

# The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

Sivan / Tammuz  
June 2020



## Let's Keep Connecting!



Zooming with the Federation and Moms on Mother's Day

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Jewish Federation  
OF GREATER EL PASO

# Up Close: **Macy Gluck**

Coronado High School graduate Macy Jordan Gluck may be 18, but I told her she sounds older, both in her ideas and her ability to express them. She said she should thank her two older sisters for that. “Leah and Ali were seven and five years older than me,” Macy laughs. “They were my cool sisters who gave me wisdom beyond my years.”

As we think about new beginnings this month, our community’s seniors got short shrift their last semester and yet, they are thrilled to launch the next chapter. For Macy, the future brings a scholarship to Texas Tech and the opportunity to explore journalism and creative writing. Her plans also include getting involved in a new Jewish community in Lubbock and joining Hillel.

Jewish communal involvement is a big part of Macy’s life, from her nine years of Jewish summer camp to her leadership in her congregation. “I would say that our Jewish community shaped me,” she adds.

For four years, she served as a teacher’s assistant at Temple Mount Sinai’s Religious School and was the president of Mount Sinai Temple Youth (MSTY) group from 2018 to 2020. At the regional level of the National Federation Temple Youth organization (NFTY), she was the NFTY-SW photographer/historian. “Being part of NFTY has been one of the best things that has happened to me,” she says.

Her willingness to step up and lead earned her a spot at the Union of Reform Judaism’s last year of the Kutz Leadership Camp in upstate New York last summer. “Never before had I learned so much about being a good person as I did that summer,” she remembers. “Meeting so many good people in one place was incredible.”

Prior to that, she loved spending eight consecutive summers at Camp Young Judea, where she received the camp’s Mensch Award for Good Citizenship and Best Camper Award.

The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso also recognized her commitment, naming her Volunteer of the Year in 2018.

Working with kids at Temple from first through eighth grade stands out among her many good memories. “Teaching the middle schoolers was really fun and I loved all the volunteer work we did. We spent every other week on a volunteer trip to different organizations around town.”

“We made sure that Sunday School was not just about learning the Jewish holidays” she adds. “It was about learning the lifestyle of being Jewish and its emphasis on loving and accepting others and sharing the beauty of being kind.”

*Cindy Graff Cohen  
Editor, The Jewish Voice*



### *What do you value most in your friends?*

I love making friends and I really consider everyone a friend, but I value authenticity over anything else. I think being your most authentic self is really important and I value that in others.

### *What might we be surprised to learn about your interests/hobbies?*

My hobbies include writing, reading, exercising, painting, knitting, dancing, and music – I played in the Coronado band. People might not know that I like comic books, superheroes and graphic novels. I was president of ThunderCon, a one-day ComicCon-style celebration of music, dance, and fine arts, at Coronado this year, but it didn’t take place this spring.

### *What are your plans for this year? Where would you like to see yourself five years from now?*

This is the big year! Graduation, moving away to college, and starting a new and independent chapter in my life. There is a lot of uncertainty in the world right now. Graduation has already been affected and I am not sure if college will be too, but I wouldn’t be surprised. I am just hoping that throughout this year I can grow and learn and become better. Wow, five years into the future is a lot for me. I hope to have gotten a good education and I hope to get the opportunity to travel and learn and volunteer. I just hope I am making a difference in the world for the better.

### *Who’s your favorite Jewish hero?*

Abby Stein (author, activist, former rabbi, and first openly transgender woman raised in a Hasidic community) came to El Paso a few years ago and I got to meet her and share a meal with her, as well as listen to her life story. I think because I feel a deep connection with her and she is an advocate for women and the LGBTQ+ community, she is my favorite Jewish hero.

### *What is your favorite Jewish holiday and why?*

Tu B’Shvat would have to be my favorite Jewish holiday. I think celebrating nature and really connecting

with the earth is so important; especially in the new age of technology. It’s a good reminder to be humble and respect the land we live on.

### *What would you say to encourage young people to take part in local Jewish activities?*

You have nothing to lose! I think a lot of young people (well, really everyone) fear the unknown. They fear being unable to fit in or hating it or losing something, but really participating in new things teaches us so much, regardless if you hate it or not. How would you know that you hate it if you never give it a chance? I encourage young people like me to try and keep an open mind, because you really have nothing to lose from the experience.

### *What is a favorite memory of your time at Temple Mount Sinai?*

I liked being the MSTY representative to Temple’s board of directors. It was part of my job as youth group president and I was only 16, but they treated me like an adult. There I was among highly educated and accomplished leaders and it set me on a track for other good things. The experience taught me a lot about leadership. Temple has just made me such a better person and I cherish every single memory.

### *What would you say to encourage others to take leadership roles in our Jewish community?*

The most important thing to remember is that young people are the future. Each individual has power and it is so important that you fight for what you care about and believe in. That is what life is all about.

### *What’s the best thing about being part of El Paso’s Jewish community?*

I wish I could say everything. If I had to pick one thing, it’s the people. I mean, I really love everyone in this community and everyone I have ever met has made me better. Every conversation, every “wow you’ve gotten so tall,” every hug, just everything. I love this community with everything I have because I would not be the person I am without it.

**Parents’ names:** Elisa and Tom Given and Brion and Valerie Gluck

**Siblings’ names:** Leah Green, Ali Gluck, Hannah Rich, Hope Rich, Lindsey Moran, Aly Given

**Local grandparents’ names:** Doris Gluck and Irene Osborn (of blessed memory)

**Birthplace:** El Paso

**School:** Texas Tech University (Fall of 2020)

# Venitchazek! We will be strong -- together



It's hard to believe that as I write my last column for The Voice as Jewish Federation board president, we are living in an unprecedented time of a global pandemic. Although there were many who foresaw our predicament, we were not prepared and most did not believe our world would shut down as it has and would change how we live forever. Our future success will depend on our collaborative efforts and it is times like these that reveal the relevancy and the power of the collective of our community and JFNA, The Jewish Federations of North America.

