



**RECONSTRUCTIONIST
RABBINICAL COLLEGE**

המדרשה ליהדות מתחדשת

Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Graduation Ceremony

May 22, 2022 • 21 Iyar 5782

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Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Graduation Ceremony

May 22, 2022 | 21 Iyar 5782

Order of Ceremony

ACADEMIC PROCESSION

Music performed by the Ken Ulansey Ensemble

OPENING PRAYER

Elsie R. Stern, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Bible

WELCOME

Seth Rosen

Chair, Board of Governors

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., '99

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Amanda Mbuvi, Ph.D.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Rabbi Linda Holtzman, '79

Acting Director of Rabbinic Formation
and Student Life

Josh Nelson

Student Representative to the Board of Governors

HONORARY AWARDS AND DEGREES

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.; Seth Rosen

TEKES HATARAT HORA'AH

CONFERRING THE TITLE OF RABBI AND THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HEBREW LETTERS

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

Amanda Mbuvi, Ph.D.

Members of the Regular Faculty

KABBALAT HATARAT HORA'AH

RABBIS' RESPONSE

and MISHEBERAKH, A BLESSING

Rabbinical Class of 2022/5782

and Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

CLOSING PRAYER

Rabbi Jacob Staub, Ph.D., '77

Director, Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish
Conversations; Professor Emeritus of Medieval
Jewish Thought and Civilization

RECESSIONAL

Music performed by the Ken Ulansey Ensemble

*Please stand if you are able to do so comfortably during the processional and recessional.
Following the ceremony, please join us for the president's reception.*

Prizes and Awards

We bestow these prizes on the following students, faculty, staff and members of our community. We thank them for their service to the ideals of studentship and scholarship, social justice, the building of community and the growth of the Reconstructionist movement.

THE RABBI DEVORA BARTNOFF MEMORIAL PRIZE FOR SPIRITUALLY MOTIVATED SOCIAL ACTION

Through the generosity of the members of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, the Rabbi Devora Bartnoff Memorial Prize for Spiritually Motivated Social Action is awarded annually to a third-, fourth- or fifth-year student whose rabbinic work best demonstrates how *ru'akh hakodesh* (sacred spirit) inspires *tikkun olam* (social action).

The 2022 recipient is Sarah Brammer-Shlay.

THE RABBI KENNETH BERGER AND AVIVA BERGER MEMORIAL PRIZE IN PRACTICAL RABBINICS

Through the generosity of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, the Rabbi Kenneth Berger and Aviva Berger Memorial Prize in Practical

Rabbinics is awarded annually at graduation exercises to a fourth- or fifth-year student who exemplifies those qualities of rabbinic service that enhance the quality of congregational life.

The 2022 recipient is Adam Cerino-Jones.

THE YEHUDA BERGER PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

The Yehuda Berger Prize for Excellence in Biblical Studies is awarded from time to time to a student who demonstrates significant scholarly mastery of, and insight into, biblical civilization and biblical texts. This prize is named in memory of Yehuda Berger, z"l — an intellectual, a scholar of Jewish contributions to civilization, a dedicated teacher himself and a mentor to teachers who was deeply committed to the Jewish people. He helped found, lead and shape Congregation Beit Simchat Torah of New York City, where he was highly respected and widely

loved, and where he is still fondly remembered.

The 2022 recipient is Josh Nelson.

THE DAVID FERN MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RRC COMMUNITY

The David Fern Memorial Award for Outstanding Contributions to the RRC Community is awarded annually at the graduation ceremony to a member of the RRC faculty, administration or staff who has made a positive difference in the life of the RRC community, enabling its scholars and leaders to achieve more effectively their goals of Torah study, creating Jewish community, service to the Jewish people and professional service.

The 2022 recipient is Rabbi Vivie Mayer, '96.

THE LILLIAN FERN MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RRC COMMUNITY

The Lillian Fern Memorial Award for Outstanding Student Contributions to the RRC Community is awarded annually at the graduation ceremony to a matriculated student who has made a positive difference in the life of the RRC's

community, enabling its scholars and leaders to more effectively achieve their goals of Torah study, creating Jewish community, service to the Jewish people and professional service.

The 2022 recipient is Solomon Hoffman.

THE EVELYN R. MEHLMAN JEWISH MUSIC AWARD

In memory of Evelyn R. Mehlman, z"l, whose dedication to Judaism and to Jewish music was unparalleled, and who brought light to everyone she befriended, a prize is awarded annually to a full-time RRC student who advances the study or performance of cantorial or seriously intentioned music addressed to Jewish themes.

