

# the jfrej broadside

Welcome! Over the last two years, JFREJ has examined and shifted our work in order to meet the changing realities of Jewish communities in New York City, nationally and globally.

JFREJ is simultaneously engaging in organizing Jewish communities, while we continue to bring a progressive Jewish voice to citywide debates. We have received tremendous support in these efforts from members and allies alike.

Since the beginning, JFREJ has been on the frontlines. From the successful campaign with the Chinese Staff and Workers Association for back-wages and respect at the Silver Palace restaurant in 1994, to the massive anti-war protests since 2001, to the Special Touch home health aides fight to win a union in November 2005 — we've been there.

When JFREJ staff and campaign leaders meet with Jewish immigrants in Bensonhurst, employers of full-time caregivers in brownstone Brooklyn, and members of our intergenerational study group from Long Island City to the Upper West Side, we hear two resounding sentiments, though voiced in different languages and different ways: "How can I fight for change and bring my full Jewish self?" and, "I want to be a part of a bigger movement, where I am there to support others and they are there to support me."

There are tremendous possibilities for building JFREJ. We've started to develop the Employers for Justice, a network of Jewish employers organizing in partnership with Domestic Workers United to advocate for changes in the treatment of domestic workers across New York State. And we are delighted to announce the beginning of a Jewish immigrant-led working group of JFREJ members.

We have made remarkable progress in the past two years:

- ★ **built our staff** from two to six members
- ★ **recruited and trained more than seventy-five new members** to lead our work for Domestic Workers rights and Jewish Immigrants rights
- ★ **revitalized** our Rabbinical Council (25 rabbis and growing)
- ★ **developed political education** programming through our study group, alternative holiday celebrations, and ongoing member trainings

As a member and supporter, you are a key part of JFREJ's work. Reach out to your friends, neighbors, and synagogue members. Tell them why you think it is crucial to have a progressive Jewish voice in New York City. Send them to our website. Invite them to join you at our upcoming New Member Orientation, on April 6th, to support JFREJ financially and to be a part of the growing movement for racial, economic, and gender justice.

Over the next six months, JFREJ will develop a plan for the next five years of change-making in New York City. Please join us as we chart our course!

In struggle,  
Dara Silverman

## letter from the director

shift from activism to organizing meets nyc and jfrej members' needs

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# nu? what's new?

## our campaigns: *shalom bayit*/justice for domestic workers campaign and the jewish immigrant justice campaign

Much has changed about our work in the last couple of years.

Since 2001, JFREJ has worked in solidarity with many local membership groups whose members and communities were affected by the increase of racist attacks on immigrants after September 11th. JFREJ has worked in coalition against detention and deportation, fought harmful legislation, and educated Jewish communities about racism and xenophobia.

While JFREJ continues to build and deepen this work in solidarity with our non-Jewish allies, we are also building our own power as a Jewish progressive community and voice. By bringing in skills and values of community organizing, we are strengthening the contribution JFREJ makes to coalitions and actions and are creating a lasting impact on how Jews do justice work in this city.

To this end, JFREJ has launched two distinct campaigns: the **Shalom Bayit: Justice for Domestic Workers** campaign, and the **Jewish Immigrant Justice** campaign.



## fighting for justice by organizing in synagogues

*Shalom Bayit* (peace in the home) is a campaign that was named for the idea that justice in the world starts in our homes and personal spaces. Since 2002, JFREJ has been working with Domestic Workers United (DWU) — a group of full-time nannies, housekeepers, and elderly care providers in New York — to win respect and better working conditions for one of New York's most vulnerable workforces.

While supporting DWU's Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and educating employers about just employment practices, JFREJ realized we could build our power as a Jewish community by organizing in synagogues. JFREJ members are building relationships with synagogue members, staff and clergy in order to develop real partnerships with these Jewish institutions. The *Shalom Bayit* campaign sees an exciting opportunity for a broad base of Jews to make real and visible impact on the way that domestic workers are treated, and to build support for the broader issue of just labor practices in the organized Jewish community.

## strengthening immigrant jewish communities

A full one-third of New York Jews are first-generation immigrants to the United States. But all too often the "New York Jewish community" is portrayed as U.S.-born, white, and Ashkenazi.

