of having a community.” Since college, she moved away once and then returned to settle in the city.

Currently Julia’s parents are very active in the community, but her only sibling is no longer active. “I’m sort of the one in the middle,” she said. She still practices Shabbat with family and family friends, and she still observes and values holidays. She also says she has “admiration, respect and love” for the rabbi at her synagogue. “He’s always been an important part of my life. He would like me to be more engaged. I think he’s great, he’s amazing, he works for me.” She still feels like there is a lot to Judaism and Jewish life that is “rich and meaningful.”

Julia wants to share those pieces of her identity with her daughter and plans to send her to Hebrew school. But she isn’t quite sure where to get what she and her daughter need from the community.

“I want her to be able to sing all the songs that I knew growing up. I want her to be able to follow along during services and lead services if she wants. I want her to know about Jewish holidays and Jewish history. I want her to have that be a part of her identity. I want her to think about education and social justice. All of those things are meaningful to me. I’m not at all ready to throw in the towel on being Jewish, but I’m not getting those things from these places anymore.”

In her group of friends, only Julia identifies as Jewish. Even though she isn’t active in the community, she has maintained her Jewish identity.

“I talk about being Jewish, I think about being Jewish. I talk about community and how Judaism is different than other religions because it’s not about ‘you go and pray and then you’re done.’ It is about community; it’s about a whole way of life.”

Mara values traditional Jewish activities and rituals. She feels they create stronger communities and connect others. She wants spaces specifically designed for young people like her in the community. When Mara tries to participate in these rituals,

“I don’t see people that I have something in common with.... It gives me a sense of community but not in the way I think the Jewish community tries to push. I don’t necessarily feel that I have a special relationship with someone else because they’re Jewish, which is the way that I think our community frequently thinks about that. I don’t particularly value the idea of dating or marrying within the Jewish community. If it happens, that’s fine, but it’s not something I’m looking for. But instead, I want those relationships so I have people that I can go to Shabbat dinner with, or having holidays, and having something that stays the same, and stays

consistent in my life, and is about returning every year as a slightly different person to the same practice. That's really important to me."

b. Jewish Education

A strong education rooted in Jewish wisdom, history, and texts helps people face difficulty and opportunity. Half of the interviewees discussed the importance of Jewish education — specifically opportunities for preschool-aged children and adult learners.

Edward, like Julia described in the previous section, is committed to living out Jewish values and rituals. He and his wife don't have children yet, but they see a gap in programming for preschool-aged children. He has observed that many young families today struggle to find good daycare. He knew his family would be very excited if they could find something within the community when their first child is born. "There are not a lot of good daycare options for us. It would be nice to potentially have my children raised with other Jewish kids and also understanding what it is to be Jewish."

Denise is currently considering whether she will re-engage with Judaism and the community a little more because, "I can't imagine raising a child not in a Jewish household, because that is how I was raised." She said that she thinks that the rituals of her religion, or "outward manifestations of the practices," are a very important process in understanding the faith, how it compares to others, and what Jewish ethnicity means.

"I won't force a Jewish education on them like it was forced on me, but I will encourage the eating of Jewish food, the celebration of Jewish holidays, and some understanding of Jewish culture and Jewish history. I would encourage them to read children's [authors] like Isaac Bashevis Singer and Yiddish fiction writers. I think that's really important. I think it's very important that they understand Torah. It's very important that they have a cultural fluency in the Old Testament, because I think one should have that. And I think they should understand the religion, not that they have to believe in the religious practices, but to understand that they were born into a group of people that have religious practices. Liturgical practices are a way to be introduced to how religion functions. I think that is very important."

Jewish education is important for those new to Judaism, or who are Jewish but not raised in an observant household. At the encouragement of her rabbi, Mara benefitted from technical study of the important texts. [More study] would really interest her, as well as "actually stepping in and learning a little bit more about my tradition." This study helped her better understand her own Jewish identity.

"Learning more about text, about Hebrew, than I'd ever known in my life; I've been surprised by how much I've really enjoyed that. One of my biggest mentors and influences in college was our school's rabbi, and that shocked me. If you had told me that one of my closest friends and mentors would be a 70-year-old white rabbi, I would have laughed at you. But he was really a wonderful person. I've been continually surprised to say that I can have more of a place in the Jewish community that I thought I could."

c. Tikkun olam through social justice

צֶדֶק, צֶדֶק תִּרְדּוּף

Justice, justice shall you pursue! - Deuteronomy 16:20

The desire to work toward social justice is both Jewish -- acting on the Jewish value of tikkun olam -- and universal. The Jewish community helps Millennials accomplish important social justice goals.

"I'm not going to get involved in something that I see just operating on the surface level. I need a place to be open and embrace those deeper conversations and deeper levels of action." - Mara

All interviewees feel social justice is a key component of their Jewish identity. Engagement in social justice varies depending on the resources available to each individual. Supported causes align with Jewish values. Interviewees engage and support organizations based on personal assessments of the organization's mission and effectiveness. Most interviewees stated that the Federation should promote conversations around issues of social justice and/or help members find effective charities that align with Jewish values. Most interviewees prefer long-term, meaningful engagement to short-term opportunities.

2. Barriers Identified in the Current Community

The interviews showed seven barriers to participation in the greater Saint Paul community experienced by the 10 Millennials interviewed. These seven barriers are: 1) Too expensive, 2) Competing non-Jewish communities, 3) Closed Saint Paul Jewish community, 4) Lack of space for diverse views on Israel, 5) Lack of diversity, 6) Pressure to participate, and 7) Does not see Millennials as individuals. These themes and a summary of each are presented in Table 2. A description of why these aspects of Jewish life are important to the interviewees follows.

TABLE 2: BARRIERS IDENTIFIED IN THE CURRENT COMMUNITY

Barriers Identified in the Current Community		
1)	Too expensive	High costs sometimes prevented some interviewees from actively participating in Jewish life.
1a)	Competing expenses	Interviewees expressed they felt that they have to choose between paying for expenses related to participating in the Jewish community <i>and</i> other important things in their life, such as graduate school or rent.
1b)	Financial strings attached to participation	Some interviewees felt that there were underlying, sometimes hidden financial strings attached to joining the Jewish community and a sense that participants for some programs may be selected for their predicted ability to donate in the future.
2)	Competing commitments to non-Jewish communities	For some interviewees, most of their community is not Jewish. This leads to competition for their time and the challenge of balancing or melding their Jewish community and non-Jewish communities.
3)	Closed Saint Paul Jewish community	Interviewees expressed difficulty finding a ‘way in’ as a newcomer and that the community can seem intimidating to outsiders.
4)	Lack of space for diverse views on Israel	Interviewees discussed their questioning of issues related to Israel and Palestine, how their changing beliefs play a role in their Jewish identity, and how the extent to which their questioning and diverse views are welcome influences their involvement within the community.
5)	Search for Diversity & Affirmation of Differences	Some interviewees shared dissatisfaction with their perception of a lack of diversity in the Jewish community and expressed desire for an openly and actively accepting and affirming community.
6)	Pressure to participate in an ongoing engagement	Interviewees shared a sense of pressure to participate in an ongoing way, discussed the fear of being ‘sucked down the drain’, and experienced that the community approached them from a place of desperation rather than strength.
7)	Community does not see Millennials as individuals	Interviewees expressed how organizations too often required participation on the organization’s terms, rather than meeting the unique needs of individuals. The prevented some from engaging at a deeper level.

1) Too expensive

Cost prevents active participation in Jewish life, according to most interviewees. With limited expendable income, interviewees felt that these fees were not the best use of their funds. Interviewees also felt pressured to donate money at free events.

Steep student loans repayments leave little spending money at this time.

1a) Competing expenses

Young parents feel pressured to meet all the financial demands associated with raising a family. “We don’t shop for fun or entertainment; we think really hard about what we purchase.” The family business consumes the vast majority of Alena’s family income. After that, Alena listed day care and health insurance as her biggest costs. At the end of the day, there just isn’t extra money.

Julia, a single parent, prioritizes her charitable giving and spending to maximize her limited income. “I’m supporting a child on my own. I pay a mortgage, and I pay for childcare, and pay for food.” Julia chose to discontinue her synagogue membership. While Judaism has been a significant part of her life, she could not financially support the associated fees. Julia added, “Eventually, I’ll need to figure out Jewish education. It’s going to be difficult, and there are ways in which that will come down to a question of money. But if I were going to invest somewhere, education would probably be the place I would do it.”

Interviewees without children describe similar financial pressures. Elizabeth and her spouse have a combined income of less than \$100,000 a year. They spend on necessities (clothes, rent, utilities) and some luxuries (organic food, travel). She said they don’t have money to pay dues at their synagogue for this year.

Mara is thankful to have full-time employment when so many of her peers are struggling to attain a stable salary and benefits. However, Mara plans to apply to graduate school soon. She anticipates taking out student loans and having limited or no income over the next six years.

Denise tries very carefully to carry no credit card balances, which is difficult considering the time she spent attaining advanced degrees. Steep student loans repayments leave little spending money at this time. She does spend some of her extra income on exercise and entertainment.

Roger saves diligently. He travels some but said, “Most of my money’s going in the bank, saving for the future.” Roger is most likely to give extra money to a friend’s event, such as a fundraising bike ride for MS.

1b) Financial strings attached

One interviewee shared that before joining something he asks himself, “Am I about to be asked for money?” Because, he continued, “I’m not at a point in my life right now where I have that capacity, so I don’t want to enter into a relationship falsely and take advantage of programming when I’m not able to give. I think programs [should be] very clear that right now you are on the receiving end, and there isn’t the expectation of giving, at least at this point.”

One interviewee hesitates to engage with the Federation. Unable to give back financially at her age, she believes the Federation would neither welcome her participation nor consider it appropriate.

Elizabeth feels that some existing community programs select participants based on potential future donations (from the participants). “They always pick Target executives and people that have no time anyway.” This frustrated her and reinforces the idea that there are financial strings attached.

2) Competing commitments to non-Jewish communities

Millennials belong to and manage diverse, time-consuming, and competing social networks. For some, most of their community (sport leagues, co-workers, other parents, etc.) is not Jewish. One interviewee expressed concern about how this dynamic has an impact on the Twin Cities Jewish community. He worries that there are just not enough individuals his age and younger involved, specifically in Saint Paul.

“My life has developed in other areas, and it has been hard to meld the two.”

“I hear board members, who are extremely dedicated and extremely active, say, ‘My daughter’s getting married, I wish they would come back here,’ or ‘My son is going to school, but he refuses to come here, he wanted to go somewhere else.’ You just see these people who are so passionate about the community, and if their own family is not coming here, well who is going to replace them when they decide they are not going to be as active? There are a lot of people in their 50s, 60s, and 70s. What is going to happen in 10 years if there is no replacement plan?”

Sylvia said that the Jewish community is amazing. She specifically mentioned the JCC as being a warm and welcoming place, even though she only stops by every month or two. In contrast to what she looks for in programming, Sylvia appreciates how the space itself does not ask her to “Be Jewish, be Jewish, be Jewish, always wear your Jewish hat.”

Sylvia drifted away from the community lately, but once had many Jewish friends that lived in a separate world from her non-Jewish friends. She credited the JCC as the only place where her two communities of friends could meet. She still has Jewish friends, many of them from college.

Julia says that she is not currently “very active” in the Jewish community other than celebrating holidays with her family, an occasional visit to synagogue, and trips to the JCC with her daughter. “My life has developed in other areas, and it has been hard to meld the two.”

Julia has a very close group of friends, but none are Jewish; she identifies strongly with Jews, but none are friends. Time limits her ability to bring the two groups together. “When I’m not working and doing other things, in the time that I have to be a part of the community, typically I want to spend time with my chosen community of friends.”

Five other interviewees who described being pulled between Jewish and non-Jewish communities shared sentiments like Julia’s.

3) Closed Saint Paul Jewish community

Newcomers find the Saint Paul Jewish community difficult to engage. When Alena returned to the Twin Cities, finding members of the Jewish community was surprisingly difficult. “We looked to our left, and looked to our right, and we looked to our left again, ‘Where are the Jews?’ and ‘Where are the young Jews?’ I just assumed they’d be there, and they weren’t.”

Mara shared a similar experience.

“It has been hard, honestly. Minnesota has this reputation for being very closed off. In many ways you have to already be a part of the community in order to find it. And certainly as someone who didn’t grow up here, I’ve found that to be very true. ... I’ve given up, but that was very much my experience, the people who [attend programming] still tend to be the people who grew up in this community. So it’s more ‘Oh look, it’s all these high school friends who went off to college and now they’re reconnecting.’ So as someone who is new to the community, it still doesn’t feel very accessible to me.”

Mara wants to encourage self-reflection in the Jewish community, especially on questions of inclusivity, race, and sexual orientation. She cited some fledgling conversations within the community. Mara described inclusive efforts she wants to encourage.

“I know some synagogues do programs of sending care packages to their college kids on holidays, but I don’t know of anyone who says, ‘Let me reach out and connect you to this Federation or this rabbi.’”

Since moving to the city, Denise has not been contacted by anyone in the Jewish community. She knows the location of a couple of synagogues, but has not sought them out. She has never seen any literature about them. She noted that in all of her time moving, she has never had a community reach out to her before.

Denise has never lived in a place where the Jewish community has been particularly active within the wider community. “My mother told me from a very early age that I was Jewish and being Jewish was special. So, for better or worse, I’ve grown up with this myth about myself and about the people from which I came. I’m part of this supposed community but it is very difficult to ever find.”

Edward, who grew up in the community, echoes similar sentiments. He feels the community can intimidate newcomers, young people, or people with low Jewish community engagement. Edward agrees with the claim that everyone [in the Saint Paul Jewish community] seemed to know everyone, and that “everyone’s related to each other.” He believes this prevents or impedes people from joining the community. He wants intentional welcoming efforts targeted at the less engaged and newcomers.

“I think the way to make yourself more open is to have a Welcoming Committee, and have a multi-point way of reaching out to people. So email, a phone call, maybe inviting people to Happy Hours; reaching out more than once. I think people sometimes worry about on the other end, ‘Oh, we don’t want to be too aggressive. They’ll never want to talk to us if we invite them. The young family moves here and they want to get involved, and we

reach out to them too much and they get overwhelmed.’ So, maybe you have an older family reach out to them, to adopt them as a family. Or a younger family they can relate to. Or inviting them to some areas that they are passionate about.”