The 2022 recipient is Solomon Hoffman.

THE JOSEPH L. AND ANN W. PINKENSON PRIZE IN RABBINICS

Through the beneficence of the Pinkenson family, the Joseph L. and Ann W. Pinkenson Prize in Rabbinics is awarded at graduation to a student who has excelled in the study of rabbinic literature and civilization.

The 2022 recipient is David Goodman.

THE A. WALTER SOCOLOW WRITING PRIZE

Through the beneficence of the children of A. Walter Socolow, z”l, the annual Socolow Writing Prize is awarded to a student for a paper, essay or monograph. The work must have been written expressly as part of the RRC course of study during the previous 12 months on a theme of interest to the Jewish people, with special attention to American Jewry, Reconstructionism and family life. It must be an articulate work, excellent in its conception, method, content and style.

The 2022 recipient is Alana Krivo-Kaufman for “Journal of a Medieval Ashkenazi Jew.”

THE FRED LOUIS STAMM MEMORIAL PRIZE

Through the generosity of the family of Fred Louis Stamm, z”l, the Stamm Memorial Prize is awarded annually at the RRC’s graduation exercises to a student who writes an essay that most contributes to the field of Jewish history and culture. The essay must consist of original research written during the previous year, focusing on any period of Jewish history and culture.

The 2022 recipient is Solomon Hoffman

for “The Evolution of Perspectives on Music in the Rabbinic Era.”

THE ALICE STEIN PRIZE IN CONTEMPORARY JEWISH CIVILIZATION

Through the generosity of the Joseph F. Stein Foundation, the Alice Stein Prize is awarded annually at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College’s graduation exercises to a student who creates an innovative project that explores relevant cultural and social issues, including but not limited to issues of gender, race, class and identity. A variety of formats will be considered as long as the project includes a clearly stated application to the reconstruction of contemporary Jewish life.

The 2022 recipient is Sarah Brammer-Shlay for “How to Support Individuals Who Have Experienced Police Brutality: A Primer for Spiritual Caregivers.”

RU’AKH AKHERET AND TIKKUN OLAM AWARDS

Each year the Reconstructionist Student Association honors students for their contributions to *tikkun olam* at RRC and in the wider community. In addition, the RSA gives the

Ru'akh Akheret Award for a student contribution to the spiritual well-being of the RRC community.

The 2022 Tikkun Olam Award recipient is May Ye, for her courage and stamina, her future rabbinate built around Palestinian liberation and for connecting politics to the way that we pray.

The 2022 Tikkun Olam Award recipient is Sarah Brammer-Shlay, for her work on the ground fighting for justice and peace in Israel/Palestine last year, and her continued advocacy to promote justice in the American Jewish community.

The 2022 Ru'akh Akheret Award recipient is Rachel Kipnes, for steadfastly and persistently advocating for students who might otherwise get overlooked, and for fostering rich and sustained hevrutah learning for Talmud students.

THE YAAKOV GLADSTONE AWARD FOR FINE TEACHING

The Yaakov Gladstone Award for Fine Teaching is presented annually at the graduation ceremony to a member of the faculty, nominated by students and chosen by student ballot, who exemplifies fine teaching. This prize is named in memory of Yaakov Gladstone, z"l, whose life

exemplified fine teaching in the fullest sense.

The Gladstone Award winner is announced at graduation.

Honorary Awards and Degrees

Each year at graduation, we bestow awards upon individuals whose work nurtures and engages Jewish communities, and we honor our graduates from 25 years ago or more, whose rabbinical work and commitment to Reconstructionist Jewish values have been exemplary and inspirational.



KETER SHEM TOV, THE CROWN OF A GOOD NAME

The *Keter Shem Tov* Award recognizes distinction in scholarship or community service in the pursuit of Reconstructionist ideals, and is offered to an individual of the highest regard. The honor takes its name from *Pirkei Avot* 4:17: “Rabbi Shimon says there are three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingship, but the crown of a good name [*keter shem tov*] rises above them all.”

The 2022 Keter Shem Tov Award is presented to David Zinner.



David C. Zinner is the founder and recently retired executive director of Kavod v'Nichum (Honor and Comfort). Since 2000, the organization has worked to restore to Jewish death and bereavement practice, the traditions and values of *k'vod hamet* (honoring the dead) and *nikhum aveilim* (comforting the bereaved). He is also the co-founder of the Gamliel Institute. Founded in

2010, Gamliel is a center for leadership training and advocacy of traditional Jewish practice in the continuum of care at the end of life.

