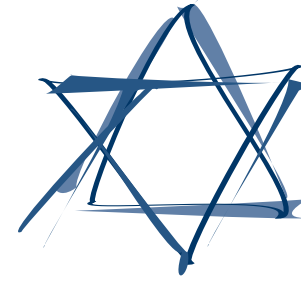


# AN AFTERNOON OF MARTINIS AND MUSIC

On Sunday, October 7th, Academy supporters Hanna and Bernie Rubinstein welcomed over 50 invited guests to the beautiful gardens of their home in Beverly Hills. Billed as “An Afternoon of Martinis and Music,” the purpose of the event was to introduce the Academy and the important work being done here to potential donors, many of them members of LA’s Israeli community. The musical portion of the event was coordinated by the Chair of AJR, CA’s Fundraising Committee, Cantor Judy Greenfeld, ’04, and Hazzan Nathan Lam, Dean of the Cantorial School. The inspiring musical numbers were performed by Hazzan Lam, Cantor Greenfeld, Cantor Paul Buch, ’05, and Hazzan Eva Robbins, ’04 as well as current Cantorial students, Elisa Waltzman and Ellen Sugerman. AJR, CA Board of Directors member, Shoshi Wilchfort, chaired the event which also featured remarks by several others including Dr. Jacob Zigelboim, Chair of AJR, CA’s Board of Directors, and Academy President, Rabbi Stan Levy. In explaining their support of the Academy, the Rubinsteins’ said, “We are very disturbed by the distancing and apathy of American Jewry towards organized Judaism reflected, in part, by the large number of intermarriages. At the same time, we are heartened by the new kind of Jewish spiritual leader that the Academy is producing; dynamic men and women, who, because of their unique training can relate, communicate and reach out to the Jewish community, including the unaffiliated, in a very different and effective way.” “We are also deeply impressed,” they continued, “that many AJR, CA students are highly accomplished professionals who have chosen to make a sometimes significant career change because of their passion and love of Judaism and the Jewish people. They should serve as an inspiration to us all.”



Back row (l-r): Rabbi Lynn Brody '05; Dr. Jacob Zigelboim; Rabbi Stan Levy; Shoshi Wilchfort; Lauren Goldner, Director of Administration; Hazzan Eva Robbins, '04, Director of Admissions and Recruitment; Alumni Association President, Rabbi Yocheved Mintz, '04; Hazzan Nathan Lam; Rabbi Miriam Hamrell, '03; Board Member, Dr. Charles Hamrell  
Front row (l-r): AJR, CA Supporters and Hosts, Hanna and Bernie Rubinstein



## Academy for Jewish Religion | CA

*Serving as a bridge between the pillars of Judaism*

Fall 2007 Volume 1 No.6



AJR, CA is a transdenominational, pluralistic institution dedicated to the training of rabbis, cantors, and chaplains. Our mission is to develop religious leaders steeped in Torah wisdom and tradition, and capable of transforming Jewish communities into places where all Jews can grow toward wholeness and well-being.



## News briefs from . . .

### The Rabbinical School

Rabbi Moshe J. Rothblum, the Rabbi Emeritus of Adat Ari El, the first Conservative synagogue in the San Fernando Valley, has joined the faculty of the Rabbinical School and is teaching a Tefilla Seminar. Ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Rabbi Rothblum is a past president of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California.

### The Cantorial School

Hazzan Avshalom Katz of Beth Jacob Congregation in Beverly Hills, the largest Orthodox synagogue on the West Coast, is teaching a new bi-weekly class entitled “Music for the Soul.”

### The Chaplaincy Program

Rabbi Rochelle Robins has joined the faculty of the Chaplaincy Program. Ordained at HUC-JIR, Rabbi Robins is a Co-founder and the Executive Director of Bat Kol, an organization that began as Jerusalem's first feminist yeshiva and has expanded its mission to include interfaith coalition building and health care education in the US. Rabbi Robins is also the Associate Director for the Clinical Pastoral Education program at the Center for Urban Chaplaincy in San Diego.

