

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2024

# JEWISH FEDERATION NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER INDIANAPOLIS.



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 Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis

## JEWISH FEDERATION NEWS

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The mission of the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis is to promote the vision of a vibrant, engaged, inclusive, and sustainable Jewish community by serving as its central philanthropic, planning, community engagement, and unifying partner.



We are in the midst of an exciting season filled with big programs and big transitions that are yielding big, positive impact for our community!

In 2023, you told us that you expect the Indianapolis Jewish Federation to take more leadership in our community and to carry us all into the future. We hear you and are striving to do exactly that. But, of course, we cannot and should not do it alone. So, we partner with our outstanding Jewish agencies and institutions to lift us all to new heights.

I am very excited to work with all the new executive professional colleagues across our city including Rachel Katz at Jewish Family Services, Sam Dubrinsky at the Jewish Community Center, David Sklar at the Jewish Community Relations Council, and Lori Halperin at Hasten Hebrew Academy. We carefully nurture these critical partnerships and value the strength that results from them.

On behalf of us all, we offer our most sincere gratitude to Lori Moss, who is retiring after 40 years of Jewish communal service to Indianapolis. Since I first walked in the door, Lori has been more than a colleague. As she has for so many others, Lori has been my friend, mentor and confidant. I know you join me in wishing her well as she takes on new responsibilities with her family. (Read more on page 18.)

As I finish my third year with the Jewish Federation, we continue to reestablish ourselves in the Federation's traditional roles of convening our community together, planning for our future, and providing both the direction and resources to get us there.

This year, we have brought the community together in so many meaningful ways from Hamantaschen tastings to major donor dinners, from cooking demonstrations to community holiday observances. Our programming in the second half of the year has been extraordinary. It has included a Legacy community celebration, a Women Philanthropy program with a social media influencer, and an October 7 remembrance program and more. We are also proud of the big programs that are not just put on by the Federation, such as the Ann Katz Festival of Books and Arts, the BJ Novak program, and even small but mighty touchpoints such as when Congregation B'nai Torah brought in a Kosher meat truck – all of this is done so that we can thrive together as a flourishing and diverse Jewish community. None of this can happen without your support.

I am also so proud of the way our community has stepped up financially. After 15 years of incremental growth, it truly feels like we have turned a corner – with increased and new gifts, and newly engaged people across all walks of life. Big ideas often require big support. If you haven't made your gift, there's still time. If you want to talk about your gift, please reach out to me. I am happy to meet with you personally and tell you about all the things happening across this community and how you can get involved. Thank you for everything you do!



*Marc Swatez*  
**MARC SWATEZ**  
Chief Executive Officer

## ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

# Make Your Annual Campaign Gift Before Year End

As we near the end of 2024, we reflect on the past year. In a post-October 7 world, we as Jewish people face extraordinary challenges that demand new responses here in Indianapolis, in Israel and around the globe.

Some of these challenges include the staggering rise of antisemitism in our own backyards, and on our local college campuses. Safety and security needs have greatly risen, which has increased our investment in bolstering security at Jewish institutions, while also providing guidance in security practices and facilitating trainings. At the same time, we have experienced a notable increase in our community's desire and need for togetherness through impactful engagement opportunities.

As a Federation, we are providing more meaningful ways for our community to connect Jewishly, in a time when people feel continuously isolated and afraid to just be who they are. More and more emerging leaders have raised their hands to seek opportunities for involvement, which is why we are providing multiple leadership programs to help cultivate the next generation.

In addition, new and increased needs in services for our elderly, youth and families must be addressed. As the ongoing tensions in Israel continue to deepen, the demands for humanitarian and social services are only intensifying.

In the wake of these times, we need your support through your philanthropic contribution to the Jewish Federation's 2024 Annual Campaign. Your transformative leadership is essential in building an interconnected and thriving Jewish community in Indianapolis, Israel and around the world.

This year's Campaign theme, **The Time is Now**, reminds us that there has never been a more crucial moment for us as Jews to support and invest in our people. Your meaningful gift will continue to be the driving force of our Jewish community, allowing us to answer our greatest challenges and provide us with a strong Jewish future.

So as you bring out your menorah this Chanukah, we hope you share your light with our community by supporting the Jewish Federation's 2024 Annual Campaign.

This is your moment. **The Time is Now** to make your impact.

Rebecca Schalit-Newman  
JFGI Chief Development Officer



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A PUBLICATION OF THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER INDIANAPOLIS

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Visit [www.jewishIndianapolis.org/donate](http://www.jewishIndianapolis.org/donate) to make a meaningful gift today!

## P2G Western Galilee Academic Delegation

In September, the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council and Jewish Federation hosted a delegation of six members from Western Galilee Academic College in Akko, Israel through Partnership2Gether Western Galilee. The delegation included Nissim Ben David, the college president and an accomplished economics professor; Yossi Segal, the chairman of the executive committee with a distinguished background in the Mossad; Professor Muhammad Suwaed, an expert on Arab society and politics in Israel and the Middle East; and Dr. Chen Ryder, a cognitive neuropsychologist specializing in mental health research. Their research includes the implications of teaching Hebrew in the Arab sector, crime rankings in Arab and Jewish localities, voting patterns of Arab citizens, the effects of Operation Iron Swords on Israeli life, post-war policy recommendations, and economic activities of governmental and banking institutions. The delegation's visit included panels at Purdue University and Indiana University, as well as meetings with local leaders in Indianapolis and professors and faculty from Butler University and IU Indianapolis.



## Hundreds Attend Supernova Documentary Film Showing

The Indianapolis Jewish Community came out to bear witness during a viewing of Supernova: The Music Festival Massacre. JCRC President, Eli Isaacs welcomed everyone and Beth-El Zedeck Rabbi Hal Schevitz framed the evening with an eloquent d'var torah. The audience was moved by the stories told on screen of festival goers and their families. Following the film, a panel helped viewers process what they saw. Hosted by former JCRC Executive Director, Jacob Markey, featuring Rabbi Brett Krichiver, the Senior Rabbi of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, and Delphine Gamburg, Ph.D., the Deputy Consul General of the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest, the panel discussed how to move forward after trauma, mental health resources, and answered audience questions about the film and life after October 7.



## Indy Young Leaders Travel to Budapest for Leadership Summit



Andrew Steele, David Flaumenhaft, and Lauren Suriel joined the Young Adult Seminar in Budapest, Hungary in September to discuss Jewish identity and peoplehood with other participants from our Partnership2Gether region in Israel and Hungary.

# October 7 Remembrance

Over 1,000 people came together in person and on Livestream on Monday, Oct. 7 for a time of remembrance in a community-wide commemoration to pay tribute to the fallen, honor heroism in the face of darkness, unite the community, and reaffirm our community's strength and commitment to Israel. Speakers during the commemoration included Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb, Jewish community leaders, Jewish clergy, Israeli community members, and former Israeli Defense Forces soldiers.

In addition to the commemoration, there was an interpretation of the Nova Music Festival site, featuring the Israeli flower and posters of hostages still held in Gaza, as well as an art exhibit from Israeli artists and their reflections of the October 7 attack.



Attendees toured an interpretation of the Nova Festival site, which had hostage signs and Israeli flowers in bloom.



Governor Eric Holcomb, who was the keynote speaker, talked about his support for Jews around the globe, as well as his emotional connection to the people of Israel.



More than 800 people in attendance held up candles as Cantor Melissa Cohen sang a rendition of a famous Les Miserables song for the victims and all those affected by the October 7 attack.



Local Jewish community leaders and Governor Eric Holcomb embraced as Cantor Aviva Marer led the room in song with Oseh Shalom.



# WE ARE ONE

## Stories of Volunteerism in Israel Since Oct. 7

Members of the Indianapolis Jewish Community have generously donated both time and resources to help those in need in Israel since the war broke out in October 2023. Read stories about the work Hoosiers have done in Israel and why they decided to take action.

The work of volunteers benefits the many, especially when it comes to hunger in Israel.

Leket Israel has been on the ground after October 7, working hard to make sure that fields get harvested and food is distributed to citizens who need it. As the IDF continues to fight for Israel, many of its soldiers were drafted from farms in the region to fight. Leket has worked tirelessly, but not alone. According to their website, some 60,000 volunteers have come from all over the world to assist in the fight to get citizens the food they need.

Those volunteers have included Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis' Board President Helen Kurlander Goldstein. While she was in Israel visiting her son, Kurlander Goldstein volunteered with Leket to assist the organization in food distribution. She was fascinated that Leket is pivoting to meet the growing needs after

the start of the war, detailing her thoughts in an email sent to The Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis in July of this year.

Kurlander Goldstein says, "Leket has made a 180 degree change in their service model to meet the increasing needs of the Israeli people in the last few months as a result of the war." She went on to say that instead of Israeli farmers donating their extra produce for distribution by Leket, the organization is now buying the produce to support the farmers in this time of need.

"The farmers don't have the manpower to harvest and ship their own produce, and therefore can't afford to work their own fields. Leket's payments to the farmers are keeping them solvent during the war, all while continuing to provide food for the poor and displaced in Israel - both Jewish and Arab."

She mentioned that working alongside



Helen Kurlander Goldstein and Asaf Goldstein sorting potatoes at the Leket warehouse.



Helen Kurlander Goldstein and her son, Eitan Goldstein with Leket staff.



Helen Kurlander Goldstein and Asaf Goldstein at Partnership2Gether.

Leket and being in Israel has opened many people's eyes to the true situation. "It's amazing how people are coming together through this."

Jeff Linkon and his wife, Sarit, also volunteered with food production in Israel, though not directly with Leket. Linkon described what it was like to watch so many people coming together to help and cited a family connection that made the situation all the more real for him.

"They don't tell you until you get on the bus [where you are going], and then you learn the itinerary for the day. So we get to Jerusalem, we get on the bus, and we find out that we're going to this lettuce farm just outside of Beit Shemesh. My

sister's kibbutz is on the other side of the street. About a half an hour into our work, I find out that my nephew had worked at the lettuce farm after the army for an extended period of time. Post October 7th, with all the challenges and financial challenges that businesses have had, [the farm] had lately laid off staff."

Linkon and his wife were amazed that just after his nephew had been called up, they had seemingly been called to take his place. "This can only happen in a country like Israel. Here we are volunteering. We could have gone anywhere in the country. We could have been assigned anywhere in the country, and we ended up replacing my nephew."

Leket and other organizations are finding that the influx of Jews wanting to help with the situation within Israel has really been impactful. In a blog post, Leket said, "Volunteers find a unique opportunity to make an immediate difference, fostering a sense of community and purpose that keeps them coming back."

Benefiting communities is what Nonie Vonnegut-Gabovitch saw with Leket, too. "The most memorable aspect of my time volunteering with Leket was meeting and working alongside people who had come from all over the world to help Israel and her people. The common denominator was that we all witnessed this tragedy that Israel was suffering and wanted to do something to try to ease the burden of our brothers and sisters," she said. "I met both Jews and non-Jews from all walks of life, some coming for a short time, others for an extended period, and even those for whom this was their third or fourth trip to



Nonie Vonnegut-Gabovitch volunteering for Leket.

volunteer their time."

The fact that Leket had also attracted non-Jewish volunteers was very meaningful to Vonnegut-Gabovitch. "I was especially moved by a very young non-Jewish woman who came to volunteer, knowing nobody. She told me that she felt a strong pull to aid this nation she had admired since childhood."

As Israel stands strong in the face of continued attack from Hamas, Leket and its volunteers are also standing strong in helping where it matters - on the ground to feed the nation. Vonnegut-Gabovitch sums her experience up by reflecting on how volunteering can really make a difference.

"It was a reminder that there are many wonderful people pulling for Israel because of what [the country] stands for."

The country of Israel stands for hope.

**"The most memorable aspect of my time volunteering with Leket was meeting and working alongside people who had come from all over the world to help Israel and her people."**

**Nonie Vonnegut-Gabovitch**

# Local Lions Gear Up for January Conference



Indianapolis Lion of Judahs, who are heading to the International Lion of Judah Conference in Atlanta in January, came together at Women's Philanthropy Chair Linda Mordoh's home to hear exciting updates about the upcoming conference. JFGI President Helen Kurlander Goldstein was also recognized as Indianapolis' 2025 Kipnis Wilson Friedland Award Winner.

