

# YESH

THE INSTITUTE FOR  
NEWISH JEWISH  
PROFESSIONALS

## MEET THE PROFESSIONALS



**AMRAM ALTZMAN**  
Youth Programs Associate, Keshet

Amram joined the Keshet team in August 2017, where he works to make empowering, celebratory spaces for LGBTQ Jewish teens and their parents, educators, and allies around the United States. He is a recent graduate of the joint undergraduate program with Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary where he studied sociology and Jewish history. While in college, he worked as a contributor for *New Voices Magazine*; his writing has also appeared in *Jewcy* and *The Forward*. He lives with his husband, Jamie, and their two cats, Perle and Herschel.



**MAKAI DORFMAN**  
Family Educator, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun

Makai recently graduated with a master's in Jewish education from the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education at JTS and oversees family educational programming. Over the last 12 years Makai has taught and led a variety of educational programs and settings, including early childhood centers, day camps, Moishe House retreats, after-school and teen programming, special education, and more. When he has time, Makai loves hosting Shabbat meals, organizing day hikes or bike rides, and crafting prayerful experiences with meditation and music.



**AARON FINEBERG**  
Development Associate, American Society for Yad Vashem

Aaron is a proud Midwesterner hailing from the “world’s largest village” of Skokie, Illinois. He was a participant on the Nativ College Leadership Program in Israel and graduated from Brandeis University with a degree in business. He serves on the boards of the Upper West Side’s Wandering Minyan and the Advancing Jewish Professionals-NYC/JPRO New York. During his free time, he can be found cheering on the Chicago Cubs and Chicago Blackhawks or attending a Broadway musical.



### **TALIA GRAFF**

#### **Associate Director of Public Programs, Hadar**

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Talia Graff has lived in New York since 2015. After completing a B.A. at Brandeis University with majors in Near Eastern & Judaic studies and politics, Talia remained at Brandeis, earning a master's degree in Near Eastern & Judaic studies. She returned to L.A. to study at UCLA, earning a master's degree in history and serving as a teaching assistant and an editor of academic publications. Talia worked as a senior editorial assistant and author liaison for Routledge prior to joining the staff at Hadar. Talia can generally be found playing with her dog, Watson, in the park.



### **BRIANA HILFER**

#### **Caring Department Planning Executive, UJA-Federation of New York**

After graduating from Emory University in 2015, Briana returned to her birthplace, New York City, to earn her master's in social work from Columbia University. There, she honed her interests in nonprofit management, grants management, and program development and evaluation. While at Columbia, Briana completed her graduate school internship at UJA-Federation, solidifying her intent to serve the Jewish community. Since 2017, Briana has strived to create programs that not only provide older adults with socialization opportunities, medical and mental health support, and direct services, but also that foster and elevate their pride and dignity. Briana is particularly proud of her work with Holocaust survivors. Briana enjoys cooking, traveling, music, and Zumba.



### **NADIYA IVANOVYCH**

#### **Assistant Director of Senior Citizens Transportation Program, JCCGCI**

Originally from Ukraine, Nadiya graduated in December 2016 from Baruch College with an M.A. in public administration. The same year, she started her job at Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island where she serves Holocaust survivors, seniors, and disabled individuals residing in Brooklyn. Nadiya is passionate about social justice issues, working with volunteers on food distribution through her organization, and has a strong interest in local and state governance. A proactive and highly motivated individual, Nadiya's personal mantra is that there is no limit for perfection. She tirelessly works to enhance the services she provides to others through technology and innovation. Nadiya enjoys traveling with her family.



### **JULIA JERUSALMI HENIG**

#### **Member Engagement Manager, Footsteps**

Julia is a social worker who serves as the first point of contact for prospective and new Footsteps members. Julia conducts initial meetings, provides direct member support, and facilitates Footsteps members' integration with, and contribution to, the wider Footsteps community. Julia is passionate about fostering warm, open, and affirming spaces for individuals and communities. Julia earned her master's degree in social work from New York University's Silver School of Social Work in 2015. She also holds a bachelor's degree in English and women's and gender studies from Brandeis University. Julia lives in Brooklyn with her husband, Ben, and their son, Adin.