4) Lack of space for diverse views on Israel

The Millennials who were interviewed do not feel that they can openly contradict mainstream opinion on Israel. Millennials do not feel they can encourage dialogue with the Palestinian community. The quotes below show the full range of thoughts and feelings interviewees hold about Israel.

“...It doesn’t feel like a safe place to have an alternate viewpoint.”

Mara shared, “My sense is that more Millennials are moving toward the left on this issue, moving toward a stance that’s more openly questioning of Israel and affirming of Palestinian experiences. Even if they aren’t more open to a full conversation, [they favor] an honest dialogue allowing huge spectrums of opinion in. The Jewish community historically has been only interested in conversation that goes from the center over to the right, and they don’t want to even acknowledge the existence of these other parties. It’s really complicated, but it’s very difficult for me to be part of a Jewish community that isn’t hosting these conversations.”

Chris was raised Lutheran, celebrated Jewish holidays, but can’t remember visiting the temple more than three times. He has visited Israel through a Birthright-sponsored program. Chris’ priorities have changed as he’s aged, and he feels a greater pull to become more active in the Jewish community. He recognizes that he is not as active as many others, but he reflected on his travel to Israel and how it impacted his thinking about the Jewish community. “Trying to evaluate something that I haven’t been a part of is difficult, but through doing something like Birthright – that was awesome – I think that’s pretty special stuff, that we can be in that position to get that kind of financial support.”

Elizabeth thinks that her changing views toward Israel have played a role in her Jewish identity and in turn her involvement within the community. She admitted that Israel is seen as an occupying force and is not well-liked in many of the other communities she is a part of. Over time, she has begun to look toward Israel through a more positive lens (she was previously anti-occupation and critical) as she has matured in her ability to have her own beliefs that stand in contrast to others she is close to. She now says, “It’s been pretty amazing to grow up knowing that Israel is a homeland of some sort.”

The issue of Israel is at the heart of Julia’s distance from the Jewish community. She has seen those who share her viewpoints actually excused from participation in community events and in community work. She said that issues like ‘Black Lives Matter’ cannot be discussed, as they end up tied-up in the same “us versus the world” tone of conversations related to Israel and Palestine relations. And as she makes decisions on how to spend her time, these issues of incongruence end up pushing her away from activity in the community. She said,

“I’m part of this synagogue 20s and 30s Facebook group. There are a ton of posts on there of ‘Support Israel no matter what....[In reaction to specific incident redacted] I just thought ‘How am I a part of this congregation?’ This stuff feels icky now. It doesn’t feel like a safe place to have an alternate viewpoint.”

James is involved in an official capacity with a formal artist-based group and a “Jewish group that supports Palestinian rights.” He is also quite involved with an international non-profit group supporting athletic opportunities in an African country. He found the group at random as he was performing spoken word at a local performance venue.

Millennials want an understanding Jewish community that engages with the full range of Millennial opinions, beliefs, feelings, and connections to Israel.

5) Search for Diversity and Affirmation of Differences

Contemporary social networks provide diversity not found within the traditional Jewish community. Specifically, a small number of Millennial interviewees cited race and sexual orientation as areas of diversity.

Julia said she feels “ambivalent” about the Jewish community. She observes that her bi-racial family members live in some contrast to white members of the Jewish community. She wants those family members to “see . . . [themselves] reflected in various ways.” For example, Jewish events for children rarely attract children of color.

In fact, Julia said she can count Jewish community children of color on one hand. She cannot discuss issues like ‘Black Lives Matter’, as these issues end up in the “us vs. the world” tone of Israeli/Palestinian conversations. As Julia decides how to spend her time, these issues of incongruence push her away from the community.

Mara hasn’t always seen Jewish communities welcome people of all ages, races, sexual orientations and gender identities. Even when people within the community aren’t actively unwelcoming, Mara talked about “quietly accepting, versus openly affirming.” Mara thinks having an “event that’s specifically for young Jews of color might be really appealing to folks.” She also suggested events that target the LGBTQ community. “Are there ways events could be funded by the Federation and run by these different diverse communities, owned and run by people who are not what you would think of as typical members of the Jewish community?” she asked.

6) Pressure to participate

Some interviewees fear being “sucked down the drain.” If they volunteer or engage once, then they will be asked to volunteer or engage at higher rates. Interviewees perceive the “asks” as intense and unceasing. This prevents people from engaging with the community.

Julia hesitates to engage because she feels like engagement/volunteering would be hard to do on her terms. She feels like the Jewish community expects active members to devote large amounts of time. She feels that the Jewish community feels entitled to ask members for time. Even when she attends synagogue, she feels like, “...the message is always, ‘It’s so great to have you here! How can we get you here every week!’ And then I just feel like, ‘Whoa, okay, I’m here now! Is that okay?’”

When Sylvia participates, community members pressure her to involve her husband and family. Sylvia’s spouse has no desire to convert to Judaism, nor does she want to push her spouse into conversion. “This is where it really gets sticky, because as friendly and open as people have been to [the spouse], that’s how pushy and uncomfortable they’ve been to me.” She is tired of “You guys should come as a family” invitations, which feel pushy. Sylvia wants people to accept that she’s the one showing up.

Roger has attended Federation events in the past but has never committed to anything. “Where does it end?” he asked. “Right now I don’t belong to a temple. I don’t really belong to any sort of Jewish organization. Do you choose one? And then [when] you’re in one, do you do a bunch? Or can you just get away with doing an event a year?” He said he understands that’s not what the community wants to hear, but he’s just not ready to engage more time and resources.

Some interviewees see the Saint Paul Jewish community coming from a place of desperation, rather than strength. They have a sense of alienation from and dissatisfaction with Jewish organizations. Some mentioned “turfiness” as an alienating factor.

One interviewee shared:

“There is this very apparent sense of ‘Come back to us! We’re desperate for you!’ The [job redacted] in me is like, ‘That doesn’t work.’ If you know anything about relationships, being the desperate one who’s like, ‘We need you! Please!’ doesn’t work very well. There is this sense of if you are going to be in, then you are going to be really in. You are going to be doing all of the 20s and 30s gatherings, and hikes on weekends.... There’s no sense at all of coming into my life a little bit. Let me be a part of both communities [along with personal life] and not have to choose.”

7) Community does not see Millennials as individuals

Interviewees described dissatisfying experiences within the Saint Paul Jewish community. Local Jewish organizations require participation on their terms, according to interviewees. Local Jewish organizations neither meet nor respond to the needs of potential new members. Julie shared, “The main message is that there is a lot of reaching out that feels like ‘Come, Come, Come!’ but not a lot of ‘What would you like?’ or ‘How can we meet you in the middle?’”

She said that the biggest complaint she hears is, “we didn’t do enough and we didn’t go deep enough.”

Sylvia wants the community to understand her and her needs. “What I’m looking for is a way to be a member of the community, just as a woman and as a young person, not as a wife or as a mom.” She wonders why there is no program directed solely at spiritual Jewish women. “It’s all about, ‘Bring your family! Bring your [spouse]! Bring your kid.’” She said sometimes her synagogue will even assume her daughter’s future participation in religious school, and she wants to say, “Whoa, whoa whoa, you already have her Jewish education planned... but you can’t ask me to do something separate?”

Mara feels that the younger people she works with want to be known as individuals. Her students desire meaningful, beneficial opportunities for community engagement. Mara observes that they seek inroads into the adult community, saying they are “very sick of being treated as kids. They are ready to be treated as adults. I think things that would let them explore independence and adulthood would be very appealing [to them].”

Mara thinks people want to go deeper, and she cautioned against incessant invitations to “Happy Hour.” She says, “Don’t treat us like our only interest in life is getting drunk. Engage us on an intellectual level, engage us through all the other parts of who we are.” Thinking back on

her programming directed at student-aged Millennials, she said that the biggest complaint she hears is, “we didn’t do enough and we didn’t go deep enough.”

3. Attributes of an ideal Jewish community

The interviews revealed seven attributes of an ideal Jewish community as described by the ten Millennials interviewed. These seven attributes are: 1) Relevance, 2) Belonging, 3) Community-based, 4) Choice and acceptance about how to engage and be Jewish, 5) Commitment to social justice, 6) Relationship-focused, and 7) Opportunities for co-creation. These themes and a summary of each theme are presented in Table 3. A description of why these aspects of Jewish life are important to the interviewees follows.

TABLE 3: ATTRIBUTES OF AN IDEAL JEWISH COMMUNITY

Attributes of an Ideal Jewish Community		
1)	Relevance	Interviewees expressed that they are more likely to engage in community opportunities that have relevance to them.
2)	Belonging	Interviewees want to connect with and belong to a community of others who share similar purpose and passion , which may or may not relate to Jewish issues. In an ideal world, the Jewish world provides these inclusive opportunities.
3)	Community-based	The mentality used to be, “build-it and they will come.” More and more, organizations are finding that people want opportunities in their homes, their neighborhoods, and their other community-based networks .
4)	Choice and acceptance about how to engage and be Jewish	Ideally, young Jews can engage in the community in various ways without judgement about the ways in which they do or don’t conform to others’ ideas about what it means to be Jewish.
5)	Commitment to social justice	The participants urged the Federation to deeply engage with questions of identity, power, and privilege . Ideally, the community provides avenues to work toward social justice.
6)	Relationship-focused	Ideally, opportunities in the community create opportunity to develop and deepen relationships .
7)	Opportunities for co-creation	Ideally, young Jews have opportunities to learn from more experienced people, while also having their talents, ideas and energies valued and utilized .

1) Relevance

Millennials must see Judaism as relevant to current life in order to engage. They expressed a desire for the community generally, and the Federation specifically, to offer programming and opportunities that are relevant to their lives.

“...something that’s labeled as ‘social action’ is usually to stock shelves at a food shelf.”

Julia wants to engage with an organization like the Federation around “causes” she really believes in. She recognizes that she doesn’t have all the answers but urges the Federation to present opportunities that seem more organic and time-efficient. “I don’t get a lot of reaching out for things like that. I get a lot of reaching out for boat rides and happy hours.”

Julia feels she understands her own engagement-focused needs. She feels confident that “at this point in my life, I really only invest in things that I know are working.” As a result, she avoids events that have an undefined purpose, a poorly-defined purpose, or have people engaged “on such different levels where only certain voices are getting heard.” She said that any engagement must have balance. “You have to put in work, but you should also get some sense of fulfillment out of it.”

Mara suggested that the Federation and other community organizations bring in new members. She feels that new members can cultivate deeper engagement opportunities for other members of the community. She suggested that current community programming lacks depth and focus, specifically saying that “something that’s labeled as ‘social action’ is usually to stock shelves at a food shelf.”

Hadassah⁵ could be exactly what Sylvia craves. Sylvia has family members who have served within the organization, and understands Hadassah as a place where the women in a family become lifelong members. However, when she attended a meeting, she felt that it didn’t seem relevant to her. Specifically, Sylvia was 30 years younger than any of the other attendees. “It just doesn’t seem relevant, but I wish it was, because at one time that was a space for Jewish female leadership and Jewish female voices, apart from the [spouse] and kids.” She spoke to her mother after the meeting and asked, “Where are the other women my age? What happened?” Sylvia’s mother suggested that Sylvia share her interest and observations about Hadassah with someone in the community. However, Sylvia had no idea who she should talk to.

Sylvia needs a group for successful career-oriented women in their twenties and thirties. She would enjoy having a professional mentor. She also would enjoy a spiritual mentor. Sylvia

⁵ From hadassah.org ... “Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is a volunteer organization that inspires a passion for and commitment to its partnership with the land and people of Israel. It enhances the health of people worldwide through its support of medical care and research at the Hadassah Medical Organization in Jerusalem. Hadassah empowers its members and supporters, as well as youth in Israel and America through opportunities for personal growth, education, advocacy and Jewish continuity.”

wants the “female celebration of, ‘I’m not just a mom, I’m not just a wife. Where is the female side of Judaism?’” She expressed how great it is that women can have a bat mitzvah, become rabbis and read the Torah, “But what does that mean?” It felt to her like it wasn’t special anymore, because people didn’t understand the deeper meaning that it was connected to, and there wasn’t really a shared space for women to engage in dialogue.

Sylvia does not think that the group would even need to meet in person all the time. She is a member of a Jewish mothers group on Facebook, “Minnesota Mammals. ...an awesome resource, and I’ve found it phenomenal.” She thrives with the constant advice and questions about raising kids. The group feels private, so members feel free to ask anything. One mother wanted a community to help her raise her child, so she started Minnesota Mammals on her own. Sylvia suggested the Federation ask her how she was so successful. Now, Sylvia wants something similar that addresses her as a Jewish woman, but not specifically as a mother.

Denise said that the Federation should try to provide multiple access points [for engagement]. In her role at the college, she has successfully engaged students through events. She said, “Free food is always good, and at a place like [college redacted], activities that get them off the campus, where they can have transportation.” For example, she suggested transporting students from their college town to the metropolitan area (and their families) for an event.

“If there is one thing that I could emphasize, stop doing events. Stop worrying about events. People have enough events going on in their life.”

Elizabeth admitted that she doesn’t quite understand what the Federation does, and she wanted to couch all her comments in the admission of a lack of awareness. Aside from her ability to identify major donors through their “Lion of Judah” pin, Elizabeth understands that the Federation is structured like a sorority. She knows that the Federation helps support the community through accumulation of funds and the dispersal of smaller grants to many organizations and causes. Elizabeth says all small non-profits now have development departments and acquire funding through their own fundraisers, and she thought the Federation’s model was somewhat outdated.

As an actively practicing artist, James wants to connect with the community at the crossroads of art and faith. He said he would be very interested if the Federation sponsored artistic development workshops or other similar events, especially [social] cause-related. In this way, he sees the Federation offering a platform for his work and passion that he cannot create alone. He knew of one such event at the Highland Park Library, “but I don’t think that there’s anything large scale that has actually grabbed tons and tons of young Jewish artists.” James talked about how a shared work environment/coffee shop idea (like the Co-Co type of space suggested by others) could display art created by local Jewish Millennial artists.

