

## Faculty & Staff for the Northeast Leadership Summit

**Wilson Baer, Assistant Director, [wbaer@urj.org](mailto:wbaer@urj.org) – Onsite RA and Housing Coordinator**

**URJ Eisner Camp, [www.urjeisnercamp.com](http://www.urjeisnercamp.com)**

Ever since Wilson was three years old he has loved Eisner Camp. He rose through the units as a camper and eventually grew to become a staff member at camp. He is a graduate of Brown University where he studied ancient Greek and Latin in addition to serving as a leader of the Brown University Band. Wilson also spent two years teaching middle and high school Latin in central Massachusetts. By applying his experience he looks forward to the opportunity to help bring continued success to the Eisner Camp community. Since 1958, URJ Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping. Children from Union for Reform Judaism congregations across the Northeast join together each summer to experience the fun and magic of this special community.

**Jeffrey Bank, CEO – #SharkTankMuseum Judge**

**Alicart Restaurant Group, [www.alicart.com](http://www.alicart.com)**

Jeffrey Bank, CEO of Alicart Restaurant Group, is committed to providing high-quality dining experiences marked by delicious food, welcoming ambiance, great value, and superior service. For over twenty years, the Alicart family of restaurants has been offering an exciting and unique spectrum of dining concepts. The Legendary Carmine's Family Style Italian restaurant serves exceptional southern Italian cuisine in abundant portions designed for sharing. Other specialty restaurants include Virgil's Real BBQ located in Times Square and Atlantis Bahamas. Jeffrey is an alumni of Eisner Camp and also served on the URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps Board of Directors.

**April Baskin, Vice President of Audacious Hospitality, [abaskin@urj.org](mailto:abaskin@urj.org)**

**Union for Reform Judaism, [www.urj.org](http://www.urj.org)**

April Baskin is the Union for Reform Judaism's Vice President of Audacious Hospitality. The URJ builds community, provides vision and a voice to transform the way people connect to Judaism. The URJ helps congregations stay adept and agile, motivate more young Jews to embrace Jewish living, agitate for a more progressive society, and foster meaningful connections to Israel. Before joining the URJ team in August 2015, April served as the national Director of Resources and Training at InterfaithFamily.com. Dedicated to building a stronger, more inclusive Jewish community committed to social justice, April has spent 10 years advocating for Jewish diversity inclusion locally and nationally in a variety of ways, including facilitating LGBT educational trainings as a Keshet facilitator and writing a thesis about the experiences and identities of Jewish young adults of color in American Judaism.  
*Saturday Morning Workshop: Privilege, Power, and Jews--Oh My!*

**Michael Bogdanow, Artist/Lawyer/Author/Musician, [michaelbogdanow@gmail.com](mailto:michaelbogdanow@gmail.com)**

**Michael Bogdanow's Contemporary Universal and Judaic Art, [www.MichaelBogdanow.com](http://www.MichaelBogdanow.com)**

Michael Bogdanow is an internationally recognized artist, attorney, and author. His artworks are often inspired by Judaic texts, but transcend the texts to communicate universally. His art is on the covers of numerous books and recordings, including The Freedom Music Project by Peri Smilow and The Power and the Blessing by Sue Horowitz. He received his B.A. from Brandeis, M.F.A. from Columbia, and J.D. from Harvard. He practices law at Meehan, Boyle, Black & Bogdanow ([www.MeehanBoyle.com](http://www.MeehanBoyle.com)), a leading trial firm in Boston, representing victims in cases such as the death from hazing at M.I.T., and the "Big Dig" tunnel collapse.  
*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Using Art To Express Ideas And Effectuate Change*

**Margie Bogdanow, Senior Youth Engagement Specialist, [mbogdanow@urj.org](mailto:mbogdanow@urj.org)**

**Union for Reform Judaism, [www.urj.org](http://www.urj.org)**

Margie Bogdanow, LICSW, is a consultant, coach and parent educator in the Greater Boston area working with the Union for Reform Judaism and Combined Jewish Philanthropies on a variety of projects involving supplemental education, teen engagement and professional development. In that capacity, she works closely with the Northeast Teen Collective and NFTY. Additionally, she is a member of the Hebrew College Adult Learning faculty.

**Louis Bordman, Senior Director, [lbordman@urj.org](mailto:lbordman@urj.org) – #SharkTankMuseum Judge**

**URJ Eisner Camp, [www.urjeisnercamp.org](http://www.urjeisnercamp.org)**

Louis has been a leader in the field of Jewish Education and Jewish camping for over 25 years. Over the last 20 years, his vision and direction inspired the URJ Eisner Camp's renaissance. He guided the redevelopment of Eisner's facilities and program and the addition and renovation of virtually every building in camp. During his tenure, Eisner has become one of the most respected camps in the country boasting an average camper return rate of over 94% and home-grown staff return rate over 85%. Since 1958, URJ Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping. Children from Union for Reform Judaism congregations across the Northeast join together each summer to experience the fun and magic of this special community.