In response to this, and to the attacks on immigrants all over the city and the country, JFREJ's Jewish Immigrant Justice (JIJ) campaign emerged. JFREJ members, staff and board decided that as a progressive Jewish organization doing immigrant justice work, JFREJ should also prioritize community organizing in Jewish immigrant communities.

Members of the JIJ have spent the last two years engaging in one-to-one relationship-building conversations with Jewish immigrant communities all over the city, and mapping the issues and information that have come out of these conversations. This fall the JIJ is deepening its relationship with the Russian Jewish community in Bensonhurst and with the Bukharian Jewish community (Jews from Uzbekistan) in Queens.

This spring we will launch a working group led by Jewish immigrant JFREJ members who will direct a local organizing campaign focusing on one of the many issues they struggle with everyday: affordable housing, better public schools, and access to meaningful full-time jobs. There are many exciting possibilities in strengthening and supporting Jewish immigrant communities to advocate for change in their own lives.

Former board member Jesse Ehrensaft-Hawley and former staffers Sarah Eisenstein and Temim Fruchter at DWU Tribunal, 2004

# jfrej in action

and  
justice  
shall dwell  
there

## jfrej meets in chicago with jewish social justice groups nationwide

In April 2005, JFREJ members, staff, and board members attended a conference in Chicago convened by the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, titled *Tzedek Yalin Bah/And Justice Shall Dwell There: Strengthening the Jewish Commitment to Justice in Our Cities*. JFREJers joined Jewish social justice activists from throughout the country to share best practices and models for Jewish social justice work, and to plan for collaboration on issues of common concern.

JFREJ Director Dara Silverman and Yavilah McCoy, Director of the Ayecha Resource Organization (a training center led by Jews of color), facilitated a workshop on racism and anti-Semitism; JFREJ member Jenny Romaine led a workshop on arts, culture, and identity-building; and JFREJ member and writer Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz (with Rabbi Capers Funnye) led a workshop on racial diversity in Jewish communities.

## jfrej members reflect:

"Seeing all of the work that different Jewish social justice groups are doing and pulling together a group of young people at the conference really gave me a deeper understanding of what organizing means."

— Matthew Vogel, JFREJ member

"One of the best parts of the conference was getting to connect — member-to-member — with other members working on similar campaigns to JFREJ's [immigrant justice campaign]."

— Daniel Lang/Levitsky, JFREJ member

"As a relatively new JFREJ member, getting to talk to and eat with and argue with JFREJ members — older and younger — has made JFREJ feel much more like a community for me."

— Sarah Strnad, JFREJ member



JFREJ Community Organizer  
Danielle Feris and DWU  
members lobby for the  
Domestic Workers Bill of  
Rights in Albany, March 2006

# jfrej in action

## building solidarity in our fragile homes



DWU & JFREJ in partnership

## creating more just, equitable, and peaceful homes

*What issues face women who work as nannies, housekeepers, and elder care givers? What issues face those who employ domestic workers and depend on their labor in order to do work of their own? How can members of synagogue communities come together to take action on these issues?*

On a bright Sunday afternoon this fall, Rabbi Ellen Lippman, members of Kolot Chayeinu (a Park Slope synagogue), JFREJ, and Domestic Workers United (DWU) came together to raise and discuss these questions. The event, called "Our Fragile Homes" in reference to the temporary shelters built during *Sukkot*, was part of *Shalom Bayit's* ongoing organizing and political education campaign focusing on congregations in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

*The Shalom Bayit: Justice for Domestic Workers Campaign* is working with congregations to build community support for domestic workers' rights and to develop resources for employers to create more just, equitable, and peaceful homes. *Shalom Bayit* engages synagogue community members through interactive gatherings in congregants' homes, panel discussions, informational mailings and prayer book inserts, and alternative rituals for celebrating Jewish holidays.

