

Celebrating 80 Years While Focusing on the Future



Gil Graff

During 2017-2018, BJE celebrated the milestone of eighty years of Jewish educational leadership in Los Angeles. It marked this occasion not by looking backward but, as it has throughout the years, focusing on the future. Among the year's initiatives were "Leading Together," a leadership development program for board and professional heads of day schools; Project EnAble, aimed at enabling students with diverse learning needs to thrive in day school settings; the launch of a third cohort of First 36 Fellows, bringing deeper understanding of neuroscience to bear on meeting the developmental needs of young children; and the start of Reshet L.A., a project helping congregations re-imagine and introduce new models of part-time Jewish education. At the same time, such ongoing programs as BJE March of the Living, JKidLA/Concierge—connecting parents with Jewish educational experiences appropriate for their children—and BJE Impact, BJE's service learning initiative, touched the lives of thousands of students and families.

Nothing as significant as Jewish educational leadership for the Jewish communities of Los Angeles can be provided exclusively by a lone entity. BJE benefits from partnerships with schools, a number of foundations including the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles, the Jewish Federation and a wide variety of allied institutions. Jewish education is not about institutions; it is about individuals and families. The support of Jewish education, likewise, is not only institutional; it owes much to the individuals and families who share in this project.

Thank you for your partnership and support, enabling BJE to engage successive generations in meaningful Jewish learning experiences.



With best wishes in 2018-2019 (5779),

Gil Graff, Executive Director

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INCREASING ACCESS

Addressing the Needs of Diverse Learners

As part of a multi-pronged effort to broaden and deepen attention to diverse learning needs, BJE organized several opportunities for day schools: BJE's Project EnAble, funded through



a grant from the Jewish Community
Foundation, provides day school
students educational support services,
at reduced costs to parents, enabling
students to succeed in the day school
setting. During the 2017-18 academic
year, Project EnAble partnered with
four day schools: Cheder Menachem,
Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy,
Kadima Day School, and Pressman
Academy, to serve students with
diverse learning needs.

Three schools, Adat Ari El, Emek
Hebrew Academy, and Pressman
Academy are also participating in
B'yadeinu, an 18-month program
sponsored through BJE with Boston's
Gateways. The program assists schools

in undertaking a comprehensive needs assessments to strengthen their approaches in meeting the diverse learning needs of students.

More than 50 educators from 10 schools also participated in a day-long professional development program featuring Jonathan Mooney, a leader in advocating inclusive education to meet the needs of those who learn differently. The day focused on Building a Community of Inclusion within our day schools.

BJE looks forward to expanding its work to assist diverse learners by increasing the numbers of schools and students who will benefit from Project EnAble in 2018-19.

ENHANCING QUALITY

Board Development Cohort: Leading Together

On March 13, over 40 lay leaders and heads of schools, representing 10 L.A. Jewish day schools, gathered for the second session of BJE's Leading Together: Board Development Cohort. This 18-month BJE program, funded through a grant from the Diane P. and Guilford Glazer Fund, focuses specifically on the Head of School/Board Chair partnership and how that strong relationship can serve the school's mission and community.

The second session focused on

fundraising and was conducted by Rae Ringel, a faculty member at the Georgetown University Institute for Transformational Leadership.

The program kicked off in November 2017 with a presentation by Pat Bassett, former Executive Director of the National Association of Independent Schools. Pat spoke about decision making, difficult conversations and crisis collaboration. A third session in October 2018, will be open to the entire board of each participating school and feature



Nanette Fridman speaking on Board Leadership 101 and Creating School Ambassadors. Participating schools also have access to coaching and Board Source's Board Self-Assessment.

The BJE leadership cohort helped prepare me as the incoming VP of Education at Pressman Academy.
This robust program provided expert coaching on how to build a strong board with both the how and the why behind each initiative. The guest speakers conveyed leadership as a process and provided a framework.

-Jennifer Elad

The workshops gave us a lot of help with our strategic vision. By attending these workshops together [school administrators and lay leaders], it's a shared experience, in which we're able to grow together— it gives us a common language we can use to move forward.

