

# FRANKEL JEWISH ACADEMY

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20





## OUR MISSION

Frankel Jewish Academy is a rigorous college preparatory high school pursuing academic excellence and Jewish literacy. We inspire students to think critically, creatively, and compassionately; to dedicate themselves to Jewish tradition, peoplehood, and the State of Israel; and to become lifelong learners and leaders.



At FJA, 2019-2020 was a year like no other. We introduced more creative opportunities in the performing and fine arts. We established pre-engineering and engineering courses. Students had more Jewish and General studies electives to choose from. And our freshmen were scheduled to embark on our first trip to explore history, identity, and peoplehood by spending time with the Northern Cheyenne in Montana and hiking Yellowstone National Park. These opportunities are examples of our ongoing initiative to provide students with unique, life changing learning experiences in authentic “real world” settings.

Whether in academics, arts, athletics or clubs, there were multiple opportunities within FJA for students to express and develop creativity and character. Beyond the walls of FJA, in addition to our freshman trip to Montana and Wyoming, an FJA team was scheduled to travel to Israel to compete in Technion’s International Robotraffic competition (where we earned 1st place the previous year for students’ CAD design of a fuel injector), a multi-grade trip to

Washington DC was set to leave to explore US history and see the government in action, and our seniors were looking forward to capping off their FJA experience with a meaningful and formative trip to Poland and Israel.

The year was well underway, when in March, teachers were faced with the challenging task of taking their well honed pedagogy skills and developing creative ways to engage students from a distance. They supported students by hosting informal coffee hours and delivering care packages to their students. By all measures, teachers and staff were wildly successful in maintaining our exceptional academic standards while supporting student growth, creativity, and wellbeing.

Not only did we successfully pivot in the academic realm, but FJA was also one of the first to host a live virtual gala that was viewed over 3,500 times by viewers around the world. As the academic year concluded, we said farewell to 39 graduating seniors in a celebratory commencement held outdoors

and welcomed a freshman class of 41. Our ability to navigate an unprecedented year is a testament to the excellence of our staff and faculty, the close partnerships we share with our students and families, and the support of our lay leaders and community constituents. Thank you for your incredible support. With your help, FJA has been able to maintain a strong sense of community while continuing to provide metro Detroit with unparalleled Jewish education, even in the most challenging of times.

Rabbi Azaryah Cohen  
Head of School

Bob Canvasser  
Chair, Board of Trustees





# FJA BY THE NUMBERS

**22**  
ATHLETIC AWARDS FOR  
FJA STUDENTS

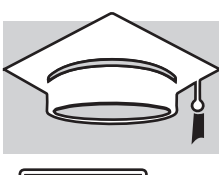


**100%**  
OF FJA STUDENTS  
ATTEND THEIR 1<sup>ST</sup> OR  
2<sup>ND</sup> CHOICE COLLEGE



**3700**  
VIEWED FJA'S 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
GALA ONLINE

**802**  
MEMBERS OF THE  
FJA ALUMNI FAMILY



**11**  
WEEKS OF ONLINE  
SCHOOL IN SPRING 2020



**60%**  
OF STUDENTS  
RECEIVE TUITION  
ASSISTANCE



**43**  
NEW STUDENTS IN  
THE CLASS OF 2024

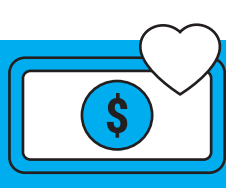


**14**  
NEW COURSES OFFERED



**\$2,000,000+**  
COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS EARNED  
BY THE CLASS OF 2020

**90%+**  
90%+ OF FACULTY  
& STAFF DONATED  
TO THE ANNUAL  
CAMPAIGN



## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY & COVID-19

The 2019-2020 school year began with fanfare and celebration as we began our 20th year of school at Frankel Jewish Academy. We launched a new school schedule, new classes to give students more choice in their education, and revised graduation requirements to meet the needs of our students. The theater and athletic programs were booming. It was an incredible year.

Then, the COVID-19 pandemic struck and disrupted all of the schools in Michigan, and our country. Frankel Jewish Academy was unique in its ability to shift - nearly seamlessly - to remote learning. Our students were able to participate in 11 weeks of school online, and continued their learning at the same exceptional level that FJA is known to provide. While our students were not able to participate in the planned trips to Israel, Poland, Montana,

and other exciting opportunities, they were thankful for the stability and constancy that FJA provided. FJA's incredible faculty and staff were there to help students through every stage of the pandemic, providing emotional and social support in addition to educational excellence.

