



A Year of Kindling Meaningful Jewish Experiences

Another extraordinary year has gone by! As we moved through the familiar rhythms of the High Holy Days season, the Jewish LearningWorks staff and Board were deeply grateful for your commitment to teaching and learning, to pursuing excellence in Jewish education, and to building a healthy, resilient, and inclusive Jewish community for all of us.

Our support for educators in more than 100 Bay Area Jewish organizations, and our commitment to increased Jewish literacy for learners of all ages, are **grounded in both this unique moment in history, and the timeless pull of Jewish values**.

During the past year, we articulated the values grounding our mission, and completed a new strategic plan. While the values will guide our work across our many initiatives and projects ahead, our plan asks us to deepen our individual and collective impact — by increasing the amount of personalized support we provide to professionals and expanding our geographic reach into new communities. There is much to look forward to! But first, we invite you to look back on our accomplishments during the 2021–2022 program year — the young lives we've touched, the innovation we've enabled, and the spark we've kindled for thousands of Bay Area Jews.

Thank you, for all you make possible, this year and every year. Todah Rabah.



Sharon Weinberg
President



Dana Sheanin
Chief Executive Officer

We Are On a Mission

Jewish LearningWorks elevates the field of Jewish education by nurturing educators, inspiring innovation, and building Jewish literacy.

GUIDED BY THESE VALUES

Leadership. We are fearless in our pursuit of continuous improvement, experimentation, and thought leadership that expands the intellectual horizons of those with whom we work.

סקרנות - Curiosity. We are lifelong learners who delight in discovery, and strive to spark imaginative inquiry among those we serve.

- Connectedness. We believe in the power of belonging, and seek to equip Jewish educators not only with the tools and practices they need to thrive alongside their learners, but also to foster a strong community of support.

אחריות - Mutual Responsibility. We believe in the shared responsibility of learners and educators to bring their best selves to the experience of vibrant Jewish learning, and to the pursuit of a more just and perfect world.

הגשמה עצמית - **Personal Fulfillment.** We recognize every Jewish educator and learner as a whole, creative and resourceful person worthy of finding joy and meaning in Jewish life.



Caring and Inclusive Spaces to Learn and Grow

Recognizing that all children are entitled to a learning experience that respects their uniqueness regardless of ability, Jewish LearningWorks reaffirms its commitment to fostering equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in every Jewish educational setting.

SPECIAL NEEDS INCLUSION INITIATIVE

Last year we focused on removing barriers to participation in Jewish education for those with special needs by providing educational organizations with much needed sensory tools to keep their learners engaged.

The grant for à la carte sensory kits successfully reached our Bay Area educational spaces,

including JCC after-school programs, summer camps, congregational schools, preschools, day schools and congregations.



31 SENSORY TOOLKITS DISTRIBUTED

We also provided monthly
Early Childhood Education
consultations to preschool
professionals facing
challenges with students
in their classrooms, and a
total of 20 hours of clinical
student observation that
informed much needed
accommodations for students
with special needs.



TEACHING IS SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL TOO

Addressing the social, emotional and spiritual well-being of our students is essential to helping them increase both their feeling of belonging and their academic achievement. Too often however, the social, emotional and spiritual well-being of educators is overlooked.



Last year, we offered ten Social, Emotional and Spiritual Learning (SESL) sessions for educators. We focused on how to respond to anxiety within ourselves and our students, in order to create more effective teaching and learning experiences. 31 individuals participated in a two-part series about the wisdom of mystical Judaism, or *Hassidut*, and the connection to anxiety. Participants also experimented with practices to manage anxiety in their personal and professional lives. Another group of 25 educators from 10 organizations joined us for a series to enhance their ability to implement SESL competencies and inclusion standards.

We also partnered with Studio 70 to present at the 2021 Voices from the Field Conference, a professional learning convening for after-school educators. We offered training and resources to help educators support children through the process of grief and mourning, informed by Jewish tradition, and on youth mental health first aid.

"Thank you for a meaningful learning experience today.

SESL has become a regular part of my landscape as a

Jewish educator in Milwaukee. I had been searching for
the opportunity to develop the vocabulary, and a better
understanding of how to weave SESL into my own work."