—Larry Kligman, Head of School,

Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School

Building Resilience in Children through BJE Professional Development

The 2018 BJE Bebe Feuerstein Simon Early Childhood Institute

built upon BJE's learning and partnership with the Simms/Mann Institute's The First 36 Project to focus on "The Whole Child" with the aim of nurturing a new generation of more resilient children. BJE was fortunate to have Dr. Pat Levitt, Simms/Mann Chair in Development

Neurogenetics, Institute for the Developing Mind, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, as the keynote speaker and facilitator at BJE's 37th Annual Early Childhood Institute. Nearly 300 early childhood educators from across





3rd Cohort of The First 36 Project

Top Row (left to right) Chana Blugrind - Yaldei Yisroel, Juliette Portnoy - Valley Beth Shalom, Chana Herzog - Gan Israel, Tarzana, Elana Banafsheha & Genene Turndorf - Wise School, Kira Rappaport - Pressman Academy, Andrea Segall & Edita Leifer - Temple Aliyah, Paula Hoffman - Ilan Ramon.

Bottom Row (left to right) Rachel Tuch - Alice and Nahum Lainer School, Ailee Dembo - Valley Beth Shalom, Youna Yaghoobzadeh - Alice and Nahum Lainer School, Jaclyn Lafer - Kehillat Israel Los Angeles gathered for the day of professional development, and an awards ceremony for distinguished early childhood educators.

Dr. Levitt's keynote, "Seeing the Whole Child", focused on the development of an early childhood curriculum. His research points to a child's physical and brain development early in life as being one of the key indicators of future educational outcomes. Participants also attended workshops which explored this relationship, including "Children and Media: How it Affects Children's Brains" and "Crawl, Run and Jump: How the Body Teaches the Brain to Think."

The First 36 Project

inducted its third cohort of thirteen early childhood educators from nine BJE-affiliated schools, bringing the total number of trained educators to 36 and participating schools to 18.

The First 36 Project curriculum uses cutting-edge neuroscience research to provide a select group of parent-and-me instructors with an exclusive professional development experience designed to strengthen their ability to support parents as they build strong, meaningful bonds with their children. Fellows engage in cohort-based learning experiences, and receive one-on-one coaching and consultation, including class visits, observation and feedback. In addition. fellows have access to lectures and a curriculum with the latest information in child development and participate in an annual conference that brings together world-renowned neuroscientists studying how the brain develops during the first three years of life.

The First 36 Project, is an initiative of the Simms/Mann Institute, and is implemented in collaboration with BJE and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.

Working with BJE and the First 36 Project has been invaluable to us at Ohr Eliyahu. We're so thankful to have professional development opportunities like the First 36 Project and the Early Childhood Educators' Institute. Even if the teachers only come away with one new idea, that one new idea is worth it, because it informs what they're doing in a way that becomes exponential. When teachers get professional development during the school year, it renews, inspires, and boosts them. The excitement they come back with is contagious, it spreads to the parents, it spreads to the staff members, and most importantly, it spreads to the kids.

- Shayna Goldman, Early Childhood Director, Ohr Eliyahu

Becoming Witnesses on BJE March of the Living

"When you hear a witness, you become a witness"

- Elie Wiesel

According to a recent article in the New York Times, 41% of Americans and 66% of Millennials cannot say what occured at Auschwitz, Since 1992, BJE has partnered with the International March of the Living to bring teens and adults to Poland and Israel in order to keep the memory of the Shoah from fading, by providing firsthand experience and education which leads to action. The 2018 BJE March of the Living delegation consisted of 214 teens, from 36 synagogues and 17 schools, along with 25 staff members, and 5 Holocaust survivors who marched in solidarity with Jews from all over the world from Auschwitz to Birkenau.