James feels that successful events or programs need a “cause to get things going, or just something that is really fun.” He said that most successful events blend causes with fun [activities]. James feels groups should form around a shared cause, and “fun” should be added later. He said, “You don’t want to burn people out, and you want to have people do this stuff, so remember why you brought them there and why you are coming together.”

James spoke about the wide range of less involved individuals and ways Federation could engage and support them. He thought the Federation could connect community members to volunteer experiences and help distribute volunteer time because,

“People don’t want to do all the research about where they want to volunteer, because it’s double the amount of work.... There are a lot of people who are kind of living not the fullest lives and need to go find [their cause] It’s kind of hard to find that after college, but you have to be a bit proactive. I think [the Federation] should be opening up to a whole lot of suggestions, hopefully from people who can figure out something better than I can, but asking people, ‘What kind of things do you want to see?’ and ‘Would you want this type of organization to help you see that?’ Just getting a good feel on what are the community’s biggest desire[s].”

Roger connects to the larger Jewish community solely through participation in a basketball league and a softball league. He cautioned, “It’s more about the sport, less about the Jewish. I like the fact that there is a game every Sunday; it’s just kind of a cherry on top that it’s a bunch of Jewish people.” He likes that this opportunity solves a particular problem for him (not having to put together his own teams).

“It sucks calling everybody and getting them to come out, when people cancel and whatnot. It is so much easier, so much better to have [the rabbi-led league]. I’m not even a member; he just called me a few times.... He’s just doing a good job, and I’m getting involved. Involved without pressuring to join anything.”

The interviewee said he wants groups focused more on people his age and within a few years of his age, rather than the wide-open category of young adults ages 21-41. He said that the wide age range sometimes leads to uncomfortable, awkward events. “It’s tough, maybe there’s just not enough, so that’s why there’s such a large spectrum. But it’d be great if there were ongoing, professionally staffed events, maybe three or four times per year where there was a group of young adults that are really developing.”

2) Belonging

Millennials want to connect with and belong to a community of others who share similar purpose and passion, which may or may not relate to Jewish issues. In an ideal world, the Jewish world provides an inclusive community. It should be added that “belonging” may look different to the younger generation than it looked to their elders.

“I don’t need to know everybody when I go to Friday night services. I need to know four people. And they need to be happy to see me, and that’s it....”

Alena said that the only way for her to engage was to immerse herself in the community. However, she senses and understands that some Millennials might feel hesitant about engagement and immersion. But she also feels like engagement and immersion were invaluable to her spiritual journey. Alena thought smaller-sized groups might help overcome initial fears and welcome newcomers into the community.

“Some of the mega-churches have it right. Small groups and cohorts make it easier to show up. I don’t need to know everybody when I go to Friday night services. I need to know four people. And they need to be happy to see me, and that’s it.... So, how do you get from not knowing anybody to having

four people happy to see you when you show up on a Friday night? Some sort of ante-up peer involvement thing.”

Mara would look for shared values and a place “where I know assumptions won’t be made about me” in a potential formal community. She desires places where she can show up and be herself. She desires community members who understand that the world is complicated. Potential community members would say, “It’s messy, and we don’t make assumptions.” Mara admitted that she has struggled to find that place.

“I want the Jewish community to prove to me that I’m wrong, that all of my assumptions that I don’t have a place in the Jewish community are wrong. That’s hard for the Federation because I’m reluctant to engage; I’m nervous about engaging. But I want them to prove to me that there are other young people who value ritual, who want to be engaged Jewishly, and without any of the cheesy stuff.... I have so few friends right now who are practicing Jews in any way. I have fairly few Jewish friends, and then even fewer who engage in any way, shape or form as Jews. I’d like to find out that that’s something I would like in my life.” - Mara

During his birthright trip to Israel, Chris connected with Jews from outside the Twin Cities and made several friends. This made his Jewish heritage feel more comfortable and tangible. Hearing stories of engagement from members of vibrant, urban American Jewish communities impacted Chris. “It made me more comfortable with being part of the Jewish community in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.... This isn’t scary, this is real stuff.” Chris also said that friendships and bonds forged on the trip have now been brought into the Saint Paul community, which has helped him and others begin to engage. “It feels safer, like more of a family.”

Giving money to causes doesn’t interest Chris. Chris prefers to see change in action, such as watching kids grow, experiencing changing neighborhoods, or forging a relationship with a family. He feels fortunate that he stumbled into this opportunity through a brother who made him aware of this under-the-radar organization. Chris foresees the Federation helping others like him match their volunteer time to opportunities that align with their interests. Not everyone will “stumble” into opportunities like he did. He remembered his first days as a volunteer and the immediate sense of connection.

“Wow, this is really cool! I love [the sport], and I like kids, and I like working with kids. This is a win; this is a way to give back.... I think [the Federation could] open the door to things we can do in the community together, in the Jewish community, outside of just the religion.”

As a leader within the community, Elizabeth enjoys establishing trust. She values the community and thinks that it is unique. “I think the biggest highlight in being involved in the Jewish community is how the intentions are always to be as inclusive and open and embracing as possible.” She cited her spouse’s conversion to Judaism, how easy it was, and how much encouragement she and her spouse received before their wedding.

Roger says,

“It’s about knowing that on the holidays I’ll get together with my family. You know, we’re going to get to see everybody. People sometimes come to town. It’s just more about those traditions than the actual spirituality of it.”

Maybe that'll change in the future, I'm not closing any doors, but for now, it's kind of how it's been. I'm good with that, too."

3) Community-based

The mentality used to be "build it and they will come." More and more, organizations are finding that people want programming to come to them -- to their homes, their neighborhoods, and their other community-based networks.

Alena spoke about her engagement with the [online] community of mothers.

"Before I was a mom, I didn't have a need for a community of parents. I certainly would not have expected to find value in an online one. I would have expected to show up to a physical location. That very quickly became impossible after having my first (child) and going back to work. After we got pregnant with our second, it was like, there's absolutely no way that I could have a community that is particularly vibrant or valuable to me that in order to get something out of, I have to show up with any regularity."

Julia said that as a child, people were born into a community, then added that hers was very important. Growing up, Julia had her Jewish community and her school community. As an adult, Julia actively chooses the communities she will participate in. With her limited time, relationships become very important. "In my life, that's been choosing people who have similar values, shared understandings of the world, and what we want it to look like." She has chosen people who are in a "similar life stage" as she is [motherhood]. She values her current community highly.

"I work really hard to make sure it stays healthy and rich. ...I feel pretty supported in the communities that I am a part of. I guess I'd be interested to talk to other single moms, but then I hesitate with that too, because I don't really know what that would look like, and I don't know that this defines who I am. It would be interesting to be part of a community that really sort of understood my daily life a little more."

Out of her group of friends, only Julia identifies as Jewish. Even though she isn't active in the community, she has maintained her Jewish identity.

"I talk about being Jewish, I think about being Jewish. I talk about community and how Judaism is different than other religions because it's not about 'you go and pray and then you're done.' It is about community, it's about a whole way of life."

Mara described her home community as averse to the mention of G-d. "I grew up valuing being Jewish and being very proud of a cultural heritage and an ethical heritage. But formalized, institutionalized religion was never really part of my Jewish identity." She discussed how meaningful it is to her that her community and heritage have such a long and valued history.

"I'm a total history nerd, so a lot of it is just the sensation that I'm engaging in a ritual that's been going on for 3,000 years. There are pieces of our songs that we know the melody has been around since somewhere around 1,000 CE. That's amazing. I think Judaism gives me a history in a way that's always been very appealing to me."

Chris defined community as a collective group of people with a common interest. He talked about how geography once limited community to the people who lived next to you, but those boundaries no longer inhibit him. His understanding of community has not changed much over the course of his life, but the importance he places on belonging [to a community] has increased. As a result, he became more involved. Chris' membership in various communities has more depth now than at previous points in his life.

Denise defined a community as a group she can use for her "social outlet." As someone who has moved frequently, she noted how this group provides her with friendship, companionship and new experiences. She noted that social groups can be quite "porous." She added that none of her communities tie directly to any particular institution or lifestyle (such as her yoga group from a previous location).

That being said, Denise would definitely consider attending Hebrew classes if those were available. Following a Hebrew refresher, Denise thinks that she might engage with the community more than she has previously. "I would just want to see if there are any social events with people my age. Is there a meetup? Or people to have cocktails with? Or, to play kickball or something? Fun, social activities."

Belonging to Jewish community allows Elizabeth to explore her beliefs and "better" herself through the connections that she makes. She appreciates her membership in a community that works to preserve its culture and heritage. Elizabeth feels that this quality (cultural preservation) is rare among her community groups. The overall [Jewish] culture of service interests Elizabeth greatly. Elizabeth appreciates, "the responsibility, not just for our own community, but for everyone else. I think that's really powerful, and that's why I stay a part of Judaism, because it's a place where people want to see other people do well."

James referred to community as a group of people who understand each other and share the same or similar experiences. They may share the same passion or faith and bond by working toward a similar goal. He talked about the Saint Paul communities he engages in.

"I have my artsy friends, and then I have my more activism-focused friends, and then some of my friends are more into hanging out and showing up and not doing a whole lot of either one of those. So, there are a lot of different kinds of crews. I'm in a lot of smaller communities right now. But there's the global artist community, and there's the local artist community, or global activism, and local activism. There's not really a global movement of people just hanging out, but I would say small groups of people is what I'm a part of."

Roger spoke about his communities, including kickball, basketball and softball teams. He also plays poker with a group of guys. His definition of community - "having activities with groups of people" - included these and similar groups. Roger feels close to his co-workers throughout the [school] district, and he is especially close to the teachers in his department. He noted that there is not much crossover between these communities. Roger doesn't purposefully try to connect them, citing his natural tendency to be more introverted. "I've got my friends. I've got my family. The people I play kickball with are not the people I'm going to play poker with, and they're not the people I work with. There are just little pockets everywhere."

“You just have to shortcut everything in life. So there is a shortcut to saying, ‘What group are you a part of?’ Well, it happens to be that a lot of my social gatherings are around legal-minded folks. If I have a dinner party with friends, it happens to be that of the eight people there, six of them are attorneys. I could easily just call them my friends, but then people ask, ‘How did you meet them?’ and it’s ‘through legal communities.’”

Edward still lives in the same neighborhood he grew up in and is still close with his childhood friends. His parents still live in his childhood home. The neighborhood is home to many other members of the Jewish community, and he says he chose the location in part because, “It’s important for me to have resources that are Jewish in nature close by.”

Edward continued that in buying a house in the neighborhood:

“It seemed right, it’s geographically close to everything that’s important to my specific life. I chose my neighborhood predominantly because of the fact that that’s where I grew up. I think if you speak to a lot of folks around here, it’s one of those interesting bubbles that you see in a few other parts of the Twin Cities, in Minnesota.... Geographically it’s close to the airport, it’s close to the Jewish [place redacted], and synagogue, it’s close to everything that I need.”

4) Choice and acceptance about how to engage and be Jewish

Young Jews engage in Judaism individually. Young Jews want choices. Activities and programs can inspire Millennial engagement by providing meaningful options.

“I think there is this expectation that you grow up a certain way, you’re going to stick to that, you’re going to follow all these rules, and that is exactly how you’re going to raise your kids.”

Roger compared his current lack of community engagement with his parents at his age. Growing up, his parents were married with three kids. They raised Roger and his siblings in the temple and provided Jewish experiences like Hebrew school and summer camp. Roger just isn’t in the same place at the same age. He explained, “I think they belonged to a temple, and they had more responsibilities on their plate, so they had less leeway. They were different.”

Denise’s mother taught her Hebrew. However, she has lost confidence in her ability to speak Hebrew as an adult. In her family, everything was “done by the book in Hebrew.” As a child, there was always stress about improving one’s ability to read and speak the language. To this day, Denise is worried about being judged on her Hebrew speaking and reading abilities, no matter how “irrational” that fear might be.

“I have anxiety about going to people’s homes or to new communities because I’m very self-conscious about how bad my Hebrew is. That makes me very nervous, because we always went to services in Hebrew. I feel like I would be embarrassed now. I should go to services in Hebrew now, but I would be embarrassed because I can’t read the Hebrew anymore.”

When community organizations reach out to her, Julia sometimes feels like a commodity. “I’ve read the articles too, about losing young Jewish people to intermarriage, or just not being

interested, and I do have concerns about that. Yet it doesn't help when it just feels like, 'Let's get her back in our camp.'"

Sylvia added that the community has changed its assessment of her. As a teenager, Sylvia felt very valued as an individual. She remembered the time after college when she called and asked about a job and was told, "Yes, we can find something for you." But now that Sylvia is married, "That's the focus – family. And it's not about me anymore."

Sylvia feels reluctant to follow her family's tradition and benefit from entitlement within the community. Instead, Sylvia wants to pave her own way. When Sylvia has interactions supported by her family's legacy, she feels like a child again. Sylvia feels that those community members see her as the little girl who "has a nice voice and used to sing in the plays." She said, "I think there is this expectation that you grow up a certain way, you're going to stick to that, you're going to follow all these rules, and that is exactly how you're going to raise your kids." However, she'd like to chart her own path, rather than following the "track" laid out for her since childhood. "Nope, sorry, not playing anymore."

Elizabeth explained that within her circle of communities, Millennials develop friendships and "create their own subcultures that don't necessarily have to exist within facilitated walls." She finds that social media creates the ability to find friends and seek social groups, without relying upon those physically nearby. According to Elizabeth, [strong] online relationships may get Millennials out and to events. "I really don't think people come to things unless they know other people are going to them." She also believes that Millennials do not all have the same interests, and she cites herself as an example. Now married, she seeks out different things to do and expects that if she had children, it would change even more.

They also want acceptance of their life choices within the Jewish community. Millennials want an understanding and supportive Jewish community that accepts Millennial life choices, such as tattoos, living arrangements, etc. Millennials want a sensitive and non-judgmental Jewish community capable of accommodating variations in beliefs and practices. Millennials want multiple touch points for engagement within the Jewish community. Millennials want to question (or even oppose) Jewish beliefs, traditions, practices, etc., but still find acceptance within the Jewish community.