# JFGI Scholarship Window Is Open!

The Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis (JFGI) is opening its 2025 scholarship and grant application window. Each year, JFGI awards academic and experiential scholarships and grants to community members, thanks to the generosity of donors who have established funds to support these opportunities in perpetuity.

These scholarships demonstrate a commitment by donors to the community's young people and to the future. They increase access to meaningful experiences such as organized trips to Israel or Jewish summer camps thanks to the Rothbard family; and they offer support for students seeking to further their education through the Friedmann, Perel, Dorfman, Pescovitz, and Grimberg families. In addition to these funds, JFGI also offers support for youth experiences by partnering with the national One Happy Camper program and through the Federation's own Israel Experience Fund.

In 2024, nearly \$18,000 was awarded to individuals and families through scholarship and grant awards, making it one of the highest totals distributed in the history of the Federation.

But the most important part of scholarships is the impact they have on the lives of recipients. Scholarship providers talk about their vision for helping in an area of their own interest, such as for foreign-born students living in Indiana, STEM studies, or promoting continuing education for women.

The family of one 2024 camp scholarship recipient shared that the scholarship "helped [the camper] live her best life at camp...at her happy place...thank you for helping make that happen."

Separately, an academic scholarship recipient shared that their scholarship served as a "powerful reminder...[and] message of

unity and support" from the Jewish community. In light of the events of October 7 and facing the rise of antisemitism on campus, this student felt empowered by their award, and he is now volunteering regularly with a Jewish organization at his college.

The JFGI scholarship program helps families and individuals have meaningful Jewish and educational experiences. Visit [jewishindianapolis.org/scholarships](http://jewishindianapolis.org/scholarships) to learn more about the program and begin the application process. The deadline for submission is Feb. 28, 2025, so don't wait, and apply early to ensure your information is received on time.

Contact [scholarships@jfgi.org](mailto:scholarships@jfgi.org) for more information.



A Rothbard camp scholarship recipient enjoying her experience at GUCI this past summer.



Wraparound services from Eskenazi Health do more than treat illness. They chart a course for preventive care, ensure families have access to nutritious food, and provide a sense of partnership and advocacy. According to Ileana and her husband Eddie: "Aside from helping with our health situations, Eskenazi Health has been tremendous in connecting us to other resources and making sure our family is OK."

Eskenazi Health was recently named Indiana's #1 hospital for community benefit and health equity by the Lown Institute. Thanks in part to community partners and philanthropy, we are helping families get **beyond barriers**.

**ESKENAZI HEALTH**  
FOUNDATION  
[eskenazihealthfoundation.org](http://eskenazihealthfoundation.org)



## SAVE THE DATE

*Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis Annual Campaign Kickoff and Donor Thank You.*

*Featuring The Challah Prince, Idan Chabarov, who will lead a Challah Workshop.*

*6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 6*  
*Laikin Auditorium, Max & Mae Simon Jewish Community Campus.*

*More information coming soon.*



# Donor, Program Chairs Reflect on the Importance of the ATID Leadership Program

The Prystowsky ATID program (meaning “future” in Hebrew) provides a meaningful educational experience that develops emerging leaders of the Indianapolis Jewish community. The first cohort started 12 years ago and is currently in its sixth class.

The program is generously funded by Bonnie and Eric Prystowsky, who have been community philanthropists for decades.

Bonnie says they have always believed in encouraging young people to find their passion and be involved in shaping the community. As a clinician, teacher and mentor, Eric has worked his entire career fostering leaders in his field. That passion, coupled with their philanthropic work, was a perfect match for supporting this program.

“The majority of the people involved in the program have been committed and have gone on to take leadership roles in the Jewish community and community at-large, which is very heartening,” she said. “The federation has been showing a great deal of commitment and success in this program.”

And this year’s ATID chairs, Barry Wormser and Marlo Katz, who were part of 2015-16’s ATID IV, have been instrumental leaders because of the ATID program.

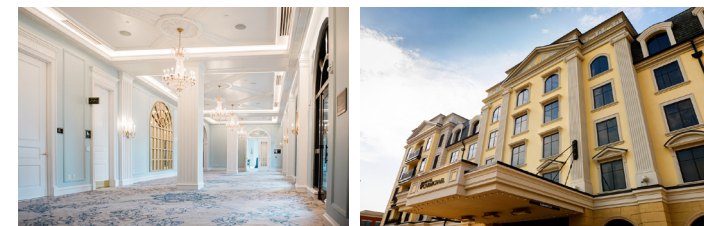
“The people you connect with and the relationships you build are so important,” Wormser said. “ATID exposed me to the interworking of the Jewish Federation and its agencies and how someone like me can be a contributor in the community.”

Katz said her class was incredibly close and gave her a network of people that she wouldn’t have necessarily known in the community. Both Katz and Wormser want the next class of ATID to learn how the program can complement their existing work and expand their knowledge base to pursue more interests in the community.

They said the ATID 6 cohort already has good community knowledge and experience. They are impressed with their enthusiasm and leadership skills. They hope the class finds their path to leadership success in the Jewish community and they cannot wait to see what’s next for them.

As Bonnie looks to the ATID 6 class and all future leaders, she says she learned so much from observing the brilliant and talented leaders before her. She learned how to lead, about the work the Jewish community does, how to listen and hear what other people are saying, and how to engage in meaningful ways. She took those tools and found her own passion for what she could do to help bring the community to another level. She said she received more than she put into her work and hopes the next class of ATID feels the same way when they complete the program.

“A program like this is valuable at any time but right now at this point in our history, with the rise in antisemitism, we are once again facing hostility and adversity around the world and here in the US,” Bonnie said. “It is important and necessary for the Jewish community to educate our people and provide a blueprint on how to combat the hate that is around us. It’s important that the community and world see that we are standing together. It is a crucial time for all of us to stand up.”



## ELEVATE YOUR EVENT TO NEW HEIGHTS

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## Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation & Herbert Simon Family Foundation presents Justice and Judaism: A Fireside Chat with **B.J. NOVAK**



Moderated by Rabbi Brett Krichiver and Cantor Aviva Marer  
Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 6:30 p.m.  
Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation  
VIP reception to follow.



# Maurer Koach Program Cohort Travels to Europe

From Sept. 12-22, the second Maurer Koach Program cohort travelled together to Krakow, Warsaw and Budapest, seeing firsthand the history of the Jews in the Holocaust, juxtaposed with inspiring stories of empowerment and Jewish growth in each city.

Solemn visits to the death camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau and concentration camp Majdanek were mixed with amazing and uplifting interactions with the Jewish communities of Krakow, Warsaw and Budapest. Jewish life is thriving in each place. The cohort celebrated Shabbat dinner at the Krakow JCC, packed food for Ukrainian refugees, and heard the shofar and sang Hatikvah, the Israeli national anthem, with another tour group from Israel in Majdanek, next to the site where 18,400 Jews were murdered in a single day. In Warsaw they met with the Israeli Ambassador to Poland Yacov Livne, and Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich for updates about the war and also how the Polish Jewish community is growing seemingly every day.

A highlight of the trip was the time spent in Budapest. The Maurer Koach group joined the Horizons Young Leadership Seminar attended by a diverse group of leaders from Indianapolis, other US cities, Budapest and Israel’s Western Galilee. Participants built new bonds as they learned together at the Merkaz; Israel Cultural Institute and toured Jewish Budapest. The Maurer Koach program participants were especially moved while hearing stories from their Israeli peers about life since October 7, serving in the reserves, parenting while being evacuated and understanding the politics that underlie the current situation.

There was not a day where someone was not moved by an experience or story that they heard. Many members of this cohort expressed themselves through writing poetry and prose, which can be found at [www.jewishindianapolis.org/jfjgi-blogs](http://www.jewishindianapolis.org/jfjgi-blogs). Participants came home with a new or renewed sense of Jewish community and a deep desire to get involved. The Maurer Koach program has three more sessions, and in each one they will continue to unpack our trip, work on skills and also look to how this group can get involved in the Federation and Indianapolis Jewish community.



Koach group crossing the Danube River in Budapest, Hungary.



Koach program at the entrance of Auschwitz - Birkenau concentration camp.



Koach program visits the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial, proudly displaying Israeli flags.



The group enjoys a meaningful Shabbat meal at the Krakow JCC.



# JEWISH COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF LEGACY HIGHLIGHTS INVESTMENTS IN THE FUTURE

On Sept. 24, 2024, JFGI hosted its annual Celebration of Legacy at the Arthur M. Glick Jewish Community Center. The event highlighted updates on the Federation's endowment and planned giving efforts, recognized several new agency and partner leaders, and celebrated the Jewish community's 500+ legacy donors who have made commitments to sustain the Jewish community through Life and Legacy.

The evening culminated in the presentation of the prestigious Or L'Dor ("a light unto the generations") award to Alan and Linda Cohen. The Cohens were recognized for their decades of philanthropic contributions in support of the Federation, Congregation Beth-El Zedeck, and the JCC, among other entities. At this year's event, though, there was additional appreciation of their most recent significant contribution: the endowment of their ongoing support of the Federation's administration of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's "PJ Library" program throughout central Indiana.

As Linda shared in her remarks, "[PJ Library] does far more than provide books—it nurtures curiosity, strengthens Jewish identity and fosters a love for storytelling among young families... Together,

we are ensuring that the next generation carries forward a strong sense of their heritage, values and community."

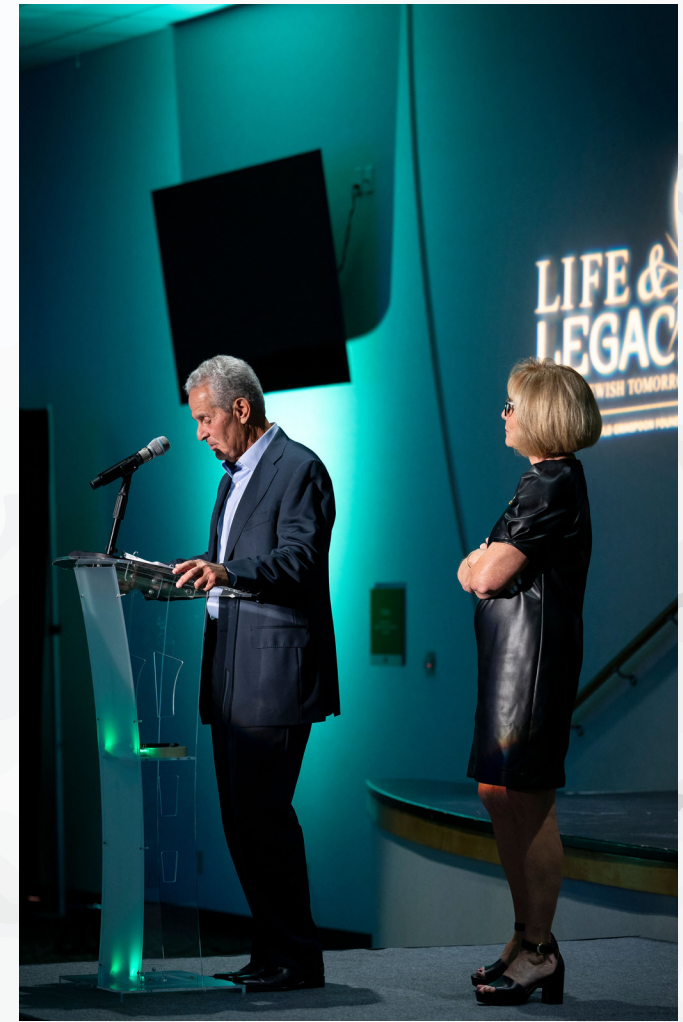
The Cohens' investment in children represents Alan's belief that, despite the challenges facing the Jewish community today, "we should not abandon our Jewishness, but embrace it and do everything that we can to support important organizations." He reinforced how PJ Library "is an important and meaningful program...[which] our community needs to support and nurture."

The Cohens have made a profound impact in the Indianapolis Jewish community which will be felt for generations, and which embodies the spirit of the Or L'Dor award.

The evening was both a celebration and a call to action. Attendees saw hundreds of names of families who have made commitments to the future, and were encouraged to think about the impact they could make. At this year's Celebration, attendees were reminded that everyone can leave a legacy and help shape the community's future. To learn more about supporting the PJ Library endowment or creating your own lasting impact in the community, contact Brian Hoffman at [bhoffman@jfgi.org](mailto:bhoffman@jfgi.org).