- Jennifer Saber, Kesher Inclusion Specialist and Teen

Philanthropy Coordinator, Milwaukee Jewish Federation



ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Prior to the pandemic, 13% of US children had a diagnosed mental or behavioral health condition, and this number is rising. We know that a critical element of education is addressing the whole child, and we continue to support teens in making healthy choices through adolescence.

Through a combination of programming and training, we have helped to bring mental health to the forefront of communal attention. Last year, we:

- Organized **16** Youth Mental Health First Aid trainings, certifying **229** individuals
- Offered four sessions with Dr. Betsy Stone on adolescent development and supporting our teens
- Trained the staff teams of Jewish Community High School of the Bay, and Camp Ramah
 Ojai, as well as the Stand with Us high school program team

Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative

Engaging teens requires patience, wisdom, resilience, and the proverbial village. **Time** and again, teen professionals in schools, camps and youth groups become trusted allies, for parents, and the teens themselves as they navigate the journey of identity, connection and emerging adulthood.

We are proud to develop the skills of those youth professionals supporting our children during their teenage years, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. Their creativity and commitment continue to help teens find joy in the journey to emerging adulthood.

MENTORING YOUTH PROFESSIONALS

Our Bay Area Mentor Program celebrates its fifth year matching teen professionals who are new to the field with seasoned mentors to serve as their partners, a sounding board for programmatic challenges, and a bridge to new leadership skills.

In the 2021–2022 year, we successfully matched 12 mentors with mentees serving a variety of Bay Area educational organizations. Mentees include congregational professionals, as well as those in summer camps and local organizations such as Wilderness Torah and Diller Teen Fellows.

Since 2018, we have engaged 20 mentors in support of 33 mentees. The success of the Bay Area Mentor Program has sparked a grant from the Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative to create a Cross Community Mentor Program in four new communities during 2022–2023.

"My mentor is so wonderful and helpful! I always come away from our discussions feeling supported and refreshed.I'm very grateful for Jewish LearningWorks, and for my mentor. I just wish I had a mentor like her for all other parts of my life!"

- Leah Savage, Education Director, Congregation Beth Shalom

RUBY AWARD

Jewish LearningWorks' annual award for excellence in Jewish youth education and engagement was first given in 2020. Last year, we were proud to name the award in memory of Robert Ruby, to honor his lifelong commitment to teen engagement.

The 2022 Ruby Award went to Jenessa Schwartz, a middle school Language Arts Teacher at Yavneh Day School. For the first time during the pandemic, we presented the award in person, and celebrated the work of all Bay Area Jewish youth professionals with a day of learning focused on building teen community with our minds, our hearts and hands.







REGATHERING & ENERGIZING YOUTH PROFESSIONALS

Working with scarce resources, limited growth opportunities, and often for low pay, Jewish youth professionals commonly experience burnout and leave their roles too quickly. To support them, we created **new opportunities to gather in-person and online to re-energize our talent, boost morale, and to reimagine their workplace experiences.** We were particularly proud to co-create Expanding our Reach, a series of monthly seminars and master classes, with our partners at the Jewish Teen Funder Collaborative.



Reimagine, a virtual conference, convened over 120 youth professionals, their supervisors and lay leaders. Together we explored how to support talent, and create thriving workplaces.



Held in beautiful Sonoma county, our summer and winter retreats were carefully designed to nurture youth professionals, build community, and provide a deepdive into learning together.



These in-person sessions took place in five different Bay Area counties, providing opportunities to relax, meet new colleagues, and inspire each other.

New Mindsets to Spark Change

Professional learning keeps us sharp, equipped to respond to challenges and meet our goals, but what really drives change in an organization or community are the mindsets that help us determine where to focus time and attention.

In recognition of the female dominated field of education, the documented gender gap in nonprofits, and the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of our community, last year Jewish LearningWorks continued to prioritize **elevating female leadership by taking the steps necessary to create equity in Jewish communal life.**

VOICES FOR GOOD INITIATIVE

The Voices for Good Initiative is designed to amplify the voices of female leaders, and strengthen the community's talent pipeline. During the 2021–22 program year, 11 Voices for Good fellows began their second year of training; we led quarterly networking meetings for 25 female leaders in C-suite positions, and provided leadership coaching for 14 women leaders.