*If you are interested in learning more about or getting involved in the Shalom Bayit: Justice for Domestic Workers Campaign, please contact JFREJ Community Organizer Danielle Feris at 212-647-8966 x11 or [danielle@jfrej.org](mailto:danielle@jfrej.org).*

## organizing trainings

**PAST TRAININGS:** In January 2006, JFREJ held a training, **Organizing in Religious Communities**, with Rev. Alexia Salvatierra, the executive director of CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice), an interfaith association which works across Los Angeles for the rights of the working poor. CLUE has a membership of over 400 religious leaders and has learned many lessons on the strengths and challenges of working in religious communities and with religious leaders. This was an excellent opportunity for members to learn and deepen our organizing skills and analysis about the role of solidarity in our work. In February, JFREJ Director Dara Silverman and member Dara Nussbaum led a training on **Successful One-to-One Recruitment Meetings**.

**FUTURE TRAININGS:** We hope new and seasoned JFREJ members (especially those active in JFREJ campaigns) will take these opportunities to learn and grow as organizers for racial, economic and gender justice.

**The Basics of Synagogue Organizing** Thursday, March 16, 7pm

**Methods of Social Change** Tuesday, April 4, 7pm

**Public Speaking** Thursday, May 11, 7pm

All trainings are held at JFREJ, 135 West 29th Street (between 6th and 7th Avenues) #600

Check [www.jfrej.org/trainings.html](http://www.jfrej.org/trainings.html) for more info

“We learn from each others’ traditions, are informed by past practices and mistakes, and can move forward being creative about our activism together.”

## preparing for passover

JFREJ is helping rabbis raise their voices for justice in New York City through the newly invigorated JFREJ Rabbinical Council. The Council was re-launched this summer with the help of former rabbinic intern Jo Hirshmann, and so far twenty-five rabbis from across the Jewish religious spectrum have joined. The goals of this group include engaging rabbis and their communities in JFREJ campaigns, providing a venue for rabbis to build relationships that will support their justice work, and generating resources that connect JFREJ campaigns with Jewish holidays, texts, and traditions.

Our current focus is to involve the Rabbinical Council in the Shalom Bayit Justice for Domestic Workers campaign. We are gearing up for a pre-Passover event on March 21 that will bring together rabbis, congregational leaders, members of Domestic Workers United (DWU), concerned employers of domestic workers, and our Shalom Bayit working group. This will be an opportunity to hear workers’ stories, study Jewish texts related to domestic work with Rabbinical Council members, and get ready for Passover with a *Haggadah* supplement that includes religious and secular Jewish texts linking justice in our homes with the celebration of this festival of freedom.

*For more information, to get involved, or to get a copy of the Haggadah supplement, contact JFREJ rabbinic intern E. Kukla at 212-647-8966 x15 or ekukla@jfrej.org.*

rabbinical  
council  
forges  
forward

## intergenerational study group

### connecting the struggles between generations

JFREJ has always been a multigenerational organization. Collectively our members have personal experience in U.S. social movements spanning the past five decades. We launched the Study Group to harness and distill this knowledge, and to create structured opportunities for members to read and discuss academic texts, oral histories, memoirs, poetry, religious texts, and other materials that shed light on past and present social justice struggles.

We all have unique perspectives and cultures to offer, which is itself an opportunity and a challenge. We come together to critically analyze our diverse experiences of political practice. We learn from each others’ traditions, are informed by past practices and mistakes, and can move forward being creative about our activism together — making new mistakes to learn from.

The year is planned out in two “semesters.” Last semester, as we broadened our understanding of what constitutes a text, we began to focus on sharing personal stories as important catalysts for learning and discussion. This semester, we will hear members’ stories about what connects them to the struggles of previous generations, and we will read first person-narratives about family, Jewishness, legacies from earlier generations, and political action.

Please join at any time — all are welcome!

*For more information or to get involved, please contact JFREJ Community Organizer Shelley Goldman at 212-647-8966 x12 or shelley@jfrej.org.*



JFREJ members share experiences

# events

## alternative holiday celebrations



Alan and Emma Levine celebrate  
*Tashlikh* with JFREJ

*Tashlikh*, the traditional High Holidays practice of casting off one's sins in the form of bread into a body of water, is a ritual ripe with symbolism, much of it about renewal and commitment for the New Year. Over past years, JFREJ has held regular *Tashlikh* gatherings — generally near bodies of water — anchored in themes of social justice. Members have gathered to “cast off the sins” of the New York City government, to protest injustice, and to stand in solidarity with the Immigrant Workers’ Freedom Ride.