JFGI President Helen Kurlander Goldstein addressed guests and shared updates about the Federation.



Alan and Linda Cohen shared remarks about the importance of investing in our community's future and their passion for the PJ Library program.



Attendees enjoyed cocktail hour in the JCC Arts Gallery.



Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso offered an opening invocation and Hamotzi.



2019 Or L'Dor Award recipients Dick and Barb Leventhal presented the 2024 Award to Alan and Linda Cohen.



Event co-chairs Dick Leventhal and Laura Rich Boyewsky welcomed guests to the program.



2024 Or L'Dor Award recipients Alan and Linda Cohen and family.

# LATKES & LIGHTS

5-9 p.m. | Sunday, Dec. 29 | Newfields

Please join the Indianapolis Jewish community for the Fifth Annual Chanukah takeover at Newfields!

Celebrate Chanukah at Winterlights! Wander along Twinkling Trail as nearly two million lights light the way, admire the windows of Lilly House illuminated with menorahs and Stars of David, and enjoy latkes at the festive Winter Market. For the eight days of Chanukah, Landscape of Light will dance and dazzle to Judith Clurman's arrangement of Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of Chanukah. Grab your family and friends to celebrate the warmth and joy of the holiday season.

Buy tickets at <https://discovernewfields.org/calendar/latkes-and-lights>.

Tickets will include a special Chanukah experience.

Contact Andrea Kruszynski at [akruszynski@jfgi.org](mailto:akruszynski@jfgi.org) with questions.



NEXTGEN



NEXTGen and PJ Library closed out the summer in a shared program, Summer Camp Rewind. In true camp fashion, attendees participated in games, crafts and a BBQ at picnic tables at the JCC Pavilion.



NEXTGen enjoyed one of America's greatest pastimes at Jewish Community Night at Victory Field for an Indianapolis Indians game.



NEXTGen, local synagogues, and the Jewish Federation's Women's Engagement Committee cleaned up the White River at Holliday Park in early October. During the high holidays, it is customary to perform an atonement ritual. This event, called Reverse Tashlich, partnered with Repair the Sea, an international cleaning of waste and litter around flowing bodies of water to commemorate the new year.

## LIGHT IT UP

### NEXTGen's Annual Chanukah Party!

Dress up in your best Chanukah-themed attire and enjoy a night of live music with friends!

**8-11 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14**

**Brick House Dueling Pianos' Private Back Room**  
6235 Guilford Ave, Indianapolis

**Ticket cost: \$15** and includes door cover and two drinks.

Register at <https://bit.ly/lightitup24>

WWW.JEWISHINDIANAPOLIS.ORG 15

## Three generations Give Back Together through Adopt-a-Family

After “adopting” a family for Chanukah one year, Shelley Kahn decided to invite her immediate and extended family to join her efforts in future years. She now coordinates shopping among six households, including Marshall and Shelley Kahn; Brian and Emily Kahn with kids Noah (17), Simon (14), and Eli (12); Erin and Angel Castillo with kids Sara (7) and Micah (4), Jeff and Ashley Kahn with baby Annie



Grandchildren of Shelley and Marshall Kahn: Noah Kahn (17), Simon Kahn (14), Eli Kahn (12), Sara Castillo (7), Micah Castillo (4), and Annie Kahn (infant).

(infant); Dan Kahn and Mindy Shapiro; and Cameron Willett and Tanner Gray.

Each household takes on the shopping list of one individual within a large family, then all gifts are brought to Shelley to wrap and drop off at JFS. This coordination takes considerable effort, but as a grandparent, Shelley expressed how meaningful this program is to her and her family.

“It’s a really great message to my grandkids,” she said. “No ask is that big. In truth, a lot of this isn’t Chanukah related, this is just basics, needs, needs being met. It’s such a meaningful lesson – a hands-on, touch-feel-see lesson, that indirectly we can teach our grandchildren. Maybe they’ll remember it, maybe they’ll take it into their adulthood. Giving back is important.”

Her son Brian also shared the importance of including his children in this service project each year.

“We like the program because it is a great opportunity to involve our children in an act of tzedakah,” he said. “We all look to find ways to teach our children how to be charitable and how important we hope it will become in their future, but it is so much more effective to show them rather than just tell them. This program is a fantastic chance to show them how their actions can help others, how good it can feel to be charitable, why it should always be something that is important to them.”

Giving during the holidays creates joy, boosts happiness, and fosters community spirit, as well as provides vital support for charities.

“The fact that it’s a Chanukah program, I think it ties the whole holiday together for us,” Shelley said.

There are many ways to participate and support Adopt-a-Family. Learn more at [www.jewishindianapolis.org/adoptafamily](http://www.jewishindianapolis.org/adoptafamily).

## Making the Case for Mental Health Wellness

There is a great deal of evidence to support that we are experiencing a mental health crisis in America, particularly among our children and young adults.

According to Mental Health America (2024), 20 percent of youth reported a major depressive episode this past year, with 13.6 percent having serious thoughts of suicide. Approximately 60 million adult Americans (23 percent) have experienced mental illness in the same time period.

We know that our Jewish communities are additionally grappling with serious challenges worldwide, especially since October 7. Some are arguably more impactful than we have seen in a couple generations, contributing to the uptick in mental health needs among Jews, along with generalized feelings of threat and insecurity.

Where is the good news in these statistics? Growth and strength are often built by exposure to stress, and we can expand our ability to manage in response to it. Like a physical muscle, our emotional capacity can grow under duress, with the right supports in place.

Our people and our communities have banded ever more strongly together,

united to build resiliency to internal and external threats. As we have stepped up efforts to address security needs, there is also unprecedented support within our institutions to acknowledge and address mental health challenges. In our private homes and in our organizations, Jews are striving every day to find the balance required to meet the demands placed upon us. In that effort, there is great meaning, purpose and growth potential.

How do we lean into building our resiliency in terms of mental health wellbeing? Research tells us that the presence of protective factors in our lives can contribute to handling challenge positively- even mitigating our responses to trauma. Some of these protective factors include social and emotional support, meaningful activity, the ability to meet our basic human needs, access to treatment, environments that support our physical wellbeing, and often spirituality or faith- among others.

Connection and engagement with one’s Jewish community of choice has the potential to be a foundational piece of creating and sustaining mental health wellness. Within our community, we can find opportunities for social and recreational activities,

purposeful programming and volunteer opportunities, rituals of religious life and spiritual guidance, and connection to a large network of other Jews who may be navigating similar experiences. As in, we are not alone.

At JFS, our very mission resonates with this purpose “no person should face life challenges alone.” JFS offers specific support toward the goal of mental health wellness, connecting community members to and providing mental health services, along with financial support during times of struggle. Other community organizations work as well to offer inclusive programming and services, often with financial assistance to belong or participate-welcoming all under the tent of our tribe.

As we look to cultivate wellness and address mental health concerns, let us consider the simple act of belonging to community as a profound first step towards stability from which to grow and thrive.

This article was written by Julie Sondhelm LCSW, Clinical Director, Jewish Family Services. Contact Julie at (317) 536-1476 or [jsondhelm@jfsi.org](mailto:jsondhelm@jfsi.org) for more information about support available through JFS.

**ADOPT-A-FAMILY**  
Community Day  
**Sunday, Dec. 8**

Adopt-a-Family is an annual community-wide program that helps Jewish households in the Indianapolis area during the Chanukah holiday. Wrapped gifts may also be dropped off directly at JFS prior to Community Day.

**Registration and more information:**  
[www.jewishindianapolis.org/adoptafamily](http://www.jewishindianapolis.org/adoptafamily)

Contact Rachel Katz at [rkatz@jfsi.org](mailto:rkatz@jfsi.org) with questions.  
Need some support this Chanukah? JFS is here to help!

Contact Julie Sondhelm at  
(317) 535-1476 or [jsondhelm@jfsi.org](mailto:jsondhelm@jfsi.org)

### Friend groups hosting intimate service projects to benefit Popsie’s Pantry



Women gather at the home of Lisa Frank to make women’s personal care and hygiene kits.



Families with young children gather at the home of Hillary Ramaswamy to make kid-friendly snack packs and personal hygiene kits.

Interested in hosting a service project with friends or colleagues? Contact Rachel Katz at [rkatz@jfsi.org](mailto:rkatz@jfsi.org).

### 2024 Jewish Family Services’ Mourners Walk



### JFS Active Older Adults explore Newfields Art Museum



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Pickle for Purpose**  
JFS Pickleball Tournament

**Sunday, March 16**

More details coming soon.

## Lori Moss, JFS Executive Director Retires After 40 Years of Service

At the end of the year, Lori Popp Moss will be retiring after 40 years of dedicated service in the community. She has been a great source of strength and compassion and has touched the lives of thousands upon thousands of people during her career.

Since starting her work in 1984, Lori has had many career highlights and accomplishments.

- Resettlement from the Former Soviet Union during the major immigration wave in 1989-1993. Lori played a major role in the resettlement experiences of every single family who came to Indiana from the FSU. She helped these new immigrant families secure housing, enroll their children in schools, learn English, navigate employment opportunities, and make important community connections through the Family Circles program.
- \$2 million federal grant to lead the area's Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) in 2003-2013. With advocacy support from the JCRC and in partnership with JFGI, the Reuben Center received \$2 million in federal funding to lead the NORC program. Through the NORC, Lori worked with leaders from dozens of local agencies to provide the best care and programming for older adults. After the NORC grant ended, Lori and her team continued the commitment to serving seniors.
- Transition to Jewish Family Services. During Lori's tenure, the organization transitioned from a sole focus on older adults to support across the lifespan as the agency became a Jewish Family Services, a model that is replicated across the country.
- Received the Frank H. Newman Award for Professional Excellence in 2006.
- Popsie's Pantry opened in 2010. Lori played a major role in the development of Popsie's Pantry. The case management work being done by JFS social workers shed light on a major gap in services to meet the unique needs of Jewish families struggling with food insecurity. At the time, food pantries in the area had long wait lines and distributed pre-boxed foods that typically included pork products. Lori took this information to the Russell family who wanted to fund something that would truly honor Anton "Popsie" Berkovitz, a Holocaust Survivor. It was then the pantry was born. Today the pantry is recognized as exemplifying best practices in the sector and serves both the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community with basic food needs, household essentials, and fresh foods.
- Lori joined the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies

(NJHSA) first board since its inception, when the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies and the International Association of Jewish Vocational Services joined forces. She has been actively engaged with the Network since then and has helped her staff connect to their resources, training, and extensive networking opportunities that they offer.

- Under Lori's leadership, JFS launched the "Kavod" program (services for Holocaust survivors) in 2016, with federal grant funds and local community support. This marked the first federal grant specifically designated for the care of Holocaust survivors.
- Lori continuously advocated on behalf of smaller communities across the US to receive grant funds from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany to support Holocaust survivor services. Indianapolis received grant funding from the Claims Conference for the first time in 2019, funding that JFS continues to receive annually.
- Lori played an integral role in the Indianapolis Jewish community's response to the 2008 Great Recession and the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the aftermath of both catastrophes.

Through her commitment to helping others and her leadership both locally and nationally, Lori has made an incredible impact on the programs and services that exist at JFS today, and on the lives of so many. These career highlights showcase some of the major accomplishments and challenges that Lori has met and led this community through, but the biggest accomplishment of all is how she makes each person feel – supported, uplifted, cared for.



# PJ Goes Apple Picking

PJ Library kicked off the new endowment initiative, PJ FOREVER, in September with an apple picking extravaganza at Stuckey Farm. Contact Brian Hoffman at [bhoffman@jfgi.org](mailto:bhoffman@jfgi.org) for more information on the PJ Library endowment.



## PJ Partners with JFS, Seeds of Caring to Address Food Insecurity

PJ Library and Jewish Family Services partnered with Seeds of Caring Indy to make snack packs for Popsie's Pantry. Children and their families learned about food insecurity in Indianapolis and worked to create more than 170 snack packs for the community.



Come celebrate Lori and all her accomplishments on Jan. 16, 2025.