## Meeting the Need Nationwide

When the Academy was established in Fall 2000, there were well-meaning naysayers who could not conceive of a Rabbinical and Cantorial School that taught its students about the teachings and traditions of *all* of Judaism’s denominations. With this kind of training, they asked, “Would AJR, CA graduates even be able to find jobs upon ordination?” The irony is that this is perhaps our greatest accomplishment and proof that there was and is an urgent need for a school like the Academy. Our graduates are meeting that need nationwide. They are leading Conservative, Reform, Jewish Renewal, Reconstructionist and Transdenominational congregations; serving as Rabbis of Day Schools; teaching Religious Studies at universities; serving as Directors of Synagogue Religious Schools; heading up Chaplaincy-related organizations; the list goes on and on.

In this issue, you will learn about the specific achievements of a number of our alumni and the recognition that they’re receiving from local, national and international media. You will also read about the fact that during the most recent High Holy Days, AJR, CA students were recruited to officiate at services by congregations across the US. Our students and alumni are in demand, in part, because of the quality of education provided by our superlative faculty. As such, we’re pleased to note the addition of new faculty and administration members.

The vitally important work being done here – the creation of a new kind of Jewish spiritual leader - would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. It is with deep gratitude that we acknowledge the tremendously generous donation made by one of our alumni as well as the efforts by AJR, CA lay leaders to “spread the word” and expand our donor base. For all of this, for all of you, we feel blessed.

**Jacob Zigelboim, MD**  
*Chair, Board of Governors*

**Rabbi Stan Levy, Esq.**  
*President*

**Rabbi Mel Gottlieb, PhD**  
*Dean, Rabbinical School and Chaplaincy Program*

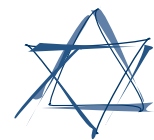
**Tamar Frankiel, PhD**  
*Dean of Students*

**Hazzan Nathan Lam**  
*Dean, Cantorial School*

**Cantor Perryne Anker**  
*Assistant Dean, Cantorial School*

**Hazzan Eva Robbins**  
*Director of Admissions and Recruitment*

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Academy for Jewish Religion | CA

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## Alumni Making an Impact

The Academy is tremendously proud of the impact that our Alumni are making nationwide. In this issue, we profile two talented and accomplished individuals who are serving the local Los Angeles Jewish community; albeit very different populations.



Rabbi Andrew Feig, '07

### Current Position:

Rabbi-in-Residence at Sinai Akiba Academy, a K-8 Solomon Schechter day school affiliated with Sinai Temple, a Conservative synagogue in Los Angeles.

### Making an Impact:

Responsible for leading the school's tefillot and

developing programming that will enhance the religious and spiritual life of the 500 students enrolled.



Chaplain D'vorah Epstein McDonald, '06

### Current Position:

Chaplain at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in Burbank.

### Making an Impact:

Visits with and offers spiritual support to patients of all religions including Jewish patients who are currently unaffiliated yet seem to find

comfort in having a Jewish spiritual presence during difficult and fearful times.

**If you know of a synagogue or other Jewish institution that needs a Rabbinic, Cantorial or Chaplaincy intern, contact Rabbi Mel Gottlieb at 310-824-1586.**

## AJR, CA Alum Establishes Scholarship Fund

In a tribute to her late husband, Rabbi Yocheved Mintz, '04 has established the "Dr. Alan and Rabbi Yocheved Mintz Scholarship Fund." The Fund, established in perpetuity, will award \$10,000 during its first year, and in excess of \$5000 annually after that. The monies will be awarded to AJR, CA students



Rabbi Yocheved and Dr. Alan Mintz z"l

at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee. Rabbi Mintz, the spiritual leader of Valley Outreach Synagogue of Las Vegas, spoke movingly of her impetus in creating the Fund. "Alan knew," she said, "how much the Academy meant to me in terms of fulfilling my life long dream to enter the Rabbinate. He also knew how much the experience of studying at AJR, CA

made me happy. Ironically, preparing to become a rabbi and subsequently having my own congregation, proved both a challenge to us and, ultimately, a blessing. His untimely death could have left me, like so many other widows, biding my time. But, HaShem had another plan in mind and, as a rabbi, I awake every day with the blessing of purpose. I was fortunate to have the financial means to attend Rabbinical School. May the scholarship in his memory enable others to fulfill their dreams as well."

## AJR, CA Students Fill Pulpits

During the 2007 High Holy Days, AJR, CA Rabbinical and Cantorial students officiated at services around the country. Congregations in Las Vegas, NV, Laramie, WY and Buffalo, NY were among those that hired Academy students as did synagogues in Mission Viejo, Santa Clarita, Cotati (near Santa Rosa) and San Jose. In the Los Angeles-area, students worked at Sinai Temple, Stephen S. Wise Temple, Creative Arts Temple, Los Angeles Jewish Home for the Aging's Eisenberg Village campus, UCLA Hillel, and Beit Teshuvah.