As the pandemic raged, we hoped that we would be able to return to school in-person in the fall. Through intense planning in partnership with faculty, staff, students, parents, the Board of Trustees, and the Jewish Federation, we were able to return to school in person to start the school year, and remain in school for most of the fall. More than 90% of FJA students continue to learn in-person, with a few students choosing to learn remotely in the same classes as their peers.



## FACULTY & STAFF LEADERS



**ELLA DUNAJSKY** is currently in her eleventh year as Director of College Counseling at FJA. Mrs. Dunajsky thoroughly enjoys getting to know

students from freshman year onward, which in turn helps her match their interests with future college aspirations. "I work at being a good listener, and always try to make others feel comfortable so they can feel at ease sharing their thoughts and aspirations with me." Dunajsky says.

Mrs. Dunajsky has a strong desire to help and assist students with the challenges of finding the right college

fit, and is known for her famous motto;

**'College is not a prize to be won but a match to be made.'**

Mrs. Dunajsky is there for students throughout their entire college planning process, from reviewing college essays, to being there with them when they receive their email acceptance letters. "Some of the most important moments are watching students analyze college options and witness the thrill and excitement of getting accepted to many of their favorite colleges."

**RABBI ELLIOT PACHTER** has been involved with FJA since its inception, and was among those dancing in the JCC courtyard on the opening day of school 21 years ago. He currently serves as Rabbinic Advisor, and was previously a Bible Instructor and Director of Student Services.



"I have been part of many curricular transformations in the Bible Department and Jewish Studies program," Rabbi Pachter says. He was involved in an effort to create meaningful classes for students who struggled with Hebrew, and began to focus more on big ideas

and fostering a love for Bible. "With our newest version of Jewish studies, Honors Bible I is an option, and the students who choose Honors are motivated to work hard."

Along with his career at FJA, Rabbi Pachter is also an alumni parent of Gabriel, class of 2009, and Jonathan, class of 2012.

**"At FJA, my kids had opportunities to shine, made long lasting friendships, and took amazing classes which impacted their college and career choices and success."**

During a regular year you'll find Rabbi Pachter greeting students as they enter the building at the beginning of the day, as well as sharing lunch with his students. "I make sure they know that I care about them as people, not just as

students, and ask them about what's going on in their lives."



**ERIC RAPP** teaches Calculus and Physics at FJA. Currently in his eighth year teaching at Frankel, he is motivated to not only help students

develop the math skills that will benefit them in the next phase of their lives, but also hopes to create an atmosphere where they are comfortable with math.

One memorable moment that sticks out to Mr. Rapp is from a Calculus class. At the conclusion of the lesson, a student asked, 'Why didn't I think of that?' "The student understood everything we were doing to the point that he felt that

he could have derived this high level concept on his own. I could see the confidence in this student's face. Few times in my life have I felt such a sense of accomplishment. I'm not sure who was more proud that day, but I think it was me," Rapp says.

When asked what he loves most about FJA, he says,

**"There really are two main things I love about FJA and they go hand-in-hand. They are the students and the class sizes. The small class sizes make it easy to really get to know the students. The bonds created last well beyond graduation, and I still meet with a group of Physics students that I had six years ago. We go to see a Star Wars movie every time a new one comes out."**



## ATHLETICS



Despite missing the spring season sports due to COVID-19, 22 students received awards from the Catholic league in athletic, academic, and team accomplishments in 2019-2020. The boys tennis team was the only Oakland County team at the MHSAA Division 4 State Finals, and Eli Grey '20 made it to the semifinal round. We completed the fall and winter sports seasons before the pandemic canceled other sports. But, the JAGs are back on the field in the current school year, sometimes competing with other schools, and sometimes in intramural competitions.



## ACCOMPLISHED ARTISTS

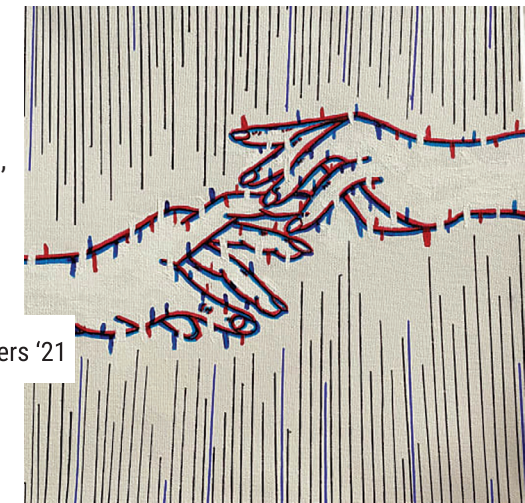
Mazal Tov to Lili Tarnopol '21 whose painting is one of the winners of the Holocaust Memorial Center Art and Writing Competition for the second year in a row!

