

## Yedid Nefesh Advisory Group – Who’s Who?



**Dr. Esther Altmann** - Esther Altmann, Ph.D., is the Director of Pastoral Education at Yeshivat Maharat and is a clinical psychologist in private practice. Dr. Altmann has expertise in adolescent development and young adulthood, eating disorders, ADHD, and female cancers. She specializes in marital and family therapy and enjoys working with adults across the lifespan. Formerly on the teaching faculty of New York University, Adelphi University and YCT Rabbinical School, she has also been a supervising psychologist at several New York City hospitals. Dr. Altmann consults to schools and communities on eating disorders, and writes and lectures on mental health topics.

**Dr. Robbie Berg** - Robbie Berg, MD is currently a psychiatry resident at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. A product of the URJ camping system and former FJC Cornerstone Fellow, he was a Benjamin Franklin Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania where he studied biochemistry and linguistics. He went on to serve as the inaugural assistant director at URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy, the nation’s first Jewish science and technology camp. He received his medical degree from Columbia University’s Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, where he conducted research in neuroimaging of adolescents with PTSD and worked with at-risk emerging adults in an LGBTQ clinic in New York City. He is particularly interested in the intersection of medical illness and psychiatric well-being in children and adolescents.





**Liora Bernstein** - Liora Bernstein is currently a dual degree graduate student at Hebrew Union College's Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management and University of Southern California's School of Social Work. Prior to moving to Los Angeles, Liora was one of four inaugural members of the first cohort of FJC Fellows at Foundation for Jewish Camp in New York, NY. In her two years at FJC, Liora worked as a Leadership Development Fellow on different mental health initiatives, such as Yedid Nefesh, and counselor programs, such as the Cornerstone Fellowship. Liora was a camper, counselor, and unit head at URJ Eisner Camp in Great Barrington, MA. She was also an undergraduate participant in the Nachshon Project in Jerusalem, Israel and is currently a Graduate Fellow Participant in the Nachshon Project. Liora graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from George Washington University in Washington,

D.C.



**Amy Bram** - Amy brings more than 20 years of camp leadership experience to AIJC. She recently launched the inaugural summer for Tiyul Summer Adventures Day and Overnight Camp at the Pearlstone Center. Previously she opened Horizon Day Camp, serving children with cancer and their siblings, directed Camp Milldale out of the Baltimore JCC, served as the Outdoor Adventure Coordinator at Camp Louise and worked as the Director of Exceptional Experiences at Ramah Darom in Georgia. Her roots lie in outdoor and environmental education with 10 years as the Day

Camp Director of the Chattahoochee Nature Center's Camp Kingfisher in Atlanta and the Co-Director of the Teva Learning Center in NYC. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin.



**Helene Drobenare** - Helene Drobenare, MSW, MA, holds a Master of Social Work from Yeshiva University and Master of Administration in Organizational Change Management from the New School of Social Research. Helene has been working with youth for 20 years. She grew up in BBYO and went on to work in their leadership camp programs at Perlman and Beber camps. She has also served as the coordinator for the March of the Living program, and the director of programs for Masada Israel Summer Programs. Helene lived in Israel for four years where she worked for TRACKS Adventures as Director of Youth Programs & Marketing. Helene has spent years committed to improving the lives of children in Africa through her volunteer work in South Africa and Tanzania. Helene has served as the director of CYJ Sprout Lake since September 1999.



**Dr. Jason S. Frydman** - Jason S. Frydman, PhD, RDT, NCSP is an assistant professor of psychology at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. Born and raised in the Chicagoland area, growing up Jason was actively involved with the Jewish Community Centers of Chicago, attending Camp Chi in Lake Delton, WI for 13 summers, as a camper, counselor, counselor trainer, and unit head. Jason also served as a unit head for two summers at JCC Apachi Chicago Day Camp before transitioning to New York City to pursue a master's degree in drama therapy (New York University; 2010) and a PhD in school psychology (Fordham University; 2018). He is a registered drama therapist, nationally certified school psychologist, and holds a clinical

specialization in trauma-informed practice for children, adolescents, and families. Jason was a postdoctoral research fellow at Tulane University where he coordinated the Safe Schools NOLA project and serves on the editorial boards of Drama Therapy Review, School Psychology Review, and Translational Issues in Psychological Science.