## Alum/Administrator on New CD

Hazzan Eva Robbins, '04, who serves as the Academy's Director of Admissions and Recruitment, is one of the featured performers on the new CD "The Spirit of the Jewish Wedding." The CD is part of a series jointly produced by the Cantors Assembly and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Other vocalists on the CD include AJR, CA Dean Hazzan Nathan Lam and Cantor Meir Finkelstein, a member of the AJR, CA Academy Council.



## AJR, CA IN THE NEWS

In just a three month period, August to October 2007, Academy-affiliated students, alumni, and administration were featured in local, national and international publications as well as on TV. On August 2nd, Rabbi Diane Elliot, '06 was the subject of "Dancer-rabbi becomes Renewal minyan's rabbi-chaver," *J. (The Jewish newspaper of Northern California)*. On August 12th, Rabbi Julie Kozlow, '07 was interviewed on WGNO, the ABC TV affiliate in New Orleans. Cantor Judy Greenfeld, '04 was the focus of the article "Soul Music," which appeared in the Fall issue of *Jewish Woman Magazine* and she was also the subject of the

piece "Ode to Judaism," in the October issue of *Hadassah Magazine*. On October 5th, the *Jewish Journal* ran "Ritual, worship and love: A rabbi/comic and a cantor/actress" about AJR, CA Rabbinical Student Ira Rosenfeld and his wife. And, the *Jewish Journal's* October 12th cover story, "Shul tripping – a nostalgic hippie tours the alternative scene," featured numerous quotes from AJR, CA Rabbinical School Dean, Rabbi Mel Gottlieb. It also made mention of Academy President, Rabbi Stan Levy, as well as Chaplain Judith Sommerstein, '06, Chaplain Ruth Belonsky, '06, and Rabbi Monty Turner, '05.



## Cantorial School Announces New Appointment

Hazzan Nathan Lam, Dean of the Academy's Cantorial School, has announced that Cantor Perryne Anker has been appointed to the newly created position of Assistant Dean of the Cantorial School. A longtime member of the Cantorial School Faculty, and a graduate of the famed Juilliard School in New York, Cantor Anker was the first woman to fill a cantorial position in Los Angeles at Stephen S. Wise Temple. She has also served as cantor at Beth Shalom in Santa Monica, and LA's Temple of the Arts. She is a leading voice teacher and coach as well as a member of the American Conference of Cantors. In announcing the appointment, Hazzan Lam said of his colleague, "She is a consummate artist, always prepared and takes making music seriously. Cantor Anker elicits the highest standards from the students that she teaches and coaches and she adds to our School another administrator whose experience and professionalism is of the highest caliber." In turn, Cantor Anker expressed enthusiasm for the future of the Academy and her new association with it. "It gives me pleasure," she said, "to see the growth of our School as we all strive to have it reach its' greater potential. It has been and continues to be a joy to serve on the AJR, CA Faculty and I look forward to my greater involvement as part of the Administration."

## Thousands Visit AJR, CA on the Web

In this day and age, an organization's website provides the opportunity to present itself to audiences on a global scale and the Academy is no exception. AJR, CA's website, [www.ajrca.org](http://www.ajrca.org), offers information about our specific schools/programs, faculty, students, alumni and much more. During the period, August 31 - October 23, 2007, thousands of visitors from 45 countries visited the AJR, CA website. While the majority of visitors were from the United States, there were "hits" from such countries as Israel, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Italy, India, Germany, Japan and the Philippines among others. Keeping in mind that the Academy was founded only seven years ago, the fact that we are attracting attention from around the world speaks to the caliber of our institution and the people associated with it. Recently, several additional features have been added to the website. One of these new features, a page called "Donate Now," allows our supporters to donate to the Academy online with all of the necessary security in place. One of the most heartening pages on the website is the "Alumni Association" page. In addition to the information about their current positions and responsibilities, each alum has written an eloquent message about their experience at the Academy. It is insightful to note that, while each message is different, there is a striking similarity in the remarks related to the "stellar faculty," the "nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment," and the "camaraderie" of the student body.

