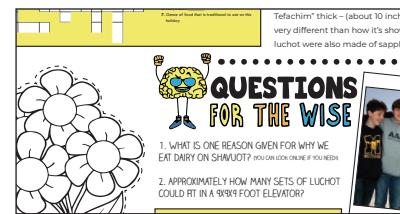


The Voice of the Greater New Haven Jewish Community

SHALOM



NEW!
Have Fun
with the
Interactive
Shalom Kids'
Page! **pages 16-17**

NEW HAVEN
SPRING 2021 • IYAR/TAMMUZ 5781

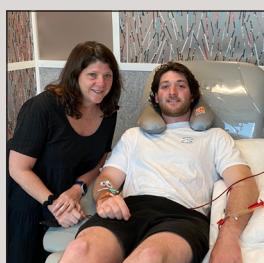
Springing Forward

Anemones burst into full blossom in Israel near the Jezreel Valley with a view of Mount Tabor



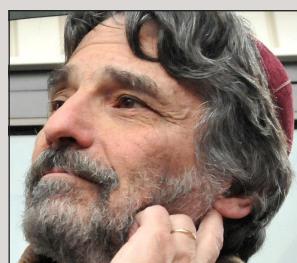
Say YES to the
JCC this spring

page 4-5



GIVING THE GIFT OF LIFE

John Sandberg's local Jewish roots, his family's history of philanthropy and his ties to Israel inspire his bone marrow donation **PAGE 3**



SPRING CELEBRATION HONORING RABBI HERBERT BROCKMAN

Honoring the rabbi for his human rights, social justice and community efforts in the Greater New Haven area **PAGE 10**



RABBI GREENE: SHAVUOT AND CHILDREN AS GUARANTORS

Shavuot reminds us that receiving the Torah is about the Jewish future we build with youth **PAGE 25**



FROM THE DESK OF
JUDY ALPERIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | jalperin@jewishnewhaven.org

Moving Forward with Momentum and Gratitude

Momentum. We can feel it. We know a little something about rebuilding and rebirth after a significant challenge and we see the signs. With the encouraging and hopeful news that Connecticut's vaccination rate is amongst the highest in the nation and loosening restrictions, the community is beginning to open up with many congregations finding safe and creative ways to resume in-person events and services. Hybrid and in-person programs are ratcheting up and membership in our JCC is beginning to bounce back.

Of course, our Jewish community never ceased in providing meaningful programs, worship, services and activities during the pandemic. Many of the accommodations and adjustments made to ensure that community bonds would continue have been enhanced as we discover a new normal. There have been silver linings during the pandemic; discovering new ways to maintain connections from afar is certainly one of them.

I am reminded of one of the most powerful lessons we learned in the wake of the fire that devastated our JCC building. When we opened our temporary fitness center on Research Drive in Woodbridge just weeks after fire, we expected that

members would run to their favorite treadmill, elliptical or bike, and get back to the business of exercise. But that wasn't what happened. Rather, people ran to one another. They embraced. They smiled. They found a spot to sit and catch up. They missed one another. They missed the intimacy of community.

We are working every day to reopen more and more of our community building and campus to ensure that once again the Beckerman/Lender Jewish Community Building on the JCC campus will be your home away from home as we commit to maintaining our vibrant virtual footprint to service all—near and far. When you return, you will notice some physical changes and enhancements that are underway. The Vine Family Auditorium is receiving a top-to-bottom renovation complete with a new ceiling, floor and wall panels. The Community Room is also receiving a facelift with a new ceiling, floor and refreshed walls. Both rooms will be ready to host expanded programming and events.

Concurrently, the new security desk and entryway is under construction, creating a safe, bullet- and intruder-resistant system to keep our members, visitors and

For more than 100 years the Jewish Federation has been taking care of our community, Israel, and Jews around the world. With the support of generous donors, we helped make the desert bloom, and saw to the signing of the declaration of independence; we



rescue(d) Jews around the world and resettled them in our historic homeland and right here in New Haven. Locally, we established The Jewish Home, The Towers, Camp Laurelwood, and we have sustained the Jewish Agencies in our community year after year after year.

That is why we say the Jewish Federation was built for this moment. We've been taking care of our community since the earliest days of modern Jewish history, and thanks to the support of more than 2,000 donors, we will continue to meet the vast and growing needs of all who are counting on us. We are here for good.

To participate in the 2021 Annual Campaign, please visit jewishnewhaven.org/give



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER NEW HAVEN



SHALOM NEW HAVEN

SHALOM NEW HAVEN is published six times per year and delivered free of charge to the Greater New Haven Jewish community by the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven.

COPY DEADLINES

Copy deadlines for the upcoming Shalom New Haven issues are:

- May 24 for July/August issue
- July 24 for September/October issue
- Sept. 25 for November/December issue
- Nov. 25 for January/February issue
- Jan. 25 for March/April issue
- March 25 for May/June issue

SUBMISSIONS

To submit an article or photo, please email shalomnh@jewishnewhaven.org. Please include your contact information when submitting.

Space is limited; submission does not guarantee publication. All articles are subject to approval by the editorial board.

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Inspired to Give Life

by Ariana Fine
Shalom New Haven Editor

"I didn't do anything special. Joining is the big part. I was just lucky to be picked."

Pikuach nefesh (שִׁמְעָנָה), loosely translated as saving a life, is an integral principle in Jewish law about the preservation of human life. It is one that has been a theme in one young man's life as he grew up Jewish in the New Haven area, as he traveled to Israel, as he volunteered to be part of the bone marrow registry and as he donated to save a life.

John Sandberg was raised in a family that was built on giving back to the community, both professionally and personally. His mother, Emily Sandberg, worked previously as the executive director of the Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine and is now Director of Administration for Wellspring Consulting, which works with nonprofits to develop strategic plans. His father, Ken Sandberg, is the Vice President of Health Services at the Whitney Center, a non-profit senior living community serving the Greater New Haven area.

"With my dad's job being about giving back and serving, he has shown me what a very compassionate role model looks like in their lives with dignity. And my mother's job—and now as the Chair of the newly launched New Haven chapter of Dignity Grows—also exemplifies how both my parents are influencing me to do good for others," said John.

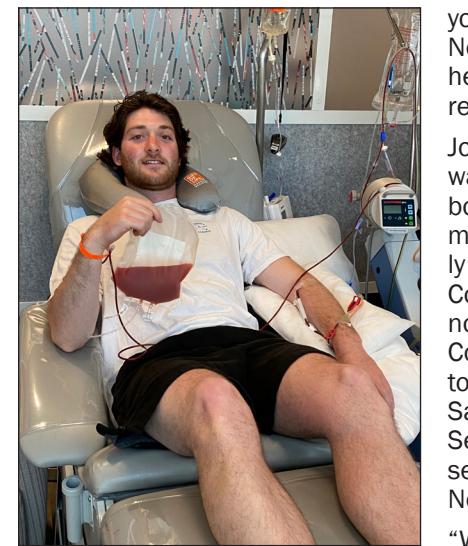
The *tikkun olam* ("repair the world") concept was and is a large part of his Jewish upbringing. As children, John and his siblings were surrounded by talk about giving back and doing the right thing. He volunteered at Woodbridge's food bank in the sixth grade; his sister Mia volunteered at the Jewish Family Service food bank and his brother Zack was heavily involved in BBYO, Hillel and Congregation B'nai Jacob.

"I have felt a strong connection towards the Jewish community my entire life. I attended Hebrew school in Maine before moving to Woodbridge and joining B'nai Jacob, where I would later have my bar mitzvah. I was fortunate to attend an all-boys Jewish overnight camp in Middleboro, MA. Camp Avoda provided me with a great Jewish family, a 'home away from home.' Avoda has since begun recruiting at the JCC of Greater New Haven camp fair. I am proud to have a shared bond with members of both communities. Upon moving to Woodbridge, the first place I made new friends was at JCC Biddy Basketball camp. I later would enjoy my time on the JCC Middle School Basketball team under Coach Tietleman. These experiences instilled in me the importance of giving back, community and Israel," said John.

He explained more about his experiences going to Israel with his Camp Avoda friends through the Birthright program the summer after his freshman year of college and what led him to sign up for the bone marrow donor program while there.

"During one of our information sessions, a Gift of Life representative presented on the importance of the bone marrow registry. The registry matches patients with donors that match a certain DNA criterion. The more people active in the registry, the greater the chance a patient has of finding a match. Gift of Life made it very clear that if you weren't willing to go through with the donation, it is better to not join the registry at all as it may give false hope if you were to be a match and back out. Given how important of a cause this was, it was a no-brainer for my entire group to join. It was incredibly easy to sign up. It consisted of minimal paperwork and a quick swab to the cheek of my mouth for 30 seconds."

He didn't get the call that he was a match for nearly three years after his trip to Israel. In the meantime, he continued with school and volunteering. Knowing that school would be virtual for his senior year, John chose to join Americorps' National Civilian Community Corps 10-month residential program to do something meaningful with the year. The projects they participated in included an environmental project in Oregon to clear out trees in meadows that *(Continued on page 31)*



With Anti-Semitism on the Rise in CT, 'We Now Always Lock Our Doors'



Jessica Simms, a senior journalism student at Quinnipiac University and Managing Editor of The Quinnipiac Chronicle, completed her final capstone project with an in-depth article focusing on anti-Semitism in the Greater New Haven community. Read the full article at hqnn.org/2021/03/26/with-anti-semitism-on-the-rise-in-ct-we-now-always-lock-our-doors.

As anti-Semitism continues to be a growing issue in Connecticut and nationwide, rabbis, Jewish educators and professionals have spoken up about how it has impacted their communities and how they combat this type of hate. While anti-Semitism takes different forms—such as hateful comments, physical violence and graffiti—these Jewish leaders share how they keep their communities safe and teach others outside of the Jewish community how to be more accepting.

For many rabbis, the increase in anti-Semitism has forced them to make their synagogues safer by locking doors and implementing security procedures. At college, universities and public school districts, professionals have spoken up against anti-Semitism and other hate toward minority groups by stopping anti-Semitism in its tracks and making statements about recent nationwide hateful acts.

All of the leaders in this article have the same message: let's stop hate by coming together as one community.

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Say YES to a Brighter

A day before we shut down due to COVID-19, the JCC was buzzing and bustling with activity. The MakerSpace; the Rothberg Family Climbing Wall; the Cube; Cafe 360; the new Spa at the J; the Hoos Family Art Gallery; and the tried-and-true aquatics, fitness, and sports and recreation programs all drove JCC membership to record-high numbers.

While a significant portion of the JCC membership was lost during COVID-19, the JCC has been able to cross the chasm and start seeing the hopeful buds of the post-pandemic spring. And while the JCC still implements the strictest guidelines and recommendations in disease prevention, an upward trend is starting to be seen. As more and more community members get vaccinated and the weather warms up, additional spaces and activities begin to open and more members—old and new—are joining every week. Read on to see what's new at the JCC and what's up and coming as we're ramping up for a brighter tomorrow.

Say YES to the Future

This spring, the JCC is saying yes to more of what our community loves. We are implementing some changes that will increase the focus on some key areas that are important for our members and our future growth. Curious?



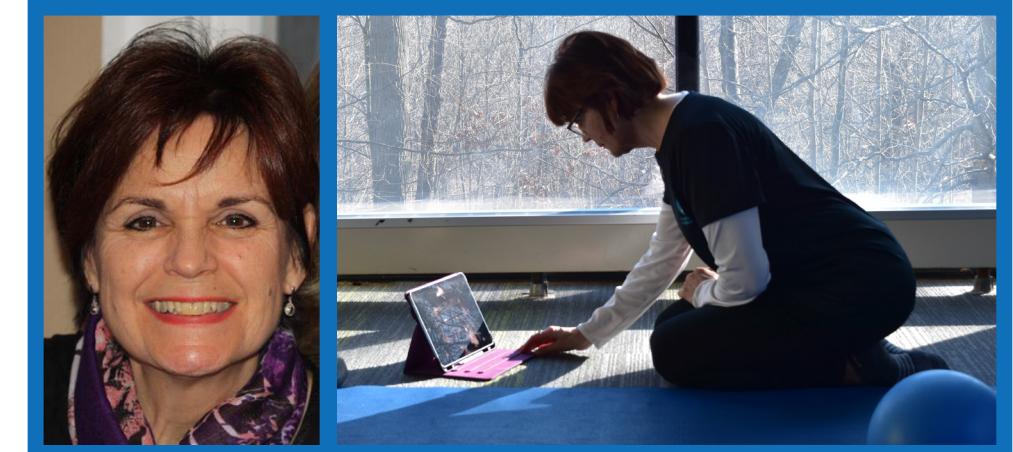
Say YES to What's Next

The JCC is ramping up for the post-pandemic era, which calls for more flexibility, the breaking down of silos, and seamless transitions between on-site and online services. The world is more dynamic than ever and the JCC must foresee, adapt and leverage the opportunities that will generate growth and increase our ability to serve our members. We created the role of JCC Assistant Director, which we announce on the next page. This new structure will allow JCC Executive Director Scott Cohen to focus more on growth and new initiatives, like the ability to expand programs and services for people of all



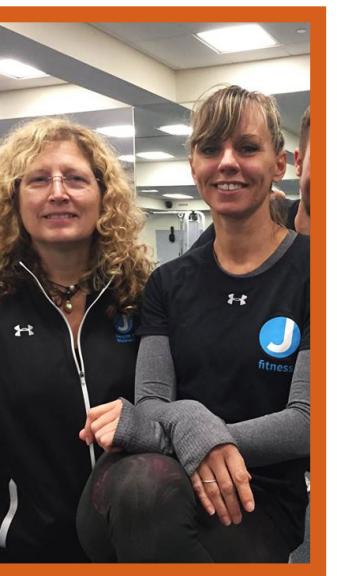
Say YES to Options

While we all can't wait to put the pandemic behind us, everyone has something that they're going to preserve moving forward. At the JCC, continuation of digital services and offerings is one example. Pandemic or not, everyone appreciates the option to exercise from home from time to time, or take their favorite group exercise class while traveling out of town. Susan Donovan's new role as Group and Virtual Exercise Manager will help facilitate just that. Susan will continue to oversee Group Exercise—offline and online—as well as services offered at Spa at the J. And before you ask, yes, the spa is open! Some restrictions do apply so please make sure to check the website at jccnh.org/spa to find out more.



