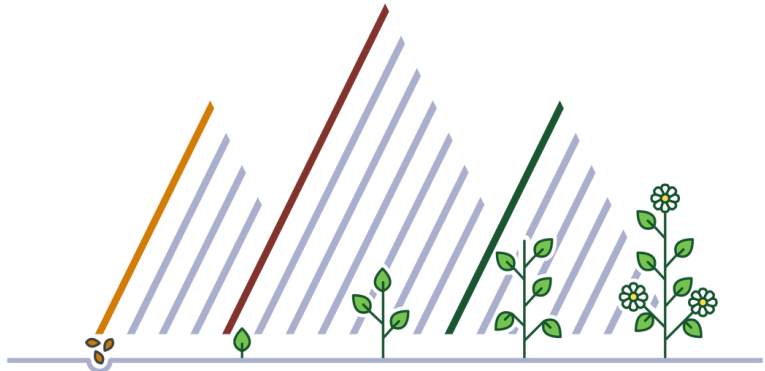


THE WEXNER FOUNDATION



# SUMMIT SEEDS

PLANTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADING CHANGE

SUMMIT SEEDS: ATID

---

# BIO BOOK



**MARK ACHLER** *WHP Chicago II-99* Evanston, IL  
(312) 404-4555 | markachler@gmail.com

Mark is the Managing Director of Math Venture Partners - [www.mathventurepartners.com](http://www.mathventurepartners.com) - an early to mid-stage technology venture capital fund and an Adjunct Lecturer of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Northwestern University Kellogg school of Business. He is a serial entrepreneur who started four companies, managed three venture funds, and was head of Innovation for Redbox. Achler is a frequent speaker, resource and ardent champion for the entrepreneurial community; where he is a mentor for TechStars, the Junto Institute, and several other entrepreneurial organizations. He is the past Board Chair of Upstart and of Mishkan.



**SARAH BENOR** *WGF/DS Class 11* Los Angeles, CA  
(310) 872-0536 | sbenor.huc@gmail.com

Sarah Bunin Benor - Class XI. Sarah is Professor of Contemporary Jewish Studies and Linguistics at Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion (Los Angeles campus). She teaches about Jewish languages and names to rabbinical students and linguistics and Jewish studies to undergrads at USC. She has published academic articles on sociolinguistics, Jewish languages, and American Jews. Her books include *Becoming Frum: How Newcomers Learn the Language and Culture of Orthodox Judaism* (2012) and *Hebrew Infusion: Language and Community at American Jewish Summer Camps* (2020). She is founding co-editor of the *Journal of Jewish Languages* and founding director of the HUC Jewish Language Project, which runs the Jewish Language Website ([www.jewishlanguages.org](http://www.jewishlanguages.org)) and the Jewish English Lexicon. Sarah and her husband, Mark, enjoy spending time with their three teenage and young adult children, Aliza, Dalia, and Ari.



**MARK BLATTNER** *WHP Portland 21* Beaverton, OR  
(215) 298-4747 | marc@jewishportland.org

Marc Blattner was born in Atlanta, Georgia, but grew up in Orlando, Florida. His father owned the only Jewish deli in town, and thus was always connected to the Jewish community. In High School, Marc was very involved in BBYO and was ultimately elected the 63rd International President of AZA (his wife, Sarah, served as International Vice President of BBG that same year). After a transformational experience at the Soviet Jewry rally in Washington, DC in December 1987, Marc attended Emory University and received a BA in Jewish Studies and a BA in Near Eastern Studies. Marc then attended the Baltimore Institute for Jewish Communal Service and received his MA in Judaic Studies from the Baltimore Hebrew University and a MSW from the University of Maryland. Marc has always been drawn to the idea of community building and has worked at the Baltimore, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Portland Jewish Federations over his 30+ years in the field of Jewish communal service. Marc's wife, Sarah, is a high school educator. His daughter, Aliyah, lives in Brooklyn and his son, Shai, is a junior in college.