**Scott Brockman, Executive Director, [scott@oasisofpeace.org](mailto:scott@oasisofpeace.org)**

**American Friends of Neve Shalom Wahat al-Salam, [www.oasisofpeace.org](http://www.oasisofpeace.org)**

Scott's journey to become a peace entrepreneur and informal educator started in NFTY, here at Eisner Camp. Time in Israel soon after college led to a lifelong commitment to service. Scott's alphabet soup of institutions he has led or worked for includes, NFTY in Israel, New Israel Fund, Outreach and Expansion Director for the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach, Executive Director for the Hillel of Broward & Palm Beach, Southern Regional Director for J Street & now Executive Director of American Friends of Neve Shalom Wahat al-Salam. The American Friends of NSWAS raises funds for the first bilingual, binational, multicultural Primary School in Israel, a School for Peace, a Pluralistic Spiritual Community Center. All of these programs exist in Israel's only deliberate multicultural binational village of 60+ families. Half Israeli Arab and half Jewish. Scott is the proud father of two NFTYites now.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Identities in Conflict - Making sense of the dual narratives of Israelis and Palestinians*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: My Story*

**Rabbi Tamara Cohen, Chief of Innovation, [tcohen@movingtraditions.org](mailto:tcohen@movingtraditions.org)**

**Moving Traditions, [movingtraditions.org](http://movingtraditions.org)**

Rabbi Tamara Cohen, Chief of Innovation for Moving Traditions, loves creating ways for teens to explore their gendered and Jewish selves and communities. Moving Traditions guides Jewish teens on their path to becoming healthy, successful adults. Through our field-tested programs, Rosh Hodesh and Shevet Achim, we provide teens with trained adult mentors, a safe environment with supportive peers, and the opportunity to explore challenging issues and apply Jewish wisdom, all within Jewish community. Tamara has led dozens of feminist seders around the country and in Russia, trained thousands of people on LGBT and diversity issues, and published numerous essays and prayers. Tamara was a founder of Brit Tzedek V'Shalom and is a member of Rabbis Without Borders and the Selah Jewish Social Justice Network. A graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Sarah Lawrence College, and Barnard College, she lives in Philadelphia with her partner and two amazing kids.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: What Is Gender & Why Do We Care?*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Be The Change, Change the Norm*

**Corey Cutler, Director of Development, [ccutler@urj.org](mailto:ccutler@urj.org)**

**URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camp, [www.urjnortheastcamps.org](http://www.urjnortheastcamps.org)**

Corey has led the fundraising efforts at Eisner and Crane Lake Camps for the past 10-years. Since 1958, URJ Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping. Children from Union for Reform Judaism congregations across the Northeast join together each summer to experience the fun and magic of this special community. Previously, Corey had a successful 15-year career in public relations and investor relations. He holds a Bachelor's Degree from the SUNY Albany. In 2013, Corey received the "Development Professional Award" by JCamp180, a Harold Grinspoon Foundation program, recognizing his accomplishments in successful fundraising for the Camps. Corey attended Eisner as a camper and counselor. He enjoys traveling, yoga, the New York Mets and music of all types. A member of Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel, Corey resides in West Orange, NJ with his daughter.

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Philanthropy in Action*

**Emilia Diamant, Executive Director, [emilia.diamant@gmail.com](mailto:emilia.diamant@gmail.com)**

**Jeremiah Program, [www.jeremiahprogram.org/boston](http://www.jeremiahprogram.org/boston)**

Emilia Diamant is a NFTY-NE Alumna (2003) who now works and lives in Boston. She is the Executive Director of Jeremiah Program, a nonprofit that works with low-income single mothers and their young children to help families move out of poverty. Jeremiah Program gives a hand up, not a hand out, to families led by low-income single mothers. A national program with offices across the US, Jeremiah provides wraparound support to families as moms attend college, children get ready for school, and the family moves toward more success. Emilia is a trained community organizer through the JOIN for Justice Organizing Fellowship. She is an educator who has worked with Jewish and non-Jewish teens all over the east coast on learning around privilege, power, oppression, and anti-racism work.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Privilege, Power, and Jews--Oh My!*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Grassroots Community Organizing*

**Jonah Frelander, Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Development, [JFrelander@urj.org](mailto:JFrelander@urj.org)**

**URJ Mitzvah Corps, [www.Mitzvahcorps.org](http://www.Mitzvahcorps.org)**

Jonah grew up in the Reform movement and was heavily involved in the NFTY and URJ Eisner camp communities through College. Jonah has since dedicated his professional life to the creation and development of innovative educational experiences, designed to guide Jewish youth toward living meaningful Jewish lives in an ever-changing complex world. After 4 years working with URJ Mitzvah Corps, Jonah has helped to connect more than 600 Jewish teens with opportunities in the social justice space throughout the world. URJ Mitzvah Corps connects Jewish teens with a chance to spend their summers traveling and experiencing other cultures, meeting new friends, and exploring a variety of social justice and service learning opportunities throughout the world.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Voluntourism vs Service Learning*

**Melissa Frey, Director, [mfrey@urj.org](mailto:mfrey@urj.org)**

**URJ Kutz Camp, [www.kutzcamp.org](http://www.kutzcamp.org)**

Melissa Frey is director of the URJ Kutz Camp. Kutz is the summer home of NFTY and Reform Jewish teens worldwide. Teens entering grades 10-12 join together for four weeks of intensive specialty training in leadership, social justice, the arts, and Jewish learning. Previously, Melissa served as NFTY Associate Director, NFTY Director of Operations, NFTY Assistant Director, regional advisor to NFTY's Northeast Lakes and Texas-Oklahoma Regions, and curriculum author for the Regional Board Leadership Track at Kutz. A product of the Union for Reform Judaism's Camps (Greene and Kutz) as well as NFTY and BBYO, Melissa has been involved in youth work in various capacities with the URJ for over twenty years. Melissa builds teen leadership via Jewish ethics and values, engagement and empowerment, and by fostering strong, meaningful, Jewish communities.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Resilience and Leadership*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: The Engagement Equation*

**Mike Fuld, Senior Regional Director of Youth Engagement, NFTY's New York Area Region, [mfuld@urj.org](mailto:mfuld@urj.org)**

