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HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION  
היברו יוניון קולג' – מכון למדעי היהדות

# עשייתם Happenings

**A L U M N I N E W S L E T T E R**  
from the School of Jewish Communal Service HUC-JIR/Los Angeles

We're pleased to send you our latest electronic newsletter! Stay tuned for our Fall edition!

## Summer 2010 – Kayitz 5770

### SJCS Alumni Association Leadership

#### From the Co-Chairs

It's been another busy year for the School of Jewish Communal Service and our alumni association! We admitted 15 new students into the program, welcomed 5 new colleagues into the field (read a little about our graduates below), and honored 6 alumni for twenty five years of service to the Jewish community. We also honored two more alumni from the class of 1985 with the Sherut L'Am Award. We are very pleased to let you know that our alumni campaign has raised over \$35,000 towards student scholarships, and is still bringing in more donations! This is in large part due to the hard work of the campaign committee, the class captains, and Richard Siegel, and we thank everyone who has already participated. In addition to all these festivities and accomplishments, there has been a lot going on behind the scenes... [Read more.](#)

#### From the Dean: Steven Windmueller, Ph.D.

##### Beginning at the Beginning: Some Reflections on the Communal Enterprise

When Jessica Ingram invited me to write this brief article, as I step away from the HUC-LA deanship, it afforded me the opportunity to look back, not just on fifteen years at the College or twenty-five years in Los Angeles but at a total career portfolio, covering some forty years, literally 1970-2010. So, little did Jessica or I realize the significance of her request!

In almost every facet related to communal practice a fundamental revolution has occurred. These changes that I am referencing are both qualitatively and quantitatively different from my work on the "Second American Jewish Revolution," as that paper sought to identify internal institutional trends. In this short essay I am focusing our attention on the larger communal trends and best practices that once defined this field that now no longer do so... [Read more.](#)

#### Letter from the Director: Richard A. Siegel

### Milestones and Mazal Tov!

#### Engagements

**Matt Kahn** (MAJCS/MAJE 2009) and Samantha Orshan (MAJCS/Rabbinic Ordination expected 2011) announced their engagement in December 2009 and will be married in October 2010.

**Laura Siegel** (MAJCS/MAJE 2009) and Avi Perpinyal announced their engagement on January 17, after Avi proposed 1,000 meters above sea on top of Table Mountain, overlooking Cape Town, South Africa, where they currently live. Laura serves as the Executive Director of Development of the Jewish National Fund of South Africa.

#### Marriages

**Lisa Helene Helfman** (MAJCS/MSW 2005) married Joseph Gottman on March 14, 2010. They bought a home in Bowie MD, moved in and are unpacking a little more each day. Lisa is a Congregational Representative for the Union for Reform Judaism.

**Cassie Kirschbaum** (MAJCS/MSW 2004) was married to Eitan Weinstock on May 13, 2010.

#### Births

**Suzanne Afergan** (MAJCS/MSW 2002) and her husband Mike welcomed their daughter Maya Abigail Afergan on January 13, 2010.

**Rachel (Isaacson) Margolis** (MAJCS/MAJE 2007) and Rabbi Ari Margolis (MAHL 2007, MAJE 2008, ordained 2010) are the proud parents of Laila Millie, born on November 23, 2009. They will

also be moving to Raleigh, NC where Ari will serve as a rabbi.

**Joy Sisisky** (MAJCS/MPA '00) and her husband, Jonathan Salky, gave birth on April 9th to a baby girl. Her name is Alexandra Lily Salky and she was 6 lbs and 18.5 inches. She is our first and she is adorable!!

## Letter from the Director, Richard A. Siegel

### Introducing Our New Name!

Dear Alumni,

On or about September 1, 2010, the HUC-JIR School of Jewish Communal Service (SJCS) will be officially renamed the HUC-JIR School of Jewish Nonprofit Management (SJNM). We are excited about the new name and the new brand, but realize that it may raise some questions or concerns among our alumni... so I want you to know why we are making the change, what it says about our program, and what it means for you as alumni... [Read more.](#)

### Student Profiles: The Class of 2010

This year we are excited to welcome 15 new students to the School of Jewish Communal Service! They are joining the second year cohort of 8 students (four MSWs, two MPAs, one certificate, and one Joint Masters).