Say YES to More

There is so much that's offered with a standard JCC membership, and yet for those who ask for more, Jessica Scott will deliver. As the new Manager of Personal Training (congrats, Jess!), she is already hard at work planning personal training in a hybrid world that will include both in-person and digital services. What's more, JCC members will be able to buy reduced-priced, integrated packages that include both pilates reformer and strength training, as an example. There is more! JCC members will be able to invite their friends to outdoor monthly pop-up fitness classes with leading JCC trainers, for a small guest fee. Ready, set, say YES to more in personal training at the JCC.



Say YES to Great Experiences

If you came to the fitness floor during the pandemic and admired the cleanliness and great customer service, you experienced Terri's touch. JCC's new Fitness Center Operational Manager Terri Tully (congrats Terri!) will supervise the floor staff and ensure equipment is running smoothly, everything is up to the JCC highest standard of cleanliness and safety, and that JCC members have the best experience.

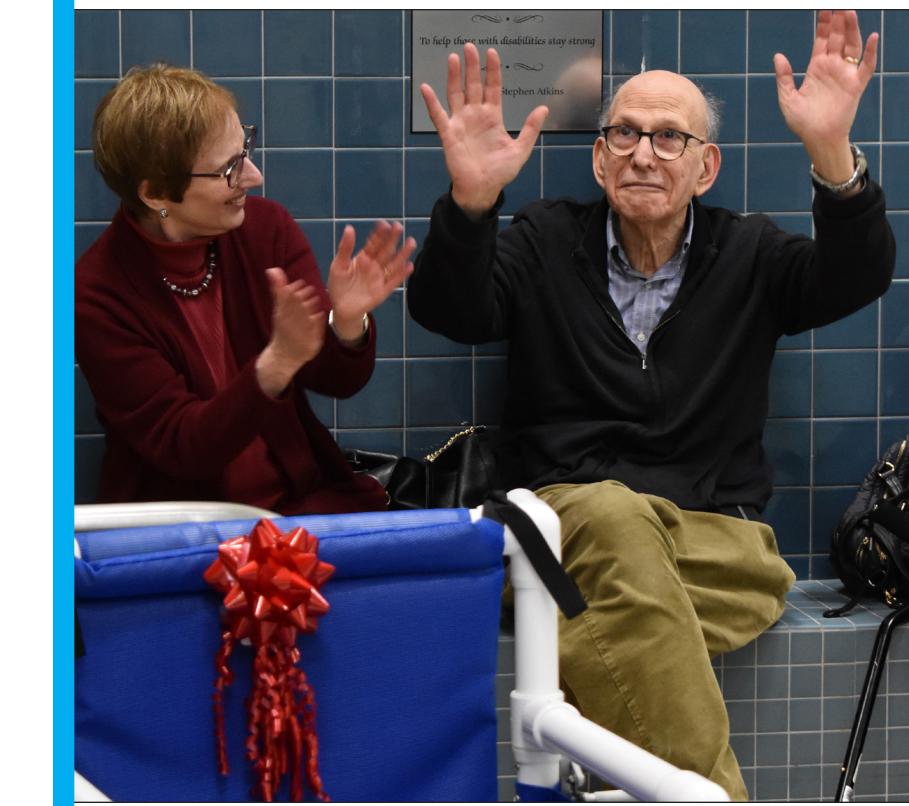


Say YES to Trying Something New

Feel like it's time to try something new? Perhaps you've been coming to the JCC for a game but never tried the fitness area, or, you are an avid runner who wants to try the more social experience of sports when it's safe to do so? Why shouldn't you? Alex Lagase's new role as JCC Sports and Recreation Coordinator is designed to make that bridge. He will help facilitate programs that cross-pollinate and encourage more people to try something new across the hall! Congratulations on your new role, Alex!



FUTURE



Say HELLO to Nicolle DeMorro Vigneron

JCC Assistant Director

In the past six years, if you did anything related to sports or swimming at the JCC, you must have met JCC Director of Sports and Recreation Nicolle Camara, who recently changed her last name to DeMorro Vigneron. Nicolle joined our community in 2015 but has served at the Bridgeport JCC and other facilities for 20 years prior. She studied business and sports management at the University of New Haven after playing soccer, basketball and softball in college. She was picked straight from college to serve as the Sports and Recreation Manager at the Bridgeport JCC, and three years later was promoted to a Director, overseeing multiple departments there. At the JCC of Greater New Haven, she built the climbing wall programs and adaptive swim from the ground up. She maintained a strong swim team, swim school, basketball league, volleyball and other recreational programs. "I love the community atmosphere, the relationship that I have with the members and the inclusivity. I look forward to working with Scott Cohen, our amazing staff and lay leaders to deliver quality programs and continue the momentum that we all witnessed here just before the pandemic," she said.



Nicolle is married and her family includes four grown children, two of whom work at the JCC. Diana is in the membership department and Nik is a lifeguard. When asked how the family responded to her new role, she said with a smile and a twinkle in her eye that her wife, Annette, and children are all excited, supportive and say it's well deserved.

Nicolle will be overseeing the day-to-day operations at the JCC, including Health and Wellness, Sports and Recreation, Beverly Levy Early Learning Center, JCC Day Camps, and Youth Enrichment programs.

Community and JCC members are invited to write to our newest JCC Assistant Director Nicolle DeMorro Vigneron at nicoleddv@jccnh.org.

Say HELLO to Sarah Schryver

Director of Operations of the Beverly Levy Early Learning Center



When you meet Sarah, you are immediately surrounded by her warm and bubbly character. If this doesn't sell you on the spot, then her 20-something years of experience in early learning education and administration will do the trick. She won the KinderCare excellence awards in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Sarah comes to the Beverly Levy Early Learning Center highly experienced and motivated. She is married and has boys Brian (7), who attends second grade, and Jason (3), who will be joining Beverly Levy in the fall. Her favorite thing about being an early childhood educator is watching a child learn something for the first time. "The pride and excitement are unmatched!" she wrote in an email to the Beverly Levy families. In her spare time, she loves spending time with her family and friends, reading, and swimming. Sarah looks forward to getting to know all of the

families and being a part of the family feel of the center. Beverly Levy families and prospective families are welcome to contact Sarah at sarahs@jccnh.org.



Say Thank You!
A special shout out is in order for JCC After School Director Sandy Horvath, who jumped right in to fill in as the Interim Beverly Levy Director since March of this year. A certified teacher and experienced administrator, Sandy had no hesitation when she was asked to help outside of her traditional role, especially with her Youth and Camp supervisors supporting her as she took on this challenge. So thank you JCC Day Camps Director Debra Kirschner and Assistant Director Alison Lurie. The Beverly Levy families and the entire JCC family are forever grateful to the entire team!

The Towers Celebrates Return to New Normal

VACCINATION RATE AMONG RESIDENTS, STAFF AND CAREGIVERS

With 93% vaccination rate among residents, staff and caregivers, The Towers at Tower Lane is pleased to share that we are returning to life as normal. Programming will resume to a full, in-person schedule. We will re-open our café slowly in May. Current residents and those new to our community will also benefit from the new Proactive Partner Model through which services are wrapped around each resident in a customized way to address their goals and needs.

WE'VE STAYED AHEAD THROUGH CAREFUL SAFETY MEASURES

We very quickly implemented critical safety measures to keep our community healthy. The delivery of delicious, nutritious meals from our in-house kitchen to residents' doors enabled our community to distance healthfully. We kept our staff and caregivers safe



by providing the necessary PPE and supplies to perform their work safely. We are proud that we've had no resident-to-resident transmission of COVID-19 in our community.

GREAT TIME TO MOVE TO THE TOWERS

There has never been a better time to move to The Towers as we welcome new residents. Our strength comes from our communal setting. Our residents were able to remain connected and enjoyed services throughout the pandemic. We are concerned for those who have remained in their individual houses. They have likely experienced more isolation and disconnection. They may now be facing greater decline. The Towers, which typically has a waiting list, has openings for the first time in many years. For those considering a move, there has never been a better time to join our safe, vibrant community. New residents will be welcomed into our vaccinated community, where they can enjoy friends, neighbors, programming and person-centered services in a safe, carefully delivered way.

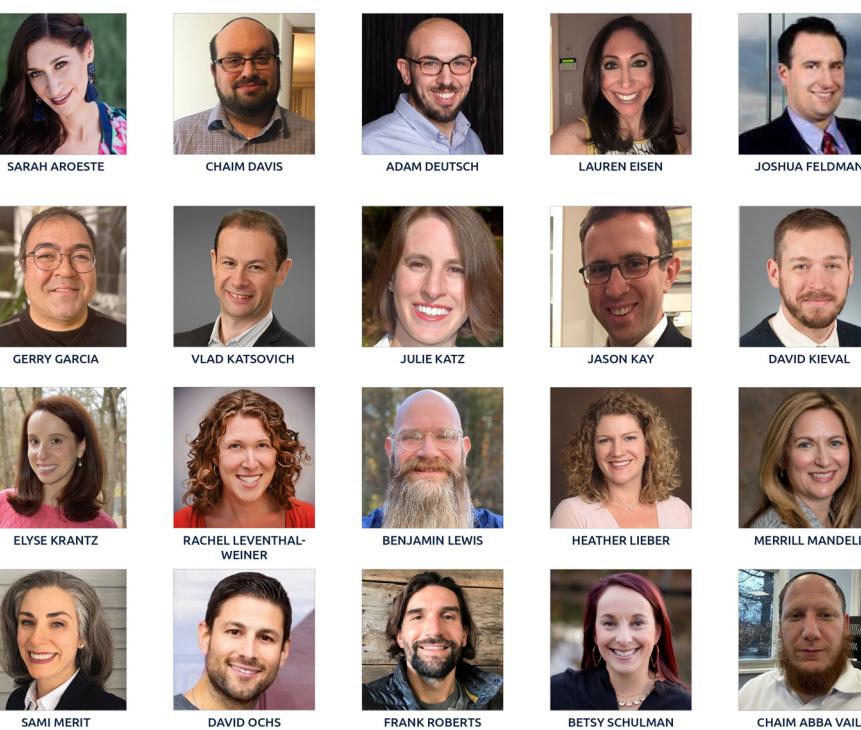
WE ARE FINANCIALLY FLEXIBLE FOR ALL SENIORS

We are a wonderful option for those seeking a warm, down-to-earth, vibrant community. With no buy-in or upfront fees, we are an excellent option for those who want financial flexibility and the freedom to focus on what matters to them: family, friends and new experiences. Residents in our community enjoy high-quality services, a dining plan, and save an average of \$2,000 per month compared other local senior communities.

"The past year has been particularly challenging for the elderly. With two family members at The Towers, we have had numerous concerns for our loved ones," said Ellen lead, a family member of two residents. "The Towers community has been extraordinary. The early implementation of comprehensive testing for residents and the inclusion of family caregivers has made a huge difference. Residents have three meals a day delivered to their doors. The staff has been instrumental in providing services and maintaining COVID safety protocols. Masking and distancing during programs kept everyone safe. Towers TV has broadcast exercise classes and other programs to residents who subscribe. Activities and treat bags were delivered to doors, volunteers called residents daily to check in, and other group activities have been held on Zoom and via telephone. With on-site vaccinations concluded and most residents and caregivers inoculated, in-person activities have carefully begun again. With spring here, there can be more time outside. Gus has been a compassionate, effective leader guiding The Towers through this trying time all while still looking forward to the future."

For more information or to schedule a tour, visit towerlane.org, or contact Rebecca Olshansky at (203) 772-1816 x250 or rebecca@towerlane.org.

Wexner Heritage Program 2021 Cohort Announced



THE WEXNER FOUNDATION

WELCOME WEXNER HERITAGE PROGRAM NEW ENGLAND 2021

The Wexner Foundation announced three new classes of the Wexner Heritage Program with dynamic volunteer leaders from Cleveland, OH, New England (New Haven, CT, Hartford, CT, and Western Massachusetts) and Portland, OR. Jewish volunteer leaders will study Judaism and leadership over the course of two years.

Twenty outstanding volunteers from each community were selected through a highly competitive process for this two-year intensive program. New Haven area members include Gerry Garcia, Vlad Katsovich, Julie Katz, Elyse Krantz, Sami Merit, Betsy Schulman and Chaim Abba Vail. The program is supported by the Sydney A. Perry Fund for Jewish Learning and Leadership at the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven.

Utilizing cohort-based learning, Wexner Heritage Members will be exposed to different approaches to leadership and tools for addressing pressing issues in the Jewish community, while deepening their understanding of Jewish texts, history and values. Members will also be integrated into The Wexner Foundation's network of more than 3,000 professional and volunteer leaders in North America and Israel.

The Wexner Foundation has more than 35 years of experience developing excellence in Jewish professionals and volunteer leaders in North America. The mission of the Wexner Heritage Program is to expand the vision of Jewish volunteer leaders, deepen their Jewish knowledge and confidence, and inspire them to exercise transformative leadership in the Jewish community. More than 2,300 leaders from 34 North American cities have participated in the program.

To learn more, visit wexnerfoundation.org/programs/wexner-heritage-program.

Emerging from the Pandemic



manner for our community.

As we move forward, I am confident that we will be able to begin to relax our restrictions and work to bring back in-person activities and events so that we may once again come together. I am sure you all share my strong desire to be together with one another. It has been an incredibly challenging year for all of us and for the agencies in our Jewish community that have been challenged to do more with fewer resources. Even before the pandemic, I felt like I was hearing how our agencies were being asked to do more with less; that has only gotten more difficult now.

We have so many wonderful agencies and leaders who are doing incredible things for our community; they need all of our support. As we emerge from the pandemic and move toward the end of our Federation Annual Campaign, I humbly request that you all consider contributing what you can this year. If you gave already, please consider an additional contribution. If you hav-

en't made your pledge yet, please do so now. We do so much every year in this community, yet only a small percent make a contribution. I can only imagine the amazing things we could do as a community and for our community if everyone were to give a little. I am deeply honored to serve as the President of our Jewish Federation and am truly inspired by the amazing work being done throughout our community.

If you have any ideas or thoughts on how we can build upon the great work in our community, please let me know. Feel free to email me anytime at sjfleischman@gmail.com.

All the best,

Dr. Steven Fleischman
President, Jewish Federation of
Greater New Haven

Family Experience: Host an Israeli Emissary

by Betsy Flaherty

Hosting an Israeli emissary was a huge decision for our family. Being an Ezra Academy family, we had met so many others before.

Over the last four years, Vicky has stayed a part of our family even from so far away. She came for a visit last year, and it was as if she had never left! She became a part of our family and there she remains. She is my Israeli daughter. We often talk of the time when our family can go to Israel and see it through her eyes. That is something that we all look forward to.