**Union for Reform Judaism, [www.newyork.nfty.org](http://www.newyork.nfty.org)**

Michael Fuld has worked for the Union for Reform Judaism for the past eight years, and is currently the Senior Regional Director of Youth Engagement for the NY Area. NFTY is a Movement that builds strong, welcoming, inspired communities through teen-powered engagement. Together, we pursue tikkun olam, personal growth, youth empowerment, and deep connections, all rooted in Reform Judaism. The New York Area Region of NFTY serves Jewish Teens in Long Island, New York City, Westchester and part of Fairfield County, CT. We work in partnership with the over 70 Union for Reform Judaism affiliated congregations to provide meaningful Jewish experiences for middle and high school students. Prior to becoming the NY Regional Director, Mike was one of the Assistant Directors at the URJ Kutz Camp, and a Program Associate for NFTY. Mike has also previously served as a congregational youth professional for a congregation in Queens. He holds a BA and MPA from New York University.

**James Gelsey, Director of Operations, [jgelsey@urj.org](mailto:jgelsey@urj.org) – Onsite Director of Operations**

**URJ Eisner Camp, [www.urjnortheastcamps.org](http://www.urjnortheastcamps.org)**

James is the Director of Operations at Eisner Camp and is part of the full time team for Eisner, Crane Lake and 6 Points Sci-Tech. Eisner, Crane Lake and 6 Points Sci-Tech are the URJ camps serving Reform congregations in the northeast. James joined the Eisner summer staff in 2008 to work on camp's amazing 50th Anniversary Celebration. He spent the next few summers as Program Director and Summer Administrator before joining the full-time staff in 2011. James's varied professional background includes Jewish camping, education, and youth work; commercial theater in New York and Toronto; and authoring over 60 children's books (the "Scooby-Doo! Mysteries" chapter books among them). James grew up in Miami, spending nine summers at URJ Camp Coleman, and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. James and his family live in northern New Jersey and belong to Temple Beth El of Northern Valley, where James served six years as chairperson of the Education Committee and continues to serve on the Board of Trustees. His wife is an Eisner alum, and both of their children have been at camp since 2007.

**Everett Gendler, Rabbi, [gendler.everett@gmail.com](mailto:gendler.everett@gmail.com)**

**Gendler Grapevine, [www.gendlergrapevine.org](http://www.gendlergrapevine.org)**

Born in Iowa, studied at University of Chicago and Jewish Theological Seminary. Ordained as Rabbi in 1957, served congregations in Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Havana, and Princeton, NJ, before serving as rabbi to Temple Emanuel, Lowell, MA, and as Jewish Chaplain and Instructor at Phillips Academy, Andover, MA. Long involved in nonviolent action for peace, civil rights, and the environment, and also active in Jewish liturgical experimentation and renewal. Since "retirement" he, with his wife, Mary, travels regularly to India to help the Tibetan exile community, following the Dalai Lama, establish a program of study about strategic nonviolent struggle.

The Gendler Grapevine Project is a six-year initiative that promotes activities within the Jewish and interfaith communities that recognize and celebrate the deep connections between Jewish tradition, social justice, and the environment by grants empowering individuals and communities to spiritual and practical application of these values.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Environment - Resources and Issues*

**Dana Gershon, Attorney, [dana@danagershon.com](mailto:dana@danagershon.com)**

**Ankner & Levy, PC, [www.anknerlevy.com](http://www.anknerlevy.com)**

Dana Gershon is an attorney with a private practice that specializes in employment law. She represents clients both independently and through an affiliation with Ankner & Levy, PC. Prior to starting her own practice, Dana worked at Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C. in Boston and at Goodwin Proctor, LLP. She has also taught at Boston University School of Law and in the Genesis Program at Brandeis University. Dana received her J.D. from Columbia University School of Law, and her B.A. from Cornell University. Dana is a past-President of the Board of Trustees of the Rashi School in Dedham, MA and a former trustee there. She also served on the Board of Trustees on the Boston Jewish Community Relations Council and on the Council at Temple Israel in

Boston. Dana co-chaired CJP's Boston-Haifa Connection and was instrumental in the founding of the Parents at the Center Program in Haifa, Israel which provides assistance to families with children at risk. Dana is also on the Board of Advisors of the New England Center for Children in Southborough, MA. Dana recently moved to the Washington, DC area, where she lives with her husband, Rabbi Jonah Pesner, and three of her children. Her oldest child is a college student at Harvard University

**Rabbi Neal Gold, National Director of Content and Programming, [ngold@arza.org](mailto:ngold@arza.org)  
ARZA, [www.arza.org](http://www.arza.org)**

Rabbi Gold worked as a Rabbi in congregations - New Jersey and Massachusetts - for 18 years, before joining ARZA last year as their Director of Program & Content. As one of the leading voices of progressive Zionism today, ARZA has two main missions: to promote and expand the place of Israel in American communities here, and to strengthen the Reform movement in Israel. ARZA is the Zionist arm of the Reform Jewish movement in America. Rabbi Gold is also doing graduate work in Near Eastern & Jewish Studies at Brandeis. For years he worked with the Ziv Tzedakah Fund, which specialized in the off-beat and creative ways that people do the work of Tikkun Olam. His passions include music, flyfishing, and books, and I'm learning to play electric bass.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Taking Back the Z: What is Progressive Zionism - and Why Now?*

**Rabbi Andrew Goodman, Assistant Director of Recruitment & Admissions, [andrew.goodman@huc.edu](mailto:andrew.goodman@huc.edu)  
HUC-JIR, [www.huc.edu](http://www.huc.edu)**