As I reflect on my time over the past two years, I am grateful for our board, our staff and our volunteers who helped make our community better. I am grateful that this experience afforded me connections with so many dedicated and committed people. It forced me out of my box, gave me strength I didn't know I had, pushed me beyond my comfort zone, and taught me about budgeting, programming, fundraising, board development and engaging others. I became a better speaker and a better writer, two things I did not like to do. This role gave me confidence and helped me believe in myself. That's what leadership does; it makes you a better person.

I am proud our Federation engages all generations, connects our board members with resources and training, and supports our community members, Jewish schools, synagogues, other partner agencies and the greater El Paso community. Our granting process was improved and our security, programs and the Jewish Film Festival were enhanced. I believe our community is more united.

As soon as shelter-in-home began, our decision to have our operations move cloud-based made for a smooth transition allowing our staff to work from home. We started a zoom community leadership forum to share ideas and resources, we connected our partner agencies with SBA loans, we delivered kosher Passover meals, and we developed a COVID emergency fund along with the Jewish Community Foundation. Simultaneously, JFNA streamlined and developed strategies and resources for Jewish communal institutions to assist us all with our response to this crisis.

The custom in Ashkenazi communities is that at the conclusion of each of the Five Books of Moses, the congregation stands and calls out "Chazak, chazak, venitchazek!" ("Be strong, be strong, and we will be strong!"). We need to be strong for our families, our communities and we need to strengthen one another.

I look forward to seeing you at our Annual Meeting on June 18 by Zoom, as we celebrate the last year, say farewell to outgoing board members and elect new ones. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and may you all stay safe and healthy during these difficult times.

*Janet Kent Wechter  
President, 2018-20*

*Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso*

**We sit in the quiet**

We sit in the quiet  
Uncertain when it will end  
We hear the birdsong  
The leaves rustling in the wind  
It is so quiet, we can hear ourselves think  
At times, it is peaceful,  
At times, it is not.

We miss our gatherings, our families, our friends  
And even our board meetings  
That have become second nature to our lives  
As we serve any way we can.  
But we also secretly revel in The Shutdown.  
The pandemic is an excuse not to go, not to do,  
Not to be anything but our true selves.

At first we do not like it, but week after week  
We begin enjoying time by ourselves,  
And although we aren't sure how we will persevere, we do.  
We learn to be with our spouses, our partners, our children,  
Our roommates and our furry friends.

We enjoy time in nature, time in our homes,  
Time to imagine, time to notice, time to read, time to write, time to call  
Time to garden, time to clean, time to bake, time to eat  
Time to pray, time to laugh, really laugh, time to cry,  
Time to forgive, time to heal, time to change, time to be.

All the time we spent going, doing, wanting becomes available  
It breathes freedom we could only imagine.  
It gives us the opportunity to serve others,  
Maybe not in person, not close up, but we can serve from afar,  
Be together, support one another,  
Together we are strong, we are better and we will thrive.

*Janet Kent Wechter*

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**The Jewish VOICE** A publication of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

The Jewish Voice of El Paso, published ten times a year, is dedicated to informing, educating, and uniting the Jewish community by providing news items of local, national, Israeli and international concern.

The Jewish Voice will consider for publication any materials submitted that support the mission of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso and have relevance and appeal to the El Paso Jewish community. Articles are subject to editing at the editor's discretion and are subject to space limitations. Letters cannot be longer than 150 words and articles must be kept to a maximum of 300 words. Please email to [thevoice@jfedelpaso.org](mailto:thevoice@jfedelpaso.org)

Opinions are those of individual writers and not necessarily those of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. The Jewish Voice is not responsible for the kashrut of any product or eating establishment advertised herein.

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**These We Honor With Tributes**  
Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

<b>To:</b> Carlos and Sofia Kaplan with thanks for your friendship	<b>To:</b> The Rotwein and Goldman Families in Memory of their Beloved Mother Estelle Goldman
<b>From:</b> John and Lourdes Eger	<b>From:</b> Janet and Randy Wechter
<b>To:</b> Rochelle Saks with thanks for your friendship	<b>To:</b> Marc Ellman in Memory of his Beloved Father Murray Ellman
<b>From:</b> John and Lourdes Eger	<b>From:</b> Janet and Randy Wechter
<b>To:</b> Amit and Pollie Toren with thanks for your friendship	<b>To:</b> Mila and Carlos Martinez in Honor of the Birth of their Son Luca Martinez
<b>From:</b> John and Lourdes Eger	<b>From:</b> Janet and Randy Wechter
<b>To:</b> Laura and Merton Goldman and Susie and Eddie Goldman and Families in Memory of Estelle Goldman	<b>To:</b> Mindy and Meyer Marcus in Honor of the Birth of their Grandson Luca Martinez
<b>From:</b> Cindy Graff Cohen	<b>From:</b> Janet and Randy Wechter

**Todah Rabah to Our Volunteers**

**My Funny Quarantine**  
Robin Furman and Wendy Lanski, Co-Chairs

**On-Call Volunteers**  
Haidi Appel, Michelle Blumenfeld, Steve Haydu, Sammy Holaschutz, Noel Hollowell-Small, Aaron Weislow, Isaac Weislow

**Passover Seder Volunteers**  
Edward "Doobie" Dubowitz, Noel Hollowell-Small, Brian Kanof, Stuart Kanof, Monika Kimball, Robert Kimball, Wendy Lanski, Brian Small, Amanda Vine

**Promotional Video**  
Jonny and Lory Rogers  
Libi and Liam Lanski  
Fidel French

**Campaign Callers**  
Leslie Beckoff, Michelle Blumenfeld, Robin Furman, Lori Gaman, Debra Kanof, Monika Kimball, Wendy Lanski, Sandy Nadler, Jane Snow, Janet Wechter

# Perpetual Tzedakah: One couple's gift for giving

As second-generation Americans, Jack and I were fortunate to grow up with our "pioneering" grandparents of El Paso. It was a time when our Jewish community was very small and close knit. We all knew each other or were related to each other! Our roots grew deep.