**EFRAT BRON-HARLEV WIF Class 18** Tel Aviv, IL  
+972 50-461-3026 | [efrathr@clalit.org.il](mailto:efrathr@clalit.org.il)

Efrat Bron-Harlev is a Senior Pediatric Intensive Care Physician and presently serves as the CEO of Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel. Dr. Bron-Harlev was born in Israel and grew up in Jerusalem. She served in the Israeli Air Force for three years as a squadron operations officer. She studied medicine at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, and in 1994 she started her pediatric residency at the Schneider Children's Medical Center, continuing on with a fellowship in Pediatric Critical Care. She has since been a senior critical care physician in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. In 2006 Dr. Bron-Harlev decided to expand into medical management, receiving the position of knowledge manager in the headquarters of the HMO. After returning from her studies at Harvard, she served as the Deputy director of Rabin Medical Center, and as Deputy Director of Schneider Children's Medical Center. In 2016 she became the Medical Director of the North District at Clalit HMO, and after that she served as the Director of Beilinson Hospital. Dr Bron Harlev was also member of the 8400 Healthtech network. She holds a Master in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government as a Wexner Israel Fellow.



**ZEV ELEFF WGF/DS Class 22** Merion Station, PA  
(847) 769-0859 | [zeleff@gratz.edu](mailto:zeleff@gratz.edu)

Zev Eleff is president of Gratz College. A prolific scholar, Eleff holds an international reputation for academic rigor and sophistication. He is the author or editor of 14 books and more than 120 articles in the fields of Jewish Studies and American Religion. Eleff's research in American Jewish history has received numerous awards, including the American Jewish Historical Society's Wasserman Prize and the Rockower Award for Excellence by the American Jewish Press Association. He is also a two-time finalist for the National Jewish Book Award, a member of the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society, and one of the youngest faculty members promoted to full professor in Touro College's history. Before relocating to the Philadelphia area, Eleff was a prominent and wide-reaching voice within Chicago's Jewish community. He was a member of several agency boards, an invited speaker in dozens of synagogues and agencies, and was a recipient of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago's "36 Under 36" award. Eleff is a champion of pluralism and constructive conversation, having lectured to large audiences at Yeshiva University (Orthodox), Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative) and Hebrew Union College (Reform). His efforts have also extended to other faith-based initiatives within academic and educational settings, including partnerships with George Mason University's Pandemic Religion project and Loyola University Chicago. Eleff received his Ph.D. from Brandeis University and M.A. from Teachers College, Columbia University. At Yeshiva University, Eleff graduated from Yeshiva College and received ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. He is a past Wexner Graduate Fellow/Davidson Scholar, a prestigious program for Jewish leaders and professionals. Eleff resides in Merion Station, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Melissa, and their three children.



**SHIRA EPSTEIN** *WFF Class 1* Brooklyn, NY  
(212) 518-8845 | shirakoch@gmail.com

Rabbi Shira Koch Epstein is the Executive Director of Atra: Center for Rabbinic Innovation. Previously, Rabbi Epstein served as Executive Director of the 14th Street Y in Manhattan and on the faculty of the Shalom Hartman Institute. Her past roles have included serving as Rabbi-Educator at Congregation Beth Elohim in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and as Associate Director/Reform Zionist Think Tank Manager at ARZA. Rabbi Epstein has served at various congregations, Jewish youth groups and summer camps as an educator, is a certified StorahTelling "Maven," and has studied improvisational comedy and acting in various programs including the Upright Citizens Brigade. A Wexner Field Fellow, she has received the Pomegrate Prize for Jewish Education from the Covenant Foundation. Rabbi Epstein received her BA from Wesleyan University, has attended Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and received her rabbinic ordination and MA in Religious Education from HUC-JIR. Rabbi Epstein lives in Park Slope, Brooklyn, with her husband, Dr. Jason Epstein, their sons, and their dogs.