More details at [bit.ly/lorimoss](https://bit.ly/lorimoss)

# Congratulations

## to the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis' 36 Under 36 cohort!

This listing honors outstanding Jewish young adults who make a difference in their professional work, volunteering and involvement in the community.

The impressive list of leaders is packed with 20- and 30-somethings making meaningful contributions through their work, in their free time, in the Jewish community, and beyond. They are talented, giving, and changing our community for good. The roster is replete with leaders, innovators, volunteers, and more. They work everywhere from classrooms to courtrooms, hospitals to Jewish community agencies.

A call for nominations occurred this Spring and resulted in 71 well deserving nominations. The selection committee included: David Calderon, Rachel Gershman, Brian Hoffman, David Katz, Andrea Kruszynski, Rebecca Schalit-Newman, and Carly Traynor.

The honorees came together for the first time as a cohort during a Sept. 30 lunch and learn. They are being celebrated and provided an award during a November dinner, which features Michael Rapaport, an actor, comedian and Israel activist. Throughout the year, these leaders will be provided ample opportunities to network with one another, and to grow professionally through discussions with senior members of leadership and the community.

Flip through this magazine and meet this year's 36 Under 36 cohort – the next generation of leaders.

Visit [www.jewishindianapolis.org/36-under-36-2024](http://www.jewishindianapolis.org/36-under-36-2024) for the full bios of each of these honorees as well as a link to make a tribute gift in their honor.

Contact Andrea Kruszynski at [akruszynski@jfgi.org](mailto:akruszynski@jfgi.org) with questions.

Thank you to the following community members for making a tribute gift in honor of a 36 Under 36er!

Rachel Stevens  
Aimee Lurie  
Jeff Berebitsky  
Wendy Soos  
Ron Kovler  
Terri Kaback  
Lora Black  
Steve German  
Andrew Mirkin  
Judith B Weiss  
Robin Ridge  
Lindsay Yaggi  
Sarah Shmoel  
Zoe Morning  
Sharon Harrison  
Brittany Osinski  
Semyon Shulman  
Gary Kushner  
Eleanor Vonnegut  
David Kirschtel  
Nicole Keller  
Jacqueline Exline  
Nicole Silpe  
Courtney Cantor  
Phyllis DeVorkin

\*As of Oct. 9



36 Under 36 seeks to identify young Jewish professionals who are changing our community for good – building a more just society, ensuring the health and wellness of our friends and neighbors, and creating connections in innovative ways.



# Congratulations

TO THIS YEAR'S 36 UNDER 36 HONOREES



Glick Philanthropies is an Indianapolis-based family of charitable initiatives dedicated to building community and creating opportunity that empowers every person to reach their full potential. We carry out our mission by leading and supporting efforts to:


## BUILD COMMUNITY


 Provide affordable housing

 Support a healthy democracy

 Strengthen Jewish cultural life

## CREATE OPPORTUNITY

 Expand equitable opportunities in the arts

 Close education achievement gaps

 Improve access to basic needs

 Increase economic mobility

### Daniella Bennett

Age: 34

Primary Gig: Attorney

On the Side: Mom (but is it really on the side?)



#### Describe yourself in 100 words or less:

I am a mother of two young kids, a big, dopey rescue dog, a one-eyed rescue cat, and several fish. My toddler is petitioning for a turtle next. I am the daughter of immigrants, who instilled in me the importance of working hard, celebrating my Jewish heritage, giving back to my community, and enjoying good food. I am the wife of a proud Hoosier. In my (limited) free time, I enjoy baking, reading, playing pickleball, and being on the water.

**How do you give back?** Volunteering has always been an important aspect of my life. Before moving to Indiana, I served on the board of my law school. I am now becoming more involved in the local Indiana community and am particularly drawn to animal rescues, children's charities, and Jewish causes.

### Abraham Benson

Age: 36

Primary Gig: Father

On the Side: Attorney



#### Describe yourself in 100 words or less:

I was born and raised in Indianapolis and have spent most of my adult life here. I attended Hasten Hebrew Academy through 8th grade and then went to North Central High School before studying Finance at IU Bloomington. About 10 years ago, I met my wife, Olivia. We live on the north side of Indianapolis with our three children, Violet, Izzy, and Birdie. I love to travel, cook, build things, and spend time with my family. Professionally, I am a tax attorney and serve on the JCC Board of Directors.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Do not be too quick to draw conclusions. Gather facts, understand the circumstances, consider different perspectives, then make an informed decision.

### Olivia Benson

Age: 35

Primary Gig: Dentist

On the Side: Mother



#### Describe yourself in 100 words or less:

I grew up in Northwest Indiana, attended Indiana University in Bloomington, then moved to Indianapolis in 2011 to attend IU School of Dentistry. I now work as a general dentist on the north side of Indy, and I also practice at the VA hospital. My husband Abe and I have three kids, Violet, Izzy, and Birdie. Aside from dentistry and raising children, I also love to read, exercise, and try all the great restaurants around Indy.

**How do you give back?** One important way I give back to my community is by doing dentistry at the VA hospital. The veterans deserve excellent care and I consider it my privilege to provide it to them. My family participates annually in JFS Adopt-a-Family, as well as periodic donations to the JCC, Chabad, and Indy's synagogues.

### Rachel Birenbaum

Age: 29

Primary Gig: Director of Advocacy for Indiana Credit Union League

On the Side: Owner of Simple Strategies LLC, which does fundraising and events for political and nonprofit clients.



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am originally from South Florida and as much as I love my home in Indianapolis, I'll always be an east coaster at heart. I moved here after attending Indiana University in Bloomington and falling in love with public affairs and the city itself. I now have three dogs that are my world, and I love exploring new places in the city with friends (and anywhere I can bring my dogs)! I pride myself on being a hard worker and good friend.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Everyone makes mistakes, don't be so hard on yourself. Learn from your mistakes, and don't make the same one twice.



The JCC extends a hearty mazel tov to board member Abe Benson (and his wife Olivia) and staff members Ethan Cohen, Hanna Fogel and Abby Katz for receiving this well-deserved honor!

## Braca Cantor

Age: 36

**Primary Gig:** Geriatric Physician working at Community Health Network



**On the Side:** Wife to fellow physician and mother of two daughters (and two giant husky dogs)

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am a proud Jewish American born in Israel, dedicated to the service of caring for our aging population and balancing the love and time it takes to be married and help raise a family.

**How do you give back?** I feel that my career allows me to give back every day. Even during time off, I am often reading to help reinforce my knowledge and enrich the care I provide my patients and their families. My mother, who has worked for the United Way of Central Indiana over 25 years, instilled a deep passion for service work from a very young age. Most recently, I have volunteered at my synagogue (Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation) as well as a URJ camp (Goldman Union Camp Institute).

## Ethan Cohen

Age: 28

**Primary Gig:** Assistant Director of Youth Engagement & Special Events/ BBYO City Director at the JCC



**On the Side:** 7-8th Grade Boys Basketball Coach at the Orchard School

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am Passionate and patient, I find fulfillment in mentoring teens and supporting the Indianapolis Jewish Community. I am actively involved in the Indianapolis Jewish Community through the JCC, Jewish Federation, and Young Adult groups. When I am not working, you can usually find me watching my favorite sports teams (especially the Pacers and IU Basketball), playing/coaching basketball, or playing softball.

**How do you give back?** In addition to my professional endeavors, I am actively engaged in supporting the Indianapolis Jewish community. My work with BBYO helps guide teens in planning and executing service projects and fostering a spirit of volunteerism within the younger generation. Furthermore, I partner with the Jewish Federation to bolster their Holocaust programming and other initiatives throughout the year. These efforts contribute to the strength and vibrancy of the Jewish community in Indianapolis.

## Hannah Cohen

Age: 24

**Primary Gig:** Senior Financial Analyst



**On the Side:** Dance Teacher

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I cherish my loyalty and authenticity, finding great meaning in my Judaism, family bonds, and friendships. I embrace challenges as opportunities for personal growth. Activities like dancing, running, and engaging in deep conversations over coffee bring me genuine happiness.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Say yes and learn to love yourself. Say yes to events, say yes to opportunities, say yes to going places on your own, you never know where these paths may lead. Learn to love yourself and all the amazing things you are capable of, because loving yourself, in my opinion, is where true confidence comes from.

## Mallory Deardorff-Dawson

Age: 34

**Primary Gig:** Lawyer-Law Clerk for the Indiana Commercial Court



**On the Side:** President of Temple Israel of West Lafayette, Indiana; Board of Directors of LTHC Homeless Services; Immediate Past President of the YWCA Foundation of Greater Lafayette

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Originally from Warsaw, Indiana, I attended Purdue University and the Thomas R. Kline School of Law at Drexel University in Philadelphia. Outside of my day job, I enjoy volunteering in the community, and serving others was a value instilled in me by my parents. I converted to Judaism in May 2021 and soon became the leader of Temple Israel's Sisterhood, then President-Elect of Temple Israel, and now President of Temple Israel. I am the proud wife of Lucas Dawson (my VERY supportive husband) and pet-mom to a senior chihuahua-mix and 4 cats. I enjoy history, traveling, hiking, reading, and music.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Do not be afraid to ask questions. Don't worry that it may make you seem inexperienced. Asking questions is the only way you can continue to learn and grow in your profession, and it shows that you are interested and invested.

## Hanna Fogel

Age: 32

**Primary Gig:** Assistant Director of Communications at JCC Indianapolis



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Per LinkedIn: Thoughtful, detail-oriented, community-driven wordsmith Per Instagram: Reader; sports-watching Jewish feminist nerd I'm a hombody from everywhere - originally from Toronto, I have a B.A. in English Literature from McGill University (Montreal) and an M.A. in Publishing from Rosemont College (outside Philadelphia) with a concentration in children's and young adult literature (I'm also a proud graduate of the Hasten Hebrew Academy and Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School). I came back to Indy after a summer in New York made me realize I didn't want to live there with five roommates for the rest of my life; the rest is history.

**How do you give back?** I give back by working within our Jewish community every day! I love sharing all the great programs and services our various departments offer as well as making one-on-one inroads with people when featuring them in the JCC eZine/blog and reminding them what it is they love about our community.

## Kathryn Friedman

Age: 33

**Primary Gig:** School Counselor



**On the Side:** Travel Agent

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am a very passionate and open-minded counselor, partner, aunt, friend, cat mom...the list goes on. I believe we are all here to connect with as many people as possible and learn as much as we can from them along the way. Everyone has a story, and I want to hear as many as I can in this lifetime.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** It is so easy to get in the habit of people-pleasing and being a "yes person" during the first few years of your career. There is nothing more valuable than learning how to set healthy boundaries for yourself and your time. This will help you as well as others appreciate the value you bring to your organization.

## Jillian Hastings

Age: 32

**Primary Gig:** Senior Assistant Director at URJ Goldman Union Camp Institute



**On the Side:** PR/Marketing/Graphic Design Freelancer

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** As a passionate Jewish woman and dedicated camp professional, I am committed to enriching the lives of young people through immersive, meaningful experiences. My work focuses on fostering a deep sense of community, identity, and connection to Jewish traditions. By creating inclusive and dynamic camp environments, I aim to inspire the next generation, instilling values of leadership, empathy, and resilience. This recognition as one of the "36 Under 36" honors my dedication to empowering youth and strengthening our vibrant Jewish community.

**How do you give back?** My entire career is based on creating healthy, positive, Jewish experiences for children and young adults of all ages. Working with my team, we create an inclusive community that accepts young people from diverse Jewish and Jewish-adjacent backgrounds that is safe for them to explore and celebrate their Judaism. This is all done through the lens of the Jewish summer camp experience, which at its core is lifechanging, creates lifelong friendships, builds confidence, and both develops and fosters the next generation of Jewish leaders.



## Congratulations to the 36 Under 36 cohort of the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis!

Special Mazal Tov to HHA alumni and HHA and Giving Tree Early Learning parents:



Abe Benson ☆ Braca Cantor ☆ Hanna Fogel ☆ Asya Kislyuk  
Cooper Laikin ☆ Emma Law-Oppman ☆ Jessica Mallah ☆ Taylor Nefouse  
Max Newman ☆ Stacy Rekhter ☆ Victoria Shmoel ☆ Yaniv Shmukler

Congrats also to Marissa Missan, our Director of Enrollment and Engagement.