Working with an international team, Rabbi Goodman identifies and supports future Jewish professionals as they explore how to use their gifts to impact the world. He guides Jewish leaders as they discern their vocational path and assists in connecting them to the appropriate program where they can thrive. Prior to joining HUC-JIR, Rabbi Goodman served as the Campus Rabbi and Director of Religious Social Responsibility at the University of Richmond where he worked with a multifaith chaplaincy team to support the religious and spiritual needs of the campus community. We are the center of innovation for Jewish life and learning – preparing rabbis, cantors, leaders in Jewish education, Jewish nonprofit professionals, pastoral counselors, and scholars to apply their knowledge, commitment, vision, and expertise to strengthen and transform the Jewish community and larger world.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Hazan et ha-kol: Food Justice and Judaism*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Networking and Relationship Building*

**Gussie Gordon, Founder, [gussiegordon@me.com](mailto:gussiegordon@me.com)  
Young Jewish Leaders (YJL)**

I am a senior at Nobles and Greenough, a private school in Greater Boston. I have a passion for singing, musical theatre, fashion, and food. I have traveled to 23 countries, and experiencing other cultures is a meaningful part of my life. Judaism is an important part of my identity. Judaism's fundamental tenets and my relationship to God and spirituality are especially meaningful to me. The principles of Justice and morality, celebrating life, questioning and challenging, the call to action, and respect for other people's beliefs guide my life. Judaism exists within me as a powerful drive to leave the world better than the way I found it. The mission of YJL is to motivate and educate Jewish students at private secular schools so that they can both respond and advocate for issues pertinent to the Jewish community, most importantly in support of Israel.

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Creating and Sustaining Your Own Organization*

**Patti and Louis Grossman – [SharkTankMuseum](https://www.sharktankmuseum.com) Judges**

Patti and Louis Grossman have been actively involved in the Greater Boston Jewish Community for more than 35 years and are long-time supporters of URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps. Patti is on the URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Board and is a member of the National Board of Women of Reform Judaism, a Vice President at Temple Beth Shalom in Needham and a former Board member of the New England Chapter of the Anti-Defamation League and of Needham Hadassah. Louis is President of The Grossman Companies, Inc., a family owned commercial real estate management, investment and development firm based in Quincy. Louis' community involvement focuses on Jewish continuity. He was on the URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Board and currently serves on the Governance Board and Finance Committee at the JCC of Greater Boston, and the Board of Trustees of Hebrew College in Newton and the Union for Reform Judaism. He is a past president of Temple Beth Shalom in Needham.

**Laura Gurvis, Associate Director, [lgurvis@urj.org](mailto:lgurvis@urj.org) – Onsite Participant Care Coordinator  
URJ Eisner Camp, [www.urjeisnercamp.org](http://www.urjeisnercamp.org)**

Laura began working at Eisner in 2000 as our Camp Mom. Since then, she has been our Parent Liaison, Camper Care Director, and now is a full time Associate Director. She has served as the Jewish Educator at both the URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp in Utica, MS, and the URJ Joseph and Betty Harlam Camp in Kunkletown, PA. She has held various positions in the Jewish community such as Educator at Temple Shaaray Tefila in New York, NY, and as the Director of the Children's Department at the YM-YWHA of Washington Township, NJ. Since 1958, URJ Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping. Children from Union for Reform Judaism congregations across the Northeast join together each summer to experience the fun and magic of this special community.

**Rabbi Liz Hirsch, Assistant Director, [lhirsch@urj.org](mailto:lhirsch@urj.org) – Summit Prayer Coordinator**

**URJ Eisner Camp, [www.eisnercamp.org](http://www.eisnercamp.org)**

Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch was ordained by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Liz grew up as a camper and staff member at Eisner and NFTY participant. Liz graduated from Brown University with a degree in Environmental Studies. Between college and rabbinical school, she worked as a Legislative Assistant at the Religious Action Center in Washington, D.C. In recognition of her academic and leadership achievements, Liz was honored as a Wexner Graduate Fellow and Tisch Fellow during rabbinical school. Liz met her husband Rabbi Neil Hirsch at Eisner and they are delighted to make their home in the Berkshires.

**Briana Holtzman, Director, [briana@jfn.org](mailto:briana@jfn.org)**

**Jewish Teen Funders Network, [www.jfn.org](http://www.jfn.org)**

Briana is the Director of the Jewish Teen Funders Network. The Jewish Teen Funders Network (JTFN) creates, connects, and supports Jewish teen philanthropy programs worldwide. Jewish teen philanthropy programs introduce teens to collective grantmaking in a process guided by Jewish values. JTFN supports a network of over 100 programs in which thousands of teens grant over \$1,000,000 annually to nonprofits. Before joining JTFN, Briana was the founding associate director at URJ Camp Kalsman, outside of Seattle, WA and participated in the Foundation for Jewish Camp's (FJC) Yitro Leadership program. An FJC Bildner Graduate Fellow, she earned her MBA from University of Washington's Foster School of Business with a focus on marketing and management. Briana currently serves on the Steering Committee for Presentense's NYC Accelerator, as a trustee for the Sigma Delta Tau Foundation, and is a fellow in the UJA Federation of New York's Ruskay Institute for Jewish Professional Leadership.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Giving at the Root of the Problem: Social Justice Philanthropy*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Philanthropy in Action*

**Laura Hyman, Boston Regional Director, [lhyman@movingtraditions.org](mailto:lhyman@movingtraditions.org)**

**Moving Traditions, [www.movingtraditions.org](http://www.movingtraditions.org)**

Laura Hyman is the new Boston Regional Director of Moving Traditions. At Moving Traditions, we believe that when Judaism promotes self-discovery, challenges traditional gender roles, and celebrates a diversity of voices, it has the power to move our teens, our communities, and Judaism forward. Moving Traditions creates experiences that inspire Jewish teens to openly explore fundamental questions of identity and society. Previously, she oversaw Moving Traditions programming for seven years as Director of Havayah: The Teen Community at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, MA. Raised in the Boston area, Laura served as the Religious School Principal at Temple Israel of Hollywood, Los Angeles for 10 years before returning home in 2008. Laura holds a BA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Joint Masters Degree in Jewish Education and Jewish Communal Service from HUC-JIR.