**JEFFREY FEIG** *WHP New York 16* New York, NY  
(646) 258-7618 | jeff.feig@gmail.com

Jeff grew up in Toronto where he attended the Associated Hebrew Day School through Junior High School. Jeff earned a Bachelor of Arts in Honours Business Administration from the University of Western Ontario, graduating in 1989. He joined Citibank Toronto as a Management Associate and worked in various trading businesses and worked in various trading and management positions until 2004 when Jeff was asked to take the helm of the Global FX business in the developed world. He led this flagship business for Citi until June of 2014. During Jeff's tenure running FX, the business achieved record revenues and returned to a #1 tier market share position. Jeff left Citi in June of 2014 to join Fortress as Co-CIO of the Fortress Macro Fund and co-President of the Liquid markets business. Jeff left Fortress in July of 2015. Jeff was on the board of directors EBS an active member of various central bank FX committees. Jeff was the chair of the FRBNY FX Committee from 2011-2014. Jeff has been on the boards of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun and the Jewish Week. He serves on the boards of JTS, Shefa, Israel Story, 70 Faces of Media, UJA and the JCC where he just finished a 3 year term as chair. Jeff is a Wexner Heritage Fellow.



**DARREN FINDLING** *WHP Detroit 17* Royal Oak, MI

(248) 506-2130 | Findlingda@gmail.com

Born in the backseat of a 1969 Buick Regal, my mother says the world was ready for me faster than her body was. She was right. When I was three, my Jamaican nanny brought me to an inner-city Baptist church where I promptly danced down the aisles. As a teenager, I charmed my way into a hotel to hang out with the Jackson Five. As an adult, I bought a beat-up, 40-passenger bus that I painted maize and blue to drive the neighborhood kids to U of M football games. I have also appeared on *The View* and on the front pages of *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* — all for different reasons. I am both quick thinker and talker, and am obsessed with puns — very much to the dismay of my four children. I take the phrase “it can’t be done” as a challenge in both my professional and personal life. When I’m not in court or behind a desk, you can find me spending time with my family, bungee jumping, sky diving, heli-skiing, trekking mountains, running marathons, and re-inventing philanthropy. Usually performing a few of these simultaneously.



**MAITAL FRIEDMAN** *WGF/DS Class 22* Scarsdale, NY

(914) 844-6120 | maital.friedman@gmail.com

Maital Friedman is the Vice President of Communications and Creative at Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, where she previously served as Director of Intergroup Initiatives. She has served as Senior Program Director at Repair the World, where she led the organization’s signature multi-site volunteering initiative. Prior to joining Repair the World, Maital was selected as a Dorot Fellow to volunteer and study in Israel, where she directed and produced a film on women’s religious identity. Maital also worked at CASES, an alternative-to-incarceration in NYC, and founded a community library with a local non-profit in Mbale, Uganda. As a Wexner Graduate Fellow/Davidson Scholar, Maital earned a Master in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management with a specialization in International Development from New York University. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts from Princeton University in Religion and African Studies. Maital lives in Westchester, NY, with her family.



**MICHAEL HALBERT** *WHP Toronto 1* Toronto, ON  
(416) 780-8000 | [mjh@timberlineq.com](mailto:mjh@timberlineq.com)

Michael Halbert, serves as Principal and President of Timberline Equities Limited, Solray Energy Corporation, and their related companies which own and manage a diversified portfolio of corporate and real estate investments. He was also a founding partner in Priveq Financial Corporation, a private Canadian venture capital and private equity enterprise.

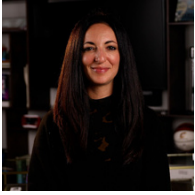
Mr. Halbert serves as Board Chair of the Harvard Business School Club of Toronto, Chaired the University of Pennsylvania's applicant interview program for most of Canada and is Chair of the Mackenzie Institute which focuses on issues of national security and counter-terrorism. He co-founded the Village Shul, a successful Toronto kiruv synagogue and learning center, has been on the boards of several Toronto schools and Community organizations and maintains the Canadian office for Nitsana Darshan Leitner's Shurat HaDin/Israel Law Center. He's a Wexner Heritage Foundation member and produced the current WHF Toronto cohort. Mr. Halbert is a daily Torah learner and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the Wharton School and a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Systems Engineering, both with Honors, from the University of Pennsylvania, where he was a Halcon Scholar. He was awarded a Masters degree in Business Administration, with Honors, by the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.