Join BJE March of the Living in 2019

2019 will include a BJE Adult March of the Living trip guided in Poland by renowned Holocaust historian, Dr. Michael Berenbaum, and joined at times by survivors, in addition to the annual teen trip. For more information about the 2019 BJE Adult March please visit www.bjela.org/2019AdultMOTL; for the 2019 BJE teen trip, please visit www.bjela.org/MOTL

"The Poland of my imagination was a blackand-white charnel house—grotesque and forbidding. After going on BJE's Adult March of the Living, I realized that the country exists in technicolor—yes, monstrous sites juxtaposed against centuries of rich Jewish history, seeds of Jewish renewal. My wife and I conquered our fears to go on this journey— and consider ourselves richly rewarded."

- David Nimmer, BJE Board Member, 2016 Adult March of the Living Alumnus

ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION 2018 March of the Living

REMEMBER. EDUCATE. ACT.



BJE March of the Living's theme, "Remember, Educate, Act" was also reinforced throughout the year in the teen pre-trip Farber educational workshops as well as reunions for teens and adults. This year, March of the Living staff and adult alumni were also treated to a talk given by Simon Gronowski, a Holocaust survivor who, in April, was reunited with childhood friend and survivor Alice Gerstel Weit, after 76 years.

As a child, Alice and her family had been hidden by Simon's parents in their home in Belgium, prior to being sent to Auschwitz.

Shortly after the Gerstel family fled Europe for the safety of Cuba, Mr. Gronowski, then age 11, was taken from his home in Brussels and sent, along with 1600 other Belgian Jews, to die in the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau. He recounted his harrowing tale of escape to the gathered alumni:

"I didn't realize that I'd been condemned to death and that this train would lead to the place of my execution. By a



miracle, I jumped off the train and escaped. I ran all night through the woods.... I arrived at dawn in a village and got to a small house which gave me trust. I rang the bell. I said to the lady, 'Madam, I played near here with other children, I got lost and I have to go back to Brussels, to my father. She took me... to the next town, and dropped me at a gentleman's house... He said to me 'I know everything, you were in the train with the Jews. You have escaped but you must not be afraid. I am a good Belgian and I will not betray you.'"



Mr. Gronowski believes it's important to retell the story: "The Holocaust deniers say that all of this is not true: 'there were no gas chambers, no crematoriums, no mass murder.' I only wish they were right because then I would have kept my family.

These deniers are so dangerous. They deny the crimes of the past and commit new crimes tomorrow."

Impacting the Community through BJE Teen Service Corps

Chloe Harris is passionate about volunteer service. For the past three years, Chloe has been a part of BJE's Teen Service Corps, and it inspired her to take on volunteer opportunities



throughout the city year-round.
At 15, the rising sophomore at
Milken Community High School has
volunteered with several charities
including Heal the Bay, No Kill LA, and
Food Forward, an organization whose
activities include preparing meals
from unsold farmers' market food, and
distributing the meals to the homeless.

"Living in the bubble of West LA, you don't really see a lot of the problems that are going on in the greater community. All my life I've been taught, at home, at school, and in synagogue, that it's my responsibility to give back to the community. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to participate in Teen Service Corps because I get to see

what's going on outside of my bubble, and to do something about it. "

Since 2011, BJE's Teen Service Corps has created meaningful Jewish service learning experiences for kids and teens throughout Los Angeles. This year, students undertook Jewish service learning projects supporting such local charities as LA Kitchen, Mazon, the Pico Union Project, Baby2Baby, and Worthy of Love. In addition to engaging in community service projects, Teen Service Corps participants reflect on their service experiences through the lens of Jewish texts and values.

If your child is interested in participating in Teen Service Corps, visit BJELA.org/ServiceCorps.



www.bjela.org/dayofservice

BJE@80 and Moving Forward

BJE Celebrates Shabbat

Families of all ages across Los Angeles gathered for BJE's Night of 80 Shabbats in celebration of BJE's 80th anniversary and Jewish Education. **This year's BJE Shabbat Celebration will take place on November 30, 2018.** To participate, please go to: www.bjela.org/shabbat

Day of Service Learning

Children and families from all over L.A. learned more about BJE Impact: The Center for Jewish Service Learning through a meaningful day of Jewish service learning last October.

