From the Director

What a year it has been! Our Program has gone through tremendous change, some by design, a lot by chance. Four people have left our team: Dr. David Slucki, who took a position at Monash University in Australia; Dr. Ted Rosengarten, who has retired; Pamela Partridge, who moved on after serving as Hillel’s Engagement Coordinator and Asst. Executive Director for three years; and Mark Swick, who for the last eight years worked as our program’s Jewish community liaison, and is now the Executive Director at KBBE. We are thankful for their service and wish them all the best.

This fall, we welcome Dr. Ashley Walters, who is assuming Shari Rabin’s former position and will gradually transition into the role of Director of the Pearlstein/Lipov Center for Southern Jewish Culture (currently under the interim directorship of Dale Rosengarten); Jamie Gottlieb, Hillel’s new Engagement Coordinator and Program Associate (more about her in the Hillel section); and Dr. Stacy Veeder, a visiting professor who will be teaching Holocaust and other courses this year.

Since I wrote to you last, we completed a strategic planning process that helped us imagine our next five years. We focused on programming that appealed to diverse audiences, such as a babysitting and tutoring program; our fall lineup on p. 3. We experimented with online community conversations and we spent much time planning for a fall semester that will be very different from anything we have ever experienced. As I write these words, the College has already made the decision to start the fall semester online and delay student move-in. Eventually, students will return to campus, where they will discover classrooms with reduced capacity to allow for physical distancing, hybrid instruction (online and face-to-face), a requirement to wear a mask in all public areas and classrooms, and one-way traffic in most buildings, including in the Jewish Studies Center. On-campus events will be limited to 30 participants indoors, and 50 outdoors. Serving food will be subject to restrictive guidelines. For many of our student and faculty audiences, taking classes in person would not be feasible. Fortunately, most of our sections will offer the option to attend remotely. See more details about our courses on the next page.

Given the restrictions on in-person interactions, we have also decided that this semester, for the first time since its inception, our Program will not hold in-person public events. We will miss getting together for a delicious Sunday brunch, facilitating conversations with travelers from all over the country and the world. Nonetheless, we have designed an exciting online program of lectures, conversations, and films that could be accessed from anywhere. You may find more information about our fall lineup on p. 3. Hillel activities, too, will take a different form, as nearly every recurring event will be re-assessed and re-adjusted to fit the new reality. You can read more on what’s expected at Hillel on the next page.

Lamentably, financial uncertainties at the College level have led to a near complete hiring freeze. This means that, while we can hire a temporary, part-time replacement for our Community Liaison position (now called Associate Director for Community Relations), our plans to fully replace the position are put on hold. The same goes for our Associate Director for Jewish Admissions, a position that will remain vacant this year. Our search for a permanent Holocaust history professor and director of the Zucker/ Goldberg Center for Holocaust Studies has also not yet been approved.

This is merely a temporary setback. Sooner or later, our Program will resume operations in full capacity, and the College will need a plan to accept this “downtime” to plan for a better future. And better it will be.

We will bring more Jewish students to Charleston, in part by creating more scholarship opportunities. Offer more spiritual, intellectual, and social opportunities than ever before. Build a world-class Holocaust Studies Center. And transform our Arnold Center for Israel Studies into a campus-wide innovation and creativity hub. The Perlmutter Fellows Program, now in its second year, will continue to bring the brightest minds to CofC; it will soon become a nationally leading mentorship program. We are also in the midst of updating our curriculum and improving our marketing strategy. We know Jewish Studies is the best second major or minor students can choose. More and more of them will soon realize it too. We will serve our community better, as we engage with more facets of the Jewish experience. All this will come.

Thanks to our community’s ongoing support, we have managed to weather this crisis well. We are forever thankful to all of you, from near and far, who take part in what we do and help us build a great future for our students and the Charleston Jewish community.

Yaron Ayalon
Director, Yaschik/Arnold Jewish Studies Program
Associate Professor of Jewish and Middle Eastern Studies

From the Chair

When I wrote in my introductory article for the newsletter last fall that the “College as a whole, and the Jewish Studies Program in particular,” were in the midst of transition, little did I know what our program, the College, Charleston and our community as a whole were about to experience. The transition in leadership of the Yaschik/Arnold Jewish Studies Program and the College has occurred seamlessly, and it is clear that the respective search committees have found intelligent, insightful, and energetic leaders dedicated to overcoming the challenges that COVID-19 has placed on us, while moving our program and the College to the next level. I’ve been truly impressed by the energy, organization and creativity Yaron has brought to the program.