### **MALLORY KAHN-JOHNSTON**

#### **Philanthropy Associate, Women of Reform Judaism**

Mallory grew up in Bethel, Connecticut, and was a camper and counselor at URJ Eisner Camp. She graduated from Washington College with a B.A. in international studies. After college, she was a counselor for Young Judeaea's gap year program in Israel. She then made aliyah and received her M.A. in Middle Eastern studies from Ben Gurion University of the Negev. In Israel, she worked for Nefesh B'Nefesh and the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism and helped found a Reform Community in Be'er Sheva. Since returning to the U.S., Mallory has overseen the philanthropic fund and worked in development with Women of Reform Judaism. Mallory lives in Astoria with her husband, Martin, and her two Israeli rescue cats, Shai and Namair.



### **RACHEL KAPLAN**

#### **B'nei Mitzvah & Clergy Operations Administrator, Temple Shaaray Tefila**

Rachel graduated from Binghamton University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. While at college, Rachel became very involved in several aspects of Jewish life. This experience combined with twelve years at Jewish summer camp ignited Rachel's passion to give back to the community and pursue a career in Jewish nonprofit leadership. Rachel grew up in Bergen County, New Jersey, and currently lives on the Upper East Side.



### **SOPHIA KATZ**

#### **Development Coordinator, Lamplighters**

As a development coordinator, Sophia works in close collaboration with the executive director and team to support current development programs, as well as creating and implementing fresh fundraising initiatives, assisting in proposal writing, research, and strategic development of alternative revenue streams. Before working at Lamplighters, Sophia worked in a variety of environments, in fields as diverse as marketing, library, and other nonprofits. Working in these different settings has given Sophia experience in website marketing, organizational and administrative tasks, writing, customer service, and much more. Sophia is currently finishing her B.A. in psychology at Brooklyn College, and in her spare time enjoys playing guitar, reading dystopian novels, and hiking.



### **JORDYN KAUFMAN**

#### **Associate Marketing Manager, Foundation for Jewish Camp**

After deepening her connection to Judaism in high school and college, Jordyn graduated from Yeshiva University looking for a way to use her music degree, extensive theater background, and passion for storytelling to give back to her Jewish community. She dove headfirst into the Jewish nonprofit world, and hasn't looked back. In her current position, Jordyn's responsibilities include curating social media (follow us @jewishcamp!), managing the website, telling the story of Jewish camp, and finding ways to add her creative flair in any way she can.



**SHOSHANA KIRSCH NIRENBERG**  
**Program Coordinator, The Jewish Board**

Shoshana began working at the Jewish Board in 2017 while pursuing her master's degree in social work. Currently, she leads JACS, their program on addiction and recovery, and coordinates their teen mental health initiative, Here. Now. She received her B.A. in gender and sexuality studies from SUNY New Paltz, as well as high honors and the Outstanding Student Award. She is a licensed master social worker and received her M.A. from Hunter with a specialization in community organization, and is a former UJA Graduate Fellow. In her spare time she loves taking care of animals, baking, and anything to do with Harry Potter.



**MAYA LEVINE**  
**Young Leaders Development Executive, UJA-Federation of New York**

Maya provides those in their 20s and 30s with opportunities for personal, professional, and philanthropic growth, while also overseeing UJA's 700-person annual Young Leadership gala. Previously, Maya spent two years working in UJA's Planned Giving and Endowments division. Born and raised on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, Maya is proud of her strong Jewish upbringing. She was involved in synagogue and youth group life, attended URJ's Eisner Camp as a camper and staff member, and spent six months working in Israel's Museum of the Jewish People while studying at Tel Aviv University. Maya holds a B.A. in international studies and Judaic studies from the University of Michigan. Maya currently lives in Chelsea, and she's a huge fan of Pilates, crossword puzzles, wine, and discovering new restaurants in NYC with good company.