This year's Day of Service Learning will take place on October 21, 2018. For more information please go to:



Vears of BJE

LOOKING BACK

THANKING OUR DONORS

2018 GALA

In celebration of its 80th anniversary, BJE honored three pillars of the Los Angeles Jewish Community,

Jean and Dr. Jerry Friedman — founders of Shalhevet High School, and Bennett Spiegel, an active BJE board member and officer. BJE also recognized Keren Dunn with the prestigious Young Leadership Award.

BJE's January 16 Gala—co-chaired by Jennifer Elad, Jill Lasker, and Réna Slomovic—drew an attendance of over 450 people, and generated net proceeds of \$385,000, thanks to BJE's honorees and generous donors.

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2018

BJE Gala for making it a truly unforgettable evening.

BJE is always reinventing itself to meet the needs of the community. It is always willing to think outside the box, take the balcony view of what is best for the total community, and bring programs of tremendous impact to Los Angeles. That is why we believe so deeply in this organization.

- Jean & Dr. Jerry Friedman

"Lighting the fire" is a metaphor for learning through taking concrete steps to be a positive light in the world through action. That kind of learning is exemplified by the BJE Teen Service Corps where teens are actively involved in meaningful community service here in LA.

- Bennett L. Spiegel



Remembering and honoring the past, while looking ahead and planning for the future...nobody does this better and more wholeheartedly than BJE, whether it is planning for a meaningful and impactful March of the Living experience once there are no more Holocaust survivors to join the trip; ensuring that a Jewish Day School education is accessible to those who choose this path in an era of rising tuition; reimagining religious school to meet the needs and desires of today's and tomorrow's students and families; or teaching and promoting service learning in a world that needs citizens committed to civic responsibility more than ever.

- Keren Dunn

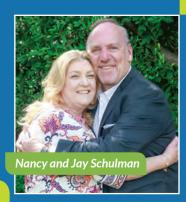
BJE DONOR THANK YOU EVENT





As BJE's fiscal year drew to a close, BJE dedicated a Sunday morning to thanking its Donor Society members for their support and enabling us to reach our fundraising goal. The May 6, 2018 thank you event was generously hosted by Liz Rosman Schwartz and Mitchell Schwartz, in the garden of their Larchmont Village home.

Attendees were treated to a sumptuous brunch, a roving a cappella group – Pella ("the Jewish Glee"), and a fascinating talk on "The Evolution of Jewish Music" given by Dr. Mark Kligman – Mickey Katz Professor of Jewish Ethnomusicology at UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music. The event was chaired by Liz Rosman Schwartz and Nancy Schulman.



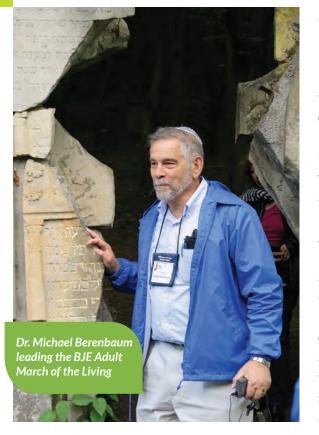


LOOKING FORWARD

Inspiring Action Through Deep Jewish Learning -

BJE's 2019 Gala

BJE's 2019 Gala will recognize three individuals - representing orthodox, reform and conservative Jewish affiliations - who have each applied their deep Jewish learning to make a difference in the world.



Dr. Michael Berenbaum is a distinguished Holocaust historian. He played a leading role in the creation of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and served as the first director of its Research Institute. In 1997, he moved to L.A. to become President and CEO of the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation. Michael now serves as the Director of the Sigi Ziering Institute on Exploring the Ethical and Religious Implications of the Holocaust at American Jewish University. Michael has dedicated his career to teaching the Holocaust across a multitude of formats, from university classrooms to documentary and dramatic films and museum exhibitions.

"BJE is a natural part of any organized community that has commitments to Jewish education," Michael said.

Michael is most familiar with BJE's March of the Living, having served as the scholar in Poland for two BJE Adult trips so far, with a third coming up in 2019.