Hosting an emissary was an unexpected, rich addition to our family.

The Flaherty family from Woodbridge hosted Vicky in 2016 through the Young Emissary Program. Read the full article at jewishnewhaven.org/press-releases/family-experience-host-an-israeli-emissary.



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JCARR Mother Crosses Bridge Between Cultures

by Kris Oser

This Mother's Day, the Jewish Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement (JCARR) applauds the mothers of its refugee families who, like many mothers in the US during COVID-19, braved financial hardships while working, caring for their families and overseeing their children's schooling. One mother faced these challenges while pregnant.



Aminah in action at a conference.

Aminah's new baby was born last October. His birth meant Aminah could take a few weeks unpaid maternity leave to spend with the newborn, his three older siblings and her husband. She had worked through her pregnancy, exhausted, but with the enthusiasm she is known for. Aminah wouldn't dream of not returning to work. Her success was too hard won.

Soon after Aminah's family had settled in Connecticut in 2016, her husband landed a job. JCARR friends explained that in the US, both parents usually work. At first, Aminah refused. In Syria, a middle-class wife like her does not work outside the home. She certainly does not work with men. Her hijab and modest dress easily identify her as a Muslim, and hate crimes against Muslims were increasing.

But, to be self-sufficient, the family needed more income. Aminah was an accomplished home cook and members of JCARR's employment task force persuaded her to enroll in a commercial cooking and entrepreneurship training program with Cityseed/Sanctuary Kitchen. The program checked a couple of crucial boxes. Cooking is an acceptable job for a



Aminah and her family before their son was born.

woman from Aminah's culture and Sanctuary Kitchen has a female staff. "Aminah had to work against her cultural expectations," recalled Kate Ezra, who works on the task force. "But then her charismatic personality, skills and energy transported her."

Today, Aminah is a manager for Sanctuary Kitchen.

For more info about Jewish Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement, visit jewishnewhaven.org/refugee-resettlement, or reach out to JCARR Coordinator Jean Silk at (203) 687-8808 or jsilk@jewishnewhaven.org.

Families Giving Back

MOTHER'S DAY
Special Coverage

FATHER'S DAY
Special Coverage

Celebrating Mother's Day and Father's Day Through Multigenerational Philanthropy

by Ariana Fine
Shalom New Haven Editor

Giving back is an integral part of our Jewish identity, and it is especially apparent in many of the families in the Greater New Haven area. Seeing how multigenerational families are so involved in our community motivates us to do the same. There are many examples of those giving back with their time, financial resources and/or skill sets. As we celebrate Mother's Day and Father's Day this year, it is especially fitting to highlight how generations inspire each other.



Jewish Federation for many years. Lisa has been campaign chair for Jewish Federation in Boston, worked with the leadership development and Acharai programs, and chaired the Boston-Haifa connection for CJP. The Wallack's grandchildren are all involved as well, whether it is volunteering for CJP, writing a graduate thesis about the way Jews have survived as a community, or in other ways.



THE FLEISCHMANS: Bringing Up to Give Back

Steve and Andrea Fleischman lead by example. Through their volunteer work, currently serving as President of the Jewish Federation and a co-chair of Dignity Grows, Grows, respectively, they are inspiring their children to follow in their footsteps. Their oldest daughters, Samantha and Julie, have won awards for their volunteer work.

"How would you define *tikkun olam*?" Steven asked. "For me, it's being a part of the community we are living in and making that community a better place. Some of those opportunities have been the (*Continued on page 29*)

SPOTLIGHT SPOTLIGHT SPOTLIGHT

HARRIET AND LEONARD SCHLEIFER

The Schleifers are our newest donors to the JCC Capital Campaign, making their new gift on April 1. While they do not live in the Greater New Haven community, their son David does and so they chose to support our JCC. We are very grateful for their generous support with their capital gift. They have made additional generous gifts to our JCC operations and our inclusion programs. We asked them a few questions about why they chose the JCC to be the recipient of their philanthropic dollars.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE JCC AND OUR COMMUNITY?

We hope the JCC remains a hub for community recreation, relaxation, education, culture and socialization. It should continue to be a welcoming and inclusive destination!

WHY SUPPORTING THE JCC IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

The JCC can add quality of life to the surrounding community.

WHAT HAS THE JCC MEANT FOR YOU OR YOUR FAMILY?

Our son David has been welcomed into the JCC family. He has used the center for physical training, swimming, social activities and vocational training. We certainly hope that David will continue to access all the benefits available!

To learn more about being a donor to the campaign of your choice, contact Amy Holtz, Chief Development Officer, aholtz@jewishnewhaven.org or (203) 387-2424 x254.



THE WALLACKS: Philanthropy Across New England

Branford residents Milt and Joan Wallack both remember being brought up in a philanthropic environment as their parents were very involved in their respective communities in New York and Massachusetts. Each was instilled with the knowledge that one should take an active role in making a difference for others. Through their philanthropy and volunteerism, each has modeled how to be impactful to their children.. Milt is a past president of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven, past chair of JCRC and was on Congregation Mishkan Israel's board, among other leadership positions. Joan has served as a Department of Jewish Education chairperson; co-chaired Mishkan Israel celebrations, Young Leadership and several Israel missions; and served as a Federation and Women's Division board member.

"Our children were involved as kids because they saw how much we loved what we were doing for the Jewish community. They grew up participating as we led a number of missions to Israel and locally in Super Sunday—now called Mitzvah Day. They had a sense of Jewishness throughout their childhood. They respect-

VIEG

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This Father's Day, the Jewish Historical Society of Greater New Haven remembers a "father" of the New Haven community, Joey Russell, who passed away in 2010 at the age of 90. The philanthropist and Jewish activist was also a comedian who worked with comedic legends of the day and on the Borscht Belt. The son of an Orthodox rabbi and one of 11 children, Russell gave back to the local and Israel community in a big way. He established a local American Red Magen David for Israel chapter and succeeded in raising money for 20 ambulances. His Penny Parade Fund raised \$60,000 to pay for an ambulance after a girl gave him the idea of collecting a penny for every Jew who died in the Holocaust. He guided over 50 trips to Israel with many from the New Haven area joining him. Russell was instrumental in raising millions of dollars for Israel Bonds as well.

On a local level, he was known for purchasing kosher food after holidays to be distributed by Jewish Family Service to those in need in the Jewish community. Many may also remember him from his nearly 30 years as Happy the Clown and Colonel Clown on Connecticut television stations.

Joey Kept His Word

by Leonard J. Honeyman

Imagine you are on your first trip to Israel. It's late winter 1997 and your tour group has just been to the walls of Jericho and is now stopped for a break at a large gift shop-restaurant near that site. The Palestinian flag wafting overhead as you leave your bus and enter the building is somewhat discomforting. At the end of the corridor, you see a big man whose stern expression, handlebar moustache and attire would have been at home in an Aladdin movie.

He's moving quickly toward you. Then he stops, looks at your tour leader. Suddenly his arms open, his face slides into a great grin and he shouts, "Papa Joey."

It was an event repeated in many places we visited. Joey had told us he knew everyone is Israel and the exaggeration wasn't that great. Papa Joey, of course, was Joey Russell, the longtime fixture in show business and Greater New Haven.

We would not have been on that trip had he not recruited us at synagogue.

"You have to go to Israel," he told us.

"We are paying tuition for three children and can't afford it," we pleaded.

"Group leaders get a free pass on their tour," he told us. "I want you to have this trip so I'll use that to get the cost down. And I can make it a business trip by bringing back items." He and his wife Josi ran Costume Bazaar, a costume shop, for many years.

We had bonded so I felt comfortable asking him why he was doing this. He explained he was keeping a promise he made to Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion.

He told us that he had wanted to become involved in the new fledgling state and had asked the leader what was needed. Should he move to Israel?

"No. There are enough shtick-machers (comedians) in Israel. Stay in the States, instead, and work for Israel," he said Ben-Gurion had told him. And he did for the rest of his life. Our trip was number 38 for Joey, he said. He would lead several more. We, and dozens of people before and after us, caught the fever that Joey spread.

Then there was the Penny Parade. Joey was heavily involved with the local chapter of American Red Magen David for Israel (ARMDI), now American Friends of Magen David Adom (AFMDA). He was speaking about Israel at a local school one day when he happened to mention Israel needed to replace ambulances which cost \$60,000 each. One student did the math and observed that \$60,000 was six million pennies. The Penny Parade was born. Joey was involved in collecting the six million pennies and the first of many ambulances was shipped to Israel from the New Haven area.

Did he keep his promise to Ben Gurion? You bet.

Leonard J. Honeyman has been a news reporter and editor for more than 50 years and has lived in Greater New Haven for most of that time. The Jewish Historical Society of Greater New Haven is dedicated to collecting and preserving historical documents, photographs and memorabilia of the Jewish community of Greater New Haven. Visit jewishhistorynh.org to digitally read more about many others who have helped shape local, regional and national history.

FATHER'S DAY
Special Coverage



Joey Russell applying his clown makeup for an appearance, during an interview with Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network years ago.

Honoring Rabbi Herbert Brockman

Perhaps it was beshert that Rabbi Herbert Brockman would bring his passion for human rights and social justice to the Board of the Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven (JFS). Brockman, who will be honored at JFS' June 17 virtual Spring Celebration, has long been dedicated to Jewish values and to community welfare. He brings to board leadership a natural fit with the JFS mission of providing human and social services to the most vulnerable—without regard to race, ethnicity or religion. JFS Co-President Ilene Rosalimsky Bronen has observed that he inspires the Board to keep Jewish values central to every aspect of its organizational oversight.

"He always captivates the Board when he shares his vision and fresh perspectives on social justice for the New Haven community," Bronen said. Co-President Linda Caplan pointed out that having Brockman on the Board has enhanced board dynamics as well. "Having Rabbi Brockman as a Board member of JFS has brought an even higher level of unity and sense of purpose to our Board. We are so lucky to have him," she stated.

Amy Rashba, the agency's CEO, summed it up: "JFS is proud to honor Rabbi Herb Brockman, whose involvement in both the Jewish and interfaith community epitomizes all that JFS stands for. With warmth, intelligence and a Jewish heart, Rabbi Brockman honors us all with his devotion to tikkun olam. He is a true mensch!"

Brockman has had a long history of social justice activism during his 32-year tenure as rabbi of Congregation Mishkan Israel (CMI) in Hamden. Under his leadership, the synagogue began its participation in Abraham's Tent, an interfaith program which provides shelter to homeless men; established the Peah garden to grow produce for area soup kitchens; moved to declare itself a "sanctuary congregation" in response to the Trump administration's immigration restrictions; and became active in the Jewish Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement. Brockman, who retired in 2018 and is now CMI's Rabbi Emeritus, was followed by Rabbi Brian Imberman, who continues the long-standing tradition of social action at CMI.

CMI President Michael Dimenstein was quick to see how Brockman's passion for human rights dovetailed with the work of JFS. "Rabbi Brockman always inspires and challenges us to view the world through the lens of Judaism's values and ethics," he observed. "In the way we treat refugees, how we address the crisis of food insecurity, or how we express racial justice and interfaith unity, Rabbi Brockman shares the same guiding principles that are the basis of the JFS mission."

Rabbi Brockman recently reflected on the circumstances that led to his fortuitous connection to JFS following his retirement from CMI's pulpit. "I knew that I wanted to continue to support those efforts which I had always considered important, and to which I had dedicated my life professionally and personally. Within the Jewish community, the question was which organization represented best the lived-out values of Judaism? The Jewish Family Service actually 'feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, cares for the orphan and supports the widow.' Its mission is of biblical proportions. The clincher for me was when I went in search of food for an immigrant Latino family whose father, the family breadwinner, was being placed in a church sanctuary to avoid deportation by ICE.

(Continued on page 29)

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF GREATER NEW HAVEN

Robbin Seipold Welcomed as Director of Development



Robbin Seipold has been hired as Director of Development at Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven (JFSGNH). She most recently held the position of development manager at the legendary Shubert Theatre in New Haven, working with corporate and individual donors, volunteers and the community. Seipold is an ambassador for the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce, and

the founder of [robbinslist.com](#), a website promoting special events, fundraisers and restaurants for the Greater New Haven area.

"I love New Haven and all it offers. I'm thrilled to be joining the JFS team. I am amazed at the wide range of services and support they are able to provide to those in need in the community at large. I am looking forward to helping JFS continue to grow and thrive," said Seipold.

Upcoming Offerings

VIRTUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

If you are caring for an ill or aging loved one and looking for support and connection, join online the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 11 AM. Upcoming dates: May 12 and 26, June 9 and 23. Contact Marcy at mklein@jfsnh.org or (203) 389-5599 x116.

JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP

If you are an older adult grieving the loss of a spouse or significant other and would like support and guidance at this time, join online the second and fourth Thursday at 11:30 AM. Upcoming dates: May 13 and 27, June 10 and 24. Contact Andrea at ajoseph@jfsnh.org or (860) 800-9494.

CHECK-IN PHONE CALLS BRIGHTEN THE WEEK

Since the pandemic started, Margie has stayed within the safety of her home. The weekly phone call from a JFS staff member or volunteer never failed to bring a smile to her face as she heard a familiar voice. Even now that restrictions have been lifted, Margie still looks forward to her weekly check-in. She knows that if she needs services, JFSGNH is there to help with case management, phone check-ins, support groups, referrals to community resources and assistance to home-bound older adults. If you know someone who can benefit from the program, contact Andrea Joseph, LCSW, at (860) 800-9494 or ajoseph@jfsnh.org.

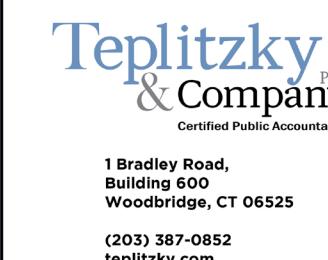
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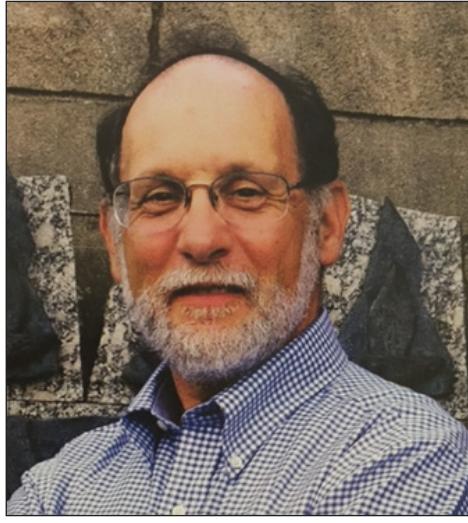
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BETH EL-KESER ISRAEL (BEKI)

Carl Astor Interim Rabbi



Carl Astor, who moved to Westville with his wife, Sharon, three years ago, has been hired as Interim Rabbi at Beth El-Keser Israel (BEKI). Jon-Jay Tilsen, who has been BEKI's rabbi since 1993, is on sabbatical until completing his term of service on August 14.

