Presenters

Additional presenters will be added soon.



Joy Brand-Richardson is a vice president of strategic initiatives at JCC Association of North America. A longtime employee of JCC Association, Brand-Richardson has developed and directed leadership cohorts and programming for thousands of JCC employees over the last 25 years. Before joining JCC Association, she worked at three different JCCs. Brand-Richardson holds a master's degree in education and has additional training in coaching, staff development, and customer service. She is a proud recipient of the JCC Association Graduate Scholarship, member of the SRE Network inaugural advisory board, and an advisor for JPRO's WellAdvised program. Although not a Red Sox fan herself, she does have a dog named Fenway and another named Journey; as a family they love to hike and swim.



Deann Forman is the executive director of the Center for Innovation and Impact at JCC Association of North America. Prior to joining JCC Association, she was the CEO and principal of Perspicuity Coaching and Leadership Services, where she provided executive coaching and leadership development to more than 500 senior leaders and teams across the nonprofit, public, and private sectors. Forman formerly served the JCC Movement as CEO of the Riverdale YM-YWHA in the Bronx, chief operating officer at the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades in Tenafly, New Jersey, and the first director of benchmarking at JCC Association. She holds a master's degree in public administration from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Brandeis University. She and her husband, Sid, are proud parents of three children.



Risa Goldberg brings more than 25 years of experience to her work helping leaders and organizations adopt new technologies that people actually embrace. During more than two decades at global professional services firm Accenture, she led change management programs that reached more than 500,000 employees, helping people build confidence with new technology and adopt new ways of working. Her approach is grounded in a simple truth: Transformation succeeds or fails on people. Change that happens with them lands. Change done to them doesn't.

As founder of The Adoption Studio, Goldberg designs hands-on AI programs that help executives and teams develop practical skills and lasting habits. She helps leadership teams define how AI fits their organization, establish principles and practical policies for its use, and clarify who is responsible for decisions and oversight. She brings a change management lens to AI, focusing on what people will actually use, what gets in their way, and what needs to change in their everyday work. Her leadership workshops help teams align around what matters most and lead with purpose. She is based in New York City.



Brian Hayden is president of Collaborative Strategies, Inc. He and his firm have led long-range planning efforts for dozens of JCCs, Federations, day schools, and synagogues across the continent. His strategic approach consistently enhances mission fulfillment, organizational capacity, and financial sustainability for his clients. Beyond his work with individual organizations, Hayden has led significant continental initiatives for JCC Association of North America, Jewish Federations of North America, and Hillel International. He has supported the JCC Benchmarking initiative since 2006, leading analytic efforts to uncover the practices of the highest performing JCCs. He earned an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and an MBA from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He and his family reside in St. Louis, Missouri.



Barak Hermann is president and CEO of JCC Association of North America. Before joining JCC Association in 2025, he served for 13 years as CEO of the JCC of Greater Baltimore, the oldest JCC in North America, where he built upon more than three decades of leadership in the JCC Movement. Hermann formerly was executive director of the JCC of Central New Jersey, chief operating officer of JCC MetroWest, and program and camp director at the Suffolk Y JCC. Throughout his career, he has developed and implemented strategic plans that led to innovative operating models and successful programs. He is the board chair of the Owings Mills Corporate Roundtable and a past board member of Leadership Baltimore. In 2022, he was recognized as one of Maryland's most admired CEOs by The Daily Record, a statewide news source. He earned a master's degree from Yeshiva University's Wurzweiler School of Social Work, a bachelor's degree from Stony Brook University, and an associate degree from Johnson & Wales University. Hermann is a Schusterman Fellow and has completed executive non-profit programs through Harvard Business School and Columbia University. He and his wife, Cory—empty nesters—have three sons, Jacob, Zachary, and Jonah.



Jen Josephs serves as Senior Marketing Strategist for Red Whisk Creative. A human-centered designer turned marketing executive, Jen excels at uncovering hidden audience insights and translating them into strategy that drives participation and organizational growth. Her extensive work in the JCC Movement includes serving as Chief Marketing Officer and interim Co-CEO at the Shames JCC on the Hudson, fractional CMO for the Minnesota JCC, and providing marketing and brand strategy for several others including the Oshman Family JCC and Sid Jacobson JCC. Before focusing on communal brand strategy, Jen spent over a decade as an interpretive strategist designing experiences for major museums and public spaces. She was honored to be a Hadar Wisdom Fellow, and she is deeply dedicated to her work as a certified Jewish end-of-life doula. With Catherine Kolbeck and design partners OfficersOf, Jen leads research for the JCC Movement Repositioning and Rebranding Initiative, which will also shape the next evolution of JBrand, the modular brand system for JCCs and independent JCC Camps. At Mifgash 2027, Jen and Catherine look forward to hearing from executive and senior professional leaders about what their communities need, so that this work delivers brand tools that help every JCC strengthen its local recognition.