"I think BJE has made a deep and profound commitment to the March of the Living, and has done so exceptionally well," he said. "Pilgrimage is a unique experience. Every journey outward is also a journey inward. So the March, as a pilgrimage, needs to be viewed on two levels: One is the self-exploration of the students, and the other is what it is that they see, and what it is they see together."



David Nimmer is an international expert on copyright law, annually updating *Nimmer on Copyright*, the field's standard reference. Of counsel to Irell & Manella LLP, David also serves as Professor from Practice at UCLA Law School and guest professor at numerous universities across the world. David has woven his passion for Jewish learning into his professional work by authoring articles on the overlap between halakha and copyright. David serves on the board of BJE and is a past president of B'nai David-Judea Congregation where, 14 years ago, he established an ongoing lunch for the homeless. He was previously on the boards of Maimonides Academy and Shalhevet High School.

David participated in the 2016 BJE March of the Living. Of his journey he says, "it was truly the highlight of my life, to come together with all of those age groups from Los Angeles for a common cause, and to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust. And to experience that with Holocaust survivors themselves, that was an extra blessing."

(from left to right and top to bottom)

Marcia and David Nimmer with
grandaughters Ella and Rebecca Nimmer



Betty Winn has served tirelessly in Jewish and secular education and charitable causes for decades. As past Head of School at the Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School and current Senior Consultant at BJE's Center for Excellence in Day School & Early Childhood Education, Betty has worked to strengthen Jewish education across Los Angeles by creating professional development opportunities and enhanced communities of practice for educators, admissions directors and development personnel.

"Jewish education provides a child with an excellent educational experience, while also helping to instill Jewish values and helping them truly understand the importance of community."

In addition to her professional role, Betty actively participates as a lay leader on numerous committees at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, and has been involved for over thirty years with LA Family Housing, a local charity that works to combat homelessness.

"We feel so blessed and feel it's our responsibility to share with others. Helping to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and provide shelter for the homeless; those are all Jewish values."

Michael, David, and Betty's children, who were raised in Los Angeles, all attended BJE affiliated early childhood centers and day schools. Their local grandchildren also attended BJE-affiliated schools.

Welcoming BJE's New Officer and Directors



Craig Rutenberg is a partner at Manatt focusing on complex civil litigation matters primarily in healthcare and real estate. Originally, from Highland Park, IL, Craig joined the Jewish Federation's Legal Division in 2003, and is currently the Chair of the Division. At the Federation, he remains involved with awarding grants to participants of Jewish camps and BJE March of the Living, through which he became acquainted with BJE. Now beginning his fourth year on the BJE board,

Craig will serve as BJE Treasurer in 2018-19. Craig and his wife Stephanie have two children, Jonah, who attends Brawerman Elementary School, and Sloane, who will soon enough.



Ellen Cervantes brings over 40 years' experience in cultivating the well-being of children and families to the BJE board. As Chief Operations Officer of the Child Care Resource Center, Ellen oversees programs to strengthen families, and provide early care and education, for children birth-five years of age. Prior to relocating to Los Angeles from Chicago in 2001, Ellen worked in Jewish communal services for 25 years. Ellen is

past President of Shomrei Torah Synagogue. She and her husband Don are the parents of two adult daughters.



"I have a passion for Jewish education. Building educated and interested Jewish children is the key to creating educated and interested Jewish adults, and the key to building our Jewish future."



Sharon De Mayo, a native of Rome, moved to Los Angeles in 2009 with her husband, from Portland. She had no sooner settled in a new city than she became involved with Jewish education in her community. Currently the Vice President of Education on the executive committee at Temple Isaiah, Sharon has served on numerous committees related to education in her eight years of service with the congregation. Sharon and

her husband Luca's children attend Temple Isaiah's Religious School.

"I grew up having a very strong sense of the importance of education as it relates to Jewish history and Judaism. BJE seemed like a natural progression from my focus on education at Temple Isaiah. I'm looking forward to creating more connections that will be of value to all of the stakeholders."