This past year, at the head of the Jewish calendar year 5766, JFREJ members and friends gathered for something slightly different — a *Tashlikh* that participants created themselves. Giving the ritual the kind of energy one might want to give their year — one of engagement and relationship — art-makers and creative members of JFREJ’s community formed a small committee to begin planning *Tashlikh*. Members and staff led groups based on artistic medium (writing, baking, visual art and music), which created the pieces of a beautiful and content-rich recommitment to a year of community and work for justice at JFREJ.

On October 9, 2005, nearly 50 people gathered at the Jewish Community Center of Manhattan and together created pieces of theater and visual art, baked challah, and collaboratively wrote songs and poems. Liz Lauren, a new active member, reflected about the process which many felt was the most exciting part: “It was a wonderful to actively participate in a religious ritual in a way that made it truly meaningful both personally and politically.” Some of the conversations that came up while people were working were extremely thought-provoking: How is this ritual connected to JFREJ’s Jewish Immigrant Justice work? What does it mean to commit to justice alongside your own community? In solidarity with another?

The final moments of the program included what resembled the traditional casting off of bread, representing either regrets or disappointments, or things in the world that need changing. The twist, in spectacular JFREJ tradition, was the sparkling, gauzy tableau of a body of water created by the visual art group, on which participants wrote their commitments to justice, then hung it off the balcony overlooking the Upper West Side. JFREJ member Sherry Gorelick remarked: “As an educator, I was impressed by how well the different pieces came together. There was structure and focus provided so that participants could create the content. This *Tashlikh* was a truly grassroots effort!”

“It was a wonderful to actively participate in a religious ritual in a way that made it truly meaningful both personally and politically.”



JFREJ held our 8th annual Meyer awards on November 10, 2004, and honored activists, artists and independent journalists who taught us how to speak truth to — and about — power. Held just a week after the 2004 election, the Meyer awards offered a window of hope and inspiration to JFREJ members, allies and friends in the months and years that followed. Honoring Tami Gold, Amy Goodman, Juan González, Naomi Klein, Richie Pérez (z'v' 1964–2004) and Art Spiegelman, JFREJ recognized the need for people whose words, images and actions fully expose and challenge the chilling effects of the Bush administration and the long-term effects of an increasing restrictive and repressive government. As Alisa Solomon wrote in the evening's program: "Tonight, JFREJ honors individuals who anchor us in the firm ground of justice. Refusing to be intimidated, they have kept the channels of dissent open. Without them, we'd know far less about what is going on, and less still about what is possible."

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"We are arguably living during the meanest moment in American history since slavery," wrote Blanche Weisen Cook, the co-chair of JFREJ's 9th Annual Meyer Awards, held on December 8, 2005. On that night we were inspired, impressed and invigorated by some of the best organizers, advocates, religious leaders and lawyers of our time. By honoring the Audre Lorde Project, Jessie Cagan and Leslie Cagan, Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Seymour Melman (z'v' 1917–2004) and Michael Ratner, as well as memorial honorees Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Larry Levine and Sumner Rosen, JFREJ recognized those who labored tirelessly for decades against the increase of militarization, war, and empire around the world and in our city. Over 500 people joined us at the Brotherhood Synagogue on Gramercy Park as we paid public tribute to these amazing risk-takers."

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# the 8th and 9th annual rabbi marshall t. meyer risk-taker awards



## beyond the pale: the progressive jewish radio hour

In November 2005, **Beyond the Pale** celebrated **10 years** of bringing radical Jewish politics and culture to the airwaves. The event featured program hosts Esther Kaplan and Marilyn Kleinberg Neimark presenting a performance of Tony Kushner's latest work, revolutionary memoirist Roya Hakakian, anti-war analyst Yifat Susskind, provocative poets Ruth Knafo Setton & Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz, and mind-blowing musicians from the Klezmatiks, Pharaoh's Daughter, and more.

listen to beyond the pale: **Sundays, noon – 1pm on WBAI 99.5 FM**

access the archive at: <http://www.jfrej.org/radio.html>

# in focus

“Trans-positive work means battling hate and oppression—not battling Jewish tradition.”

