MESSAGE FROM REBECCA SIMONS,
DIRECTOR FOR JEWISH LIFE AT DUKE

“You might not have expected a university in the middle of North Carolina to develop the vibrant, friendly, and loving Jewish community many of us have come to call home for the past four years. But the Freeman Center, and more importantly, the people in it, made Duke feel like home faster than I could have imagined.”

Danielle Lefland, T’16, President of the Jewish Student Union, at the May 2016 Jewish Baccalaureate ceremony

The Jewish Baccalaureate ceremony over Graduation weekend is always a moving experience. Hearing students like Dani describe their Jewish journeys at Duke, and seeing the expressions on the parents’ faces, makes me so proud to be a part of this incredible family. It’s a vivid illustration of why our works matters, and what Jewish Life at Duke means to our community.

At Jewish Life at Duke, our work is informed by three fundamental principles: developing Jewish identity; exploring Jewish values; and building and belonging to one’s Jewish community.

Through Hillel International’s Measuring Excellence initiative, over the past year we have begun to quantify our impact on the Jewish student experience. The numbers are encouraging and suggest the breadth and depth of our reach: in the 2015-16 academic year,

JLD staff members had more than 800 unique student interactions and met one-on-one with more than 60% of Duke’s Jewish undergraduate students. JLD and its student groups held more than 135 unique programs or events attended by approximately 3,600 participants.

I am enormously grateful to everyone who makes this work possible: the loyal alumni, parents, and friends whose support helps sustain our community and secure our future, and an extraordinarily dedicated and generous Advisory Board led by Heath Freeman T’02, who time after time shows what it means to lead by example. Their efforts, which you will read about in these pages, contributed to an overall 25% increase in the number of gifts vs. last year and positioned us to reach new heights in the year ahead.

Throughout the 2016-17 academic year, we will be celebrating a milestone in our history: the 18th anniversary of the Freeman Center for Jewish Life. It has been the home for our Jewish community on campus since 1999; today, it is impossible to envision life at Duke without it. I invite you to celebrate with us and to join us in building a strong future for Duke’s Jewish community. Thank you for being part of the Jewish Life at Duke family.

Rebecca Simons
Director for Jewish Life at Duke
MESSAGE FROM HEATH FREEMAN T’02, CHAIR OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

It has been an honor serving as Chair of Jewish Life at Duke’s Advisory Board. I’ve had the chance to see firsthand some of the incredible programs that transform students’ lives and to meet amazing students, alumni, and supporters. All have unique stories about how the Freeman Center for Jewish Life/Rubenstein-Silvers Hillel has shaped their lives. I’d like to share mine.

My parents, Brian and Harriet Freeman, didn’t go to Duke, but their three children did. We weren’t an especially religious family. Still, Jewish culture was always a part of our lives.

When my sisters Danyelle and Amanda attended Duke in the mid-90s, there was no Jewish center. On the High Holidays, they went to services in the basement of the Chapel or in a rundown building on Central Campus. It felt as if they had no home.

My father, a restructuring advisor, and my mother, a visionary with tremendous heart, saw a chance to make a difference. In 1999, they helped establish Duke’s first permanent home for Jewish students, the Freeman Center for Jewish Life.

Now, as we celebrate the center’s 18th anniversary, I am gratified to see that it has been everything that my parents envisioned: a home-away-from-home, a place to celebrate the holidays, or where students can connect to Jewish life in countless ways.

My parents died not long after the Freeman Center opened, but their legacy lives on within its walls. Many others—students, alumni, parents, faculty and administration—had worked tirelessly to lay the groundwork, and thousands more supported it generously in the years that followed. I’m deeply grateful to all of them and so proud of what we have built. For me and for thousands of others who bleed blue, Jewish Life at Duke is our home, our family, and our future.

Heath Freeman, T’02
Chair, Jewish Life at Duke Advisory Board
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Jewish Life at Duke advises six undergraduate student groups which are recognized by Duke Student Government.

DUKE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL is a non-partisan group whose programs are designed to increase appreciation for all aspects of Israel throughout the Duke community.

