



BLOSSOMING/PRICHA (פ ר י ח ה)

2019 HEBREW COLLEGE JEWISH EDUCATION CONFERENCE

MONDAY-TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11-12, 2019

PRESENTER BIOS

Tuesday's Keynote Speaker will be Rabbi Avraham Infeld.

AVRAHAM INFELD is the President Emeritus of Hillel International– the Foundation for Jewish Campus life. He also serves as a consultant on Tikkun Olam to the Reut Institute, and is a member of the Faculty of the Mandel Institute. In May 2012, Avraham was elected Chairman of the Board of the Hillels of Israel. In 1970, Avraham founded Melitz, a non-profit educational service institution that fosters Jewish identity. He also served as chairman of Arevim; founding chairman of the San Francisco Federation's Amuta in Israel; and chairman of the Board of Israel Experience, Ltd.

Avraham was also Director General of both Gesher Educational Affiliates, the Shalom Hartman Institute and served a three-year tour of duty in London as Director of the Jewish Agency's Youth Department for English speaking Europe. Avraham was Birthright's first International Director, and led the Planning Process which created one of the most successful and formative educational programs in the Jewish world. He is a graduate of the Hebrew University in Bible and Jewish History, and of Tel Aviv University's Law School. In 2005, he was awarded the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's prestigious Samuel Rothberg Prize for Jewish Education. He was awarded honorary doctorates by Muhlenberg College and from Hebrew Union College for his contribution to the field of education.

Other Confirmed speakers:

ELLEN ALLARD, Music Performer, Educator, Composer and Coach

Ellen, a multi award-winning Performer, Music Educator, Composer, and Coach educator is one of the most influential musicians on today's Jewish music scene. Traveling throughout the US and abroad, Ellen has been performing and teaching music to young children, adults and families for over 40 years. Her repertoire of over 300 songs is featured across 14 recordings and 7 songbooks; her music has been published by fellow singer-songwriters on 31 recordings and 11 books. Ellen's songs are sung in schools, synagogues and summer camps worldwide, and are part of the curriculum for Hebrew Union College, Hebrew College, Jewish Theological Seminary and Aleph. In addition to presenting workshops and keynotes on the importance of music in the lives of young children, Ellen is a regular faculty member and presenter at Hava Nashira, Song Leader Boot Camp, NewCAJE, and the Hebrew College Jewish Education Conference; she regularly presents workshops, leads family worship, and performs on the Jewish Rock Radio stage at the URJ Biennial. She is a cantorial soloist at Mishkan Tefila, Brookline, MA, is certified as a holistic health coach, teaches Yoga Yeladim children's yoga classes and Rhythm 'n' Ruach

children's music classes. Ellen holds a BA in music from Boston University and a master's degree in early childhood education from Arcadia University.

GILAD AMSHALOM, Speech Language Pathologist and Infant Mental Health Specialist at Boston Medical Center; Fellow in the Infant-Parent Postgraduate Fellowship at UMass, Boston; Infant Mental Health Counselor in the Early Intervention Program, Riverside Community Care, Somerville

Gilad Amshalom is a speech-language pathologist and holds a BA from Haifa University and a Master's degree from Hebrew University (Jerusalem) in infant and early childhood mental health. Gilad joined the Infant-Parent Mental Health Postgraduate Fellowship/Certificate Program at University of Massachusetts Boston in March 2019. For the past seven years, Gilad has worked closely with infants and their families, as well as with educational staff and governmental programs.

Recently, Gilad contributed to the Israeli Health Ministry's plan for early childhood education renewal and policy revision by helping to construct a three-year blueprint of an ideal early childhood in Israel. The plan addressed the issue from four perspectives: theoretical, economic, practical and ethical. Central to his plan was an emphasis on the children's relationship with his surroundings.

Gilad, a member of the Harris Professional Development Network, will reside with his family in Boston until August of 2022. Since December 2018, Gilad has volunteered at the SPARK Center (Supporting Parents and Resilient Kids) at the Boston Medical Center. At SPARK, Gilad facilitates dyadic interventions with mothers in recovery from substance abuse and their babies. Gilad also works as a Mental Health Clinician in the Early Intervention Program in the Riverside Community Care of Somerville, MA.