## Josh Kaback

Age: 36

**Primary Gig:** Strategy for CBRE

**On the Side:** Dad. Husband. Golfer.

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Dedicated. Loyal. Caring. I give 100% of myself to everything I do and truly commit to achieving the outcomes and results I am working towards. I put my family first and wouldn't be the person I am without them.

**How do you give back?** I try to give back by positioning myself within the Jewish community to help address opportunities and challenges with the future in mind. To do this, I dedicate my time to both the learning/leadership development and involvement in the local community. This year I served on the JFGI P&A committee, joined the BEZ board, joined the next JFNA Cabinet class, and completed the ADL Glass Leadership Institute program.



## Abby Katz

Age: 34

**Primary Gig:** Mom

**On the Side:** Associate Director of Early Childhood Education at the JCC

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am the mom of two amazing boys, Joseph and Benjamin. My husband, David, and I recently increased our involvement in the organizations in the Jewish community that we enjoyed as children. I also serve on the board of our family business on the Cantor side, called Hamilton Exhibits. In my free time, I like to play tennis and read fun books.

**How do you give back?** I serve as the Corresponding Secretary of the Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation's board. I also serve on the Temple Sisterhood's Social Action Committee. This March, I chaired an event in which the Social Action Committee collaborated with Coburn Place for a special event in honor of Read Across America. As a family, we participate in annual community service programs. For example, we support Adopt-a-Family each Hanukkah, assemble Passover and Thanksgiving baskets for families in need, and contribute to Jewish Family Service's Birthday Club. We also support various programs and events through the Jewish Community Center.



## Asya Kislyuk

Age: 35

**Primary Gig:** Founder of AMK Strategies

**On the Side:** Running a dinner club with friends. We choose recipes created by different chefs (Adeena Sussman, Yotam Ottolenghi, etc). If you want to join, please reach out!  
How long have you lived in Indianapolis? 18 years, moved to the East Coast for a decade before returning back 4 years ago.

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Originally from Moldova, I grew up in the Indianapolis Jewish community, attending HHAJ and the International School of Indiana. After graduating from IU, I moved to DC to pursue a career in diplomacy which led to work in government, non-profits (where I met my fellow Hoosier husband, David) and then in the public policy field at some of the biggest tech companies, including Airbnb and Instagram. I moved back to Indy over the pandemic and have loved reconnecting with old friends and making new ones.

**How do you give back?** For me, experiences are the best gifts I can give and receive. I love hosting friends and family for Shabbat dinners where we enjoy delicious food, meaningful conversation, lots of laughter and share highlights from our weeks. I am passionate about helping the next generation and am part of the IU Hamilton Lugar School's Emerging Leaders' council along with the alumni network at the International School of Indiana. Additionally, I enjoy mentoring young women in various stages of their careers sharing tips on interview skills, resume building, salary negotiations and building and giving back to a network.



## Evan Kroot

Age: 33

**Primary Gig:** Real Estate Investor/ Entrepreneur

**On the Side:** Family Man

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** First and foremost, anyone who knows me knows family is my top priority. I've been blessed with parents who've always had my back and supported me through thick and thin. I see myself as a gritty entrepreneur who isn't afraid of hard work. I'm a competitor, always ready to take on a new challenge. I have flaws just like everyone else, but I work to get better every day. I appreciate the process of personal growth and evolution.

**How do you give back?** Over the past 4 years, I've been actively involved with the Starfish Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to mentoring and empowering high school students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. My role has included mentoring, organizing fundraising events, and collaborating with local businesses to provide resources and opportunities for Starfish scholars. I also participated in the Frank Larner Leadership Academy at the JCC, where I focused on enhancing the JCC's business operations and community engagement efforts.



**Mazel Tov, Jillian! We are so proud of you and all you bring to the greater GUCI community.**



## Jason Kirschtel

Age: 32

**Primary Gig:** Chief of Staff to the President and Head of AI at Speechify Inc

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am dedicated to building relationships and fostering a vibrant community. I enjoy connecting with people, connecting them with others, and making them feel a part of something larger than themselves. I grew up with amazing Jewish role models and strive to make an impact similar to them. I love whipping up new dishes in the kitchen and inviting my friends over to test them out, playing sports, and watching TV. I'm always looking for people to talk NY sports, and I'm still on a mission to find the best pizza, wings, and bagels in the city.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Get involved and get outside your comfort zone. Find things that excite you outside of work and meet more people. If the only thing you're involved in is your job, you're doing something wrong.



## Matthew Kramer-Morning

Age: 36

**Primary Gig:** Executive Director | Hillel Foundation at Purdue

**On the Side:** A little of everything in the community.

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Years ago, I served in the IDF as a lone soldier in the Nachal Brigade. As I finished my service and thought about what was next, I really came to the realization that whatever I did, I wanted to continue fighting for the Jewish people. That led me to Jewish nonprofit work, and it has to be some of the most rewarding work there is.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** It may sound cliché, but just get involved in something you find passion in. You'll give back - AND you'll learn so much and make such great connections with the community.



## Stuart Kushner

Age: 32

**Primary Gig:** Nonprofit management

**On the Side:** I perform improv with ComedySportz Indianapolis

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am an outgoing, kind, caring member of the community, who values family, professional growth, and a culture built on respect. While I grew up in the Washington, DC area, Indianapolis has been my home since 2018, and I am proud to have built roots here for my family to be part of this community for a long time to come. Now looking to expand those roots, I am focused on becoming more involved in Indianapolis' Jewish community.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Your reputation is the best investment you can make at this point in your career. Work hard, network, and be nice to people. Doing all three of these things is so important and will undoubtedly help you get to where you want to go.



## Cooper Laikin

Age: 32

**Primary Gig:** Co-Founder of BrightPoint Real Estate

**On the Side:** Dog Dad

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I'm a co-founder of BrightPoint Real Estate and a leader in commercial real estate and development. I've successfully negotiated landmark deals, including representing both the landlord and tenant in a major lease. Recently, I've expanded into real estate development, demonstrating my adaptability and forward-thinking approach. I'm deeply committed to community engagement, participating in the Black and Jewish Relations Workshop and supporting MELI (More Equality Less Ignorance). My goal is to blend professional excellence with social responsibility, making a positive impact in both my industry and community.

**How do you give back?** I give back to my community through active participation and support of various initiatives. I am deeply involved in the Black and Jewish Relations Workshop, which promotes dialogue and understanding between diverse groups. Additionally, I support MELI (More Equality Less Ignorance), a local Indiana brand focused on promoting equality and reducing ignorance. These efforts help foster inclusivity and social responsibility, demonstrating my commitment to making a positive impact beyond my professional achievements in real estate. My dedication to community engagement reflects my belief in using my platform to drive meaningful change and support those around me.

## Emma Law-Oppman

Age: 35

**Primary Gig:** Philanthropy

**On the Side:** Jewish Advocacy

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am a Jewish mother, fiercely dedicated to my family and this community. With unwavering love and commitment, I prioritize the well-being and success of my loved ones. As a fierce advocate, I am passionate about fighting for justice and equality. I actively engage in causes close to my heart, using my voice to speak up for those who are marginalized and oppressed. My passion fuels my pursuit of making a positive impact in the world, whether it be through volunteering, educating, or creating meaningful change. I am a force to be reckoned with, driven by love and a commitment to making a difference.

**How do you give back?** I serve on the board of Beth-El Zedeck, JCRC and the Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis. I co-founded a nonprofit called Grant's Giants devoted to supporting the Pompe community. I am a co-chair of the Women's Engagement committee with JFGI. I served on the Planning and Allocation committee with JFGI. I was recently selected as a member of the next ATID Leadership development program. I am the community leader and grassroots strategist for Mother's Against College Antisemitism and I am a vocal advocate for Jewish rights.



## Jessica Mallah

Age: 35

**Primary Gig:** Mother

**On the Side:** Installation Assistant

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Dedicated and hardworking wife and mother of 4. Born and raised in Indianapolis, grew up in the Etz Chaim Sephardic Community. Raising my children in the same community while working, and volunteering as much as I can.

**How do you give back?** Working with Washington Township Little League and their baseball/softball programs. Help Etz Chaim where I can as well as the Hasten Hebrew Academy where my two boys attend school.



## Jacob Markey

Age: 35

**Primary Gig:** Former Executive Director, Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council

**On the Side:** Fiance to Bianca

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am a passionate and energetic individual, who is deeply connected to the Jewish community. I am a proud native of Wisconsin who loves the Packers, Badgers, Brewers, and Bucks. I love learning and traveling and exploring the world, especially to Israel, and am a big foodie.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Seek out complexity. Do not be satisfied with a superficial answer. Instead, ask questions and lean in on conversations to learn more.



## Heather Maurer

Age: 36

**Primary Gig:** Operations Lead at Kynisca Innovation Hub

**On the Side:** Founder and CEO of Cove Operations Group

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** My community is very important to me as is my heritage. The concepts of chesed, tzedakah, and tikkun olam have shaped my outlook and feeling of responsibility toward the world. I love to learn and become exposed to new and different perspectives. I come from an admirable line of Indianapolis community leaders, and it is my honor to carry on that legacy. I am a hiker, nature-lover, and avid Butler Basketball fan!

**How do you give back?** In addition to serving on local nonprofit advisory and director boards, I love to connect people to my vast network and help them build relationships and new ideas with one another.



## Amber Maze

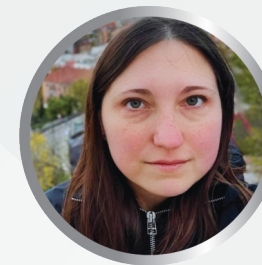
Age: 36

**Primary Gig:** Senior Associate, Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council

**On the Side:** Co-Founder and Executive Director, Crane Center for Mass Atrocity Prevention

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am a mother, Jewish communal professional, and wife dedicated to human rights and passionate about making a difference in the world. My husband, Joshua, and I have been married for 13 years, and we have an 8-year-old daughter named Willow. I enjoy engaging in conversations with people from various cultures, learning about their unique perspectives, and helping empower them to initiate change in their communities. My commitment to understanding and advocating for others drives my work and personal life as I strive to create a more just and compassionate world for everyone.

**How do you give back?** I give back to the community primarily through my professional work with the JCRC, where I counter antisemitism and build bridges across interfaith and intercultural divides. In addition, I create spaces for the community to remember the Holocaust and strive to ensure the stories of victims and survivors live on.



## Isaac Mervis

Age: 27

**Primary Gig:** Organizational Development Director, United Way of Central Indiana

**On the Side:** Teen Board Director, Caroline Symmes Children's Cancer Endowment

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Social impact professional walking alongside the nonprofit sector in Central Indiana. Passionate about developing leaders, organizations, and systemic solutions related to the community. Ultimate frisbee enthusiast, amateur jazz pianist in-training, and undeterred online chess loser.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Don't spend too much time worrying about your final destination. If you follow your values and your passions, you'll end up right where you need to be.



## Marissa Missan

Age: 27

**Primary Gig:** Director of Enrollment and Engagement at Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis

**On the Side:** Founder of Improve with Improv

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I have served in the nonprofit and education space for over 7 years. I am currently the Director of Enrollment and Engagement at Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis. In this role, I aspire to contribute to young Hoosier's education and Jewish identities through promoting the high-quality academic experience found at the only Jewish day school in the greater Indianapolis area. Previously, I was the Assistant Director of TRIO Upward Bound for Ivy Tech Community College. My passion for students and families shows in my years of work with underrepresented youth and communities.

**How do you give back?** My Indiana volunteer work includes tutoring through Brightlane Learning and committee work with Indiana TRIO and Indianapolis JCRC. I am honored to be part of the 2024 Maurer Cohort through which I continue to grow as a young Jewish woman during these challenging times.



ADVERTISE WITH JEWISH FEDERATION NEWS



Want to promote your name or business to our 5,000 households? The Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis now offers advertising! Contact Andrea Kruszynski, Director of Communications and Editor at [akruszynski@jfgi.org](mailto:akruszynski@jfgi.org) for a rate sheet and more information.

Stay tuned for the January/February magazine for photos from the 36 Under 36 Honoree Celebration featuring Michael Rapaport.