Kavod v'Nichum is the only nonprofit organization in the United States and Canada that focuses solely on education and advocacy of Jewish traditions around dying, death, funerals, burials, cemeteries, grief and mourning.

David is the Gamliel Institute's lead author for its first three courses *Chevrah Kadisha*, the Holy Society; *Taharah and Shmirah*; and Education Strategies. David researches and writes the course material, including extensive historical, text and political analysis. He has written numerous articles on Jewish traditions around death and mourning. The institute has taught more than 200 students, and 30 have earned a *Chevrah Kadisha* Certificate.

For the last 20 years, David has been coordinator for the annual *Chevrah Kadisha* and Jewish Cemetery Conference. Since its inception in 1998 and for 20 years, David edited and managed www.Jewish-funerals.org.

David teaches workshops on Jewish traditions and practices that relate to death and dying throughout the United States. His teaching includes workshops for individuals and training for existing or evolving *chevrah kadisha* groups.

David's newest project, PRINCE Preservation and Restoration Initiative for Neglected Cemetery Entities, matches cemeteries that need labor with prisoners eligible for work release.

As co-vice-president of the Jewish Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington, David participates in developing citywide contracts with funeral homes. He is a consumer representative on the State of Maryland's Advisory Council on Cemetery Operations. He was the executive director of Tifereth Israel Congregation, a Conservative synagogue in Washington, D.C., for 10 years.

David is a past president, choir member, *sukkah* building coordinator and *chevrah kadisha* coordinator at the Columbia Jewish Congregation.

David is also a bike leader for Cycle to Health, a

Howard County-sponsored senior cycling group,
and a chief election judge in Howard County, Md.

David received his bachelor's degree from
Washington University in St. Louis with
a major in nonprofit management.

THE PRESIDENTIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

The Presidential Recognition Award is presented to an individual who has devoted their life to advancing Reconstructionist Judaism in both institution and practice, a person who has sown the seeds that nurture rabbinical training and movement leadership. This award honors an individual whose life's work has been to advance Reconstructionist Judaism profoundly, making an inclusive, vibrant, open and thoughtful Jewish practice available to countless individuals, and thereby transforming the landscape of Judaism in our day.

The 2022 Presidential Recognition Award is presented to Donald Shapiro.



Donald L. Shapiro, a philanthropist and Reconstructionist movement leader, is the founder of Vector Realty Associates, a real estate development firm. A longtime member of the Board of Governors, he served as board chair of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College from 1999-2006.

Shapiro was raised in Great Neck, N.Y., attending Temple Beth-El, a Reform congregation. He graduated high school from Phillips Academy Andover in Massachusetts, one of the nation's oldest university preparatory schools, before earning a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Harvard University.

He proudly served in the U.S. Navy. Shapiro was a communication and top-secret control officer on a heavy cruiser in the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet.

He left the Navy in 1959, returning to Harvard to earn a Master's in Business Administration.

He spent a decade working for Levitt & Sons, the developers whose designs and structures were highly influential in post-war, suburban home construction. As vice president of real estate for the firm, he oversaw all land acquisition for the company. He left to form Vector Realty Associates, perhaps best known for the design and building of innovative condominiums on Long Island and a high rise in Manhattan.

Shapiro first encountered Reconstructionist

Judaism in the late 1960s while living in Huntington, N.Y., with his first wife, Ann, and their children. The family was invited by friends to join a fledgling Reconstructionist community, Congregation Kehillath Shalom in Cold Spring Harbor. Within a few years, Shapiro was president of the congregation and a committed Reconstructionist. Later, when he moved to Manhattan, he served as president of a second Reconstructionist congregation, West End Synagogue. (More recently, he also served as president of a third synagogue, Temple Shalom, a Reform community in Naples, Fla.)

In the early 1980s, he was invited by friend Aaron Ziegelman, a longtime movement supporter, and Rabbi Arthur Green, Ph.D., then RRC's president, to join the College's board. Today, he sits on the board of Reconstructing Judaism, which oversees RRC, and serves on several committees, including the executive finance, and development committees. He was instrumental in recruiting several board members to join, including Susan Beckerman and Karen Kolodny. He is proud today that the organization

is on a much firmer financial footing than in the past, and is proud of the staff and faculty's efforts to advance Reconstructionist values.

In addition to his support of the Reconstructionist movement and the Jewish community, Shapiro sits on the Board of Advisors of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is past president of the Harvard Club of New York City and the Harvard Club of Naples.

Shapiro and his wife, Arlene, divide their time between Naples, Fla., and Lenox, Mass. He has two daughters, Rabbi Rona Shapiro, and Emma Morgan, and a son, Edward Shapiro, an author and event planner, as well as two granddaughters, Noa and Hallel. He has also played a large role in the lives of Arlene's grandchildren, Lance and Sela.

DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS

RRC awards the Doctor of Humane Letters to a communal leader or scholar who is distinguished in the pursuit of Reconstructionist ideals, and has made an outstanding contribution to the Jewish community and/or to Jewish life in North America or Israel.

The 2022 honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters is awarded to Rabbi Jacob Staub, Ph.D.



Rabbi Jacob Staub, Ph.D., is professor emeritus of Jewish philosophy and spirituality at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, where he served on the faculty a 1983-2021 and as academic vice president from 1987-2004. Staub, RRC '77, has devoted his career to articulating, developing and reconstructing the ideas, practices and institutions of the Reconstructionist movement.

He was editor of *The Reconstructionist* from 1983-89, and is the founding and current director of Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations.

He served as the vice president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, as well as the chair of the RRA's Committee on Intermarriage and its Committee on Boundaries (*Gevulot*).

He co-founded RRC's program in Jewish Spiritual Direction with Barbara Breitman in 1998 — the first program to offer spiritual direction to rabbinical students in Jewish history! He continues to direct the program. He is himself a spiritual director.

At RRC, he co-founded with Breitman *Bekhol Derakhekha Da'ehu* (Know God in All of Your Ways), a program for training Jewish spiritual directors, and he co-founded with Rabbi Myriam Klotz *Bekhol Levavkha* (With All Your Heart) at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, also a training program for Jewish spiritual directors.

He is the author of *The Creation of the World According to Gersonides* (1982), the co-author with Rabbi Rebecca Alpert of *Exploring Judaism: A Reconstructionist Approach* (1985, 2000) and the co-editor with Rabbi Jeffrey Schein of *Creative Jewish Education: A Reconstructionist Perspective* (1985). He also authored the monograph "Shabbat" in Volume II of *The Guide to Jewish Practice* (2013).

Among the more than 100 essays he has published, he is most proud of "A Reconstructionist View of Patrilineal Descent" (1985), "Pluralism As an Opportunity" (1987), "How Can Reconstructionists Pray?" (1996), "Interpreting Jewish History in the Light of Zionism" (1998), "God As Comforter" (1999), "Jewish Theologies and Spiritual Direction" (2006), "The Healing Serpent: Recovering Long Lost Jewish Fragments in Parashat *Hukat* (Numbers 19:1-22:1)" (2009), "Worship for Agnostics: Building a Personal Relationship with a Non-Personal God" (2010) and "Theology of *Shavu'ot*" (2013).

His poetry has appeared in many publications, including *Response, Presence, Jewish*

Currents, ZEEK, Jewcy, APIARY, Cross Currents, White Crane, Ashe and The Forward.

He is forever grateful for his parents, Andrew Staub (z"l) and Frieda Staub Cohen (z"l); his husband, Michael Spitko; his children Leah, Andrew and Rachel, and Hana (z"l); and his grandchildren Jonah, Hallie and Ari.

It has been his honor and privilege to have had the opportunity to work shoulder to shoulder with Reconstructionist teachers, colleagues and students in building pathways to Jewish meaning.

2022 DOCTOR OF DIVINITY DEGREES

RRC awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity to rabbis who have completed at least 25 years of commendable service as Reconstructionist rabbis. The following rabbis have devoted their lives to rabbinical service in keeping with Reconstructionist ideals and core values.



Rabbi Amy Bernstein
Pacific Palisades, Ca.



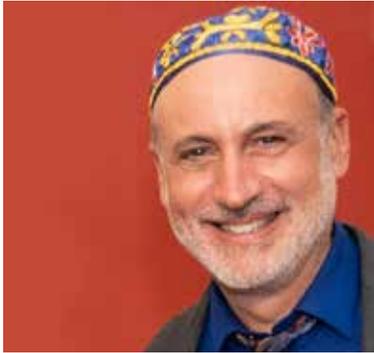
Rabbi Daniel Brenner
Montclair, N.J.



Rabbi Karen Landy
Andover, Ma.



Rabbi Linda Potemken
Media, Pa.



Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb
Bethesda, Md.



Rabbi Natan Fenner
San Francisco, Ca.



Rabbi Kevin Hale
Washington Green, Ct.



Rabbi Rayzel Raphael
Melrose Park, Pa.



Rabbi Yael Ridberg
San Diego, Ca.



Rabbi Elisheva Sachs Salamo
San Francisco, Ca.

**2022 DOCTOR OF
DIVINITY DEGREES**

CONTINUED



Rabbi Jeremy Schwartz
Willimantic, Ct.