#### Certificate in Jewish Communal Service

Lisa Berney (Third year Rabbinical student)

#### MAJCS/MAJE Joint Masters

Natalie Davidowitz  
Amanda Greene  
Jessica Lebovits  
Rachel Levin  
Hannah Rubin-Schlansky  
Mindy Sherry  
Lauren Trexler

#### MAJCS (Single Masters)

Igor Khokhlov (Just completed MARE at the NYSOE)

#### MAJCS/MBA

Matthew Lipton-Schwartz

#### MAJCS/MPA

Makenzie Means

#### MAJCS/MSW

Elenna King  
Samira Setareh  
Elana Simon

#### MAJCS/MCM

Leah Guskin

### Student Spotlight: Sarah Bassin

Sarah Bassin is a fifth year rabbinic student at Hebrew Union College who is entering her second year in the School of Jewish Communal Service. The JCS program was a natural fit as Sarah has long desired her rabbinate to be based not in a synagogue but in the realm of Jewish non-profit. After a fellowship with the American Jewish Committee in 2003 focused on Jewish-Catholic relations, Sarah developed a passion for interfaith relations in general. She continued to seek out interfaith work through experiences such as the Encounters program in Israel and a civilian diplomacy trip to Iran in November 2008. These experiences led her to focus specifically on Jewish-Muslim relations... [Read more.](#)

### Upcoming Events at the SJCS

#### Scholar in Residence and Culmination

Rabbi Louis Bernstein Scholar-in-Residence and 2010 SJCS

**Adynna Swarz** (CJCS 08 / UCLA MBA 08) and her husband Mike welcomed their first child, Eliana Serena, on May 2nd, 2010.

**Stacy Walter** (MAJCS/MCM 1999) and Steven Katz welcomed a son, Eli Simon Katz, on February 1, 2010. He is the little brother to their daughter, Riley Irit.

**Sarah Raful Whinston** (MAJCS 2005) and Rabbi Josh Whinston welcomed Mollie Helen Whinston on February 26, 2010. Additionally, Sarah is now the Executive Director of Camp Poyntelle Lewis Village. Check it out at [www.poyntelle.com](http://www.poyntelle.com).

### Employment Updates

**Jane Fantel** (CJCS 1980) assumed the position of Acting Director of the Agency for Jewish Education in San Diego as of February, 2009.

**Adrienne Muscat Swedlove** (MAJCS/MS Gerontology 1982) will be entering HUC Rabbinic School this June, after 28 years in the Jewish Communal field.

**Stacey Zackin** (MAJCS/MSW 2005) received a Masters Degree in Depth Psychology on her way to a Ph.D. from Pacifica Graduate Institute in May 2010.

**Yuri Hronsky** (MAJCS/MAJE 2001) will be the Head of School for Heschel West Day School in Agoura as of July and Rabbi Sarah Hronsky (MAJCS 2002, ordained 2003) will be the Senior Rabbi for Temple Beth Hillel in Valley Village.

**Lesley Plachta** (MAJCS/MSW 1991) will be taking a new job as the Senior Development Director for American Jewish University, managing the development department, responsible for the annual campaign. Additionally, her daughter Talia became Bat Mitzvah on May 1, 2010 at Temple Aliyah in Woodland Hills, CA.

**Deborah Shapiro Abelson** (MAJCS/MPA 2004) will be moving up the ranks of HUC to become the next National Director of Admissions and Recruitment for HUC-JIR beginning July 1. Of course, if people know anyone interested in the 2011-2012 school year they can be in touch with her directly!

**Laurel Klein** (MAJCS/MSW 2009) is helping start Eden Village Camp, a one of a kind non-denominational, Jewish environmental, sleep-away camp just off the Appalachian trail in Putnum Valley, NY. She is also coordinating the 16th annual Teva Seminar on Jewish environmental education funded by the JNF. Laurel is newly engaged to Rabbi Eli Freedman and they are moving to Philadelphia, PA where Eli will be the newest Rabbi at Rodeph Shalom.

### Professional Accomplishments

**Naomi Abelson** (MAJCS/MPA 2007) traveled to Haiti as a representative of the Union for Reform Judaism, to do a needs assessment in the wake of the January earthquakes. Read about her experiences and see pictures here: <http://blogs.rj.org/reform/2010/03/urj-on-the-ground-in-haiti.html>.

**Michelle Landau Brooks** (MAJCS/MSW 1997) recently completed the CORO Women in Leadership program in St. Louis, MO. The program is a 5 month part-time training program aimed at providing an opportunity for women to refine their personal and professional leadership competencies as well as learn about the community.

Culmination Speaker will be Nancy Kaufman.

Nancy K. Kaufman has been the Executive Director of The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of Greater Boston since 1990. JCRC serves as the public affairs arm of Boston's Jewish Federation, Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP). Before coming to the JCRC, Nancy worked for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as Deputy Director of the Governor's Office Human Resources, Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services and Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Welfare.