**Greg Kellner, Camp Director, [gkellner@urj.org](mailto:gkellner@urj.org)**

**URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech, [www.6PointsSciTech.org](http://www.6PointsSciTech.org)**

Greg Kellner is the founding director of URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy. URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech is the only Jewish science and technology camp, for young Jewish scientists and innovators. Campers participate in an immersive, hands-on environment that nurtures their passion for exploration and creativity in areas such as robotics, video game design, environmental science, coding, digital media production, and biology. Greg has been part of the URJ Camps and NFTY family for more than 10 years, serving as Assistant Directors at both Eisner and Crane Lake Camps. Greg holds an MPA in nonprofit management from CUNY Baruch College. Greg's passion for tech can be seen in his work launching XM's Radio Hanukkah, a national Radio broadcast dedicated to the 8 nights of Hanukkah as well as in his work at the Digital Media Association, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing the online music industry.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Innovation & Tech: The Global Landscape*

**Leah King, Regional Director of Youth Engagement, Northeast, [lking@urj.org](mailto:lking@urj.org) – Coordinator: Bus Captains and**

**Union for Reform Judaism, [www.northeast.nfty.org](http://www.northeast.nfty.org)**

**the Welcoming Team**

Leah King, the URJ's Regional Director of Youth Engagement for the Northeast, is passionately committed to helping youth connect with Jewish life in vibrant and meaningful ways. NFTY is a movement that builds strong, welcoming, inspired communities through teen-powered engagement. Together, we pursue tikkun olam, personal growth, youth empowerment, and deep connections, all rooted in Reform Judaism. NFTY's Northeast Region includes Connecticut (excluding Fairfield County), Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, upstate New York and Montreal. With experience in congregational, camp, and communal settings, Leah's work has included teen leadership development, project-based learning, and creating safe spaces. She graduated from McGill University and is currently pursuing an Executive Masters in Jewish Education from HUC-JIR. Leah lives outside of Boston with her fiancé Craig.

**Adam Kohane, [adam.kohane@gmail.com](mailto:adam.kohane@gmail.com) – Songleader**

Adam Kohane is a Junior at NYU studying Music Business. Adam started at URJ Eisner Camp when he was 7 years old and has continued going every summer until 2016. Adam is a songleader at his temple and URJ Eisner Camp.

**Sarah Lauing, Associate Director, [slauing@urj.org](mailto:slauing@urj.org) – Faculty Liaison  
URJ Crane Lake Camp, [www.cranelakecamp.org](http://www.cranelakecamp.org)**

Sarah joined the full time Crane Lake team in 2015 as Associate Director, after serving for four summers as Director of Jewish Life. Sarah enjoys integrating Jewish learning and values into the already amazing camp day of boating, playing sports, and ziplining. Sarah holds an MA in Jewish Education from Hebrew Union College's Rhea Hirsch School of Education in Los Angeles, and a BA in Religion from Middlebury College in Vermont. Sarah's favorite camp event is Fight Song and her favorite camp meal is macaroni & cheese! Previously a privately-owned camp, Crane Lake Camp brings deep history and traditions to create a special community. Since joining the cohort of Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) camps in 1998, Crane Lake has become a second home to many.

**Brett Lubarsky, Associate Director, [brett.nsti@gmail.com](mailto:brett.nsti@gmail.com)  
North Shore Teen Initiative, [www.nsteeninitiative.org](http://www.nsteeninitiative.org)**

Brett Lubarsky is the Associate Director of the North Shore Teen Initiative, a national model for Jewish teen engagement serving the north and metro west suburbs of Boston. NSTI builds community among Jewish teens through institutional collaboration, innovative programming and participation in regional and national opportunities. By collaborating across the North Shore and MetroWest communities and offering innovative programming rooted in Jewish values and learning, NSTI connects Jewish teens to their peers and motivates participation in Jewish life. Over the past fifteen years, Brett has worked with Jewish youth and professionals at congregations and organizations throughout the country, specializing in adolescent, teen and emerging adult engagement, youth leadership and team development, service learning, educational technology and youth communications strategy. Brett is a Birthright Israel Fellow, spends his summers at Jewish overnight camp, "sings" Sweet Caroline at Fenway Park while cheering on the Red Sox and is an avid bowler.

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Building and Strengthening Community Through Social Media and Technology*

**Lisa Moldowsky – Onsite Registered Nurse**

Lisa Moldowsky is an elementary school nurse during the year and has spent that past 11 summers as a nurse at URJ Eisner Camp. Lisa was also a camper at Eisner for a five summers. Lisa has three children who have also attended URJ Eisner Camp.