**ATARAH MARK**  
**Operations Associate, Yeshivat Maharat**

Atarah Mark graduated *cum laude* from University of Maryland, College Park, where she studied communications and philosophy. She received a certificate in paralegal from Montgomery College. Previously, Atarah worked with religious and educational nonprofits at the University of Maryland's A. James Clark School of Engineering Alumni Network and the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism in Washington, D.C. At Yeshivat Maharat, Atarah ensures their growth and development for creating a more equitable Jewish future. In her spare time, Atarah enjoys participating in social justice-oriented book clubs and making cholent for the Beis Community in Washington Heights.



### **JAQUI MCCABE**

#### **Director of Engagement, Temple Beth-El of Great Neck**

Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Jaqui attended the University of Arizona, graduating with a bachelor's degree in English and Judaic studies. Pursuing her love for Judaism and Israel, she moved to Israel to immerse herself in Israeli life and culture. Upon her return to California in 2014, Jaqui continued her passion of working within the Jewish community through positions with BBYO-CRW and at Congregation Beth El in Berkeley. Reform synagogue life made such a large impact on Jaqui's life, and for this reason she chose to make a career out of it! As a new New Yorker, Jaqui and her fiancé, Nick, love exploring New York. (It's very different from California!) She also loves spending her free time planning her upcoming wedding in April, when she will become Jaqui Wadsworth!



### **BROOKLYN MICHALOWICZ**

#### **IACT, Columbia-Barnard Hillel**

Inspired by the phenomenal staff at Hillel at UCLA, Brooklyn embarked on a post-grad journey to NYC. Brooklyn recently completed the Hartman Institute Engage Fellowship, where she delved into and explored both the personal and political complexities of Israel. This past summer, she spent three weeks at the Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem and is delighted to be continuing her Jewish learning with YESH. Brooklyn is passionate about making Judaism relatable to young people and looks forward to a career in the rabbinate.



### **AMIRA MINTZ-MORGENTHAU**

#### **North American Programs Coordinator, Pardes Jewish Studies Institute**

Amira Mintz-Morgenthau started her career as a JDC Global Jewish Service Corps Fellow in Western Germany. Overwhelmed and fascinated by the contemporary Holocaust memorial and commemorative culture in Germany, Amira moved to Israel where she pursued a master's degree at the University of Haifa in Holocaust studies with a focus on the Roma genocide commemoration. In 2015, Amira moved to Berlin to continue her master's thesis research and writing, ultimately co-founding and running an international summer university program in Berlin called the Jewish Activism Summer School (JASS). Amira loves finding herself in new and exciting places around the world, especially when there are new Jewish communities to encounter.



### **EZRA MOSES**

#### **Jewish Life Planning Associate, UJA-Federation of New York**

Ezra Moses oversees grant portfolios on community development in Europe and the former Soviet Union and Jewish religious pluralism in Israel. He graduated from New York University's dual degree program in public administration and Hebrew and Judaic studies. Following graduation from McGill University, he was a Jewish Service Corps fellow with the Joint Distribution Committee in Kharkov, Ukraine, and Tbilisi, Georgia, where he initiated Active Jewish Teen, a youth movement with over 50 chapters across the region. Prior to attending NYU, Ezra was an account executive at Thatcher+Co., a boutique public relations firm in New York City, and worked as an associate at the American Jewish Committee. Ezra and his wife, Hannah Miranda Miller, live on the Upper East Side of Manhattan and enjoy traveling to places most people don't travel to.