"The sessions have been powerful for me, in being my best self as a professional and as a human. I am using what I am learning to support so many of my staff and colleagues each day, and it will be the same for years to come. I would most certainly not be able to do this coaching work at this time without Jewish Learning Works' generosity and vision" - Myla Marks, Senior Director, Camp Tawonga

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING IN JEWISH EDUCATION

The work of creating an inclusive environment for our multicultural, multiracial community is an imperative for Jewish LearningWorks. We are working to meet this goal by diversifying the people with whom we work, collaborate, and serve, and by continuing our own staff learning.

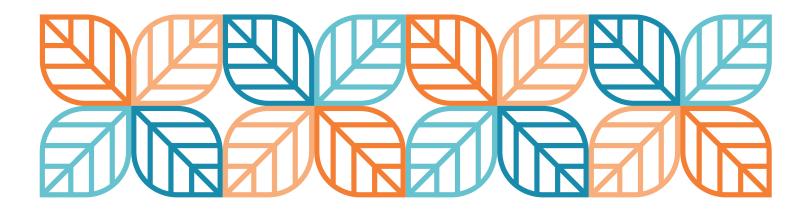
Last year, we hosted "Constructing Our Racial and Ethnic Identities," a workshop that supported 31 educators to understand their own identities, equipping them to help students understand theirs, and to use that knowledge to enhance teaching and learning.

High-Caliber Customized Training

We know from decades of experience that educators and learners benefit when teaching or leadership teams learn and plan for action, together.

We are proud to help leadership teams **respond to specific challenges and identify opportunities for staff growth and development.** Last year we worked with one organization to enhance the quality of Project Based Learning in their education program. We worked with another to implement a program evaluation plan. For a third, we supported the development of a new educational vision.

Jewish LearningWorks began to tailor training support for organizations in 2017 and has slowly grown this service. Initially provided only by Jewish LearningWorks staff, we now work with a team of skilled partners to meet the need for customized training. Each training is tailored to the organization through a thoughtful, collaborative process.





"There are many things I value about [the customized training] engagement, but at the top of the list is the regular reminder to reflect and evaluate and to keep focused on the big picture as our work progresses." - Sue Bojdak, Director of Education, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

"The training really allowed for me and my new boss to be in a constructed creative space where we were able to have more out of the box thinking." - Natalie Connell, Youth Programs Director, Congregation Sherith Israel



Professional Learning that Informs Practice & Touches Lives

EDUCATORS ENGAGED FROM ALL JEWISH EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS



921
participants
from all Jewish
educational
settings



594 unique individuals, nearly 10% more than last year



400
educators
participated
in our online
programs, 60%
more since the
first year of the
pandemic



24 U.S. states served by our online programs



175
organizations
served
50% Bay Area
50%
Across the U.S.