Rabbi Toba Spitzer
West Newton, Ma.



Rabbi Margot Stein
Elkins Park, Pa.



Rabbi David Steinberg
Duluth, Mn.



Rabbi Lina Zerbarini
Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.



Tekes Hatarat Hora'ah

טקס התרת הוראה

CONFERRING THE TITLE OF RABBI AND THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HEBREW LETTERS

With this ceremony, we proclaim that these individuals are *mukhanim* – prepared and ready – to fulfill the sacred functions of a rabbi. May their work multiply and amplify Torah, *kedushah* (holiness) and *tzedek* (justice) in the world.

Kabbalat Hatarat Hora'ah קבלת התרת הוראה

RABBIS' RESPONSE

For our closing ritual, we offer the Priestly Blessing, one of the oldest blessings in our tradition (Numbers 6:24-26, *Parashat Naso*). Our president, Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., will lead the community in blessing us with these words in order to envelop us in the tradition in which we are now leaders.

May God bless and keep you.

Kein y'hi ratzon

May God's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

Kein y'hi ratzon

May God's face lift up to you and give you peace.

Kein y'hi ratzon

יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ

כִּן יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן

יֵאָר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּחַנֶּךָ

כִּן יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן

יִשָּׂא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשְׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

כִּן יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן

Life Stories and Wisdom Statements of the 2022 Graduating Class

Our students arrive with many gifts and life experiences. During their time at the College, they build on those gifts through study, reflection and practice. We gain strength and guidance from their life stories and the wisdom they offer.







Sarah Chava Brammer-Shlay

Sarah Brammer-Shlay grew up in Minneapolis, a city that cultivated her love for Judaism, social justice and music. Sarah earned her Bachelor's degree at the University of Minnesota then moved to Washington, D.C., where she worked as a community organizer and in the labor movement.

Alongside her rabbinic studies, Sarah completed a master's degree in Nonprofit Management from Gratz College and held a wide variety of rabbinic internships, including at Or Hadash, SAJ Synagogue, the American Federation of Teachers, Einstein Hospital, Mishkan Shalom and Spring Mill Pointe Senior Center.

After noticing a lack of communal space in the Jewish community to discuss one's relationship with God/divinity, Sarah created the God Cafe Project. She received the Alice Stein Prize in



Contemporary Jewish Civilization
for the God Cafe Project in 2020.

Sarah's passion for community organizing, specifically for fighting for freedom and dignity in Israel-Palestine, has been significant in her growth as a Jewish leader. Sarah was a co-founder of IfNotNow. While studying in Jerusalem, she served as a movement chaplain for activists with the Center for Jewish Nonviolence.

At the core of Sarah's rabbinate is the desire to support people to get out of isolation and into connection, whether it be by exploring their relationship to the Divine, building political community, or gathering in times of communal need. Sarah is deeply grateful for her teachers at RRC for teaching her to center love for the Jewish people in her rabbinate.

Sarah would not have reached this moment without the support of her family and friends. She is profoundly thankful to her mother, Florence, for teaching her that freedom is something to fight for; for her father, David, for pointing out the rich learning moment in every

situation; and for her sisters, Rebecca and Rachel, who have been a rock and light for her throughout her entire life. Sarah is deeply appreciative of her friends all over the world - friends she has known for decades, partners in the struggle for freedom and all of the people who make her laugh.

ואחרי בכלות הנבל לבדו ימלוך נורא
והוא היה והוא הוה והוא יהיה בתפארה.

And after everything is gone, yet One alone, awesome, will reign. God was, and is, and will remain, in splendid balance. - Adon Olam, translation from Kol Haneshamah

אם אין אני לי מי לי. ובשאני לעצמי
מה אני. ואם לא עבשיו אימתי.

If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?
- Pirkei Avot 1:14

*I grew up in the shoes they told me I could fill
Shoes that were not made for running up that hill
And I need to run up that hill
I need to run up that hill, I will, I will, I will, I will, I will.
Fetch the bolt cutters, I've been in here too long.
- Fiona Apple*



Adam K. Cerino-Jones

Adam K. Cerino-Jones believes that a synagogue should be a place where all Jews, Jew-adjacent loved ones and those interested in Judaism should not only feel welcome and safe but heard, respected and valued. This means meeting people where they are and accompanying them on whatever their life path looks like. It also means recognizing, encouraging and utilizing people's unique gifts, talents and interests. Adam's rabbinate focuses on creating an inclusive, diverse environment where everyone feels maximally comfortable, supported in taking risks and trying new things and welcome to "do Judaism" in whatever ways are personally meaningful.