LUCY BANERJI, Director, Temple Shalom Nursery School (Newton, MA)

Lucy Banerji was born in Russia. She studied Psychology and Sociology of Childhood at Saratov State University, Russia (equivalent to a Ph.D. in Sociology of Childhood.) She is passionate about the topics of children's rights, inclusion and cultural construction of quality concepts in early childhood education.

Lucy's professional experience includes work in preschool settings, academic research, and teachers' training. In her early career, Lucy taught Psychology and Social Pedagogy in Saratov Pedagogical College and led professional development courses for early childhood educators. After immigrating to the United States, Lucy worked at Tufts Educational Daycare Center, a laboratory school at Tufts University, as a mentor teacher. In August of 2017, Lucy started her work as a director of Temple Shalom Nursery School (Newton, MA.)

RABBI JETHRO BERKMAN, Dean of Jewish Education, Gann Academy (Waltham, MA)

A graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), where he was a Wexner fellow, Rabbi Berkman has since joined the Reform movement's rabbinical association. He studied at the Yakar Center for Tradition and Creativity, the Harvard Divinity School, the Hebrew University, the Pardes Institute, the Conservative Yeshiva and Machon Schechter.

Prior to his studies at RRC, he worked for several years both in Israel and America for Seeds of Peace, an organization that helps teenagers from regions of conflict learn peacemaking skills.

In his role as Dean of Jewish Education at Gann Academy, he has become increasingly interested in thinking about how Jewish wisdom and practices support human thriving and how Jewish living and learning at Gann help our students to thrive as human beings.

DAVID BERNAT, PHD, Executive Director of Synagogue Council of Massachusetts; Lecturer in Judaic Studies at UMass Amherst; and *Me'ah* instructor at Hebrew College.

Dr. David Bernat holds a Bachelor's degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Biblical Interpretation from Brandeis University. Dr. Bernat is the author of Sign of the Covenant: Circumcision in the Priestly Traditions, co-editor of Religion and Violence: The Biblical Heritage (with Jonathan Klawans, Boston University professor and previous *Me'ah* faculty member.) He has been with the *Me'ah* program since 1997, and planned and led *Me'ah's* summer Israel Study tour. His research focuses on ritual and violence in Jewish texts and traditions.

Yael Boim-Fein, Director, the Israeli Institute for Gender Equality in Education

Yael Boim-Fein, the Founding Director of the Israeli Institute for Gender Equality in Education, is an educational entrepreneur, and a specialist in the field of gender and education. Yael founded and directed the education department at Beit Avi Chai, and has an academic background in Media and Culture studies, Gender studies and Pluralistic Education. Yael is an executive member of the international Gender and Education Association (GEA), and a graduate of the Mandel School for Educational Leadership and the American State Department's leadership program.

AMY BOLOTIN, Director, JCC Early Learning Center, Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston

Amy Bolotin is the director of the JCC Early Learning Center, Brookline/Brighton. A graduate of Bank Street College of Education's Infant and Parent Development program, Bolotin has been working with very young children and their families for more than twenty-five years. In addition to her work at the JCC Greater Boston, she works with JCCA faculty at the Sheva Center to support JCC directors around the country create and sustain quality Jewish early childhood environments. Amy is involved with the Paradigm Project, a national organization that supports Jewish early-childhood educators, was a member of the third cohort of the Jewish Early Childhood Leadership Institute and facilitates a local community of practice for Jewish early childhood educators working with infants and toddlers. She has presented workshops on open-ended play at previous Hebrew College conferences, as well as a workshop on creating developmentally-appropriate, open-ended experiences around Jewish holidays for toddler environments.