THROUGH MEANINGFUL HUMAN CONNECTIONS AND LEARNING



training sessions offered to the educator community



coaching sessions for **28** Jewish professionals



mentoring sessions for rising youth professionals



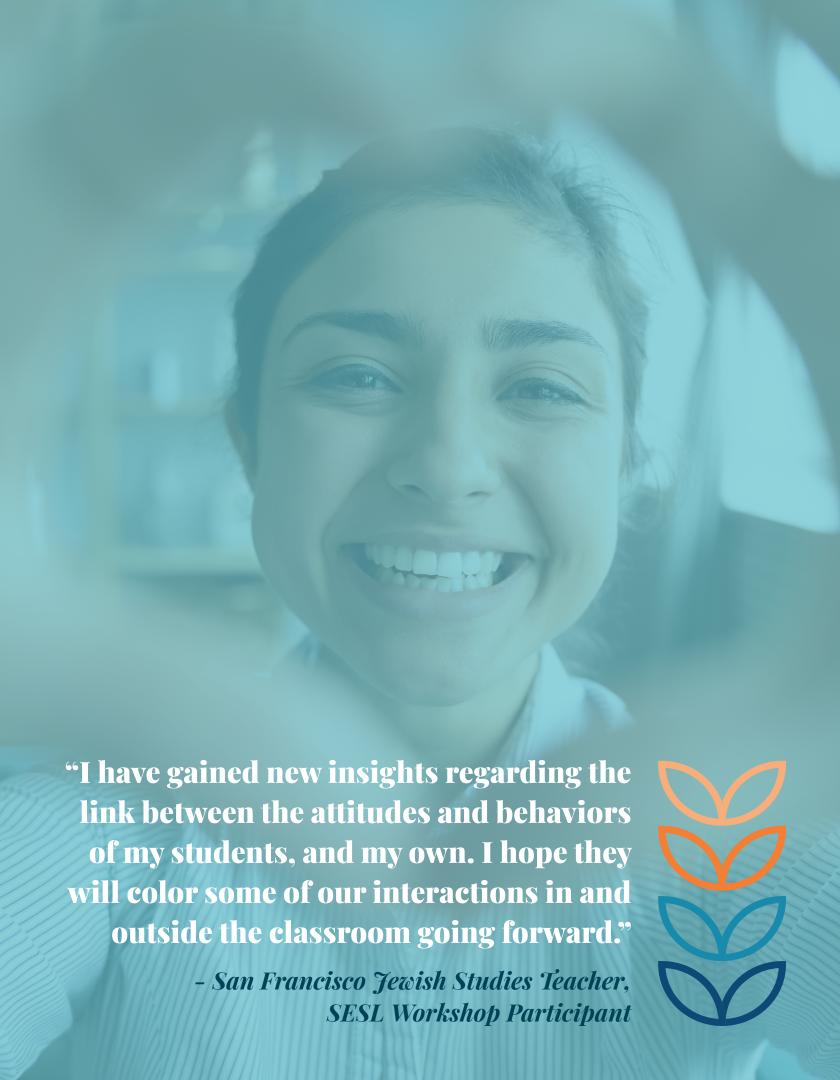
customized training sessions for 23 teams, 17% more than last year



in-person networking events connecting youth professionals as we emerge from the pandemic

2021-22 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS

Mentoring and Coaching **Public Customized** networking sessions: sessions: workshops: training: 65 sessions 219 sessions 104 sessions 41 sessions 15 % 51 % 24 % 10 %



The Jewish Community Library: Celebrating a Trajectory of Six Decades, and Counting

By 1954, the collection of books, magazines and periodicals found at the Jewish Educational Society of San Francisco was considered one of the most remarkable collections of Jewish literature in the West. In 1958 the Educational Society became the Bureau of Jewish Education, now known as Jewish LearningWorks. Although originally established as a resource for Jewish educators, over the past 62 years the Jewish Community Library has grown to include a collection of more than 40,000 items, and offers a year round menu of book group opportunities and public programs, circulating thousands of books to Library patrons.

The Library moved into dedicated space at the corner of 14th Avenue and Balboa in 1976. In 2003, in order to properly house the growing collection and make it accessible to all, the Library moved to the newly opened campus of the Jewish Community High School of the Bay. The Library also established Pushcart branches at the Jewish Community Centers in Palo Alto and San Francisco. The popular One Bay, One Book program was launched in 2012, inviting the community to read a single Jewish title simultaneously. This program, along with the Library's long standing Book Club in a Box program, creates opportunities



to discuss myriad topics from different perspectives, and most importantly, to connect through the love of books, and Jewish ideas.

Most recently, the popularity of the Library's virtual public programs was propelled by the move to remote experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. Today more than 5,000 people from across the Bay Area use the Library's programs and services annually.

LAST YEAR, THE LIBRARY:

•



public programs with more than **3,700** attendees.

Offered



eBooks for children and adults, free to Bay Area residents.

Supplied



eBooks and **366** audiobooks to **271** unique users.

Provided



sets of books to **43** book groups in nine Bay Area counties.



A Tribute to Howard Freedman

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Writer Leo Rosten said that a mensch is "someone to admire and emulate, someone of noble character" — just like Howard. With a background in education, he started working at the Bureau of Jewish Education in 1992 as the coordinator of the Battat Education Resource Center, went on to become the reader services librarian for the Jewish Community Library, and became the library director in 2009 when Jonathan Schwartz retired.