Why create an endowment for this unique community? When I lived in Jerusalem, back in the 70s, I had a friend who never passed a street beggar without giving him a few coins of Tzedakah. I asked him once if he ever got tired of it and his answer is probably one of the reasons that I was motivated to honor our obligation of Tzedakah and to establish an endowment in our community. He told me that these beggars did him a favor—that they gave him an opportunity to fulfill his

mitzvah of giving, that he didn't have to go out of his way to find someone to honor his obligation to give.

When our community established the El Paso Jewish Community Foundation, it gave us an opportunity to create an endowment which is "a gift that keeps giving" long after our ability or opportunity to give in person ends.

I am only embarrassed that I procrastinated and took so long to take the first step to create this perpetual offering of Tzedakah. It helps us fulfill the mitzvah of giving, "without having to go out of our way to find a way to fulfill that mitzvah."

Growing up in El Paso's Jewish community reinforced the pride and importance of embracing our heritage. Own it – it is a treasure.

*Benita Neumann*



## Foundation has filed for favorable tax treatment

One of the most beneficial tax methods for senior citizens to donate to charities is to make their donations directly out of their Individual Retirement Account (IRA). As long as the senior citizen (now generally at least 72 years of age) is subject to a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), donations to a qualified charity up to \$100,000 made directly out of an IRA can receive favorable tax treatment on RMDs from IRAs.

Effective in 2020, the Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso filed for status with the IRS as a

Public Charity separate from the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. As a separate Public Charity, qualified donors may establish a Designated Fund with the Foundation and fund it with RMDs from their IRAs as soon as the Foundation has received official designation as a Public Charity. Please note, donations to a Donor-Advised Fund do not qualify for this beneficial tax treatment.

Cliff Eisenberg, Foundation president, and Robert French, Foundation executive director, welcome you to contact them to discuss the establish-

ment of a Designated Fund in your name. As always, prospective donors should consult with their tax advisor concerning their reporting requirements of any planned tax transactions.

Established in 2002, The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso is committed to protect the fund's

principal while generating current income for the Jewish community of El Paso and Las Cruces. More than \$4,000,000 has been given back to the community since 2004; \$533,000 was distributed to local Jewish organizations and projects in 2019. As of December 31, 2019, the Foundation held assets of \$11,970,000.

### Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso Board

**President:** Cliff Eisenberg

**Vice President:** Stuart P. Shiloff

**Vice President:** Alan Krasne

**Treasurer:** Rose Schechter

**Secretary:** Robin Furman

**Executive Director:** Robert French

**Board Members:** Robert Beckoff, Marcia Dahlberg, Brenda Ehrlich, Joyce Jaffee, Robert Krasne, Meyer Marcus, Cindy Metrikin, Jerry Rubin, Shari Schwartz, Robert Shiloff and Randy Wechter

**JFED Board Representative:** Janet Wechter

**Ex Officio:** Allan Goldfarb, Jon Sonnen

*For more information, visit [jcfep.org](http://jcfep.org) or call 915-842-9554*

## Readers Write: Fed's Seder delivery

"Please extend my thanks for the Seder in a Box! Yesterday was a tough day and I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate being included. Good tears."

"We greatly appreciate being included in the Passover meal distribution for seniors. This community gesture helped to break the loneliness of our prolonged self-quarantine."

"We are so appreciative of the Passover Seder meals we received from the Federation and Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso. It certainly made the holiday special. Thank you so much for including us."

"Thank you for including me – it was

*super nice."*

"Thank you all for the seder package of plate, food and book."

"Thank you for the food that was delivered to my house, I really appreciated it and that it is a beautiful thing JFED and the Foundation are doing."

"Thank you again for the Passover Dinner that Federation and the Jewish Community Foundation sponsored. Such a treat and all so very good. We are most appreciative of the Jewish community of El Paso."

*"You are all doing such an outstanding job. Know it is very much appreciated."*



**BORDERLAND'S**  
CAFÉ EUROPA

(Seniors 65+)

### Call-in events for June

#### Puppy Love and the Cat's Meow

with Deb Benedict  
CEO Of El Paso Humane Society

Wednesday, July 8, 2020 | 11:30 am

#### Harvesting Wisdom with Legacy Letters

with Joanne Turnbull

Wednesday, July 29, 2020 | 11:30 am

**Zoom Meeting ID 818 9321 5592**

Check weekly email for registration dates to have a light lunch delivered to your home.

We look forward to "seeing" you.



Jewish Federation®  
OF GREATER EL PASO



The Jewish Community  
FOUNDATION  
of El Paso

# Zoo Zooming with bugs, bunny, and bird

Over 60 kids and parents took a virtual walk on the wild side through the El Paso Zoo's Zoom classroom in May. Presented by the PJ Library in partnership with the J Center for Early Learning the successful event combined story time and animal encounters to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Lag B'Omer.

It's a day that is often celebrated with gatherings, bonfires and barbecues, as well as trips. Since we couldn't gather physically, we gathered virtually to observe the essence of the holiday. Students and PJ Library families listened to local PJ Library specialist Alison Westermann read the story "Why Dogs Have Wet Noses." From their own kitchens, bedrooms, and living rooms, the children intently followed the pictures on the screen.

The program then was turned over to the El Paso Zoo's education specialist and "Zoo Adventure" coordinator Sarah Murphy. She

led a segment where students learned about some of the animals in the zoo's collection and why it's so important to care for these creatures, even the creepy-crawly ones! We got to see three creatures "close up" – a bunny, some hissing cockroaches, and a bird, which was very talkative. The students were delighted with it!