Previously the rabbi of Congregation Beth El in New London (1981-2013), Rabbi Astor retired after 32 years as Rabbi Emeritus. While in New London, he was president of the New London Clergy Association, a faculty member at Connecticut College, a member of the chaplaincy board and ethics committee at Lawrence and

Memorial Hospital, and a mohel.

Ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he also earned his Ph.D. in Rabbinic literature (Midrash), Rabbi Astor first served for seven years in Wayne, New Jersey. His prior experience as an interim rabbi was in 2015-2016 at Shaarei Tikvah in Scarsdale, New York.

The author of *Who Makes People Different: Jewish Perspectives on the Disabled*, published in English and Hebrew, Rabbi Astor also contributed a Jewish life cycle unit for *The Observant Life*, published by the Rabbinical Assembly.

BEKI's search committee is continuing to interview rabbinical candidates. Led by co-chairs Carole Bass, a writer, editor and past president, and Rachel Light, a strategy consultant to nonprofit organizations, the committee conducted a survey of the congregation and a series of focus group conversations to ascertain what BEKI members want.

"We couldn't be luckier to have Rabbi Astor, who has been a BEKI member for three years, step in to lead us through the transition," BEKI President Yaron Lew said.

In recognition of Rabbi Tilsen's many years of service to BEKI, the Jon-Jay Tilsen Endowment has been established in his honor for the benefit of Congregation BEKI. Donations can be made at beki.org/about/make-a-donation or via a check payable to BEKI and marked for Jon-Jay Tilsen Endowment.

To contact Rabbi Astor, email rabbi@beki.org.



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Barbara A. Rader Fund Reshaping BEKI Library

Barbara Rader, who passed away in January 2020, was a voracious reader who frequently read more than 150 books per year. An active working member of the Friends of the Woodbridge Library, she earned an M.A. and Ph.D. in English and worked professionally as a book editor. She was also a longtime member of Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel's (BEKI) board.

In her memory, her family established The Barbara A. Rader Memorial Library Fund, which is reshaping BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library. The young adult collection has already expanded by 75 titles, and additional children's books and parenting books have been added. The purchases will continue, next focusing on the adult collection. Each new book displays a bookplate designed by BEKI member Howard Gralla to honor Barbara Rader.

"Barbara's enduring professional goal was to elevate the role of books and reading to prominence in people's lives," Dennis Rader explained. "She lovingly encouraged her four grandchildren to become avid readers. The broad objective of this Memorial Library Fund is to perpetuate her goal and to encourage others to do so in the same way."

The Rader project has inspired other book initiatives at BEKI. Thanks to the Ari Nathan Levine Memorial Fund, BEKI's Kadima youth group (for grades

4 through 8) now has a Book Club. Youth & Family Programming Director Annie Norman-Schiff chose *The Way Back* by Gavriel Savit as the first book, featured in an author talk at a recent BEKI Schmooze. In addition, new art has been installed on the library walls with a set of prints called *A Genesis* by Gabor Peterdi. A camera system to livestream events from that room is an additional component of the Rader project.

Find out more at beki.org.

An Island Galaxy, 1966; from *A Genesis*, a suite of 15 etchings, now on display in the BEKI Library.



TEMPLE BETH TIKVAH

Member Shares Holocaust Story with Students

Helena Schanzer only started asking questions about her family's Holocaust experience as her mother lay dying in Chile.

"Many parents didn't talk about what happened and many children didn't ask," Schanzer said. "I feel embarrassed and guilty for not having shown more interest at the time."

She and her husband did things differently, sharing their family history with their children and grandchildren. Now in her 70s, Schanzer is sharing her story more widely. She recently told Temple Beth Tikvah religious school students in eighth, ninth and 10th grade about her family's journey during and after World War II. This was part of a program called 2 Way L'Dor V'Dor, which means from generation to generation in Hebrew. The project aims to increase opportunities for social interaction and intergenerational understanding by inviting congregants of all ages to interact. It was made possible thanks to the Grants for the Jewish Elderly program of the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven.

Schanzer's family lived in eight countries and traveled by boat to four continents, learning multiple new languages, getting acclimated to each new place and starting over with each move. The moves brought uncertainty and worry about



which country would accept Jews, how the family would be received and how long they could stay.

"It is the story of our people, the Jewish people that have had to move from place to place, from country to country, from continent to continent, in order to survive," said Schanzer. "And after all we have experienced and suffered, we have survived and thrived."

She encouraged children in her audience to ask their parents and grandparents about their own history. Connections were made by Rabbi Stacy Offner and others about the role of religion and faith, hope, resiliency, current day issues of accountability for war crimes, empathy, and immigration.

"Everyone has a story, and our Jewish community has a shared story," said Rabbi Offner. Six million people means six million stories. We are each made stronger when we share our stories with each other."

Helena shared her story again with the larger Temple Beth Tikvah community ahead of Holocaust Remembrance Day alongside others who

shared their own Jewish journey.

"Bringing the generations together offers incredible opportunities for students to hear first person perspectives from people who lived history," said Donna Fedus, gerontologist educator, Temple Beth Tikvah member, and 2 Way L'Dor V'Dor project director.

To learn more about 2 Way L'Dor V'Dor, email donna@borrowmyglasses.com.

TEMPLE BETH TIKVAH

Welcoming a New Rabbi

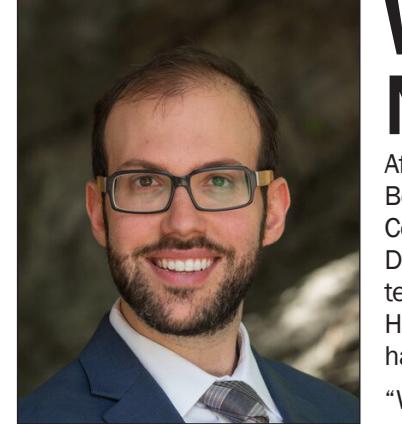
After an extensive search, Temple Beth Tikvah's (TBT) Search Committee and Board hired Rabbi Danny Moss to be the Madison temple's next rabbi, starting on July 1. He succeeds Rabbi Stacy Offner, who has been TBT's rabbi since 2012.

"We understood that any rabbi who would follow Rabbi Offner had to

be someone special. We knew that the person we were looking for needed to be warm, engaging, scholarly, thoughtful and inclusive to all. It had to be someone who had a vision for TBT and its new building while having an understanding of our fundamental values and what we hold sacred. We also knew a sense of humor and ability to spread joy wouldn't hurt! We are pleased to say we have found that all in Rabbi Moss. Rabbi Moss, originally from Chicago, comes to us with a wealth of knowledge, talents and an enthusiasm for what we will do together," said TBT President Sarah Mervine, and Search Committee Co-Chairs Marlene Schwartz and Karen Goldberg in a January letter to the congregation.

A graduate of Oberlin College, majoring in Jewish studies and comparative religion, he pursued his rabbinic studies at Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion. He is in his fourth year at Temple Israel in Westport, first as assistant rabbi and currently as associate rabbi. He will be joining TBT along with his wife, Rabbi Susan Landau Moss, the palliative care chaplain of Bridgeport Hospital.

Visit TBTshoreline.org to hear him.



TEMPLE EMANUEL

Religious School Students Doing Well

by Rebecca Goodman Olshansky
Education Committee, Temple Emanuel of Greater New Haven

The children and teachers at Temple Emanuel Religious School have not let the COVID-19 pandemic get in the way of their learning: the school has had almost 100% attendance week after week. Principal Olga Markus and Rabbi Michael Farbman have kept their interest alive, even when the children are looking at their classroom through a computer monitor. Thanks also goes to the middle and high school teens who acted as teaching assistants (*madrichim*) and to the students themselves, who never seem to grow tired of learning.

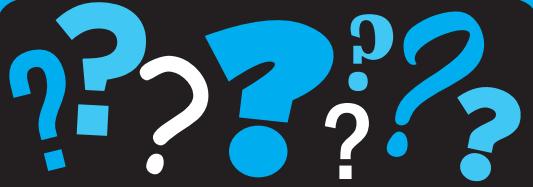


Although the students are participating remotely, no one misses any of the material that is vital to youngsters as they learn Hebrew and Jewish history, and begin work on their bar and bat mitzvahs. Our synagogue uses a specific method of teaching — known as *Mitkadem* — which allows each student to learn at his/her own pace.

Asephah is a communal start to Sunday mornings for students and their parents, during which Rabbi Farbman teaches important lessons. His stories and songs, usually accompanied by his guitar, illustrate morals and ideas people of all ages need to learn. The feeling of coming together as a community has been maintained on Zoom. On Wednesdays, the communal *T'filah* sets the tone for the day, bringing students together so they feel connected to one another and are ready to learn. Since the students are learning remotely, parents have the opportunity to see and hear how well their children are doing.

Janet Adams, one of the teachers, commented about the challenges inherent in virtual instruction. "We had to re-think, re-plan and re-fashion all our lessons to fit the virtual platform. The exciting part was to see how eager the kids were, even a year later, to continue to learn and be part of their religious school community."

Learn about Temple Emanuel's religious school at tegnh.org, (203)397-3000 or school@tegnh.org.



SHALOM NEW HAVEN CLUE GAME

Our clue game revolves around famous Jewish people, places and things. Consulting with friends and family or looking up on Google is perfectly 'kosher'! If you can find the answer to the clue, email your response to SNH@jewishnewhaven.org by May 30, 2021. All correct responders will be published in the next edition of Shalom New Haven and a \$50 VISA gift card will be raffled and sent to one lucky winner. Let the game begin!

Born in France in 1923, he made his mark on the world without having to say a word.

Email responses to
SNH@jewishnewhaven.org
by May 30, 2021

FITNESS & WELLNESS AT THE J

Let's Talk About Pilates

by Susan Donovan
Group and Virtual Exercise Manager
JCC of Greater New Haven

Still a buzz word, Pilates continues to be a popular form of core training. It is an innovative, safe system of exercise that uses a variety of props and equipment (or apparatus as it is called) in addition to being done using just a floor mat. Evolving decades ago from the principles of Joseph Pilates, who first called the method Contrology, it can dramatically transform the way your body looks, feels and performs. Because Pilates builds strength without bulking up, it has a steady following, especially with women.

LONG, LEAN MUSCLES AND FLEXIBILITY

While more traditional work outs are weight-bearing and tend to build bulky muscles, the Pilates method of exercise elongates and strengthens while improving joint mobility, balance and flexibility.

STRONG CORE AND PAIN-FREE BACK

Your core consists of the deep and superficial abdominal muscles as well as the smaller muscles close to the

Local ADL Teen Leadership Summit Focuses on Anti-Semitism

by Ava Gross
Class of 2022



On March 18, 2021, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) held a teen summit on anti-Semitism for teenagers of the Greater New Haven Area. Led by Susan Walden, Marji Lipszey-Shapiro and five teen trainers—Ava Gross, Talya Braverman, Zoe Hoffman Kamrat, Julia Schroers and Ian Glassman—the summit was held on Zoom to foster open discussion about anti-Semitism.

Talya opened with a narrative on Jewish pride and identity, and gave strategies to combat anti-Semitism at the end. Following her, Susan explained the purpose of the ADL and its historic origins to give everyone context. To prepare everyone for the panel, Marji mentioned the importance of listening to Jewish voices and understanding where hate comes from.

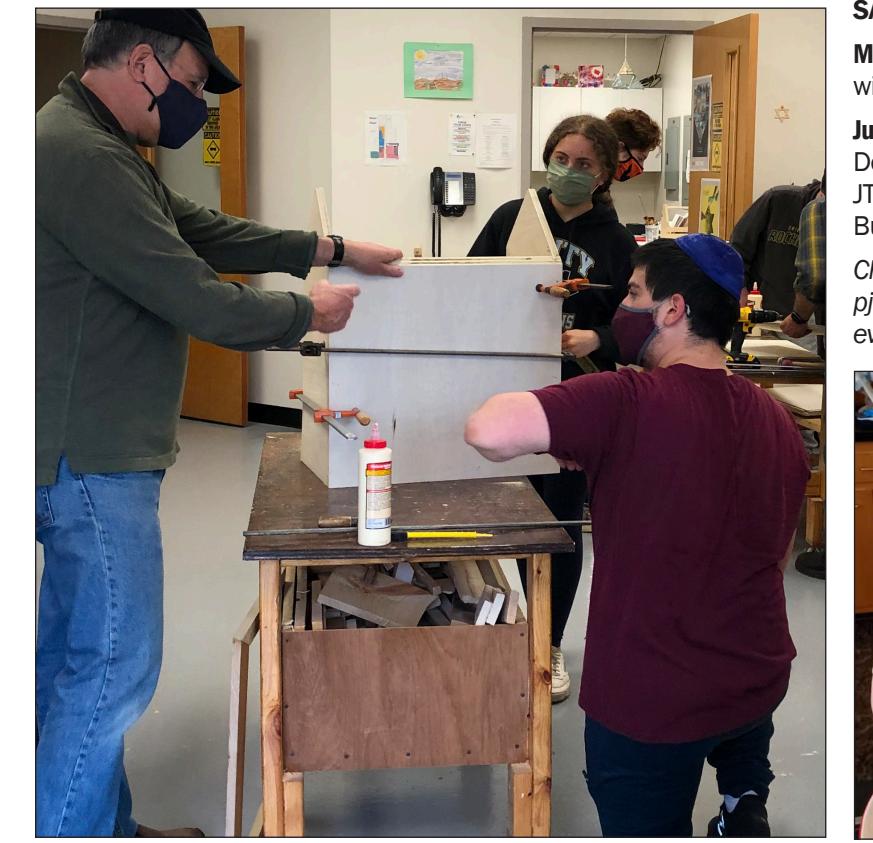
The rest of the teen trainers held a panel where they shared their stories and answered questions. People were shocked to hear about the silence Julia was met with when exposing the anti-Semitism and the resistance Zoe faced when she tried to fight back as well.

