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# NEWS RELEASE

## Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York Expands Community Relations Efforts as Amidah Albany Transitions Its Mission to Federation

**(ALBANY, N.Y.)** After three years of impactful advocacy and community engagement, Amidah Albany will transition to continuing its mission and key initiatives under the umbrella of Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York (JFNENY). This transition ensures that the important work pioneered by Amidah will be sustained and expanded through the Federation's resources, reach, and community leadership. As part of this effort, the Federation is strengthening its commitment to combating anti-Jewish hate, advancing civic engagement, and building a more connected and resilient Jewish community.

Amidah Albany, formed in the aftermath of the October 7 terrorist attacks in Israel and the subsequent explosion of antisemitism in communities around the world, is a grassroots organization devoted to standing up for the Capital Region Jewish community, advocating for Israel, and fighting antisemitism however and whenever it occurs.

To preserve and advance the mission that has guided Amidah Albany since its founding, **JFNENY Board Chair Mindy Holland has established the new Amidah Committee of Federation.** The committee will be chaired by Federation board members and Amidah co-founders **Deborah Zamer** and **Dee Levy** and will be largely comprised of Amidah Albany's current membership, including original co-founder **Simona Fish**. Under their leadership, the committee will remain dedicated to supporting Israel, combating anti-Jewish hate, and ensuring that the voice of the Jewish community remains strong throughout the region.

JFNENY is proud to announce that original Amidah co-founder **Laura Weisblatt** has been named **Director of Civic Engagement and Education for the Jewish Federation of NENY**. A longtime educator, mentor, and community leader, Weisblatt has led the efforts of Amidah for the past three years. In her new role with JFNENY, she will oversee community-wide education, civic mobilization, and initiatives to combat anti-Jewish hate, including antisemitism and antizionism. She is among the first professionals hired

nationwide through **Frontline**, a historic Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) initiative designed to strengthen local advocacy, community relations, and efforts to address rising antisemitism.

The JFNA **Frontline** initiative is a groundbreaking $35 million effort backed by 25 philanthropic funders. It aims to add 100 dedicated community relations and advocacy professionals to local teams across 120 federations in North America. These roles are designed to address the dramatic rise in antisemitism through local and state advocacy, stronger engagement with K-12 and higher education institutions, and deeper interfaith and intergroup partnerships.

"We are thrilled to welcome Laura to this essential new role and to carry forward Amidah's important mission within the Federation," said **Rob Kovach**, President and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York. "This investment strengthens our ability to educate, advocate, and build partnerships throughout the region at a time when those efforts are more important than ever."

"I am deeply honored to step into this role as part of a vital national movement," said **Laura Weisblatt**. "Building coalitions, educating our neighbors, and advocating for our community's safety and dignity have never been more important. I look forward to working alongside our local civic, interfaith, and educational partners to push back against bias and ensure that Northeastern New York remains a welcoming home for all."

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**About Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York**

Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York is the area's central agency for meeting Jewish needs and articulating Jewish concerns in the Capital Region, Israel, nationally, and around the world. More information is available at www.jewishfedny.org or on Facebook or Instagram.