Students had time to ask very insightful questions, followed by a follow-up lesson with their preschool teachers to reinforce the field trip. It was a terrific partnership and PJ Library looks forward to strengthening the connection between and among all the partner agencies of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso during these times of virtual programming as well as in the future when we can gather again physically. For more information about PJ Library, check out our Facebook page: facebook.com/pjlibraryelpaso



## PJ Library

in El Paso

Give your family the gift of **FREE** Jewish books.

Visit [pjlibrary.org/elpaso](http://pjlibrary.org/elpaso)

## PJ OUR WAY

Sign up at [pjourway.com](http://pjourway.com)

for free chapter books and graphic novels with Jewish themes for kids ages 9-12

 Jewish Federation OF GREATER EL PASO

## Community Counts

Have YOU taken the 2020 Jewish Community Demographic Survey?

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

Watch your email, log on and be counted **BEFORE JULY 31!**

Follow the email link to this first-time-ever UTEP Sociology Department Survey. Completely confidential, anonymous, and secure.

*Questions cover areas such as age, zip code, attitudes toward Israel, encountering antisemitism, keeping Kosher, and how YOU identify as a Jew.*

*Make YOUR voice count.*

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# Jewish Federation of Greater

## Executive Committee 2020-22



**Monika R. Kimball**  
**President**

Retired Professor/Director of ESL Programs  
Born: Berlin, Germany  
Spouse: Robert Kimball, Ph.D.  
Children: Angela F. Brockman and Claudene E. Blake  
*I believe in the JFED's mission and wish to support its programs on behalf of the El Paso and Las Cruces communities and abroad*

*"I chose to serve the Federation as president out of a sense of duty to and love for my Jewish communities here and in Las Cruces. That may sound like a platitude, but I truly mean it. I can assure you that despite the pandemic and the lack of in-person meetings, YOUR Federation Leadership and its dedicated staff have been working remotely in keeping with its mission and will continued to do so.*

*I will contact many of you in the near future and hope that we can work together to enhance the goals of the Federation, to be vigilant in fighting antisemitism and to always remember that WE ARE ONE.*

*If ever there were a time to support the ideals and promises of this Federation, it is now. We need your involvement, your volunteer spirit and, of course, your financial support. Not just for us locally, but also for our Jewish communities here and abroad. I look forward to working with you and our Federation. If I can be of help to you in any way, please contact me via the Federation office."*



**Leslie Beckoff**  
**First Vice President**  
**- Governance**

Volunteer  
Born: Ottawa, Ontario  
Spouse: Robert Beckoff  
Daughter: Jordan Beckoff (David Feiner)  
*Working as a volunteer with the Jewish Federation is my way of giving back, both with my time and contributions, because building a strong, secure and happy Jewish community in El Paso is our future. The Jewish Federation also allows me to help combat the increase of anti-Semitism and it supports Jews worldwide and in Israel. As it has been said, "We are Stronger Together."*



**Debra P. Kanof**  
**Second Vice President**  
**- JCRC Chair**  
**(Jewish Community Relations Council)**

Attorney  
Born: New York, N.Y.  
Children: None, unless you count my dog, Harper Lee Kanof  
*Why have I chosen to serve on our JFED board? It chose me.*



**Bill Stein, Ph.D.**  
**Secretary**

Retired Research Scientist/Engineering Instructor  
Born: Louisville, Kentucky  
Spouse: Susan Michelson  
Children: Sarah, David, Scott and Barbara  
*I have a strong commitment to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in the greater Jewish community of El Paso and Las Cruces. I believe that, as a board member of the Jewish Federation, I have the opportunity to fulfill this commitment.*



**Dan Sonnen**  
**Treasurer**

Wealth Advisor  
Born: Fort Worth  
Spouse: Vanessa Sonnen  
Son: David  
*I serve on the JFED board so that I can have a positive impact on the outcomes of local Jewish philanthropy, something I have been passionate about since my Birthright Israel trip.*



**Janet Wechter**  
**Immediate Past President**

Interior Designer  
Born: Shreveport, Louisiana  
Spouse: Randy Wechter  
Children: Ryan and Jenny  
*I choose to serve on the JFED board because I believe in its mission. I also serve so that my volunteer work will benefit the greater El Paso Jewish community and the Federation's partner agencies around the globe and its relationship to Israel.*



# 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting

## Thursday, June 18 6:00 p.m.

<https://www.jfedel Paso.org>

# El Paso Board of Directors

## Campaign 2020-22



**Robin Furman**  
**Campaign Co-Chair**  
 Community Volunteer and Full-time Wife,  
 Mother and Daughter  
 Born: Richmond, Virginia  
 Spouse: Tony Furman  
 Children: Adam Furman (Wendi); Jordan Furman (Allison)  
*I am serving because of my strong commitment to the local and world Jewish communities and my love of Israel. With coronavirus making life more challenging at the moment, my commitment of time and resources to an organization like JFED that impacts so many people in need locally has been very personally rewarding.*



**Wendy Lanski**  
**Campaign Co-Chair**  
 Mom and Community Volunteer  
 Born: St Louis, Missouri  
 Spouse: Dr. Steven Lanski  
 Children: Libi Chaya and Liam Hanan  
*I discovered in my late 20s that my whole maternal family was Jewish. It was then I "found myself." Fast forward, I'm committed to and passionate about making Jewish life, education and community a priority for my family. The El Paso Jewish Community is amazing and the Jewish Federation is at the heart of it all.*