Born in New York City but raised in the suburbs of Baltimore, Adam began his rabbinical studies at RRC in the fall of 2017. At RRC, he has taken an active role in student leadership, most notably serving as



president of the Reconstructionist Student Association and as senior representative to the Admissions Committee. Over the last five years, Adam has supported two congregations; revitalized and supervised a college Jewish Student Union; interned with the Hillel of a state university; and served in a chaplaincy role, meeting the pastoral needs of hospital patients in an oncology unit. With 15-plus years of musical training, Adam is a burgeoning composer and musician in the Reconstructionist movement, winning the Evelyn R. Mehlman Jewish Music Award for 2020-21.

Before his rabbinical studies, Adam received Bachelor of Arts degrees in Religious Studies and History from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. He was a member of the concert choir and co-founded an a cappella ensemble that is still running today. After college, Adam focused on workers' rights, working in a labor non-profit and serving as a member of the General Executive Board for the North American branches of the Industrial Workers of the World.

בוסי רויה אך טוב וחסד ירדפוני
כל-ימי חיי ושבתי בבית יי לארך ימים

My cup overflows. Surely, goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of YHVH forever.

*"...Whatever G!d might be, It is right here, in our experience of each moment, accessible in all aspects of our lives, because ultimately, G!dliness is the stuff of all existence."
Rabbi Toba Spitzer,
"G!d in Metaphor: A Guide for the Perplexed,"*

*The wind is low, the birds will sing
That you're a part of everything
Dear Prudence, won't you open up your eyes?
The Beatles, "Dear Prudence"*



David Nathan Goodman

Like the Israelites spending 40 years in the wilderness, David took the long road to his Promised Land: rabbinical school. After campus activism at the University of Michigan, he worked four decades in journalism, mainly with the *Associated Press* in Detroit. But he always aspired to serious Jewish learning and jumped at the chance when retirement incentives (and loving help from parents Joyce, z”l, and Bernard Goodman) made RRC seem possible.

David grew up in Columbia, Mo., and Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was active in Isaac M. Wise Temple’s youth programs. He spent a summer at NFTY’s Torah Corps and six months in its Israel high school exchange. David joined Detroit’s Reconstructionist Congregation T’chiyah, where he co-led services. He also engaged in Israeli-Palestinian peace advocacy with New Jewish Agenda and spent a year



volunteering and studying in Jerusalem.

Aside from expanding his knowledge of Jewish texts and civilization, RRC let David practice a range of rabbinic vocations – teaching at West Philly’s Kol Tzedek; mentoring students at West Chester University; and most recently, serving as spiritual leader of Nafshenu, a Reconstructionist community in Cherry Hill, N.J. He hopes to continue this deeply fulfilling congregational work after graduation.

David may have come from Detroit seeking wisdom, but he also found his *bashert* in Philadelphia, Pearl Raz. Married in 2018, their blended family includes three adult children, Reuben, Susannah and Nisa; their respective partners, Retsina, Aaron and Ben; and grandchildren Michaela and Saul.

הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה יי דורש
ממך: כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד
והצנע לכת עם אלהיך (מיכה ו:ח)

*People, YAH has told you what’s
right and what’s expected from you:*

*enacting justice, treasuring lovingkindness, and
walking modestly with your God. Micah 6:8*

אשרי אדם מצא חכמה ואדם יפיק תבונה כי טובה
סחרה מסחר כסף ומחרוץ תבואתה... ארך ימים
בימינה בשמאולה עשר וכבוד... עץ חיים היא
למחזיקים בה ותמכיה מאשר. (משלי ג:יג-יח)

*It’s a happy person who discovers wisdom, who attains
understanding. Wisdom is worth more than silver and
gold. ... It’s a tree of life to those who embrace it, and
attaining it brings happiness.
Proverbs 3:13-14,18*

יפה שתיקה לחכמים קל וחומר לטיפשים שנאמר
אויל מחריש חכם יחשב. (בבלי פסחים צ”ט:ש)

*Silence befits the wise; so much more so the unwise. As
the Bible says, “A fool who keeps quiet comes off like a
fount of wisdom.”
Babylonian Talmud, Passover 99A; Proverbs 17:28*

*The redemptive truth brought by [Adam and Eve’s
punishments for eating from the Tree of Knowledge] is
that patriarchal social relations construct a world
that cries out to be mended.*

*Rabbi Rachel Adler, “Engendering Judaism:
An Inclusive Theology and Ethics”*



Alanna Faye Kleinman

Alanna “Lonnie” Kleinman grew up on the lands of the O’odham and the Yaqui people in Tucson, Ariz. She found her way to Reconstructionism through the writings of Mordecai Kaplan, z”l, while at Lewis and Clark College. She graduated *cum laude* with an honors thesis focused on Holocaust education and intergenerational trauma. Afterward, Lonnie spent a year studying at the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies. Lonnie then lived in the South and organized Jewish communities in their journeys to build power and equity. She is passionate about pastoral work and communities caring for one another in dreaming of a more just future.