5) Commitment to social justice

Interviewees described their ideal concept of social justice. Six interviewees identified social justice as important to their lives and consistent with Jewish values. Most interviewees currently engage in a variety of social justice activities but feel individual action is less effective than group action. Many asked that the Federation engage deeply – internally and externally – with questions of identity, power and privilege.

The main areas of concern to interviewees were: engagement/non-engagement of Millennial Jews, developing relationships within the Jewish community, developing relationships between the Jewish community and other local communities, and promoting peace between Israel and Palestine.

Interviewees cited three avenues toward social justice: philanthropy, volunteerism and communication. Alena and Julia give directly to causes each supports. Alena also donates through Amazon.com purchases. Mara promotes inclusivity and deep engagement with the ideas of social justice both in personal conversations and through her employment. Chris and

Denise both want to volunteer but cannot identify effective organizations. James works with two charities and wishes to promote social justice through arts and music.

Interviewees support the following causes: hunger, neighborhood health (Saint Paul), heart disease, inclusivity (race, gender, sexual orientation), inclusivity (Israel and Palestine), police brutality, conversations around identity, privilege and power; faith-based justice, children, arts, music.

Interviewees support the following organizations: Give to the Max Day, an unnamed Jewish group that supports Palestinian rights, an unnamed group that supports athletics in an African country, and the Federation.

Interviewees identified the following reasons for support: personal connection to a particular issue, friends/family doing charitable work, personal evaluation of charitable organization, employment with organizations that promote social justice.

Interviewees wish to support, but are not currently supporting, the following causes and organizations: literacy, Jewish Community Action, Seeds of Change, and the Federation.

6) Relationship-focused

Millennial engagement is relationship-focused. The Jewish community must engage Millennials through building personal relationships, and not through programs or organizationally-focused activities.

“People have a lot of power in their connections.”

Alena described community as people that you know and who know you with some depth. She referenced how this can be geographic, like her community with those who live in or near her suburb, but also can surround life events such as school, motherhood or some other attribute.

When Alena returned to the Twin Cities, she bonded strongly to a training cohort drawn from local community members. The training cohort overlaps with some other communities that Alena participates in. “I show up at an event, and those are the people I know, the people I want to see, the people that I have developed deeper relationships with. We’re friends on Facebook; we go to each other’s life cycle events even if we don’t hang out.”

Relationships form the most important and lasting ties Julia has to any community. She likes feeling that the community was part of something greater, especially when working toward a greater good such as social justice. In her communities, “...we all depend on each other. Where it’s less about divisions between people and more about what should we all be working for?” In these ways, she engages through her work communities. Julia is thankful for those opportunities.

James looks for engagement opportunities online, if he does know someone already involved. Social media provides influential information. Connecting with events through Facebook sets the table for personal connections later. When James attends a music or poetry event, for example, friends introduce him to other friends. “People have a lot of power in their connections.”

Roger said, “I never sought to find Jewish people; it’s just something you have in common.” He said that relationships with community members don’t frequently include conversations about

Judaism, nor Jewish practices. “I’ve got a really good friend who’s Orthodox, and I’ve got some who are ‘just’ Jewish.”

However, Roger’s sports-centered relationships are strong.

“They’re good people, you know? Otherwise I wouldn’t hang out with them. We’re not all Jewish; we all have our own stories. It’s a comfort level, and obviously you do activities that you like. I don’t know how to explain it. They’re your friends. You hang out with your friends. The relationships are number one. That’s how you teach, too. So if you don’t build a relationship, they aren’t going to learn anything.”

One interviewee said,

“It’s really nice to have that group.... Usually when people say ‘social,’ I think of hanging out with my friends who I’d want to go grab dinner with, not ones that I’d necessarily go to work functions with. But one of my friends from the Cardozo⁶, he and I live in the same neighborhood, so we’ll go for walks together, or we’ll go grab a drink or dinner. He’s an attorney. He’s Jewish. He’s part of the Cardozo society.”

7) Co-creation

Millennials co-create. They recognize that they can learn from more experienced people but also want to see their talents, ideas and energies valued and utilized. Young Jews, specifically, are committed to co-creating their own Jewish experiences. Young Jews want a voice in the shaping of their experience and the Jewish organizations they choose to engage with.

“Don’t spend any more money on events; they are going to be low attendance, and the ROI is not good. Spend money on creating community spaces.”

Co-creation in this context refers to collaboration between the next generation and the current Greater Saint Paul leaders, agencies and organizations. Research reveals that Millennials⁷ do not want to stand back and wait for people to create programming for them.

⁶ Twin Cities Cardozo Society

⁷ Anna Fyrberg, Rein Jürjado, (2009) "What about interaction?: Networks and brands as integrators within service-dominant logic", Journal of Service Management, Vol. 20 Iss: 4, pp.420 – 432.

Gower, Geoff. “Marketing to millennials: the rise of content co-creation.” The Guardian. 3 Nov 2014.

McWilliam, E. (2008). Unlearning how to teach. Innovations In Education & Teaching International, 45(3), 263-269.

Petro, Greg. “Millennial engagement and loyalty – make them part of the process.” Forbes. 21 Mar 2013.

Mary M. Sommerville, Navjit Brar (2007). “Toward co-creation of knowledge in the interaction age: an organizational case study.” Tenth National Convention on Knowledge, Library and Information Networking. 14 pp.

As a Millennial with some experience in leadership positions both within and outside of the community, Elizabeth sees some differences between folks her age and younger with those of previous generations. Millennials work in a different way, have not yet developed strong leadership skills and struggle to work with other generations. For that reason, Elizabeth suggested that Jewish organizations should really support training and opportunities for the younger generation. She mentioned the Next Gen program of the Jewish Family and Children's Service in Minneapolis as an example. This program operates its own board, organizes volunteer opportunities and provides social opportunities.

Alena discussed her family's journey through entrepreneurship and a perceived lack of support from the Jewish community as a whole.

"It is a travesty how little support we got. I have a girlfriend who is high up in her organization, and we talk frequently about how there is this huge unmet need in our Jewish community [surrounding support in business]. If she has an opening, she has no idea who is looking for employment at our synagogue. She has no idea who is starting a business and who might have services that she could say, 'Hey, submit your [proposal].' There is zero involvement and zero mechanisms... we don't even have a billboard where people can put... 'I'm looking for work' much less an online community where that happens. Nobody is fostering it, and nobody is interested. I don't even think that the leaders in the Jewish community are aware of it."

Julia discussed the idea of a small-business incubator type of effort or space. She feels it that could help the community. Her spouse investigated membership in CoCo⁸ but found it cost-prohibitive. She cautioned that such an effort at supporting small business would have to be intentional.

Chris ran his small company out of his home and wished the community could have provided a gathering place with other like-minded individuals.

"I've always been interested in having a place to gather, with a break-out room and stuff like that. It would be really cool, like CoCo, especially if it doesn't cost anything or costs very little. One of my brother's closer friends growing up started a coffee shop focused on entrepreneurs where they [have internet], get coffee, have break-out rooms, and invite people there to have meetings. They've got these 'travelling offices' almost, and the plan is to franchise those out and put several around the area so you can use them at your will. It's a pretty cool idea for the entrepreneur who's just starting out and they don't have a lot of capital. It's like 'I'm just going to work from home, because it's too expensive.'"

⁸ <http://cocomsp.com/>

Denise talked about how the Federation could organize opportunities for young people, such as kickball. She also mentioned hiking and running groups being very difficult for one person to organize and manage, but that would interest many people. "I always want to run, but I feel like it would be better if I had a group of people that I met up with and then went on a run together with." She said this group could even provide some coaching for a 5K or specific workouts.

Elizabeth wishes that she would have had more career support from the Jewish community in three specific areas: 1) Scholarships for her college studies as she prepared for her career. Elizabeth carries \$150,000 in college loan debt. 2) Leadership opportunities to support her in her career (as mentioned earlier), and 3) Seed money and mentorship for her start-up business.

Elizabeth has seen other Millennial entrepreneurs express her same desire for start-up support. She would love it if the Federation supported Kickstarter-type campaigns or even created a space for business incubation. She suggested an open and collaborative shared office space, with a great coffee shop, meeting rooms and desks that can be used as needed. She mentioned CoCo⁹ as an ideal.

In this collaborative space, the Federation could mentor Millennials and focus programming on business development. Elizabeth believes that successful new business owners will be more likely to give back to the Federation. She suggested thinking about such a space as a "Moisha House" for collective business rather than collective living. She added, "Don't spend any more money on events; they are going to be low attendance, and the ROI is not good. Spend money on creating community spaces."

Elizabeth expressed that she hoped they would just start trying new things. And not new events. "If there is one thing that I could emphasize: Stop doing events. Stop worrying about events. People have enough events going on in their life." Instead she suggested a focus on creating space as mentioned earlier, and pushed for more affinity groups. She suggested adding a Millennial affinity group to go along with the doctor, lawyer, and other "business-y affinity groups."

⁹ cocomsp.com

Panel Vision & Recommendations

VISION

The Greater Saint Paul Jewish community will co-create with 22-35-year-olds a culture that engages the next generation of Jews: one that honors the interests, ways of affiliating, and desire for social impact of the next generation.

FOCUS

Our panel discussed the age range defining “next generation” early in our work. We decided to focus our research and recommendations on 22-35 year olds as communities and organizations across the globe acknowledge that connecting with and engaging individuals graduating from college and beginning their careers is an inflection point for community involvement.

We recognize the need to also engage high school and college youth as well as young Jewish families, but this work was outside the scope of this panel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our hope is that these recommendations will develop opportunities for deepening levels of involvement, starting with participation and leading to true engagement.

Recommendation #1: Develop a Young Adult Philanthropy Fund that Encourages Social Entrepreneurship

Description

We recommend that the Greater Saint Paul Jewish community invest in youth and young adult philanthropy and social entrepreneurship by creating the opportunity for youth and young adults to propose, fund, and carry out initiatives that are developed and led by them.

We propose creating a fund with significant resources to support young-adult-driven giving related to the Greater Saint Paul Jewish community in four specific areas:

- (1) Jewish ritual;
- (2) Jewish study;
- (3) Jewish social life; and,
- (4) Tikkun Olam.

The Tikkun Olam fund would not be restricted to giving in the Jewish community.

We recommend exploring the use of a “giving circle” model for the philanthropic engagement.¹⁰ We recommend exploring whether “gesher l’keshet” funds might be a source of funding for this effort.

We recommend that the Jewish community should widely advertise the opportunity for young Jewish adults to participate. Young adult “participation” could include:

- (1) community-based efforts to generate ideas for funding and proposals for funding;
- (2) “site visit” types of research about what to fund and to what extent to fund; and,
- (3) decision-making about funding.

Criteria for funding would have to be developed with substantial young adult involvement. That said, some criteria might include:

- (1) substantive involvement by young adults;
- (2) clear articulation of goals;
- (3) reliance on an evidence-based practice;
- (4) innovation (funding opportunities that do not currently exist for Jewish Millennials); and,
- (5) role of evaluative thinking (the extent to which measures are developed and deployed early on to evaluate success).

The funding process might include review by an advisory panel and/or an online community voting component. The fund would be coordinated by the Jewish Federation of Greater Saint Paul. A group of young adults would have to be chosen to design the process in greater detail; this group should be broadly representative of all of the demographic elements in the Jewish community, it should not be made up solely of historic leaders or the families of historic leaders.

For the purposes of these recommendations, we are defining the terms as follows:

Youth (or Young Adult) Philanthropy: Empowering young people to determine where grant dollars would be put to the best use in their own communities.¹¹

Social Entrepreneurship: Creating, financing and implementing innovative ideas in the nonprofit or for-profit world that improve communities and add social value.¹²

¹⁰ According to the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers’ More Giving Together, a giving circle “is formed when individuals come together and pool their dollars, decide together where to give the money (and other resources such as volunteer time), and learn together about their community and philanthropy.”

¹¹ <http://www.goypi.org/y-pi-what/our-story.html>

Research Basis

Organizations and communities have developed various ways of engaging youth and young adults. Those programs are judged in a variety of ways, including by “dosage” (the duration of time over which youth are involved) and by the extent of “co-creation” (the extent to which youth or young adults have the power to shape their programs, policies, and philanthropic decisions).

Youth Councils and Advisory Boards get youth involved in solving local problems and actively engaged in the community. Our panel interviewees indicated that sometimes they feel like a commodity and that the community does not value their individual voices or interests. Interviewees indicated that they would like to chart their own path in the community and would like acceptance of their life choices within the Jewish community.

Recommendation #2: Engage in Partnerships in Larger Community For Social Good

Description

Initiate active involvement with local nonprofits to offer programs, events and community-wide volunteer opportunities. This may include nonprofits in the Jewish community (such as JFS), but would not be restricted to nonprofits in the Jewish community. For example, an intensive tutoring effort through Reading Partners in the Saint Paul Public Schools might be considered. Partnering should occur at least quarterly, or perhaps even weekly. Young adults ages 22-35 will drive the partnerships with nonprofits based on their interests in various social issues.

This recommendation could dovetail with the Youth and Young Adult Philanthropy. For example, intensive partnership with a particular nonprofit could lead to recommendations for funding that nonprofit through the Youth and Young Adult Tikkun Olam fund.

Research Basis

We heard repeatedly during interviews with this age cohort that a significant portion of their concept of their own identity is rooted in seeing themselves as part of the larger community. For many people in the target age group, identity as part of the larger community competes with or eclipses identity as Jews. Youth and young adults who have a strong Jewish identity expressed the need to act on their Jewish values through a broader social lens.

Additionally, the research revealed that competing commitments in the non-Jewish community often present a barrier to engagement. Implementing this recommendation will foster greater

¹² Irby, M., Ferber, T., & Pittman, K. with J. Tolman & N. Yohalem. (2001). Youth Action: Youth Contributing to Communities, Communities Supporting Youth. Community & Youth Development Series, Volume 6. Takoma Park, MD: The Forum for Youth Investment, International Youth Foundation.

alignment with the activities and interests of this demographic. It will also help to expand the Jewish community's presence in and engagement in the larger community, and engagement with diversity (diversity in many ways, including age, race, religion, economic status, immigrant status, sexual identity status).