## dismantling trans phobia

members examine attitudes and assumptions about gender, identify jewish tradition that values difference

In March 2005, JFREJ held a training focused on Dismantling Transphobia facilitated by a team from *Keshet*, a Jewish gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender organization based in Boston. I was thrilled that the JFREJ community addressed this topic.

In the workshop, we began to consider complicated gender issues for both trans (an abbreviation for transgender) people and trans allies within JFREJ. Transphobia, the discrimination and oppression against transgender and gender-queer people, must be fought directly — by naming it, recognizing when and where it occurs, and confronting it. We discussed the fear and physical harm that transgender and gender-queer people face, as well as the systems — bathrooms, schools, government agencies, and the medical establishment — built to keep transgender and gender-queer people out. For example, prisons that segregate people by gender have no space for those who do not clearly fit into a gender box.

We also spent time talking about how JFREJ can become a more welcoming place to transgender and gender-queer people and how we can incorporate transgender awareness into our campaign work. As a non-trans person, I believe that we must tackle these questions and commit as an organization to make change. With more trans-identified and gender-queer people within the membership, staff, and board, it is important and necessary for all of us to work to make JFREJ a place to which people can bring as much of themselves as possible. For example, we now have gender-neutral bathrooms, with single stalls so people do not need to declare a gender when performing a bodily function.

I am hopeful that we will build on what we started at the training: the process of educating ourselves and making a commitment together to fight transphobia and to fight for gender justice as Jews.

— Sarah Strnad

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Those of us working to open up gender-queer, intersex, and transgender-positive space in Jewish communities feel that we are breaking new ground. And in some ways, we are. The recent work to raise awareness of trans issues within JFREJ recognizes that Judaism has often enforced rigid binary sex and gender roles. Many Jews, gender-queer and not, believe that Judaism — as a religion, ethnicity, and culture — condemns trans and intersex identities and experiences.

As a progressive, transgender, religious Jew, it saddens me that our tradition has indeed been used to cause our communities so much suffering. It is time for us to change that.

Progressive Jews should know that we have a significant and powerful legacy to offer the fight for gender freedom—and a stake in that fight. In many ways, Jewish tradition offers a more gender-flexible and sexually diverse paradigm than today’s Western culture. From the Bible to rabbinic texts, Jewish tradition acknowledges a spectrum of biology and a multiplicity of identity as it wrestles with what the presence of this diversity means for Jewish society. The Talmud proposes that Abraham and Sarah—the parents of our people—were *tumtumim*, people of undefined sex (Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot, 64a). The prophet Isaiah

assures intersex people an honored place in God’s world (56: 3-7). Rabbinic legend tells that Mordechai grew breasts to feed his baby daughter, and that Adam was created as an androgynous being (Genesis Rabbah 30:8, 8:1). More and more Jews today are asserting that Judaism need not be transphobic or narrow. They are following in the footsteps of the sages of old, who recognize trans and intersex people as full human beings, creations of God with lives of equal value (Mishna Bikkurim 4).

I believe that claiming and revealing this tradition is a key to transgender-, intersex-, and gender-queer-positive organizing within religious Jewish communities. As JFREJ becomes more involved in organizing with synagogues through the *Shalom Bayit* campaign, we should remember that trans-positive work means battling hate and oppression—not battling Jewish tradition. We can proudly continue the work of our ancestors: asking hard questions, imagining greater possibilities, and affirming life. In some ways, building a gender-queer-conscious Jewish community is breaking new ground. In other ways, it simply means claiming our heritage of resistance as we stand up together for social and economic justice for all people.

— Reuben Zellman

# the jfrej community

## jfrej honored with prestigious award

Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz and Esther Kaplan, the two founding staff members of JFREJ, have been chosen to receive a grant of \$50,000 by the Union Square Awards Program in recognition of their work building JFREJ and their impact on New York City. The Union Square Award was founded in 1998 and this year will award \$750,000 to 15 grassroots community-based organizations. Each organization is recognized by the Union Square Awards for their tireless work on issues that are otherwise overlooked, neglected or inadequately addressed. "JFREJ is the first Jewish group to be honored by the Union Square Awards — that's a testament to the unique role we play in city politics," added Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz.

