

Hebrew Tabernacle Board Candidates May 2024



Jason Bernstein

I am an accomplished executive in the pharmaceutical advertising industry, bringing vast experience and innovative marketing strategies to promote health and wellness. I am known for my strategic business acumen and dedication.

If elected to the Temple Board, I will be passionate about fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment in which Jewish values and traditions are preserved and celebrated.

As a proud parent of Rhett and Aaron, who are currently enrolled in the Temple's Hebrew School program, I look forward to serving the Temple community with dedication and integrity.



Amy Feinstein

I am a public-school teacher in the Bronx and the author of the book *Gertrude Stein and the Making of Jewish Modernism* (2020). My first career was as a professor of English and Jewish Studies. My spouse, Aaron Kaplan, is a software developer at Columbia University's Climate School and we are the parents of 9-year-old Hebrew School student Pearl Kaplan-Feinstein. I am an amiable people-person, passionately principled, and team-spirited. I thrive on group discussions, small and large, which is one of the reasons I love being a teacher. It is also why I am a committed union organizer at my school, building solidarity among a corps of diverse staff members and holding regular consultations with the principal to find constructive ways to work together for the good of our

students. The challenges of consensus-building and interests in social justice led me to co-found (with Micaela Podlipny) the Peace and Palestinian-Israeli Solidarity reading and discussion group at Hebrew Tabernacle earlier this year.

I grew up in Newton, Massachusetts in a Jewish home staunchly without Zionism (something I didn't know at the time), while remaining close to extended family in Israel. Though we were raised in Reform, humanistic, and secular traditions, my only sibling is a *bal teshuvah* in New Jersey with seven children. In my personal and professional lives, I am thus very familiar with navigating *and celebrating* in diverse Jewish spaces. If selected to join the Board of Trustees at Hebrew Tabernacle, I would work to continue promoting

tolerance and pluralism in the synagogue, at the Hebrew School, and in our Washington Heights community.



Rebecca Gonzalez

I would like to apply for the 3-year position on the Hebrew Tabernacle’s Board of Directors. My kids, Alex and Julia, who are 6 and 10 respectively, both attend Hebrew School. I have been really happy with our kids’ experience at the Hebrew School, and we have enjoyed attending services and other community events.

Growing up, I attended a Reconstructionist Congregation in Maryland, I went to various Jewish camps during the summers and I lived on a Kibbutz in Israel for a year while I was in high school. Some of my most vivid memories include the peace and gratitude I felt while praying during the Amidah, the joy from singing within a community, and the times we spent with family and friends savoring challah with butter on Friday nights. Although my husband was not raised in the Jewish tradition, he and I are both committed to raising our kids within it, so that they too have the joy of the traditions, the sense of belonging within a religious community, and the knowledge of these traditions to carry with them into Adulthood.

I have enjoyed being on the Board for the last year, and I look forward to continuing in the position for a 3-year term. It has been an honor to serve, and to contribute my perspective as a parent of young children as well as my perspective as a parent with a partner who was not raised within the Jewish Tradition. I would love to brainstorm ways to both strengthen and expand programming for all ages. In addition, I would love for the synagogue to find ways to explicitly welcome families with interfaith backgrounds so that it becomes an even more inclusive and welcoming community. I look forward to being in community with all of you in the years to come, and working with you in whatever capacity that may be.



Laurie Slodounik

I am a clinical psychologist and early childhood educator who has lived in Hudson Heights since 2009. I currently work as the Early Childhood Psychologist of the Abraham Joshua Heschel School, a pluralistic, progressive Jewish day school near Columbus Circle. Along with my husband, Aaron, and my two children, Ezra and Amos, I have been an active participant of the HT congregation for the past nine years. I joyfully co-led Tot Shabbat services for several years and joined the board two years ago as co-Chair of the Tot committee.