Mr. Halbert's free will is regularly superseded by that of his wife, Batsheva. Half of their children and all of their grandchildren now live in the Holy Land while they're, incomprehensibly, recreating a ravine-with-creek stone house in Toronto. He's an avid outdoorsman, lakeswimmer, backcountry skier and canoeist, has rafted the Grand Canyon and Futaleufu, summited Kilimanjaro, crossed the Atlantic by sail, has a weakness for Citroens and built a cedar strip canoe.



**BRIAN JUDD** *WHP Seattle 12* Seattle, WA  
(206) 200-3402 | [kubrickfan@gmail.com](mailto:kubrickfan@gmail.com)

Brian is lifelong Seattle resident with an extensive career in public sector leadership and management. Brian (and his husband Michael) have used their skills to provide leadership in the Jewish community, including serving as founding members of a progressive synagogue community named Kol HaNeshamah and implementing various programs with Jewish Federation, Kavana Cooperative (part of the Jewish Emergent Network), and Jewish Family Service over the years. Brian is currently a partner with Kavana Cooperative.



**HALLIE KOGELSCHATZ** *WHP Cleveland 22* Hunting Valley, OH  
(617) 270-1101 | hallie@sharkandminnow.com

Hallie has over 20 years of experience as a strategic communications consultant, having worked for organizations in both Boston/Cleveland prior to founding her firm, shark&minnow, in 2013. shark&minnow is a strategy and design consultancy that specializes in strategic planning, communications, design & motion/sound. She leverages her experiences working on global, domestic, and local strategic planning projects and communications-based campaigns for clients such as Napster, Cadillac, Progressive Insurance, The Cleveland Clinic, Department of Transportation, various Port Authorities, Westfield Insurance/Bank and many other clients worldwide to also bring value to those she serves in a lay leadership/volunteer capacity. Many of these appointments (as well as her growing book of business pertaining to consulting with Jewish organizations) reflect her deep commitment to the future of Jewish Cleveland (i.e. Park Synagogue Board Member, Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Mandel Jewish Community Center, Mt. Sinai Health Foundation, Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage) as well as Jewish Peoplehood at large [Overseas Connections Committee, JAFI's 248, etc.].



**AVICHAJ LEVIT** *WIF Class 15* Even Yehuda, ISL  
+972 50-623-2847 | Avichai\_Levit@hotmail.com

AVICHAJ LEVIT is currently Department Director for Audit of the Ministry of Defense at Israel's State Comptroller's Office, directing oversight activities of the national security sector. Through state audit - examination of whether activities of the defense establishment in Israel have been carried out in accordance with the principles of efficiency and ethical integrity - he deals with ensuring accountability of the central government for the benefit of the Israeli public and the protection of their rights. Prior to the State Comptroller's Office, Mr. Levit held several positions in the Israeli Foreign Trade Administration, including Director of Import Policy and Israel's Commercial Attaché in Turkey. As Director of Import Policy he worked on reducing non-tariff barriers to trade and as Commercial Attaché he was particularly influential in increasing Israeli high-tech exports to Turkey. Prior to joining public service, Mr. Levit was a manager at Hyatt International Hotels & Resorts. Mr. Levit holds a PhD in Political Science from Tel Aviv University, a Masters in Business Administration from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a Master in Public Administration from Harvard University as a Wexner Israel Fellow.



**EYAL LEVIT** *WHP New York RSJ 16* Brooklyn, NY  
(917) 868-5112 | Eyallevit@gmail.com

Eyal is the director of a cosmetic surgery fellowship for the ASDS (America Society of Dermatological Surgery). He is also an author of adult and children's stories, including a collection of true stories imbued with Jewish history and wisdom from his medical practice. He has also authored "The King's Race," an illustrated children's book about friendship, perseverance and how a small and easily overlooked horse changes an entire kingdom. Eyal is co-editor of a new medical textbook by Elsevier (due for completion this year) on face and eyelid lifting techniques and the inventor of a new minimally invasive lower eyelid lift.