While many people live in a semi-safe bubble, it was extremely evident that they never imagined experiencing this level of hate at school. After sharing stories, everyone broke out in breakout rooms led by the teen trainers. In the rooms, a series of questions were asked, about anti-Semitic incidents and how you respond. These were done to create dynamic conversation and give people an opportunity to discuss anything that has happened to them. By asking peers for advice, many people found out that they are not alone and, ultimately, felt stronger to stand up to hate in the future.

It was comforting to be in a "room" full of people who understood the circumstances of anti-Semitism and the struggles to successfully stand up against hate.

Ava Gross, a Class of 2022 student at Amity Regional High School, writes about her experience participating in the Greater New Haven Teen Leadership Summit on Antisemitism, which was cosponsored by Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven, BBYO and ADL Connecticut. She is a Teen Trainer for the ADL Connecticut region and a board member of her BBYO Chapter.

PJ Library® Upcoming Events...and Recent Fun Times!



SAVE THE DATES!

May 16, 10 AM Celebrate Shavuot with Temple Emanuel and PJ Library

June 13, 10 AM Little Free PJ Library Dedication with PJ Library and JTE at the JCC Beckerman Lender Building (parking lot)

Check jewishnewhaven.org/pj-library for the latest PJ Library events and information.



Everly was rocking her favorite PJ Library apron to prepare Shabbat cookies.



Naomi (left) enjoyed her planting kit for Tu B'Shevat.



Miri & Simon (right) were so excited to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut with their "Israel in a Bag" kits.



Grammy Award-Winning Artist, Joanie Leeds joined an all-star lineup for our pre-seder musical Passover Celebration on Zoom.



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SAVE THE DATE!
Shop, Nosh & Schmooze
A thank you event for our women supporters of the Federation 2021 Annual Campaign*

Sunday, June 13, 2021
10 a.m.
Outdoors at the JCC

*Open to all Women who make a gift to the 2021 Federation annual campaign

CO-CHAIRS: Betsy Flaherty, Betsy Hoos, and Emily Sandberg
WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPY CHAIR: Nancy Cohen
Watch for more details on jewishnewhaven.org






patterns, which makes the method ideal for sports performance and injury recovery. And, yes, men also reap the benefits!

GENTLE AND CHALLENGING

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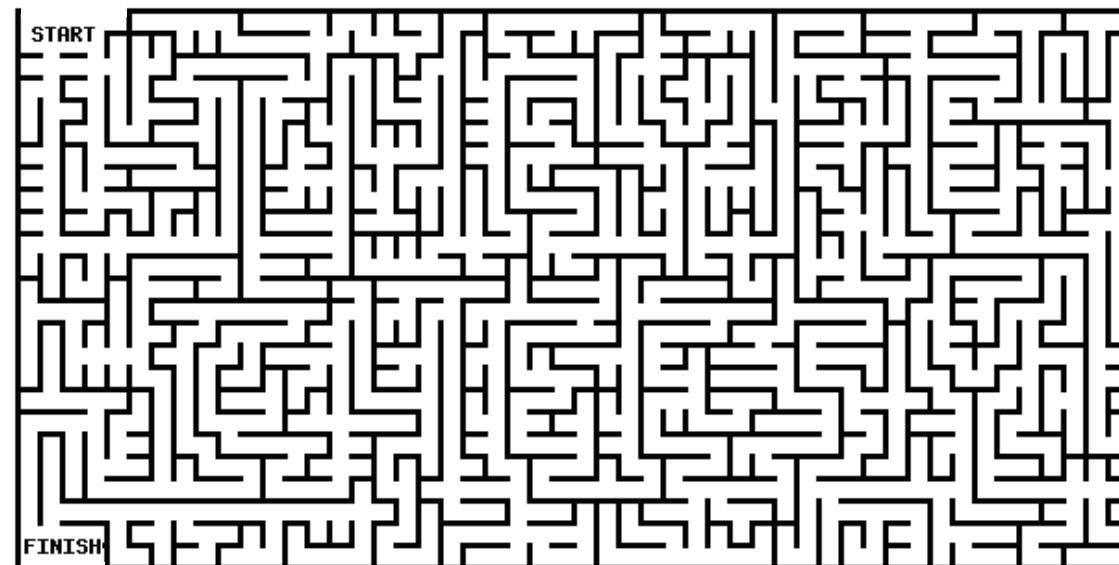
The JCC Pilates Studio is staffed with experienced, certified Pilates teachers. Contact susand@jccnh.org for a free visit.

Shalom **FUN!**

edited by Chava Light

WHY DON'T PEOPLE LIKE JOKES ABOUT SHAVUOT CUSTOMS?

(SOLVE THE MAZE BELOW FOR THE ANSWER TO THE RIDDLE!)



COMMUNITY KIDS

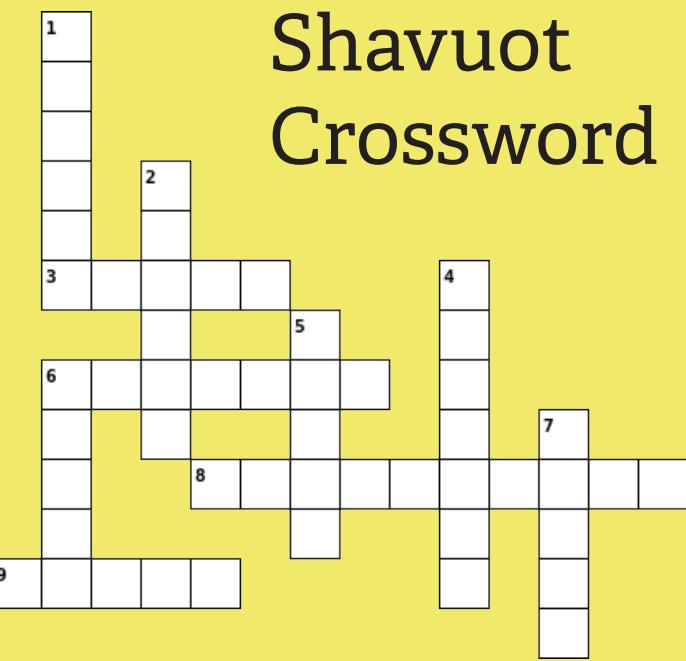
CUT OUT AND COLOR THE SHAVUOT FLOWERS ON THE RIGHT FOR A SHAVUOT DECORATION!



WANT TO BE IN OUR NEXT ISSUE? Have an adult send a photo of you with your picture to SNH@jewishnewhaven.org by May 30, 2021.*

Maya, Alex and Molly L. on their way to their Bubby and Sabas house for Shabbat

Shavuot Crossword



ACROSS

3. What the Jews got on the mountain
6. The name of this holiday
8. Specific cake known as a holiday favorite
9. It's traditional to stay up and learn Torah all _____

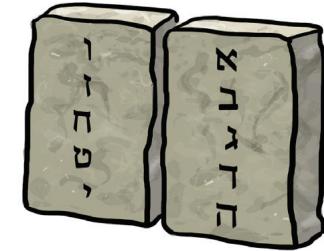
DOWN

1. The Hebrew word for the Two Tablets
2. The name of Moses'/Moshe's sister
4. We decorate our homes with these on Shavuot
5. The English name of the man who brought the Torah down from the mountain
6. Har/Mount _____
7. Genre of food that is traditional to eat on this holiday



Did You Know?

According to the Talmud, the length and width of each of the luchot (Tablets) was "six Tefachim" (about 20 inches length and width) and "three Tefachim" thick (about 10 inches). (This is very different than how it's shown in art!) The luchot were also made of sapphire.



1. WHAT IS ONE REASON GIVEN FOR WHY WE EAT DAIRY ON SHAVUOT? (YOU CAN LOOK ONLINE IF YOU NEED!)
2. APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY SETS OF LUCHOT COULD FIT IN A 9X9X9-FOOT ELEVATOR?

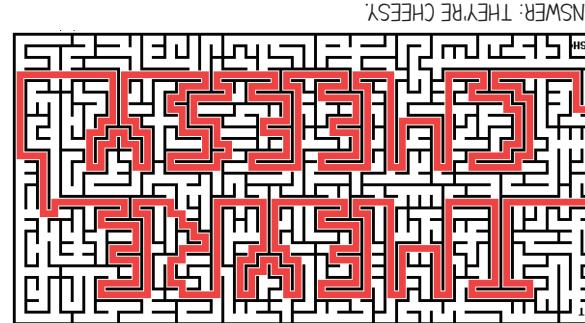


WANT TO BE IN OUR NEXT ISSUE? Have an adult send a photo of you with your answers to SNH@jewishnewhaven.org by May 30, 2021.*

Aviva Wyner, Noam Benson-Tilsen, Adam Fleischman, and Maya Dworin of Jewish Teen Education (JTE) are hard at work building Little Free PJ Library boxes for our community

We will feature all submitted photos on our Facebook page and will print at least one in our next issue!
SNH@jewishnewhaven.org

Crossword Answers
ACROSS:
1. TORAH
2. SHAVUOT
3. MIRIAM
4. CHEESECAKE
5. MOSES
6. SINI
7. DAIRY
DOWN:
1. LUCHOT
2. NIGHT
3. MIRIAM
4. CHEESECAKE
5. MOSES
6. SINI
7. DAIRY



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lbarger@jewishnewhaven.org or call
(203) 387-2424 x276

Grow with Us!

Forty-three babies and counting have been gifted with Shalom Baby gift bags!

Shalom Baby is building community with personal gift bag deliveries, stroller-walking groups, socially distanced outdoor programs and virtual programs for parents. Having co-chairs safely visit families at their homes to bring them gifts has been a beautiful point of connection for parents feeling especially isolated at this time. Families are also connecting online in a closed Shalom Baby Families Facebook group.

To learn more about Shalom Baby, jewishnewhaven.org/shalom-baby to find us on Instagram and our closed Facebook group.



Dad and Baby Flora with her Baby Fox Puppet Book.



Baby Bodie and family excited for their gift bag.



Baby Eden is one of our youngest babies to receive her Shalom Baby gift bag.



Baby Flora enjoys eating challah French toast while keeping clean in her new favorite bib.

Taking Local Security to Heart with New Resources

For the past several years, the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven has monitored our community's security concerns through strong relationships with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. We witnessed the deadly mass shootings in Pittsburgh and Poway. We endured the telephonic bomb threats to the JCC. We removed the swastikas and rebuilt in response to vandalism. Most importantly, the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation offered tools and resources to our community to help increase the sense of security for all of us as well as assist them as they seek federal nonprofit security grant funding.

In addition to securing our Jewish community campus, the Jewish Federation has served as a resource to many of our agencies, schools and synagogues, offering security trainings and helping to secure state grants for houses of worship in Connecticut. In December, the Connecticut State Bond Commission released \$5 million in state bonding to allow nonprofit organizations like synagogues, mosques and churches to seek a competitive state grant to help them fortify themselves against terrorist attacks and hate crimes, or to pay for recent security improvements they have made. The Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut led this advocacy effort, which also included the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven.

Complementing these efforts, the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven awarded \$260,000 in security grants in 2020 from its Arthur Eder Family Fund in memory of Arthur and Yvette Eder to 18 local synagogues, day schools, the JCC and Camp Laurelwood.

In addition, the Jewish Federation system, with its Washington office in the lead, worked tirelessly to help our



legislators understand why their support for funding is so critical. As a direct result, the funding levels have recently doubled from \$90 million to \$180 million.

"While these measures are significant, they are certainly not enough," commented Evan Wyner, Vice President of Security and Facilities on the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven's Board of Directors. "Pittsburgh, Poway, and Halle taught us that our responsibility had become far greater than ever before. We must be expertly prepared and in order to achieve optimum security, we must collaborate and work together as one community."

In March 2021, the board of directors agreed to join with

several Connecticut Federations and hire a full-time Regional Security Advisor (RSA). Each congregation, agency, facility, kosher establishment and Chabad house will be served through the development and implementation of strategic frameworks, best practice policies and procedures, threat and vulnerability assessments, training and education, safety and security matters, and crisis management support during critical incidents.

The security director will be hired through Secure Community Network (SCN). As the official safety and security organization of the North American Jewish community, SCN will also benefit our community through their security and intelligence resources, trusted best practices, training opportunities, facility assessments, and the vast knowledge and experience of its current and former military and law enforcement experts.

"Security was indicated as a top priority for our community in a recent community survey we conducted, and it is certainly a top priority for our Jewish Federation. We take this step with a strong sense of mission and responsibility for our community and look forward to a fruitful collaboration with all the facets of our Jewish community," said Judy Alperin, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven.



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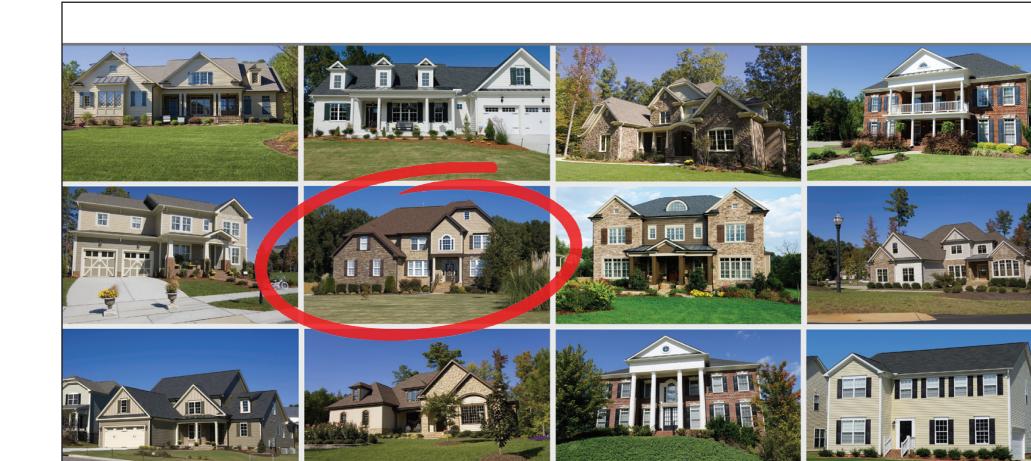
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Prior to COVID-19, the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven committed to conducting an in-depth strategic planning process to better understand the changing current and long term priorities for a sustainable future. After many months of data gathering, analysis, and direct input from our diverse community, the initial planning process is complete. However, this is an on-going process that will continue to engage and strengthen our collective Jewish community. We are excited to share some highlights from the results.

The mission and vision of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven allows us all to be a part of a strong, vibrant, Jewish community that engages resources in new ways determined by the core priorities:

We look forward to working to increase community collaboration and cohesiveness in the coming years to further enhance the strengths and opportunities that will sustain us into the future.