## Taylor Nefouse

Age: 34

**Primary Gig:** Retail Merchandising and Marketing

**On the Side:** Travel Advisor



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Creative visionary with a wanderlust spirit, blending rock and royal with an old soul. I'm passionate and dedicated in all my endeavors. I'm a proud Zionist and Jew, and cherish my roles as a daughter, sister, cousin, and aunt. I'm a feminist and advocate for women's rights, students and education, the environment, and mental health. Known for my blunt honesty and loyalty as a friend, I'm empathetic and compassionate. I'm a sports fanatic, animal lover, a travel enthusiast, and admirer of the natural world. I'm a naturally curious individual who loves to learn and wants to make an impact.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Your work is not your identity. Embrace the journey of discovering who you are beyond your job title. Invest in your passions and hobbies and cultivate relationships that nurture your well-being. Advocate for causes that matter to you as these pursuits will enrich your life in ways a career alone cannot. Stay curious and committed to lifelong learning and remember that your worth is not measured by professional success but by the positive impact you make on the world and the lives you touch.

## Max Newman

Age: 36

**Primary Gig:** Writer, WWE Creative Media Department

**On the Side:** Adjunct Professor, Butler University



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** Husband to 1, Father of 3, can still count to 10.

**How do you give back?** My wife and I serve together on the board of the Hasten Hebrew Academy where all of our kids attend. I also sit on the board of Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation and am an active member of The VISION Movement based out of Israel.

## Stacy Rekhter

Age: 34

**Primary Gig:** Mom

**On the Side:** Therapist in private practice



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I moved to Indy from the former Soviet Union in 1994 with my family. I'm married with two young kids, so that takes up most of my time. I also love to get creative when I can; whether that's a creative solution for clients at work, or with interior design and cooking at home. My happy place is being on a beach in Lake Michigan with family although I love to travel near and far.

**How do you give back?** I am on the Federation's Woman's Philanthropy Committee. I am involved with Adopt-a-Family and JFS Birthday Club every year.

## Nicole Ridge

Age: 29

**Primary Gig:** Social Work Case Manager at Community Hospital North

**On the Side:** Hiker, Artist, Musician



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am a uniquely creative individual bursting with passion, which shows in my life as a Jewish woman, artist, social worker, twin sister, musician, and every other version of myself. I grew up in Carmel and always knew I wanted to make the world a better place. Music was my first true love learning the flute in 4th grade, and I now serenade the world every day on my commute to and from work. But my real fulfillment comes from helping others, especially through advocacy for vulnerable communities. After achieving a bachelors, masters, and license in social work, I was ready to change the world! With such big goals, I narrowed down my scope to Indianapolis to start. I have always been told I am an old soul, and they must have been right because I ended up working with the geriatric population as a healthcare social worker. There is a hodgepodge of people that I get to help, and I bring my best self into every patient room. To balance out the hard days, I find my joy through peaceful hikes in the woods. When it gets cold outside, I cuddle up with a good craft varying from paint to crochet and more. I have worn many titles in this short life so far, and my favorite these days is a person whose life is full.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** There is a quote that has carried me through every great and terrible moment in my career, always bringing me back to my "why". I share it with you in the hopes it may become such a beacon to others. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." -Margaret Mead.

## David Rosenthal

Age: 35

**Primary Gig:** Partnerships Director at Vote.org

**On the Side:** Plant Dad and co-running AMK Strategies



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I grew up in West Lafayette where my dad taught at Purdue and my mom was a nurse. I have three brothers who live all over the country. I've spent 10 years working on the technology and systems that power politics, international development, and nonprofits. My wife Asya and I met in DC and we moved to Carmel in 2020. In my free time I love gardening, travel, and learning how to fly small airplanes. Last year I had the opportunity to participate in the Maurer Koach Program, which inspired me to get more involved in the Jewish community.

**Any advice for younger professionals?** Be adaptable, work hard, and have patience - nothing is going to be handed to you. If you're on a career track that's working for you - great! If not, don't be afraid to make a change and try something different.

## Victoria Shmoel

Age: 34

**Primary Gig:** Running a homecare agency

**On the Side:** Nonstop mom



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I'm loyal, caring, welcoming, and a good listener. I bring everyone in my circle together whether it's for dinners or events. I love to host and feed people. I also love a good glass of Sauvignon blanc.

**How do you give back?** On my day to day - I help elderly and disabled individuals throughout all of Indiana get access to community resources and matched with caregivers to help them in their home. For the Jewish community - I was part of ATID 5 cohort, I helped plan Israel's 75th anniversary events during earth day, I was a co-chair for the Yom Haatzmut/ Yom Hazikaron event, I participate in JFS' Birthday Club and Adopt-a-Family every year. My family is involved with Chabad, PJ Library, and recently established the Maya Shmoel fund at Hasten Hebrew Academy. I am also on the Women's Philanthropy and JFS committees.

## Yaniv Shmukler

Age: 31

**Primary Gig:** JCRC Program Associate

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I am an Israeli American Jewish professional dedicated to Israel education and strengthening the Jewish community. I am passionate about fostering understanding and partnerships across diverse communities. I enjoy traveling with my wife, Deanna, and our son, Noam.

**How do you give back?** By providing Israel education to the community, mainly to Jewish teens and young professionals.



## Sarah Stuckey

Age: 34

**Primary Gig:** Program Manager at IU Health

**On the Side:** RoseGold Yarn



**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I'm an Indy native and a longtime member of Congregation Beth Shalom. I'm an avid reader, knitter, and traveler. I'm lucky to be an aunt to the greatest kids around, and my husband and I are parents to four crazy cats! My life goals are to travel to every continent and to own a yarn shop.

**How do you give back?** I'm on the board of directors for Congregation Beth Shalom, as well as the co-chair for the CBS Caring Circle. I volunteer with the fundraising and social action committees and assist with CBS's library.



## Natalie Weiss

Age: 34

Primary Gig: Attorney

On the Side: Mom



### Describe yourself in 100 words or less:

I grew up in the Philadelphia area and moved to Indianapolis after college to join Teach for America. I met my now-husband at a Federation event while in Indianapolis. After completing law school in Chicago, I moved back to Indianapolis. I have a golden retriever named Luna and a daughter named Vivienne. In my spare time I enjoy traveling, reading, running, practicing yoga, and spending time with my family.

**How do you give back?** My husband and I donate to several local causes. Also, my professional work and community engagement often intertwine.

## Ethan White

Age: 28

Primary Gig: Howard M. Lorber  
Director of Programming at  
Alpha Epsilon Pi International  
Headquarters



**On the Side:** Local BBYO Advisor,  
JCRC of Indianapolis Board of Directors, University of  
Delaware Hillel Board of Directors

**Describe yourself in 100 words or less:** I graduated from the University of Delaware in 2018 with a degree in Organizational and Community Leadership. Following graduation, I made my way to Indianapolis to join the Alpha Epsilon Pi professional team. Contributing to the local Jewish community has always been a big part of my life. As such, I became a volunteer for BBYO and currently serve on the boards of directors for the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council and the University of Delaware Hillel.

**How do you give back?** For me, giving back to the Jewish community has become a core part of my everyday life. My day-to-day job revolves around helping shape future Jewish leaders for our community. Additionally, I advise and work with incredible local and national organizations to help support Jewish students on campus and beyond.

# 36 Under 36 Welcome Lunch

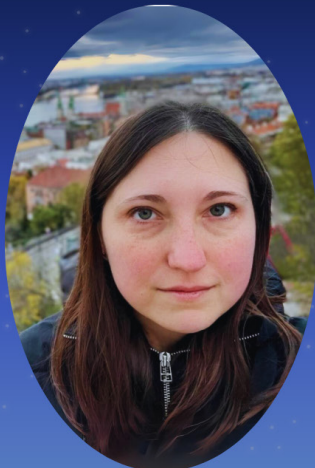


This year's 36 Under 36 class attended a welcome lunch where they got to meet one another and hear from Jewish community leaders about their organizations and how to get involved.



## MAZEL TOV!

The Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council proudly celebrates Amber Maze and Yaniv Shmukler for being honored in this year's 36 Under 36.





**THE ANN KATZ FESTIVAL OF BOOKS & ARTS**

The JCC's Ann Katz Festival of Books & Arts continues with impactful authors including Alex Kor and Haaretz journalist Lee Yaron. Tickets for these and other Ann Katz Festival events can be secured at [JCCindy.org/events](http://JCCindy.org/events).

The Ann Katz Festival of Books & Arts is made possible with funding from the Irwin and Ann Katz Cultural Arts and Education Endowment Fund and major festival sponsors including The Herbert Simon Family Foundation, Lilly Endowment Inc., Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, and Katz Sapper & Miller.



**Sunday, Nov. 3 | 4 p.m. | In-person at the JCC | Free**

*A Blessing, Not a Burden* with Alex Kor and Graham Honaker, Part of the Spirit & Place Festival

By all accounts, Dr. Alex Kor's life has been a miracle. The son of two Holocaust survivors, including Mengele twin Eva Kor, Alex will discuss his book *A Blessing, Not a Burden*. In his book, Alex details his incredible journey, from his unique upbringing to his present-day mission of carrying on his parents' inspiring legacy. From his mother's controversial stance on forgiving the Nazis to his father's unbridled optimism, Alex shares life lessons that have helped him overcome his own hardships along the way. Alex also offers his own perspective on forgiveness as he nurtures his parents' legacies in a world still fraught with discrimination.

Dr. Kor and Honaker will be interviewed by Troy Fears, Executive Director of CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center.

Presented in partnership with CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center, Hooverwood Living, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis.

**Thursday, Nov. 7 | 7 p.m. | In-person at the JCC | Free, registration required**

*10/7: 100 Human Stories* with Lee Yaron

The definitive account of the 10/7 massacre through the stories of its victims and the communities they called home.

A masterful work of investigative journalism by acclaimed Haaretz reporter Lee Yaron, *10/7* chronicles the massacre that ignited a war through the stories of more than 100 civilians. These stories are the products of extensive interviews with survivors, the bereaved, and first responders in Israel and beyond. The victims run the gamut from left-wing kibbutzniks and Burning Man-esque partiers to radical right-wingers, from Bedouins and Israeli Arabs to Thai and Nepalese guest workers, peace activists, elderly Holocaust survivors, refugees from Ukraine and Russia, pregnant women, and babies.

Lee Yaron has been a journalist with Haaretz, Israel's oldest and most award-winning newspaper, for nearly a decade. Her investigative reporting has resulted in the founding of state-level commissions and the changing of substantial bodies of Israeli policy and law. She is an elected member-representative of the Executive Committee of the Union of Israeli Journalists. She has also written and directed acclaimed theater productions notable for their use of found materials, including official governmental texts, to bring attention to marginalized communities both in Israel and throughout the Middle East. Born in Tel Aviv, Yaron splits her time between her native city and New York.

Yaron will be interviewed by Jamie Ratner Rich. Sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council.



# Community Animal Adventure

On Sept. 8, Giving Tree Early Learning/HHAJ and PJ Library invited families to enjoy an afternoon of animal-themed fun at Cool Creek Park. HHAJ and PJ Library are privileged to be part of this year's Prizmah Engage program which helps grow Jewish day schools through community partnerships.

Families came together for a nature scavenger hunt. Children used the loose parts they collected in nature to create an animal of their choosing. This Reggio-inspired activity inspired children to think creatively, sparked their curiosity and enabled them to work collaboratively with friends, old and new. Giving Tree Early Learning/HHAJ teachers were on hand to encourage children and speak with parents about the benefits of a Reggio-inspired Jewish education.

Families then enjoyed a fun and enlightening animal presentation from Silly Safaris. The children loved being able to pet the animals. Highlights included a tarantula high five, a diaper-wearing toad and holding a giant albino python.



## HHAJ Introduces Art Therapy



In the Torah, the medium of art is depicted as the wisdom of the soul. Art therapy is a unique gift nourishing the child's soul beyond their academic performance highlighting the affective emotional and spiritual domains.

With the uptick in anxiety amongst teenagers and younger students since COVID and the documented detriment of the social media culture let alone the global antisemitic aftermath of October 7, the challenge to support student mental

health abounds. Their love and passion for art is evidenced by the fact that they clamor for more and more opportunities to express themselves and their personalities visually, as well as participate in art-based collaborative school projects.