Finally, we know that Tikkun Olam and social justice are driving forces for youth and young adults. If the Jewish community is authentically addressing these concerns and offering opportunities for meaningful engagement, those efforts will increase the Jewish community's potential for engaging the next generation.

Recommendation #3. Engage in Safe Discussions

Description

Develop a series of forums designed to elicit diverse viewpoints in an open, nonjudgmental manner. The forum leaders would ideally make it clear that all viewpoints are truly welcome in the discussion and no judgement or other negative repercussions will result from an open sharing of views.. The environment for these forums and the publicity for them must convey that this is a "safe space" for a variety of opinions to be voiced and heard.

Research Basis

A recurring theme in the literature and research identifies lack of openness to differing views on Israel as a barrier for young adults to engage whole-heartedly in the Jewish community. Additionally, a faith-based study on "Engaging Millennials in Ministry" recommended creating opportunities for safe questioning and open dialogue about faith and how it relates to everyday life.¹³ We would likely remove barriers to engagement if we were to offer authentic opportunities for open dialogue.

Other issues for safe-space discussions might include issues relating to sexual identity, to power and privilege and the responsibilities of same, race relations, and religious identity.

Recommendation #4: Expand Jewish Professional Affinity Groups

Description

We recommend establishing Jewish affinity groups in professions beyond medicine (Maimonides) and law (Cardozo). These groups would offer opportunities for programs, events, connections, mentorship, pro bono work, and fundraising, with an emphasis on making connections between the work/profession and Jewish values.

¹³ Engaging Millennials in Ministry (2015), a qualitative research project co-commissioned by the Siebert Lutheran Foundation and Kern Family Foundation, in partnership with Oversight Network. www.siebertfoundation.org

Research Basis

Research on Millennial engagement in the corporate world indicates that is important to find ways to connect people within their natural circles and in ways in which there is “something in it for them”.¹⁴

Youth and young adults prefer less segmenting of their affiliations and seek ways to integrate the diverse aspects of their life. Because this age group is at a critical point in their work life/career development, creating an avenue to bring a Jewish lens to their work/profession minimizes the need for people to choose between engaging and growing in their work/profession versus engaging and investing in the Jewish community.

Additionally, several panel interviews revealed a strong desire for belonging and relationship. Interviewees discussed using small groups or cohorts to enhance welcoming for newcomers, and stressed the importance of finding shared values in a formal community to provide a stronger way to connect with one’s peers. Interviewees indicated that fostering deeper connections within a professional community begins to build networks and a sense of belonging.

Recommendation #5. Address Cost Issue by researching the feasibility of creating a “Passport to Jewish Life in Saint Paul”

Description

This would be a program modeled after the “Passport to Jewish Life” program of the Federation in Orange County, California. The program offers financial rebate or scholarship to participate in Jewish activities and institutions with the intent to encourage participation, engage youth and young adult families when they are “ready,” and minimize the financial burden of engagement in Jewish life.

Research Basis

Local and national data illustrates that the expense of “being Jewish” is a barrier to participation. Further, Orange County research found that Jewish learning experiences during

¹⁴Schwartz, A. (2014, June 18). Want To Attract Millennials To Your Company? Engage Them In Causes from 5th Millennial Impact Report, put together by the creative agency for causes, Achieve, and sponsored by the Case Foundation; Feldmann, D. (2016, November); CAUSE, INFLUENCE & THE WORKPLACE The Millennial Impact Report Retrospective: Five Years of Trends. <http://www.themillennialimpact.com/retrospective/>; Dahwan, E. (2015, April 13). How To Engage Millennials In Your Corporate Culture. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ericadhawan/2015/04/13/how-to-engage-millennials-in-your-corporate-culture/>

youth increase children's chances of choosing Jewish lives as adults. Like passports used by travelers, Passport to Jewish Life® grants open the doors for youth and young adults to exciting Jewish destinations, including Jewish camping, Maccabi experiences, religious school, teen leadership programs, Israel trips and more. This approach has been utilized with some success in other Jewish communities but bears further study as to whether it could be supported in the Saint Paul community.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE INCORPORATED IN OTHER PRIORITY ARENAS

These are additional strategies generated by the panel that we believe would engage the next generation but fall better in the scope of one of the other Priority arenas. The Priority and the strategy are described below.

For consideration by Panel 1: Warm & Welcoming Connections - Expand TC Jewfolk "Who the Folk" Concept, and Look for Ways to Broaden Its Reach and Impact. By highlighting individuals from a variety of backgrounds, faith-based practices and ways of being "Jewish", we send messages of acceptance and provide potential avenues of connection across the community. We know that storytelling, social media avenues and the need to find ways to accelerate connectedness are keys to successful engagement of Millennials. Panel 2 would like to explore whether this strategy can be effectively woven into the implementation of Panel 1's recommendations related to a Jewish Twin Cities website and concierge function.

For consideration by Panel 5: Enhance Cooperation - Invest in the Harry Kay Leadership Program and Look for Ways to Expand Its Reach and Impact. This flagship bi-cities program has proven results, is well-funded, creates opportunities for education, networking, meeting others, and builds a cadre of knowledgeable, invested, Jewish leaders.¹⁵ Programs like this respond to the Panel 2 research that identifies these concerns:

- The importance of Jewish education
- Barrier of a closed Jewish community
- Barrier of not seeing Millennials as individuals
- The desire for belonging and relationship focus
- The stated importance of tikkun olam/social justice

¹⁵ Harry Kay Leadership Program most recent evaluation statistics (2011): 92% of participants have held leadership positions in local Jewish Community; 52% of participants currently hold leadership positions; average gifts made by participants increased 108% between two years prior to participating in the program and two years after completing the program.

Evaluation

The Community Planning Process used a seven-step approach to guiding the panel process. The seventh step recognizes the importance of determining success or failure in a thoughtful and systematic way, and thus, calls for evaluation of the recommendations once they are implemented. Panel 2 recommends determining the specific evaluation processes upon implementation of the recommendations. Given the themes and discussions of the panel, below are several key elements that could assist in guiding the development of evaluation questions and an evaluation plan. Recommendations should:

1. Help create a **welcoming and person-focused community**. Outcomes should demonstrate that opportunities are created where young Jews feel welcomed regardless of where they stand in terms of affiliation, commitment, engagement, political affiliation, race, ethnicity, gender identity and or sexual orientation.
2. **Help young people engage in ritual**. Recognizing that even when young people struggle with belief, there is still value in rituals. What is implemented should provide a way for young people to engage with ritual in a non-judgmental environment.
3. **Enhance opportunities for Jewish education, including learning about Jewish history, wisdom, text, and practice**. The recommendations implemented should create opportunities for people from various generations to pass on Jewish history, wisdom, text, and practice to the next generation.
4. **Multiply and deepen authentic relationships**. A desired outcome is that opportunities will lead to increased social interactions and deepened connections.
5. **Increase a sense of interconnectedness**. The projects/programs implemented should create a greater sense of belonging; that one is living in a connected community.
6. **Create an environment where questioning is okay**. Recommendations undertaken should create a space for and acceptance of young people questioning Jewish beliefs, practices, politics, traditions, and rituals. Being able to ask questions and being taken seriously in discussion enhances people's sense of authentic belonging.

Conclusion

Why are many of the members of our next generations seeing Jewish life differently from their parents and grandparents? The panel sought the thinking of many experts in the community. Earl Schwartz shared the following thoughts which are particularly pertinent:

Pre-modern Jewish reformers typically claimed that they offered a more authentic reiteration of Jewish life than the communities and institutions they criticized. Through the end of the 20th century, even when informed by the liberal emphasis on individual rights and contracted relationships, these critiques were of communities that continued to emphasize inheritance and obligation. However, with the passing of the European, North African, and

Middle Eastern immigrant generations, the last vestiges of such communities have largely disappeared in non-orthodox settings, and the communal forms now found wanting are themselves the product of earlier liberalization. Thus the majority of Jews in many locales currently have little or no personal experience of communities beholden to ethnic roots (including Jewish languages and extended Jewish families) and an obligation-based social system. The key themes drawn from the interviews . . . rest on these same liberal premises - most significantly: the autonomous individual, the primacy of contracted over “given” relationships, and progressive innovation over historical authenticity. Thus one can now react against current Jewish communal forms and institutions without engaging them in the terms by which classical Jewish communities understood themselves e.g., mitsvah, covenant, Torah, People, etc. . . . [W]e have no historical models of viable Jewish communities – communities of sufficiently compelling substance as to claim the hearts of the third and fourth generation - construed and constructed in this way. . . . Nevertheless, there is little reason to doubt the Panel’s finding that this is where much of the younger segment of the St. Paul Jewish community, outside of the Chabad-affiliated portion of the community, now stands - and we can only start from where we actually stand, not from where we wish we were.

Our future lies in being able to be truly present as we listen to our youth and young adults’ concerns while remaining rooted in enduring Jewish teaching and values.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: LISTENING SESSION EXIT SURVEY

Date: _____

Appendix A, Item 5: Exit Survey

Location: _____

Listening to Our Community Jewish Federation of Greater Saint Paul

Thank you for taking part in today's Community Listening conversation. What you say about our community and issues affecting Jewish people living here will help the Saint Paul Jewish Federation better understand where and how we commit our resources as we plan for the future.

Help us find out more about who attended focus groups and their opinions. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You are not obligated to complete a survey and you are free to skip items as you prefer. Responses to this survey are private and confidential - since we are not asking for your name you cannot be identified. Our questions about your zip code, occupation and income, etc., are for statistical purposes only.

Please answer questions 1-17 below by filling in the blank or circling the letter or number that corresponds with your answer.

<p>1. After today's discussion, what do you feel are the three most important things the Saint Paul Jewish Community has to offer to you and your family?</p> <p>a. _____</p> <p>b. _____</p> <p>c. _____</p> <p>2. After today's discussion, what do you feel are the three most important issues or concerns faced by Jewish people in our community?</p> <p>a. _____</p> <p>b. _____</p> <p>c. _____</p> <p>3. What is your zip code? _____</p> <p>4. What year were you born? _____</p> <p>5. In what country were you born?</p> <p>a. U.S.A.</p> <p>b. USSR, Russia, Ukraine or Belarus</p> <p>c. Israel</p> <p>d. Other _____ (name of country)</p>	<p>6. Are you:</p> <p>a. Male</p> <p>b. Female</p> <p>7. Do you consider yourself to be:</p> <p>a. Heterosexual or straight</p> <p>b. Gay or lesbian</p> <p>c. Bisexual</p> <p>8. Are you currently.....</p> <p>a. Married</p> <p>b. Widowed</p> <p>c. Divorced</p> <p>d. Separated</p> <p>e. Single/never married</p> <p>f. Living with someone/partner</p> <p>9. How many children living in your household are under the age of 18?</p> <p>a. No children</p> <p>b. _____ (Number of children)</p> <p>10. Are all the members of your household Jewish?</p> <p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
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Rainbow Research, Inc
December, 2012
Side 1



Appendix A, Item 5: Exit Survey

<p>11. Are you or someone in your household currently a member of a synagogue or other Jewish congregation?</p> <p>a. Yes b. No c. Don't know</p> <p>12. Is that synagogue or congregation:</p> <p>a. Conservative b. Orthodox c. Reform d. Reconstructionist e. Traditional f. Sephardic g. Jewish Renewal h. Humanist i. Havurah j. Non-affiliated k. Other</p> <p>_____</p> <p>l. Don't know</p>	<p>13. What was the total income of everyone living with you in 2012, from all sources including earnings from jobs, social security or pensions, welfare, unemployment benefits, child support, etc.?</p> <p>a. Less than \$25,000 b. \$25,000 to less than \$35,000 c. \$35,000 to less than \$50,000 d. \$50,000 to less than \$75,000 e. \$75,000 to less than \$100,000 f. \$100,000 or more</p>
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	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. "I had a good opportunity to express my opinion at this meeting."	1	2	3	4	5
15. "The meeting moderator did a good job"	1	2	3	4	5
16. "I would recommend attending a meeting like this to others."	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Thank you for your help!



Rainbow Research, Inc
December, 2012
Side 2

APPENDIX 2: LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

- Rabbi Morris Allen
- Tracy Arnold
- Jennifer Bagdade
- Wendy Baldinger
- Rabbi Shlomo Bendet
- Steve Brand
- Barbara Brooks
- Tom Cytron-Hysom
- Rabbi Jeremy Fine
- Ted Flaum
- Burt Garr
- Barry Glaser
- Leslie Hahn
- Steve Hunegs
- Miriam Itzkowitz
- Benjie Kaplan
- Jean King
- William Lipschultz
- Rhoda Mains
- David Milavetz
- Susan Minsberg
- Jeffrey Oberman
- Jonathan Parritz
- Randi Roth
- Dan Rybeck
- Steven Shaller
- Judy Sharken Simon
- Sally Silk
- Eli Skora
- Rabbi Adam Spilker
- Julie Swiler
- Jeff Tane
- Michael Waldman
- Mary Ann Barrows Wark

APPENDIX 3: PANEL MEETING SUMMARIES

Meeting 1– Introduction to each other and the process

Panelists introduced themselves, explained why they joined the panel, and shared their hopes for the process. Panel members discussed the scope and focus for this panel. The following questions guided our discussion.

Who is the next generation we are going to focus on in this group? “Next generation” could mean *elementary aged, teens, twenties, thirties, or forties*. Each group has different characteristics and needs; therefore, what will engage them will vary. This panel needs to focus on one or two age-groups and should be able to explain why we selected this focus.

What type of engagement are we trying to foster/support? What do we mean by “engage?” Do we seek to have the next generation feel *welcomed? Connected? Embedded?* And what level of engagement do we seek?

What is the purpose of the engagement? Engagement opportunities have different purposes. What is our purpose? Is it to foster deep roots in Jewish learning and practice that will endure for generations to come? Is it to avoid intermarriage in this generation? Is it to build and maintain a strong community – a *kehila* [check sp] – that builds on our cultural traditions and connections?