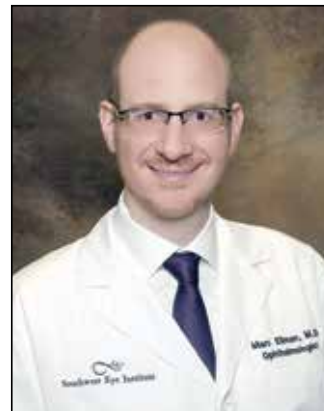
## First-Year Board Members 2020-22



**Tatiana Judith Avila**  
 Communication and Marketing  
 Coordinator  
 St. David's and Las Palmas Del Sol  
 Healthcare  
 Born: El Centro, California  
 Future Spouse: Engaged to Peter Svarzbein  
 Children: None. My lovely niece who I raised, Venice Michelle – and two dogs  
*I'm actively involved in several local national boards, nonprofits, and organizations. I enjoy contributing to my community in any way possible. When approached about this opportunity, I was delighted. I would love to help grow this amazing organization, as well as elevate our community to help create a better future for our families, friends, and neighbors.*



**Lea Chayes**  
 CEO, ORI Investments  
 Born: Jerusalem, Israel  
 Partner: Steve Newcomb  
 Children: Jason Chayes (Liz), Marla Sofer (Yaniv), and Adam Chayes (Roz)  
*In an unprecedented time like this, I think that our strongest bond is our community and our religious unity. This is the time to come together as "one" to preserve and strengthen our Jewish community and our neighbors and friends.*



**Marc Ellman, M.D.**  
 Ophthalmologist Specializing in  
 Cataract Surgery  
 Born: Peekskill, New York  
*I have seen some of the wonderful things that the Federation has been doing and I would be honored to be a part of that. This has become even more special to me as my father sadly passed away from COVID-19 and he was very happy when I told him I'm joining the Federation Board. Judaism was very important to him and one of the most important things in his retired life was his participation with a Jewish police officer organization, the Shomrim Society. My father spent his NYPD career on the streets of the Bronx. My mother's parents were sole survivors of their families from Auschwitz.*



**Dana Frank**  
 Community Volunteer  
 Born: El Paso  
 Spouse: Adam Frank  
 Children: Drew, Jamie and Lane  
*I chose to serve on the JFED board because I saw firsthand, while co-chairing the 2020 Film Festival, the amazing reach and impact it has on the Jewish community of El Paso.*



**Noel Hollowell-Small**  
 Telemarketing at Full Beauty Brands  
 Born: Los Angeles  
 Spouse: Brian Small  
 Children: Derrick and Evelynnn  
*My passion is creating a strong Jewish community, regardless of affiliation, and I hope to accomplish this by serving on our Jewish Federation board.*



**Carlos Kaplan**  
 Small business owner at First Finance Co.  
 Born: Mexico City  
 Spouse: Sofia  
 Children: Jonathan and Aleeya  
*I have previously served on the JFED board and I found the work interesting and beneficial to the Jewish Community. I enjoyed working with the other volunteers and leadership. Many organizations worry about their individual needs. The JFED encouraged and help fund several of these worthwhile groups. The leadership showed direction and helped them focus on what they each did best.*

## Second-Year Board Members 2020-21



**Stephanie Calvo**  
 Educator  
 Born: Providence, Rhode Island  
 Children: Daniel Calvo (Gaby), Luis Calvo (Blandine), Andres Calvo  
*I serve on the Board to promote an organization that fosters and supports a continuously evolving Jewish identity and community and goodwill towards others.*



**Cesar Carrasco**  
 Professor, Civil Engineering  
 Born: Cd. Juarez, Chihuahua  
 Spouse: Blanca M. Carrasco  
 Children: Rebecca and Joel  
*I would like to contribute to bringing the El Paso Jewish community together and I believe the Federation is in a unique position to accomplish this goal.*



**Martha Eisenberg**  
 Play at being "Gaga" to our seven grandchildren  
 Born: El Paso  
 Spouse: Cliff Eisenberg  
 Children: Jenna Eisenberg (Haim Magriso), Dr. Lauren Eisenberg (Adam Rosenfield), Ernest Eisenberg (Cheryl)  
*I love El Paso and want to see the Jewish community thrive not only for my grandchildren, but for our entire community.*

Not pictured: **Ben Kaufman**, second-year board member

Join Us Virtually  
 We Celebrate Our  
 Jewish Community

Watch your email  
 for zoom link  
[us02web.zoom.us/j/89778591869](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89778591869)

- Enjoy a video presentation on the Federation's past year
- See who wins the iPad raffle for Jewish Community Demographic Survey early respondents
- Toast Nathan Stevens, winner of the 2019-20 Florence and Bernard Schoichet Young Leadership Award
- Vote for the incoming slate of nominees of Board Officers and Board of Directors, above
- Thank Janet Wechter for her service to our community and the Jewish world as Board President
- Thank outgoing Board members: Shari Ehrlich, Eitan Lavi, Ophra Leyser-Whalen, and Peter Svarzbein

# MAZEL TOV TO 2020 GRADUATES!

## Julian Cohen



**Silva Health Magnet High School**  
 Plans: Attend Texas Tech University and major in Kinesiology  
 Parents: Alan and Debra Cohen  
 Grandparents: Kenneth and Sandra Levine and Julius and Shirley Cohen (of blessed memory)  
*It is important to stay active with Judaism and to never forget your roots. By taking part in USY, I have done just that: meeting new people, having incredible experiences and reconnecting with my faith. To me, everyone should give it a try, you never know what you are missing.*

## Elise Ehrlich



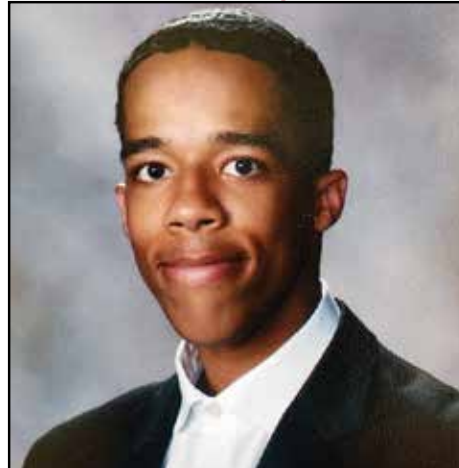
**Coronado High School**  
 Plans: Attend Washington University in St. Louis to major in history on the school's premed track  
 Parents: William and Jennifer Ehrlich  
 Brother: Adin  
 Grandparents: Herb and Brenda Ehrlich  
*Never be afraid to push yourself to do your best. It's easy to be satisfied with an average grade, but pushing yourself in your studies to learn the material and get a higher grade involves more work and it's worth it in the end. Success doesn't come easy; it comes with patience and devotion.*