COALITION FOR PRESERVING MEMORY, focusing on genocide and Holocaust awareness, is dedicated to memorializing genocide victims from the 20th and 21st centuries.
CHALLAH FOR HUNGER holds monthly Challah baking sessions, then sells the challah on campus. Proceeds go to organizations fighting hunger.

DUKE ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE works closely with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), America’s pro-Israeli lobby, to achieve peace and strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship.

JEWISH STUDENT UNION aims to build an inclusive Jewish community through fun, diverse, and engaging programming and to foster friendships across the Jewish campus community.

J STREET U at Duke is part of the national, student-led network that promotes U.S. involvement in a peace treaty and two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
JON SCHHEYER AT THE FREEMAN CENTER

On October 26, 2015, an audience of enthusiastic Duke basketball fans descended on the Freeman Center for an evening with Assistant Men’s Basketball Coach Jon Scheyer (T’10). In an in-depth conversation moderated by basketball manager Zack Spiera (T’18), Jon reflected on a wide range of topics: growing up Jewish in Northbrook, IL; the best piece of advice Coach K ever gave him; the differences between the 2010 and 2015 championship teams; and living in Israel as a member of Maccabi Tel Aviv. It’s hard to say who was happier to be there—Jon, or the students who grew up idolizing him as a key member of the 2010 championship team. Afterwards, Jon took questions from the students, posed for photos, and signed autographs.

#TOGETHERWEREMEMBER

The student group Coalition for Preserving Memory is dedicated to memorializing genocide victims of the 20th and 21st centuries in a way that will be relevant and meaningful for future generations. On April 10-11, 2016, the group held its annual 24-hour name-reading ceremony on the Chapel Quad. Duke faculty and administration, along with community members, joined students of all backgrounds as name-readers in this moving ceremony.

THE CHICKEN SOUP HOTLINE

What does it mean to be a home-away-from-home? For parents worried about their under-the-weather Dukie, it means that a comforting cup of kosher chicken soup is just a phone call away. In the 2015/16 academic year, Jewish Life at Duke delivered some 75 cups of chicken soup to sick but grateful Duke students all over campus, free of charge.

STUDENT-HOSTED SEDERS

Student-hosted Seders have become popular ways to celebrate Passover at Duke. In April 2016, in addition to the hundreds taking part in the traditional community Seders at the Freeman Center, more than 630 undergraduate and graduate students attended 21 student-hosted Passover Seders around campus. Rabbi Elana offered Seder-leading workshops and JLD supplied the Seder plates, meals, and haggadahs.

"Thank you Freeman Center for providing the food for our AEPi Seder. The event was spiritually meaningful for the Jews, educational for the non-Jews, and fun for all of us. We had a tent set up behind the fraternity seniors’ house, and around 100 people showed up. Our Haggadah was originally written in 2010 by Jeremy Moskowitz T’12 (who now works for Hillel International), and is edited each year to reflect the current members and humor of the fraternity. Since many of our attendees are not Jewish, we make an effort to explain certain traditions that may seem unfamiliar. The Freeman Center food was accompanied by matzoh ball soup made by Sam Honig (T’18)…" Jordan Taylor (T’18)

Student-hosted Seders are made possible through the generosity of the Freeman Family Program Fund.
Israel Engagement and Programming have never been more important on college campuses than they are today. JLD’s Israel Program offers opportunities for Duke students to engage with Israel through informal education, leadership experiences, and travel. Chen Agiv, Duke’s Jewish Agency Israel Fellow for the 2015/16 and 2016/17 academic years, is part of a cadre of Israeli educators working on college campuses around the world. What motivates her? “I’m excited to share my pride in being a Jew and my love for the state of Israel. I want to show students a different side of Israel, its culture, in all its vividness and color—the Israel I’m so in love with.”

In 2015/16, Israel Engagement and Programming were supported by the Jim and Nicki Woldenberg Family Jewish Life at Duke Fund; the Lauren and Jim Grien Fund; Lauren and Ari Ackerman; Laurie and Randolph May; and other generous donors.

“I’m excited to share my pride in being a Jew and my love for the state of Israel. I want to show students a different side of Israel, its culture, in all its vividness and color—the Israel I’m so in love with.”