Meeting 2 – Defining the panel’s task

Panelists began the meeting by continuing their discussion of the purpose of the panel. They talked about which age group(s) would be our focus. The panel decided to separate the age ranges into Post-Bar or Bat Mitzvah, 18-22, and mid-to-late 20’s. The discussion would continue into the next meeting.

The discussion then shifted to the panelists’ own hopes for the next generation. Both universalistic and particularistic themes arose:

Universalistic:

- **Belonging.** The Jewish world provides a sense of belonging.
- **Community.** The need for a sense of community.
- **Non-judgmental/Allowing for Difference.** Individual approaches to belief and practice.
- **Values.** Engagement happens on many levels. Jewish values line up well with humanistic values.
- **Social Justice.** The desire to work toward social justice is both Jewish and universal.
- **Global Interest.** Young people have an interest in global issues, including their connection with Israel.

Particularistic:

- **Education about Jewish Texts, History, & Wisdom.** It is important for the next generation to have a strong education rooted in Jewish wisdom and Jewish texts.

- **Experience of Jewish Ritual.** It is important for the next generation to have personal experience with Jewish ritual.
- **Deep and Broad Particularly Jewish Experience.** The next generation should have broad and deep exposure to Jewish approaches to life.
- **Wrestling with Tradition.** The next generation will of course need to be prepared to make important life choices. Panelists would the next generation to be equipped and inclined to engage learning gleaned from Jewish texts and traditions as they wrestle with those choices.

Meeting 3 – Articulating scope and focus

The panel started with a discussion on the criteria for selecting an age group. After hearing from everyone in the room, the group decided to focus on community members in the 22-35 age range.

The group then discussed the four different methods the panel would use for its research:

- 1) Learning from experts in the Greater Saint Paul Jewish community
- 2) Learning from experts in other Jewish communities
- 3) Learning from experts in non-Jewish communities working to address the same issues
- 4) Learning from members of the community in the 22-35 age range.

Meeting 4 – Reviewing and developing research process and design

During this meeting, the panel reviewed the different research options. As a group, they reviewed the four different methods highlighted during meeting 3, brainstormed a list of people to be interviewed from the Saint Paul Jewish community, other Jewish communities, and non-Jewish communities. The panel decided to also interview individuals who may not fit the existing structure or methods but who may provide useful insight. Finally, the panel agreed to distribute the list of people to rabbis and agency executives at their next monthly meeting to seek their input about who should be on the list. The meeting concluded by assigning panel members to interview the listed experts.

Meeting 5 - Further determining and developing research options

The panel made further decisions about who they would interview and the process they would use.

Interviewing Experts

The panel also decided to conduct interviews with experts. Each panelist agreed to sign-up to send emails, make calls, and conduct interviews with one or two experts from the list. The panel also agreed to interview rabbis in the Twin Cities Jewish community. The interview list of names and protocol is included in Appendix 3.

Interviewing Young People in Saint Paul

The approach to interviewing young people in our community required careful thought. The panel discussed the following aspects of how they might conduct the interviews with the young people in our community:

Interview Questions: The panel gave feedback on potential interview questions, including a focus on an individual's life story, open-ended questions that allow the interviewee's Judaism to come up organically, and asking for feedback on what they wished their community offered and how they would enjoy giving back.

Interview Process: It was important to the panel that interviewees have control over their own story and have an opportunity to view and request changes to the original write-up.

Interview Case Selection: The panel expressed how important it was to find interviewees who may not have been effectively reached during the Listening Sessions. Additionally, the panel thought it was important to choose interviewees who spanned the spectrum of having been raised in Jewishly observant and affiliated households and being actively affiliated as young adults. Of the ten young people interviewed, four of the ten were married; six were single; and three were raising children.

Interviewer: The panel agreed that they wanted an external professional to conduct all of the interviews. It was agreed that a proposal would be submitted to Federation for funds to pay for a professional interviewer.

Meeting 6 – Research status and PEW report presentation

The panel reviewed the results of its expert interviews. Panelist all gave updates on their completed and pending interviews. The notes from the interviews with the experts are attached as Appendix 3.

Panel members also discussed moving forward with the professionally conducted interviews. Jason Altman was selected as the interviewer. The modest budget for paying Mr. Altman was approved by Federation. The proposed interview protocol, which focused on life stories that impacted the individual, was reviewed. The professional interview protocol is attached as Appendix 4.

The group discussed how to choose the young people to interview. The group decided to include: (1) highly affiliated and affiliated individuals; (2) a formerly affiliated individual; and (3) individuals who are unaffiliated or unengaged in the Saint Paul Jewish Community. The majority of those interviewed were either highly affiliated or affiliated.

Later in the same meeting Professor Riv-Ellen Prell, a faculty member in the Department of American Studies and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Minnesota, gave a presentation on the 2013 PEW report (see Appendix 5), "A Portrait of Jewish Americans". She touched on the following themes:

- 1) **Methodology of the PEW Study.** PEW set out to create a census for communal planning, to learn about changes, and to assess population growth and decline in the Jewish community. Because Jews are such a small part of the population, it is hard to learn about their community in national surveys. For the purposes of the survey, eligibility was determined based on four factors:
 - Their Religion is Jewish, OR
 - Aside from religion they consider themselves to be Jewish or partially Jewish, OR
 - They were raised Jewish, or had at least one Jewish parent, even if they do not consider themselves to be Jewish today.

- Anyone who said “yes” to any of these questions was eligible for the main survey.

2) **Millennial Religious Affiliation.** Millennials as a whole have low religious affiliation rates. PEW defines millennials as those born after 1980 and coming of age in 2000. The poll indicated that 25% of adults under 30 are unaffiliated religiously and see themselves as atheist, agnostic, or nothing. This compares to 19% of those in their 30s. In response to questions about whether survey participants were proud to be Jewish, had a strong sense of belonging to Jewish people, and had a special responsibility to care for Jews in need, Jews by religion continually had stronger rates of agreement than Jews of no religion (see the chart below). Outside of whether a participant was proud to be Jewish, Jews between 18 and 49 had lower rates of agreement than Jewish people over 50.

<i>% who agree they...</i>			
	Are proud to be Jewish	Have strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people	Have special responsibility to care for Jews in need
NET Jewish	94	75	63
Jews by religion	97	85	71
Jews of no religion	83	42	36
Ages 18-49	94	70	61
Ages 50+	94	80	64

3) **Low Marriage Rates and Intermarriage.** Millennials married at a lower percentage than other generations (see graph below). As indicated during the presentation, marriage is the greatest predictor of religious affiliation. Further, Millennials are the product of the highest number of intermarriages among Jews in the United States. This could create impacts such as lower ethnic identity, lower commitment to marriage, and a general weakening of identity.

Generation	Percent Married between the ages of 18 and 32 (%)
Millennials	26
Generation X	36
Boomers	48
Silent	65

4) **Millennial Institutional Affiliation.** Millennials tend to be far more politically independent than their predecessors. Fifty percent of millennials identify as political independents, as compared to thirty-nine percent of those in Generation X.

5) **Urgency.** Due to the low Jewish birthrates, and high rates of intermarriage, there are worries that among those that are non-orthodox, there will be fewer Jews with the

education and cultural skills necessary to allow for knowledgeable participation and leadership in the Jewish community.

- 6) **What works to create identity and connectedness?** Several options, including offering cultural venues, choices and options, non-traditional forms of associations, and Shabbat projects in homes outside of communal institutions.

Meeting 7 – Interview case selection and expert interview results

Professional Interview Case Selection

The panel spent continued discussions the different demographics that were important to have represented in the group of individuals that we would interview. They decided to seek diversity in income, race, observance, education, urban or suburban, and class. The panel was interested in how these demographics interacted with different levels of affiliation, so they looked at whether the person was: (1) affiliated, born in Saint Paul, and likely to stay; (2) affiliated and moved to Saint Paul; or (3) unaffiliated or unengaged with the Saint Paul Jewish Community. The panel brainstormed about several groups that might be a good starting point for finding interviewees, including Jewish Community Action, TC Jewfolk, PJ Library, and Chabad.

Interviews with Engagement Experts

The panel then spent time reviewing the list of experts and themes that arose from interviews or the experts. Themes include:

- **Retail, Not Wholesale.** It is important to reach out to Millennials on a one-to-one basis. They want to be courted and seen as individuals.
- **Choices.** The next generation wants choices and options regarding the activities and programs they engage with. One size fits all does not work anymore.
- **Relationship.** Having a relationship-based focus is critical to engaging young people.
- **Non-Institutional Settings.** Some organizations have found success bringing programs out of the institution and into people's homes or to other less formal settings.

Finally, the panel discussed the Rose Community Foundation report, "Legwork, Framework, Artwork: Engaging the Next Generation of Jews." The piece discusses how important it is to think of the Jewish community as a patchwork of mini-communities and to focus on outcomes that work for the next generation of Jews.

Meeting 8 – Learning from the professional interview cases

By meeting #8, many if not all of the professional interviews of young people had been completed. In this report, each interview is referred to as a "case." This meeting's primary goal was to engage panel members in reading and comprehending the interview data.

Two cases were shared electronically in advance of the meeting. One represented someone who grew up inside the Jewish community, and the other was a person who converted to Judaism later in life.

Next, panel members received a coding lexicon to help identify themes present in the cases. We reviewed the cases in study pairs, or havruta, identifying themes in the case that appeared on the lexicon, and adding-to and editing the lexicon. Then the study pairs each shared their learning with the entire panel, and the panel build consensus around a full set of themes. The remaining cases were analyzed in the months to come, and the set of themes was finalized.

Key themes included:

- **Purpose and passion.** Interviewees want to connect with others who share their purpose or passion. There is a sense that it should be easier than it is for people in Saint Paul's Jewish community to find and connect with others who share those things.
- **Lack of diversity.** Interviewees described a struggle to find diversity in the community, including lack of diverse views on Israel, and minimal LGBT Jews and/or Jews of color.
- **Social justice vs Jewish engagement.** Interviewees explained that people interested in social justice issues often will engage with others across racial, ethnic and cultural lines. There are only so many hours in a day, so their work in those communities takes away from the time they have to be involved in the Jewish community.
- **Spirit of individualism.** Interviewees described a spirit of individualism. They want to be seen as individuals, not just as Jewish, and want people and organizations to understand and support them in their individual needs and identities.
- **Creating their own path.** Interviewees do not know how or whether they want to embrace and pass on Jewish traditions, rituals, and heritage in the same way that their parents did.
- **Accepted and affirmed.** Interviewees want to be accepted and affirmed for the choices they make regarding their Judaism.
- **Overzealous Outreach.** Interviewees described sensing a feeling of desperation and scarcity in the Jewish community. When Jewish organizations aggressively pursue interested individuals, they seem desperate for involvement and it turns potential participants or members away. One interviewee described the Jewish community as being like a desperate ex-boy or girlfriend who just keeps calling you and wanting you to do things with them.
- **Turfiness.** Interviewees described a "turfiness" in the Saint Paul Jewish community. This leaves a negative impression and does not inspire respect.
- **Many competing obligations.** Interviewees are very busy and have lots of debt. These constraints on their time and on their finances impact their ability to participate in communal events.

Following this meeting, Randi and consultants Nora Murphy and David Milavetz started to draft portions of this report. The panel met in the winter of 2016 to complete the report based on the research and process outlined above.

Meeting 9 – Developing recommendations

The panel discussed possible recommendations, including youth philanthropy, mapping interests in the community, and creating a safe space to express alternative views on Israel. Many felt that the recommendation involving mapping interests would not interest young adults and would be perceived as too intrusive. The panel discussed that project to determine if points of interest in the community might work better as part of Panel 1's concierge recommendation.

The five ideas chosen by the panel are explained in the Recommendations section, below. Some of the ideas that were not chosen include:

- 1) Investing in the Harry Kay Leadership Program, and looking for ways to expand its reach and impact
- 2) Expanding TC Jewfolk's 'Who the Folk' concept, and looking for ways to broaden its reach and impact
- 3) Creating an interactive, live mapping function of where and how people engage in their Judaism

Finally, the panel recommended that idea #1 above (investing in Harry Kay) should be suggested to Panel 5 (cooperation between Minneapolis and Saint Paul), and idea #3 above (creating an interactive mapping function) should be suggested to Panel 1 (to perhaps include in the work of the concierge).

APPENDIX 4: EXPERT INTERVIEW LIST & PROTOCOL

List of Interviewees

1. Elka Abrahamson, President, The Wexner Foundation
2. Zalman Bendet, Rabbi of Chabad in St. Paul
3. Mark Blazer, Rabbi at Temple Beth Ami and Founder of the Albert Einstein Academy
4. Jeremy Fine, Rabbi at Temple of Aaron
5. Shawna Friedman, researcher for “Legwork, Framework, Artwork: Engaging The Next Generation Of Jews”
6. Lisa Farber Miller, Rose Community Foundation
7. Rabbi Adam Spilker, Senior Rabbi at Mount Zion Temple
8. Yitzi Steiner, Co-Director at Chabad at University of Minnesota
9. Maddy Wegner, Director of Training & Innovation at Youthrive

Interview Protocol

1. Can you tell us about the work you’ve done with young adults between the ages of 22-35? What strategies have worked particularly well?
2. Have you made targeted efforts to engage individuals that were not already connected with your organization or your community? How did that go? Did you continue to stay in touch?
3. Do you feel that your organization or community adequately reaches out to and fully engages 22-35 year olds in your community? If not, what gaps do you see in engaging 22-35 year olds?
4. Can you share a story where you’ve sparked an interest with someone who is not affiliated?
5. Is there any material you have that you can share with us or direct us to?

APPENDIX 5: PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Background

- Tell me a little bit about yourself.
- Tell me a little bit about your Jewish background.

Community

- What does community mean to you?
- How has this changed for you over time?
- What communities are you connected to now?

Jewishness

- What does being Jewish mean to you?
- How has this changed for you over time?
- What are your current Jewish connections?
- What are the highlight of Judaism for you? What are the lowlights?