Ms. Kaufman was noted among the top 50 (The Forward Fifty) American Jewish leaders in The Forward Newspaper in 2000 and 2004 and has received many prestigious awards. Nancy holds a Bachelor's Degree from Brandeis University; a Master's in Social Work from Boston College, and a Master's in Public Administration, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Public Service from Northeastern University in June, 2001. Ms. Kaufman has served on the Board of the Urban League of Massachusetts, the Jewish Organizing Initiative and the Cohen Hillel Academy. Ms. Kaufman currently serves as a co-convenor of the National Jewish Social Justice Roundtable.

Nancy will be doing a Summer Salon for Jewish professionals in the LA area on Monday evening, August 2nd... place TBA.

Culmination will be on Wednesday, August 4th at 5:00pm.

## The Class of 2007: Leading the way in Continuing Education

Despite being spread across the globe, the SJCS Class of 2007 had a strong desire to continue studying together and learning from one another. To fulfill this aspiration, they began their own informal distance-learning conference call series. A few times a year, classmates come together with distinguished scholars/professionals to discuss pressing issues of the field. On occasion, they will open the discussion for all SJCS alumni to participate.

**The Class of '07 is pleased to invite you to their next call on August 11, 2010, 3:00pm EST:**

### Our Obligation as Jews: Advocacy and Social Action Rabbi David Saperstein, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

Designated in Newsweek's 2009 list as the most influential rabbi in the country and described in a Washington Post profile as "the quintessential religious lobbyist on Capitol Hill," Rabbi Saperstein represents the national Reform Jewish Movement to Congress and the Administration as the Director of the [Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism](#). Rabbi Saperstein will be leading a discussion on our role as individual Jews in addressing societal ills.

For further details or for the call-in information, please email Naomi Abelson at [naomiabelson81@gmail.com](mailto:naomiabelson81@gmail.com).

## A Covenant of Jewish Professional Leadership: Brit haMiktzoa

In May, 2008, a Jewish Communal Professionals of Southern California (JCPSC) Task Force comprised of 16 people came together to create a document that would set forth standards for professionals working in the Jewish community. The task force

learn about the community.

**Andrea Fleekop** (MAJCS/MAJE 2003) recently received the title Reform Jewish Educator (RJE) from the National Association of Temple Educators (NATE). She serves as the Director of Education at Temple Beth Torah in Fremont, California.

**Lori Klein** (MAJCS/MSW 1991) was granted the Bobbi Asimow Award for Professional Mentorship by the Jewish Communal Professionals of Southern California at their annual awards dinner on June 9, 2010. The award recognizes an individual who has served as a mentor to other Jewish communal professionals or lay leadership and who has nurtured, effectively supervised or otherwise served as a model for professionals in the Jewish communal field.

## Other Simchas

**Michele F. Prince** (MAJCS/MSW 2002) shared a piece of fun news: her niece recently had twins - the 4th generation to be born on February 28. Chances of that happening are 1 in 17 billion! The listing will make it into the Guinness World Book of Records and the local television, radio and newspaper press all picked up the article! Professionally, life is busy at the Kalsman Institute at HUC, where Michele is the director: she recently had an article on Judaism, health and healing in the Journal of Jewish Communal Service, and has another article due soon in the Journal of Religion and Health. Also, she had the honor of giving the benediction at the recent HUC-LA graduation in May.

## Congratulations to the class of 2010!

The recent graduates of the class of 2010 are leaving HUC and spreading out around the country to delve into the world of Jewish Communal Service. Below you can find information about the capstone projects they submitted in partial completion of their requirements for graduation.

**Carly Brown:** *Informing a Branding Strategy: A Competitive Analysis for the School of Jewish Communal Service.*

**Melissa Renee Cowen:** *A Central Address for the Jewish Community? How the Los Angeles Federation Can Improve its Outreach to Orthodox Jews.*

**Jenna Fields:** *The Jewish Safety Net Responds to the Economic Crisis: A Case Study of Greater Los Angeles.*

**Courtney Jacobson:** *Jewish Outdoor Adventure Education: An Exemplar of Successful Experiential Jewish Education.*

**Samantha Pohl:** *Building a Base of Reform Jewish Leadership: An Impact Study of Three Youth Programs.*

## Congratulations to these Distinguished Alumni on Receiving their Honorary Doctorate Degrees

**On May 17, 2010 (4 Sivan 5770), the faculty and the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion conferred the Honorary degree of Doctor of Jewish Communal Service upon:**

Marla Eglash Abraham  
Ron A. Astor, Ph.D.  
Karen S. Bernstein  
Dale Glasser  
George M. Goodwin, Ph.D.

professionals working in the Jewish community. The task force was one element of a five-part relationship between JCPSC and the School of Jewish Communal Service organized around the SJCS's 40th anniversary. The development of what is now called The Covenant of Jewish Professional Leadership-Brit HaMiktsva took place over seven task force meetings from May 2008 to March 2009.