May the Jewish community of Greater New Haven continue to go from strength to strength.

COMMUNITY CORE PRIORITIES

- Caring for those most in need, with an emphasis on seniors and Holocaust survivors
- Community security: Jewish community members feel safe and secure to participate and be Jewish
- High-quality Jewish education at every stage of life, from birth through seniors
- Immersive Jewish experiences that inspire life-long engagement
- Shifting a larger portion of funding to local initiatives and priorities

JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER NEW HAVEN'S VISION STATEMENT

"We unite our diverse Jewish community, inspiring each person's actions to strengthen Jewish life in Greater New Haven and around the world."

- 24 in-depth individual interviews
- 7 diverse focus groups throughout the entire community
- 1,091 responded to the online survey

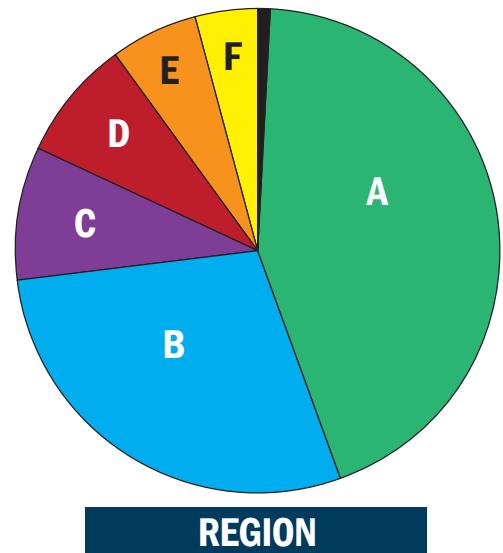
Community Survey & Strategic Planning Progress

Four pillars were identified as the core mission of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven:

1. Unite our Jewish community, embracing diversity and strengthening relationships through shared values and goals
 - Strengthening collaboration and relationships
 - Less duplication of services
 - Train and develop the community leaders of tomorrow
2. Empower Jewish journeys through learning and immersive experiences that create meaningful moments in Jewish life
 - Increase participation in Jewish education
 - Provide immersive experiences (missions, travel and retreats)
 - Make Jewish experiences available digitally at home
3. Maximize Impact by mobilizing the community's resources to address the greatest needs and effect positive outcomes.
 - Focus on community needs and aspirations through measurable impact
 - Increase total philanthropy for the community
 - Advocate as a voice of the collective Jewish community
 - Represent our Jewish community values in the broader community
 - Create and maintain partnerships with the government, private and nonprofit organizations
4. The plan provides a roadmap of innovative opportunities that will better support our community's synagogues and agencies, those connected, the disconnected and the not yet connected.

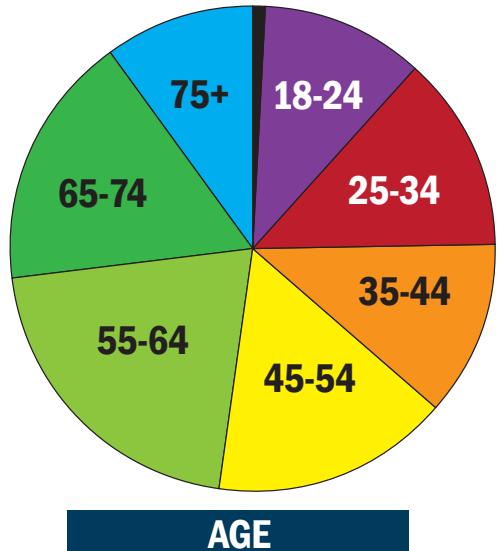
COMMUNITY SURVEY PARTICIPATION

With almost 1,100 respondents participating in the survey, the Jewish community in Greater New Haven sent a message to the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven that it cares about the future and wants to have a say.

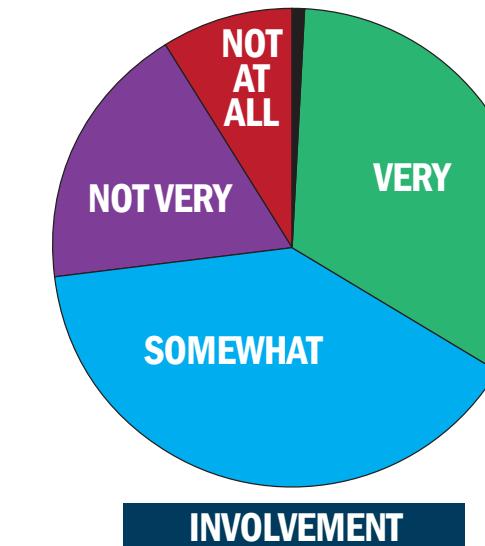
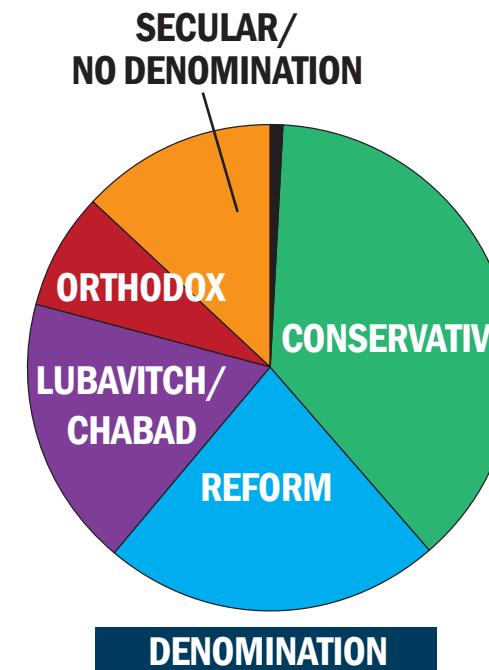
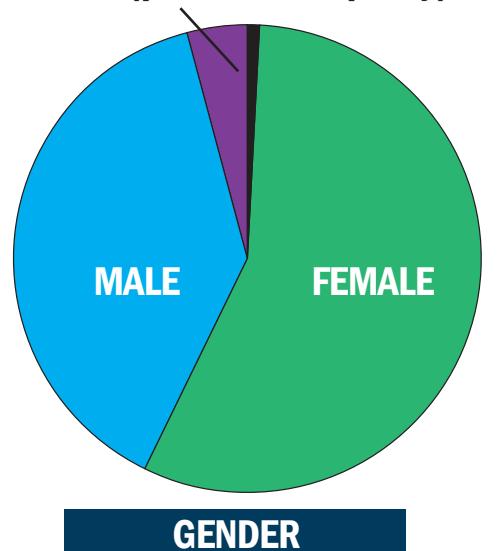


TOWNS INCLUDED

- A. Central (44%): Hamden, New Haven
- B. BOW (29%): Ansonia, Derby, Orange, Seymour, Bethany, Woodbridge
- C. Shoreline (9%): Branford, Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Killingworth, Essex, Guilford, Madison, North Branford, Northford, Old Saybrook, Westbrook, East Haven
- D. Northern (8%): Cheshire, North Haven, Wallingford
- E. Furthest South (6%): Milford, Shelton, (Towards NYC) West Haven
- F. Other Greater New Haven (4%): (unspecified) n/a



OTHER (prefer not to specify)



The Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven wishes to thank the Melior Group, a professional research firm, for soliciting input from our diverse community, and to David Kaplan and Beth Rosenberg of Panoramic Strategy, for guiding our dedicated group of Strategic Planning Taskforce volunteers.

SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO:
 Linda Bell Dr. Norman Ravski,
 Stacy Dworkin Co-chair
 Betsy Flaherty Gayle Slossberg
 Dr. Steven Fleischman, Jonathan Snyder
 Co-chair Josh Weinstein
 Scott Hurwitz Judy Alperin
 Cliff Merin Robyn Teplitzky
 Stacey Perkins

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Foundation News

Scholarship & Grants

from the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

All college scholarships are for area students from Jewish households. All applications must be completed online by May 15. All applications are confidential and anonymously reviewed. This is a competitive process and unfortunately not all applicants will receive awards. Go to jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships for more information.

• **Mary Taylor Friedler Memorial Scholarship Fund:** This scholarship is not needs-based and requires an essay concerning what peace, justice and righteousness mean to you and your Judaism. Awards range from \$500-\$2000. Applicant must reside in Greater New Haven and be entering their freshman year of college. Awards are based on the strength of the application.

• **Stuart J. Drell Scholarship Fund:** Awards are \$2,500 and the applicant must reside in Connecticut. All college years are eligible. Awards are based on the strength of the application and financial need.

• **Emma Kohn Podoloff Scholarship Fund of the National Council of Jewish Women's Greater New Haven Section:** The average award is \$1,500 and applicants must reside in Greater New Haven and be entering their freshman year of college. The application includes an essay and three recommendations. Awards are based on the strength of the application and financial need.

ISRAEL EXPERIENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Jewish Foundation Israel Experience Scholarship Program enables local Jewish students ages 14-20 the opportunity to participate in an Israel experience to develop and enrich their Jewish education, and reinforce their Jewish identity. The Jewish Foundation provides scholarships for both short-term (minimum of three-week program) and long-term organized Israel educational programs. For 2021 summer trips, the deadline has passed. For the 2021-22 gap or academic year programs, applications are due by June 11, 2021. Go to jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships for more information, a list of qualifying programs and application requirements. This is a competitive process based on the strength of the application and, unfortunately in most years, not all applicants will receive an award.

ONE HAPPY CAMPER

For overnight Jewish summer camps, the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven offers needs-blind incentive grants for first-time campers as well as needs-based scholarships for first-time and returning campers. Campers must reside in the Greater New Haven catchment area and must be attending an overnight camp in North America. For more information, go to jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships/one-happy-camper.

"After this past year, camp could not be more important to the social-emotional development of our children. Financial aid at camp is more critical in 2021 than in any previous year." says Rabbi James Greene, Executive Director of Camp Laurelwood, which has been serving the Jewish community of Connecticut for 84 years. **"As our community moves toward the summer, many families have suffered significant economic shifts, job loss and more. We have seen significant requests for tuition assistance over this past year, and Camp Laurelwood is committed to ensuring that every camper has the chance to have the summer of a lifetime at camp! We are grateful to the One Happy Camper program which makes Jewish camping possible for so many."**

GRANTS

Go to jewishnewhaven.org/grants for all grant information and applications.

• **Security Grants Initiative** from the Arthur Eder Family Fund, in memory of Arthur & Yvette Eder. \$260,000 in security grants were awarded in 2020 to Congregation B'nai Jacob, Congregation BEKI, Congregation Or Shalom, Chabad of the Shoreline, Hebrew Congregation of Woodmont, the Israeli Jewish Center, Temple Emanuel, Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek, Congregation Mishkan Israel, Westville Synagogue, Beth Israel (Wallingford), Temple Beth David, Temple Beth Shalom, Temple Beth Tikvah, Ezra Academy, Camp Laurelwood, Southern Connecticut Hebrew Academy and the JCC. 2021 applications are now being accepted on a rolling basis until August 3, 2021.

• **Women of Vision Society** The Jewish Foundation's Women of Vision Society has been helping women and girls in the Greater New Haven area and Israel for over 20 years. This endowment, created by 100 founding members in our community, has tackled issues from domestic violence and health to acculturation and spirituality. The endowment has more than doubled its membership and giving since its creation. Since its inception, Women of Vision has disbursed over \$200,000 to help seed and sustain critical programs and services for women and girls. Application deadline is May 28, 2021. Grant awards typically range \$500-\$3000 for qualifying programs.

• **Grants for the Jewish Elderly** These grants benefit new and innovative programs and projects for Jewish elderly residing in Greater New Haven. In 2020, \$130,000 in grants were awarded to Temple Beth Tikvah, Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven and the Towers at Tower Lane. 2021 applications are due May 21, 2021.



Your first time camper may be eligible for up to \$1000 off Jewish Camp!

The Jewish Foundation's One Happy Camper program provides 1. Needs-blind incentive grants of up to \$1000 for first-time campers and 2. Needs-based aid for first time and returning campers to over 195 Jewish overnight camps.

To learn more or apply, please visit:
jewishnewhaven.org/one-happy-camper



Foundation News

Retirement Plans and Charitable Giving

Retirement plans can present tax-smart charitable giving opportunities both during a donor's lifetime and in the donor's estate plans.

1. Charitable Giving Opportunity with an IRA During a Donor's Lifetime - Available for Those 70½ and Older

The Charitable IRA Rollover is a way for donors, age 70½ and older, to pay less tax while supporting their favorite charities. A Charitable IRA Rollover allows donors to direct up to \$100,000 (or less if they choose), from their traditional IRA, to charity, tax-free.

The Charitable IRA Rollover creates an opportunity for donors to establish an endowment or make an outright charitable gift to a charitable organization. Your rollover can be directed for a capital campaign gift, current needs, or restricted for endowment purposes. Your gift can be earmarked for your synagogue, a local Jewish agency, Jewish education, or any program or organization that is important to you. Donor-advised funds do not qualify for the IRA Charitable Rollover.

This strategy may be right for you if you:

- want to make a qualified charitable gift from your IRA to reduce the value of future distributions you will be required to take;
- do not itemize your deductions and would like to realize an increased tax benefit for your giving;
- wish to make an impactful gift to benefit the community;

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OF GREATER NEW HAVEN**

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- 5 The proceeds are invested and continue to work for you, tax free
- 6 Request distribution to qualified charities – at your convenience

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What do you want to do jewishly & how can we help?

→ already contribute to charity at your deduction limit, and you want to donate more;

→ do not need your Required Minimum Distribution (all it does is raise your tax liability);

→ have a secondary smaller IRA you do not need; and/or

→ wish to reduce your IRA and remove from your taxable estate.

Please consult your professional advisor concerning your tax plans.

2. Retirement Plans as Part of Your Estate Plan

Retirement plans, such as IRAs/401Ks/403bs, are tax-plagued assets when they are left to a non-spouse beneficiary

Under the Secure Act, a non-spouse beneficiary of an IRA/401K/403B must withdraw the entire amount of the inherited retirement within 10 years; non-spouse beneficiaries are no longer permitted to "stretch" the withdrawals over their lifetime. For example, Mr. Cohen passes away (assume Mrs. Cohen predeceased him) and his 2 sons are the named beneficiaries of his \$150,000 IRA. The sons will need to withdraw the entire \$150,000 within 10 years, which means paying about \$50,000 in income tax. That \$150,000 asset, when left to the Cohen sons, will only be worth about \$100,000. For a \$1,500,000 IRA, the sons will need to withdraw it within 10 years and pay about \$500,000 in taxes.