RACHEL LEVITT KLEIN DRATCH, Associate Director, Educational Innovation, Prizmah Center for Jewish Day Schools

Rachel has a Masters in Jewish Education from Yeshiva University, is a Mandel Jerusalem Fellow, participated in the Mandel Teacher Education Program, has an ELI talk, and has served as a scholar in residence in many communities. She has also spent time in Maimonides school in Boston, taught Torah, led rallies for Soviet Jewry, and more. Rachel was a student teacher at *Michlalah* in Jerusalem before continuing her passion for teaching as a Hebrew school teacher and student leader at Stern College. Rachel served as a *Tanach* and Prayer teacher, Director of Professional Development, Teacher Mentor, Dean of students, Vice Principal, Student Life Coordinator, Israel guidance advisor and other meaningful

roles at many amazing day schools including: Frisch, Ramaz, Maimonides, Fuchs Mizrachi, Berman Academy and *Beth Tfiloh*. Rachel has also been Director of SLED educational consulting, and spends her summers at Camp *Moshava IO* running drama and special programming.

LINNA ETTINGER, MJED '12, Assistant Director, Early Childhood Institute, Hebrew College

Linna is also supervisor of Field Experience I, Coordinator for the Annual Jewish Education Conference, and Facilitator and Coordinator of the Israel Education Community of Practice. She received her Master's in Jewish Education from Hebrew College and a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her Master's project was the compilation of 23 Torah Time Primers that have been distributed to families at the preschool. Her informal Jewish education includes completion of the two-year *Me'ah* program of Combined Jewish Philanthropies and Hebrew College, completion of the two-year *Me'ah* Graduate Institute Certificate of Studies in Jewish Thought and Spirituality, and participation in the Community Leadership Program of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem since 2013.

Linna has authored several articles about Jewish education for the Jewish Advocate, eJewishPhilanthropies.com, and JewishBoston.com, and has written several blogs including ScienceFunFortheHolidays.blogspot.com. Her work experience includes classroom teaching and leading workshops in the field of early childhood education in the Jewish community. She is also a group leader for the Community Leadership Program of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Linna is passionate about bringing modern day meaning, joy and significance of Judaism and Jewish sources to people of all ages. She and her family have been members of Temple Emunah, a Conservative synagogue located in Lexington, MA, since 1992. Linna has been co-chair of Adult Education at Temple Emunah for over a decade. As part of her Adult Education work, Linna has been a champion of the Shalom Hartman Institute video lecture series including iEngage a series designed to equip rabbis with the sources and strategy needed to comprehensively teach about Israel in all of its complexity.

SANDY GOLD, Director of Jewish Education, Gateways Access to Jewish Education

Prior to her current position, Sandy was Director of the Temple Shir Tikva Early Learning Center in Wayland and was a full-time instructor in the education department of Framingham State University, where she taught methods classes in both the undergraduate and post baccalaureate programs and supervised student teachers in their practicum placements. Sandy currently teaches on-line classes for professional development at Framingham State and for the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education at Hebrew College. Dually certified in both general and special education, Sandy has over twenty-five years of teaching experience as both a classroom teacher and an inclusion specialist and provides consulting services to schools and parents.

JONATHAN GOLDEN, PHD, MJED '97, Israel Curriculum Coordinator and American History Teacher, Gann Academy (Waltham, MA)

During Dr. Golden's career at Gann, he has taught AP American History, chaired the History Department, served as Assistant Head of School and Director of Academic Operations, and mentored numerous teachers and department chairs. A graduate of Princeton University, he received his MJEEd from Hebrew College and Ph.D. from Brandeis University. At Brandeis, he studied American Jewish history under the tutelage of Professor Jonathan Sarna and wrote a dissertation entitled "From Cooperation to

Confrontation: The Rise and Fall of the Synagogue Council of America.” In 2007, Dr. Golden was the recipient of Hebrew College’s Sydney Hillson Memorial Award for Distinguished Leadership in and Commitment to Jewish Education. In 2014, he received the AJC Boston Young Leadership Award. In 2018, he was given CJP’s Chai in the Hub award honoring the contributions of young professionals and lay leaders in the greater Boston Jewish community. He is a member of the AJC New England Regional Board and he serves on the Steering Committee of AJC’s Contemporary Jewish Life Commission and the Jewish Religious Equality Coalition (JREC). He also serves on the Board of Trustees for Camp Yavneh.

RABBI DR. ARTHUR GREEN, Founding Dean and Rector of the Rabbinic School, and Irving Brudnick Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Religion at Hebrew College

Dr. Arthur Green is Professor Emeritus at Brandeis University, where he occupied the distinguished Philip W. Lown Professorship of Jewish Thought. He is both a historian of Jewish religion and a theologian; his work seeks to form a bridge between these two distinct fields of endeavor.