Recently, the College announced its plan for reopening the campus for Fall classes. Among the changes is a restriction on indoor gatherings to a maximum of 30 people. So, where are we with our community programming? Unfortunately, with very few exceptions, in-person community events will have to be placed on hold, at least until the Spring. The challenges of social distancing, limited number of participants, food service, travel, etc. are too difficult to overcome, particularly in the at-risk age group that typically attends our programs. There will, however, be some on-line programming by faculty and “local talent” for our participation, as well as a few events featuring guest speakers, and several movies. The Three Rabbi Panel will, for the first time, be held online this Fall. With new Rabbis at Emanu-El and BSBI, and with the current social and health issues affecting our country, this fall’s conversation would be an opportunity to introduce themselves to the greater Charleston Jewish community and for the three rabbis to provide insight on Jewish perspectives on race. Seniors who wish to audit classes will likely seek only those classes that are solely on-line, or that offer the possibility of remote participation, with faculty permission. If you aren’t already, this will be your opportunity to become comfortable with Zoom!

Speaking of change, on a final note, I too would like to bid Mark Swick a fond farewell and wish him the best of luck in his future position as Executive Director of KBBE. Over the years, his responsibilities as community liaison for the Jewish Studies Program, and recently as the Executive Director of the Jewish Historical Society of SC, have grown tremendously. He has handled them consistently with a smile and gusto! His knowledge of and connections to the Charleston Jewish Community are deep (despite his “from off”). He has been a tremendous help to me over the years and the Program will miss him. I know Mark will thrive in his new position. We are all happy that he, Ellen, and soon to be Baby Swick will continue to be part of the Charleston Jewish Community.

Robert Steinberg
Chair, Jewish Studies Advisory Board

For event updates, follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/cofcjwst or check our website at jewish.cofc.edu

WANT TO STAY UP TO DATE WITH OUR EVENTS THIS FALL?
Email jwst@cofc.edu to join our mailing list.
While Spring 2020 wasn’t the semester anyone could have imagined or planned for, Hillel made the most of it. Even with the move to online classes and programming, Hillel continued to engage Jewish students on social media and Zoom. The Hillel student board posted on Instagram every day with weekly specials including: Sunday senior spotlight for the class of 2020, an interactive Tuesday “Schmoozeday,” Tikkun Olam Thursday, and more. The Holocaust Education, Awareness, and Remembrance (HEAR) group had a social media campaign for Genocide Awareness Week to educate others on the Holocaust and beyond. Challah for Hunger, who could not hold in-person challah bakes, focused their efforts on fundraising for the Lowcountry Food Bank to help our Charleston neighbors fight food insecurity. Havurah, a student initiative of peer-to-peer Jewish learning, moved their discussions from the Hillel lounge to Zoom.

Hillel and Jewish Studies also teamed up to do several virtual meet and greets with the incoming freshmen class as well as prospective high school students and their families. I am so impressed by all of our students’ adaptability during this challenging and uncertain time. We would all rather be together in person, of course, but we learned that we can be creative with our programming and that our strong sense of community can still be felt screen-to-screen in addition to face-to-face.

As you may know, Pamela Partridge has moved on from CoC after 3 years. In her time as the Engagement Associate, she helped increase the quality and quantity of Hillel programming at CoC and the Citadel. I am grateful for all she contributed to the Program and wish her the best of luck on her new endeavors in Texas. Pamela left big shoes to fill, but I am confident that Jamie Gottlieb, our new Engagement and Program Associate, is up for the challenge.

Jamie is excited to be joining College of Charleston Hillel and the Jewish Studies Program. She is originally from Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Jamie just graduated from the American University in Washington, DC, where she earned her BA in Jewish Studies with a minor in Leadership and Management. On campus, Jamie was highly involved with American University Hillel, a-cappella, and Greek Life. Professionally, she has spent the last two years interning for Hillel International as both a conferences and campaign services intern. In her free time, Jamie can be found watching Grey’s Anatomy and practicing her stand-up comedy routine. She can’t wait to get to campus and meet everyone in the fall!