A TAX-SMART SOLUTION:

If Mr. Cohen had named a charity as the beneficiary of the IRA, at Mr. Cohen's passing, the charity would have received the entire IRA, tax-free. Mr. Cohen could then leave his other, tax-free assets to his sons.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RETIREMENT PLAN GIFTS TO CHARITY DURING LIFETIME VS. IN DONOR'S ESTATE PLAN

DURING LIFETIME

IRA Only (Not from 401K/403B)*

Maximum \$100,000 per year

Any US-based public charity
(but not to donor-advised fund)

Not subject to income tax

Accomplished via rollover/distribution
from IRA directly to charity

Contact plan administrator for rollover
paperwork

Must be 70½ or older

IRA/401K/403B okay

No maximum

Any US-based public charity
(including donor-advised fund)

Not subject to income or estate tax

Accomplished by naming charity as
designated beneficiary for all or part of
the retirement plan

Contact plan administrator for proper
beneficiary designation form

Can designate at any time but charity
will only benefit at your passing

*Want to take advantage of the charitable IRA rollover but only have a 401K/403B rather than an IRA? See if you can roll your 401K/403B into a qualified IRA.

Please consult your professional advisor concerning your tax plans.

For more information, visit newhavenjewishfoundation.org/retirement-plans-and-charitable-giving.



Jewish Foundation
OF GREATER NEW HAVEN

Foundation News

SHALOM NEW HAVEN, 2021 • 5781 Page 24

Fried Watsky Family Creates Community Legacy

by Jeannette Brodeur

Husband and wife Drs. Kal Watsky and Debbie Fried have always been generous in donating their time and money to the Jewish community. Over the years, they and their children, Benjamin and Rebecca (Ben and Reba) have established funds at the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven, where Dr. Watsky is a member of the Board of the Trustees, to support the programs and organizations that are most important to them.

Most recently, they created the Watsky Fried Family Fund with the first fund distributions going to support the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven's COVID-19 Maimonides Response initiative, as well to the Jewish Community Center to support the swimming pool. Through their family fund, the couple also provided that when they pass, a percentage of the fund will be used to establish a permanent family endowment for their synagogue, Congregation B'nai Jacob, and for PACE (Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment, a designated/restricted fund which endows their Jewish Federation annual campaign gift) with the remainder to continue as a family fund, with their children and future grandchildren as donor advisors.

"We have been fortunate to be part of a vital community and want to do our part to help secure its future," Dr. Watsky explained.



that the JCC staff has done a superb job mastering the ever-changing and difficult safety protocols of the pandemic.

Another place of respite for their family has always been their synagogue. They first became involved at B'nai Jacob in 1995 when their oldest child, Ben, started pre-school at Gan Hayeled, and their daughter, Reba, soon followed.

Dr. Watsky has served as a member and chair of B'nai Jacob's Religious School Committee as well as a past board member. He has also chaired their Social Action Committee, which raises money for the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen, Habitat for Humanity and local coat drives. In 2017, he was a recipient of the B'nai Jacob Shem Tov award.

Dr. Fried also served as a board member and an executive committee member. She was a member of the Social Action Committee, a parent volunteer for the B'nai Jacob Religious School and performed with the B'nai Jacob Players Production for many seasons. She continues to be an active member of their Kol Nidre Choir.

Their children grew up at B'nai Jacob, attending religious school there and also volunteered in the madrichim program. They both received the Herbert Epstein Prize leadership award as high school seniors. Reba also worked as a volunteer for the Gan Hayeled summer camp.

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RABBI'S CORNER for Shavuot: Children as Guarantors



by Rabbi James Greene

Shavuot, along with Passover and Sukkot, are the *shalosh regalim*—the three Pilgrimage Festivals of Jewish tradition. The Torah speaks of it as an agricultural festival, calling it *chag habikkurim*, or the Festival of First Fruits. However, the rabbis of early Jewish tradition identified it with *zeman matan torateynu*, or the time of the giving of our Torah.

One of my favorite *midrashim* imagines G-d being reluctant to present this gift of Torah unless it would truly be appreciated by its recipients:

At Sinai, when the Jewish people were ready to receive the Torah, G-d said to them, "Am I supposed to give you the Torah without any security? Bring some good guarantors that you will keep it properly, and then I will give it to you."

They said: "Our ancestors will be our guarantors." G-d said: "They themselves need a guarantor!" [...]

They said: "Our prophets will be our guarantors." G-d said: I have complaints against them, too [...]"

They said: "Then our children will be our guarantors." G-d said: "Now, those are good guarantors!" (Shir Hashirim Rabbah 4:1)

Have you ever wondered why the midrash tells this story? Certainly our ancestors or the prophets could be equally powerful in this important role. Why children? I have seen it throughout my career, and I see it now more than ever as the executive director at Camp Laurelwood, where we bring children together for Jewish-related summer and year-round experiences.



All the research and evidence tells us that our early engagement breeds a lifetime of Jewish commitment and continuity. It is why our community invests so heavily in Jewish youth experiences like religious education in synagogues and teen youth groups, and summer camps like those at the JCC and Camp Laurelwood.

Aside from delicious dairy desserts like cheesecake, Shavuot doesn't have the natural appeal of the Passover Seder or the abundance of presents like Hanukkah. Because of that, it is often a holiday that is less widely observed by Jewish children and families. But, I would argue that this holiday commemorating the receiving of the Torah at Sinai should be near the top of our priority list. It reminds us as a community that receiving the Torah is not about our past or our present. Instead, it is about the Jewish future that we will build with our youth.

Children are certainly the best guarantors we can have! And, we are lucky to have an abundance of places in our community where that most sacred work is happening every day.

Rabbi James Greene is the Executive Director of Camp Laurelwood.

Page 25, SHALOM NEW HAVEN, 2021 • 5781

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- Lucile Burgo-Black
- Alice Labrum
- Caron and Norman Alderman
- Jay Alpert Architects, AIA
- Jay & Sharon Alpert
- The Sirowich Family



Women's Philanthropy Why I Give

In this series, Shalom New Haven will feature women in our community who make a gift in their own name to the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven Annual Campaign. The Lion of Judah is a distinction given to a woman who makes a gift at the level of \$5,000 or more. A Pomegranate designates a gift at the level of \$1,800-\$4,999 and a Sabra designates a gift of \$365-\$1,799.



Here is Linda Greenhouse on why she "lions"

"The Supreme Court tells us that 'money is speech,' and that's true in philanthropy as well as in the realm of campaign finance that the Court was referring to. If we as women want our voices to be heard, we have to show up as contributors in our own name to the causes we care about, to the extent that we have time or resources to commit. I grew up in the New Haven Jewish community and to me, it's important to make a personal statement that I care about its welfare."

Linda Greenhouse is an American legal journalist who is a Senior Research Scholar in Law at Yale Law School. She is a PulitzerPrize-winning reporter who covered the United States Supreme Court for nearly-three decades for The New York Times.

BI-CULTURAL HEBREW ACADEMY Administrative Team Unveiled

Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein, who currently serves as Dean of Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy of Connecticut (BCHA), has been appointed BCHA Interim Head of School. Rachel Haron, currently the school's Lower School Principal, has been named Interim Associate Head of School, announced David Pitkoff, President of the BCHA Board of Trustees.

Along with these appointments to the Stamford school's top administrative team, Rabbi Josh Rosenfeld, who serves as Middle School Principal of Manhattan Day School and Assistant Rabbi at Manhattan's Lincoln Square Synagogue, has been appointed BCHA's new Head of Judaic Studies for pre-K through grade 12. Previously, Rabbi Rosenfeld also served on the faculty



Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein

of SAR High School.

The new team will take over leadership of the school on August 1 when long-time Head of School Jacqueline Herman steps down from her post. During the transition period, Herman will serve as an advisor to Rabbi Bernstein, Haron and the board.

The in-house administrative team, which also includes Upper School Principal Rabbi Shimmy Trencher and Middle School Principal David Giver, will be enhanced by the addition of Rabbi Rosenfeld, said Pitkoff.

Rachel Haron will be the first BCHA alumni to serve as Associate Head of School.

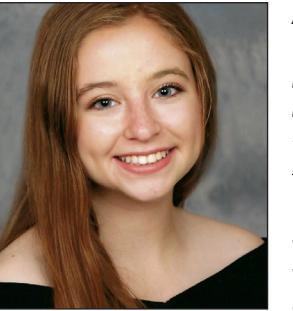
Learn more about Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy of Connecticut at bcha-ct.org.

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Anti-Semitism on Campus

by Avital Sutin

The rise of anti-Semitism on college campuses is a major concern locally and across the country. What can we do to ensure that Jewish students and faculty are able to successfully advocate for themselves and how can we support their efforts? The anti-Semitism on Campus: Are We Ensuring a Safe Environment for the Jewish community? conference took place on March 17 on Zoom.

Experts in the field discussed the current climate of anti-Semitism on campus and how we can make a difference. The webinar, which included a welcome by UConn Hillel President Dori Jacobs and words from Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven's CEO Judy Alperin, was moderated by psychologist, author and commentator Dr. Dale Atkins.



Avital Sutin

Avital Sutin (Class of 2023), Vice President of UConn Hillel at University of Connecticut (UConn), provided her perspective on what has been happening on her Storrs campus. She was one of many participants in the webinar.

In the past academic year at the UConn, there were seven acts of anti-Semitism, three of which occurred during Passover alone. Serving as the current UConn Hillel Vice President, I can recall the board meeting where we were discussing our course of action to respond to the first two incidents on the night of Passover. Our executive director, Edina Oestricher, joined the call to notify us of yet another swastika, accompanied by SS, written in graffiti onto another academic building. Up until then, I denied that this hate could live in my college community, but at this moment I was shocked, hurt and fearful. I feared for the future of UConn, its Jewish community and my generation's American Jewry as a whole. The following morning, I walked past the remains of the other swastika spray painted on campus, right beside the Trachten-Zachs Hillel building; the same shock overcame me. I grew up surrounded by Jewish family and friends in the Greater New Haven area, attended Ezra Academy, went to Jewish summer camps and worked at Hebrew school. My upbringing taught me pride in my faith and culture, and to see the same hate and symbols that my grandmother escaped from in her home country of Poland was a terribly rude awakening.

I believe in my heart that anti-Semitism is cowardly ignorance, and that it truly does not belong at UConn. However, at that moment, I could not be so sure.

EZRA ACADEMY New Science Teacher Brings Innovation and Excitement

"There is such a buzz in our classroom that Dr. Waynik peeks in to see if we are six feet apart or tearing up the lab," describes new Ezra Academy Science Teacher Willa Ridinger. The Head of School invariably finds animated students collaborating on projects, such as designing valves to prevent the backflow of blood (marbles) from the atrium to the ventricle.

A graduate of Hopkins, Dartmouth and the UConn School of Law, Ridinger has taught English and science, all while running a pottery business and teaching a JCC indoor cycling class. Her many interests and talents infuse Ezra's science curriculum.

Studying renewable energy, fifth and sixth graders built dams and solar houses; they plan to make sail cars in warmer weather. Parent Nicole Korda says her son loves the hands-on projects, like building insulated model houses to discover which materials are most efficient. Marisol Sanchez-Moycik notes that her daughter's critical thinking and public speaking skills have blossomed as teams investigate and debate energy sources.

The creative approach continues into seventh and eighth grades where students master the concepts needed for success in high school and beyond. Seventh-grader Jordan Hass' favorite part of science is getting to play games outside to learn new material. The class recently aced a quiz on the periodic table.

Sixth-grader Shai Hurwitz sums it up: "Morah Willa brings science to life by having us immerse ourselves in a subject. She makes it very interactive and exciting."

Learn more about Ezra Academy at ezraacademyct.org.



Willa Ridinger

UCONN HILLEL New Development Director



UConn Hillel is excited to welcome Danielle (Dani) Bergman as Development Director. She is a seasoned development professional with close to 10 years of Jewish communal fundraising experience. She has worked in multiple key development roles serving the senior population in New York at Selfhelp Community Services, Inc. and DOROT. Most recently, she served as a development executive at Yachad, a Jewish-focused, disability inclusion agency. In these roles, Bergman focused on all areas of development, including individual giving, online fundraising, event planning, leadership development and grant management.

Investing in Jewish communal life, Bergman sits on the Board of Trustees for GrowTorah, a nonprofit that aims to cultivate a more passionate, compassionate and sustainable Jewish future driven by Torah values.

Bergman is excited to bring her experience to UConn Hillel and looks forward to working with students, alumni, staff and leadership to support and grow Hillel's vital programming.

She graduated with a B.A. in English Language and Literature from the University of Maryland in 2011, where Hillel played an important role in her college career. While she currently lives in New Jersey with her husband and son, she looks forward to soon calling Connecticut home. She is an avid runner and serves as a running coach in her spare time.

Learn more about UConn Hillel at uconnhillel.org.

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Soviet Jews and American Jews Were Together

by Yelena Gerovich
New American Acculturation Program Coordinator

In May 1945, the last stronghold of the Nazi regime surrendered unconditionally to the Allied powers, ending World War II (WWII) in Europe. The heroism of the Jews displayed during the Second World War remains practically unrecognized in Russia; we know very little about it here in the US. The role of the Soviet Red Army during World War II was decisive: the Soviet forces liberated Auschwitz. However, after 76 years, many forget that about half a million Jews fought in the ranks of the Soviet Army.

A lot of anti-Semitic articles have been published claiming that Jews did not fight and were hiding in safe places. This is untrue. Millions of Jews fought during WWII, and many fought heroically. Jews never surrendered because surrender meant certain death. When the first Jewish veterans from the USSR arrived in Connecticut almost 50 years ago, it was difficult for them to communicate because of poor English. However, they still found many friends when participating in meetings and events with American veterans. They communicated in Yiddish.

"We were together—Soviet and American soldiers—it was a common goal," said one of the veterans. "There was no talk of who did more or less than the other."

Russian-speaking veterans have been celebrating Victory Day every year at the Jewish Community Center since it opened.

Approximately 550,000 Jewish men and women served in the US Armed Forces during WWII. They served on all fronts in Europe and in the Pacific. Some 10,000 were killed in combat.

Many Jewish soldiers took part in liberating the camps. About 60 percent of all Jewish physicians in the US under 45 years of age served in the military. In 1943, for the first time in American history, women were granted full military status. Thousands of women joined up, taking on administrative and technical jobs that freed the men to fight. Among them were more than 10,000 Jewish women, disregarding their parents' warnings that the military "was no life for a nice Jewish girl." Like their male counterparts, these women took their Judaism with them overseas and practiced it proudly. In 1943, Mildred Scheier, an officer and a nurse, led a seder for 1,000 enlisted men in Bari, Italy.