**Dr. Samantha Fuld** - Samantha Fuld (she/her/hers) is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Master's program at the University of Maryland School of Social Work where she teaches both foundational and advanced courses in human behavior, social work practice with individuals, advanced clinical interventions and cognitive behavior therapies. She received her DSW in clinical social work from New York University's Silver School of Social Work where she focused on the impact of trauma and stigma on mental health in people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and worked to promote a critical social model of understanding mental health and disability in social work practice and education. Dr. Fuld has held a variety of supervisory, clinical, administrative and consulting positions throughout her career which included

work as a mental health clinician and clinical supervisor at a New York City agency providing services for people with IDD, serving as director of a summer camping program for teens on the autism spectrum, and program development, grants allocation and advocacy in the fields of mental health and disabilities. She also has post-graduate training in Schema Therapy. Dr. Fuld is committed to breaking down the stigma surrounding mental/behavioral health and creating supportive, inclusive spaces that value neurodiversity.



**Rabbi Bradley Hercman, PsyD, NCSP** - Rabbi Dr. Bradley Hercman is a psychologist and educator with a passion for building innovative, supportive and exciting learning environments. He received his B.A. in Psychology and Jewish History from New York University, and Rabbinic Ordination from Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School, where alongside his rabbinic studies, he served in Jewish day schools, college campuses, synagogues and hospitals. He earned his M.S. in School Psychology and his Psy.D. in Combined School-Clinical Child Psychology from the Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology of Yeshiva University. He has experience developing and implementing treatment plans for individuals, families and communities in a wide range of settings including: NYU Child Study Center, Camp HASC, JBFCS, Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center, Yeshivat NOAM, Ardsley School District, Scarsdale School District,

Big Apple Day Program, Nassau BOCES and South Orangetown Central School District. He also lectures on the intersection of psychology and Judaism, special education, and a wide array of topics in mental health and mental wellness.

Rabbi Dr. Hercman grew up in the Jewish camp network and recently joined the Camp Moshava I.O. family as a member of the Camper Care Team. In this innovative role, he provided supervision, consultation, and on-going training for staff and counselors so that they can better support the social-emotional needs of the campers.



**Dr. Aviva Levine Jacobs** - Aviva completed a joint degree in Psychology and Judaic Studies at Brown University. She received her PysD in clinical psychology from the CA School of Professional Psychology in San Francisco with a focus on children and families. Aviva has worked as a therapist supporting children, teens, and families in both clinic settings and private practice. Aviva has a long history with Camp Ramah in California as a camper, counselor, unit head, and staff trainer. She currently serves as Director of Camper Care at Ramah CA, in the role of safeguarding the social-emotional well-being of campers and staff members, supporting staff training and education, and supervising the camper care team. She also serves as the Senior Yoetz Coordinator for the National Ramah Commission and as a mental health consultant for the Childcare Network of Evanston. Her favorite

camp moments are the conversations and connections that come alive at camp and her favorite camp food is blueberry muffins on shabbat morning.



**Dr. Cheryl Kornfeld** - Dr. Kornfeld works as a licensed clinical psychologist at the ACUTE Center for Eating Disorders at Denver Health, the country's center of excellence for those with the most extreme forms of eating disorders and malnutrition. She received her undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis and her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. During her time in graduate school, Cheryl published many book chapters covering the importance of suicide prevention and intervention in the school system. Additionally, her passion for working with individuals

with eating disorders started through her practicum placement and pre-doctoral internship at The Renfrew Center in Florida in 2012. Throughout Cheryl's professional career, she has worked in various levels of care from inpatient/residential facilities for individuals struggling with eating disorders to outpatient care for adults, couples, and adolescents - as well as aiding in providing mental health care at her home away from home, URJ Camp Coleman in 2018. Cheryl started going to sleepaway camp at the age of 6 and spent 16 summers at Camp Coleman in several different capacities. Outside of eating disorders, her interests include depression, suicide prevention, trauma, identity formation, LGBTQ issues, and the integration of mental health at summer camps.



**Renana Levy** - Renana Levy is the founder of Keshev, a mental health support, therapy and education center in Israel. She has over a decade of experience leading youth in educational settings in around the world. Previously she counseled women with infertility at Keren Gefen in Jerusalem, was the Social Worker at Moriah College in Australia, and the Dean of Students in Migdal Oz's women's overseas program. Renana has a BA in Psychology, Masters in Social Work and is currently completing post-graduate studies in the Rotem Health Center at Hebrew University. She resides in Jerusalem with her husband and four children.