While at RRC, Lonnie served as a student rabbi at Abramson Senior Care, Arcadia University, the Shalom Center, POWER, Lankenau Medical Center and the University of Pennsylvania Hillel. She also served as an admissions intern and

student life intern. She was a chaplain with the Philadelphia Movement Chaplaincy Network. Lonnie studied at the Council for Relationships and finished training to accompany others as a spiritual director. In 2021, she received the Lillian Fern Memorial Award for Outstanding Student Contributions to RRC. She is currently a fellow in SVARA: a traditionally radical yeshivah's teaching *Kollel*, where she is delving deep into Talmud study from a queer lens.

Lonnie is overcome with gratitude for all that supported her and helped her reach this moment. She is grateful to the incredible teachers who model what it means to be a rabbinic presence. She is especially grateful to her parents, stepmother, brother and brother-in-law for their everlasting support. Today, her *tallit* incorporates fabric from those who have helped her reach the rabbinate. Her chosen family of friends and loved ones mean so much to her and inspire her to show up as a loving presence in our world.

מנוחה נכונה תחת כנפי השכינה

*Grant [us] full respite under the wings of Shekhinah
El Malay Rachamim*

Interdependence is ultimately about “we,” instead of “me.” It understands that we are bound together, by virtue of existing on this planet. Interdependence is generative and grounded in care for one another. It doesn't live in obligation or entitlement, but rather a loving willingness and a sacred giving.
Mia Mingus

*When the world is sick, can't no-one be well
But I dreamt we were all beautiful and [whole]*

אנא אל נא רפא נא לה
O God, please heal her

*English words: the Silver Mount Zion Orchestra
and Tra-La-La band, Hebrew words: Numbers 12:13*



Armin Langer

Armin Langer was born in Munich, Germany, and grew up in Vienna, Austria, and Sopron, Hungary. He studied sociology, philosophy and Jewish studies in Berlin, Budapest, Jerusalem, Potsdam and Washington, D.C., and graduated with two B.A.s, an M.A. and a Ph.D.

Armin returned to his ancestors' traditions in his late teenage years, coming from a secular Hungarian-Jewish family that lost many members in the Holocaust. He became first involved in Budapest's Jewish community. After studying at the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem, Armin began rabbinical studies in Berlin in 2013. Since his first rabbinic internships, he has taught classes and led prayer in various Reconstructionist, Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and unaffiliated communities across Europe, the United States and Mexico.

Armin's understanding of Judaism has been heavily influenced by Mordecai

Kaplan's thought, which eventually made him relocate to Philadelphia and study at RRC. While at RRC, Armin researched Jewish ethical responses to the coronavirus pandemic and racial justice at the Center for Jewish Ethics. He had the privilege to serve as the spiritual leader of Am Haskalah, the Lehigh Valley's Reconstructionist Congregation, as an educator at Congregation Beth Am in San Antonio, Texas, and as the instructor of Reconstructing Judaism's adult-education course "Through a Reconstructionist Lens."

As a rabbi, Armin wants to emphasize education, especially adult education, and the inclusion of marginalized communities within the Jewish community and greater society. He hopes to share the richness of Jewish civilization with communities across the globe and participate in further critical and constructive discussions on the past, present and future of the Jewish people. He is grateful for Rabbi Katalin Kelemen, who first encouraged him to pursue rabbinical studies; and Rabbis Rebecca Lillian and Nancy Fuchs Kreimer, who supported him in following this path at RRC.