**SAMARA MINKIN** *WHP Atlanta 18* Atlanta, GA  
(917) 214-8935 | samaraminkin@me.com

Samara Minkin is the Executive Director of The Spring, a generation opportunity to develop a Jewish cultural, community, and residential campus in Midtown Atlanta. In her prior position, Samara advised the last three Atlanta mayors on arts and cultural policy and launched the city's largest acquisitions program, bringing museum-quality international sculpture to Atlanta. When Covid struck, Samara managed day-to-day operations for the City of Atlanta's Covid19 Vaccine Equity Outreach Campaign overseeing teams across city departments, public-private partnerships, and a ground effort to connect 80,000 residents in hard-to-reach districts with vaccines. She has consulted corporate clients on acquisitions and collections management and has held positions with the Smithsonian Hirshhorn Museum, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and the Israel Museum. Past board service includes New Israel Fund/New Generations, Bnai Jeshurun, Jewish Education Project, and The Breman. She currently works with the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival, the Freedom Park Conservancy, the Paideia School Parents and Little 5 Points Alliance. She co-leads a Learning circle focused the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and participates in a monthly contemporary art study group.



**RICHARD RICE** *WHP Chicago 2* Skokie, IL  
(312) 443-8404 | RichJRice@gmail.com

I am the founder/CEO of a middle market SEC registered investment bank based in Chicago which I acquired in 1993. I am a father of two, grandfather of four, and lost Lynne, my wife of almost 54 years, their mother/ grandmother, in January of 2024 after over a decade of serious illness. Lots of little league, dance recitals and plays. I have a long history of communal involvement ranging from anti-Daley politics in the early 70's to condo president before I was 30, to Jewish communal involvement that commenced in 1981 with JUF young leadership, grew to JUF board and head of Soviet Jewry advocacy, executive comm. of the NCSJ, AJC national Board of Governors and chair of international relations, and the 1st Wexner Chicago class. I ended my involvement when I concluded my term as President of AJC Chicago in 2007.





**WENDY ROSOV** *WGF/DS Class 6* Berkely, CA  
(510) 798-6760 | [wendy@rosovconsulting.com](mailto:wendy@rosovconsulting.com)

Wendy Rosov is Founder and Principal of Rosov Consulting, a multinational, mission-driven, full-service research, evaluation and metrics company dedicated to empowering Jewish leaders to make data-informed decisions. Wendy brings more than 25 years of experience as a senior-level consultant to individual philanthropists, community and family foundations, and Jewish communal nonprofit organizations throughout North America, Israel, and other Jewish communities world-wide. Wendy holds a PhD in Education from Stanford University and a BA from Barnard College. She is a proud graduate of 12 years of day school education and spent nearly 10 summers attending or working at Ramah camps. She is married to Dr. Peg Sandel, Head of School at Brandeis Marin, and is the proud parent of two grown kids - Talya in Jerusalem and Gaby in Santa Cruz.



**RAY RUBIN** *WHP Toronto 2* Toronto, ON  
(416) 822-9725 | [rrubin@dwpv.com](mailto:rrubin@dwpv.com)

Ray is a partner in the Private Client and Family Office practices at Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg LLP, specializing in wealth management and preservation. She assists clients with strategic tax and succession planning, including cross-border matters and provides guidance on trusts, wills, powers of attorney and marriage contracts and charitable giving. Ray also helps clients with charitable giving including the establishment and ongoing compliance of charitable entities. Known for her ability to simplify complex issues, Ray's clients – including high-net-worth individuals, family businesses, trust companies and charitable organizations – value her thoughtful and practical approach to personal planning.



