

BALTIMORE HEBREW INSTITUTE

MASTER'S IN JEWISH STUDIES

MASTER'S IN LEADERSHIP IN JEWISH EDUCATION AND COMMUNAL SERVICE

GRADUATES 2020-2021

The Baltimore Hebrew Institute at Towson University is happy to introduce eight graduates who completed their degrees or earned post-baccalaureate certificates during the 2020-2021 calendar year.

Graduates earned master's degrees in either Jewish Studies or Leadership in Jewish Education and Communal Service or a Certificate in Jewish Communal Service from Towson University. The pandemic made the experience more challenging, but each of them worked diligently to complete their degrees. One overall sentiment expressed by the graduates was how the strong connections they made with each other and the faculty made their graduate experience much more fulfilling. The Baltimore Hebrew Institute is proud to support these students with financial assistance and enrichment programs.

(graduates listed in order of graduation and then by degree)

Rebekah Waltemeyer graduated with an M.A. in Leadership in Jewish Education and Communal Service. One of her best memories from the program is her study abroad experience in Israel with Dr. Hana Bor and fellow students. "I learned about my cohort on a deeper level and also had an opportunity to have new experiences...". Rebekah works as a Development Associate at Beth El Congregation in Baltimore and loves being an aunt planning and her upcoming wedding.

Marisa Barnett, coincidentally, is also planning a wedding, and thoroughly enjoyed her trip to Israel with Dr. Bor. One of her favorite parts of the Israel trip was the visit to the Lian Ramon Museum. "We were lucky enough to see soldiers training off the side of the (Ramon) crater" notes Marisa. She graduated with dual degrees: Master's in Social Work from the University of Maryland and an M.A., in Leadership in Jewish Education and Communal Service. Marisa plans to eventually become a Jewish camp professional once she receives her LCSW-C license. Currently, Marisa is a social worker with Baltimore City schools through Villa Maria.



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Rachael Harvey earned her M.A. in Leadership in Jewish Education and Communal Service and moved to New York to serve as an Assistant Director of Membership at Central Synagogue. Rachel initially came to TU as a Jewish professional working as an Engagement Associate for TU Hillel. Later on, when she entered the graduate program, she enjoyed learning and connecting on a different level, with classmates she previously knew as undergraduates, thereby enhancing her learning experience.

Cantor Jennifer Rolnick graduated with an M.A. in Leadership in Jewish Education and Communal Service and is currently a Cantor at Beth Israel Congregation in Baltimore. Jennifer enjoyed the close bonds that formed between students and faculty in the program, all through the shared hardship of continuing a degree in a virtual setting. She is thankful that Jodi T. organized a WhatsApp group so that all the students could keep in contact and was touched when fellow student Grace W. showed up at her door with a misloach manot package during the Jewish holiday of Purim.

Jake Shapiro concurs with Jennifer. He feels that the students and faculty at BHI are truly what made the experience so fulfilling. Jake says he has made lasting friendships from his time in the program. Jake graduated with an M.A. in Leadership in Jewish Education and Communal Service and is a Preschool Lead Teacher at Beth Tfiloh Community Day School.

Catherine Berge, class of 2020, and **Daphna Oren**, class of 2021, both earned their M.A.'s in Jewish Studies. Daphna recalled how enthralling the rabbinic classes with Dr. Avram Reisner and Dr. Deborah Barer were, specifically when students worked

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together to tease apart the inscrutable message of the Gemara. Daphna is currently teaching Talmud for a Jewish Day School and an adult education program.

Shaina Segal received her post-baccalaureate certificate in Jewish Communal Service and "...loved the bond that was created with the students and staff." She notes that those relationships are what positively supplemented the educational experience. Shaina is the preschool office manager at Cheder Chabad, a Jewish day school in Baltimore.



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