**Cori Miller, LSW** - Cori received her MSW from the University of Pennsylvania and is a Pennsylvania licensed social worker. Cori currently works for URJ Camp Harlam and oversees enrollment and mental health initiatives. This work includes staff training and supervision and supporting the mental, emotional, social and spiritual health of campers and staff in the Harlam community. Prior to her work at Harlam, Cori worked with children and families in residential, community based and school settings providing individual and family therapy and extended assessments to provide level of care recommendations. Cori also worked with school districts to provide screenings for students identified at risk, served as the director of an in-home family therapy program and worked with prospective adoptive families. Cori has written for and been quoted in various publications and is

also certified by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing as a Youth Mental Health First Aid instructor.



**Professor Meg Owens** - Dr. Megan Owens is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration at Western Illinois University. She received her doctoral degree from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign specializing in youth development practices in the Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism. Megan has spent the past 20 years in positions that allowed her to design, implement, evaluate, and advise a variety of summer camp programs. Megan's multiple camp positions have informed her current role of educator and mentor to young adults preparing to enter the youth development field. Megan's research focuses on the development and facilitation of youth social-emotional learning skills through out of school time programs with a particular emphasis on the youth-adult relationship in summer camps. She has presented research at several ACA National Conference Research Symposiums as well as been an invited speaker

and staff trainer focusing on various camp-related topics. Megan is a member of the American Camp Association Healthy Camp IV Committee where she has been able to contribute to the membership's awareness and knowledge of camper and camp counselor Mental, Emotional and Social Health (MESH) needs.

**Rabbi Rex Perlmeter** - Rabbi Rex Perlmeter was ordained at HUC/JIR in 1985, and went on to



serve as spiritual leader of Temple Israel of Greater Miami and the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation. After serving on staff at the Union for Reform Judaism for five years, he has gone on to found the Jewish Wellness Center of North Jersey, a practice dedicated to supporting all engaged in "seeking Oneness in body, heart, mind and soul." In addition to having trained as a Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Teacher and a Spiritual Director, he received his Masters of Social Work from New York University in May 2016. Rex also serves at the Central Conference of American Rabbis as Special Advisor for Member Care and Wellness.

Rex's relationship with Jewish camping goes back to childhood, when he attended an unaffiliated Jewish camp through high school. The relationship continued through rabbinic school, when he served on staff of URJ Camp Harlam. He and his family returned to Harlam beginning in 1996, when he and his wife, Rabbi Rachel Hertzman, joined the camp faculty, and their children Jackie, Sarah, Mitch and Nate began their years as campers and counselors. The relationship deepened when the camp community was a mainstay for the family as they began coping with the death of Mitch at age 17 in 2011. They established a scholarship fund in his honor, which the camp has since made the primary fund for assisting families in making Jewish camping possible for their kids. Rex's service to Jewish camping is inspired by his firsthand knowledge of the many ways in which it shapes and strengthens our children and their families.



**Michal Berkson Powell** - Michal is a licensed clinical social worker with over 15 years of experience providing counseling and therapy services to children, teens, and families in schools, clinics, synagogues, and summer camps. But long before entering the professional world of mental health, Michal saw the magic of Jewish camps firsthand – as a camper at OSRUI in Wisconsin, as a JCC day camp staff member, and as a counselor at Camp Alonim in Brandeis, CA, where she currently serves as the Community Care Specialist. Somewhere in-between these summertime experiences, Michal served as a social worker in public schools in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, and spent eight years with the Jewish Social Service Agency in the DC area providing individual and group therapy, facilitating therapeutic day camps and social clubs, and serving as a liaison and mental health consultant to local synagogues, religious schools, and pre-schools.

Over time, Michal has worked in private practice, facilitated school-based therapy groups for the BJE in Los Angeles, and built an extensive background serving kids and adults with learning and developmental disabilities. Michal was part of the first Yedid Nefesh Cohort and is committed to ensuring that campers and staff get the full scope of support they need.

Michal earned a Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Psychological Services from Northwestern University and a Master's in Social Work from the University of Chicago. She lives in Washington, DC, with her husband and two boys who can't wait for next summer and the chocolate chip coffee cake for breakfast on Shabbat.



**Erica Riba** - Erica Riba, LCSW is a Clinical Social Worker and Director of Higher Education and Student Engagement at The Jed Foundation (JED). She serves as a liaison to Higher Education organizations & partners. Using JED's comprehensive approach, Erica advises colleges and universities on promising practices to protect emotional health, prevent suicides, and reduce substance use issues among college and graduate students. Prior to joining JED, Erica worked as a therapist at Eastern Michigan University and Wayne State University's Counseling & Psychological Services. Erica earned her BA in elementary education from Michigan State University and received her master's in social work at The University

of Michigan.