The Holocaust Center's Art and Writing Competition this year is inspired by Elie Wiesel and the question: "What does a better world look like to you? What choices can we make to reach that better world?" Having learned about Elie Wiesel throughout my schooling, I knew that Wiesel was strongly against indifference and I wanted to capture that in my painting. My painting features a lantern being held up to a broken wall from which a hand is reaching out. I believe the first step to a better world is making the CHOICE to hold a light up to the destruction we've caused and people we've left behind. Just as the painting depicts, we need to choose to see our issues and pain before we make amends. The wall in the painting was always broken, but it couldn't be fixed until someone chose to see it. The hand coming from the darkness behind the wall are the communities that have suffered as a result of mistakes humanity has made. In the corner of the painting, scratched into the wall, is a phrase I chose to emphasize the overdue action of owning up to our mistakes: "Where have you been?"

- Lili Tarnopol '21



Liana Tarnopol's piece from 2020 Holocaust contest



Lillian Beavers '21





# 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GALA



**RABBI AZARYAH COHEN**  
Head of School

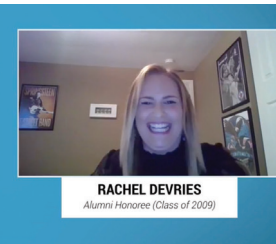


**SAMANTHA & ROSS PARTRICH**  
2020 Honorees

When FJA went virtual this spring, alumni, parents, and friends stepped up to support the school in significant ways. In no case was this more evident than with FJA's 20th Anniversary Gala. The wonderful gala honorees helped to make our first-ever virtual gala a

stunning event. We had the opportunity to celebrate Samantha and Ross Partrich, alumna Rachel Devries '09, and faculty member Melanie Sesi. More than 500 guests joined us live online to remember FJA's first 20 years and celebrate the school's anniversary. Thousands more viewed the event later on Facebook. Samantha Partrich summarized her family's

commitment to the school, "Students graduate from Frankel Jewish Academy knowing who they are, and feeling confident about who they are as Jews and as members of our society. FJA doesn't just make good students, it makes good people, and that is invaluable."



**RACHEL DEVRIES**  
Alumni Honoree (Class of 2009)



**MELANIE SESI**  
Faculty Honoree

## ALUMNI DONOR SPOTLIGHT: TEDDIE OLENDER EISENBERG '08



"FJA provided me with the best high school experience I could have asked for. While I didn't know what I wanted to do for my career at that point, I did know that I wanted to make a positive difference in the world. Being

surrounded by an inclusive community that shared these goals, reaffirmed this desire and helped guide me to where I am today.

I have chosen to support FJA as an adult to make sure the wonderful high school experiences I had are provided to our community for years to come - the celebration of Judaism and Zionism, strong academics, opportunities to expand horizons, and cultivation of future leaders who will make a positive difference in the world."

Teddie Olender Eisenberg graduated from FJA in 2008 and is a graduate of the University of Michigan. Teddie

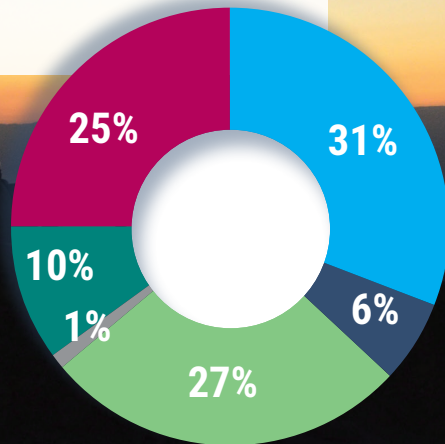
enjoys giving back to her community, from helping plan and carry out volunteer events for Jewish teens in Metro Detroit through Adat Shalom Synagogue's Teen Volunteer Corps, to mentoring future CFP® (CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER TM) candidates through the CFP Board. She is currently the Vice President of Investments with the Olender Group of Wells Fargo Advisors and lives in Huntington Woods with her husband, Adam.