Engagement

- What's working for you around Judaism and community?
- What is and isn't working for you in terms of engagement with the outside world? I.e. What activities or engagements bring you the greatest joy or satisfaction? Greatest aggravation or disappointment?
- What do you wish you had in your life that you don't?
- What do you pay for? What are you willing to pay for? How much are you willing to pay?
- Is there anything else that they wanted to be part of? If you could create something to be a part of, what would it be?

Going deeper

- Probe on what has already been shared and draw out stories

Conclusion

- What else should I have asked you that I didn't?

APPENDIX 6: "A PORTRAIT OF JEWISH AMERICANS" PEW RESEARCH CENTER

A Portrait of Jewish Americans

Pew Research Center's Religion and Public Life
<http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/Jewish-Americans-beliefs-attitudes-outlook-survey/>

U.S. Millennials' Religious Affiliation

Pew Research Center, Religion and Public Life-2010

Born after 1980 and came of age in 2000

25% of adults under 30 are unaffiliated and see themselves as atheist, agnostic, nothing

19% of those in their 30s

18% of those under 30 left a religion for no affiliation

Affiliated Millennials as strong as other groups

A Diminishing Value on Marriage

- 2014 Pew Study on Marriage
- Marriage rate for those over 25 is the lowest in the nation's history
- For whites, the rate of non-marriage has doubled since 1960
- "Is society just as well off if people have priorities other than marriage and children?"
- 50% of respondents agree; 65% of those under 30

Percent Married between ages of 18-32

- Millennials 26%
- Gen X 36%
- Boomers 48%
- Silent 65%
- **Marriage is the greatest predictor of religious affiliation**

Unmoored from Pol Insts

- Political Independents
- Millennials 50%
- Gen Xers 39%
- Facebook Friends (median)
- Millennials 250
- Gen Xers 200

Generational Makeup

- Millennials
- Born after 1980
- 27 % of adult population; white-57%
- Most diverse generation in American history

Why Study Jews?

- Census for communal planning, to learn about changes, and to assess growth and decline
- Jews are such a small part of the population cannot learn about them in national surveys
- Like every census, debates and conflicts about how to count people. Who is a Jew, but in the US census who is African American etc

Overview of Pew Findings

- Growth in Jewish population for the first time in decades
- Growing number of Jews define themselves as not religious or not members of denominations
- Identifying as Jewish does not preclude other types of behaviors and identities
- Inter-marriage over these generations has changed the nature of Jewish life

- Dramatic downturn in antisemitism and broad acceptance of Jews in the larger society have had a profound impact on identification

Who is a Jew in the Survey?

- Their religion is Jewish, OR
- Aside from religion they consider themselves to be Jewish or partially Jewish, OR
- They were raised Jewish or had at least one Jewish parent, even if they do not consider themselves to be Jewish today.
- Anyone who said "yes" to any of these questions was eligible for the main survey.

Margins of Error

Group	Sample size	Plus or minus percentage points
All U.S. Jews	3,475	3.0
Jews by religion	2,786	3.4
Jews of no religion	689	6.2
Ages 18-49	1,271	5.1
Ages 50+	2,189	3.3
50-64	1,044	4.8
65+	1,145	4.2
Orthodox	517	9.1
Ultra-Orthodox	326	12.9
Modern	154	12.4
Conservative	659	6.5
Reform	1,168	4.8
No denomination	908	5.9

Generations in the Survey

- Title Birth Years
- Greatest 1914-1927
- Silent 1928-1945
- Baby Boomer 1946-1964
- Gen X 1965-1980
- Millennial Born after 1980

Who is a Jew and How many of them are there?

- The estimate from the new Pew Research survey that there are approximately 5.3 million "Jewish adults"
- 1 million children who are being raised exclusively as Jewish (or 1.3 million children being raised at least partly Jewish)

Estimated Size of the U.S. Jewish Adult Population

	Share of U.S. adults	Estimated number (millions)
NET Jewish	2.2%	5.3
Jews by religion	1.8%	4.2
Jews of no religion	0.5%	1.2
Self-ID as Jewish	0.2%	0.5
Self-ID as partly Jewish	0.3%	0.6
Jewish background	1.0%	2.4
Christian	0.7%	1.6
Other religion	0.2%	0.4
Jewish and Christian	+	0.1
Jewish and other religion	+	+
No religion	0.1%	0.3
Jewish affinity	0.5%	1.2
Christian	0.3%	0.6
Other religion	+	0.1
Jewish and Christian	+	0.1
Jewish and other religion	+	+
No religion	0.1	0.2

What's Essential to Being Jewish?

% saying _____ is an essential part of what being Jewish means to them	NET Jewish	Jews by religion	Jews of no religion
Remembering the Holocaust	73	76	60
Leading an ethical and moral life	69	73	55
Working for justice/equality	56	60	46
Being intellectually curious	49	51	42
Caring about Israel	43	49	23
Having good sense of humor	42	43	40
Being part of a Jewish community	28	33	10
Observing Jewish law	19	23	7
Eating traditional Jewish foods	14	16	9

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Q.22a-f.

Essentials of Jewish Identity

	Remembering Holocaust	Leading ethical life	Working for justice/equality	Being intellectually curious	Caring about Israel	Sense of humor	Being part of Jewish community	Observing Jewish law
NET Jewish	73	69	56	49	43	42	28	19
Men	70	61	51	45	39	28	24	16
Women	75	76	62	53	46	44	32	23
Ages 18-49	69	66	51	47	35	28	28	21
Ages 50+	77	71	61	51	49	45	30	18
Orthodox	84	80	51	35	55	34	69	79
Ultra-Orthodox	83	78	46	25	45	33	78	82
Modern Orthodox	74	90	61	54	79	28	71	78
Conservative	78	68	58	48	58	41	48	24
Reform	77	75	62	52	42	42	25	11
No denomination	67	58	51	50	31	46	13	8

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Q.22a-f.

Highland Park Illinois Study Early 1960s

- What does it mean to be Jewish
- 93% Lead an ethical and moral life
- 85% Accept being a Jew and try not to hide it
- 67% Support all humanitarian causes
- 67% Promote civic betterment
- 48% Know fundamentals of Judaism
- 44% Work for equality of Negroes

Jewish Pride, Connections, Responsibilities

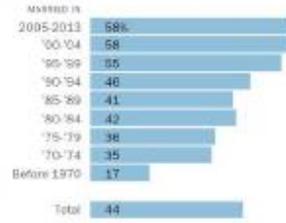
	Are proud to be Jewish	% who agree they... Have strong sense of belonging to Jewish people	Have special responsibility to care for Jews in need
NET Jewish	94	75	63
Jews by religion	97	85	71
Jews of no religion	83	42	36
Ages 18-49	94	70	61
Ages 50+	94	80	64

Intermarriage

- Millennials are the product of the highest number of intermarriages among Jews in the US
- Why is that significant? Impacts include:
 - Lower ethnic identity
 - Lower commitment to in marriage
 - General weakening of identity
- Advantage or disadvantage depending on perspective

Intermarriage, by Year of Marriage

% of Jews with a non-Jewish spouse ...



Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Based on current, intact marriages.

Figure 1. Percent Jewish by Religion (By Parental Marriage Type and Generation)

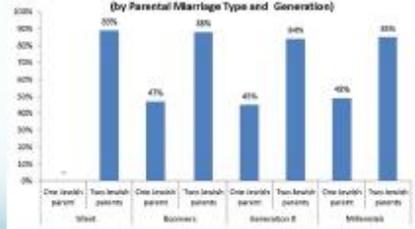
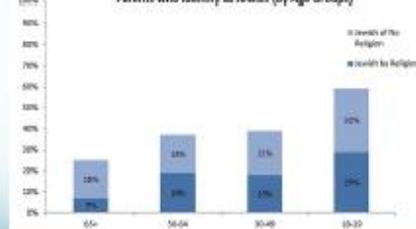


Figure 3. Percent of Adults with Intermarried Parents who Identify as Jewish (by Age Group)



Birthrate and Intermarriage

- Low Jewish birthrates
- Combined with high rates of intermarriage
- Produce two deleterious outcomes for the American Jewish population:
 - Fewer non-Orthodox Jews and among them; fewer Jews with moderate-to-advanced education and cultural skills to allow for knowledgeable participation and leadership in Jewish life.

Orthodox Jews

- 10% of all Jewish adults
- 27% of all Jewish children
- 35% of all Jewish children under age 5
- 53% of all in-married Jews are Orthodox

Jewish Practices and Traditions

	Participated in Seder last year	Fasted all/part of 2012 Yom Kippur	Always/ Usually light Sabbath candles	Keep kosher in home	Avoid handling money on Sabbath
	%	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	70	53	23	22	13
Jews by religion	70	62	28	25	16
Jews of no religion	42	22	6	11	5
Age 18-49	60	54	25	20	15
Age 50+	71	53	21	16	12
Married	75	57	28	21	16
Spouse Jewish	91	75	45	35	24
Spouse not Jewish	54	34	7	4	6
Not married	64	49	17	22	11

How Important is Being Jewish in Your Life?

	Very %	Somewhat %	Not too/ not at all %
NET Jewish	46	34	20
Jews by religion	56	34	10
Jews of no religion	12	34	54
Ages 18-49	40	36	24
18-29	33	44	23
30-49	46	29	25
Ages 50+	52	31	16
Married	52	30	18
Spouse Jewish	68	24	7
Spouse not Jewish	31	36	32
Not married	40	38	22

- ### What Works to Create Identity?
- Cultural venues
 - Choices and options
 - Non traditional forms of association
 - Shabbat projects in homes outside of communal institutions



APPENDIX 7: LITERATURE ON ENGAGING JEWISH MILLENNIALS

**Pickus, A. "The Next Generation: What Jewish Organizations are Doing to Cultivate 20-and-30-Somethings". Retrieved from *Ejewishphilanthropy.com*.
<http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/the-next-generation-what-jewish-organizations-are-doing-to-cultivate-20-and-30-somethings/>**

The article explores the question of why the 20-30-year-olds were not engaging with traditional Jewish organizations. In Denver, the Rose Community Foundation, however, has been making an effort toward understanding what NextGen needs actually are. One of the key discoveries of the RCF Study is that primarily, the NextGen just wants someone to engage them in conversation. They want to feel a part of something. Another key point in the article is the importance of inclusivity and to make sure that you offer programs and ways to connect for a diverse group of people. NextGeners need a personal invitation and also someone to show them their options.

**Klein, L., and Liff-Grieff, S. (Summer/Fall 2009). "From Generation to Generation: Changing Behavioral Perceptions and Expectations in Jewish Nonprofits". *Journal of Jewish Communal Services*. Volume 84, No. 3/4. Retrieved from:
<http://www.jcsana.org/upimagesjcsa/325.pdf>**

This article largely focuses on how the Millennial generation works within Jewish communal organizations. It focuses on how each generation has a distinct work style. Millennials in particular are interested in a more informal environment with more focus on multitasking and achieving a desirable work-life balance.

Kurzeka, A. (December 2009). "The Benefits of Youth Philanthropy Programs in San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Schools".

This report reviewed the benefits of incorporating philanthropy into environments with youth, particularly focusing on San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Day Schools. The study focused on alumni of a youth philanthropy project, focusing on their involvement and reflections on the experience. The findings were that the project enhanced students' academic, social and life skills while providing students an opportunity to explore passions.

**"Make Judaism More Fun and Relevant for Teens". Baltimore Jewish Leaders Assembly.
<http://acharai.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Make-Judaism-More-Fun-and-Relevant-for-Teens.pdf>**

The key points at this assembly are that teens value Judaism that is relevant to their daily lives, to connect with the things teens already are doing, have kids plan the program, don't overload on programming and have social programs that don't necessarily focus on the Jewish component.

Engaging the Next Generation

Chertok, F., Phillips, B., and Saxe, L. (May 2008) "It's Not Just Who Stands Under the Chuppah: Intermarriage and Engagement". Steinhardt Social Research Institute.

This article helps define what engagement looks like, in particular with American Jews in relation to marriage. Engagement in this sense is defined as "Jewish socialization in the form of Jewish education, experience of home ritual, and social networks plays a far more important

role than having intermarried parents in determining Jewish identity, behavior, or connections”.

Cohen, S. “Engaging the Next Generation of American Jews: Distinguishing the In-Married, Inter-Married, and Non-Married”. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. New York.

This article explores different methods of engaging groups of in-married, inter-married and non-married Jews. For in-married Jews, a primary objective is promoting engagement and education. For inter-married Jews, the key is to go beyond welcoming in engagement efforts. For non-married, the primary objective is to deal with the vast range of diversity in the group.

Elcott, D., and Himmelfarb, S. (September 2014). “Generations & Re-Generation: Engagement and Fidelity in 21st Century American Jewish Life”. The Jewish Boomer Platform. Research Center for Leadership in Action, NYU Wagner.16

This study sought to understand, in part, whether the institutions, behavioral norms, and values that have served Jewish life in the United States over the past century are appropriate for the current generation of Millennials. The researchers found that a significant minority of connected Jews are leaning away from long-term commitments and toward episodic participation (pg. 5). Highly connected younger Jews are only somewhat satisfied with Jewish communal institutions. Engaged Jews are strongly identified both with universal values (making the world better for everyone) and with being Jewish (addressing Jewish needs), but their levels of motivation and enthusiasm for universal values are significantly stronger and more consistent than their Jewish ones. The researchers advise intentionally bridging universal and Jewish values, listening and responding to the needs of community members, and creating a new narrative to support the formation of Jewish identity and Jewish communities.

Evolvement: A replicable outcome-oriented model for youth engagement in policy change. <http://rescueagency.com/files/pdf/Evolvement.pdf>

The report suggests that successful youth engagement can:

- Integrate effective and creative strategies for policy change efforts
- Generate and amplify public support
- Help to successfully change public health policies

The four basic concepts of the model include:

- **Branded Campaign** – Your policy issue is organized into a campaign with an appealing brand and S.M.A.R.T. objectives.
- **Measures of Progress** – Tangible and quantifiable indicators of progress are identified and implemented to achieve your S.M.A.R.T. objectives, such as petition signatures, support statements and surveys.