This document is just the beginning of a much deeper process to legitimize the field of Jewish communal service as a profession: it provides the foundation for the creation of a true profession by defining standards of behavior and values by which to operate. It provides future Jewish communal professionals something to aspire to and all Jewish communal professionals a field, or profession, of which they can be proud.

**You can access the Brit haMiktsva here:**

[http://www.jcpsocal.org/Brit\\_HaMiktsva.html](http://www.jcpsocal.org/Brit_HaMiktsva.html)

**Read the full Journal of Jewish Communal Service article by Marsha Rothpan (MAJCS/MSW 1994)**, chair of the JCPSC Task Force and leader in the creation of the Brit.

[www.bjpa.org/Publications/downloadPublication.cfm?PublicationID=4429](http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/downloadPublication.cfm?PublicationID=4429)

Use the HUC-JIR Online Alumni Directory Looking for an old friend or lost classmate? You can find any HUC alum in the online directory. Simply go to [www.huc.edu/alumni/private/](http://www.huc.edu/alumni/private/). The directory is password-protected. For the username and password, please contact Jessica Ingram at [SJCSAlumni@huc.edu](mailto:SJCSAlumni@huc.edu).

Once there, please make sure that your own information is correct. Have you moved, changed jobs, married, or had children? Your entry might be outdated. Updates you send to the SJCS Alumni Association are shared with the national directory maintainers, but it is a separate database.

Michelle Krottinger Wolf

Additionally, the **Sherut L'Am Award** was conferred upon alumni Barry and Debra Cohn, acknowledged as "Communal Leaders and Supporters of Jewish Education, Jewish Communal Life and the State of Israel."

## The Berman Jewish Policy Archives

We are proud to announce that the Berman Jewish Policy Archive (<http://bjpa.org/>) will be making HUC-JIR masters theses/projects available online! As of now, we don't have the resources to scan all of the bound versions, so we're only accepting electronic versions (Word or PDF). If you have your thesis/project available in electronic format, please send it to Prof. Sarah Benor at [sbenor.huc@gmail.com](mailto:sbenor.huc@gmail.com).

## HUC-JIR Alumni E-Learning

You can explore Online Alumni resources and Learning Opportunities at the HUC-JIR E-Learning site:

<http://www.huc.edu/de/alumni/>

You can also write for the alumni e-learning blog!

The Department of E-Learning has asked for volunteers out in the field who would be interested in writing for the alumni blog. If you are working on an interesting project, or feel that you have an interesting point of view to share, we'd love to hear from you!

## SJCS Alumni Assoc. Executive Committee

Esther Cohen, Chair

Andi Milens, Vice Chair, HUC-JIR Alumni Council Rep.

Alan Ronkin, HUC-JIR Alumni Council Rep.

Lori Lander Goodman, Past Chair

Joy Wasserman, National Director of Alumni Affairs

Richard Siegel, ex-officio

Lori Klein, ex-officio

Jessica Ingram, Coordinator of Alumni Affairs

## SJCS Working Groups are Developing!

Interested in getting involved? The SJCS Alumni Association is looking to expand its leadership with the creation of a number of different working groups and committees. Each group has broad overarching goals, and group members will have many

opportunities to shape and direct the groups' strategic directions.

### Alumni Continuing/Professional Education

Have a great idea for a professional development or learning opportunity? Interested in helping to create a nationwide day of learning for any and all SJCS alumni? Interested in developing smaller learning sessions for alumni in various fields? Work to develop learning opportunities that will keep our alumni engaged and at the top of their fields!

### Student Outreach

Help us build stronger relationships with current students and recent grads, and develop a stronger alumni network! There are numerous opportunities already on the table, but they need your personal touch!

### Recruitment

Know college students or recent grads who are thinking about a career in Jewish Communal Service and who might be a great fit for the SJCS? Interested in serving as an ambassador for the School to the public? Serve as a member of the Recruitment Committee and watch our school continue to grow, attracting the



best and the brightest!

**Annual Campaign**

With the outpouring of support from Alumni for our Alumni campaign, we are now poised to develop an annual campaign of which alumni can be a part, continuing to support student scholarships for the SJCS.

To volunteer for a project, if you want more information, or if you have any questions, contact Jessica at [SJCSAlumni@huc.edu](mailto:SJCSAlumni@huc.edu)

[Visit www.huc.edu](http://www.huc.edu)

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