



## The Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Memorial Campaign

*Since the tragic loss of our friend, teacher, leader, and President, Rabbi Aaron D. Panken, Ph.D., hundreds of members of the community whose lives he touched and whose callings he inspired, reached out with a desire to ensure his remarkable example lives on. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) has been working in partnership with his family to fittingly honor his profound impact on the institution, its students, and the Reform Movement. **Today, we invite you to help us sustain Rabbi Panken's legacy and amplify the impact of his life on future generations.***

### An Immeasurable Impact

Throughout his time at the College-Institute, first as an ace student, then as a beloved faculty member, respected dean, and visionary President, Rabbi Panken modelled the extraordinary qualities of leadership the College-Institute seeks to instill in its graduates. Intellectual precision and courage. Creativity and compassion. Integrity and warmth. He listened well. He galvanized every student who came to him stymied by their current project, every colleague who wanted to talk a problem through. He knew that HUC-JIR's mandate was to train religious leaders, yes, but also to shape ethical leaders in difficult times. He encouraged each graduate to find their path to useful service, and to prioritize friendships and family. Rabbi Panken invigorated every person whose path he crossed with bold aspirations for the institution's next chapter and optimism for the Jewish future.

As President of HUC-JIR, he was dedicated to building a thriving center of education, where progressive Jewish professionals and scholars would develop into the transformative leaders the world increasingly requires. Rabbi Panken put people—his students, colleagues, and community members—at the center of his agenda.

He invested to ensure that the best and brightest would come to HUC-JIR to embrace their callings as the Reform Movement's leaders in synagogues, schools, board rooms, and communities across the globe. And he recruited world-class faculty members—including three newly tenured positions—entrusting them to steward thousands of years of Jewish history and heritage and make it vital and relevant to today's students. The result: a global center of innovation for Jewish life and learning and a vital resource to thought leaders the world over.



## An Opportunity to Carry this Legacy Forward

With eyes firmly focused on the future, Rabbi Panken worked to position the institution to nurture talent for generations beyond his tenure. At the time of his passing, he was leading the development of large-scale plans to bolster HUC-JIR's endowment with the necessary resources to ensure the College-Institute's endurance and growth. He recognized that an investment in the change-makers that make HUC-JIR the pre-eminent institution of Jewish higher education, would pay off in a strong Jewish future. **The establishment of endowed Professorships in Rabbi Panken's memory will both honor the work he began and ensure that it comes to fruition.**

Four endowed *Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professorships* — one on each of HUC-JIR's four campuses in New York, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem — will ensure that HUC-JIR can continue to sustain and enhance its academic excellence. The Panken Professorships will attract leading Judaic scholars and academicians and students with the intellectual, spiritual, and leadership capacity to build the Jewish future.

Rabbi Panken was a teacher first, a gifted communicator and conversation-starter, a mentor who managed to touch and influence countless students so indelibly. He also made faculty recruitment a cornerstone of his HUC presidency, luring world-class teachers—including three newly tenured positions—and entrusting them to make our ancient liturgy, poetry, stories, and text relevant and resonant year after year. Endowed professorships are a fitting tribute because Rabbi Panken always made time — despite his heavy schedule as President — to instruct in a hands-on way, savoring the robust discussions that animated his classrooms. His leadership attracted HUC-JIR's second largest incoming first-year class in the last decade.

The *Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professorships* will be carefully selected by future HUC-JIR presidents to ensure that the faculty members and their disciplines best reflect the values that made Rabbi Panken a singular leader for HUC-JIR and the Reform Movement.

The named professors may be both emerging scholars at the outset of promising careers or existing members of HUC-JIR's renowned faculty. Each endowed Professorship will support teaching, research, and publication work, ensuring that HUC-JIR recruits and retains the most gifted teachers and scholars to not only instruct, mentor, and inspire future generations, but also enrich the broader field of Jewish Studies. HUC-JIR will acknowledge the creation of the *Panken Professorships* in its printed materials, in their research and lectures, and on its website.

## Why this Campaign Matters for HUC-JIR, our Community, and You

At the College-Institute, Rabbi Panken found his calling and life's work and joy as a champion of the Reform Movement and in the development of future generations of Jewish leaders. HUC-JIR was founded to realize the vision of a vibrant Jewish community firmly grounded in the modern world. Its four campuses are home to world-renowned faculty who guide students to find fulfilling careers as rabbis, cantors, educators, nonprofit professionals, and scholars, so they can reinforce the bedrock of progressive Judaism in North America and Israel: carrying on its vital traditions and innovating and leading community change. The support provided through the Campaign not only honors Rabbi Panken's life, it also invests in the College-Institute's greatest resource—thought leaders and interpreters of the rich and varied Jewish past who will lead Judaism into the unknown future with creativity, insight, and resolve—while providing a bridge to HUC-JIR's next leader who will take up the mantle.