### **BRANDON PINSKER**

#### **ACCESS NY Assistant Director, American Jewish Committee**

Brandon's role includes enlarging and enhancing ACCESS NY's advocacy work, leadership, and fundraising. Brandon joins AJC from Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) of Boston, where he worked on Israel activism on campus. At CJP, he founded their Intercampus Leadership Committee, a group of 20 pro-Israel student leaders representing the Greater Boston area, and established coalitions between pro-Israel/Jewish student groups and Latino, Muslim, LGBT, and interfaith groups. Brandon is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and received his bachelor's degrees in history and religious studies from the University of Pittsburgh, and his master's degree in Near Eastern and Judaic studies from Brandeis University. Brandon enjoys reading, hiking, traveling, and hockey (die-hard Pittsburgh Penguins fan)!



### **RACHEL SHERMAN**

#### **NY Field Manager, OneTable**

After graduating from Indiana University with degrees in Jewish studies and ethnomusicology/folklore, Rachel worked at The Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv. During that time, she developed a passion for social and emotional learning in Jewish immersive experiences. Rachel then returned to the U.S., where she earned her M.A. from The William Davidson School of Jewish Education at JTS. Upon graduation, Rachel began working to support millennials in creating personally relevant, meaningful, and delicious Shabbat experiences. When Rachel is not creating Shabbat magic, she can be found trying new restaurants, exploring museums, and petting every dog in NYC.



### **KERYN WARREN**

#### **Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications The Jewish Education Project**

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Keryn began working in the Jewish nonprofit sector two years ago, and currently focuses on digital strategy and brand awareness. Keryn is passionate about engagement, design, and empowering people to use as little text as possible on their PowerPoint slides. Keryn earned a B.A. in Asian studies at SUNY New Paltz, an M.A. in East Asian languages and literature at the University of Oregon, and an M.P.A. with a focus on nonprofit management at Baruch College. In her spare time, Keryn enjoys reading, Zumba, and sharing pictures of her sister's corgi, Leia Corgana.



### **ALANA WEISMAN**

#### **Development Associate, UJA-Federation of New York**

Alana began working at UJA first as a CLIP intern in the summer of 2016 and then as a yearlong AmeriCorps volunteer. She loves helping her donors create their philanthropic legacies and knowing that her work has a positive impact on the community. Alana graduated from NYU with a B.A. in Hebrew and Judaic studies. She feels fulfilled to have turned her passion for Judaism and helping others into a career. In her spare time, you can find Alana fostering rescue dogs or making pasta from scratch!



### **MICHELLE WEXLER**

#### **Center for Family Life Tween Coordinator, Center for Special Needs School Age and Transitions Coordinator, Camp Settoga CIT Director Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan**

After graduating from Brandeis University, Michelle received her MSW from Columbia School of Social Work. Michelle is living her passion of making the Jewish community accessible to all. In the Jack and Shirley Silver Center for Special Needs, Michelle serves as the schoolage and transitions coordinator, supporting kids and teens of all abilities. In the Bert and Sandra Wasserman Center for Family Life, Michelle is the tween coordinator, engaging 10- to 13-year-olds in service and other activities rooted in Jewish values. Michelle is also the first CIT director at the JCC's Camp Settoga during the summer months. In her free time, Michelle enjoys going to museums and trying new restaurants!



### **TAYLOR WISHNOV**

#### **Northeast Regional Manager, Masa Israel Journey**

Taylor strives to empower Jewish students and young professionals by overseeing recruitment for long-term opportunities in Israel such as internships, studying abroad, teaching, and volunteerism. After graduating from the University of Central Florida, she taught English in China and traveled internationally for a year, which ignited her passion for Jewish philanthropy. Before working with Masa Israel, Taylor moved to New York to join Met Council on Jewish Poverty's team as their volunteer coordinator focusing on issues such as kosher food, affordable housing, and domestic violence counseling throughout the five boroughs. She is also passionate about food anthropology and exploring the ins and outs of New York City.



Funded by the Jim Joseph Foundation, YESH brings together people who are 2 – 4 years into their careers in the Jewish nonprofit sector, helping them focus their drive to succeed and grow in the field and in their own professional lives.