¹⁶ http://wagner.nyu.edu/files/faculty/publications/GenerationAndReGeneration_September2014.pdf

- **Mini-Grantees** – Existing youth organizations are provided with mini-grants to participate in the youth engagement effort, making youth recruitment and training efficient and expedient.
- **Youth Projects and Events** – Youth-lead projects and events in your community to reach community members and stakeholders. Youth measure their impact by completing measures of progress.

Giess, M., and Patel, E. (August 2010). “Building a Campus Movement of Interfaith Cooperation: Interfaith Youth Core in Action”. *Spirituality in Higher Education*, Vol. 5, Issue 5.

The Giess and Patel article focuses on interfaith work and demonstrates the importance of having youth leaders working together to build one-on-one relationships, and finding meaning in their spirituality. This collaboration worked best when students were able to use their strengths, build new relationships and take collective action by putting vision, values, and higher purpose into real-life practice.

Goldseker, S., and Moody, M. (2013). “#NextGenDonors: The Future of Jewish Giving”. Johnson Center. Retrieved from: <http://www.nextgendonors.org/wp-nextgendonors/wp-content/uploads/next-gen-donors-jewish-2013.pdf>

This article explores if the Jewish nonprofit infrastructure currently considered a model across the United States will be sustainable over the coming decades. The research demonstrated that NextGen Jews are less interested in formal religious practice and Israel. In the analysis, there was an even split of those in their 20s and 30s, mostly white respondents, half married, well educated (at least a bachelor’s and 64.4% had a master’s, only slightly more than half identified as liberal (8.2% as conservative), most got major giving capacity through families, 6.9% are primary creators of wealth used for philanthropy, 57.5% report making more than \$100,000, and just under half (48.1%) report \$1 million or more in personal net worth. Largely, the study focused on large NextGen donors.

They found that:

- 1) Jewish NextGen donors do give to Jewish causes
- 2) Inherited values drive giving
- 3) Eager to engage in meaningful ways
- 4) A desire to revolutionize philanthropy
 - a. Changing strategies to increase impact
 - b. Being more hands-on
 - c. Using more peer-based method

Yelman, A., and Schonberg, E., (June 2008). “Legwork, Framework, Artwork: Engaging the Next Generation of Jews”. Rose Community Foundation¹⁷

¹⁷ <http://rcfdenver.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/EngagingNextGen.pdf>

The single most important thing that Rose Community Foundation found to engage and build connections with NextGen Jews was one-on-one conversations. This study found NextGen Jews have:

- Strong, positive Jewish identities
- Powerful connections to family
- High percentage of interfaith marriage
- Diverse social networks
- Sense of alienation from and dissatisfaction with Jewish organizations
- Commitment to creating personal Jewish experiences
- Broad social awareness

The study came up with several recommendations focused on Jewish communal organizations and funders. Jewish Communal Organizations should focus on: Legwork, Network, and Teamwork. Funders should focus on: Framework, Patchwork, and Artwork.

Zeldin, S. (2010) "Youth as Agents of Adult and Community Development: Mapping the Processes and Outcomes of Youth Engaged in Organizational Government. Applied Developmental Science.

Zeldin discusses the importance of getting direct experience in community development as a youth to generate and support investment and ownership in one's community. Zeldin proposed that engaging young people in organizational governance promotes positive youth development and organizational effectiveness. To do this effectively, organizations need to engage youth early in the processes of creative strategic planning and policy change efforts.

Current State of Affairs

Achieveguidance.com. "The 2013 Millennial Impact Report".

This article discusses data that shows the Millennial generation's values and trends. Recent trends include that Millennials:

- Connect via technology
- Share in micro ways (short volunteer stints, low barriers of entry)
- Facilitate and rely on peer influence
- Volunteer along a continuum of support
- Give to have an impact

The top takeaway of the report is that "Millennials first support causes they are passionate about (rather than institutions), so it's up to organizations to inspire them and show them that their support can make a tangible difference on the wider issue."

Windmueller, S. Dean of the Los Angeles Campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. "The Dawning of a New Day: A Call for a National Consultation On the American Jewish Future". Retrieved from:

<http://www.jcsana.org/upimages/jcsa/Dawn%20of%20a%20New%20Day%20in%20America%20Judaism.pdf>

This article explores implications of the changing social and political structures of the 21st century and how that will impact the future of the Jewish community. Examples of these include globalization of the economy, emergence of new world powers, growth of terrorism and violence, reordering of the American economy and the emergence of large demographic shifts that will change the American social landscape. Because of these changes, in particular changes to the economic climate, Jewish institutions and younger Jewish participation are suffering. Windmueller makes the argument that in the future, Jewish life will be governed under several core principles:

- 1) Old notions of institutional turf will no longer apply
- 2) A different Jewish marketplace that is transparent and committed to innovation and experimentation
- 3) Revisit fundraising messages and inventory of financial resource tools

Windmueller advocates for convening a large national dialogue similar to previous ones like the 1943 American Jewish Conference that advocated for a Jewish state and other gatherings previously in the 1870's that helped create the Reform Movement. He also advocates for local level dialogue.

Windmueller, S. PhD, Dean of Los Angeles Campus-Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. (Summer 2007). "The Second American Jewish Revolution". *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*. Vol. 82, No. 3. Retrieved from:

<http://www.jcsana.org/upimages/jcsa/SecondAmerJewishRevolutionfinal.pdf>

Windmueller argues that just as the world is drastically changing in technology and communications, there will be a fundamental restructuring of the American Jewish community shaped by a new generation of Jewish activists. The argument is based on that fact that since the beginning of the 1980s, the Jewish community has experienced its most significant growth since the 1880's through the 1920's, which resulted in the birth of family and community foundations, and the establishment of an array of interest groups and specialized organizations in the Jewish community.

Waxman, C. (November 5, 2009) Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Jewish Studies, Rutgers University. "Beyond Distancing: Jewish Identity, Identification and America's Young Jews". Retrieved from:

http://contemporaryjewry.org/resources/13_waxman.pdf

Waxman focuses on Steven Cohen and Ari Y. Kelman's argument that younger, non-Orthodox Jews have significantly lower and declining attachment to Israel. The argument is largely based on an analysis of data from a 2007 survey. The data indicates that Jewish philanthropists currently are more likely to make their largest gifts to non-Jewish philanthropies. Younger Jews are less likely to be involved in Jewish life and are less committed to Jewish philanthropy. Waxman argues that the most significant issue is the distancing of young American Jews from the Jewish people and historical Judaism.

Wertheimer, J. (September 2010). "Generation of Change: How leaders in their twenties and thirties are reshaping American Jewish life". Retrieved from: <http://avichai.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Generation-of-Change-FINAL.pdf>

This report focuses on women and men ages 22-40 who serve as leaders of Jewish endeavors. This research process encompassed interviews with over 250 leaders across the country and

elicited 4,466 survey responses from Jewish leaders of all ages, allowing for a comparison between older and younger Jewish Leaders. The report does not claim to be representative due to a lack of demographic data at the time.

Several areas were identified as causes that young Jewish leaders care about. One is **protective** activities, defined as defending Israel, fighting for freedom for Soviet Jewry, offering support to Jewish poor, sustaining Jewish communal institutions and offering stronger Jewish educational opportunities to strengthen weak Jewish identities. Two other areas that young leaders care about include progressive and expressive activities. **Progressive** includes broader social causes such as environmentalism and a variety of social justice causes including what they regard as justice for Palestinians. **Expressive** means that young Jewish leaders want to help their peers find personal meaning in being Jewish.

Finally, Wertheimer shares the key findings of this study: Established organizations may have to rethink their governance structures to make room for younger Jewish leaders. Also, young Jewish leaders may need to reexamine their views of the establishment. Other key findings and questions include whether organizations that are Jewish can adapt to young leaders' need to support and find social justice causes that are not Jewish focused.

APPENDIX 8: PANEL MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

** Indicates a panel member in the 21-35 year old age range.*

Randi Ilyse Roth, Panel Chair

Randi has served as the Executive Director of Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul since July 2015. In her previous position as the Executive Director of Philanthropy for the Otto Bremer Foundation she led the Foundation in grant-making that contributed to improved access to higher education, anti-poverty programs for communities in need and support for disadvantaged youth. Randi has also worked as a federal court-appointed Monitor for a national class action civil rights lawsuit brought by 22,000 African-American farmers and at Farmers' Legal Action Group (FLAG) as a Staff Attorney and then as its Executive Director. Randi earned her B.A. in Political Science from Yale University, and her J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law. Randi is an active community volunteer, serving on the board of the Rural Advancement Foundation International, as a Trustee for the Jewish Federation of Greater Saint Paul, as a former member of the Legal Services Advisory Committee to the Minnesota Supreme Court, and as a director of the Minnesota State Bar Foundation. She is an active member of her synagogue, Beth Jacob Congregation in Mendota Heights.

Stuart Bear

Stuart is an attorney practicing in the areas of estate planning and elder law. He is the President of his law firm, Chestnut Cambronne PA. He has served in leadership roles in the St. Paul community, most notably as President of Beth Jacob Congregation, President of Jewish Family Service of St. Paul, and President of the Talmud Torah of St. Paul. Stuart and his wife, Marsha Schoenkin, live in Mendota Heights, Minnesota, and are very proud of their two children, son-in-law, and grandson.

Jeni Snyder Alcakovic

Jeni began her career in education as a camp counselor at James and Rachel Levinson Day Camp in Pittsburgh, PA and Camp Chi in Wisconsin. Jeni is past member of the Board of Directors for Mount Zion Temple and the St. Paul JCC. Also, former Chair of the Mount Zion Temple Religious School and the Camp Butwin Committee. Jeni is an administrator and teacher in the St. Paul Public Schools. Along with her husband, Robert, she enjoys following the progress of her daughters through college and young-adulthood.

Hayley Bemel*

Hayley is currently pursuing her Doctorate in Psychology (Psy.D.) at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in Chicago. She holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology and an Addiction Studies Certificate from the University of Minnesota. Prior to graduate school, Hayley worked at Abbott Northwestern Hospital as a Mental Health Associate. Hayley was an active participant at the University of Minnesota Hillel and served on the boards of several other student organizations on campus throughout college.

Jessica Lerman*

Jessica was born and raised in St. Paul, Minnesota and has been active in the St. Paul Jewish community for many years. Growing up, she participated in programming at Temple of Aaron,

the St. Paul JCC and USY. She interned with the Jewish Federation of Greater St. Paul in summer 2013 and assisted with some of the listening sessions at the beginning of the community planning process. She did some additional Marketing and Communications work at the Federation in late summer 2014. Jessica is currently involved in Temple of Aaron's young adult group and serves on this Panel, as well as the Federation's marketing committee.

Jeffrey Perlman*

Jeffrey was born and raised in Mendota Heights and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication and minored in Media Studies at the University of Kansas. Growing up in St. Paul, he was involved with Temple of Aaron, USY, and the St. Paul JCC. Jeffrey is a Marketing Specialist for Bellacor and serves on the Federation board.

Jodi Saltzman

Jodi is the Family Life Education Coordinator for Jewish Family Services in St. Paul. She worked for many years as a Child Life Specialist at University Of Minnesota Children's Hospital. Jodi also worked at the St. Paul Federation as the PJ Library coordinator when the Community Listening process was in its early stages. Jodi is on the board of the St. Paul JCC and National Council of Jewish Women Minnesota. Jodi and her husband, Dan, are members of the Temple of Aaron and longtime residents of St. Paul.

Aaron Hodge Greenberg Silver*

Aaron, originally from New York, has lived in Minneapolis since willfully moving here in 2009. He has serves on the board of Beth Jacob Congregation, where he has been a member for his entire time in Minnesota. Aaron is a papercut artist, website developer, bicyclist and chef. He lives with a revolving menagerie of wonderful humans and animals.

Eiden Spilker*

Eiden is enrolled at Brown University. In high school, Eiden was active in Circus Juventus and NFTY serving as the Social Action Vice President of NFTY (Northern Region) in 2013-2014 and Religious and Cultural Vice President the following year. Eiden was also an active community volunteer with Minnesotans United for All Families, among other volunteer activities.

APPENDIX 9: STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

David Milavetz, Panel Coordinator

David Milavetz earned a Master of Public Policy degree with emphases in public leadership and nonprofit management from the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and a BA in International Studies from the University of Denver. He also holds a Certificate in Evaluation Studies through the OLPD program at the University of Minnesota. His training and experience is in program evaluation, research design and implementation in community and cultural settings. David has experience conducting evaluation and research in communities, nonprofits, and informal education organizations. He is particularly interested in using data to support organizations and programs in creating their desired impact.

Nora F. Murphy, Panel Facilitator

Nora holds a Ph.D. in Evaluation Studies from the University of Minnesota and an MA in Research Methodology from the University of Pittsburgh. In addition to her formal training, she has developed broad experience as an evaluator by working in and with schools, school districts, community organizations, non-profits, government entities and foundations. Nora has worked both as an external consultant and as an internal evaluator as the Director of Assessment and Evaluation for the Perspectives Charter Schools in Chicago, Ill., and as coordinator for the Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute. In 2013, she was awarded The Michael Scriven Dissertation Award for Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation Theory, Method, or Practice. She is currently President of the Board of TerraLuna Collaborative, the evaluation cooperative she co-founded with colleagues in 2012, and serves as Program Chair for the Evaluation Use Topical Interest Group of the American Evaluation Association (AEA).

Judy Sharken Simon, Planning Director, Jewish Federation of Greater Saint Paul

Judy holds a Masters of Arts degree in Organization Development from the University of Minnesota and an undergraduate degree in Employee Relations/Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Michigan State University. Responsible for ensuring the Federation's vision of building a vibrant, cohesive, and inclusive Jewish community. Judy has more than 20 years' experience consulting with nonprofits. At the Minneapolis Jewish Federation she was part of the Community Impact team which sought to work with partner agencies to create a strong Jewish community locally and abroad. At MAP for Nonprofits she trained 1000+ people/year. Judy is also the author of *The Nonprofit Field Guide to Conducting Successful Focus Groups* as well as *The Five Life Stages of the Nonprofit Organizations*. She also coordinated the Twin Cities Southeast Asian Leadership Program and supervised the Bicultural Training Partnership. Judy has worked as project manager for a county government human services department and as a mentorship coordinator in human resource development for 3M Corporation in Austin, Texas.