This school year, Bethany Callis, Art Therapist, will be at the school Wednesday through Friday working with K-8 students. Callis and all second-year students in the Herron School of Art + Design's Art Therapy Master program complete a year-long internship aimed at providing them with clinical skills needed to become licensed mental health counselors (LMHC) and board-certified art therapists (ATR-BC). Students are placed in a variety of community settings including medical sites, community mental health centers, schools, art studios and art museums.

In the school setting, they hone their clinical skills and personalized approaches to helping children address anxiety and anger management issues. Collaborating with staff and a licensed supervisor, they reflect upon their experiences, lead professional development and provide critical feedback for the child's socioemotional growth and self-esteem.

This program is generously funded by the Maya Shmoel Memorial Fund, Miriam Gettinger, and the JFGI Leonard and Marion Freeman Fund.

**Save the date**

2-4 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 15

Giving Tree/HHAJ and PJ library Chanukah event with Reggio-inspired programming and laser tag

Thank you Harold Grinspoon Foundation, Lisa and Arieh Coll and Prizmah for generously funding this program.

## STATE TAX CREDITS

DONATE TO THE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FUND TODAY AND RECEIVE 50% OF YOUR DONATION BACK IN TAX CREDITS!





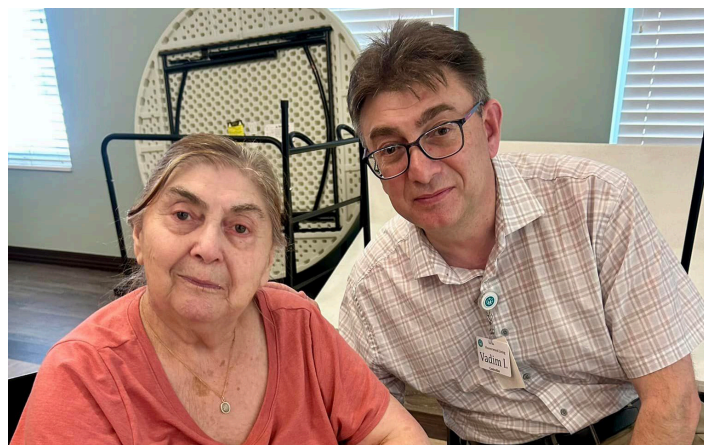
Thank you to everyone who continues to make our Kibitz and Cocktails speaker series a success! Hooverwood Living has been fortunate to have so many wonderful community members share their expertise with residents and attendees.



The Hooverwood Guild generously sponsored a recent outing to Beef & Boards Dinner Theatre, where residents enjoyed a performance of Million Dollar Quartet. The evening featured a wonderful combination of great food, lively company, and a memorable show celebrating the music of Elvis, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins. Hooverwood Living residents thank the Guild for their continued support, and a special acknowledgment to volunteers Ilonka and Marsha, whose dedication ensured the success of this outing.



The Chopped Liver Festival, a cherished tradition, was recently held at Hooverwood Living. The event brought smiles and shared stories and the beloved dish, steeped in cultural significance. Hooverwood Living thanks those who participate, and to the volunteer chefs.



Hooverwood Living is looking for new volunteers! Volunteering at Hooverwood Living offers a unique opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the lives of older adults. By sharing your time, energy, and compassion, you can help foster a sense of community, reduce feelings of isolation, and bring joy to residents. Whether you engage in conversations, assist with activities, or provide companionship, your presence helps create a supportive and enriching environment. Volunteering at Hooverwood is not just about giving—it's about building connections, gaining new perspectives, and creating memories that leave a lasting impression on everyone involved. Contact Jacqueline Goldstein at [jgoldstein@hooverwood.org](mailto:jgoldstein@hooverwood.org) for more information about becoming a volunteer.

## Greater Indianapolis Jewish Community Promotes Peace at Festival of Faiths

The Jewish community booth, spearheaded by the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) Community Engagement Committee, played a prominent role in the Festival of Faiths, an annual event organized by the Center for Interfaith Cooperation (CIC). This year, the festival, which brings together diverse faith and cultural communities to celebrate and learn from one another, centered around the theme of "Exploring Peace." The Jewish community chose to focus on peace through language, showcasing the rich tapestry of unique languages spoken by Jews around the world.

Visitors to the Jewish community booth were invited to engage in activities that highlighted the universal pursuit of peace. One of the most popular activities was an informal poll where participants voted for their favorite Jewish saying about peace, sparking conversations and reflections. Additionally, the booth featured a station where attendees could write their personal responses to the question, "What does peace mean to you?" These responses created a collective vision of peace that resonated with the festival's spirit.

As a special keepsake, the JCRC offered visitors pumpkin seeds inscribed with the word "shalom," symbolizing peace and growth.

This small token, representing the Jewish commitment to peace, was a hit among attendees.

Through its presence at the Festival of Faiths, the JCRC successfully fostered connections across faith communities, demonstrating how language and culture can serve as bridges to peace.



### Back to School Toolkit

Resources for University Students and Parents

The 2023-2024 school year saw a significant rise in antisemitic incidents on college campuses, and this troubling trend is expected to continue into the 2024-2025 academic year.

Equip yourself with the tools needed to counter antisemitism on your college campus.

[LEARN MORE](#)

The 2023-24 school year saw a significant rise in antisemitic incidents on college campuses, and this troubling trend has continued during the 2024-25 academic year. JCRC created a toolkit to provide students, parents, and administrators with essential resources for identifying, addressing, and reporting antisemitic incidents. JCRC's goal is to equip you with the tools and knowledge necessary to stand against hate and ensure the safety and well-being of all students. Get the toolkit at [www.indyjrc.org](http://www.indyjrc.org).

### Israel Engagement Fellowship

Explore. Experience. Enact.

Registration for the 2025 cohort is now open!

JCRC is seeking 10th-12th graders for the 2025 Israel Engagement Fellowship (IEF) cohort! Teens who participate in IEF will learn about the history of Israel and gain the invaluable tools needed to engage in conversations around Israel with their peers. If you know a teen who should be involved in IEF, contact Yaniv Shmukler at [yshmukler@indyjrc.org](mailto:yshmukler@indyjrc.org).

## Congregation Beth-El Zedeck

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MULTI-FAITH BUILD: 9 A.M. FRIDAY, NOV. 1 AT SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.** Join BEZ for the Habitat for Humanity Multi-Faith Build and unite with members of different local faith communities to positively impact neighbors' lives. Wear warm clothing and comfortable, closed-toe shoes to work together to build hope and homes. Contact [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org) with questions or to RSVP.

**ULPAN SHABBAT: 6 P.M. FRIDAY, NOV. 1 AT BEZ.** Join BEZ for services as the 8th grade religious school class leads in prayer. Religious school families are invited to stay after services for a Shabbat dinner. RSVP to George Kelley at [gkelley@bez613.org](mailto:gkelley@bez613.org).

**MINI MINYAN: 10:30 A.M. SATURDAY, NOV. 2 AT BEZ.** Discover the magic of Shabbat with Cantor Melissa in "Mini-Minyan," a participatory service designed specifically for elementary-aged children and their families. Children are invited to bring their favorite stuffed animal to join the service! Learn the melodies, understand the rituals, and actively participate in this joyous Shabbat experience. Oneq included.

**PARENT/TODDLER HAVURAH: 9:45 A.M. SUNDAY, NOV. 3 AND DEC. 15 AT BEZ.** Join an immersive experience of Jewish life and learning for families with children ages 2-5. Enjoy engaging activities such as songs, stories, and crafts led by Maria Simon. RSVP to [parenttoddlerhavurah@gmail.com](mailto:parenttoddlerhavurah@gmail.com) to reserve your spot.

**LEYNING 101: 10 A.M. SUNDAY, NOV. 3 AND 17 AT BEZ.** Join Cantor Melissa Cohen for Leyning 101, a beginner's class to learn the basic of Torah and Haftarah trope cantillation at BEZ. Cantillation, or leyning, is the practice of chanting biblical texts by reading specific melodic patterns, dating back to the destruction of the first Temple. Deepen your connection to Judaism through this intellectual and spiritual experience.

**SPIRIT AND PLACE: THE CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION OF GRATITUDE: 1:30 P.M. SUNDAY, NOV. 3 AT BEZ.** While the act of gratitude is universal, its expression is based on cultural norms. This event invites you to learn about and explore how different cultures express gratitude through interactive vignettes and meaningful conversation. A partnership between Congregation Beth-El Zedeck, IU Indianapolis Department of World Languages and Cultures, and Alley Theatre Company. Contact 317-531-6299 or [gkelley@bez613.org](mailto:gkelley@bez613.org) with questions.

**MAHJ MONDAY: 1-4 P.M. MONDAY, NOV. 4 AND 18, DEC. 2 AND 16 AT BEZ.** All experience levels are welcome! Mahjong is a tile-based game played in Asia for over 300 years and by American Jews since the 1920s. It is easy to learn but challenging to master. Sisterhood supplies the games—you bring your game card. No card? There will be extras! The suggested donation is \$3 per day. RSVP to Sue at [illinicane@verizon.net](mailto:illinicane@verizon.net).

**COCKTAIL JUDAISM: 7 P.M. MONDAY, NOV. 4 AT TBD.** Join Rabbi Hal Schevitz and Barbara Herman, PhD for a conversation exploring how to manage challenges and maintain healthy relationships. RSVP to [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org) for the address.

**TOT SHABBAT: 10 A.M. SATURDAY, NOV. 9 AT BEZ.** Join for a lively Tot Shabbat experience! Enjoy singing, movement, music, and more at this lively Shabbat service designed for newborns to 3-year-olds, along with their families and friends. Older siblings are welcome to join in the fun too! RSVP to Robbie Alder at [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org).

**MEN'S CLUB HAPPY HOUR: THURSDAY, NOV. 14 AT DEVIATE BREWERY IN CARMEL.** Savor a selection of delectable local beers and leave your cares behind. Join for a night of camaraderie, relaxation, and a whole lot of fun. Don't forget to leave the kids at home for this 21+ event! RSVP to Conor Larkin at [Thomas.conor.larkin@gmail.com](mailto:Thomas.conor.larkin@gmail.com).

**TORAH ON TAP: 7:30 P.M. THURSDAY, NOV. 21 AT ROYAL PIN BOWLING.** Millennials and Gen-Z professionals, do you feel ready to take on the challenge of beating Rabbi Hal's high score in bowling? Give it a try at Royal Pin Bowling on 96th Street. Join your Beth-El Zedeck friends and neighbors for a fun night of pizza, bowling, and meaningful discussion. RSVP to [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org).

**ROSH HODESH CANDLE MAKING: 7 P.M. MONDAY, DEC. 2 AT BEZ.** Ladies, are you in need of some rest and relaxation? Crafting candles from granulated paraffin can provide the perfect opportunity for tranquility. Cantor Melissa will guide an inspirational teaching, and then engage in the captivating and meditative process of creating a personalized candle, from selecting fragrances and colors to customizing the container and number of wicks. Let's unwind, gather, and unleash our creativity together. RSVP to [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org).

**MEN'S CLUB HAPPY HOUR: THURSDAY, DEC. 12 AT MOON TOWN BREWERY IN CARMEL.** Hey guys, relax and join the Men's Club at Moon Town Brewery in Carmel! Enjoy some fantastic local beers and leave your worries at home as you join an evening of friendship, unwinding, and plenty of fun. Remember that this is a 21+ event, so make arrangements for the kids to stay home! RSVP to Conor Larkin at [Thomas.conor.larkin@gmail.com](mailto:Thomas.conor.larkin@gmail.com).

**HANUKKAH SHABBAT AND CONSECRATION: 6 P.M. FRIDAY, DEC. 13 AT BEZ.** Celebrate Hanukkah with friends and family at BEZ! Join a special Hanukkah Shabbat dinner after the kindergarten consecration service. This family-friendly event will feature a talented entertainer sure to keep everyone smiling. RSVP to [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org).

**TORAH ON TAP: 7:30 P.M. THURSDAY, DEC. 19 AT 16-BIT.** Calling all Millennials and Gen-Z professionals - it's time to unleash your inner child with adult beverages and video games! Enjoy 16-bit classics like Donkey Kong, Joust, Street Fighter, and Star

Wars without spending a dime! So, "GET OVER HERE," and get your name on the leaderboard - let's make sure Rabbi Hal doesn't have the high score all to himself. RSVP to [ralder@bez613.org](mailto:ralder@bez613.org).