"With minimal resources, Melanie and Esther are individuals who were moved to build an organization. By organizing and bringing attention to critical social and economic issues, JFREJ has gotten amazing results and made extraordinary contributions to the educational, economic and cultural life of New York City," says Iris Morales, Director of the Union Square Awards Program. "It means a lot to me to have the work of JFREJ be recognized by the Union Square Awards. It acknowledges the role of JFREJ in progressive movements in New York City and the value of the work we have accomplished," said Esther Kaplan. "This award recognizes the importance of Jews engaging in the fight for justice in our own communities and in partnership with non-Jewish communities across New York City." JFREJ will use the money to hire a staff member to focus specifically on development and fundraising — helping to build our sustainability for the long-term.

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*JFREJ member Allan Botshon chose to support JFREJ in a key venture in 2005 by contributing our first charitable annuity. Allan is 79 years old, a long-time political activist and proud radical.*

*Charitable annuities are a method of offering sustainable support to JFREJ while providing income to the donor during their lifetime, with the principal of the donation then going to JFREJ when the donor dies. For many organizations they are a key to financial longevity and vitality.*

**How did you first hear about JFREJ?** I attended the Marshall Meyer Risk Taker Awards emceed by Ozzie Davis in 2002. I had heard about JFREJ for a year or two before that. I think it was what I was looking for: an organization that was adequately progressive on local issues. JFREJ fit the bill.

**Why a charitable annuity? Why to JFREJ?** It is in my self-interest. I get the tax deduction and some money tax-free. It increases what is left in my estate. As a donor, I cannot afford not to do this. This is not the end of my support for JFREJ. I also plan on supporting JFREJ with a transfer upon death account, where my assets will be split between four different organizations equally, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the Rosenberg Fund for Children, the National Lawyers Guild, and now JFREJ.

**How do you choose which groups to give to?** Groups with which I have a great political unity and sympathy.

**Why should other people do this?** Because they should all emulate me (*laughs*). JFREJ represents my best values — standing up for working people across New York City and speaking out as Jews for justice!

supporting jfrej:  
focus on  
allan  
botshon

*If you are interested in setting up a charitable annuity, or discussing other ways in which you can support JFREJ, please contact Dara Silverman at 212-647-8966 x13 or [dara@jfrej.org](mailto:dara@jfrej.org).*

# the jfrej community

## staff

**Dara Silverman** Director  
**Danielle Feris** Community Organizer  
**Shelley Goldman** Community Organizer  
**E. Kukla** Rabbinical Intern  
**Helena Tubis** Development Director  
**Nicole Solomon** Office Manager

## board of directors

### Co-Chairs:

**Cindy Greenberg**  
**Lee Schere**

**Ilana Berger**  
**Naomi Braine**  
**Stosh Cotler**  
**Rachel Goldstein**  
**Ellen Gurzinsky**  
**Jeremy Hoffman**  
**Gayle Kirschenbaum**  
**Rachel LaForest**  
**Jon Moscow**  
**Daniel Rosan**  
**Benji Rosen**  
**Dana Schneider**

### SPECIAL THANKS FOR IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER:

Dolly Meieran, Jenny Levison, Miranda Outman-Kramer, Reuben Zellman, Sarah Strnad, Liz Lauren, Sherry Gorelick, Temim Fruchter, Catherine Bell, Matthew Vogel, Daniel Lang/Levitsky, Cindy Greenberg, Lee Schere, Allan Botshon and Iris Morales.

## board and staff transitions

JFREJ has experienced many changes in the past two years in our programs, staff and board. Below we offer an introduction to our new staff and board members and a fond farewell to departing board and staff.

### farewell to jfrej staffers

**Sarah Eisenstein** had been at JFREJ for four years and was crucial to the organization becoming more democratic, participatory and member-led. Sarah did critical work on our Youth Theatre Project, JFREJ's work post-9/11 with Arab and Muslim communities, the launch of our Immigrant Justice/Racial Justice campaign, and building of the *Shalom Bayit*: Justice for Domestic Workers campaign. Sarah is missed and we wish her well in her position at Imani House in Brooklyn as the Coordinator of Adult Literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESL).