## Conner Fraker



**Coronado High School**  
 Plans: Attend Texas Tech  
 Parents: Liz and Trey Fraker  
 Siblings: Andrew and Zachery  
 Grandparents: Gloria Dembovicius, Tony Alvililar, Rusty Fraker  
*I would tell the other graduates that all your hard work has paid off. Your life is just beginning and the best days are yet to come. The sky is the limit!*

## Elijah-James Hagins



**Coronado High School**  
 Plans: Attend Temple University in Philadelphia  
 Parents: Sarah Williams and Andre Hagins  
 Grandparents: Bill and Yolanda Radcliffe and Brian Williams  
 Siblings: Noah and Hannah  
*Don't be afraid to jump into new things or to test your comfort zone. Life is all about discovery and you might just find who you are doing something you may have never thought yourself capable of.*

## Brenda Hamicha



**American University**  
 Plans: After graduating in political science with certificate in Spanish translation, return to Washington, D.C., and continue to work at the State Department or other government position for a year before pursuing graduate school  
 Parents: Dina and Dani Hamicha  
 Sisters: Shirley and Denise  
*Work hard and don't give up: as cliched as it may sound, it's the truth. Anything in life can be achieved with hard work and with not giving up. No dream is too big!*

## Alexandra (Jita) Holderman



**Franklin High School**  
 Plans: Attend Texas Tech, major in biology and minor in business;  
 Parents: Christopher and Patricia Holderman  
 Siblings: Twin Madison, Wesley and Lauren  
 Grandmother: Jeanne Moye (of blessed memory); Uncle: John Moye  
*Work hard in high school – it really counts! Also get a job or internship without the help of your parents; it is a great way to get into the real world. Never be afraid to do what makes you happy!*

## Madison Holderman



**Coronado High School**  
 Plans: Attend Texas Tech, major in nutrition  
 Parents: Christopher and Patricia Holderman  
 Siblings: Twin Jita, Wesley and Lauren  
 Grandmother: Jeanne Moye (of blessed memory); Uncle: John Moye  
*No matter what the movies say, high school isn't as bad as it seems. Don't be afraid to be yourself and make sure to love what you do and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.*

## Aaron Hyman



**Arrowhead Park Early College High School**  
 Plans: Attend New Mexico State University  
 Parents: Michael and Stacey Hyman  
 Brothers: Derek, Evan and James  
 Grandparents: Aaron and Selma Hyman, Jean and Pauline Lemelin

## Grace Marks



**Las Cruces High School**  
 Plans: Attend University of New Mexico to study music and business  
 Parents: Ross and Debra Marks  
 Siblings: Kagan and Mason Marks  
 Grandparents: Mark (of blessed memory) and Stefanie Medoff  
*Always pursue what you want to do in life, no matter if someone tells you that you cannot succeed that way. It is your life and you are to write your story. Spend time with family, although in teenage years they may seem a tad annoying to you, when you look back on these years you will always remember those who helped you though, let them be your family.*

## Emily Zenner



**Coronado High School**  
 Plans: Attend Yale University with hopes of pursuing a career in medicine or law  
 Mother: Elisa Kahn  
 Siblings: Jacob and Julia  
 Grandparents: Frances and Stuart Kahn  
*I'd encourage students to work as hard as possible right now to the best of their ability, even in difficult circumstances, because hard work now is the best way to guarantee the ability to reap amazing rewards in the future.*



# New school set for inaugural year

Enthusiastic parents, a united board, and strong educators have fast-tracked The Cherry Hill School to a great start.

Classrooms are set up and waiting for students, along with a computer lab, art room, and science lab. Kids and staff hope to be at the Congregation B'nai Zion August 10, pending the same concerns that every school and house of worship share with COVID-19 this year.

The inaugural first-grade class is ready to go, with potential for a second-grade class and an additional first-grade room if needed, says Susie Gibson, head of school administration. Classes are limited to twelve students each.

For parents whose pre-schoolers have come up through the Jewish Center for Early Learning at Temple Mount Sinai, the good news is that the new elementary school will combine elements of Reggio Emilio student-

driven curriculum along with proven pedagogical practices of Finland, one of the world's top countries in educational innovation and achievement. Kids and parents had a chance to visit and try out learning activities at one of the school's open houses in February.

Joining Suzie will be Sandy Garza, head of curriculum, and language teacher Amanda Martin. Classes will go beyond the usual first-grade fare and will introduce foreign languages, art, music, science, technology, engineering, the arts, math, computers, sports and more.

Students will work on their Hebrew vocabulary following the Moskowitz "Learning Hebrew Through Movement" program. Outdoor adventure education is another important part of the program, promoting teamwork, personal development, and environmental stewardship.

The school will use Jewish teachings to teach universal lessons of respect, kindness, empathy and charity, with the goal to give children the confidence that they need to make good choices and make a difference in our world.

### Learning on the road

Earlier this year, Suzie and Sandy were inspired from their visits to other schools following the Reggio Emilia philosophy and open enrollment Judaics. Wendy Lanski, mother of an enrolled first-grade student and wife of the school's board chair, pediatric emergency physician, Dr. Steve Lanski, joined the research trip.

"This experience gave both Sandy and me a baseline of information to consider and build on at The Cherry Hill School," says Suzie.