Deb Silver, MSW  
Hillel Director
MONDAY, AUGUST 31 AT 7:00PM
A CONVERSATION WITH PETER BEINART

In July, the journalist and political commentator Peter Beinart published an essay in The Atlantic, which detailed his crasis of faith about U.S. foreign policy. In this conversation, Beinart will reflect on the continued relevance of his essay for American politics, and discuss the current American political landscape. His reflections will draw from his recent book, <i>Three Days in September</i>, which reconsiders the September 11th terrorist attacks in light of the World War II and</p>

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 AT 10:00AM
TOUCHED WITH FIRE: MORRIS B. ABRAM AND THE BATTLE AGAINST RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

Join Dr. Dale Rosengarten in conversation with David Lowe about his 2019 book on Morris B. Abram. Dr. Lowe is the former Vice President of the National Endowment for Democracy, a foundation dedicated to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8 AT 10:00AM
OFF THE DERECH: LEAVING ORTHODOX JUDAISM

Dr. Ezra Cappell, CoCf Professor of Jewish Studies and English, and Dr. Jessica Lang, Professor of English and Director of the Wasserman Jewish Studies Center at Baruch College, City University of New York, will discuss their new co-edited book on ultra-Orthodox jews who have left their communities.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13 AT 7:00PM
A CONVERSATION WITH MANISHATANA

Malashiana is the pen-name of Rabbi Shais Roshon, an African-American Orthodox rabbi, author, and public speaker. Join us to learn about his journey as a Jewish leader of color whose work has taken prejudice, bias, and ignorance head on.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20 AT 12:30PM
WHEN HEROES FLY TO NETFLIX: ISRAELI TRAUMAS AND ITS INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES

When Heroes Fly (2018) follows four IDF veterans who served together in the 2006 Lebanon war. They travel to Latin America and are subject to change. Follow us on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/cofcjwtst) or join our email list (email jwst@cofc.edu to be added) to receive the ZOOM link for each event and other last-minute updates.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 AT 7:00PM
BLACK POWER, JEWISH POLITICS: REINVENTING THE ALLIANCE IN THE 1960S

Dr. Marc Dollinger, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Chair in Jewish Studies and Social Responsibility, San Francisco State University

In his recent book, Prof. Dollinger takes a new look at Jewish involvement in the civil rights movement, showing how American Jews leveraged the Black Power movement to increase Jewish ethnic and religious identity in the late 1960s and early 1970s. His talk will explore historical documents that reveal a fascinating and surprising Jewish past, one that is very relevant with the recent interest in Black Lives Matter and larger questions of race and justice.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10 AT 7:00PM
CHARLESTON JEWISH BOOKFEST PRESENTS: THE FALSE CAUSE: FRAUD, FABRICATION, AND WHITE SUPREMACY IN CONFEDERATE MEMORY, BY ADAM DOMBY

In The False Cause, Dr. Domby (Assistant Professor of History, ConCf) examines the role of lies and exaggeration in the creation of Lost Cause narratives of the Civil War. The book examines such issues as Confederate monument dedications and myths and their relationship to white supremacy. In this conversation, Program Director Dr. Ayalon will explore with Dr. Domby the broader implications of his findings and what they can teach us about our world today.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2 AT 7:00PM
JEWS AND RACE: A CONVERSATION WITH RABBI JILL JACOBS

Join our own Prof. Joshua Shanes in a conversation with Rabbi Jill Jacobs about Jews and Race.

Rabbi Jill Jacobs is the Executive Director of Truah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, an organization of rabbis and cantors from all streams of Judaism dedicated to protecting and advancing human rights.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23 AT 7:00PM
REVISING SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY IN 2020

Award-winning scholar Shari Rabin (author of <i>Jews and the Frontier: Religion and Mobility in Nineteenth-Century America</i>) examines the role of lies and exaggeration in the creation of Lost Cause narratives of the Civil War. The book examines such issues as Confederate monument dedications and myths and their relationship to white supremacy. In this conversation, Program Director Dr. Ayalon will explore with Dr. Domby the broader implications of his findings and what they can teach us about our world today.