Chen Agiv, Duke’s Jewish Agency Israel Fellow for the 2015/16 and 2016/17 academic years.
Jewish Life at Duke depends almost entirely upon contributions to fund our work, from leadership and social activities to religious celebrations and observances. Fundraising efforts in 2015/16 focused on bringing more alumni and parents into our family of donors. Because every gift, no matter what the size, makes a statement that Jewish Life at Duke matters.

**PARTICIPATION MATTERS**

“Participation Matters” is the watchword of JLD Advisory Board Chair Heath Freeman (T’02) and his wife Jane Hegleman Freeman. To inspire others to join the ranks of supporters, in December 2015 they pledged to contribute $150 for every new gift of $100+. The goal: 100 new $100+ donors and $25,000 in income by June 2016.

Their giving challenge exceeded expectations, raising $35,000 for student programs over the 6-month period. More than 100 alumni, parents, faculty, and friends stepped up with gifts of $100+, and Heath and Jane donated $150 for each and every one.

Overall, the number of contributions increased by 25% during the 2015/16 fiscal year, showing just how much JLD means to our community. We are grateful to Heath and Jane for their leadership and to our loyal and generous family of supporters.

**TOBACCO ROAD TZEDAKAH CUP**

Young Alumni ♥ JLD, as they demonstrated in the 2nd annual Tobacco Road Tzedakah Cup (TRTC) challenge. JLD alumni in Classes of 2000–2015 outraised their Carolina counterparts to take home victory for the second straight year.

TRTC takes place over a three-week period in February and March, when Duke and Carolina are battling on the court. Pitting our young alumni against Carolina’s, TRTC is an epic showdown over who can raise more money for Jewish life on their campus. Once again Elizabeth Heyman Winter (T’03) led the way, announcing that she would donate $100 for every gift of $18 or more. A cadre of team captains rallied their friends and classmates, and Jon Scheyer (T’10) delivered a late-game endorsement that sealed the victory. When the dust settled, 92 young alums had contributed nearly $16,650. That’s double the dollars from triple the number of donors compared with the previous year. Thank you, team!
THANK YOU PARENTS

Thank you, Parents, for showing how much JLD means to you and your Dukie. In 2015/16, 142 current parent or grandparent households supported our work—a 23% increase over the previous year. A record-breaking 80 households joined the Parents Circle with gifts of $360 or more. Contributions from JLD parents and grandparents provide essential income for student programming, from High Holiday services and meals in the fall to the Jewish Baccalaureate ceremony in the spring. Thank you for being part of the JLD family.

As my ancestors planted for me before I was born, so do I plant for those who will come after.”

_Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anit 23a_

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Dr. Judith Ruderman’s legacy gift to Jewish Life at Duke caps three decades as one of our community’s greatest champions.

It was 30 years ago, in 1986, that Duke University’s then-president H. Keith Brodie asked Judith Ruderman to be part of a planning committee to establish Duke’s first dedicated Jewish center. Dr. Ruderman, at that time the director of Continuing Education and Summer Session at the university, gladly accepted the challenge: “The idea of enriching Jewish life at Duke, and the vibrancy of the entire campus by extension, was very appealing to me. To play a small part in that effort was and still is an honor.”

The road to the Freeman Center for Jewish Life proved long and winding: it would take nearly 15 years for the vision to be realized. But Dr. Ruderman’s commitment never wavered. She helped steer the project through the administration of two Duke presidents, playing a role in every aspect of the process from site selection to fundraising. After the Center opened in 1999, she continued to serve on its board of directors after finishing her six-year stint as the board’s first president, and for many years did the honors as guest cantor and occasional rabbi at the Center’s High Holiday services.

_In naming Jewish Life at Duke as a beneficiary of her will, Dr. Ruderman is helping to ensure that JLD is there for future generations._ In the words of the Talmud, “As my ancestors planted for me before I was born, so do I plant for those who will come after.”

_Dr. Judith Ruderman at the Freeman Center following its opening in 1999. (Duke University Archives) _
Jewish Life at Duke gratefully acknowledges those whose endowment gifts have helped ensure our long-term financial stability.

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