**Evan Mallah, Principle, [evanmallah@gmail.com](mailto:evanmallah@gmail.com) – #SharkTankMuseum Judge  
Edge Principal Advisors, LLC, [www.edgepe.com](http://www.edgepe.com)**

Evan Mallah is co-founder of Edge Principal Advisors, LLC, a real estate private equity firm that owns and develops apartments, hotels, office buildings and retail. Evan is a member of the Board of Eisner and Crane Lake Camps, chairs the Development Committee and helped create their wellness program. Evan is a member of The Community Synagogue in Port Washington, NY. Evan's passion is practicing mindfulness, and he is currently a participant in the Institute for Jewish Spirituality's meditation teacher training program. Evan attended URJ Eisner Camp (1984-93), was involved in LFTY and NFTY and participated in NFTY in Israel.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Mindfulness*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Philanthropy in Action*

**Dina Mann, Partnership and Outreach Manager, [dina@rebooters.net](mailto:dina@rebooters.net)  
Reboot, [www.rebooters.net](http://www.rebooters.net)**

Dina Mann is the partnership and outreach manager, responsible for liaising with Reboot's national and regional Community Partners to maximize the impact of Reboot projects. Reboot affirms the value of Jewish traditions and creates new ways for people to make them their own. Inspired by Jewish ritual and embracing the arts, humor, food and philosophy, we produce projects that spark the interest of young Jews by re-imagining Jewish lives full of meaning, creativity, and joy. Dina was previously a social media consultant and a member of the teaching faculty of Park Avenue Synagogue. Dina holds a B.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from Rutgers University and an M.S. from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Unplug and reflect like Steve Jobs*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Put the YOU in USER*

**Emily Messinger, Director, [emessinger@urj.org](mailto:emessinger@urj.org)  
Northeast Teen Collective, [www.northeastJewishteens.org](http://www.northeastJewishteens.org)**

Emily Messinger, MARE, is the inaugural director of the Northeast Teen Collective, which is an ambitious initiative to increase the number of teens participating in Jewish life throughout New York, New Jersey, and New England. We empower highly engaged teens to use their individual passions as inspiration to create meaningful Jewish experiences that will capture the interest of their less involved friends. Through Machon Summer Leadership Institute at URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps, the Dana Gershon and Rabbi Jonah Pesner Northeast Leadership Summit, and ongoing Pop-up and Co-op Events—all powered by the Union for Reform Judaism in partnership with Combined Jewish Philanthropies and the Jim Joseph Foundation—we inspire more young Jews to embrace Jewish life and community as a path to meaning, purpose, and joy. Previously Emily served as the Co-Director of Congregational Learning at Temple Isaiah in Lexington, MA. For twelve years she held the role of Director of Teen Engagement at Temple Isaiah

growing and strengthening youth engagement and learning in the congregation. Emily has Masters in Jewish Educational Leadership from HUC-JIR. Emily lives outside of Boston with her husband and two daughters and spends her summers at Eisner and Crane Lake.

**Ben Michaels, Registrar, [bmichaels@urj.org](mailto:bmichaels@urj.org) – Onsite Registration and Transportation Coordinator  
URJ Eisner Camp, [www.urjeisnercamp.org](http://www.urjeisnercamp.org)**

Ben brings to Eisner years of experience working with Jewish youth as an Eisner staff member, a congregational Youth Director, and a religious school teacher. His love for Eisner started in 2006 when he was a camper and continued to grow throughout his years as a staff member. Ben graduated from SUNY Albany with a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and a minor in Business. Ben is passionate about nurturing the growth of Jewish youth through education, peer engagement, and camping. Since 1958, URJ Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping. Children from Union for Reform Judaism congregations across the Northeast join together each summer to experience the fun and magic of this special community.

**Nicole Nevarez, New York Director, [nnevarez@movingtraditions.org](mailto:nnevarez@movingtraditions.org)  
Moving Traditions, [www.movingtraditions.org](http://www.movingtraditions.org)**

Nicole Nevarez coordinates and supports Moving Traditions groups as well as development for the NY Metro area. Nicole is also a long time group leader and former supervisor of four local groups. Previously, Nevarez was the Jewish Education Director at the Rosenthal JCC in Pleasantville, NY. Nevarez received a B.A. from American University, DC and has spent time spent learning formally in Israel at Pardes and other institutions. Nicole has a background in Theatre and began her career in the Manhattan Theatre world. She is married to Rabbi Jason Nevarez and lives in Westchester NY with their 2 children. Moving Traditions believes that when Judaism promotes self-discovery, challenges traditional gender roles, and celebrates a diversity of voices, it has the power to move our teens, communities forward. Our field-tested programs Rosh Hodesh and Shevet Achim create experiences that inspire teens to openly explore fundamental questions of identity and society.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: What Is Gender & Why Do We Care?*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Be The Change, Change the Norm*

**Jonah Pesner, Director, [jpesner@rac.org](mailto:jpesner@rac.org) – Keynote Speaker  
Religious Action Center/Union for Reform Judaism, [www.rac.org](http://www.rac.org)**

Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner serves as the Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. He has led the Religious Action Center since 2015. Rabbi Pesner also serves as Senior Vice President of the Union for Reform Judaism. Named one of the most influential rabbis in America by Newsweek magazine, he is an inspirational leader, creative entrepreneur, and tireless advocate for social justice. Rabbi Pesner's signature accomplishment has been to encourage Jewish communities in efforts to reach across lines of race, class and faith in campaigns for social justice. In 2006, he founded Just Congregations (now incorporated into the Religious Action Center), which engages countless clergy, professional and volunteer leaders in interfaith efforts for the common good. Ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1997, Rabbi Pesner was a congregational rabbi at Temple Israel in Boston and at Temple Israel in Westport, Conn. A graduate of Wesleyan University and the Bronx High School of Science, Rabbi Pesner is married to Dana S. Gershon, an attorney. They have four daughters: Juliet, Noa, Bobbie and Cate.