**Temim Fruchter** worked at JFREJ as a community organizer from December 2004 to December 2005. We are so appreciative of the work that Temim did — recruiting new members, developing the work of the *Shalom Bayit* campaign, and working to deepen JFREJ's analysis, particularly on queer and trans issues.

## welcome new staff

Our new *Shalom Bayit* Organizer is **Danielle Feris**. Danielle became an active member of the campaign in 2005, while working as an organizer at *Democracy Now!* on media reform issues. Danielle grew up in NYC, is a coordinator for the NYC Queer *Beit Midrash* program (affiliated with *Svara*, a queer yeshiva), and a member of a queer writing group, Agent 409.

**E. Kukla** has joined JFREJ as a Rabbinical Intern. E. is a fifth-year rabbinical student at the Reform Movement's Hebrew Union College, and a Rabbinical Fellow at the Jewish Funds for Justice. E. is the Spiritual Leader of the Danforth Jewish Circle in Toronto. Previously, E. was the Rabbinical Organizer at CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice) in Los Angeles.

**Shelley Goldman** is our Jewish Immigrant Justice Organizer and a fellow at Avodah: the Jewish Service Corps. Shelley has been building connections with and supporting immigrant Jewish communities to win affordable housing and to fight against detentions and deportations. Shelley comes to us from Chicago.

**spice up your seder** Make your Passover *seder* relevant and fresh with the JFREJ *Haggadah* supplement that connects domestic work and labor justice to the Passover story. With this supplement, we link our current rituals and tradition with the fight for justice, past and present! For copies, go to [www.jfrej.org](http://www.jfrej.org) or contact [ekukla@jfrej.org](mailto:ekukla@jfrej.org) or call 212-647-8966 x15

WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE WITH GREAT APPRECIATION THE SUPPORT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS:

Arhnold Foundation, Combined Jewish Philanthropy, Dobkin Family Foundation, Elias Family Foundation, Funding Exchange, Heyman Family Fund, The Jewish Communal Fund, Jewish Funds for Justice, Max and Anna Levinson Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, North Star Fund, The Rita Poretsky Fund, Puffin Foundation, Rose and Sherle Wagner Foundation, Sonya Staff Foundation, Sparkplug Foundation, Tides Foundation, and Union Square Awards.



## thank you to out-going board members

The Board of Directors is responsible for providing fiscal and fundraising oversight to JFREJ and our director, clarifying the vision of our programmatic work in line with our mission and building JFREJ into the best and strongest organization it can be. We are sad to lose some of our long-time JFREJ members from the board, but we know they aren't going too far away. Much love and respect to:

We are forever indebted to **Alisa Solomon** for her stalwart work, year after year, on JFREJ's Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Awards, the creation of our much-lauded bi-monthly email action alerts, her active campaign participation, and her over-all vision.

Master artist, puppeteer and musician **Jenny Romaine** led the way for JFREJ's work to be known for its artistic vision, creative street actions and campaign aesthetic. JFREJ's much-lauded youth theatre project would not have been possible without the direction, expertise and genius touch of Jenny!

With her expertise in fundraising, organization building and mass communications, **Nan Rubin** has been an invaluable resource, member and board member. Serving as the treasurer, a key member of the Beyond the Pale radio show team, and a dependable member of the Meyer Awards planning team, Nan helped keep our mission in focus and continually pushed JFREJ to make explicit the connection between Jewish communities and our progressive work.

**Naomi Brussel** has been instrumental in a number of key organizational changes. Before joining the board, Naomi was active with JFREJ's Membership Committee helping to move JFREJ to a more mature phase organizationally through more clear and open communication, board term limits, strategic thinking, and member involvement at all levels.

Over the years, **Naomi Sunshine** helped JFREJ to thoughtfully build strategic partnerships and create democratic systems. From her work on Tuv Tam campaign for workers rights, to shepherding the 1997 strategic planning process through, Naomi has been a faithful JFREJ supporter, member and friend.

**Jesse Ehrensaft-Hawley** has been a jack-of-all-trades at JFREJ. He started a young people's reading group, helped to develop exciting ways for members to get involved, and streamlined our financial processes. Jesse will be missed for his good spirits, astute analysis and secular wisdom.

