



GLOBAL JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP 2015–2016 RABBINIC COHORT FELLOWS AND STAFF BIOS

The AJWS Global Justice Fellowship is a selective program designed to inspire, educate and train key opinion leaders in the American Jewish community to become advocates in support of U.S. policies that will help improve the lives of people in the developing world.

AJWS has launched the latest Global Justice Fellowship program, which will include leading Rabbis from across the United States. The fellowship period is from October (2015) to April (2016) and includes travel to an AJWS country in Mesoamerica, during which participants will learn from grassroots activists working to overcome poverty and injustice. The travel experience will be preceded by innovative trainings that will prepare Rabbis to galvanize their communities and networks to advance AJWS's work.

The 10 Rabbinic Fellows represent a broad array of backgrounds, communities, experiences and networks.

RABBINIC FELLOWS

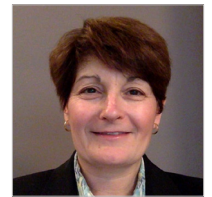


JAIME KLEIN AKLEPI

Jaime Klein Aklepi is the Reform rabbi at Bet Breira Samu-El Or Olom in Miami, Florida. She served as director of the University of Miami Hillel, where she established and implemented the first Birthright program to Israel. She has also served as religious school director at Temple Judea. Rabbi Aklepi is past president of the Rabbinical Association of Greater Miami and the Southeast Association of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. She was ordained by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1994 and received an M.A. in Hebrew literature. She received her bachelor's in Near Eastern and Judaic studies from Brandeis University. Jaime is married to Alex; they have three daughters.

CINDY ENGER

Cindy Enger is spiritual leader and rabbi of Congregation Or Chadash of Chicago. Through her work with Or Chadash, she is currently coordinating Journey to Freedom: Pesach and the LGBTQ Experience, a project supported by a Breakthrough Fund grant from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago. Prior to moving to Chicago, she was the rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in Bellingham, Washington for seven years. She previously directed the Jewish Program of FaithTrust Institute, a multifaith organization that works nationally with clergy to end sexual and domestic violence. Also an attorney, Cindy is a graduate of Princeton University and New York University School of Law. She enjoys hiking, kayaking and going for walks with her sweet pup, Homer.



JEFF BROWN

Jeffrey Brown serves as rabbi of Scarsdale Synagogue Temples Tremont and Emanu-El in Scarsdale, New York. Previously, he served as assistant and associate rabbi of Temple Solel in Cardiff, California. He is a nationally recognized rabbinic blogger and his writing has appeared in numerous print publications, including *The CCAR Journal* and *The Sacred Table* (named a finalist for the 2011 National Jewish Book Award). Jeff holds a B.A. from George Washington University and earned rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. He lives in Westchester County, New York, with his wife, Amy, and their children, Siona and Avi.

LAURIE GREEN

Laurie is the spiritual leader of Congregation Bet Mishpachah in Washington, D.C. She is also an educator, activist, organizer, pastor, *ema*, occasional author and aspiring yogi. Before the rabbinate, she worked in professional politics and advocacy. Laurie is passionate about creating sacred community, pursuing social justice, enlivening spiritual practice and reinventing Jewish life in the 21st century. In her personal practice and her professional work, Laurie is committed to integrating her spiritual practice, social activism and rabbinic leadership.



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JAMES GREENE

Rabbi James is a 2008 graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and serves as the program director at the Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center of Silicon Valley in Los Gatos, California.

He is the chair of the Cantors and Rabbis

Association of Greater San Jose, and is a past chair of the Reconstructionist Educators of North America. Rabbi James is a TorahTrek Jewish Wilderness Guide and a faculty member for Bay Area Wilderness Training, a nonprofit that trains teachers and youth workers to bring youth outdoors. In his free time, Rabbi James enjoys spending time in the woods with his partner and two daughters.



MARK KAISERMAN

Mark Kaiserman has been the rabbi at The Reform Temple of Forest Hills in Queens, New York, since 2013. He was previously a rabbi in Livingston, New Jersey, Fountain Valley, California (interim) and Dallas, Texas. He was ordained from HUC-JIR in

Cincinnati, Ohio. Mark is originally from Brooklyn, New York. Outside of synagogue life, he is an amateur film buff and an ever-hopeful New York Mets fan. He is excited to expand his worldview during the AJWS Global Justice Fellowship.