The College School in St. Louis and The Lippman Jewish Day School



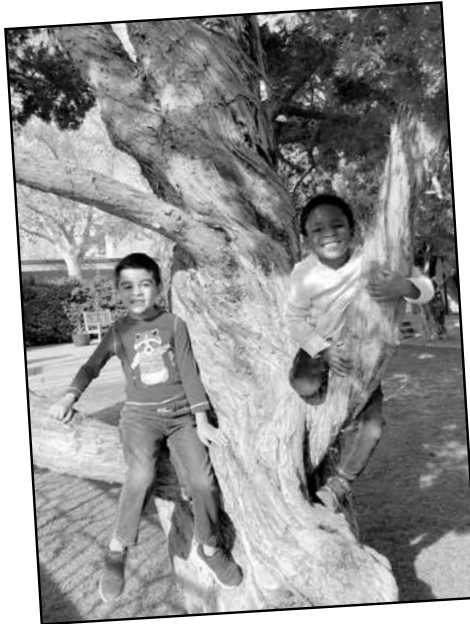
in Akron gave the women insights into classroom setup, daily schedules, learning environments, and even extra-curricular classes.

In Akron, they gained a better understanding of how the school's Jewish strand incorporated Judaic studies. In St. Louis, they saw the impact of using a model of inquiry learning generated from student interest and exploration. "We can provide a higher level of academics and create a culture of thinkers," adds Susie.

"We left the tour feeling very enthusiastic for the opportunity to build upon this experience and a vision to facilitate the learning process that addresses the whole child."

# New beginnings every day at The J

The J Center for Early Learning is an especially magical



place. We get to share so many new beginnings with the children, and their families, from taking first steps to hearing first words and so much in between.

Often, we are our students' first school and their first experience being away from Mom and Dad for a good part of the day. As they get older we get to help them as they read their first words and, with that, begin to open up an entire world of learning.

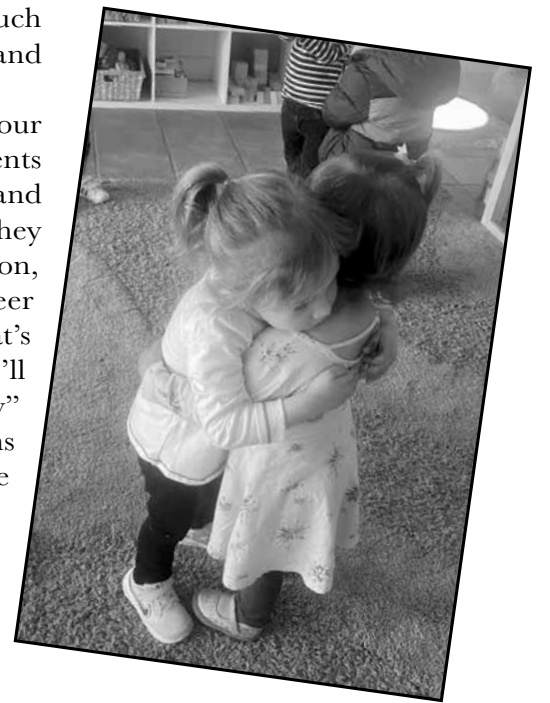
However, one of our favorite firsts has to be their very first friendships. Many of our students start with us when they are just one or two years old so, often they don't even remember when they first met their friends. What they

do know, though, is how much they love laughing, playing and discovering things together.

Walk into any one of our classrooms and you'll see students working together, helping, and encouraging one another. They are there to cheer each other on, every single day, and to cheer each other up, whenever that's needed, too. This is why you'll often hear talk of our "J family" and it's one of the many reasons we can't wait until we can all be together once again.

Meg Birk  
Director

J Center for Early Learning



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# JFED makes Kosher food more available – and more affordable

For people who miss having a wide variety of Kosher foods at a local store, we have an alternative resource. El Paso is one of 22 cities enjoying the benefits of the KC Kosher Co-op, a source of bulk Kosher goods that can be ordered by the case or partial orders when it's possible to split into smaller quantities.

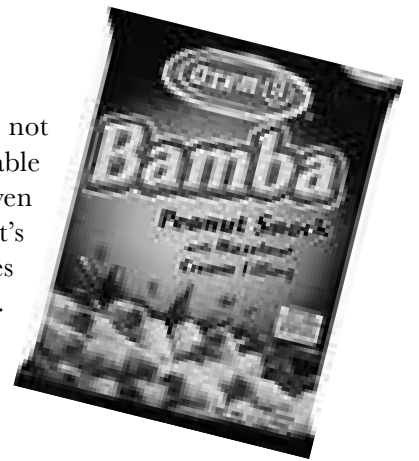


KC Kosher's mission is to "provide maximum product diversity with rock bottom prices and exceptional customer service." The diversity is clear on their website: [kckoshercoop.com](http://kckoshercoop.com) – which features Kosher bakery goods, dairy products, fish, meat, and "goodies" including snacks and sweets from Israel. Their grocery section features cases of necessities from baby food to bread crumbs, drinks to dried fruits and nuts.

The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso has partnered with this online Kosher cooperative to guarantee the delivery of the dates and times below to ensure that the community meets the minimum delivery order. KC Kosher Co-op guarantees delivery to El Paso and is waiving the delivery fee for the Federation, a savings for our community.

This resource isn't just about whether or not you keep Kosher – there are plenty of delectable delights on the website that will interest even the most discerning palate. Check out what's available: you'll find some oldies but goodies to help you reminisce about your childhood... "just like Bubbe used to make."

For information, visit [kckoshercoop.com](http://kckoshercoop.com)



Upcoming Deliveries	
Order Deadline	Delivery Date
July 1, 2020	July 23, 2020
August 12, 2020	September 6, 2020
October 14, 2020	November 5, 2020

## News from Our ADL Region: "Antisemitism Uncovered"

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Antisemitism has been called "the longest hatred," and it's an apt characterization. It has been around for centuries, and it persists. It is why the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) was founded in 1913 and as antisemitism often signals a rise in other types of hatred, it is why ADL has a two-part mission: "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all."