**Zoe Plotsky, Manager of Event Partnerships, [zoe@onetable.org](mailto:zoe@onetable.org)  
OneTable, [www.onetable.org](http://www.onetable.org)**

Zoe grew up between New York and Los Angeles, instilling in her a love of cities and the people and food that fill them early on. She graduated with a degree in Political Science and Psychology from Barnard College, the women's college at Columbia University. After 5 summers working at Eisner Camp, she applied her passion for Jewish communal work as a Development Associate engaging millennials at UJA-Federation of New York before working at OneTable, where she coaches entrepreneurial hosts to create out of the box Shabbat dinner experiences for their communities. As an online and in-person hub, OneTable helps people in their 20s and 30s find, enjoy and share Shabbat dinners to make the most of their Friday night and enjoy the best of life together.

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Hospitality and Shabbat*

**Justin Rosen Smolen, National Director of Youth Programs, [justin@keshetonline.org](mailto:justin@keshetonline.org)  
Keshet, [www.keshetonline.org](http://www.keshetonline.org)**

Justin Rosen Smolen joined Keshet in 2015 as national director of youth programs, a new senior position focused on creating inclusive, visible and celebratory spaces for LGBTQ Jewish teens throughout the country. Based in New York, Justin develops trainings on LGBTQ issues for educators as well as leadership-building opportunities for LGBTQ teens across organizations and movements. Justin is a graduate of the dual-degree program of Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he earned bachelor's degrees in philosophy and Jewish thought. A Wexner Graduate Fellow, he holds a MPA and an MA in Jewish studies from New York University. Keshet is a national organization that works for full LGBTQ equality and inclusion in Jewish life. Led and supported by LGBTQ Jews and straight allies, Keshet cultivates the spirit and practice of inclusion in all parts of the Jewish community.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Is There a "Vanilla?" What Gender & Sexual Diversity Means for Us & Our Communities*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Road Mapping: Raising Awareness & Fostering Appreciation for Gender & Sexual Diversity across our Communities*

**Eileen Shapiro, Director, [ekshapiro@gmail.com](mailto:ekshapiro@gmail.com) - #SharkTankMuseum Judge  
Partners HealthCare, [www.partners.org](http://www.partners.org)**

Eileen has been a member of the Eisner/Crane Lake Camps Board for 4 years, serving on the Facilities and Governance Committees before joining the Executive Board as Community Relations Committee Chairperson. Eileen and her family are members of Beth El Temple Center in Belmont MA, where Eileen was co-chair of the Youth Committee. Eileen is Director of the Process Improvement Program Management Office at Partners HealthCare in Boston where she leverages her management consulting experience specializing in business process improvement and change management within the health care industry to improve cost and efficiencies within this not-for-profit health care system.

**Michelle Shapiro Abraham, Director of Learning and Innovation, Youth, [msabraham@urj.org](mailto:msabraham@urj.org)  
Union for Reform Judaism, [www.urj.org/](http://www.urj.org/)**

Michelle Shapiro Abraham, MAJE, RJE has worked in the field of Jewish education for over twenty years as a synagogue educator, curriculum and children's book author, camp and organizational consultant, and professional speaker. Currently, Michelle serves full time as the URJ Director of Learning and Innovation for Youth. In addition, Michelle is a consultant for the Foundation for Jewish Camp. In her free time Michelle enjoys pottery, cake decorating, and watching television on the couch with her family. Michelle is a proud recipient of the 2015 Covenant Award for Excellence in Jewish Education.

**Debby Shriber, Director, [dshriber@urj.org](mailto:dshriber@urj.org) - #SharkTankMuseum Judge and Onsite Participant Care Coordinator  
Crane Lake Camp, [www.cranelakecamp.org](http://www.cranelakecamp.org)**

Debby is very proud to be the Director of URJ Crane Lake Camp. URJ Crane Lake Camp offers fun, immersive Jewish experiences that empower children, teens and adults to better themselves, their communities and the world. A life long camper, it was always Debby's dream to be an overnight camp director! Debby grew up in Worcester, MA at Temple Emanuel Sinai and was incredible active in WESTY and NFTY-NE. Debby now lives in New Jersey with her wife, Nili and their daughter Molly.

**Alison Simpson, Development Associate, [asimpson@urj.org](mailto:asimpson@urj.org) – Onsite RA and Housing Coordinator  
URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps, [www.urjnortheastcamps.org](http://www.urjnortheastcamps.org)**

Alison Simpson is proud to be the Development Associate for Eisner and Crane Lake Camps. Alison has been part of the Eisner and Crane Lake community since 2006, working on staff at both camps, and accompanying a trip to Israel. Prior to working for Eisner and Crane Lake Camps, Alison spent five years working as a youth educator at a synagogue outside of Boston, MA with children preschool through high school. Alison attended the University of Vermont, where she received degrees in Geography and Political Science. Alison is passionate about sharing her excitement for Judaism and camping with others. Since 1958, URJ Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping. Children from Union for Reform Judaism congregations across the Northeast join together each summer to experience the fun and magic of this special community.

