

RISING ANTISEMITISM ON U.S. COLLEGE CAMPUSES

February 12, 2024, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Panel Biographies

Deena Yellin

Moderator



As a religion reporter for The Record and the USA TODAY Network, Deena Yellin aims to explore spiritual trends in New Jersey as well as the beliefs and values that shape American society. She has covered the clergy abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, the impact of COVID-19 on religious worship and the spate of synagogue shootings around the country. In recent months, the award-winning reporter has written extensively about rising antisemitism on campus and around the world. Her portfolio of work earned top honors last year from the New Jersey Press Association. She is a graduate of the Columbia University

Graduate School of Journalism whose work has also appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Newsday and The Jerusalem Post.

Ross Brann



Milton R. Konvitz Professor of Judeo-Islamic Studies & Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellow, Cornell University

Professor Ross Brann studied at the University of California, Berkeley, the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, New York University, and the American University in Cairo. He has taught at Cornell University, in New York State, since 1986 and served nineteen years as Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Professor

Brann is the author or editor of numerous books and essays on the intersection of Jewish and Islamic culture. He serves as a fellow of the American Academy for Jewish Research and the Medieval Academy of America and has been a visiting fellow at the University of Michigan Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies and the University of Pennsylvania Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies.

Lily Cohen



Lily Cohen is a senior at Northwestern University, in Chicago, Illinois, studying political science and civic engagement. Raised in Bergen County, she first engaged with pro-Israel activism through the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey's iCan Teen Task Force. The National Council of Jewish Women Bergen County Section awarded her the Bach scholarship four years ago. During her time at Northwestern, Lily has led efforts to advocate for Israel on campus, in addition to serving in leadership roles for NU College Democrats, NU Students Demand Action, and Tonik Tap. She also serves as Vice President of Advocacy on the American Jewish Committee's Global Campus Board and was awarded the Sharon Greene Award for Campus Advocacy at AJC's Global Forum in Tel Aviv in June, 2023. Lily has written about the experiences of being a Jewish college student for *The Daily Northwestern* and *USA Today* and has spoken in the Chicagoland area and around the country about antisemitism on college campuses.

Rabbi Ira Dounn



Rabbi Ira Dounn is Associate Director of the Center for Jewish Life, Hillel, at Princeton University in New Jersey. He was raised in the Reform community in Teaneck, NJ. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Public Policy Studies at the University of Chicago with a focus on health care in Chicago and human rights in South Africa. After college, he studied at Yeshivat Hamivtar in Israel, Yeshivat Chovevei Torah in New York City, and was ordained at the Academy for Jewish Religion (AJR) in New York. He discovered his passion for engaging with young leaders while working at the Bukharian Teen Lounge in Queens, NY; at B'nai Jeshurun's teen program in Manhattan; and at BBYO where he served as South Jersey Regional Director in Cherry Hill, NJ and Director of Jewish Enrichment based in Washington, DC. Rabbi Dounn has led many Jewish themed trips and programs for young adults in the U.S., Latin America, Israel and Europe. He and his wife Shaina have two young children.

Jonah Scherl



Jonah Scherl, an Englewood, NJ, native, is a senior at Duke University in North Carolina, majoring in Political Science, minoring in Visual and Media Studies, with a certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship. He is co-President of Chabad at Duke Undergrads and acting Vice President of Strategy for Campus Enterprises, Duke's only student-operated start-up accelerator. Following graduation, Jonah plans to pursue a career in New York in Healthcare Investment Banking.

Kaylee Werner



Kaylee Werner, 20, is a junior at Indiana University (IU) in Bloomington, Indiana with plans to pursue a career encompassing entrepreneurship, corporate innovation, environmental sustainability and political science. At IU, Kaylee joined a business fraternity, Delta Sigma Pi (DSP) and a social sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta (Theta). She is active in IU Hillel and is using her background in activism to lead a task force to prevent and combat antisemitism on campus. She is an active participant at the Kelley Institute for Social Impact (KISI) and Net Impact, climate change task force.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Kaylee is a former member of Tree of Life synagogue that experienced, in 2018, the deadliest attack on Jews in US history. Fortunately, her family was not in attendance on that tragic day. She has led campaigns for TOMS and CeasefirePA, been featured in a UN documentary and has spoken all over the country to audiences as large as 5,000 people about gun violence.