Educated at Brandeis University and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he received rabbinic ordination, Dr. Green studied with such important teachers as Alexander Altmann, Nahum N. Glatzer, and Abraham Joshua Heschel, of blessed memory. He has taught Jewish mysticism, Hasidism, and theology to several generations of students at the University of Pennsylvania, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (where he served as both Dean and President), Brandeis, and now at Hebrew College. He has taught and lectured widely throughout the Jewish community of North America as well as in Israel, where he visits frequently. He was the founder of Havurat Shalom in Somerville, Massachusetts in 1968 and remains a leading independent figure in the Jewish Renewal movement.

MARION GRIBETZ, Director of Initiatives, Hebrew College

A member of the Hebrew College faculty since 1995, Marion Gribetz is director of the Pardes Educators Program in the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education. Gribetz has taught courses on a variety of topics in contemporary Jewish education and the place of art in Jewish education. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Barnard College and a master’s degree from Tufts University, was a Jerusalem Fellow and studied Jewish education and Jewish art at Hebrew University

SHERRY GROSSMAN, Gateways Director of Community Services.

Sherry joined Gateways in 2009. She works with synagogue preschools and religious schools throughout the community and coordinates the Madrichim Train the Trainer Program for youth who volunteer their time in synagogues to work with children who have special learning needs. As a senior educator, consultant, coach and program manager, Sherry’s career spans 35 years in Jewish educational settings. Sherry has a Bachelor in Psychology from Simmons College, a Master in Education in Early Education and Special Needs from Tufts University’s Eliot-Pearson School of Child Study, and a Master in Judaic Studies from Boston’s Hebrew College. She has Massachusetts certification in Early Education and Care, Director Level II, and State Teachers’ certification.

KATE HOLDSWORTH, Director of Gan Keshet Preschool (Northampton, MA)

Kate Holdsworth is the Director of Gan Keshet Preschool in Northampton, MA. She is a Harold Grinspoon Foundation award recipient for Teaching Excellence in Jewish Education. With over 15 years of experience in the field of early childhood education, Kate is excited to continue her collaboration with

her good friend (and former Gan Keshet parent), Felicia Sloin, as part of PJ Library Page to Stage. The Page to Stage project allows Kate the opportunity to meld her experience as a teacher and her background in performance, puppetry, set and prop design, bringing stories to life and inspiring children and fellow teachers to explore and expand their creativity and their connection to Jewish tradition.

KAT HORION, Lead teacher, Trust Center for Early Education at Temple Ohabei Shalom (Brookline, MA) and Associate of Second Nature Design

Kat Horion is a Lead Teacher at Trust Center for Early Education at Temple Ohabei Shalom, in Brookline, MA. Katrine holds a Bachelor's Degree of Art from UMass Boston, and a Master's Degree in Early Education from Lesley University, and is a trained behavior therapist. Kat has over 15 years of teaching experience with children ages birth through grade 5, in both Jewish and secular settings.

Kat is an advocate for Nature Based Education for children of all ages, she has worked in the field of Jewish early childhood, and secular early elementary, school age vacation and after school care for nearly twenty years. She is an independent consultant.

She has had the pleasure of presenting nationally on the topic of nature and risky play opportunities, and had the honor of delivering the keynote address at the 2019 Early Childhood Day of Learning, hosted by the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas. She has supported change and growth in the field of early childhood by participating in the EEC grant funded public conferences through EarlyEdCon and The Small Enterprise, Education and Promotion Network (SEEP) grant over the past four years.

HEIDI LOVITZ, Director of Educational Programming, ShalomLearning

Heidi Lovitz is an educator, education administrator, and curriculum developer dedicated to innovating Jewish education. Her experience includes Family Educator at Congregation Beth Elohim in Acton, MA for over 15 years, the Director of Jewish Life and Learning at Camp Tevya in Brookline, NH for 15 years, and Director of Education and Programming at Temple Beth Abraham in Nashua, NH. Heidi was one of the founding leaders of the Havayah program connecting teens from Boston, Haifa and Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine. Heidi holds a BA in communication studies from the University of Massachusetts and has completed coursework towards a Master of Jewish Education at Hebrew College.