About 500,000 Jewish soldiers fought in the Red Army during WWII. Over 200,000 of them were killed in combat and in the line of duty. Eighty percent of the Soviet males born in 1923 did not survive WWII. That is why, if asked which event was the most important one for his or her generation, any immigrant from the former Soviet Union would say Victory Day. WWII led to the greatest loss of life in the history of the Soviet Union. On May 9, the Russian-speaking community gathers to celebrate Victory Day and to thank all the Jews who performed valiant service and sacrificed themselves during WWII. Their generation—the greatest generation—will never be forgotten. We are forever grateful to them for bringing peace to the world.

For more information about the New American Acculturation Program, including sponsorships of specific program, contact Yelena Gerovich at (203) 387-2424 x321, or email ygerovich@jewishnewhaven.org.



Welcome to America

Советские и американские евреи были вместе

В мае 1945 года последний оплот нацистского режима безоговорочно сдался союзным державам, положив конец Второй мировой войне в Европе.

Героизм евреев, проявленный во время Второй мировой войны, в России практически не признается; и мы очень мало знаем об этом здесь, в США. Роль Советской Красной Армии во Второй мировой войне была решающей: советские войска освободили Освенцим. По прошествии 76 лет многие забывают, что около полутора миллиона евреев воевали в рядах Советской Армии.

Было опубликовано множество антисемитских статей, в которых утверждается, что евреи не воевали и прятались в безопасных местах. Это неправда. Миллионы евреев сражались во время Второй мировой войны,

и многие сражались героически. Евреи никогда не сдавались в плен, потому что сдача означала верную смерть. Когда почти 50 лет назад в Коннектикуте прибыли первые евреи-ветераны из СССР, им было трудно общаться с американцами из-за плохого английского. Но они находили друзей, участвуя во встречах и мероприятиях с американскими ветеранами. Они общались на идиш.

"Мы были вместе - советские и американские солдаты - это была общая цель", - сказал один из ветеранов. «Не было разговоров о том, кто сделал больше или меньше, чем другой».

Русскоязычные ветераны ежегодно приглашались и отмечали День Победы в Еврейском общественном центре с момента его открытия.

Приблизительно 550 000 евреев: мужчин и женщин служили в вооруженных силах США во время Второй мировой войны. Они служили на всех фронтах в

Европе и на Тихом океане. Около 10 000 американцев погибли в бою. Многие еврейские солдаты участвовали в освобождении лагерей. Около 60 процентов всех евреев-солдат в США в возрасте до 45 лет служили в армии. В 1943 году впервые в истории Америки женщинам был предоставлен полный статус военнослужащих. Тысячи женщин стали военнослужащими, взяв на себя административную и техническую работу. Среди них было более 10 000 еврейских женщин, которые проигнорировали предупреждения своих родителей о том, что армия «не хороший выбор для еврейской девушки». Как и их коллеги-мужчины, эти женщины продолжали соблюдать еврейские традиции. В 1943 году Милдред Шайер, офицер и медсестра, провела пасхальный седер для 1000 военнослужащих в Бари, Италия.

Около 500 000 солдат-евреев сражались в составе Красной Армии во время Второй мировой войны. Более 200 000 из них были убиты. Восемьдесят процентов советских мужчин, родившихся в 1923 году, погибли во время войны. Вот почему на вопрос, какое событие было самым важным для его или ее поколения, любой иммигрант из бывшего Советского Союза ответил бы «День Победы». Вторая мировая война привела к крупнейшим человеческим жертвам в истории Советского Союза. 9 мая русскоязычная община отпразднует День Победы, поблагодарит и вспомнит всех людей, которые проявили героизм и мужество во время Второй мировой войны. Их поколение - величайшее поколение - никогда не будет забыто. Мы бесконечно благодарны им за борьбу и восстановление мира во всем мире.

Для получения дополнительной информации о New American Acculturation Program, с вопросами и предложениями звоните Елене Герович по телефону (203) 387-2424 x321 или ygerovich@jewishnewhaven.org.

Giving Back: Dignity Grows



Human dignity should not be considered a luxury, yet many women in the U.S. suffer from period poverty, lacking financial resources to purchase basic feminine hygiene and essential personal care products. Many women in our community have been forced to choose between buying food for their families or sanitary products. Imagine you have just used your last items and have no money to purchase more. The Dignity

Grows organization pledges to make a difference in women's lives by providing personal hygiene supplies for women in need.

Women's Philanthropy of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven's new Dignity Grows™ chapter is raising significant dollars and has already placed its first order of bags and supplies for women in our Greater New Haven community. Our first distribution partners are Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven, the Diaper Bank of Connecticut and Mothers of Victim, Inc.

They held a tote bag packing party on May 2 in COVID-safe environment to pack supplies for recipients and will continue to hold more in the near future. Each month, recipients get reusable zipper-top totes filled with a month's supply of hygiene products. Volunteers support the project by donating funds to purchase supplies for the totes and/or giving their time to help pack the totes. Check the community calendar frequently for the next "Packing Parties!"

To learn more or to get involved, visit jewishnewhaven.org/womens-network/dignity-grows, or contact Chief Development Officer Amy Holtz at [\(203\) 387-2424 x254](mailto:aholtz@jewishnewhaven.org).



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Families Giving Back (Continued from page 9)

most rewarding in my life. It is incumbent on the rest of us to volunteer for those that can't. And missions require money to make things better for others. It doesn't have to be a lot; but if everyone gave a little, it would have a huge effect. Start early with donating time and money. Some of our proudest moments as parents were watching our kids giving back, encouraging their ideas to support others."

"We are committing to pay it forward to ensure the vitality of the Jewish community," Andrea said while her daughter Julie nodded in agreement. "We never said, 'you need to do these things,' but our kids saw what we were doing and we encouraged what they were interested in doing. Finding what interests your kids is very important; let them find their mission and passion."

"My parents have modeled the importance of being involved with Jewish life and community through our B'nai Jacob synagogue and Jewish Federation," Samantha said. She was a founding member of JTE during high school and is now helping to start a group for Jewish women at Yale University on campus to participate in social, educational and community service opportunities. Both Samantha and Julie taught religious school and volunteered in the B'nai Jacob office.

"Every agency has their core base of people who are supportive. When you realize the scope of the involvement of our community, and that the number of agencies and synagogues do not survive unless you have a base of individuals who are donating time, resources and money, it is amazing and inspiring," observed Steven.

WAIN/KIER: Like Mother, Like Daughter

Shalom Baby Co-chairs Dr. Stephanie Wain and Shelley Kier are another example of multigenerational philanthropic collaboration. Wain's first involvement in the community was when the family moved to the area in the late 1980s and the children began attending Ezra Academy.

"I realized moving here that there were places where help was really needed at Ezra Academy and in the community. There are dollars and there is time. I could only donate so much time being a doctor and a parent to two kids. My children saw me supporting my Jewish community at Ezra, the Federation, AIPAC, ADL and more. The Jewish community is an extension of our home," said Dr. Wain.

Kier is following in her mother's footsteps as she was pulled back to this community that she wants her kids to grow up in. She was living in New York City with her husband, working as a general counsel for Yachad. She wanted to come back specifically to the Ezra Academy and B'nai Jacob community. Now she works for Children's Community Programs of Connecticut as an education advocate and attorney. Dr. Wain's daughter Melanie is also choosing a profession geared toward giving back as she does her residency in oncology.

"Volunteering and helping other people is a great part of who we are as humans, whether it is donating a can of food, putting money in the tzedekah box or more," explained Kier. "It gives us a feeling of being useful and part of something bigger; it gives us the power to help, heal and hope. We are lucky to be able to give back individually and as a family. We are appreciative of the opportunities and choices we have to give back through the Jewish and general community."

Honoring Rabbi Brockman

(Continued from page 10)

I called JFS late in the day, and although the food pantry was closed, Sandy [Hagan, JFS Food Pantry Director] immediately told me to meet her there. She opened it up and let the family 'shop.' When the wife picked up a few items, Sandy insisted, 'That's not enough. Fill it up.' A minister who was accompanying us commented, 'Your community is amazing.' I still feel the pride I felt then. It's why I chose to join the Board of JFS and support their work."

The June 17 Spring Celebration, JFS' major annual fundraiser, will be presented virtually this year, and will feature a look at some of the agency's most impactful programs. Tributes to Rabbi Brockman are expected to be delivered by community leaders, including colleagues among the Jewish and interfaith clergy.

More information can be found at jfsnh.org.

Tributes & Remembrances

JEWISH FEDERATION

In memory of Sylvia "Shifra" Zamkov to Yom Hashoa programming

Nini Krever
Jeffrey & Karen Sklarz
Dean & Marie Colovos

In honor of Andy Sarkany and his work providing Holocaust Education in area schools

Mark & Nancy Weber

In honor of the birth of Hunter Jackson Perkins, grandson of Stacey & Hap Perkins

Judy Alperin
Amy, Mark & Sarah Holtz
Stacey & David Trachten

In honor of the 25th wedding anniversary of Amy & Mark Holtz

Robyn & Jeffrey Teplitzky

In memory of Arthur "Red" Kleinberg

Sheldon & Louise Krevit

In memory of Charles Barr

Ellen Eisenberg

In celebration of a milestone birthday for Barry Kelmacher

Heather, Mike, Neil, Kai, Lila, Levin, Henry and Ashton McKerman

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*Tributes listed are up to April 13, 2021.

In honor of the birth of Romy Evelyn, granddaughter of Dana & Harry Schwartz

Amy, Mark & Sarah Holtz
Judy Alperin

In honor of Barry Vine to the Barry Vine Send-a-Kid to Camp Scholarship Fund

Martha & Bert Weisbart

In memory of Gerald Parker, father of Jodi Seidner

Stacey & David Trachten

In honor of Bernice Margolis

Harriet & Irving Calechman

JCARR

In honor of Kate Ezra's birthday

Avi, Zel, Isabelle & Mike Headrick
Tatiana Headrick

JCC

In honor of Carol & David Robbins on moving into their new home

Judy Alperin

JCC

In memory of Harriet & Michael Gordon

Members of the UConn Physical Therapy Family

Debbie & Irwin Kabakoff

Karen & Myron Kabakoff

In memory of Stanley Jacobs

Andy Ullman
Sandra Sosnoff-Baird & L. Kirk Baird, Jr.
Jeanine & Diane Balsis and Marilyn McKerman

JEWISH FOUNDATION

In memory of Lois Smirnoff

Leslie & Peter Zackin

In memory of Al Fusco

Evan & Stacey Wyner

In honor of the 50th wedding anniversary of Debbie & Irwin Kabakoff

Karen & Myron Kabakoff

In memory of Ed Hurwitz

Linda & Michael Epstein

BECKERMAN FAMILY SUPPORTING FOUNDATION INC. ENDOWMENT AND EDUCATION FUND FOR NEW HAVEN HEBREW DAY SCHOOL

In honor of the marriage of Rabbi Sheya Hecht & Bluma Hecht's son

David & Ruthann Beckerman

BECKERMAN FAMILY SUPPORTING FOUNDATION, INC. JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER ENDOWMENT FUND

In memory of Mr. Ralph Feldman & Mr. Harold Greenbaum

David & Ruthann Beckerman

THE NACI & CRAIG SKLAR FAMILY FUND

In honor of the birth of Hudson Jove

Lisa Stanger & Greg Colodner

THE MATTHEW GRANT OLINS TZEDAKAH FUND

In honor of Matthew Grant Olins

Marc & Nancy Ollins

FRIENDS OF THE JEWISH COALITION FOR LITERACY ENDOWMENT FUND

In honor of Donna Hersh's milestone birthday

Susan & Barry Buxbaum

Gift of Life (Continued from page 3)

would be encroaching on plants that butterflies need. They spent three months in Stockton in California working in a drive-thru food bank. In April, they worked 12-hour days helping out at a vaccination clinic, one of the biggest in Texas. The final two months are being spent in Washington near the Canadian border beautifying a campground and restoring cabins at a special needs camp. John will return as a senior (Class of 2022) to Cornell University majoring in industrial and labor relations.

"Growing up in the Woodbridge/New Haven area, you can become complacent in the lifestyle and path set before us as we move toward college. I wanted to experience something different in the US as I was going through my college years so I took a gap year and chose Americorps, which my parents strongly supported. I highly recommend a gap year of service. Taking a break enables you to appreciate what you do have and to see how others in the US are living."

John recently got the call that he was a potential match for an adult male with leukemia. As a donor, he needed to get a physical and his blood tested in order to be able to donate. Gift of Life organized all of his appointments to eliminate any stress he might feel leading up to the donation. The process, from swabbing through donation, was a no-stress experience for him. Even the donation itself was not painful at all, just mild discomfort, he stressed.

"By being matched with someone, this meant I would need to do an additional DNA swab to ensure I was the closest match to the patient. When I signed up, I learned there was only a one in 300 chance of being the perfect match, and a 30% chance of being the perfect match after being denoted as a potential match. I was beyond excited at the possibility of donating, but I knew that if I wasn't the perfect match, someone else would be the better donor for the patient. I found out three weeks later that I was the perfect match. My first thought was how insane it was that I was going to have the chance to save a human life," John recalled about that moment and his ability to fulfill a mitzvah tied to pikuach nefesh. "This isn't an opportunity that everyone receives, so I felt very fortunate to donate. Most importantly, I was excited for the patient and his family."

"Given how easy it is on the donor, I would tell someone who is debating joining the registry to put themselves in the shoes of a patient and his or her family. What the patient is going through is life or death, and the fact that you can potentially save a life for no downsides is a no-brainer," John implored. "I think it is especially important for young people to join as they most often are called to donate. Lastly, the patient you are matched with is determined by how similar your DNA is with them. This means that young Jewish people would most likely be saving the life of a fellow Jewish person."

John did stress that if you are hesitant about joining, wait until you are sure. Otherwise, you may get called when you are not ready. If you do get called, and you decide to back out, it could hurt the family.

"You have a chance to save someone's life. Pikuach nefesh...this is your chance to do it," he emphasized.

Watch for more details for our local donor drive to be held at the JCC during the summer. To find out more information about being a possible bone marrow donor or to register, visit giftolife.org.



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We are here to answer all your questions. To schedule a tour or to learn more, contact Rebecca Olshansky at 203-772-1816, ext. 250 or rebecca@towerlane.org. You can learn more about The Towers at our website towerlane.org.



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