SHARON SOBEL

Sharon Sobel, senior rabbi of Temple Isaiah in Stony Brook, New York, has had a distinguished career that extends from leading congregations to national organizations. She served as executive director of the Union for Reform Judaism's

Canadian Council for Reform Judaism and ARZA Canada for more than nine years. *The Sacred Feminine*, a Canadian national television documentary program about Rabbi Sobel's rabbinate, aired to critical acclaim. She has travelled extensively on behalf of the Reform movement in both South Africa and the former Soviet Union. Rabbi Sobel's passion for social justice comes from her parents, who instilled within her the values of *tikkun olam* from a very young age. The daughter of a Reform rabbi (Rabbi Richard J. Sobel, z"l, Glens Falls, New York), Rabbi Sobel was ordained from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York in 1989.

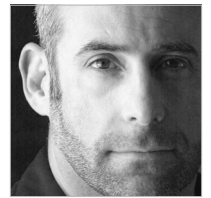
RONIT TSADOK

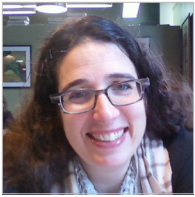
Rabbi Ronit Tsadok is the assistant rabbi at IKAR in Los Angeles, California. At IKAR, she co-leads weekly Shabbat services, coordinates regular adult learning opportunities, officiates at life cycle events, studies with b'nai mitzvah and oversees Minyan Tzedek, IKAR's social justice initiative. Through Minyan Tzedek, lay leaders create opportunities for the IKAR community to engage on issues of social justice such as racial inequality, hunger, homelessness, gun violence, environmental responsibility and others. Rabbi Tsadok has been a member of the IKAR team since 2008, when she was a rabbinical student at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. She was thrilled to stay in the community she loves upon ordination in 2012.



JOSH LESSER

Rabbi Joshua Lesser leads the dynamic Congregation Bet Haverim in Atlanta, Georgia, as a place dedicated to celebrating all aspects of Jewish life and creating a spiritual home that balances the needs of a diverse community. He served in the first Teach for America corps in New Orleans and founded the Rainbow Center, a Jewish response to LGBTQ people and their families. He is the co-editor of the groundbreaking book *Torah Queeries: A Weekly Commentary on the Hebrew Bible*. He was named one of the 36 most influential rabbis in North America in 2013 and listed as one of the 100 most notable LGBT clergy in America by *The Huffington Post*. Throughout his tenure at Bet Haverim, Rabbi Lesser has worked with a wide variety of groups and coalitions to build a better community for Atlanta by focusing on building bridges between diverse communities. He is a founder and past president of the Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta and serves as the co-chair of Georgians Against Discrimination. Taking positions as the chair of the Reconstructionist movement's Tikkun Olam Commission and the board of Georgia Equality, he is solidly dedicated to human rights for all. Recently, he completed the Lev Shomea spiritual direction program.





ELYSE WINICK

Elyse Winick is the Jewish Chaplain at Brandeis University, where her work focuses on mentoring, teaching and spiritual guidance. She takes every possible opportunity to expose students to the writings of Abraham Joshua

Heschel and to serve afternoon tea. For 20 years, she was on the staff of KOACH, the Center for Conservative Judaism on Campus of the USCJ, including serving as director for three years. She holds a B.A. in Near Eastern and Judaic studies from Brandeis and an M.A. and rabbinic ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary. She lives in Newton, Massachusetts with her husband, David Small, and their three children.

AJWS STAFF



LILACH SHAFIR

Lilach Shafir is the Director of International Education and Jewish Engagement at AJWS, where she is responsible for overseeing the creation and implementation of the Global Justice Fellowship. Lilach first discovered the

nexus of international development and Jewish social justice as a group leader in Ghana for AJWS in 2010 and has been committed to the field ever since. Lilach has led groups of students and adults on educational programming in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Brazil, Costa Rica and Ghana. Most recently, Lilach led a National Geographic Student Expedition in Brazil. Lilach holds an M.A. in international educational administration and policy analysis from Stanford and a B.A. in international studies and Latin America. Lilach is an advanced speaker of Spanish, Portuguese, Tetun and Hebrew.