When I asked Howard for something that touched him in his time at the library, he shared a story about Semyon Gerber, a former soldier who'd moved here after the fall of the Soviet Union, who always wore a suit with his military medals on it when he came to the library. Having taught Yiddish as a young man, and having lived through the suppression of Jewish culture in the USSR — he was thrilled to discover the library's strong collection of Yiddish literature. But his delight turned into depression and loneliness as he gradually found that the thriving Yiddish culture he hoped to find here did not exist, lost in the indifference of the American Jewish community to this element of its past.

You can hear in his reflection on Semyon Gerber that Howard is attentive, caring, and "someone to admire and emulate." I'm sure you've all read his book reviews in his monthly "Off the Shelf" column for the J Weekly. The engaging range of his choices, his insight and enthusiasm, come across in every sentence. As husband to Sue and father to Sabina and Isaac, I've seen his tender regard and deep capacity for connection, in a man who models for all of us the teachings of the prophet Micah, "To act justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

When I asked Howard where he'd like to put more of his energy, as he enters his 31st year at the library, he told me that he wants to "encourage people to engage in real, sustained reading," as opposed to reading short articles on our phones. He ended by saying, "Our consciousness, our imagination, our empathy, and so many parts of ourselves have been shaped by books in important ways."

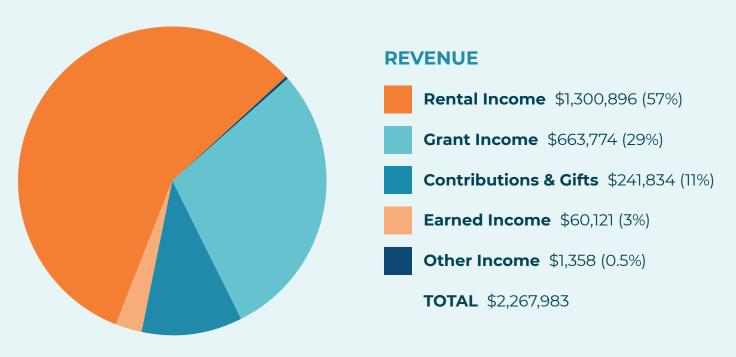
Clearly the perfect person to be the director of a library. A thoughtful, concerned, compassionate visionary. A mensch.

by Maggid Eli Andrew Ramer, Library patron, friend and former employee



Financial Sustainability

Jewish LearningWorks is grateful for the sustaining support of our generous individual and foundation donors, and for the participants whose program fees support our work.



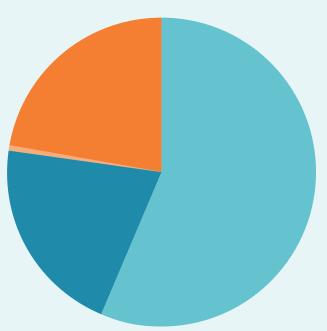
EXPENSES





- Educational Programs \$425,029 (21%)
- Marketing & Promotion \$12,734 (1%)

TOTAL \$2,052,787





We would not be here without your partnership, and commitment to lifelong Jewish learning

Together, we are developing new mindsets that spark change and revere every Jewish educator and learner as central to Jewish life. With your support we are building a just Jewish community of imagination, curiosity and belonging for generations to come.

From the bottom of our hearts, Todah Rabah.

-The Jewish LearningWorks Board and Staff



WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR OUR GENEROUS FOUNDATION SUPPORT.

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Donald and Carole Chaiken Foundation

Friends of the Jewish Community Library

Gaia Fund

Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund Koret Foundation

Lisa & Douglas Goldman Fund Propel Bay Area Jewish Women's Fund San Francisco Humanities

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

The Herbst Foundation, Inc.

The Howard and Irene Levine Family Fund



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Valerie Sopher



Building for the Future

Poised for growth, Jewish LearningWorks engaged in a strategic planning process earlier this year. Our plan centers educators, and articulates a strong commitment to foster diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging practices across all Jewish educational settings.

We are excited to share our plan and progress with you, as we build our portfolio of high-caliber professional learning opportunities for educators, and provide a continuum of responsive and meaningful support throughout their professional lifecycle.

View Our 2022 Strategic Plan







עוול עוול לילעעויל

"Chazak, Chazak, V'nitchazek — From Strength to Strength May We Be Strengthened."