## Join Us

Rabbi Panken's life has made an enduring impression on the classmates with whom he learned, students whom he inspired, faculty members with whom he collaborated, and partners across the world with whom he paved Judaism's path forward. To reflect his far-reaching legacy, the Panken Memorial Campaign is designed to be inclusive in participation and enduring in impact. Every person whose life he enriched is invited to participate: classmates, teachers, students, advisors, and many other members of the HUC-JIR, Reform and broader Jewish community. For this reason, pledges may be paid over three to five years, and a blended gift—which combines current and planned giving—may help our community members make a more significant gift than they thought possible.

Gifts can be made online (<https://donate.huc.edu/panken>) or by completing the attached pledge form.

**So far, over 480 members of our community have contributed nearly \$7 million toward the Campaign goal of \$12 million.** The community's involvement is not only a tribute to Rabbi Panken's impact but a signal of their belief in the institutions he helped to build and the promise and potential of the transformational leaders he taught. Now, more than ever, we need the leaders whom Rabbi Panken helped form: wise stewards of our Jewish identity, models of our values, spiritual guides through the milestones of Jewish life, and changemakers who will rise to the challenges that we face today and those we have not yet imagined.

## HUC-JIR: Leading the Way for Progressive Judaism

*Founded in 1875, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is the nation's premier institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism. HUC-JIR educates individuals for service to the Reform Movement and the Jewish people worldwide as rabbis, cantors, educators, and nonprofit management professionals, and offers graduate programs to scholars and clergy of all faiths.*

For nearly 150 years, HUC-JIR has served as the backbone of the Jewish Reform Movement: a pioneer that continues to lead the way today. Since its founding, the College-Institute has:

- ◆ Ordained the first female rabbis in both North America and Israel, and later welcomed the first African American and transgender rabbis to their ranks.
- ◆ Founded the first cantorial school in North America—one that continues to be without peer—and ordained the first female cantor.
- ◆ Built the largest academic faculty of Jewish outside of Israel; recent additions to the faculty include highly-regarded academics whose Ph.D.'s were earned at Princeton, Columbia, Stanford and Johns Hopkins.
- ◆ Launched the HUC Press and the Hebrew Union College Annual -- highly respected beacons of academic quality and creativity.
- ◆ Preserved the treasures of Judaica and the repository of the American Jewish experience in the second largest Jewish library and archives in the world, recognized internationally as among the finest to be found anywhere.
- ◆ Facilitated interfaith exchange, encouraging scholars of all faiths to learn from these extraordinary resources.
- ◆ Forged enduring bonds between Israel and North America through immersive study and cross-cultural exchange, connecting American students to the Jewish State and nurturing progressive values on our Jerusalem campus.

### Our Impact

These milestones have translated into worldwide impact—impact that has made the Reform Movement the largest Jewish denomination in North America, spread progressive values across the globe, preserved Jewish tradition and history, and catalyzed changemakers across faiths to embody *Tikkun Olam*.

Our rabbis and cantors will collectively reach more than **10 million people** through congregational leadership roles and sustain synagogues for more than **900 communities** in **50 countries** across the world.

Our Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management alumni change the lives of more than **7 million people** through nonprofit sector leadership and services.

Our School of Education alumni guide Jewish learning for over **200,000 children and adults**.

Alumni of our interfaith Pines School of Graduate Studies teach in more than **140 colleges, universities and seminaries**.



# The Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Memorial Campaign

## *Pledge Agreement*

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby contribute to Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, which shall be used to support the establishment of the Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professorships.

This gift will be payable over \_\_\_\_\_ years with payments to occur according to the schedule shown below. Please send me annual reminders.

\$ Amount	Payment will be made on or before (date)
_____	_____
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_____	_____

This contribution will be used to endow the Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professors to annually support the teaching, research and publication activities of these faculty members.

If at any time, in the discretion of the Governors of the College-Institute, the Fund shall no longer be necessary for the stated purpose, they shall have the authority to designate its use for a purpose that closely parallels my original intent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
For the College-Institute  
Lissie Diring  
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Official Donor Name for Recognition Purposes  
(please complete or indicate that you wish to remain anonymous)

Please email signed copy to: [akann@huc.edu](mailto:akann@huc.edu) or return by mail to:

**Panken Memorial Campaign**  
HUC-JIR  
c/o Andrea Kann  
One West Fourth Street  
New York, NY 10012-1186