## FINANCIAL REPORTS

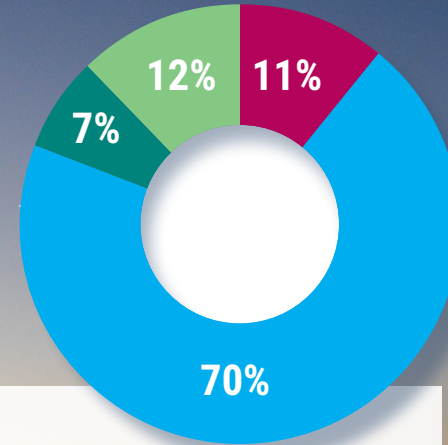
### REVENUE

- 31% Tuition & Fees
- 27% Grants
- 25% Direct Donations
- 10% Annual Fund
- 6% JFMD Grants  
*Jewish Federation, Shiffman Fund, Millennium Fund, etc.*
- 1% Other Income



### EXPENSES

- 70% Program & General Expenses
- 12% Occupancy
- 11% Management & General Expenses
- 7% Fundraising & Development



## ADVANCEMENT NEWS

The Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division awarded FJA a grant of more than \$85,000 to enhance security inside and outside the school building.



FJA received a two year grant of nearly \$1M from the William Davidson Foundation to focus on expanding experiential education opportunities for students, professional development for faculty in the Reading Apprenticeship program, and to continue marketing and branding efforts.



The Ravitz Foundation awarded FJA a \$20,000 grant to focus on student leadership development and creating more opportunities for *ruach* (school spirit).

### Jacobson Family Helps FJA Provide PPE

As the pandemic began, and organizations were searching for personal protective equipment (PPE), FJA's talented Information and Technology staff figured out how to create facial shields using a 3-D printer in the school's Genesis STEM lab. But with only one 3-D printer that could do the project, the capacity to create more face shields was limited. With a well-timed gift from Dr. Lilly and Howard Jacobson, FJA received an excellent 3-D printer that could produce more face shields. With this gift, we were able to provide 1000+ face shields to Jewish organizations, and healthcare professionals throughout our community.



# WE THANK OUR DONORS

**2019-2020 Annual Fund**  
This list represents annual donations received between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020.



**\$50,000 +**

William Davidson Foundation  
Aaron and Carolynn Frankel Foundation  
The Samuel and Jean Frankel Jewish Heritage Foundation  
Nancy and James Grosfeld  
Samantha and Ross Partrich  
Shiffman Fund  
Schostak Family Foundation



**\$25,000 +**

The Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation



**\$10,000 +**

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Norbert A. Zuckerman Foundation



**\$5,000 +**

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Andi and Lawrence Wolfe



**\$2,500 +**

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Aimee and Richard Simtob

**\*Alumni**

Michele Freind and Bruce Skolnik  
Victoria and Jon Sloan  
Tamar Springer and Steven Stancroff  
Shelley and Joel Tauber  
Henri and Lila Wagmann Charitable Trust



**\$1,800 +**

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Dina and Herman z"l Brodsky  
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Stacey Lee and Evan Caminker  
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Beth and Steve Margolin  
Myrna and Joe Salzman  
Cheryl and Steve Schanes

Ilana Glazier and Lowell Schmeltz  
Lisa and Gary Shiffman  
Margo and Douglas Woll



**\$1,000 +**

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**\$500 +**

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Dori Weinstein

Michael Weinstein  
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Geoffrey Weitzman  
Kimberly Whittington  
Richard Winkelman

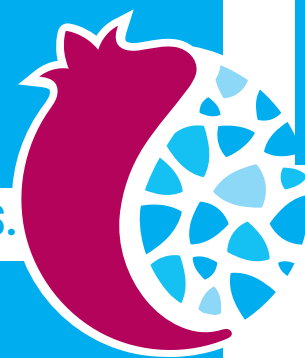
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Rochelle and Jerrold Zabel  
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Michelle Glazer-Zucker and Craig Zucker  
Judy and Fred Zwas  
Shifra and Jack Zwick

*Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. If an error has been made, please accept our apologies.*

Eli Scherr gifted FJA with a scholarship endowment fund for new students. The scholarship is open to any newly admitted student who demonstrates excellence in Jewish studies or general studies. Awardees are chosen as part of the application process.



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