## welcome new board members

It is with great excitement that we welcome seven new members who bring a different and expanded set of skills to help grow JFREJ to the next level:

**Ilana Berger** is the founding Director and current co-Director of FUREE (Families United for Racial and Economic Equality) in Brooklyn.

**Stosh Cotler** has been very active in JFREJ since she moved to New York almost 2 years ago. Stosh has been active in progressive communities for the past 20 years as an organizer, trainer, educator, and activist. Stosh is the Director of Leadership Programs at the Jewish Funds for Justice.

**Rachel LaForest** is a native New Yorker who has been working within the City's social justice movements for well over a decade. She was a founding member of SLAM! (Student Liberation Action Movement) at Hunter and is currently an Organizer with the Transit Workers Union Local 100.

**Dana Schneider** has been the Associate Program Director for the National Foundation for Jewish Culture since March 2001. She has been involved in a number of cutting edge artistic endeavors and is currently a candidate in the Masters in Public Administration program at the Wagner School of Public Service at NYU.

**Dan Rosan** is the Director of Public Health and Access to Capital Programs at the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), a faith-based corporate accountability organization.

**Gayle Kirshenbaum** is a writer, mother and long-time JFREJ member. Most recently, Gayle has been the co-chair of the Shalom Bayit: Justice for Domestic Workers campaign and has worked to organize parents and employers to join the Employers For Justice Network.

**Benji Rosen** is an artist and book-keeper. Splitting his time between NY and Puerto Rico, Benji is excited to get more involved with JFREJ, particularly the work to develop and strengthen fiscal systems.

# get involved!



## march–april calendar for jfrej members

**TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2006**

**Rabbinical Council Forum for Domestic Workers Rights Pre-Passover Preparation**

**Time:** 6:30pm–9:00pm

**Location:** Congregation Rodeph

Sholom, 7 West 83rd Street

Please RSVP to Danielle Feris at

danielle@jfrej.org or 212-647-8966x11.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2006**

**Monthly Training: Methods of Social Change**

**Time:** 7pm–9pm

**Location:** JFREJ, 135 West 29th Street,

#600 (between 6th and 7th ave)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2006**

**New Members Orientation**

**Time:** 6:30pm–9pm

**Location:** JFREJ, 135 West 29th Street,

#600 (between 6th and 7th ave)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2006**

**JFREJ Campaign Meeting**

**Time:** 7pm–9pm

**Location:** JFREJ, 135 West 29th Street,

#600 (between 6th and 7th ave)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2006\***

**A Jewish Breakfast Against the War & March for Peace, Justice and Democracy**

**Time:** 9am

**Location:** Workmen’s Circle, 45 East

33rd Street (at Park Avenue)

**For details about the march:**

www.unitedforpeace.org

**For details about the Jewish Breakfast**

**and Contingent:** www.jfrej.org

**THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2006**

**Monthly Training: Public Speaking**

**Time:** 7pm–9pm

**Location:** JFREJ, 135 West 29th Street,

#600 (between 6th and 7th ave)

For more information on any of these events contact Danielle Feris at (212) 647-8966 x 11 or danielle@jfrej.org. Please check for updated news, actions and events at www.jfrej.org.

## become a member!

JFREJ is a membership organization. Membership is an important way to support JFREJ’s work. Being a JFREJ member means your voice and values are represented in the debates over our city’s future. Membership also entitles you to receive our newsletter, discounts to our events, phone and email updates, and opportunities to get involved. JFREJ membership is \$36 a year, or whatever you can afford.

\* If your Shabbat observance permits it. Please note that JFREJ does not host events on Shabbat, but we publicize and support events of our allies so that those who want to participate can.

Yes, I want to join JFREJ, and be a part of progressive Jewish activism!

\$36  \$54  \$108  \$250  \$540  \$1080  Other amount \_\_\_\_\_

I want to join the Tzadikim of JFREJ! Please sign me up as a monthly donor:

\$5  \$10  \$18  \$36  \$54  \$108  Other amount \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  Please make my gift anonymous.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I’d like to pay by credit card. MC/Amex/Visa Card number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to JFREJ. All contributions are tax-deductible. Donations can also be made on our website.

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