WALTER LYONS, Mental Health Specialist, Gateways: Access to Jewish Education

Walter has been working with in the fields of mental health and education for over forty years. He worked at McLean Hospital as a Mental Health Worker for five years and then as a child welfare social worker at Roxbury Children's Service before moving to education. Since then he has helped start new programs in Medford and Newton, including the Curtis-Tufts Academy in Medford, the Pilot Program in Newton North H.S. and Central High School, an alternative high school in Newton. He has worked as a special education director at Newton North H.S. and as a special education director in North Andover and at the Neighborhood House Charter school In Dorchester, middle and elementary schools. He also worked for two years as the coordinator for the Newton Public School's Suicide Prevention Program. Walter is a graduate of the University of Hawaii and has M.Ed. in School Adjustment Counseling and in School Administration.

JARED MATAS, MAT, JLDS '14, Director of STEAM Innovation, Boston's Jewish Community Day School (JCDS) and Director of J-STEAM, Jewish Interactive

Dr. Jared Matas has almost two decades of experience teaching a wide range of students and content, including kindergarten, middle school history and early elementary engineering. Jared has served as an adjunct professor at a number of universities, teaching courses such as “Early Childhood Education” at Tufts University, “Teaching Tefillah” at Hebrew College, and “Teaching Hebrew with Technology” at Middlebury College. Additionally, Jared has worked as a consultant for a number of synagogues, leading efforts to innovate supplementary schools with project-based learning and STEAM integration.

Jared is the Director of STEM Innovation at the Boston Jewish Community Day School, where he leads school-wide initiatives in the areas of Design Thinking, project based learning, engineering and coding, and the Director of J-STEAM for Jewish Interactive, which gives him the opportunity to bring this work to schools across the country. Jared’s passion is transforming learning and teaching in order to empower students to explore meaningful problems and contribute positively to the world. He loves helping teachers expand their capacities to use technology as a tool for encouraging a student-centered approach to teaching and learning.

Jared has a Masters of Arts in Teaching from Brandeis University and received his doctorate in education from Hebrew College and Northeastern University, writing a dissertation titled 'The Impact of Digital Technology on Teaching and Learning,' based on teacher action research he conducted in his own classroom.

SUSAN MORELL, Director of Field Experience, Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education, Hebrew College

Susan Morrel is a dynamic Jewish educational leader with over 25 years of congregational education experience, as well as work in Jewish camps and organizations. In addition to her current position as the Director of Field Experience at Hebrew College’s Shoolman Graduate School of Education, Susan is a Jewish Education Consultant in the Greater Boston area. As a consultant for *Gateways: Access to Jewish Education*, Susan leads a community of practice for school directors, provides coaching for Jewish educators, and teaches in the B’nei Mitzvah program which prepares students with special needs for their bar/bat mitzvah. Susan holds an Executive Master’s Degree in Religious Education from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

JOHANNA PERLIN, Co-Founder of Second Nature Design and Judaic Curriculum Specialist at Temple Ohabei Shalom Trust Center for Early Education

Johanna Perlin has been an educator in the field of Jewish early childhood education for over 35 years and is passionate about connecting children with nature. She is currently the Judaic Curriculum Specialist at Temple Ohabei Shalom Trust Center for Early Education. She is a partner in Second Nature, which provides staff training and consulting in both secular and Jewish settings to facilitate bringing children out doors. In addition to presenting nationally, Johanna has done nature webinars for the Jewish Outdoor, Food, Farming & Environmental Educators (JOFEE) Fellows and for The Jewish Education Project (NY). She has also been a guest lecturer at both Mass Bay Community College and Bunker Hill Community Colleges. She is a certified trainer for Nature Explore Outdoor Classrooms.

Johanna holds a master’s degree from Wheelock College in early childhood education, and a certificate from the Early Childhood Institute at Hebrew College. In addition to her work at TCEE and nature

training, Johanna can be found exploring the outdoors and wonders of nature with her young granddaughter Sophia.