Dr. Shari Rabin is an Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies and Religion at Oberlin College and formerly a faculty member in our program and the Director of the Pearlstein/Lipov Center for Southern Jewish Culture.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3 AT 7:00PM
CHARLESTON JEWISH BOOKFEST PRESENTS: WANDERING DIXIE, DISPATCHES FROM THE LOST JEWISH SOUTH, BY SUE EISENFELD

In Wandering Dixie, Eisenfeld uncovers how the history of Jewish southerners converges with her personal story and the region’s complex, conflicted present. Her book also discusses the unexpected ways that race, religion, and hidden histories intertwine.

Dr. Shari Rabin is the Assistant Program Director of Jewish Studies and Religion at Oberlin College and formerly a faculty member in our program and the Director of the Pearlstein/Lipov Center for Southern Jewish Culture.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2 AT 7:00PM
E-THREE RABBI PANEL

a virtual event

JEWS and RACE

WEDNESDAY, November 18, 7:30PM

Rabbis Scott Hoberman (Orthodox, BSBII) Evan Ravski (Conservative, Emanu-El), and Stephanie Alexander (Reform, KKBII) will sit for a conversation about Jews and Race.

For event updates, follow us on facebook.com/cofcjwtst or check our website at jewish.cofc.edu

Zoom link will be sent out via email and shared on Facebook.

The Three Rabbi Panel is supported by the Stanley and Charlot Karesh Family Fund, an endowment given by the Karesh family in the Spring of 2015 in support of Jewish Studies’ community outreach programming. We are incredibly grateful for their support, and for their broad vision of Klal Yisrael.
JEWISH FILMFEST

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 AT 7:00PM
GOLDA’S BALCONY
(Q&A AND DISCUSSION WITH THE WRITER/PRODUCER)
Golda’s Balcony recreates Tovah Feldshuh’s award-winning stage performance as Golda Meir using footage from a 2003 Off-Broadway performance. This moving portrait of Golda Meir was featured in 75 Jewish Film Festivals last year, winning 21 Audience Choice Awards. Trailer at https://vimeo.com/37846297.
Free film link will be available for streaming from 9/8 to 9/8, no preregistration required.
Join director/producer David Fishelson for a conversation, 9/8 @ 7 pm

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 AT 7:00PM
BODY AND SOUL: AN AMERICAN BRIDGE
(Q&A AND DISCUSSION)
Body and Soul illustrates the complex interplay between Jewish and African-American cultures through one of the most popular songs in the jazz repertoire. Winner of the Best Music Documentary award at the San Francisco Black Film Festival. Trailer at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZY_dBdViaHw.
Free film link will be available for streaming from 10/12 to 10/15.
Join Dr. Karen Chandler, Director of the Graduate Certificate in Arts and Cultural Management at CofC, and local jazz musicians, for a discussion, 10/15 @ 7 pm

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 7:00PM
PAST LIFE (Q&A AND DISCUSSION)
Join Jewish Studies Professor Ezra Cappell for a discussion of the movie Past Life (Israel, 2018), based on the Holocaust memoir Can Heaven Be Void? by Baruch Milch (Jerusalem, 2003). Link to view movie will be distributed two weeks before this event. An electronic version of the book will be made available upon request. Sponsored by the Zucker/Goldberg Center for Holocaust Studies

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2020 @ 5:30PM
JHSSC | JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Presented via ZOOM
Judge Richard Gergel and Robert Rosen
With special guests Charleston 350 Commission Co-Chairs; Mr. Jonathan Green, City of Charleston Ambassador for the Arts, and Hon. A. Peter Shahid Jr., City Councilmember, Ninth District
Charleston’s Early Jewish Community and the City’s Notable History of Religious Tolerance

For registration information, visit jhssc.org

The founders of K.K. Beth Elohim, as portrayed by Charleston artist William Halsey. Commissioned by Thomas J. Tobias and the Alexander family in 1930, it is one of two murals painted by Halsey in the synagogue’s social hall.
Photo by Jack Altman, courtesy of Special Collections, College of Charleston