Rabbi Bill Kaplan, senior vice president of JCC Camps of North America, leads efforts to strengthen camp leadership, build connections across the field, and elevate the impact of JCC Camps. He previously spent nearly 30 years as CEO of Shalom Institute in Los Angeles, transforming the regional camp into a year-round, $8 million nonprofit agency. He also launched Shemesh Farms, a nationally recognized social enterprise that engages adults with diverse abilities. His lifelong connection to the JCC Movement began as a camper at Camp JCA Shalom and continued at the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Los Angeles, where he held several leadership roles, including directing the camp. Rabbi Kaplan earned a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University, an MBA from the University of Judaism (now American Jewish University), and rabbinical ordination from the Academy for Jewish Religion in Los Angeles. He served on JCC Association's board from 2020 to 2026.



Rabbi David M. Kessel has served in senior executive roles at Hillel, BBYO, and Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), transforming organizations that engage Jewish teens, college students, and young adults. His leadership experience includes fundraising, developing strategic vision, engaging stakeholders, and designing and implementing meaningful Jewish experiences. Kessel works with lay, professional, and organizational partners across the JCC Movement to inspire and create vibrant, meaningful Jewish communities. He is a runner, vegan, and proud early childhood program graduate of the JCC of the North Shore in Marblehead, Massachusetts.



Catherine Kolbeck is the founder of Red Whisk Creative, a research-led brand and marketing strategy firm serving community-anchored organizations. Catherine and her team specialize in the JCC Movement and the broader Jewish communal and nonprofit sector, helping organizations understand how they are known by the people they serve, and translating that insight into positioning, brand strategy and marketing the field will actually use. Her firm currently supports 10 JCCs, and Catherine has worked with JCCs across North America for more than 20 years, serving as a JCC Chief Marketing Officer, brand strategist, and research partner. Before founding Red Whisk Creative in 2015, she worked in fitness center management and marketing consulting, where she began her work with JCC San Francisco, in 2004, a client she still advises today. She holds a BA from DePauw University. In her downtime, Catherine reads biographies and watches documentaries. With Jen Josephs and design partners OfficersOf, Jen leads research for the JCC Movement Repositioning and Rebranding Initiative, which will also shape the next evolution of JBrand, the modular brand system for JCCs and independent JCC Camps. At Mifgash 2027, Catherine and Jen look forward to hearing from executive and senior professional leaders about what their communities need, so that this work delivers brand tools that help every JCC strengthen its local recognition.



David Lunken is principal of Cedarcroft Advisors. He helps groups operate as high-performing teams, with a focus on supporting leaders and board members as they work together toward common goals. As an Osborn-Parnes Creative Problem Solving (CPS) facilitator, Lunken helps teams tackle ambiguous, complex, or under-defined challenges. As a Predictive Index consultant, he guides organizations to use The Predictive Index behavioral science platform, software, and data to align their people strategy with business goals. Most recently, he facilitated JCC Association's executive team retreat.



Veronica Maravankin is vice president of the Sheva Center for Innovation in Early Childhood Jewish Education and Engagement at JCC Association of North America. She previously served as the early childhood director at the Mandel JCC of the Palm Beaches, Florida, for 12 years. She earned a bachelor's degree in physical education from Club Nautico Hacoaj in Argentina, and a master's degree in education from Harvard University. One of the original architects of the Sheva Early Learning Framework, she served as a member of the Sheva faculty for over four years. More recently, Maravankin launched her own consultancy to mentor and support educators and directors in an array of areas including values-based practice, fiscal responsibility, strategic planning, and donor and board relations. She is a native of Argentina.



Amy Marks is the chief advancement officer (CAO) at JCC Association of North America, where she leads all aspects of JCC Association's advancement efforts, develops and deepens long-term philanthropic partnerships, and serves as a key member of the executive leadership team. Before joining JCC Association, Marks oversaw a $30-million multi-year fundraising campaign at RootOne. Previously, she was vice president of philanthropy at Hillel International, where she managed a portfolio of over $40 million annually and played an integral role in major campaigns, including raising $12 million in emergency funding following October 7 to support urgent campus needs. She also took a leadership role in the Centennial Campaign, which secured over $200 million for the Hillel movement and culminated in a multi-day event in New York City that brought together thousands of students, professionals, donors, and community members to mark the milestone. She is a board member of the JCC Harlem initiative of the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan and grew up frequenting the Minneapolis JCC. She is a graduate of Indiana University Bloomington and an alumna of the Mandel Executive Leadership Program. She and her husband and their three young children live in New York City.



