

Lerner's 2011-2012 Board of Directors

Rachel Bearman – President

We first came to The Lerner School in 2005 when our oldest daughter, Noa, entered Kindergarten. Since that time both Nathan and I have been active volunteers at the school. I joined the board in 2007 as co-chair of the Annual Campaign with Nathan. That experience was a wonderful opportunity for us to become more engaged and for us to reach out to Lerner families and the larger community, sharing our passion for the day school education. Over time, our commitment to the Lerner School has only grown. Noa has graduated, our middle son, Dov, is now in third grade and our youngest, Lev is in Kindergarten. I have been honored to serve as President of the Lerner School and I look forward to the coming year. To the position I bring both a dedication to our school and community and experience as a professional and volunteer as both a member and leader of non-profit boards. I look forward to working with the board, Lerner families and the larger community to continue to grow and strengthen our school.

Jeff Spinner-Halev - Vice-President: Policy

My family and I moved to Chapel Hill nearly four years ago, when we enrolled our three children at Lerner. We now have two Lerner graduates, while Shoshana is a rising fifth grader at Lerner. My wife Elyza is often found at the school, taking pictures, assisting in a classroom, organizing a field trip, or helping out in other ways. I have just finished my fourth year on the Board, one year as chair of the Policy committee, two years as Secretary and one as Vice President. During the day I teach at UNC, where I am a Professor of Political Science with a specialty in political theory. We are family with many Israel connections, and we lived in Jerusalem for a year in 2003-4. With the expansion of the school, and the new JCC, this is an exciting time to be at Lerner, and I'm happy to be able to help the school as it enters this new stage of growth.

Tal Lewin-Wittle – President-Elect & Vice President: Development

This is my third year on the board, after serving for two years as VP for Development and one year as Policy Chair. I have co-chaired the Auction committee (two years), the Mishloach Manot committee and served as classroom parent. Also, most Fridays you will find me at school baking with the Challah Club. All these activities have been rewarding ways to contribute to our school's success. My husband Eric and I have greatly enjoyed being a part of the Lerner community these past 5 years. My oldest daughter Liora graduated from Lerner last year, and Ilana is in fourth grade. As President Elect and Vice President, I will continue to be an active part of helping the Lerner School strengthen and grow.

Chip Bailin -Treasurer

Since its inception we have been supporters of the Lerner School even though we never had the opportunity to send any of our children. I see the school as an entity that can engage the entire Jewish community regardless of synagogue affiliation or Jewish background. As a non-parent board member, I enjoy working on ways to expand support for the school from across the broader Jewish community.

I've worked in the health care industry for almost 30 years in a variety of administrative and financial positions. Currently I'm serving as the Financial Director for the Department of Community and Family Medicine in the Duke School of Medicine Family: Robin and I arrived in NC 32 years ago so I could attend graduate school at Duke and we never left. We've raised three children in Chapel Hill. My oldest daughter, Rori is a lawyer working in Washington, DC. My other daughter, Jessica is a television producer living in Knoxville, TN and my youngest is Josh who is working in Birmingham, Alabama. My wife, Robin, manages the Chapel Hill Senior Center and is active among the senior community.

Jenny Hoffman -Secretary

I've always been an active volunteer at Lerner doing one thing or another. I have served as the Recruitment Chair, 1st Grade Class Parent and as the Book Fair Chair. I've come to feel that Lerner contributes far more to our family than the religious and academic education of our children. I would love to see Lerner flourish and grow. As a Board member, I hope that I can be a welcoming face to prospective Lerner parents. I look forward to helping find new and interesting ways to get the word out about our special school. I have three children at

Lerner: Sadie is in 5th grade, Asa is in third grade, and Noah is in Preschool. I studied Fine Arts and Architecture in college and graduate school. Before becoming a mother, I worked and volunteered in the field in a variety of ways: as an Architect Intern, graduate student teaching, and on construction crews. My personal interests, when I can find the time, is anything design or construction-related, yoga, biking, gardening and reading.

Allison Eisner –Annual Fund Co-Chair

In the summer of 2005, I relocated from New York City to Durham with my husband Douglas and two children. We came to Durham so Douglas could get his MBA at Duke. Liana, 7, is in third grade at Lerner and Jake is in first grade. They both enjoy Lerner tremendously and have enthusiastically embraced their Jewish identity and heritage as a result of their experience at the school. I enjoy volunteering in the classroom regularly as well as partaking in the various PAC volunteer opportunities. Prior to having children, I worked in advertising and market research in New York for 13 years. Douglas is now COO of Grassroots Biotechnology, an agricultural biotechnology company located in downtown Durham.