**Reuben Rotman -** Reuben D. Rotman is the founding President and CEO of the Network of



Jewish Human Service Agencies ([www.networkjhsa.org](http://www.networkjhsa.org)). The Network was established in May 2017 as an international membership association with the mission of strengthening and advancing the Jewish human service sector. Today, The Network serves as the leading voice for the sector; the go-to for best practice research, innovation, and partnerships.

Most recently, Reuben served as the Executive Director of Jewish Family Service of MetroWest New Jersey, where he held several increasingly responsible positions for 21 years, and previously he held positions with UJA Federation of New York, Jewish Family

Service of Metropolitan Detroit and Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

Reuben earned a double Master of Arts from Brandeis University; in the Management of Human Services from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management and in Jewish Communal Service from the Hornstein Program for Jewish Professional Leadership. Reuben earned his Bachelor of Arts in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and in Sociology also from Brandeis University.



**Tricia Stern LCSW, MPH -** Tricia Stern LCSW, MPH is a psychotherapist specializing in working with children, adolescents, parents and families. She also serves as a consultant to nonprofit organizations, government agencies and the private sector to implement best practices for these populations. Tricia provides consulting support to Jewish organizations including the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies (NJHSA) and is also a member of the steering committee for the national Resiliency Roundtable initiative, convened by the Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative and NJHSA, to address the mental health needs of the Jewish community and create a more coordinated response. She is also part of JWI's Jewish Communal Women's Leadership Project. Tricia is the founder and former Director of the

Family PEACE Trauma Treatment Center at New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. Tricia also established and served as Director of the Child and Adolescent Services Department at Jewish Family Service of MetroWest NJ. Tricia received a dual masters degree in Social Work and Public Health from Columbia University and is trained in many different clinical interventions and wellbeing approaches including being a Trained Teacher in Mindful Self Compassion and Self Compassion for Kids.



**Dr. Betsy S. Stone, Ph.D** - Betsy is a retired psychologist who currently teaches as an adjunct lecturer at HUC-JIR. Her classes include Human Development for Educators, The Spiritual Lifecycle, Adolescent Development and Teens In and Out of Crisis.

Betsy also teaches webinars and seminars on topics ranging from a series of national webinars on “13 Reasons Why” to adolescent spirituality to Gen-Xers as parents and teen brains and stress. She is an engaging speaker whose passion for the lives of teens and their parents has brought her invitations to teach throughout North America and Europe. She has worked with the Jewish Education Project on multiple webinars and live teaching opportunities, including trips to Broadway shows, Character Strengths and Bullying. She also leads groups for clergy, as they navigate the complexities of their personal and professional roles.

During the COVID-19 crisis, Betsy has led webinars for congregations, Clergy, Hillels, Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Education Project. Her topics include Trauma in our Bodies and Brains; Post-Traumatic Growth; Grief, Anxiety and Stress; and Issues of Reopening.



**Lisa Tobin** - Lisa Tobin is the Director of Development of the Central Conference of American Rabbi. Lisa has earned an M.A. in Special Education (NYU), an M.S.W. (University of Maryland) and an M.A. in Jewish Studies (Baltimore Hebrew University). Lisa is a licensed social worker and educator and has worked extensively in the Jewish Community, and in Jewish Camping and Inclusion. She was the Director of Round Lake Camp, NJY Camps’ residential camp for youth with special needs, worked at Ramapo Anchorage Camp in Rhinebeck NY for many years. Lisa has over 20 years experience working with youth of all ages, focusing her work on children with disabilities and mental and educational needs. While Director of Inclusion for the Foundation for Jewish Camp, Lisa co-published important research in the field and innovated inclusion cohorts around the country. Lisa has also been the national Director of Admissions for the

Jewish National Fund’s AMHSI, and a planning associate at the Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore.



**Dr. Kohenet Harriette E. Wimms** - Dr. Kohenet Harriette E. Wimms is a Maryland licensed clinical psychologist who specializes in providing compassion-infused mental health care to children, adolescents, adults, and families. Dr. Wimms is a prayer leader in both the Kohenet community and Hinenu: The Baltimore Justice Shtiebl. She is the driving force behind Hinenu JOC, the Baltimore JOC Community Havurah, the Jews of Color Mishpacha Project, and the JOCMP's Jews of Color National (Virtual) Shabbaton program. Harriette is currently a Keshet contract trainer, a Keshet mentor, and a member of the Seleh Jewish Leadership Fellowship program, JOC cohort 17. A community connector, Dr.

Wimms is a proud Black, Disabled, Queer, Fat, Jew by Choice, and is most proud of being mother to her 17-year-old son.