ADL has just released a comprehensive report on the history of antisemitism entitled "Antisemitism Uncovered" which can be read at [antisemitism.adl.org](http://antisemitism.adl.org). It includes a definition of antisemitism, put simply, "hatred toward Jews," and information on how antisemitic tropes and stereotypes began and continue to be used today.

### Antisemitism and the pandemic

While anti-Jewish hatred shares characteristics with other types of hate, it often is based on contradictory logic that envisions Jews both as overly powerful, and very weak, or even subhuman.

For example, ADL's Center on Extremism has been monitoring posts by extremists about Jews and COVID-19. The posts alternately blame Jews for spreading the virus in order to control the world and profit and offer examples of Jews being sick and weak with the virus or illustrations of Jews as the virus itself.

### Responding to and reporting antisemitism

ADL has vehicles for reporting and tracking antisemitism. If you see an antisemitic incident or crime, report it to us at [www.adl.org/reportincident](http://www.adl.org/reportincident). The incident



will be investigated and addressed by ADL, if appropriate, and it will be entered into our yearly "Audit of Antisemitic Incidents," which helps us and law enforcement see trends and respond to them. If judged to be a true antisemitic incident, it will show up on our "Antisemitism Tracker" and may appear on ADL's "H.E.A.T. Map," which tracks Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, and Terrorism.

Antisemitism is at a high right now. We must address it immediately, effectively, and comprehensively, before it gets worse. Know that ADL has fought antisemitism for 107 years, and will continue that fight as long as it is needed, and we can be successful, with your help.

*Dena Marks*  
Senior Associate Director  
ADL's Southwest Regional Office - Houston  
(sister of Ronnie Marks of El Paso, of blessed memory)

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To bring much needed solace during this uncertain time, Camerata del Sol is launching a new initiative to bring chamber music to the community in a safe environment. We are offering to the Las Cruces and El Paso community À La Carte Driveway Serenades. Patrons will have the opportunity to order from our menu of musical selections, including Classical, Baroque, Romantic, early 20th century, and Pop music. We will come to you. Grab a lawn chair, open your garage, and we will serenade you from the comfort of your driveway. For 15-20 minutes of music, our prices are as follows:

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## We had a plan...

We had a plan for 2020.

After my retirement from the active congregational rabbinate at Temple Beth-El at the end of June, Rhonda and I were going to move to a community in the Midwest that we knew quite well. We had not yet determined what we might do in terms of activities and service to local organizations, but we believed that our connections would organically develop over time.

Normally, I might describe a need to alter our course for the coming months by referring to the Yiddish saying, Mann Tracht, Un Gott Lacht (Man Plans, and God Laughs).

I don't believe in a God who would laugh at what is happening now. I do believe in a God who would help us to be grateful for our lives, guide us to find new ways to promote healing for ourselves and others, and inspire us to sustain communal hope and to brighten our days enough so that we won't lose our sense of humor.

My path in May and June toward retirement was always going to include organizing and downsizing files and my collection of books. I had planned to continue leading weekly study groups, conduct worship services, bring the Religious School year to a close (on May 3), officiate at a group Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah (on May 2), and hold a Confirmation service for our oldest students in Religious School.

Most of that is still happening, just not in person. Confirmation will wait until we can be in one another's presence again, and there are other individual ceremonies that will happen in a virtual space.

So how is this retirement going to be different than the retirement I expected? I will never know. I suppose that we do have only one world and one existence, despite the fact that the alternate

timelines of my favorite science fiction series do intrigue me.

What I do know is this: I was ordained almost 39 years ago. I have notebooks containing articles by me and about me from local and national press, Bar/Bat Mitzvah programs, High Holy Day sermons, and photos from

*They were demonstrating one of the most central Jewish values that has sustained our community over the centuries: adaptability.*

significant family and communal events. I have been reviewing some of those materials in recent weeks.

These materials describe my presence at special moments in people's lives. They recount my reflections on the meaning of Jewish holidays and personal and congregational milestones.



They chronicle my efforts to advocate for people in need, combat bigotry and prejudice, foster cooperation among people of different faith groups, and gather people together for study and discussion. They trace my interest in

music as a way to give voice to what we hold inside our Jewish souls. And they demonstrate how much Rhonda and I have done together to make Judaism come to life for the communities where we have lived.

During our last Religious School session, held on Zoom, I asked the

members of our learning community what Jewish values they believe are important now, more than ever before. They cited principles that could have been chosen at most any time: being attentive to one's own health; community; practicing Judaism at home; kindness/Chesed; remembrance;



called me and asked Rhonda and me to go outside on our driveway. The Religious School families had organized a thank-you drive-by caravan for our years serving Temple and the Religious School.

They were demonstrating one of the most central Jewish values that has sustained our community over the centuries: adaptability.

I can only think as their cars passed by our home, that God had blessed their secret plan...and that God was laughing and smiling at their success.

And that is how I will go into the next chapter of my rabbinate: ready to expect the unexpected, and prepared to serve in any way I can no matter where I will be.

Rhonda and I thank Temple Beth-El, the Las Cruces community, and the regional Jewish community for the opportunity to be partners in enhancing Jewish life. May we

always be strong and gain greater strength for ourselves, so that we can strengthen one another.

*Rabbi Larry Karol  
Temple Beth-El  
2011-20*

## Rabbi Larry Karol: Congratulations on Your Retirement With Best Wishes Always

Temple Beth-El and the Jewish community of Las Cruces and El Paso extend our deepest gratitude to Rabbi Larry and his wife Rhonda for their service, their wisdom and especially their friendship.

### Career of scholarship and leadership

- 1981: Ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati
- 1981-2011: Three decades serving congregations in Dayton, Ohio; Topeka, Kansas, and Dover, New Hampshire
- 2011: Became the fifth full-time spiritual leader of Temple Beth-El, a congregation launched in 1953



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