As a member of the board, I have been an active participant in the Social Action, Ritual, and Tot committees, and recently collaborated with Jen Talansky and Robyn Schwartz to drive the creation of a new Parent Circle to foster connections between parents of children of all ages within our congregation. I and my family are eager participants in our Hebrew School and love attending family and tot services regularly.

I feel profoundly grateful for the warm, inclusive, creative, and meaningful Jewish community that we are building together under Rabbi Paula's inspiring leadership. I have also been excited by the opportunity to contribute further to our community as a Vice President.



Iris Snyder

My husband and I have lived in Washington Heights since 2006, and absolutely love this neighborhood. We've been a part of the Hebrew Tabernacle community since our oldest, Elijah, participated in the Tot Shabbat program when he was a toddler (he's 14 now). Both our sons have attended Hebrew School for 7 years and each has looked forward to class every week as Shelly and the teachers teach Hebrew and religion in such a fun and engaging way! Elijah had his Bar Mitzvah in early 2023 at Hebrew Tabernacle with Rabbi Paula and it was such a joyous occasion! Our friends and

family all commented on what a lovely and warm community we have, and we completely agree! We are currently looking forward to Jordan's Bar Mitzvah that is coming up in November.

We have made great friendships through our years at the synagogue and it's been wonderful the last few months to be able to contribute to the finance committee. My professional background has been focused on Finance in the food and beverage industry for the past 20 years. I am currently the CFO of Whisps, a cheese snack company, based in Hoboken, NJ. I love working with numbers, but I also like coaching and mentoring others (reach out if you need Excel tips!). In my short time on the executive committee, it's been great working closely with Treasurer Todd Rubinstein and Bookkeeper Jesse Gerber. I would be thrilled to continue that work as a Board Member and as an Interim Associate Treasurer.



Patrick Stahl & Sarah Stahl

Sarah and Pat grew up in NJ and met at Rutgers University in New Brunswick through their work at the on-campus TV station. Sarah graduated in 2005 and moved to NYC to get her masters in education at Teachers College. Sarah was a High School teacher through 2023 before joining

DeWitt Clinton High School as an Assistant principal last year. Pat graduated a year later in 2006. Upon graduation, he joined Sarah in NY and started a career in TV technology at NBC. Since then Pat received his MBA and currently oversees technology at WABC-TV.

Together Pat and Sarah continued to put down roots, marrying in 2010, moving to Inwood in 2011, and finally welcoming our son Samuel Reid Stahl in 2014. Currently Sarah works at DeWitt Clinton High School and Pat works at ABC.



Navajo Stoller

The Hebrew Tabernacle has always accepted my family and me with open arms, enthusiasm, respect and care. Before the Hebrew Tabernacle I was a little insecure about not having a traditional Jewish family which fits inside a box. The Hebrew Tabernacle opened my eyes and showed me that Jewish families come in many different shapes and forms and Judaism is all inclusive. Both of my daughters had several years of Hebrew School with Sheldon Koy as principal, and such helped shape their lives and reinforce their Jewish heritage and culture. Rabbi Gale & the Hebrew Tabernacle gave both of my daughters Hebrew names. My oldest Daughter, Siena, was a Bat Mitzvah here as well. I had the honor of having a solo art show in the Armin Gold Wing which was an important stepping stone for me as an artist.

My recent experience/venture at the HT has been working alongside some brilliant minds to help keep the real property both occupied by licensees and in a condition to accommodate such. This is no small feat! We generally have regular Licensing Committee and Building Committee meetings to discuss the matters that pertain to each. When I was approached to join the licensing committee almost 6 years ago, I should have been reluctant, because I carry a full plate, but there was really never a hesitation. This was my opportunity to give back to an organization that has given me so much. I have found that my experience in the commercial real estate industry, as a broker in Washington Heights, has prepared me to be an integral part of this committee. Once when Mike Klein, Andy DaSilva and I were looking through old blueprints and records of the property, I learned that the stewardship of this property and organization has been immense and requires the same attention to detail going forward and I look forward to continuing to do my part, if I am re-elected as Board member.