"I've always believed that it's important for the Jewish community in America, that there be Jewish education, and a means to support it. I'm excited to take on this position on the BJE board, and to share my ideas about making sure every child has the opportunity to



Aaron Leibovic, originally from Brooklyn, NY is a lawyer and principal of Health Advocates, a public advocacy organization, and Leibovic Law Group. Aaron served as Board Chair at Sinai Akiba Academy and Milken Community Schools and on numerous boards including Sinai Temple and the Ziegler Rabbinical School at American Jewish University. Aaron and his wife Sheila's three daughters graduated from

Los Angeles Jewish day schools.



Alan Petlak, a Los Angeles native and alumnus of L.A.'s Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy and YULA Boys High School, is a mediator who specializes in real estate and business related matters. He earned his undergraduate degree from UC San Diego and his law degree from the USC Gould School of Law. Alan and his wife, Lisa, have three children, all of whom attend BJE-accredited Jewish day schools.

"I'm honored to have been asked to join the BJE board. Jewish education is of paramount importance to building a Jewish future for the next generation, and I'm thrilled at the chance my membership on the BJE board will provid e me to use my personal and professional experience to help ensure a sustainable Jewish future."

Supporting Jewish Education: Honor Roll of Donors

Gifts of \$100+ received July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018

BJE gratefully acknowledges the essential support of the donors and organizations whose generosity enables BJE to provide ongoing services and programs to enhance quality, increase access, and encourage participation in Jewish education.

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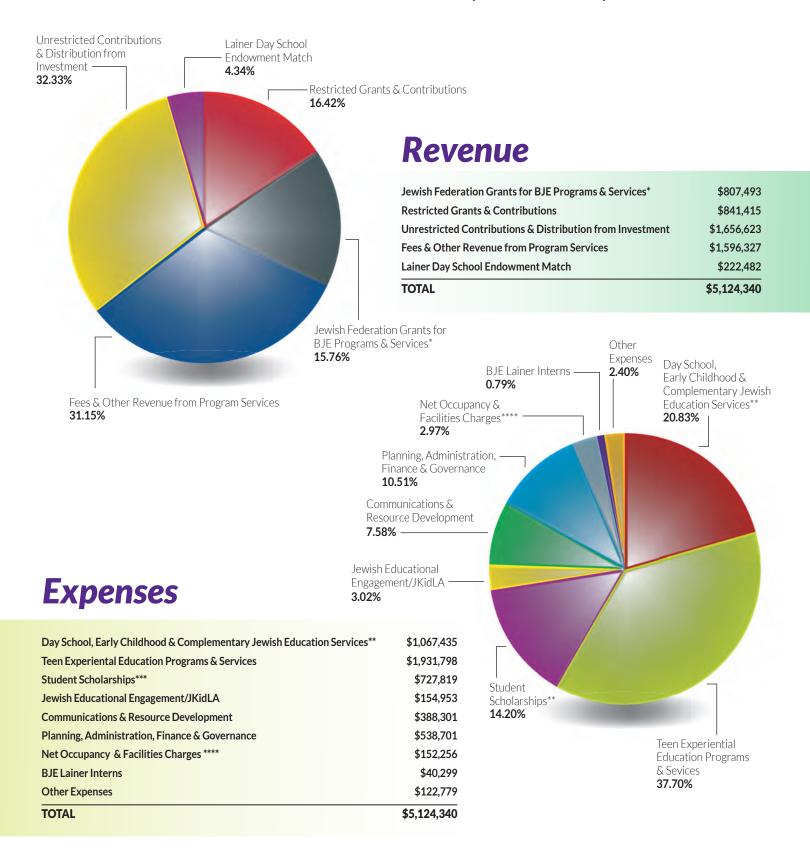
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To discuss Legacy or Endowment opportunities at BJE please contact Miriam Prum Hess, 323.761.8334 or mprumhess@bjela.org

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Fiscal Year 2017-2018 (unaudited)



^{*} Includes \$610,000 in program grants, \$63,241 in support of collaborative project with Simms/Mann Institute, \$129,237 for L.A. Jewish Teen Initiative jointly funded by The Jewish Federation and Jim Joseph Foundation, and \$5,015 for CAPSO dues, on behalf of BJE-accredited Day Schools

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