*God created human in their image.
Genesis 1:27*

*God did not, as the Bible says,
create human in their image; on the
contrary [...], human created God in their image."
Ludwig Feuerbach,
Lectures on the Essence of Religion (1851)*

*Science does not destroy the belief in miracle. It merely
transfers that belief from the supernatural to the natural.
Mordecai Kaplan, Random Thoughts (1949)*



Allyson Marie Zacharoff

Allyson Zacharoff lives a life passionately devoted to multifaith dialogue — bringing people together across lines of religious difference so that they can all grow in understanding and respect. It was the pursuit of this path that brought her to the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

Allyson had learned the value of religious diversity at a young age, growing up on Long Island, N.Y., as the Jewish child of the beautiful interfaith marriage between her beloved parents, Maria and Kevin. It was during her studies at the College of William and Mary that she first realized that not everyone appreciates such difference. Her undergraduate research focused on modern and contemporary antisemitism in Europe, and this inspired her to find ways to combat such baseless hatred. Her fulfilling college experience included a semester studying abroad in Florence, Italy, and another working for the Welsh Assembly in Cardiff, the United Kingdom,

before she spent a summer interning at Global Spiritual Life, the interfaith office at New York University. It was there that she was first exposed to people working in interfaith dialogue professionally. Allyson had found her life path.

Since that meaningful first experience, Allyson has spent much of her time focused on multifaith learning and dialogue. After college, she studied as part of the Russell Berrie Fellowship in Interreligious Studies in Rome, Italy; worked for the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees in New York City; served as a Conflict Resolution Fellow at Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem; and studied as an International Peacemaking Program Fellow at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace in Connecticut. Over time, she came to realize that she dearly wanted to deepen her Jewish knowledge in rabbinical school.

Allyson's time at RRC has involved rich learning and growth. She created a brand-new multifaith engagement program at Har Zion Temple in Penn Valley, Pa.; taught young people at Goucher Hillel in Towson, Md.; learned to love leading

Shabbat at Kehilat HaNahar in New Hope, Pa.; and completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Lankenau Medical Center in Wynnewood, Pa.

Along her way, Allyson has undertaken various grant-funded multifaith projects. She currently serves as an official Jewish representative on several national interfaith dialogues here in the United States, regularly attends international interfaith convenings and writes about her interfaith life on her blog, "Of Christmas and Kreplach."

Allyson's vision for the world is one in which everyone has meaningful relationships with people of all backgrounds. She works towards a time when we can all celebrate our beautiful differences, and she hopes that everyone will join her in this holy work.

Now go out and love one another.

Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
Stephen Covey (Member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

If you judge people, you have no time to love them.
Mother Teresa (Catholic)

I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.
Anne Frank (Jewish)



Welcoming New Rabbis

Into the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association

On behalf of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and your new colleagues, we congratulate this year's exceptional class of graduates! The new rabbis who stand before us today represent the best and brightest of our aspirations and dreams for the Jewish future.

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, in building relationships among colleagues and supporting each other in our rabbinic work, seeks to be a source of strength, nurturance, leadership and collegiality for all of its members, and we are proud to welcome Rabbi Sarah Chava Brammer-Shlay, Rabbi Adam K. Cerino-Jones, Rabbi David Nathan Goodman, Rabbi Alanna Faye Kleinman, Rabbi Armin Langer and Rabbi Allyson Marie Zacharoff.

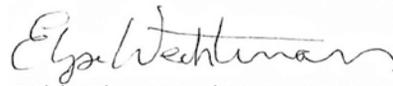
We look forward to working together to strengthen all of our rabbimates, the Reconstructionist movement and the communities we serve. As these graduates have so eloquently and passionately demonstrated, Jewish teaching is a source of inspiration to help all of us work towards manifesting our collective vision of a world redeemed. We are delighted to join hands with you and continue the journey.

As we read in *Pirkei Avot*: "Make for yourself a teacher, acquire for yourself a friend." At the RRA, we look forward to you joining us as teachers and becoming our friends.

Hazak hazak v'nitkhazek! May we go from strength to strength.



Rabbi James Greene, '08
President



Rabbi Elyse Wechterman, '00
Executive Director

In Memoriam

Howard Brammer

Miriam Brammer

Dan Cedarbaum

Doreen Drew

Geraldine Eisenstadt

Harold Eisenstadt

Rabbi Mimi Polin Ferraro

Rabbi Joyce Galaski

Fannie Goodman

Joyce Goodman

Louis Goodman

Richard Haimowitz

Muriel Hammer

Sid Hammer

Laura Jones

Roger Jones

Joan Kleinman

Julius Kleinman

Herbert Krasnow

Josephine Murray

Jeanne Saletan

Howard Shlay

Myrna Sigman

Theodore Willoughby

Zibbie Willoughby

Bernard Zacharoff

Deborah Zacharoff

Maria Zajick







2022/5782

Class Gift

THE EMET TAUBER (ז"ל) JUSTICE COLLECTION

This will be a collection of books on justice issues that Rav Emet was passionate about in his rabbinate. This collection will be started by the class of 5782 and continued in future years. It will serve to inspire and inform students' rabbinic formation for years to come.