Sharon Halperin –Annual Fund Co-Chair

I moved to Chapel Hill in 1983 from Boston. She and her husband raised 3 daughters here. She graduated from Quinnipiac University with a degree in Physical Therapy and from Columbia University with an MPH in Health Education. Sharon sees private physical therapy patients, does consulting work for several local non profits, assists the Jewish Family Service with educational outreach, is actively involved with the Multiple Sclerosis Society and UNC Hospice. Sharon is co-founder of the Durham-Chapel Hill Holocaust Speakers Bureau and is thrilled to be placing local Holocaust Survivors and liberators in classrooms and organizations.

Gabriel Liberty - Facilities Chair

I am a father of four and married to Perri Shalom-Liberty. I currently have all four of my children enrolled at Lerner, Leel, Arel, Eliya and Odeya. My oldest daughter Leel, began at Lerner back in 2007. I look forward to contributing in every way I can to the success of Lerner. Our community is dependent on Lerner's success. It is the hub and will remain the hub of our community that brings us all together.

I moved to Durham back in 2007. I have been a professional Software Engineer creating software for the video game industry for over 14 years. I have helped publish many video games and have contributed to many more. I have worked with a handful of companies but am now an independent contractor. This allows me the extra time to spend with my family and the many activities that keep us busy. I am an active volunteer in the community. I volunteer regularly at the school and for other Jewish organizations. I also serve as the President of the Carillon Forest HOA, this is a 165 home development a couple miles away from Lerner.

Marian Abernathy– Public Relations Chair

I live in Durham with my husband, Dan Kaplan, and children, Celie and Alex. We came to the Lerner School in 2007, when our daughter entered Kindergarten, and our son soon followed. We have found the Lerner community to be a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment providing exactly what each child has needed at the right moment. Originally from the Boston area, I came to the Triangle for an international health job in 1990 and have lived here ever since. After 20+ years in international public health and health education, I'm now Director of Member Services and Communications for LINGOs, a non-profit consortium that helps member organizations (all international development, humanitarian relief, health, conservation and social justice organizations) build the capacity of their global staff through technology-enhanced and blended learning. I'm becoming well versed in social media for adult learning. I look forward to participating on the board, and helping the public be aware of our school.

Julie Mell -Religious Practices Chair

My husband Malachi Hachohen and I have two daughters, both of whom now attend Lerner: Hadas (4th grade) and Lilach (Kindergarten). One of my favorite times of the week is the Shabbat Sing-a-long. The joy and enthusiasm of the children as Shabbat is coming in is a "moment of grace" each week. We are also long time members of the Orthodox Kehillah at Beth El Synagogue. At Beth El, I've helped lead the Tot Shabbat and I've

served as the representative of the Orthodox Kehillah on the Beth El board for the past 2 years. I am a Jewish historian and a member of the faculty at NC State University. I completed a Ph.D. at UNC-Chapel Hill with degrees in History and Religious Studies. My husband Malachi Hacohen and I moved to Durham in 1993 when he joined the faculty at Duke. (He is also a Jewish historian!) We like to spend the summers in Israel with our Israeli family, when we can.

Stephanie Poley- PAC Chair

I am mom to Porter Milo, a Kindergartener full of energy, comedy, and sweetness. Our family joined Lerner in 2010 and has found it to be a perfect fit for Porter's social and educational development. As well, we have found it to be a perfect fit for our family's values and desire to be part of an active and committed community of Jewish families and professionals. I am thrilled to be asked to serve on the Parent Activities Committee because I know how rewarding and important it is for parents to be involved in their children's education. Among friends, I'm known to be the organizer of information for social and kid activity planning. I hope that my skills of organization and enthusiasm for Lerner will be useful in identifying new opportunities for parents to be involved and encouraging even greater parent participation. In June of 2011 I received a Ph.D. degree from the Department of Health Policy and Management at the UNC-CH Gillings School of Global Public Health. I now serve as a Senior Clinical Informatics Analyst at Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, after working for 12 years with the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at UNC-CH.