Megan Ragsdale is an executive coach, mindfulness instructor, and author of "Risky Women: How to Reach the Top Levels of Leadership or Know When to Get the Hell Out." She facilitates peer groups for CEOs, getting some of the most guarded people in business to open up. She has spent more than 20 years in the C-suite at brands including Hulu, Dollar Shave Club, Deloitte, Sony, and The North Face. As a strategy and operations leader, she has helped clients triple their retail footprint, speed up their path to exit, and scale through acquisitions. She also leads workshops that help leadership teams build trust and actually work together. She serves on the board of Crisis House in San Diego. At home she's a wife and mom, and she has learned that the toughest negotiations happen at her own kitchen table.



Amy Schiffman is president and CEO of Evolve Giving Group. With more than 25 years in nonprofit development, she partners with organizations to develop effective fundraising campaigns, build strong leadership teams, and empower them with tools to visualize and achieve mission impact. Since co-founding Giving Tree Associates in 2008 and launching Evolve Giving Group in 2020, Schiffman has helped over 500 nonprofits, including more than a dozen JCCs, raise hundreds of millions of dollars, create growth strategies, and recruit exceptional nonprofit executives. She served as director of development and communications at Ida Crown Jewish Academy in Chicago from 2003–2008. Based in Chicago and northern Michigan, Schiffman is a frequent public speaker and trainer. She oversees a team of 43 individuals across 16 states and serves on the faculty at the Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management at HUC-JIR in Los Angeles and Spertus Institute in Chicago.



Barak Sella is an educator, researcher, and strategic facilitator, and one of the leading Israeli experts on Israel-U.S. relations and world Jewry. Sella serves as a senior research fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Middle East Initiative (MEI), where he leads the Israel program. He is also a founder and U.S. director of the Abraham Tent, an initiative advancing civil society relationships among the U.S., Israel, and countries in the MENA region.

Sella co-created Tzomet Games, a strategic foresight game about the future of American Jewish life. Previously, he was executive director of the Reut Institute and held leadership roles in Jewish education and community development in Israel and North America.

A published author, Sella is a frequent op-ed contributor to leading outlets in the U.S. and Israel. He holds a master's degree in public administration from Harvard Kennedy School and a master's degree in American Jewish studies from the University of Haifa.



Rabbi Daniel A. Septimus is the executive director of JCC Association's Center for Jewish Peoplehood, a unified home for the programs and experiences that shape Jewish identity, belonging, and shared community across North America and beyond. Before joining JCC Association he was the CEO of Shalom Austin, where, during his 10-year tenure, Rabbi Septimus increased total revenue, expanded engagement, built a leadership pipeline, strengthened staff culture, and initiated a strategic plan focused on family engagement, Israel and peoplehood, and brand storytelling. He previously was the executive director of Texas Hillel Foundation and Texas Hillel Endowment Foundation in Austin, Texas, and the associate rabbi and director of congregational learning at Temple De Hirsch Sinai in Seattle, Washington. A fifth-generation Houstonian, he holds a bachelor's degree in Jewish studies from Tulane University and rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Earlier in his career he was the recipient of a Hartman Fellowship for Jewish Campus Professionals and a Schusterman Foundation Fellowship for Jewish Leaders.



Phil Siegel, an entrepreneur and investor, is a founder and managing partner of Tritium Partners, a $1.5 billion private equity firm with three investment funds. Previously, he was a managing partner at Austin Ventures and a partner and director at BCG. He was also a founder or first investor in Newgistics, HomeAway, and RetailMeNot, among others, as well as a co-founder of three successful nonprofits.

He was a founder and professor at the Acton School of Business and also taught at the University of Texas. A co-founder of MathHappens Foundation, Siegel is a leader in mathematics education outside the classroom, partnering with museums, libraries, and cultural centers. He is also a co-founder of CAPTRS (Center for Advanced Preparedness and Threat Response Simulations), a leading nonprofit game designer and builder for societal disaster and threat preparedness.

Siegel is a Jewish philanthropist, civil rights activist, and the founder of a Tzomet game for Jewish leaders that focuses on the future of American Jewry.

Mark S. Young is vice president of Talent at JCC Association of North America. He brings more than 20 years of experience in leadership, program development, and talent strategy in nonprofit organizations to his roles, having gained much of it in previous positions with the Willam Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS), Episcopal Social Services of New York, the 92nd Street Y, and the Mandel JCC in Cleveland, Ohio.

Young holds dual master's degrees in nonprofit management and Judaic studies from New York University and a bachelor's degree from McGill University. He is the author of "Bless Our Workforce: Changing the Way We Manage Our People." Young is a proud recipient of the JCC Association Graduate Scholarship, an alumnus of the Wexner Field Fellowship, and a member of Cohort V of the Mandel Executive Leadership Program. He and his family—his wife, Rabbi Mara Young, and their two children—live in Hartsdale, New York, where they are members of the Harold and Elaine Shames JCC on the Hudson.

QUESTIONS?
Check out the FAQ. Still have questions?
Email mifgash@jcca.org and we'll get back to you soon.

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