## Congregation Beth Shalom

Congregation Beth Shalom (CBS) holds its activities and functions at 3085 W. 116th St., Carmel, IN 46032. These include, but are not limited to, in-person worship services, religious school (Talmud Torah), meetings, and social gatherings. CBS shares the building facilities of Congregation Shaarey Tefilla but remains an independent Reform congregation. The CBS mailing address continues unchanged at 4000 W. 106th St., Ste 125-118, Carmel, IN 46032.

**REGULAR CBS SHABBAT SERVICES: 6:30 P.M. FRIDAYS AT TEMPLE.** Worship services are both in person and virtual. Zoom links and access codes are available to everyone through the CBS website. All are invited and welcome to participate, whether in person or through Zoom.

**EVERYBODY SHABBAT: 6:30-7:30 P.M. FRIDAYS, NOV. 29 AND DEC. 27.** Specially designed for the entire family, this monthly event involves the children as well as the adults. Everyone is welcome.

**TORAH STUDY: 9:30-10:30 A.M. EVERY SATURDAY MORNING, TEMPLE LIBRARY.** This is a weekly gathering and immediately precedes any Saturday morning service. Everyone is invited to come.

**CBS BOOK CLUB: 3 P.M. SUNDAY, DEC. 10.** Book for discussion: A Death in Cornwall by Daniel Silva. Book Club may be attended in person or online. Contact [adult.ed@bethshalomindy.org](mailto:adult.ed@bethshalomindy.org) for more information.

**MAJ LESSONS IN NOVEMBER:** If you are interested in learning how to play Maj Jong, contact Mickie Gurvis at [mgurvis@comcast.net](mailto:mgurvis@comcast.net). Cost is an \$18 donation to the CBS Sisterhood Yes Fund.

**ADULT EDUCATION/INTERFAITH DIALOGUE:** An interfaith dialogue between Rabbi Justin Kerber of CBS and Rev. Chris Duckworth of New Joy Lutheran Church and facilitated by Yaniv Shmukler with JCRC. May include history about Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation as well as a discussion of what this tragic history and more hopeful recent history means. Check the CBS calendar at the CBS website [www.bethshalomindy.org](http://www.bethshalomindy.org) for the exact date and time of this most important and extremely timely interfaith conversation.

Visit [bethshalomindy.org](http://bethshalomindy.org) or [@BethShalomIndy](https://www.facebook.com/BethShalomIndy) on Facebook for more information.

## Congregation B'nai Torah

**SHACHARIT: 8:30 A.M. SUNDAYS; 6:50 A.M. MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS; 7 A.M. TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS; 9 A.M. ON SHABBAT.**

Contact the office at (317) 253-5253

or email [office@btorah.org](mailto:office@btorah.org) to sponsor a kiddush on occasion of a yahrzeit, simcha, or other event. Visit [btorahindy.org](http://btorahindy.org) to donate or to view current shul bulletin and service times.

## Chabad Lubavitch of Indiana

Chabad Center for Jewish Life Weekly Services – 10 a.m. Shabbat Services every Saturday; 9 a.m. Sunday Services every Sunday. Visit [www.chabadindiana.org](http://www.chabadindiana.org) or [@chabadindiana](https://www.facebook.com/chabadindiana) on Facebook for upcoming events, classes and programs.

## Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation

Welcome Rabbi Daniel and Rubisa Rajeli Askenazi and family to Etz Chaim and the Indianapolis Jewish Community! Check for newly added services, classes, and events on the Community Calendar and on the website at [etzchaimindy.org/calendar](http://etzchaimindy.org/calendar).

### SERVICES:

**7:15 A.M. MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS; 7:30 A.M. TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAYS**

**9 A.M. SHABBAT SHACHARIT SERVICE \*SHABBAT MINCHA SERVICE TIMES VARY**

**9 A.M. SUNDAYS AT CHABAD**

**9 A.M. ALL HOLIDAYS AT ETZ CHAIM**

**WELCOME DINNER TO RABBI DANIEL ASKENAZI AND HIS FAMILY: NOV. 10.**

**BINGO NIGHT (TENTATIVE): DEC. 1**

**HANUKKAH DINNER: DEC. 25**

Check the website for current information on holidays and events and subscribe to receive weekly emails at [www.etzchaimindy.org/calendar](http://www.etzchaimindy.org/calendar). Connect on Facebook at [@EtzChaimIndy](https://www.facebook.com/EtzChaimIndy) and [@EtzChaimTheSisterhood](https://www.facebook.com/EtzChaimTheSisterhood). Contact (317) 251-6220 or [office@etzchaimindy.org](mailto:office@etzchaimindy.org) for more information.

## Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation

**TORAH TALK: 9:30 A.M. WEDNESDAYS.** Join Rabbi Krichiver to discuss Jewish sacred source texts in a non-intimidating way. All are welcome. Proudly presented by Sisterhood. You can join in person or find the Zoom link to participate on [ihcindy.org/](http://ihcindy.org/) online.

**KABBALAT SHABBAT: 6:15 P.M. FRIDAYS.** Join IHC for the weekly service, bringing the peace of Shabbat into homes. You can watch live at [ihcindy.org/streaming](http://ihcindy.org/streaming).

**SHABBAT MORNING TORAH STUDY: 9 A.M. SATURDAYS.** IHC clergy guides the group through the weekly Torah portion text seeking understanding of the teaching for the time and discussing its message for today. It is available online or in person. No prior knowledge is necessary, and all are welcome.

**SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES: 10:30 A.M. SATURDAYS**

**IHC SISTERHOOD'S GIFT SHOP HOURS:** 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Tuesdays - Fridays; 5:15 – 6:15 p.m. Fridays; 9:45 a.m. – 12 p.m. Sundays when the Jewish Learning Program is in session. You can also make an appointment to shop by emailing [ihcsisterhoodgiftshop1@gmail.com](mailto:ihcsisterhoodgiftshop1@gmail.com).

**IHC CIRCLES:** Circles are small groups formed around specific interests, passions, geography, life stage, or profession. There is a Circle for wine lovers, young families, volunteers, and more. Visit [ihcindy.org/ihc-circles](http://ihcindy.org/ihc-circles) to learn more.

**MITZVAH STITCHERS: 10 A.M. SUNDAYS, NOV. 3, 10, 17 AND 24, AND DEC. 8 AND 15.** If you love to knit, crochet, sew, or embroider and love to schmooze while you stitch, then Mitzvah Stitchers is perfect for you. Email Barb Levy at [bcl@bclevy.com](mailto:bcl@bclevy.com) to be added to the email distribution list so she can provide you with the Zoom link for meetings.

**EUCHRE CIRCLE: 10 A.M. MONDAY, NOV. 4 AND 18, AND DEC. 9.** All levels of play are welcome to come and have some fun, meet new people, and compete for a prize. This circle also meets at 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 7 and Dec. 5.

**JEWISH BOOK CLUB: 12 P.M. TUESDAYS, NOV. 12 AND DEC. 10.** The Jewish Book Club is a great way for book lovers to enjoy getting to know each other through lively discussion about great books with Jewish and literary value. Selections are mostly fiction, occasional biography/memoir, or historical non-fiction. Email Evelyn Pockrass at [epockrass@ihcindy.org](mailto:epockrass@ihcindy.org) to participate.

**BLOOD DRIVE: 8 A.M. SUNDAY, NOV. 3.** Donate blood and save lives! Each donation saves up to 3 local Hoosier lives. Text or call Chelsea at (734) 755-7245 with questions.

**JUSTICE AND JUDAISM: A FIRESIDE CHAT WITH B.J. NOVAK: 6:30 P.M. TUESDAY, NOV. 12.** IHC welcomes Executive Producer, Writer, and Star of NBC's The Office B.J. Novak to a moderated conversation with Senior Rabbi Brett Krichiver and Cantor Aviva Marer with a VIP reception to follow.

**GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP: 6 P.M. THURSDAY, DEC. 14.** Join Cantor Aviva Marer and Clinical Psychologist Tami Krichiver in a warm, confidential environment to comfort one another, share our pain, reflect on loss, or simply observe, and listen.

**INTERFAITH COUPLES AND FAMILIES: A WEEKEND OF LEARNING AND CONVERSATION: NOV. 15 – 17.** Scholar in residence is Marion Usher, Ph. D., expert and author renowned for her work with interfaith relationships. Nearly two decades ago, Marion Usher created "Love and Religion: An Interfaith Workshop for Jews and Their Partners" and has since worked with over 600 interfaith couples. In the workshops, she facilitates conversations where Jewish interfaith couples can: address questions they have about establishing a religious life, discuss the central challenges they face, and learn skills to enhance their relationship. This event is open to the community. Call (317) 255-6647 for more information or to make a reservation.

- **KABBALAT SHABBAT D'VAR: 6:15 P.M. FRIDAY, NOV. 15.** Following services, Shabbat Dinner and Dialogue: How do parents discuss interfaith relationships with their college-aged children?
- **GRANDPARENTS AND GRAVITAS: 9:30 A.M. SATURDAY, NOV. 16.** For interfaith grandchildren.
- **BEER, BUBBLY AND BITES FOR YOUNG SINGLES AND COUPLES: 5 P.M. SATURDAY, NOV. 16.**
- **BREAKFAST AND BAGELS: A DISCUSSION WITH INTERFAITH FAMILIES RAISING JEWISH CHILDREN: 10:30 A.M. SUNDAY, NOV. 17.**

Visit [ihcindy.org](http://ihcindy.org) or [@IHCIndy](https://www.facebook.com/IHCIndy) on Facebook for links to all Zoom services, classes and programs and for more information.

## Congregation Shaarey Tefilla

**KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICES AT 6:30 P.M. ON FRIDAY NIGHTS:**

- First Friday of the month is Family services geared towards young kids and parents
- Third Friday of the month is musical accompaniment service

**SHABBAT SERVICES AT 9:30 A.M. ON SATURDAY MORNINGS:**

- First Saturday of the month Nosh 'n Drash with Rabbi Sendrow following services (at approximately 11:30 a.m.)

**WEEKDAY MINYANS AT 6:30 P.M. ON MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS.**

**DR. JACK KAMEN TORAH STUDY GROUP WITH RABBI SENDROW: 11 A.M. ON WEDNESDAYS ON ZOOM.**

**SISTERHOOD BOOK CLUB: 7 P.M. WEDNESDAYS, NOV. 27 AND DEC. 25.**

**ANNUAL HANUKKAH PARTY IN DECEMBER.**

Visit [www.shaareytefilla.org](http://www.shaareytefilla.org) or [@ShaareyTefilla](https://www.facebook.com/ShaareyTefilla) on Facebook for the most updated information.

## Temple Beth El Muncie

**KABBALAT SHABBAT: 7:30 P.M. SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH IN-PERSON AND ONLINE**

**TORAH STUDY GROUP: 10 A.M. SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH IN-PERSON AND ONLINE**

Visit [templebethelmuncie.org](http://templebethelmuncie.org) and their weekly emails for more information on classes and programs. Connect with Temple Beth El [@TempleBethEl](https://www.facebook.com/TempleBethEl) on Facebook, (765) 702-7731 or email [contact@templebethelmuncie.org](mailto:contact@templebethelmuncie.org).



# COMMUNITY MENORAH CANDLE LIGHTING SCHEDULE



Join the Jewish community at the Max & Mae Simon Jewish Community Campus community menorah to light the candles!

- 🕯 **FIRST NIGHT:** 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 25 – Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation
- 🕯 **SECOND NIGHT:** 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 26 – Hooverwood Living & Jewish Community Center ECE
- 🕯 **THIRD NIGHT:** 4:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 27 – Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation & Jewish Community Relations Council
- 🕯 **FOURTH NIGHT:** 6:45 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 28 – Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis
- 🕯 **FIFTH NIGHT:** 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 29 – Congregation Beth Shalom & Congregation Shaarey Tefilla
- 🕯 **SIXTH NIGHT:** 6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 30 – Indianapolis Jewish Discovery Center
- 🕯 **SEVENTH NIGHT:** 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 31 – Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis & PJ Library
- 🕯 **EIGHTH NIGHT:** 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025 – Congregation Beth-El Zedeck