Marlo Wilcox – At Large – Middle School Committee Chair

Our daughter, Sophie, is in 3rd grade, and began her tenure at Lerner in preschool. Our son, Sam, is 4 and in Lerner's preschool. We have loved building our lives and establishing roots in Durham, and have worked hard to create a supportive and robust Jewish community for our family, while also doing our part to give back to the very community we take part in. I spend a lot of my free time volunteering at our synagogue as well as at Lerner, and have spent the past year chairing a committee charged with looking at the viability of a middle school at Lerner. I have loved working with other Lerner parents, and we are trying to be role models for our kids with our volunteer activities, showing them that our efforts to impact the parts of our lives that are important to us can also benefit others. Sophie has thrived at Lerner, and as a result of her time here really loves school. We know Sam will have a similar experience, and I am glad that I will be a part of the school at the same time they are. I have lived in Durham for 17 years, and have been married to my husband, Dirk, for 8 of those years. We are both originally from Michigan (Go Blue), but I grew up in Richmond, VA while Dirk grew up outside of Lansing. Professionally, I am a Director of Human Resources and currently work for a pharmaceutical company in RTP. Dirk is in Sales.

Sue Egnoto – At Large - Marketing

My husband Morris, daughters Grace and Eve and I moved to Chapel Hill from the Bay Area just five short years ago looking to slow down and integrate ourselves into a smaller community. Grace (then a senior) settled in at Durham Academy and Eve attended our local public elementary school. After a short and disappointing experience we frantically looked for an alternative for Eve (then in 3rd grade). I had heard great things about Lerner, so I decided to check it out and two weeks later Eve was attending! It's been a fabulous choice for Eve and our family. Being connected to the school has provided us a path to be actively involved in the Jewish community. I have been privileged to serve for several years on the board as PR chair. I also serve on the finance committee. We are an interfaith family & members of Judea Reform. In my work life, I am a marketing professional specializing in new product development, positioning and branding. If I ever find the time I'll restart my marketing consulting practice.

Jodi Bakst -At Large - Alumni

Jodi Bakst is a mother of two children who attended Lerner. Her son graduated from Lerner in 2005 and is now at Chapel Hill High School. Jodi is a Realtor and an active volunteer in the Jewish Community. While at Lerner she served on the Board and was a fundraising co-chair. She was the former co-chair of the Women's Philanthropy Division at the Jewish Federation and has served on numerous other Federation committees. Jodi

is excited to again serve on the Lerner Board. She is a strong supporter of the school and it committed to its success.

Idan Dalyot – At Large – Recruitment

I was born and raised in Tel Aviv, Israel and attended the Hebrew University in Jerusalem where I have graduated with a B.Sc and Teaching Diploma as well. Leaving behind a successful and promising career in medical device sales was a hard decision to make but after nearly a year we believe we have made the right choice. When the opportunity to relocate to the US for academic reasons had materialized, finding the best education for our 2 children was one of the top priorities. The minute we heard about Lerner and learned of its mission and model we knew this was the right place for our children. We put our younger son to the trusted hands of the preschool staff and our older daughter started her journey in the kindergarten. I cannot express how happy we are with our decision. The past year, I have been volunteering in school as much as I could and have seen the school in action. I hold a teaching certificate and have a general knowledge about how a school should run. There is no doubt in my mind that Lerner is a perfect place and serves as a hub for the whole Jewish community. Offering me the opportunity to serve the parents and the school's agenda as a board member brings a lot of honor. I am looking forward to contributing to our community make a change and enjoying the experience.

Jennifer Kornbluth - Preschool Liaison Chair

Patty Wild – Ex Officio Past President

Both my daughters graduated from Lerner and are now in middle school and beginning high school. I previously served the Board as Past-President, President, V.P., PAC Co-Chair and Chair of the Committee on Trustees. I continue as a member of the Head Support Committee and founding Challah Club member. I love the school, and look forward to its continued growth and success under Mary's leadership. I am especially interested in strengthening relations with Lerner alumni. When not at Lerner, I work 3 days a week as an Audiologist, serve on the board of Community Midrasha and enjoy family time with my husband Michael, who is a sales manager for Nestle Clinical Nutrition, and our daughters.

Bryna Rapp – Ex Officio Past President

I have been a member of the Lerner School Board off and on since 1993. At the time, I was pregnant with my first child, Ben. Both my kids were at Lerner for elementary school and now Ben is in 11th grade at American Hebrew Academy and my daughter Sadie is in 8th grade at Duke School. Fortunately for me, I have a slew of younger niece/nephews who will keep me tied to the school until at least 2017! I have served as President and lead the Head Support Committee and Committee on Trustees for 2 years each. I am a founding member of the Challah Club and a lifetime co-chair of the Care for the Mosaic Wall committee. I love everything about the school... the teachers, the parents, the amazing children who make up my extended family. I am an architect by training, but spend my professional time running a small commercial furniture business in Carrboro (the FurnitureLab) with my husband Greg and my brother, Nathan.