RABBI DR. NEHEMIA POLEN, Professor of Jewish Thought, Hebrew College

Rabbi Dr. Nehemia Polen is a leading expert in Hasidism and Jewish thought. A widely published author, his books include The Holy Fire: The Teachings of Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto (Jason Aronson Inc., first ed., 1977); The Rebbe's Daughter (Jewish Publication Society, 2002), based on Polen's research as a National Endowment for the Humanities fellow and recipient of a National Jewish Book Award; and Filling Words With Light: Hasidic and Mystical Reflections on Jewish Prayer (Jewish Lights Publishing, 2004), written with Lawrence Kushner. Polen holds a doctorate from Boston University, where he studied with and served as a teaching fellow for Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel. Prior to his career in Jewish academia, Polen served for 23 years as a congregational rabbi.

WILMA POYSER, MJED '19, Jewish Educator, Temple Aliyah (Needham, MA)

Wilma Poyser holds a BS in Business Management from Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) and a Masters in Jewish Education from Hebrew College. She participated in fellowships focusing on technology in Jewish education from CJP as well as the iCenter's Israel education program. As a teacher who has lived in both Israel and America, Wilma uses technology to bring Israel to life within her classroom through various applications of technology. For example, creating fun and exciting green screen movies around topics that the students have researched about Israel. Furthermore, she makes modern Hebrew creative and engaging to learn through technology and the students become part of the process learning to create their own games and online resources.

RACHEL RAZ, MJED, Assistant Director, Early childhood Institute, Hebrew College

Rachel Raz serves as the Director of the Early Childhood Institute; Chair of the Annual Jewish Education Conference since its inception in 2011; and Director of the Boston-Haifa Early Childhood Educators' Connection, a program sponsored by Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) and the Haifa Municipality Department of Early Childhood Education. Rachel has designed and led educational seminars in Israel and Boston for educators and professionals. In 2015 she founded the national Jewish Early Engagement Forum (JEEF), a platform to share the state of the field and strategic action to ensure a stronger foundation for young children and their families. In 2016 she held a national symposium at Hebrew College to advance the field.

Rachel Raz, is an active member of the Israeli-American Council (IIAC) Boston and serves on the advisory committee of the KESHET program of the National IAC. In addition, she is a board member of UMass Amherst Hillel; a member of Boston's Israel Academic Forum; and she and her family are long time members of Temple Emunah, a Conservative synagogue in Lexington MA. As a member of the synagogue, Rachel serves on the Israel Committee and focuses on strengthening connection to Israel by bringing together the Israeli-Americans and American-Jews.

Since 2016 she has served as the Executive Producer of a documentary film about Dr. Jeff Hoffman, American Jewish Astronaut and MIT Professor, who in addition to his inspiring professional journey has a fascinating Jewish story including the taking of the first Torah scroll to space in 1996 (spacetorahproject.com). She is the author of the children books, ABC Israel (2012) and The Colors of

Israel (2015). Rachel has a BA from Bar-Ilan University, and MJED (Master of Jewish Education) from Hebrew College.

REBECCA REDNER, MJED '19, Educational Specialist, Gateways Access to Jewish Education

Rebecca Redner is an educational specialist at Gateways: Access to Jewish Education in Boston, where she has taught for over ten years. In addition to teaching Sunday school classes for students with special learning needs, Rebecca developed the current Gateways B'nei-Mitzvah curriculum and coordinates the Gateways B'nei-Mitzvah program. Rebecca is the author of two books that aim to make Jewish rituals accessible to people of all abilities: *The Gateways Haggadah* (2015), and *The Gateways Shabbat Family Companion* (2016). Rebecca received a BS in special education from Boston University and an MJEd from Hebrew College.

ANDREA SHAPIRO, MJED '19, Dor Chadash (Young Family) Coordinator, Temple Emanuel (Newton)

In 2019 she received her Master's degree in Jewish Education with a specialization in Early Childhood Education (MJED-ECE) at Hebrew College. Andrea was an iCenter Fellow working on incorporating the best tools to engage children and families in Israel education. An active member of the Boston-Haifa Early Childhood Educators' Connection, Andrea has participated in seminars in Boston and Israel. Andrea has spent the last 12 years working with young children and families as an early childhood educator. Over the past two years Andrea has developed a passion for early childhood education as it relates to Israel and has written two children books about her trips to Israel.