**Les Skolnik, Education Consultant, Teen Engagement, [lskolnik@JewishEdProject.org](mailto:lskolnik@JewishEdProject.org)  
The Jewish Education Project, [www.jewishedproject.org](http://www.jewishedproject.org)**

Les Skolnik is an Education Consultant focusing on Teen Engagement at The Jewish Education Project in Manhattan. The Jewish Education Project works with educators, clergy, principals, and volunteers to create outstanding Jewish experiences around New York City. We help educators develop new ideas, build strong networks, and nurture necessary skills. Together, we spark and spread innovations that expand the reach and increase the impact of Jewish education. In this capacity Les focuses on professional development, network weaving, and institutional innovation for teen engagement in the greater New York area. Les has been a Jewish youth worker and educator for almost fifteen years and holds a B.A. in History from the University at Buffalo, a Master's degree in Inclusive Secondary Social Studies Education from Hofstra University, and studied adolescence and emerging adulthood in Jewish Education as a member of cohort 3 of the certificate program at HUC-JIR.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Beginning with Everyone in Mind: Foundations in Universal Design*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Understanding By Design: Creating Experiences for Today's Jewish Teen*

**Melo Taylor, NFTY GER Regional Director, [mtaylor@urj.org](mailto:mtaylor@urj.org)  
Union for Reform Judaism, [www.gardenempire.nfty.org](http://www.gardenempire.nfty.org)**

Growing up in Lake Tahoe, California, Melo spent summers at Camp Tawonga in Yosemite. She was the president of her youth group STARY at Temple Bat Yam in South Lake Tahoe, as well as an active member in NFTY-CWR. She attended California State University, Chico where she earned a B.A. in Theatre Arts. She has been working with young people in the Jewish community for the last five years and is so excited to join the NFTY professional staff.

NFTY is a movement that builds strong, welcoming, inspired communities through teen-powered engagement. Together, we pursue tikkun olam, personal growth, youth empowerment, and deep connections, all rooted in Reform Judaism. NFTY's Garden Empire Region includes central and northern New Jersey and the West Hudson Valley of New York.

**Roger Tillis – #SharkTankMuseum Judge**

Roger serves on the Board of Regents at New York State Education Department and has the Director at Long Island Association, Inc. He served as Chairman of Board of Trustees at Long Island University. He was elected as the Regent for the Tenth Judicial District. He was Chair and a founding member of the Association for a Better Long Island, past acting Chair of the Long Island Regional Planning Board, and has been Executive Vice Chairman of the Tilles Center For The Performing Arts. Roger is a long-time supporter of the Jewish community and URJ Eisner Camp. Roger Tillis is a past board member of URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps and his father was one of the original trustees of URJ Eisner Camp. Roger founded Project Understanding, which brings together Catholic and Jewish teenagers on an annual mission to Israel. He was President of Temple Beth-El of Great Neck, serves on the Board of The Jewish Outreach Institute, and is a member of the National Young Leadership Cabinet of the UJA.

**Josh Warhit, Northeast High School Coordinator, [joshw@standwithus.com](mailto:joshw@standwithus.com)  
StandWithUs, [www.standwithus.com](http://www.standwithus.com)**

Josh Warhit is the Northeast High School Coordinator at StandWithUs. StandWithUs uses literature, programs, social media and other tools to tell Israel's inspiring story and counter extremism. StandWithUs hopes that by sharing the facts we can promote a just peace for everyone. After earning his BA in International Relations from the University of Rochester, Josh made Aliyah and enlisted in the Israel Defense Forces, serving in the Nachal Infantry Brigade. His combat service furthered his intimate knowledge of what it means to live as an Israeli, and provided first-hand knowledge about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the narratives involved, and the complex reality on the ground. Challenging and demanding situations inspired Josh to encourage dialogue on the Middle East, in the hope that the more people know, the sooner peace may come. Israel education organization, inspired by our love of Israel and our belief that education can lead to peace.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: Understanding Narrative*

**Carine Warsawski, Co-Founder, [carine.warsawski@gmail.com](mailto:carine.warsawski@gmail.com)  
Trybal Gatherings, [www.carinewarsawski.com](http://www.carinewarsawski.com)**

Carine specializes in Jewish engagement through travel. Inspired by an internship at Start-Up Nation Central in Tel Aviv, she is the co-founder of Trybal Gatherings, a Jewish travel start-up. Trybal's organizes large-scale experiences for Jewish young adults and their friends that foster community, adventure, and connection. Disrupting the traditional model of post-Birthright programming, Trybal offers multiple-day gatherings that leverage the core elements of immersive Jewish experiences, like camp and Birthright, to create pop-up Jewish communities close to home. Previously, Carine was the Marketing Director for Authentic Israel, overseeing brands such as BBYO Passport and Israel Outdoors; a consultant to the iCenter; and the Assistant Director of Marketing & Recruitment for NFTY's Israel programs. Carine is a Wexner Graduate Fellow, ROI community member, and proud Eisner alum. She holds a B.S. in Anthropology from Bates College, a Certificate in Marketing from Georgetown, and an MBA with honors from Boston University.

*Saturday Morning Workshop: The Israeli Innovation Ecosystem*

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Storytelling*

**Imogene Winkleman, NFTY-NAR Regional Advisor, [iwinkleman@urj.org](mailto:iwinkleman@urj.org) – Coordinator: Hofesh Pop-Ups  
Union for Reform Judaism, [www.newyork.nfty.org](http://www.newyork.nfty.org)**

Imogene Winkleman is thrilled to be NFTY-NAR's new Regional Advisor after spending last year with the region as a part-time Program Associate. NFTY-NAR (New York Area Region) is a vibrant, teen-powered community of Reform Jewish teens from New York City, Long Island, Westchester and Fairfield County, CT. Imogene grew up in NAR, served two terms on Regional Board, and spent her summers at Camp Harlam and Kutz. She graduated from Clark University with a B.A. in Psychology and Women's & Gender Studies. While in college, Imogene oversaw Clark's All Kinds of Girls mentoring program and worked at TBE in Wellesley. After graduating, Imogene spent a year working in government relations at JBFCs and currently serves as an Activist Alliance Volunteer for NOW-NYC.

*Saturday Afternoon Strategy Session: Event Planning from Z-A*