**JUSTIN SMOLEN** *WGF/DS Class 23* Maplewood, NJ  
(718) 536-4765 | justin.rosen86@gmail.com

Justin Rosen Smolen is Vice President for Thriving Communities and Partnerships at Reconstructing Judaism where he oversees movement initiatives supporting nearly 100 congregations worldwide and build partnerships to advance a deeply rooted, boldly relevant, and co-creative approach to Jewish life. Justin previously served as Director of Jewish Emergent Network where he led collaboration and strategy across seven pioneering communities throughout the United States to spark innovation in Jewish spiritual life. Previously, Justin served as National Director of Youth Programs at Keshet, where he expanded leadership programs and partnerships to support LGBTQ Jewish youth, and as Associate Director for Community Based Teen Initiatives at The Jewish Education Project, where he advised a collaborative of funders launching new teen initiatives across the country. He has also consulted to a variety of organizations on inclusion, innovation, and strategy. Justin holds an MPA in management and an MA in Jewish Studies and is an alum of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship. He lives in northern New Jersey with his partner and their two children.



**YONI TORGOW** *WHP Detroit 17* Oak Park, MI  
(313) 618-2024 | Yonit@sgdetroit.com

Yoni Torgow is the Chairman of Sterling Group a Michigan based real estate, development and investment company. Yoni is an executive board member of The Yeshiva Beth Yehudah, a board member of Geshet Human Services, Hebrew Free Loan and on the board of trustees of The Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Yoni is a Wexner Heritage Fellow, recipient of the Frank A. Wetsman Young Leadership Award and was named 36 Under 36 by The Well & Jewish News. He was instrumental in the creation of the Detroit Jewish Youth Sports League for both mainstream and underprivileged community youth. Yoni attended Touro College and Sh'or Yeshuv Institute where he received his Bachelor of Talmudic Law in 2003. Yoni and his wife, are passionate advocates for Jewish unity and Jewish education and are the proud parents of six wonderful children.



**JERICHO VINCENT** *WGF/DS Class 33* Brooklyn, NY  
(347) 517-8463 | jerichozvincent@gmail.com

Rav Jericho Vincent is the founding rabbi of Temple of the Stranger and a leading teacher of inclusive mystical Torah. They were ordained by the AOP in the lineage of Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi zt"l. A first-generation college student, Rav Jericho holds a graduate degree in public policy from Harvard University, where they were a Pforzheimer Fellow. A member of the ROI: Schusterman Community and a recent fellow at Atra: The Center for Rabbinic Innovation, Rav Jericho has been named to the Jewish Week's 36 Under 36 and Forward 50 for their work. They teach Torah on Instagram at @thealef.



**ARI WITKIN** *WGF/DS Class 28* Huntington Woods, MI  
(612) 369-0476 | witkin.ari@gmail.com

Rabbi Ari Witkin is the Senior Director of Philanthropy at the Jewish Federation of Detroit. A graduate of Goucher College, Ari also holds a Masters in Nonprofit Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania, and Rabbinic Ordination from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College where he was a Wexner Graduate Fellow. Raised in Minneapolis, he has lived and worked in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Uganda, and Jerusalem. At Federation Ari combines his love of Jewish tradition and community in helping to leverage resources to support the wide variety of needs that make for vibrant Jewish life. He is passionate about building diverse leadership pipelines that represent the full spectrum of Jewish life and building relationships across the community. Currently, Ari is a fellow with the Mandel Institute's Executive Leadership program. He and his wife Liz Traison live in Huntington Woods with their children Hadar, Raviv, and Sivan.



**ETTA ZIMMERMAN** *WHP Boca Raton 07* Boca Raton, FL  
(561) 212-9559 | ezboca@gmail.com

Etta Gross Zimmerman an officer of JDC. She has traveled extensively throughout the world visiting various JDC programs and speaks of her overseas travels using her passion for photojournalism to engage audiences about imperative overseas needs. She is on the board of the Jewish Book Council. She serves on the Claims Conference Board. She is a proud member of the Jewish Future Promise advisory council. Mrs. Zimmerman is a Wexner Heritage Program Alumnus, served as the Chair of the Board of the South Palm Beach Jewish Federation from 2005-2007. Mrs. Zimmerman and her husband Raymond, have one daughter, Leya Kaufman and two grandson's Ezra and Theo.