RABBI DR. MICHAEL SHIRE, Chief Academic Officer of Hebrew College and Dean of the Shoolman Graduate School and Jewish Studies Program

Rabbi Michael Shire joined Hebrew College in 2011 as Professor of Jewish Education and Dean of the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education. In July 2015, he assumed the additional responsibilities of Chief Academic Officer of the college and Dean of the Graduate Programs in Jewish Studies. Shire received his Rabbinic Ordination from Leo Baeck College and his Ph.D. from Hebrew Union College. Rabbi Shire has published widely in the field of religious growth and development as well as the Jewish theology of childhood. He has also published four books of creative liturgy with medieval illuminations in association with the British Museum.

FELICIA SLOIN, Music Teacher, Gan Keshet Preschool and Lander Grinspoon Academy; Cantorial Soloist of Congregation B'nai Israel (Northampton, MA) and PJ Library Page to Stage Performer

Felicia Sloin has an extensive background in Jewish life, education, and community building. She is an accomplished singer/songwriter and a self-coined children's 'entertainer' using musical instruments, puppetry, sign language, and song to celebrate Jewish tradition with communities all over the East Coast. Felicia is the music teacher at the Lander-Grinspoon Academy and the cantorial soloist at Congregation B'Nai Israel in Northampton, MA where she helped to pilot Shabbat Shabloom, an outdoor musical Shabbat service for young children and their families. Together with her fellow puppeteers and educators, she writes and performs puppet shows based on popular PJ Library books as part of PJ Library Page to Stage. She is excited to inspire, scaffold, and encourage families to integrate Jewish tradition into their homes through song, story, and performance.

MICHAL FOX SMART, Director, Ayeka North America

Michal Fox Smart is an Associate Principal of Judaic Studies at Bi-Cultural Day School in Stamford, CT. A recognized leader in innovation and curriculum design, Michal has received the Grinspoon Award for Excellence in Jewish Education, the JEIC Education Innovation Award, and was one of the ten designers re-envisioning day school education on the Hakaveret Design team. She is the Editor of *Kaddish: Women's Voices* (Urim, 2013), winner of the 2013 National Jewish Book Award. Earlier, Michal pioneered Jewish outdoor and environmental education in this country. She is a founder of the TEVA Learning Center and co-author of *Spirit in Nature: Teaching Judaism and Ecology on the Trail* (Behrman House, 2000).

A Fulbright scholar in Jewish Thought, Michal received her B.A. from Princeton University in Religion and an M.S. from Cornell. She is also an alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship, the Melton Senior Educators Program at Hebrew University, and Machon Pardes.

ERICA STREIT-KAPLAN, Associate Director of Parenting Through a Jewish Lens, Hebrew College

A social worker by training, Erica Streit-Kaplan understands that supporting parents is key to nourishing children and strengthening families. In her five years at Hebrew College, she has been inspired to see how ancient Jewish wisdom and compassionate facilitation can support modern families today. She received her MSW and MPH degrees from Boston University.

FAYE TONKONOGY, Director of Early Education, The Judy Gordon Early Learning Center at Temple Israel (Natick, MA)

Faye has a degree in Early Childhood Education from Wheelock College. She has worked in many different settings with young children and families and has a passion to help young children grow and learn. Partnering with parents in the child rearing journey is an interest of Faye's that has developed over the 30 plus years in the early education field. Most recently, Faye was a public school Kindergarten Teacher.

RONIT ZIV KREGER, PHD, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Ronit oversees Momentum's education, leadership development, and evaluation programs. She joined Momentum with over 20 years of experience in those areas.

Ronit previously served as a consultant, helping Jewish institutions navigate systemic changes, adapting and implementing new pedagogies to manifest their educational vision. She is the founding designer and trainer of Hebrew College's congregational project-based learning professional development, and has taught for a range of innovative adult learning initiatives. Ronit is a graduate of the Pardes Jewish Educators Program, and holds a Ph.D. from MIT's Sloan School of Management.

Ronit and her family live in the Boston area.